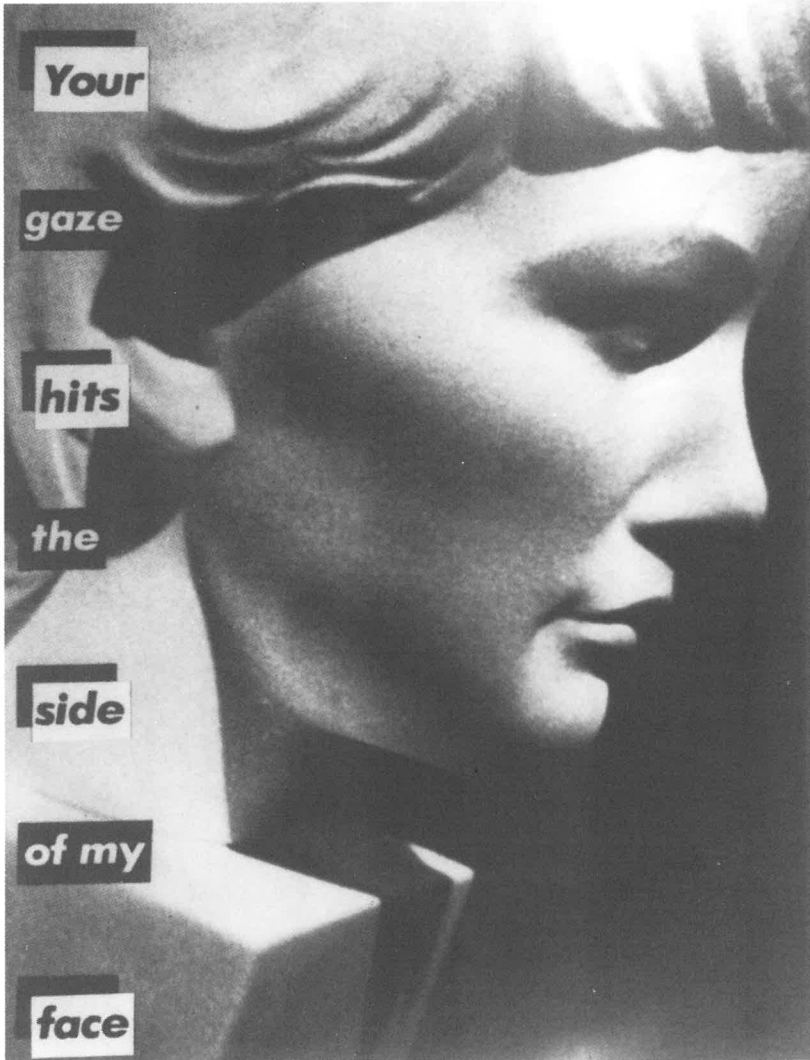


Re-presentações do Corpo
Re-presenting the Body

Organização de
ANA GABRIELA MACEDO
ORLANDO GROSSEGESSE

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BARBARA KRUGER, *Untitled (your gaze hits the side of my face)*, 1981

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Preface

*The questioning of the subject's identity and its representation have since long been a main focus of enquiry in literature as well as in the visual arts. It was our aim, when we organised the Colloquium that gave origin to this volume, on the Re-presentations of the Body, to open up the current debates on this topic to a variety of disciplines and fields of research, allowing the participants to exchange perspectives and methodologies around one same «object»: the body, the geographies that circumscribe it, the politics that define it, and the transgressions it elicits. Throughout the two days of the Colloquium, a variety of challenging analyses were presented and different outlooks were presented, comprising the following: literature, filmic narrative and psychoanalysis as discussed by Elisabeth Bronfen in her paper, «The female subject – strategies of survival in the symbolic»; the representation of the feminine body and its social function in the medieval narrative *La vie de Sainte Énimie* by Bertrand de Marseille, in the essay presented by Cristina Álvares; the cultural inscriptions and the body techniques present in two different productions of *Twelfth Night* (BBC/Renaissance Films, 1996 and Teatro Nacional S. João, 1998), discussed by Francesca Rayner; the semiotisation of the feminine body through the corporeal figuration of the doll in Rilke's essay «Puppen», from 1914 and two of Salman Rushdie's novels, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999), and *Fury* (2001), presented by Isabel Capeloa Gil; the allegory of the «bodyless man» in Italo Calvino's novel, *Le Chevalier**

Inexistent, as an anti-utopia and caricature of modern man, as discussed by Maria da Conceição Carrilho Jézéquel; the intertext of literature and cinema through the processes of montage and multiperspectivisme, discussed by Sérgio Sousa; the «visual bodies», the feminine myth and the deconstruction of the female images in the media, presented by Silvana Mota Ribeiro; in a paraliterary perspective, the body understood as a structure and emotional dictionary of the individual history, discussed by the psychologist and psychotherapeut José Luís Gomes; at last, the aesthetics of denaveling in Fernando Pessoa, as discussed by Orlando Grossegeesse.

To all the participants our deepest gratitude for their personal commitment and engagement in this Colloquium, the high level of the papers read and the debates that took place. Amongst all, we have a special debt of gratitude to Professor Elisabeth Bronfen, who travelled all the way from Zürich University to share with us her wide knowledge and to enliven our Colloquium with her energy and scintillating mind.

Finally, we wish to thank the Instituto de Letras e Ciências Humanas da Universidade do Minho and the Centro de Estudos Humanísticos for the generous support they provided towards the organisation of the Colloquium and the present volume.

Braga, 17 de Junho de 2003

ANA GABRIELA MACEDO
ORLANDO GROSSEGESSE

Prefácio

*O questionamento da identidade do sujeito e a sua representação têm constituído um tema fulcral nas artes e na literatura ao longo dos tempos. Foi nossa intenção, ao promovermos um Colóquio transdisciplinar em torno do tema das «Re-presentações do Corpo», abrirmos este debate a uma variedade de campos e de áreas do saber, entrecruzando olhares e reflexões em torno de um «objecto» comum: o corpo, as geografias que o circunscrevem, as políticas que o definem e as transgressões que aquele instaura. Nos trabalhos apresentados ao longo dos dois dias de duração deste Colóquio foram postas em diálogo diversas vozes e percorridas distintas intersecções: a literatura, a narrativa fílmica e a psicanálise na comunicação de Elisabeth Bronfen, «The female subject – strategies of survival in the symbolic»; a representação do corpo feminino e a sua função social na narrativa medieval *La vie de Sainte Énimie*, de Bertrand de Marseille, na comunicação de Cristina Álvares; as inscrições culturais e as técnicas corporais em duas produções da obra shakespeariana, *Twelfth Night* (BBC/Renaissance Films, 1996 e Teatro Nacional S. João, 1998), discutidas no texto de Francesca Rayner; a semiotização do corpo feminino através da figuração corpórea das bonecas em Rilke (num ensaio de 1914, «Puppen») e em Salman Rushdie (*The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, 1999 e *Fury*, 2001), apresentada por Isabel Capelo Gil; a alegoria do «homem sem corpo» no romance *Le Chevalier Inexistent*, de Italo Calvino, enquanto anti-utopia e caricatura do homem moderno, na comunicação de Maria*

da Conceição Carrilho Jézéquel; o intertexto da literatura e do cinema através dos processos de montagem e multiperspectivismo, apresentado por Sérgio Sousa; os «corpos visuais», a mitificação do feminino e a desconstrução da imagem da mulher na publicidade, na comunicação de Silvana Mota Ribeiro; numa perspectiva paraliterária, o corpo visto como «a estrutura e o dicionário emocional da história individual», na comunicação do psicólogo e psicoterapeuta, José Luís Gomes; por último, a estética do «corte umbilical» (denaveling) em Fernando Pessoa, apresentado por Orlando Grossegese.

A todos os participantes, o nosso profundo agradecimento pelo seu envolvimento pessoal neste Colóquio, pela elevada qualidade dos trabalhos apresentados e pela participação activa nos debates havidos. Um agradecimento particular à Professora Elisabeth Bronfen, que se deslocou especialmente para este efeito da Universidade de Zurique, pelo seu incentivo a este projecto e a sua contagiante vivacidade de espírito.

O presente volume e o Colóquio que lhe esteve na génese devem, finalmente, a sua existência material ao Instituto de Letras e Ciências Humanas e ao Centro de Estudos Humanísticos que generosamente os patrocinaram.

Braga, 17 de Junho de 2003

ANA GABRIELA MACEDO
ORLANDO GROSSEGESE

Re-presentações do corpo, questões de identidade e a «política de localização» – uma Introdução

ANA GABRIELA MACEDO
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O corpo humano entra numa maquinaria de poder que o esquadriha, o desarticula e o recompõe. Uma 'anatomia política', que é também igualmente uma 'mecânica do poder' ... A disciplina fabrica assim corpos submissos e exercitados, corpos 'dóceis'.

(Michel Foucault, *Vigiar e Punir*)¹

Começar, assim, não por um continente, por um país ou por uma casa, mas pela geografia mais próxima – o corpo. (...) A política da localização. Tentar ver, como mulher, a partir do centro.

(Adrienne Rich, *Notas para uma Política da Localização*)²

Vou circunscrever a minha reflexão nesta Introdução à questão do *corpo feminino* e à construção e des/construção da identidade aí, focando a mulher enquanto *objecto* da representação e simultaneamente enquanto *espectadora* de si própria representada. Tarefa esta que envolve alguns riscos, visto que é difícil teorizar sobre o corpo feminino sem o essencializar, isto é, sem o reduzir a pura abstracção e assim o desmaterializar. Porém, tal como afirma a

¹ FOUCAULT, Michel, (*Surveiller et Punir*, Paris: Gallimard, 1975), *Vigiar e Punir: Nascimento da Prisão*, Vozes: Petrópolis, 1996, p. 127.

² RICH, Adrienne, *Blood, Bread and Poetry: Selected Prose 1979-85* (London: Virago, 1987), pp.212-15. Tradução de Maria José Gomes, in MACEDO, *Género Identidade e Desejo: Antologia Crítica do Feminismo Contemporâneo*, Lisboa: Cotovia, 2002, pp. 19-20.

teórica Elizabeth Grosz, a excessiva discursividade em torno do corpo é susceptível de criar, como efeito reactivo, a neutralização de todo este processo, já que, como Grosz acrescenta,

Os corpos articulam discursos, sem necessariamente falarem, porque são codificados com e como signos. Articulam códigos sociais. Tornam-se intertextualizados, narrativizados; simultaneamente incarnam códigos sociais, leis, normas e ideais. Se os corpos são atravessados e infiltrados por saberes, significações e poder, eles podem igualmente, em determinadas circunstâncias, tornar-se pólos de luta e resistência, inscrevendo-se activamente em práticas sociais.³

No pólo oposto, a tentativa de iludir tal conceptualização discursiva tem por base o argumento conservador que vê o corpo feminino como um «conceito opaco» o qual, à semelhança do conceito de «mulher» não pode ser definido «em si mesmo», isto é, é sempre definido «em relação a» ou «por justaposição a *humano*» ou, mais concretamente ainda, a *homem*, tal como afirma Denise Riley⁴. Assim, nesta tentativa de materializar o conceito de uma forma não redutora, entenderemos por corpo, em sintonia com o pensamento feminista da «política da localização» (a partilha de um território espaço-temporal ocupado), a «geografia que nos é mais próxima», nas palavras da poeta Adrienne Rich: «Quando escrevo 'o corpo' não vejo nada em particular. Escrever 'o meu corpo' faz-me mergulhar numa experiência vivida, numa particularidade: vejo cicatrizes, desfigurações, descolorações, males, perdas, assim como coisas que me agradam»⁵.

Por sua vez, a filósofa feminista Rosi Braidotti, define corpo como uma realidade profundamente ancorada no social: uma

³ «Bodies speak, without necessarily talking, because they become coded with and as signs. They speak social codes. They become intertextuated, narrativized; simultaneously, social codes, laws, norms, and ideals become incarnated. If bodies are traversed and infiltrated by knowledges, meanings, and power, they can also, under certain circumstances, become sites of struggle and resistance, actively inscribing themselves on social practices». In Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of the Body*, Routledge: N.Y. & London, 1995, pp. 35-6. (Salvo referência em contrário, todas as traduções de citações neste texto são da minha responsabilidade).

⁴ DENISE RILEY, *Am I that Name? Feminism and the category of women in history*, London: Macmillan, 1988, p. 107.

⁵ ADRIENNE RICH, op. cit., *Género Identidade e Desejo*, p. 19.

«construção cultural e uma interface, um limiar de energias heterogêneas e descontínuas, uma superfície onde se cruzam e se inscrevem múltiplos códigos (de raça, classe, sexo, idade, etc.)»⁶.

É sabido que, desde pelo menos meados dos anos 60, um dos mais importantes objetivos do Feminismo tem sido o *re-conceptualizar do corpo feminino*, focando-o numa enorme panóplia de temas e discussões, desde os primados da luta em torno da contracepção, a sexualidade, a imagem de si, a auto-estima, a pornografia, a posição perante a lei, etc. Nos anos 70 as feministas em França reclamaram o corpo como o lugar da diferença e um pólo fundamental de luta e resistência (e.g., Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray)⁷. Porém, já nos anos vinte, na Inglaterra, Virginia Woolf falava às primeiras mulheres admitidas nas universidades inglesas, da necessidade de «inscrever o corpo feminino na escrita» e, mais ainda, equacionava esta questão no cerne da problematização da identidade feminina: «Ah! Mas o que significa 'ser ela própria?' Isto é, o que significa ser mulher? Asseguro-vos que não sei. E tão pouco acredito que o saibais. E não creio que alguém o possa saber até que ela se tenha podido expressar através de todas as artes e profissões abertas ao ser humano»⁸. Assim, este questionamento tem sido inseparável da problematização da identidade do sujeito, conceito este que, tal como Stuart Hall faz notar, sofreu, nos últimos anos, «uma verdadeira explosão discursiva» no âmbito de uma imensa variedade de áreas disciplinares, todas elas, e cada uma a seu modo, empenhadas na desconstrução crítica de

⁶ ROSI BRAIDOTTI, «Between the No Longer and the Not Yet: Nomadic Variations on the Body» (paper presented at the Bologna Conference in Women Studies, September 2000, p. 1). Web page: <http://4thbo.women.it/plenary/braidotti.htm>.

⁷ Veja-se, por exemplo, as palavras de Hélène Cixous em 'The Laugh of the Medusa' ('Le rire de la méduse', *L'arc*, 1975): «Write your self. ... Your body must be heard. ... To write. An act which will not only 'realize' the decensored relation of woman to her sexuality, to her womanly being, giving her access to her native strength ... her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal; ... inscribe the breath of the whole woman» in MARKS, Elaine and de COURTIVRON, Isabelle, eds., *New French Feminisms: An Anthology*, New York, Schocken Books, Univ. of Mass. Press, 1981, p. 250; ou o texto de Luce Irigaray 'Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un' (*Minuit*, 1977), bem assim como o texto de Julia Kristeva 'La Femme ce n'est jamais ça' (*Tel quel*, Autumn 1974).

⁸ VIRGINIA WOOLF, «Professions for Women», (1931), in VIRGINIA WOOLF, *Women and Writing*, ed. Michèle Barrett, London: Virago, 1988, p. 60. Tradução de Ana Gabriela Macedo in op. cit., *Género Identidade e Desejo*, p. 7.

uma noção de identidade integral, originária e unificada⁹. Ainda segundo Hall, algumas das suas mais audaciosas premissas, constituintes da crítica anti-essencialista a concepções étnicas, raciais e nacionais de identidade, articulam precisamente os conceitos de «identidade cultural» e de «política da localização»¹⁰.

No contexto do mundo globalizado e pós-industrial, as mulheres continuam ainda a lutar pelo reconhecimento da «materialidade» do corpo feminino e pela necessidade de deixar bem vivas as marcas da sua inscrição na prática quotidiana, na linguagem, na arte. Tal como a crítica feminista tem vindo a demonstrar «o corpo», enquanto signo, constructo, representação e foco potencial de resistência, constitui uma questão central no pensamento e discurso feministas contemporâneos. Griselda Pollock afirma a este respeito que os novos feminismos se constituem, em larga medida, como uma política do corpo, organizando-se em campanhas em torno da saúde, da sexualidade feminina, da luta contra a violência e a pornografia, bem como nas questões da maternidade e do envelhecimento. Estas traduzem, tal como afirma Pollock, «(U)ma nova política que articula a especificidade do feminino com a problemática do corpo, não enquanto entidade biológica, mas enquanto imagem psicologicamente construída que oferece a localização e a imagética dos processos do inconsciente, do desejo e da fantasia»¹¹.

Por outro lado, não se poderá igualmente ignorar que a proliferação de estudos e o crescente interesse ao nível antropológico, sociológico ou filosófico neste campo, é devedor, em grande parte,

⁹ STUART HALL, «Who needs 'identity'?» in *Identity: a Reader*, Paul du Gay, Jessica Evans e Peter Redman (eds.), London: Sage, 2000, p. 15.

¹⁰ «Within the anti-essentialist critique of ethnic, racial and national conceptions of cultural identity and the 'politics of location', some adventurous theoretical conceptions have been sketched in their most grounded forms» (STUART HALL, *op. cit.*, Ibid.).

¹¹ «The new feminisms are, in significant ways, a politics of the body – in campaigns around health and the claims for female sexualities, the struggle against violence and assault as well as pornography, the issues of motherhood and ageing. The new politics articulates the specificity of femininity in special relation to the problematic of the body, not as a biological entity, but as the psychically constructed image that provides a location for and imageries of the processes of the unconscious, for desire and fantasy.» (Griselda Pollock). In POLLOCK, Griselda, ed., 'The Politics of Theory' in *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts*, London and New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 6.

do pensamento de Michel Foucault. Contudo, tal como contra-argumenta Moira Gatens neste contexto, «não pode ser subestimado o impacto da teoria feminista nas ciências sociais pelo seu empenho em trazer o corpo para o foco da análise»¹². Na realidade, e tal como afirma Susan Bordo, se se pode e deve dar o devido crédito a Foucault por nos ter mostrado o modo como o corpo foi «historicamente disciplinado», as reconceptualizações feministas do corpo a partir de uma visão puramente biológica para a de um constructo histórico e um modo de controlo social (o conceito de «política do corpo» feminista), constituíram, indubitavelmente, um passo crucial para a formulação da «política pessoal» postulada pelo feminismo anglo-americano dos finais dos anos 60 e 70¹³. A este respeito será interessante recordar as palavras de Germaine Greer no seu já histórico texto, *The Female Eunuch* (1970):

É impossível defender a emancipação feminina se não houver certezas quanto ao grau de inferioridade ou de natural dependência tal como tem sido a da mulher (...) Sabemos aquilo que somos, mas não sabemos aquilo que poderemos ser ou o que poderíamos ter sido (...) As mulheres têm de aprender a questionar as noções mais básicas de normalidade feminina, de modo a reabrir as possibilidades de desenvolvimento que têm sido sucessivamente cerceadas por condicionamentos vários. (...) As novas conceptualizações em torno da questão do corpo significam que tudo aquilo que possamos observar poderá vir a ser *de um outro modo*¹⁴.

Mais ainda, e a título igualmente histórico, importa igualmente evocar o pensamento crítico e transgressivo de uma figura como Mary Wollstonecraft e a sua «Vindication of the Rights of Woman»

¹² GATENS, Moira, *Imaginary bodies: ethics, power, corporeality*, New York and London: Routledge, 1996, p. 67.

¹³ BORDO, Susan, 'Feminism, Foucault and the politics of the body' in RAMAZANOGLU, Caroline, ed., *Up Against Foucault: Exploration of some Tensions between Foucault and Feminism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1993, pp. 181-82.

¹⁴ «It is impossible to argue a case for female liberation if there is no certainty about the degree of inferiority or natural dependence which is unalterably female ... We know what we are, but know not what we might be, or what we might have been. (...) Women must learn how to question the most basic assumptions about feminine normality in order to reopen the possibilities for development which have been successively locked off by conditioning (...). The new assumption behind the discussion of the body is that everything that we may observe *could be otherwise*». In GERMAINE GREER, *The Female Eunuch*, London, Granada, [1970], 1981, p. 20.

(1792), incitando a reclamar o corpo da mulher bem como o seu intelecto, através da conquista da educação e do acesso ao poder na esfera social. Dois séculos antes das teorias de Foucault a respeito dos «corpos dóceis», subjugados por métodos disciplinares e adestrados (o corpo «que se manipula, se modela, se treina, que obedece, responde, se torna hábil»¹⁵), Wollstonecraft veio denunciar severamente o «estado deplorável» das mulheres, obrigadas a submeter-se aos desígnios (leia-se masculinos) de serem «um 'belo' defeito da criação», mulheres cujas mentes escravizadas não seriam senão um produto dos seus corpos escravizados:

Para manter a beleza física – glória da mulher – corpo e mente são subjugados por processos mais cruéis do que o enfaixamento chinês, e a vida sedentária a que são condenadas, enquanto os rapazes desfrutam do ar livre, entorpece os músculos e enfraquece os nervos (...) mas as senhoras de sociedade são escravas dos seus corpos e exultam nessa sujeição. (...) Tendo aprendido desde a infância que a beleza é o ceptro da mulher, a mente molda-se ao corpo e, enclausurada na sua gaiola dourada, dedica-se apenas a adorar a sua prisão¹⁶.

Dois séculos volvidos, importa dizer que a normalização do feminino e da feminidade é ainda hoje um factor determinante na constituição da identidade social da mulher bem como da sua avaliação (e muitas vezes auto-avaliação), em larga medida como consequência do crescente poder da imagem numa sociedade cada vez mais regulada pelos «media». Instala-se assim nas próprias mulheres uma auto-vigilância compulsiva, um auto-policiamento, identificado por Foucault como «um estado de permanente e consciente visibilidade, que assegura o funcionamento automático do poder»¹⁷.

¹⁵ MICHEL FOUCAULT, op. cit., *Vigiar e Punir: Nascimento da Prisão*, p. 125.

¹⁶ «To preserve personal beauty – woman's glory – the limbs and faculties are cramped with worse than Chinese bands, and the sedentary life which they are condemned to live, whilst boys frolic in the open air, weakens the muscles and relaxes the nerves. (...) but genteel women are, literally speaking, slaves to their bodies, and glory in their subjection. (...) Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and roaming round its guilt cage, only seeks to adore its prison.» In MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, [1792, ed. J. Johnson], 1992, pp. 129-32. (Tradução de Ana Gabriela Macedo e Ana Maria Chaves).

¹⁷ MICHEL FOUCAULT, *Surveiller et Punir*, (op. cit). Tradução Inglesa, *Discipline and Punish*, New York: Vintage, 1979, p. 201. *Apud* SANDRA LEE BARTKY, «Foucault,

Ainda neste contexto, Lois McNay levantou uma questão crucial no seu livro *Foucault and Feminism* (1992), no qual, apesar de reconhecer o importante contributo de Foucault para a análise feminista da subordinação da mulher, chama a atenção para o facto de as teses de Foucault sobre o poder perpetuarem uma forma de «cegueira em relação às questões de género» que sempre foram predominantes na teoria social¹⁸. E acrescenta: «Ao descrever o desenvolvimento do poder moderno como uma forma insidiosamente crescente de domínio e ao obscurecer todo o contexto social susceptível de organizar e regular o exercício do poder, Foucault apaga retroactivamente a natureza específica da subordinação feminina e sobrestima os efeitos normalizadores do poder disciplinar na sociedade industrializada»¹⁹.

