

THE GAZE IN THEORY:  
THE CASES OF SARTRE AND LACAN

Melinda Jill Storr

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## ABSTRACT

The topic of my research is the 'hierarchy of the senses' as it appears in mainstream Western thought, and specifically the privilege accorded to vision in twentieth century literary and theoretical writings. My aim is to investigate the allegation (as made by, for example, Evelyn Fox Keller and Christine Grontowski, and by Luce Irigaray) that the metaphor of vision is intimately connected with the construction of gender and sexual difference, and that the traditional privilege of vision acts to perpetuate the privilege of masculinity in modern writing practices. This allegation, captured in the thesis that masculinity 'looks' and femininity is 'looked-at' - that, as John Berger puts it, "men act and women appear" - has some degree of currency in contemporary writings on 'sexual difference', but has in itself received little critical attention. Taking the philosopher and novelist Jean-Paul Sartre and the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan as 'case studies', I investigate the plausibility of this allegation by means of a detailed analysis of the use of vision and its relation to gender in the respective works of each. This work represents a significant contribution to serious critical work on both Sartre and Lacan, and to the understanding of the relationship between gender and representation.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

None of the material contained in this work has been presented for any degree awarded either at the University of York or elsewhere. Research for this work was begun on the MA in Women's Studies at the University of York in 1989. It was upgraded from MA to MPhil status in 1990, and from MPhil to DPhil status in 1992.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### The trouble with vision

This piece of work is about vision. Let's have a look at the dictionary:

"See, v: ... Have or exercise the power of discerning objects with the eyes ... Discern mentally, attain to the comprehension of, apprehend, ascertain by search or enquiry or reflexion, consider, foresee, cannot see a or the joke, the point; see reason; do you see what I mean?; justice is seen to be done; can't think what he sees in her; must see what can be done ...). Take view of, have opinion of, (I see life, things, it differently now; I see it as being quite possible; see eye to eye; see fit to); as I ~ it, in my opinion ... Reflect, take time to consider; let me ~ (appeal for time to think ...)" (1).

Even the word 'theory' comes from the Greek meaning 'spectator'.

Vision is so accepted as the dominant metaphor of thought, of how the rational human subject addresses the world, that its dominance is - if I may put it this way - practically invisible: that clear sight should be the paradigm of thought is at once obvious and unremarked, which is precisely why it stands in such urgent need of attention. The question to be asked is of what is at stake in this privileging of vision. Why is sight invested with such value in the construction of the human subject? What interests are served by that investment? Specifically, what are the signs, images, references and representations that the privilege of vision makes available for this construction of the subject, and what does it omit or elide? My thesis is that this question is fundamentally a question of gender, and that the privilege of vision in theories and representations of

the subject results in the construction of that subject as masculine.

John Berger's now famous (or notorious) claim that "men act and women appear" (2) might be taken as groundwork for such a thesis. The fact that visual representations can and do construct women as objects demonstrates that looking stands in some significant relation to gender. Berger's claim locates that relation in a model of heterosexuality in which men look and women are looked at by men. This outline of a gender problematic around the look is expanded and given more definite shape in the film maker and theorist Laura Mulvey's article 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', which draws on psychoanalytic theory to articulate the importance of what Mulvey calls the look's "active/passive heterosexual division of labour" (3) for the construction of the male subject. Mulvey writes:

"In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. Woman displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif of erotic spectacle" (4).

Thus the claim that men act and women appear is elaborated by Mulvey into an analysis of the production, in the cinema and by extension in other forms of visual representation, of sexual difference and desire around masculinity as activity and femininity as passivity.

John Berger and Laura Mulvey articulate the question of vision and gender from within the fields of art and film criticism and theory; their respective arguments, that is, are explicitly concerned with the production and reception of visual representations. The privilege of vision and the power of the look are not, however,

confined to the cinema or gallery, as Rey Chow points out:

"In the twentieth century, the pre-occupation with the 'visual' - in a field like psychoanalysis, for instance - and the perfection of technologies of visibility such as photography and film takes us beyond the merely physical dimension of vision. The visual as such ... reveals epistemological problems that are inherent in social relations and their reproduction. Such problems inform the very ways social difference - be it in terms of class, gender or race - is constructed" (5).

The heterosexual division of labour in looking is a question not only of who looks at whom, but also of why and to what political effect, both inside and outside twentieth century 'technologies of visibility'. The politics of the gaze extend not just "from pin-ups to strip-tease, from Ziegfeld to Busby Berkeley" (6), but beyond the physical dimension and into the realm of the intellect where clarity of vision is the ideal.

That the rational human subject as constructed in and posited by Western philosophy is essentially a male subject - precisely a 'man of reason', as Genevieve Lloyd calls him - is a well known and central claim of feminist philosophy (7). What seems to have been considerably less seriously investigated (8), and what I shall be discussing here, is whether the construction of the rational human subject as male and the construction of that subject as seeing is more than a matter of coincidence. If, as Laura Mulvey's article suggests, the exercise of vision enables or enacts the construction of a male subject and a female object, then the prevalence of vision and the gaze in philosophical works may well play an important role in philosophy's privileging of the masculine. The issue at stake here is not (or not only) that the texts of mainstream Western philosophy tend to presuppose a male reader, or that the 'great' philosophers of the

Western canon have come up with a lot of insulting remarks about women (although this is certainly true), but whether the masculinity of the philosophical subject is profoundly connected to, or even produced by, philosophy's deployment of the gaze.

This connexion - between the masculinity of the philosophical subject and philosophy's privileging of the gaze - has indeed already been recognised among feminist philosophers and theorists, as the quote from Rey Chow above indicates: the theoretical and political implication of the privilege of vision are beginning to be questioned, and some feminists are already engaged in what Evelyn Fox Keller and Christine Grontowski call "the revolt against the traditional hierarchy of the senses" (9). For the most part, however, the grounds of this 'revolt' have lacked any substantial or well-defined formulation - it is based on, as Fox Keller and Grontowski put it, "a vague sentiment ... that the logic of the visual is a male logic" (10), a "suspicion" (11) which "needs to be explored" (12) rather than a coherent position or critical stance. Moreover, many feminist expressions of that suspicion are informed by psychoanalytic theory - that is, are couched in terms taken from a body of thought which itself already accords a great deal of importance to the role of the visual in the psychic life of the human subject - through key psychoanalytic concepts such as voyeurism, exhibitionism, scopophilia or the scopic drive, some of which I shall be examining in detail in later chapters. (An important example of this kind of exploration of the connexions between feminism, psychoanalysis and the gaze is Jacqueline Rose's Sexuality in the Field of Vision (13), a collection of essays which uses this kind of psychoanalytic framework to conduct an impressive and highly illuminating discussion of feminine

sexuality, but which is not concerned to question as such the importance of the visual in that framework itself.) Rey Chow, in the article already quoted, states boldly that "[o]ne of the chief sources of the oppression of women lies in the way they have been consigned to 'visuality'" (14) and that "visuality [is], precisely, the nature of the social object that feminism should undertake to criticise" (15); but she bases her argument for this position on a reading of Freud, and in particular of Freud's paper 'The uncanny' (16) in which - as Chow curiously omits to mention - Freud himself argues that there is a "substitutive relation between the eye and the male organ" (17). To take a text or theory which already posits a fundamental connexion of this sort between the eye and the phallus and then use it to argue that vision is phallogocentric or "masculinist" (18) is not to offer a critique of the privilege of vision but merely to state it as the premise of a circular argument: it is precisely the relation between masculinity and the gaze which is in need of investigation, in psychoanalysis no less than elsewhere. This is the investigation which I shall be conducting in this work.

Despite the under-developed nature of much of the feminist critique of the 'hierarchy of the senses' there is, however, one feminist who places a questioning of the privilege of the gaze and its connexion with masculinity at the heart of her intellectual project: Luce Irigaray, whose philosophical and psychoanalytic work remains the most rigorous, sustained and thoroughly elaborated feminist critique of the privilege of the gaze to date.

## Luce Irigaray

Irigaray's investigation of the privilege of the gaze derives from her very specific theoretical agenda, a complex dialogue between philosophy and psychoanalysis through which the masculinity of the philosophical and theoretical subject is both revealed and questioned. Herself both a philosopher and a practising psychoanalyst, Irigaray seeks to re-think the question of sexual difference as it has been posed by psychoanalysis, particularly by Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, placing emphasis in her writing on the specificities of femininity, female sexuality and the female body. Her work has caused considerable controversy, not only with her fellow analysts, but also amongst even her most sympathetic readers: her special focus on the female body has led some to accuse her of a misleading and even dangerous essentialism (19); her profound and radical insights into questions of femininity and sexual difference have led others to hail her as one of feminism's most brilliant and original thinkers (20). Any attempt to adjudicate between the opposing views in this debate is outside the scope of my concern here, although my own position in relation to Irigaray's formulation of sexual difference will be set out below.

Psychoanalysis - as I shall be setting out in detail and at length in chapters to follow - is (especially in its Lacanian form) ostensibly about sexual difference: that is, about how masculinity and femininity are constituted and how each human subject comes to 'take up' either one or the other. Thus it would seem that the concept of sexual difference occupies centre stage in psychoanalytic thought. Irigaray's radical contention is that this 'centrality' is in fact an illusion: that sexual difference is not centre stage in

psychoanalysis - in fact, Irigaray argues, sexual difference as such, far from being central, has been accorded no place in psychoanalytic thought at all. According to Irigaray, the psychoanalytic account of sexuality and sexual identity is an account not of two sexes, but only of one: the masculine. 'Femininity' is conceptualised entirely in relation to the masculine and defined entirely by the masculine - as the opposite to (in the sense in which one speaks of 'the opposite sex') or, perhaps more exactly, as the negative of the masculine.

The psychoanalytic formulation of the castration complex (which, again, I shall be setting out and discussing in more detail in later chapters) is crucial here. The castration complex is the central nexus through which each human subject must pass, the outcome of which lays down the 'masculine' or 'feminine' path of sexual identity which the subject thenceforward will take. Thus for psychoanalysis the castration complex is the means by which 'sexual difference' - the difference between masculinity and femininity - is made available for the subject. For Irigaray, however, the castration complex as currently conceived in psychoanalytic theory is, conversely, the means by which any possibility of genuine difference is suppressed, and by which any formulation of a femininity genuinely different from the masculine, either before or after the castration complex itself, is made impossible. 'Femininity' is explicitly ruled out by Freud himself for both boys and girls in the period before the attainment of the castration complex, a period characterised by active masturbation which in both sexes is understood as 'phallic' and 'masculine' activity: for example, Freud claims that:

"[A] woman has two [sexual organs]: the vagina - the female organ proper - and the clitoris, which is

analogous to the male organ ... In women ... the main genital occurrences of childhood must take place in relation to the clitoris. Their sexual life is regularly divided into two phases, of which the first has a masculine character, while only the second is specifically feminine" (21).

Thus, Irigaray argues:

"For Freud, the first phases of sexual development unfold in precisely the same way in boys and girls alike ... [F]or the little girl the clitoris alone is involved at this period of her sexual development and ... the clitoris can be considered a truncated penis ... The little girl is then indeed a little man, and all her sexual drives and pleasures ... are in fact 'masculine'" (22).

Femininity, then, is not possible for either girls or boys before the castration complex: pre-castration children of either sex enjoy a masculine sexuality. According to Freud's account, however, femininity is made available by the castration complex itself, which in girls takes the form of 'penis envy', the recognition on the girl's part that she does not have a penis and is, therefore, already castrated (for boys the process is different, as I shall explain in later chapters): various consequences may follow, one of which is the option for the girl to renounce her previous 'masculinity' and move into the 'feminine' phase of development; as Freud puts it, "[T]he little girl's recognition of the anatomical distinction between the sexes forces her away from masculinity and masculine masturbation on to new lines which lead to the development of femininity" (23). It is in this way that the castration complex is the central nexus of sexual difference for psychoanalysis:

"[T]he castration complex always operates in the sense implied in its subject-matter: it inhibits and limits masculinity and encourages femininity. The difference between the sexual development of males and females at the stage we have been considering is an intelligible consequence of the anatomical distinction between their genitals and of the psychical situation involved in it;

it corresponds to the difference between a castration that has been carried out [the 'feminine' situation] and one that has merely been threatened [the 'masculine' situation]" (24).

For Irigaray, however, any claim that the relationship between 'masculine' and 'feminine' that Freud is outlining here is a relationship of difference in any genuine or meaningful sense is deeply disingenuous: 'femininity' here is not really different from masculinity, but merely the negative or absence of it; the terms of so-called difference are both set out in relation to only one referent, namely the penis, and 'sexual difference' is reduced to a matter of either having or not having a penis - in other words, to being either masculine or not-masculine. Thus, for Irigaray, psychoanalysis' account of sexual difference is not about difference at all, but about sameness, or what she has wittily called 'hom(m)osexuality' (25). This issue is neatly and succinctly crystallised by Elizabeth Grosz, who uses a device from philosophical logic to distinguish between two kinds of 'difference' - the difference between A and B, and the difference between A and not-A. 'A and not-A' is composed of one term and its negation, and as such expresses a relation of opposition rather than of difference; difference as such is expressed in the relation between A and B. Irigaray's claim is that psychoanalysis presents the relationship between 'masculinity' and 'femininity' as a relationship of sexual opposition (A and not-A, masculine and not-masculine) instead of sexual difference (A and B, masculine and feminine as an autonomous and genuinely different terms); and it is Irigaray's project to begin to make it possible, through insistence upon and exploration of the specificities of femininity and feminine sexuality, to articulate

femininity as a term of genuine sexual difference.

It is in the context both of this critique of psychoanalysis and of this project to articulate sexual difference that Irigaray formulates her rejection of the privilege of vision in psychoanalytic theory - and, by extension, throughout the Western philosophical tradition, from as far back as 'the myth of the cave' in Plato's Republic (27). The privilege of vision in philosophical (including psychoanalytic) approaches to the human subject is, for Irigaray inextricably linked with castration and all that that entails for sexual difference. The crucial moment of the castration complex is the moment when boy and girl child see each other's genitals, as Freud himself makes plain:

"In [boys] the castration complex arises after they have learnt from the sight of the female genitals that the organ which they value so highly need not necessarily accompany the body ... The castration complex of girls is also started by the sight of the genitals of the other sex" (28).

The first chapter of Irigaray's Speculum of the Other Woman, 'The blind spot of an old dream of symmetry', is given over to an intense and rigorous close reading of the lecture on 'Femininity' from which the above passage is taken, and Irigaray here elaborates her critique of the privilege of the gaze, or "oculocentrism" as she also calls it (29), as one of the most important means by which Freud reduces sexual difference to sexual opposition. Commenting on precisely the passage of the lecture I have quoted above, Irigaray writes scathingly:

"The gaze is at stake from the outset ... Now the little girl, the woman, supposedly has nothing you can see. She exposes, exhibits the possibility of a nothing to see. Or at any rate she shows nothing that is penis-shaped or could substitute for a penis ... This nothing, which actually cannot well be mastered in the twinkling of an eye, might equally well have acted as an inducement to perform castration upon an age-old oculocentrism.

It might have been interpreted as the intervention of a difference, of a deferent, as a challenge to an imaginary whose functions are often improperly regulated in terms of sight ... Woman's castration is defined as her having nothing you can see, as her having nothing. In her having nothing penile, in seeing that she has No Thing. Nothing like man. That is to say, no sex/organ that can be seen in a form capable of founding its reality, reproducing its truth. Nothing to be seen is equivalent to having no thing. No being and no truth. The contract, the collusion, between one sex/organ and the victory won by visual dominance therefore leaves woman with her sexual void" (30).

The fact that little girls do not have any sexual organ which is visible in the same way as is the organ of the little boy should have suggested to Freud that a focus on sight or the gaze is inadequate for formulating any useful account of the little girl's sexuality: that the little girl's difference from the boy requires a different, non-visual approach. But Freud's insistence on the gaze leads him to overlook (that is the apposite word) the fact of difference, and he sees merely the absence of the visible male organ when he should be perceiving and recognising the presence of feminine specificity. Thus it is the privilege of vision in Freud's thought that allows him to hide, and even to deny, any possibility of an autonomous femininity. Moreover this link between the privilege of the gaze and the privilege of masculinity holds good for Irigaray not just in psychoanalytic theory but throughout mainstream Western philosophy, where, as Margaret Whitford points out, Irigaray also detects the effects of castration and of 'hom(m)osexuality': "Irigaray links [oculocentrism] with castration ... Whatever the subject cannot dominate, or overlook and perceive from his transcendental elevation, threatens the subject with castration ... - the cavern, the womb, the inside of the mother's body is a dangerous place" (31).

Having thus placed her critique of oculocentrism at the heart of

her critique of the privilege of masculinity in mainstream Western thought, Irigaray goes on to launch her project - of formulating sexual difference and an autonomous femininity - in terms which expressly reject that 'traditional hierarchy of the senses' which privileges the gaze. Irigaray claims in Speculum that "any theory of the subject has always been appropriated by the 'masculine'" (32) and that this is, as explained above, connected to the "non-visible, therefore not theorisable nature of woman's sex and pleasure" (33).

In This Sex Which Is Not One she writes:

"[W]oman's desire has doubtless been submerged by the logic that has dominated the West since the time of the Greeks. Within this logic, the predominance of the visual, and of the discrimination and individualisation of form, is particularly foreign to female eroticism. Woman takes pleasure more from touching than from looking, and her entry into a dominant scopic economy signifies, again, her confinement to passivity: she is to be the beautiful object of contemplation" (34).

Thus, according to Irigaray, the heterosexual division of the labour of looking which places man as subject and woman as object of the look takes place in the realm of theory, with all that is implied by the etymology of that word: the woman is the object not just of literal, but of intellectual contemplation (and hence femininity is construed by Western philosophy as an enigma - the "riddle of the nature of femininity" as Freud calls it (35)). In her own representations of sexual difference Irigaray therefore accordingly places emphasis upon, and gives privilege to, the sense of touch, as the following passage illustrates:

"So woman does not have a sex organ? She has at least two of them, but they are not identifiable as ones. Indeed, she has many more. Her sexuality, always at least double, goes even further: it is plural ... Indeed, woman's pleasure does not have to choose between clitoral activity and vaginal passivity, for example.

The pleasure of the vaginal caress does not have to be substituted for that of the clitoral caress. They each contribute, irreplaceably, to woman's pleasure. Among other caresses ... Fondling the breasts, touching the vulva, spreading the lips, stroking the posterior wall of the vagina, brushing against the mouth of the uterus, and so on. To evoke only a few of the most specifically feminine pleasures. Pleasures which are somewhat misunderstood in sexual difference as it is imagined - or not imagined, the other sex being only the indispensable complement to the only sex" (36).

Irigaray's critique of the privilege of vision in Western thought is the most thoroughly elaborated and without doubt the most important body of feminist work on the question of the connexion between vision and masculinity, and was indeed one of the most important sources from which my own awareness of, and interest in, this question originally sprang. Irigaray's position both on sexual difference and in the use of the psychoanalytic framework, however, is not a one I share, and my own critique of the privilege of vision will therefore take a very different direction from hers in the chapters that follow. Although I agree with her insights in her quite brilliant analysis of the absence of sexual difference in Freud's work, I disagree, in part at least, with her response to that absence. Irigaray's project, as explained above, is to begin to articulate that hitherto suppressed 'difference' by articulating the specificities of femininity and of 'woman's pleasure'; this suggests that sexual difference is in some sense the primary form of difference, taking theoretical and, therefore, by implication, political and conceptual precedence over other forms of difference such as ethnicity and class - Irigaray's project to articulate femininity does not, in itself, offer any facility for the articulation of other kinds of difference at the same fundamental conceptual level as sexual difference. I find this primary focus on sexual difference both politically and conceptually

inadequate, for reasons that I shall set out in detail shortly in a discussion of 'gender' and 'sexual difference'. My difference with Irigaray over the use of the psychoanalytic framework follows from this. While Irigaray clearly rejects the psychoanalytic formulations of 'sexual difference' offered by Freud (and, later, by Lacan), she nevertheless intends to provide an alternative account of femininity within the psychoanalytic framework, in the sense that she accepts, and adapts to her own purpose, such basic psychoanalytic concepts as the unconscious, the transference, desire and the drives - thus, for example, her emphasis on the articulation of feminine sexuality and jouissance (sexual pleasure). My own project does not attempt to work within psychoanalysis in this way: in assessing the role and importance of the privilege of vision in psychoanalysis in the chapters that follow, I make no claim or argument either to accept or to reject the psychoanalytic framework; I merely examine the role that the gaze plays in it - or rather, to be precise, in the texts that have arisen from it. Psychoanalysis, as such, is a practice: a clinical experience in which individuals engage, from which certain texts have arisen but which, as both a practice and an experience, cannot be reduced to those texts. My focus is on the texts rather than on the practice or experience, and my approach to those texts - which I shall set out in more detail below - is to give them an attentive and rigorous reading. My commitment to the political and conceptual formulation of other forms of difference as well as sexual difference leads me, not to reject psychoanalysis as such, but rather to attempt to think outside it: psychoanalytic theory is a theory of sexuality and sexual difference; my intention to go beyond the

exclusive focus on sexual difference to articulate other differences takes me beyond the limits of psychoanalytical concerns, and, consequently, my analysis in the chapters that follow does not employ the psychoanalytic conceptual tools used by Irigaray, even where the object of my analysis is psychoanalytic theory itself. Again, my approach to the reading of psychoanalysis is set out in detail later in this chapter. However, before I continue with my introduction here to what I shall be doing in this thesis, I must briefly clarify what it is I shall not be doing.

### The right to look

Although in my discussion of 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema' above I spoke of the dynamics of looking as a heterosexual division of labour, this does not, or should not, imply that looking functions as a site or means of oppression only when it takes place between men and women: the oppressions of the industrialised West are structured not only by patriarchy but also by capitalism, racism, homophobia and the deployment of power in ways of which the range, diversity, function and importance are a subject of constant debate both within feminism and outside it (37). The "right to look" (38) is a privilege exercised through and across society by the socially powerful over the socially unpowerful, as film theorist Jane Gaines argues: "[S]ome groups have historically had the licence to 'look' openly while other groups have 'looked' illicitly" (39). It is not only women, for example, who are looked (or stared) at in public in ways that determine them as powerless to return the look, nor are those who look always male: black people, lesbians, gay men, the homeless, people with disabilities or mental illnesses are all

potential objects of an oppressive (and sometimes openly threatening) look.

If the question of 'who looks at whom' can be posed in a variety of contexts to yield a variety of answers, the question of 'why and to what political effect' presents at least as many openings for discussion. The concept of the 'right to look' as Jane Gaines articulates it points to ways in which looking insinuates itself into the fabric of race, class and other structures. An attempt to trace all those insinuations would be a project of enormously ambitious proportions, and it is certainly not a project I shall be undertaking here. My concern is not so much with the 'right to look' as it functions in its many forms and contexts, but rather with the question of why, precisely, it is the right to look which is so significant rather than a right to hear or to smell: my question is not about the privileged exercise of the gaze, but the privilege of the gaze as such. My thesis is that this privilege is a matter specifically of gender and of sexual difference: my argument will therefore centre mainly on the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine'. This may seem paradoxical in light of my contention above that sexual difference should not be accorded political and conceptual primacy in feminist thought; I have given my position on 'sexual difference', and hence on the status of the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine', as a critical one. This is only a seeming paradox, however, because, as I shall now explain, my position on sexual difference is deliberately to distinguish it from gender and explicitly to resist the reduction of the latter to the former; indeed, my analysis of the privilege of the gaze is itself informed by such resistance.

## Gender and sexual difference

Gender and sexual difference are by no means necessarily the same thing, and a substantial body of feminist work now exists which seeks to distinguish sharply between them; indeed, the question of whether one should think in terms of 'gender' or of 'sexual difference' is arguably one of the most important and fundamental questions of contemporary feminist theory. One of the clearest formulations of the distinction between gender and sexual difference is made by Teresa de Lauretis in her important essay 'The technology of gender', in which she argues that, unlike 'sexual difference' as it has been conceived even by feminist theorists themselves, gender is - or should be - both a representation and a self-representation which allows the subject to surpass the terms of its construction, according to the logic of sexual difference, as merely either male or female - or, more exactly, as either male or non-male. She writes:

"With its emphasis on the sexual, 'sexual difference' is in the first and last instance a difference of women from men, female from male ... The first limit of 'sexual difference(s)' ... is that it constrains feminist critical thought within the conceptual frame of a universal sex opposition (woman as the difference from man, both universalised; or woman as difference tout court, and hence equally universalised), which makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to articulate the differences of women from Woman, that is to say, the differences among women or, perhaps more exactly, the differences within women ... A second limitation of the notion of sexual difference(s) is that it tends to recontain or recuperate the radical epistemological potential of feminist thought inside the walls of the master's house, to borrow Audre Lorde's metaphor ... By radical epistemological potential I mean the possibility ... to conceive of the social subject and of the relations of subjectivity to sociality in another way: a subject constituted in gender, to be sure, though not by sexual difference alone, but rather across languages and cultural representations; a subject en-gendered in the experiencing of race and class, as well as sexual, relations; a subject, therefore,

not unified, but rather multiple, and not so much divided as contradicted" (40).

The first limitation that de Lauretis ascribes here to the concept of sexual difference is, in part at least, the very limitation that Irigaray reveals at work in Freud's concept of sexual difference: the limitation of sexual difference to difference from the masculine, which maintains 'masculine' in its position as privileged and defining term - indeed, in Irigaray's view, the only available term.

Recognition of this particular limitation arguably does not require a rejection of the concept of sexual difference as such, merely a re-formulation of it - this being, of course, Irigaray's project: to dislodge masculinity from its centrality by articulating a new kind of sexual difference. De Lauretis' critique of 'sexual difference', however, goes further than this: she is arguing that 'sexual difference' elides or obscures not just women's genuine difference(s) from men, but also, and more importantly, women's differences from each other and within themselves, differences such as race and class which are no less fundamental to, and have no less impact upon, women's lives and experiences than sexual difference. Sexual difference, paradoxically, is the term of difference's elision, and the concept of gender must be extricated from it if feminism - to return to the Audre Lorde metaphor quoted by de Lauretis - is ultimately to succeed in dismantling the master's house (41).

Judith Butler continues the critique of sexual difference:

"If one 'is' a woman, that is surely not all one is; the term fails to be exhaustive, not because a pre-gendered 'person' transcends the specific paraphernalia of its gender, but because gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities.

As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained ... The masculine/feminine binary constitutes not only the exclusive framework in which [feminine] specificity can be recognised, but in every other way the 'specificity' of the feminine is once again fully decontextualised and separated off analytically and politically from the constitution of class, race, ethnicity, and other axes of power relations that both constitute 'identity' and make the singular notion of identity a misnomer" (42).

Thus although 'sexual difference' has been and continues to be used by feminists as a theoretical tool for the understanding of women's oppression - by among others, such important feminist theorists as Rosi Braidotti, Hélène Cixous, Elizabeth Grosz, Julia Kristeva and, of course, Luce Irigaray (43) - its exclusive focus on sexual difference obscures the many other forms of difference and diversity which shape women's lives and identities, and gives the entirely false impression that the sexual can in any sense be extricated, either in theory or in practice, from any of those other differences; and this has produced serious political and conceptual stumbling blocks for the development of feminist thought, which has often found itself 'adding on' race, class and other differences in politically harmful ways rather than acknowledging and accepting them as feminist agendas in their own right (44). For these reasons, it is argued, sexual difference has become, as de Lauretis puts it, "something of a liability to feminist thought" (45), both politically and intellectually.

The premise behind this argument is the Foucaultian (46) notion that identity is not some 'thing' which one can 'be' or 'have', but is itself part of a political and cultural process by which the subject is not only defined, but actually produced. Butler explains:

"[J]uridical systems of power produce the subjects they subsequently come to represent ... [T]he

subjects regulated by such structures are, by virtue of being subjected to them, formed, defined and reproduced in accordance with the requirements of those structures ... Juridical power inevitably 'produces' what it claims merely to represent" (47).

Or as de Lauretis puts it, "gender is not a property of bodies or something originally existent in human beings, but 'the set of effects produced in bodies, behaviours, and social relations,' in Foucault's words" (48). Consequently, formulations of identity do not 'describe' a pre-given (pre-gender, pre-racial, pre-sexual) 'person', but are rather the effect of - and, at the same time, the articulation or re-articulation of - the forms and representations available in particular contexts for the production and construction of the subject as such. "Gender is (a) representation - which is not to say that it does not have concrete or real implications, both social and subjective, for the material life of individuals ... The representation of gender is its construction" (49). Thus any formulation which equates gender with the masculine/feminine binary of sexual difference places limitations on the representational power of the concept of gender which will have seriously damaging political effects: if 'masculine' and 'feminine' are the only terms available for the articulation of gender, then all the specific and diverse ways in which gender identity is inflected or modulated by differences (from, between and among women and men) are lost and ignored. The false universality of 'Woman' and the continuing centrality of 'Man' - the oppressive 'frame of universal sex opposition' identified by de Lauretis - are thus, in a sense, self-perpetuating.

My own position on the question of 'gender' and 'sexual difference' is in broad agreement with that of the 'gender' theorists, represented here by de Lauretis and Butler. This should not be taken

to imply that 'sexual difference' theorists have not attempted to reply to de Lauretis' charge that they create and/or perpetuate a false universality for the term 'woman' - or indeed that I am dismissive of those attempts: some of the most important and challenging feminist work in recent years has been the development by 'sexual difference' theorists of what has become known as 'strategic essentialism'. Rosi Braidotti, for example, argues that sexual difference, in the sense of women's difference(s) from men, must be taken as the primary and fundamental starting point of feminist thought because it is the only means by which any feminist movement - movement, that is, for the liberation of women as women - can be made possible. To insist that other forms of difference should have parity with, or even precedence over, the status of difference between men and women is, according to this account, to give up any possibility of feminist thought and politics; it is to give up on the project of women's politics altogether. Sexual difference must therefore be placed at the forefront of feminism. Braidotti writes:

"In my reading, the thought of sexual difference argues the following: it is historically and politically urgent, in the here and now of the common world of women to bring about and act upon sexual difference ... 'We' women, the movement of liberation of the 'I' of each and every women [sic], assert the following: 'I, woman, think and therefore I, woman, am.' I am sexed female, my subjectivity is sexed female" (50).

Placing sexual difference at the forefront of feminism in this way is not a simple ignoring or rejecting of the many questions that have been raised about, and the great importance that has been placed upon, other kinds of difference such as race and class by recent feminist thought; it is a conscious decision - a 'strategic' decision - to insist on sexual difference and, hence, on women's shared identity as

women, as the necessary premise of any feminist approach to all those other kinds of difference. As Braidotti goes on to explain:

"It is the 'philosophy of as if': in order to enunciate a feminist epistemological position the feminist woman must proceed as if a common ground of enunciation existed among women. As if the subjectivity of all was at stake in the enunciative patterns of each one" (51).

In other words, although feminists know that there are forms of difference other than the sexual, they must operate as if sexual difference were prior to those other differences, as if there were such a thing as the shared experience or shared identity of women, despite the fact that, in actuality, women are divided by differences at least as often as they are united by any sense of shared identity. This 'essentialism' - being a feminist politics based on the commonality of women as women - is a purely 'strategic' one, and is the necessary price, according to Braidotti and other strategic essentialists, of preserving even the possibility of feminism as women's liberation.

My response to this line of argument is that any essentialism, no matter how self-consciously 'strategic' it may be, is too high a price to pay for feminism; and that any insistence on sexual difference as primary or as prior to other forms of difference, no matter how radical in intent, is inadequate as a grounding for liberatory political thought, not least because it (albeit unwittingly) elevates the political priorities of relatively privileged women over those of women who face 'different' oppressions, women for whom, for example, racism and poverty are oppressions at least as heavy as the oppressions of sex: for such women the prioritising of sexual over other differences, 'strategic' or

otherwise, is an unaffordable luxury. The realities of oppression on the grounds of sex, race, class and other differences do not exist in the mode of 'as if'; a 'common ground of enunciation' does not exist among women precisely because of the realities of those many oppressions. Those women who are able to make public enunciations (in the form, for example, of academic publications) in the name of feminism still tend overwhelmingly to be the relatively privileged women who, privileged in terms of race and class (and other factors), not only do not share those 'different' oppressions, but have (intentionally or unintentionally) actually benefited from them - white women who are privileged by, and benefit from, racism in a racist society; middle and upper class women who are privileged by, and benefit from, class oppression in a class society - benefited, that is, from the oppression not just of other women, but also of men who are oppressed by race and class. In the light of harsh and complex political realities like these, which women's interests are served by the insistence on the prioritising of sexual difference?

The point is made by bell hooks:

"Implicit in [a] simplistic definition of women's liberation is a dismissal of race and class as factors that, in conjunction with sexism, determine the extent to which an individual will be discriminated against, exploited, or oppressed. Bourgeois white women interested in women's rights issues have been satisfied with simple definitions for obvious reasons. Rhetorically placing themselves in the same social category as oppressed women, they were not anxious to call attention to race and class privilege" (52).

Hooks goes on:

"Feminism is a struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels as well as a commitment to reorganising society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and

material desires. Defined in this way, it is unlikely that women would join feminist movement simply because we are biologically the same" (53).

Far from requiring a 'strategic essentialism' of sexual difference, feminism and feminist politics are only possible when the complexities of women's lives are recognised and when the different oppressions that women face are respected as integral features of the feminist agenda: if feminism is truly to be a movement to end women's oppression, then it must have equal regard to all the forms of oppressions that women face, and not regard one particular form of 'difference' as primary. It is for this reason that I reject the position of the 'sexual difference' theorists and adopt the line suggested by Teresa de Lauretis and Judith Butler, which approaches gender as a complex and sometimes even contradictory interplay of race, class and other differences as well as sexual difference. A black woman and a white woman are indeed both women, but the experiences of 'being a woman' are different in each case, and the differences are at least as significant as the likenesses: while 'sexual difference' prioritises (one of) the likenesses, 'gender' in the sense in which I have outlined here, can encompass both the likenesses and the differences.

Within this conceptual framework, I regard gender as a matter, not of identity, nor even, strictly speaking, of subjectivity as that term is employed by 'sexual difference' theorists (as, for example, Rosi Braidotti claims that "my subjectivity is sexed female" (54)), but of positionality: of the individual's position on what might be imagined as a gender 'map', a position within a complex network of socially and historically constituted differences: gender is a question not of 'who' one is, but 'where' one is, what place one

occupies in the network - or rather, what places, since we all occupy many different positions at once, positions of sex, race, ethnicity, class and other forms of difference. Conceived in this way, gender is not merely a rejection of essentialism, but actually renders any kind of essentialism impossible, since it regards difference as a matter of position rather than as a way of being. Thus, for example, when I use the term 'lesbian' - a term which will appear and which will indeed play a significant role in the chapters that follow - I do not intend thereby to set up 'lesbian' as any kind of stable, closed or 'authentic' ontological category, or to make any definitional claim about the forms that 'lesbian desire' might take: I use it merely to refer to a particular position in the network of differences, a position the occupation of which, of course, has profound and far-reaching implications for the occupier, but which does not constitute an identity in any substantive or essentialist sense, any more than the occupation of any other position would do. Indeed, desire for other women may be experienced by women who do not identify as lesbian, and women who do so identify may experience desire for persons who are not female. I use the term 'lesbian desire' in the chapters that follow simply to designate same-sex desire between women, and the term 'lesbian' to designate individuals who experience such desire - I use them, therefore, to designate a positionality rather than an identity. As film theorist and critic Valerie Traub puts it:

"[I]n its singularity and self-identity, 'lesbian' is a politically necessary but conceptually inadequate demarcation: ... less a person than an activity, less an activity than a modality of pleasure, a position taken in relation to desire. Its problematic ontological status suggests that it is better used as an adjective

(eg 'lesbian' desire) than as a noun signifying a discrete order of being ... '[L]esbian' is a point of reference around which erotic difference can and must rally politically, but upon which it should never stand for long" (55).

Moreover, the position of 'lesbian' has enormous potential for the deconstruction of sexual difference, and in the chapters that follow (especially chapters three and five) I shall be utilising that potential. As I shall demonstrate, the binary structure of sexual difference employed by Sartre and Lacan attempts to reduce the term 'lesbian' - and indeed, in a different way, 'male homosexual' - to its own binarism, characterising lesbians and homosexuals as, at best, hybrids (and, at worst, failures) of masculinity and femininity. This, in effect, is an attempt to recontain within sexual difference the radical potential of 'lesbian' and 'homosexual' as refusals - even, as I shall be arguing in later chapters, as unravelling points - of those binary terms, for neither 'lesbian' nor 'homosexual' can adequately be accommodated within a structure which posits 'masculine' and 'feminine' as universals and opposites. In some of the chapters that follow I shall be placing great emphasis on this potential of 'lesbian' and 'homosexual' and, in charting the stresses and strains under which the structure of sexual difference finds itself in its attempt to account for these terms within its own binary logic, I shall demonstrate both the limitations of sexual difference and, at the same time, some at least of the political and conceptual possibilities that can be opened up when one situates terms such as 'lesbian' in the realm of gender. In particular, I shall demonstrate how Sartre's system of sexual difference is unable to accommodate male homosexual desire, and how Lacan's system is unable to accommodate lesbian desire; and I shall argue in each case that this failure is

symptomatic of the reductive - not to say conservative - nature of sexual difference as such.

Gender, then, is a complex phenomenon produced by an intricate network of differences; and, as Teresa de Lauretis indicates in a passage already quoted, any attempt to reduce the multiplicity and complexity of gender to the simplistic binary of 'sexual difference' is both a denial of the realities of women's oppression(s) and a restriction and limitation of the radical potential of feminist thought - is, in fact, an attempt to use the master's tools to destroy the master's house (56). In the course of this thesis I shall be arguing that two 'masters' in particular - Sartre and Lacan - have used the tool of sexual difference to precisely these ends: have presented 'sexual difference' and the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' as primary terms, terms which both limit women to the feminine and simultaneously define the feminine in relation to the masculine. In other words, I shall be arguing that Sartre and Lacan reduce gender to 'sexual difference', and privilege masculinity in so doing. I shall also be demonstrating that vision is one of the most effective - because most elusive - tools with which the master's house of representation has been built; by which I mean to say that the privilege of vision in representations and constructions of gender, whether they be feminist, psychoanalytic, philosophical or of any other variety, functions like a knot tying gender to sexual difference so as to keep women - or rather Woman - limited to the terms of difference from man. As Stephen Heath in his essay on difference writes, "where a discourse appeals directly to an image, to an immediacy of seeing, as a point of its argument or demonstration, one

can be sure that all difference is being elided, that the unity of some accepted vision is being reproduced" (57). The use of the gaze and of visual metaphors invokes the 'immediacy of seeing' to 'naturalise' the frame of universal sex opposition: what could be more natural, or more immediately obvious, than man and woman? In the following chapters I shall be examining some of the ways in which that apparent 'naturalness' and 'immediacy' in representations of 'sexual difference' are in fact the results of intricate textual manoeuvres.

### Reading

Some of the texts I shall be discussing in the following pages are overtly fictional: novels and plays. Most of them are not. However, I shall be subjecting them all to the same kind of reading, paying close attention to the images and metaphors they contain and to the operation of each text as text. This kind of reading refuses to draw any distinction between fiction and theory or philosophy: it denies any of the traditional privilege granted the latter as "the elaborator of standards governing the 'true', the 'good', and the 'beautiful'" (58), insisting instead on its status as writing. Indeed, subjecting philosophical texts to this kind of reading can reveal just how close to - and arguably, in many senses, even indistinguishable from - pieces of fiction such texts really are. Jonathan Rée argues that fiction has always been integral to the writing of philosophy, even where the philosophical works in question have themselves continued to make 'authoritative' pronouncements on the true, the good and the beautiful:

"Fiction is what is made up, in contrast with the natural and with the true. In ancient and mediaeval Latin, fictio was a translation of the Greek work

hypothesis; and in Roman law it meant an assumption which, though false, is required in order to avoid unjust legal conclusions. Hence its generalisation by Hume and Kant, among others, to mean an untruth which has to be assumed in order to make knowledge possible" (59).

The relation between fiction and philosophy is however more treacherous than the pronouncements of philosophers like Hume and Kant tend to suggest, as Michèle Le Doeuff demonstrates. Introducing a collection of her own essays in which a range of philosophical texts is subjected to a critical textual reading, Le Doeuff writes: "Now that the notion of thinking in images has come to acquire a degree of cultural respectability, it is no longer feasible to go on ignoring the importance of imagery in philosophy" (60). She continues:

"[T]he interpretation of imagery in philosophical texts goes together with a search for points of tension in a work. In other words, such imagery is inseparable from the difficulties, the sensitive points of an intellectual venture ... [T]he meaning conveyed by images works both for and against the system that deploys them. For, because they sustain something which the system cannot justify, but which is nevertheless needed for its proper working. Against, for the same reason - or almost: their meaning is incompatible with the system's possibilities" (61).

Philosophical texts employ metaphor and imagery because they are unable to function without such devices; but philosophy's own insistence that it is an abstract realm of intellectual enquiry into the true, the good and the beautiful and not a form of literary fiction means that it must suppress or deny its reliance on such devices. Thus by focussing on images and metaphors and tracing their function in philosophical texts, the critic or reader is able to reveal how what philosophy presents as the true, the good and the beautiful are in fact produced through the writing itself: they are products of literature or, quite simply, fictions.

It is in the light of these insights by Rée and le Doeuff that I adopt here a method of reading texts which draws no distinction between the philosophical and the fictional, the formal and the informal, or indeed the 'public' (published texts) and the 'private' (diaries and letters). In dealing with Sartre, for example, I make no distinction in my method of reading between his philosophical texts, his novels and other works of fiction, his dramatical works and his diaries; in the case of Lacan I likewise make no distinction between his formal essays and the published transcripts of his seminars. This should not be taken to imply that are no differences between these texts, or that those differences in themselves are without significance. I do not intend to reject or to ignore the differences: I merely put them to one side for the purposes of my project. My intention is to analyse and trace the metaphors of vision and their effects in the texts I have chosen; I seek neither to prove nor to disprove the theories offered by the authors in question, nor to judge them as 'good' or 'bad' on their literary or artistic merits. I aim merely to find out what happens to 'gender' and 'sexual difference' when metaphors of vision occur in the texts. This is my sole aim, and I therefore regard any investigation of those aspects of text which do not bear directly on that aim - including aspects such as differences of genre or of form - as irrelevant to it. Investigation of those aspects would be a valuable and illuminating project in its own right; however, it is not my project.

The impetus for this approach to the reading of texts has its origin in the work of the structuralist theorist Roland Barthes, who makes a radical distinction between work and text, arguing that the latter is the field where the movements and effects of writing -

including the role and use of metaphor - are played out. Outlining the main features of the distinction between work and text, Barthes writes:

"The difference is this: the work is a fragment of substance, occupying part of the space of books (in a library for example), the Text is a methodological field ... [T]he text is a process of demonstration, speaks according to certain rules (or against certain rules); the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language, only exists in the movement of a discourse" (62).

Any analysis of the linguistic or methodological elements of a piece of writing as writing - of the operation of metaphor and its effects on the 'process' and 'movement' on and in the writing itself - therefore concerns itself with text rather than work. Text is produced through the process and play of writing as such: "The Text ... decants the work ... from its consumption and gathers it up as play, activity, production, practice" (63). Moreover, because it is the product of writing as such, it renders redundant any attempt to divide or to separate different 'kinds' of writing: "the Text is that space where no language has a hold over any other, where language circulates" (64). Barthes makes explicit the implications of this approach to the text for the traditional (often hierarchical) distinction between pieces of writing according to 'type' or genre:

"[T]he Text does not stop at (good) Literature; it cannot be contained in a hierarchy, even in a simple division of genres. What constitutes the Text is, on the contrary (or precisely), its subversive force in respect of the old classifications" (65).

Since the effects of writing which constitute the text are not confined to any particular class or genre of writing - writing itself is what constitutes text in Barthes' sense - any attempt to divide texts according to class or genre is redundant - does, indeed, miss

the point of 'text', since text is the field of process and movement, 'that space where no language has a hold over any other'. The effects of writing, including the effects of metaphor, have no respect for divisions between philosophical writing and fictional writing, between the writing of formal essays or the writing of transcribed speech; and thus my own analysis of the effects of writing in Sartre and Lacan - specifically of the effects of a particular metaphor and its impact on the construction of 'sexual difference' in the texts I have chosen for discussion - will pass over such divisions, focussing on the text rather than on the genre or type, these being notions which the text as such transcends.

I shall, then, be proceeding by close and rigorous reading of texts. This method has been used elsewhere, notably by Irigaray in Speculum, which submits to such reading works by Freud and Plato, among others, and in doing so reveals what Irigaray, as explained above, identifies as the hom(m)osexuality of Western thought. I have chosen this method of reading as the most appropriate to my own specific aims: a close reading of the texts in question can reveal the complexity and detail of the visual metaphors and their conceptual effects and consequences; it can trace and follow both the formulation of concepts and the crucial inter-relationship of concept and metaphor as these appear in the texts; and above all it can reveal the use and production of visual metaphor and the use and construction of 'sexual difference' as these occur - can track closely the 'movement of discourse' which connects vision to sexual difference, both within single texts and between and among the various texts of the respective authors. If any understanding is to be gained as to whether there is

a significant relationship between the privilege of the visual and the privilege of the 'masculine', it must, in my view, be gained from a close and thorough scrutiny of the construction and deployment of the visual itself in the texts in which it appears.

Philosophy's and theory's reliance on 'literary' devices such as metaphor and imagery as revealed by Rée and le Doeuff does not mean that philosophical and theoretical ideas about such things as the true, the good and the beautiful (or, in the case of a theory such as Freudian psychoanalysis, for example, such central notions as need, love and desire) do not have real cultural and political effects. Rosi Braidotti writes lucidly of this "materiality of ideas" (66): "One cannot make an abstraction of the network of truth and power formations that govern the practice of one's enunciation; ideas are sharp-edged discursive events which cannot be analysed simply in terms of their propositional content" (67). Their fictional nature notwithstanding, philosophical ideas about the true and the good have material effects through, for example, the formulation and practice of 'justice' or of 'democracy' or 'equality'; psychoanalytic notions about love and sexuality likewise have effects on the practice and provision of medicine, mental healthcare, childcare and children's welfare, or marriage and other such 'institutions'. The representations and self-representations which both philosophy and psychoanalysis make available have profound psychic effects on subjects and on their relations with others and with the world in which they live. Of course the effects are not all one-way: just as we are materially affected (and, according to the radical anti-foundationalist arguments cited above, also effected) by ideas, so we in our turn appropriate or respond to those ideas in significant and

even subversive ways - hence the very possibility of feminist and other forms of resistance to oppressive 'norms' and representations. Exposing the fictional nature of philosophical and theoretical claims to 'truth' can be a powerful method for carrying out just this kind of subversion. Teresa de Lauretis gives a wonderful illustration of this two-way process:

"Most of us [women] ... probably check the F box when filling out an application form. It would hardly occur to us to mark the M. It would be like cheating or, worse, not existing, like erasing ourselves from the world ... From the very first time we put a check mark on the little square next to the F on the form, we have officially entered the sex-gender system, the social relations of gender, and have become en-gendered as women; that is to say, not only do other people consider us females, but from that moment on we have been representing ourselves as women. Now, I ask, isn't that the same thing as saying that the F next to the little box, which we marked in filling out the form, has stuck to us like a wet silk dress? Or that while we thought we were marking the F on the form, in fact the F was marking itself on us?" (68).

The fact that gender, like 'truth' or 'desire', is, as I argued above, fiction or representation, does not prevent it from having profound and concrete effects - hence one's unhesitating decision as to whether one 'is' F or M, with all that that entails in psychic and material terms. Nor, however, does it prevent the woman ticking the F box from being at the same time a radical and subversive feminist critic of the opposition between F and M within which 'she' exists. "[T]he construction of gender is also effected by its deconstruction: that is to say, by any discourse, feminist or otherwise, that would discard it as ideological misrepresentation" (69).

In the chapters that follow, I shall be tracing the various workings of images and metaphors of the visual as they occur in a

selection of texts which, more or less explicitly, produce particular formulations of gender - of what the F and M signify. (That these formulations limit the representation of gender to the binary terms of F and M is, as I have already established, part of the point of my critique.) Rejecting all of the claims to 'truth' and intellectual privilege made by philosophy and psychoanalytic theory, I shall take the texts apart to find out how they work - more precisely, to find out how the metaphors of vision make them work - and in doing so shall expose some of the hidden mechanisms by which widely influential theories and representations of gender have been constructed. This should not be taken to imply that philosophy and psychoanalysis - even those necessarily limited and selective examples of them which I shall be discussing - are in some simple sense 'wrong' or 'false' while feminism, or any particular version of feminism which I might be taken to be advocating here, is 'right' or 'true'. What it does imply is that texts, whether 'fictional' or 'non-fictional' in the traditional sense of those terms, feminist or otherwise, are never just stories: they are always also fields of representation, producers of meaning and weapons of political struggle.

### Texts and contexts

The texts I have chosen to discuss here are the works of the Frenchmen Jean-Paul Sartre and Jacques Lacan. Sartre (1905-80) and Lacan (1900-81) were, and are, two of the major intellectual figures of western Europe this century, and were almost exact contemporaries. The latter point tends, perhaps, to be overlooked: Sartre's existentialism was at its height in the years immediately following the end of the Second World War, while Lacan is associated with

the structuralist and other 'new' intellectual movements by which existentialism was superseded (70). They each, that is, enjoyed their own particular and distinct periods of fashionableness.

'Fashion' is a word with (at least) two meanings. One of its meanings refers to that which is ephemeral, transient, of fleeting popularity merely: to call a philosophy or a theory 'fashionable' is often taken to imply that it is trivial, superficially attractive but ultimately without weight or importance. Another meaning of 'fashion', however, refers to a shape, a pattern or a make, and used as a verb can mean to shape, to make or to build. Sartrean existentialism and Lacanian psychoanalysis are fashions in both these senses. Existentialism, for example, was for a certain period of this century enormously fashionable, both in France and elsewhere: one of Sartre's biographers even calls the years 1946-56 "the Sartre years" (71); Deirdre Bair, in her biography of Simone de Beauvoir, sums up the popularity of the movement at that period:

"Although a brilliant future was supposed to have begun at the war's end in 1945, ... the beginning of Existentialism as a dominant force in French intellectual life did not really happen until the early 1950's. By that time, Paris was once again filled with refugees who had chosen to be there ... For most it meant freedom, although they were hard pressed to explain its principles. The word if not the substance of Existentialism had filtered down from the arenas of intellectual debate and was now the catchword of the day. Existentialism reigned as the supreme expression of youthful revolt and hope for the future" (72).

In many ways, this was 'fashion' in its most trivial sense, as Bair goes on to explain: "They all, it seemed, clutched battered copies of Being and Nothingness even though many of them did not read French well enough to understand it; however, whether or not one was

Existentialist had suddenly become determined more by dress than by philosophical argument" (73). Existentialism's 'fashionableness', however, as Bair makes clear here, derived from its genuine intellectual significance in the post-war era: it became a 'catchword' precisely because it appealed to - or, more correctly and much more importantly, articulated and re-created - ideals of freedom and human agency in the context of that particular historical moment. If fashion is by nature transient, it is also and for that reason very firmly located in time and place. Moreover, the ideals and ideas of Sartrean existentialism, because they played such an influential and in many ways formative role in twentieth century European thought, continue to have an impact (often undetected and unremarked, in large part, I would argue, because Sartre is currently so very unfashionable an intellectual figure) on intellectual debate today, not least on those very intellectuals and writers - including Lacan himself - who present themselves as radically opposed to the aims of the existentialist project:

"[N]o-one can continue to think/write in the ways that it is urgent for us to think/write in the West without first having written and thought with Sartre the philosopher. Phenomenology, empiricism, metaphysics, the ego cogito, the Imaginary, the Other, dialectics, even 'ideology' or 'poetics', become just so many contemporary buzz words unless one has recognised that twenty-five years of French thought have been transcribing those words through Sartre, against Sartre" (74).

The fashionableness of Jacques Lacan, on the other hand, has been more recent, indeed continues up to the present day, supported (somewhat paradoxically) by widespread current interest both in 'post'-structuralism and in highly sophisticated versions of feminist theory. Far from promoting individual freedom and agency as ideals of

what it is to be 'human', Lacanian psychoanalysis insists that the human subject is split, fractured and intrinsically incomplete, that it is produced through the system of language, and that it is, in a deep sense, alien to itself. Recent interest in Lacan's work, therefore, arises in the context of a specifically late twentieth century concern with the disintegration of coherent theories of subjectivity, which Rosi Braidotti sums up: "As a famous graffito on the Paris walls puts it: 'God is dead, Marx is dead, and I'm not feeling too well myself'" (75). Like the popularity of existentialism, that of Lacanian psychoanalysis owes much to the spirit of the age, a spirit not of post-war optimism but, it could be argued, of entrenched and widespread conservatism, and consequently of a profound political pessimism among feminists and other critics of contemporary society and culture:

"To reject the validity of the question Who is writing? or Who is speaking? is simply no longer a radical position ... It merely duplicates on the level of aesthetics and theory what capitalism as a system of exchange relations produces tendentially in every day life: the denial of subjectivity in the very process of its construction" (76).

The fact that the popularity of Lacanian psychoanalysis reflects a historically specific political mood does not, however, prevent it from having crucial importance for the development of either politics or philosophy in the future: the de-stabilisation of the traditional 'human' subject heralds a new age even as it confronts the present. Feminist theorist Jane Flax, citing psychoanalysis as one of the "kinds of thinking that best present (and represent) our own time apprehended in thought" (77), writes:

"It seems increasingly probable that Western culture is in the middle of a fundamental transformation: A 'shape of life' is growing old. In retrospect, this

transformation may be as radical (but as gradual)  
as the shift from a mediaeval to a modern society ...  
This transitional state makes certain forms of  
thought possible and necessary, and it excludes  
others" (78).

If a 'shape of life' is growing old, then Lacanian psychoanalysis is one of the 'shapes' or 'fashions' of thought which is opening a path to new ways of thinking.

Thus both Sartre and Lacan, each in his own period and context, are not just fashions in, but also fashioners of, twentieth century thought, and even of the thought of the next millennium. They both also have important relations to the development of contemporary feminism: Sartre through his personal relationship with Simone de Beauvoir and through the explicit influence of his existentialist philosophy on de Beauvoir's The Second Sex; Lacan through his own interventions on the topic of femininity and feminine sexuality and through the many, often very passionate, feminist responses to them. These relations to feminism will be explored in some detail in the pages to follow: indeed, this very work itself continues those relations, insisting as it does that the works of Sartre and Lacan, sometimes overtly, sometimes implicitly, contain theories and representations of gender and sexual difference which have (owing to the very 'fashionableness' of those works) been widely disseminated and with which feminist theory and criticism ought, therefore, to concern itself. My own particular concern, of course, is with the roles the gaze and the metaphors of vision play in the formulation of those theories and representations. The importance of vision is explicit in the works of both men: for Sartre, the gaze of the Other is a fundamental philosophical concept; for Lacan, the gaze, the scopic drive, and the revelations of the science of optics are some of

the most basic elements behind his innovations in psychoanalytic theory and practice, characterised by him as a radical 'return to Freud'.

Sartre and Lacan were extremely active on the Western intellectual scene right up until the final years of their respective long lives, and both men were extremely prolific: Sartre, in particular, produced a vast corpus of written work which, in terms of sheer volume alone, is nothing short of astonishing (79). My selection of texts for discussion has therefore had to be extremely restricted. For my discussion of Sartre I have limited myself, on the whole, to texts from the post-war 'Sartre years' and the years leading up to that period: the period covered, roughly speaking, thus runs from 1938, the year of publication of Nausea in France, to 1952, the year of publication of Saint Genet: Actor and martyr, although I shall make occasional reference to, or comment upon, both earlier and later works. I take this period broadly to represent Sartre's existentialist period (the relations between Sartre's earlier and later works - between his 'existentialism' and his 'Marxism' - are of course more complex than such a schematic formulation might imply), although some of the works of this period - Saint Genet is a case in point - already reflect Sartre's developing interest in Marxism, in favour of which he was ultimately to reject existentialism as, interestingly, "a past, peripheral cultural fashion, not unlike a particular brand of soap" (80). The 'existentialist' works, more importantly for my own project, are also the works most directly concerned with the role and importance of the gaze. The main texts for discussion, then, are: Nausea, first published in 1938;

Being and Nothingness, published in 1943; the three novels of the Roads to Freedom series, published in 1945 (the first and second volumes) and 1949 (the third volume); the critical essay 'Black Orpheus', first published in 1948; and the critical biography Saint Genet, published in 1952.

Lacan's output of essays and written texts was less prodigious than Sartre's, but his seminars on psychoanalytic theory were conducted - not without interruption by the controversies they themselves generated - well into his old age; the publication of their transcripts, in France and elsewhere, continues up to the present. I have chosen to focus my attention on these published seminars and on those written works which bear most directly on the importance of vision for Lacan's thought. The main texts are: 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', first published in France in 1933; 'Le temps logique et l'assertion de certitude anticipée', originally published in 1945 and reproduced in the collection Ecrits; 'The mirror stage', delivered as a conference paper in 1949 and likewise published in Ecrits; and the transcripts of the seminars of 1953-4 (The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 1), 1954-5 (The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 2) and 1964 (The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis), although again I shall draw on other works by Lacan, and, very extensively, on the works of Sigmund Freud, where these are relevant (81). For the sake of clarity and accessibility, references throughout are to the English translations of all texts where these are available, and I have provided my own translations where they are not (as is the case, for example, with some of Sartre's occasional pieces, and with some of Lacan's earlier works).

A brief explication is required here of my approach to the

relationship between the texts of Freud and those of Lacan. Although Lacan presented his own work as a commentary upon and elaboration of that of Freud, insisting throughout his career that Freud's texts were his primary texts and that his own work was to be regarded as an exposition and clarification of what Freud had already said (as a 'return to Freud'), Lacan scholars have noted that there are in fact significant differences between the positions of Freud and Lacan, and that Lacan's claims on this matter may be misleading, perhaps even disingenuous. Malcolm Bowie, for example, in a useful introductory study of Lacan, begins by setting out some of the considerable theoretical and methodological differences between the two psychoanalysts, and argues that Lacan's relationship with Freud is far more complex than Lacan himself tends to suggest; describing Lacan's attitude towards Freud as one of "dissenting assent" (82), Bowie writes that, for Lacan, "Freud was right but not right enough, or not right in quite the right way. Lacan's argument is conducted on Freud's behalf and, at the same time, against him" (83). Thus Lacan is not merely explaining Freud, but is extending him, taking him in new directions and, at the very least, re-interpreting Freud's work, if not actually manipulating it to his own ends. However this is not simple disregard or deliberate betrayal on Lacan's part. Bowie goes on:

"Already in [1938], Lacan is a disciple who races ahead of his master, and an independent-minded thinker who makes large claims before he is able to support them. But his loyalty to Freud is intense, and the originality he seeks is that of an inspired and devoted reader, one who can think fruitfully only from inside someone else's text" (84).

In my own reading of Lacan's texts, I take Lacan at his word on the

subject of his relationship with Freud; I set aside the complex questions of whether and how Lacan 'races ahead of' or even distorts Freud, since the pursuance of such questions is outside the aims and scope of my project: my method is to provide a close reading of Lacan's texts as he presents them - as, that is, commentaries on Freud - rather than to question that presentation. Thus when Lacan tells his followers, as he did in 1980 shortly before his death the following year, "It's up to you to be Lacanians, if you want to be. Myself, I'm a Freudian" (85), I accept this as if it were a simple statement of position; not because the statement is not questionable in itself, but because I regard that questionableness to be a *matter* for serious investigation by another project than mine. I therefore refer to Freud's texts during my analysis of Lacan as if there were an uncontroversial relationship between Freud's texts and Lacan's, as if the latter were merely explanations of and commentaries upon the former - as if, in other words, Lacan were only doing what he claimed all along he was doing, namely 'returning' to Freud, and in my exposition of Lacan I shall myself 'return' to Freud in the sense that Lacan's own presentation permits. This includes paying attention to the visual metaphors that appear in Freud's texts as well as in Lacan's, tracing the path of such metaphors both in Lacan's own texts and in the original (and originary) texts on which his own are fed; for, if Lacan is a commentary upon Freud, then Freud's texts - with all the images, shifts and tensions which those texts, like any other, contain - must be considered as integral to, and even inherent in, those of Lacan, in the sense that Freud's original writings and Lacan's commentaries together form what one might call an 'intertext' or a hybrid of two interwoven and inseparable parts.

Another consideration which I put to one side in my respective discussions of Sartre and Lacan is that of 'autocritique' - that is, the process of critique and re-evaluation to which both men subject their own work throughout their careers. In the case of Sartre, as I have already indicated, this process was very marked, leading, for example, to the outright rejection of existentialism in favour of Marxism that I have referred to above; in the case of Lacan, autocritique takes the form of a continual development and re-thinking of his own theoretical position (this never takes quite the violent turn of Sartre's rejection of his own theory, but nevertheless represents a lengthy and complex process incorporating some radical innovations including, for example, the introduction of mathematics to psychoanalytic discourse) and of a crucial awareness of the effects of transference and of the analyst's desire (terms which I shall be setting out and explaining in detail in later chapters) both in the process of psychoanalysis itself, and in his teaching practice at the seminars. Again, I put this question of autocritique to one side not because it has no importance in the work of both Sartre and Lacan as such, but because an investigation of it is beyond the scope of my project. As I have explained at length above, my approach to the work of Sartre and Lacan is to read a selection of their respective texts and in particular to focus upon the operation of visual metaphors in them: this is distinct from a literary-historical approach, which would aim to map the trajectory of Sartre's and Lacan's respective intellectual courses through examination of each author's work as corpus, as a life's work following a path of development and progression from the first tentative formulations of a conceptual

framework, through revisions, rejections and refinements, to a final (finished or unfinished) statement of position. Both Sartre and Lacan followed such trajectories; but for my purposes - that is, for the purposes of this thesis - the main interest lies not so much in the trajectories themselves as in the texts which lie along them, and although these authors later revised and even rejected their earlier works, the texts themselves remain: Sartre himself, for example, may have repudiated the existentialist theory of Being and Nothingness, but Being and Nothingness as a text continues both to exist and to hold an important position in twentieth century thought. This is the case even for those texts whose origins are, so to speak, non-textual: for example, the transcripts of Lacan's seminars, which are based on notes taken from Lacan's oral teachings later written up and (with Lacan's approval) published, have, despite, their non-textual origins, become texts - become indeed highly influential texts in psychoanalytic theory, widely read and discussed as such, with no less existence and solidity as texts than the works of Sartre or, indeed, than Lacan's other, more formal textual works. It is to the dissection and analysis of texts, then, rather than to the mapping of trajectories, that I turn my attention here. Moreover, my concern in the dissection of those texts is to pinpoint the privilege of metaphors of vision, a privilege which is common to the texts I have selected by both men, but which forms part of the autocritique of neither: although both men subject their work to this long process of modification and/or rejection, neither of them ever modifies or rejects his privileging of vision or his use of visual metaphors as part of that project - or, indeed, as part of any project: neither of them questions the privilege of vision at all. The issue of the

privilege of vision therefore lies beyond, and is in excess of, the autocritique of either Sartre or Lacan.

I have, then, had to limit my respective discussions of Sartre and Lacan both in the selection of texts and in the range of topics for discussion. My concern is with the role of vision in the construction of gender, and I limit the terms of my enquiry to that concern very strictly indeed. This sharpness of focus necessarily forecloses certain areas of critical and theoretical discussion: I do not, for example, discuss the relationship between the 'look' in Sartre's philosophy and Merleau-Ponty's work on perception; my discussion of Lacan does not include any consideration of Irigaray or of any other psychoanalytically-informed feminist critic of 'oculocentrism', for reasons already outlined. I also avoid the unnecessary use of biographical data, or psychological hypotheses or speculations, about the two men, since my interest lies in the operations of their texts rather than in the personal lives of the authors; nor do I investigate at any length the troubled and often acrimonious relationship between existentialism and psychoanalysis, or between Sartre and Lacan themselves: any such investigation would undoubtedly be a major project in twentieth century intellectual history in its own right, and is not something which I have been able to undertake here (86). For the present purposes, I consider Sartre and Lacan rather as individual case histories of the role of vision in theories of gender which developed in a particular period, location and context: mid- and late twentieth century western Europe (and, through their influence in English translation, North America). Nevertheless, there are certain parallels and connexions to be drawn

between the uses of vision in the respective texts, and I shall draw them at the end of this work.

Keeping my discussions of Sartre and Lacan separate, then, I divide this work into two sections, the first dealing with Sartre, the second with Lacan, following the chronology of their 'fashionableness'. Each section contains three chapters. The first chapter on Sartre introduces Sartre's use of the gaze in his fictional, critical and philosophical writings. I argue that Sartre, who explicitly equates activity and consciousness with looking, thereby implicitly equates looking with masculinity and relegates femininity to the status of passive object of the gaze: the Sartrean subject's status as such is based upon its power to look at, and thereby 'nihilate', the feminine body/object. This results in a classic heterosexual division of labour between active and passive along the lines set out by Laura Mulvey. I demonstrate, however, that the constant irruption of the male body in Sartre's writings, particularly in his fiction, dissolves this division of labour and ultimately undermines both the Sartrean subject and the system of sexual difference. The second chapter examines Sartre's deployment of the gaze in his representations of homosexuality. Sartre goes so far as to define homosexuality as the result of one's 'being' the object of another's gaze, thereby, I argue, feminising the homosexual while at the same time essentialising homosexuality as an ontological state rather than an existential project: the homosexual is thus by definition always less than a free human subject in Sartrean terms. The third and final chapter in the section on Sartre compares the Sartrean gaze as it has emerged in the previous chapters with Sartre's use of the four other senses. I demonstrate that while smell, taste

and touch are represented by Sartre as if they were derivatives of sight, the sense of hearing, which makes no clear distinction between subject and object or active and passive and is thus incapable of the heterosexual division of labour, becomes a source of disturbance both for Sartre's hierarchical philosophical system and for the dichotomy of sexual difference.

The section on Lacan opens with a discussion of the Lacanian imaginary, which is the site of narcissism and which Lacan expounds in terms of optics and visual images. This chapter begins with a consideration of Freud's claim that women are 'naturally' narcissistic, and moves on to discuss the implications of this claim for the construction of feminine sexuality in Freudian and Lacanian theory, particularly for the construction of 'female homosexuality' which is linked, through narcissism, to psychosis and which is the paradoxical product of Freud's and Lacan's formulations of sexual difference. The chapter considers the role of the optical model as such in this, and asks whether a non-visual paradigm of the imaginary might avoid or resolve the problems in Lacan's theory. The second chapter on Lacan discusses the Lacanian symbolic, which privileges the phallus as the primary signifier, and the Freudian scenario of 'penis envy', which privileges the penis as the visible genital organ. Through an examination of the structure of the drive, particularly of the scopic drive, in Lacanian theory, it considers the vexed question of the relation between the penis and the phallus, and asks whether woman's status as exchange object is a result of the operation of the symbolic or of the emphasis on vision. It then moves on to a discussion of Lacan's own position in the symbolic, both as subject to

the phallus and as object of an external gaze - specifically, the gaze of the international psychoanalytic community. The final chapter on Lacan investigates the uncture between the imaginary and the symbolic, which according to Lacan is the point at which the analytic experience itself takes place. Drawing on the findings of the two previous chapters, this chapter uses Lacan's notion of 'logical time', which begins with the 'moment of seeing' and passes through the 'time for understanding' to the 'moment of conclusion' and which as such follows the stages of Freud's formulation of the little boy's castration complex. I argue that the little girl's failure to pass through these stages in the Freudian scenario is echoed in Lacan's formulation of the analytic process, which requires a move from the imaginary to the symbolic of which, according to this account, femininity is constitutionally incapable.