Por sua vez, Susan Bordo argumenta que se deve ao feminismo a prerrogativa de ter invertido e convertido a velha metáfora do «corpo político» segundo a tradição de Platão, Aristóteles, Cícero, Séneca, Maquiavel, Hobbes entre outros pensadores, numa nova metáfora – a «política do corpo»:

Na velha metáfora do «corpo político», o estado da sociedade era imaginado como um corpo humano em que os diferentes órgãos e partes simbolizavam diferentes funções, necessidades e constituintes, forças, etc. (...) Para o feminismo o corpo é ele próprio uma entidade politicamente inscrita, sendo a sua fisiologia e morfologia moldada e marcada por práticas históricas de condicionamento e controle – desde o enfaixamento dos pés ao uso dos corpetes, à violação e ao espancamento, à heterossexualidade compulsiva, à esterilização forçada, à gravidez não desejada (...) ao tráfico explícito²⁰.

Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power», in WEITZ, Rose ed., *The Politics of Women's Bodies*, O.U.p. , Oxford & New York, 1998, p. 42.

¹⁸ McNAY, Lois, *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992, p. 33.

¹⁹ «By depicting the development of modern power as an increasingly insidious form of domination and by obscuring any lifeworld context which may organize and regulate the exercise of power, Foucault retroactively effaces the specific nature of female subordination and overestimates the normalizing effects of disciplinary power in industrial society». In LOIS McNAY, *Foucault and Feminism* (op. cit., p. 46).

²⁰ In the old metaphor of the 'body politic', the state or society was imagined as a human body with different organs and parts symbolising different functions, needs and constituents, forces and so forth (...) Now, feminism imagined the human body as itself a politically inscribed entity, its physiology and morphology shaped

Esta questão continua a ser pertinente no seio do feminismo contemporâneo, aliada, tal como Judith Butler argumenta, à crescente consciência da materialidade ou corporeidade do feminino, e a um entendimento do corpo não como um «ser», mas como uma «fronteira variável», como «um campo de possibilidades interpretativas», «uma superfície cuja permeabilidade é politicamente regulada, uma prática significativa num campo cultural de hierarquia de géneros», por oposição à concepção tradicional do corpo como «matéria inerte» ou «vazio profano»²¹.

Neste contexto se inscreve a necessidade de repensar as políticas da representação e o redesenhar dos limites ou fronteiras do corpo, implicando assim a descoberta de novas cartografias do feminino e, como tal, novas formas identitárias de ancoragem no social, tema este que se tem vindo a manifestar fulcral na obra de muitas artistas plásticas contemporâneas, pintoras, fotógrafas, escultoras [(veja-se, a título de exemplo, a imagem da pintora britânica Jenny Saville, «Untitled» (1994) **Fig. I**]. Estas «re-presentações» do corpo feminino são, por sua vez, teórica e criticamente fundamentadas no conceito de política da localização, tal como anteriormente o definimos, traduzindo a necessidade de redefinição de padrões de identidade feminina, de subjectividade, de papéis sociais, etc. (veja-se, por exemplo, o sugestivo trabalho fotográfico de Mary Kelly, na série «Corpus» [**Fig II**], ou a obra de Barbara Kruger, tal como exemplificada na imagem do cartaz deste colóquio, reproduzida em extra-texto no início deste volume).

Finalmente, e reportando-nos de novo à questão da redefinição do conceito de identidade em articulação com a política da localização, poderemos falar da prática feminista, concretamente num mundo em crescente globalização, e nomeadamente no âmbito da cultura visual, como um imperativo da construção de uma «geopolítica da identidade» (numa formulação de Susan Stanford Friedman), no eixo da qual é crucial o conceito de diferença, não de

and marked by histories and practices of containment and control – from footbinding and corseting to rape and battering, to compulsory heterosexuality, forced sterilisation, unwanted pregnancy and (...) explicit commodification.» In SUSAN BORDO, 'Feminism, Foucault and the politics of the body', (op. cit.), pp. 188-89.

²¹ Ver BUTLER, Judith, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (N.Y. and London: Routledge, 1993), ix; e ainda, da mesma autora, «Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions» in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Routledge, New York & London, 1990, pp. 128-141.

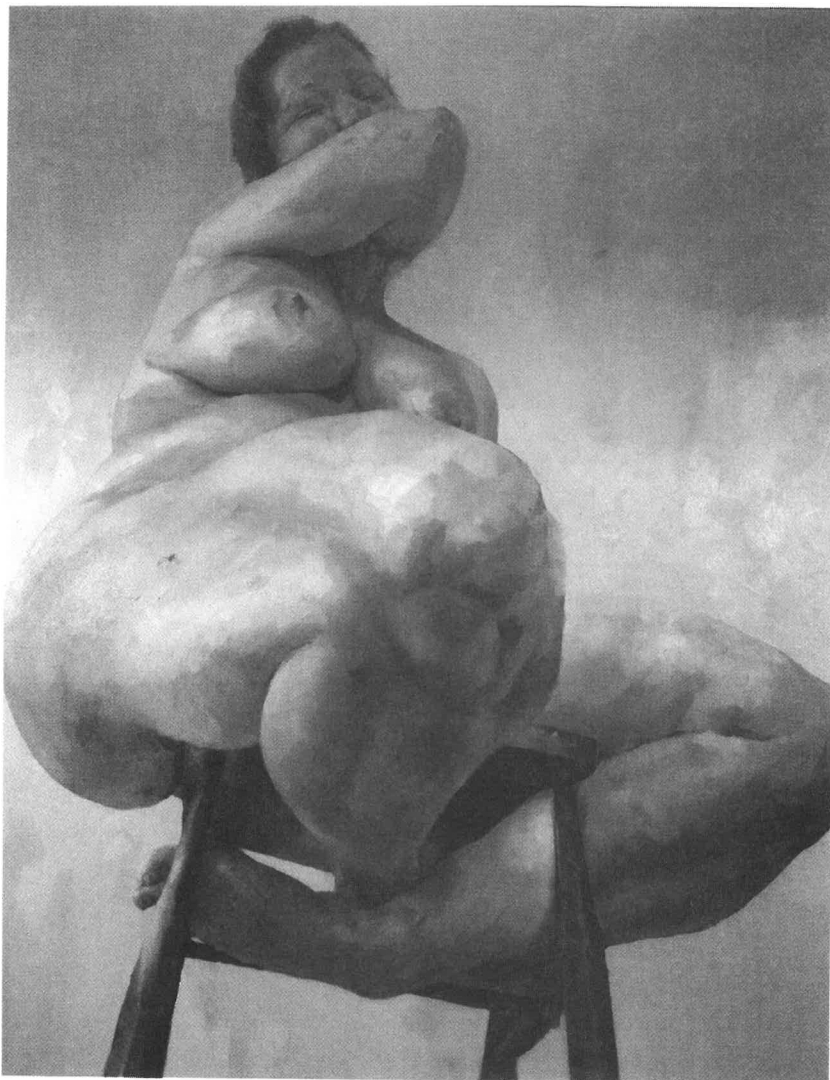


FIGURA I
JENNY SAVILLE, *Untitled*, 1994

uma forma fetichizada ou reificada, mas antes permanentemente abraçando a contradição, a deslocação e a mudança. Reiteramos assim a pertinente afirmação de Friedman quanto aos crescentes

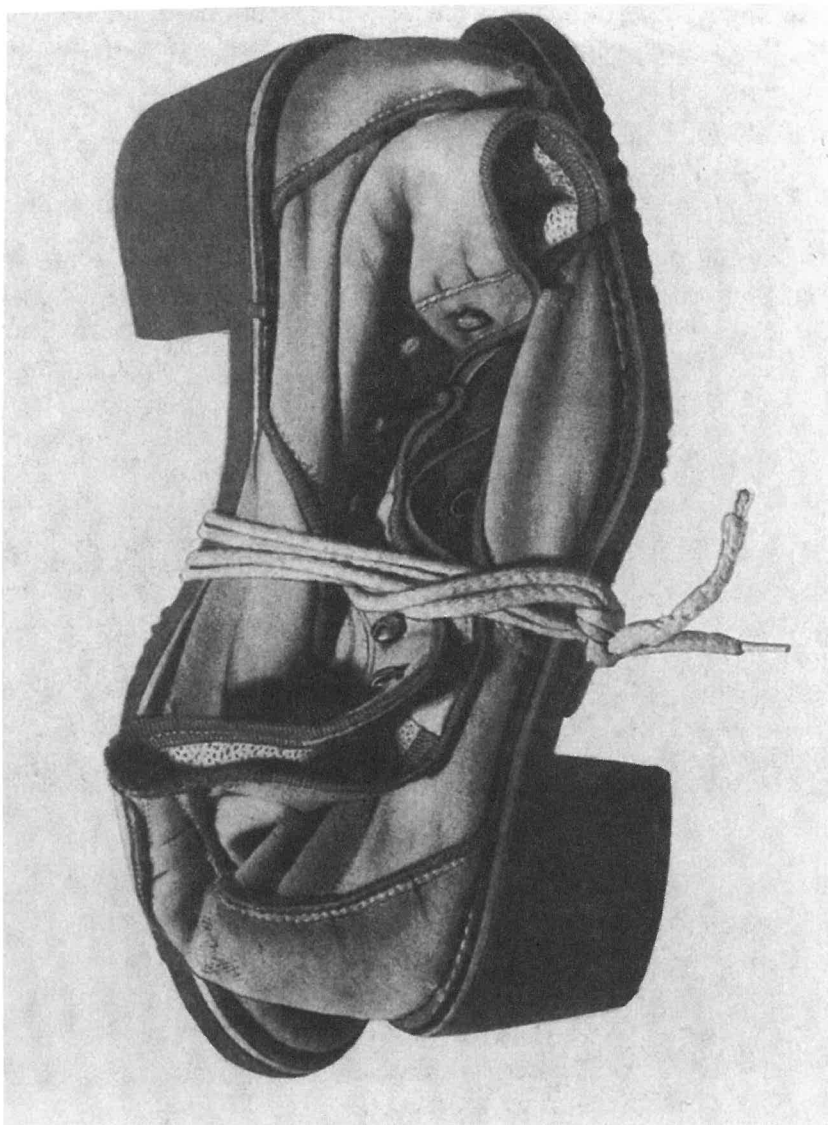


FIGURA II
MARY KELLY, *Interim*, «Supplication», 1983-85

desafios que o feminismo dos nossos dias encontra: «Partindo de um enfoque inicial no silêncio e na invisibilidade, o feminismo

transportou o seu questionamento para a localização – a geopolítica da identidade no seio de distintos espaços comuns do ser e do devir»²².

Neste contexto, o corpo deixa de ser uma ficção ou uma entidade imaterial, para se transformar numa verdadeira «localização» que não necessita ser transcendida, mas antes, e permanentemente, reclamada, e a que as novas «re-presentações» do corpo pretendem dar forma.

²² «In an increasing globalized and transnational context, feminism has become ever more acutely attuned to the meanings of borders as markers of positionality and situatedness. From an earlier emphasis on silence and invisibility, feminism has moved to a concern with location – the geopolitics of identity within differing communal spaces of being and becoming. (...) The future of feminisms and other progressive movements lies, I suggest, in a turning outward, an embrace of contradiction, dislocation and change». In FRIEDMAN, Susan Stanford, *Mappings: Feminism and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, p. 3-4.

The Female Subject – Strategies of Survival in the Symbolic

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In her seminal study, *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir insisted on the fact that within our western culture the subject is to be conceived as being encoded masculine, while figurations of alterity, delimiting the masculine subject position, take on a feminine encoding. This construction of femininity as the boundary to all that which is considered to be part of the norm, ultimately serves – thus her thesis – as a strategy of mirroring the masculine subject. For the latter requires a clear demarcation from the feminine Other to define himself. Having been relegated to the margins of normality, femininity appears in cultural texts either as an idealization or a perversion, as angel or monster. Woman either represents what exceeds or what misses the mark of a culturally designated norm. From this position of liminality, figurations of femininity often come to represent that social member, who must be excluded for the symbolic community to hold, and in so doing to constitute and guarantee its stability and survival. Owing to this cultural logic, femininity also often comes to be employed in narratives of sacrifice, so as to mark the cathartic restitution of an existing order that had fallen into crisis, and whose survival is negotiated over the body of the sacrificed woman.¹

There is, however, another equally dominant, even if overlooked image repertoire for the way in which the feminine subject fashions herself in relation to the symbolic codes that determine her, which is to say for the way the feminine subject can resignify

¹ See ELISABETH BRONFEN, *Over Her Dead Body. Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1992).

herself in relation to the symbolic codes and laws that define her, negotiating these laws of interpellation. In these texts, however, the feminine subject does not function as a figuration of alterity, as the boundary to cultural norms. Rather, at stake in the cross mapping I am proposing is a different cultural trajectory; namely the fact that with the emergence of the Shakespearean theater a significant double encoding of the feminine subject has been brought into circulation. On the one hand we find the death-driven *femme fatale*, seeking to transgress cultural and psychic boundaries – and one might want to think of Lady Macbeth or Ophelia, whose violent desire positions them beyond the symbolic laws. On the other hand one, however, also bears in mind the resilient and inventive representatives of precisely those cultural laws, which abnegate any dominant position to the feminine subject. In the latter case one might want to think of the clever daughters of the comedies, who come to take on a counter-position to the witches and the beautiful corpses of the tragedies, in so far as they claim a right to negotiate the very law that curtails, and thus narcissistically injures them, rather than radically transgressing it: Portia in *Merchant of Venice*, the Princes in *Love's Labor's Lost*, Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Primarily since the epistemic break the historian Michel Foucault places around 1800, so as to designate the beginning of modernity, this figuration of femininity has resurfaced with new resilient energy². In his study on the history of sexuality, Michel Foucault has pointed out that the birth of the bourgeois family goes hand in hand with the birth of its crisis. As the deployment of sexual strategies came to challenge the hitherto dominant deployment of alliances, primarily revolving around kinship codes rather than a particularized notion of individual happiness, the bourgeois family not only emerged as the point of interpenetration between these two deployments. Rather, this shift also gave birth to the figure of the family neurotic, as an embodiment both of an alliance gone bad and an abnormal sexuality, and came to include the hysteric daughter, the life-weary hallucinating son, as well as the indifferent or murderous mother. However, as part of this new public negotiation of family economics, within which the castrative

² See MICHEL FOUCAULT, *Histoire de la sexualité 1. La Volonté de savoir* (Paris: Editions Gallimard 1976).

law of the father was not only radically put into question, but also subtended by a crisis in masculinity – finding its most pronounced expression in the suicidal tendencies of the sons – a cultural figure came to reemerge, which Michel Foucault pays little attention to; namely the reasonable daughter, bent on survival. She functions as a sober counter-point to the fragile, hysterical or etheric girls who inspired the poetic excesses of romantic authors such as Poe, Novalis and Nerval. That the daughter should be the one positioned on the side of the law, serving, with her sober gaze, as an antidote to the delusions of her lover or brother, as well as to the dark desires of her danger-courting sisters, had already been a cultural trope in the Renaissance. Crossdressed as a man, Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* straightens out the highly deviant desires of the man her father's courtship ritual has designated for her, much as the vanquished Amazon queen Hippolyta in *Midsummer Night's Dream* is the one to pay credence to the way discord and harmony always resonate together in stories revolving around political power and love. The energy of this gesture, to borrow a term from Steven Greenblatt,³ resurfaces in a culturally significant way at precisely the historical moment, when the newly founded bourgeois family decides to broadcast its complaint publicly, with the sister, fully willing and able to negotiate cultural codes, functioning as the projection screen and the corrective for the hallucinations and gestures of self-expenditure that the young bourgeois men had recourse to, given that their masculinity had come into crisis at precisely the cultural moment when it was constructed in radical alterity to femininity. These sober-sighted daughters, thus the wager subtending this paper, came to serve as the catalyst and object of the delusions of these young men in crisis, even while offering a counter-articulation to transgression.

Let me recall for you briefly the German novella at the heart of Sigmund Freud's thoughts on the uncanny, namely E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*. In this text, the sober-sighted daughter Clara attempts, as though she were a psychoanalyst *avant la lettre*, to convince her beloved Nathanael that a reasonable explanation for the lack in knowledge haunting them since the mysterious death

³ See STEPHEN GREENBLATT, *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1988). See also THOMAS LAQUEUR, *Making Sex. Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge M.A.: University of Harvard Press 1990)

of their father, can be found. Nathanael has suddenly become convinced that Coppola, a merchant of ocular instruments, is no one other than the terrible sandman from their nanny's bed-time stories, and as such also responsible for their father's demise. In a letter she writes in answer to Nathanael's description of the uncanny re-emergence of this figure of his childhood nightmares – which was falsely addressed to her rather than to her brother Lothar in what Freud will later call a slip of the hand – she explains that the dark powers that take hold of our inner lives and lead us into a darkness we would otherwise not penetrate are doubtlessly part of the psyche. Yet it is up to us whether this dark force can gain its uncanny power over us. If we acknowledge it as a foreign and alien force that can be contained if not obliterated, then its uncanny power can find no figuration, and thus can not survive. As she explains in closing, only the belief in the foreign and alien force can actually render it as an enemy. In the course of the story, Clara will not succeed in convincing her lover of her insistence on psychic survival, because, inspired by the mechanical doll Olympia, who responds to everything he asks her with the docile confirmation «Ach-Ach-Ach,» Nathanael will plunge into an uncurtailed enjoyment of his paranoia. Indeed, he will attempt to thrust the representative of the law of reason from a church tower, and only fail at killing her because Clara's brother Lothar is able to come to her rescue in the last moment and disentangles her from the fatal embrace of her lover. Nathanael jumps from the tower instead, because he believes to espy the alleged murderer of his father among the crowd that has gathered beneath the tower to watch the sensational family drama. In so doing, he is able to detach himself forever from the paternal law, whose crisis his pathology had come to articulate, with an analogy between the phallus and the tower intended. But this early 19th century resolution of what I am tempted to call bourgeois gender trouble is so compelling, because it serves as the cultural matrix for the resilient survival as trope of the daughter, who makes a claim on the fragile but viable symbolic laws, so as to assure her personal survival over and against a death-ridden, hallucinatory transgression, and as such allows us to trace a trajectory that leads from Shakespeare's wise and canny daughters to the protagonists of 90s mainstream Hollywood cinema.

Such a cross-mapping, focussing on the need to renegotiate cultural codes, becomes particularly compelling once it is read in conjunction with the debate on gender identity and gender perfor-

mance, called forth by Judith Butler. In her discussion of the cultural construction of sexuality, Butler had claimed that gender is to be thought of as an embodiment. One can arrive at a gendered identity only by impersonating an ideal, yet as she insists, this is an ideal that nobody actually inhabits. At the same time there can be no identity before or beyond cultural influences. Gender is thus always already troubled, because it knows about its own constructed embodiment; about its impersonations. To recognize the necessity of donning a culturally constructed identity, however, opens up the possibility of a parodistic engagement with the social energies that have circulated traditionally to define and reglement the feminine subject. Butler's gender trouble pertains to a self-conscious fragmentation, reencoding, and reassemblage of prescribed notions of subjectivity, so as to trouble these certainties by virtue of a highly particular appropriation and resignification, even while these codes can never be extinguished or obliterated. Because, as Judith Butler also insists, one can never evade predefined symbolic fictions. They are what give consistency to our psychic world. They are necessary for any organization of desire. However, recognizing the psychic and social importance of symbolic fictions neither means foreclosing nor emptying out symbolic laws. Rather the parodic gesture Judith Butler proposes can be conceived as ethical, because it is aimed towards a viable survival within the symbolic.⁴

So as to present to you the contemporary refiguration of a character like Clara, who knows of the demons of the unconscious, but who refuses the pathos of hallucination, I want to analyze two films, in which the female subject emerges as the one who is clearly in control of the laws of the imaginary, using her fantasy work to negotiate her desires. At the same time these two heroines emerge as the figure, who, in contrast to her crisis-ridden masculine counterpart, forcefully stand in for the necessity of cultural laws. In the cross mapping I am proposing between *Eyes Wide Shut* and *Fight Club*, two things are at stake. First; both Kubrick's Alice (Nicole Kidman) and Fincher's Marla (Helena Bonham Carter) embody gender trouble in the sense that they both support and vex the hallucinations of their lovers. Secondly; their intervention in the

⁴ See JUDITH BUTLER, *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York/London. Routledge 1990).

fantasy realm of their lovers is tied to their claim that the imaginary domain of the female subject be conceived along the lines described by Drucilla Cornell, namely as a as a moral and psychic space of free exploration of sexual identifications and representations. As she explains in a manner relevant to both Kubrick's and Fincher's cinematic narratives, «It is precisely because we are inevitably formed by our basic identifications, because our freedom is inevitably relational and thus so fragile, that we need to be recognized as the moral source of the narration and representation of our sexual difference and our erotic lives. Only then can we move beyond accommodation.»⁵

In his last film *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), Stanley Kubrick uncannily has recourse to the figure of the clear-sighted daughter, functioning as an unofficial psychoanalyst. For the cross-mapping I am proposing it is less an issue whether he captures the tone of Arthur Schnitzler's «Dream novella,» or rather how he fails, for that would pertain to more conventional issues of intertextuality and the relation between literary text and cinematic refiguration. Rather compelling for me is the refiguration of the young woman, representing symbolic law offered to us, because like E. T. A. Hoffmann's Clara, Kubrick's Alice not only knows about the demons that can haunt one in one's dreams, but also takes seriously the message that these emanations of the unconscious transmit to the subject. Yet while she functions as the catalyst for her husband's hallucinations that befall him suddenly one night, she also serves as their corrective. In contrast to Schnitzler's literary version, Kubrick allows only the wife to confess her adulterous desires. In so doing, she actually initiates her childlike husband into recognizing his own transgressive desires for the first time. Indeed, a marital crisis is only at stake superficially. Instead the film revolves around a crisis in masculinity, precipitated by the classic psychoanalytic question, 'What does woman want?' It wasn't by chance that the screenplay writer Frederic Raphael had wanted to call his revision of Schnitzler's novella «The Female Subject.» Kubrick didn't accept the title, nevertheless, *Eyes Wide Shut* thrives off the double meaning of the word subject contained in this proposed title. The question as to what femininity as a subject of a narrative means to

⁵ DRUCILLA CORNELL, «Pornography's Temptations» in *Feminism and Pornography*, ed. by Drucilla Cornell (Oxford, Oxford University Press 2000); 566.

Alice's husband is the theme of a story, in which Alice also seeks to pit her feminine subjectivity against the prejudices of her husband regarding her desire. Bill (Tom Cruise) wants to define his wife such that she will mirror his narcissistic self-image. She resists this appropriation and instead describes to him one night in luscious colors how little he knows her desire. After a Christmas party, during which both had the opportunity of cheating on their partners, Bill claims it is part of man's essential character to entertain sexual desires for any beautiful woman he might encounter. In response to Alice's question, whether, in his function as physician, he experienced sexual desire while examining his female patients, Bill responds that his responsibility toward his family were what kept him from committing adultery. But Alice isn't willing to give in and challenges him to consider further, whether he might not feel adulterous desire in the presence of an attractive woman, even if she were his patient, thus implying that she might well feel the same, were she to meet an attractive man. Bill's unequivocal claim that his wife can have no adulterous desire, because this would be impossible for the mother of his child, finally gets Alice to offer him a story that utterly troubles his narcissistic self-confidence. She reminds him of the vacation they spent last summer in Cape Cod, and confesses that she met a man there, for whom, if he had responded to her desire, she would have been willing to give up everything, and leave her husband and child.