This work is informed by the ultimate desire to find new ways of writing and theorising which will free the 'radical epistemological potential' of the feminist concept of gender from the constraints of the binary hierarchical structure of sexual difference. So long as the structure and logic of sexual difference remains at the heart of our representations (and self-representations) of gender, women both within and outside feminism will be unable fully to articulate themselves, in all their diversities and contradictions, as anything other than simply different from men. This, in effect, is the impasse of much contemporary feminist thought on the subject of difference: while gender is tied to sexual difference, we are left with the cumbersome and conceptually inadequate formulations of gender and race, gender and class, gender and sexuality - 'etc', as one is forced to add lamely (87) - instead of the recognition, at a profound

conceptual level, that gender can never be separated from the complex and specific cultural, societal and representational context in which it occurs. My analysis of the link between the privilege of vision and the privilege of the masculine in two particular representational fields is intended as a contribution to the search for a new and radical theory of the gendered subject. It is my contention that the dismantling of the master's house may only be possible if we are prepared also to dismantle the traditional hierarchy of the senses. Such a task is not, perhaps, as impossible as it looks.

Original in colour

CHAPTERS TWO TO FOUR: SARTRE



Alberto Giacometti, Portrait of Jean Genet

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE HETEROSEXUAL DYNAMICS OF THE GAZE

#### INTRODUCTION

In November 1939 Sartre made the following entry in the notebook he kept during his brief period as a soldier in the 'phoney war':

"My confederates stripped to the buff [for a medical examination]. Me too. I shall say nothing of myself except that, as I sought a relaxed pose in front of six soldiers who sat at a table checking documents, I felt I had a back. But my confederates surprised me: in the buff, they were no more naked than usual ... Our sexes gave that respectable gathering a tinge of melancholy. Wrinkled, wilting, ashamed, they strove vainly to conceal themselves in their hair. The MO inspected them all with an elegant finger, saying: 'Cough'. And I understood and approved wholeheartedly that phrase of André Breton's: 'I should be ashamed to appear naked before a woman without having an erection'. No two ways about that, it's a question of taste ... Mild disgust, from seeing all those pricks. But what's disgusting about that? It was sexual, I suppose: a way of asserting my heterosexuality" (1).

The scene is at once vivid and complex: the philosopher stripped bare and exposed to an authoritarian (and clothed) gaze, his awkward flesh the object of official inspection, is confronted with the nakedness and sexuality of the male body - both his own and others' - and feels compelled to assert his heterosexuality in a gesture of disgust. A kaleidoscopic rush of anxieties about masculinity, sexuality and physical embodiment is released through the simple mechanism of being looked at while naked.

Sartre had closed a long entry in the same notebook made just a

few days before the scene of the medical examination as follows:

"I'm stopping for today. I can no longer manage to think of anything because my eyes are hurting too much. I've never felt so clearly that I think with my eyes. Today I have a restricted horizon; an inability to focus my thoughts, because I'm incapable of focusing on an object; the impression that I have two dark walls to my right and my left, and between these walls a kaleidoscopic dazzle" (2).

Taken together, these two short passages present all the elements of the thesis I shall be expounding in this chapter. To claim that Sartre's writing, both fiction and non-fiction, is sexist, is nothing new: Michèle Le Doeuff sums up the argument in her statement that Sartre's existentialism "offers a space for expressing a terror on the part of men in relation to women's bodies which provides the basis of an ontologico-carnal hierarchy between masculine and feminine" (3). What I shall be arguing, further than this, is that this 'ontologico-carnal hierarchy' erected by Sartre through the imbrication of the dichotomies of activity-passivity and mind-body with a crudely heterosexual binary of masculine-feminine is a direct result of Sartre's explicit equation of consciousness with the activity of looking and the body with the passivity of being looked at; that the system continues to operate only as long as Sartre is able to 'forget' that men too have bodies which can become objects of another's gaze; and consequently that any irruption of the male body - in particular of the male sexual body - causes the whole theoretical edifice to collapse into a 'kaleidoscopic dazzle' of gazes and bodies in which activity, masculinity and heterosexuality are all dissolved.

The identification of masculinity with activity and femininity with passivity lies at the heart of dominant constructions of sexuality and 'sexual difference' in contemporary Western culture.

Active and passive are the terms of the construction of a heterosexuality in which the division of labour (4) between masculine and feminine situates the former as sexual agent and the latter as both the place where that agency operates, and its complement: the paradigm of the heterosexual division of labour is 'the sexual act' - the male's active penetration of the passive female body - with an emphasis on 'the' because it is the act which is the organising principle of all sexuality (5), and an emphasis on 'act' because it is precisely an act performed by the active half of the heterosexual couple, his penetration of her.

Activity and passivity are also key terms in the construction of the subject-object dichotomy which lies at the heart of dominant constructions of the individual as a 'human subject' in relation to objects and to other subjects. Subjects in the world act on objects; objects can only react to what subjects do to them. The active-passive dichotomy gives substance to the terms 'subject' and 'object' as such, and is implicit in their very meaning. The activity-passivity opposition thus informs the construction of masculine-feminine on the one hand, and of subject-object on the other. The two sides meet in the familiar construction of man as subject and woman as object (6). They intertwine to construct the masculine as the locus not only of activity but also of subject-hood in relation to which woman as object is nothing more nor less than a necessary condition of the continuing privilege of masculinity. As Simone de Beauvoir famously puts it, "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute - she is the Other" (7).

As I shall demonstrate in what follows, the privilege of vision

is a central term of this alignment of activity, masculinity and subject-hood in that looking is both active and transitive. To look, in these terms, is to institute a power relation of subject over object which reproduces the relation of active over passive and hence implicitly of masculine over feminine. The point here is not that a theoretical or conceptual 'liberation' of masculinity and femininity from the terms of the active-passive and subject-object dichotomies would generate a space in which masculinity and femininity would circulate freely, with the attributes 'active' and 'passive', 'subject' and 'object', equally open to either. The binary construction of sexual difference is such that both masculinity and femininity are constructed entirely within the heterosexual paradigm: to be active subject, I want to argue, is to be masculine, according to the meaning of 'sexual difference'. Access to the status of subject-hood is denied to women by the construction of subject-hood itself; and the look functions as cornerstone of the theoretical subject's entrenched masculinity.

In Sartrean philosophy, activity and subject-hood are explicitly equated. Existentialism posits activity as a premise of subject-hood: "[T]here is no reality except in action ... Man is nothing else but what he purposes, he exists only in so far as he realises himself, he is therefore nothing else but the sum of his actions" (8). For Sartre, to be a subject is to be active rather than passive (in Sartrean terminology, to be 'being-for-itself' rather than 'being-in-itself'); it is also to be the locus of the philosophical project, since the phenomenology in which existentialism is rooted (9) takes the consciousness of the subject as the starting point of its enquiry. It is in Being and Nothingness that both the activity through which

the subject posits itself as such in relation to others, and the term by which it extrapolates from the fact of its own consciousness to the apprehension of that of others, is explicitly set out as looking.

Looking is the essential and original mode of the Sartrean subject's relation to other subjects; moreover the construction of looking as an activity inscribes all such relations as power relations between active subject and passive object. When I look at someone, I see him or her just as I see any object in the world, but my recognition of that someone as another human subject is, in Sartrean terms, based on my recognition that he or she may look at me and thereby make me into an object for himself or herself. Any meeting of subjects is therefore a battle of looks, a struggle by each subject to save its own subject-hood from obliteration by the other's look.

The aim of the present chapter is to chart the (hetero-) sexualisation of this battle of looks. The chapter will fall into two sections. The first section will focus on the detailed exposition of Sartre's theory of the subject in Being and Nothingness, and will map the process by which Sartre equates masculinity with subject-hood and femininity with object-hood through his invocation of the mind-body dichotomy and his repeated insistence on the horror of the female body: masculinity wins the battle of looks, femininity loses. The second section will then go on to show that the irruption of a horrific male body, particularly in Sartre's fiction of roughly the same period (Nausea and Roads to Freedom), results in the implosion of the 'ontologico-carnal hierarchy' so triumphantly erected in Being and Nothingness. Sartre can focus his theoretical thoughts only so long as he can focus on an object; the fact of masculine embodiment

causes the whole binary system in which Sartrean heterosexuality is enshrined to collapse. The philosopher who 'thinks with his eyes' is confounded by the phenomenon of his own nakedness (10).

I shall begin, then, with a discussion of the dynamics of the gaze in Being and Nothingness.

#### SECTION ONE: MASCULINE AND FEMININE IN THE BATTLE OF LOOKS

Being and Nothingness, first published in 1943, is a phenomenological enquiry into the nature of being. Sartre begins his enquiry by distinguishing between two kinds of being: being-in-itself and being-for-itself (11). Being-in-itself is the nature of being of non-conscious things, characterised by a plenitude of being ('it is what it is'); being-for-itself is the nature of being of consciousness, characterised by a lack in being ('it is what it is not and is not what it is'), and as such is essentially the nihilation of being-in-itself. In other words, consciousness can constitute itself as such only by asserting itself against the non-consciousness of things: being-for-itself pushes itself upwards, as it were, by pushing down on being-in-itself. Thus to be a subject (a 'consciousness') is essentially to constitute oneself as the negation or nihilation of objects. (It is this which lies behind existentialism's emphasis on activity: one's subject-hood must constantly be re-asserted if one is not to lapse into the 'immanence' of being-in-itself (12).)

This concept of the subject as a negation (the 'nothingness' of the title) of objects forms the basis of Sartre's answer to the

problem of solipsism, and it is here that the power (sic) of vision emerges as the essential component of subject-hood as such. The Other (13) is recognisable as a subject because:

"The Other is not only the one whom I see but the one who sees me ... The Other ... is presented in a certain sense as the radical negation of my experience, since he is the one for whom I am not subject but object. Therefore as the subject of knowledge I strive to determine as object the subject who denies my character as subject and who himself determines me as object" (14).

Thus the battle of looks commences; indeed war is inevitable as soon as the Other emerges as such (15). Sartre illustrates the power dynamics inherent in the look by means of two major examples. In the first example, I am in a public park and I see a man who does not see me. My recognition of him as a man implies that I see him not simply as an object in relation to other objects (trees, benches and so on) in my field of vision, but as a subject with a field of vision of his own which in some measure destabilises the arrangements of the objects in my own field; recognising him as a subject means recognising that there is "a spatiality which is not my spatiality, for instead of a grouping toward me of the objects, there is now an orientation which flees from me" (16). But as long as this man does not look at me he remains essentially an object in my universe:

"[T]he Other is still an object for me. He belongs to my distances; the man is there, twenty paces from me, he is turning his back on me. As such he is again two yards, twenty inches from the lawn, six yards from the statue; hence the disintegration of my universe is contained within the limits of this same universe; we are not dealing here with a flight of the world toward nothingness or outside itself. Rather it appears that the world has a kind of drain hole in the middle of its being and that it is perpetually flowing off through this hole. The universe, the flow and the drain hole are all once again recovered,

reapprehended and fixed as an object. All this is there for me as a partial structure of the world, even though the total disintegration of the universe is involved" (17).

However, my recognition of the Other as a man implies not only that he sees the world of objects but also that he sees me: "'Being-seen-by-the-Other' is the truth of 'seeing-the-Other' ... [T]he Other is on principle the one who looks at me" (18). Once this look emerges as directed at me, my own look, and hence my relation of absolute subject-hood to the world, is annihilated: "[W]e can not perceive the world and at the same time apprehend a look fastened upon us; it must be either one or the other" (19).

This is the point of Sartre's second example. I am engaged in looking through a keyhole at a scene taking place behind it; I am entirely absorbed in my activity, I am 'lost' in my contemplation of the scene: "My consciousness sticks to my acts, it is my acts ... My attitude ...has no 'outside'" (20). But as soon as I become aware - or even if I merely suspect or imagine - that there is someone standing behind me who is looking at me, the structure of my being changes and I become aware of myself as an object-for-the-Other; I am thus alienated from myself, from the world which my consciousness has hitherto organised around itself and from my own freedom: 'caught in the act', I cease to be my acts and become a seen object. This sudden shift in the structure of my being is manifested in a shame which acknowledges that I am this object for the Other: "Shame reveals to me that I am this being, not in the mode of 'was' or of 'having-to-be' but in-itself" (21). I remain consciousness, but I have also become an object. Indeed, death itself is characterised as "the triumph of the point of view of the Other over the point of view which I am

toward myself" (22): the battle of looks is ultimately a battle to the death.

### Femininity bodied forth

Sartre's privileging of the look in the constitution of subject-hood casts all relations between subjects along the traditional lines of active-subject and passive-object; each active looking subject is in perpetual danger of becoming passive looked-at object at the end of the Other's look. It is essential to recognise in all this that this clean alignment of subject with active and object with passive would not have been possible if Sartre had chosen one of the other senses as the privileged manifestation of subject-hood. His assertion that 'we can not perceive the world and at the same time apprehend a look fastened upon us' which forms the locus of the split between active-subject and passive-object in the look is based on his observation that to see a pair of eyes is not to apprehend the look as such, since a pair of eyes is only an object in the world like any other: "[M]y apprehension of a look turned toward me appears on the ground of the destruction of the eyes which 'look at me'. If I apprehend the look, I cease to perceive the eyes" (23). But no such splitting occurs with the other senses: if, for example, I apprehend that I am being touched, I do not thereby cease to apprehend the flesh that touches; quite the reverse. It is noteworthy that Sartre attempts to deny this apparently self-evident phenomenological fact about the sense of touch:

"[W]hen I touch my leg with my finger, I realise that my leg is touched. But this phenomenon of double sensation is not essential ... To touch and to be touched, to feel that one is touching and to feel that one is touched - these are two species of

phenomena which it is useless to try to unite by the term 'double sensation'. In fact they are radically distinct, and they exist on two incommunicable levels" (24).

Insisting on the primacy of vision and the split between the eye and the look, Sartre finds himself obliged to pursue the model of subject and object thus set up to the point of distortion. The translation of subject-who-looks and object-looked-at into subject-who-touches and object-touched simply does not work; but to recognise this would be to recognise that the non-reciprocal nature of relations between subject and object, for-itself and in-itself is not a pure 'given' but is entirely constructed by the privilege of vision and the battle of looks in Sartre's writing. The privilege of vision is not just a contingent feature of Sartre's theory of the active subject, but is an essential structuring principle of it.

Furthermore, despite the apparent gender-neutrality of these formulations of self and Other, the active-subject and passive-object dichotomy set up by the look throws Sartre's theory along the axis of the masculine-feminine dichotomy. The terms are set within the classic Cartesian framework of the mind-body split: on the one hand, by Sartre's inevitable conclusion that to be "pure subject" is to see without being seen (25); and on the other by his thesis that the body is fundamentally that which is known - that is, seen - by the Other (26).

The being-in-itself to which consciousness is reduced as soon as it apprehends that it is - or may be - looked at by the Other amounts to that of being a body: "[T]o be an object-for-others or to-be-a-body are two ontological modalities which are strictly equivalent expressions of the being-for-others on the part of the for-itself"

(27). My body also constitutes the being-in-itself which my own consciousness as being-for-itself must constantly strive to nihilate in its emergence as such: "The body is what I nihilate. It is the in-itself which is surpassed by the nihilating for-itself and which re-apprehends the for-itself in this very surpassing" (28). Thus the body as being-in-itself threatens the for-itself of subject-hood from two sides, both as the term of the victory of the Other in the battle of looks, and as a constant downward pull on the upsurge of consciousness itself. The tension between the body as object and consciousness as subject crystallises in Sartre's discussion of shame before the Other's look:

"Modesty and in particular the fear of being surprised in a state of nakedness are only a symbolic specification of original shame; the body symbolises here our defenceless state as objects. To put on clothes is to hide one's object-state; it is to claim the right of seeing without being seen; that is, to be pure subject" (29).

In other words, to be seen as a naked body is radically to be seen as an object; and conversely the paradigm of subject-hood - 'pure' subject-hood - is to see that object without oneself being seen. Sartrean consciousness triumphs not just in the death of the Other, but in a lethal voyeurism.

The alignment of the mind-body dichotomy with the masculine-feminine dichotomy is a recognised philosophical tradition which has almost entered the realms of cliché: its deconstruction has been one of the primary and most basic tasks of feminist philosophy (30). The Sartrean version of the tradition continues the inscription of woman as body, and specifically as sexual body, in Being and Nothingness. Michèle Le Doeuff points out that there are only two major female figures in the text, one of them 'frigid', the other engaged in a

pretence of not understanding her would-be lover's sexual intentions, both of them key figures in Sartre's formulation of 'bad faith', which Le Doeuff deconstructs as a species of philosophical 'machismo' (31). More important for the present argument is Sartre's equation of the in-itself with not a genderless but a sexual female body in the notorious 'holes and slime' passages which occur towards the end of Being and Nothingness (32). The slimy, a "constant hysteresis" which Sartre compares to "the flattening out of the full breasts of a woman who is lying on her back" (33), epitomises the threat that being-in-itself poses to the being-for-itself of consciousness:

"[T]he For-itself is suddenly compromised. I open my hands, I want to let go of the slimy and it sticks to me, it draws me, it sucks at me ... It is a soft, yielding action, a moist and feminine sucking ... I cannot slide on this slime, all its suction cups hold me back ... It is a trap ... Slime is the revenge of the In-itself. A sickly-sweet feminine revenge which may be symbolised on another level by the quality sugary" (34).

Similarly the hole represents being-in-itself's innate appeal to the for-itself:

"[T]he hole is originally presented as a nothingness 'to be filled' with my own flesh ... [T]o plug up a hole means originally to make a sacrifice of my body in order that the plenitude of being may exist; that is, to subject the passion of the For-itself so as to shape, to perfect, and to preserve the totality of the In-itself ... The obscenity of the feminine sex is that of everything which 'gapes open' ..." (35).

Thus, in the words of Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, it is "actual female anatomy which constitutes the threatening In-itself" (36); although Collins and Pierce recognise only the reference to holes as a strictly anatomical reference, the analogy between slime's "moist and feminine sucking" and the wetness of the female sexual

organs is strongly implied if not explicit. (Noteworthy in this connexion is Sartre's apparently casual remark in the War Diaries: "For the past three days, thaw. Mud, slush; the roads have an oddly female smell this morning" (37).)

The being-in-itself which threatens consciousness is characterised by Sartre as unequivocally feminine: the epitome of the naked body as 'object-state' is the body of a full-breasted woman lying on her back. It is, moreover, a female body conceived entirely in a relation of difference from the masculine in the classic heterosexual division of labour - passive, inert, waiting to be 'filled' by the action of the for-itself; a body which consciousness as the 'upsurging' for-itself must nihilate in the maintenance of its subject-hood:

"The obscenity of the feminine sex is that of everything which 'gapes open'. It is an appeal to being as all holes are. In herself woman appeals to a strange flesh which is to transform her into a fullness of being by penetration and dissolution. Conversely woman senses her condition as an appeal precisely because she is in the form of a hole" (38).

The imbrication of active-passive, subject-object and masculine-feminine could hardly be more explicit.

The privilege of vision in Sartre's text is the very condition of that imbrication. Sartre founds his active-subject versus passive-object division explicitly on the phenomenological division between the eye and the look, a division which has no obvious counterpart in any of the senses other than vision. When he aligns active subject-hood with the masculine and the passive object-state of being-in-itself with the feminine he is, therefore, placing them within a hierarchical, dichotomous relation the respective positions of which are structured directly by the nature of vision. Moreover by

constructing being-in-itself as body and then representing the specifically passive female body as the epitome of being-in-itself as such, Sartre seals the masculinity of the subject and inscribes femininity as simultaneously the essence of being-a-body and the antithesis of consciousness. The 'heterosexual division of labour' between the man who looks and the woman who is looked at (39) is in Sartre's philosophy not a contingent outcome of the battle of looks, but a structuring principle of the nature of subject-hood.

#### Women - the matter of life and death

I noted above Sartre's characterisation of death as "the triumph of the point of view of the Other" (40), the final nihilation of self by the Other's look. Dead, my life ceases to be my own project, I neither 'exist' nor 'realise myself'; my life only has any meaning in so far as those who survive me grant it meaning:

"[D]eath, in so far as it can be revealed to me, is not only the always possible nihilation of my possibles, a nihilation outside my possibilities ... It is also the triumph of the point of view of the Other over the point of view which I am toward myself. This is doubtless what Malraux means in L'Espoir when he says of death that it 'transforms life into destiny' ... When the for-itself 'ceases to live' ... [t]he disappearance of the nihilating being [ie the for-itself, which nihilates the in-itself] does not touch that part of its being which is of the type of the in-itself; it is engulfed in the in-itself. My whole life is ... For example, Sophocles' life was happy, Balzac's life was prodigiously industrious, etc ... The unique characteristic of a dead life is that it is a life of which the Other makes himself the guardian" (41).

But death is also the triumph of the point of view of the Other in another, more literal sense. In the battle of looks, each for-itself strives to nihilate the Other to the status of being-in-itself

by fixing it with its look; when the for-itself disappears, it leaves behind the body. The living body in Sartre's system is of ambiguous ontological status:

"[W]e could define the body as the contingent form which is assumed by the necessity of my contingency. The body is nothing other than the for-itself; it is not an in-itself in the for-itself, for in that case it would solidify everything. But it is the fact that the for-itself is not its own foundation [ie 'it is what it is not and is not what it is', it is a perpetual projection of the subject's 'possibles'], and this fact is expressed by the necessity of existing as an engaged, contingent being among other contingent beings" (42).

Thus the body is paradoxically both the necessary condition of being-for-itself (I could not exist without a body) and the contingency or 'facticity' of being which the for-itself strives to nihilate: "The body is what I nihilate. It is the in-itself which is surpassed by the nihilating for-itself and which re-apprehends the for-itself in this very surpassing" (43). But once the for-itself ceases to exist, the in-itself of the body is no longer surpassed; the body loses the ambiguity of being it received from consciousness and lapses into the status of a mere thing, an object like any other object in the Other's field of vision. "[T]o die is to lose all possibility of revealing oneself as subject to an Other" (44). It is when I am dead that the Other will be able to look at me in the certain knowledge that I will never be able to return the look.

It is this appalling fact that in many ways forms the climax of Sartre's Roads to Freedom, the trilogy of novels written around the same time as Being and Nothingness (the first two novels were published in 1945; the last completed novel of the series was published in 1949). In Iron in the Soul, the final novel of the trilogy, one of the leading characters, Mathieu Delarue, a philosophy

teacher and now a soldier of the already defeated French army of the Second World War, finds himself together with a handful of men on top of a church tower. German troops are advancing on the village and, although Mathieu and his comrades have been preparing to offer a token resistance, their deaths are certain. At last the German troops begin to arrive:

"He thought: 'Those are Germans!' and felt frightened, frightened in an odd, almost religious way: his emotion was, more truly, a sort of horror, such as is inspired by the supernatural. Thousands of foreign eyes were raking the village: eyes of supermen and insects.

"He was overwhelmed by a sudden frightful realisation: they will see my dead body!" (45).

This 'sudden frightful realisation' is the ultimate realisation of both death and defeat; Mathieu regards with horror the prospect of his dead body's becoming the object of the enemy's gaze almost as if he were going to be there himself as consciousness of this final humiliation. To be looked at by the Other in this way is to be reduced to an object and so to be utterly vanquished.

For Mathieu and his fellow soldiers, this death eventually comes as a violent calamity which befalls them from without. They are killed with guns, bombs, firecannon and other weapons: their male bodies are destroyed in battle by external forces. The female body, however, is represented in Roads to Freedom as a mortal flesh which destroys itself from within; it is as if death were inherent in the female body itself. This is most vividly exemplified in the figure of Lola. Lola is the older mistress of young Boris, with whose sister Ivich Mathieu falls disastrously in love. In The Age of Reason, the first novel of the trilogy, Lola is an aging woman and a drug addict, a "stereotypical older woman clinging to life through a youthful

lover", as Collins and Pierce put it (46); in Iron in the Soul she has "a tumour of the womb" (47) and is actually dying:

"My body disgusts me even if it doesn't disgust you! it's a swindle, it's rotten - and you don't know it. If you did know, it would fill you with horror.

"But he [Boris] had already taken her by the shoulders; he was nearly upon her. It is through a wound that you will enter me ... He achieved his orgasm. It's in my blood that he is spending himself, in all that is evil in me ... He clasped her to him, nothing about her moved except her breasts. With a little impulsive movement he separated himself from her, and her breasts made a sound like rubber suckers suddenly detached" (48).

Lola's body in this sexual scene is a typical Sartrean female body of holes and slime: her sex 'gapes open' like a wound; her breasts touch Boris' body with a 'moist and feminine sucking'. Her body is truly disgusting, for it contains 'evil' and death, and although Lola clearly thinks that she is more likely to die during surgery than to be killed by her disease ("I've got a tumour of the womb: I've got to have an operation, and at my age that's sometimes dangerous" (49)), it is her body itself - most significantly her womb, the locus of all the holes and slime of femininity - that is presented in the text as the thing that will kill her, "the unclean beast proliferating in the fastness of her body" (50) rather than the surgeon's knife.

This passage, which occurs towards the end of Roads to Freedom, echoes another passage towards the beginning of the trilogy in which Marcelle, Mathieu's pregnant mistress, looks at herself and contemplates the prospect of an abortion:

"In that belly a little strawberry of blood was making haste to live, with a sort of guileless urgency, a besotted little strawberry, not even yet an animal, soon to be scraped out of existence by a knife ... She shrugged her shoulders: yes, that foolish, burgeoning body was indeed created

for maternity. But men had decided otherwise. She would go to the old woman: she need only imagine it was a tumour. 'Indeed, at that moment, it is just a tumour'" (51).

Marcelle's unwanted pregnancy - unwanted by Mathieu, at any rate - is a 'tumour', an 'animal', an unclean beast proliferating in the fastness of her body which can only be removed by potentially lethal surgery, this time the surgery of a back-street abortion (much of the action of The Age of Reason revolves around Mathieu's attempts to raise the money to pay for this abortion which in fact Marcelle does not really want). Marcelle's body, perhaps even more than Lola's, is disgusting in its femininity. She vomits repeatedly:

"[S]he got up abruptly and ran to the basin: she vomited a foamy, turbid liquid, which looked rather like the slightly beaten white of an egg. Marcelle clutched the porcelain rim, and gazed at the frothing water. She smiled wryly and murmured: 'A memento of love' ...

"She first thought of butter, and was revolted; she seemed to be chewing a bit of yellow, rancid butter, and then she felt something like an insistent laugh at the back of her throat, and leaned over the basin. A long filament hung from her lips, she had to cough it away. It did not disgust her, though she had been very ready to be disgusted with herself ... She watched the dabs of mucus sliding slowly towards the drainhole, leaving glossy, viscous tracks behind them, like snails. And she muttered: 'It's fantastic!' She was not revolted; this was life ..." (52).

While Lola is disgusted by her body's 'proliferation' of death, Marcelle is delighted by the signs of the approach of life. But for Sartre death and the being of the foetus amount to the same thing, that is, to being-in-itself, as he explains in Being and Nothingness: "Death is a pure fact as is birth ... At bottom it is in no way distinguished from birth, and it is the identity of birth and death that we call facticity" (53); "[t]he body as facticity is the past as it refers originally to a birth; that is, to the primary nihilation

which causes me to arise from the In-itself ..." (54). In other words, both the non-conscious being of the foetus and the non-conscious being of the dead body have the status of being-in-itself (55). Both Lola and Marcelle are thus reduced not just by their female bodies, but to their female bodies as being-in-itself, manifestations of a holey and slimy feminine sexuality in which each of them is finally immersed: Lola will die, Marcelle will have her child, although significantly neither event forms part of the narrative 'action' of Roads to Freedom; as Marcelle is wryly aware, "A human being who wakened in the morning with a queasy stomach , with fifteen hours to kill before next bed-time, had not much use for freedom" (56).

It is noteworthy that in both these passages the women are naked and seen. Marcelle takes off her clothes and looks at herself in the mirror:

"The mirror reflected her image encircled by leaden gleams. She walked up to it. She looked neither at her shoulders, nor at her breasts: she disliked her body. She looked at her belly - a capacious, fecund vessel ..." (57).

Lola is naked in bed with Boris:

"He sat up, drew back the sheet, and studied Lola's body attentively. Lightly with his hand he brushed her nipples. She felt embarrassed.  
"Just a marble statue," he said.  
"She thought of the unclean beast that was proliferating in the fastness of her body, and the blood rushed to her face" (58).

Marcelle is awkward and unwilling to look at herself in the mirror; Lola is embarrassed by Boris' attentive gaze. As we have already seen, embarrassment or modesty at being seen naked according to Sartre is "a symbolic specification of original shame; the body here symbolises our defenceless state as objects. To put on clothes is to

hide one's object-state" (59). Marcelle's and Lola's nakedness is a symbolic specification of their object-status: the flesh to which they are reduced is the flesh which can be looked at (and it is worth recalling that the slimy itself is partly characterised in Being and Nothingness as "display - like the flattening out of the full breasts of a woman who is lying on her back" (60)). While Mathieu is horrified at the thought that the enemy will see his dead body, Marcelle and Lola - especially Lola, the dying woman - have become discomfited and embarrassed objects of the gaze while still living.

The horrific scenario of Mathieu's body under the Germans' gaze - which, like Lola's death and Marcelle's childbearing, does not take place within the text - is prefigured by Lola's 'false' death in The Age of Reason. Boris awakes one morning to find Lola apparently dead beside him; he thinks she has killed herself with a drug overdose, and in a state of panic he leaves her and then asks Mathieu to go back to Lola's hotel room for him and retrieve some compromising letters, which he sent to Lola in the past and which mention his own experiments with illegal drugs, before her body is discovered and the police called. Mathieu agrees to do so and sets off: "[S]uddenly Mathieu realised that Lola was dead, that he was going to enter her room, see her large open eyes, and her white body. 'I shan't look at her'" (61). But he does look at her:

"Mathieu saw Lola, an all-white figure, looking at him. 'Lola!' he said in a low voice. Lola did not answer: she had a marvellously expressive but impenetrable face: her breasts were bare, one of her lovely arms lay stiff across the bed - the other was under the bedclothes. 'Lola!' repeated Mathieu, advancing towards the bed. He could not take his eyes off that proud bosom - he longed to touch it" (62).

Femininity and death meet under Mathieu's gaze: the female body both dead and desired as object of the Other's look. The fact that Lola is in fact alive but in a sort of coma makes the scene horribly reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe's 'Monsieur Valdemar': caught in a kind of suspended animation between life and death, the female body seems ready at any moment to collapse into the pure being-in-itself of holes and slime - "a nearly liquid mass of loathsome - of detestable putridity" (63).

The scene is not, however, a simple one of the triumph of Mathieu's male gaze over Lola's naked and exposed female body. Despite his continuing belief that she is dead, Mathieu feels himself the object of a gaze while he is taking the letters from Lola's trunk: "The room was filled with a motionless presence: Mathieu knelt down beside the suitcase, the inexorable presence was there, it weighed upon his back, like watching eyes" (64). The sense of being watched prevents Mathieu from stealing from Lola's trunk the money he needs to pay for Marcelle's abortion:

"After a moment or two, he rummaged nervously among the papers, sorting them by touch with eyes averted. 'I've got the money,' he thought. Behind him lay that long, white woman with the astonished face, whose arms seemed still able to reach out, and her red nails still to scratch. He got up ... Despite himself, he stood on the alert, he listened to Lola's silent body, and felt clamped to the floor. 'Very well,' he murmured with resignation. Fingers opened and the bank notes fluttered down into the suitcase" (65).

Like the voyeur caught in the act and reduced to shame by the gaze of the Other, Mathieu is caught in the act of theft by the uncanny gaze emanating from Lola's body (the scene is oddly reminiscent of the scenario, reconstructed by Sartre in Saint Genet, of the young Genet caught in the act of theft (66), which will be discussed in the next

chapter). When a few moments later Mathieu changes his mind and returns to Lola's room intending to take the money, he finds himself the literal object of a gaze emanating from Lola's body which, although Lola is now obviously alive, has retained in some measure its semblance of death:

"He was not even sure whether he had the courage to steal. He took two or three faltering steps into the room, and finally made out Lola's grey face, and her wide eyes looking at him ...

"'I've got a headache,' she said. She pulled the bed-clothes up to her chin and lay motionless, her eyes fixed on Mathieu. She looked as though she were still dead ...

"Mathieu handed her the bag; she took a powder-box out of it, and eyed her face with disgust.

"'It's true - I do look as if I were dead,' she said.

"She put the bag down on the bed with a sign of exhaustion and added: 'I'm not much more use than if I were dead' (67).

Moreover Mathieu is implicated in the gaze of this dead-alive, naked female body in his own body, specifically in his sexual body: "He could not take his eyes off that proud bosom - he longed to touch it. He stood for a few instants beside the bed, hesistant, uneasy, his body poisoned by a sour desire" (68). Mathieu does not merely regard the sexual body of Lola, poisoned by drugs, from on high; the reciprocity of her gaze, even in 'death', reduces Mathieu to poisoned sexual body in his turn. To be absolute subject - to see without being seen - is impossible, even in the most extreme scenarios: men too have bodies which can be seen.

## SECTION TWO: HETEROSEXUALITY'S MELTING MOMENTS

### Nausea

Heterosexual encounters provoke disgust in Sartre's fiction. Perhaps the most famous (or infamous) of these encounters is that between Antoine Roquentin, the narrator of Nausea (Sartre's first published novel, published in 1938), and the patronne of a local café:

"I had dinner at the Rendez-vous des Cheminots. Since the patronne was there, I had to fuck her, but it was really out of politeness. She disgusts me slightly ... As for me, I toyed absent-mindedly with her sex under the bedclothes; then my arm went to sleep. I was thinking about Monsieur de Rollebon: after all, why shouldn't I write a novel on his life? I let my arm move along the woman's side and suddenly I saw a little garden with low, wide-spreading trees from which huge hairy leaves were hanging. Ants were running about everywhere, centipedes and moths. There were some even more horrible animals ... The broad leaves were black with animals. Behind the cacti and the Barbary fig trees, the Velleda of the municipal park was pointing to her sex. 'This park smells of vomit,' I shouted. "'I didn't want to wake you up,' said the patronne, 'but the sheet got rucked up under my backside and besides I have to go down to attend to the customers from the Paris train'" (69).

This passage has become something of a sitting target for feminist critics, who see it as the epitome of that Sartrean terror of the female body identified by Michèle le Doeuff. Collins and Pierce call this episode "one of the most repellent in the novel" and argue that it presents "woman ... endowed with a nature which is menacing and obscene; she becomes here the personification of the In-itself" (70). In this they are certainly correct, but the terror the encounter provokes is not, I would argue, simply a reaction to the facticity of the female body, but a fear of the threat that the (sexual) body in general, and the facticity of the male body in particular, poses to

the supremacy of the narrator's consciousness. If, as I have argued, Sartre aligns masculinity with the mind and femininity with the body, then the entanglement of the sexes in heterosexual embrace - or to be more exact the revelation of the male as body in that embrace - threatens both the mind-body dichotomy and the masculine-feminine dichotomy with collapse. It is significant that at the point of falling asleep in the above passage, Roquentin is thinking about the difficulties he is having with his intellectual work - his inability to keep the rigorous historical study he is trying to write from drifting into fiction; and that the falling asleep of his mind and its drift into the dream is echoed by the 'falling asleep' of his arm as he caresses the patronne. Mind and body are not as distinct as poor, nauseous Roquentin would like them to be.

The disturbing nature of the male sexual body, and the confusion its irruption provokes in the mind that inhabits it, is more vividly illustrated in a slightly earlier episode in Nausea. Roquentin has gone to the cafe but finds that the patronne is not there:

"I had come along for a fuck, but I had scarcely opened the door before Madeleine, the waitress, called out to me:

"The patronne isn't here, she's gone shopping in town."

"I felt a sharp disappointment in my prick, a long disagreeable tickling. At the same time I felt my shirt rubbing against my nipples and I was surrounded, seized by a slow, coloured whirlpool, a whirlpool of fog, of lights in the smoke, in the mirrors, with the benches shining at the back, and I couldn't see why it was there or why it was like that ... I floated along, dazed by the luminous mists which were entering me from all directions at once ...

"Then the Nausea seized me, I dropped on to the bench, I no longer knew where I was; I saw the colours slowly spinning around me, I wanted to vomit" (71).

This is Roquentin's first full-blown identifiable attack of 'the Nausea', and it is provoked by the In-itself and contingency not of

the female body, but of his own. Caught in the fleshliness of his own body and deprived of the customary 'object', the patronne, on or in which he had come, as he puts it, to "purge" himself of his unease (72), Roquentin's world dissolves into a "kaleidoscopic dazzle" (73), a whirlpool in which he is unable to focus either thought or vision.

Not only does Roquentin, like all men, have a body; what is much worse, in Sartrean terms, is that this male body is a body of the holes and slime which are supposed to characterise the reviled and object-like bodies of women (74). The 'kaleidoscopic dazzle' does *not* merely confuse Roquentin, it also 'enters' him, while the desire to vomit reveals the disgusting slime that Roquentin's body already contains. Holes and slime in Nausea prove to be inescapable aspects of all human flesh. Immediately before this first attack of Nausea, Roquentin - significantly feeling unable to continue with his intellectual work - studies his own face:

"On the wall there is a white hole, the mirror. It is a trap. I know that I am going to let myself be caught in it. I have. The grey thing has just appeared in the mirror. I go over and look at it, I can no longer move away.

"It is the reflection of my face ... I cannot even decide whether it is handsome or ugly ... At heart, I am indeed shocked that qualities of this sort can be applied to it, as if you called a piece of earth or a lump of rock beautiful or ugly ...

"My gaze travels slowly and wearily down over this forehead, these cheeks: it meets nothing firm, and sinks into the sand ... When I was small, my aunt Bigois used to tell me: 'If you look at yourself too long in the mirror, you'll see a monkey there.' I must have looked at myself even longer than that: what I can see is far below the monkey, on the edge of the vegetable world, at the polyp level ... The eyes in particular, seen at such close quarters, are horrible. They are glassy, soft, blind, and red-rimmed; anyone would think they were fish-scales. I lean my whole weight on the porcelain edge, I push my face forwards until it touches the mirror. The eyes, the nose, the mouth disappear ... Brown wrinkles

on each side of the feverish swelling of the lips, crevices, mole-hills ... [I]t's a geological relief map ...

"I grimace at myself. An entire half of my face gives way, the left half of the mouth twists and swells, uncovering a tooth, the eye-socket opens on a white globe, on pink, bleeding flesh. That isn't what I was looking for: nothing strong, nothing new; soft, vague, familiar stuff!" (75).

Roquentin looks at his own 'foolish, burgeoning body' (76) and finds that it is no more than a mass of flesh, an object like any other, an alien and horrific thing which is nevertheless, *in some absurd way, himself*. The particular horror provoked by the eyes is noteworthy in the light of Sartre's insistence in Being and Nothingness on the split between the eye and the look: the power of my gaze is what manifests my power as subject in the world; yet the physical organs from which my gaze emanates are wet and disgusting, a mass of pulp and flesh in the form of the being-in-itself which my subject-hood is supposed, according to Sartre's philosophy, to transcend.

A similar but much more explicit anxiety about the holes in the male body appears in another dream, which Roquentin recounts immediately after the episode with the patronne:

"I gave Maurice Barrès a spanking. We were three soldiers and one of us had a hole in the middle of his face. Maurice Barrès came up and said to us: 'That's fine!' And he gave each of us a bunch of violets. 'I don't know where to put it,' said the soldier with the hole in his head. Then Maurice Barrès said: 'You must put it in the middle of the hole you've got in your head.' The soldier replied: 'I'm going to stick it up your arse'" (77).

It is possible to read this passage as a simple homosexual fantasy on the part either of Roquentin or of Sartre himself (78), but its significance in this context is the anxiety it reveals about the sexuality and facticity of the male body in general. As Roquentin's scrutiny of his own face has already shown him, all men have 'holes'

of various kinds in the middle of their faces, as well as arseholes: it is a fact the male intellectual would, it seems, rather forget. As Roquentin grimly notes, "For some time now I have been remembering my dreams much too often" (79). Moreover, this dream sequence occurs in the text immediately after the description of the dream of the municipal park, which ends with the Velleda statue pointing to the site of her own female 'hole', and is immediately followed by the arrival of Roquentin's letter from Anny, his former mistress, whose imminent visit provokes a fresh bout of anxiety. It is not homosexuality that is at stake here so much as Sartrean heterosexuality and the instability of the distinction between masculine and feminine to which the facticity of the male body gives rise.

That facticity, with its holes and slime, culminates in a vision of utter horror at the end of the novel:

"What if something were to happen? What if all of a sudden it [Nature] started palpitating? ... And a host of things will appear for which people will have to find new names - ...and somebody who has gone to sleep in his comfortable bed, in his quiet, warm bedroom, will wake up naked on a bluish patch of earth, in a forest of rustling pricks, rising all red and white towards the sky like the chimneys of Jouxtebouville, with big testicles half way out of the ground, hairy and bulbous, like onions. And birds will flutter around these pricks and peck at them with their beaks and make them bleed. Sperm will flow slowly, gently, from these wounds, sperm mingled with blood, warm and vitreous with little bubbles ... Men all alone, entirely alone, with horrible monstrosities, will run through the streets, will go clumsily past me, their eyes staring, fleeing from their ills and carrying them with them, open-mouthed, with their tongue-insect beating its wings. Then I shall burst out laughing, even if my own body is covered with filthy, suspicious-looking scabs blossoming into fleshy flowers, violets and buttercups. I shall lean against a wall as they go by and I shall shout to them: 'What have you done

with your science? What have you done with your humanism? Where is your dignity as a thinking reed?" (80).

Just as his first attack of Nausea is provoked by the awareness of his body in unfulfilled heterosexual desire, so Roquentin undergoes this apocalyptic crisis shortly after his brief meeting with Anny, which ends in her rejection of his sexual advances. He is all alone with the horrible monstrosity of his sexual body, which has at last erupted into his imagination as a diabolical tyranny of the flesh: the forest of pricks with sperm and blood oozing from their gaping wounds is far more disgusting than either Marcelle's pregnancy or Lola's tumour will be in the later novels. Moreover, what is destroyed in this riot of masculine flesh is man's status as thinking subject: 'Where is your dignity as a thinking reed?' Man's place on the 'dignified' side of the mind-body split is lost with each stirring of the flesh.

The role of the gaze is implicit in all this since to be an object, for Sartre, is by definition to be the object of a subject's gaze. The 'heterosexual division of labour' discussed above demands that the masculine be the subject and the woman the object; but the fact that men have bodies too disrupts this familiar pattern, for male bodies can become the object of a gaze - more alarming still, of a female gaze. The point is illustrated in a brief and relatively low-key episode set in the municipal park. Roquentin is in the grip of a very serious attack of Nausea, and is using the power of his own gaze - the paradigmatic assertion of his subject-hood - to try to subdue it: "As long as I could fix objects nothing would happen: I looked at as many as I could, pavements, houses, gas lamps ... I tried to reduce them to their everyday appearance by the power of my gaze" (81). Running through the streets in a continuing state of panic, he

finds himself at the park gate and is suddenly confronted with the sight of man in a cape and a small girl. He realises that the man is about to expose himself and that the girl is waiting for him to do so: she is "watching him in fascination" (82); "they were riveted to each other by the obscure power of their desires, they formed a couple" (83). Caught in the act by Roquentin, the man in the cape is doubly an object, for the little girl on the one hand and for Roquentin on the other. The man realises that Roquentin is watching him and the intended act - like so many of Roquentin's own sexual acts - does not take place; the girl runs away and the culprit reacts with typical Sartrean shame:

"The fellow in the cape had seen me: that was what had stopped him. For a second he remained motionless in the middle of the path, then went off. His cape flapped against his calves.  
"Hey, I say!' I cried.  
"He started trembling.  
"A great menace is hanging over the town,' I said politely as I walked past him" (84).

In effect, the exhibitionist himself represents the 'great menace' which Roquentin feels hanging over the town and which finds its ultimate expression in the 'forest of pricks': the threat that men will be overwhelmed by their bodies, that they will cease to exert the power of the gaze and will become objects of the triumphant gaze of an Other. The paradigmatic object of display here is not "the flattening out of the full breasts of a woman who is lying on her back" (85), but a man with his genitals nakedly exposed.

This riot of masculine flesh does not only threaten the hierarchical dichotomies of mind-body and subject-object; the masculine-feminine split itself is also destabilised. In the passage just described, it is Roquentin's fascination at the little girl's

fascination which involves him in the scene that that strange heterosexual 'couple' represent; in a later episode Roquentin actually identifies himself with another small girl, this girl too the victim of a sexual assault, which Roquentin reads about in a newspaper. The episode occurs immediately after Roquentin has finally given up on his attempts to write his historical work. A prolonged attack of Nausea follows in which Roquentin is profoundly aware of the facticity of his body: "I am the Thing. Existence, liberated, released, surges over me. I exist" (86). In the midst of this attack Roquentin reads in the newspaper of the discovery of the body of Lucienne, a small girl who has been raped and murdered, and in a whirlpool of physical and mental confusion Roquentin becomes increasingly unable to distinguish masculine from feminine:

"Little Lucienne was raped. Strangled. Her body still exists, her bruised flesh. She no longer exists ... I am, I exist, I think therefore I am ... She felt that other flesh slipping into hers ... A sweet, bloody longing for rape takes hold of me from behind ... [A] finger which scratches inside my pants, scratches, scratches and pulls the little girl's finger soiled with mud, the mud on my finger which came out of the muddy gutter and falls back gently, gently, scratching less hard than the fingers of the little girl who was being strangled, criminal, scratching the mud, the earth less hard, the finger slides gently, falls head first and caresses curled up warm against my thigh; existence is soft and rolls and tosses ... [T]he finger is raised. Am I going to ... caress in the splendour of white sheets the splendid white flesh which falls back gently, touch the blossoming moisture of the armpits, the elixirs and liqueurs and florescences of the flesh, enter into the other person's existence, into the red mucus membranes with the heavy, sweet, sweet smell of existence, feel myself existing between the soft wet lips, the lips red with pale blood, the throbbing yawning lips all wet with existence, all wet with a transparent pus, between wet sugary lips which cry like eyes? My body of living flesh, the flesh which swarms and turns gently liqueurs, which turns cream, the flesh which turns, turns, the sweet

sugary water of my flesh, the blood of my hand, it hurts, gently to my bruised flesh which turns ... [L]ittle Lucienne assaulted from behind, raped by existence from behind, he begs for mercy ..." (87).

Again, this passage has been read elsewhere as homosexual fantasy (of being 'taken from behind') (88), but the point I want to extract from it is its repeated collapse of masculine into feminine, subject into object, rapist into raped. Even in the most violently dichotomised heterosexual act - in which a man has asserted a tyrannical subjectivity over a female body, literally reducing it to pure object by killing the girl-victim - the fleshy existence of the male body dissolves the dichotomous structure into a kaleidoscopic dazzle of soft, sugary bodies, bruised, gaping flesh and shifting pronouns. The issue is not whether Roquentin really has a secret desire to be raped, but that the object-status of his own flesh is indistinguishable from the object-status of the flesh of the dead Lucienne, or of any living woman.

#### 'I wish I were a man'

Sartre's hierarchical dichotomies of active over passive, subject over object, mind over body and masculine over feminine, apparently so cleanly aligned by the sovereignty of the gaze and the operation of the battle of looks in relations between human subjects in Sartre's philosophy, is disrupted by the fact that men as well as women have bodies which can be passive, objects, seething with the horrible carnality of holes and slime which is supposed to represent the obscenity of the feminine sex. As soon as it becomes plain that neither partner is necessarily or by nature any more of an 'object' than the other, the heterosexual division of labour between active and

passive collapses, and the definitions of masculinity and femininity constructed within that paradigm go down with it. A Sartrean man in love truly forgets himself: the irruption of his body, most particularly in states of heterosexual desire, causes the outline of his sexual identity to blur into confusion.

Such confusion is legible, for example, in the fourth chapter of The Age of Reason. The chapter describes a rendez-vous between Mathieu and Ivich, who makes her first appearance in the novel here; it is in this chapter that Mathieu realises he is in love with Ivich, and the chapter ends with his kissing her impulsively. The narrative charts the ebbs and flows of their *often awkward conversation* (Mathieu is absorbed in the problem of raising money for Marcelle's abortion, Ivich in the conviction that she has failed her recent exams) and of Mathieu's first stirrings of desire for her, which falls broadly into a pattern of three movements, culminating in the final kiss. The climax of each movement - the surge of incipient desire that Mathieu feels for Ivich - is also a crisis of sexual identity for one or the other of them, a collapse of masculine into feminine at the very moment when heterosexual desire is most vividly present.

At the beginning of the chapter Mathieu is waiting for Ivich in a cafe: they have arranged to go to a Gauguin exhibition together. Ivich arrives and Mathieu orders for her a peppermint drink, which he tells her she likes and which she claims in fact to dislike. The drink is described in terms which recall Sartre's descriptions in Being and Nothingness of the slimy: "'That green, gluey stuff I drank the other day? Oh, I don't want that, it makes my mouth all sticky'" (89). During what follows, this peppermint drink plays an almost symbolic role in the drama of masculine and feminine. As Sartre puts

it in Being and Nothingness, "Nothing testifies more clearly to its ambiguous character as a 'substance in between two states' than the slowness with which the slimy melts into itself" (90): in the ebb and flow of Mathieu's morning with Ivich, heterosexuality indeed melts into itself, into an inchoate substance in which the states of masculinity and femininity become indistinct.

At this point Ivich is presented as the object of Mathieu's gaze: "Ivich he saw, he could call her by her name or touch her on the shoulder: but she was out of reach ... : she looked painted and varnished, like a Tahitian woman on a canvas by Gauguin, and not meant for use" (91). Ivich's own visual power is impaired by a painful attack of conjunctivitis, which she melodramatically imagines to be the onset of blindness, but which in any case seems merely to be a more extreme version of her usual visual powerlessness: "'[A]s for looking people in the face, ... I just can't do it. My eyes begin to smart at once'" (92). Clearly, in the battle of looks, Ivich has never been any great warrior.

In the course of the conversation Ivich declares that she hates to be touched, yet in spite of this Mathieu sees her as both voluptuous and catastrophic: "[W]hen he saw Ivich, he felt as though he were experiencing a catastrophe. Ivich was a voluptuous and tragic little embodiment of pain ... Mathieu could not endure to live without her" (93). A compliment from Mathieu on her physical appearance made precisely at this moment produces a complicated response in both of them:

"She regarded compliments with disgust ... She alone could think with due propriety about her own appearance. And she did so without the use of words, with a sort of affectionate certitude, a caress. Mathieu looked

diffidently at Ivich's slender shoulders, the straight, round neck. She often said: 'I have a horror of people who are not conscious of their bodies.' Mathieu was conscious of his body, but rather as though it were a large and embarrassing parcel" (94).

Consciousness of one's own body is for Ivich a kind of necessity, for Mathieu an encumbrance; yet this distribution of mind-body, masculine-feminine between Mathieu and Ivich is already becoming blurred by Mathieu's admiration of Ivich's physical appearance, and he reacts with confusion and embarrassment while she, conscious of her own body, is disgusted by physical admiration and the implied intrusion of the body of another. The climax of this first movement of the chapter comes shortly after this incident, when the waiter brings Ivich her peppermint. Despite her insistence that she dislikes the drink and only wants to look at it, Mathieu still associates its sliminess or 'stickiness' with her, in voluptuous terms: "For Ivich, it was a little viscous delight that made her sticky down to her finger tips" (95). It is while he is looking at her with her drink that Mathieu experiences his first crisis of desire and the first beginnings of a collapse of sexual identity:

"She looked at the glass, and Mathieu looked at her. A violent and undefined desire had taken possession of him: a desire to be for one instant that distracted consciousness so pervaded by its own odour, to feel those long slender arms from within, to feel, at the hollow of the elbow, the skin of the forearm clinging like a lip to the skin of the arm, to feel that body and all the discreet little kisses it so ceaselessly imprinted on itself. To be Ivich, and not cease to be himself" (96).

'A violent and undefined desire had taken possession of him': it is as though the voluptuous and 'feminine' sliminess were acting upon Mathieu's consciousness itself. The slimy is explicitly described in Being and Nothingness in terms of possession: "[A]t the very moment

when I believe that I possess it, behold by a curious reversal, it possesses me ... [T]he For-itself is suddenly compromised ... [Sliminess] is a soft, yielding action, a moist and feminine sucking" (97). Not only is this an 'undefined desire', but it is also and more significantly a desire for the undefined; 'to be Ivich, and not cease to be himself': to be a 'substance between two states' which 'melts into itself' in a sensual self-caress; to allow both himself and Ivich to lose themselves in a kaleidoscopic dazzle of sexual embodiment. None of the parts of Ivich's body with which Mathieu is explicitly concerned - the arms, the elbow - are necessarily parts of a female body; Mathieu himself has arms and elbows which touch each other and which he can experience from within just as Ivich experiences hers. But for Mathieu the philosopher, his own body is 'a large and embarrassing parcel' - a parcel containing his sovereign and radically distinct philosopher's mind - the sensuality of which he continues to displace onto Ivich even when - or especially when - he is himself in a 'violent' state of desire. It is as if, all flesh being essentially feminine, Sartre's philosopher-hero were unable to desire without himself dissolving into a viscous femininity.

The beginning of the second movement is heralded by a shift in the visual dynamics between Mathieu and Ivich. Mathieu finds that he is tired of looking at Ivich and his own eyes, like hers, begin to hurt. Ivich herself turns her gaze onto passersby and fellow customers; Mathieu amuses himself by asking her to describe aloud what she sees ("If I could be granted one wish," he tells her, "it would be that you should be compelled to think aloud" (98)). Mathieu complains however that she still does not exercise her gaze in the proper way: "[Y]ou don't look at people, Ivich, I've been watching you. You

looked at your hand, and then you looked at your foot'" (99).

("Anyway," he adds, "I know what you're thinking" (100). If the female body provokes Mathieu to confusion, the female mind, apparently, presents no obstacles at all.) However it is Ivich's alarmingly inappropriate exercise of her gaze that brings on the second crisis:

"A woman emerged from the cafe and walked slowly past them: she was handsome, with a very small nose in a sleek face, and she seemed to be looking for somebody. Ivich must first have smelt her scent. She raised her brooding face, saw the woman and her whole expression was transformed.

"'What a magnificent creature,' she said in a low, deep voice. Mathieu hated that voice.

"The woman stood motionless, blinking in the sunshine, she might have been about thirty-five, her long legs could be seen in outline through her thin silk frock: but Mathieu had no desire to look at them, he was looking at Ivich ...

"It was at such moments that he was most attracted by her, when her charming, almost dainty little person was possessed by a gripping force, an ardent, uneasy, graceless love of human beauty. 'I,' he thought, 'am no beauty,' and he felt alone in his turn.

"The woman departed. Ivich followed her with her eyes, and muttered passionately: 'There are moments when I wish I were a man.' She laughed a short dry laugh, and Mathieu eyed her regretfully" (100).

'There are moments when I wish I were a man'; 'it was at such moments that he was most attracted by her'. A more or less latent lesbianism or bisexuality in Ivich is also hinted at elsewhere, most notably in an episode towards the end of the novel in which Ivich, drunk in a nightclub, kisses a girl: a man watches her do so, and Mathieu, watching the man watching Ivich, realises that he now desires her in an explicitly sexual way for the first time (102). However, the issue, at least in this earlier episode, is not - or at least not only - a voyeuristic male fascination with lesbianism, but the disruption

of Ivich's heterosexual identity and its repercussions on Mathieu: Ivich says, not, 'I wish I were that woman's lover', or even, 'I wish I were a lesbian', but very specifically, 'I wish I were a man'. The woman is passive, an object of the gaze, standing motionless and directing her own gaze at no-one in particular - she blinks in the sun, looks distractedly about her, engages no-one in a battle of looks; Ivich's desire accordingly falls in with the heterosexual paradigm and is presented in active, even aggressive terms: it is 'a gripping force', 'ardent', 'uneasy', 'graceless'; "she looked somnolent and cruel, just, he thought, as though she would like to bite" (103). Yet although her active and masculine desire makes her "become almost ugly" (104), it is now, when her sexual identity is most precarious in classic heterosexual terms, that Mathieu finds her most attractive, as though the dissolution of sexual identity and the upsurge of heterosexual desire were inevitably linked.

Immediately after this episode Mathieu is called away to the telephone to discuss arrangements for Marcelle's abortion, and when he returns he finds that during his absence Ivich has drunk the sticky peppermint; she has after all taken her 'little viscous delight that made her sticky down to her finger-tips'. The third and final crisis of sexual identity soon follows. Mathieu and Ivich leave the cafe and take a taxi to the exhibition. They suddenly become aware of the sexual potential of their situation: "A silence followed. It was as though they had both simultaneously realised that they were a man and a woman, enclosed together in a taxi" (105). Mathieu suddenly decides to act:

"[H]e felt free. The dense, warm mass of a summer day came close to him, and he longed to plunge headlong into it. For one more second he seemed

suspended in the void, with an agonising sense of freedom, and then, abruptly, he reached out his arm, took Ivich by the shoulders, and clasped her to him" (106).

The imagery, like the desire, is masculine and heterosexual: the 'dense, warm mass' is close to him and he 'longs to plunge into it'; buoyed up by his own freedom, Mathieu takes decisive action and goes so far as to kiss the passive Ivich:

"'She's criticising me,' thought Mathieu irritably. 'He leaned towards her: and to punish her, he laid his lips lightly against a cold, closed mouth: he was feeling defiant: Ivich was silent'" (107).

However, no sooner is the act committed than the terms are reversed and identity destabilised:

"Lifting his head he saw her eyes, and his passionate joy vanished ... [H]is arm dropped, dead and flaccid: Ivich's body straightened with a mechanical jerk, like a pendulum swinging back to equilibrium. 'Now I've done it,' said Mathieu, 'she'll never forgive me.' He sat huddled in his seat wishing he might disintegrate" (108).

Faced by the cataclysm of his desire for her, Mathieu becomes 'flaccid' while Ivich stiffens - he becomes feminised, passive and inert, while she is masculinised, hard and upright. This reversal appears as the consequence of the disappointment of Mathieu's heterosexual desire - he looks at her and realises that his love is not reciprocated - but in fact it is a metaphorical embodiment of that very desire as represented at the two previous 'crises': her desire to 'be a man'; his desire to feel the 'clinging' softness of her flesh as if it were his own. 'He' might well disintegrate in good earnest: the sharply dichotomised terms of heterosexuality are such that any manifestation of physical desire on his part will lead to a collapse of 'masculine' identity as surely as erection is followed by detumescence.

Throughout all of this Mathieu himself has remained convinced - with what degree of bad faith the reader is left to judge - that although, as he finally realises, he loves Ivich, he does not really desire her physically:

"'It isn't true,' he reflected vehemently: 'I don't desire her, I never have desired her.' But he already knew that he was going to desire her. It always finishes like that, he would look at her legs and her breasts, and then, one fine day ... In a flash he saw Marcelle outstretched on the bed, naked, with her eyes closed: he hated Marcelle" (109).

Mathieu's stakes in not desiring Ivich are high: physical embodiment - which for Sartre paradigmatically means female embodiment - is all holes and slime, the facticity and constraint that Marcelle, pregnant, now represents for Mathieu - in between bursts of anxiety over the abortion arrangements he has already begun to think of himself as married to Marcelle (as a "married man messing about with a young girl in a taxi" (110)) and hence as no longer free - as well as the literal womb, blood and vomit which are now the defining features of Marcelle's physical and emotional existence (the scene of Marcelle's morning sickness takes place in the chapter immediately following this). But Ivich does have a body, as Mathieu is acutely aware; she has a body which consists of legs and breasts, fore-arms and finger-tips, holes and slime, and in his perceptions of and fantasies about that body Mathieu's own body - with its own flesh, its own holes and slime - is profoundly implicated. Little wonder that he hates Marcelle: she is now more than ever the living proof of his sexual physicality; her pregnancy is the direct result of the holes and slime which men - and especially male philosophers - are not supposed to have. In this sense Mathieu and Marcelle are indeed

married: in her pregnancy they have become one indistinguishable flesh.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have been arguing that the active-passive distinction which Sartre locates at the heart of the very nature of being (as being-for-itself versus being-in-itself) is fundamentally constructed within, and therefore maintained by, the privilege of vision as the manifestation of consciousness: it is the paradigm of looking and being looked-at set out in Being and Nothingness as the two original modes of being in relation to the Other which gives the split between activity and passivity its absolute nature. This paradigm falls into a classic heterosexual division of labour between masculine and feminine cast along the lines of the mind-body split by Sartre's characterisation of being-in-itself as essentially feminine: woman-as-object and woman-as-body are fused in Sartre's ontology. The masculine subject's status as a subject is based upon his power to look at, and thereby assert himself over - 'nihilate' - the feminine being-in-itself of the body as object.

Thus Sartre's philosophy presents a fully-fledged theory of sexual difference: a binary system in which one term - the masculine - is privileged over, and at the same time defines, the other. Yet the terms by which this binary is forged - in this case, the dichotomy between being-for-itself and being-in-itself, between mind and body - are also the terms of its downfall: men too have bodies, and paradoxically it is when they are most strongly implicated in the

binary system of masculine and feminine - when they are in states of heterosexual desire - that the irruption of the male body explodes the theoretical structure from within. Male heterosexual desire is, for Sartre, above all a disorienting and even frightening experience:

"[W]hen we do desire a woman ... the desire compromises me ... Let any man consult his own experience; he knows how consciousness is clogged, so to speak, by sexual desire ... It is like a yeasty tumescence of fact ...

"Suddenly the man who desires becomes a heavy tranquillity which is frightening; his eyes are fixed and appear half-closed, his movements are stamped with a heavy and sticky sweetness ... I feel my skin and my muscles and my flesh ... as a passion by which I am engaged in the world and in danger in the world" (111).

It is quite explicitly the privilege of the gaze in Sartre's philosophy that has erected the binary system of sexual difference in this way: looking-looked at, active-passive, subject-object, mind-body, masculine-feminine. Yet it is the very rigidity of the dichotomous structure - the theoretical inadmissibility of masculinity to the passive, subject, embodied side of the binary - that causes it to collapse. As soon as the male body appears, either literally or metaphorically, Sartrean heterosexuality is in danger.

All of this leads me on to the question of Sartre's formulation of homosexuality. Sartre by no means ignores or dismisses the dimension of homosexual desire: in Being and Nothingness he clearly states that the Other "is not necessarily for me - nor I for him - a heterosexual existent but only a being who has a sex" (112); as we shall see, homosexual characters play important roles in his fictional, dramatic and critical works. But if heterosexual desire itself is so disruptive of Sartre's system of sexual difference, what are the effects on that system of homosexual desire? It is to this

question that I shall be turning my attention in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE GAZE AND HOMOSEXUALITY

#### INTRODUCTION

The phrase 'Hell is other people', spoken by Garcin at the end of the play In Camera, has become a kind of Sartrean cliché, a catchphrase of existentialism which, as is the nature of catchphrases, tends to be recited without thought of the original context (1). That original context is that the three main characters in the play, sent to Hell for misdeeds committed on earth, are confined to a room together and condemned to spend all eternity in one another's company - or to be more precise, beneath one another's gazes. As Garcin puts it, "one has to live with one's eyes open all the time" (2), unable to sleep or even to turn off the light for respite from the gaze of one's fellows:

"... [A]ll those eyes intent on me. Devouring me. What? Only two of you? I thought there were more; many more. So this is hell. I'd never have believed it. You remember all we were told about the torture-chambers, the fire and brimstone, the 'burning marl'. Old wives' tales! There's no need for red-hot poker. Hell is ... other people!" (3).

In Camera was written in 1943, the year of publication of Being and Nothingness, while Sartre was still working on The Reprieve, the second novel of the Roads to Freedom series; it is therefore not surprising that the dynamics of the gaze and of the battle of looks discussed in the previous chapter should be very much to the fore in the action of the play (4). Sartre himself explains that in writing In Camera he "was not forgetting the feeling I had had at the Stalag

[a prisoner-of-war camp in which Sartre spent some months during the Nazi occupation of France (5)] of living constantly and totally beneath the eyes of others, and the Hell which naturally set in under such circumstances" (6). Hell is other people because "the Other is on principle the one who looks at me" (7), "the one for whom I am not subject but object" (8) in that battle of looks in which, as I have already argued, to be defeated and captured by another's gaze is to be stripped of one's status as subject. To be constantly and totally beneath another's gaze is to be endlessly vanquished - to live under a totalitarian regime of the look.

In this chapter I shall be arguing that if being-for-others is for Sartre the domain of Hell, it is also the domain of homosexuality, which, through the character of Inez in In Camera, and more importantly through the character of Daniel in Roads to Freedom and the (arguably no less fictional (9)) figure of Jean Genet in Saint Genet: Actor and martyr, he equates with evil and bad faith. The homosexual is presented by Sartre as a being who is essentially looked-at, an alienated consciousness for which being-for-others is the primary mode of being. The homosexual is an object before he (10) is a subject: he lives constantly and totally beneath the eyes of others, and his interest for Sartre lies in the extremes to which he is driven in his struggle to escape the Hell of his condition.

Indeed it is remarkable how closely the respective stories of Genet and Daniel follow each other, as if they were in fact only one story - the Story of the Homosexual. Both stories begin with the protagonists situated as objects of the gaze of others: the young Genet caught in the act of stealing is frozen beneath an adult gaze

("Someone has entered and is watching him. Beneath this gaze the child comes to himself ... A voice declares publicly: 'You're a thief'" (11)) which defines him as a thief from that day forward; the handsome Daniel's angelic good looks unfailingly attract admiration even - or perhaps especially - from the women and girls who disgust him: during the reader's first direct encounter with Daniel in The Age of Reason he is the unwilling object of the gaze of the concierge's daughter: "He observed in the mirror his dark, handsome, blue-jowled visage. 'That's what excites them.' An archangel's face: ... and now he must submit to the admiring gaze of this deplorable child" (12); "No one ever disliked Daniel's face" (13). From this initial situation both characters move on to become objects not simply of the gaze of their fellows, but of the gaze of God. In a ruse which, if it does not free the homosexual from his object-like condition, at least grants it the dignity and stature of divine meaning, Genet assumes the identity of 'saint and martyr', "a sacred object to celestial eyes" (14): "Since he is, in the depths of his soul, a man who is being watched, what if he called another gaze to his rescue? ... [W]hat if he transformed himself into one of the elect?" (15). A similar impulse leads Daniel to a similar 'religious' experience: "God looked at Daniel" (16); "[T]hou seest me and I serve thee ... I am thy creature, thou lovest thyself in me" (17). At the end of the story the homosexual at last discovers a form of subjectivity, but one which is in defiance of - even to the wilful destruction of - the 'others' by whom he has been condemned. Genet finally becomes a writer who, since he cannot obliterate the gaze of the Other, flouts it with a display of all the Evil with which his status as object has invested him: "His voice is one of those that we

never wanted to hear; it is not meant for analysing disturbance but for communicating it" (18); "[W]e recognise, with horror, a subject" (19). Daniel, wandering the deserted streets of occupied Paris, exulting in the defeat of Virtue by Evil, becomes the sole subject of an evil and sexually predatory gaze and prepares to destroy the world of those others under whose gaze he has lived: "All the witnesses against me are dead or thinking of other things" (20); "'[Y]ou want to undermine bourgeois morality, don't you? Well, you've got the Germans now to give you a helping hand'" (21). From simple object to saint to dangerous subverter of society's morals, the path of the homosexual seems to be mapped out inexorably from the first moment to the last. Daniel's adventures in Iron in the Soul, the third volume of Roads to Freedom, were published in 1949, Saint Genet in 1952; by the time Sartre and Genet first met in 1944, the first two volumes of Roads to Freedom were all but finished (The Age of Reason had been completed in 1941 and was published simultaneously with The Reprieve in 1945) (22). In the light of this chronology and the close resemblance between Sartre's 'lives' of Genet and Daniel, Saint Genet's ambiguous status between critical biography and Sartrean invention becomes more unstable than ever. I would argue that Saint Genet tells us far more about Sartre's concept of homosexuality than about Genet's experience of it (23) - and it is Sartre's concept that I shall be examining in this chapter.

My argument in this chapter will be that that concept of homosexuality, as delineated in the 'story' of Genet and Daniel outlined above, effectively essentialises the homosexual as object of the look in a way similar to that in which Sartre essentialises women

as body-objects - except that the homosexual, unlike the woman, represents not so much fleshliness and corporeality as criminality and evil. Sometimes Sartre regards this homosexuality as a good thing, as in the case of Genet, whose literary celebrations of his criminal activity expose the injustice and bad faith of bourgeois society; sometimes it is a bad thing, as in the case of Daniel, whose cowardice and bad faith ultimately lead him to collaboration with the oppressor. But in either case the essentialised homosexual is as such denied that original freedom which even the most hampered or inadequate heterosexual subject derives from its status as being-for-itself: always defined first and foremost as object of the look, the homosexual's being is not being-for-itself but being-for-others.

My discussion of this 'essentialising' mechanism in Sartre's concept of homosexuality will be divided into two sections. The first section will examine the status of the homosexual as object, whether of the look of others or of the look of God: it will discuss the way in which Sartre condemns the homosexual to being-for-others. The second section will deal with the homosexual's position at the end of the story as agent and representative of evil, which Sartre himself in Saint Genet aligns with the position of Woman as Other outlined by Simone de Beauvoir in The Second Sex (24). Each section will compare Sartre's characterisation of homosexuality in Being and Nothingness, Roads to Freedom and Saint Genet with his descriptions of femininity and feminine sexuality in the same texts, showing how their frequent alignment - despite Sartre's invocation of the feminism of The Second Sex - reinforces Sartre's denigration of both. My purpose throughout will be to show that, despite his ostensibly anti-essentialist intentions, Sartre's definition of homosexuality is such

that, by his very 'nature', no homosexual can ever be free.

#### SECTION ONE: THE HOMOSEXUAL AS OBJECT

##### Homosexuality and bad faith

"Let us take an example: A homosexual frequently has an intolerable feeling of guilt, and his whole existence is determined in relation to this feeling. One will readily foresee that he is in bad faith. In fact it frequently happens that this man, while recognising his homosexual inclination, while avowing each and every particular misdeed which he has committed, refuses with all his strength to consider himself 'a paederast'. His case is always 'different', peculiar; there enters into it something of a game, of chance, of bad luck; the mistakes are all in the past ... etc, etc. Here is assuredly a man in bad faith who borders on the comic since, acknowledging all the facts which are imputed to him, he refuses to draw from them the conclusion which they impose" (25).

As I noted in the last chapter, Michèle Le Doeuff calls Sartre's concept of bad faith a "macho concept" (26): she points out that there are only two important female figures in Being and Nothingness, a frigid woman and a coquette, who are used by Sartre as major examples in his explication of the concept of bad faith (27), the 'lie to oneself' which emerges in Being and Nothingness as, as she puts it, "a speciality of inferior beings" (28). There is only one homosexual figure in Being and Nothingness, and he too is an example of bad faith: despite all his knowledge of himself and his own feelings, despite all the evidence of his past actions, the man refuses to recognise himself as a homosexual. He does so however not through stupidity or a brute rejection of the facts of his life, but through a curious and rather clever kind of play on words:

"The homosexual recognises his faults, but he struggles with all his strength against the crushing view that his mistakes constitute for him a destiny. He does not wish to let himself be considered a thing. He has an obscure but strong feeling that an homosexual is not an homosexual as this table is a table ... It seems to him that he has escaped from each mistake as soon as he has posited it and recognised it ... Does he not recognise in himself the peculiar, irreducible character of human reality? His attitude then includes an undeniable comprehension of the truth. But at the same time he needs this perpetual rebirth, this constant escape in order to live ... Thus he plays on the word being. He would be right actually if he understood the phrase, 'I am not a paederast' in the sense of 'I am not what I am'. That is, if he declared to himself, 'To the extent that a pattern of conduct is defined as the conduct of a paederast and to the extent that I have adopted this conduct, I am a paederast. But to the extent that human reality can not be finally defined by patterns of conduct, I am not one.' But instead he slides surreptitiously towards a different connotation of the word 'being'. He understands 'not being' in the sense of 'not-being-in-itself'. He lays claim to 'not being a paederast' in the sense in which this table is not an inkwell. He is in bad faith" (29).

The being of consciousness is being-for-itself; the being of objects is being-in-itself. The homosexual manages to tell himself the lie which constitutes his bad faith by blurring the distinction between the two modes of being. The homosexual who says 'I am not a homosexual' is, according to Sartre's account, like a cafe waiter who says 'I am not a cafe waiter' (30). He is not a cafe waiter in the sense in which a table is a table, 'being-a-cafe-waiter' is not the essence of his whole being; and yet he is a cafe waiter in the sense that he performs all the tasks and receives the payment of a cafe waiter. Likewise the homosexual in Sartre's example is a homosexual in the sense that he behaves like one.

It is noteworthy that, despite Sartre's insistence elsewhere in Being and Nothingness that heterosexuality is not a given and should not be presumed to be the primary mode of sexuality ("[I]t must be

well understood," he writes, "that at first this Other [in the realm of sexuality] is not necessarily for me - nor I for him - a heterosexual existent but only a being who has sex" (31)), the homosexual here suffers 'an intolerable feeling of guilt' over acts which are unquestioningly presented as 'misdeeds' and 'faults' rather than simple expressions of sexuality. The example of the homosexual however is used by Sartre not just as an illustration of the bad faith of the sexual miscreant, but also as a pretext for the discussion of bad faith as inherent to the attitude of sincerity. The homosexual, Sartre tells us, has a friend (of undisclosed sexual orientation) who is a "champion of sincerity" (32):

"His friend ... asks only one thing - and perhaps then he will show himself indulgent: that the guilty one recognise himself as guilty, that the homosexual declare frankly - whether humbly or boastfully matters little - 'I am a paederast'" (33).

However, despite his apparent commitment to frankness and honesty, the sincere man who exhorts the homosexual to declare himself is in fact playing his own game of bad faith. In asking his friend to declare himself a paederast the sincere man in effect is asking him to constitute himself as an object - to reduce himself to the status of being-in-itself so that others may treat him with 'indulgence'.

Sartre describes the situation as follows:

"Does he [the sincere man] not wish, first in the name of sincerity, then of freedom, that the homosexual reflect on himself and acknowledge himself as an homosexual? Does he not let the other understand that such a confession will win indulgence for him? What does this mean if not that the man who will acknowledge himself as an homosexual will no longer be the same as the homosexual whom he acknowledges being and that he will escape into the region of freedom and of good will? ... The critic demands of the guilty one that he constitute himself as a thing, precisely in order no longer to treat him as a thing. And this contradiction is constitutive of the demand of sincerity. Who can not

see how offensive to the Other and how reassuring for me is a statement such as, 'He's just a paederast,' which removes a disturbing freedom from a trait and which aims at henceforth constituting all the acts of the Other as consequences following strictly from his essence. That is actually what the critic is demanding of his victim - that he constitute himself as a thing, that he should entrust his freedom to his friend as a fief, in order that the friend should return it to him subsequently - like a suzerain to his vassal. The champion of sincerity is in bad faith to the degree that in order to reassure himself, he pretends to judge, to the extent that he demands that freedom as freedom constitute itself as a thing" (34).

Thus while the sincere man appears to be - and believes himself to be, since the nature of bad faith is such that, on a certain level, one believes the lies one tells oneself (35) - helping his homosexual friend to realise his own freedom in encouraging him to acknowledge himself as a homosexual, he is in fact merely trying to reduce his friend to the level of an object over which he can reign: he is asking his friend to allow himself to 'be' a homosexual in the sense of 'being-in-itself'. The homosexual that the sincere man wants his friend to declare himself to be is indeed the same as the homosexual the man in bad faith refuses to be: it is the homosexual as object. Moreover, "the essential structure of sincerity does not differ from that of bad faith since the sincere man constitutes himself as what he is in order not to be it" (36). This is in effect what the homosexual who refuses to declare himself in Sartre's example has already realised: that in sincerely confessing oneself to 'be' such-and-such a thing - evil, homosexual, whatever - one has constituted that 'thing' as an object, a being-in-itself which one then immediately transcends in the movement of one's consciousness as for-itself. "The man who confesses that he is evil has exchanged his disturbing 'freedom for evil' for an inanimate character of evil; he

is evil, he clings to himself, he is what he is. But by the same stroke, he escapes from that thing, since it is he who contemplates it" (37). Thus if the homosexual denies that he is a homosexual, he is in bad faith, but if he confesses to it sincerely, he is treating his being-a-homosexual as being-in-itself and is likewise in bad faith. What an unfortunate fellow he is!

The bad faith of the homosexual is illustrated in the character of Daniel Sereno in Roads to Freedom. Daniel is a homosexual, and is in bad faith: he simultaneously knows that he is a homosexual and refuses to acknowledge himself as such, and indeed his every action - particularly in The Age of Reason - is motivated by this paradoxical situation. At his first appearance in The Age of Reason Daniel sets off to the banks of the Seine intending to drown his pet cats in order to punish himself and to cause himself pain, because he hates himself "as though he were someone else" (38) - or rather, because he would like to do so:

"It was odd, he thought, that a man could hate himself as though he were someone else. Not that that was really true: whatever he might do there was always only one Daniel. When he despised himself he had the feeling of detachment from his own being, as though he were poised like an impartial judge above a noisome turmoil, then suddenly he found himself plunging downwards caught again in his own toils" (39).

This is the essential mechanism of bad faith: Daniel's self-contempt is merely a continual attempt to constitute himself as being-in-itself, as an object of his own (or others') loathing; he tries to hate himself because he is a homosexual, thereby paradoxically constituting his homosexual self as 'someone else' who is not himself just as a table is not an inkwell. Consequently he regards other homosexuals with loathing, and is horrified when he thinks that they

in their turn have recognised him as a fellow-member of what he calls the "freemasonry of the urinal" (40); a sexual encounter with the young Ralph results in Daniel's almost attempting to castrate himself with a razor, although - as with his plan to drown the cats, which acts as a prelude to this later scene - he ultimately lacks the courage to do so (41). Above all, Daniel is appalled at the thought that he is an object for others, and yet at the same time he longs for others to judge him in the hope that they might succeed where he has failed in the impossible task of despising himself. For example, a barman who innocently offers him his 'usual' drink provokes him to fury: "'Confound these fellows' mania for classifying human beings as if they were umbrellas or sewing machines. I am not so-and-so; one isn't ever anything. But they pin you down as quick as look at you'" (42). But a visit to an equally familiar bar after his near-attempt to castrate himself provokes him to an opposite kind of fury:

"[W]ith all his might he longed to loathe himself ... 'Beast! - coward and comedian: beast!' For an instant he thought he would succeed, but no - these were mere words ... Ah, no matter who it was, he would have accepted any person's judgment, no matter whose, so it were not his own, not that ghastly self-contempt, which seemed at every moment on the point of self-annihilation, but always survived. If only someone else knew, if he could only feel upon him the weight of someone else's contempt. But I never shall, I would sooner castrate myself" (43).

Daniel's loathing for himself as a homosexual clearly springs from the belief that homosexuality is a 'fault' or 'misdeed' which he both acknowledges and repudiates in himself; his decision to marry Mathieu's pregnant ex-lover Marcelle is an attempt both to renounce his homosexuality and to punish himself for it - an "occasion to play a little trick upon himself" (44). The point I want to make here is that Daniel is in extreme bad faith, and that this bad faith places a

special emphasis on his being-for-others. What he both fears and longs for is that his homosexual self should become an object of contempt for another person, or for himself as if he were another person. The idea that others may know of his homosexuality fills him with terror: "Who knows? ... No, no one. Yes, Bobby knows, Ralph knows, Mathieu doesn't ... Oh, to live among the blind!" (45) he exclaims to himself feverishly, fearing that Mathieu may have discussed him with his students, or even warned them about him; when Ralph's lover Bobby recognises and approaches him at a fair frequented by homosexuals, Daniel is furious: "There was nothing to be done but crush him like a slug: Daniel's image was embedded in that narrow forehead, and there it would remain for ever" (46). And yet his simultaneous desire that someone else should know that he 'is' a homosexual and judge him accordingly eventually leads him to confess his homosexuality to Mathieu, in a dramatic scene at the very end of the novel which I shall discuss shortly.

Being and Nothingness pinpoints being-for-others as one of the "most basic instruments of bad faith" (47). Sartre writes that, for the purposes of bad faith, one can employ

"[A] kind of duplicity derived from human reality which we will express roughly by saying that its being for-itself implies complementarily a being-for-others. Upon any one of my conducts it is always possible to converge two looks, mine and that of the Other. The conduct will not present exactly the same structure in each case. But, ... as each look perceives it, there is between these two aspects of my being, no difference between appearance and being - as if I were to my self the truth of myself and as if the Other possessed only a deformed image of me. The equal dignity of being, possessed by my being-for-others and by my being-for-myself permits a perpetually disintegrating synthesis and a perpetual game of escape from the for-itself to the for-others and from the for-others to the for-

itself" (48).

Thus one of the mechanisms by which bad faith operates is a flight from being-for-itself into being-for-others, or vice versa. The bad faith which Daniel manifests over his homosexuality operates by just such a flight: his desire to hate himself 'as though he were someone else' or to make himself the object of another's contempt represents an escape from the for-itself to the for-others, an attempt by the homosexual to flee the freedom and responsibility implied by being-for-itself and to seek refuge in making being-for-others the primary mode of being - to replace the 'I am what I am not and am not what I am' of the for-itself with the for-others' 'I am the object the Other sees'.

#### Homosexuality and being-for-others

As we have already seen, women and male homosexuals are aligned in Being and Nothingness through their apparent propensity to bad faith, a propensity also displayed by Daniel in Roads to Freedom, whose bad faith over his homosexuality operates by means of a flight into being-for-others in what one might call a 'textbook case'. Any reader of these two texts might be tempted to conclude that Sartre regards a life of bad faith as the inevitable fate of the homosexual, and possibly of women too. However in Saint Genet: Actor and martyr we find a homosexual who, far from being in bad faith, is on the contrary a literary hero who exposes the bad faith of his readers by forcing them to confront what they, as the representatives of bourgeois society, have made him (49). Genet's writing, according to Sartre, portrays the underworld of criminals and homosexuals so as to make the reader recognise that this horrifying world of Evil is of the

reader's own making: "Genet addresses not the criminologist or sociologist but the 'average Frenchman' who adorns himself with the name of good citizen ... Genet, who has been a victim and instrument of the good citizen since childhood, is now able to avenge himself at last" (50). Genet, then, is radically unlike Daniel and the homosexual in Being and Nothingness in that he does not fall prey to that bad faith which might otherwise have seemed to be an essential feature of Sartre's concept of homosexuality. But there is a feature which Genet and Daniel share and which, I want to argue, is essential in a deep sense to Sartrean homosexuality: the *primacy of being-for-others* which Sartre portrays in Saint Genet as part of the structure of homosexuality itself.

The child Genet was caught in the act of stealing by one of his adult guardians and was told that he was a thief. According to Sartre's account, this moment of being seen and defined by the Other is the decisive moment of Genet's life: "Genet has lived and has not stopped re-living this period of his life as if it had lasted only an instant ... it is revealed to him that he is a thief and he pleads guilty" (51). In an adult this easy priority of the for-others - to accept that 'I am a thief', as a table is a table, because another says that I am a thief - would doubtless be a simple manifestation of bad faith, a deliberate flight from being-for-itself. But its effect on a child is quite different:

"The most immediate result is that the child is 'doctored'. He regards the existence of adults as more certain than his own and their testimonies as truer than that of his consciousness. He affirms the priority of the object which he is to them over the subject which he is to himself" (52).

The power that the adult who sees and defines wields over the child who is seen results in the child's believing what adults claim to know about him rather than what he might think he knows about himself, and this prioritising of being-for-others over being-for-itself is a mechanism that will determine Genet's thought for the rest of his life.

Thus Genet 'is' a thief because others perceive him as one. He is in fact a thief only in the mode of being-for-others, but he makes that mode of being the primary mode. Sartre goes on to consider Genet's homosexuality as a consequence of this state of affairs: "At present, Genet is perhaps a thief because he is a homosexual. But he became a homosexual because he was a thief" (53). His being labelled a thief caused Genet to prioritise being-for-others, and this prioritisation led in turn to Genet's becoming homosexual, as Sartre describes:

"This priority, in the subject itself, of the object over the subject leads, as we see, to amorous passivity, which, when it affects a male, inclines him to homosexuality.

"... [Genet] makes of his objectivity for others the essential and of his reality-for-himself the inessential. What he desires is to be manipulated passively by the Other so as to become an object in his own eyes. Any man who places his truth in his Being-for-the-Other finds himself in a situation which I have called prehomosexual. And this is the case, for example, of many actors, even if they enjoy sleeping only with women" (54).

This rather bizarre account of the development of male homosexuality which, as Sartre himself acknowledges, is a direct contradiction of Genet's own account ("[Genet] has even written that his homosexuality preceded his stealing and that the latter was merely a consequence of the former. But we [sic] cannot follow him in this" (55)), presents it as having more to do with the relative importance one places on

one's being-for-others than with any sexual desire one might - or might not, in the case of heterosexual actors - feel for members of one's own sex. Primacy of being-for-others leads to homosexuality, and not, as the 'bad faith' characterisation of Daniel, for example, might have led one to expect, vice versa.

Moreover, the homosexuality which results from being-for-others is also a femininity. Sartre writes:

"In his very depths, Genet is first an object - and an object to others. It is too early to speak of his homosexuality, but we can at least indicate its origin. Simone de Beauvoir has pointed out that feminine sexuality derives its chief characteristics from the fact that woman is an object to the other and to herself before being a subject. One can expect that Genet, who is the object par excellence, will make himself an object in sexual relations and that his eroticism will bear a resemblance to feminine eroticism" (56).

In The Second Sex, first published in French in 1949, Simone de Beauvoir offers an analysis of the situation of women as 'relative beings', objects for the masculine subject: "She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute - she is the Other" (57). By invoking The Second Sex in his discussion of Genet's sexuality, Sartre is ostensibly endorsing its analysis of women's oppression and extending it to provide an account of the oppression of homosexuals. In fact this alignment of feminine sexuality with male homosexuality has the opposite effect: far from endorsing The Second Sex, it serves to undermine its argument and to reify those aspects of sexuality which de Beauvoir identified as the effects of women's alienation and oppression. In The Second Sex, de Beauvoir is careful to stress that

woman is the Other not because it is in her nature to be so, but because of her situation in contemporary society. In the introduction to Book Two she writes:

"When I use the words woman or feminine I obviously refer to no archetype, no changeless essence whatever; the reader must understand the phrase 'in the present state of education and custom' after most of my statements. It is not our concern here to proclaim eternal verities, but rather to describe the common basis that underlies every individual feminine existence" (58).

Sartre, however, makes no such proviso in Saint Genet regarding his use of the term 'homosexual'. According to his account, homosexuality is the result of the prioritising of being-for-others over being-for-itself, a prioritisation that takes place before, and frequently (although not always) results in, sexual desire for members of one's own sex: the boy Genet becomes a homosexual because he has already been made an object. Sartre's claim that this mechanism resembles the object-status of feminine sexuality as described in The Second Sex implies one of two things. On the one hand, Sartre may be implying that the predominance of being-for-others is an original feature of feminine sexuality in the same way that, according to his account, it is an original feature of homosexuality - in which case, he is ignoring de Beauvoir's proviso that women's sexual object status is a result of social factors rather than of the structure of their being as such. This would be a simple misrepresentation of the argument of The Second Sex. On the other hand, he may be implying that the prioritisation of being-for-others, which leads either to homosexuality or to the 'feminine' sexuality that de Beauvoir describes, is a result of oppression and the abuse of power, since being-for-others becomes the primary mode of one's being in situations

where one is powerless in the face of others' judgements: thus woman "becomes an object, and sees herself as object" (59) in de Beauvoir's account because she is subjected to "male sovereignty" (60), and the boy Genet is the 'object par excellence' because he has been subjected to the accusatory gaze of adults (and, later, of the judicial system of French bourgeois society) who define him as a thief. In this case, one must conclude that in a society in which such oppression and such abuses of power were no longer possible, women and children would no longer be Others defined by or in relation to a power-wielding and oppressive Subject, and that being-for-others would no longer be the primary mode of being of these hitherto oppressed subjects. Since being-for-others is for Sartre the origin and not just the effect of homosexuality, one must assume that, under such circumstances, homosexuality would cease to exist. Thus we find, behind Sartre's apparent championing of the causes of women's and homosexuals' liberation, a crude and familiar homophobic fantasy: that homosexuality is a 'fault' or 'misdeed', the unfortunate product of a diseased - hypocritical, 'bourgeois' - society, which, in a healthy or just society, would simply disappear.

Thus the primacy of being-for-others, the priority of object over subject in the structure of one's being, is constitutive of homosexuality as such. When Daniel makes his confession to Mathieu at the end of The Age of Reason, it is his being-for-others which lies behind his intention. Mathieu asks:

"' ... [W]hy do you come to tell me all this?'  
"'Well, I ... I wanted to see the effect it would produce on a fellow like you,' said Daniel, clearing his throat. 'Also, now that there's someone who knows, I ... I shall perhaps succeed in believing it.'  
"He had turned a little green, and spoke with difficulty, but he was still smiling. Mathieu could not endure

that smile, and turned away his head" (61).

On one level, this flight by Daniel into being-for-others is just another manifestation of his bad faith: in declaring himself a homosexual in this way, he is performing an act of sincerity of the kind described in Being and Nothingness - he confesses his homosexuality and thereby constitutes his being-a-homosexual as an object which he may then surpass. Moreover he is able to 'declare' his homosexuality to Mathieu at this point in the narrative because he has, in a sense, already repudiated and surpassed it by deciding to marry Marcelle - as Mathieu realises, Daniel is marrying her in order to "make a martyr" of himself (62). On another level, however, Daniel's confession is an illustration of the thesis that the homosexual must be in the form of being-for-others. Only if another knows him to 'be' a homosexual will Daniel be able to believe it; only if he is first a homosexual-for-others will he succeed in being a homosexual-for-himself.

Once the confession has been made, Mathieu goes on to ask Daniel why he is ashamed of his homosexuality. Daniel replies:

"'I was waiting for that, my dear fellow. I am ashamed of being a homosexual because I am a homosexual. I know what you are going to say: If I were in your place, I wouldn't stand any nonsense. I would claim my place in the sun, it's a taste like any other, etc etc. - But that is all entirely off the mark. You say that kind of thing precisely because you are not a homosexual. All inverts are ashamed of being so, it's part of their make-up.'

"'But wouldn't it be better ... to accept the fact?' asked Mathieu timidly.

"This seemed to annoy Daniel. 'You can say that to me, when you have accepted the fact that you are a swine,' he answered harshly. 'No. Homosexuals who boast of it or proclaim it, or merely acquiesce ... are dead men. Their very sense of shame has killed them. I don't want to die that sort of death'"(63).

Again, on one level this is a manifestation of bad faith: 'It's part

of my make-up, I can't help the way I am, it's my nature, my essence.' But on another level Daniel's claim that all homosexuals are ashamed can be taken as an expression of the primacy of the homosexual's being-for-others, since the feeling of shame, according to Sartre, is nothing other than the apprehension that one is an object for the Other. In Being and Nothingness he writes: "Pure shame is not a feeling of being this or that guilty object but in general of being an object; that is, of recognising myself in this degraded, fixed and dependent being which I am for the Other" (64). Thus when Daniel, in abject bad faith, claims that to be ashamed is part of his 'make-up', the fault he is trying to excuse before both Mathieu and himself is not his liking for young men, but the primacy of this being-for-others and his status as object in a world of subjects.

### The eye of God

As I demonstrated in the last chapter, to be an object for the Other is to be seen by the Other, and the struggle over the respective positions of subject and object takes place in the battle of looks which Sartre describes in Being and Nothingness: "the Other is not only the one whom I see but the one who sees me ... [H]e is the one for whom I am not subject but object ... I strive to determine as object the subject who denies my character as subject and who himself determines me as object" (65). The feeling of shame is therefore a reaction to the knowledge that one is seen:

"Modesty and in particular the fear of being surprised in a state of nakedness are only a symbolic specification of original shame; the body symbolises here our defenceless state as objects. To put on clothes is to hide one's object-state; it is to claim the right of seeing without being seen; that is, to be pure subject" (66).

The priority of object over subject and of being-for-others over being-for-itself which lies at the origin of homosexuality thus places the homosexual in the position of being seen rather than seeing. This is very explicitly the case with Sartre's Genet, for whom the originary moment which gave priority to his being-for-others was his being seen, in the act of stealing, by an adult: "Someone has entered and is watching him. Beneath this gaze the child comes to himself ... A voice declares publicly: 'You're a thief'" (67); "Pinned by a look, a butterfly fixed to a cork, he is naked, everyone can see him and spit on him. The gaze of the adults is a constituent power which has transformed him into a constituted nature" (68). The connexion between young Genet's status as an object of the Other's gaze and his homosexuality is indeed so intimate that the adults' gaze itself is portrayed by Sartre in startlingly sexual terms:

"As a result of his original crisis ..., Genet finds himself immersed in a situation that might be called prehomosexual [see above] ... Sexually, Genet is first of all a raped child. The first rape was the gaze of the other, who took him by surprise, penetrated him, transformed him forever into an object. Let there be no misunderstanding: I am not saying that his original crisis resembles a rape, I say that it is one ... Genet has now been deflowered; an iron embrace has made him a woman. All that is left for him is to put up with being" (69).

The portrayal of Genet as a 'woman' continues throughout the rest of this passage, in which Sartre describes him as "the village whore" (70) who is "undressed by the eyes of decent folk as women are by those of males" (71). The ramifications of this repeated comparison between homosexuality and feminine sexuality in Saint Genet have already been discussed above. It is noteworthy that certain commentators have attempted to separate Sartre's conception of

femininity from his opinions on women: Joseph Halpern for example suggests that femininity "is not understood [by Sartre] as being restricted only to the female sex. It is rather a mode of being, an ontological choice, that is open to all" (72). Any such claim however is contradicted in Saint Genet, in which Sartre insists that the 'femininity' of the 'passive' homosexual is artificial: homosexual love "does not reflect him [the beloved] as a woman's love reflects the man she loves. It is addressed to a being who definitely has the appearance of a man and who is nevertheless an object, as is a woman" (73); "A false woman harbouring an imaginary passion for an appearance of a man and adorning herself in order to please him with the appearances of jewels: is not that the definition of the homosexual?" (74). Femininity here is not a 'gender-neutral' ontological choice: there is something 'false' about it when it is assumed by a homosexual man.

While young Genet acquiesces to his status as object of the gaze and being-for-others, and assumes it as his destiny ("[W]hat is important is not what other people make of us but what we ourselves make of what they have made of us ... [H]e has said, ... I will be the Thief" (75), Daniel, up until his confession to Mathieu, reacts to his situation with defiance. The idea that he is an object for others is, for Daniel, as we have already seen, "an in-tol-er-able notion, enough to make a man sweat with fury ... Oh, to live among the blind!" (76). But his decision to confess to Mathieu is in effect a decision to accept his status as object, and he displays the correlative sense of shame ("I am ashamed of being a homosexual because I am a homosexual" (77)).

Genet's assumption of his status as object is not, according to

Sartre's account, an act of bad faith but rather of heroism. He writes:

"[W]hat is important is not what people make of us but what we ourselves make of what they have made of us. By virtue of the option which they have taken on his being, the decent folk have made it necessary for a child to decide about himself prematurely ... He has chosen to live; he has said, in defiance of all, I will be the Thief. I deeply admire this child who grimly willed himself at an age when we were merely playing the servile buffoon" (78).

In the case of Daniel, on the other hand, the game of bad faith continues even after the assumption of his object status - or, to be more precise, by means of it. Having recognised the primacy of his being-for-others, Daniel goes on to employ the mechanism of flight from being-for-itself into being-for-others in order to perpetuate his bad faith: having recognised his status as object, he takes refuge in that status by rendering himself the eternal and irredeemable object of the gaze of God. Sartre describes this particular form of flight in Being and Nothingness:

"If ... I conceive of the 'they' as a subject before whom I am ashamed, then it can not become an object without being scattered into a plurality of Others; and if I posit it as the absolute unity of the subject which can in no way become an object, I thereby posit the eternity of my being-as-object and so perpetuate my shame. This is shame before God; that is, recognition of my being-an-object before a subject which can never become an object. By the same stroke I realise my object-state in the absolute and hypostasise it. The position of God is accompanied by a reification of my object-ness. Or better yet, I posit my being-an-object-for-God as more real than my For-itself; I exist alienated and I cause myself to learn from outside what I must be. This is the origin of fear before God" (79).

This process of making oneself an object before God (which constitutes the second phase of the 'Story of the Homosexual' as I described it in the introduction to this chapter) is, in Daniel's case, a continuation

of the bad faith which, in The Age of Reason, made him long to be the object of another's contempt. Daniel's bizarre 'religious' experiences occur in The Reprieve. Daniel by now is married to the heavily pregnant Marcelle, but despite his marriage and his confession to Mathieu, his situation as portrayed in The Age of Reason appears to have changed surprisingly little: he still longs for the judgement of others to make him 'be' a homosexual. On holiday in the country with Marcelle, Daniel is distressed to find himself admiring the good looks of the hotel-keeper's son: "[T]hat lovely body demanded the touch of a sculptor, it ought to be reproduced in clay. Daniel sat up straight in his armchair ... This won't do - I mustn't drift into that again. I'm too old for it now" (80). The 'little trick' that Daniel wanted to play upon himself by marrying Marcelle has not, it seems, been much of a success; nor, for that matter, has his attempt to make himself believe that he is a homosexual by telling Mathieu about it: "I am a paederast - he uttered the words, and words they too remained, they passed him by" (81). What he longs for above all is to be a homosexual as a table is a table, or a statue a statue:

"If I had been an insensible stone figure, ... I should stand, a fantastic, white-eyed statue, without a purpose, without a care: then I might have come face to face with myself. Not so as to accept myself - Heaven forbid! but becoming at last the pure object of my own hatred ... Why can't I be what I am, paederast, villain, coward, a loathsome object that doesn't even manage to exist ... [H]e almost laughed aloud at the thought of how respectable he must look. Idiot! He was sick of thinking what he looked like, sick of looking at himself; especially as, when I look at myself, I am two people. I want to be: in the unseeing darkness. To extinguish myself. Extinguish the inner eye. 'Extinguish.' To be a paederast, as an oak is an oak ... Why can't I be what they see, what Mathieu sees - and Ralph, with his filthy little mind?" (82).

In confessing to Mathieu, he has at least made it impossible for himself to deny his homosexuality outright in the way that the homosexual in Being and Nothingness does; but, since another now knows of his homosexuality, he goes to the other extreme and wishes only to be that object that Mathieu and others see. It is at precisely this point that Daniel has his first 'religious' experience:

"... [I]t comes, it comes. It clove him like a scythe, extraordinary, heartbreaking and pleasurable. At long last the husk bursts and opens, I am myself for all eternity, paederast, villain, coward. I am seen; no, not even that; it sees me. He was the object of a look. A look that searched him to the depths, pierced him like a knife-thrust, and was not his own look: an impenetrable look, the embodiment of night, awaiting him in his deepest self, and condemning him to be himself, coward, hypocrite, paederast for all eternity ..." (83).

It is striking that this gaze which fixes Daniel is experienced in sexual terms, like the gaze of the adults by whom Genet is accused: 'extraordinary, heartbreaking and pleasurable'; "[H]ere was this strange, strange joy, more intense than all the pleasures of the flesh; the Look" (84). The difference is that for Genet the primacy of being-for-others is merely the origin of his homosexuality, whereas for Daniel, bad faith converts it into an alibi as well. His ecstatic experience of 'the Look' frees him at last from the anguish of the for-itself which 'is what it is not and is not what it is'; as the table is the table, Daniel is now himself, 'paederast for all eternity'.

In this first episode, the subjectivity behind the look is unidentified - it is experienced only as 'the eternity of being-as-object' before 'the absolute unity of the subject which can in no way become an object'. It is only later that Daniel identifies 'the Look' as that of God: "God looked at Daniel. Shall I call him God? .... I

felt sure there was something. Indeed I've always done everything for the benefit of an eye-witness. A man evaporates without an eye-witness" (85). Being-for-itself in fact constantly evaporates by definition, since it is a process of perpetual transcendence, but Daniel has by now given up on the project of being-for-itself. He addresses his newly-found God in tones of shame:

"Here I am as thou hast made me, a vile coward, irredeemable. Thou lookest at me, and all hope departs: I am weary of my efforts to escape myself But I know that, beneath thy eye, I can no longer escape myself. I shall enter [the church], I shall stand among those kneeling women, like a monument of iniquity. I shall say: 'I am Cain. Well? Thou hast made me, now sustain me.' Marcelle's look, Mathieu's look, Bobby's look, my cats' look: they always stopped short at my skin. Mathieu, I am a paederast. I am, I am, I am a paederast, God help me!" (86).

'Here I am as thou hast made me'; 'all inverts are ashamed of being so, it's part of their make-up': Daniel has now succeeded in both reifying his own object-ness and simultaneously presenting that reified 'nature' as the product and responsibility of an absolute Subject. It is significant that the addressee of Daniel's thoughts in this passage slips at one point between God and Mathieu: it is not, after all, God as such whom he is addressing, but God as the representative of an abstract and unified Other, the most important concrete instance of which for Daniel is of course Mathieu, the one who 'knows'. Indeed it is Mathieu again to whom Daniel chooses to confide his experience of the gaze of God. In a letter to Mathieu, Daniel writes: "I am seen, therefore I am. I need no longer bear the responsibility of my turbid and disintegrating self: he who sees me causes me to be: I am as he sees me" (87). At last he has achieved the being of a statue, a 'monument of iniquity' in the eyes

of both God and Mathieu, who is perhaps in this respect the representative of Daniel's God on earth: "Hated, despised, sustained, a presence supports me to continue thus for ever. I am infinite and infinitely guilty. But I am, Mathieu, I am. Before God and before men, I am" (88). Daniel's strange need nevertheless to continue to affirm himself before Mathieu perhaps foreshadows the impermanence of this new God's existence, which has apparently disappeared without trace in Iron in the Soul.

In a remarkably similar move, Genet too transforms himself from object of the gaze of others - of adults and, later, of the larger society of 'decent folk' which condemns him - into the object of the gaze of God, the abstract and transcendent Other. Sartre describes the transformation in Saint Genet:

"So Genet changes witnesses. This is a new reversal. Thus far, he has been trying to see himself through the gaze of Others. His consciousness was an eye which peered into the semi-darkness in an attempt to perceive Genet as an object. He now resigns himself to never being an object to himself, provided that he be an object in the eyes of an absolute and benevolent witness. This means that he wants to be Genet in the eyes of a God of love" (89).

This passage describing Genet's transformation into "a Saint, a martyr" (90) is also an almost perfect summary of Daniel's 'religious' experience in The Reprieve. Unable to regard himself as an object, unable to bear any longer the evanescence of the for-itself, the homosexual makes himself an object beneath the gaze of 'a God of love', a God benevolent enough to sustain him in his being-for-others (even Daniel's God, who sees all that is most contemptible in him, is a God of love: "[T]hou seest me and I serve thee ... I am thy creature, thou lovest thyself in me" (91)). Genet, like Daniel ('I am

Cain') bears his being-for-others as a mark of Cain:

"So Cain flees from the sight of God. The power of becoming an object, which has devolved upon all of us, has been exaggerated in him and been transformed into a permanent objectivity: visibility is his very substance; he is because he is perceived. For him, the world, even before it is divided into trees, rivers, houses, animals and people, is a gaze that draws him from nothingness, envelops him, condemns him. Things are eyes. They keep him at a distance ... In order to defend himself he steps back and views himself in perspective; he looks at himself being looked at ... He is the sole object of those millions of eyes and his sole object" (92).

Genet and Daniel, of course, are not the same: while Daniel retreats into cowardice and bad faith, Genet, as we have already seen, "wills his own misfortune and failure" (93) and thus ultimately achieves a dialectical path "from being to existence" (94). By willing himself as the object which the Other sees, Genet paradoxically asserts his own subjectivity:

"[H]is consciousness poses the being of the Other as essential and regards itself as inessential ... Strictly speaking, in order to be able to decide as to what will be the essential and what the inessential, consciousness must already be conscious of being sovereign, therefore essential. In other words, Genet must decide upon his servitude" (95).

This decision by Genet deliberately to become the evildoer that the Other perceives him to be is what marks him off from Daniel, for Daniel abdicates his subjectivity and posits himself as object 'for all eternity', whereas Genet recognises the impossibility of such an abdication: "Is it possible to will oneself, at the same time and in the same connexion, as a pure object and as an absolute subject? ... [T]his invisible God is too abstract; Genet's subjection is too deliberate" (96). (This is the origin of "the whirligig of being and appearance, of the imaginary and the real" (97) that Sartre so greatly admires in Genet's works, for to perform a wholly evil act one must

oneself consider the act evil and therefore must wish not to perform it: "I shall know unmistakably that an action is evil when the very idea that I might commit it horrifies me ... [I]t is the horror itself that ought to be my most powerful motive" (98).) The abdication is ultimately impossible for Daniel too, as the absence of God in Iron in the Soul demonstrates, and, as we shall shortly see, Daniel ends by asserting his subjectivity in a way that perhaps makes him resemble Genet more closely than Sartre's apparent condemnation of the former and admiration for the latter would suggest.

Where Genet and Daniel are alike, however, even at this stage, is in their status as objects before God, which derives not from the good or bad faith in which they act but from that primacy of being-for-others in which homosexuality originates. It is interesting to note in this connexion Simone de Beauvoir's analysis of the 'religious' experiences of women in The Second Sex. Women according to de Beauvoir, like homosexuals according to Sartre, place undue emphasis on their being-for-others, which in the case of women leads to an over-emphasis of the importance of love:

"[M]ost often woman knows herself only as different, relative; her pour-autrui, relation to others, is confused with her very being; for her, love is not an intermediary 'between herself and herself' because she does not attain her subjective existence; she remains engulfed in this loving woman whom man has not only revealed, but created" (99).

It is precisely this impulse of the for-others that generates the fervent mysticism that de Beauvoir describes as being peculiar to women:

"Love has been assigned to woman as her supreme vocation, and when she directs it towards a man, she is seeking God in him; but if human love is denied her by her circumstances, if she is disappointed or

over-particular, she may choose to adore divinity in the person of God Himself" (100).

Sartre describes Genet's prostration before the gaze of the Other in terms of love also: "[H]is consciousness poses the being of the Other as essential and regards itself as inessential: this is Love" (101); "he wants to be Genet in the eyes of a God of love" (102). (At one point Sartre explicitly compares Genet's mysticism with that of "the swooning female worshipper who asks to be pierced by the divine sword" (103), noting that "[t]he language of the female saints has amazing erotic overtones" (104).) Moreover de Beauvoir describes the female mystic's experience as the experience of the gaze of God: "Woman seeks in divine love first of all what the amoureuse seeks in that of man: the exaltation of her narcissism; this sovereign gaze fixed attentively, amorously upon her is a miraculous godsend" (105). This divine gaze is for the woman what it is for Daniel in The Reprieve - that is, an eternal alibi and guarantor of being: "We can understand how intoxicating it is for the narcissist when all heaven becomes her mirror; her deified reflection is infinite like God himself, and it will never fade" (106). I have already discussed the covert and treacherous effects of Sartre's comparison of 'the homosexual' in Saint Genet with 'woman' as she is described in The Second Sex, although again it is interesting to note that it is a comparison which de Beauvoir herself makes in a rather bizarre footnote on the relative importance of dress for men and women: observing that women's fashions make women into "erotic objects" (107) while men's do not, she remarks that "[e]xception must be made for homosexuals, since they regard themselves, precisely, as sexual objects" (108). The footnote goes on to remark also that "fops ... call for a separate study" and

that "the current 'zoot-suitism' of American Negroes, with their bright-coloured and showily tailored garb, has very complex causes" (109), causes as to the nature of which de Beauvoir unfortunately fails to provide any information. Perhaps fashion, like bad faith, is "a speciality of inferior beings" (110); or perhaps, more to the point, the primacy of being-for-others is the common lot of all those to whom Sartre refers in Saint Genet as "relative beings" (111), those who, like women, are forced to occupy the reviled and contemptible position of 'the Other'.

## SECTION TWO: THE HOMOSEXUAL AS OTHER

### The homosexual's revenge

In the third and final stage of what I have been calling Sartre's 'Story of the Homosexual', the homosexual who, as the 'story' has developed, has become, either through heroism or through bad faith, the object of the others' gaze, takes his revenge on them and returns that gaze. It is important to realise that his gaze is not that of an existentially free subject or of a transcendent being-for-itself: he returns the gaze only at the end of the 'story', when he has already been constituted by the gaze of others. For Genet, as we have already seen, "[t]he gaze of the adults is a constituent power which has transformed him into a constituted nature" (112) - constituted nature, that is, a fixed and immutable essence, a being-in-itself; for Daniel the gaze of God has similarly constituted him as "himself, coward, hypocrite, paederast for all eternity" (113). At the final stage of the 'story', Genet is no longer the condemned

child or the saint and martyr, nor is Daniel any longer the grateful object of God's 'Look', but both men have already been firmly situated by Sartre as being objects before they are subjects; whether by an act of cowardice or an act of will, they are what they are, and what they are is evil.

Genet's evil, as I have already pointed out, is heroic, a deliberate assumption of the status of the criminal and homosexual Other that French bourgeois society has designated him: "He seizes upon the curse ... It was a constraint; he makes of it his mission" (114). The Other, in this sense - which is also the sense in which de Beauvoir uses it in The Second Sex - is the category to which the bourgeois citizen consigns all those acts and attributes which he (sic) refuses to accept as his own and against which he therefore asserts himself as such. As de Beauvoir puts it:

"[N]o group ever sets itself up as the One without at once setting up the Other over against itself ... In small-town eyes all persons not belonging to the village are 'strangers' and suspect; to the native of a country all who inhabit other countries are 'foreigners'; Jews are 'different' for the anti-Semite, Negroes are 'inferior' for American racists, aborigines are 'natives' for colonists, proletarians are the 'lower class' for the privileged" (115).

And, according to Saint Genet, criminals and homosexuals are 'evil' for the bourgeois citizens of the society whose adults first told the child Genet that he was a thief and thus produced in him that homosexuality which was the consequence of his being so named: "For the man in the street," Sartre writes, "there are evil acts, but it is always the Others who commit them" (116). The Other is thus the category onto which the citizen projects all the evil which lurks within himself and which he then punishes accordingly - it is, in

other words, the product of the citizen's bad faith:

"[T]he 'average Frenchman' ... adorns himself with the name of good citizen; ... it is he who preserves the idea of Evil, while science and law are tending to break away from it; it is he who, burning with desires that his morality condemns, has delivered himself from his negative freedom by throwing it like a flaming cloak on the members of a minority group whose acts he interprets on the basis of his own temptations" (117).

The value, for Sartre, of Genet's writing, lies in its power to confront the 'good citizen' with his own bad faith and to make him recognise as his own all the evil for which he has punished Genet and his kind:

"Genet, who has been a victim and instrument of the good citizen since childhood, is now able to avenge himself at last: he is going to apply to him the lex talionis. He will make that innocent discover the Other in himself; he will make him recognise the Other's most improper thoughts as his own; in short, he will make him experience with loathing his own wickedness" (118).

The final chapters of Saint Genet, which describe his 'metamorphosis' into a writer, therefore portray Genet as a defiant Other punishing his oppressors by forcing them to encounter all the evil to which he has been consigned and which he has assumed as his peculiar destiny. Genet's vengeful relationship to his readers is presented by Sartre as a resolution of his paradoxical situation as the wilful object of the Other's gaze:

"[T]his crafty hoodlum could enjoy at will the astonishment of decent people. He would see them seeing his image, and they would become objects for him precisely insofar as his reflection was an object for them. We have ... defined the work of art according to Genet: it is an object of horror, or rather it is Genet himself engendering himself by a criminal act as an object of universal horror and turning this horror into his glory because he has created himself in order to provoke it ... Haunted by the problem of the Other, which is his problem, Genet has spent his life meditating on the phenomenon

of embodiment. He had to make himself become the Other that he already was for the Others. He had tried everything, he had attempted to make himself be reflected by a mirror, by the eyes of a lover, by those of the beloved, to have himself possessed by the Other, to be himself as Other: each undertaking ended in failure. Recourse to art is his final attempt: thus far he has been unable to be his own cause except in imagination, since it was the Others who had first, and spontaneously, affected him with this otherness. He now realises this imagination in an object trap which forces the Others to see him as he wants to be seen ... At last he sees himself ..." (119).

Genet as writer is the homosexual triumphant: through the medium of his writing Genet is at last able to fulfil the dream of seeing himself as others see him, of realising his being-for-others. He is the evildoer that others perceive, but he also sees them seeing him and decides what they see: he has thus paradoxically attained the status of for-itself through the medium of the for-others. He makes the homosexual the subject of a gaze and so rescues him from the category of the Other: "When reading Genet we are ... tempted to ask ourselves: 'Does a homosexual exist? Does he think? Does he judge, does he judge us, does he see us?'" (120). But he does so, it should be remembered, not by denying or rejecting the evilness of homosexuality, but by accepting and assuming it.

In Iron in the Soul, Daniel too is transformed from object into subject of the gaze. His powerful experience of the look of God seemingly forgotten, it is now Daniel himself who 'possesses the right of seeing without being seen' as he wanders alone around Paris. France has been defeated by Germany, and Paris has been evacuated: the streets are almost totally empty. Daniel exults both in the victory of the Nazis and in his freedom from the gaze of his fellow Parisians; the fall of France and the evacuation of Paris represent

the defeat of the 'good citizens' by the forces of evil:

"For twenty years he had been on trial. There had been spies even beneath his bed. Every casual passer-by had been a witness for the prosecution, a judge, or both at once: every word he spoke could have been used in evidence against him. And now, in a flash - stampede! They were running, the lot of them, witnesses, judges, all the respectable folk, running beneath the blazing sun, the blue sky, and a threat of aircraft over their heads ...

"He walked with his eyes on the ground. He thrilled with pleasure ... He thought: Marcelle's pupping at Dax; Mathieu's probably a prisoner; Brunet's almost certainly got himself bumped off. All the witnesses against me are dead or thinking of other things. It is I who am making a come-back" (121).

Daniel is thus transformed from eternal object into sovereign subject by the brutal defeat of the 'witnesses' and 'respectable folk' by evil and terror, which he thenceforth embraces: "[T]oday the Reign of Evil begins. What joy!" (122).

As his solitary wandering through Paris continues, Daniel's gaze displays its power to reduce others to objects as he himself has been reduced in the past - and specifically to reduce others to sexual objects. In a chance encounter he meets the handsome young deserter Philippe on the banks of the Seine: "All his life seemed concentrated in his eyes, and, with his eyes, he devoured the slim young man who, in all innocence, had his back towards him and was leaning over the river" (123). Daniel has of course, as the reader is aware, subjected young men to his sexual gaze in this way many times - for example, the young man at the Fair in The Age of Reason, or the hotel-keeper's son in The Reprieve. But he is now free to exercise the power of his gaze in a way that he has not been hitherto:

"Daniel felt sick with anxiety ... He thought: 'Everything is going to begin again, everything - hope and wretchedness, shame and madness.' Then, suddenly, he remembered that France was finished: 'All things are permissible!' Warmth radiated out

from his stomach into his finger-tips, weariness left him, the blood beat in his temples" (124).

This apparent transformation from object to subject, however, does not last; unlike Genet's triumph, which he himself has achieved through craftiness and strength of will, Daniel's newly-found 'power' is merely the effect of external and contingent circumstances: his gaze is sovereign over Paris not because of any real change in the structure of his being but just because there is no-one else there. Ultimately, as he realises at the end of his last appearance in Iron in the Soul, his situation remains, and will remain, unchanged:

"He sat up on the bed and began to undress. This time, he decided, it [ie his affair with Philippe] was going to be serious. He felt sleepy and perfectly calm. He got up to fetch his pyjamas, clearly conscious of how calm he felt. 'It really is extraordinary,' he thought, 'that I'm not at all on edge.'

"At that precise moment he got the feeling that there was somebody behind him. He swung round. There was nobody, but suddenly the calmness of his mood was shattered, rent in two. 'Just the same old business over again!' - he knew it all backwards, could foresee precisely what would happen, could reckon minute by minute the years of misery that lay ahead, the daily toll of long, long years heavy with boredom and hopelessness, and, at the end of them, the squalid, inevitable end. It was all there. He looked at the shut door. He was breathing heavily. 'This time,' he thought, 'it'll be the end of me,' and in his mouth he could taste the bitterness of all the agonies still to come" (125).

'He got the feeling that there was somebody behind him': as long as Daniel's being-for-others remains his primary mode of being, any freedom or transcendence he attains will be purely illusory - just the same old business over again.

### The criminal and the traitor

Both Genet and Daniel manifest their Evil and Otherness through acts of crime and betrayal. For Genet, betrayal is the apotheosis of evil: the betrayal of a fellow criminal is a double crime, and therefore the most evil act of all:

"All at once, Genet has just discovered the greatest Evil: to betray. For betrayal is not a return to Good. It is the Evil which does evil to itself. Two negations are not equivalent to an affirmation: they get lost, tangled up in each other, in the mad darkness of the nay. Genet had discovered an immediate and tragic evil: crime. He will never be a criminal, but he can be the canker of crime, the gnawing parasite of Evil. Betrayal is, in effect, a parasitic crime since it has to be grafted on another crime. It is, so to speak, a second-degree crime. That suits Genet to a T. His mind is made up: he will be a traitor" (126).

Genet's homosexuality, it must be remembered, is a result, according to Sartre, of his being a thief or, to be more exact, of his being made into a thief by the accusatory gaze of adults and 'good citizens': it is merely another facet of the evil Other he has had to become. His decision to become a traitor, which Sartre situates long before his 'metamorphosis' into a writer, nevertheless in many ways foreshadows that metamorphosis. Betrayal in Saint Genet is described as the subjection of society to the gaze of the Other, a sudden reversal of terms between subject and object:

"[T]he society originally established itself against an enemy, against Another ..., and it knows that to that Other it is the Enemy, it is Evil, but it does not care about this, for it is outside ... But if it should suspect that there is a traitor in its midst, everything changes: the Other's gaze, suddenly conveyed within its soul, petrifies it; ... what was most private becomes public, subjectivity changes into an object. Above all, what makes the situation intolerable is that it itself has ... produced the traitor who looks at it with the Other's eyes" (127).

At this point in his development, it is only the 'society' of

criminals which Genet betrays to the police; it is not until much later that he will manage to betray the society of 'good citizens' by refusing to remain an object and exposing the shameful truth, that the evil of the Other, including the evil of betrayal, is nothing else than the evil of the 'good citizen' himself: "[T]he traitor's gaze is still our gaze; it is a perversion of our own eyes" (128). In the meantime, Genet's love of evil and betrayal results in an ambivalent attitude towards Nazism:

"I can testify to the fact that during the occupation he [Genet] had no particular liking for the Germans. No doubt he admired, on principle, Nazi malevolence. But then what? They were victors, their triumphant Evil was likely to become institutional, it would be a new order, a new Good ... When they were defeated, routed, humiliated, he began to love them, and I heard him defend them publicly when it was highly dangerous to do so" (129).

Daniel too, in less ambiguous fashion, admires Nazi malevolence and welcomes the occupation of Paris as an opportunity for revenge on all those 'good citizens' who have hitherto been 'witnesses' against him. The gloating monologue, already quoted above, with which Sartre provides Daniel in Iron in the Soul could almost be attributed to Sartre's Genet too:

"[H]e noticed a poster printed in white and red, stuck on a hoarding. He went up to it and read the words WE SHALL WIN BECAUSE WE ARE THE STRONGER. He flung out his arms, grinning with a sense of delight and release: they're running, running: they've never stopped running. He raised his head, laughing to high Heaven, and drew deep breaths. For twenty years he had been on trial ... And now, in a flash - stampede! They were running, the lot of them, witnesses, judges, all the respectable folk ... The walls of Paris were still clamorously extolling their merits and their pride: we are the stronger, the more virtuous, the sacred champions of democracy, the defenders of Poland, of human dignity, or heterosexual love ... But they were running, mad with terror, flinging themselves flat in the ditches,

begging for mercy ... They are running and crawling. I, the Criminal, reign over their city in their stead" (130).

The triumph of evil has punished the 'respectable folk' who once judged and condemned Daniel as the homosexual Other for their hypocrisy and bad faith, much as the celebration of evil and the reign of the criminal in Genet's writings will do. Moreover, since Daniel continues to be in bad faith, the 'institutionalisation' of evil by the Nazi victory is for him a prospect to be welcomed, for the reification of evil as a 'new order', "the victory of contempt, of violence and bad faith" (131), will render evil a 'thing' for Daniel to be, once again, as a table is a table, thus providing him at one stroke with an alibi for both his being and his revenge. He therefore prepares to betray his fellows by actively collaborating with the Nazis, and attempts to persuade Philippe to join him:

"...[T]he historical coincidence has been a godsend for you. You want to undermine bourgeois morality, don't you? Well, you've got the Germans now to give you a helping hand. They'll make a clean sweep of all this junk right enough! You'll have the delightful spectacle of respectable householders positively crawling and licking the conqueror's boots, just asking to have their fat bums kicked. They're the people who have really been beaten in this war. What an opportunity to show your contempt!"  
"He laughed till the tears came. 'Oh, what a spring cleaning there's going to be!' he said: then, with a quick swing round: 'You've got to learn to love them.'

"Philippe looked startled. 'Who've I got to learn to love?' he asked.

"The Germans: they are our allies.'

"Love the Germans? But - but - I don't know them.'

"We'll get plenty of opportunity to know them, never fear. We shall be asked to dine with the Gauleiter, with the Field-Marshal. They'll trot us round in their great black Mercedes cars, while the Parisians'll have to trudge it on foot'" (132).

In his article of 1945, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un collaborateur?', Sartre claims that the attitude of the collaborator towards the Nazis

contains a "curious mixture of masochism and homosexuality" (133) and, furthermore, that the homosexuals of Paris supplied the ranks of the collaborators with "numerous brilliant new recruits" (134). He ascribes this to a combination of femininity and bad faith:

"Having posited strength as the source of right and as the exclusive possession of the master, the collaborator has kept cunning for himself. Thus he recognises his weakness, and this priest of virile strength and the masculine virtues contents himself with the weapons of the weak, the weapons of women. You will find everywhere, in articles by Chateaubriant, Drieu and Brasillach, curious metaphors which represent the relations between France and Germany as a sexual union in which France plays the woman's part. And most certainly the feudal connexion of the collaborator to his master has a sexual side. For all that one may be able to imagine the state of mind behind collaboration, femininity appears in it as its climate [on y devine comme un climat de féminité]. The collaborator speaks in the name of strength, but he is not strength: he is the cunning, the shrewdness which leans on strength, he is even charm and seduction ..." (135).

This 'femininity' which forms the climate of collaboration is apparent in Daniel's reaction to the sight of the invading German troops as they enter Paris, a sight which provokes him to an ecstatic, even sexual response:

"An intolerable, delicious thrill mounted in him from thighs to head: there was a mist before his eyes: his breath was coming in pants. To himself he said: 'Just like butter! - they are going through Paris just like a knife through butter!' Other faces passed before his dimmed vision, more and more of them, each as beautiful as the last ... He longed to be a woman so that he might load them with flowers" (136).

I have already discussed the dangerous hidden agenda behind such comparisons of homosexuality with femininity (137). The comparisons rest on Sartre's contention that women and homosexuals are alike in that they give their being-for-others priority over being-for-itself,

and hence are objects before they are subjects. This is precisely the reason for the extraordinarily sexual nature of Daniel's pleasure at the sight of the Germans: not only does he welcome them as the conquerors of the 'respectable folk' of Paris, but he also welcomes them as his conquerors, the glorious victors beneath whose gaze he can prostrate himself as vanquished object:

"In the whole length of the avenue he was the only Frenchman, the only civilian, and the whole of the enemy army was looking at him. He had no sense of fear. He surrendered with confidence to those myriad eyes. He thought: 'Our conquerors!' - and was caught up on a wave of happiness ... [H]e stood there confronted by the angels of hate, fury and extermination whose gaze was heavy with the gifts of childhood" (138).

The 'gifts of childhood' are perhaps what they were for Genet - the 'gift' of being seen and named by a sovereign and adult gaze, a 'gift' against which Genet struggles all his life but to which Daniel, in his desire to 'be', would doubtless surrender as to a wonderful luxury. Thus when Daniel gazes at the Germans in their turn - "Boldly he returned their stare" (139) - he does so not to regard them as objects or to engage them in the battle of looks - that battle, like all the others, is already lost - but so as to adore them, as the amoureuse as de Beauvoir describes her might gaze at her lover (140): "Boldly he returned their stare, taking his fill of their fairness, of the sun-tanned faces in which eyes showed like glacier lakes, of the narrow waists and the unbelievable length of the muscular legs. He murmured: 'How beautiful they are!'" (141).

Thus both Daniel and Genet choose crime and treachery as the particular expressions of their evil and Otherness. Genet first becomes the thief he is accused of being, and then becomes the traitor who, as the betrayer of his friends, is reviled by all; Daniel becomes

a collaborator, a criminal who betrays the 'respectable folk' who for so long judged him as a criminal. For both men, crime and treachery are the paths to revenge against all those who have been 'witnesses' against them and as whose 'Others' they have been cast: Genet's writing is a betrayal of the society of 'good citizens' who, as his readers, are at last forced to confront the evil they have hitherto contrived to deny in themselves; Daniel's collaboration is a betrayal of the France which, when it championed 'virtue', 'dignity' and 'heterosexual love', did so against him whom it excluded as the shameful Other. Moreover, for both men, the crime and betrayal which each has chosen is, according to Sartre's account, intimately connected to his homosexuality. Genet is a homosexual because he is a thief, and becomes a traitor so as to make his evil even greater than that of a thief; Daniel's desire for collaboration arises from a 'curious mixture of masochism and homosexuality', from the primacy of his being-for-others which for Sartre amounts to 'femininity' and from the bad faith which still makes him long to 'be' a vanquished and irredeemable object. Genet succeeds in his revenge; for Daniel, whose 'allies', the Nazis, will themselves ultimately be defeated and whose continuing bad faith will never allow him to achieve that degree of subjectivity which Genet manages to grasp as a writer, any lasting success, as he himself finally comes to realise, is impossible. Nonetheless, for both Genet and Daniel, the 'Story of the Homosexual' is a story of evil, crime and betrayal, regardless of whether its ending is a happy or a sad one, or of whether its protagonist is a 'salaud' or a hero of existentialism.

### Mirror images

My discussion has focussed on what I consider to be the two major themes in Sartre's characterisation of homosexuality: the homosexual as object, and the homosexual as Other. In fact these two themes are not as easily separated as my discussion here might suggest, as is illustrated by the recurrent motif of the mirror in Sartre's writing on the subject. In Saint Genet, Sartre argues that the Other onto whom one projects one's own evil becomes, in a sense, one's own mirror:

"Evil is a projection. As for the evildoer, we all have our own: he is a man whose situation makes it possible for him to present to us in broad daylight and in objective form the obscure temptations of our freedom. If you want to know a decent man, look for the vices he hates most in others ... The enemy is our twin brother, our image in the mirror" (142).

But the mirror-image is important not just because he is the Other as 'evildoer' but also because of the importance of his being-for-others and his status as object:

"A mirror is consciousness in reverse. To the right-thinking man, it reveals only the appearance he offers to others. Sure of possessing the truth, concerned only with being reflected in his undertaking, he gives the mirror only this carcass to gnaw at. But for the woman and for the criminal, for all relative beings, this carcass is what is essential. If Genet looks at himself in the mirror, it is not primarily out of homosexual coquetry; he wants to understand his secret ... The soul is the visible body and, at the same time, it is the being in the back of consciousness ... Murmuring 'Genet the Thief,' Genet gobbles up his reflection with his eyes. He tries to enjoy it. If only he could flatten himself against the glass so that the image could enter him entirely and he the image, if only he could ... drown in the eyes of the Others and at the same time wrest his being from them in order to be possessed by it ...

"Narcissism? No doubt, but narcissism is not primary, any more than is pride or homosexuality: 'One must first be guilty' ... The mirror is the eyes of Others, and the dream of Narcissus expresses

his secret will to pluck out those eyes and graft them on himself" (143).

Genet gazes at his own image in the mirror in an attempt to see himself as others see him - to realise his being-for-others, which since he is only what others perceive him to be ('Genet the Thief'), is 'what is essential', his 'secret': "Genet seeks his Being" (144). His fascination with his own image is not the result, as such, of either his homosexuality or his narcissism: it is, rather, a manifestation of that state of being which causes his narcissism and homosexuality - and his being a criminal also, for he is a thief because others see him as one, that is, because they project evil onto him and make the 'secret' of his being into not just a mirror image, but their own mirror image. In the mirror the image of the object and the image of the Other are united.

Mirrors also feature largely in Sartre's descriptions of Daniel, most particularly in The Age of Reason (before Daniel has been able to enlist the help of either God or the Nazis to realise his being). The chapter of The Age of Reason which gives the reader her or his very first direct encounter with Daniel - the chapter describing his attempt to drown the cats - both begins and ends with Daniel gazing at himself in a mirror: "Naked to the waist, Daniel was shaving in front of his wardrobe mirror" (145); "Daniel walked up to the mirror and inspected his dark and comely countenance" (146). Like Genet, Daniel gazes at his own reflexion in order to discover what others see: "He observed in the mirror his dark, handsome, blue-jowled visage. 'That's what excites them'" (147). His reflexion also provides him with hints and prophecies about his homosexuality. His image warns him before he decides to visit the Fair, for example: "On leaving his

office, Daniel had surveyed himself in the lobby mirror, and thought, 'It's starting again,' and he had been afraid" (148); after his sexual encounter with Ralph, he uses Ralph's mirror to interrogate the reflected images of them both:

"Near the attic window, between the photographs of Marlene Dietrich and of Robert Taylor, hung an advertisement-calendar bearing a small and rather tarnished mirror. Daniel approached it, and bending down a little, set about retying the knot of his necktie ... In the mirror, behind him, almost effaced by the half-darkness and the white discolorations on the mirror, he could see Ralph's haggard, harsh profile, and his hands began to tremble: he longed to squeeze that thin neck with its protuberant Adam's apple, and feel it crack beneath his fingers. Ralph turned his head towards the glass, he did not know that Daniel was looking at him, and eyed him with a queer expression. 'He's looking positively murderous,' thought Daniel with a shiver ... 'One day a fellow like that will come and knock me out from behind.' The youthful face would expand in the mirror, and that would be the end - the infamous death that was his due" (149).

It is Ralph's mirror-image, not Ralph himself, which reveals to Daniel how Ralph sees him, how he sees Ralph, and how homosexuality inevitably goes hand in hand with crime and evil, 'the infamous death that was his due'.

Perhaps the most striking illustration of the importance of the mirror in this respect is in the character of Inez in In Camera, the play to which I referred at the beginning of this chapter. Inez is a woman and hence already a 'relative being'; she is also a criminal, since she is in Hell for having destroyed her lover's marriage and driven her to murder and suicide; and she is a lesbian. She and her fellow-inmates Garcin and Estelle have been condemned to spend eternity together in Hell, in a room without mirrors. The absence of mirrors, and the three characters' consequent dependence on one another for information about their own appearance, is an important

feature of their Hell: as Inez herself says to Garcin, "Why, you've even stolen my face; you know it and I don't!" (150). But Inez' important role in this respect is not to seek her own reflexion, but to provide Estelle with hers. When Estelle despairs of being able to apply her make-up without a mirror, Inez offers to act as mirror for her: "Now ask me questions. I'll be as candid as any looking-glass" (151). But when she refuses to respond to Inez' flirtatious advances, the mirror turns traitor:

"ESTELLE: I don't make friends with women very easily.  
"INEZ: Not with postal clerks, you mean? Hullo, what's that - that nasty red spot at the bottom of your cheek? A pimple?  
"ESTELLE: A pimple? Oh, how simply foul! Where?  
"INEZ: There ... You know the way they catch larks - with a mirror? I'm your lark-mirror, my dear, and you can't escape me ... There isn't any pimple, not a trace of one. So what about it? Suppose the mirror started telling lies?" (152).

Up until this episode it has been Inez who, of the three, has been the one to recognise frankly both her own and the others' past evil, and to accept the fact that she is now in Hell for what she has done; while Garcin and Estelle try to invent excuses for themselves, Inez exclaims: "Yes, we are criminals - murderers - all three of us. We're in Hell, my pets, they never make mistakes, and people aren't damned for nothing" (153). The 'mirror' episode with Estelle prompts the three of them first to quarrel, and then to confess their respective crimes.

As a Sartrean lesbian, Inez is an interesting character: references to homosexuality in Sartre's works are almost exclusively to male homosexuality, and Sartre nowhere, to my knowledge, offers an account of lesbianism as he does of male homosexuality in both Being and Nothingness and Saint Genet (154). The Sartrean lesbian is

thus a very rare beast, and it is difficult to judge to what extent Sartre considers lesbianism to be 'like' male homosexuality and to what extent he considers it, on the other hand, to be 'like' male heterosexuality. Certainly Inez is portrayed in In Camera as an active and conscious rival to Garcin for Estelle's affections, which seems to suggest the latter interpretation (and as a stereotypical man-hater to boot: when Garcin holds Estelle in his arms, Inez tries to stop him, crying, "Let her alone. Don't paw her with your dirty man's hands" (155)); moreover, before she died and came to Hell, Inez was another man's successful rival for another woman's affections, and the affair ended in the deaths of all three of them. This active sexual aggressiveness on Inez' part, and her open hostility towards both Garcin and, to varying degrees as the play progresses, Estelle, tends to mark her out as a typically 'masculine' (within the terms of the active/passive heterosexual division of labour) Sartrean consciousness, ready to engage, in this eternity to be spent under the others' gazes, in a ferocious battle of looks.

But in certain ways Inez' role is also like that of Genet as homosexual Other: recognising herself as evil, she eventually forces her fellows, as Genet forces his readers, to recognise the evil in themselves. Suppose the mirror started telling lies? Suppose the Other started writing novels, telling stories? Estelle, like Genet's readers, gazes into the homosexual mirror in the hope that what she sees will reaffirm her own image of herself; but the mirror takes its revenge and reveals an ugly reflexion that Estelle, like Genet's readers, does not want to see. Estelle's words to Inez could equally well be addressed by the 'good citizen' to Genet: "You scare me

rather. My reflexion in the glass never did that; of course, I knew it so well. Like something I had tamed" (156). If the homosexual/mirror starts talking back, the beast escapes, and "we recognise, with horror, a subject" (157). Inez in this respect is a homosexual like any other.

### CONCLUSION

Thus Sartre's concept of the homosexual is as both object and Other, a 'relative being' more or less condemned to evil. Homosexuality is the result of the primary being-for-others which leads the subject to regard itself, first and foremost, as an object. The primacy of being-for-others effectively reduces the homosexual to an 'empty space' onto which the 'good citizen' may project his own evil. Moreover, as I hope my discussion above has shown, Sartre's claim that women and homosexuals share this primacy of being-for-others suggests either that he believes that women and homosexuals simply are 'relative beings' in some inevitable way - that to be 'relative beings' is their essence or nature, 'a part of their make-up' - or that he believes that homosexuality is a disorder of being, a product of the oppression of what in Saint Genet he calls "castoffs: abandoned children, 'the poor,' bourgeois who have lost their status, 'lumpenproletariat,' déclassé of all kinds, in short, all the wretched" (158), and that the overthrow of oppression will also be the 'cure' for the homosexuality it produces. Inez' ambiguous position between (active) male rivalry and (passive, 'feminine') male homosexual 'Otherness' merely serves to underline the poverty of

Sartre's representations of sexuality and sexual difference, confined within the heterosexual division of labour as it emerged in the previous chapter (159).