Initially Bill insists on his role as physician. He glances condescendingly at the woman, who is crouching in front of him on the floor of their bedroom, mocking his masculine self-assurance. As though she were one of his patients, whom he is practiced to analyze with a detached, impersonal gaze, he declares her emotional outbreak to be the result of the hashish they both took at the beginning of their conversation. Indeed, his diagnosis is that hers is a classic hysteric attack, as it was described by Sigmund Freud in his *Studies on Hysteria*. In contrast to Schnitzler's tale, in which the husband confesses his adulterous affair as well, Kubrick's hero only listens, once Alice has begun to talk about her longing for the stranger she met on Cape Cod. One might well ask oneself, whether he doesn't offer a confession, because he wants to withhold something from his wife, or because he has no clandestine desire? In either case, something has clearly gone wrong with the transference the husband intended. Alice not only doesn't accept his punishing gaze, nor does she feel herself to be morally inferior to

him. Rather she resists the fact that he is seeking to reduce her feminine subjectivity to the position of being exclusively an object within his psychic reality, by claiming for herself an independent place in the erotic imaginary of her husband, as well as the right to her own erotic imaginary, separate and distinct from his. Precisely because she was willing to enjoy the fantasy of jeopardizing everything for her sexual desire, she is, in fact, completely sure of her position within the symbolic. On closer perusal one might even detect sadistic traces in the facial expression with which she accompanies her confession. She is clearly enjoying the fact that it isn't her husband, imitating the position of the omniscient psychoanalyst, who has opened her eyes. Rather, she has helped Bill, who has begun to listen to her silently, to gain an insight into the ambivalence of his erotic emotional life. As in this night, he will, in the course of the film, repeatedly not respond to Alice's narration of her adulterous fantasies, and instead flee from the site of the gender trouble her confession has performed. In place of any confession on his own, he will instead allow his mind to wonder copiously, while desperately seeking an amorous adventure on the nocturnal streets of New York, so as to take revenge on Alice. In this sense, also, Stanley Kubrick has recourse to Sigmund Freud's work on hysterical fantasies. What, however, he explores in *Eyes Wide Shut*, are the hysterical fantasies of self-aggrandizement of his male subject, which Bill begins to play through in his mind unabashedly, in response to the narcissistic wound Alice inflicted upon him. All the women he meets during these nocturnal peregrinations desire him; the daughter of a patient, who just died; the prostitute, who addresses him on the street and takes him up to her room; the daughter of the man, from whom he rents the suit he wears at a clandestine party, and finally the masked woman at the orgy, who appears to be willing to sacrifice herself, so that his trespassing remains unpunished.

Put another way, the cross mapping I am proposing for Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* onto «The Sandman» as well as Freud's *Studies in Hysteria* allows me to highlight two significant refigurations. For one, it allows me to trace the survival of E. T. A. Hoffmann's Clara in the figure of Alice and her confession, given that on the one hand she admits to her own seducibility, even while, on the other hand, giving voice to her resilient ability to resist this transgressive desire, which would be destructive to her family and herself. For another, Stanley Kubrick also stages the survival of

the hysteric gesture of fantasizing, which Sigmund Freud sought to theoretically explicate at the end of the 19th century, based primarily on what his female patients told him. In his *Studies on Hysteria* the Viennese Psychoanalyst came to refigure the trope deployed by physicians in antiquity, namely that of the wandering uterus as to come up with a cure for those psychosomatic disturbances he could find no organic lesions for. He also sought to understand the power of the work of hallucinations, which had taken hold of the psychic reality of his patients in the form of somatically enacted wish-fantasies to such a degree that they were privileged over any experience of their actual realities.⁶ Mapped onto E.T.A. Hoffmann's «Der Sandmann» one might claim for Kubrick's Alice, that, because she has recognized the dark demons of her erotic fantasy and enjoyed these in her imaginary domain, she does not actually have to give in to them. Her husband, however, must first traverse a hallucinatory fantasy scenario, which will not have the fatal consequences it had in Nathanael's case, even while it will drive him into a state of utter despair. Because, infected by her confession, he begins to imagine the clandestine love-making between his wife and the navel officer she had met on Cape Cod, namely as a black-and-white film projected onto the screen of his own inner theater. This narrative insert allows Kubrick to render visible how much the fantasy life of his male hero is less dependent on the image of his wife, than on the stories she tells him. He not only sees before his inner eye what she has narrated to him. Rather, he only sees, because she has presented him with a narration of her adulterous desire. In so doing, Kubrick refigures what has become a cultural cliché, namely that woman functions as the desired object of the masculine gaze, pleasing and reflecting him, while at the same time being always subordinated to him. For the verbal seductive powers Kubrick endows his female subject with give voice to the way her husband is hopelessly at the mercy of his wife, precisely because he seeks to confirm his identity by mirroring himself in her. We see her fantasies through his eyes. But that also means, that she is the catalyst and the frame for his fantasies, much as she is the one who, throughout the film, influences the course they take. Therein lies another compelling refiguration on the part

⁶ See also ELISABETH BRONFEN. *The Knotted Subject. Hysteria and its Discontents* (Princeton. Princeton University Press 1998).

of Kubrick for the way Freud had come to search for an explanation for the hysteric over-excitation of his patients, given that in his correspondence with Fliess he has written about the enormous power oral tales, told to children, prove to have on adult life. Hysteric fantasies – thus Freud’s thesis – often can be traced back to things, which child had heard early on in their childhood, even if they could make sense of these stories only belatedly. With their eyes wide open they had been listening attentively to the mothers and nannies, so as to receive from them the narratives about love, danger, transgression and salvation that would come to influence all aspects of their subsequent fantasy life. It is precisely in a hysteric belief in the psychic reality of oral tales, as well as in the resilient influence such stories, heard during childhood, have on adult fantasy work that one can locate the primal scene for the son’s delusions in E. T. A. Hoffmann’s novella. As Freud notes, his misjudged encoding of the world, leading to a lethal paranoia, is less a result of the clandestine, nocturnal death of the father, than the nursery tales about a sandman, who will come and throw sand into the eyes of unruly children, who won’t sleep at night, threatening to tear these eyes out. Therein lies a further aspect of the complex juxtaposition between romantic novella and psychoanalytic interpretation, with which Stanley Kubrick explicitly plays in *Eyes Wide Shut*.

After the first third of the film, Nicole Kidman appears only sporadically. But precisely because we see Alice so rarely, the gaze, with which she looks through her glasses at her husband, functions like an ironic commentary. In one scene she is sitting with her daughter at the kitchen table, solving arithmetic problems, while Bill, who is clearly confused, enters the room to fetch a bottle of beer from the refrigerator. As their eyes meet she smiles at him deviously, as though she wanted to make him aware of the fact that she is fully cognizant of the fantasy images tormenting him. She is the director of the hallucinations he is enacting at his own body, and not, as he believes, the obscene paternal figure, played by Sidney Pollock, of whom he imagines that he has involved him in a conspiracy plot, meant to cover up the death of the young woman, who had allegedly sacrificed herself for him during the clandestine orgy. Stanley Kubrick once more highlights Alice’s role as catalyst and corrective for Bill’s hysteric fantasies in the orgy scene, which had caused such controversy when the film was first released. While Tom Cruise secretly takes part in the performance of a clan-

destine sexual ritual, being held in a villa in one of the wealthy suburbs of New York City, Nicole Kidman dreams about a mass orgy. In contrast to her husband she is able to actually experience this forbidden sexual act, owing to the strength of her imaginary domain, which he can only watch others perform it, even while in her dream his public humiliation gives her erotic pleasure. Stanley Kubrick thus calls upon us to speculate that Tom Cruise/Bill's experience of the scene, which the American filmboard insisted on censoring, emerges from the fantasy world of his wife (Nicole/Kidman/Alice). When, the following evening, Bill finds the mask he believed to have forgotten, lying in his place next to his wife, as she is peacefully sleeping in their mutual bed, he finally breaks down completely, and confesses all his hysterical hallucinations to Alice. Yet one must not overlook that it is, once again, she, who compels him to do so. After all, she staged the mask in relation to her body in such a manner as to demonstrate to him – who was never willing to respond to her verbal confessions – that she had disclosed him all along.

In the final scene of the film Alice is fully in the position of the psychoanalyst. In the middle of the toy section of a department store, her husband describes to her his own despair, explaining that he no longer knows how they might continue with their marriage. She answers fully composed and fully empowered, as though astonished at his melodramatic exaggeration, that their marriage was never really endangered. One might, of course, speak of a certain cultural progress in the area of gender trouble, if one considers that this deluded man is finally willing to listen to the sober prognosis of his wife, rather than turning her into the object of his destructive rage. Nevertheless, the old antidote against dark inner demons, which Freud had prescribed against the excessive vagabonding of his female hysteric's fantasies, namely the infamous *penis normalis* five times a day, uncannily resurfaces at the end of the 20th century. Alice explains to her husband calmly, «maybe, I think, we should be grateful that we have managed to survive through all of our adventures, whether they were real or only a dream.» She is sure of one thing, namely that they have both woken up, and will hopefully remain awake for a very long time. In contrast to Bill's naive hope, this might well be forever; she proves herself to be more conservative, and, as such, more prudent, insisting that inner demons may be banished but never fully obliterated from one's psychic apparatus: «Forever. Let's not use that word. It frightens me. But I do

love you and you know, there is something very important that we need to do as soon as possible.» Some members of the audience were shocked to hear the word 'fuck' coming out of Nicole Kidman's mouth. Yet the cross-mapping I have been proposing between Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* and both Freud's *Studies on Hysteria* as well as the figure of the clear-sighted daughter of the romantic novella, allows one to isolate this response as a compelling refiguration of the female subject in postmodern culture. Alice knows that one will always be haunted by the dark powers of desire. For this reason she, from the start, never underestimated the real consequences, which can result from the power of fantasy work. In contrast to her husband, she was always confident about her imaginary domain, which is why she can have the last word.

With *Fight Club*, David Fincher also has recourse to the cultural trope I have been tracing, namely the manner in which the female subject comes to function both as the catalyst as well as the corrective for masculine hallucinations. In so doing, he also refers to Freud's work on the uncanny disturbances of fantasy work, notably the figure of the double. Given that, as Freud astutely notes, our fantasy work usually functions as a compensation for discontent in our everyday existence, we enjoy inventing for ourselves an alter-ego, who is more beautiful, stronger and more empowered than we are. Freud sees in this double an expression of the uncanny foreignness inhabiting the ego; a symptom for the sense of discontent, which calls upon the day-dreamer to enter into the imaginary domain in the first place. The double offers an encrypted message about the desires, which the subject, who has invented him, can not directly confront, and in so doing helps him organize his obscene, and often self-destructive enjoyment into a viable fantasy scenario. However, the same double, who, as though it were subject's immortal soul, seems to allow the subject to indulge in a belief in his own omnipotence and indestructibility, is also a creature of destruction. As the agent and instigator of the delusions that give the afflicted subject a sense of self-empowerment, the double also sucks the one who has dreamed him up dry. As Freud cannily notes, «initially a guarantee for survival the double turns into an uncanny harbinger of death.»⁷

⁷ SIGMUND FREUD, «The Uncanny.» (1919) *Standard Edition* XVII (London: Hogarth Press 1955); 235

As though David Fincher wanted to signal to us that all that was about to follow must be understood as hallucinations, experienced in the real, he has *Fight Club* begin in the material seal of the wish fantasies of his nameless hero (Ed Norton). While the credits role on the screen, his camera drives backwards through the surreal landscape of his hero's brain tissue, breaking through the sweat-covered skin around his mouth, so as to glide along the revolver, which the imagined double Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt) is holding in his mouth. The flashback that follows, always accompanied by the off-screen voice-over of the unnamed narrator, relates how the two had become friends, and had ultimately begun building their own private army, so as to blow up the most important credit card buildings in San Francisco. The thirty-year-old man, working as a recall agent for an automobile insurance company, recalls that everything began with his insomnia. This can readily be deciphered as a hysterical articulation of his wish to wake up from the psychic numbness he, as a junkie of consumer culture, has fallen prey to. For this reason, he began visiting diverse self-help groups. The pain of those facing an immanent death is meant to resuscitate his own frozen emotions and senses. But in order to experience the threat of death at his own body he requires a double, who significantly comes to take shape when, sitting in an airplane, our narrator hopes they will crash. Tyler Durden teaches the narrator what it means to give in to one's destructive urges, to one's yearning for self-expenditure. In the fight club they found together, the narrator finally feels himself coming alive. The blows he deal out there and the wounds he procures in the course of these fights, convince him that he has finally woken up, although Fincher clearly stages this as a form of waking up into a hallucinatory dream-scape. In the fight club, functioning like a heterotopic countersite to their everyday reality, the young man, embracing each other in battle, can finally liberate themselves from the dictate of consumerism they find so stifling, and in so doing reach a sense of authenticity, negotiated over the power as well as the vulnerability of their fighting bodies. At the same time, David Fincher configures the fights, which his deluded protagonist enjoys together with his double in the course of his traversal of this hallucinatory dreamscape, as an explicitly oedipal competition. The young men enter the fight club so as to bond together against their fathers, whose unremitting work ethic has exhausted them. Yet what they also seek to escape from is a dangerous femininity, regardless whether this pertains to the femi-

nine side in the male subject or to the love for a woman. In one of the key scenes of the film, these two antagonisms are directly named by Tyler as the ground subtending their founding of the fight club. The narrator and his double sit in their bathroom one night, discussing whom they would like to fight, and while Ed Norton's claims he would like to fight his boss at work, Brad Pitt significantly declares his father to be his privileged sparring partner. To this the narrator responds by explaining why he can't marry. After all, he claims, he is nothing other than a thirty-year-old boy. Tyler agrees with him and takes his thoughts one step further, claiming that they both belong to a generation of young men, abandoned by their fathers, and thus raised exclusively by their mothers. Which is why he isn't so sure whether another woman is really the answer. In American culture at the end of the 20th century, one no longer needs nocturnal experiments to keep the position of the father empty.

David Fincher highlights the fact that the double induces and supports a hallucination which isn't tenable for ever by – like Stanley Kubrick – resuscitating precisely the same figure from E. T. A. Hoffmann's novella «The Sandman,» whom Freud chooses to overlook in his discussion of the uncanny. After all, the problematic relation these young men entertain toward their mother only comes up in a discussion about their agonistic relationship with their real or symbolic fathers, precisely because the narrator is only too aware that 'another woman' is at least as much his problem as all representatives of paternal authority. For David Fincher has endowed his narrator – as we discover at the very onset of the film – with a second double, namely the death-driven Marla Singer. Like Ed Norton, this pale, chain-smoking, black-dressed *femme fatale* goes to the self-help groups of the terminally ill, even though she, too, has no real illness, apart from her proclivity towards self-expenditure. All she knows is that she can die every moment, and she locates the tragedy of her life in the fact that death will not occur. But for the narrator she represents an unbearable disturbance; gender trouble pure. Her presence in the self-help groups forces him to recognize that the fantasies of merging with the dying he plays through there are nothing other than yet another drug, deadening his senses. Yet she also stands for trouble for another reason. With her entrance into his field of vision, she offers him a way of waking up completely, which he is, at this point, not yet willing to accept; i.e. relinquishing the narcissistic self-love

his fusion with his double celebrates. One must, however, not forget that it is one of the conventions of gothic literature that the uncanny alter ego destroys the one who has come to dream him up. Because the love for one's double is an extreme form of love. It readily collapses with its opposite and becomes deadly. While the double protects the dreamer from giving up his narcissism in lieu of the love for a woman, the love for the double can ultimately only be sustained by death itself. Thus it is part of this gothic trope that the beloved of the dreamer is also ultimately destroyed by the double. This is precisely the point where David Fincher deviates from the plot conventions of gothic tales, even while he significantly does not deviate from the constellation of figures one finds in E. T. A. Hoffmann's romantic novella. For David Fincher does not allow the double to destroy the woman, who threatens the homoerotic bond between him and the unnamed narrator.

This refiguration must be taken seriously, because it allows one to isolate the ambivalence David Fincher entertains toward the male community, whose fights he also so lusciously performs. The woman troubling this homoerotic dreamscape can not simply be excluded or removed. Throughout the film she remains a disturbing foreigner, who repeatedly insists on entering into the places Ed Norton has chosen as places of refuge. After she has troubled his self-help groups, she penetrates into the house on Paperstreet with her insistent desire, where the narrator lives with his double. Repeatedly her clear-sighted gaze radically questions his bizarre existence on the periphery of the city, as she also puts into question the presence of his private army in his back yard, once the fight club mutates into project mayhem, moving its enjoyment for destruction from the cellar beneath a bar to the open streets of San Francisco, the designated stage for their terrorist attacks. Indeed, to the end she insists on her clear-sightedness and uses her verbal retorts to resist the way in which her lover seeks to completely subsume her within his dream world. In this sense David Fincher's female subject functions as the corrective to the totaling male bond celebrated in *Fight Club*. She doesn't fit into the 'we' that the young men have carved out for themselves in the cellar rooms where their fights take place. Which is why her gesture of contradicting the protagonist at every step is also so dangerous. By insisting that she has a right to define the reality she shares with him, she demonstrates to the narrator that a retreat into a male community completely excluding the feminine position is neither

possible or tenable. Finally she directly addresses the unnamed narrator's madness, much as E.T.A. Hoffmann's Clara does in her letter to Nathanael. While they are sitting together in a coffee shop, and the narrator tries to convince Marla that she has to leave town, because, owing to him, she is in danger, she immediately recognizes that his story emerges from his paranoid anxiety. The narrator has realized that he only imagined his double. But he is, as yet, not willing to include her in this recognition, because only her exclusion allows him to continue to hold onto the masculine autonomy, which the 'we' of the fight club celebrates. But Marla does not accept his wish that she accommodate herself completely to his fantasy-scape. Instead, she advises him to seek professional help, and insists, once she has realized how little he is able to listen to her, on troubling his hallucinations to the end. After he has forced her to get onto a bus which just happens to stop in front of the coffee shop, asking her not to let him see where she is going, as this would continue to endanger him, she turns around on the steps of the bus, forcing him to turn around as well and face her interpellation: «You are the worst thing that has ever happened to me,» she claims in parting.

The refiguration, which David Fincher undertakes by insisting on the survival of his clear-sighted Marla, allows us to recognize that he is less interested in the neurotic self-destructive urges of young American men around thirty, than in the possibility of a re-entry into the symbolic. One might call this a form of waking up, both from the living death of an everyday reality lived under the auspices of consumer culture, as well as from a lethal self-love, negotiated as the homoerotic bond to one's double. Once the narrator has nothing to lose, not even his life, he has recognized the foreignness within himself and can thus also accept the alterity of the other; the alterity of woman. This may explain why Tyler, who repeatedly insisted that Marla is a threat to their friendship, recalls his rival to the place where he hopes to witness his grandiosely staged explosion of the credit card buildings, when everything already seems lost. David Fincher's neurotic son thus follows the path of recognition, which E. T. A. Hoffmann's Nathanael refuses. Not he is consumed by his double, but rather consumes him instead. He wakes up and gazes, for the first time, with open eyes onto the nocturnal world opening up in front of him, just before the architectural manifestations of paternal authority, the credit card buildings, are about to collapse. Yet significantly, he will come to

witness this spectacle, which David Fincher stages as though it were a film within a film, not in the company of Tyler, but rather holding Marla's hand, after having explained to her that she met him at a very strange moment in his life.

After the story we have been presented as a flashback had finally reached the point where *Fight Club* began – namely with the narrator realizing that Tyler is pushing a revolver into his mouth – Ed Norton had taken the gun and shot himself in the head, thus extinguishing the double that had emerged from his mind-scape. At this point, Marla had taken the position now suddenly become empty, so that her sudden and unexpected reappearance proves to be the core of Fincher's fantasy scenario. Her resilient survival, and with it the return of everything which, negotiated over her body, the narrator has sought to repress from his psychic reality, transmits the message that one can not escape from love. Yet because this reappearance of Marla allows Fincher to insist on the fact that one must choose love, it also serves to negotiate a different dictum, namely that one can not escape from symbolic laws. The paradox consists in the fact that, by making this choice, one gives up the freedom to choose, and thereby allows contingency to appear as though it were fateful necessity. That is, of course, precisely the figure of thought Freud highlights for the correlation between beautiful woman and death in his thoughts on the motive of the three caskets: «One chooses, where in reality one obeys a compulsion, and what one chooses isn't terrifying, but rather the most beautiful and desirable.»⁸ In *Fight Club*, the fact that it is the beautiful and desirable Marla one comes to represent the law of love, only to introduce with it an acceptance of precisely the symbolic law one has no choice but to accept, may be read as a form of mitigating its harshness. At the same time, by using the reappearance of the beautiful woman to negotiate the unavoidability of a false choice, Fincher performs precisely the trope I have been making a claim for all along; namely that it is the female subject, who in this *rite de passage* takes on the position of the law. The two protagonists do not have to jump to their death from a phallic tower, as was the case in «The Sandman.» In Fincher's postmodern refiguration, the architectural materialization of paternal authority – the credit card

⁸ SIGMUND FREUD, «The Theme of the Three Caskets.» (1912) *Standard Edition* XII (London: Hogarth Press 1958); 299

buildings – can collapse instead. They aren't necessary anymore, because, owing to the love contract between the hero, who has now fully woken up from his delusions, and his clear-sighted lover, the law these buildings symbolized has been recognized as the symbolic mandate binding the couple together; in a gesture of trust and commitment, which requires no further edifices. But then, the final tableau also commemorates another fiction, namely the happy-end to romance. As Mladen Dolar notes, «the alien extimate kernel that love has to deal with and which lies at the bottom of its paradoxes is the only precarious and evasive hold for the subject, and at the same time what makes its impossibility.»⁹

⁹ MLADEN DOLAR, «At First Sight.» *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects*. Ed. by Renata Salecl and Slavoj Žižek (Durham: Duke University Press 1996); 150.

Bodies Beyond the Fall. The Allure of Dolls from Rilke to Salman Rushdie

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*Der Mensch, an seiner Freiheit zweifelnd, schuf
Sein Bild, die Marionette. Leicht gelenkt,
Ein kleiner Adam, lebt sie auf und schwenkt
Die Glieder quick. Ein himmlischer Beruf.*

(Alfred Wolfenstein, «Theater»)

Prolegomena: Is there anybody out there?

Barbara Kruger's *dictum* «Your Body Is a Battleground» (1989), though clearly addressing woman as the subject and object of artistic creation/manipulation and thus deconstructing the male gaze that objectifies the feminine self, applies in a deterritorializing fashion, to use the term coined by Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze, Guattari 21), to the «body wars» that have marked Western culture. Stronger than what Elizabeth Grosz has called a «conceptual blind spot» in Western thought (Grosz 3), the body has indeed been a battlefield for power struggles and ideological wars. The normalizing procedures that, according to Michel Foucault, constrain Western discourse on the body have shown that *somatophobia* (*soma*, Gr. body) is at the core of our culture. In the twentieth century the «retreat from the body» (*remotio corporis*) is intimately intertwined with what Dietmar Kamper calls «an aesthetics of absence», i.e. increasing fictionalization and virtualization of culture through abstraction that arises out of a historical need to extend human power over objects and thus turns the body into an abstract

«Thing».¹ The *remotio corporis* has, however, been paired with a new appraisal of the body as fundamental in a new logic of creation, or rather of creation as incorporation,² as Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter state in their introduction to the volume *Incorporations*: «Indeed, incorporation may well be the name of the new primary logic of creation and innovation in our late modern world.» (Crary/Kwinter 15).

In fact, the crisis of reason as an unchallenged hegemonic explanatory system that pervades late modernity has led to a corporeal turn not only in the arts but also in the humanities, in a search for meaning beyond the limits and agendas underlying language. Abundant examples of this «turn» or re-turn to the body in the arts, that already has a long tradition in classical painting or sculpture, can be witnessed in the more radical action and body-art of authors such as Marina Abramowicz and Damien Hirst, in the postmodern performance art, or in the ritual theatre of Hermann Nitsch, to name but a few. On the other hand, a new aestheticism that evades a reality, perceived as falling apart, and moves into alien, virtual realms looking to inspire and be inspired by, comes to represent a new form of *somatophobia*, replacing an aching and a lustful body by dismorphic abstract hyperbodies. The aporia at the core of the new postmodern virtual esthetics is that this *esthétique de la disparition* (Virilio 10), the disappearance of the body in hyperreality, stems from the same critical impulse that has led to the modern criticism of reason, as found in the work of authors such as Nietzsche, who proclaims a philosophy that has parted from reason and is performed on the borderlands of corporeality, (*am Leitfaden des Leibes*). Whilst the latter are looking for *somebody* to go by, the former are sure that there is *no-body* there.

In the search for the body out there, and either as the foreground to a *corpus absconditus* (Kamper 19) or as the manifest of a *corpus triumphans*, aesthetic representations have been used in the frontlines of the «body wars». Representational bodies, such

¹ «Dieser Zwang zur Abstraktion vom Körper ist die Folge einer historischen Erweiterung der menschlichen Macht über Dinge, einer durchaus künstlichen Installation, die in ihrem Umfang, in ihrer Struktur und in ihren Weiterungen gerade erst deutlich zu werden beginnt.» (Kamper 7)

² Incorporation is understood by Crary and Kwinter as meaning both integration and embodiment, i.e. integration into a determined semiotic and cultural system and the acquisition of a body (Crary/Kwinter 14).

as dolls, are both witnesses and players in the ongoing debate. Spiritless and sexless, situated beyond the Aristotelian matter/spirit gap, avoiding the Cartesian dichotomy between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, the artificial body of the doll plays upon its likeness to the human counterpart, while overcoming the erotic materiality of the natural body and its finite dimension, thus presenting grace as its *primum mobile* instead of soul. Ephemeral and diaphanous, demonic and lustful, dollification has been a strand of culture from times immemorial. The doll is in fact nobody's body, the body in its most sublime dimension, the result of a sanitized «grammar of creation».

I. Beginnings.

Let us reread the beginnings. The title of this paper «Bodies Beyond the Fall» points to an appraisal of bodies that have not been subject to the Fall, the word «beyond» signifying both «outside» and «out of reach» of what Augustinian theology has called the Fall of Man from the Garden of Eden. I shall argue that dolls have been signifiers of a form of embodiment that through aesthetic performance is placed beyond the Fall, situating dollness in its origins, for better or worse, inside the premises of the Garden guarded by a Cherub with a flaming sword. Moreover, I shall discuss the impact of this edenized existence in contemporary culture, arguing that dollification may indeed be a privileged sign of the crisis in representation.

The first book of the Bible presents a grammar of the creation of the body in two somewhat contradictory narratives that nonetheless underlie the forms of Western discourse on the body and sexual difference. First, in Gen 1, 26-28 we learn that on the sixth day of creation God created mankind out of His spirit:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Gen 1, 26-28)

This passage shows humanity as a creation *ex nihilo* of God's will and devised in His own image. However, man is presented as a copy created after the likeness of a being that has no body (Eilberg-Schwartz 43-44). According to rabbinic tradition and to the books of the Old Testament, God in His dealings with humans is mostly perceived as bodiless and sexless.³ The issue of God's image leaves the whole notion of *mimesis* that underlies the narrative at odds.⁴ An embodied being created in the image of a bodiless original, man would thus be a godlike being trapped in a godless body. If the original, i.e. God, has *no-body*, what is man's body but a fake copy? If so, as an irreferential copy, the human body evades the very notion of normativity in this story of creation. Man's form is *like* God's, but he *is not* He. Creation arises out of a twofold game of likeness and difference. First, the creature plays upon similarity, while being a

³ Several episodes, such as that of the burning bush, or when God speaks to Abraham, provide examples of the formlessness of God, perceived as a spirit. This concept would probably have supported the prohibition of depicting God's image in the Old Testament. See for instance the following passage in Deuteronomy 4:12-24: «The Lord spoke to you out of the fire; you heard the sound of words but perceived no shape – nothing but a voice ... For your own sake, therefore, be most careful – since you saw no shape when the Lord your God spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire – not to act wickedly and make for yourselves a sculptured image in any likeness whatever: the form of a man or a woman, the form of any beast on the earth... Take care, then, not to forget the covenant that the Lord your God concluded with you and not to make for yourselves a sculptured image in any likeness, against which the Lord your God has enjoined you.» (See Eilberg-Schwartz 43). However, there are some passages that suggest God's embodiment, such as Exodus 33:23, when God speaks to Moses and confides that He will pass by him, thus allowing Moses to see His back but not His face, or in Ezekiel 1:26-28, when God is portrayed with the semblance of a human form.

As to the likeness of man to God, Nahum Sarna argues that it should be perceived as that which pertains to character and not in terms of the body: «The idea of man 'in the image of God' must inevitably include within the scope of its meaning all those faculties and gifts of character that distinguish man from the beast and that are needed for the fulfillment of his task on earth, namely, intellect, free will, self-awareness, consciousness of the existence of others, conscience, responsibility and self-control. (Sarna 15-16).

⁴ The many and varied theological and cultural positions on this subject and the complexity of the theme do not allow me to pursue at this moment a consequent discussion, so I shall point to the three main issues anchoring the debate: a) God is both bodiless and sexless; b) God is formed out of man's desire; c) God is sexually differentiated and could be either male or, for feminist theologians such as Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, a female (Fiorenza 35). See on this subject Eilberg-Schwartz 46ff.; Brenner 56-71.

deviation of the spiritual creational act, a sort of Frankenbody, showing that monstrosity and the norm are intimately intertwined in this story about the origins of the physical body. Second, mankind is *like* God but not as Him, because humanity is sexually differentiated. In the quote above we may already read the creation of sexual difference («male and female created he them»), showing that the primeval creation act is pervaded by difference, whereon rests the human reenactment of this primeval moment in reproduction («be fruitful and multiply»).

Yet, the plot does not end here, for as we all know in Gen 2 the mode of creation is quite another. Creation of the body *ex nihilo* is replaced by creation out of the ground and God is depicted as a potter or puppet master that breathes life into the nostrils of a dollified man: «And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.» (Gen 2:7) The first human, according to this narrative, is thus male. Later in the same chapter, the creator mimetizes the creation of the male body, presenting the female as a secondary creation, a piece taken out of the same substance as man, and objectified as man's helper:

And the Lord said, *It is* not good that man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him. (Gen 2:18)

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Gen 2:20-25)

Whereas the first narrative of creation in Genesis 1 presents body creation as arising out of the will and the word of God, a performative act of irreferential *mimesis*, determined by similarity but excluding equality (Weber 5), and granting human beings the

power of mimetic re-creation through sexual reproduction, the narrative in Gen. 2 shows creation to be an aesthetic act. The Pygmalion God creates a doll out of clay and breathes life into it. The substance of the doll precedes human matter. Moreover, the creation of the female out of man's substance places her in the objectified position of a doll, functionalized to be man's helper. Contrary to man, she is left without the touch of divine breath and is totally dependent on the male to be and to act. On the other hand, in this chapter, sexual difference does not presuppose reproduction. Male and female are human representations, going about naked without consciousness and the knowledge that underlie sexuality.⁵ Living an innocent – in a sense esthetic – existence, they are at this stage like living dolls in the Garden of Eden.

Going a step further, Gen. 3 narrates the end of this aesthetic existence with the advent of transgression. Lured by the serpent, Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden, thrown into the world due to eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of good and evil (Gen 3:6). Consciousness, which arises out of this episode, structures the moral discourse that leads man and woman to be ashamed of their nakedness and sow aprons out of fig leaves (Gen 3:7),⁶ thus linking sexual awareness to moral and cultural norms. Moreover, the episode of the Fall also structures an ethics of sexual difference. A set of cultural rules tasks the male with the socially active and the productive side of the relationship. It is his duty to supply maintenance for the woman through hard labour, as she is the lesser, feeble partner. The woman is thereafter marked as socially unproductive and as sexually active, what makes her prone to deviation. Yielding to biology and destined to bear children, she is a lustful being, whose desire will be normalized by submission to her husband and the pains of childbirth.⁷ In this sense, conception and reproduction are branded with the loss of grace, arising from the Fall.

⁵ Sexuality is here understood, in Michel Foucault's sense, not only as a biological proposition, but also as the power practices, the political and moral restrictions present in the discourses that shape sexuality.

⁶ This episode is perceived by the philosopher Immanuel Kant in *Mutmaßlicher Anfang der Menschheitsgeschichte* (1786) to mark the beginning of civilization, identified with the reign of reason and moral consciousness (Kant 113).

⁷ «Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.» (Gen 3:16)

Bringing together the threads of the three chapters of Genesis, one may observe a gap between the following two forms of re-enactment: reproduction and representation. Whereas the former rests on a form of re-creation arising out of difference, in Gen 1, and resulting from transgression and awareness of sexuality, in Gen 3; the latter stems from the renewal of the creator's presence in the aesthetic form of the doll made of clay, in Gen 2. Reproduction is the visible sign that mankind falls short, eternalizing physical forms that deviate from the (unknown, because bodiless) norm, but struggling to reach sublime perfection. Monstrous due to its insufficiency, mankind is also deviant by its very existence outside the Garden of Eden,⁸ trapped between the base and the divine, as beings *in-between*. Banished from this protected space, fallen humanity will be fruitful and multiply, while at the same time striving for the lost utopia through representation, and searching for a body beyond the Fall. This is a body overcoming difference, contingency and deviation, the sublime exercise of desire and delusion as marketed in advertising and in the fashion world of popular culture, and fully embodied in the bodiless and godless doll.

II. The allure of dolls.

What then is a doll? A copy lacking an original (Treusch-Dieter 10); the longing for eternity (Lammer 131); a creation that reasserts its maker's identity, or indeed the pure replication of desire? The allure of dolls in Western culture answers all these propositions while embodying in full the mimetic drive at the core of our culture. The reproduction/representation gap has been overcome by replication, formerly an unauratic mode of creation, as Walter Benjamin states in «Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Repro-

⁸ In an insightful reflection on humanity's shortcomings *vis-à-vis* cultural rules of physical perfection, Thomas Macho proclaims: «Wir sind Monstren nicht nur, weil wir den Idealen der Mode- und Werbeplakate, den makellosen Zahlentiraden der Herrenmagazine nicht genügen [...], sondern vielmehr: weil und insofern sich in allen unseren Abweichungen, in jeder auffälligen oder unauffälligen Entstellung und Regelwidrigkeit, zeigt, dass wir *wirklich* leben und existieren. Nicht als Schnittmuster und Vorbilder, aber auch nicht als Kopien und blutleere Schatten an der Höhlenwand sind wir auf dieser Welt, sondern als freie Lebewesen: liebenswert und grauerregend zugleich, – göttlich, tierisch, menschlich und monströs. *Wir sind Zwischenwesen.*» (Macho 147).

duzierbarkeit» (1935), but closing in on the human privilege of reproduction, with the new developments in the field of genetic engineering. Not only has the renewal of a creative presence in the act of representation been overcome by replication / copy / fake / mimicry, but human reproduction seems to be following close behind. Beyond ethics, consciousness and morality, in this culture of the copy (Schwartz 141), the doll personifies the ideal likeness that nature corrupts, the sublimation of difference and the overcoming of death, replicated *ad infinitum* by the production lines of our inessential, unauratic, somebody/nobody culture. Fleeing the body and fully embracing it, literature has remarkably illustrated this tension with an abundance of dollified personae, to which I shall now turn, focusing specially on two literary reflections on the doll from a century apart: Rainer Maria Rilke's essay «Puppen» (1914) and Salman Rushdie's latest novel *Fury* (2001).

Using the latter as the touchstone for this discussion, let me quote a passage where the appeal of these representational bodies and their allure to contemporary culture is addressed:

In its origin, the doll was not a thing in itself but a representation. Long before the earliest rag dolls and golliwogs, human beings had made dolls as portraits of particular children and adults, too. It was always a mistake to let others possess the doll of yourself; who owned your doll owned a crucial piece of you. (Rushdie 73)

In the beginning, dolls were thus perceived as aesthetic performances of the self, a signifier dependent on a human signified, fetishizations of desire, and abstractions of the real body, filling a gap created by the absence of their referent. Going back to Dietmar Kamper, the latent *somatophobia* at the root of culture, caused by the fear of the body's erotic materiality, provoked a void that could be dangerous and terrible (*horror vacui*, Kamper 15), as well as enriching, leading thus to filling those voids with an army of dolls and puppets, these humanoid substitutes with such a long tradition in Western culture. The pygmalionic utopias of artificial bodies brought to life by skilled artists, dating as far back as the story of the animated statue in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,⁹ are expounded in the modern age with the Cartesian concept of the world as a mecha-

⁹ See on the many versions of the Pygmalion myth, the study edited by Gerhard Neumann and Mathias Mayer in 1997.

nism, brought about by a clockmaster God. When man is perceived as a mechanism, as Descartes states in his 1632 essay, *Traité de l'homme ou du fœtus*, the obsession with the creation of automata can be easily understood as a reenactment of the primeval act of creation, using art to try and right what nature got wrong. This 17th century study, along with those written by La Mettrie and Condillac on the engineering of the human body, are amazing reflections on the search for the perfect body, a body beyond the natural contingency of health and disease, working perfectly and incarnating an ideal golden rule.

Where nature falls short, art can achieve perfection, and in fact, this preference of the artistic over the natural pervades much of the literary reflection on the doll's body, ranging on a representative scale from Goethe's *Der Triumph der Empfindsamkeit* (1778), E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*, used as the basis for Léo Delibes' ballet *Coppelia* (1870) – where the artificial body of the doll is indeed preferred to a real woman – to Villiers de l'Isle Adam, *L'Éve future* (1885), William Hosea Balou *Automatic Wife: A Novel of the New Code of Honour* (1891) and Thea von Harbou's female robot in *Metropolis* (1926). Autonomous mechanical bodies are a major trend in what might be called literary dollification, particularly as far as the representation of women is concerned.¹⁰ However, the automaton is only one of the dollification strategies present in our culture. Christina Lammer organizes doll representation into three different stages. The first, during the early modern age, is centred on an anatomical image of the human and on the possibilities of its mechanical representation/reproduction. The second comes with the industrial age and strives for a return to the natural, attempting to remake the natural body in an artificial way, as seen in the Frankenstein story. Today we find ourselves in the third stage, which is rather more focused on replication than representation, we have arrived at the cybernetic stage, where the cyborg incar-

¹⁰ Remarkably, except for Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, dwelling on a male artificial creation that however does not fit into the tradition of the mechanical body in literature, a large part of the automaton literary tradition deals with would-be female dolls. However, in film there are several examples of male automatons. Beginning with Karel Kapek's *R.U.R* (1920), see for instance *Blade Runner* (1982), *Robocop* (1987) or *Terminator* (1985). As for the female automatons in film and video-art see Jean-Luc Bresson's *The Fifth Element* (1997) and the latest video-clip by the singer Björk «Love is all around» (2002).

nates the new dollification procedures (Lammer 13-14).¹¹ Notwithstanding the differences, and in whatever form, the sexless doll overcomes the biological destiny of its human counterpart, performing the definite conquest of nature by culture. When representing a woman, it prevails over the demonization of the female body owing to its link to reproduction, whilst embodying a sublimated desire and pleasure without fear.

A rather strange example of how the doll acts as substitute to the natural body is the story surrounding the German painter Oskar Kokoschka and his beloved Alma Mahler, Gustav Mahler's widow. The relation between the young Kokoschka and the much older Alma lasted roughly three years, from 1912 to 1915, when Kokoschka returned severely wounded from the war. However, his obsession with the former mistress was permanent, even after they had broken up. The doll-affair came about in 1918, when he met the young craftswoman Hermine Moos, who was in Dresden to organize an exhibition of her doll collection. Moos, who had been working with Lotte Pritzel, one of the most famous craftswomen of the time, was asked by Kokoschka to design a life-size doll in the likeness of Alma Mahler and according to very explicit instructions given by the artist in several letters exchanged between the two (Kokoschka 133ff.). Kokoschka even painted a life-size picture of the imagined Alma-doll (see picture 1). Hermine Moos followed the instructions by the letter, but the result was more than disappointing for Kokoschka, who was appalled by the monstrous being and eventually disposed of it (picture 2).¹² The scandal had however been triggered. Abandoned by his muse, Kokoschka sought a simu-

¹¹ Though considering Lammer's structuring a useful conceptual tool, it is faulty in that it shows these stages to be somehow self-exclusive, whereas certain forms from one of these stages may be observed in later development phases. See for instance the persistence of stage two in the continuing posthuman/cloning debate.

¹² Kokoschka describes the shock of comparing his dreams of Alma with the doll: »Als die Puppe aus dem Haufen von Material, worin sie eingepackt war, herausgenommen wurde, startete mich statt der Realisierung eines aberwitzigen Wunschtraumes, statt des verführerischen Traumwesens, von dem ich bisher fieberhaft besessen war, ein Phantom an. Was ich da sah, hatte tote Augen und entblößte eine indezente Nacktheit den Blicken aller; im schonungslosen Licht der hundert Kerzen des Kristalleuchters. Keine Illusion darüber war möglich, daß hier statt Herzenswärme, atmender Haut verführerischen weiblichen Geschlechts ein Machwerk, eine Gliederpuppe in meinen Armen lag.« (Kokoschka 113).

lated Alma in the doll, an erotic substitute, a compensation for the loss and a reassurance of the painter's former self. However, as Hillel Schwartz puts it, despite the transposition of desire, the doll when confronted with the real is definitely perceived as a shoddy forgery:

Inadequate to love, the sex doll is a shoddy forgery. Shoddy, because it belongs to that class of materials and persons 'characterized by the endeavour to pass for something superior to what they really are'. A forgery because it isolates an act from its original contexts, social, historical, biological. (Schwartz 129)

The Kokoschka episode shows that whereas woman, the negative pole of the phallus in a Lacanian reading, has no access to the symbolic order, man gives the doll, his sexless fetish, the task of filling the blind spot of female representation in the realm of culture. In our fictive culture, the body, which is not, fulfills the symbolic role denied to woman in the phallogocentric order. Perhaps the most remarkable example of a dollified take-over bid is Barbie's displacement of real life femininity from the cultural tissue. Mattel's million-selling doll has in fact occupied a place left empty by the displacement of women from the symbolic. Based on a German prototype, the «Lili» doll, Barbie was created in 1959 by Jack Ryan, better known for designing the Hawk and Sparrow ballistic missiles for the Raytheon Company. Used, as Jacqueline Urla and Alan Swedlund have pointed out, as a commodity during the Cold War (Urla/Swedlund 279), Barbie equalled the impact of a missile in a culture already dominated by performance and simulation.

In the society of the *corpus absconditum*, Barbie is a paradigm of imaginary capital, a meaning system in itself that with its simultaneously ideal and deviant body relies on the circulation of cultural capital, acting as a socialization tool for the phallogocentric order, but also depending for its survival on the absorption of the trends and tendencies of contemporary culture. Barbie, the model housewife and the fashion model, has been displaced by new personae trying to meet the demands of the emancipated woman. In its wake one witnesses the arrival of Barbie, the pilot, the vet, the doctor, but also the athlete and the Gulf War Trooper. Moreover, in our multicultural and multiracial world Barbie went ethnic, and so Shandy, the black Barbie, came about, as well as Teresa, the Hispanic doll, accompanied by a Chinese counterpart. Barbie reaches

out for society's energies and recycles them for its own commodified system before pouring it anew in the cultural text. Through this circulation, Barbie has acquired almost a life of its own, prescribing the predicaments of femininity, and as a reverse Galatea dollifying its owners and granting them an artificial would-be existence. The thin line between nature and culture is easily crossed in the notorious Barbie look-alike contests. As the British winner of one of these contests put it: «I feel like Barbie; everyone calls me Barbie; I love Barbie. The main difference is she's plastic and I'm real. There isn't really any other difference» (Urla/Swedlund 298). Not only has this fan reinvented herself to look like Barbie, but she also acts, thinks, communicates and shares the same values as the doll. Dollification becomes a form of renewed socialization in the consumer culture Barbie stands for. In its extreme form, dollification/self re-creation goes as far as cosmetic surgery in a radical acceptance of Barbie's pedagogy. While arguing that «Women should be free to do what they want with their bodies; that is a basic feminist right», Naomi Wolf contends that fashion surgery, breast implants and the like are indeed inflected by power structures acting upon the desire of women to be up to a norm, that is white, blond, tall and certainly prone to anorexia (Wolf 188). The feminist demand for women to take over their bodies is, in this case, subverted by the beauty myths that consumer culture creates.

Barbie culture is certainly a radical approach to a role dolls have always had, that of forming subjectification, first through identification and then denial of the artificial body, other to the self. In fact, dolls are children's primary means of social and gender performance. Kaja Silvermann, following Lacan, argues that the human is «[...] the subject whose being has been sacrificed to meaning» (Silvermann 176) due to the abstraction of the body through the effect of language. Therefore, to take on an identity, the subject must attempt to stitch the wound inflicted by language through the imaginary creation of a fictive self that may be functionalized in the doll, or in other toys, in relation to which the self is then constructed through articulation with this objectified otherness outside him/herself.

The Austrian writer Rainer Maria Rilke portrays in his essay «Puppen» this very mode of dialogical engagement between Self and doll. This essay was written during a stay in Munich in 1914 and was inspired by Lotte Pritzel's wax dolls (picture 3), whose

exhibit he visited on 15-9-1913. The fairy-like character of these wax dolls personifies ephemeral grace,¹³ while also evoking in the poet a traumatic gender inversion which took place in his childhood years, when he was raised as a substitute for an early deceased sister. Pritzel's dolls are perceived by the poet as a frustration of the child's need to identify with the object. As he puts it: «[the doll] is autonomous, it has grown, it has aged early, it has taken over all the unlikelinesses of her own life.» (Rilke 685)¹⁴. These emancipated dolls, freed from a child's desire, are *bodenlos*, unearthly (Rilke 688), a term that resembles the depiction of the puppet in Heinrich von Kleist's *Über das Marionettentheater*, where the puppet, a representation of the lost grace, fallen from paradise through an act of reasoning, is described as *antigrav*, seeking in its lightened and ephemeral existence the back door to paradise, guarded by the Cherub with the flaming sword (Kleist 11).

Recalling Kleist, Rilke then moves on to demonize the doll, separating it from the puppet filled with fantasy, whereas the doll feeds on the desire, the wishes and the identity of its owner.

The doll [...] is just less than a thing, whereas the puppet is more than one. Nevertheless this Being-less-than-a-Thing (*Weniger-sein-als-ein-Ding*) in all its incurable dimension holds the secret of its importance. The child must adapt to each and every object, he has to hold it, each thing has its pride. Things just bear the doll's existence, they do not love it. (Rilke 689)¹⁵

Things, objects, have a presence determined by their owner's perception. The doll, however, has an existence *per se*, feeding on its owner to acquire visibility and make him act out its role. The soulless, fleeting doll is indeed a presence in absence, playing upon its

¹³ The dolls' lightness places them close to a much admired character of Rilke's poetry, that of the dancer, whose movement is characterized as fleeting and transient, the very mode Rilke uses for the dolls in «Puppen» as well as in the 1913 poem «Hinschwindende ganz leicht, eh sie vergehen», inspired by Pritzel's figures.

¹⁴ «[...] sie ist selbständig, sie ist groß geworden, frühalt, sie hat alle Unwirklichkeiten ihres eigenen Lebens angetreten.» (Rilke 685)

¹⁵ «Die Puppe [...] ist genau um so viel weniger als ein Ding, als die Marionette mehr ist. Aber dieses Weniger-sein-als-ein-Ding, in seiner ganzen Unheilbarkeit, enthält das Geheimnis ihres Übergewichts. An die Dinge muß sich das Kind gewöhnen, es muß sie hinnehmen, jedes Ding hat seinen Stolz. Die Dinge dulden die Puppe, keines liebt sie [...]. (Rilke 689)

likeness to the human world and its difference. It is thus a form of what Freud calls the uncanny (*das Unheimliche*), something that is simultaneously familiar and alien, deriving its alienation from its very familiarity.