In postulating being-for-others as the root of homosexuality, Sartre characterises the homosexual as radically unfree, unfree in the very structure of his being. The being of transcendence is being-for-itself; as a being who experiences himself primarily through his being-for-others, the homosexual regards himself as an object rather than as a free and transcendent subject. This seems to suggest that, in order to attain the transcendence of the authentic subject, the homosexual would have somehow to renounce his homosexuality. Indeed, in order to become a writer, Sartre's Genet must undergo, if not a conversion to heterosexuality - such a conversion would remove him from the realm of the Other and so destroy his reason, in Sartre's terms, for writing - but a transformation from 'active' to 'passive' homosexual which problematises his status as object and forces him to a new act of will: "[N]ow Genet finds himself forced to play at being a male [sic]: in extending to all domains, this sexual transformation is going to lead Genet from aestheticism to art" (160). Even when he achieves the "pure freedom of the artist" (161), Genet's freedom is still a freedom of the for-others: Genet writes so as to be able to "see them [decent people] seeing his image" (162) and to "[force] the Others to see him as he wants to be seen" (163). He does not renounce his status as object; he merely manipulates the gaze of others so as to appear as he wishes to be seen.

The Sartrean homosexual is not only unfree at the heart of his being; he is also a criminal and evil. As being-for-others he is the

repository of all the attributes that the 'good citizen' consigns to the realm of the Other. He may accept that situation in more or less conscious bad faith, as does Daniel (most particularly in his attitude to the Nazis in Iron in the Soul); or he may struggle with it and attempt to adapt it to his own ends, as does Sartre's Genet. In either case, his homosexuality and his criminality are inextricably linked: he is homosexual because he is being-for-others before he is being-for-itself; he is Other and evil for the same reason.

All of this rests upon the vital importance of the look in Sartre's philosophy. It is the battle of looks which defines the positions of 'subject' and 'object' as such, and it is the battle which the homosexual as being-for-others has already lost at the outset. This is very much Sartre's characterisation of homosexuality: if, for example, Sartre had accepted Genet's own account of his homosexuality, that he became a homosexual before he became a thief and not vice versa, the entire structure and argument of Saint Genet, and its analysis of the phenomenon of homosexuality as such, including the importance of being-for-others and the status of the child Genet as 'object', would have to have been very different. But, as I have already suggested in the introduction to this chapter, by the time he started working on Saint Genet Sartre seems already to have made up his mind: Daniel came before 'Genet', and Daniel, who, as the critic Richard Coe puts it, "is the clearest symbolic incarnation of Sartre's theory of 'le regard'" (164), is a being who is seen. Sartre's theory of homosexuality as caused by the primacy of being-for-others is developed within the context of his definition of the Other, in Being and Nothingness, as "on principle the one who looks at me" (165). That look is what essentialises the homosexual as object and

Other: it is the "constituent power which has transformed him into a constituted nature" (166). The homosexual is the object of the look, you can't be the former without being the latter; which amounts to saying that all inverts are necessarily so, it's part of their make-up. The homosexual has a 'make-up', is defined as unfree by nature, because he is a homosexual, in a way that the heterosexual is not: one can only conclude that, for Sartre, a homosexual is always something less than a human subject.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE GAZE AND THE SENSUAL HIERARCHY

#### INTRODUCTION

Sense data and sensory perception play a vital role in Sartre's philosophy in Being and Nothingness. The being of consciousness is being-for-itself which rises up in transcendence and negation of the being of objects, being-in-itself: the sensory perception of objects reveals to consciousness the nature of being of that world of the in-itself which consciousness is not: "Quality [ie the sensorily perceived being of an in-itself] is the indication of what we are not and of the mode of being which is denied to us. The perception of white is the consciousness of the impossibility on principle for the For-itself to exist as colour - that is, by being what it is" (1). Not only is sensory perception the only means by which the For-itself can encounter being-in-itself, but according to Sartre the sensory perception of being-in-itself is indistinguishable from that very being. Being-in-itself is nothing other than the 'qualities' through which its being is revealed to sensory perception:

"[T]he yellow of the lemon is not a subjective mode of apprehending the lemon; it is the lemon ... In fact the lemon is extended throughout its qualities, and each of its qualities is extended throughout each of the others. It is the sourness of the lemon which is yellow, it is the yellow of the lemon which is sour" (2).

Thus no one sense or mode of perception is privileged over any other: all senses function equally to apprehend the objects which present themselves to consciousness, and no one sense is more 'objectifying'

or transcendent than any other:

"Quality, whatever it may be, is revealed to us as a being. The odour which I suddenly breathe in with my eyes closed, even before I have referred it to an odorous object, is already an odour-being and not a subjective impression. The light which strikes my eyes in the morning through my closed eyelids is already a light-being" (3).

In fact it is not until Sartre comes to the problem of the for-itself's apprehension of the existence of other consciousnesses that the sense of sight takes up its privileged status. The perception of 'quality' is the perception of being-in-itself only, not of consciousness: "[T]he quality is the presence of the absolute contingency of being, its indifferent irreducibility" (4). Such forms of perception can therefore reveal the presence of the Other as a body or object of consciousness, but they cannot reveal the Other as a consciousness in its own right:

"This woman whom I see coming toward me, this man who is passing by in the street, this beggar who I hear calling before my window, all are for me objects - of that there is no doubt. Thus it is true that at least one of the modalities of the Other's presence to me is object-ness. But we have seen that if this relation of object-ness is the fundamental relation between the Other and myself, then the Other's existence remains purely conjectural" (5).

If one's fellows are perceived only in the manner in which objects are perceived, then there is no way of knowing that "this voice which I hear is that of a man and not a song on a phonograph" (6) or that "the passerby whom I see is a man and not a perfected robot" (7) - no way of knowing, that is, that the Other as such exists at all. What distinguishes the being of the Other from the being of simple objects, as we have seen in previous chapters, is my apprehension that the Other can see, and in particular can make me the object of her or his own look in the way that I have made the Other the object of my look:

"[I]f the Other-as-object is defined in connexion with the world as the object which sees what I see, then my fundamental connexion with the Other-as-subject must be able to be referred back to my permanent possibility of being seen by the Other. It is in and through the revelation of my being-as-object for the Other that I must be able to apprehend the presence of his being-as-subject ...

"Thus this relation which I call 'being-seen-by-another', far from being merely one of the relations signified by the word man, represents an irreducible fact ... 'Being-seen-by-the-Other' is the truth of 'seeing-the-Other'" (8).

From this point onwards, sensory perception is in effect collapsed into visual perception: apprehension of and relations with the Other are described by Sartre in terms of a visual paradigm, that famous 'battle of looks' which I have already discussed, even when the sensory data from which one's apprehension of the Other derives are not themselves visual:

"Every look directed toward me is manifested in connexion with the appearance of a sensible form in our perceptive field, but contrary to what might be expected, it is not connected with any determined form. Of course what most often manifests a look is the convergence of two ocular globes in my direction. But the look will be given just as well on occasion when there is a rustling of branches, or the sound of a footstep followed by silence, of the slight opening of a shutter, or a light movement of a curtain. During an attack men who are crawling through the brush apprehend as a look to be avoided, not two eyes, but a white farm-house which is outlined against the sky at the top of a little hill" (9).

Moreover such manifestations "never refer ... to the actual eye of the watcher hidden behind the curtain, behind a window in the farmhouse. In themselves they are already eyes" (10). One does not any longer need eyes in order to see, because all relations with and perceptions of the existence of the Other, even when the Other is not physically present, are visual. Far from the richness of sensory experience offered by the perception of a lemon through its 'qualities', we now

suddenly find Sartre baldly stating that "to perceive is to look at" (11).

But why is to perceive to 'look at'? A reading of the text at this point suggests that the privilege of vision as the revelation of the existence of the Other as such is more or less arbitrarily produced by the anecdote of the man in the public park which Sartre uses to illustrate the problem of the existence of the Other: "I am in a public park. Not far away there is a lawn and along the edge of that lawn there are benches. A man passes by those benches. I see this man; I apprehend him as an object and at the same time as a man ..." (12). The man is an object because Sartre sees him, and a man firstly because Sartre recognises that the man can himself see the park with its lawn and benches just as Sartre can (unless, for example, he is blind, a possibility which Sartre mentions (13) without investigating its implications for his definition of the Other as "on principle the one who looks at me" (14)), and secondly and more fundamentally because Sartre recognises that the Other can look at him (15). Now, this may or may not be a plausible phenomenological description of an encounter between two people who see each other in a public park, but not all encounters with the Other take place in public parks in this way, and there is no reason to give such encounters an ordinary or privileged status over encounters of any other kind. I am able to apprehend the Other as a conscious being even if the Other, or I, or indeed both of us, are blind, in hiding, in the dark or even merely have our eyes closed: if it is the permanent possibility of being perceived by the Other that reveals her or his existence as a conscious being to me, then that revelation

could equally well be based on the possibility of my being heard, smelled, touched or even tasted by the Other; it could just as plausibly be argued that a farmhouse on a hill represents an ear to be avoided as that the sound of footsteps manifests the Other's look. It is only if one has already decided that 'to perceive is to look at' that the consciousness of the Other will seem to be revealed exclusively through the look as such. Moreover, such a decision will not be based on the account of perception given in the earlier pages of Being and Nothingness as described above: it will be independent, arbitrary, an unphilosophical nonsequitur in Sartre's argument.

The reasons for this choice of vision as the privileged manifestation of consciousness are open to speculation, of a biographical or even a psychoanalytic nature. Perhaps, for example, Sartre had a peculiar predilection for metaphors of vision by way of compensation for, or psychological defence against, his own poor eyesight: he was blind in one eye from early childhood and became wholly blind in old age (16) - a blindness poignantly foreshadowed in his autobiographical volume Words, in which he recalls his childhood game of imagining himself as an old man and a writer of genius who would become tragically blind ("blinder even than Beethoven was deaf" (17)) and who would nevertheless manage to complete his final masterpiece without being able to read a word of what he himself had written. (His final blindness in fact forced Sartre to abandon his great work on Flaubert, which remained unfinished (18).) He was also self-conscious throughout his life about his own ugliness, and about his physical appearance in general: in Words he describes his childhood self as "a toad" (19), and in Adieux speaks at length with Simone de Beauvoir about his ugliness and its effects on himself and

his relations with others, particularly with women (20); perhaps this is a personal reason why 'being seen by the Other' holds such potential terrors in Sartre's philosophy. Such speculation about Sartre's personal investment in the sense of sight is nevertheless outside the scope of this project, which aims to investigate Sartre's texts rather than the man himself. The essential point to notice here is that the extraordinary privilege afforded to vision in Sartre's texts is not, contrary to appearances in Being and Nothingness, determined or necessitated by Sartre's philosophical argument or by his definition of consciousness as being-for-itself. Indeed within the terms of his argument there is no reason for him to have privileged any one of the senses over any of the others; and the fact that he nevertheless did so has serious and far-reaching consequences for his definitions of subject and object, masculine and feminine, and relations with the Other, as discussed in previous chapters.

All of this being so, a new question now arises: given that there is no reason, necessary or internal to Sartre's philosophy, for the privilege of vision, and that he could therefore equally well have chosen any or no other sense upon which to lavish his textual attention, is there in fact any particular connexion between the (apparently arbitrary) privilege of vision and the sexism or masculinism of Sartre's texts? After all, Sartre has been widely accused of - and indeed defended against accusations of - literary and philosophical sexism by critics who have never so much as mentioned the look or the privilege of vision as an important or even contributing factor of the argument either way: Genvieve Lloyd, for example, traces Sartre's sexism back to existentialism's roots in the

philosophy of Hegel (21), and Margery Collins and Christine Pierce link it to his remarks on the 'femininity' of holes and slime, as discussed earlier (22). Perhaps to insist that the privilege of vision is an important factor in that respect is to over-complicate the case unnecessarily: if Sartre is a sexist writer and philosopher - if, that is, he constructs his philosophical and other texts in ways that bar women from the status of subject, or that represent that status as paradigmatically a male preserve - and if he also chooses, for whatever reason, to privilege the look in his writing, then the uses he makes of the look will inevitably express his sexism in the way that any other favourite trope or metaphor would do: a sexist philosopher who favours metaphors of vision will use such metaphors to sexist ends, as by the same token will a sexist philosopher who happens to favour metaphors of taste or hearing. So is the sexism of Sartre's texts an effect, as such, of his emphasis on the sense of sight, or is his use of visual metaphors sexist because his use of any sensual metaphor is sexist anyway? Is the sexism of his visual metaphors easier to trace merely because it is the kind of sensual metaphor he happens to use most often?

In this chapter I shall attempt to answer precisely these questions by examining Sartre's use of the four other senses - smell, taste, touch and hearing - in his texts in order to discover whether it is more, or less, or just differently sexist than his use of the sense of sight as discussed in my previous chapters. Sartre's use of sight, I have argued, produces and reproduces hierarchical binarisms of subject over object, consciousness over body, masculine over feminine, through its portrayal of relations between subjects in terms of the 'battle of looks' as originally described in

Being and Nothingness. In what follows I shall investigate whether his use of the other senses also reproduces such binarisms, whether and in what ways his use of those senses can be said to be sexist, and whether it would after all have made a difference if in Being and Nothingness Sartre had not so arbitrarily plumped for the look as the privileged - indeed the only - revelation of the Other's consciousness.

My discussion will be divided along the lines of the "social hierarchy of the senses" (24) as set out by film theorist Christian Metz. Writing about the gaze, Metz notes that:

"Psychophysiology makes a classic distinction between the 'senses at a distance' (sight and hearing) and the others all of which involve immediate proximity and which it calls the 'senses of contact' ... [T]he main socially acceptable arts are based on the senses at a distance, and those which depend on the senses of contact are often regarded as 'minor' arts (eg the culinary arts, the art of perfumes, etc)" (25).

The concept of distance is crucial to Sartre's definition of consciousness, in that being-for-itself is a perpetual non-coincidence with itself, a being which 'is what it is not and is not what it is': hence "man [sic] is always separated from what he is by all the breadth of the being which he is not ... Man is 'a being of distances'" (26). Yet on another plane contact, that is, contact between people, as opposed to the physical distance from one's fellows decreed and strictly maintained by the middle class society he despised, was also important to Sartre, particularly after his experiences of communal life in a prisoner-of-war camp. He recounts in a conversation with Simone de Beauvoir that in the camp the prisoners "lived in a crowd, perpetually touching one another, and I remember writing that the first time I was free in Paris I was

astonished to see people sitting so far apart in a café. It seemed to me space wasted" (27); he regarded his period of communal living, of proximity with his fellows, as a period of 'political reshaping' which led to his attempts at resistance activity and to his life-long commitment to leftist politics (28). Thus once again there is no reason, within Sartre's own terms, for sight to be privileged over the other senses, or more generally for the 'senses at a distance' to be privileged over the 'senses of contact': each should have its own importance. Whether this is in fact the case will emerge in the following discussion.

As with previous chapters, the discussion will fall into two sections. The first section will deal with the 'senses of contact' and their portrayal in Sartre's fictional and philosophical writing: it will examine how the hierarchical binaries already discussed continue to be upheld by Sartre's use of these senses, but will argue that this is so because Sartre bases his descriptions and analyses of these senses specifically on his analysis of vision and the battle of looks rather than because he uses sensual metaphors simply and indiscriminately to express or to illustrate sexist ideas; this section will end with an analysis of Sartre's highly sexualised and sensually portrayed concept of knowledge as set out in Being and Nothingness. The second section will focus on the sense of hearing, the 'sense at a distance' which Metz partners with sight, and will argue that, unlike the 'senses of contact' which Sartre treats almost as derivatives of the sense of sight, hearing does not uphold but actually disrupts and dissolves those hierarchical binarisms which the privilege of vision erects. This section will focus in particular

on the role of music in Nausea and on Sartre's representations of race and gender in connexion with the aural in Nausea and in his critical essay on black French poetry, 'Black Orpheus'. I shall end this final chapter on Sartre with a summary and overall conclusion of my analysis of the function and importance of the gaze in Sartre's texts and in his representations of gender and sexual difference.

#### SECTION ONE: SENSES OF CONTACT

##### Smell

The importance of the sense of smell for Sartre has in fact been well documented by the critic Stuart Zane Charmé, who notes that "[f]or Sartre, some smells are deeply disturbing reminders of the biological facts of life that consciousness and civility constantly try to transcend. Other odours, however, capture the bad faith of civilised life and seep through its cracks" (29). In an insightful analysis of Sartre's use of olfactory images in Nausea and elsewhere, Charmé demonstrates how Sartre "often reacted to odours as far-reaching tentacles of an overflowing nature that threatened to engulf and suffocate the human realm. They were the most obvious residue of the cycle of organic birth, death, and decay that so terrified Sartre" (30); and how in his fictional depictions of sexuality, "strong odours indicate the vulgar, obscene oozing of nature in general and of female sexuality in particular. Sartre's male characters feel engulfed by women's sexual scent" (31). I have already discussed Sartre's constant equation between femininity and the fleshiness and contingency of the body, and this link between bodily odour and female

sexuality traced by Charmé therefore comes as no surprise.

Indeed, so strong is the link between bodily odour and female sexuality in Sartre's fiction that sometimes it even seems to compensate his male characters for any loss of the powerful and objectifying gaze which they might suffer. In The Reprieve, the character Charles is paralysed and lives in a nursing home, wholly dependent on others for his physical needs; his inability to stand or to sit upright drastically limits his field of vision, and the trolley on which he lies is provided with a little rotating mirror positioned above his head on which he relies to see the people and things around him. Charles' limited vision expresses his passivity on both a literal and a metaphysical plane: physically passive and dependent because of his disability, his lack of visual power, the power to wield the gaze and to assert himself over others as subject, is matched by the attitude of bad faith which he takes up towards his disability and which allows him to regard himself as an object merely: "[H]e had forgotten his legs, he had found it quite natural to be pushed and wheeled and carried, he had developed into an object" (32). When speaking to Jeannine, the nurse with whom he has his only sexual contact, he refers to himself with bitter irony as "our little doll" (33).

Charles' bad faith and physical dependency combine to make him acutely aware of himself as a body-object. On the morning when the nursing home is evacuated because of the threat of war, Charles is stricken with diarrhoea, and his illness and inability to attend to his own bodily needs simultaneously fill him with self-pity - "How am I going to manage if I have diarrhoea on the train?" he asks plaintively

(34) - and give him sensual and bodily pleasure: "He turned over, he heard her [the nurse] walking about the room, then he felt the touch of expert fingers. This was the moment he most enjoyed. A mere object: a forlorn little object" (35). Once Charles is on the train, however, a transformation begins: he finds himself lying next to a beautiful young female patient, and her presence and in particular the spectacle of her physical disability allows him to begin to transcend his own, even though her disability is exactly the same as his:

"She was poor and ill, she was lying on her back in a cattle-truck, she had to be dressed and undressed like a doll [sic] ... Beside him lay all that humiliated beauty, that slim, pure, tarnished body ... [H]e felt as though he had been lifted onto his two feet" (36).

The darkness of the railway-truck and their respectively limited fields of vision (she too has a rotating mirror) mean that it is easier for Charles and his new friend to communicate by touch than by sight: "She laughed: 'It's as though we were blind: we must get to know each other through our fingers'" (37). However, the crucial turning-point at which Charles transcends the object-status of his passive and disabled body is connected not to the sense of touch but to the sense of smell. As the journey gets underway, Charles is stricken with another bout of diarrhoea. Once again, his illness forcibly reminds him of his object-status: "[T]he heat, the throbbing urgency within him, the mass of moist matter that gurgled in his intestines - all this was himself" (38). It is his physical disability and his physical sexuality which thus combine to reduce him to a body-object:

"A quiver shot through his penis: ... it came from further away, from the large, bare room at the edge of the sea. He rang the bell, Jeannine came in, folded back the covers and slid the bedpan under him, she

watched him pee and sometimes she held John Thomas between her finger and thumb - he loved that. Now, his flesh had stiffened, it had become a habit: all his urges to shit were poisoned by a sour languor, a swooning desire to let himself go with someone looking on, to stink under professional eyes. 'That's what I am,' he thought. His heart stopped. He despised himself" (39).

His body is essentially an object of another's gaze; he is a mass of flesh 'under professional eyes', of the holes and slime which, as we saw in a previous chapter, Sartrean masculinity must by definition transcend. The presence of the woman beside him prompts Charles manfully to resist the demands of his body: "He was suffering but proud to suffer: I won't give way; I'm a man" (40). And then, to Charles' great surprise, the woman herself asks the nurse for the bedpan:

"She had to throw off her fur [coat]: for an instant the scent of it drowned everything, then gradually a strong rancid odour filled his nostrils. Well, she was a sick person: that taut and silky skin enclosed liquid vertebrae, and purulent intestines. He hesitated, torn between disgust and foul desire. Then, suddenly, his entrails closed up like a fist, and he was no longer conscious of his body ... All needs and all desires were extinguished, he felt clean and fresh, like a man who has regained his health ... He was not an object; nor a helpless infant ... 'She is ashamed. I'll look after her,' he thought affectionately. Standing up, and leaning over her, and gazing at her gentle, haggard face ... And there he was, compact and dry, a man delivered" (41).

The 'strong and rancid odour' the woman produces serves not only to make Charles aware of her status as a sick and helpless body-object, but also to make him surpass the object-status of his own flesh. The disgusting and foul-smelling reality of her fleshly existence rids him of the diarrhoea which was such a physical torment to him only moments before, indeed rids him of all those 'needs and desires' for the fulfilment of which he has hitherto been completely dependent on

others, and even, in his own mind, rids him of his disability: while she is prostrate and ashamed, he imagines himself 'standing up, and leaning over her'. Thus the reduction of a woman to smelly flesh and bodily helplessness has instantly promoted Charles to the transcendent status of a man unhampered by his own flesh, standing over and, significantly, 'gazing' at a woman, 'delivered' from his own body. Her humiliation is the occasion for his transcendence.

The sense of smell, then, and in particular the odours of the body, are certainly no less sexist or masculinist in effect than the gaze and the sense of sight: the odours produced by human and especially female flesh simply continue and re-inforce the familiar hierarchy of mind over body, masculine over feminine. It is important to note however that it is, precisely, the same hierarchy as that enforced by Sartre's use of the gaze and that it continues within the very same terms as originally set up by the gaze. Indeed, Charles' transformation from 'passive' body to 'active' consciousness is marked by a reversal in status from object of the gaze to 'gazing' subject; if it is true that his sense of smell compensates him for his limited vision, it does so in fact by granting him the status which the power of his gaze would have given him as a seeing and masculine subject, rather than by replacing it with something different - and by transcending his body and 'standing up' he ultimately does achieve a gaze of sorts, 'gazing at her gentle, haggard face'. The body which is smelled and the body which is seen are in essence the same body. Most significantly of all, there is no reciprocity in Sartre's description of the sense of smell: as soon as Charles smells the odours of his female companion, he loses all desire to shit and hence to produce a similar odour himself - she does not get to smell him.

This amazing 'miracle cure' for Charles' diarrhoea can be traced back to the structure of the 'battle of looks' in Being and Nothingness: one must either see or be seen, be a subject or be an object; likewise one must either smell or be smelled. Sartre's use of the sense of smell seems to have less to do with how that sense actually operates than with the fact that Sartre has already decided that the 'battle of looks' is the paradigm for all human, including sexual, relations. The sense of smell here is little more than a kind of olfactory gaze, with the strict division between the positions of subject and object, active and passive, masculine and feminine, remaining intact. We shall shortly discover whether this is also the case for his use of the other senses.

### Taste

In the second volume of her autobiography, Simone de Beauvoir relates Sartre's first encounter with phenomenology:

"Raymond Aron was spending a year at the French Institute in Berlin and studying Husserl ... When he came to Paris we spent an evening together at the Bec de Gaz in the Rue Montparnasse. We ordered the speciality of the house, apricot cocktails; Aron said, pointing to his glass: 'You see, my dear fellow, if you are a phenomenologist you can talk about this cocktail and make philosophy out of it!' Sartre turned pale with emotion at this" (42).

De Beauvoir presents this episode almost as an originary moment for Sartre: "Here was just the thing he had been longing to achieve for years" (43). The discovery of Husserl prompts Sartre to go to Berlin himself and spend a year at the French Institute studying phenomenology (44); Being and Nothingness is itself presented by Sartre as 'an essay on phenomenological ontology' (45). And in fact

the apricot cocktail marks the beginning of an extraordinary philosophical investment by Sartre in food and drink, both in Being and Nothingness and in his fiction; as the critic George H Bauer puts it, "Just how the cookie crumbles becomes a serious part of his philosophy" (46). Sartre himself explains the importance of food in conversation with de Beauvoir:

"I think that all food is a symbol. On the one hand it's food, and in that sense it's not symbolic - it nourishes, it's edible. But its taste and outward appearance evoke images and symbolise an object. An object that varies according to the food but that is symbolised by the food itself. In Being and Nothingness I tried to analyse certain tastes, or at any rate certain symbolic aspects of things" (47).

The section of Being and Nothingness to which Sartre alludes here occurs towards the end of the book, and is the section which introduces Sartre's project of 'existential psychoanalysis':

"The yellow and red, the taste of a tomato, or the wrinkled softness of split peas are by no means irreducible givens according to our view. They translate symbolically to our perception a certain way which being has of giving itself, and we react by disgust or desire, according to how we see being spring forth in one way or another from their surface. Existential psychoanalysis must bring out the ontological meaning of qualities ... Our next procedure then is to sketch in outline this particular attempt of existential psychoanalysis ... For it is not on the level of a taste for sweetness or bitterness and the like that the free choice [made by a subject] is irreducible, but on the level of the choice of the aspect of being which is revealed through and by means of sweetness, bitterness, and the rest" (48).

Taste, then, plays an important part in Sartre's philosophy: the taste of a thing constitutes a profound revelation of its being. Moreover since a thing's taste is one of its qualities (in the sense that yellowness and sourness are qualities of the lemon), it provides access to all the other qualities of that thing and to the being of

the thing as a whole:

"In fact the lemon is extended throughout its qualities, and each of its qualities is extended throughout each of the others ... We eat the colour of a cake, and the taste of this cake is the instrument which reveals its shape and its colour to what we may call the alimentary intuition. Conversely, if I poke my finger into a jar of jam, the sticky coldness of the jam is the revelation to my fingers of its sugary taste" (49).

Thus when Sartre declares in Being and Nothingness that "[w]hat we must do is to attempt a psychoanalysis of things" (50), how things taste assumes an immediate importance in that psychoanalytic project.

Sartre's 'existential psychoanalysis' is of course the pretext for that discussion of 'holes and slime' which has become so notorious among feminist critics (51). In fact, the 'slimy', as a translator's note to the English language edition of Being and Nothingness points out, is a translation of the word 'visqueux' which "at times comes closer to the English 'sticky'" (52); and those now infamous passages in which the 'slimy' is equated explicitly with femininity actually make that equation by evoking simultaneously both the stickiness and the correlative sweetness of certain foods as revealed to the philosopher who goes around poking his fingers into jars of jam:

"The honey which slides off my spoon onto the honey contained in the jar first sculpts the surface by fastening itself on to it in relief, and its fusion with the whole is presented as a gradual sinking, a collapse which appears at once as a deflation ... and as display - like the flattening out of the full breasts of a woman who is lying on her back" (53).

"Slime is the revenge of the In-itself. A sickly-sweet, feminine revenge which will be symbolised on another level by the quality 'sugary'. This is why the sugar-like sweetness to the taste - an indelible sweetness, which remains indefinitely in the mouth even after swallowing - perfectly completes the essence of the slimy. A sugary sliminess is the ideal of the slimy; it symbolises the sugary death of the

For-itself (like that of the wasp which sinks into the jam and drowns in it)" (54).

Thus the link between slime and femininity which, as we have already seen, relegates the latter to being-in-itself, the status of objects, is achieved through the image of a sticky sweetness or sugariness, that is, through the medium of taste. Moreover although Sartre refers to 'sourness' and 'bitterness' as the kinds of qualities which his psychoanalysis might consider, it is only the 'sweetness' he connects with femininity which receives any sustained attention in the text. No other kind of taste seems to inform Sartre's *project* in any substantial way. No wonder Sartre 'turned pale with emotion' as he sat before his apricot cocktail: the sweetness and stickiness of the drink obviously had a profound and horrifying meaning for him. (It is interesting to recall in this connexion the sweet, sticky peppermint drink which Mathieu buys for Ivich and which plays a sexually symbolic role throughout their conversation in chapter four of The Age of Reason, which I discussed in a previous chapter (55); similarly in the short story 'Intimacy' the cloyingly feminine Rirette, vain, frivolous, and stricken with bad faith, sits in a café with a glass of port and thinks about her best friend's extra-marital affairs: "[S]he looked at the port, all sticky in the glass, like a liquid caramel and a voice in her repeated, 'Happiness, happiness,' and it was a beautifully grave and tender word" (56).)

All of this might seem to indicate that the denigration of femininity in Sartre's writing is derived at least as much from the sense of taste as from his use of the look and the privilege of vision, for Sartre makes the vital connexion between femininity, the body and being-in-itself precisely by means of his images of

sweetness and sugariness. However, as I have already argued, Sartre is able to align masculinity with consciousness and being-for-itself and femininity with the body and being-in-itself only because those hierarchical binary divisions have already been set up in the 'battle of looks' which defines subject and object, for-itself and in-itself, as such. The radical and dichotomous split between consciousness and the body is entirely structured by the split between the eye and the look, between 'the permanent possibility of being seen by the Other' and the contingent and always superfluous 'convergence of two ocular globes in my direction' - "[M]y apprehension of a look turned towards me appears as the ground of the destruction of the eyes which 'look at me'. If I apprehend the look, I cease to perceive the eyes" (57).

Sartre's use of the sense of smell neither alters these definitions of consciousness and body, for-itself and in-itself, as such, nor offers any alternative to them: as with the sense of smell, Sartre uses the sense of taste merely to maintain those familiar hierarchies and to cement the correlative terms of masculinity and femininity into place. It is not just femininity in particular, but the contingency and being-in-itself of the body in general that reveals itself to consciousness through the medium of taste. Long before he embarks on his outline of 'existential psychoanalysis', Sartre writes in

Being and Nothingness:

"Consciousness does not cease 'to have' a body. Coenesthetic affectivity is then ... a pure apprehension of the self as a factual existence. This perpetual apprehension on the part of my for-itself of an insipid taste which I cannot place, which accompanies me even in my efforts to get away from it - this is what we have described elsewhere under the name of Nausea. A dull and inescapable nausea perpetually reveals my body to my consciousness" (58).

Femininity is equated with the being-in-itself of the body and the

body reveals itself to consciousness through the sense of taste. Thus if femininity seems to be particularly connected to taste, this is so only because it is already aligned with the status of the physical body in Sartre's ontology. Femininity comes to be connected with taste only after it is deemed to have lost the 'battle of looks'.

Sartre's 'existential psychoanalysis' connects femininity with eating not only through the images of slime or stickiness but also through the equally notorious images of holes. Sartre suggests that the importance of holes in human sexuality is wholly derived from and secondary to the more general significance of the hole as a 'gap' to be filled, an 'appeal' addressed to the for-itself by the in-itself. He describes the original significance of the hole as follows:

"[T]he hole is originally presented as a nothingness 'to be filled' with my own flesh ... Thus to plug up a hole means originally to make a sacrifice of my body in order that the plenitude of being may exist; that is, to subject the passion of the For-itself so as to shape, to perfect and to preserve the totality of the In-itself" (59).

This 'plugging up' of holes is part of the fundamental meaning of the act of eating: "This tendency is certainly one of the most fundamental among those which serve as the basis for the act of eating; nourishment is the 'cement' which will seal the mouth; to eat is among other things to be filled up" (60). It is immediately after this comment on the meaning of eating that Sartre makes his startling observations on the subject of feminine sexuality:

"It is only from this standpoint that we can pass on to sexuality. The obscenity of the feminine sex is that of everything which 'gapes open'. It is an appeal to being as all holes are. In herself woman appeals to a strange flesh which is to transform her into a fullness of being by penetration and dissolution. Conversely woman senses her condition as an appeal precisely because she is 'in the form of a hole' ...

Beyond any doubt her sex is a mouth and a voracious mouth which devours the penis" (61).

Once again, femininity is aligned with being-in-itself: in 'the' (paradigmatic, heterosexual) sexual act the woman appeals to the man to 'plug her up' (she 'senses her condition as an appeal', in other words, she's asking for it on an ontological level) in precisely the same way that being-in-itself appeals to the for-itself to 'plug up' and preserve its plenitude (by sticking a finger into a jam jar, perhaps). She 'eats' the penis in the same way and for the same reason that one eats food: so as to be a full body, to achieve a feeling of fullness. What is at stake here however is not the sense of taste but rather the sensation of being filled or 'plugged up', with food or with the flesh of another's body - that is, with tactile sensations. This brings me on to the last of the senses of contact, the sense of touch.

### Touch

Holes and slime provoke tactile sensations, responses of the flesh. Holes are 'a nothingness to be filled with my own flesh'; even more vividly, slime (or 'stickiness') as the 'revenge of the in-itself' offers "something like a tactile fascination" (62): "the For-itself is suddenly compromised. I open my hands, I want to let go of the slimy and it sticks to me, it draws me, it sucks at me ... It is a soft, yielding action, a moist and feminine sucking" (63). It is these tactile phenomena of holes and slime which Sartre uses in Being and Nothingness to make the equation between femininity and being-in-itself, an equation played out in his fictional writings in ways I have already described at length. Femininity is a phenomenon

of the flesh.

However, the sense of touch in Sartre's philosophy is perhaps even more profoundly structured by the sense of sight than the other 'senses of contact' analysed above, and the relationship between consciousness and the flesh - between, that is, the 'masculine' for-itself and the 'feminine' in-itself which threatens it - is so thoroughly visual in nature that touch, which might have been expected to be the sense of contact par excellence, actually turns out almost to be one of the 'senses at a distance'.

As I have already pointed out, the human subject for Sartre is "a being of distances" (64): consciousness bears a relation of non-coincidence with itself in that it 'is what it is not and is not what it is'. The importance of distance in the constitution of subjectivity - and of inter-subjectivity - is also manifested in the unfolding of distances around the subject that constitutes the subject's field of vision; it is the disorganisation of the latter by the look of the Other which demonstrates the Other's status as subject: thus for example in Sartre's 'public park' scenario discussed above, Sartre recognises the man in the park as a fellow consciousness by recognising that he sees the objects in the park unfolding in his own field of vision ("[T]here unfolds a spatiality which is not my spatiality; for instead of a grouping toward me of the objects, there is now an orientation which flees from me" (65); "[t]he Other is first the permanent flight of things toward a goal which I apprehend as an object at a certain distance from me but which escapes me inasmuch as it unfolds about itself its own distances" (66)). This unfolding of distances places the subject as a sort of geometral perspective point in the world, and the subject's relations with

objects in the world are always determined by that point of perspective:

"[T]hings are precisely 'things-which-exist-at-a-distance-from-me' ... Thus knowledge can only be an engaged upsurge in a determined point of view which one is. For human reality, to be is to-be-there; that is, 'there in that chair', 'there at that table', 'there at the top of that mountain, with these dimensions, this orientation, etc'. It is an ontological necessity" (67).

Thus consciousness always encounters objects - being-for-itself always encounters being-in-itself - in an 'unfolding of distances' around a 'point of view'. This so-called ontological necessity is in fact only a necessity of Sartre's equation of consciousness with vision. The 'battle of looks' creates subject and object positions such that the paradigm of subject-hood is to see without being seen, while being seen by the Other constitutes being an object for the Other. These subject and object positions imply that the essential term of one's own visibility - of the permanent risk of being reduced to object-status by the Other's look - is one's body. The perspectival nature of 'human reality' for Sartre means that the 'pure' subject status of seeing without being seen is ultimately unattainable; this is because the organisation of the world around the 'point of view' which the subject is always correlatively entails her or his visibility as a body:

"[I]n a perspective scheme the eye is the point toward which all the objective lines converge ... Only we do not see this centre as the structure of the perspective field is considered; we are the centre. Thus the order of objects in the world perpetually refers to us the image of an object which on principle can not be an object for us since it is what we have to be. The structure of the world demands that we can not see without being visible. The intra-mundane references can be made only to objects in the world, and the seen world perpetually defines a visible object to which its perspectives and arrangements

refer" (68).

The split between the eye (as physical organ) and the look (as manifestation of consciousness) entails that the subject who looks is always also a physical body (with eyes) that can on principle be seen, this physical body being the point around which consciousness's relations with objects are organised. Thus the looking subject as being-for-itself on principle never quite coincides with the seen subject as being-in-itself; the two modes of being remain in tension in the dialectic set up within the subject by the 'battle of looks'. This distance within the subject informs the unfolding of distances from the subject:

"If in fact we define the body as a contingent point of view on the world, we must recognise that the notion of a point of view supposes a double relation: a relation with the things on which the body is a point of view and a relation with the observer for whom the body is a point of view. When we are dealing with the body-as-point-of-view, this second relation is radically different from the first; it is not truly distinct when we are dealing with a point of view in the world (spectacles, a look-out point, a magnifying glass, etc) which is an objective instrument distinct from the body ... [My body] is the instrument which I can not use in the way I use any other instrument, the point of view on which I can no longer take a point of view" (69).

A person admiring a view from a belvedere, for example, sees the view, and can also see the belvedere (its roof, its windows etc); the belvedere is what gives the observer his or her viewpoint on the landscape, but it is also one of the things unfolding in the observer's field of vision. Not so with the body: I cannot stand back from my body in the way I can stand back from the window of a belvedere. My body is the ultimate point from which my point of view unfolds.

My own relation to my body is therefore structured by the split

between the eye and the look. My inability to 'stand back' from my own body is essentially the inability to see my own eye(s): I can look, but I cannot see my eye looking; my look as the manifestation of my being-for-itself is always radically distinct from my body - my physical organs, my flesh - as being-in-itself. The implications of this for the phenomenon of touch are explicit in the text: the fundamental impossibility of 'seeing myself seeing' is translated by Sartre into an impossibility to 'touch oneself touching' in a passage to which I have already referred in a previous chapter:

"[W]hen I touch my leg with my finger, I realise that my leg is touched. But this phenomenon of double sensation is not essential ... To touch and to be touched, to feel that one is touching and to feel that one is touched - these are two species of phenomena which it is useless to try to unite by the term 'double sensation'. In fact they are radically distinct, and they exist on two incommunicable levels" (70).

The body constitutes the 'point of view' for Sartre because of his insistence on the primacy of vision: the body is in a relation of perpetual distance from itself by virtue of the split between the eye and the look, which becomes the term of a radical splitting within the body's very flesh. Thus when I touch my leg with my finger, the phenomenon of 'touch' involved is not a tactile sensation of flesh in mutual contact with flesh, but is an encounter with a fleshy-object, a being-in-itself as alien and potentially threatening as the being-in-itself of holes and slime. In fact one could go so far as to say that Sartre never writes about the sense of touch, as such, at all, except as a poor and even deceptive (since it can give rise in the unwary to the illusion of 'double sensation') substitute for the sense of sight through which objects in the 'unfolding of distances' properly reveal

themselves to consciousness. Indeed, the body, for Sartre, is really only either an object in the Other's field of vision or the optical instrument by means of which I survey my own field of vision. Objects are touched only in the way that they are seen - once again, that is, the sense of touch is merely used by Sartre to maintain the relations between the for-itself and the in-itself in the form determined by the primacy of vision. The slimy, stickily tactile clinging of flesh to flesh is not just condemned by Sartre to the realm of femininity and being-in-itself: presided over by a petrifying gaze as object is presided over by subject, the tactile is all but abolished.

#### Men's knowledge, women's bodies

My analysis above of Sartre's uses of the 'senses of contact' has demonstrated that such uses are no less sexist in effect than his use of the sense of sight; but that this is so only because the senses of contact are themselves, implicitly or explicitly, regarded (sic) by Sartre as derivatives of or substitutes for the sense of sight which gives all relations between subjects (or of subjects with objects) their fundamental structure. Sartre first sets up the respective positions 'subject' and 'object' as the outcome of the battle of looks, and then ensures that women are in the object-position of being-in-itself by presenting the smelliness, sickly sweetness and frightening sliminess of the body as attributes of femininity.

If Sartre thus uses the 'senses of contact' to condemn femininity to the object-status of the body, he uses them no less actively to make a positive identification of masculinity with the power and sovereignty of the mind. The sense of sight and the senses of contact which, for Sartre, are sight's correlatives combine in a

startling passage of Being and Nothingness in which Sartre presents a theory of knowledge as a peculiarly masculine, not to say sexually oppressive, manifestation of consciousness (71). He writes:

"[T]he idea of discovery, of revelation, includes an idea of appropriative enjoyment. What is seen is possessed; to see is to deflower. If we examine the comparisons between the knower and the known, we see that many of them are represented as being a kind of violation by sight. The unknown object is given as immaculate, as virgin, comparable to a whiteness. It has not yet 'delivered up' its secret; man has not yet 'snatched' its secret away from it. All these images insist that the object is ignorant of the investigations and the instruments aimed at it; it goes about its business without noticing the glance which spies on it, like a woman whom a passerby catches unaware at her bath. Figures of speech, sometimes vague and sometimes more precise, like that of the 'unviolated depths' of nature suggest the idea of sexual intercourse more plainly. We speak of snatching away her veils from nature, of unveiling her ... Every investigation implies the idea of a nudity which one brings out into the open by clearing away the obstacles which cover it, just as Actaeon clears away the branches so that he can have a better view of Diana at her bath. More than this, knowledge is a hunt. Bacon called it the hunt of Pan. The scientist is a hunter who surprises a white nudity and *who violates by looking at it*" (72).

This passage speaks so plainly as to require little comment: it is, as Michèle Le Doeuff puts it, "quite chilling" (73). Sartre unashamedly presents man as the subject and woman as the object, man as the enquiring scientific mind and woman as the enticingly naked body (the insistent 'whiteness' of female nudity for Sartre will be discussed in the next section), and the sovereignty of the former over the latter is expressed in terms of visual rape, 'violation by sight'. The inherent masculinity of the visual metaphor in Sartre's writing could hardly be made more explicit. Sartre goes on from here to make use of the senses of contact too:

"...[A] person hunts for the sake of eating. Curiosity

in an animal is always either sexual or alimentary. To know is to devour with the eyes ... Knowledge is assimilation. The writings of French epistemology swarm with alimentary metaphors (absorption, digestion, assimilation)" (74).

Knowledge is not only violation by sight; it is also a form of visual eating. Sartre's enthusiastic claim that 'to know is to devour with the eyes' is more than a little ironic here, given that earlier in Being and Nothingness he had complained bitterly that "[t]he description of knowledge is too often alimentary. There still remains too much of prélogisme in epistemological philosophy, and we are not yet rid of that primitive illusion ... according to which to know is to eat" (75). The puzzled reader might also be left wondering whether the object thus devoured has the sweet or sugary taste of femininity, which is what Sartre's images might lead one to expect, but unfortunately he does not tell us. What is important to note however is that eating here is explicitly a question of sight - Sartre is not interested in taste, or even in feeling full, since the object of knowledge can never be consumed in a literal sense - "the known remains in the same place, indefinitely intact, ... as indigestible as a stone" (76) - but rather in seeing, in devouring 'with the eyes': the senses of contact associated with eating are subordinated to, indeed superseded by, the sense of sight.

But Sartre has not finished yet:

"The impossible synthesis of assimilation and an assimilated which maintains its integrity [ie the impossibility of really devouring the indigestible object of knowledge], has deep-rooted connexions with basic sexual drives. The idea of 'carnal possession' offers us the irritating but seductive figure of a body perpetually possessed and perpetually new, on which possession leaves no trace. This is deeply symbolised by the quality of 'smooth' or 'polished' ... This is the reason why erotic descriptions insist on the smooth whiteness of a woman's body ... It is at

this point that we encounter the similarity to scientific research: the known object, like the stone in the stomach of the ostrich, is entirely within me, assimilated, transformed into myself, and it is entirely me; but at the same time it is impenetrable, untransformable, entirely smooth, with the indifferent nudity of a body which is beloved and caressed in vain ... We see here how the sexual and alimentary currents mingle and interpenetrate ... ; we can see the digestive and sensual roots which are re-united to give birth to the desire of knowing. Knowledge is at one and the same time a penetration and a superficial caress, a digestion and the contemplation from afar of an object which will never lose its form" (77).

Now it is not only the sensations produced by eating which are obliterated by the sense of sight, but also the sensations produced by the contact of flesh with flesh: the object or body is not caressed, nor indeed 'penetrated', for the sake of the tactile pleasure which such contact will give to the subject (let alone to the 'object' itself of course, which, as 'she' is 'unconscious of being known', is therefore presumably unconscious of either the caress or the penetration by which 'she' is known, and in any case does not willingly participate since the act in question is a form of rape), but only so as to effect an 'assimilation' or 'transformation', a transformation forever impossible because the object remains to be 'contemplated from afar' - to be 'possessed' not by absorption, but by sight only. Thus the erotically smooth female body, 'irritating but seductive', is still fundamentally the object of the look; it offers itself to the other senses only in so far as both the 'sexual and alimentary currents' through which it is known are themselves ultimately organised around the primacy of sight: knowledge is 'violation by sight', to know is to 'devour with the eyes'.

The 'senses of contact', then, are always subordinate to the sense of sight, which, as these passages on the theory of knowledge so

vividly demonstrate, casts the subject as masculine and the object as feminine to spectacular (I use the word advisedly) effect. The world revealed to the senses of contact in Sartre's texts is really just the visual world in another guise: the battle of looks and all that it has been seen to entail in the two previous chapters is still the structuring principle of it all. Describing Sartre's excited emotion at the prospect of making philosophy from his apricot cocktail, Simone de Beauvoir inadvertently sums up the privilege of sight over these other senses for Sartre: "Aron convinced him that phenomenology exactly fitted in with his special pre-occupations: ... affirming simultaneously both the supremacy of reason and the reality of the visible world as it appeared to our senses" (78). 'The reality of the visible world as it appeared to our senses': this implies that no matter which of the senses we employ, it is always the visible world that will be discovered; sight is the primary sense, the sense to which the reality of the world is revealed - the other senses are either derivatives of sight or else, at best, simply irrelevant. There is one sense, however, which has so far been missing from the account - the sense of hearing.

## SECTION TWO: SENSES AT A DISTANCE

One could go so far as to say that hearing is the elided sense in Sartre's phenomenology. While the 'senses of contact' are routinely reduced by Sartre to being derivatives or poor relations of the sense of sight, the sense of hearing, that elusive other 'sense

at a distance', is rarely mentioned in his philosophy, and certainly seems to play no significant role there. It is striking that in his discussion of the notion of 'quality' as the sensory phenomenon by which being-in-itself is revealed to consciousness, Sartre chooses to take the quality of the lemon as his leading example (79): lemons can be seen, smelled, tasted and touched; but they make no noise. In her conversation with him reproduced in Adieux, Simone de Beauvoir also observes that "in spite of loving, understanding, and living in music" (80) all his life, Sartre was "never really ... tempted to write about it" (81); and this is in stark contrast to his enormous output of theory and criticism on the subjects of painting, sculpture, food, sexuality, literature - on practically all aspects of the culture in which he lived apart from the aural.

The one major exception to this exclusion of hearing from Sartre's work occurs in Nausea, in which the jazz song 'Some of These Days' has a crucial and even revelatory importance for Roquentin in his queasy search for the meaning of existence. The piece of music, a recording of which Roquentin has the waitress play for him during his various visits to the 'Rendez-vous des Cheminots' café, surpasses the nauseating contingency of everyday existence, creating its own time and carrying within it its own necessity:

"It seems inevitable, the necessity of this music is so strong: nothing can interrupt it, nothing which comes from this time in which the world is slumped; it will stop of its own accord, on orders. If I love that beautiful voice, it is above all because of that" (82).

It is this kind of necessity which Roquentin finds painfully lacking from the insipid, pointless events of his own life: "Alas! Now I can see so clearly what I wanted. Real beginnings, appearing like a

fanfare of trumpets, like the first notes of a jazz tune, abruptly, cutting boredom short, strengthening duration" (83); "I am so happy when a Negress sings: what summits would I not reach if my own life were the subject of the melody" (84). In the final pages of the novel, Roquentin listens to this song for the last time before leaving Bouville for good, and his experience of the necessity of the music gives him hope that some form of escape from the disgusting contingency of human existence is at least possible. He imagines the Jewish man who wrote the song and the black woman who recorded it:

"That makes two people who are saved: the Jew and the Negress. Saved. Perhaps they thought they were lost right until the very end, drowned in existence. Yet nobody could ever think about me as I think about them ... For me they are a little like dead people, a little like heroes of novels; they have cleansed themselves of the sin of existing" (85).

Roquentin now decides to attempt to cleanse himself of the 'sin of existing' by writing a novel, a book in which "you would have to guess, behind the printed words, behind the pages, something which didn't exist, which was above existence ... It would have to be beautiful and hard as steel and make people feel ashamed of their existence" (86). Nevertheless it is music that has provided Roquentin with a glimpse of this possibility and a paradigm for its achievement in a way that his encounters with other forms of human creativity - his meals, his travels, his visits to the library or to the exhibition of paintings at the Bouville museum - have failed to do. Given his comments about music ("Melodies alone can proudly carry their own death within them like an internal necessity; only they don't exist ... [E]xistence is a repletion which man can never abandon" (87)), it may indeed seem odd and even somewhat implausible that Roquentin should expect to be able to achieve his 'salvation' through

any other medium.

Music, then, is the pathway to salvation. Yet despite Roquentin's claim that music is somehow 'beyond' the contingencies of human existence, gender and race are immediately at stake in the very salvation from existence that 'Some of These Days' seems to offer. The 'two people who are saved' are not simply the songwriter and the singer, but are quite specifically 'the Jew and the Negress'. This would seem to hint that there is some hidden meaning lurking behind this rare use in Sartre's work of music and of the sense of hearing. In what follows I shall disentangle that hidden meaning - fantasies and representations of gender and race the emergence of which through the sense of hearing will provide insights into Sartre's apparent rejection of that sense in favour of the sense of sight. I shall begin however with a brief examination of visual codings of blackness, whiteness and femininity in Nausea as a background to the discussion of Sartre's aural codings of race and gender and their implications for the privilege of vision.

#### Visual codings: black and white

I have already briefly mentioned above Sartre's strange insistence on the whiteness of female nudity in Being and Nothingness. Whiteness in this text "manifest[s] the absolute nudity of substance [ie of being-in-itself]" (88); Sartre writes of the feminised object as a "white nudity" (89) in a passage already quoted, and in another of "erotic descriptions [which] insist on the smooth whiteness of a woman's body" (90). The image also occurs with similar insistence in Nausea. The patronne of the Rendez-vous des Cheminots with whom

Roquentin has sex disgests him because "she is too white" (91). In the long passage in which Roquentin reflects confusedly on the discovery of the body of Lucienne, the little girl who has been raped and strangled and about whom he has read in the newspapers, the whiteness of the female body is invoked with horror:

"Am I going to ... caress in the splendour of white sheets the splendid white flesh which falls back gently, touch the blossoming moisture of the armpits, the elixirs and the liqueurs and the fluorescences of the flesh, enter into the other person's existence, ... feel myself existing between the soft wet lips, the lips red with pale blood, the throbbing, yawning lips all wet with existence ..." (92).

Thus the female body whose 'holes and slime' encapsulate all the nauseating and inescapable contingency of existence is very evidently a white body. Interestingly, this passage ends with a snatch of song heard on a gramophone:

"The voice, deep and husky, suddenly appears [sic] 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. But there it is. You can't say that that exists" (93).

Roquentin's attitude to this 'woman' is in marked contrast to his attitude towards the 'Negress'; while the former, of unspecified race, 'existed' like Roquentin and is in herself of no interest, the 'Negress' is 'saved', she "can justify her existence" (94), and Roquentin thinks of her as of 'the hero of a novel'. This would suggest that a woman who is to cleanse herself of the sin of existing may not herself be embodied in the 'white nudity' which characterises contingency and female flesh.

But if whiteness is associated with female nudity, blackness does not attain the level of the human even in the guise of the flesh;

it is rather associated with animality and even with the vegetable world - that is, with the disgusting and menacing world of Nature, the "Vegetation Belt" (95) which "has slipped into [the] town, has infiltrated everywhere ... What if something were to happen? What if all of a sudden it started palpitating?" (96). The whiteness of the patronne's naked body is in contrast to "the broad leaves ... black with animals" (97) in the nightmare of the municipal park that Roquentin has in her bed, and that blackness itself foreshadows the more intense and frightening blackness of the real park when Roquentin, contemplating the chestnut-tree root, sees the "black, knotty mass, which was utterly crude and frightened me" (98), and suddenly finds himself overwhelmed by the existence of things: "I flop onto a bench between the great black trunks, between the black, knotty hands reaching out towards the sky. A tree is scratching the earth under my feet with a black nail" (99); "[t]hat black, there, against my foot, didn't look like black, but rather the confused effort to imagine black by somebody who had never seen black and who wouldn't have known how to stop" (100).

Thus both whiteness, which is associated with the contingency and existence of female flesh, and blackness, associated with the contingency and existence of the world of Nature, are employed by Sartre as visual images to maintain the familiar hierarchical division between being-for-itself and being-in-itself. Sartre somewhat disingenuously suggests in this connexion that the sense of sight is indistinguishable from the other senses in the face of all this contingency: "I didn't see that black in a simple way ... That black, a weak, amorphous presence, far surpassed sight, smell, and taste" (101). It does not, however, surpass hearing - because, I want

to argue, on the contrary, the sense of hearing surpasses blackness, whiteness, the visual hierarchy and all that it entails.

Aural codings: Sartre's black and white minstrels

Listening to 'Some of These Days' for the last time at the end of Nausea, Roquentin daydreams at length about 'the Jew and the Negress' who created it. The songwriter is "a Jew with coal-black eye-brows" (102) who lives "suffocating with the heat, on the twentieth floor of a New York skyscraper" (103), who had money troubles and 'woman' troubles: Roquentin contrasts "the black heat of his room" (104) in the middle of a July heatwave with "the white, acid sounds of the saxophone" (105). The singer is a Negress - "I should like to hear the Negress sing" (106) - and while her life is not imagined in any detail, her race and her gender are both posited as certain: "The Negress sings ... I feel extraordinarily intimidated" (107).

Roquentin's daydream of 'salvation' is Sartre's fantasy of race and gender. As Dominick LaCapra points out, "Sartre both inverts and overdramatises the 'truth' in his fictive account of the origin of 'Some of These Days'. It was written by a black [Shelton Brooks] and recorded by Sophie Tucker, who was of eastern European Jewish immigrant background" (108). Sophie Tucker was even known as "the last of the white red-hot mamas" (109). Thanks to the wind-up gramophone at the Rendez-vous des Cheminots, hearing operates so effectively as a 'sense at a distance' that Roquentin is able to hear a song whose creators are too far away (both in space and in time - he reflects that, for all he knows, they may be dead by now) for him to

see, and this failure of sight is accompanied by a failure in the allocation of blackness and whiteness, masculinity and femininity: the man who should have been white is really black, the black who should have been female is really male. And as LaCapra comments, this 'fictive account' casts considerable doubt on Roquentin's search for 'salvation', upon which he embarks because 'the Jew and the Negress' are saved - but 'the Jew and the Negress' don't exist (110).

A similar slippage between black and white, male and female, occurs in 'Black Orpheus', originally published in French in 1948, which Sartre wrote as an introduction to an anthology of black poetry in French edited by Léopold Senghor. The choice of image - the 'black Orpheus' of the title being Sartre's metaphorical term for the black poet - is significant on more than one level. It represents the black poet as a singer or musician: according to Greek myth, Orpheus was "the most famous poet and musician who ever lived" (111), and after his death his severed head continued to sing (112); 'Black Orpheus' begins with a challenge to the white reader expressed through the imagery of the voice: "When you removed the gag that was keeping these black mouths shut, what were you hoping for? That they would sing your praises?" (113). The 'Orpheus' image also, however, by representing the black poet as a figure of Greek myth, turns him into a kind of white man in black-face, and Sartre has been criticised for the "bizarre irony of Hellenising [the] search for black roots by transforming the black into the mythological Orpheus" (114). But having turned the black man into a white, Sartre goes on in 'Black Orpheus' almost immediately to turn the white man into black again. He writes:

"[O]ur [sic] whiteness seems to us to be a strange

livid varnish that keeps our skin from breathing - white tights, worn out at the elbows and knees, under which we would find real human flesh the colour of black wine if we could remove them" (115).

Slightly later he says that "I am talking now to white men, and I should like to explain to them what black men already know" (116) - clearly identifying with 'black men' himself, as if he had already removed his 'white tights' to reveal the black man beneath them. Thus blackness and whiteness are not simply 'inverted'; rather the distinction between the two is dissolved, and they become interchangeable, as they are in Roquentin's fantasy of 'the Jew and the Negress' and their real-life counterparts, the 'Jewess' and the Negro. The image of the 'black Orpheus', like that of 'the Jew and the Negress', is integrally connected to the aural: it is the white singer become black, the black musician become white.

'Black Orpheus' is inverted in yet another sense too. The black poet for Sartre is an Orpheus whose Eurydice is 'negritude', the 'black soul' or black cultural roots in search of which the black poet descends into his own soul:

"Since this Eurydice will disappear in smoke if Black Orpheus turns around to look back on her, he will descend the royal road of his soul with his back turned on the bottom of the grotto; he will descend ... with his back turned and his eyes closed, in order finally to touch with his feet the black water of dreams and desire and to let himself drown in it" (117).

But, as a translator's note at this point suggests, "Sartre seems to have confused his images here, since Orpheus was instructed not to look back while he was ascending from Hades, after he had retrieved Eurydice from Pluto" (118). Sartre's 'black Orpheus' is not only the wrong colour; he is also going the wrong way.

The topsy-turvy world of this black-and-white upside-down

musician is even further complicated by the issue of gender, and 'masculine' and 'feminine' collapse into each other in the same way as 'blackness' and 'whiteness'. According to Sartre, the black man is closer to both Nature and the roots of human sexuality:

"The black man's secret is that the sources of his existence and the roots of his Being are identical ... [T]he black man is first of all a peasant ... To plant is to impregnate the earth ... [T]he black peasant remains the great male of the earth, the world's sperm. His existence is great vegetal patience; his work is the yearly repetition of holy coitus ..." (119).

The reader may well wonder how Sartre, presenting himself in this essay as the defender and champion of the black poets, could nevertheless lapse so easily into the crudest racist myths of both the 'animal sexuality' and the brute-like 'peasant mentality' of black people, apparently without realising what he was doing (120). But his insistent sexualisation of black identity ultimately leads to a startling conclusion:

"For our black poets, ... Being comes out of Nothingness like a penis becoming erect; Creation is an enormous perpetual delivery; ... [the Negro] is both Nature's female and its male ... This spermatoc religion is like the tension of a soul balancing between two complementary tendencies: the dynamic feeling of being an erect phallus, and that more deaf, more patient, more feminine one of being a growing plant. Thus negritude is basically a sort of androgyny" (121).

Here, as in Nausea, blackness is linked to the world of Nature, but this time Sartre valorises rather than denigrates the connexion in yet another reversal (122). In fact with the dissolving of 'masculine' and 'feminine' into 'a sort of androgyny', the process of collapse in 'Black Orpheus' is complete: not only have 'blackness' and 'whiteness', 'masculine' and 'feminine' become indistinguishable, but even that most fundamental of divisions, the division between the in-itself and the for-itself, is abolished in this world where 'the

sources of existence and the roots of Being are identical' and "man grows along with his wheat" (123). It is as though all those visually-erected divisions were meaningless in the aural realm of the singer-musician (and 'his' 'deaf' - that is, aurally defined - consort). It is not surprising, perhaps, that Sartre was an indefatigable and exclusive prose writer throughout his career, if this is the kind of confusion in which he believes that poetry can result.

### Distant voices

Thus Sartre's use of aural images, in particular images associated with music and singing, tends to produce a blurring of distinctions which in the visual realm are clear and well-defined, either as terms equally set up and reigned over by the look (as is the case with 'blackness' and 'whiteness', both of which are given by vision as qualities of the in-itself), or as *hierarchical binary* divisions in which one term exercises the power of the look over the other (as with the for-itself and the in-itself, and, correlatively, with masculine and feminine). This is indeed intriguing, given that this dissolution of visually-defined distinctions by the sense of hearing is permitted by the very feature that sight and hearing have in common - that is, by the fact that they are both 'senses at a distance'.

According to Roland Barthes, music, and especially singing, directly invokes the body of the former in its encounter with language and meaning; what he calls 'the grain of the voice' is "the materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue" (124) - "the

'grain' is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs" (125), involving the performer's body in an intimate sense, "the cavities, the muscles, the membranes, the cartilages" (122). It is not, however, a visible body - membranes and cartilages are unseen by the audience even when the performer is physically present - and it is this lack of visibility which causes Sartre's disorientation in the aural realm. The physical body is defined for Sartre as the in-itself which consciousness transcends, and this definition is of course made in terms of the look: the body as such is visible rather than audible, and so those aspects of the body which emerge as 'the grain of the voice' are simply elided by Sartre, resulting in the curious disembodiment of the singing voice and all the confusion that disembodiment produces. Thus Roquentin, listening to 'Some of These Days' for the last time, automatically translates his aural experience into visual images which, disconnected as they are from the body of the performer as performer, are more or less arbitrary: instead of considering "the clutch of the fingertips" (127) or "the pad of the fingers" (128) in the audible 'grain' of the musicians' performance, he imagines "the worn body of that Jew with the coal-black eye-brows" (129); instead of encountering the voice of the singer on a purely aural level, he decides that she sounds like a 'Negress' and so attributes to her body a visually determinable quality of 'blackness' which in fact has nothing to do with the sound of her voice as such. It is the distance between the hearer and the performer that permits this confusion; the fact that the music Roquentin hears is recorded makes that distance not just immeasurable, but arguably even definitional of this particular sensual experience: it is, specifically, a recorded voice that he

hears, the human and embodied origin of which is radically absent and the sound of which, thanks to the gramophone, he can hear repeatedly and at will. (Its repeatability also adds to that air of 'internal necessity' which Roquentin finds so compelling. He could, after all, have gone to hear live jazz in a nightclub, in which case no two performances - even of the same song - would necessarily have been the same; but he prefers a record which he has been able to listen to many times before, and consequently he always knows what is coming next and can project 'internal necessity' onto what is, perhaps, merely familiar (130).) Since the body for Sartre is visible by definition, and the sound of a voice the source of which is invisible is for that reason literally disembodied, Sartre is faced with the dilemma of either having to invent an 'embodied' (that is, *visual(ised)*) source for the sound, or admitting that sight is not the sole or primary or paradigmatic sense to which the world or the body is revealed. Of course he must decide in favour of the former, because the entire hierarchical Sartrean universe is built on the denial of the latter.

Little wonder, then, that Roquentin should believe that "melodies ... don't exist" (131): of course they don't, since they're invisible. It is this invisibility, an effect of hearing's character as a 'sense at a distance', which gives to music its much-prized air of non-contingency, and even of immortality, for the recorded sounds continue even though the performers themselves are unseen, indeed may even be dead. In the last pages of Nausea Roquentin finds himself aspiring to a similar sort of immortality or, as he regards it, 'salvation' through the creation of a work of art, the only possible means of escape from the facticity of his own existence: "[P]eople

who would read [my] novel ... would think about my life as I think about the life of that Negress: as about something precious and almost legendary" (132). This idea of 'salvation through art', which, as Sartre himself later admitted, is closely connected to "the Christian idea of immortality" (133), was one that he later renounced (134), but the notion that music as an art form is somehow less contingent, less located in time and space than other art forms was one that was retained by Sartre throughout his life, and in conversation with de Beauvoir he agreed that this was one of the reasons he was so reluctant to write about it: "[A]lthough music does in fact reflect its time, the society of its time, it does so in such a remote [sic] and indirect fashion, so difficult to grasp, that it seems almost independent of it" (135).

In fact, I would argue, the sense of hearing is so difficult for Sartre because of its refusal of all those hierarchical divisions elsewhere maintained in Sartre's texts by the privilege of vision: in the aural realm there is no hierarchical, or even well-defined, division between subject and object, active and passive, because it is impossible to determine whether the one who hears is active or passive in relation to the sound heard: the one who 'actively' listens is also the one who 'passively' receives the sound heard (136), whereas for Sartre 'to look', as I have already argued in a previous chapter, is always both active and transitive. Moreover Sartre also finds himself unable to reduce the sense of hearing to a lesser version of the sense of sight, as he does with the 'senses of contact'. This seems to be because those senses bring the subject into direct and more or less unmediated contact with the flesh, which Sartre, with varying degrees of success, can continue to define as being-in-itself

and hence as object of the look, whereas the relations between the flesh and the sense of hearing are more complex. The 'distance' at work in the sense of hearing and the 'grain of the voice' which the hearer encounters even when the performer is physically absent produce a relationship between the hearer and the flesh of that absent body which can be grasped by neither sight nor the 'senses of contact': the latter demand that the in-itself present itself, so to speak, as a dense and passive matter before the subject's consciousness; hearing, and in particular hearing the human voice (including one's own voice, a sound which all hearing people simultaneously both hear and produce), is more properly an interaction with the flesh, an encounter with 'the cavities, the muscles, the membranes, the cartilages' which, in producing the sound of the voice, are themselves perhaps more active than passive.

The power of the aural image to destabilise and even to dissolve the hierarchical binary divisions in Sartre's texts does not, of course, succeed in overthrowing those divisions altogether. Although the collapse of race and gender divisions in the song 'Some of These Days' in Nausea may indeed cast doubt on Roquentin's project for transcendence through art, it is not enough to overthrow all the hierarchies of subject over object, mind over body, and masculine over feminine which have preceded it in the novel: the in-itself is still subordinate to the for-itself, contingency is still nauseating. Nor is 'Black Orpheus', despite the centrality of the metaphor of the singer-musician, by any means a liberatory or even simply non-oppressive text, not even - especially not - for those whose cause it claims to champion: in Black Skin, White Masks, Frantz Fanon

discusses 'Black Orpheus' at length, pointing out that not only does it fail to contribute to black struggles against racism, it actually hinders them:

"When I read [a particular passage of 'Black Orpheus'], I felt that I had been robbed of my last chance. I said to my friends, 'The generation of the younger black poets has just suffered a blow that can never be forgiven' . . . Orphée Noir is a date in the intellectualisation of the experience of being black. And Sartre's mistake was not only to seek the source of the source but in a certain sense to block that source . . . Jean-Paul Sartre, in this work, has destroyed black zeal" (137).

Indeed it is the familiar pattern of immanence and transcendence as it appears in 'Black Orpheus' which is the target of Fanon's criticism here, since Sartre suggests in this text that "negritude appears like the up-beat [unaccented beat] of a dialectical progression" (138) - as a term, that is, the sole purpose of which is to be transcended and surpassed as history progresses towards the abolition of all racial categories as such. This 'dialectical progression' in which negritude will eventually be surpassed is even present in 'Black Orpheus' in the form of the 'battle of looks'. In the opening paragraph Sartre writes that:

"Here are black men standing, looking at us, and I hope that you - like me - will feel the shock of being seen. For three thousand years the white man enjoyed the privilege of seeing without being seen . . . Today, these black men are looking at us, and our gaze comes back to our own eyes" (139).