Our orientation was the doll. It was more profound in its nature [...]. However, we learned soon enough that it could be turned neither into a thing nor into a human being, and in such moments it seemed like a stranger to us, and every secrecy with which we had filled and burdened it was estranged. (Rilke 690)¹⁶

Moreover, the fleeting, ephemeral and self-consuming substance of Lotte Pritzel's wax dolls is indeed, in the poet's eyes, a representation of soulless change, of transience as a mode of being, representing a third gender beyond the Fall, terrifying in its graceful movements for the earthful human body. Whereas the romantic Kleist believed that the Fall and the debasement of the human body through the force of consciousness and reflection could be overcome by culture, materialized in the puppet as a sublime representation, for Rilke, Pritzel's self-consuming adult dolls, as opposed to children's dolls, are symptoms of a surplus aestheticism in a culture lost in its fictiveness.

The culture of fiction, the culture of the copy, the society of the spectacle, as our post-modern world defines itself, pursues and enlarges the fictive drive at the core of our being. Rushdie's *Fury* expands the alienated relationship between doll and human to a new ethic of behaviour, overcoming the barriers between real and unreal, self and other, moral and amoral.¹⁷ When the main

¹⁶ «Wir orientierten uns an der Puppe. Sie lag tiefer von Natur [...]. Aber wir begriffen bald, daß wir sie weder zu einem Ding noch zu einem Menschen machen konnten, und in solchen Momenten wurde sie uns zu einem Unbekannten, und alles Vertrauliche, womit wir sie erfüllt und überschüttet hatten, wurde uns unbekannt.» (Rilke 690)

¹⁷ In his previous novel, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, Rushdie already interweaves the major theme of the book, celebrity culture, with issues of fictionalization and dollification, especially as a metaphor for the manipulation of the individual by the power of the market. «If one were of a paranoid disposition (and these are paranoid days) one might suppose that Yul Singh has engineered this long weekend with great deliberation: that even from distant Park Avenue Yul Singh the blind puppeteer is pulling his guest's strings, the way George Bernard Shaw up there on his godlike cloud manipulates his Higgins and Eliza marionettes on the cover of the original *My Fair Lady* cast recording.» (Rushdie, 1999: 393). See also on celebrity culture Bronfen/Staumann, 2002.

character in the book, the middle-aged Oxford professor living an existential crisis, *alias* the well-off dollmaker, and postcolonial subject Malik Solanka argues that «A dead body on a street, [...]coming down to earth, looks a lot like a broken doll» (Rushdie 74), he presents the whole world as pure representation, a stage where life is fiction, and fiction turns into a macabre reality. A shrewd observer of the world around him, Solanka re-enacts the creation story, turning into a voyeur dollmaker that restages the world as in one of the 17th century dollhouses that impressed him so in the Rijksmuseum.¹⁸ Fleeing England for fear of harming his family with the ravaging fury that overwhelmed him, Solanka takes off to New York, the capital of fake in the land of self-creation, at a time of plenty, when «fashion had never been more fashionable» (*Ibid.*).

The fictionalization of culture in the global metropolis expounds the attraction of a re-arrangement of the self as a simulacrum of a human original that never was. When searching in New York for the source of his fury, Solanka is definitely caught by the Pygmalion pull, and the desire to make it right this time, not only by rearranging his own self, but also that of humanity surrounding him. This corrective drive is embodied in the doll legion he creates, avatars of a forsaken deity that are reinstated as new divinities of the celebrity culture. The reinvention of the self involves a reversal of domains between what is fictional and real. The doll, formerly a representation of a natural body, now becomes a simulacrum, pretending not to be what it really is by dissimulating its fictional, lifeless substance, and faking it, pretending to be what it is not, namely real. Solanka's dolls take on a life of their own, either by being co-opted into consumer culture, or because their human impersonators have cannibalized them, taking the dolls' biographies as their own identities.

Solanka's first doll, Little Brain, the spiky-haired, smart doll, is a fine example of a commodity brought to life by marketing. Beyond its creator's control, Little Brain reproduces itself in the form of puppet, virtual show host, cartoon and even dissolving

¹⁸ «The Dutch doll's houses, for all their intricacy and beauty, and in spite of their ability to decorate his imagination, finally made him think of the end of the world, some strange cataclysm in which property had remained undamaged while all breathing creatures had been destroyed» (Rushdie 15-16).

in human form through the mediation of actresses who impersonate it. The doll then evolves from the «smart version» to a revised edition, where it is transformed into a glamour-puss, turning so «real» that it becomes the inspiration for the human owners, as one of the female characters in the book, the sex-crazed Mila Milo, says: «Little Brain [...] has been my like total obsession for most of the last ten years. I watch every move she makes. And as you spotted, she's only the *basis* and *inspiration* for my whole current *personal style*» (Rushdie 90).

At a time when the original has lost its aura through technical replication, when, in fact, there are no more originals in sight, Solanka's dolls are provided with «not just personality but individuality. His dolls had tales to tell» (Rushdie 73). Dolls made like women dethrone the original, in this world turned upside down «[...] living women wanted to be doll-like, to cross the frontier and look like toys. Now the doll was the original, the woman the representation» (Rushdie 74). The dollification procedure is at its highest form in the fate of the three doll-named society girls: Saskia Schuyler («Sky»), Lauren Muybridge Klein («Ren»), Belinda Booken Candell («Bindy»). Unable to draw the line between fake and reality, these living dolls are drawn from their fictionalized existence through a violent reality check. The brutal death of these fully accessorized «Oscar-Barbies», murdered and scalped, presents pain and suffering as the ultimate intrusion of the real into this fictive world. Moreover, by being robbed of their hair – a commodity of allure – by the killers, the girls suffer the ultimate deprivation. Lacking a self-sufficient identity, the victims are dispossessed in their final location of its fetish substitute, resembling dolls tortured and discarded by bored children. Showing how thin the limits between real pain and a dollified existence are, in the end Sky, Ren and Saskia were simple semblances of broken dolls:

[...] perhaps he broke them simply to reveal their lack of humanity, their breakability. Their dollness. For these had been – yes! – android women, dolls of the modern age, mechanized, computerized, not the simple effigies of bygone nurseries but fully realized avatars of human beings. (Rushdie 73)

The motives behind the murders are also enlightening as to the make-believe societal construct the characters moved in. The felons were none other than the girls' boyfriends, the rich members

of a restricted club named S&M, supposedly meaning «Single and Male» but in fact engaging in sadomasochist practices. For these young men, with the emblematic names «Stash», «Horse» and «Club», murder was the ultimate kick in a world of fiction. The scalping of the victims owes much to the dollification of their bodies as such, the hair seen as the trophy replacing the symbolic function that the real woman had in their lives, and that explained the reaction to their deaths as «a medallion-loss» (Rushdie 72). Unable to escape the culture of fiction, they perform the murders incarnating a new persona. Masked as Disney characters, Goofy kills Lauren «Ren» Klein, Robin Hood murders Saskia «Sky» Schuyler and Buzz Lightyear terminates Belinda «Bindy» Booken Candell. In what seems to be nothing but a violent children's game, human brutality contaminates that would-be cartoon innocence and blends fiction into reality.

A further example of the fictional takeover of reality occurs with the new doll series created by Solanka, a remarkable post-colonial narration of a posthuman future. Disappointed with the turn things have taken with Little Brain, which he begins to name «Frankendoll», his unnatural child (Rushdie 5), Solanka creates a new army of dolls, placed in the sci-fi setting of the decaying Rijk civilization of the Baburians, impelled by Mila, a woman who reinvents herself to act as his own sex puppet, a pygmalionic Galatea that breathes him back to life (Rushdie 138). The new story unfolds as a cyberneticist Akasz Kronos (the god-like dollmaker) creates a dynasty of cyborgs, the Monstrous Dynasty of Puppet Caesars, also known as Professor Kronos' No-String Puppet Kings. These living dolls, created to serve the Baburians, had the power to reproduce themselves and were shaped in the image of Kronos, (the Dollmaker), his lover Zameen (The Goddess of Victory) and other native Baburians. Given the power to carry themselves freely and be masters, they had a value system and could even be idealist. The cyborgs had but one limit. In their master program, Kronos inserted a Prime Directive that always forced them to obey the humans, to the point of acquiescing in their own self-destruction should it be deemed necessary. This colonial creation story places the cyborg in the position of the colonial subject, thus questioning human imperialism and embedding the cyborg with utopian performativity to overthrow the pedagogical rule of the human empire.

Equating the postcolonial with the posthuman, this dollified sci-fi rewriting of the Judeo-Christian creation story also presents a Fall, or an ascent as the case may be. Rebelling against the directive, the cyborgs are led by the Dollmaker, the copy, taking the lead against Kronos, his original. In this utopian fight for freedom, we can recognize the reworking of the constrictions of likeness and similarity that have structured our culture. The cyborg represents the liberation of the artificial body from its Eden original, striving for a future based on the dialogical articulation of nature and culture, as Donna Haraway argues in «A Cyborg Manifesto»:

In a sense, the cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense – a «final» irony since the cyborg is also the awful apocalyptic telos of the West's escalating dominations of abstract individuation [...] The cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian and completely without innocence. [...] The cyborg would not recognize the Garden of Eden; it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust. (Haraway 151)

Enhancing the postcolonial reading of the Puppet-Kings' plot, the dethroning of the original performed by Solanka's dolls is ultimately inspiring to freedom fighters in the antipodes, in the remote land of Lilliput-Blefescu, where stores are raided and the costumes of the Puppet King characters such as the Dollmaker and the Goddess of Victory are stolen and used as masks in a military bid to overthrow the government. In a radical statement of how «Real life had started obeying the dictates of fiction» (Rushdie 170), humans, who perceive themselves in this virtual culture as disembodied entities, reverse the order of creation and recreate new identities out of the copy.

The questions that Rushdie presents in the novel, enmeshed in this complex web of fakes and simulacrum, show how thin the former divide between reproduction and representation has become in the 21st century, pleading for embodied entities beyond the dictates of the original creation. The *remotio corporis* and the reinvention of creation as a reversal of the established categories of copy and original have opened the way to overcome the humanization of the doll by a dollification of humanity, and to a precedence of representation over reproduction. The nature of the «natural» or the liveliness of the «unnatural», life brought about by sexual repro-

duction or life created by the imagination,¹⁹ are no longer so unequally weighed. Almost one hundred years after Rilke's gloomy appraisal of the artificial body, we may be stranded in an age of new aestheticism. For better or worse, the sexless bodies of dolls locked inside the Garden of Eden have fled the cherub's flaming sword.

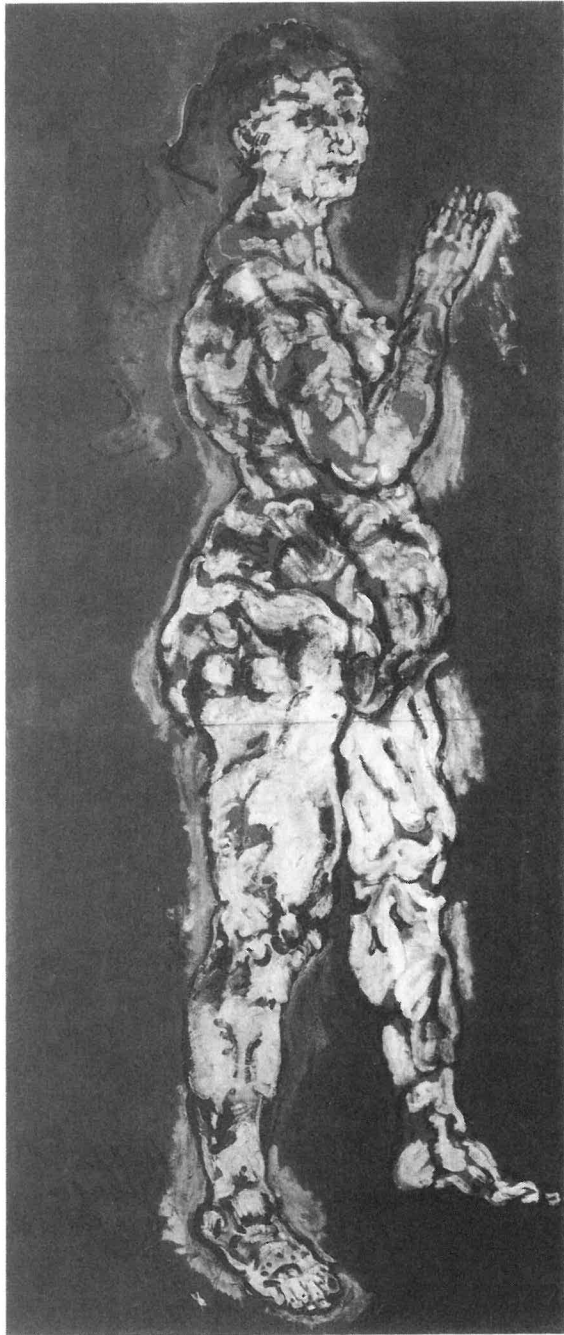
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¹⁹ This debate is echoed in the discussion envisaged by Solanka between the Baburian leader Mogol and Kronos, the cyberneticist: «There followed, in the pages Solanka wrote, a long dispute between the two men on the nature of life itself – life as created by a biological act, and life as brought into being by the imagination and skill of the living. Was life 'natural', or could the 'unnatural' be said to be alive? Was the imagined world necessarily inferior to the organic one?» (Rushdie 188-189).

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PICTURE 1

Oskar Kokoshka, «Stehender weiblicher Akt, Alma Mahler» (1918)



PICTURE 2
Hermine Moos, «The Doll»



PICTURE 3
Lotte Pritzel's dolls

Cultural Inscription and Body Techniques in *Twelfth Night*

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*I want to see the physicality of an actor, the size,
the bulk, the shadow they cast on the wall*

(Peter Greenaway)¹

My intention in this paper is to compare the representation of the actor's body in two productions of *Twelfth Night*, one English and one Portuguese. I start from the premise that the two productions are roughly comparable. Firstly, because they were both made around the same time, The Teatro Nacional S. João production in 1998 and the BBC/Renaissance Films co-production in 1996. Secondly, because they both claim a national importance and assume a national audience. The Teatro Nacional S. João in Porto, is Portugal's second national theatre and the production was directed by Ricardo Pais, who is well-known nationally, while the BBC/Renaissance Films production, was directed by Trevor Nunn, who is currently Director of the National Theatre in London. Yet both productions also reveal an interest in introducing elements of innovation into the performance of the play. This is expressed in the English production at the level of the text, in its cutting, splitting up and moving of lines and scenes. In the Portuguese production, the innovation is more in terms of systems of staging. In this respect, it is also worth noting that both productions are conventional in the area the other is innovative, for the Portuguese pro-

¹ Quoted in relation to *Prospero's Books* by Douglas Lanier in «Drowning the Book: *Prospero's Books* and the textual Shakespeare» in J.C.Bulman (ed.) *Shakespeare, Theory and Performance*, (London & New York, Routledge, 1996), p. 199.

duction uses a translation by António M. Feijó, whose explicit intention is literalness, while the English production makes use of the conventions associated with realist, mimetic theatre. The major difference between the two resides in the fact that the Portuguese production is for the stage while the English production was made for television but, I suggest, for the purposes of this paper, this does not make comparison between the two invalid. Although I'm not suggesting that either production is either quintessentially English or Portuguese, the productions do illustrate tendencies within Shakespearean production in both cultural spheres.

My focus will be on the body of Feste, the Fool. Feste interests me because in the last few years he has taken an increasingly central role in productions of *Twelfth Night*, to the extent that after taking students to the theatre to see the Portuguese production, there was overwhelming agreement among them that Feste had been their favourite character. Moreover, in both productions, the actors who play Feste are well-known. Ben Kingsley, after this title role in *Gandhi*, needs no further introduction, and João Reis, although unknown outside Portugal is well-known nationally as a stage and television actor. As the title of my paper suggests, I will be using the character of Feste to examine the question of cultural inscription and body techniques. More specifically, I'm interested in locating my work between the following, seemingly contradictory points of view. On the one hand, French theatre theorist Patrice Pavis argues that actors are indelibly marked by their theatrical and social culture:

Because actors belong to a certain culture, they have convictions and expectations, techniques and habits, which they cannot do without. Actors are thus defined by «body techniques» (Mauss, 1936), which can only be got rid of with difficulty and which are inscribed by the culture on their bodies, then on the performance.²

On the other hand, English director Peter Brook, currently working in Paris, holds the view that such cultural marks are more superficial than even actors themselves allow:

We found that popular clichés about each person's culture were often shared by the person himself. He came to us believing that

² PATRICE PAVIS, *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, p. 9.

he was part of a specific culture, and gradually through work discovered what he took to be his culture was only the superficial mannerisms of that culture, that something very different reflected his deeper culture and his deepest individuality.³

Because of constraints of time, my focus on the body of Feste is specifically on the relationship between body and text in performance as mediated through the voice. Thus, this paper focuses on the three songs that Feste sings in *Twelfth Night* and how they are portrayed in the two productions. There are two reasons for this particular focus. The first is to problematise the notion of the «natural» voice of the actor and its relationship to Shakespearean language. In a fascinating article on some of the «truisms» which guide voice manuals for the training of actors, Richard Paul Knowles notes how the «natural voice» is set up as the end point of an actor's technique. Kristin Linklater, for example, in *Freeing the Natural Voice* waxes lyrical on the removal of constraints as a means to the acquisition of technique:

(...) words have a direct line through the nerve endings of the mouth to sensory and emotive storehouses in the body....That direct line has been short-circuited, and the beginning work to release the built-in art of eloquence must be to re-establish the visceral connection of words to the body.⁴

From this perspective, the natural voice then comes to speak the text equally naturally in performance. Yet such an uncomplicated view of theatrical voicing is deeply problematic, particularly with Shakespeare. As Dennis Kennedy points out, the language of Shakespeare in no way represents natural speech, especially for contemporary audiences:

In English, language will always be important to our appreciation, yet our ability to reach the plays directly in their original language lessens year by year. Our own English continues to

³ PETER BROOK, «The Culture of Links» in Patrice Pavis (ed.) *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, (London & New York, Routledge, 1996), p. 66.

⁴ Quoted by RICHARD PAUL KNOWLES in «Shakespeare, voice and ideology – Interrogating the natural voice» in J. C. Bulman (ed.), *Shakespeare, theory and performance*, op. cit. p. 99.

change and eventually only specialists will be able to read the texts, much less listen to them comfortably in the theatre.⁵

This is particularly true with Feste. Several of his verbal puns and parodies have become singularly unfunny over the years as their intelligibility decreases. Even native speakers fumble and flounder with the archaisms. Therefore, the notion of the natural voice and its natural relationship with Shakespearean language is, in fact, deeply ideological, shoring up what Knowles labels «the myth of cultural ownership» of Shakespeare by native speakers of English and elite cultural groups. Yet in this respect, foreign language productions often find themselves in a more advantageous position. As it is common practice to commission new translations for foreign language productions of Shakespeare, the language of the translation is invariably more colloquial and more closely tied to the particular production. As Kennedy observes:

even the oldest of Shakespearean translations are infinitely closer to the language spoken on the street in Berlin or Zurich or Vienna than Shakespeare's language is to that of London or Los Angeles or Melbourne.⁶

Therefore, the familiarity that accompanies such cultural ownership leads, ironically, to a potentially decreased relevance of English-speaking productions and a corresponding potential increase in the relevance of foreign language productions of Shakespeare, which often have all the freshness associated with the performance of a new play.

My second reason for focusing on the voice is the fact that in Shakespeare generally, and particularly in *Twelfth Night*, the voice and the area around the mouth become sites of intense, but ambiguous erotics. As John Russell Brown observes, in the absence of more obvious statements of desire, Shakespearean theatre relies heavily on the music of speech to represent its rhythms on stage and the rhythms of speech in turn condition body techniques:

In the person of the actor, the «music» of speech may be created by crucial changes of breath and nervous tension. Change of pos-

⁵ DENNIS KENNEDY, «Shakespeare without his language», in J. C. Bulman (ed.), *Shakespeare, theory and performance*, op. cit. p. 146.

⁶ Ibid. pp. 136-7.

ture may also be necessary. No one can speak without making some bodily actions, and the more demanding the words spoken in phrasing, metre, texture, reference and so on – the more complicated and impressive those actions that make speech possible. In effect, the actor's body must take part in a kind of dance which is the physical concomitant of speech, necessarily responsive to it as well as the cause.⁷

With the locus of sexual desire displaced from the «un-showable» genitalia onto the «music of speech», the mouth in Shakespearean performance becomes something of a sexual organ in itself, and attention is often drawn to the sexual quality of the voice. In *Twelfth Night*, for instance, Orsino praises the feminine qualities of the cross-dressed Cesario, marvelling that «...Diana's lip/Is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe/Is as the maiden's organ» (Act I, sc. iii, 31-33).⁸ Malvolio describes Cesario somewhat ambiguously as «very well-favoured, and as speaking «very shrewishly» (Act I, sc. v 170-171). Feste himself is said to have a «mellifluous voice» and to have «contagious breath» (Act II, sc. iii, 51,52). As the professional singer called upon to perform for others, Feste and his songs thus occupy an unique place in the erotic exchanges in the play.

The first song I would like to compare is the love song that Feste sings at Sir Toby and Sir Andrew's request on the night of their merrymaking «O, Mistress Mine» (Act II, scene iii). The scene involves several activities centred around the mouth, such as singing, eating, and drinking, whilst the song begins after Sir Andrew has complimented Feste on his vocal abilities and ends with more praise of Feste's «mellifluous voice» and «contagious breath». What is most immediately apparent from each production is that both bodies and song have a different relationship to the scenic space around them and to the other characters. The Portuguese production, with its minimalist, suggestive set, allows the bodies of all characters more space in which to move, creating additional height through the use of steps, which enable characters to perform at different horizontal levels. In the English production,

⁷ JOHN RUSSELL BROWN, «Representing sexuality in Shakespeare's plays» in Catherine Alexander & Stanley Wells (ed.) *Shakespeare and Sexuality*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 176.

⁸ *Twelfth Night*, New Penguin edition.

all the trappings of mimetic realism, interiors at the turn of the 19th century, create a more constricted notion of space in which the bodies are able to move. Space between the characters follows a similar pattern. While in Nunn's production, Feste sings for a group that includes not only those present in the kitchen, but also those sleeping in the household and even the court of Orsino as well, the bodies of the actors in Pais' production are more insular and self-contained, seemingly unconnected to each other. In relation to the song itself, in Pais' production, it is more self-consciously framed as a performance. This is suggested first of all by Feste's initial reluctance to sing, which is only overcome by Sir Toby's offer of money. Feste's body movements and vocal phrasing are artificial and stylised, exaggerated to increase the sense of performance. The vocal style is curt, almost staccato, using breaks between syllables such as in «senso» and «paraíso» to dramatic effect. Additionally, the piano music that accompanies the song is from a modern looking tape recorder rather than a live instrument. With Nunn's production, the song, though paid for, appears to emerge spontaneously. It connects thematically with the other characters, as if Feste was providing them all with a sung warning about the fleet-footedness of time. Maria, smartly interpreting Feste's words, joins in with the second verse and even the inebriated Sir Toby appears to get at least something of the message. Cutting and editing bring the other characters into the song, widening the theme of time passing to include most characters in the play. It appears, here, that Feste is using his «natural» voice to sing and the element of enforced performance is downplayed. The quickened tempo seems closer to real speech. He accompanies himself with what seems to be «live» music. The only occasion when the tone or intonation vary in the song is with the vehement, almost spat out «Youth's a stuff will not endure». Additionally, costume takes on a more fundamental role in Reis' performance than in Kingsley's. Reis' post-punk look with coat over dress allows him to introduce a note of gender ambiguity which seems absent from Kingsley's performance. He uses this to tease his audience with the promise of revelation of what lies underneath his various layers of clothing, but when he lays backwards in a position of *rigor mortis*, all that is revealed is yet another layer of costume, in the form of white leggings. The same teasing reoccurs when he flaps the folds of the dress up and down to cool the heat in his blood («ardor no sangue»), accompanied by a vocal trill. By contrast, Kingsley

seems almost sexless in his dark overcoat and scarf. Thus, while the Portuguese production emphasises stylisation, exaggeration, insularity and the constraints involved in Feste's vocal performance, the English production emphasises spontaneity, universality and naturalness. While the English production gives us a Fool who is, not to put too fine a point on it, past it, the Portuguese production gives us a Fool evidently bothered by passion, located somewhere between the masculine and the feminine.

The second song, «Come Away Death», (Act II, scene iv) embodies more directly the questions of gender and sexuality that traverse the play. The textual setting makes this logical thematically, as the scene involves a cross-dressed Viola in love with her master, Orsino, but who dares not reveal her femininity to him. Yet while both productions choose to echo this sexual focus from the text in production, the sexual ambiguity they both bring out is stressed differently. In Ricardo Pais' production, the ambiguity is located within gender. The husky voice that comes out of the darkness to ask Orsino whether he is ready to hear the song and the pink sequin coat, black veil and high heels of the cabaret artiste, mark Feste's gender as ambiguous. Interestingly, he seems more ambiguous here even than the cross-dressed Viola. The song is self-consciously another performance in its use of microphone and tape recorder and the fact that Feste undresses on stage after the performance reinforces this. The elongated vowel sounds in «corre» and «morre» allow Reis to exaggerate the dramatic potential of the song. However, Nunn's production locates the ambiguity more within the area of sexuality. Although Viola's cross-dressing is very obviously present in the pencil-thin moustache, it is the homoerotic implications of Orsino's growing affection for someone he still thinks to be a young boy that are foregrounded. Ambiguity is restricted to the relationship between the two main characters and Feste is cast as a voyeur, with Orsino's offer of money at the end striking us both as a way of buying his silence and payment for the song. The song itself, in the improvised barn setting, again takes on the semblance of a spontaneous event. Audience focus is also different. While with Pais' production, we consistently look *at* Feste, as if we were another member of the court, in Nunn's we become positioned *as* Feste, observing with a knowing wink the shadowy intimacy of Viola and Orsino. Thus, the Portuguese production locates sexual ambiguity within gender, with Feste a more sexually ambiguous character than Viola. In the English production, sexual ambiguity is located

within the domain of sexuality and restricted to the main characters, although Feste is given privileged access to their secret. The same tendency to put performance «in inverted commas», which was noted in the Portuguese production with the first song, and to naturalise performance in the English production, remains true for this second song as well. As to whether the choices to focus on gender in one production and sexuality in another are culturally inflected, I don't think this is so much the case here. What seems more important is the embodiment in theatrical language of the imprints of service Feste bears, made effeminate in one production and a voyeur in another. It may be true that the Portuguese production concentrates on gender because of a cultural discomfort with questions of sexuality, and that the English production identifies culturally with the position of voyeur in a way it would not with more overt homoeroticism. Yet I don't find this a completely satisfactory answer. I'm happy to listen to what people might have to say on this one.

The fact that it is Feste who has the last word in the text of *Twelfth Night* (Act V, scene i) rather than any of the main characters is in itself interesting. It means that in a sense there are two endings which follow on from one another, the resolution of the comedy of mistaken identity in the two marriages of the main characters, and Feste's final song about the wind and the rain. In the two productions, this double ending leads to a certain inability to decide who, physically, is centre stage at the end. In Pais' production, Feste receives equal billing with the two naked twins for his last song, while in Nunn's, judicious use of editing interweaves the marriage celebrations and Feste's song, which, in turn, comes to be about the characters who are leaving the household as the marriages take place. What is intriguing about both these productions is the way in which their endings balance elements of closure, whilst retaining elements of ambiguity. The differential stress on either gender or sexuality in the two productions remains in the final song. In Reis' performance, he removes his white coat to complete his song in a dress. The song is performed around a startling image of the two naked twins, which is striking in that at the very moment their nakedness should make gender difference absolute and closure definitive, there seems to be little actually separating the two, even biologically. Yet this apparent continuation of gender ambiguity beyond the close is abruptly contradicted by a scenographic detail. Feste's final «*agradou*» coincides with the closure of the two semi-

circular objects which have symbolised most of the settings in the play and, on a meta-theatrical level, different identity formations.

The English production maintains a similar tension between openness and closure, located within the domain of sexuality, and particularly the institutionalisation of heterosexuality in marriage. The beginning of the movement towards the final marriages actually begins in the previous Act with a very topsy-turvy marriage proposal. Olivia, heartened that her beloved Cesario now appears to return her affection and unaware that this is in fact Viola's twin brother Sebastian, seizes the moment and exclaims «Would thou'dst be ruled by me!» Sebastian, equally amazed at his good fortune, promptly replies «Madam, I will» (Act IV, sc. i, 62,63). From this moment, characters either spin towards marriage and the festive conclusion or away from both. What I would suggest is that this apparent double movement is, in reality, a unitary one which propels characters in two directions. Sebastian's «I will», immediately marks off those whose will form part of the festive conclusion in opposition to those whose answer to marriage is «I won't» or «I can't» or «I'll be separated before long». In the English production, the verses of Feste's final song are each made to correspond to one of these particular characters. They are a motley crew, ranging from the idiotically unmarriageable Sir Andrew who leaves to the echo of fool, to Sebastian's possibly homosexual love buddy Antonio who is linked to knaves and thieves. Sir Toby and Maria, whose marriage doesn't seem likely to last, leave to the accompaniment of Feste's «and when I came, alas, to wive», while the humiliated social climber Malvolio leaves, appropriately enough, to the ring of tosspot. Finally, as the marriage celebrations continue inside, Feste's final verse links him with all entertainers who «strive to please you everyday» and whose itinerant freedom makes marriage unlikely. As a group, they resemble Jeffrey Weeks's «exotic parade dancing into history with a potentially infinite series of scripts and choreographies»,⁹ or a series of relationships to marriage we might call «queer». Nunn's production does not end with a miserable role call of those who fall outside the festive conclusion,

⁹ JEFFREY WEEKS, «The paradoxes of identity» in Goodman & de Gay (eds.) *The Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance*, (London & New York, Routledge, 2000), p. 163. Weeks is here referring to the «rush of alternative or oppositional sexualized identities» that have emerged since the 1960's.

but fixes on a knowing Feste, eyebrow raised, smiling, eventually dancing off into the distance in a very positive representation of the queerest of folk. Even the Irish music by Shaun Davey plays both for those who marry and those who don't, but then considering Orsino's little dalliance in the barn and Olivia's awakening to passion by a woman dressed as a man, it really is a case of «there but for the grace of a marriage contract go I». In fact, the ending is so universal even the housemaids get to join in. Nevertheless, it is significant that whereas in the text Viola does not return to the stage in women's clothes, here, her peach wedding dress is central to the final scene, representing a strong element of closure at the level of both gender and sexuality.

The question of voicing remains fundamental to the ending of both performances. In the English production, Feste's song is accompanied by Irish music, but Feste has very visibly hung up his instrument. Is there then a sense here that Feste's ability to wander freely and apparently naturalised voice have only been achieved through an act of cultural appropriation? With Reis, an overtly stylized, almost caricatural style is used for the first few verses, but the song then slides seamlessly into David Bowie's «Time». However, the refrain is brought to an abrupt halt by Feste himself who speaks, albeit very theatrically, the final verse. Could it be that, impatient with having had to put on a series of voices and costumes in command performances, we are being given a tantalising glimpse here of Feste's «natural voice»? Yet the slide back into Bowie, followed by closure reminds us that even if Feste has now found access to his «natural» voice, in the theatrical and wider world we live in, not all voices will be heard equally. In a world where Anglo-American voices dominate, whether Shakespeare or Bowie, theatrical performances in Portuguese are not likely to receive equal attention, however good the quality of individual actors and however exceptional the translation.

In relation to the question outlined at the beginning of this paper as to whether it was possible to detect culturally defined marks of inscription on the actor's body, or whether such cultural marks are never as deep as individual or universal ones, I would suggest, tentatively, that such marks do exist, but the extent to which they are rendered visible as explicitly cultural marks depends on relationships of power between cultures. While the Portuguese production constantly displays such marks self-consciously, forced to be aware of its distance from the original language and culture

of the play, the English production smoothes them over, secure in their supposed familiarity with Shakespeare. However, by being obliged to present its language and voices as un-natural and not-Shakespeare, the Portuguese production simultaneously lays bare the mechanisms of theatrical illusion and reveals the limitations of its artifice. Thus, the audience cannot help but focus on questions of voicing and cultural negotiation. This does not occur in the English production with its fragile sense of cultural security. It is, therefore, important to recognise that cultures often display their marks on actors' bodies because they have to, and that when this does not seem to be happening, it is invariably because the culture is dominant and has the power to efface those marks. Yet, certainly in the context of Shakespeare, this may turn out ultimately, to be the most counter-productive of moves for English culture, ensuring not its continuing security but an increasing irrelevance.

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La peau de la pierre.
Autour de la représentation
du corps féminin et de sa fonction sociale
dans *La Vie de Sainte Énimie*,
de Bertrand de Marseille

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1. Introduction

Le texte dont je voudrais vous parler est un récit hagiographique occitan de la première moitié du XIII^e siècle, écrit par Bertrand de Marseille¹. Il s'agit d'une vie de sainte dont on peut résumer le récit en utilisant le mot d'Élisabeth Bronfen de survivance au/dans le symbolique. Eh bien, Énimie a eu beau essayé d'y survivre, elle n'y a pas réussi.

¹ Le *Dictionnaire des Lettres Françaises du Moyen Âge* dit que ce texte est un chef-d'oeuvre de la littérature occitane, et on ne peut que regretter que, dans l'énorme quantité d'études sur des récits hagiographiques, très peu de pages aient été consacrées à celui de Bertrand de Marseille. Parmi ces pages, celles écrites par Simon Gaunt dans *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature*, Cambridge UP, 1995, pp. 191-8 sont des plus intéressantes. On ajoutera du même auteur: «Si les anges avaient un sexe... L'hagiographie occitane et son rapport avec la poésie des troubadours» in GOUIRAN, G., coor., *Contacts de langues, de civilisations et intertextualité. Actes du III^e Congrès Internationale de l'Association des Études Occitanes*, tome III, Montpellier, Centre d'Études Occitanes de l'Université de Montpellier, 1990, pp. 895-906. Il y a aussi des études ethnologiques centrées sur le *background* folklorique de l'histoire de Sainte Énimie: I. GRANGE, «Métamorphoses chrétiennes de femmes-cygnes: du folklore à l'hagiographie», *Ethnologie Française*, 13,2, 1983, pp. 139-150; H. FROMAGE, «Sainte Énime et le drac», *Bulletin de la Société de Mythologie Française*, 65, 1967, pp. 1-18; CLIER-COLOMBANI, *La fée Mélusine au Moyen Âge*, Paris, Léopard d'Or, 1991.

De l'auteur, on sait très peu de chose et le peu qu'on en sait c'est ce que lui-même nous raconte dans le texte: il était clerc (car il s'intitule *maître*, gradué d'université) et il a écrit *La Vie de Sainte Énimie* à la demande du prieur du monastère de Sainte-Énimie en Lozère (Languedoc-Roussillon, près de Mende). Son texte vise certainement à légitimer le culte des reliques pratiqué dans ce monastère et donc à augmenter son prestige.

Il s'agit d'une traduction en langue d'oc d'une *Vita* en latin du XII^e siècle. Mais à l'époque la *translatio* réorganise le texte modèle et il faut préciser que Bertrand de Marseille invente deux événements qui sont absents de la *Vita*: la pierre qui bouge et le sang du dragon qui tombe sur la pierre. Ces événements constituent le noyau de deux miracles de purification dont la fonction narrative est déterminante en ce qui concerne le corps de la sainte et sa position sociale. La place qu'Énimie occupe tour à tour dans l'ordre social est le résultat d'une transformation de son corps et de sa puissance. Il y a deux transformations correspondant au deux miracles. Les pierres y jouent un rôle très important. Il sera question de ces miracles, en analysant d'abord ce qu'ils font changer dans l'histoire – et on verra qu'il s'agit du statut social d'Énimie et du pouvoir de son corps – et ensuite en les comparant pour saisir leur corrélation.

Avant de vous raconter l'histoire, je voudrais juste signaler deux points:

i) Le corps est un enjeu très important dans la sainteté, dans la mesure où il est pris comme l'objet privilégié d'un idéal – celui de la sainteté – de négation ou de dépassement de la corruption de la chair ².

ii) Très souvent, les vies de saints se divisent en deux parties sur le point où le saint ou la sainte est mort ou morte. Il y a une partie qui raconte les miracles accomplis en vie du saint ou de la sainte, et une autre partie qu'on appelle les miracles *post-mortem*,

² En ce qui concerne la sainteté féminine, le corps y est encore plus important car il est considéré comme plus charnel, plus matériel, plus impur que le masculin, inférieur à celui-ci, si bien qu'il constitue le problème central de la sainteté féminine (ALBERT, J.-P., *Le sang et le ciel. Les saintes mystiques dans le monde chrétien*, Paris, Aubier, 1997:85-7). D'où la fonction narrative du thème du martyr dans la plupart des vies de saintes, ce qui n'est pas le cas dans la *Vie de Sainte Énimie*.

ceux qui concernent le pouvoir miraculeux des reliques. Au contraire du corps vivant qui sent la corruption de la chair, de ses fluides et de ses sécrétations, la relique sent bon et on parle alors d'odeur de sainteté ou de paradis. Ce qui veut dire que si un cadavre – paradigme de l'abject – sent bon c'est qu'il a définitivement surmonté la corruption de la matière et cette pureté, signalée par le parfum, c'est la sainteté. Cela veut dire aussi qu'il n'y a pas de sainteté achevée tant que le corps est vivant. Le vrai corps saint est un corps mort. Et c'est pourquoi le récit hagiographique continue après la mort du héros ou de l'héroïne pour raconter la révélation des reliques.

C'est ce qui se passe également dans *La vie de Sainte Énimie*.

2. L'histoire

Voici l'histoire.

1. Énimie est la fille du roi Clovis, le petit-fils du premier roi chrétien de France. Elle s'occupe à soigner les malades et les handicapés, notamment des lépreux. On voit déjà qu'elle a affaire à la déformation et la pourriture du corps.
2. *Topos* du refus du mariage: pour échapper à un mariage qu'elle ne souhaite pas, Énimie demande à Dieu de la rendre lépreuse.
3. Elle se purifie de la lèpre en se baignant dans la source de Burla, située dans un lieu sauvage et désert, où il n'y a que des rochers et des eaux. C'est là que le miracle de la pierre a lieu. Il consiste dans le fait qu'un des rochers sur lequel Énimie s'appuie bouge au contact de ses hanches et épouse leur forme.
4. Elle reste à Burla car, à chaque fois qu'elle essaie de quitter ces lieux, elle redevient lépreuse
5. Pendant une courte période de vie érémitique (elle habite dans une grotte), elle guérit des malades (lépreux, aveugles, boiteux, paralytiques) rien qu'en les touchant. Le plus spectaculaire de ces miracles c'est la résurrection d'un enfant qui s'était noyé dans le Tarn. On voit bien qu'il s'agit dans ces miracles de donner la vie, de faire bouger, de faire couler (par exemple une source qui avait séché); et ces miracles, elle les accomplit avec le pouvoir de son seul corps.

6. Sa réputation gagne les populations, il y a des femmes qui la rejoignent pour l'aider et elle décide de faire bâtir un monastère³;
7. Mais il y a un dragon, sorti d'on ne sait pas où, qui s'amuse pendant la nuit à détruire tout ce qui a été construit pendant la journée.
8. L'évêque Yles blesse le dragon avec un crucifix et le fait tomber dans le Tarn écrasé par des tas de rochers que l'évêque fait mouvoir sous le coup d'une parole. Remarquons la présence de l'institution ecclésiastique dans l'histoire.
9. On bâtit aussi un monastère pour moines. Énimie devient l'abbesse du complexe monastique, établi par l'autorité de l'évêque. Elle ne fait plus de miracles, le seul miracle raconté est d'ordre économique et concerne l'étonnante fertilité de la vallée du Tarn. Elle meurt.
10. On passe alors à la 2^e partie. Énimie s'était arrangée avec les nonnes pour garder secret le lieu où se trouve son cercueil caché dans la pierre dure.
11. Les nonnes réussissent à tromper le roi Dagobert, frère d'Énimie, qui voudrait translater les reliques de sa soeur à Saint Denis.
12. Mais la dernière nonne étant morte, Dieu révèle à un moine la localisation précise du tombeau. Les reliques sont révélées et leur culte s'institue.

On voit qu'il y a là, autour de la possession des reliques de sainte Énimie, un réseau de rivalités ou de conflits opposant le pouvoir laïque (le roi) et le pouvoir ecclésiastique, le masculin et le féminin (les nonnes aux hommes en général, y compris Dieu), et peut-être aussi le pouvoir central (Paris) et le pouvoir local ou

³ C'est la façon classique de transformation d'un ermitage en communauté monastique. La vie en communauté exige une règle et très rapidement la règle adoptée fut celle de Saint Benoît. Mais tandis que chez les hommes c'étaient leurs discours qui attiraient les foules, ici c'est la seule action thérapeutique du corps féminin qui les attire auprès d'Énimie.

régional (Gévaudan). Ce conflit-ci apparaît dans la partie *post-mortem* et la victoire du monastère languedocien sur l'abbaye royale de Saint Denis est marquée par la possession des reliques.

3. La sainteté sauvage et la liberté féminine

Or, ce conflit entre l'État monarchique et l'Église pour Énimie – pour le contrôle des pouvoirs de son corps – traverse toute l'histoire du début jusqu'à la fin. Car le mariage forcé était un moyen pour le lignage royal de s'approprier la fonction procréatrice du corps de la fille pour établir une alliance intéressante avec une autre famille et s'assurer une descendance. En échappant au mariage, Énimie s'émancipe des liens de parenté et des contraintes biopolitiques du lignage. Elle s'exclut de l'ordre social. Mais cette émancipation n'est qu'un préalable à sa réinsertion dans un autre ordre, l'ordre monastique: elle va devenir abbesse. Autrement dit: elle quitte les liens de parenté charnels (de sang et par alliance) pour être prise dans les liens de parenté spirituels⁴. Ce qui n'est pas inattendu pour une sainte, certes. Mais ce qui importe maintenant c'est de voir comment elle est passée d'un lien (charnel) à l'autre (spirituel), à travers un moment où il n'y a pas de liens, pas de contrats, où elle habite un lieu qui n'a pas de place dans un ordre, quel qu'il soit. Regardons ce schéma :

Condition sociale

Corps
purification d'une souillure
(re)donner forme

⁴ Et si l'Église à travers l'hagiographie promouvait la virginité et le refus du mariage c'est parce que cela fonctionnait comme un obstacle aux intérêts aristocratiques. «L'Église atteint bien son but en appuyant l'idée que la chasteté et la virginité sont des éléments essentiels de la sainteté féminine, car il s'agit ici justement du talon d'Achille du modèle laïque du mariage. Je ne prétends pas expliquer ainsi l'importance de la chasteté dans la sainteté féminine du moyen âge; je constate seulement qu'il faut inscrire ce phénomène dans le contexte de l'attaque concertée de l'Église contre le modèle laïque du mariage. Le succès du culte des saintes vierges (telles Énimie et même *la* sainte Vierge) serait un indice du succès du modèle ecclésiastique du mariage, qui permet aux femmes, en théorie sinon en réalité, de choisir leur partenaire, ou bien d'opter pour le mariage ou pour la chasteté» (Gaunt 1990:902).

1. **princesse** (palais)
 - a) Burla: guérison de la lèpre
2. **ermite** (grotte)
 - miracles thaumaturgiques
 - b) Dragon: apaisement de la violence
3. **abbesse** (monastère)
 - miracle économique

On voit qu'Énimie occupe différentes positions sociales – princesse, ermite, abbesse – auxquelles correspondent des transformations de son corps.

On voit que pour passer de 1) à 2), soit du palais à la grotte, Énimie se soumet au miracle de purification dans la source de Burla. Pour passer de 2) à 3), soit de la grotte au couvent, un dragon doit être tué pour apaiser la violence. Si l'on assimile la violence à la souillure (ou la pollution à la violence, comme chez R. Girard), on peut considérer que, comme le miracle de Burla, celui de la victoire sur le dragon consiste aussi dans une purification, non pas du corps, mais de l'espace. Ce que les deux miracles ont en commun surtout, c'est qu'il s'agit de donner ou redonner forme: au corps d'Énimie déformé par la lèpre, aux bâtiments détruits. On obtient ainsi un alignement ou une équivalence de trois catégories: la souillure, la violence, l'informe.

Entre ces deux miracles, qui opèrent comme des seuils ou des tournants dans le processus de transformation d'Énimie vers la sainteté, 2) signale une condition tout à fait spéciale. Car là Énimie n'est pas l'objet des miracles, elle en est l'agent. Le métier d'infirmière qu'elle exerçait quand elle était princesse devient, dans l'espace sauvage de Burla, le pouvoir miraculeux de guérir, de donner ou redonner la vie. Et lorsqu'elle devient abbesse, elle ne fait plus de miracles, ceux-ci étant subsumés dans le miracle de production agricole mis en place par les moines: son pouvoir, le pouvoir vital de son corps, a été transféré à l'ordre monastique⁵.

⁵ Au cours du IX^e siècle, les couvents servent de plus en plus souvent à isoler des femmes considérées comme indésirables, socialement dangereuses ou simplement improductives» (WEMPLE, S. F., «Les traditions romaine, germanique et chrétienne» in DUBY, G. & PERROT, M., dir., *Histoire des femmes*, Paris, Plon, 1991, p. 207.

La nature spéciale de 2) est due au fait que l'accomplissement des miracles thaumaturgiques a lieu dans un cadre sauvage et désert du causse⁶, ce qui veut dire: purement naturel, intouché par la culture au sens anthropologique: vierge de tout système signifiant (langage, parenté, mythes, inscriptions). Et c'est dans ce prémonde qu'Énimie exerce un pouvoir non normé, non régulé par des lois et des institutions, non contrôlé par des structures ou des formes qui le mettraient dans l'ordre en lui assignant une place pour s'exercer légitimement. C'est un pouvoir délié, non reconnu par la société et ses représentants, qui s'exerce en toute liberté. C'est la sainteté sauvage. Cela est congruent avec la condition érémitique qui ajoute au retrait du monde l'émancipation par rapport au destin biosocial féminin. Je voudrais signaler que, bien que le corps d'Énimie possède le pouvoir de donner la vie, elle n'a pas de pouvoir au sens politique du mot, car les structures de pouvoir et de régulation des rapports sociaux sont inexistantes à Burla. Il ne s'agit pas de pouvoir mais de liberté. Énimie est libre dans la mesure où elle hors symbolique.