Thus negritude or 'black consciousness' is represented as the subjection of 'the white man' to the gaze of 'the black man' (it is only men, as usual, who engage in such battles) - but this subjection is "a 'crossing to' and not an 'arrival at', a means and not an end . . . With what pride as a man will he strip his pride as a negro for other men!" (140). The ultimate goal of the 'battle of looks'

waged between black and white is not 'black consciousness' but the uniting of "the oppressed of every colour" (141) into "the universal race of the oppressed" (142), the formation of a non-racial 'we' for the sake of which 'the black man' must renounce his 'blackness' (as Sartre puts it, to Fanon's anger, "It is when negritude renounces itself that it finds itself; it is when it accepts losing that it has won; the coloured man - and he alone - can be asked [by whom? Sartre does not say] to renounce the pride of his colour" (143)). In fact this could not be the end of the battle of looks as such - as long as there are consciousnesses that battle will continue - but merely a re-grouping of combatants: 'we' is defined by Sartre in Being and Nothingness as "*consciousness (of) being a co-spectator of [a] spectacle*" (144), that is, as the phenomenon of being a joint subject of the look; 'we' are only 'we' when we are looking at something. Thus Sartre manages to avoid much of the potentially disruptive effect of the aural *imagery of 'Orpheus' on his* hierarchical conceptions of subject, object and transcendence by re-inserting the 'battle of looks' at crucial points in his argument, and in doing so he reproduces in his writing those very structures of privilege, domination and oppression - "the gag ... keeping these ... mouths shut" (145) - which he so devoutly wished that his writing would help to destroy.

## CONCLUSION

Indeed, those structures of domination and oppression are so prevalent in Sartre's work that Michèle Le Doeuff calls him "a literary tyrant" (146) who "establish[es] himself ... as the only speaking subject" (147). According to Le Doeuff, this is particularly evident in his published letters to Simone de Beauvoir and his other friends and lovers, but, as she puts it, "there is also a congruence of his personal position and his philosophical theory" (148) in the form of what she jokingly calls "the Adam complex" (149):

"In Sartre's ethics there is only room for one ego, who represents humankind as a whole - the 'I' of the phenomenologists - but to whom that humankind is reduced. This hypertrophied subject, who appears in the philosophical works, reappears in the biography in the form of a single speaking subject, one Jean-Paul Sartre" (150).

A similar accusation, couched in rather different terms, is made by Mary Warnock, who speaks not from Le Doeuff's explicitly feminist standpoint but from within mainstream academic philosophy itself. Noting the 'congruence of his personal position and his philosophical theory' in Sartre's work, and in particular in his discussions of nausea and the quality of the slimy in Being and Nothingness, Warnock declares that:

"It is hard not to conclude here that his choice [of the 'slimy' or 'viscous' as a 'natural symbol'] is too idiosyncratic to have much general value, and that it must be an exceedingly dubious foundation for a total account of the world. And when one considers the feeling, nausea, which is particularly associated with viscosity in his account, and remembers that it is this feeling which must mediate for us, according to him, all our awareness of the physical world, then one is most strongly tempted to write the whole thing off as an obsession, or a reflexion of some feature of Sartre's own life

which one may feel very thankful not to share" (151).

Taken together, these observations by Warnock and Le Doeuff suggest that Sartre 'tyrannises' over his readers by conflating 'I, the phenomenological philosopher' with 'I, Sartre' and elevating his personal tastes and quirks into a philosophical system. Even the most cursory reading of Sartre's biographical and autobiographical material, particularly his conversations with de Beauvoir reproduced in Adieux, does in fact provide evidence to support this view. For example, in Adieux, Sartre speaks at length about his attitude towards his own body, and his remarks reveal the deeply personal nature of attitudes and ideas which appear in Being and Nothingness as philosophical truths about the relations between consciousness and the body in general: he speaks of the, for him, disagreeable "inward feeling" (152) or 'coenesthesia' he experiences as a more or less constant condition:

"I think that for me my body was essentially something in action ... What counted was the act I performed ... I think that when I was a child I very early conceived of my body as a centre of action, neglecting the aspects of sensation and passivity. This passivity existed, of course, and all I was doing was repressing it a little. But in doing so I emphasised what was objective, real, an action performed by me - putting sand in a bucket and making a castle or a house with it. But in any case what counted was the action. And it was always by activity that I was aware of certain elements of my body ... There are imaginary bodies that envelop one's own body in one's perception of it. My imaginary body was that of a military captain, indeed ... a cloak-and-dagger hero. And I know when I acquired it, or at least when I developed it. It was when I was little and when I played at being Pardaillan [a fictional 'cloak-and-dagger' hero] while my mother was playing the piano" (153).

The discussion continues and Sartre considers the effects of this 'active' conception of his body on his attitudes towards sexuality, specifically towards heterosexual relations:

"For me what counted and what has always counted is the active side, that is to say the position of my hand and of course the feeling of the flesh, but the feeling insofar as I brought it into being ... It was my action that counted, together with what the action perceived, that is, the exterior, objective aspect of the opposing [sic] body ... Reciprocity was the thing I felt least ...

DE BEAUVOIR: You were never aware of yourself as a passive object.

SARTRE: Never" (154).

And so on; the discussion continues further, covering Sartre's dislike for sliminess, nature, animals ("Animals. As I see it they are a philosophical problem. Basically" (155)), his love of eating and drinking, and other personal details. These passages clearly indicate how such features of Sartre's philosophy as the sovereignty of activity over passivity, the lack of reciprocity or of the 'double sensation' of touching and being touched, the dichotomy between the active subject and the passive object in relations with the Other and, most importantly in the present context, the 'heterosexual division of labour' between the active male and the passive female upon whom he acts, are all expressions of Sartre's idiosyncratic relations with his own body, which developed, as he himself states, from a childhood fantasy game rather than from introspection or philosophical enquiry. When questioned further as to the origins of this "refusal of all bodily passivity" as de Beauvoir calls it (156), Sartre can offer no explanation, saying only that there was "something immediate about it from the very beginning" (157), and conceding - with some reluctance - that it may stem from such things as "questions of weaning, questions wholly to do with childhood" (158).

Thus when Le Doeuff sums up her feminist investigation of Being and Nothingness -

"What have we found? A little horror - woman as the 'sugary death of the For-itself' - much conviction regarding superiority over women, an apparently self-evident and never questioned reduction of woman to the sexual interest she arouses but disappoints, the assimilation, also unquestioned, of the object to be known to the female body and, reciprocally, a relation to this body which is called 'appropriation' and 'rape'. Is it possible to be more exhaustive in expressions of sexism?" (159)

- the 'expressions of sexism' she enumerates have their origins in personal attitudes and beliefs at least as much as in the project of 'phenomenological ontology'. This does not of course mean that the sexism in Sartre's philosophical and other writings is 'contingent' or 'accidental', as some of his defenders have tried to suggest (160); these personal elements are not mistakes or stylistic blunders which can be removed while leaving the philosophical system as a whole intact; Sartre's sexism, as I hope I have demonstrated by now, is integral to his philosophy - as indeed, according to Mary Warnock, is "the anecdotal mode of argument" (161), which in her introduction to the English language edition of Being and Nothingness she calls "a genuinely existentialist method of argument" (162) and which, through its deployment of such figures as the frigid woman, the coquette, the homosexual and his 'sincere' friend, the philosopher with sticky hands and the child who insists on *poking his fingers into holes*, does so much of Sartre's philosophical and tyrannically sexist work for him.

Sartre's elevation of the sense of sight over the other senses in his philosophical and other texts, then, may well, as I have already suggested, originate in personal whim or preference; in any case, its privileged status, which has emerged in this chapter as both arbitrary in the sense that, contrary to appearances, it is not determined or required by Sartre's philosophical system, and necessary

in the sense that it is the determining factor in Sartre's hierarchical definitions of subject and object and all the sexist and oppressive consequences that follow from them, is neither more nor less whimsical or unfounded in philosophical terms than much else that appears in the texts I have been discussing. In this sense it could be argued - as Michèle Le Doeuff, for example, ultimately argues - that Sartre is sexist because he is a bad philosopher. My aim, however, has not been to judge whether Sartre is a 'good' or 'bad' philosopher, nor indeed to make pronouncements about what constitutes 'good' or 'bad' philosophy as such, or about whether it is even possible to speak of 'good' or 'bad' philosophy at all; it has been merely to investigate, by close reading and discussion of a number of Sartre's texts, whether and how the privilege of the gaze and of the visual metaphor in those texts is a sexist device, and this I hope I have done. In the course of these three chapters on Sartre I have demonstrated how Sartre's use of the look erects and defines the terms 'subject' and 'object', 'consciousness' and 'body' and how these terms are then equated with the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine', thus creating a hierarchical relation of the former over the latter; how the denigration of 'femininity', thus equated with the being-in-itself of the body or object, is therefore a requirement of the very structure of Sartre's philosophical system; how the 'heterosexual division of labour' between activity and passivity in that system likewise relegates homosexuals to the status of objects, objects of the gaze specifically, and 'relative beings' by virtue of the peculiarities of Sartre's definition of homosexuality in terms of the 'battle of looks'; and finally, how Sartre's use of all the other senses, with the sole exception of hearing, amounts in effect to a

reduction of those senses themselves to variants of the sense of sight merely, thus keeping the sexism or masculinism effected in his texts by the privilege of vision in place. The sense of hearing is the only sense which Sartre seems unable to bring under the sway of the organising principle of the look; and the potentially disruptive effects of aural imagery on the hierarchical binary divisions erected by the look have been noted above. By continuing to insist on the primacy of vision and on the 'ontological' status of those hierarchical divisions, Sartre manages to some degree to limit the damage, but the potential for disruption remains, and, more importantly, the disruptive potential of aural imagery indicates that the system erected by the privilege of the look is neither inevitable nor immovable.

Thus, in the case of Sartre, the evidence that the gaze and the visual metaphor as it is used in theoretical writings is a sexist device is damning indeed: Sartre's texts are sexist and oppressive, and his use of the gaze is a vital determining principle of that sexism and of the conceptual structures in which the mechanisms of oppression - often quite contrary to Sartre's explicitly avowed anti-hierarchical and anti-oppressive intentions - are enshrined. One could even go so far as to say that the dynamics of the gaze, with its sharp division between 'active' and 'passive', 'subject' and 'object', 'mind' and 'body', has emerged in these three chapters as constitutive of sexual difference as such in Sartre's texts, and that Sartre makes woman into an object by definition almost as surely as being-in-itself is non-conscious by definition: in a philosophy in which the being of objects is 'feminine' and the knowledge of objects

is 'rape', the supremacy of masculinity over femininity, the erection of the power of activity of the former over the passivity of the latter, must be so entrenched as to have become almost axiomatic. All of this is achieved by the power of the gaze, the manifestation of sovereign consciousness which turns the Other into an object at one glance. Take a look then at this Sartrean woman: she is as you see her; she is what she is.

Original in colour

CHAPTERS FIVE TO SEVEN: LACAN



Hans Holbein the Younger, The Ambassadors

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE IMAGINARY AND THE MIRROR STAGE

#### INTRODUCTION

During the seminar on anamorphosis transcribed in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, Lacan remarks: "I saw myself seeing myself ... Certainly, this statement has rich and complex implications in relation to the theme developed in La Jeune Parque, that of femininity - but we haven't got there yet" (1). Nor indeed do we ever 'get there': nowhere in The Four Fundamental Concepts does Lacan expand on this remark, and the femininity of 'I saw myself seeing myself' only appears in the text through a series of displacements and condensations, through asides on woman's enjoyment of exhibitionism or allusions to female genitalia as a metaphorical camera (2). These unelaborated remarks remain enigmas within the text - one cannot help saying, like unanalysed dream images - troubling its surface but never fully emerging. In this chapter I shall investigate the hidden agenda behind such remarks, an agenda which uses the paradigm of the visual image to manipulate concepts of masculinity and femininity.

To place 'I see myself seeing myself' in context, one must turn to the concept of the mirror stage. The mirror stage is one of Lacan's earliest contributions to Freudian psychoanalysis, and is the cornerstone of Lacan's psychoanalytic theory. (Lacan himself regarded his work as a radical 'return to Freud', a correction of misreadings of Sigmund Freud's original work by subsequent psychoanalysts. I

shall be discussing this aspect of Lacan's work at length in later chapters.) Lacan postulates that the child passes through the mirror stage somewhere between the ages of six and eighteen months, before the acquisition of language: the mirror stage is essentially the phenomenon of the child's seeing its own image in a mirror and identifying with that image. Through this identification the child assumes a totalising image of its own body which is radically alien to its experience of that body as fragmented, sensorily chaotic and lacking motor co-ordination. In providing the child with a totalised body image, the mirror stage gives an image of unity and self-mastery in which the child 'jubilates' (3) and which paves the way for the assumption of the 'I' which the child will make when it acquires language and so enters the symbolic order. At the same time, however, the mirror stage introduces the term of alienation, since the unified and unifying image the child sees is never in the place from which the child sees it; the image is always 'other' than, alien to, the child. The gap thus opened up between child and image foreshadows the more radical splitting which will occur when the child leaves the mirror stage to enter the intersubjective dialectic characteristic of the imaginary (4) and to become a subject by passing through the castration complex and entering the symbolic (5).

In this context, 'I see myself seeing myself' emerges as both an infantile phenomenon, an entrapment in the fascination exerted over the pre-subjective child by its own image, and as an illusion, a kind of Lacanian 'bad faith' in which the subject glosses over its inherently split, castrated nature and seeks to (re)present itself to itself in an impossible unity (6). The form of those 'rich and

complex implications' at which Lacan hints so flirtatiously starts to become a little clearer: what is at stake is woman's place within the realm of the imaginary, the realm of intersubjectivity and identification structured by the effects of images and (mis)recognitions. 'I see myself seeing myself' is the mark of a femininity caught within, on the one hand, an autistic self-absorption by/in its own image and, on the other, a delusional denial of castration, a sort of (mirror-) reversal of penis envy (7). If, as Lacan states with respect to the imaginary, the mirror stage is the threshold of the visible world (8), then femininity is situated within that visible world as a place of infantilism, autism and delusion.

This femininity is embodied for both Freud and his disciple and re-interpreter Lacan in the figure of the narcissistic woman, "the type of female most frequently met with, which is probably the purest and truest one" (9). The narcissistic woman is the point of convergence of many currents within Freudian psychoanalytic thought; Sarah Kofman in particular posits the narcissistic woman as a trouble spot in Freudian theory, a fascinating and uncanny figure who represents for man the 'paradise lost' of pre-Oedipal primary narcissism (10). In Lacanian terms, as I shall make clear in this chapter, the narcissistic woman comes to represent the quintessence of feminine sexuality as "the effort of a jouissance wrapped in its own contiguity" (11), a sexuality whose 'phallic' phase of infantile development is dominated by the "autistic" organ of the clitoris (12). Not only is the narcissistic woman caught in the illusion of her own image, 'seeing herself seeing herself', but her consequent place within the imaginary and its identificatory structure leaves her loving herself loving herself and fucking herself fucking herself. In

the closed circuit of her sexuality, Lacanian woman can make no exchange; she can only herself be exchanged.

In this chapter I will show that the narcissistic woman is at the core of the manipulation of 'masculine' and 'feminine', and that that manipulation seeks to reduce the complexities of gender to a question of either/or which leaves no room for anything other than compulsory heterosexuality and a rigidly pre-ordained binarism of sexual difference, the "conceptual frame of universal sex opposition" (13) discussed in my introductory chapter. The discussion will fall into two main sections.

The first section will focus on femininity, and specifically on the narcissistic femininity outlined in Freud's 1914 paper 'On narcissism: an introduction'. 'On narcissism' is a - arguably the - major foundation stone of Lacan's realm of the imaginary, and as such is a crucial starting point for the analysis of the place of femininity within that realm. This section will accordingly begin with a discussion of the concept of narcissism developed in that paper, and particularly of the alignment of women, criminals, animals and children that occurs within it. In this section I will begin an investigation of the alignment of femininity with criminality as it appears in Lacan's early paper 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque' (1933) which imbricates femininity, homosexuality and psychosis in a structure which has narcissism at its centre.

The second section will focus on the issue of object-choice, again starting with 'On narcissism', in which Freud argues that there are two basic and more or less mutually exclusive types of object choice, the anaclitic and the narcissistic, which he characterises as

typically masculine and feminine respectively. In the context of this distinction I will move on to the Lacanian formulation of object-choice, particularly the object-choice of the 'female homosexual' as she appears in the works of both Freud and Lacan; I shall argue that the conflation of types of object-choice with sexual difference in psychoanalytic theory accords no place to lesbian desire, and that the latter thereby dislodges femininity from its orthodox narcissistic place in the imaginary. This section will end with a brief return to the case of the psychotic and 'homosexual' Papin sisters as they are described and diagnosed in 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque'.

I will close this chapter with a summing up of the effects on the construction of gender of the concepts of narcissism and the imaginary in Lacanian theory, and a discussion of whether those effects are direct results of, or simple correspondences with, the status of narcissism and the imaginary as visual concepts. This will raise a number of difficult questions, many of which will be topics for investigation in later chapters.

#### SECTION ONE: NARCISSISM AND FEMININITY

I saw myself seeing myself, says the young Parque (14). She also says, she who is moved to see herself weeping before a mirror can never die (15). Weeping for herself weeping for herself: for the young Parque, unlike Narcissus, entrapment in one's own image is the term not of death but of an uncanny continuation of life. For men, an excess of narcissism in Freudian/Lacanian terms dooms the subject to perversion or psychosis; for women, excessive narcissism is the

essential condition of femininity, perversion and psychosis little more than an occupational hazard of the state of being woman (16). In this section I shall trace some ways in which a paradigmatically visual narcissism distorts the Lacanian image of femininity into an image of monstrosity, culminating in the Papin sisters, perverts, psychotics, notorious instances of feminine narcissism taken to its logical conclusion.

### The imaginary and the visual

The concept of the imaginary has its place at the heart of Lacanian theory as one of the great 'trptych' of imaginary, symbolic and real, the three major concepts by which Lacanian theory is structured. The imaginary is rooted in the mirror stage as described above: it is the realm in which ego-formation and identification occur, where the subject's relations to its (libidinal) objects take shape and where intersubjective relations are structured through identification and dialectic. Although Lacan concedes that 'image' need not mean 'visual image' (17), it is nevertheless the visual that is the paradigmatic 'image' of the imaginary: "imaginary, narcissistic, specular identification - the three adjectives are equivalent when it comes to representing these matters in theory" (18). That this is an equivalence precisely 'in theory' is stressed by Lacan, who points out that his description of imaginary relations in terms of visual mirror images is only a metaphor - it is not to be taken literally, or as he says after Freud, the scaffolding is not to be taken for the building (19). Lacan knows a thing or two about the function and importance of metaphor in psychoanalysis: he knows, for

example, that it is one of the basic mechanisms of dream and symptom formation (20), that analysis of a metaphor can end by revealing the repressed material, the hidden agenda behind the subject's speech ...

If the visual image provides Lacan with a metaphor for the operations of the imaginary, it also provides him with a ready-made science, a structure with its own scientific laws according to which those operations may be characterised and described. In his seminar of 1953-4, Lacan makes his first introduction of the mirror schemata of imaginary, narcissistic, specular identification with the following words:

"I cannot urge you too strongly to a meditation on optics. The odd thing is that an entire system of metaphysics has been founded on geometry and mechanics, by looking to them for models of understanding, but up to now it doesn't seem as though optics has been exploited as much as it could have been ... [O]ptics is founded on a mathematical theory without which it is absolutely impossible to structure it. For there to be an optics, for each given point in real space, there must be one point and one corresponding point only in another space, which is the imaginary space. This is the fundamental structural hypothesis" (21).

Optics is henceforward taken by Lacan as one of the foundations of his own metaphysics, and he returns to it continually (notably in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, to be discussed at length in another chapter). His description of the imaginary, narcissism, the specular in terms of optical phenomena may be metaphorical, but for him it is also scientific, a mathematical structure around and through which Lacanian theory may be constructed: a metaphor, but a metaphor of real substance, from which Lacan goes on to the exposition of his various mirror schemata (22). Narcissism, the excess of which characterises femininity, is thus very particularly concerned with a paradigmatically visual image: seeing

herself seeing herself, exactly.

### Freud's naughty narcissistic girls

In a much-quoted and endlessly bizarre passage of 'On narcissism: an introduction', Freud writes:

"With the onset of puberty the maturing of the female sexual organs ... seems to bring about an intensification of the original narcissism ... Women, especially if they grow up with good looks, develop a certain self-contentment ... Strictly speaking, it is only themselves that such women love ... The importance of this type of woman for the erotic life of mankind is to be rated very high. Such women have the greatest fascination for men ... For it seems very evident that another person's narcissism has a great attraction for those who have renounced part of their own narcissism and are in search of object-love. The charm of a child lies to a great extent in his narcissism, his self-contentment and inaccessibility, just as does the charm of certain animals which seem not to concern themselves about us, such as cats and large beasts of prey. Indeed, even great criminals and humorists, as they are represented in literature, compel our interest by the narcissistic consistency with which they manage to keep away from their ego anything which would diminish it ..." (23).

The bizarreness of this passage, which comes almost as a digression at the end of a discussion of types of object choice (to which I shall be returning in the next section), does not only stem from the linking of narcissism with female sexual organs, although given Freud's remarks in later papers on 'penis envy' and its consequent wound to feminine narcissism, this may already appear bizarre enough (24). What strikes the reader is the way that the usually measured and methodical Freud suddenly presents us, pell-mell, with a collection of half-explained and apparently random images; especially striking is Freud's own 'fascination', to use his term, with those images. His fascination with the woman in this passage is rich material for all kinds of speculations: later in the same paper,

he writes that "[t]he majority of hysterical women [ie Freud's own female patients] are among the attractive and even beautiful representatives of their sex" (25), and elsewhere he remarks upon certain female patients who are "children [sic] of nature" and whose "elemental passionateness" (26) makes their inevitable transference-love for their analyst impossible to deal with. The narcissistic woman, "the type of woman most frequently met with [by men? by psychoanalysts? by Freud?] which is probably the purest and truest one" (27), is at once child, animal, criminal, humorist, the one who exercises the greatest fascination over men, perhaps especially over Freud himself.

'Fascination' is a richly associative word in Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, specifically in connexion with the imaginary (28). Fascination is an essential feature of the Lacanian subject's imaginary, narcissistic, specular identification with the image, that image being always ambiguous as to its status as 'ego' or 'other', 'me' or 'you'. This fascinating ambiguity is expressed by Lacan in the term 'captation' (29), a narcissistic relation with an image which both seduces and entraps the subject. Captation can result in Verliebtheit, a narcissistic, imaginary love for the other which engulfs the subject and whose counterpart is an imaginary hate which desires the other's destruction (30). (Women, as we shall see, are particularly prone to both.) Freud's fascination with the image of the narcissistic woman is a relation of captation, of Verliebtheit with its attendant threat of imaginary hate ("[t]he great charm of narcissistic women has, however, its reverse side ..." (31)). Like the infant at the mirror stage, Freud contemplates the image of the

complete, 'self-contented', self-loving woman and jubilates in a mastery to which he has no proper claim (32).

Lacan takes Freud's 'On narcissism' as one of the foundations of his own concept of the imaginary (33); consequently the images of narcissistic femininity presented by Freud in that paper - child, animal, criminal, humorist - can be traced in Lacanian theory in ways that reveal something of the hidden agenda that lies behind them. The implications of the 'child' image have already been seen above in connexion with the mirror stage: the self-contentment and inaccessibility of the narcissistic woman is mirrored in that of the pre-subjective child captivated by its own image. (The equation woman=child is continued in Freud's paper in his discussion of women's love for their own children, "a part of their own body [which] confronts them like an extraneous object, to which, starting out from their narcissism, they can give complete object-love" (34) - meaning that the only possible form of 'feminine' object-love is "[p]arental love, which is so moving and at bottom so childish" (35).)

The animal image too turns up in 'The mirror stage', where Lacan cites as examples of Gestalt-recognition the behaviour of pigeons and of migratory locusts (36). These rather surreal but highly characteristic references to animal behaviour (Lacan continues such comparisons throughout later works, appealing to, among others, molluscs, insects and stickleback fish (37)) occur in the context of Lacan's elaboration of the distinction between ego-libido and object-libido, a distinction over which Freud takes great pains in 'On narcissism' (38). The distinction, roughly speaking, is that object-libido gives rise to the sexual drives and situates the individual as an involuntary link in the chain of the propagation of the species,

while ego-libido gives rise to ego-drives which centre around the individual as such. Gestalt-recognition in animals is taken by Lacan to indicate the role of the imaginary in the operation of sexual drives: sexual display and/or recognition of another member of one's own species results in sexual coupling and the reproduction of the species or type:

"In the function of pairing mechanisms, ethologists have proved the dominance of the image ... The mechanical throwing into gear of the sexual instinct is thus essentially crystallised in a relation of images, in - I now come to the term you're expecting - an imaginary relation. This is the framework within which we must articulate the Libidotriebe and the Ichtriebe. The libidinal drive is centred on the function of the imaginary" (39).

"[T]he Freudian notion of narcissism gives us a category which enables us to understand to what extent there is nonetheless a relation between the structuration of the animal world and that of the human world" (40).

The imaginary relation of the animal to its own image, like that of Freud's narcissistic woman, is of an importance for the erotic life of its species which is to be rated very high; like the narcissistic woman too, its appeal lies in its self-contentment and inaccessibility:

"Let's start with the animal, an animal which is also an ideal, that is to say successful - the unsuccessful one is the one we managed to capture. This ideal animal gives us a vision of completeness, of fulfilment ... That's what makes this living form seductive, as its appearance harmoniously unfolds" (41).

Woman, like the 'successful' animal, only succeeds in exercising her fascinating and seductive allure over men as long as she remains enigmatic, inaccessible, that is to say, as long as she has retained the attributes of her Freudian narcissism, uncaptured by masculine object-love.

Of course Lacan is not trying to say in these passages that the role of the imaginary in the sexual drive is the same in humans and in animals, or that pigeons and locusts pass through a 'mirror stage' like that of the human infant. Animal Gestalt-recognition is only that, and the vision of completeness that the animal represents is that of a "perfect fit, indeed the identity of the Innenwelt and the Umwelt" (42). In other words, what distinguishes the human from the animal in the realm of the imaginary is the relation of gap and alienation that the human mirror stage infant has to its own image:

"Living animal subjects are sensitive to the image of their own kind ... But the human being has a special relation with his own image - a relation of gap, of alienating tension. That's where the possibility of the order of presence and absence, that is of the symbolic order, comes in" (43).

What distinguishes the human from the animal in the realm of the imaginary is the gap and the symbolic order which arises from it. But "the symbolic order, in its initial operation, is androcentric. That's a fact" (44). And if the 'human' imaginary is characterised by a relation of gap, feminine sexuality for Lacan, let it be remembered, is no less characterised by 'contiguity' and 'autism'; if, according to the famous formula, "there is no absence in the real" (45), there is a corresponding Lacanian formula that woman is "a being much more engaged in the real than males" (46).

All of this ultimately leads to the topic of the place of gender and sexual difference at the juncture between the symbolic and the imaginary, a topic which I shall discuss at length in another chapter. In the meantime we can reflect that this contiguity and lack of lack which characterises femininity derives directly from the 'I see myself seeing myself' of feminine narcissism and ends in the deluded, uncanny

immortality of the young Parque:

"I don't have a mouth, we hear this when we're starting our careers, on the first psychiatric wards we, like lost souls, arrive on. At the heart of this miraculous world, we encounter very old ladies, very old spinsters, and the first thing they tell us is - I don't have a mouth. They inform us that they don't have a stomach either, and what is more that they will never die ... What they have identified with is an image where every gap, every aspiration, every emptiness of desire is lacking ... To the extent that the being's identification with its pure and simple image takes effect, there isn't any room for change either, that is to say death. That in fact is what their theme is - they are both dead and incapable of dying, immortal - like desire" (47).

These ghoulish, un-dead old maids lead me on rather nicely to some young maids, equally ghoulish, and to the third of Freud's images of narcissism, that of the criminal.

#### Narcissistic criminals: the Papin sisters

The fascinating powers of women and criminals come together in spectacular fashion in the figures of the Papin sisters, two young maidservants who in Le Mans in 1933 murdered their two mistresses, mother and daughter, and whose horrible crime - the most notorious feature of which was the tearing of the victims' eyes from their sockets - both shocked and fascinated the French public (48). The murders form the subject of Lacan's 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', an early paper which foreshadows the formulation of the mirror stage (49) in its emphasis on narcissism and the subject's ambiguous relation to the image. It has been noted by a recent critic (50) that Lacan allows himself in this paper to deviate somewhat from the facts of the Papins' case, the more strongly to make his own: the "siamese souls" (51) acting as one in the destruction of their own image as they

appear in this text are not so much real-life figures as Lacan's own creation, true femmes fatales whose narcissism is infantile, bestial and criminal at once. It is Lacan's version of the sisters and their crime that I shall be focussing on here.

Christine and Léa Papin were employed as maids in the household of M and Mme Lancelin. Mme Lancelin and her grown-up daughter arrived home one evening to find that there had been a power-cut, and that the maids had been unable to complete their chores because of it. There was an exchange of words, and suddenly the maids attacked their mistresses, using household implements, including a hammer, a pitcher and a kitchen knife, to beat them to death. The bodies were mutilated - the eyes torn out, the sexual parts uncovered, and the thighs and buttocks slashed and bloodied. Afterwards, the Papins washed themselves and retired together to the same bed, which led to allegations during their trial that they were engaged in an incestuous and 'homosexual' relationship (52). What is perhaps most striking about this crime in connexion with the Lacanian imaginary is that it was committed by two women (relatives, one older than the other) against two women (relatives, one older than the other), as I shall be discussing shortly.

In response to the various speculations by doctors and specialists of the day as to the correct diagnosis of the sisters, Lacan argues that their behaviour is the manifestation of a paranoia conceived along orthodox Freudian lines. The basis of this paranoia is unconscious aggressivity, the "aggressive drive" (53), accompanied by sado-masochism and homosexuality (54). The status of this aggressivity as an effect of the imaginary is clarified by Lacan in a later description of an analogous situation:

"The little girl ..., who wasn't particularly awful, found refuge in a country garden, where she became very peaceably absorbed, at an age when she was scarcely walking on her feet, in the application of a good-sized stone to the skull of a little playmate from next door, who was the person around whom she constructed her first identifications. The deed of Cain does not require very great motor sophistication to come to pass in the most spontaneous, I must even say in the most triumphant, of fashions. She had no sense of guilt - Me break Francis head. She spoke that with assurance and peace of mind. Nonetheless, I still don't predict a criminal future for her. She simply displayed the most fundamental structure of the human being on the imaginary plane - to destroy the person who is the site of alienation" (55).

'The fundamental structure of the human being on the imaginary plane': the little girl in this passage, who, it appears, may not yet quite be beyond the mirror stage (witness her lack of motor sophistication and her poor manipulation of 'I' and 'me') reacts in a perfectly consistent manner to the alienating effects of the image of the other embodied in her playmate. The image of the other, which, because of its perpetual ambiguity between 'me' and 'you', is also the image of herself, sets up a tension in the girl to which she responds, not with jubilation, but its opposite, and which she consequently attempts to destroy (56). Seen in the imaginary context of this concept of aggressivity, homosexuality and sado-masochism emerge as manifestations of Verliebtheit and imaginary hate respectively, the former a narcissistic fascination with the image of the other, the latter an aggressive drive aiming at its destruction.

The paranoia of the Papin sisters finds them locked in the imaginary passions of the mirror stage, like little girls intent on breaking the heads of their playmates. The situation is more complicated for them, the double of a double, in that the sisters are confronted with mirror-images not only in each other, but also in

their mistresses: the imaginary hatred which they direct at their victims mirrors the imaginary love they maintain between themselves. Their 'deed of Cain' is displaced onto a shared other in an act of "délire à deux", double madness (57), through which they attempt to bring about the destruction of the/each other. When, like 'beasts of prey', they mutilate the bodies of their victims, they are acting out their refusal of the alienating, unified image of the other and returning it to the fragmented body of infantile experience, while preserving the jubilatory aspect of their relation to the image in their relation of Verliebtheit to each other. In effect, if, as Francis Dupré suggests, the Papins prepare their victims as if for cooking (58), they do so in order to delude themselves that they can have their narcissistic cake and eat it.

As "one pole of the very structure of the intersubjective relation" (59), the aggressivity which the Papin sisters display and which is at the root of their paranoia might be supposed to be a phenomenon of human intersubjectivity occurring in a gender-neutral space. And yet the scenario of the sisters' crime is almost overloaded with feminine sexuality: the alleged incestuous sexual relationship between the two sisters, their choice of the mother-daughter couple as victims, the grisly voluptuousness of their attack on their victims' bodies and the concentration of attention on their victims' buttocks, thighs and sexual parts all signal that something here is rotten in the state of femininity.

Towards the end of 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', Lacan cites Freud's description of homosexuality as the effect of early sibling rivalry transformed by repression from hostility to desire (60), and

goes on to claim that the structure of paranoia is entirely dominated by the course of this kind of "fraternal complex" (61). Narcissism, says Lacan, offers the path of least resistance for the re-direction of the repressed drive in such cases: hence the desire is a homosexual one between siblings of the same sex, taking as its object that which most resembles the subject. If, as Freud suggests during his analysis of the paranoiac writings of Schreber, female homosexuality and excessive narcissism are linked in the formation of paranoid delusions - specifically when those delusions are concerned with sexual or marital jealousy (62) ("I believe that in another life I should have been my sister's husband," says Christine Papin (63)) - then the 'motive of the paranoiac crime' of the Papin sisters appears as a sexual literalisation of the 'I see myself seeing myself' of the young Parque. In Lacanian terms, feminine sexuality, let us recall, consists in "the effort of a jouissance wrapped in its own contiguity" (64): the savagery of the murders, above all the slicing and bloodying of the flesh around the lower body and sexual parts, constitutes a literal and violent attempt by the sisters to break open the closed circuit, the 'autism' (65), which their sexual bodies represent and to which their constitutionally excessive narcissism condemns them. Like the old women on Lacan's ward, the Papins' victims presented an identificatory image where every gap, and hence every possibility of free-moving Lacanian desire, was lacking; they were both dead and incapable of dying - after the murder, Christine Papin asked after them as if they were still alive (66). "The enigma of the phallus and of feminine castration" which Lacan produces, as if from nowhere, as an explanatory device at the end of 'Motifs du crime paranoiaque' (67), and which, as I shall discuss in later chapters, structures his

formulation of feminine sexuality, is mirrored in the wounds the sisters inflict. Perhaps the tearing out of the victims' eyes was intended as a blinding of the image that stares back from the mirror, a violent refusal to see oneself seeing oneself any longer: the paranoiac, according to Lacanian theory, tends to take metaphors literally (68).

The crime of the Papin sisters is thus a crime of narcissistic passion, their paranoia an active translation of the 'I see myself seeing myself' of femininity into their intersubjective relations with their mistresses. Freud's narcissistic woman becomes narcissistic criminal in the twinkling of an eye. Nor do the implications of woman's excessive narcissism in this case stop here. Further investigation of the role of feminine narcissism in the sisters' 'homosexuality' yields rich results, as we shall see in the next section.

### The joker

The narcissism which characterises femininity is, for Freud, the same as that which characterises the child, the animal and the criminal (69); readings from Lacan show how, through this common factor, femininity is conflated with any or all of the three. What then of the fourth image, the humorist who "compel[s] our interest by the narcissistic consistency with which [he] manage[s] to keep away from [his] ego anything which would diminish it" (70)?

This enchanting figure might perhaps be none other than Lacan himself, celebrated as he is for his jokes and puns, in particular for a favourite pun on his own name ("aux boys le phalle aux girls le

c..." (71)), for alternately teasing and mystifying his audience, for being impervious to criticism and for never quite answering the question: "the less you understand," he tells his audience tauntingly, "the better you listen" (72). Lacan at such times is a real coquette, performing an intellectual strip-tease with a phallus whose 'enigma' is never quite revealed. Certainly his work is notoriously difficult, and he has himself been a highly controversial figure, both during and after his own lifetime, among analysts and non-analysts alike; his project to 'return to Freud', and the accusation against his Freudian predecessors and peers that they abuse or misunderstand Freud's texts, is hailed by some as an intellectual revolution and condemned by others as at best misguided, and at worst downright charlatanism (73). Perhaps Lacan is also a seductive little playmate, a figure around which feminists and critics of 'sexual difference' might construct their imaginary identifications, allowing themselves to be captated for a while so as to be able to break his head later - provided that he doesn't scratch our eyes out first.

## SECTION TWO: NARCISSISM AND OBJECT-CHOICE

The discussion in section one showed how femininity is characterised in Freudian theory by an excess of narcissism, and illustrated some of the consequences of that characterisation for Freud's and Lacan's analyses of feminine sexuality. This section will go on from there to focus specifically on the role of 'feminine' narcissism in Freud's theories of sexual object-choice. I shall demonstrate that Freud's 'two types of object-choice' are mapped onto

the concepts of 'masculine' and 'feminine' in such a way that femininity is always constituted as the 'object' for the masculine 'subject'. My argument will focus on the predicament of lesbian desire in Freudian/Lacanian theory and on how that desire confounds the binary structure within which Freudian concepts of femininity - and in particular the concept of the 'female homosexual' beloved of psychopathology - seek to contain it.

#### And/or

The passage from 'On narcissism' cited in the previous section appears in the course of Freud's discussion of the two types of sexual object-choice, which he calls the 'narcissistic' and the 'anaclitic' types:

"The first auto-erotic sexual satisfactions are experienced in connection with vital functions which serve the purpose of self-preservation. The sexual instincts are at the outset attached to the satisfaction of the ego-instincts; only later do they become independent of these, and even then we have an indication of that original attachment in the fact that the persons who are concerned with a child's feeding, care, and protection become his earliest sexual objects: that is to say, in the first instance his mother or a substitute for her. Side by side, however, with this type and source of object-choice, psychoanalytic research has revealed a second type, which we were not prepared for finding. We have discovered, especially clearly in people whose libidinal development has suffered some disturbance, such as perverts and homosexuals, that in their later choice of love-objects they have taken as a model not their mother but their own selves. They are plainly seeking themselves as a love-object, and are exhibiting a type of object-choice which must be termed 'narcissistic' ... We say that a human being has originally two sexual objects - himself and the woman who nurses him" (74).

Despite his emphasis that the two types of object-choice are not mutually exclusive and are both equally open to any individual (75),

Freud goes on immediately from this passage to characterise anaclitic object-choice as masculine:

"A comparison of the male and female sexes then shows that there are fundamental differences between them in respect of their type of object-choice. Complete object-love of the attachment type is, properly speaking, characteristic of the male" (76).

In other words, men, unless their 'libidinal development suffers some disturbance', will take the women who nurse them as the model for their love-objects - their sexual drives will retain their attachment to their ego-drives (77) - whereas 'perverts and homosexuals' will become locked in the narcissism which we have seen to characterise femininity, and make their object-choice accordingly. In fact, the narcissistic type of object-choice which characterises femininity barely qualifies as a type of object-choice at all: feminine narcissism is "unfavourable to the development of a true object-choice" (78), and the narcissistic woman does not seek a love-object of her own, but wishes rather for someone of whose masculine-anaclitic object-choice she will be the sexual object. Object-love as such, outside of motherhood, is only open to a woman who "feel[s] masculine and develop[s] some way along masculine lines" (79). This characterisation, as we have already seen, amounts to the contiguity and autism of a feminine sexuality which, incapable of taking and exchanging objects, can only itself be taken or exchanged; it is also, of course, an elegant version of the classic heterosexual division of labour between active-masculine (reaching out in search of the object) and passive-feminine (awaiting the seeker's attentions).

The distinction between anaclitic and narcissistic object-choice

thus conflates sexual object-choice with 'sexual difference': in both cases there are only two positions available, masculine or feminine. Moreover, this conflation designates all sexual object-choices as heterosexual; the male homosexual who chooses other men does so because of his 'feminine' narcissism, not because of the promptings of any same-sex masculine desire. Freud's assertion that "both kinds of object-choice are open to each individual" (80) is by no means, therefore, a permission of the free play of erotism - far from it. As Judith Butler points out, "for Freud bisexuality is the coincidence of two heterosexual desires within a single psyche" (81).

But at this point, Freud's textual development seems to suffer some disturbance. Is same-sex object-choice between women anaclitic or narcissistic, masculine or feminine? What place can be given to such object-choice within the structure of Freudian sexual difference? Or, in Lacanian terms, given that both kinds of object-choice take place in the imaginary (82), what relation does same-sex object-choice between women have to what image? What follows will show how the distinction between narcissism and anaclisis generates the peculiar hybrid 'female homosexual', half heterosexual woman and half homosexual man; and how the lesbian, on the contrary, in refusing to be either, is the snag that undoes the Freudian concepts of both.

#### Narcissistic object-choice: the lesbian as heterosexual woman

In drawing his distinction between anaclitic and narcissistic object-choice, Freud makes a clear alignment of homosexuality and femininity. The narcissistic object-choice of the homosexual, whose disturbed libidinal development drives him to seek himself as love-object, converges with the dispositional narcissism of the woman who

wishes only to be the object of another's love. In this framework of desire, if the male homosexual is placed as feminine, the female homosexual is doubly so: she both seeks her own likeness as object of desire (homosexuality) and simultaneously positions herself as that object of desire (femininity), succeeding twice over in the narcissistic quest of loving herself. Female homosexuality is in this sense not a failure of Freudian femininity, but, on the contrary, an excess of it; falling, like its heterosexual counterpart, on the 'feminine' side of the anaclitic/narcissistic divide, female homosexuality, it seems, differs from female heterosexuality only in degree. The female homosexual is just too much of a woman.

Once it is carried over into the Lacanian imaginary, the contradictions involved in the narcissistic/anaclitic divide become clearer. 'On narcissism' presents the (only) two possible kinds of sexual object-choice as a choice between the two original objects of desire, oneself and the woman who nurses one (83). To choose oneself is to make the feminine choice; to choose one's mother or mother-substitute is to make the masculine choice. Lacan endorses this distinction (84), and clarifies its status: the equivalence of the terms narcissistic, specular and imaginary for Lacan highlights Freud's premise that both types of object-choice are imaginary (85) in that they originate in primary narcissism, one being constituted through a libidinal investment in one's own image, the other through an investment in the image of the one who attends to the satisfaction of the ego-drives. Lacan's distinction between love and Verliebtheit leaves little doubt that the 'correct' kind of object-choice in Lacanian theory is an anaclitic and heterosexual one. Verliebtheit,

imaginary love, is merely an entrapment, a narcissistic and potentially self-destructive absorption in the image of the other, whereas love is an exchange between subjects made in the context of the symbolic:

"Love, now no longer conceived of as a passion but as an active gift, is always directed, beyond imaginary captivation, towards the being of the loved object, towards his particularity ... [L]ove, to the extent that it is one of the three lines of division in which the subject is engaged when he realises himself symbolically in speech, homes in on the being of the other. Without speech, in as much as it affirms being, all there is is Verliebtheit, imaginary fascination, but there is no love" (86).

Love as an exchange between subjects in the symbolic is exemplified in the pact of heterosexual marital fidelity, and is moreover in active conflict with Verliebtheit:

"The love which constitutes the bond of marriage, the love which properly speaking is sacred, flows from the woman towards ... all men. Similarly, through the woman, it is all women which the fidelity of the husband is directed towards ... It's the universal man, the universal woman, the symbol, the embodiment of the partner of the human couple ... But there is a conflict between this symbolic pact and the imaginary relations which proliferate spontaneously within every libidinal relation, all the more so when what intervenes belongs to the order of Verliebtheit" (87).

The homosexual, on the other hand, is condemned by his narcissistic desire never to go beyond the order of Verliebtheit; his desire will lose itself in endless self-reflection, will never be capable of exchange with another subject:

"The requirement of this style of desire [ie homosexuality] can only be satisfied in an inexhaustible captation of the desire of the other ... An incessant see-saw of the lark-mirror which, at each moment, makes a complete turn on itself - the subject exhausts himself in pursuing the desire of the other, which he will never be able to grasp as his own desire, because his own desire is the desire of the other. It is himself whom he pursues ... The intersubjective relation which subtends perverse desire is only sustained by the

annihilation either of the desire of the other, or of the desire of the subject ... The other subject is reduced to being only the instrument of the first ... Perverse desire finds its support in the ideal of an inanimate object" (88).

Here, as one might expect, Verliebtheit and homosexuality fall on the side of narcissism and hence of femininity: like the woman, the homosexual attempts to position himself as object of the desire of the other - in ignorance or disavowal of the fact that the desire of the other is his own ("man's desire is the desire of the other", according to Lacanian formula (89)) - hence the endless spiralling of his desire which chases its own tail and which will never achieve the symbolic anchoring of love.

To achieve that symbolic anchoring, the homosexual would have to go beyond his (sic) attachment to his own image and enter the circuit of heterosexual/symbolic exchange (with which his imaginary love(s) would henceforth be in conflict). But the symbolic pact of heterosexuality does not require that the woman give up her narcissism. As for Freud, feminine heterosexual 'object'-love for Lacan seeks a man for whom she can be the object, in that "the woman is introduced into the symbolic pact of marriage as the object of exchange between ... fundamentally androcentric lineages" (90). In fact, far from requiring the woman to 'go beyond' her narcissism, the symbolic 'goes beyond' her, and her 'choice' of the universal man as her love-object is in reality little more than an effect of her place in the symbolic:

"[T]he symbolic order literally subdues her, transcends her. The all men of Proudhon is here the universal man, who is both the most concrete and the most transcendent man, and that's the impasse into which the woman is pushed by her specific function in the symbolic order ... In other words, in the primitive form of marriage, if a woman isn't given, or doesn't give

herself, to a god, to something transcendent, the fundamental relation suffers every form of imaginary degradation" (91).

In other words again, the woman who embraces a man thereby embraces the symbolic order, and positions herself as object for both. When she narcissistically places herself as object of desire, the woman, unlike the male homosexual, is making no mistake; the conflict between the imaginary and the symbolic arises for her not because of any inherent contradiction between her positions in the imaginary and the symbolic, but merely because the 'concrete' man cannot, just in himself, fulfil the transcendent function of the symbolic ("... because we aren't, and haven't been for a long time, cut out to embody gods" (92)).

All of this is of course predicated on the mirror stage, the originary moment when the subject perceives its own image as such and which gives the formula 'man's desire is the desire of the other' its structure. In making the alienating distinction between itself and its mirror image, the mirror-stage child also introduces a distinction between itself as unified 'one' and the mother with whom it has hitherto enjoyed an unbroken union (93). Thus the unifying/alienating effect of the mirror stage releases two original figures which can occupy the place of the 'other': the image of oneself, and the image of one's mother as distinct from oneself. Either of the two figures can come to occupy that place in the formula that 'man's desire is the desire of the other', and the pre-symbolic child has no need of a definite decision or choice in favour of one or the other. But as soon as the subject enters the symbolic and thereby becomes 'sexed' (94), he or she must choose according to the familiar Freudian pattern. Masculine desire chooses anacritically, that is, chooses the

image of the mother to fill the place of the 'other', and strives for the desire of the (m)other through 'having' what she lacks - namely, the phallus (95); feminine desire chooses narcissistically, that is chooses its own image as the 'other', and positions itself in the heterosexual relation as 'being' the phallus, the object (or signifier) to be exchanged in the marital pact as described above (96).

The distinction holds good in the case of the male homosexual: in choosing his own image, he makes the feminine choice of 'being' the phallus; hence his desire's dependence on 'the ideal of the inanimate object', for, in 'being' the phallus for himself, he repeatedly reduces himself (and/or his sexual partner) to an object by trying to make exchange with himself of what he (and his partner) already has (have) (97). For Lacan, female homosexuality is likewise characterised by an emphasis on 'being' the phallus, that is, as an excessive distortion of feminine heterosexuality:

"Paradoxical as this formulation might seem, I would say that it is in order to be the phallus, that is to say, the signifier of the desire of the Other, that the woman will reject an essential part of her femininity ... It is for what she is not that she expects to be desired as well as loved ... [T]he man manages to satisfy his demand for love in his relationship to the woman to the extent that the signifier of the phallus constitutes her precisely as giving in love what she does not have" (98).

"In that such a love prides itself more than any other on being the love which gives what it does not have, so it is precisely in this that the homosexual woman excels in relation to what is lacking to her" (99).

Both the heterosexual and the homosexual woman excel in giving what they do not have; the difference being that the homosexual woman, whose refusal to accept castration leaves her suspended in the belief

that sexed male subjects (and according to Lacan, she might paradoxically consider herself to be one such) could really 'have' the phallus, 'has' correspondingly much more than her heterosexual counterpart not to give (100).

Thus both Freudian and Lacanian theory posit feminine homosexuality as an extreme or excessive version of feminine heterosexuality, both being forms of narcissistic desire as it falls within the terms of the masculine-analitic/feminine-narcissistic distinction. However the distinction between the analitic and the narcissistic type of object-choice is maintained on the condition that one's primary object-choice is based on the sexual(ised) difference between the image of oneself as ideal or model and the image of one's mother as model. If one's own (female) image were to coincide or converge with the (female) image of the mother, then this binary structure of Freudian/Lacanian object-choice might appear to be not so much analytic tool as an instrument of coercion.

#### Significant (m)others

For Lacan, the narcissistic crime of the Papin sisters revolves around the 'what she does not have', the "enigma of the phallus and of feminine castration" (101). Just as the sisters maintain their relation of Verliebtheit with each other by displacing their imaginary hate onto their other 'others', so they enable themselves to continue to 'give each other what they do not have' by displacing their disavowed castration onto their victims' bodies in the wounds that they inflict on them. Seen in this light, the 'autism' which the sisters are trying to cut open is that of exchange-objects which have no subjects to set the exchange in motion: their homosexuality

condemns each of them to 'being' the phallus, to being, if not inanimate objects, then objects in suspended animation, waiting for the means of exchange which only the 'pact' of heterosexuality could provide. "I believe that in another life I should have been my sister's husband" (102): the motif underlying the sisters' paranoiac crime is that 'her husband', in the context of Lacan's symbolic pact, is precisely what neither of them can be.

This Lacanian reading of the Papin case holds good as long as the sisters' 'homosexual' object-choice is taken to be narcissistic instead of anaclitic, that is, as long as the sisters are regarded as having chosen the object which most resembles themselves (the outcome of the 'fraternal complex' (103)) instead of the object which resembles their mother. What Lacan conveniently forgets of course is that, for a woman, the sexual object which resembles herself will also resemble her mother: more specifically in the scenario of the Papin case, that the 'others' the sisters are driven to destroy are not themselves sisters, but are mother and daughter, presenting the Papins all at once with reflections both of themselves as mothered and of the mother herself (104). The figure of the 'woman in the mirror', the other who is both myself and my mother, confounds the structure of 'female homosexuality' - heterosexuality by any other name - and reveals the sisters' lesbian relationship as simultaneously a narcissistic relation and an anaclitic object-choice which positions the sisters as subjects of their own desire.

In effect it is the requirement in the 'androcentric' symbolic that they be either one thing or the other that is at the heart of the sisters' paranoia. In 'A case of paranoia running counter to the

psychoanalytic theory of the disease', Freud describes the origins of a paranoid woman patient's delusions as follows:

"We can see by what means the girl freed herself from her homosexual dependence on her mother. It was by means of a small piece of regression: instead of choosing her mother as a love-object, she identified herself with her - she herself became her mother. The possibility of this regression points to the narcissistic origin of her homosexual object-choice and thus to the paranoid disposition in her" (105).

This 'girl' (actually a thirty-year-old woman (106)) suffered delusions of being watched which according to Freud arose from her identification with her own mother while lovemaking (at the 'primal scene' (107)). Thus her paranoid delusions resulted directly from her 'homosexuality', which Freud regarded as narcissistic even when its explicit object was her own mother. Freud saw the woman's symptoms as arising from an inner conflict between her heterosexual impulses towards her male lover, a man whom she had met at work, and her so-called homosexual attachment to her mother. But one might well consider that the real conflict in this case was between the woman's unruly sexual object-choice which, being both narcissistic and anaclitic at the same time, did not fit within the structure of the narcissistic/anaclitic divide, and Freud's own determination that it be made to fit within that structure. Freud records his sympathy with his patient's rejected lover - the "favourable impression" (108) made on him by the latter's letters to the patient and his agreement with his (the lover's) opinions about the patient's "morbid" (109) motives for ending the relationship - while at the same time noting that the woman herself "had never sought any love affairs with men" (110) and had "at last" (111) consented to a physical relationship with this man only after persuasion, 'pleading' and 'promises' on his part and in

spite of the fact that unspecified "external reasons" (112) meant that there was no prospect of marriage between them (one wonders whether the man was married already, and how sincere or serious his feelings towards her really were). The reader is given only Freud's version of the woman's story, which portrays the lover as a "highly cultivated and attractive man" (113) who "paid her attentions and she in turn had been drawn towards him" (114). But Freud also notes that the woman was unco-operative during analysis, having been brought to Freud by a third party ("She obviously resented the interference of a doctor and took no trouble to hide her distrust" (115)), and a similarly unco-operative reader might interpret her lover's pleas "that it was senseless to sacrifice to social convention all that they both longed for and had an indisputable right to enjoy" (116) as the familiar patten of workplace sexual harassment rather than as the expression of a "beautiful and tender relationship" (117). Be that as it may, Freud makes no secret of his agreement with the lover's own judgment of the affair, or of his opinion, freely expressed in this paper, that "normal sexual satisfaction" (118) for a woman lies in relations with men - that the woman should make the feminine choice of becoming a sexual object for a male lover instead of retaining a sexual attachment to her mother or mother-figure (the latter appearing in this case in the form of an older woman colleague). One could argue that the woman's paranoid illness was in fact the result of the impossible demand that she love either narcissistically or anaclitically when her attachment to this female figure who represented both her mother and herself made any such choice meaningless: perhaps her retreat into madness was for her a retreat from the impossible demands of an androcentric system of

heterosexuality with which both her (male) psychoanalyst and her (male) lover insisted that she should comply. Her 'homosexual' attachment to the mother-figure was in itself (or 'dispositionally') neither narcissistic nor anaclitic: it is Freud's own theoretical agenda which forces the woman's sexual choices into such categories. Freud does not record what effect his treatment had on this woman, or whether she ever recovered from her illness.

A similar argument might be made in the case of the Papin sisters: it is perhaps the subjection of their same-sex object-choice to the tyranny of heterosexuality and 'feminine narcissism', rather than the effects of an inherently narcissistic 'homosexuality', that drives them to their crime. Lacan remarks in 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque' that, in an enigmatic episode which took place some time before the murders, the sisters had gone to their mayor to ask for the "emancipation" (119) of the younger from service with the Lancelins. The French word for 'mayor' (maire) is a homonym for the word 'mother' (mère), and the event could be read as a confused appeal to a mother-figure for emancipation not just from their social position as maids, but from their impossible psychical position, caught in the double bind between anaclisis and narcissism: through their attack on their two female victims, the sisters attempt to obliterate the image of the mother-daughter relationship which the former represent and which embodies the form of their desire which the androcentric symbolic order forbids them. It is their double madness which is the effect of their impossible position in the symbolic, and not vice versa: according to the structure of the narcissistic/anaclitic divide, the imaginary figure of the 'woman in the mirror' could not be both

themselves and their mother - and because she was both nevertheless, the sisters were driven to destroy her.

Anaclitic object-choice: the lesbian as homosexual man

I have been arguing above that Freudian/Lacanian theory attempts to keep same-sex desire between women within the narcissistic/anaclitic divide by characterising it as 'female homosexuality', and that, by insisting that the image of the 'woman in the mirror' is a narcissistic image of oneself, the theory places it on the side of heterosexual femininity. There is however an alternative account of 'female homosexuality' in Freudian theory running alongside the narcissistic one, which shifts the emphasis from 'female' to 'homosexual' and represents lesbian desire not as an excess of femininity, but as a transgressive masculinity - the masculinity of the homosexual man.

Lacan derives the 'fraternal complex' which he claims is the root both of the Papin sisters' homosexuality and of their paranoia from Freud's paper 'Some neurotic mechanisms in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality'. In that paper, Freud argues that male homosexuality is the result both of narcissistic object-choice (as discussed above) and of the boy's over-strong anaclitic attachment to his mother which, alongside his narcissism, leads him later to identify with her and to look for men or boys for whom he can care as his mother once cared for him. The passage from which Lacan draws his 'fraternal complex' runs as follows:

"Observation has directed my attention to several cases in which during early childhood impulses of jealousy, derived from the mother-complex and of very great intensity, arose [in a boy] against rivals, usually older brothers. This jealousy led to an exceedingly

hostile and aggressive attitude towards these brothers which might sometimes reach the pitch of actual death-wishes, but which could not maintain themselves in the face of the subject's further development. Under the influences of upbringing - and certainly not uninfluenced also by their own continuing powerlessness - these impulses yielded to repression and underwent a transformation, so that the rivals of the earlier period became the first homosexual love-objects" (120).

This account by Freud of a "new mechanism leading to homosexual object-choice" (121) - intended not to replace but to supplement his previous accounts of male homosexuality - thus posits the 'fraternal complex' (the term is Lacan's, not Freud's) as the outcome of sibling rivalry over the mother, that is, as the outcome of early anaclitic attachment to her. Lacan's use of the 'fraternal complex' treats the Papin sisters as if they were homosexual men whose jealous anaclitic attachment to their mother has driven them into each others arms.

Indeed, anaclitic resonances are to be found in the details of the Papins' crime alongside its narcissistic aspects. The Lacanian critic Francis Dupré makes a comparison of the 'sliced' bodies of the Papins' victims with food 'sliced' as if prepared for cooking (122), which might be taken in conjunction with Freud's description of the little girl's 'masculine-anaclitic' phase: "in this dependence on the mother we have the germ of later paranoia in women. For this germ appears to be the surprising, yet regular, fear of being killed (?devoured) by the mother" (123). Perhaps this aspect of the murder is a consummation of the mother-fixation, a compulsion to 'eat mummy all up' (as she was once the source of nourishment in early infancy) before she eats them.

Anaclitic love in girls became quite a problem for Freud: the question of how and why girls should renounce their attachment to their mothers and become heterosexually attached to their fathers is

the impetus behind his paper 'Female sexuality', in which, nearly twenty years after 'On narcissism', he famously writes that "[o]ur insight into this early, pre-Oedipus, phase in girls comes to us as a surprise, like the discovery, in another field, of the Minoan-Mycenaean civilisation behind the civilisation of Greece" (124). It does not however take him so much by surprise as to render him unable to assimilate it into the thesis of 'On narcissism' that anaclisis is masculine: the girl's pre-Oedipal attachment to her mother is the focus of "active and in every sense masculine trends" (125), which she renounces when she "represses her previous masculinity" (126), makes her "transition to the father-object" (127), and only then finds that "[t]he path to the development of femininity now lies open" (128). In other words, anaclisis is always masculine even though it is the primary form of object-love for both boys and girls. Consequently there is little if any distinction to be made between the male homosexuality which is based on rivalry over the mother and any other kind(s) of homosexuality based on anaclitic attachment - regardless of the fact that, according to the Freudian hypothesis, such attachments make boys choose their own sex in place of their mother's, whereas girls will choose their own sex because it is the same as their mother's (129). The 'fraternal complex' which makes the Papin sisters narcissistic criminals makes them so in the guise of homosexual men in drag.

In equating the Papins with homosexual men in this way, Lacan does not undermine the parallel equation of 'female homosexuality' with an excess of heterosexual femininity; quite the contrary. As we have already seen, male homosexual object-choice is characteristically

narcissistic, and this is so even in cases where the original impetus has been an over-strong mother fixation:

"[The progression of the fraternal complex] is made however according to the law of least resistance by an affective fixation still very close to the solipsistic ego, a fixation which deserves to be called narcissistic and in which the object chosen is that which most resembles the subject: such is the reason for its homosexual character" (130).

Moreover, the jealousy at work in the fraternal complex is, in Lacanian theory, endemic to the orthodox narcissistic femininity which 'gives what it does not have'. It is of female homosexuality in particular that Lacan writes:

"Far from its being the case that the passivity of the act corresponds to this desire, feminine sexuality appears as the effort of a jouissance wrapped in its own contiguity (for which all circumcision might represent the symbolic rupture) to be realised in the envy of desire, which castration releases in the male by giving him its signifier in the phallus" (131).

Female homosexuals who "appeal to their quality of being men" (132) in articulating their homosexuality do so out of Lacanian penis envy, what might be called 'phallus envy' or envy for the position of subject of desire which their status as women in the symbolic seeks to deny them. Men and female homosexuals are seen by Lacan as "the holders of desire and the claimants of sex ... [who] work against each other as rivals" (133): this rivalry over who gets to hold the 'masculine' position of subject of desire derives from, is indeed merely a sophisticated version of, the rivalry over who gets to satisfy the anaclitic attachment to the mother as it is played out in the fraternal complex. Girls can take part in the competition just as much as boys can, but it's a competition run on boys' terms, and the girls will lose: 'aux boys le phalle, aux girls Lacan' (134).

## Not/nor

My argument in this section may have appeared somewhat paradoxical, in that I have been maintaining on the one hand that 'female homosexuality' in Freudian theory is feminine-narcissistic, and on the other hand that it is also sometimes masculine-analitic. The point I am trying to make however is not so much that psychoanalytic theory is wrong in that it tries to define same-sex desire between women as either one or the other - although, as the discussion above shows, I think that there is a strong element of that; I want to argue more importantly that Freudian psychoanalysis is wrong in trying to define same-sex desire between women in terms of the analitic/narcissistic divide at all. The 'woman in the mirror' is an 'other' who resists that binary division altogether; the imaginary structures which cluster around her, being simultaneously narcissistic and analitic in form, neither contain nor require any such distinction. Lesbian desire is a desire that defies the binary structure of 'female homosexuality' which, as we have seen, is based on polarised heterosexual concepts of masculinity and femininity.

The narcissistic femininity which 'sees herself seeing herself', then through identificatory dialectic and Verliebtheit 'loves herself loving herself', and ultimately, through narcissism and object-choice, 'fucks herself fucking herself' as quintessential object of masculine desire (the latter finding what one might call its apotheosis in Lacan's famous slogan "there is no sexual relation" (135)), is a useful concept in a theory that wants to continue to reproduce women as exchange objects. In refusing to follow the paths of Freudian object-choice, lesbian desire effectively causes the Freudian edifice

to collapse; once the anaclitic/ narcissistic distinction goes down, the other binarisms with which it had been conflated - masculine/feminine, subject of desire/object of desire - go down with it. Such a collapse might be an opening for precisely that free play of erotism that Freudian 'bisexuality' denies - a denial which the elderly 'spinsters' on Lacan's ward have enacted in their closed, lifeless, object-like bodies (136). For Freudian/Lacanian theory, a lesbian subject of desire on the loose is an alarming prospect indeed.

#### CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have taken the young Parque's 'I see myself seeing myself' cited by Lacan in The Four Fundamental Concepts and traced its implications for the place of 'femininity' in Lacan's concept of the imaginary, specifically with regard to feminine sexuality and object-choice. I have argued that the Freudian/Lacanian conflation of narcissism with femininity condemns the latter to an autistic sexuality locked in the passions of the mirror stage, and to a position in the structure of object-choice which allows no access to the status of subject of desire. By focussing on the (Lacanian version of the) Papin sisters, I have illustrated the operations of feminine narcissism and of 'female homosexuality' as they are played out in Freudian/Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, and have pinpointed the figure of the 'woman in the mirror' as the figure that that theory seeks to constrain or repress. This figure has gradually emerged as a potential site of refusal of the orthodox binarism and compulsory heterosexuality (137) of Freudian femininity.

All of this leaves open the question: would things be otherwise if the 'image' in imaginary had been other than visual? In other words, is it the definition of narcissism as paradigmatically visual - as having a mirror-structure that can be mapped out in optical schemata - that condemns femininity to autism and object-status, or would a narcissism of 'I touch myself touching myself' or 'I hear myself hearing myself' have the same effects? After all, as I have already noted, an image need not be visual, and the equivalence in Lacanian theory of the terms imaginary, narcissistic and specular does not in itself imply that the mirror in question should be an optical one:

"All sorts of things in the world behave like mirrors. All that's needed is that the conditions be such that to one point of a reality there should correspond an effect at another point, that a bi-univocal correspondence occurs between two point in real space" (138).

Although Lacan suggests that we think of these effects as "being like light, since that is what most clearly evokes an image in our mind" (139), and although it is to optics in particular that he refers as "this strange science which sets itself to produce, by means of apparatuses, that peculiar thing called images" (140), there is nothing in his argument which either rules out a description or characterisation of the imaginary in terms of non-visual images, or implies that the structure of the imaginary (and hence of 'feminine' narcissism) would turn out to be any different if it were so described. Moreover, the image of the 'woman in the mirror' which I have posited as potential site of resistance is not as it stands either inherently visual or inherently non-visual; its potential arises from its position in the structure of desire - its position as

the figure around which identifications converge and which consequently confounds the anaclitic/narcissistic distinction - rather than from the visual or non-visual nature of the image itself.

So far, then, the case against vision in Lacan's work remains unproven: although Lacan's concept of the imaginary quite clearly privileges the masculine, and although it employs paradigmatically visual 'images' in doing so, it seems, on the face of it at least, that other images might have served it equally well. One might say that the uses to which vision is put in Lacan's theory of the imaginary serves to uphold the privilege of the masculine, but that nothing has emerged so far to suggest that this is an effect of the nature of vision itself. It is to this question of the nature of vision that I shall be turning my attention in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SYMBOLIC AND THE GAZE

#### INTRODUCTION

While expounding his theory of the castration complex, Freud writes:

"Here the feminist demand for equal rights for the sexes does not get us very far, for the morphological distinction is bound to find expression in differences of psychical development. 'Anatomy is destiny', to vary a saying of Napoleon's ... [W]hen she [the little girl] makes a comparison with a playfellow of the other sex, she perceives that she has 'come off badly' and she feels this as a wrong done to her and as a ground for inferiority" (1).

As has been pointed out in various critiques of Freud (2), this notorious scenario of 'penis envy' and the castration complex turns on the sight that boys and girls have of one another's genitals, or rather on the sight of the "strikingly visible" (3) penis and of the latter's evident absence from little girls' bodies; the invisibility of the girl's own "inconspicuous organ" (4) amounts, according to Freud, to "the fact of being castrated" (5). 'I'll show you mine if you show me yours', as far as Freud is concerned, is psychoanalysis' unanswerable challenge to feminism.

Lacan's concept of the symbolic order - the second term of the triptych imaginary, symbolic and real - as the realm of language and its effects in the human subject finds the triumphantly displayed penis transmogrified into the phallus, which is the primary signifier. According to Lacanian theory, the subject as such is not a pre-given entity, but an effect of the symbolic. Before the child's entry into language, it has no means by which to individuate itself from its

mother, and mother and child form a dyadic union. The unifying/alienating function of the mirror stage foreshadows the child's assumption of the 'I' of language: the dyadic union is broken by this irruption of language, the symbolic order through which the child is set apart as a (speaking) individual (6). The phallus as 'primary signifier' represents the term which effects this break in the union between mother and child; as such it also coincides with the place of the father as third term external to the mother-child dyad (7).

The phallus is also the mark of 'sexual difference', in that subjects effected as such by it are simultaneously constructed as masculine or feminine through their relation to it, along the axes of 'being' and 'having' discussed in the last chapter (8). The father therefore not only coincides with the phallus in his position as third term, but is also the 'possessor' of the phallus in relation to whom the child comes to see the mother as 'castrated'. The child's entry into the symbolic order (9) thus constitutes the crisis of the castration complex, in that it is the production of the subject as essentially cut or split (by virtue of the splitting of the dyadic union) and as subjected to the phallus which has effected that split.