4. La hantise de l'autonomie féminine

On peut dire aussi que ce qu'il y a de miraculeux ici c'est que le pouvoir qu'a le corps féminin de donner la vie ne se traduit pas dans la reproduction sexuée, mais qu'il se transmet d'un corps à un autre par la seule voie du toucher. Ce qui est non pas seulement miraculeux mais scandaleux et, d'un point de vue masculin, dangereux aussi. Il me semble en effet que ce qui est en condition de constituer l'axe commun à l'hagiographie des XII^e et XIII^e siècles et la littérature courtoise de la même époque c'est une certaine représentation du corps féminin soutenue par la hantise de l'auto-suffisance féminine. Tout un savoir médico-philosophique se fait l'expression de la croyance au pouvoir qu'aurait la femme de concevoir toute seule, sans intervention masculine. Plusieurs traités médicaux des XII^e et XIII^e siècles reprennent les idées de Galien sur le sperme féminin. «À partir du moment où l'on suppose que le sperme féminin pos-

⁶ Dans *Mythologies d'Hiver*, Pierre Michon insère quatre petits récits concernant Énimie – *Énimie*, *Simon*, *Santa Enimia*, *Bertrand* – dans la section appelée «Neuf traversées du causse»

sède un pouvoir d'aménager la matière – comme Galien l'avait fait – il y a chez la femme deux humeurs susceptibles de participer à la génération: l'une de manière active, le sperme, l'autre de manière passive, les menstrues. Donc, si l'on raisonne en termes de philosophie, la femme pourrait concevoir toute seule⁷. De plus, cette théorie de la double émission est associée au plus de plaisir sexuel qui serait l'apanage des femmes. Pierre d'Espagne affirmait que l'amour est plus intense chez les hommes, mais que les femmes jouissent davantage, car elles éprouvent un double plaisir dans l'émission et dans la réception des sécrétions⁸. Aussi, la hantise de l'auto-suffisance féminine a deux aspects, l'un biologique – l'autonomie reproductive de la femme menaçant la paternité – et l'autre proprement sexuel – la jouissance féminine supposée dépasser la jouissance phallique. Ce qui se passe dans la majorité des récits hagiographiques et romanesques c'est que le héros (chevalier ou, comme c'est le cas dans notre récit, évêque) met le pouvoir du corps féminin dans l'ordre symbolique. Et quand j'emploie le verbe *mettre*, c'est vraiment au sens de faire rentrer: il s'agit de faire rentrer dans l'ordre un excès, de le maîtriser en lui assignant des règles, des mesures et des positions: celles que la femme occupe dans l'institution matrimoniale ou monastique. Cela étant, ce dénouement partagé par une grande quantité de récits ne peut pas ne pas avoir un effet tranquilisateur et dissipateur de l'angoisse⁹.

⁷ JACQUART, D. & THOMASSET, C., *Sexualité et savoir médical au Moyen Âge*, Paris, PUF, 1985, p. 90. Charles T. Wood remarque que «this double-seed theory does not entirely agree with Aristotle's form-and-matter approach, but reflects, rather, the non-Aristotelian sources of most of the purely medical literature («The Doctor's Dilemma: Sin, Salvation, and the Menstrual Cycle in Medieval Thought», *Speculum*, 56,4,1981, p. 717).

⁸ Cité in WACK, M. F., *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages*, Philadelphia, U of Pennsylvania P, 1990, p. 87. On trouve la même idée chez Constantin l'Africain ou Gérard de Solo.

⁹ Cette angoisse est d'abord celle des hommes, laïcs ou ecclésiastiques, face à une menace fantasmatique de perte du contrôle sur la fécondité des femmes, mais aussi une angoisse générale, teintée peut-être d'un sentiment nostalgique ou utopique, face à une menace fantasmatique de disparition de l'ordre symbolique lui-même, i.e., de la forme socioculturelle de la vie humaine. Car l'appropriation masculine de la fécondité des femmes, dans laquelle réside la domination masculine, est inhérente à la loi de l'exogamie qui règle dans toutes les sociétés humaines l'échange du pouvoir de fécondité des femmes entre des groupes familiaux différents, afin d'établir des alliances et de renforcer le lien social. Autrement dit, tout système de parenté fonctionne comme un dispositif permettant l'échange des

5. Burla et le Dragon

Revenons à notre schéma. La phase 2) est, on le voit, limitée en amont et en aval par les deux miracles-tournants – a) et b) –, le premier déterminant l'exclusion sociale d'Énimie, le second sa réinsertion. Ou, si l'on veut, le premier dénouant le lien de parenté charnelle, le second renouant le lien de parenté spirituelle. On s'interrogera alors sur le rapport qu'il peut y avoir entre les deux miracles, celui de Burla et celui du Dragon.

Burla c'est la purification de la lèpre. La lèpre c'est la chair pourrie qui apparaît à l'extérieur, qui se donne à voir sur la peau et détruit la forme du corps. Le dragon est une sorte de lèpre affectant le corps social ou collectif: il représente l'informe, la violence, les forces qui détruisent les formes, le continu qui efface les différences. Un corps qui se purifie de la lèpre c'est un corps qui retrouve sa forme. Celui d'Énimie, en récupérant sa forme, acquiert aussi le pouvoir de donner la vie, et on a vu que donner la vie c'est finalement redonner la forme aux corps infirmes, déformés, handicapés. Or, du côté Dragon, re-donner la forme aux bâtiments pour organiser l'espace en ordre chrétien ne passe pas par donner la vie mais, au contraire, par donner la mort: il faut tuer le dragon pour que l'installation et la vie d'une communauté humaine organisée soit possible. Le second miracle présente donc le mode d'un meurtre fondateur.

On a déjà un premier couple d'oppositions mettant en rapport les deux miracles. Mais pour bien y saisir la question de la forme, de donner forme à une matière, que cette matière soit la chair ou la pierre, et sa connexion avec le pair vie-mort, il faut expliquer le rôle des rochers dans les deux miracles.

En effet, Burla est bien plus qu'un bain d'immersion. Comme je l'avais déjà signalé, la guérison d'Énimie est suivie du miracle de la pierre qui bouge au contact des hanches de la sainte. Voyons comment cela se passe.

femmes entre hommes, comme disait Lévi-Strauss, et par là même la reproduction de la société dans la différence des rapports consanguins et des rapports d'alliance, ainsi que la circulation ou diffusion de la libido irrigant les rapports sociaux (autrement elle serait confinée à la sphère domestique). Par conséquent, la peur d'un monde dépouillé de la domination masculine n'est pas dissociable de la peur d'un monde déserté par le symbolique.

Mas dis vos ay la virtut bela/ que Deus fes per la domai- zela/en aquel loc, que cant banhada/se fo en Burla e lavada,/aqui ad una pouca rocha/s'apilet, que ab l'aygua si tocha,/car ges be souffrir avia, et aqui eus que s'apilet, la rocha sobr'ela crebet, et gitet a raitz et a fos/aygua, per un loc o per dos,/ clareta , perlu- zens e bela,/qu'arozet tota la pieuzele;/et ancor mostra hom per ver/a cels que ho volun vezer,/als clergues ho a la gen laygua,/ los pertus pe on eissi l'aygua./Ar escoltat altre miracle/que Dyeus i fes bel e mirable,/que yeu que us o dic o ay vist, aissi mi valha Jhesu Crist,/ car aqui on li si sufferc,/la rocha un petit s'uberc/e fes a la verge son loc/on sezer e pauza si poc./Et encar i parcis ses dec/lo sanz setis on ela sec,/lo loc del dos e del ladrier/hy pot hom vezer, s'om lo quier;/del cap e del col eyssamen/y es lo locs entieyramen. (v.513-44).

Mais je vous raconterai le beau miracle que Dieu a fait pour la demoiselle dans ce lieu-là. Après s'être baignée et lavée à Burla, elle s'appuya sur un petit rocher qui touchait l'eau, car elle était très fatiguée des grands maux qu'elle avait souffert. Et aussitôt qu'elle s'y appuie, le rocher éclate et l'eau jaillit à jets et à flots, par un ou deux lieux, claire, lumineuse et belle, pour arroser la pucelle. Et on peut voir toujours les trous d'où l'eau sortit car ils sont bien visibles à tous ceux qui voudront les voir.

Maintenant écoutez l'autre miracle beau et merveilleux que Dieu fit et dont j'ai vu les marques, avec l'aide de Jésus Christ, car là où elle s'appuya, le rocher se fut un peu ouvert et fit à la vierge une place pour s'asseoir et reposer. Et on peut y voir encore l'em- preinte de la sainte place où elle s'assit, le contour du dos et des hanches. Si l'on veut, on peut la voir. Et on peut voir aussi le contour de la tête et du cou (traduction des vv. 513-44).

Quand on lit le texte, on s'aperçoit que la guérison a été suivie de deux autres événements: i) un rocher éclate et de l'eau jaillit qui arrose la princesse (on dirait que la pierre devient de l'eau et coule); ii) au contact des hanches, un rocher perd sa forme dure et acquiert la plasticité de la chair et de la peau pour recevoir l'empreinte des hanches.

Ainsi, le corps qui vient d'être purifié donne-t-il une nouvelle forme à une pierre qui bouge, qui est vivante. Il dépétrifie l'environnement. Ce qui est frappant c'est que ceci même qui matérialise la forme dure, solide, définitive, à savoir la pierre, soit finalement aussi souple que la peau et la chair. Il y a là une continuité entre le corps et la pierre qui met en cause la stabilité des formes.

En même temps, l'empreinte du corps sur la pierre constitue la trace primordiale inscrite dans cet environnement jusque-là intouché. Le narrateur l'a vue, elle est toujours là signalant le point

de déploiement de l'espace sauvage en un lieu chrétien organisé en monastères et en églises.

Or c'est justement par le biais d'un projet immobilier que les pierres passent d'un miracle à l'autre, de Burla au Dragon. Construire un monastère féminin près du rocher qui a bougé c'est non seulement donner une forme chrétienne à l'espace mais la fixer. C'est dire que la socialisation de cet espace est incompatible avec l'instabilité des formes. On dirait que l'empressement bâtisseur, en travaillant la pierre avec des outils, en aménageant des localisations, des écarts, des frontières, vise à rompre la continuité entre corps et pierre.

Que fait le dragon? Il détruit les formes érigées et fixées dans la pierre. Il détruit la forme chrétienne de l'espace. Créature des eaux (il symbolise dans le folklore les crues du Tarn) et des cavernes (comme Énimie), le dragon dépétrifie l'environnement sur le mode négatif et destructeur de la violence.

Remarquons que le dragon apparaît au début de la mise en ordre social de ce qui n'était qu'un ermitage. Cette mise en ordre remplace la continuité matérielle (corps-pierre) par la différenciation des valeurs, notamment féminin-masculin (car, si on bâtit un monastère féminin, cela fera de la place pour un masculin), nature-culture (la culture étant la maîtrise de l'homme sur la nature), bien et mal (car le dragon est un démon, il représente le paganisme). Et surtout, le dragon entraîne la présence de l'évêque nécessaire à la pacification du site de Burla. Ce qui veut dire que le dragon est là pour mettre la sainte dans une situation d'impuissance et, par conséquent, sous la dépendance de la hiérarchie et du pouvoir du clergé.

Dans le combat de l'évêque avec le dragon – qui n'est pas un combat à l'épée mais avec un crucifix, i.e., un symbole – je voudrais souligner 3 actions :

- i) poursuivi par l'évêque, le dragon court à toute bride et heurte violemment un rocher très dur pour s'y cacher, tout en le crevassant;
- ii) lorsqu'il en sort, Yles le blesse avec le crucifix, le dragon saigne, le sang tombe sur une pierre et y laisse une trace ou tache rouge;
- iii) bien que blessé, le dragon s'échappe et l'évêque, n'arrivant pas à le rattraper, le conjure au nom de Dieu à s'immobi-

liser; en même temps il conjure les pierres à se mouvoir et à poursuivre le dragon jusqu'à le faire tomber dans le Tarn; il y est écrasé sous une pluie de rochers.

On vérifie que ces trois actions sont l'inversion symétrique de ce qui se passe dans le miracle de la pierre:

- i) la crevasse dans le rocher dur que le dragon fait pour y pénétrer inverse la douce rupture du rocher d'où jaillit l'eau qui arrose la sainte;
- ii) la blessure étant une coupure, elle inverse la continuité corps-pierre, ainsi que la perte de chair et de sang, la perte de substance vitale, inverse le don de vie que le corps transmet à la pierre; c'est là qu'on peut dire que le sacrifice du corps inverse le bonheur du corps;
- iii) la trace saignante est une deuxième empreinte sur la pierre qui va se déployer en un monastère masculin, de même que l'inscription primordiale du corps sur la pierre marque la place du monastère féminin.
- iv) finalement, tandis que le corps touche la pierre et la fait bouger en toute absence de langage, l'évêque fait bouger les pierres par le verbe; au corps correspond une intimité, au verbe une maîtrise, une domination.

On peut le représenter de la façon suivante:

Burla

Dragon

Donner Forme

(au) Corps

(à l') Espace

Donner la vie

Donner la mort

Continuité:

Coupure:

Purification
Eau jaillit du rocher
Pierre bouge au contact
des hanches d'Énimie

Blessure
Rocher crevassé
Pierres bougent sous le
coup de la parole

la peau de la pierre:

trace primordiale sur la pierre se déploie en monastère féminin

bonheur du corps

intimité

la blessure symbolique:

trace signante sur la pierre se déploie en monastère masculin

sacrifice du corps

maîtrise

6. Conclusion

Cet ensemble d'inversions symétriques crée une corrélation entre le dragon et Énimie, d'autant plus que la mort du premier a des conséquences dévitalisantes pour la seconde: devenue abbesse, elle ne bouge plus et ne fait plus bouger. Elle quitte les pierres et les eaux pour le cloître, là où elle est surveillée et soumise. Vaincre le dragon équivaut à maîtriser le pouvoir du corps de la sainte, à le mettre dans l'ordre (monastique, en l'occurrence). Aussi, et pour reprendre les termes de René Girard, le meurtrier fondateur qui permet la mise en place d'un nouvel ordre, opère-t-il ici par dédoublement de la victime sacrificielle : le dragon est le double monstrueux d'Énimie, celui qui peut et doit être sacrifié à sa place, selon une ligne de partage séparant le *sacer*, la partie impure, et le *sanctus*, la partie pure¹⁰ : le dragon et l'abbesse.

¹⁰ GIRARD, R., *La violence et le sacré*, Paris, Grasset, 1972, p. 366. Je crois qu'il est possible de lire le récit de Bertrand de Marseille comme un texte de persécution au sens de Girard, ce qui élargit sa portée pragmatique et sa visée idéologique et politique. En effet, le texte met en scène la sainteté sauvage pour signifier sa vanité: le pouvoir miraculeux de donner la vie ne sert à rien tant qu'il n'est pas organisé et maîtrisé par l'institution et l'autorité ecclésiastiques. Il n'y a pas de salut hors l'Église – voici le message de cette vie de saint. Or, il ne faut pas oublier que le Languedoc (où se situe la Lozère) était, avec la Provence et la Lombardie, les régions où l'hérésie cathare – qui proclame le salut hors l'Église – s'était développée depuis le milieu du XII^e siècle. L'époque de Bertrand de Marseille est celle qui a vu la croisade contre les Albigeois (1209) ainsi que le IV^e Concile de Latran (1215), lequel a pris des mesures strictes contre l'hérésie.

Quand on compare le moment érémitique d'Énimie et la prédication indépendante de gens comme Robert d'Arbrissel, ermite lui-même, ou Henri de Lausanne, on s'aperçoit qu'ils relèvent du même phénomène inquiétant et dangereux. Et si Robert d'Arbrissel a pu être récupéré par et pour l'Église, d'autres, comme Henri de Lausanne, ont été déclarés hérétiques et persécutés. Comme le dragon. Ou comme

Enfin, juste une note pour souligner que, dans la 2^e partie du récit, le secret féminin concernant la localisation de la tombe d'Énimie consiste en l'absence de toute inscription sur la pierre. C'est le silence de la tombe, c'est bien le cas de le dire. Aucun signe, aucune place. En se soustrayant au symbolique, Enimie retrouvait sa condition d'ermite, jusqu'à ce que les moines découvrent sa sépulture – ce qui coïncide avec la mort de la dernière nonne – et s'approprient ses reliques pour en faire un élément de prestige du complexe monastique désormais entièrement masculin.

Aussi, la 2^e partie répète-t-elle la première: la *Vie de Sainte Énimie* raconte la mainmise de l'Église sur le pouvoir miraculeux d'un corps féminin (deux fois soustrait à sa famille) – mis au service de la productivité agricole, de son vivant, et du prestige du monastère en tant que lieu de pèlerinage, une fois mort.

la lèpre. En effet, dans le discours ecclésiastique, hérésie et lèpre étaient permutables et fonctionnaient comme métaphores l'une de l'autre (MOORE, R, *La persécution. Sa formation en Europe. X^e-XIII^e siècles*, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1991, pp. 75-6). De même, la prédication, qui contagiait des masses et produisait du désordre social, était aussi métaphorisée par la lèpre (idem:124). Lèpre, dragon, hérésie sont des figures de l'impureté et de l'informe. Tuer le dragon c'est éliminer l'ombre que la lèpre jetait sur le pouvoir miraculeux du corps d'Énimie, ce que sa sainteté avait de trop puissant, de dangereux, d'inquiétant, d'informe, de sacré, si bien qu'elle puisse rentrer dans les formes et les normes de l'Église. C'est pour cela que la mort du dragon est le sacrifice du pouvoir miraculeux du corps de la sainte: c'est sa mort.

L'homme sans corps: *Le Chevalier inexistant*, d'Italo Calvino

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1. L'homme sans corps : l'homme de la loi?

Le corps est notre premier territoire, notre premier habitat. Or ce roman nous raconte l'histoire d'un homme sans corps. Qui est donc cet homme? Il a quand même quelque chose qui paraît jouer le rôle d'un corps – une armure; si l'habit ne fait pas le moine, il semble que ce n'est pas le cas de ce chevalier: la rigidité de ce vêtement, sa droiture, son apreté, sa dureté apparaissent tout d'abord, aux yeux du lecteur, comme des représentations du monde bureaucratique et moral dans lequel Agilulfe, le héros du roman, vit plongé.

Quand Raimbaut, jeune qui s'engage dans l'armée de Charles Magne pour venger la mort de son père, (personnage central du roman) arrive à l'armée, Agilulfe est la première personne qu'il rencontre. Il lui fait part de la raison de sa présence, lui communique son ardent désir de combattre; mais Agilulfe ralentit tout de suite son élan en le conseillant, avant tout, d'adresser une requête «à la Surintendance des Duels, Vengeances et Atteintes à l'Honneur, en spécifiant les motifs de sa démarche; «l'autorité» – ajoute-t-il, «examinera quelle est la façon meilleure de te mettre en mesure d'obtenir la réparation sollicitée» (p.22).

Pauvre Raimbaut qui dans sa fougueuse jeunesse voulait tout de suite lutter et se voit ainsi arrêté par le devoir de remplir toute une série d'inutiles paperasses. Après la bataille, ravi d'avoir pu venger son père et tout excité encore par la chaleur de la lutte, Raimbaut se dirige de nouveau vers Agilulfe pour lui demander un poste plus à risques, une tâche difficile, une expédition dangereuse, quelque chose enfin où il puisse se donner tout entier, où il puisse

assouvir son désir d'action et de réalisation. Mais de nouveau la réponse obtenue est bien décevante. Agilulfe lui rappelle qu'il n'y a pas de grandes victoires sans un travail minutieux de coulisses, sans que les petits riens de la vie quotidienne ne soient parfaitement réglés: «Sache que la chose la plus difficile, dans la conduite d'une armée (...) c'est de calculer combien de gamelles de soupe qu'il y a dans une marmite. Pas un régiment où ce chiffre soit exacte (...) Tiens, dès maintenant, pour t'exercer un peu à ton métier de paladin, tu pourrais aller faire un tour dans les cuisines des régiments, listes en main, et examiner si tout est en ordre. Ensuite, tu viendras me rendre compte» (62).

Agilulfe paraît bien le représentant des grandes personnes vues par le Petit Prince de Ste Exupéry: pour lui, les choses importantes sont les chiffres et les comptes et jamais une fleur abandonnée. Quand Charles Magne lui demande, intrigué, comment un homme qui n'existe pas, peut-il remplir son devoir dans l'armée, Agilulfe lui répond: «A force de volonté, Sire, et de foi en la sainteté de notre cause» (15).

2. Utopie et anti-utopie

On peut envisager Agilulfe comme une sorte de prolongement de l'homme d'affaires visité par le Petit Prince de Saint-Exupéry ou encore le commerçant qui vend des pilules pour tuer la soif. Quand le Petit Prince demande à celui-ci pourquoi il vend ces pilules, il lui répond que c'est par économie de temps; d'après lui, les experts qui ont fait les calculs, ont compris qu'ainsi on épargnerait 53 minutes. Le petit Prince lui demande alors qu'est-ce qu'il fait pendant ces 53 minutes: «Ce qu'on veut», lui répond le commerçant. Et le Petit Prince conclut que s'il avait à sa disposition 53 minutes, il irait, à pied, très lentement, chercher une fontaine.

Agilulfe peut donc être considéré comme une caricature de l'homme moderne, mis-en-scène dès le XIX siècle par les anti-utopies: s'il pourrait, en principe, vivre plus légèrement, grâce à une superbe organisation de la vie, il paraît, au contraire, avoir plongé dans une étrange solitude où le monde a acquis une rigidité et une épaisseur – qui lui fait oublier le plaisir de chercher à pied une fontaine.

L'absence de corps ne peut-elle être vue comme une anti-utopie? Le corps, mesure de toutes choses, en disparaissant, nous

fait entrer dans un monde sans nuances, sans contours. Nous entrons dans le monde âpre des números, où le corps n'est plus qu'une machine asseptique – les oeuvres de Rad Bradburry, G. Orwell ou Jules Verne (Paris au XX siècle) en sont justement une mise-en-scène.

Dans le contexte de la trilogie, la dimension anti-utopique paraît se révéler justement dans une espèce d'absence de corps, ou d'un corps mutilé: c'est le cas de notre livre et de celui du *Vicomte Pourfendu*, par opposition au *Baron Perché*, oeuvre nettement utopique: a partir du moment où Cômes, le héros de ce roman, après une dispute familiale, grimpe dans les arbres pour ne plus descendre sur la terre, même pas pour mourir, il aperçoit un monde tellement différent et vaste par rapport à celui où il était né – bien qu'il fût si proche – que le confort de sa maison passe désormais, à ses yeux, pour une cage dorée. Il devient l'homme-oiseau, l'homme-chat, l'homme de la transformation cosmique. En fait, il développe de façon prodigieuse tous ses sens et ses capacités sensorielles, toutes sortes de capacités corporelles que l'homme moderne tend à atrophier de plus en plus.

2.1. *Le rôle de la littérature et de la fantaisie*

Un des traits communs à presque toutes les anti-utopies est le rôle central qu'y joue la littérature: une des premières mesures de toutes les dictatures décrites dans les anti-utopies est d'exercer une censure sur la lecture. Dans *Paris au xx siècle*, de Jules Verne, par exemple, seuls les livres techniques sont permis. La littérature comme pouvoir d'imagination est une menace qui pèse sur toute les sociétés décrites dans les anti-utopies.

En fait, Agilulfe, en tant que symbole du bureaucrate obsédé par la rigueur de la loi, ne peut pas avoir beaucoup d'imagination: il n'a plus le temps d'imaginer l'existence de mondes différents de celui de ses tâches quotidiennes; s'il est très antipathique parmi les soldats, c'est justement parce qu'il empêche l'éclosion de toute sorte de fantaisie. Quand le soir venu, les soldats racontent leurs prouesses, Agilulfe est là pour tout corriger, pour dire que non, ce n'est pas vrai que celui-là ait tué 10 arabes mais 5. Ce chevalier ne sait pas qu'une action de bravoure ne l'est que quand est elle est racontée, c'est-à-dire, reconstruite et hyperbolisée par les mots: «Depuis que le monde est monde, entre la guerre qu'on fait et celle

qu'on raconte, il y a toujours un léger décalage. Mais après tout, dans une existence d'homme de guerre, qu'un événement se soit ou non produit, peu importe. Ce qui compte, c'est la personnalité, la vaillance, une certaine continuité dans la façon d'agir (...) Seulement voilà: cet Agilulfe n'a rien qui puisse donner un support à ses actions, réelles ou imaginaires. Ou bien elles sont consignés au jour au jour dans un procès verbal, inscrite sur les registres; ou bien c'est le vide, le noir complet (86).