The double function of the phallus as both primary signifier and mark of sexual difference is at the heart of the question of the place of women in Lacan's "androcentric" (10) symbolic order. Lacan's insistence on the primacy of that symbolic order, and on the impossibility of understanding sexuality and sexual identity outside of language, would seem to offer an account of the subjection of women which does not fall back on biological

determinism or the 'anatomy is destiny' of Freud's original formulation. Yet the difficulty and ambiguity of the relation of the phallus to the penis (what Stephen Heath calls "the penis/phallus distinction-oscillation-relation" (11)) threatens to bring biological determinism in through the back door, and to make the subjection of women in the symbolic an effect of anatomy after all. The following quote is from Lacan's seminar of 1955:

"It would be entirely incorrect, the author [of the case history under discussion] tells us, to think that Penisneid is entirely natural in women. Who told him it was natural? Of course it's symbolic. It is in so far as the woman is in a symbolic order with an androcentric perspective that the penis takes on its value. Besides, it isn't the penis, but the phallus, that is to say something whose symbolic usage is possible because it can be seen, because it is erected. There can be no possible symbolic usage for what is not seen, for what is hidden" (12).

The penis only has value because the symbolic order is already androcentric, and anyway it isn't the penis that has value but the phallus, which has its value in the symbolic because it is visible when erect. One is reminded of Freud's illustration of dream-formation, the story of the man who, when accused by his neighbour of havng returned the latter's kettle to him in a damaged state, replied that firstly, he had returned it undamaged, secondly, the kettle was already broken when he borrowed it, and thirdly, he had never borrowed his neighbour's kettle at all (13). Despite Lacan's claims elsewhere that the "primary signifier is pure non-sense" (14), the 'strikingly visible' penis is looming here in distorted form, rather like the anamorphic skull in Holbein's painting The Ambassadors (more on Holbein later).

It is in the face of this kind of confusing ambiguity that Jacqueline Rose argues for the 'fraudulent' status of the phallus,

claiming that it has no value in itself but is merely a signifier representing that to which value may accrue (15). In connexion with the question of anatomy and the value attached to the visible organ, Rose argues that "something can only be seen to be missing according to a pre-existing hierarchy of values" (16) - in other words, that female genitals are strictly speaking only invisible if you are already looking for something else - namely the penis - in their place. Rose takes this to be indicative of a concern, on Lacan's part if not on Freud's, very explicitly not to naturalise the primacy of the phallus by linking it to a 'natural', obvious or visual privileging of the penis, but rather to emphasise the gap between the phallic signifier and the anatomical organ, and hence the arbitrary nature of the phallic signifier as such.

In this chapter I shall be examining the problematics of the 'strikingly visible' organ and its status as such in the symbolic order as they are manifested in the structure of the Lacanian drive expounded in Lacan's seminar of 1964, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis (17). It is in the course of this seminar, as we have already seen, that Lacan comments on the femininity of 'I see myself seeing myself' and on its illusory status as a denial of the subject's 'split' or castrated nature, a self-deceiving and impossible image of wholeness. Over against this illusion he places "I am photo-graphed" (18) as the correct statement of the position of the castrated subject in the visible world. This statement is based on the very nature of vision itself, and an investigation of it will therefore help to answer some of the questions raised at the end of the last chapter. The question of who is photo-graphed and who photo-

graphs will also reveal Lacan's hidden stakes in the Freudian scenario of penis envy quoted above, and will, I hope, expose a fraud which is strikingly visible and of large proportions.

As with the previous chapter, my discussion will fall into two sections. The first will address the question of who is photographed, and will involve an examination of the drives and their structure; this section will deal explicitly with the penis/phallus question and the importance of the visible organ. The second section will deal with the question of who photo-graphs, with the 'point of light' and the 'gaze that is outside': whereas the first section will be based on a reading of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, the second will be more concerned with Lacan's own position as analyst with respect both to Freud and to the wider analytic community. The chapter will end with a 'reading back' of the effects of the nature of vision into the previous chapter's questions concerning the status of the visual image.

#### SECTION ONE: THE PHOTO-GRAPH, THE GAZE AND THE SCOPIC DRIVE

Lacanian psychoanalytic theory posits four drives - the oral, the anal, the scopic and the invocatory - each of which has its own corresponding objet a (19). Objet a is the representative of desire, constantly pursued by the subject but on principle unattainable. It represents what is lost through the splitting of the subject on its entry into the symbolic. The subject thenceforward pursues the lost object in the form of the objet a in an attempt to put an end to the anguish of castration (20). The 'a' of objet a is from the original

formulation objet petit autre - petit autre being 'small other', other with a small 'o', in distinction from grand Autre, Other with a capital 'O', which is the term Lacan sometimes uses to designate the symbolic order, the realm of language which pre-exists the subject (a language is already spoken by other subjects before any individual subject comes to acquire that language in its turn) and which subsequently becomes the locus of the subject's unconscious which, according to Lacan, is structured like a language: "The unconscious is constituted by the effects of speech on the subject, it is the dimension in which the subject is determined in its development of the effects of speech, consequently the unconscious is structured like a language" (21).

The objet a of the scopical drive is the gaze itself (22), and Lacan regards the scopical as the most privileged of the drives in that it is the most characteristic of this function of desire as an attempt to gloss or to replenish the split subject: the scopical is the drive that "most completely eludes the term castration" (23), and the privilege of the gaze "derives from its very structure" (24). This is because the gaze is the most elusive of the objets a and hence the most characteristic of the unattainable nature of the objet a as such; and also because the very elusiveness of the gaze - its 'evanescence' - makes it easy for the subject to gloss over it as the term of the lost object of castration, and to imagine that it 'sees itself seeing itself' in illusory plenitude.

The gaze in Lacan's theory is therefore in an explicitly privileged relation to the phallus, since it is the objet a most characteristic of the phallus's effects as signifier on the subject.

The terms of this relation are inherent in the nature of the gaze as such - its elusiveness and evanescence - and thus ostensibly avoid the crudity of the Freudian formulation's privileging of the 'visible' phallus. However, the fact that it is the visual that is thus privileged in relation to the phallus as signifier will allow for the re-introduction of that visible organ, as we shall see shortly.

The basic structure of vision is given in The Four Fundamental Concepts as a split between the eye and the gaze (25), and it is this split which is the locus of the scopic drive: "[t]he eye and the gaze - this is for us the split in which the drive is manifested at the level of the scopic field" (26). This places the eye and the gaze in a dialectic in which the gaze is radically ungraspable by the eye:

"When, in love, I solicit a look, what is profoundly unsatisfying and always missing is that - you never look at me from the place from which I see you. Conversely, what I look at is never what I wish to see" (27).

Already at this stage there is an equivocation between the phallus as signifier and the phallus as organ:

"In my reference to the unconscious, I am dealing with the relation to the organ ... [I]t is a question ... of the relation to the phallus, in as much as it is lacking in the real which might be attained in the sexual goal. It is in as much as, at the heart of the experience of the unconscious, we are dealing with that organ - determined in the subject by the inadequacy organised in the castration complex - that we can grasp to what extent the eye is caught up in a similar dialectic" (28).

However it is the place of the subject itself in the dialectic between the eye and the gaze which is the more important site of the re-introduction of the phallus as organ. This re-introduction is effected through the concept of depth of field, the feature which distinguishes visual from geometral space and which is revealed in the

mapping of the subject in the visual world.

#### Ambassadors of the symbolic order

"[W]e are beings that are looked at, in the spectacle of the world. That which makes us consciousness institutes us by the same token as speculum mundi" (29). The place of the subject in the dialectic between the eye and the gaze is not only as looking at the objects in the visible world, but also as looked-at, as something that can itself be mapped in that visible world: "I see only from one point, but in my existence I am looked at from all sides" (30). This amounts to a "pre-existence" (31), an autonomy, of the gaze with respect to the subject, and to a "dependence of the visible on that which places us under the eye of the seer" (32).

Lacan illustrates this with an anecdote about a sardine can (33). Once, while at sea on a fishing trip, Lacan saw a sardine can floating on the sea, glittering brightly in the sunshine. One of the fishermen pointed it out to him, saying, "You see that can? Do you see it? Well, it doesn't see you!" (34). The significance of the incident lies in the fact that the can was, nevertheless, looking at him: "It was looking at me at the level of the point of light, the point at which everything that looks at me is situated - and I am not speaking metaphorically" (35). The point of light functions as the point of the look which determines the subject in the visible by photo-graphing it there:

"This is the function that is found at the heart of the institution of the subject in the visible. What determines me, at the most profound level, is the gaze that is outside. It is through the gaze that I enter light and it is from the gaze that I receive its effects. Hence it comes about that the gaze is the instrument

through which light is embodied and through which - if you will allow me to use a word, as I often do, in a fragmented form - I am photo-graphed" (36).

This function of the photo-graph and the point of light is what constitutes depth of field, and Lacan takes it to be the distinguishing characteristic of the nature of vision. The traditional Cartesian concept of the subject as a point of perspective is not a visual concept of the subject: perspective is a matter of geometry, of the spatial organisation of objects, not of vision as such (37). The place of the subject in the scopic realm is therefore not as a point of perspective, but as an 'object' caught in the play of light:

"I am not simply that punctiform object located at the geometral point from which the perspective is grasped ... That which is light looks at me, and by means of that light, in the depths of my eye, *something* is painted ... something that is not simply a constructed relation, the object on which the philosopher lingers - but something that is an impression, the shimmering of a surface that is not, in advance, situated for me in its distance. This is something that introduces what was elided in the geometral relation - the depth of field, with all its ambiguity and variability, which is in no way mastered by me. It is rather it that grasps me, solicits me at every moment, and makes of the landscape something other than a landscape, something other than what I have called the picture" (38).

In other words, vision by its very nature as play of light maps the subject as looked-at, that is, as visible. The subject is 'captured' in the scopic field between the terms of the eye-look dialectic:

"They have eyes that they might not see. That they might not see what? Precisely, that things are looking at them" (39). If the subject were to perceive that things are looking at it, it would be faced with the recognition that its supposed autonomy as a seeing subject - as a point of perspective on the world - is illusory. This would amount to forcing the subject to recognise the fact of

castration, for it would be analogous to the subject's perceiving that its apparent autonomy as a speaking subject is always already destroyed by its subjection to the phallus. I see because I am already seen, in the same way that I speak because I am already spoken: the pre-existence of the 'gaze that is outside' reflects the pre-existence of the symbolic order. Hence the privileged status of the scopic drive in its relation to the phallus; the subject is essentially looked-at in the same way that it is essentially castrated through language.

It is this re-emergence of visibility - of being looked-at - as a central term in the theory of the subject that threatens to collapse the gap between phallus and penis. According to the terms of the dialectic, the point of light which looks at the subject pre-exists the subject, but this then also means that, conversely, the subject must present itself before that point of light in order to be looked-at by it. Thus the fact that "there is already in the world something that looks before there is a view for it to see" (40) implies "the pre-existence to the seen of a given-to-be-seen" (41). Rose's interpretation of the question of the visible and the invisible is thus denied at a stroke: the given-to-be-seen is prior to the seen, not because of any pre-existing hierarchy of values, but by virtue of the essential structure of vision itself. The strikingly visible organ strikes back.

The effects of this are illustrated in Lacan's discussion of Hans Holbein's painting The Ambassadors (42). The painting includes one of the best-known examples of anamorphosis, an artistic device in which the artist paints an object so that it appears in its regular shape

only when seen from a point oblique to the canvas, and consequently appears distorted when seen from any other angle. As Lacan points out, the device in itself does not depend on the nature of vision as such, since it is effected merely by stretching the normal lines of geometral perspective (43). He takes it however as illustrative of vision's non-geometral nature: "I will go so far as to say that this fascination [of anamorphosis] complements what geometral researches into perspective allow to escape from vision" (44).

The anamorphic figure in The Ambassadors is a long, oblique figure in the foreground of the painting which, when seen from the appropriate angle, resolves itself into a traditional memento mori in the form of a human skull. As a representation of "the subject as annihilated" (45), this figure encapsulates for Lacan the elusive function of the gaze as the objet a which exemplifies the individual's subjection to the phallic signifier. But the fact that this exemplary representation is a visual one immediately brings the phallic organ back into play; Lacan asks:

"How is it that nobody has ever thought of connecting this [the distorting effect of anamorphosis] with ... the effect of an erection? Imagine a tattoo traced on the sexual organ ad hoc in a state of repose and assuming its, if I may say so, developed form in another state" (46).

The illustration in the visual realm of the primary signifier is immediately also an illustration of the male sexual organ ('because it can be seen, because it is erected'). As soon as we enter the scopic field, it seems, we find ourselves staring at that damned penis again.

### Forward and back to the phallus

The "phallic ghost" (47) which looms so ominously in The Ambassadors is nevertheless only an illustration: anamorphosis is just a trick which points to the nature of vision as depth of field, it is not itself an effect of depth of field. It is however very much the penis as organ which is at stake in this matter of the given-to-be-seen as it is structured by the nature of vision. This is so because of the way the nature of vision meshes with the basic structure of the drive, and of the scopic drive in particular.

The basic structure of the drive is of a forward and back movement: "[W]hat is fundamental at the level of each drive is the movement outwards and back in which it is structured" (47). The drive does not aim at its object, but turns around it and back towards the subject, and the experience of satisfaction comes not from the object - which as objet a is always unattainable - but from this movement of the drive itself:

"If the drive may be satisfied without attaining what, from the point of view of a biological totalisation of function, would be the satisfaction of its end in reproduction, it is because it is a partial drive, and its aim is simply the return into the circuit ... [The object] is in fact simply the presence of a hollow, a void, which can be occupied, Freud tells us, by any object, and whose agency we know only in the form of the lost object, the objet a. The objet petit a is not the origin of the oral drive [for example]. It is not introduced as the original food, it is introduced from the fact that no food will ever satisfy the oral drive, except by circumscribing the eternally lacking object" (49).

The forward and back movement of the drive - and this is particularly so in the case of the scopic drive (50) - always refers to the place of the other:

"He [Freud] is careful to observe that there are not two stages in these drives, but three. One must

distinguish the return into the circuit of the drive of that which appears - but also does not appear - in a third stage. Namely, the appearance of ein neues Subjekt, to be understood as follows - not in the sense that there is already one, namely the subject of the drive, but in that what is new is the appearance of a subject. This subject, which is properly the other, appears in so far as the drive has been able to show its circular course. It is only with its appearance at the level of the other that what there is of the function of the drive may be realised" (51).

This means that "[t]he activity of the drive is concentrated in making oneself (se faire)" (52) - as in 'making oneself seen', in the case of the scopic drive - and Lacan is at pains to stress that the other to which it refers is not the imaginary other of narcissism:

"[T]he root of the scopic drive is to be found entirely in *the subject*, in the fact that the subject sees himself. But, because he is Freud, he does not fall into error here. It is not seeing oneself in the mirror, it is Selbst ein Sexualglied beschauen - he looks at himself, I would say, in his sexual member. But, be careful! That's not right either. Because this statement is identified with its opposite ... This gives - Sexualglied von eigener Person beschaut werden ... In a way, just as the number two delights at being odd, the sex, or widdler, delights at being looked at. Who has ever really grasped the truly subject-making (subjectivable) character of such a sentiment? In fact, the articulation of the loop formed by the outward and back movement of the drive is obtained very well by changing only one of the terms in Freud's statement ... [I]n place of werden I put machen - what is involved in the drive is making oneself seen (se faire voir)" (53).

If, following these instructions by Lacan, one replaces werden with machen in Freud's statement, the result is 'Sexualglied von eigener Person beschaut machen': in Lacan's terms, 'he makes himself seen in his sexual member'.

Vision as structured by the 'point of light' and the eye-look dialectic demands that there be a given-to-be-seen which precedes the seen; and the original 'given-to-be-seen' of the scopic drive is the visibility of the sexual member. The 'root of the scopic drive', the

'making oneself' which constitutes the structure of the drive as such, is a gesture of organ display - the very scenario of 'penis envy' as formulated by Freud which privileged the phallus as the male organ "strikingly visible and of large proportions" (54). This re-emergence of the visible phallus - of the penis, in other words - is no mere accident, its re-appearance cannot be extricated from the primacy of the phallus as signifier: as Lacan himself states in the passage quoted above, this 'making oneself seen in the sexual member' is of a 'subject-making character': which is to say that it is an articulation of the castration complex which inaugurates the subject. The primacy of the phallus as signifier coincides exactly with the primacy of the penis as visible member. This is indicated by Lacan's reference to the other in the movement of the drive, the status of which he outlines elsewhere as follows:

"The subject is only ever supposed. It is its condition to be only supposable. If it knows anything, it is only by being itself a subject caused by an object - which is not what it knows, that is, what it imagines it knows. The object which causes it is not the other of knowledge (connaissance). The object crosses this other through. The other is thus the Other, which I write with a capital O" (55).

The objet a operates in the unconscious; it is not an object of knowledge for the subject itself. In the scopic realm, the object (objet a) which causes the subject is the 'gaze that is outside', that point of light essential to vision which photo-graphs the subject, captures the subject in its play. This object, or other (remembering the origins of the petit a as 'autre' or small other), crosses over to the side of the Other, the symbolic realm or chain of signifiers which constitutes the unconscious, by virtue of its (the object/other's)

inaccessibility to the subject itself. The phallus as primary signifier is privileged with respect to the Other; the visible sexual member, through the structure of the drive, is privileged with respect to the other; and the operation of the gaze as objet a and cause of the subject indicates the structural link, the bridge between one and the other. The castration of the subject through the symbolic which sets the drives in motion is re-directed through the scopic drive to its original, anatomical destiny.

Thus the structure of the gaze and the scopic drive, which places them in their privileged relation to the castration complex and to the phallus as signifier, is *simultaneously* the term of the privilege of the penis as visible organ: the play of light which photo-graphs the subject - the play of light whose 'gaze' causes the subject in the scopic field - does so by looking at him in his penis. The scopic register is the site of the re-introduction of the penis of the Freudian scenario as essential to the construction of the subject, and the term of symbolic castration with which the subject negotiates through the objets a is, through the scopic, constantly re-aligned with the visibility of the male organ. At the 'heart of the institution of the subject in the visible' is the photo-graph: a photo-graph of a penis.

## SECTION TWO: THE DESIRE OF THE ANALYST AND THE SMALL APPARATUS

The question to which the seminar The Four Fundamental Concepts Of Psychoanalysis is explicitly addressed is that of whether psychoanalysis is a science (56). It is in relation to this question

that Lacan first introduces the issue of the desire of the analyst:

"What is it that makes us say at once that alchemy, when all is said and done, is not a science? Something, in my view, is decisive, namely, that the purity of soul of the operator was, as such, and in a specific way, an essential element in the matter ... I may even have been saying the same thing myself in my teaching recently, when I point straight out, all veils torn aside, and in a quite overt way, towards the central point that I put in question, namely - what is the analyst's desire?" (57).

Freud's desire, says Lacan, constitutes "some kind of original sin in psychoanalysis" (58) - some unanalysed, mysterious factor which was the key to his discovery, through his encounter with the hysterics, of the unconscious itself; moreover the desire of every analyst since Freud is legible in her or his theoretical approach, in particular in her or his theory of the transference ("I could do an analysis of Abraham for you," Lacan boldly declares to his audience, "simply on the basis of his theory of part-objects" (59)). In this section I want to offer a reading of Lacan's own desire - not in his theory of the transference, as this will form the topic of the next chapter, but through the 'gaze that is outside' and the vantage point from which it sees.

#### The photo-grapher's small apparatus

"After all, the people who followed Christ were not so brilliant. Freud was not Christ, but he was perhaps something like Viridiana. The characters who are photographed, so ironically in that film, with a small apparatus, sometimes remind me irresistibly of the group, also photographed innumerable times, of those who were Freud's apostles and epigones" (60).

This aside comes in the course of Lacan's discussion of the desire of the analyst. A footnote by the English translator tells us that:

"The allusion is to a film by Bunuel of the same name [Viridiana] in which a group of peasants pose to be

'photographed' at a dinner-table. The characters are so arranged as to reproduce Leonardo's painting of the Last Supper. The 'photograph' is taken by one of the girls raising her skirt at the assembly - hence the reference to the 'small apparatus'" (61).

It seems difficult to trace the 'irony' here: the image maps onto the Freudian/Lacanian scenario of the 'visible organ' all too easily. The girl with her 'small apparatus' - her "small and inconspicuous organ" (62) or "little thingummy" (63), what one might call, as Lacan calls the eye itself in his seminar of 1954, her "titillating little appendage" (64) - stands awestruck at the "momentous" (65) sight of the boy whose "penis ... strikingly visible and of large proportions" (66) is its "superior counterpart" (67); like the flash of a camera, she "makes her judgment and her decision in a flash. She has seen it and knows that she is without it and wants to have it" (68). A girl who raises her skirt at an assembly of analysts thereby displays the site of her 'castration', her lack of "large and complete - that is to say, male - genitals" (69): the place under her skirt is inevitably the place in which she finds herself wanting.

This 'flashing' of her sexual parts might also be said to embody the 'glittering' of the sardine can in Lacan's anecdote, the flashing of the point of light, "the point at which everything that looks at me is situated" (70), the point of the 'gaze that is outside'. The 'photograph' of the analysts as Last Supper thereby also represents the 'photo-graph' which situates the subject in the visible: Freud and his apostles 'captured' in the play of light, in the uncanny 'gaze' emanating from the female genitals ("[i]t often happens that neurotic men declare that they feel there is something uncanny about the female genital organs ..." (71)). "[T]he point of gaze always participates in the ambiguity of a jewel," says Lacan (72); and "[i]s

not 'jewel-case' (Schmuckkätschen) a term commonly used to describe female genitals ... ?" writes Freud in the course of his case history of the celebrated hysteric 'Dora' (73) - a case, as I shall be arguing shortly, by no means without significance in connexion with Lacan's imagery here.

In expounding this thesis of the 'legibility' of the desire of the analyst, Lacan makes use of his 'hoop net' schema of the unconscious:

"When I speak to you of the unconscious ... you may picture it to yourselves as a hoop net (nasse), which opens slightly at the neck and at the bottom of which the catch of fish will be found ... We can conceive of the closing of the unconscious through the effect of something that plays the role of obturator - the objet a, sucked, breathed, into the orifice of the net. You can draw an image like those great balls in which the number to be drawn in a lottery are enclosed. What is concocted in this great roulette out of the first statements of free associations emerges from it in the interval in which the object is not blocking the orifice" (74).

Returning to this schema - which, as a member of the audience observes, itself resembles an eye (75) - Lacan now tells us, in connexion with the analyst's desire:

"In order to conjugate the schema of the net with those I have made in response to a psychologising theory of the psychoanalytic personality, you have only to turn the obturator ... into a camera shutter, except that it would be a mirror. It is in this little mirror, which shuts out what is on the other side, that the subject sees emerge the game by means of which he may ... accommodate his own image around what appears, the petit a ... What do we know of all this? - if it is only at the mercy of fluctuations in the history of analysis, of the commitment of desire of each analyst, we manage to add some small detail ... which enables us to define the presence, at the level of desire, of each of the analysts" (76).

The shutter of the girl's little camera becomes a mirror in which can be traced the mechanism of the analyst's desire: Lacan is alluding

here to his 'inverted bouquet' schema of the imaginary. According to this schema, an empty vase and a bouquet of flowers are positioned separately between two mirrors in such a way that the image of the vase formed in the first mirror is reflected towards the point of the image of the bouquet formed in the second mirror. This results in the optical illusion of the bouquet 'standing' inside the vase (77).

Lacan speaks of the subject using the mirror in the 'hoop net' schema in an analogous way to accommodate his image around the objet a, as the image of the vase is accommodated around the bouquet in the inverted bouquet schema (78). When the assembly of analysts looks into the mirror/shutter of the girl-photographer's camera, the image of himself that each of them creates there will be an image formed around the objet a, the desire of each analyst which Lacan claims to be able to trace. It is interesting to note in this connexion Freud's description of the fetishist, for whom "the fetish is a substitute for the woman's (the mother's) penis that the little boy once believed in and - for reasons familiar to us - does not want to give up" (79); one might ask whether it is not in fact a fetishistic 'analyst's desire' on Lacan's part which has placed the mirror/shutter over the site of the girl's 'castration' here - whether the image of his own visible organ which might appear in that little mirror is not a fetish-image of the phallus around which Lacanian theory revolves.

Who is it, then, who is speaking when Lacan pronounces the formula 'I am photo-graphed'? Whose image is it that is articulating itself here around the object of desire which flashes, like a glittering prize, from beneath the girl's raised skirt? Evidently it is Lacan as bearer of the phallus, the masculine subject of an

androcentric symbolic order, who is making himself seen in his paradigmatic sexual member; it is also Lacan as analyst, the apostle or epigone of Freud, defender, through his much-vaunted 'return to Freud', of the one true psychoanalytic faith against heretical teachings (80). The convergence of the two - the masculine subject and the good Freudian - around the metaphorically dense image of the photograph of Freud as Buñuel's pastiche of Leonardo's Last Supper might indicate the place where Lacan himself accommodates his image around his own desire - the apotheosis of the analyst's desire, namely the desire for Freud.

#### In the name of the father

"It would be wrong to think that the Freudian myth of the Oedipus complex had put an end to theology on the matter. For it is not enough to wave the flag of sexual rivalry. It would be better to read what Freud has to say about its co-ordinates; for they amount to the question with which he himself set out: 'What is a Father?' 'It is the dead Father', Freud replies, but no-one listens, and concerning that part of it that Lacan takes up again under the heading 'Name-of-the-Father', it is regrettable that so unscientific a situation should still deprive him of his normal audience" (81).

The concept of the Name-of-the-Father or 'paternal metaphor' in Lacanian theory encapsulates Lacan's re-reading of the Oedipus complex in the context of the symbolic order. Freud's formulation of the Oedipus complex posits that the child desires its mother and regards its father as a rival in relation to her; the Oedipus complex dissolves when the child, perceiving the 'castration' of the female genitals in relation to the male, takes this as a (threatened or realised) punishment for its incestuous desire, which it thenceforward represses (82). In the Lacanian version, the sanction of 'castration'

emanates from the place of the father as third term external to the mother-child dyad; the coincidence of that place with the place of the symbolic order as it irrupts into the dyad gives it its 'metaphorical' character - the stress is not so much on the actual father, but on the father's structural position in relation to the pre-subjective child (83).

The notion of the 'dead father' introduced by Lacan in the ironically self-referential passage quoted above derives from Freud's mythical 'primal horde', the hypothetical 'primitive' social group the father of which was eventually killed by his sons:

"One day the brothers ... came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end to the patriarchal horde ... After they had got rid of him, had satisfied their hatred and had put into effect their wish to identify with him, the affection which had all this time been pushed under was bound to make itself felt ... The dead father became stronger than the living one had been ... They revoked their deed by forbidding the killing of the totem, the substitute for their father; and they renounced its fruits by resigning their claim to the women who had now been set free. They thus created out of their filial sense of guilt the two fundamental taboos of totemism, which for that very reason inevitably corresponded to the two repressed wishes of the Oedipus complex" (84).

This killing of the primal father led to the transformation of the primal horde into a coherent and structured 'group':

"He [the father of the primal horde] was later on exalted into the creator of the world ... He was the ideal of each one of [his sons], at once feared and honoured ... These many individuals eventually banded themselves together, killed him and cut him in pieces. None of the group of victors could take his place, or, if one of them did, the battles began afresh, until they understood that they must all renounce their father's heritage. They then formed the totemic community of brothers, all with equal rights" (85).

The 'dead father' is thus in the Lacanian version the function which sets the androcentric symbolic in motion: it is in relation to the

structural position of the dead father that symbolic exchange (as described in the previous chapter) among the 'community of brothers' takes place.

Psychoanalysis, since his death in 1939, has had its own dead father in the figure of Freud himself, a figure in relation to whom the 'group of analysts' over which he presides continues to make exchange - of ideas, of interpretations, of signifiers. There is no doubt that even in his own lifetime Freud was a paternal figure for the group with which he was, as Lacan says, photographed innumerable times; Ernest Jones speaks of the "filial" attitude of Freud's followers (86), and Jung, for example, asks explicitly in a letter to Freud of 1908 that their relationship be conducted "not as one between equals but as that of father and son" (87), while Freud in turn addresses Jung as "my dear friend and heir" (88). That Lacan, at least as much as any other analyst, should find himself in an Oedipal position with regard to Freud the father is an obvious suggestion, and one that has indeed been made elsewhere. Jane Gallop for example remarks:

"That he [Lacan] would like to be a father of analysis as Freud was: "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden", "Where Freud's presence ... was, I must come to be ... Lacan is himself ... caught up in a rivalry over who is the true inheritor of Father Freud's psycho-analysis" (89).

It is around this structural position of Freud as father that the speakers of Lacan's 'I am photo-graphed' - Lacan as masculine subject and Lacan as Freudian analyst - converge. The masculine subject, photo-graphed, 'caught' and subject-ed in the symbolic order, enters the castration complex through the irruption of the Name-of-the-Father as third term: the 'masculine' position he then takes up is that of

'having' the phallus (90) - having the sexual member in which he makes himself seen. The Freudian analyst seeks a place for himself in that photo-graph of Freud and his followers as Freud's heir, the Oedipal son who, fearing and honouring the father who is his ideal, desires to occupy the father's place while at the same time subjecting that desire to the rule of the name of the father - that is, to the primacy of Freud's original (sic) works over his own. The place of the dead father in this respect is the ultimate object of desire in psychoanalysis: a place already vacant, waiting for the Oedipal son to take for himself, and at the same time a place already filled by a father who, because now dead, is permanently idealised and unassimilable.

Freud's position as father of psychoanalysis makes him also its law-giver and its master. Lacan in particular, through the 'return to Freud', places him in that position: Lacan's Freud is not only the master of psychoanalysis, but he is a master whose knowledge reigns supreme over all his followers:

"In fact, the maintenance of Freud's concepts at the centre of all theoretical discussion in that dull, tedious, forbidding chain - which is read by nobody but psychoanalysts - known as the psychoanalytic literature, does not alter the fact that analysts in general have not yet caught up with these concepts, that in this literature most of the concepts are distorted, debased, fragmented, and that those that are too difficult are quite simply ignored ... [N]o-one is any longer concerned, with certain rare exceptions to be found among my pupils, with the ternary structure of the Oedipus complex or with the castration complex" (91).

"Now, it is quite certain, as everyone knows, that no psychoanalyst can claim to represent, in however slight a way, a corpus of absolute knowledge. That is why, in a sense, it can be said that if there is someone to whom one can apply there can only be one such person. This one was Freud, while he was alive ... He was not only the subject supposed to

know. He did know, and he gave us this knowledge in terms that may be said to be indestructible ... No progress has been made, however small, that has not deviated whenever one of the terms around which Freud ordered the ways that he traced, and the paths of the unconscious, has been neglected ... The function, and by the same token, the consequence, the prestige, I would say, of Freud are on the horizon of every position of the analyst. They constitute the drama of the social, communal organisation of psychoanalysts" (92).

Lacan here is very brazenly not only situating Freud as absolute master of psychoanalysis, but also situating himself as the master's only true follower - in particular, as the only true Oedipal son who understands, and can transmit to his sons, the function of the Oedipus complex itself; also as the son who, through Freud's death, takes the father's place (as in Gallop's gloss on Freud's 'Wo Es war, soll Ich werden'): the one who knew was Freud, while he was alive, and now that he is dead I am the only one to whom you can come for that knowledge.

Yet for a father also to be in a position of mastery is, according to Lacanian theory itself, far from the Freudian ideal. In the 'Seminar of 21 January 1975', Lacan comments that "there is nothing worse than a father who proffers the law on everything. Above all, spare us any father educators, let them rather be in retreat on any position as master" (93). This comes from the Lacanian formula that "there is no Other of the Other" (94), meaning that there is no ultimate guarantor of truth or knowledge to which one can appeal from within the Other, that is, from within the symbolic order - there is no meta-order which lies 'beyond', anchors or secures the symbolic order, no kind of philosophical Truth to which the subject can turn for final meaning or certainty. As Jacqueline Rose explains:

"Subjects in language persist in their belief that somewhere there is a point of certainty, of knowledge

and of truth ... The Other appears to hold the 'truth' of the subject and the power to make good its loss. But this is the ultimate fantasy. Language is the place where meaning circulates ... [T]here can be no final guarantee or securing of language. There is, Lacan writes, 'no Other of the Other', and anyone who claims to take up this place is an impostor (the Master and/or psychotic)" (95).

By setting Freud up as 'the one who knows', Lacan effectively makes him 'the Other of the Other', point of certainty and guarantor of psychoanalytic truth - precisely, the Master.

This position of the Other of the Other is in effect the position of God, who "guarantee[s] by [His] very existence the bases of truth" (96). Freud the father becomes God-the-Father, the "immortal sire" (97) in relation to whom Lacan would now be seen as the Christ who has come to deliver the word of God. This suggestion, too - that Lacan places himself in position of Christ - has been made elsewhere; Marcelle Marini writes of his identification with the figure of Christ, "perfect Son, pure victim of both the abandonment and the cruelty of God-the-Father" (98), and argues that Lacan "recognises that he speaks of the dead God because he cannot free himself from the dead Freud" (99). It is this, perhaps, that is the hidden fantasy at play when Lacan finds himself 'irresistibly' reminded by the photograph of Freud and his disciples of Buñuel's 'Last Supper': the place of Freud which Lacan, as Oedipal son and rival, wants to occupy is meshed, as in the 'condensation' (100) of dream images, with the figure of Christ with which Lacan, as Oedipal son and heir, identifies himself. Certainly for Lacan giving the seminar of The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, such imagery is rich in association: having abandoned his previous seminar on 'The Names of the Father' after the Société Française de

Psychanalyse had banned him from performing training analyses at the request of that International Psychoanalytic Association originally established by Freud himself and by his disciples, which made the removal of Lacan from the SFP's body of training analysts a condition of the SFP's winning official recognition from the IPA (101), Lacan begins The Four Fundamental Concepts by speaking of his "major excommunication" (102) from the "Church" (103) of psychoanalysis, for which he has been, he claims, "the object of what is called a deal" (104): Lacan as Christ has been betrayed for the thirty pieces of silver of international recognition for the SFP. Marini summarises Lacan's position at this point: "For Lacan, the shock is overwhelming: as if suddenly the father were neither his father, nor Freud, nor the Father, but himself, discovering himself in that place, and in that place betrayed" (105).

Such, then, is the fantasy of Lacan as Freudian analyst in relation to the photographed Freud. Lacan as masculine subject accommodates himself around that image of Freud through the configuration of another kind of fantasy as well: the fantasy of the hysteric, and in particular of the hysteric 'Dora'.

According to Lacan, "the desire of the hysteric [is] the desire of the father, to be sustained in his status" (106). Of Freud's case history of 'Dora' Lacan writes:

"Dora's obvious complaisance in the father's adventure with the woman who is the wife of Herr K, whose attentions to herself she accepts, is precisely the game by which she must sustain the man's desire. Furthermore, the passage à l'acte - breaking off the relationship by striking him, as soon as Herr K says to her not, I am not interested in you, but, I am not interested in my wife - shows that it was necessary for her that the link should be preserved with that third element that enabled her to see the desire, which in any case was unsatisfied, subsisting - both the desire of the

father whom she favoured qua impotent and her own desire of being unable to realise herself qua desire of the Other" (107).

Dora's situation, briefly stated, is that she is the object of a series of sexual advances from Herr K, a friend of her father's, while Herr K's wife is having an affair with Dora's father himself. It emerges in the course of the analysis that Dora has been the 'object of a deal' in that her father tacitly allows Herr K to continue his advances to her in return for Herr K's tolerance of his affair with Frau K. According to Freud's analysis, it is Dora's Oedipal desire for her own father which is at the root of her hysterical symptoms as it has become embroiled with her desire for both Herr K and his wife. Lacan's reading of the case is that the source of Dora's trouble is her refusal to accept her place as a woman in the exchange of the symbolic order:

"As is true for all women, and for reasons which are at the very basis of the most elementary forms of social exchange ..., the problem of [Dora's] condition is fundamentally that of accepting herself as an object of desire for the man ... Dora is driven towards the solution which Christianity has given to this subjective impasse, by making woman the object of a divine desire, or else, a transcendent object of desire, which amounts to the same thing" (108).

This is why Dora's desire is characterised as the desire to sustain the desire of the father. Her refusal to accept her position as a woman in the symbolic order is a refusal to accept that her desire is the 'desire of the Other' - that the mechanism of her desire is itself regulated by the mechanism of the symbolic, which casts her in the role of exchange object. The desire of the Other as such revolves of course around the phallus as primary signifier, and the role in which Dora as woman is cast by it is that of 'being' the phallus in the way already described in the previous chapter; the phallus here is

acting in its guise as "pure non-sense ... [T]his signifier that kills all meanings" (109), a signifier whose status is an arbitrary effect of the symbolic order and for which, because there is no Other of the Other, there can be no possible justification. Dora's solution to this 'subjective impasse' is to make the place of the father the place of the Other of the Other in an attempt to 'make sense' of the pure non-sense of the symbolic order - to place the father in the God-like position of guarantor, in relation to which she can then situate herself, not as an object of exchange in an arbitrary and meaningless economy, but as a cause of 'divine desire' in a stable, fixed and meaningful system. In seeking to 'sustain' the desire of the father, Dora is seeking to sustain the desire of that Other of the Other which she has herself invented in order to explain to herself the inexplicable position of woman in the symbolic order ("It is indeed because [woman] has a relation of second degree to this symbolic order that the god is embodied in man or man in the god" (110)). In effect she imagines that the Name-of-the-Father is the Name-of-God, and invests all of her own desire in maintaining the Name-of-the-Father in that position.

Lacan's desire, too, is to sustain the desire of the father - more precisely, to sustain the desire of Freud in his position of Other of the Other, as fantasised by Lacan himself. It is from within this desire that Lacan speaks of Freud's desire as the 'original sin' of psychoanalysis:

"So hysteria places us, I would say, on the track of some kind of original sin in analysis. There has to be one. The truth is perhaps simply the desire of Freud himself, the fact that something, in Freud, was never analysed. I had reached precisely this point when, by a strange coincidence, I was put into the

position of having to give up my seminar. What I had to say on the Names-of-the-Father had no other purpose, in fact, than to put in question the origin, to discover by what privilege Freud's desire was able to find the entrance into the field of experience he designates as the unconscious" (111).

If Freud holds the position, in relation to psychoanalytic 'knowledge', of the Other of the Other, then his desire is the absolute 'truth' and guarantor of psychoanalysis ("the truth is perhaps simply the desire of Freud himself"); Freud's desire is not, like the desire of any other subject, subject-ed to the symbolic order in the usual way ('man's desire is the desire of the Other'), but is rather the desire which is the point of 'origin', the desire whose absolute 'privilege' makes it the prime mover, and not the object ('something ... never analysed') of analysis itself. Strange coincidence indeed that Lacan should have reached such a point when he became the object of a deal amongst the psychoanalytic community. Like Dora, Lacan refuses what for him is the quintessentially feminine position of exchange object, and creates for himself an Other of the Other as the means of that refusal: having lost his place among those who make exchange of signifiers - among the psychoanalytic community - and become instead one who is exchanged by them, Lacan explains this to himself as an 'excommunication' for having taken up his messianic position in relation to Freud the father's psychoanalytic 'truth', just as Dora explains her own position to herself as a consequence, not of her meaningless object-status, but of divine desire and of meaning ordained as by God.

This fantasy, then, of Freud as both father and Other of the Other, is at work on two levels in Lacan's image of the photograph of Freud. Firstly, it is a fantasy of Lacan as analyst, imagining

himself as the son and heir of a Freud who embodies psychoanalytic truth; secondly, it is a fantasy of Lacan as masculine subject, who, finding himself cast in a feminine position in relation to what he calls "the social, communal organisation of psychoanalysts" (112), seeks to reclaim his masculinity by re-inserting himself, in his role as the only true Freudian, into the position of son of the ultimate truth-giving father. In response to the question, What is the desire of the analyst? one can therefore reply, in the case of Lacan, that it is an Oedipal desire of exemplary structure: the objet a around which Lacan accommodates his own image is the position of Freud as father - of psychoanalysis, of Lacan himself. What then of the 'camera's mirror/shutter, the little flashing jewel in which the image of this desire is caught? Returning to the 'Seminar of 21 January 1975', one finds:

"A father only has a right to respect, if not love, if the said love, the said respect, is - you won't believe your ears - perversely (père-versement) orientated, that is to say, come of a woman, an objet a who causes his desire" (113).

The Oedipal drama of father and son takes place wholly around the mother, the objet a who causes the desire of both and in relation to whom they hold their structural positions as father and son. Although the castration complex which sets going the Oedipal rivalry between them is brought on by the irruption of the Name-of-the-Father, it is the mother who in Lacanian theory comes to embody the place of the Other from which the Name-of-the-Father springs:

"The fact that the Father may be regarded as the original representative of this authority of the Law requires us to specify by what privileged mode of presence he is sustained beyond [au-dela] the subject who is actually led to occupy the place of the Other, namely, the Mother" (114).

The mother occupies the place of the Other both because she is likely to be the one through whom the child first experiences speech, and because it is she who is the locus of the child's first articulation of desire (according to 'man's desire is the desire of the Other'), in that the child desires to be what the mother desires:

"If the desire of the mother is the phallus, then the child wishes to be the phallus so as to satisfy this desire. Thus the division immanent to desire already makes itself felt in the desire of the Other, since it stops the subject from being satisfied with presenting to the Other anything real that it might have which corresponds to this phallus ... Clinical practice demonstrates that this test of the desire of the Other is not decisive in the sense that the subject learns from it whether or not he has a real phallus, but inasmuch that he learns that the mother has not. This is the moment of experience without which no symptomatic or structural consequence (that is, phobia or penisneid) referring to the castration complex can take effect" (115).

It will be recalled that in Freud's original account, the boy's castration complex is brought on when he catches sight of the female genitals, sees that she has been 'castrated', and thenceforward regards his own penis as at risk of a similar fate as punishment for his incestuous Oedipal desires (116). This is also the 'penis envy' scenario explored in the first section of this chapter in which the boy makes himself seen in his sexual member and in which the primacy of the phallus as signifier in the realm of the Other is mirrored by the primacy of the penis as visible organ in the scopic realm. In this respect the Other of language and the point of light or 'gaze that is outside' which is its scopic equivalent overlap:

"[I]t is in the space of the Other that he sees himself and the point from which he looks at himself is also in that space. Now, this is also the point from which he speaks, since in so far as he speaks, it is in the locus of the Other that he begins to constitute that truthful lie by which is initiated that which participates in desire at the level of the unconscious" (117).

In other words, as I have already argued above, the pre-existence of the 'gaze that is outside' reflects the pre-existence of the symbolic order, that is, of the Other. In this context, the significance of the girl's 'camera' becomes clear: it reveals the 'castration' of the mother as the site of legitimation of the primacy of both penis (in the scopic) and phallus (in the Other), the site of the 'gaze that is outside' which marks their point of intersection. The objet a which flashes in the mirror/shutter of the 'camera' is the mother's castration, cause of desire of the subject in the Other and visible absence in relation to which the boy's own organ is affirmed in its privileged status; both the phallus as primary signifier and the penis as visible organ acquire their status as such in relation to the Other, linguistic or scopic, as it is manifested in the mother's castration. If the operation of the Other is such that the subject who is 'photo-graphed' in the play of light makes himself seen in his sexual member, then the camera nestling beneath the girl's raised skirt is the gaze before which he presents himself for affirmation; and if Lacan's desire as it is revealed through this image of 'camera' and 'photograph' is the desire for Freud the father, that desire is founded as such upon the invisibility of the mother, the reduction of the place of woman in the Oedipal structure to an object or vanishing point of desire.

#### CONCLUSION

The paths of Lacan's desire could doubtless be traced even further through his image of the 'photograph' of analysts as Last

Supper; and as Lacan himself says of his own mapping of the desires of other analysts in their psychoanalytic theories, "[a]ll this may be no more than a kind of game" (118). In any case, to say that certain desires at play can be traced in Lacanian theory does not, just in itself, invalidate that theory; the basic premise of psychoanalysis is that it is in the nature of human subjects to have hidden 'unconscious' desires which will surface in a psychoanalytic reading of any spoken or written text that they might produce (119). What is at issue is the way in which the theory is informed by Lacan's desires so as to privilege masculine over feminine; and the way it does so is by privileging the visual in relation to the symbolic order.

In this chapter I have been arguing that the alleged separation in Lacanian theory between the 'penis' and the 'phallus' founders on Lacan's formulation of the scopic realm in terms of 'play of light' or 'gaze that is outside', the 'given-to-be-seen' and the outward-and-back movement of the drive, and that as soon as one enters that realm the status of the phallus as primary signifier falls back into the old scenario of 'penis envy' and the girl's sight of the male organ as it appears in Freud's original texts. The essential point which I now want to extract from my argument is that this collapse back into the Freudian scenario is the result of the nature of vision: the status of the given-to-be-seen as it is granted to the male organ and the place of the 'gaze that is outside' allotted to the girl are structural positions set up by the function of the play of light or 'depth of field', which Lacan distinguishes from geometral perspective as the function characteristic of vision as such (120). Given that the Lacanian subject of the scopic drive 'makes himself seen in his

sexual member', one can only conclude that the subject who is 'photographed' by the 'gaze that is outside' is paradigmatically masculine. Conversely, consideration of the 'castrated' mother as the locus both of the Other and of the 'gaze that is outside' indicates that the 'castration' the elision of which through the 'evanescence' of the gaze gives the scopic its privilege over the other drives is typically feminine.

We are now in a position to return to the question raised at the end of the last chapter, of whether woman's position in the Lacanian imaginary results from Lacan's use of the optical image as his paradigm. The thesis that the 'mirror' at work in imaginary identifications need not be visual is re-affirmed in Lacan's insistence that geometral perspective is not a function of vision as such:

"[T]he geometral space of vision - even if we include those imaginary parts in the virtual space of the mirror of which, as you know, I have spoken at length - is perfectly reconstructible, imaginable, by a blind man. What is at issue in geometral perspective is simply the mapping of space, not sight" (121).

However, the mechanism in the scopic realm which places woman in the 'invisible' position - the position of one who gazes upon another's visibility without having any 'visible' sexual parts to offer to his gaze - demonstrates that, while the Lacanian imaginary may or may not be necessarily visual, the realm of the symbolic, which Lacan himself unabashedly describes as 'androcentric', both privileges the visual and uses that privilege in the construction of its own androcentrism, particularly in the construction and reconstruction of 'penis envy' and the primacy of the phallus. This in turn may have implications for Lacan's preference for optical images as the means of exposition of

his theory of the imaginary. In particular, the position of the mother in the scopic and the symbolic realm as castrated - as having no given-to-be-seen to present to the gaze of the other - suggests that the image of the 'woman in the mirror', which I posited in the previous chapter as the female image which, as both my mother and myself, collapses the anaclitic/narcissistic distinction, would in fact be invisible. If the female sex presents no visible organ to the gaze of the other, it is likewise, within this Lacanian logic, unable to present any form of image (sic) of a sex which I might recognise as both my mother's and my own; the female sex is recognisable only in so far as it is 'missing' - that is, is not male. Hence the radical potential of this image of the 'woman in the mirror' for the articulation of any form of non-heterosexual or non-androcentric desire on the part of women is thwarted at the outset, and Lacan presents us instead with a system of sexual difference which, in all too familiar fashion, privileges 'man' as its central and defining term. The privilege of the gaze in the symbolic realm ultimately reveals that Lacan's correlative use of optics in his exposition of the imaginary is neither accidental nor innocent: his entire androcentric system rests upon the privilege of vision.

In the next chapter I shall stay with Lacan's image of the play of light or 'glittering jewel' of the gaze in order to investigate the implications of what has been discussed thus far as they are played out in the juncture of the imaginary and the symbolic, the point of intersection at which is situated the experience of psychoanalysis itself.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE JUNCTURE BETWEEN THE IMAGINARY AND THE SYMBOLIC

#### INTRODUCTION

"The point where the entire analytic experience unfolds ... [is] the joint of the imaginary and the symbolic" (1). The previous chapter argued that the Lacanian symbolic relegates femininity to the position of the 'gaze that is outside' which holds the masculine, Oedipal subject of psychoanalysis in place, the locus of this gaze being the 'nothing-to-be-seen' of the female genitals. In this last chapter on Lacanian theory I wish to map some of the ways in which the operation of this gaze in the symbolic is articulated around or against narcissism and the imaginary as I have described it above. I shall do so through an analysis of Lacan's concept of 'logical time' and its place in the structure of the psychoanalytic experience and the encounter with the unconscious itself.

When speaking of the relation between the imaginary and the symbolic, Lacan is always at pains to stress that although the mirror stage might seem to be temporally prior to the acquisition of language, this does not imply a priority of the imaginary over the symbolic either in the operations of the unconscious or in the psychoanalytic experience:

"The symbolic relation is constituted as early as possible, even prior to the fixation of the self-image of the subject ... The imaginary experience is inscribed in the register of the symbolic as early as you can think it. Everything that happens in the order of the object relation is structured as a function of the particular history of the subject, and

that is why analysis, and the transference, are possible" (2).

Since the subject as such is an effect of the symbolic, all relations between subjects - including those identificatory, specular relations which are situated on the level of the imaginary - take place within the context of the symbolic order. There is moreover no means of access to the imaginary realm which is separate from or outside of the symbolic, and this is as true of the psychoanalytic relation as of any other form of relation between subjects:

"The symbolic will shape all those inflections which, in the life of the adult, the imaginary commitment, the original captation, can take on ... If you think that the child is more a captive of the imaginary than of the rest [ie of the symbolic and the real], you are right in a certain sense. The imaginary is there. But it is completely inaccessible to us. It is only accessible to us when we start from its realisations in the adult. The past history, the lived history, of the subject, which we try to get at in our practice, is not ... the snoozing, the fiddling about of the subject while in analysis. We can only get at it ... through the adult's childish language" (3).

What Lacan sees as contemporary psychoanalysis's (and especially object relations theory's) tendency to neglect this fundamental truth about the experience of the unconscious is the main target of his radical project to 'return to Freud': "I emphasise the register of the symbolic order because we must never lose sight of it, although it is most frequently forgotten, although we turn away from it in analysis" (4). The task of analysis is to recognise the inter-relations of the symbolic and the imaginary as such, and to operate on them accordingly:

"The whole of psychoanalysis is quite rightly founded on the fact that getting something meaningful out of human discourse isn't a matter of logic ... There is something in the symbolic function of human discourse that cannot be eliminated,

and that is the role played in it by the imaginary ... There is an inertia in the imaginary which we find making itself felt in the discourse of the subject, sowing discord in the discourse, making it such that I do not realise that when I mean someone well, I mean him ill, that when I love him, it is myself that I love, or when I think I love myself, it is precisely at this moment that I love another. It is precisely the exercise of the dialectic of analysis which should dissipate this imaginary confusion, and reconstitute to the discourse its meaning as discourse" (5).

In this chapter I shall be considering how these essential inter- relations between the imaginary and the symbolic are played out in the analytic process, that process, as I shall argue, being at once founded upon psychoanalysis's use of the metaphor of vision, and structured by that metaphor's positioning of sexual difference as it has emerged in the two previous chapters. If Lacanian psychoanalysis sets out to restore a degree of meaning to the speech or 'discourse' of the patient (6), it does so, I shall argue, with the proviso that only those subjects which it finds to be masculine shall be eligible for access to meaning. The first section of this chapter will introduce the concept of 'logical time' and discuss its relations with masculinity and femininity in Freudian and Lacanian theory; the second section will focus in more detail on the playing out of masculinity and femininity in the analytic process itself.

#### SECTION ONE: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND LOGICAL TIME

##### Psychoanalysis versus hypnosis

During the last seminar of The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, Lacan says, with reference to the schema found in

Freud's 'Group psychology and the analysis of the ego', that "as everyone knows, it was by distinguishing itself from hypnosis that analysis became established" (7). Translating the schema in question (8) into the terms of his Lacanian algebra, Lacan explains it as follows:

"In it he [Freud] designates what he calls the object - in which you must recognise what I call the a - the ego and the ego ideal. As for the curves, they are to mark the conjunction of the a with the ego ideal. In this way Freud gives its status to hypnosis by superimposing at the same place the objet a as such and this signifying mapping which is called the ego ideal.

"I have given you the elements in order to understand it, adding that the objet a may be identical with the gaze. Well, Freud precisely indicates the nodal point of hypnosis when he formulates that the object is certainly an element that is difficult to grasp in it, but an incontestable one, namely, the gaze of the hypnotiser. Remember what I articulated for you about the function of the gaze ... You apprehend by the same token the function of the gaze in hypnosis, which may be fulfilled in fact by a crystal stopper, or anything, so long as it shines" (9).

In other words, the effect of hypnosis, according to Freud's schema, results from the subject's having confused the objet a with the ego ideal, the objet a in such cases being embodied in the gaze of the hypnotist, or in some shiny object. This objet a at work in hypnosis, the gaze or shiny object which fascinates the subject, seems to recall the 'glittering object' of the female genitals all too clearly. The point is reinforced by the convergence of Freud's formulations of hypnosis and of the fear inspired by the female genitals around the topic of 'the uncanny'. In a later chapter of 'Group psychology', Freud remarks that "hypnosis has something positively uncanny about it" (10); in 'The uncanny' he states that "[i]t often happens that neurotic men declare that they feel that there is something uncanny about the female genital organs" (11). If, as Freud claims,

uncanniness is an effect of the return of the repressed, and "the uncanny (unheimlich) is something which is secretly familiar (heimlich - heimisch)" (12), we might indeed be justified in remarking that we seem to have been here before.

The ego ideal , with which the objet a becomes confused in hypnosis, is a key term in Lacan's re-reading of Freud, and comes from Freud's 'On narcissism: an introduction', which Lacan takes to be drawing a distinction between the ego ideal and the ideal ego in a passage which states:

"For the ego the formation of an ideal would be the conditioning factor of repression.

"This ideal ego is now the target of the self-love which was enjoyed in childhood by the actual ego. The subject's narcissism makes its appearance displaced on to this new ideal ego ... He is not willing to forgo the narcissistic perfection of his childhood; and when, as he grows up, he is disturbed by the admonitions of others and by the awakening of his own critical judgment, so that he can no longer retain that perfection, he seeks to recover it in the new form of an ego ideal" (13).

According to Lacan, "the Ichideal ... is precisely symmetrical and opposed to the Idealich ... Freud is here designating two different functions" (14): the difference between them being that the ideal ego, the repository of the subject's displaced narcissism, belongs wholly to the imaginary plane, while the ego ideal, which, says Freud, "arose from the critical influence of his [the subjects's] parents (conveyed to him by the medium of the voice)" (15) and on behalf of which "his conscience acts as watchman" (16), is an imaginary function closely allied to the symbolic:

"It is speech, the symbolic relation, which determines the greater or lesser degree of perfection, of completeness, of approximation of the imaginary. This representation allows us to draw the distinction between the Idealich and the Ichideal, between the

ideal ego and the ego ideal. The ego ideal governs the interplay of relations on which all relations with others depend. And on this relation to others depends the more or less satisfying character of the imaginary structuration" (17).

It is the respective positions of these two terms - the ego ideal and the objet a - which for Lacan mark the distinction between hypnosis and psychoanalysis:

"Freud gives its status to hypnosis by superimposing at the same place the objet a as such and this signifying mapping which is called the ego ideal ... To define hypnosis as the confusion, at one point, of the ideal signifier in which the subject is mapped with the a, is the most assured structural definition that has been advanced.

"Now, as everyone knows, it was by distinguishing itself from hypnosis that analysis became established. For the fundamental mainspring of the analytic operation is the maintenance of the difference between the I - identification - and the a" (18).

The psychoanalytic process restores the imaginary and the symbolic - the I and the a - to their proper places, "dissipate[s] this imaginary confusion" (19) and, ultimately, with the dissolution of the transference-relation with the analyst, releases the subject into the operations of desire and the drives:

"In order to give you formulae-reference points, I will say - if the transference is that which separates demand from the drive, the analyst's desire is that which brings it back. And in this way it isolates the a, places it at the greatest possible distance from the I that he, the analyst, is called upon by the subject to embody. It is from this idealisation that the analyst has to fall in order to be the support of the separating a, in so far as his desire allows him, in an upside-down hypnosis, to embody the hypnotised patient" (20).

At the beginning of analysis, the patient's 'imaginary confusion' leads her or him to set up a transference-relation with the analyst - a relation through which the patient's identifications and libidinal desires are played out in the same way as they are in love (21), of

which it is indeed, according to Freud, a genuine instance (22). "From being in love to hypnosis is only a short step", as Freud says in 'Group psychology' (23): "... It is only that everything is even clearer and more intense in hypnosis, so that it would be more to the point to explain being in love by means of hypnosis than the other way around" (24). Transference, then, being a genuine form of erotic love, is in effect a kind of hypnoid state: the patient in transference confuses the objet a with the ego ideal, which the analyst herself or himself embodies for as long as the transference lasts (25). From this initial moment of imaginary confusion and hypnoid fascination, the patient in psychoanalysis moves towards a conclusion in which the objet a and the ego ideal are disentangled, the imaginary and the symbolic planes are re-aligned, and the transference comes to an end. Lacan says that "when you're in love, you are mad" (26); his formulation of the analytic process consists, in effect, of a falling out of love with the analyst.

This movement of the analytic process, from hypnotic fascination to the release of the drives and the 'restitution of meaning' to the patient's speech, can be translated into the movement and structure of Lacan's 'logical time', which passes from an initial 'moment of seeing', through a 'time for understanding' to a final 'moment of conclusion'. By mapping the analytic process as described above on to this structure of logical time, I hope to be able to demonstrate the play of gender which is at work behind the positions of the ego ideal and the objet a, this juncture of the imaginary and the symbolic at which the business of Lacanian psychoanalysis is conducted.

### Logical time

The concept of logical time was introduced by Lacan in his paper of 1945 on "Logical time and the assertion of anticipated certainty" (27). The structure of logical time is illustrated by means of a little story. Three prisoners are taken aside by their prison governor, who tells them that one of them is to be freed, and that in order to decide which one, he will give them all a test: the one who passes the test will be released. The governor then shows the prisoners five discs, which are all alike, except that three of them are white and two are black. Each of the prisoners is to have one of these discs fixed to his (sic) back, in a position quite outside his field of vision; they will then be forbidden to communicate with one another in any way, and left together in a room containing no mirror or reflective surface, so that although they will be able to see the discs on the backs of one another, none of them will have any way of seeing the colour of the disc on his own back. Whichever of them is able to work out, without resorting to guesswork or to the laws of probability, the colour of the disc on his own back, must go through the door and announce his answer to the waiting official(s). If his answer is correct, he will be set free. Having thus explained the rules of the test to them, the governor has a white disc attached to the back of each prisoner, and leaves them to their calculations.

After some time has elapsed, all three prisoners rush through the door simultaneously and announce that they are white. Each of them is questioned independently, and explains his conclusion along the following lines: 'Having seen that my fellows were both white, I realised that, if I were black, each of them would reason as

follows - 'if I were also black, the other prisoner would know that he must be white, and would have left immediately, so I cannot be black'. And both of them would have gone out together, each having reasoned in this way that he must be white. The fact that neither of them has done so shows that I must also be white; and so I hurried out to announce my conclusion' (28).

In his subsequent discussion of this little story, Lacan distinguishes three 'moments' in the 'logical time' through which each prisoner's reasoning has passed. The first step in that reasoning - 'if there were two blacks, I would be white' - contains the 'moment of seeing', logical time's initial moment. The second step in the reasoning - 'if I were black, these two whites that I see would quickly realise that they were white' - is the 'time for understanding' (for understanding, that is, that the inaction of the other two prisoners is the key to one's own solution of the problem). Finally, the 'moment of conclusion' consists, not simply in arriving at the solution 'I am white', but in rushing at that very moment to go through the door and announce one's solution before one's fellows have time to do the same (29).

In his seminar of 1955, Lacan says that this is an "apologue ... designed especially with the aim of distinguishing the imaginary from the symbolic" (30). He goes on:

"I'm not giving you this as a model of logical reasoning, but as a sophism, designed to draw out the distinction between language applied to the imaginary - for the two other subjects are perfectly imaginary for the third, he imagines them, they are quite simply the reciprocal structure as such - and the symbolic moment of language, that is to say the moment of the affirmation" (31).

In moving, from the moment of seeing, through the time for

understanding to the moment of conclusion, the subject is moving through an operation in the imaginary ('the reciprocal structure as such') to an affirmation in the symbolic, an act of meaningful enunciation ('I am white'). This in effect is the movement of the psychoanalytic process itself, in its progression from the "inertia in the imaginary" to a restitution of meaning to discourse (32), or from the I that the analyst embodies in the transference to the a that is released at the conclusion of the analysis:

"What is ontic in the function of the unconscious is the split through which that something, whose adventure in our field seems so short, is for a moment brought into the light of day - a moment because the second stage, which is one of closing up, gives this apprehension a vanishing aspect ... It is apparent that the very level of the definition of the unconscious ... is inaccessible to contradiction, to spatio-temporal localisation, and also to the function of time ... If indestructible desire escapes from time, to what register does it belong, in the order of things? For what is a thing, if not that which endures, in an identical state, for a certain time? Is not this the place to distinguish in addition to duration, the substance of things, another mode of time - of logical time? ... The appearance/disappearance [of the unconscious in analysis] takes place between two points, the initial and the terminal of this logical time" (33).

"[T]here really is a temporal factor in analysis ... Every analyst can only grasp it in his experience - there is a certain staggering of the time-for-understanding ... [O]ne can say that the transference is the very concept of analysis, because it is the time of analysis" (34).

Logical time is the temporality, both of desire and the unconscious, and of the psychoanalytic process: the transference, from its initiation in the moment of seeing constituted by the first encounters with the analyst, passes through the 'staggered' (35) phases of the time for understanding until its termination in meaningful utterance. The movement through the imaginary to the

symbolic is both structural and necessary to the "talking cure" (36), although in practice, according to Lacan, this movement is rarely allowed to complete itself (often because of what Lacan regards as the ignorance of contemporary psychoanalysts):

"Anyone who has lived through the analytic experience with me to the end of the training analysis knows that what I am saying is true ... There is only one kind of psychoanalysis, the training analysis - which means a psychoanalysis that has looped this loop to its end" (37).

At the end of his paper on logical time, Lacan claims that in principle the 'test' could be applied, with the same result, to an unlimited number of subjects, provided that the ''negative' attribute' (ie the number of black discs or their equivalent) should equal the number of subjects taking part, minus one; and that the concept of logical time might be used to demonstrate how subjects come to make the assertion that 'I am a man'. In the latter case, Lacan states that the three moments would consist in , firstly, 'a man knows what is not a man' (moment of seeing); secondly, 'men recognise one another as being men' (time for understanding); thirdly, 'I assert that I am a man for fear of being convinced by men that I am not one' (moment of conclusion) (38). As Marcelle Marini points out, all of this raises questions about the role of logical time both in the structure of sexual difference and in the function of castration, a function of lack which Lacan himself designates with the term, if not minus-one, then "minus-phi" (39); she writes:

"The article ends with an illuminating application of the formula [of logical time] to the affirmation 'I am a man' to produce the fundamental opposition man/(not-man). Which gives scope for reflexion upon this 'sophism' which Lacan says he invented himself - and for reading other texts in the light of this, notably those devoted to castration" (40).

The opposition thus introduced at the end of the paper 'Logical time' - the opposition between man and not-man - is of course a classic formulation of the system of sexual difference discussed and critiqued in my introductory chapter. Moreover the moment of seeing as it is described in the scenario of the three prisoners turns not around what the subject sees, but around what he does not see: the whole process of logical time is set in motion by the subject's not having seen any black discs on his fellows' backs. Circumstances such as these call for another return to Freud:

"There is an interesting contrast between the behaviour of the two sexes ... [W]hen a little boy first catches sight of a girl's genital region, he begins by showing irresolution and lack of interest; he sees nothing or disavows what he has seen ... It is not until later, when some threat of castration has obtained a hold upon him, that the observation becomes important to him: if he then recollects or repeats it, it arouses a terrible storm of emotion in him and forces him to believe in the reality of the threat which he has hitherto laughed at. This combination of circumstances leads to two reactions ... : horror of the mutilated creature or triumphant contempt for her ...  
"A little girl behaves differently. She makes her judgment and her decision in a flash. She has seen it and knows that she is without it and wants to have it" (41).

Reading Lacan's 'logical time' back into Freud's formulation of penis envy and the castration complex, one finds that it is the boy who passes through the three stages of logical time: from the moment of seeing - which is in fact the moment when he does not see, when he sees "the absence of a penis in a creature who is so like himself" (42) - through the time for understanding, including the 'staggering' of understanding in phases of disavowal or recollection, to the moment of conclusion: the dissolution of the Oedipus complex and the assumption, prompted by the fear of castration - the fear of losing

his status as masculine subject, of being convinced by his parents, fellows or playmates that he 'is not one' - of the affirmation, horrified or triumphant, that 'I am a boy' (43). The little girl makes no such progression: her reaction, based on what she has, rather than on what she has not seen, consequently has no proper 'moment of seeing' from which to launch itself into the stages of logical time; both her understanding and her conclusion - 'her judgment and her decision' - are made all at once, 'in a flash'.

This means in effect that the assumption of masculine subjectivity structurally requires a move from the imaginary to the symbolic - from the moment of seeing to the affirmative moment of conclusion - whereas feminine subjectivity involves no such move. The utterance 'I am a man' marks the culmination of a process laying claim to the status of subject in the symbolic order; the utterance 'I am a woman' marks at most the structural inability even to begin any such process. Unable to make the move from the imaginary, intersubjective realm to the realm of the symbolic, of affirmation and 'meaningful discourse', in the way that logical time demands, the girl is left stranded in that narcissism and symbolic object-status discussed above.

In the psychoanalytic context, all of this places femininity at the site of 'imaginary confusion' - transference, hypnosis and the failure to separate the I of identification from the a of desire. It might be appropriate to recall here what Lacan refers to as "the function of the gaze in hypnosis, which may be fulfilled in fact by a crystal stopper, or anything, so long as it shines" (44), and to trace it back again to the 'flashing jewel' or 'glittering object' of the

female genitals' 'nothing-to-be-seen'. The female sex, as an object caught in its own imaginary captation and as the site of a fascinating hypnotic gaze, is not only the metaphorical eye before which the masculine subject affirms itself as such; it is also the point of confusion that the subject in psychoanalysis leaves behind in its progression through the analysis and its accession to 'meaningful discourse'. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the quintessential patient is feminine, and the quintessential analyst - the one who has been through the training analysis and 'looped the loop to the end' - is masculine: on one side the women patients, with whom, by his own admission, not even Freud himself was ever able to bring the psychoanalytic process to its conclusion (45), and on the other side the analysts, who are required by the transference to come to occupy the place of the 'subject supposed to know' (46) and who, in order to do so, must first have passed through the logical time of analysis and left behind the impasse in which femininity remains trapped (47).

## SECTION TWO: THE ANALYTIC PROCESS

I shall now go on to map these two sides - the side of the woman patient and that of the male analyst - as they are played out in Lacan's formulation of the psychoanalytic process through his concept of logical time, with its 'moment of seeing' at one end of that process and the 'moment of conclusion', inaccessible to femininity, at the other. I shall take two examples of the ways in which these two moments are enacted in analysis, tracing the respective femininity and masculinity of each moment. The examples I shall examine are the

initial moment of transference-love, set against the successive moments of the transference's progress and dissolution; and the initial moment of the objet a's confusion with the ego ideal, set against the concluding moment of their separation. In each case I shall argue that the structure of logical time in the analytic process constructs femininity, like neurosis, as a state, and masculinity, like the cure, as a fortuitous outcome.

#### Transference and the 'moment of seeing'

Freud's paper of 1915, 'Observations on transference-love', is a recommendation to his fellow analysts as to how they should proceed when their women patients fall in love with them:

"[T]he only serious difficulties he [the psychoanalyst] has to meet lie in the management of the transference ... I shall select [one particular example] partly because it occurs so often and is so important in its real aspects ... What I have in mind is the case in which a woman patient shows by unmistakable indications, or openly declares, that she has fallen in love, as any other mortal woman might, with the doctor who is analysing her" (48).

The psychoanalyst is male; the patient who falls in love with him is female. No other permutation is entertained even as a theoretical possibility. The woman is neurotic and falls in love; the man has already traversed the analytic process, and must decide how to treat her accordingly.

The transference is the peculiar mode of relation of patient to analyst, and its development and dissolution form an essential part of any psychoanalysis. Freud's insistence that neuroses (and other mental disorders such as paranoia) arise from the repression of sexual drives (49) leads him to the conclusion that this particular

'transference-relation' is the arena in which those drives and the symptoms arising from them are to be played out during analysis, with the analyst as their object (50). By this means each of the patient's symptoms can be brought forward and operated upon by the analytic process. It is however also the peculiarity of the transference that it is manifested by the patient as a form of resistance to treatment, a kind of 'delaying tactic' to hold back material which has been repressed and which the treatment is drawing forth:

"There can be no doubt that the outbreak of a passionate demand for love is largely the work of resistance ... [T]his change quite regularly occurs precisely at a point of time when one is having to try to bring her [the patient] to admit or remember some particularly distressing and heavily repressed piece of her life-history. She has been in love ... for a long time; but now the resistance is beginning to make use of her love in order to hinder the continuation of the treatment" (51).

In cases such as these, says Freud, it will seem as though the woman's treatment can go no further - that it has reached its conclusion all at once, in a flash. "No doctor who experiences this for the first time will find it easy to retain his grasp on the analytic situation and to keep clear of the illusion that the treatment is really at an end" (52). But for the experienced analyst - the analyst who has traversed the analytic process several times and has looped the loop through to the end - it is clear that this is indeed an 'illusion' by means of which the patient unconsciously hopes to avoid having to see the analytic process through to its proper conclusion.

The constitutional feminine narcissism which has been seen to mark the place of women in the Lacanian imaginary is, for Freud, the basic premise both of women's love-relations in general and of women patients' transference-love for their analysts in particular. Women,

according to Freud, tend to make the narcissistic rather than the anaclitic type of sexual object-choice, loving themselves and wishing only to be loved by another (53); and this holds good for Freud's characterisation of transference-love, which he calls "the patient's endeavour to assure herself of her irresistibility, to destroy the doctor's authority by bringing him down to the level of a lover" (54). Indeed there is little if any distinction to be made between the woman's transference-love and any other love-attachment she might form:

"We have no right to dispute that the state of being in love which makes its appearance in the course of analytic treatment has the character of a 'genuine' love. If it seems so lacking in normality, this is sufficiently explained by the fact that being in love in ordinary life, outside analysis, is also more similar to abnormal than to normal mental phenomena" (55).

Thus transference-love is presented by Freud as a typically feminine form of resistance to the process which seeks to "restitute to the discourse [of the patient] its meaning as discourse" (56), holding her back, by means of her tendency to narcissism, in a state akin to the abnormal, and preventing her from moving forward through the stages of the treatment to what Lacan would characterise as meaningful affirmation in the symbolic.

The convergence of love, transference and narcissism is a recurrent theme in the seminars of Lacan, who considers the question to be one of the relations between the ideal ego and the ego ideal:

"What happens is what is called in its most common appearance the transference effect. This effect is love. It is clear that, like all love, it can be mapped, as Freud shows, only in the field of narcissism. To love is, essentially, to wish to be loved" (57).

"This distinction [between ideal ego and ego ideal] is absolutely essential, and it allows us to make sense of what happens in analysis on the imaginary plane, which we call transference.

"To get hold of it - this is the value of Freud's text ['On narcissism'] - one has to understand what Verliebtheit is, what love is. Love is a phenomenon which takes place on the imaginary level, and which provokes a veritable subduction of the symbolic, a sort of annihilation, of perturbation of the function of the ego ideal ...

"The Ichideal, the ego ideal, is the other as speaking, the other in so far as he has a symbolic relation to me (moi), which, within the terms of our dynamic manipulation, is both similar to and different from the imaginary libido ...

"The Ichideal, considered as speaking, can come to be placed in the world of objects on the level of the Idealich, that is, on the level where this narcissistic captation which Freud talks about over and over again throughout this text can take place. You can rest assured that when this confusion occurs, the apparatus can't be regulated any longer. In other words, when you're in love, you are mad, as ordinary language puts it" (58).

The Idealich, or ideal ego, is a phenomenon of pure narcissism, an imaginary function; the Ichideal, or ego ideal, although situated on the plane of the imaginary in that it is the means by which the subject hopes to regain some of its lost narcissism, is also a manifestation of the symbolic in that it is the product of verbal criticisms, speech relations with other subjects. In this sense the ego ideal might be said to be the most representative illustration of Lacan's claim that "[t]he imaginary experience is inscribed in the register of the symbolic" (59):

"What is my desire? What is my position in the imaginary structuration? This position is only conceivable in so far as one finds a guide beyond the imaginary, on the level of the symbolic plane, of the legal exchange which can only be embodied in the verbal exchange between human beings. This guide governing the subjects is the ego ideal" (60).

Returning to the inverted bouquet schema of the imaginary already discussed in a previous chapter, Lacan postulates that the ideal ego

is the (illusory) image of the bouquet in the vase that the subject sees in the mirror, while the ego ideal is the "voice of the other" (61) which governs the position and degree of inclination of the mirror in which that image appears, and hence which governs the clarity and completeness of that image (62).

For Lacan, the element of the symbolic as introduced by the ego ideal serves to distinguish the transference from a purely narcissistic, 'captating' Verliebtheit: "one cannot account for the transference in terms of a dual, imaginary relation, and ... the engine of its [the transference's] forward motion is speech" (63). Thus a transference-love which will move forward from the 'moment of seeing' of narcissistic captation towards the conclusion of the analytic treatment must include the symbolic dimension as introduced by the ego ideal. Yet this symbolic dimension, as I have already argued in my discussion of the imaginary, is peculiarly lacking from the type of love characteristic of women, whose position in the symbolic is that of exchange-objects; indeed the super-ego - the concept which Freud developed from the ego ideal (64) on behalf of which the "conscience acts as watchman" (65) - is likewise diminished in women, for whom, according to Freud, "the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men. Their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men" (66). If, as I have been arguing, women's typically narcissistic object-choice leaves them trapped in imaginary captation, and if transference-love is as genuine a form of love as any other, then the woman patient's love for her analyst will necessarily lack that essential 'engine' of the symbolic

which would otherwise propel her through the stages of logical time.

This failure of the woman patient to move beyond the initial 'moment of seeing' in analysis is effectively illustrated by Lacan's discussion of Freud's 'Dora' case. Lacan recalls Dora's early childhood memory of herself sucking at her left thumb while tugging with her right hand at the ear of her slightly older brother (67). He goes on:

"Woman is the object which it is impossible to detach from a primitive oral desire, and yet in which she [Dora] must learn to recognise her own genital nature ... In order for her to gain access to this recognition of her femininity, she would have to take on this assumption of her own body, failing which she remains open to that functional fragmentation (to refer to the theoretical contribution of the mirror stage), which constitutes conversion symptoms.

"Now, if she was to fulfil the condition for this access, the original imago shows us that her only opening to the object was through the intermediary of the masculine partner, with whom, because of the slight difference in years, she was able to identify in that primordial identification through which the subject recognises itself as I ...

"So Dora had identified *herself with Herr K*, just as she is in the process of identifying with Freud himself ... And all her dealings with the two men manifest that aggressivity which is the dimension characteristic of narcissistic alienation" (68).

Dora's hysterical illness is the result of her inability to come to terms with her femininity: "[a]s is true for all women, and for reasons which are at the very basis of the most elementary forms of social exchange ... the problem of her [Dora's] condition is fundamentally that of accepting herself as an object of desire for the man" (69). Her failure to accept this femininity - to accept, in other words, her feminine position in the exchange of the symbolic - and to take on the assumption of her own sexual body leaves her stranded in the narcissism of the mirror stage. In Dora's particular

case, the original 'other' of the mirror-identification was her slightly older brother, and this imaginary identification with a masculine figure, characterised, like all imaginary relations, by aggressivity and alienation as well as by Verliebtheit, is what structures both her unconscious love for Herr K and her transference relation with Freud. The analysis of Dora is one of Freud's most celebrated failures, a failure which Freud himself ascribes to the problems of the transference: "I have been obliged to speak of transference, for it is only by means of this factor that I can elucidate the peculiarities of Dora's analysis ... I did not succeed in mastering the transference in good time" (70). But Lacan's characterisation of Dora's transference in terms of 'identification' and the mirror stage seems to suggest that the 'mastering' of such a transference and its induction into the symbolic would be even more Herculean a task than Freud himself had supposed. (Lacan suggests that Freud ought to have proceeded by focussing his attention on Dora's 'homosexual' love for Frau K, the potential significance of which Freud only recognised long after Dora had brought her treatment to an end (71), and thence leading her to "accept herself as an object of desire, that is to say, ... [to work] out the meaning of what she was searching for in Frau K" (72); in other words, by getting Dora to recognise that Frau K is for her an object of desire, Freud might have then been able to get Dora to recognise herself as an object of desire in her turn, and thence to enable her to assume her own sexual body and to move beyond the fragmentation of the mirror stage. Yet this argument rests on the assumption that Dora's 'homosexual' love for Frau K is itself not a narcissistic love - that it is an object-choice analogous to the kind of object-choice that Herr K, for example, has

made in favour of Dora herself; and this is premised upon the narcissistic/anaclitic distinction which, as I have already demonstrated, is confounded by same-sex love between women.) Dora's 'identification' with Freud contains none of those elements of the ego ideal or of the symbolic necessary to the progression of the treatment: it is a fundamentally imaginary, specular identification based on a narcissistic mirror-relation with an infantile other - Idealich rather than Ichideal, Verliebtheit rather than transference-love in the symbolic. When Dora breaks off her treatment with Freud, she does so because she has been unable to realise the significance of her own speech in the course of the treatment:

"At the end of the second session [of a particular dream-analysis], when I expressed my satisfaction at the result, Dora replied in a depreciatory tone: 'Why, has anything so very remarkable come out?'" (73).

Speech, for Dora, does not serve as the engine of the treatment's forward motion; she - unlike Freud the analyst - reaches no 'time for understanding'. And in fact it is at the session immediately following this incident that Dora announces her decision to break off her analysis (74).

A perhaps still more striking example of the woman patient's inability to move beyond the 'moment of seeing' of the analytic process is provided by Freud's other major case history of a woman patient, that of the 'female homosexual'. In the course of his discussion of this case, Freud describes the stages through which a successful psychoanalysis must pass in terms which can be neatly mapped onto the 'moment of seeing' and the 'time for understanding' leading to the 'moment of conclusion':

"In quite a number of cases ... an analysis falls

into two clearly distinguishable phases. In the first, the physician procures from the patient the necessary information, makes him familiar with the premises and postulates of psychoanalysis, and unfolds to him a construction of the genesis of his disorder as deduced from the material brought up in the analysis. In the second phase the patient himself gets hold of the material put before him; he works on it, recollects what he can of the apparently repressed memories, and tries to repeat the rest as if he were in some way living it over again ... It is only during this work that he experiences, through overcoming resistances, the inner change aimed at, and acquires for himself the convictions that make him independent of the physician's authority ...

"The course of the present patient's analysis followed this two-phased pattern, but it was not continued beyond the beginning of the second phase" (75).

The patient in this case enters treatment with Freud at the insistence of her parents, who wish to have her 'cured' of her 'homosexuality'; Freud himself breaks off the treatment as soon as he realises that the young woman's hostile transference-relation to him, arising from the hostility she feels towards her own father, makes it impossible for the analysis to progress (76). He does not end the analysis, however, without first having time to remark on the strongly narcissistic traits of this "beautiful and clever girl" (77), traits which he takes to have been determining factors in the *development of her* homosexuality: "the idea of pregnancy and childbirth was disagreeable to her, partly, I surmise, on account of the bodily disfigurement connected with them. Her girlish narcissism had fallen back on this defence [ie refusal of sexual relations with men], and ceased to express itself as pride in her good looks" (78). Moreover her relationship with her father, which Freud takes to have been of overwhelming importance in her psychosexual development, is narcissistically structured: disappointed in her unconscious Oedipal

desire to bear her father's child, the patient 'stepped into her father's shoes' and took her mother instead of her father as love-object, through "a process of identification on the part of the lover with the loved object [ie with her father], a process equivalent to a kind of regression to narcissism" (79). It is this identificatory relation to her father, dominated by a hostility and desire for 'revenge' of the sort which Lacan would identify as "the aggressivity which is the dimension characteristic of narcissistic alienation" (80), which determines the patient's transference-relation with Freud:

"[I]t was ... the affective factor of revenge against her father that ... divided the analysis into two distinct phases ... [S]he transferred to me the sweeping repudiation of men which had dominated her ever since the disappointment she had suffered from her father" (81).

Thus it is the patient's narcissism - that feminine narcissism which Freudian theory perceives at work behind 'homosexual' object-choice as such - which manifests itself in the transference as a barrier to the continuation and conclusion of the treatment.

The patient's deadlock in the 'moment of seeing' and its relation to her feminine position in the 'penis envy' scenario is still more clear in this case than in Dora's. Like Dora, the female homosexual is unable to make the progression through the symbolic in the recognition of the significance of what is said during the treatment: she lacks the engine of forward motion which would carry her through what Freud designates the 'second phase' of the analysis. Freud describes one particularly striking incidence:

"The analysis went forward almost without any signs of resistance, the patient participating actively with her intellect, though absolutely tranquil emotionally. Once when I expounded to her a specially important part of the theory, one touching her nearly, she replied in an inimitable tone, 'How

very interesting', as though she were a grande dame being taken over a museum and glancing through her lorgnon at objects to which she was completely indifferent. The impression one had of her analysis was not unlike that of a hypnotic treatment, where the resistance has in the same way withdrawn to a certain boundary line, beyond which it proves to be unconquerable" (82).

The explicit comparison here of the patient's analysis with a hypnosis recalls Freud's alignment of hypnosis with the state of being in love, that state of imaginary confusion which constitutes the initial transference-relation and which it is the specific task of psychoanalysis, as it is distinguished from hypnosis, to resolve. More importantly for the present argument, the patient's inability or refusal, through the field of resistances of which the transference is the manifestation, to accept the significance of either her own speech (from which Freud's suggestions and hypotheses arise) or Freud's, and hence to move into any form of the 'time for understanding', recalls for Freud an act of female seeing, that of a grande dame looking through a lorgnon. He goes on just a few pages later to invoke that paradigmatic act of female seeing, the 'penis envy' scenario:

"[A]fter inspecting [her brother's] genital organs, she [the patient] had developed a pronounced envy for the penis, and the thoughts derived from this envy still continued to fill her mind ... Various clues indicated that she must formerly have had strong exhibitionist and scopophilic tendencies" (83).

The 'moment of seeing' in which the patient's resistance leaves her trapped is mirrored by that 'moment of seeing' in which she conceived an envy for her brother's penis: her continuing inability to progress beyond the latter (her mind continues to be 'filled' with it) mirrors her inability to progress in the treatment, for in either case the successive stages of logical time are inaccessible to her. Just as the sight of the penis prompts her to 'make her judgment and her

decision in a flash', so the 'discourse' produced in the course of her analysis is, for her, not speech to be heard and understood, but merely a collection of objects to be looked at. It is endemic to the feminine condition to be incapable of progressing through the stages of logical time, either in the structuration of the castration complex or in the analytic process: there is, it would seem, no means of passing beyond imaginary confusion and the moment of seeing to a meaningful affirmation of 'I am a woman' at the moment of conclusion.

In the first seminar of The Four Fundamental Concepts, Lacan says:

"Analysis is not a matter of discovering in a particular case the differential feature of the theory, and in doing so believe that one is explaining why your daughter is silent - for the point at issue is to get her to speak ... Analysis consists precisely in getting her to speak. It might be said, therefore, that in the last resort, it amounts to overcoming the barrier of silence, and this is what, at one time, was called the analysis of the resistances" (84).

If the aim of psychoanalysis is to 'get her to speak', then it seems that woman's place in - or, more exactly, her exclusion from - the structure of logical time renders that aim impossible and makes psychoanalysis a pointless exercise. One recalls the tone of pessimism in Freud's later writings on female sexuality, the "riddle of the nature of femininity" (85) which is "so difficult to grasp in analysis" (86), of the processes of which "we have as yet no clear understanding" (87) and which constitutes "a field of research which is so difficult of access" (88). It is in his 1931 paper on 'Female sexuality' that Freud makes his astonishing admission with regard to women in analysis: "Nor have I succeeded in seeing my way through any case completely" (89). In some forty years of psychoanalytic work,

Freud has never brought the analysis of a woman patient to its conclusion, has never managed to 'restitute to her discourse its meaning as discourse' - has, in fact, failed to 'get her to speak' in the sense that Lacan's formulation requires. Woman is, irrevocably, the object of the symbolic exchange: no attempt at psychoanalysis will succeed in making her the subject of meaningful discourse. A concrete example of this occurs during Lacan's discussion of the work of the analyst Michael Balint:

"This time we have a charming lady patient, who belongs to the type ... who chatter, talk-talk-talk-talk-to-say-nothing. That is how the sessions go by ... [S]he understood very well the difference between the way one treats the words of a child and the way one treats the words of an adult. So as not to be committed, located in the world of adults ..., she chatters away so as to say nothing and fill the sessions with hot air" (90).

The example crystallises not just the difference between the way one treats the words of a child and the way one treats the words of an adult, but also the difference, in analysis, between the way one treats the words of a woman and the way one treats the words of a man. After all, women and children in Freudian and Lacanian theory are alike in their 'charming' narcissism and entrapment in the imaginary. It is a difference which culminates in Lacan's notorious statement in Encore, his seminar of 1972-3 on feminine sexuality:

"There is woman only as excluded by the nature of things which is the nature of words, and it has to be said that if there is one thing they themselves are complaining about enough at the moment, it is well and truly that - only they don't know what they are saying, which is all the difference between them and me" (91).

## The I and the a

At the beginning of this chapter I set out Lacan's basic thesis that the task of analysis is to restore the imaginary and the symbolic to their proper respective positions. I have examined above the ways in which psychoanalysis does - or fails to do - so by manoeuvring the respective positions of the (imaginary) ideal ego and the (symbolic) ego ideal. I now wish to return to the terms of identification and desire as formulated in what Lacan calls the 'I' and the 'a', whose separation from each other is the characteristic operation distinguishing analysis from hypnosis.

The identificatory 'I' with which Lacan contrasts the objet a in this context is not the ideal ego but the "signifying mapping that is called the ego ideal" (92). Both the ideal ego and the ego ideal, it should be recalled, derive from narcissism and as such are fundamentally situated on the imaginary plane: the ego ideal is "the other as speaking" (93) - that is, it is a function of the relation to the other, of the inter-subjectivity which characterises the imaginary but which is nevertheless always "inscribed" (94) in the symbolic. It is this other as speaking which is "the I that he, the analyst, is called upon by the subject to embody" (95) in psychoanalysis and which is the identificatory function to be separated from the objet a, as Lacan is at pains to emphasise:

"[T]he identification in question is not specular, immediate identification. It is its support. It supports the perspective chosen by the subject in the field of the Other, from which the specular identification may be seen in a satisfactory light" (96).

In other words, the analyst is called upon by the subject to be that which determines the position and inclination of the mirror in which the subject sees its own narcissistic image, its ideal ego (97).

Holding up the mirror to the subject, the analyst serves to provide her or him with the means by which to achieve a greater or lesser degree of narcissistic satisfaction:

"The point of the ego ideal is that from which the subject will see himself, as one says, as others see him - which will enable him to support himself in a dual situation that is satisfactory for him from the point of view of love" (98).

It is with this position of narcissistic 'support' that the objet a, according to Lacan, becomes confused in both love and hypnosis, and from which it is the specific task of analysis to separate it:

"Any analysis that one teaches as having to be terminated by identification with the analyst reveals, by the same token, that its true motive force is elided. There is a beyond to this identification, and this beyond is defined by the relation and the distance of the objet petit a to the idealising capital I of identification [grand I idéalisant] ...

"There is an essential difference between the object described as narcissistic, the i(a), and the function of the a" (99).

As Lacan also puts it, "[t]he dialectic of the drive is profoundly different ... from that which belongs to the order of love" (100).

The Freudian formulation of feminine object-choice, however, is (as I have already discussed) characterised precisely by the lack of any such distinction between the narcissistic object and the object of desire:

"With the onset of puberty the maturing of the female sexual organs ... seems to bring about an intensification of the original narcissism, and this is unfavourable to the development of a true object-choice ... Strictly speaking, it is only themselves that such women love with an intensity comparable to that of the man's love for them. Nor does their need lie in the direction of loving, but of being loved; and the man who fulfils this condition is the one who finds favour with them" (101).

The alignment of this "purest and truest" (102) type of woman with

narcissistic object-choice leaves no room for the separation of the I from the a of the kind which would mark the culmination of the analytic process. According to this alignment, it is in the nature of feminine sexuality that the object of desire should coincide with the place of that ego ideal which holds up the mirror in which the narcissistic woman contemplates herself: the man who loves her in the way that she loves herself - who holds the mirror so that the "degree of perfection, of completeness" (103) of her self-image is as she would wish it - is the one who finds favour with her. Thus when the woman patient falls in love with her analyst, the 'imaginary confusion' of identification and desire characteristic of the transference, far from being a symptom susceptible of cure, is no more than a manifestation of the operation of a typically narcissistic feminine sexuality. "When you're in love, you are mad" (104): the narcissistic woman who is permanently in love with herself is doomed to perpetual madness.

It is noteworthy, moreover, that this conflation of the objet a with the 'narcissistic object' which Lacan sees at work in both love and hypnosis is linked to 'the maturing of the female sexual organs'. Lacan comments that the objet a at work in hypnosis is the gaze of the hypnotist, and that the function of that gaze "may be fulfilled in fact by a crystal stopper, or anything, so long as it shines" (105); and I have already suggested above that this 'shiny object' might be traced back to the 'glittering object' or 'flashing jewel' of the 'gaze that is outside' and the 'little camera' of the female genitals. The 'moment of seeing' in which the female patient finds herself trapped by her continuing confusion of the I with the a is thus a

moment of hypnotic fascination with the flashing jewel of the genitalia from which the 'intensification' of her narcissism arises. "Feminine sexuality appears as the effort of a jouissance wrapped in its own contiguity" (106): the uncanny hypnotic effect of female genitals has brought us back to Lacan's still familiar theme of the 'autism' (107) of feminine sexuality. It is an autism from which the 'discourse' of women patients is unable to free them: "the vaginal orgasm has kept the darkness [sic] of its nature inviolate ... The representatives of the female sex, however loud their voices at the analysts, do not seem to have done their utmost towards the breaking of this seal" (108). Lacan himself appears to be reconciled to this failure of analytic technique to penetrate the mystery of the feminine. "[T]he fact that everything that can be analysed is sexual does not entail that everything sexual is accessible to analysis" (109).

In fact, as far as women patients are concerned, the *more* 'sexual' they are, the less likely they are to be accessible to analysis at all. In 'Observations on transference-love', Freud remarks:

"There is, it is true, one class of women with whom this attempt to preserve the erotic transference for the purposes of analytic work without satisfying it will not succeed. These are women of elemental passionateness who tolerate no surrogates. They are children of nature who refuse to accept the psychical in place of the material, who, in the poet's words, are accessible only to 'the logic of soup, with dumplings for arguments'. With such people one has the choice between returning their love or else bringing down upon oneself the full enmity of a woman scorned. In neither case can one safeguard the interests of the treatment. One has to withdraw, unsuccessful" (110).

In cases where the analyst is dealing with an 'elemental' woman, a

'child of nature', her demand that he fulfil her narcissistic desire to be loved is so overwhelming that the analysis cannot proceed in any way: unable to engage with her short-circuited 'autistic' sexuality, the analyst is obliged to withdraw and leave her unsatisfied. For such women the identification of the I with the a is complete and inextricable, and they can conceive of the analyst in no other guise than that of lover. The narcissism of their sexuality has hypnotised them into a state of 'imaginary confusion' which is quite incurable. Like Dora, on her visit alone (without the male cousin who was to have accompanied her) to the Dresden art gallery, rapt in silent contemplation of the Sistine Madonna (111), the woman patient is permanently rapt (wrapped) in the contiguity of her own gaze, frozen ("frigidity ... virtually generic" (112)) in an eternal and self-referential moment of seeing: she sees herself seeing herself, but she does not speak.

#### The desire of the analyst

"Is not the contribution that each individual, Freud apart, brings to the subject of the transference something in which his desire is perfectly legible?" (113). Lacan's theory of the transference - of the analytic process as the means of disentanglement of the imaginary and the symbolic, of its progression through the successive stages of logical time - situates femininity in the state of 'imaginary confusion' which the analytic treatment is meant to dissolve, but does not allow it access to the processes of the cure. By keeping it locked in the 'moment of seeing', Lacan in effect characterises feminine sexuality as a pathological condition for which there is no treatment.

The state of femininity, and in particular its proneness to erotic 'transference-love', is in this way akin to the typical neurotic state that the patient first presents to the analyst. Freud describes that state in 'On narcissism':

"The sexual ideal may enter into an interesting auxiliary relation to the ego ideal. It may be used for substitutive satisfaction where narcissistic satisfaction encounters real hindrances. In that case a person will love in conformity with the narcissistic type of object-choice ... This expedient is of special importance for the neurotic, who ... is impoverished in his ego and is incapable of fulfilling his ego ideal. He then seeks a way back to narcissism ... by choosing a sexual ideal after the narcissistic type ... This is the cure by love, which he generally prefers to cure by analysis. Indeed, he cannot believe in any other mechanism of cure; he usually brings expectations of this sort with him to the treatment and directs them towards the person of the physician" (114).

The difference between the male patient and the female patient is that, for the male, narcissistic love is a neurotic 'expedient', while for the female the conflation of the sexual ideal with the ego ideal is the norm; if the woman patient, preferring the material to the psychical, demands that the analyst provide her with the cure by love, it is because the cure by analysis is a mechanism into which she cannot enter. Feminine sexuality is an untreatable neurosis.

Reading back through Lacan's theory of the transference, the desire that emerges from it is the desire of an exhibitionist: the desire for a perpetual return to the 'penis envy' scenario, to keep the girl's 'little camera' in place, endlessly focussed on the 'momentous' Lacanian phallus. By keeping her trapped within the bounds of the 'moment of seeing', Lacan ensures that the girl's 'camera' shutter is permanently kept open, permanently available as the site of affirmation of masculine supremacy. The net result is to

prevent her move from 'imaginary confusion' to 'meaningful discourse', from the 'moment of seeing' to that 'moment of conclusion' which culminates in an affirmation of subjectivity ('I am a man' therefore being the only such affirmation possible) - to prevent her, in short, from constituting herself as a subject of speech. The 'moment of seeing' ensures that she will remain the object, not the subject, of the symbolic order.

In his paper 'On beginning the treatment', Freud makes the following rather striking remark in relation to the time that must be spent on the successful completion of analytic treatment:

"The analyst is certainly able to do a great deal, but he cannot determine beforehand exactly what results he will effect ... The analyst's power over the symptoms of the disease may thus be compared to male sexual potency. A man can, it is true, beget a whole child, but even the strongest man cannot create in the female organism a head alone or an arm or a leg; he cannot even prescribe the child's sex ... A neurosis as well has the character of an organism" (115).

The alignment of the powers of the analyst with male sexual potency, and, through the metaphor of the 'organism', of femininity with neurosis, demonstrates all too clearly what is at stake in this question of the analytic process: the primacy of the phallus and the impossibility of any meaningful statement of feminine sexuality. Moreover this characterisation of the analyst as sexual male and the neurosis as female recalls the Lacanian formula that masculine sexuality and feminine sexuality are radically incompatible, that the structure of sexual difference under the rule of the phallus is such that "there is no sexual relation" (116), that "in the case of the speaking being the relation between the sexes does not take place" (117). So long as the rule of the phallus is upheld (sic) by the

enthralled gaze of a sexuality without access to speech, there will be not only no sexual relation, but, for the malaise of sexual difference, no cure either.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion I have reached in this chapter - that Lacanian psychoanalysis is structured so as to prevent femininity or feminine sexuality from being articulated or spoken - perhaps comes as no surprise. From his notorious assertion in Encore that women "don't know what they are saying, which is all the difference between them and me" (118), Lacan goes on:

"What gives some likelihood to what I am arguing, that is, that the woman knows nothing of this [feminine] jouissance, is that ever since we've been begging them - last time I mentioned women analysts - begging them on our knees to try to tell us about it, well, not a word! We have never managed to get anything out of them" (119).

It is hardly surprising that Lacan and his fellows (sic) should never have managed to 'get anything out of them', given that the analytic process itself prevents women from producing 'meaningful discourse'. Nor is it surprising that Lacan should fail in his appeal to women analysts to help him solve the riddle of femininity. In his famous lecture on 'Femininity' published in 1933, Freud writes that:

"In recent times we have begun to learn a little about this [the development of feminine sexuality], thanks to the circumstance that several of our excellent women colleagues in analysis have begun to work at the question. The discussion of this has gained special attractiveness from the distinction between the sexes. For the ladies, whenever some comparison seemed to turn out unfavourable to their

sex, were able to utter a suspicion that we, the male analysts, had been unable to overcome certain deeply-rooted prejudices against what was feminine, and that this was being paid for in the partiality of our researches. We, on the other hand, standing on the ground of bisexuality, had no difficulty in avoiding impoliteness. We had only to say: 'This doesn't apply to you. You're the exception; on this point you're more masculine than feminine" (120).

In other words one is either a woman or an analyst, but never both at once: psychoanalysts are 'masculine' almost by definition, and women analysts who object to psychoanalytic approaches to femininity are themselves 'masculine', which is then somehow presumed to invalidate their objections to Freud's account of what is feminine (as if their objections are necessarily based on a sense of personal insult on their part rather than on psychoanalytic or theoretical knowledge, presumably because women's underdeveloped super-ego makes them "more often influenced in their judgment by feelings of affection or hostility," as Freud had already written elsewhere (121)). Women analysts' views on femininity and feminine sexuality are either 'masculine' or else invalid, unpsychoanalytic - inaudible, incomprehensible, 'autistic' even - 'well, not a word!' Only masculine speech can become 'meaningful discourse' in psychoanalysis, even when it is speech which is both ignorant and self-confessedly idiotic ("... We have never managed to get anything out of them. So as best we can, we [sic] designate this jouissance, vaginal, and talk about the rear pole of the opening of the uterus and other such idiocies" (122)).

I have argued above that Lacanian psychoanalytic theory constructs femininity as a pathological condition for which there is no cure; that femininity is a form of neurosis which women are doomed to suffer under the androcentric symbolic order. This might be taken,

as I have already suggested, to mean that the psychoanalytic project is a failure. Freud began the development of psychoanalysis and his adventure into the unconscious with his hysterical female patients: all of the case histories in the Studies on Hysteria, published in 1895, are of women. His own admission of failure with women patients in 'Female sexuality' in 1931 is disappointing; my reading of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory in this chapter seems to suggest that it may in any case have been inevitable. But Freud's original intention, in his encounters with the hysterics, was not (or at least not only) to attempt to solve the riddle of femininity, but much more importantly, to relieve these women's sufferings. The hysterical patients in Studies on Hysteria turned to Freud (and his colleague Breuer) because they were in mental, and in many cases also physical, distress: for example, Frau Emmy von N suffered from facial tics, disturbances of speech, insomnia and pains in the limbs; Katharina suffered from anxiety attacks accompanied by giddiness and breathlessness; Fräulein Elisabeth von R suffered pains in the legs which made it difficult for her to walk. Freud himself was quite clear about the role of psychoanalysis in the relief of suffering; in the case history of 'Little Hans', a five year old boy who was brought to him suffering from a range of distressing neurotic symptoms, Freud writes: "[P]sychoanalysis is not an impartial scientific investigation, but a therapeutic measure. Its essence is not to prove anything, but merely to alter something" (123). But with Lacan, the concern with suffering, and above all the search for a cure, seems to have disappeared altogether. Marcelle Marini, who was herself in analysis in the late 1950's and early 1960's and whose study of Lacan is

dedicated to the memory of her (woman) analyst, remarks on this absence of suffering from Lacanian theory:

"The psychoanalyst as 'master of desire', master of the sciences, the only one capable of approaching the truth: there is cause for anxiety there. When Socrates becomes the model for the analyst - 'I am not there for his Good, but so that he will love me and be deceived' - there is some truth in this, as long as the analysand gains the freedom to live and to love as well. Reading Lacan, one wonders whether he is working for Life or for Death ... Without lapsing into the role of the 'Good Samaritan', which in fact is not the role of psychoanalysis, one may hope that it will have the strength to take on all of existence ... that is to say, its joys as well as its sorrows. Otherwise, it will be just one philosophy among others, and not a specific struggle against the impossibility of living from which so many people suffer" (124).

When Lacan speaks or writes of psychoanalysis, he does not deal with case histories (125), or with the sufferings of individuals, but instead produces theory: schemata, formulae, slogans, discussions of psychoanalysis as a scientific investigation or a philosophy among others, with its own place in the Western scientific and philosophical corpus. Indeed, by the time of the seminar Encore, Lacan has strayed so far from a concern with suffering and 'the freedom to live and to love' that he even excuses himself before his audience for wanting to speak to them about love ("But what is the point of my ending up speaking to you about love, given that it scarcely follows the pretensions of analytic discourse to being something of a science" (126)), despite the fact that, as he says himself a little later, love is in many senses what psychoanalysis is all about ("Speaking of love, in analytic discourse, basically one does nothing else" (127)). The incurability of the 'disorder' which femininity has become in his psychoanalytic theory - and perhaps of any disorder - is simply not a problem for Lacan, as a psychoanalyst or as a man. The symbolic is

androcentric, the phallus is the primary signifier, and there is no remedy for the situation - or more exactly, as far as Lacan is concerned, the question of remedy does not arise, it does not occur to him that a remedy is needed: his purpose is not to alter anything, but to prove something, not to listen to the speech of women, but to produce his own authoritative speech. (In an anecdote recounted in Encore about a conference he attended in Italy he says, "[T]here was a person there who was furious, a lady from the local women's movement, she was really ... so I said 'Come back tomorrow morning, I'll explain what it's all about'" (128). Lacan does not record the woman's response, nor whether she turned up the following morning to hear him speak.)

The scarcity of published material by and about Lacan's own analysands, both male and female, makes it difficult to judge whether Lacan achieved any kind of therapeutic success (whatever 'success' might mean in the Lacanian context) with his patients - whether he actually relieved the sufferings of the men or, more importantly for the present discussion, the women who came to him (129). In any case, not all psychoanalysts are Lacanian, and not all practitioners or theorists of psychoanalysis, Lacanian or otherwise, are men: the history of women's involvement in psychoanalysis, both as patients and as analysts, and the realities of women's experiences of analysis - in particular, whether and how women have managed either to speak or to be heard in psychoanalysis - is a field of enquiry which is far too large and too important for me to begin to deal with it within the limits of my present concern, which is very strictly with Lacanian theory (130). Individual women who enter the arena of Lacanian

analysis may negotiate with that theory as 'neurotic' patients or 'masculine' analysts, or in other ways, but the status of women within the theory itself (as incurables, as exchange objects) is clear:

"There is woman only as excluded by the nature of things which is the nature of words" (131).

The purpose of my investigation in these three chapters has been to discover whether and how Lacan's use of the gaze and of visual metaphors in the construction and elaboration of his psychoanalytic theory bars women from the status of subject within that theory, and to examine the formulation of 'sexual difference' within which that barring takes place. The positioning of the masculine as the central and defining term of Lacanian 'sexual difference' is quite blatant: the phallus is the primary signifier which one must either 'be' or 'have'; the symbolic order is androcentric and woman is 'excluded' by it. It is hard to imagine how any woman might be 'cured' of her sufferings under this symbolic order - how, in other words, one might 'get her to speak' (except, of course, by having her become one of those 'masculine' analysts on the principle that if you can't beat 'em, join 'em); and this 'incurability' of women within Lacanian theory is all the more acute given the subtle substitution of 'penis' for 'phallus' which, as I demonstrated in the last chapter, Lacan carries out through his formulation of the gaze and the scopical drive.

Indeed one may go so far as to say that the visibility of the penis is what it's all about, although the implications of that 'visibility' have proved to be more complex than the crudity of Freud's original 'penis envy' scenario might lead one to expect. That original scenario - the little boy and the little girl looking at their own and each other's sexual parts, finding that the little boy's

organs are 'visible' and that the little girl's are not - has in fact emerged during the course of my discussion as both the source and the structuring principle of the primacy of the phallus; of the importance of the 'gaze that is outside' (specifically, the girl's 'gaze' at the boy's penis) in the affirmation of that primacy, and consequently in the respective positions of men and women in the symbolic order; of 'logical time' and the unfolding of the psychoanalytic process itself; and of the construction of femininity as an incurable, narcissistic, neurotic disorder. The 'malaise of sexual difference' of which I spoke earlier - by which I meant the condition of sexual difference as a hierarchical structure within which 'femininity' is articulated only as different from and defined by 'masculinity', these two being the only terms available for the conceptualisation of gender - is untreatable in Lacanian theory precisely because so much emphasis is placed by Lacan on the visible and the invisible, on what can and cannot be seen and on the act of seeing as an originary moment. Moreover, the privilege of vision in Lacanian theory is so closely connected to the privilege of masculinity that in an important sense it does not even matter whether the gaze at stake is that of a man or a woman, a boy or a girl: the gaze of the girl, whether at her own disappointing genitals or at those of the enviable little boy (or at the photo-graph of analysts, or at Lacan himself), in itself affirms masculine superiority no less than that of the little boy who stares back at her in horror or contempt. Anatomy is destiny, whichever way you look at it.

Thus in the case of Lacan, no less than in that of Sartre, analysis of the gaze and of visual metaphors has found them to be

sexist in effect, and to bar women from the status of subject - specifically, in the case of Lacan, from the status of speaking subject. This conclusion ends my analysis of the works of Lacan.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSION

My discussion of the gaze and of visual metaphors in the works of Sartre and Lacan has treated the respective texts of the two authors separately, and has concentrated on detailed and sharply-focussed analyses of those texts. Although my discussion, for reasons set out in the Introduction, has tended not to make parallels or connexions between the texts of Sartre and Lacan, this by no means implies that the various operations of visual metaphors in their texts as I have discussed them are not related, or that conclusions cannot be drawn from my discussion not just about Sartrean and Lacanian theory, but more generally about the role of the gaze in the representation and construction of gender and sexual difference, and its importance for feminist theory and writing practice. In this chapter, then, I shall make some of those parallels and connexions, and set out the implications of those conclusions.

#### Sartre and Lacan: connexions and conclusions

Despite their very different approaches to the topic of the gaze and their assessments of its role and importance in the construction of the human subject, Lacan's and Sartre's works do have visual themes in common. Both men, for example, emphasise the importance of the mirror and mirror-images, particularly in the subject's relations to the other (as conceived by Lacan) or the Other (as conceived by Sartre). For Lacan, of course, the mirror stage is an inaugural moment for subjectivity as such, and the dialectic of

identification and alienation which it sets in motion also structures relations with other subjects, particularly relations situated on the imaginary plane (which include Verliebtheit and imaginary hate, as already discussed): "all imaginary references of the human being are centred on the image of the fellow being" (1), and conversely, as the case of the Papin sisters has so vividly illustrated, "the most fundamental structure of the human being on the imaginary plane [is] to destroy the person who is the site of alienation" (2). The subject's relations with the other are fundamentally structured by the twin narcissistic poles of jubilant identification and alienated aggressivity which the mirror stage sets in place; in this sense, the other in Lacanian theory is the subject's mirror-image. Similarly, the Sartrean Other is the mirror-image of the subject in that the latter can project onto the Other those aspects of itself which it wishes to deny: thus, for example, the 'good citizen' or 'decent man' projects onto the child Genet his own secret vices and desires. "Evil is a projection ... The enemy is our twin brother, our image in the mirror" (3); as I have already argued, even the homosexual's (in this case, Genet's) fascination with his own mirror-image is in fact a fascination with himself as the Other of the 'good citizen', because, according to Sartre, he wishes above all to see himself as the Other sees him - as, that is, the Other's mirror-image rather than his own. One might go so far as to claim that Genet gazing at himself in the mirror as Sartre describes him in Saint Genet (4) is caught in a dialectic of identification and alienation analogous to that of the Lacanian mirror stage: the image in the mirror is Genet, but Genet himself is only in so far as he is the mirror-image of the Other; the

image in the mirror is simultaneously Genet's own image and that of somebody else. As already discussed, Sartre ascribes this desire to see oneself as one is seen by the Other not just to homosexual men, but also to women, who, like homosexuals, are "relative beings" (5); and Lacanian theory locates femininity and feminine sexuality in the realm of imaginary narcissism, the realm of "I see myself seeing myself" (6) where women are doomed to remain lost in imaginary confusion. Thus the mirror operates similarly for both Sartre and Lacan as one of the means by which women are barred from the status of subject in their texts.

These similarities between Sartre's and Lacan's respective representations of relations between subjects can perhaps be traced back to their common roots in the work of Hegel, and specifically in Hegel's famous master/slave dialectic. According to Hegel, relations between subjects inevitably take the form of a battle in which each subject tries to force the other to recognise it as such. Both subjects risk their lives in this battle, which they fight as a battle to the death, but ultimately the victor spares the life of its defeated opponent so as to extract from it the continued recognition of itself (the victor) as subject for which the battle was fought. The victor becomes the master, and the loser the slave; the latter is subservient to the former. However, the master then finds that the recognition of a mere slave - a defeated and inferior being - is not sufficient to satisfy its own need for recognition as full and independent subject, while the slave both continues to receive a form of recognition from the master, and achieves recognition of its own subjectivity by transforming the material world in which it labours. Thus, in a dialectical movement, although the slave is subservient to

the master, conversely the status as subject achieved by the master is inferior to that which can be achieved by the slave (7). The influence of the master/slave dialectic on Sartre's formulation of relations between the subject and the Other in the 'battle of looks' is clear, and indeed Sartre directly invokes the dialectic in his discussion of the Other in Being and Nothingness, analysing and critiquing it at length (8). Lacan likewise invokes the master/slave dialectic in his discussion of the imaginary (9): the dialectic of identification and alienation which takes place between the subject and the other in Lacanian theory recalls the dialectic of recognition and subservience between the master and the slave - each subject needs the other against which it directs its aggression and in which it simultaneously seeks identification or (self-) recognition - and Lacan says that, "at every turn, I take my bearings from the master-slave dialectic, and I re-explain it" (10) (just as Sartre re-writes the dialectic in Being and Nothingness). As feminist philosopher Genevieve Lloyd has demonstrated, Hegel's philosophy itself tends to construct subjectivity (or 'consciousness', to use a more Hegelian term) as a masculine attribute to which women can only attain in a relation of second degree (11) (to say nothing of its potential implications for the representation of real-life slavery), and although I do not intend to make any more detailed discussion of Hegel here, these parallel influences of his philosophy on Sartre's and Lacan's understandings of intersubjective relations are worthy of note.

Another visual theme shared by Sartre and Lacan, and one that is perhaps more central to my concerns in this work, is the 'split'

between the eye and the gaze. For Sartre, the split between the eye and the gaze is a manipulation of the radical and hierarchical division between consciousness and the body, between the for-itself and the in-itself, which, of course, structures the hierarchical relation between masculine and feminine in his philosophy. It is important to note here that the split between the eye and the gaze is characteristic of the sense of sight as such, as I have argued in a previous chapter: to see a pair of eyes is not to see a 'look' but merely to see "the convergence of two ocular globes in my direction" (12), and one's inability to 'see oneself seeing' is the result of the nature of vision rather than of the constraints of human anatomy:

"[N]othing prevents me from imagining an arrangement of the sense organs such that a living being could see one of his eyes while the eye which was seen was directing its glance upon the world. But it is to be noted that in this case again I am the Other in relation to my eye. I apprehend it as a sense organ constituted in the world in a particular way, but I can not 'see the seeing' ... Either it [the eye] is a thing among other things, or else it is that by which things are revealed to me. But it can not be both at the same time" (13).

This split between the eye and the gaze plays a similarly crucial role for Lacan, particularly in his formulation of the scopic drive and the gaze as objet a: "The eye and the gaze - this is for us the split in which the drive is manifested at the level of the scopic field" (14). The fact that to see an eye which gazes is not to see the gaze itself, and the consequent difficulty of apprehending the gaze, produces that 'evanescence' of the gaze as objet a which I have already described, and also situates the subject as not just looking but also looked-at by the 'gaze that is outside' which 'photo-graphs' the subject:

"In the scopic field, everything is articulated between the terms that act in an autonomous way - on the side of things, there is the gaze, that is to

say, things look at me, and yet I see them. This is how one should understand those words, so strongly stressed, in the Gospel, They have eyes that they might not see. That they might not see what? Precisely, that things are looking at them" (15).

This function of the 'gaze that is outside' is what constitutes the 'play of light' or 'depth of field' which, according to Lacan, is what characterises vision as such; it is also the function of the girl's 'little camera', the envious female gaze which affirms the primacy of the phallus and its privilege over her own 'invisible' and therefore inferior sexual parts in a moment which I have located as originary of, and paradigmatic for, the privilege of masculinity in Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Thus for both Sartre and Lacan the split between the eye and the gaze is both a characteristic and distinctive feature of vision, and the means by which the uses of vision in their respective texts construct sexual difference as a binary and hierarchical relation, masculine over feminine. The split between the eye and the gaze is arguably also what places the sense of sight at the top of the "social hierarchy of the senses" (16) described by Christian Metz. If, as Metz claims, the 'senses at a distance' are socially or culturally privileged over the 'senses of contact' (17), then the split between the eye and the gaze - the 'evanescence' of the gaze and the impossibility of seeing oneself looking - is perhaps the characteristic of vision which most surely marks it out as a 'sense at a distance' and distinguishes it from the 'senses of contact': one can, as I have already argued, touch oneself touching in a form of 'double sensation' of which sight is incapable (this suggests that if sight is at the one extreme - the very top - of the hierarchy, touch is at the bottom); the split between the eye and the gaze is in fact a

manifestation of the 'split' or distance between the seeing and the seen which defines vision as a 'sense at a distance' and which lies not just between subjects and objects, but also both between and within subjects themselves. Hence the congruence of the privilege of vision in the hierarchy of the senses with the privilege of masculinity in the hierarchy of sexual difference is by no means incidental, since the split between the eye and the gaze is instrumental in creating and maintaining both these forms of privilege. I hope that my analysis in the preceding pages of the connexions between vision and sexual difference has demonstrated this congruence and its implications in the texts I have been discussing.

The thesis which I set out in the Introduction to this work has been established: the privilege of vision in theories and representations of the subject does result in the construction of that subject as masculine. I have argued in detail and at length that this is so in the cases of Sartre and Lacan, and the connexion which I have now uncovered, between the construction of the subject as masculine in a hierarchical system of 'sexual difference' and the split between the eye and the gaze which is characteristic of vision as such, implies that the masculinity of the subject will be reproduced in any theory or representation in which the gaze or visual metaphors are similarly privileged. Moreover, my analyses of the uses of vision in the texts I have been discussing here reveal that this connexion between the privilege of masculinity and the privilege of vision is not always contingent upon the sexualisation of other such forms of privilege, such as the privilege of activity over passivity or of mind over body, although it may sometimes be so. In the case of Sartre, for example,

the 'battle of looks', the privilege of activity over passivity and the reduction of femininity to the status of body or object results in the construction of a system of 'sexual difference' which is structured along the lines of the classic "active/passive heterosexual division of labour" (18), according to which to look is masculine and to be looked-at is feminine; hence the destabilisation of 'sexual difference' in Sartre's texts by the sense of hearing, in which the distinction between 'active' and 'passive' is unclear. Within Sartre's system, to look is both to be a subject and to be masculine, and the structure of the hierarchy of sexual difference in Sartre's texts is clear and simple - crude, even. But in the case of Lacan, there is no such clean alignment between masculinity, activity and looking, or between femininity, passivity and being looked-at. In the split between the eye and the gaze and the 'play of light' which it produces, while the subject looks at the world, the world, in the form of the 'gaze that is outside', also looks at the subject; in the originary moment of 'penis envy', while the boy looks at the 'castrated' and inferior girl, the girl also looks at the enviable little boy. Thus the connexion between vision and masculinity in Lacanian theory turns not around activity and passivity, but around visibility and invisibility: the boy is privileged not because of the activity of his gaze, but because his penis is "strikingly visible" (19) while the sexual parts of the girl are not; the girl is barred from the status of subject not because she is defined as an object of any 'masculine' gaze, but because of the coincidence between the (visual) privilege of the penis and the (symbolic) privilege of the phallus - a coincidence which is itself, as I have argued, put in place by the meshing of the structure of the scopic drive with the

'gaze that is outside'. While the connexion between the privilege of masculinity and the privilege of vision in Lacanian theory is rather more complex than in the texts of Sartre, it is not therefore any weaker or less important - far from it: it is founded on concepts of visibility, invisibility and the 'play of light', all of which are integral to vision as distinct from the other senses (20).

My analysis of the workings of Sartre's and Lacan's texts has concluded that the uses of the gaze and of metaphors of vision in these and, by extension, other texts has sexist effects: they create, uphold and reproduce representations of 'sexual difference' in which masculinity is privileged over femininity; and they thereby bar women from the status of subject within those texts and representations. This implies that the dismantling of the hierarchy of the senses and the dismantling of the hierarchy of sexual difference must indeed, as I suggested in my Introduction, go together.

### Writing gender

I have already set out in my Introduction both my critique of 'sexual difference' and my argument for the importance of texts and representations for feminist theory and politics. The implication of my conclusions about the relationship between vision and sexual difference is that in order to make possible for feminist theory and politics the transition from the constraints of 'sexual difference' to the diversities and contradictions of gender, feminists must find ways of thinking and writing which do not accord vision the privilege it holds in sexist texts such as those of Sartre and Lacan. This applies not only to thinking and writing which is explicitly about women,

which must, of course, seek to create representations of women which articulate the multiplicity of women's differences rather than focussing exclusively upon sexual difference, but also to thinking and writing about consciousness and subjectivity, which must actively strive not to reproduce theories and concepts which implicitly bar women from the status of subject, and which must therefore likewise avoid this hierarchy of the senses to which the hierarchy of sexual difference has proved to be so closely, and dangerously, linked.

To attempt to think and write in ways which do not privilege vision is a project so radical and far-reaching in its implications as to be difficult to grasp: as I pointed out in my Introduction, seeing is the fundamental and dominant metaphor of human thought, and metaphors of vision constitute the basic vocabulary for intellectual enquiry at any level. Indeed, in writing this very work, where all my attention has been turned towards the sexist effects of such metaphors, I have found it impossible to write comprehensibly without having recourse to terms such as 'see', 'demonstrate' (which comes from the Latin word meaning 'to show'), 'clarity', 'regard', and indeed 'theory' itself; and, like the feminist who marks the 'F' box on an application form even though she also works towards the dismantling of the universal opposition between 'F' and 'M', I find myself in the paradoxical position of having to work within a conceptual frame which I hope that my work will help to deconstruct. This, in effect, is the paradoxicality of feminism itself: since the aim of feminism is ultimately to end the oppressions of women, it will cease to be as soon as that aim is achieved; feminism exists only within the system which it seeks to destroy.

Attempts have in fact been made to dislodge vision from its

privileged position. Luce Irigaray, for example, to whose psychoanalytically-derived critique of the masculinity of vision I referred in the Introduction, famously suggests, in an often-quoted passage, that the sense of touch, rather than that of sight, is appropriate to the expression of feminine sexuality:

"As for woman, she touches herself in and of herself without any need for mediation, and before there is any way to distinguish activity from passivity. Woman 'touches herself' all the time, and moreover no-one can forbid her to do so, for her genitals are formed of two lips in continuous contact" (21).

Thus, for Irigaray, "the predominance of the visual ... is particularly foreign to female eroticism. Woman takes pleasure more from touching than from looking" (22). Irigaray's position on the nature and status of 'sexual difference', however, is far from that I have been advocating here: her concern is to create a specifically feminine subjectivity and, as Margaret Whitford puts it, "an ethics of sexual difference ... which recognises the subjectivity of each sex" (23); whereas I have been arguing for a move away from sexual difference altogether, on the grounds that not only is 'sexual difference', in the form in which it now exists, hierarchical and sexist (this, broadly speaking, being the focus of Irigaray's concern), but that differences other than the sexual must also be articulated at a basic conceptual level. Just as I do not believe that the creation of a specifically 'feminine' subjectivity would constitute an adequate articulation of women's many differences at an appropriate conceptual level, so I do not believe that the replacement of the privilege of vision with any other single privileged term is an adequate response to the oppressive effects of the gaze: the hierarchy of the senses must be deconstructed, not simply re-arranged.

If, as I have been arguing, there is no one form of difference, be it sexual or otherwise, which properly expresses what it is to be a woman (or a man) in a complexly inegalitarian society, then there will be no one metaphor through which women's subjectivities can be represented - subjectivities which are, indeed, informed by physical abilities and disabilities, including forms and degrees of blindness, deafness and other impairments to the use of the senses.

The scale of this task - the dual deconstruction of 'sexual difference' and the hierarchy of the senses - is enormous; but the theoretical and political stakes are enormously high. The development of new representations and self-representations which do not limit the meaning of the terms 'woman' and 'women' to the sexual, and the development of new ways of thinking and writing which refuse the system of sexual difference hitherto perpetuated by the privilege of vision, will begin to make possible a new conceptualisation of gender as the intersection of race, class, sex and other *differences*, differences which are inextricable from one another, and through and in which each subject - including each feminist subject - is constituted. The re-conceptualisation of gender would not, of course, mean the abolition of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' (or indeed of 'male' and 'female'); but it would mean the removal of masculinity from its central and defining role within 'sexual difference', and the removal of sexual difference itself from its central and defining role in feminist understandings of subjectivity and identity. All women are women, but we are always also many other things which are equally important in the constitution of our subjectivities and identities, and it is not until feminist thought is fully able to grasp,

articulate and represent that complexity that it will be able to begin serious work on the many oppressions that women face - and thus to continue towards the goal of women's liberation.

How, then, is all this to be achieved? The work I have conducted in these pages has been a sharply-focussed examination of the operation of the gaze and of visual metaphors in the cases of just two specific bodies of writing; the work has been instructive: it has provided what Evelyn Fox Keller and Christine Grontowski call the "vague sentiment ... that the logic of the visual is a male logic" (24) with foundation and substance, and in doing so it has demonstrated that 'the logic of the visual' is susceptible to feminist deconstruction. But the project of working towards new ways of thinking and writing about gender itself means that there is a lot more thinking and writing about feminist theory to be done. The system of 'sexual difference' has been, and continues to be, produced and reproduced not just in the texts of Sartre and Lacan, nor just in the fields of existentialism and psychoanalysis: it is something that must be located and dismantled in all textual and representational fields, including, as I have already indicated, in feminism itself; and attempts must be made to remove vision from its position of privilege through the development of writing practices in which 'seeing' is no longer the dominant metaphor in the representation of subjectivity. Such writing practices will be radical indeed: I might invite the reader to speculate upon the possibilities they might open up, if 'speculation' were not such a thoroughly inappropriate word. In any case, I do not wish to run the risk of limiting what Teresa de Lauretis might call their "radical epistemological potential" (25) by prescribing in advance what they might become.

## ENDNOTES

### CHAPTER ONE

1. Taken from the Concise Oxford English Dictionary.
2. John Berger, Ways of Seeing, London/Harmondsworth etc, BBC/Penguin, 1972, p 47.
3. Laura Mulvey, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', in Bill Nichols (ed), Movies and Methods Volume 2, London, University of California Press, 1985, pp 303-15, p 310.
4. Ibid, p 309.
5. Rey Chow, 'Postmodern automatons', in Judith Butler and Joan W Scott (eds), Feminists Theorize the Political, London and New York, Routledge, 1992, pp 101-17, p 101.
6. Laura Mulvey, op cit, p 309.
7. See eg Susan Bordo, 'The Cartesian masculinization of thought', in Signs, Vol 2, no 3, 1986, pp 439-56; Jean Grimshaw, Feminist Philosophers: Women's perspectives on philosophical traditions, Brighton, Wheatsheaf, 1986; Joanna Hodge, 'Subject, body and the exclusion of women from philosophy', in Morwenna Griffiths and Margaret Whitford (eds), Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1988, pp 152-68; Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason: 'Male and 'female' in Western philosophy, London, Methuen, 1984; Jacquelyn N Zita, 'Transsexualised origins: reflections on Descartes's Meditations', in Genders, Part 5, 1989, pp 86-105.

8. A notable exception is Evelyn Fox Keller's and Christine R Grontowski's 'The mind's eye', in Sandra Harding and Merrill B Hintikka (eds), Discovering Reality, Dordrecht, Reidel, 1983, pp 207-24, which examines the importance of vision in the works of Plato, Descartes, Newton and Jonas.
9. Ibid, p 207.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Jacqueline Rose, Sexuality in the Field of Vision, London and New York, Verso, 1986; see esp part 2.
14. Rey Chow, op cit, p 105.
15. Ibid.
16. See ibid pp 107-8, where Chow focusses on the status of Olympia as object of the male gaze in Freud's reading of E T A Hoffman's 'The Sandman', but does not mention Freud's remarks on the equation between castration and blindness (or between the eye and the phallus) in the story.
17. Sigmund Freud, 'The uncanny', in Pelican Freud Library Volume 14, London etc, Penguin, 1985, pp 335-81, p 352.
18. Rey Chow, op cit, p 107.
19. See, for example, Ann Rosalind Jones 'Writing the body: towards an understanding of l'écriture feminine', in Feminist Studies, Vol 7, no 2, 1981, pp 247-63; Toril Moi, Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist literary theory, London, Methuen, 1985.
20. See, for example, Elizabeth Grosz, Sexual Subversions: Three French feminists, Sydney etc, Allen & Unwin, 1989, esp pp 100-

- 83; Margaret Whitford, Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the feminine, London & New York, Routledge, 1991.
21. Sigmund Freud, 'Female sexuality', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, London etc, Penguin, 1977, pp 367-92, p 374.
  22. Luce Irigaray, This Sex Which Is Not One, trans Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985, pp 34-5 (emphasis Irigaray's). Irigaray here is making explicit reference to a passage from Freud's lecture 'Femininity' in which he himself likens the little girl to the little man; see Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, trans James Strachey, Pelican Freud Library Vol 2, London etc, Penguin, 1973, p 151.
  23. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, London etc, Penguin, 1977, pp 323-43, p 340.
  24. Ibid, p 341.
  25. For an explication of this term and its place in Irigaray's thought, see Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, pp 146-50; Margaret Whitford, op cit, esp pp 170-7.
  26. See Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, p 106.
  27. See Luce Irigaray, Speculum of the Other Woman, trans Gillian C Gill, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985, esp pp 241-364; Margaret Whitford, op cit, esp pp 101-22.
  28. Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures, p 158.
  29. Luce Irigaray, Speculum of the Other Woman, p 133.
  30. Ibid, pp 47-8 (emphases Irigaray's).

31. Margaret Whitford, *op cit*, p 151.
32. Luce Irigaray, Speculum of the Other Woman, p 133.
33. *Ibid*, p 139.
34. Luce Irigaray, This Sex Which Is Not One, pp 25-6.
35. Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures, p 146.
36. Luce Irigaray, This Sex Which Is Not One, p 28 (first ellipsis mine; second ellipsis Irigaray's).
37. See eg Arthur Brittan and Mary Maynard, Sexism, Racism and Oppression, Oxford, Blackwell, 1984; Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity, London and New York, Routledge, 1990; Patricia Hill Collins, Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment, London and New York, Routledge, 1991; Angela Davis, Women, Race and Class, London, Women's Press, 1982; bell hooks, Feminist Theory: from Margin to centre, Boston, South End Press, 1984; Caroline Ramazanoglu, Feminism and the Contradictions of Oppression, London and New York, Routledge, 1989; Vron Ware, Beyond the Pale: White women, racism and history, London and New York, Routledge, 1991.
38. Jane Gaines, 'White privilege and looking relations: race and gender in feminist film theory', in Screen, Vol 29, no 4, 1988, pp 12-26, p 24.
39. *Ibid*, pp 24-5.
40. Teresa de Lauretis, Technologies of Gender: Essays on theory, film and fiction, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1987, pp 1-2.

41. See Audre Lorde, 'The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house', in Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (eds), This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by radical women of color, New York, Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983, pp 98-101.
42. Judith Butler, op cit, pp 3-4.
43. See Rosi Braidotti, 'The politics of ontological difference', in Teresa Brennan (ed), Between Feminism and Psychoanalysis, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, pp 89-105; Elizabeth Grosz, Sexual Subversions: Three French feminists, Sydney etc, Allen & Unwin, 1989; Toril Moi, Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist literary theory, London, Methuen, 1985; Margaret Whitford, op cit.
44. See Patricia Hill Collins, op cit; Angela Davis, op cit; bell hooks, op cit; Caroline Ramazanoglu, op cit.
45. Teresa de Lauretis, op cit, p 1.
46. See, for example, Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality: an Introduction, trans Robert Hurley, London etc, Penguin, 1984; Madness and Civilisation: a History of insanity in the age of reason, trans Richard Howard, New York, Pantheon, 1965.
47. Judith Butler, op cit, p 2.
48. Teresa de Lauretis, op cit, p 3.
49. Ibid.
50. Rosi Braidotti, op cit, p 100.
51. bell hooks, op cit, p 18.
53. Ibid, p 24.
54. See above, n 50.

55. Valerie Traub, 'The ambiguities of 'lesbian' viewing pleasure: the (dis)articulations of Black Widow', in Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub (eds), Body Guards: the Cultural politics of gender ambiguity, New York & London, Routledge, 1991, pp 305-28, p 324 (my emphasis).
56. See above, n 41.
57. Stephen Heath, 'Difference', in Screen, Vol 19, no 3, 1978, pp 50-112, p 53.
58. Linda J Nicholson, introduction to Feminism/Postmodernism, London and New York, Routledge, 1990, p 2.
59. Jonathan Rée, Philosophical Tales, London and New York, Methuen, 1987, pp 122-3.
60. Michèle Le Doeuff, The Philosophical Imaginary, trans Colin Gordon, London, Athlone Press, 1989, p 2.
61. Ibid, p 3.
62. Roland Barthes, Image, Music, Text, trans Stephen Heath, London, Fontana, 1977, pp 156-7.
63. Ibid, p 162.
64. Ibid, p 164.
65. Ibid, p 157.
66. Rosi Braidotti, 'Envy: or with your brains and my looks', in Alice Jardine and Paul Smith (eds), Men in Feminism, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, pp 233-41, p 234.
67. Ibid.
68. Teresa de Lauretis, op cit, pp 11-12.
69. Ibid, p 3.
70. See Deirdre Bair, Simone de Beauvoir: a Biography, London,

- Vintage, 1991, pp 473-4; Elisabeth Roudinesco, Jacques Lacan & Co: a History of psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985, trans Jeffrey Mehlman, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1990, pp 416-7.
71. Annie Cohen-Solal, Sartre: a Life, London, Minerva, 1991, pp 245-359.
  72. Deirdre Bair, op cit, p 402.
  73. Ibid.
  74. Alice Jardine, 'Death sentences: writing couples and ideology', in Susan Rubin Suleiman (ed), The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary perspectives, Cambridge Mass and London, Harvard University Press, 1986, pp 84-96, p 88. On the continuing relevance and influence of Sartre to and on contemporary thought, see also Douglas Kirsner, 'Sartre and the collective neurosis of our time', in Fredric Jameson (ed), Sartre after Sartre, London, Yale University Press, 1985, pp 206-25; Brian Seitz, 'The identity of the subject after Sartre: an identity marked by the denial of identity', in Philosophy Today, Vol 35, no 4, 1991, pp 362-71.
  75. Rosi Braidotti, Patterns of Dissonance, trans Elizabeth Guild, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991, p 2.
  76. Andreas Huyssen, 'Mapping the postmodern', in Linda J Nicholson (ed), op cit, pp 234-77, p 264.
  77. Jane Flax, 'Postmodernism and gender relations in feminist theory', in Linda J Nicholson (ed), op cit, pp 39-62, p 39.
  78. Ibid.
  79. For a detailed critical record of Sartre's life's work, see

- Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka (eds), The Writing of Jean-Paul Sartre Volume 1: a Bibliographical life, trans Richard C McCleary, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1974.
80. Cit Deirdre Bair, *op cit*, p 466 (my emphasis).
81. The transcription of Lacan's seminar of 1959-60 appeared in English too late to be included in the present work. It is now available as The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 7: the Ethics of psychoanalysis, 1959-1960, trans Dennis Porter, London and New York, Routledge, 1992.
82. Malcolm Bowie, Lacan, London, Fontana, 1991, p 6.
83. *Ibid*, pp 6-7.
84. *Ibid*, p 7.
85. Marcelle Marini, Jacques Lacan, Paris, Editions Pierre Belfond, 1986, p 258 (my translation).
86. From a preliminary reading of biographical and other material it seems that Sartre and Lacan did know each other personally, though not well: they had friends and colleagues in common - Daniel Lagache, for example, was a classmate of Sartre's from his student days (it was he who gave Sartre his famous mescaline injection in the 1930's; see Annie Cohen-Solal, *op cit*, pp 191-2) and, later, a colleague of Lacan in both the Société psychanalytique de Paris and the Société française de psychanalyse (see Elisabeth Roudinesco, *op cit*, esp pp 214-23 and pp 247-9); there is a photograph of Sartre and Lacan together, Sartre sitting at Lacan's feet, with a number of other guests at a party held during the war, which appears in Cohen-Solal's biography of

Sartre (Annie Cohen-Solal, *op cit*, plate 25). Sartre regarded the very idea of an unconscious mind as self-contradictory and accused the champions of psychoanalysis of 'bad faith' (see Jerome Neu, 'Divided minds: Sartre's 'bad faith' critique of Freud', in Review of Metaphysics, no 42, 1988, pp 79-101), yet he agreed to write an ill-fated screenplay on the life of Freud (now published as The Freud Scenario, trans Quintin Hoare, London, Verso, 1985) in 1958-9 (see Annie Cohen-Solal, *op cit*, pp 384-7; Annette Lavers, 'Sartre and Freud', in Yale French Studies, Vol 41, no 3, 1987, pp 298-317) and later declared himself to be "not a 'false friend' of psychoanalysis but rather a critical fellow traveller" (*cit* Annie Cohen-Solal, *op cit*, p 473); he even briefly contemplated undergoing psychoanalysis himself with Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, a Lacanian analyst who was also for some time a member of the editorial board of Sartre's journal Les Temps Modernes (see *ibid*, pp 443-4 and pp 472-4). Lacan, for his part, was openly antagonistic towards existentialism as comparatively early in his own career as 1945, when he wrote dismissively of "recent philosophers for whom the constraint of four walls is just another advantage for the achievement of the ultimate in human freedom" (Jacques Lacan, 'Le temps logique et l'assertion de certitude anticipée', in Ecrits, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1966, pp 197-213, p 199 (my translation)). In 1966 there was an exchange between the two men in the French press: Sartre "reproached Foucault, Althusser, and Lacan jointly for their concerted refusal of history in the name of a de-

centring of the subject" (Elisabeth Roudinesco, *op cit*, p 416); Lacan, with characteristic sharpness of tone, replied: "There are those who want me to be something of a successor to Sartre. Allow me to tell you that this is a rather comical idea of what is capable of interesting me. Sartre has had a very precise function, which it is possible to gauge, but which has no relation with the work I am doing" (*cit ibid*, p 417). The true nature and extent of the relationship between the work of Sartre and and that of Lacan nevertheless, I would contend, particularly in the light of Alice Jardine's remarks quoted above (see n 74), remain to be discovered.

87. See Judith Butler, who writes that: "The theories of feminist identity that elaborate predicates of color, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and able-bodiedness invariably close with an embarrassed 'etc' at the end of the list. Through this horizontal trajectory of adjectives, these positions strive to encompass a situated subject, but invariably fail to be complete ... This illimitable et cetera ... offers itself as a new departure for feminist political theorizing" (*op cit*, p 143)

## CHAPTER TWO

1. Jean-Paul Sartre, War Diaries: Notebooks from a phoney war, November 1939 - March 1940, trans Quintin Hoare, London,

- Verso, 1984, p 20.
2. Ibid, p 15.
  3. Michèle Le Doeuff, Hipparchia's Choice: an Essay concerning women, philosophy, etc., trans Trista Selous, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991, p 60. For other feminist critiques of Sartre along similar lines see Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, 'Holes and slime: sexism in Sartre's psychoanalysis', in Carol C Gould and Marx W Wartofsky (eds), Women and Philosophy: Toward a theory of liberation, New York, Perigree, 1980, pp 112-27; Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'female' in Western philosophy, London, Methuen, 1984, pp 86-102.
  4. Cf Laura Mulvey, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', in Bill Nichols (ed), Movies and Methods Vol 2, London, University of California Press, 1985, pp 303-15, pp 309-10.
  5. Hence for example the very existence of the word 'foreplay', and the popular prejudice that non-heterosexual sexual acts - especially lesbian acts, at which no penis is present - are at best 'deviant' and at worst (or vice versa?) not 'real' sex at all. As Lee Edelman puts it, "[M]odern masculinist heterosexual culture conceptualises lesbian and gay male sexuality in terms of a phallogocentric positional logic, insistently (and dismissively) articulating lesbianism as a form of extended, non-productive foreplay and gay male sexual relations as a form of extended, non-productive behind-play" (Lee Edelman, 'Seeing things: representation, the scene of surveillance, and the spectacle of gay male sex', in Diana Fuss (ed),

- Inside/Out: Lesbian theories, gay theories, London & New York, Routledge, 1991, pp 93-116, p 104). Cf Stephen Heath, The Sexual Fix, London, Macmillan, 1982, esp pp 137-46.
6. This equation is a staple of both philosophy and pornography, and has been the target of a vast wealth of feminist criticism. See eg Laura Mulvey op cit; Genevieve Lloyd op cit; Suzanne Kappeler, The Pornography of Representation, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1986, esp pp 49-62.
  7. Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans H M Parshley, Harmondsworth etc, Penguin, 1972, p 16.
  8. Jean-Paul Sartre, Existentialism and Humanism, trans Philip Mairet, London, Methuen, 1989, p 41.
  9. The subtitle of Being and Nothingness is 'An essay on phenomenological ontology'.
  10. It should be emphasised at this point that what follows is not intended as any kind of 'psychoanalysis' of Sartre himself, nor a 'psychoanalytic' reading of Sartre's work, which since his death in 1980 has been the object of Freudian and Lacanian speculation over alleged Oedipal disturbances, repressed homosexuality and the like: see eg Andrew N Leak, The Perverted Consciousness: Sexuality and Sartre, London, Macmillan, 1989. Such approaches to Sartre are tempting; as Michèle Le Doeuff comments, Sartre does on occasion "[seem] to have done all he could to turn his readers into wild Lacanians" (Michèle Le Doeuff, op cit, p 83). It is however a temptation I intend to

resist, Lacanian theory itself being the object of my analysis in the second half of this work.

11. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans Hazel Barnes, London, Routledge, 1989, p xxxix.
12. Cf Jean-Paul Sartre, Existentialism and Humanism, pp 41-3.
13. The Other is the term Sartre uses to refer to the phenomenon of one's fellow subject(s); it has become a familiar term in feminist theory following Simone de Beauvoir's formulation of Woman as Other in The Second Sex, a formulation which itself draws on the terms set out in Being and Nothingness (cf Genevieve Lloyd, loc cit). The Sartrean Other is not to be confused with Lacan's concept of the Other as the locus of speech, which will be discussed in later chapters.
14. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 228.
15. This 'battle of looks' can be compared with Hegel's famous 'master/slave dialectic' (see G W F Hegel, Phenomenology of Mind, trans J B Baillie, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1931, pp 228-40), which Sartre himself cites in his elaboration of the concept of the Other (see Being and Nothingness pp 236-7). See Genevieve Lloyd, loc cit, for an exploration of the importance of Hegel's 'master/slave' dialectic for Sartre's thought; and for an exposition and discussion of the 'master/slave' dialectic itself see Jean Hyppolite, Genesis and Structure of Hegel's 'Phenomenology of Spirit', trans Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1974, esp pp 156-77, and Peter Singer, Hegel, Oxford etc, Oxford University Press, 1983, esp pp 45-74.

16. Ibid, p 254.
17. Ibid, pp 255-6.
18. Ibid, p 257.
19. Ibid, p 258.
20. Ibid, p 259.
21. Ibid, p 262.
22. Ibid, p 540.
23. Ibid, p 258.
24. Ibid, p 304.
25. Ibid, p 289.
26. Ibid, p 218.
27. Ibid, p 346.
28. Ibid, p 309.
29. Ibid, p 289.
30. See eg Genevieve Lloyd, op cit; Joanna Hodge, 'Subject, body and the exclusion of women from philosophy', in Morwenna Griffiths and Margaret Whitford (eds), Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy, London, Macmillan, 1988, pp 152-68; Jacquelyn N Zita, 'Transsexualised origins: reflections on Descartes's Meditations', in Genders, no 5, 1989, pp 86-105.
31. See Michèle Le Doeuff, op cit, pp 60-74.
32. Cf Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, op cit.
33. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 608.
34. Ibid, p 609; cit Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, op cit, p 117.
35. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 613.
36. Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, op cit, pp 117-8.

37. Jean-Paul Sartre, War Diaries, p 242.
38. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 613-4.
39. See above, n 4.
40. See above, n 22.
41. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 540-1.
42. Ibid, p 309.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid, p 297.
45. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, trans Gerard Hopkins, London etc, Penguin, 1985, p 212.
46. Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, op cit, pp 123-4.
47. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 206.
48. Ibid, p 204.
49. Ibid, p 206.
50. Ibid, p 205.
51. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, trans Eric Sutton, London etc, Penguin, 1986, pp 68-9.
52. Ibid, p 68.
53. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 545.
54. Ibid, p 327.
55. For Sartre's more detailed exposition of the ontological status of the foetus and its transformation from in-itself to for-itself, see Being and Nothingness pp 138-40. Marcelle's foetus, being only a 'strawberry of blood', is plainly still at the non-conscious stage of the in-itself.
56. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 67.
57. Ibid, p 68.

58. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 205.
59. See above, n 29.
60. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 608; cf above, n 33.
61. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 207.
62. Ibid, p 208.
63. Edgar Allan Poe, Tales of Mystery and Imagination, London and Glasgow, Collins, p 74.
64. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 210.
65. Ibid, p 209.
66. See Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet: Actor and martyr, trans Bernard Frechtman, London, Heinemann, 1988, esp pp 17-48.
67. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 210.
68. Ibid, p 208.
69. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, trans Robert Baldick, London etc, Penguin, 1963, pp 88-9.
70. Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, op cit, p 119.
71. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, p 33.
72. See ibid, p 17.
73. See above, n 2.
74. A similar point is made by Constance Mui - although with quite different intentions - in her article 'Sartre's sexism reconsidered'. Criticising Collins and Pierce, Mui claims that the actual facticity (the holey-ness and sliminess) of male bodies means that the sexism of Sartre's 'holes and slime' imagery is not necessary but merely contingent to the argument of Being and Nothingness, and that Sartrean

existentialism is therefore not intrinsically a sexist philosophy: Sartre just made an unfortunate choice of imagery. Such a claim is based, not on a misreading, but, I would go so far as to argue, on a wilful refusal to read the text. What is at issue is not what Sartre might have written, but what he did write; and Mui's argument is founded on the premise, which I reject in my Introduction, that the study of philosophy is not about writing and that the 'truth' of philosophy lies somewhere 'beyond' the images and metaphors it employs. See Constance Mui, 'Sartre's sexism reconsidered', Vol 16, no 1, 1990, pp 31-41, esp pp 38-41. An analogous defence of Sartre against charges of sexism - along the lines that his sexist language and imagery is 'contingent' and not integral to his philosophy - is offered in Hazel E Barnes, 'Sartre and sexism', in Philosophy and Literature, Vol 14, no 2, 1990, pp 340-7.

75. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, pp 30-1,
76. Cf above, n 51.
77. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, p 89.
78. See eg Andrew N Leak, op cit, esp p 111.
79. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, p 89.
80. Ibid, pp 225-7.
81. Ibid, p 115.
82. Ibid, p 116.
83. Ibid, p 117.
84. Ibid.
85. See above, n 60.
86. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, p 84.

87. Ibid pp 146-9 (sixth ellipsis Sartre's; other ellipses mine). The emphasis on the 'splendid whiteness' of the female flesh - of which this is by no means an isolated example in Sartre's writing - is particularly striking here; the significance of visual codings of 'blackness' and 'whiteness' will come under discussion in a later chapter.
88. See Andrew N Leak, *op cit*, pp 89-92.
89. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 53.
90. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 607.
91. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 53. The Gauguin image is representative both of Ivich's feminine sexuality and of her exoticism - she is both exotically foreign (a Russian émigré) and exotically mysterious in her wilful and often incomprehensible behaviour, towards Mathieu and other characters.
92. Ibid, p 54.
93. Ibid, p 56.
94. Ibid, pp 56-7.
95. Ibid, p 58.
96. Ibid.
97. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 608-9.
98. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 60.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid, p 61.
102. See *ibid*, p 247.
103. Ibid, p 61.

104. Ibid.
105. Ibid, p 64.
106. Ibid, p 65.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid p 66 (ellipsis Sartre's).
110. Ibid, p 65.
111. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 388-9.
112. Ibid, p 384.

### CHAPTER THREE

1. Cf Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka (eds), The Writings of Jean-Paul Sartre Vol 1: a Bibliographical life, trans Richard C McCleary, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1974, pp 95-9.
2. Jean-Paul Sartre, In Camera and Other Plays, trans Kitty Black and Stuart Gilbert, London etc, Penguin, 1990, p 184.
3. Ibid, p 223 (first ellipsis mine, second ellipsis Sartre's).
4. Cf Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka (eds), op cit, p 97.  
For a psychoanalytically-based comparison between Daniel and Genet see Andrew N Leak, The Perverted Consciousness: Sexuality and Sartre, Basingstoke and London, Macmillan, 1989, esp pp 103-28 which includes a summary account of the importance of the gaze.
5. See Annie Cohen-Solal, Sartre: a Life, London, Methuen, 1991, pp 148-59.

6. Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka (eds), *op cit*, p 98.
7. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans Hazel Barnes, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, p 257.
8. *Ibid*, p 228.
9. Cf Michael Scriven, Sartre's Existential Biographies, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1984, p 44.
10. I deliberately use the masculine pronoun here; Sartre's homosexuals are almost all male, the only major exception being Inez in In Camera, whom I shall discuss later.
11. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet: Actor and martyr, trans Bernard Frechtman, London, Heinemann, 1988, p 17.
12. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, trans Eric Sutton, London etc, Penguin, 1986, pp 81-2.
13. *Ibid*, p 88.
14. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 139.
15. *Ibid*, p 138.
16. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Reprieve, trans Eric Sutton, London etc, Penguin, 1986, p 167.
17. *Ibid*, p 178.
18. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 587.
19. *Ibid*, p 589.
20. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, trans Gerard Hopkins, London etc, Penguin, 1985, p 93.
21. *Ibid*, p 165. A similar linking of homosexual seduction, an aesthete's desire to 'undermine bourgeois morality' and a turn to Fascism also appears, although in a slightly different configuration, in Sartre's earlier short story

- 'The Childhood of a Leader' (in Intimacy, trans Lloyd Alexander, London, Panther, 1960, pp 130-220). Sartre also comments on Genet's ambiguous attitude towards the Germans during the occupation of Paris (Saint Genet, p 170) and on his anti-Semitism (ibid, p 203, n).
22. See Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka (eds), op cit, p 114 and p 231.
  23. Saint Genet, the Sartrean creation, in fact had a profound and damaging effect on Genet himself, who, after the publication of Saint Genet, never wrote another novel. It has been claimed that "Sartre's Saint Genet had entombed Genet's oeuvre, burying his corpus alive and imprisoning him within a totalising narrative of liberty to which he was condemned and from which it was impossible to escape through writing" (Simon Critchley, 'Writing the revolution - the politics of truth in Genet's Prisoner of Love', in Radical Philosophy, no 56, 1990, pp 25-34, p 25). Genet wrote to Jean Cocteau: "You and Sartre have turned me into a monument" (Annie Cohen-Solal, op cit, p 317; cit Simon Critchley, loc cit).
  24. See Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans H M Parshley, Harmondsworth etc, Penguin, 1972, esp pp 13-29; Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 37.
  25. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 63.
  26. Michèle Le Doeuff, Hipparchia's Choice: an Essay concerning women, philosophy, etc, trans Trista Selous, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1991, p 95.
  27. See ibid, pp 64-74.

28. Ibid, p 70.
29. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 64.
30. See *ibid*, pp 59-60.
31. Ibid, p 384.
32. Ibid, p 63.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid, pp 64-5.
35. See *ibid*, pp 67-70.
36. Ibid, p 65.
37. Ibid.
38. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 85.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid, p 132.
41. See *ibid*, pp 266-70.
42. Ibid, p 86.
43. Ibid, p 270.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid, p 149 (first ellipsis Sartre's, second ellipsis mine).
46. Ibid, p 132.
47. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 57.
48. Ibid, pp 57-8.
49. See Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, esp pp 584-99.
50. Ibid, pp 494-5.
51. Ibid, p 17.
52. Ibid, pp 35-6.
53. Ibid, p 78.
54. Ibid, p 81.

55. Ibid, p 77.
56. Ibid, p 37.
57. Simone de Beauvoir, *op cit*, p 16.
58. Ibid, p 31.
59. Ibid, p 361.
60. Ibid, p 18.
61. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 295 (first ellipsis mine, second and third ellipses Sartre's).
62. Ibid, p 297.
63. Ibid (both ellipses Sartre's).
64. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 288.
65. Ibid, p 228.
66. Ibid, p 289.
67. See above, n 11.
68. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 288.
69. Ibid, p 79.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid, p 80.
72. Joseph Halpern, Critical Fictions: the Literary criticism of Jean-Paul Sartre, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1976, p 11.
73. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 85.
74. Ibid, p 364.
75. Ibid, p 49.
76. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, pp 148-9.
77. Ibid, p 297; cf above, n 63.
78. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 49. The 'servile buffoon' who was Sartre as a child is described in Sartre's

autobiographical Words (trans Irene Clephane, London etc, Penguin, 1967). Interestingly, Cohen-Solal claims that "Saint Genet could be a double of Sartre" (Annie Cohen-Solal, op cit, p 314), and Words implies a number of parallels between Sartre the 'servile buffoon' and Genet the 'grim child': young Sartre 'performs' continually so as to get the attention of adults; Sartre writes that "Seen, I saw myself" (Words, p 46) and that his "true self, my character and my name were in the hands of adults; I had learnt to see myself through their eyes" (ibid p 53). In conversation with Simone de Beauvoir in Adieux, Sartre also tells how, as a child at school, he used to steal money from his mother's handbag until he was eventually caught (see Simone de Beauvoir, Adieux: a Farewell to Sartre, trans Patrick O'Brian, London etc, Penguin, 1985, pp 145-7). As so often when reading Sartre, it is tempting at this point to embark on the kind of personal and psychological speculation which I have expressly forbidden myself: in Adieux Sartre briefly mentions a "vague homosexual inclination" (ibid p 293), and homosexual themes in Sartre's writing have been explored by a number of critics: see eg George H Bauer, 'Sartre's homo/textuality: eating/the Other', in George Stambolian and Elaine Marks (eds), Homosexualities and French Literature: Cultural contexts/critical texts, New York and London, Cornell University Press, 1979, pp 312-29; Serge Doubrovsky, 'Sartre's La Nausée: fragment of an analytical reading', ibid, pp 330-

- 40; Andrew N Leak, *op cit.*
79. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 290.
  80. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Reprieve, p 112.
  81. *Ibid*, p 113.
  82. *Ibid*, pp 114-5.
  83. *Ibid*, pp 116-7.
  84. *Ibid*, p 117.
  85. *Ibid*, pp 167-8.
  86. *Ibid*, p 169.
  87. *Ibid*, p 345.
  88. *Ibid*, p 346.
  89. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, pp 138-9.
  90. *Ibid*, p 138.
  91. See above, n 17.
  92. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 310.
  93. *Ibid*, p 194.
  94. *Ibid*, p 150.
  95. *Ibid*, p 147.
  96. *Ibid*, p 149.
  97. *Ibid*, p 611.
  98. *Ibid*, p 152.
  99. Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, p 678.
  100. *Ibid*, p 679.
  101. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 147.
  102. *Ibid*, p 139.
  103. *Ibid*, p 247.
  104. *Ibid*.
  105. Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, p 683.

106. Ibid.
107. Ibid, p 543.
108. Ibid, n 1.
109. Ibid.
110. See above, n 28.
111. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 73.
112. Ibid, p 49; cf above, n 75.
113. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Reprieve, p 117; cf above, n 83.
114. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 50.
115. Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, p 17.
116. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 490.
117. Ibid, p 494.
118. Ibid, p 495.
119. Ibid, pp 489-90.
120. Ibid, p 588.
121. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 93.
122. Ibid, p 95.
123. Ibid, p 134.
124. Ibid, p 135.
125. Ibid, p 167.
126. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 171.
127. Ibid, p 173.
128. Ibid.
129. Ibid, pp 170-1; see above, n 21.
130. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 93; cf above, n 121.
131. Ibid, p 94.
132. Ibid, pp 164-5; cf above, n 21.

133. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un collaborateur?' in Situations 3, Paris, Gallimard, 1949, pp 43-61, p 58 (my translation).
134. Ibid (my translation).
135. Ibid (my translation).
136. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 95. Alastair Hamilton, in his introduction to Pierre Drieu de la Rochelle's Secret Journal, cites this famous scene in Iron in the Soul and Sartre's comments in 'Qu'est-ce qu'un collaborateur?' in his discussion of the 'homosexual' element in Drieu's attitude towards the Nazis (see Pierre Drieu de la Rochelle, Secret Journal and Other Writings, trans Alastair Hamilton, New York, Howard Fertig, 1973, esp pp ix-x and p xxvii). It is intriguing to note in this connexion the passage in the Secret Journal (ibid, pp 6-8) in which the young Drieu plays with, and deliberately cuts his finger with, a dessert-knife in a way reminiscent of Daniel's toying with, and deliberately cutting his finger with, his razor in The Age of Reason. Daniel plans to castrate himself; Drieu remarks that, on taking the dessert-knife and pointing it towards his heart, he "felt nothing more poignant the day I undid my trousers to consider a part of myself, my penis" (ibid, p 8).
137. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 94.
138. Ibid.
139. See Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, esp pp 652-79; see also above, n 99, n 100 and n 105.
140. Jean-Paul Sartre, Iron in the Soul, p 94.

141. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, pp 29-30.
142. Ibid, pp 73-4. The critic Richard Coe comments extensively on the importance of the mirror in the works of both Genet and Sartre: see Richard Coe, The Vision of Jean Genet, London, Peter Owen, 1968, esp pp 13-4.
143. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 73.
144. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, p 81.
145. Ibid, p 97.
146. Ibid, pp 81-2; cf above, n 12.
147. Ibid, p 125.
148. Ibid, p 261.
149. Jean-Paul Sartre, In Camera, p 200.
150. Ibid, p 197.
151. Ibid, pp 198-9 (ellipsis Sartre's).
152. Ibid, p 194.
153. This omission on Sartre's part is - again, from a biographical or psychological point of view - all the more interesting in light of the recently emerging evidence of Simone de Beauvoir's intense and, to varying degrees, sexual relationships with women, both during and after Sartre's lifetime. See Deirdre Bair, Simone de Beauvoir: a Biography, London, Vintage, 1991, esp pp 508-13; Simone de Beauvoir, Letters to Sartre, trans Quentin Hoare, London etc, Radius, 1991; Margaret A Simons, 'Lesbian connexions: Simone de Beauvoir and feminism', in Signs, Vol 18, no 1, 1992, pp 136-61. The ghost of lesbianism also looms over Sartre's discussion of Genet's play The Maids, which is,

based, as Sartre himself points out, on the notorious and allegedly incestuous Papin sisters, whom I shall be discussing at length in a later chapter (see Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, pp 611-25), although Sartre nevertheless still manages to focus on male homosexuality in his analysis of the play.

154. Jean-Paul Sartre, In Camera, p 213.
155. Ibid, p 198.
156. See above, n 19.
157. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 31.
158. The ambiguous position of lesbianism as 'female homosexuality' will be explored at length in later chapters.
159. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 422.
160. Ibid.
161. Ibid, p 489; cf above, n 119.
162. Ibid, p 490; cf above, n 119.
163. Richard Coe, op cit, p 14.
164. See above, n 7.
165. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet, p 49; cf above, n 68.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

1. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans Hazel Barnes, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, p 187.
2. Ibid, p 186.
3. Ibid, pp 187-8 (my emphasis).
4. Ibid, p 186.

5. Ibid, pp 252-3.
6. Ibid, p 253.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid, pp 256-7.
9. Ibid, pp 257-8.
10. Ibid, p 258.
11. Ibid (Sartre's emphasis).
12. Ibid, p 254.
13. See ibid.
14. Ibid, p 257.
15. See ibid, pp 254-7.
16. See Annie Cohen-Solal, Sartre: a Life, London, Mandarin, 1991, pp 489-90.
17. Jean-Paul Sartre, Words, trans Irene Clephane, London etc, Penguin, 1967, p 129.
18. See Annie Cohen-Solal, op cit, pp 271-2.
19. Jean-Paul Sartre, Words, p 66.
20. See Simone de Beauvoir, Adieux: a Farewell to Sartre, trans Patrick O'Brian, London etc, Penguin, 1985, esp pp 308-11.  
It is noteworthy that Sartre's feeling of being perceived as ugly is directly opposed to, and perhaps therefore informs, the spectacle of the handsome Daniel beneath the eyes of the Other or of God in Roads to Freedom, discussed in the previous chapter.
21. See Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'female' in Western philosophy, London, Methuen, 1984, pp 86-102.
22. See Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, 'Holes and

- slime: sexism in Sartre's psychoanalysis', in Carol C Gould and Marx W Wartofsky (eds), Women and Philosophy: Toward a theory of liberation, New York, Perigree, 1980, pp 112-27. For other attacks on, and defences of, Sartre, see eg Hazel E Barnes, 'Sartre and sexism', in Philosophy and Literature, Vol 14, no 2, 1990, pp 340-7; Michèle Le Doeuff, Hipparchia's Choice: an Essay concerning women, philosophy, etc, trans Trista Selous, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1991; Russell Keat, 'Masculinity in philosophy', in Radical Philosophy, no 34, 1983, pp 15-20; Constance Mui, 'Sartre's sexism reconsidered', in Auslegung, Vol 16, no 1, 1990, pp 31-41.
23. In this working definition of 'sexism' as it appears in philosophical and other texts, explained and discussed at length in my Introduction to this work, I make no use of Russell Keat's distinction between 'sexism' and 'genderism', which I find unhelpful for the present purposes, Keat's distinction being based on the kind of opposition between (natural, biological) sex and (cultural, socially constructed) gender which my own position on the status of the concept of gender renders superfluous. See Russell Keat, *op cit*.
24. Mary Ann Doane, 'Film and the masquerade: theorising the female spectator', in Screen, Vol 23, no 3-4, 1982, pp 74-87, p 78.
25. Christian Metz, The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the cinema, trans Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti, Bloomington, Indiana

- University Press, 1982, p 59.
26. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 17.
  27. Simone de Beauvoir, op cit, p 390; cf Jean-Paul Sartre, Essays in Aesthetics, trans Wade Baskin, London, Peter Owen, 1964, p 58.
  28. See Simone de Beauvoir, op cit, pp 390-1. It is interesting, not to say ironic, to compare Sartre's war-time attitude to communal living with his representation of the humanist and homosexual Autodidact in Nausea, which was, of course, written before the war. The Autodidact becomes a humanist and a socialist after a long period of imprisonment by the Germans during the First World War, when his physical proximity to his fellows made him realise that he "loved those men like brothers" (Nausea, trans Robert Baldick, London etc, Penguin, 1965, p 165): Roquentin - with whom, by his own admission, Sartre identified while writing the novel ("I was Roquentin" - Words, p 156) - is utterly repelled by the Autodidact's confession.
  29. Stuart Zane Charmé, Vulgarity and Authenticity: Dimensions of otherness in the world of Jean-Paul Sartre, Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1991, p 34.
  30. Ibid, p 37.
  31. Ibid, pp 38-9.
  32. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Reprieve, trans Eric Sutton, London etc, Penguin, 1986, p 203.
  33. Ibid, p 32.
  34. Ibid, p 181.

35. Ibid, pp 181-2.
36. Ibid, p 208.
37. Ibid, p 224.
38. Ibid, p 213.
39. Ibid, p 214.
40. Ibid, p 215.
41. Ibid, p 216.
42. Simone de Beauvoir, The Prime of Life, trans Peter Green, London etc, Penguin, 1965, p 135.
43. Ibid.
44. See *ibid*, p 136.
45. This is the subtitle of Being and Nothingness, as pointed out in a previous chapter.
46. George H Bauer, 'Just desserts', in Fredric Jameson (ed), Sartre after Sartre, London, Yale University Press, 1985, pp 3-14, p 3. Cf George H Bauer, 'Sartre's homo/textuality: eating/the Other', in George Stambolian and Elaine Marks (eds), Homosexualities in French Literature: Cultural contexts/ critical texts, New York and London, Cornell University Press, 1979, pp 312-29.
47. Simone de Beauvoir, Adieux, p 332.
48. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 599-600.
49. Ibid, p 186; cf above, n 2.
50. Ibid, p 600.
51. See esp Margery L Collins and Christine Pierce, *op cit*; cf above, n 22.
52. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 604, n 14.
53. Ibid, p 608.

54. Ibid, p 609.
55. See Jean-Paul Sartre, The Age of Reason, trans Eric Sutton, London etc, Penguin, 1986, pp 52-66.
56. Jean-Paul Sartre, Intimacy, trans Lloyd Alexander, London, Panther, 1960, p 18.
57. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 258.
58. Ibid, p 338.
59. Ibid, p 613.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid, pp 613-4.
62. Ibid, p 609.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid, p 17; cf above, n 26.
65. Ibid, p 254.
66. Ibid, p 255.
67. Ibid, p 308.
68. Ibid, p 317.
69. Ibid, p 329.
70. Ibid, p 304.
71. For a separate but related discussion of this theory of knowledge see Michèle Le Doeuff, op cit, pp 79-82.
72. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 578-9.
73. Michèle Le Doeuff, op cit, p 79.
74. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp 578-9.
75. Ibid, p 187.
76. Ibid, p 579.
77. Ibid, pp 579-80.

78. Simone de Beauvoir, The Prime of Life, p 135.
79. Cf above, n 2.
80. Simone de Beauvoir, Adieux, p 222.
81. Ibid.
82. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, pp 37-8.
83. Ibid, p 59.
84. Ibid, p 60.
85. Ibid, p 251.
86. Ibid, p 252.
87. Ibid, p 91 (my emphasis).
88. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 582.
89. Ibid, p 578; cf above, n 72.
90. Ibid, p 579; cf above, n 77.
91. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, p 88.
92. Ibid, pp 147-8 (first ellipsis Sartre's, second and third ellipses mine).
93. Ibid, p 149.
94. Ibid, p 251.
95. Ibid, p 221.
96. Ibid, p 225.
97. Ibid, p 89.
98. Ibid, p 182.
99. Ibid, p 181.
100. Ibid, p 187.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid, p 250.
103. Ibid, p 249.
104. Ibid, p 250.

105. Ibid.
106. Ibid, p 251.
107. Ibid.
108. Dominick LaCapra, A Preface to Sartre, London, Methuen, 1979, p 236, n 7; cf *ibid*, p 115.
109. *Ibid*, p 115. Sartre of course wrote extensively, in Anti-Semite and Jew (trans George J Becker, New York, Schocken Books, 1965) and elsewhere, on the specificities of Jewish identity as opposed to (and as the 'Other' of) gentile French or European identity. For the purposes of this discussion, however, which is concerned with the vicissitudes of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' in Sartre's texts, I shall not address the issue of 'white' Jewish identity as distinct from other forms of 'whiteness'. Cf Stuart Zane Charmé, *op cit*, pp 105-44.
110. Dominick LaCapra, *op cit*, p 115.
111. Robert Graves, The Greek Myths Volume 1, Harmondsworth etc, Penguin, 1960, p 111.
112. See *ibid*, p 112.
113. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', trans John MacCombie, in Massachusetts Review, Vol 16, 1964-5, pp 13-52, p 13.
114. Stuart Zane Charne, *op cit*, p 203 n 13; cf Frantz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks, trans Charles Lam Markmann, London, Pluto Press, 1986, esp pp 132-8.
115. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', p 14.
116. *Ibid*, p 16.
117. *Ibid*, pp 30-1.

118. Ibid, p 31, n 5; cf Robert Graves, op cit, p 112.
119. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', pp 38-9.
120. For an extended discussion of this point see Stuart Zane Charmé, op cit, pp 204-14.
121. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus' p 38.
122. Cf Stuart Zane Charmé, op cit, pp 206-9.
123. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', p 38.
124. Roland Barthes, Image, Music, Text, trans Stephen Heath, London, Fontana, 1977, p 182. For various discussions and analyses of the power of the voice, both literally and metaphorically, see also Mary Ann Doane, 'The voice in the cinema: the articulation of body and space', in Yale French Studies, no 60, 1980, p 33-50; Michèle Le Doeuff, The Philosophical Imaginary, trans Colin Gordon, London, Athlone Press, 1989, pp 129-37; Wayne Koestenbaum, 'The queen's throat: (homo)sexuality and the art of singing', in Diana Fuss (ed), Inside/Out: Lesbian theories, gay theories, London and New York, Routledge, 1991, pp 205-34; Kaja Silverman, The Acoustic Mirror: the Female voice in psychoanalysis and the cinema, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1988.
125. Ibid, p 188.
126. Ibid, p 181.
127. Ibid, p 189.
128. Ibid.
129. Jean-Paul Sartre, Nausea, p 250.
130. On the impact of recording technology on the arts, see Walter Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical

reproduction', trans Harry Zohn, in Illuminations, Glasgow, Collins, 1973, pp 219-53.

131. Ibid, p 191.
132. Ibid, p 252.
133. Simone de Beauvoir, Adieux, p 153.
134. See *ibid*, pp 152-3.
135. Ibid, p 226.
136. Cf Kaja Silverman, *op cit*, esp pp 79-80, for a discussion of the sense of hearing and the destabilisation of the distinction between subject and object by the sound of the voice.
137. Frantz Fanon, *op cit*, pp 133-5.
138. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', p 49 (square brackets in original translation). Cit (in a slightly different translation) Frantz Fanon, *op cit*, p 133. Sartre is here explicitly comparing the concept of race or 'negritude' with the Marxist concept of class.
139. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', p 13.
140. Ibid, p 49.
141. Ibid, p 48.
142. Ibid, p 49.
143. Ibid, p 51.
144. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 413.
145. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Black Orpheus', p 13; cf above, n 108.
146. Michèle Le Doeuff, Hipparchia's Choice, p 188 and p 189.
147. Ibid, p 183.
148. Ibid, p 189.
149. Ibid, p 191.

150. Ibid.
151. Mary Warnock, The Philosophy of Sartre, London, Hutchinson & Co, 1965, p 105.
152. Simone de Beauvoir, Adieux, p 311.
153. Ibid, pp 312-3.
154. Ibid, p 314.
155. Ibid, p 316.
156. Ibid, p 315.
157. Ibid.
158. Ibid.
159. Michèle Le Doeuff, Hipparchia's Choice, p 83.
160. See Hazel E Barnes, op cit; Constance Mui, op cit.
161. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p xi.
162. Ibid.

#### CHAPTER FIVE

1. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, trans Alan Sheridan, London, Penguin, 1986, p 80.
2. See *ibid*, p 75 and pp 159-60 respectively.
3. See 'The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience', trans Alan Sheridan, in Ecrits: a Selection, London, Tavistock/Routledge, 1989, pp 1-7, esp pp 1-2.
4. See *ibid*, esp p 2 and pp 5-6.
5. See *ibid*.

6. Lacan explicitly critiques the illusion of 'I see myself seeing myself', particularly as it is manifested in the Cartesian cogito, throughout The Four Fundamental Concepts; see esp pp 74-5 and pp 80-2.
7. Lacanian 'castration' is articulated around the phallus as primary signifier rather than around the anatomical penis; hence 'penis envy' might be considered too literal and naive a term for the impetus behind this sort of denial of castration. The question of the relation between the phallus and the penis will be discussed at length in the next chapter.
8. See Jacques Lacan, 'The mirror stage', p 3.
9. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism: an introduction', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 11, London etc, Penguin, 1984, pp 59-97, p 82.
10. See Sarah Kofman, The Enigma of Woman: Woman in Freud's writings, trans Catherine Porter, New York and London, Cornell University Press, 1985, pp 50-65.
11. Jacques Lacan, 'Guiding remarks for a congress on feminine sexuality', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1982, pp 86-98, p 97.
12. Ibid, p 91.
13. Teresa de Lauretis, Technologies of Gender: Essays on theory, film and fiction, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1987, p 2.

14. See Paul Valéry, Oeuvres, Vol 1, Paris, Editions Gallimard, 1957, p 97.
15. Ibid, p 107.
16. See Freud's remark linking female homosexuality to the dispositional effect of feminine narcissism, in 'Psychoanalytic notes on an autobiographical account of paranoia (dementia paranoides)' (the 'Schreber' case), trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 9, London etc, Penguin, 1979, pp 131-223, p 202.
17. See Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 2: the ego in Freud's theory and in the technique of psychoanalysis, 1954-5, trans Sylvana Tomaselli, Cambridge etc, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 49.
18. Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 1: Freud's papers on technique, 1953-4, trans John Forrester, Cambridge etc, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 188.
19. See *ibid*, p 76.
20. Cf Elizabeth Grosz, Jacques Lacan: a Feminist introduction, London, Routledge, 1990, pp 98-103, for a discussion of the function of metaphor in Freudian and Lacanian theory.
21. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 76.
22. The mirror schemata and their commentaries appear throughout Seminar Book 1; see esp pp 77-8, pp 124-6, pp 139-42, pp 165-6.
23. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', pp 82-3.
24. See Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychological consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, London etc,

- Penguin, 1977, 323-43, and 'Female sexuality', trans James Strachey, *ibid*, pp 367-92.
25. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 94.
  26. Sigmund Freud, 'Observations on transference-love', trans James Strachey, in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vol 12, London, Hogarth Press, 1958, pp 159-71, pp 166-7.
  27. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 82.
  28. Cf Elizabeth Grosz, *op cit*, pp 6-7.
  29. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 146, n 2.
  30. See esp *ibid*, pp 276-7.
  31. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 83.
  32. Cf Jacques Lacan, 'The mirror stage', p 2.
  33. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 107-17.
  34. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 83.
  35. *Ibid*, p 85.
  36. See Jacques Lacan, 'The mirror stage', p 3.
  37. See eg Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 122-3 and p 137; Seminar Book 2, p 86, p 89, and pp 322-3; The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 73-4 and pp 99-100.
  38. See Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', esp pp 68-74.
  39. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 137.
  40. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 166.
  41. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 137.
  42. *Ibid*.
  43. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 323.
  44. *Ibid*, p 261.

45. Ibid, p 313.
46. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 165.
47. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, pp 237-8.
48. The case in fact became something of a cultural event; the surrealists in particular portrayed the Papins as revolutionary heroines in the journal Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution (see Elisabeth Roudinesco, Jacques Lacan & Co: a History of psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985, trans Jeffrey Mehlman, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1990, p 125 and n 46). Most interestingly for the context of this thesis, Jean Genet's play The Maids was influenced by the Papins' story, and the Papins are also invoked in Jean-Paul Sartre's early short story 'Erostratus', in which the narrator recalls the photographs of the sisters, showing them 'before' and 'after' their crime, which appeared in Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution (see Jean-Paul Sartre, Intimacy, trans Lloyd Alexander, London, Panther, 1960, pp 122-3). In her autobiography Simone de Beauvoir describes Sartre's and her own complex reactions - at once sympathetic and horrified - to the Papins' case as it was reported in the press (see Simone de Beauvoir, The Prime of Life, trans Peter Green, London etc, Penguin, 1965, pp 130-2).
49. See Marcelle Marini, Lacan, Paris, Editions Pierre Belfond, 1986, p 149.
50. See Francis Dupré, La 'solution' du passage à l'acte: le double crime des soeurs Papin, Toulouse, Editions Erès, 1984, pp 240-1. A comparison might be made here with the

- distinction between the real-life Genet and Sartre's 'Saint Genet', discussed in an earlier chapter.
51. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', in Minotaure, no 3-4, 1933, pp 25-8, p 28.
  52. For a more detailed outline of the events of the crime and its aftermath, see Francis Dupré, op cit, esp pp 15-80; Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', esp p 25; Elisabeth Roudinesco, op cit, pp 124-8.
  53. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 26.
  54. See ibid, p 27.
  55. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 172.
  56. See Francis Dupré, op cit, p 249, for a discussion of this 'psychotic' reaction to the mirror stage.
  57. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 27.
  58. See Francis Dupré, op cit, p 243.
  59. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 277.
  60. See Sigmund Freud, 'Some neurotic mechanisms in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 10, London etc, Penguin, 1979, pp 195-208, pp 206-7.
  61. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 28.
  62. See Sigmund Freud, 'Psychoanalytic notes on an autobiographical account of a case of paranoia', esp pp 200-4; cf above, n 17.
  63. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 28.
  64. See above, n 11.
  65. See above, n 12.

66. See Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 27.
67. Ibid, p 28.
68. See Francis Dupré, op cit, pp 250-1, for a discussion of this.
69. Freud's characterisation of woman as child, animal, criminal, monster or degenerate is, of course, by no means an isolated case in literary or cultural history. See eg Bram Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of feminine evil in fin-de-siècle culture, New York, Oxford University Press, 1986; Cynthia Eagle Russett, Sexual Science: the Victorian construction of womanhood, Cambridge and London, Harvard University Press, 1989.
70. See above, n 23.
71. Jacques Lacan, 'On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis', trans Alan Sheridan, in Ecrits: a Selection, pp 179-225, p 198: "for the boys the phallus for the girls the c...". (The word 'con' is the French equivalent of English 'cunt').
72. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 141.
73. For an account of Lacan's controversial career, see Elisabeth Roudinesco, op cit; Marcelle Marini, op cit.
74. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', pp 80-1. In his summary of types of object-choice a few pages later, Freud suggests, interestingly, that "the man who protects" may also become the object of anaclitic choice (ibid, p 84). This suggestion is neither made, nor referred to, again.
75. See ibid, p 81.
76. Ibid, p 82.

77. See *ibid*, p 82, n 1.
78. *Ibid*, p 82.
79. *Ibid*, p 83.
80. *Ibid*, p 81.
81. Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity, London and New York, Routledge, 1990, p 61 (Butler's emphasis).
82. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 132.
83. See above, n 74.
84. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 131-2.
85. See above, n 82.
86. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 276-7.
87. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, pp 260-1.
88. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 221-2.
89. *Ibid*, p 177.
90. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 262.
91. *Ibid*.
92. *Ibid*, pp 262-3. This convergence of woman's imaginary and symbolic positions onto her relation with her male sexual partner is articulated by Lacan around the effects of the signifier in 'The meaning of the phallus', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Feminine Sexuality, pp 74-85, p 84: "for the woman the result [of heterosexual desire] is still a convergence onto the same object of an experience of love which as such ideally deprives her of that which it gives, and a desire which finds in that same experience its signifier".

93. Cf Elizabeth Grosz, *op cit*, pp 31-5.
94. See Jacques Lacan, 'The meaning of the phallus', p 83; see also Jacqueline Rose's introduction to Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Feminine Sexuality, pp 27-57, esp pp 37-43.
95. See Jacques Lacan, 'The meaning of the phallus', pp 83-4.
96. Cf Elizabeth Grosz, *op cit*, pp 126-31.
97. See above, n 88.
98. Jacques Lacan, 'The meaning of the phallus', p 84. Lacan's use of the capital rather than the small Other here signals the point of convergence of the imaginary and the symbolic which will be discussed in a later chapter.
99. Jacques Lacan, 'Guiding remarks', p 96.
100. See *ibid* pp 96-7. I shall return to the question of who 'has' the phallus in the next chapter.
101. See above, n 67.
102. See above, n 63.
103. See above, n 61.
104. Francis Dupré in fact suggests that the mother-daughter relationship between the Papins' victims was the focal point for the playing out of imaginary relations not just between the Papin sisters themselves, but also between the sisters (Christine in particular) and their mother. See Francis Dupré, *op cit*, esp pp 247-65.
105. Sigmund Freud, 'A case of paranoia running counter to the psychoanalytic theory of the disease', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 10, pp 145-58, p 155. It is this hypothesis (of the patient's narcissistic homosexual

attachment to her mother) which allows Freud to conclude that the case does not run counter to psychoanalytic theory after all.

106. See *ibid*, p 148.
107. See *ibid*, pp 153-5.
108. *Ibid*, p 149.
109. *Ibid*.
110. *Ibid*, p 148.
111. *Ibid*.
112. *Ibid*.
113. *Ibid*.
114. *Ibid*.
115. *Ibid*.
116. *Ibid*.
117. *Ibid*, p 149.
118. *Ibid*, p 152.
119. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 25.
120. Sigmund Freud, 'Some neurotic mechanisms in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality', pp 206-7 (square brackets in the original).
121. *Ibid*, p 206.
122. See above, n 58.
123. Sigmund Freud, 'Female sexuality', p 373.
124. *Ibid*, p 372.
125. *Ibid*, p 388.
126. *Ibid*, p 387.
127. *Ibid*.

128. Ibid.
129. There is a wide and varied range of psychoanalytic/feminist literature available on the relationship between mother and daughter. See eg Christiane Olivier, Jocasta's Children: the imprint of the mother, trans George Craig, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, which propounds a view of the daughter's desire very much opposed to the one I have been developing here; Luce Irigaray, 'The culture of difference', trans Alison Martin, in Pli, Vol 3, no 1, 1990, pp 44-52; Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering: psychoanalysis and the sociology of gender, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978.
130. Jacques Lacan, 'Motifs du crime paranoïaque', p 28.
131. Jacques Lacan, 'Guiding remarks', p 97.
132. Ibid.
133. Ibid.
134. See above, n 71.
135. Jacques Lacan, 'God and the jouissance of ~~The~~ Woman', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 137-48, p 143.
136. See above, n 47.
137. On the social enforcement of compulsory heterosexuality, see Adrienne Rich, Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence, London, Onlywomen Press, 1981.
138. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 49; see above, n 17.
139. Ibid.
140. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 76; see above, n 21.

## CHAPTER SIX

1. Sigmund Freud, 'The dissolution of the Oedipus complex', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, London, Penguin 1977, pp 313-22, p 320.
2. See for example Stephen Heath, 'Difference', in Screen, Vol 19, no 3, 1978, pp 50-112, pp 53-5; Mary Ann Doane, 'Film and the masquerade: theorising the female spectator', in Screen, Vol 23, no 3-4, 1982, pp 74-87, pp 79-80; Kaja Silverman, The Acoustic Mirror, Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1988, pp 14-6.
3. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, pp 323-43, p 335.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid, p 337.
6. Cf Elizabeth Grosz, Jacques Lacan: a Feminist introduction, London, Routledge, 1990, pp 50-8; Jacqueline Rose's introduction to Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne, London, Macmillan, 1982, esp pp 30-2.
7. For a detailed discussion of the role of the phallus and of the castration complex in Lacanian theory, see Jacqueline Rose, op cit; Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, pp 50-81; Stephen Heath, op cit, esp pp 51-5 and pp 59-78.
8. Cf Jacqueline Rose, op cit, pp 40-3; Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, pp 127-8; Stephen Heath, op cit, p 67.
9. That the latter is very precisely an order, the 'law of the

- father', is emphasised by Jacqueline Rose; see op cit, pp 36-43.
10. Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 2: the Ego in Freud's theory and in the technique of psychoanalysis, trans Sylvana Tomaselli, Cambridge etc, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 261.
  11. Stephen Heath, op cit, p 54.
  12. Jacques Lacan, op cit, p 272.
  13. See Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, trans James Strachey, Pelican Freud Library Vol 4, London etc, Penguin, 1986, p 107.
  14. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, trans Alan Sheridan, London, Penguin, 1986, p 252.
  15. See Jacqueline Rose, op cit, pp 40-3.
  16. Ibid, p 42. Stephen Heath makes a similar point; see op cit, pp 53-5.
  17. This seminar, given in 1964, was first published under this title in 1973 in French, and in 1977 in English.
  18. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 106.
  19. See Marcelle Marini, Lacan, Paris, Editions Belfond, 1986, pp 207-8 for an outline of Lacan's formulation of the four objets a and their relations to one another.
  20. For an exposition of the Lacanian concept of desire, see Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, pp 64-7.
  21. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 149.
  22. For a separate discussion of the gaze and the scopic drive,

- see again Elizabeth Grosz, *op cit*, pp 74-80.
23. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 78.
  24. *Ibid*, p 83.
  25. It will be recalled that the 'split' between the eye and the gaze also plays an important role in Sartre's theory of the look in Being and Nothingness, where it is a manifestation of the distinction between the mind/for-itself and the body/in-itself. See previous chapters for a discussion of this.
  26. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 73.
  27. *Ibid*, p 103; cf Stephen Heath, *op cit*, pp 87-8.
  28. *Ibid*, p 102.
  29. *Ibid*, p 75.
  30. *Ibid*, p 72.
  31. *Ibid*.
  32. *Ibid*.
  33. For a separate discussion of the anecdote of the sardine can, see Jacqueline Rose, Sexuality in the Field of Vision, London & New York, Verso, 1986, pp 190-4.
  34. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 95.
  35. *Ibid*.
  36. *Ibid*, p 106.
  37. *Ibid*, pp 86-7.
  38. *Ibid*, p 96.
  39. *Ibid*, p 109.
  40. *Ibid*, p 273.
  41. *Ibid*, p 74.
  42. See *ibid*, pp 86-9.
  43. See *ibid*, pp 85-7.

44. Ibid, p 87.
45. Ibid, p 88.
46. Ibid, pp 87-8 (ellipsis Lacan's).
47. Ibid, p 88.
48. Ibid, p 177.
49. Ibid, pp 179-80.
50. See ibid, p 178.
51. Ibid, pp 178-9.
52. Ibid, p 195.
53. Ibid, pp 194-5.
54. See above, n 3.
55. Jacques Lacan, 'Seminar of 21 January 1975', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), op cit, pp 162-71, p 164.
56. See Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 7.
57. Ibid, p 9.
58. Ibid, p 12.
59. Ibid, p 158.
60. Ibid, pp 159-60.
61. Ibid, n 2.
62. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychical consequences', loc cit.
63. Jacques Lacan, 'Seminar of 21 January 1975', p 168.
64. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 80.
65. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychical consequences', loc cit.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid, p 336.

69. Sigmund Freud, 'The dissolution of the Oedipus complex',  
p 321.
70. See above, n 35.
71. Sigmund Freud, 'The uncanny', trans James Strachey, in  
Pelican Freud Library Vol 14, London etc, Penguin, 1985,  
pp 336-81, p 368.
72. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 96.
73. Sigmund Freud, 'Fragment of an analysis of a case of  
hysteria', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library  
Vol 8, London etc, Penguin, 1977, pp 31-164, p 130. The  
'Dora' case has been widely discussed by feminist and other  
critics: see eg the essays in Charles Bernheimer and Claire  
Kahane (eds), In Dora's Case: Freud - hysteria - feminism,  
London, Virago, 1985.
74. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 143-5; the  
hoop net schema itself appears on p 144.
75. See *ibid*, p 146.
76. *Ibid*, p 159.
77. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 139-42 for a full  
exposition of the schema and its significance in the concept  
of the imaginary. The schema is also discussed at length by  
Jacqueline Rose in Sexuality in the Field of Vision, pp 166-  
97.
78. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 144-6 and p 159.
79. Sigmund Freud, 'Fetishism', trans James Strachey, in Pelican  
Freud Library Vol 7, pp 345-57, p 352.
80. For an introduction to the history of Lacan's 'return to  
Freud' see Juliet Mitchell's and Jacqueline Rose's

introductions to Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds),  
 op cit, esp pp 1-5 and pp 27-9 respectively; for a more  
 extensive discussion see Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, pp 8-18.  
 Lacan makes continual blistering attacks against a variety  
 of schools of analytic thought throughout his works: see  
 for example Seminar Book 1, pp 113-7 (against Jungianism)  
 and pp 208-19 (against object relations theory); The Seminar  
 of Jacques Lacan Book 2: the ego in Freud's theory and in  
 the technique of psychoanalysis, 1954-5, trans Sylvana  
 Tomaselli, Cambridge etc, Cambridge University Press, 1988,  
 p 58-9 (against ego-psychology); The Four Fundamental  
 Concepts, pp 152-3 (against Jungianism) and pp 131-8  
 (against ego-psychology). All of these schools are attacked  
 from the standpoint of their being misreadings or  
 misappropriations of Freud.

81. Jacques Lacan, 'The subversion of the subject and the  
 dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious' in Ecrits:  
 a Selection trans Alan Sheridan, London, Tavistock/  
 Routledge, 1989, pp 292-325, p 310.
82. See Sigmund Freud, 'The dissolution of the Oedipus  
 complex', pp 317-8.
83. For a detailed exposition of this see Jacqueline Rose's  
 introduction to Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds),  
 op cit, pp 36-40 and Elizabeth Grosz, op cit, pp 103-5.
84. Sigmund Freud, 'Totem and taboo', trans James Strachey, in  
Pelican Freud Library Vol 13, London etc, Penguin, 1985,  
 pp 45-224, pp 203-5.

85. Sigmund Freud, 'Group psychology and the analysis of the ego', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 12, London etc, Penguin, 1985, pp 93-178, p 168.
86. Ernest Jones, Sigmund Freud: Life and Works Vol 2, London, Hogarth Press, 1955, p 48.
87. Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, The Freud/Jung Letters, trans Ralph Mannheim and R F C Hull, London, Penguin, 1991, p 100.
88. Ibid, p 124.
89. Jane Gallop, Reading Lacan, New York and London, Cornell University Press, 1985, p 107. "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden" is a quotation from Freud's New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (trans James Strachey, Pelican Freud Library Vol 2, London etc, Penguin, 1973, p 112) on which Lacan makes extensive commentary: see eg Ecrits: a Selection, pp 128-9 and pp 299-300; The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 44-5.
90. See Jacques Lacan, 'The meaning of the phallus', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 83-4.
91. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 11.
92. Ibid, p 232.
93. Jacques Lacan, 'Seminar of 21 January 1975', p 167.
94. Jacques Lacan, 'A love letter (une lettre d'amour)', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 149-61, p 151.
95. Jacqueline Rose's introduction to Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 32-3.
96. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 36; see

- also *ibid*, pp 224-7.
97. This is how Freud is described in the dedication of Ernest Jones' biography of him: "To Anna Freud, true daughter of an immortal sire" (Ernest Jones, *op cit*). It is noteworthy in this connexion that Lacan attacks Anna Freud for being insufficiently 'Freudian'; see Seminar Book 1, p 67.
  98. Marcelle Marini, *op cit*, p 84 (my translation).
  99. *Ibid*, p 85 (my translation).
  100. For an exposition of the functions of condensation and displacement in the workings of the unconscious, see Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, pp 383-419; cf Elizabeth Grosz, *op cit*, pp 87-91.
  101. For an account of this period in Lacan's career *when, having* been banned from conducting formal training analyses, Lacan in protest resigned from the Société Française de Psychanalyse altogether, and indeed shortly thereafter announced the founding of his own school of psychoanalysis, see Elisabeth Roudinesco, Jacques Lacan & Co: a History of psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985, trans Jeffrey Mehlman, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1990, esp pp 359-69; also Marcelle Marini, *op cit*, pp 123-34. The photographs of Freud and his disciples to which Lacan is alluding include pictures of Freud surrounded by members of the IPA; see eg Ernest Jones, *op cit*, p 94 and plate.
  102. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 3.
  103. *Ibid*, p 4.
  104. *Ibid*.

105. Marcelle Marini, *op cit*, p 199 (my translation).
106. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 50.
107. *Ibid*, p 38.
108. Jacques Lacan, 'Intervention on transference', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 61-73, p 68.
109. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 252; cf above, n 14.
110. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 262; see also previous chapter, where I discuss this passage in a slightly different context. Lacan's exploration of the link between femininity and the place of God is continued in his famous seminar Encore: see 'God and the jouissance of ~~The~~ Woman', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 137-48, in which he considers the relation between feminine jouissance and God as the Other.
111. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 12.
112. See above, n 92.
113. Jacques Lacan, 'Seminar of 21 January 1975', p 167.
114. Jacques Lacan, 'The subversion of the subject', p 311 (square brackets mine).
115. Jacques Lacan, 'The meaning of the phallus,' p 83.
116. See Sigmund Freud, 'The dissolution of the Oedipus complex', pp 317-8, and 'Fetishism', pp 352-4.
117. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 144.
118. *Ibid*, p 159.
119. See Jane Gallop, *op cit*, pp 107-8.
120. See above, n 38.

121. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 86.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 1: Freud's papers on technique, 1953-1954, trans John Forrester, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 137.
2. Jacques Lacan, The Seminar Of Jacques Lacan Book 2: the ego in Freud's theory and in the technique of psychoanalysis, 1954-1955, trans Sylvana Tomaselli, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 257.
3. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 219.
4. Ibid, p 179.
5. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 306.
6. A 'degree' of meaning only however: "meaning survives only deprived of that part of non-meaning that is, strictly speaking, that which constitutes in the realisation of the subject, the unconscious" - Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts Of Psychoanalysis, trans Alan Sheridan, London etc, Penguin, 1986, p 211.
7. Ibid, p 273. For a discussion of the history of this shift - from hypnosis to psychoanalysis - see John Forrester, The Seductions Of Psychoanalysis: Freud, Lacan and Derrida, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp 30-47; see also Ruth Leys, 'The real Miss Beauchamp: gender and the subject of imitation', in Judith Butler and Joan W Scott

- (eds), Feminists Theorize the Political, London and New York, Routledge, 1992, pp 167-214, for a discussion of the distinction as it is played out in analytic practice.
8. The schema appears in Sigmund Freud, 'Group psychology and the analysis of the ego', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 12, London etc, Penguin, 1985, pp 91-178, p 146; reproduced in Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 272.
  9. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 272-3.
  10. Sigmund Freud, op cit, p 157.
  11. Sigmund Freud, 'The uncanny', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 14, London etc, Penguin, 1985, pp 339-76, p 368.
  12. Ibid.
  13. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism: an introduction', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 11, London etc, Penguin, 1984, pp 61-97, p 88.
  14. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 133.
  15. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 90.
  16. Ibid.
  17. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 141.
  18. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 272-3; cf above, n 7 and n 9.
  19. See above, n 5.
  20. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 273.
  21. See Sigmund Freud, 'The dynamics of transference', trans James Strachey, in The Standard Edition Of The Complete Psychological Works Of Sigmund Freud Vol 12, London, Hogarth

- Press, 1958, pp 98-108, pp 99-100 (not available in Pelican Freud Library).
22. See Sigmund Freud, 'Observations on transference-love', trans James Strachey, in Standard Edition Vol 12, pp 158-71, pp 168-9 (not available in Pelican Freud Library).
  23. Sigmund Freud, 'Group psychology', p 144.
  24. Ibid, p 145.
  25. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 185-6.
  26. Ibid, p 142.
  27. Jacques Lacan, 'Le temps logique et l'assertion de certitude anticipée: un nouveau sophisme', in Ecrits, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1966, pp 197-213. A fragment of the paper is translated in John Forrester, op cit, pp 178-9, and the paper as a whole is discussed at length, ibid, pp 168-218.
  28. See Jacques Lacan, 'Le temps logique', p 198.
  29. See ibid, pp 204-7.
  30. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 2, p 287.
  31. Ibid, pp 290-1.
  32. A similar point is made in John Forrester, op cit, p 189.
  33. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 31-2.
  34. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 285-6.
  35. A certain 'staggering' of the time-for-understanding is in fact posited by Lacan as inherent to the structure of logical time itself. See 'Le temps logique', pp 199-201 and p 212, n 1.
  36. "Talking cure" is the term used to describe the psycho-analytic technique by 'Anna O', a patient of Freud's early

- collaborator Joseph Breuer. See Sigmund Freud and Joseph Breuer, Studies On Hysteria, trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 3, London etc, Penguin, 1974, p 83.
37. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 273-4.  
Cf his criticism of Balint's conception of the termination of analysis in Seminar Book 1, pp 285-6.
38. See Jacques Lacan, 'Le temps logique', pp 212-3.
39. See eg Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 18.
40. Marcelle Marini, Lacan, Paris, Editions Belfond, 1986, pp 153-4 (my translation).
41. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychological consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, London etc, Penguin, 1977, pp 323-41, pp 335-6.
42. Sigmund Freud, 'The dissolution of the Oedipus complex', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, pp 313-22, p 318.
43. See Mary Ann Doane, 'Film and the masquerade: theorising the female spectator', in Screen, Vol 23, no 3-4, 1982, pp 74-87, pp 79-80 for a separate but related discussion of the temporal structure of the boy's and girl's respective reactions in Freud's scenario.
44. See above, n 9.
45. See Sigmund Freud, 'Female sexuality', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, pp 369-92, p 373.
46. See Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, pp 230-6.
47. For a brief commentary on the problematic status of women

- analysts in Lacanian psychoanalytic institutions see Jacqueline Rose's introduction to Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne, trans Jacqueline Rose, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1982, pp 53-7; p 53, n 19 and n 20; p 55, n 21.
48. Sigmund Freud, 'Observations on transference-love', p 159.
  49. See Sigmund Freud, 'Three essays on the theory of sexuality', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, pp 31-169, esp pp 77-82.
  50. See Sigmund Freud, 'The dynamics of transference', pp 99-100.
  51. Sigmund Freud, 'Observations on transference-love', pp 162-3.
  52. Ibid, p 162.
  53. See Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', pp 80-4; this has been discussed at length in a previous chapter.
  54. Sigmund Freud, 'Observations on transference-love', p 163.
  55. Ibid, p 168.
  56. See above, n 5.
  57. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 253.
  58. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, pp 141-2.
  59. See above, n 2.
  60. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 141.
  61. Ibid, p 140.
  62. See ibid, pp 138-41.
  63. Ibid, p 261.

64. See Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 89 n 3. Lacan in fact criticises Freud's concept of the super-ego as less fruitful than that of the ego ideal: see Seminar Book 1, p 171.
65. See above, n 16.
66. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychological consequences', p 342.
67. See Jacques Lacan, 'Intervention on transference', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, op cit, pp 61-73, p 67.
68. Ibid pp 67-8 (first and third ellipses mine; second ellipsis Lacan's).
69. Ibid, p 68.
70. Sigmund Freud, 'Fragment of an analysis of a case of hysteria', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 8, London etc, Penguin, 1977, pp 31-164, p 160.
71. See ibid, p 145, n 1 and p 162, n 1.
72. Jacques Lacan, 'Intervention on transference', p 68.
73. Sigmund Freud, 'Fragment of an analysis', p 146.
74. Ibid.
75. Sigmund Freud, 'Psychogenesis of a case of homosexuality in a woman', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 9, London etc, Penguin, 1979, pp 367-400, p 377.
76. See ibid, p 391.
77. Ibid, p 371.
78. Ibid, p 397.
79. Ibid, p 384, n 1.
80. See above, n 68.
81. Sigmund Freud, 'Psychogenesis of a case of homosexuality', p 391.

82. Ibid, p 390.
83. Ibid, p 397.
84. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 11.
85. Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, trans James Strachey, Pelican Freud Library Vol 2, London etc, Penguin, 1973, p 146.
86. Sigmund Freud, 'Female sexuality', p 373.
87. Ibid, p 383.
88. Ibid, p 389.
89. Ibid, p 373.
90. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 229.
91. Jacques Lacan, 'God and the jouissance of ~~The~~ Woman', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, op cit, pp 137-48, p 144.
92. See above, n 9.
93. See above, n 58.
94. See above, n 2.
95. See above, n 20.
96. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 268.
97. Cf above, n 62.
98. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 268.
99. Ibid, pp 271-2 (square brackets mine).
100. Ibid, p 206.
101. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 82.
102. Ibid.
103. See above, n 17.
104. See above, n 26.

105. See above, n 44.
106. Jacques Lacan, 'Guiding remarks for a congress on feminine sexuality', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 86-98, p 97.
107. See *ibid*, p 91.
108. *Ibid*, p 89.
109. *Ibid*, p 92.
110. Sigmund Freud, 'Observations on transference-love', pp 166-7.
111. See Sigmund Freud, 'Fragment of an analysis', pp 135-6.
112. Jacques Lacan, 'Guiding remarks', p 93.
113. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 158.
114. Sigmund Freud, 'On narcissism', p 96.
115. Sigmund Freud, 'On beginning the treatment', trans James Strachey, in Standard Edition Vol 12, pp 121-44, p 130 (not available in Pelican Freud Library).
116. Jacques Lacan, 'God and the jouissance of ~~The~~ Woman', p 143.
117. *Ibid*, p 138.
118. See above, n 91.
119. Jacques Lacan, 'God and the jouissance of ~~The~~ Woman', p 146.
120. Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures, pp 149-50.
121. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychical consequences', p 342; see above n 66.
122. Jacques Lacan, 'God and the jouissance of ~~The~~ Woman', p 146.
123. Sigmund Freud, 'Analysis of a phobia in a five-year-old boy', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 8, pp 165-305, p 263.
124. Marcelle Marini, *op cit*, p 38 (first ellipsis mine, second ellipsis Marini's; my translation).

125. Lacan published only one case history, the 'Aimée case', which formed part of his doctoral thesis, originally published in 1932 and re-published in France in 1975, when Lacan was already famous and his own theoretical corpus developed and established. See Marini, *op cit*, p 148.
126. Jacques Lacan, 'A love letter (une lettre d'âmour)', trans Jacqueline Rose, in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), *op cit*, pp 149-61, p 152.
127. *Ibid*, p 154.
128. Jacques Lacan, Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan livre 20: Encore, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1975, p 54 (ellipsis Lacan's); cit (in English) in Stephen Heath, 'Difference', in Screen, Vol 19, no 3, 1978, pp 50-112, p 61.
129. Elisabeth Roudinesco intersperses her history of Lacanian psychoanalysis with anecdotes about Lacan and his approaches to clinical practice, particularly his controversial 'short sessions' and 'sessions of variable length', by his former colleagues and analysands: see Elisabeth Roudinesco, Jacques Lacan & Co: a History of psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985, trans Jeffrey Mehlman, Chicago University Press, 1990, esp pp 229-35 and pp 419-27.
130. There is a vast literature on the subject of women in psychoanalysis, both historical and theoretical, of which I can do no more than scratch the surface here. See eg Jessica Benjamin, 'A desire of one's own: psychoanalytic feminism and intersubjective space', in Teresa de Lauretis (ed), Feminist Studies/Critical Studies, London and

Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1988, pp 78-101; Jane Flax, Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, feminism and postmodernism in the contemporary West, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1990, esp pp 47-132; Luce Irigaray, 'The gesture in psychoanalysis', trans Elizabeth Guild, in Teresa Brennan (ed), Between Feminism and Psychoanalysis, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, pp 127-38, and This Sex which is not One, trans Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke, New York, Cornell University Press, 1985; Melanie Klein, The Selected Melanie Klein, Harmondsworth etc, Penguin, 1986, and articles by Mary Jacobus, Noreen O'Connor, Janet Sayers, Ann Scott, and Hanna Segal and Jacqueline Rose in Women: a Cultural review, Vol 1, no 2, 1990 (special issue on Klein); Ruth Leys, op cit; editors' introductions in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), op cit, pp 1-57; Christiane Olivier, Jocasta's Children: the Imprint of the mother, trans George Craig, London and New York, Routledge, 1989; Jacqueline Rose, Sexuality in the Field of Vision, London and New York, Verso, 1986; Margaret Whitford, Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the feminine, London and New York, Routledge, 1991, esp pp 27-97

131. See above, n 91.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 2: the Ego in Freud's theory and in the technique of

- psychoanalysis, 1954-1955, trans Sylvana Tomaselli,  
Cambridge etc, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 120.
2. Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 1: Freud's papers on technique, 1953-1954, trans John Forrester,  
Cambridge etc, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p 172.
  3. Jean-Paul Sartre, Saint Genet: Actor and martyr, trans  
Bernard Frechtman, London, Heinemann, 1988, pp 29-30.
  4. See *ibid*, pp 73-4.
  5. *Ibid*, p 73.
  6. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, trans Alan Sheridan, London, Penguin, 1986,  
p 80.
  7. This brief outline is, of course, grossly over-simplified.  
See G W F Hegel, Phenomenology of Mind, trans J B Baillie,  
London, George Allen and Unwin, 1931, pp 228-40; for  
discussions and expositions of the master/slave dialectic,  
see Jean Hyppolite, Genesis and Structure of Hegel's  
'Phenomenology of Spirit', trans Samuel Cherniak and John  
Heckman, Evanston, North Western University Press, 1974,  
pp 156-77; and Peter Singer, Hegel, Oxford etc, Oxford  
University Press, 1983, pp 45-74.
  8. See Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans Hazel  
Barnes, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, esp pp 236-44.
  9. See Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, esp pp 222-4; cf  
Elisabeth Roudinesco, Jacques Lacan & Co: a History of  
psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985, trans Jeffrey Mehlman,  
Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1990, pp 134-42.

10. Jacques Lacan, Seminar Book 1, p 222.
11. See Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'female' in Western philosophy, London, Methuen, 1984, pp 86-102.
12. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p 257.
13. Ibid, p 304.
14. Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts, p 73.
15. Ibid, p 109.
16. Mary Ann Doane, 'Film and the masquerade: theorising the female spectator', in Screen, Vol 23, no 3-4, 1982, pp 74-87, p 78.
17. See Christian Metz, The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the cinema, trans Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1982, p 59.
18. Laura Mulvey, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', in Bill Nichols (ed), Movies and Methods Vol 2, London, University of California Press, 1985, pp 303-15, p 310.
19. Sigmund Freud, 'Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes', trans James Strachey, in Pelican Freud Library Vol 7, London etc, Penguin, 1977, p 323-43, p 335.
20. This vital connexion between vision, masculinity and the primacy of the penis/phallus is maintained in Lacanian theory despite the claim made by various commentators that psychoanalysis, as the 'talking cure' which listens to women's speech instead of looking at women's bodies, is not voyeuristic and, for this reason, less oppressive of women than the practices of Freud's forerunners - most notably,

the practice of Charcot, who displayed hysterical women patients to students as forms of medical 'spectacle'. See Stephen Heath, The Sexual Fix, London, Macmillan, 1982, esp p 38, and Daphne de Marneffe, 'Looking and listening: the construction of clinical knowledge in Charcot and Freud', in Signs, Vol 17, no 1, 1991, pp 71-111. The status of women's speech in Lacanian psychoanalysis has already been discussed at length in a previous chapter.

21. Luce Irigaray, This Sex which is not One, trans Catherine Porter and Carloyn Burke, New York, Cornell University Press, 1985, p 24.
22. Ibid, pp 25-6.
23. Margaret Whitford, Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the feminine, London and New York, Routledge, 1991, p 149.
24. Evelyn Fox Keller and Christine R Grontowski, 'The mind's eye', in Sandra Harding and Merrill B Hintikka (eds), Discovering Reality, Dordrecht, Reidel, 1983, pp 207-24, p 207.
25. Teresa de Lauretis, Technologies of Gender: Essays on theory, film and fiction, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1987, p 2.

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