La dimension utopique du *Baron Perché* est illustré justement par le rôle décisif qu'y tient la lecture et l'imagination dans l'évolution des personnages: il y un episode merveilleux qui illustre bien cette idée: dans la région d'Ombreuse, où Cômes vit perché dans les arbres, vit un dangereux brigand, Jean des Bruyères. Un jour, dans une fuite désespérée, il est aidé par Cômes à s'échapper. Caché dans un arbre, il observe son sauveur qui lit passionnément un livre. Étonné par toute la concentration de Cômes, il lui demande si c'est beau ce qu'il est en train de lire. Après avoir écouté l'éloge du livre par Cômes, Jean des Bruyères le lui emprunte et c'est de là que commence une amitié entre les deux, basée justement sur l'échange de livres: le brigand avoue s'ennuyer terriblement dans les grottes où il est obligé de se cacher pendant de longues périodes de temps, et devient ainsi un lecteur boulimique, à tel point qu'il ne s'intéresse plus aux vols, et s'enfonce dans sa cachette dévorant des livres, les uns après les autres. Ses amis désespèrent de cet abandon du métier de la part de leur chef et ne veulent pas accepter une si décevante réalité. Un jour, il le convainquent avec beaucoup d'efforts (justement en lui cachant le livre qu'il est en train de lire, Clarissa) à participer à un vol prometteur. Jean des Bruyères y va, mais l'âme n'est plus là et il est attrapé tout de suite et condamné à la pendaison. De la fenêtre de sa prison, il reçoit tous les jours la visite de Cômes que lui lit le livre qu'il avait laissé inachevé. Le jour fatidique, quand Jean des Bruyères arrive sur le lieu de l'exécution, alors qu'il a déjà la corde autour du cou, il voit Cômes perché dans un arbre tenant dans la main Clarissa, le livre qu'il n'avait pas eu le temps de finir: «Dis-moi comment ça finit», demande le condamné, «- Je regrette de te le dire, Jean, répondit Cômes, Jonathan finit pendu haut et court», - «Eh bien, je vais en faire autant. Allons, adieu! D'un coup de pied , il repoussa l'échelle et s'étrangla. (128)

L'homme encerclé dans la prison du concret ne peut pas développer la légèreté de l'ironie. Seule l'ironie déclenche dans l'homme la capacité d'échapper à son corps, à toutes ses contingences et

fragilités, à la mort. L'ironie est le regard de l'aigle. Par contre, le monde de l'anti-utopie est le regard de la tortue: c'est le chemin lent et lourd de celui qui ne peut jamais quitter sa carapace, de celui qui ne peut jamais déployer ses ailes dans un vol de totale insouciance par rapport au monde.

Si un grand écrivain est surtout un visionnaire, il me semble que l'oeuvre de Calvino en est bien l'exemple, en ce qui concerne notre sujet: en fait, si on n'a jamais autant parlé du corps comme il arrive aujourd'hui, de ses contraintes et des formes de les dépasser, la réalité est bien différente: il suffit d'observer, d'un côté, l'acharnement farouche qu'on met à montrer qu'on a un corps libéré, et de l'autre côté les règles médicales de conduite de plus en plus aseptiques qui ne peuvent que vider le corps de toute substance réelle. Agilulfe représente, à bien des égards, ce corps moderne plongé dans le monde du concret, de la dictature de la science, incapable du coup de pied brutal de Jean des Bruyères, à la fois rieur et léger, dans la tyrannie du destin.

3. Entre la terreur et la pitié : entre le poids et la légèreté

Mais si l'homme sans corps ne représentait l'ordre, le personnage du chevalier serait bien pauvre car il ne nous inspirerait que le sentiment de la terreur aristotélique, c'est-à-dire, la distance. Mais dès la première page, le lecteur sent une grande pitié pour lui. Comme le palefrenier le devine, Agilulfe était le chevalier le plus ennuyant mais le plus malheureux de toute l'armée. En fait, tout au long du livre, le sentiment le plus contagieux consiste justement dans l'insoutenable poids qu'il transporte, et dans notre infinie pitié pour ce fardeau si lourd à porter.

Ici se joue un des paradoxes les plus intéressants qui traverse toute l'oeuvre de cet écrivain: le rapport étroit, ambigu et énigmatique entre le poids et la légèreté, des catégories spécifiquement littéraires en tant que catégories existentielles, comme Calvino le montre dans ses *Leçons Américaines*.

Il est intéressant de penser la trilogie comme un seul livre en ce qui concerne la relation légèreté\ lourdeur\ corps. D'un côté on a Agilulfe et Médard, le héros du livre « Viconte Pourfendu; de l'autre côté, on a Cômes, le héros du «Baron Perché». Les deux premiers souffrent d'un manque, leur différence commune reposant justement sur une absence de corps. Le troisième personnage, Cômes,

vit, au contraire, une sorte de déploiement de son corps, une espèce d'ouverture et de dépassement de ses limitations physiques. Agilulfe et Médard n'arrivent pas à quitter la lourdeur du monde – l'armure et la béquille en constituant les symboles.

Mais comment vivent-ils? Comment Agilulfe peut-il oublier cet énorme fardeau de ne pas avoir un corps? Comment peut-il se dépasser, voilà la question. Car il souffre, Agilulfe, il souffre constamment de cette absence, d'une sensation perpétuelle de vide. Face au vertige de la dissolution, Agilulfe s'accroche, comme un naufragé, aux mathématiques: quand tout le monde dort, que peut-il faire? Agilulfe, lui, avait besoin, toujours, de sentir devant soi les choses comme une épaisse muraille, contre laquelle il pût dresser la tension de toute sa volonté: c'était le seul moyen qu'il eût de garder une ferme conscience de soi-même. Si, au contraire, le monde autour de lui s'estompait, devenait flou, ambigu, alors lui aussi se sentait sombrer dans cette pénombre douceuse; dans tout ce vide, il n'arrivait plus à jaillir une pensée distincte, un mouvement de volonté, une idée fixe. Il se sentait mal: c'étaient là les instants où il était prêt de s'évanouir. Parfois, ce n'était qu'au prix d'un effort extrême qu'il parvenait à ne pas disparaître. Alors il se mettait à compter: il comptait les feuilles, les cailloux, les pommes de pin, ce qui lui tombait sous la main. Ou bien il les alignait, les disposait en carrés, en pyramides. Absorbé par ces opérations méticuleuses, il finissait par vaincre le malaise, dominer l'insatisfaction, l'inquiétude et la prostration, retrouver sa lucidité et son assurance coutumières (28).

Privé de corps, Agilulfe semble pourtant plus attaché au monde, au concret, que tous les chevaliers sous et fatigués qui quittent leur armure à la tombée du jour. Ceux-ci oublient tout dans le sommeil, dans l'amour, dans les petits plaisirs. Mais Agilulfe, peut-il oublier quoi que ce soit? C'est cette angoisse permanente qui forme son caractère et détermine son attachement au concret: s'il est le bureaucrate vide et ennuyant, il est aussi l'homme qui souffre d'une absence telle qu'il doit la remplir tout le temps avec les seuls éléments à sa disposition; c'est cet attachement désespéré au concret qui mène Raimbaut à le chercher dans ses moments de désespoir, car il voit en lui, ironiquement, l'incarnation d'une présence réelle. Si Agilulfe lui inspire une certaine crainte, il se sent, pourtant, attiré par lui, car il incarne pour lui la perfection.

Pour un jeune angoissé à propos de son rôle dans le monde – c'est le cas de Raimbaut – ou pour une femme déçue avec la vulga-

rité des chevaliers qu'elle idéalisait parfaits et nobles – c'est la cas de Bradamante – la perfection ne peut exister que dans un homme sans corps. Agilulfe joue certainement le rôle d'un idéal: inaccessible, voire inexistant comme tous les idéaux, il n'est pas moins le catalyseur d'une recherche personnelle. Pour Raimbaut et Bradamante, il est une sorte de modèle, c'est-à-dire, une référence déterminante dans un parcours initiatique, que la vie se chargera de démystifier et de relativiser.

4. Un homme sans corps : celui qui en possède plusieurs?

Une question s'impose maintenant: un chevalier sans corps serait-il l'équivalent d'un chevalier sans nom? On se rappelle Dom Juan Tenório, de Tirso de Molina. Interrogé sur son identité au moment où il est soupçonné de se faire passer pour un autre (au moment où il se fait passer pour Octavio dans les bras de Anna), à la question «qui es-tu», il répond «un homme sans nom». Mais on le saura après, surtout avec le *Dom Juan* de Molière, l'homme sans nom est l'homme du masque, celui qui possède plusieurs visages.

Un homme sans corps serait, alors, celui qui en possède plusieurs?

Si on pense à Agilulfe et à son écuyer, Gourdoulou, comme un couple, c'est-à-dire, comme les deux moitiés de l'homme, cette idée est bien présente: en effet, Gourdoulou est tout d'abord l'homme caméléon, celui qui adopte la forme de tout ce qu'il voit ou touche; quand il est en train de manger sa soupe, celle-ci lui semble se transformer en lui, et au lieu d'essayer de la manger, il essaye d'être mangé par la soupe, car la soupe est devenue Gourdoulou.

Mais Gourdoulou n'est pas seulement celui qui devient à tout moment soupe, arbre, poisson ou canard. Partout où il passe, on lui attribue un nom différent. Au moment où passe le régiment de Charles Magne, Gourdoulou déconcerte la comitave quand celle-ci découvre, en l'espace de quelques minutes, la variété de noms par lesquels Gourdoulou est connu: Gourdoulou, le premier, mais tout de suite après Omébé et Martinzoust. Le jardinier de Charles Magne explique cette étrange dispersion: «Selon les contrées qu'il traverse, (...) selon qu'il suit l'armée chrétienne ou l'infidèle, on le nomme Gourdoulou, ou Goudi-youzouf, ou Ben-Çava-Yousouf, ou Ben-Stamboul, ou Pestanzoust ou Bertinzoust, ou Martinbon, ou Gars-Bon, Gars-Beste...Mais on l'appelle encore Le Vilain des

Vallées, ou Jean Piffre, ou Pierre Pignoche. Il se peut que, dans quelque ferme isolée, on lui trouve un nom tout à fait différent des autres. J'ai du reste noté que partout on le désigne diversement selon les saisons. On dirait que tous ces noms pleuvent sur lui sans jamais arriver à y tenir. Mais, de quelque façon qu'on le désigne ça lui est égal: il ne fait pas de différence. Vous l'appellez, il croit que vous appelez une chèvre; vous dites «fromage», ou bien «torrent», et il répond: «Me voici»(36).

Il serait bien difficile à trouver un couple plus parfait que celui-ci: un chevalier qui pense exister mais qui n'existe pas ne pourrait sûrement qu'avoir un écuyer qui existe sans le savoir.

Nous avons parlé du masque à propos du personnage de Dom Juan. Ce masque ne signifie-t-il pas surtout le rêve d'un homme universel, sans nom, sans identité, sans famille – un homme «cosmos» et libre? Ce que ce mythe nous rappelle particulièrement est le scandale d'un homme totalement libre parce que justement il ne craint rien ni personne. Gourdoulou peut bien être considéré comme son avatar comique et burlesque: le bonheur de ne pas avoir un rôle défini à jouer, de pouvoir être tout, de ne pas craindre les changements et les métamorphoses. Il est bien l'homme cosmique rabelaisien et s'il n'est pas devenu un mythe c'est bien sûr parce qu'il lui manque la dimension tragique, décisive dans la fabrication du mythe.

5. L'homme sans corps: l'homme-cosmos

Le corps semble ainsi n'être qu'une possibilité ininterrompue de transformations: par hasard homme, et tout de suite après, cet homme devient chat, poisson, livre ou autres choses.

Si dans la trilogie cette idée semble plus évidente, elle est présente dans toute l'oeuvre de Calvino. Rappelons-nous *Palomar* dans le magasin de fromages, à Paris: c'est bien lui qui va choisir le fromage ou le fromage qui va choisir son client? Il y a en fait un rapport réciproque entre le fromage et le client: chaque fromage attend son propre client et adopte la meilleure attitude pour attirer son attention. Palomar n'est plus le sujet de l'action, celui qui choisit, mais l'objet, c'est-à-dire, fromage lui-même. Et si le fromage se transforme en client, la métamorphose ne s'arrête pas là: le fromage devient aussi lupanar, encyclopédie, prairie, dictionnaire et musée.

Dans le contexte général de l'oeuvre de Calvino, *Le Chevalier Inexistant* acquiert un sens particulier: un monde de possibilités infinies; l'a armure comme un «réceptacle» qu'on peut remplir des façons les plus diverses. Bradamante y voit une série de possibilités romanesques, Raimbaut y lit l'impératif d'un travail bien fait, Priscilla, ironiquement, des dons amoureux inénarrables.

Le monde entier est un corps qu'on peut remplir de ce qu'on veut: on peut le vider de toute substance – c'est le cas du monde autiste du bureaucrate – ou, au contraire, le remplir de toute sorte de sens.

Un homme cherche une femme dans tout Paris; d'elle, il n'a que le parfum senti dans un bal masqué. Pourrait-il la trouver? Voilà le début du livre laissé inachevé par Calvino, *Sous le Soleil Jaguar*. Pourra-t-il remplir ce parfum – le seul corps qu'il possède – d'autres corps – un visage, etc.? Ce n'est pas par hasard que ce conte finit d'une manière singulière: la femme cherchée et trouvée n'a finalement pas existé: quand l'homme la trouve, elle est sur le point d'être enterrée; il apprend alors qu'elle était morte la veille, précisément au moment où il l'aurait connu au bal masqué.

Qu'est-ce que le monde sinon cet éventail de possibilités infinies à notre disposition? Le monde entier n'est-il pas une voix, des voix qu'on écoute et dont on essaie de deviner à qui elles appartiennent? C'est l'histoire d'un Roi à l'Écoute, troisième et dernier chapitre du livre cité. Il y a des voix auxquelles il faut attribuer un corps, celui-ci étant toujours une forme dont le contenu est libre d'être rempli selon nos souhaits.

6. Le corps-le livre

C'est aussi évidemment le corps du texte. Cette armure vide est bien le signe du corps du texte – la page blanche –, qu'on doit remplir. Ce qui est curieux dans ce livre c'est le rapport entre cette idée et le processus constant de métamorphose subi par tous les personnages: en fait il n'y a que Gourdoulou qui se transforme constamment; aussi on découvre, à la fin, que Bradamante, personnage féminin central, est soeur Thérèse, la none qui se réfugie au couvent pour écrire l'histoire – elle est la narratrice et tout ce roman est parsemé de réflexions sur la difficulté de l'écriture, sur l'énorme tâche qui représente l'acte de remplir la page vide d'un contenu solide: » chacune de nous, au couvent, se voit attribuer une péni-

tence particulière (...) A moi est échue la tâche d'écrire des histoires: elle est lourde, si vous saviez! On se met à écrire avec élan, et puis il vient une heure où notre plume ne gratte plus qu'une encre poudreuse, où ne circule plus une goutte de vie; la vie est toute entière en allée, elle est au-delà, au delà de cette fenêtre, au delà de nous mêmes; alors, il semble que plus jamais on ne pourra chercher refuge dans la page qu'on écrit, ouvrir à travers elle un univers autre et, d'un bond, s'y jeter» (82-83)

Toute l'oeuvre de Calvino est bien l'ouverture de cette fenêtre sur le monde, à partir de laquelle, à l'instar de Cômes perché sur les arbres, on voit un monde en permanente métamorphose: celle-ci peut être vue comme synonyme de musique: sons différents qui, ensemble, parviennent à constituer une pièce musicale. Dans le «Roi à l'écoute» (dernière histoire du livre *Sous le Soleil de Jaguar*), le roi craint, avant tout, le silence: n'est-il pas une menace, ce vide qu'on peut difficilement remplir d'un corps? Les voix qu'il écoute de la salle de son palais sont tout de suite matérialisées. Mais le silence?

La littérature est bien ce désir de survie, de remplir notre propre «existence-silence» avec toute sorte de possibilités offertes par l'imagination.

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Littérature et Cinéma : la monstration du corps

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Berlin Alexanderplatz, publié en 1929, montre jusqu'à quel point le cinéma a indiscutablement influencé la littérature. Alfred Döblin avançait une technique, à l'époque innovatrice, qui consistait en l'application du montage cinématographique afin de transmettre l'impression de plans superposés de la ville de Berlin.

Ce genre de montage ainsi que la multiplication de points de vue, nous le retrouvons dans *The Sound and the Fury*, texte dans lequel Faulkner a configuré quatre noyaux narratifs et des ruptures temporelles. À son tour, dans sa trilogie *USA*, Dos Passos, outre l'utilisation du contrepoint et de l'interpolation, a dispersé la narrative principale, en l'ébauchant par *takes* qui s'alignent dans un montage fragmenté. Diverses lignes d'action s'alternent par intermittence sans la connexion d'aucun commentaire explicatif. Et, dans *Manhattan Transfer*, il nous présente un roman inspiré par le montage cinématographique. Nous avons la représentation, en registre détaillé et objectif, de la vie quotidienne de Manhattan. Personnages et paysages (l'animation de Broadway, le métro de New York, etc.) surgissent et disparaissent sans présentation. On les *montre* tout simplement à travers un sujet énonciatif qui se limite à les focaliser à la manière d'une caméra. Au-delà de multiples sauts temporels qui segmentent la linéarité de l'action, l'alternance parallèle, sans transition, élucide la discontinuité et la simultanéité (c'est-à-dire par montage) de différents noyaux narratifs. Le texte est, par conséquent, imprégné d'une technique composite nettement calquée sur le discours filmique. Ceci vient prouver que Dos Passos, contrairement à André Gide, voyait le cinéma comme assise de la littérature pour une nouvelle façon de narrer (Carbajo, 1993: 127).

Les exemples que nous venons de donner, et nous pourrions en fournir bien d'autres, sont l'illustration de l'effort que la littérature déploie pour s'écrire comme à l'écran. Néanmoins, soyons conscients qu'il s'agit vraiment d'un effort, car la littérature et le cinéma sont, malgré la reconnaissance d'affinités, par la nature spécifique de leur langage, deux moyens d'expression *a priori* très différents qui comportent des spécificités morphologiques et fonctionnelles. Alors que la communication littéraire s'exerce à partir d'une chaîne de signes verbaux, code conventionnel et arbitraire, organisés linéairement et destinés à conceptualiser et à découper le réel de façon abstraite et rationnelle, le film, pour sa part, utilise au-delà du code sonore, la concrétion motivée du signe iconique, matériel analogique structuré dans l'espace.

On comprend ainsi que la représentation du corps dans le texte écrit soit forcément différente de sa représentation à l'écran. La littérature se passe volontiers de l'action ou de l'expression d'un corps pour nous faire connaître une pensée ou un état d'âme. Elle s'emploie plutôt, par la nature abstraite et conceptuelle de ses signes, à la transmission de contenus mentaux et psychiques. Au cinéma, il n'en est pas de même. C'est surtout un art qui se matérialise par l'image, ce qui veut dire qu'il se centre sur la représentation du comportement observable et sur la réalité extérieure, et connaît des difficultés en ce qui concerne le traitement de phénomènes psychologiques, se limitant souvent à suggérer la matière subjective et invisible. À l'inverse de la littérature (appropriée, grâce à son code verbal, à «plâtrer» l'univers intérieur des agents narratifs), au cinéma, la subjectivité de la conscience des personnages se révèle, de façon privilégiée, par l'objectivité des images filmiques d'un visage, d'un regard ou, si nous voulons une synecdoque totalisante, d'un corps. À l'écran, l'image d'un corps, d'une réalité observable donc, plus que dans la littérature où nous trouvons en général la tentation du biais de l'explication ou de la description, à l'écran, disons-nous, l'image d'un corps traduit du sens. D'ailleurs, rappelons que, on le sait, surtout depuis G. Deleuze, l'image cinématographique dispose de toute une grammaire visuelle des automatismes de la pensée. Nous pourrions, même à la limite, proposer une définition non verbale de corps au cinéma en tant que «psychologie externe» (Morrissette, 1985: 44). Le non-dit se conjugue avec le vu pour dire vraiment ce que l'on voit. Le corps des choses et des êtres signifie par sa seule présence. Pas besoin du bavardage d'un intermédiaire. Les images de corps remplissent de signifiés le silence de

l'image. Dans ce genre de langage, quand il n'y a pas de mots, ce qui compte c'est surtout les objets et les êtres, vides de tout autre ancrage dans la signification qui ne soit celui de leur forme et, il va sans dire, de leur disposition. C'est dans ce sens qu'il serait juste de parler du cinéma comme d'un art corporel, puisque, comme nous le dit Jean Mitry, il «suggère, sous-entend, mais ne tire aucune conclusion (en principe) et laisse ce soin au spectateur» (Mitry, 1963: 137). En somme, le corps montré par le cinéma n'est pas celui que la littérature montre.

Toutefois, prenons ici le point de vue de la littérature, la démarche d'une approche s'effectue. On la saisit lorsqu'on s'aperçoit que l'écrivain est perméable au septième art. Influencé par le cinéma, l'écriture littéraire cherche à supprimer celui qui raconte et essaie de nous donner l'impression que, comme à l'écran, on montre. Le corps devient alors, comme au cinéma, surtout sous ses différents angles et dans ses multiples perspectives métonymiques, un moyen de raconter. On sait bien que cette impression d'avoir renoncé à l'intermédiaire de la représentation, comme l'a démontré Percy Lubbock dans *The Craft of Fiction*, se trouve dans certains textes comme le pré-cinématographique *The Awkward Age*, de Henry James. Mais c'est l'exemple du cinéma qui a permis à la littérature d'apprendre à vraiment camoufler le sujet de l'énonciation. L'écrivain a appris que l'*objectivité* du raconté avec ses corps est aussi parlante et peut-être bien plus suggestive que la *subjectivité* de quelqu'un en train de *narrer*. Le narrateur se conduit comme s'il était une caméra, développant de manière objective seulement ce qu'il se propose de décrire, et qu'il se meut plutôt «par la volonté de 'montrer' que par celle de 'narrer' (Rollet, 1996: 172). Aussi n'est-il pas étonnant que l'on parle de «camera eye style», technique par laquelle le texte littéraire se construit sous la forme d'une hégémonie visuelle dans laquelle «the emphasis was on showing the object rather telling about it, on seeing it and making it seen» (Cohen, 1974: 135). Nous avons, avec l'éventuelle utilisation parallèle d'autres procédés filmiques comme le découpage par montage ou le hors-champs, la structuration du discours exercée par un «narrateur invisible» (Ropars-Wuilleumier, 1970), voix apparemment proscrite du discours filmique. On soustrait l'entité intermédiaire entre l'univers fictionnel et le lecteur. C'est alors que les corps surgissent dans la littérature. Ce sont eux qui signifient. Ils deviennent conducteurs de ce que nous lisons et de ce que l'on veut nous faire lire. Il faut, à travers eux, interpréter ce qui n'est pas rendu

explicite par le narrateur. Celui-ci est substitué par la voix et le témoignage d'un sourire, d'un geste, d'un corps, certes physique, mais qui se sait capable de nous plonger dans la subjectivité d'un personnage. Le corps devient un texte visible proche de la conscience de son «porteur» et voué à la traduire. Il attire l'attention sur le «non-vu» qu'est sa pensée. Il est le miroir des sentiments, des pensées et des émotions que le narrateur garde sous silence. Un corps possède de nombreux canaux par où s'échappent les conflits internes de l'individu. La géométrie de son expression se trace à partir de la conscience, du ressort qui l'anime ou l'effondre.

Claude Edmonde-Magny, dans *L'Âge du Roman Américain*, s'attachant essentiellement aux écrivains nord-américains des années 30 (Faulkner, Hemingway, Dos Passos...) influencés par la psychologie behaviouriste, a observé combien ces auteurs révélaient l'usage de techniques filmiques qui soulignaient la manifestation du corps comme moyen de raconter et, la plupart des fois, sans l'explication de ce que l'on décrit. Dos Passos, par exemple, revendique ce type de technique quand, dans quelques-uns de ses textes, il introduit des chapitres qu'il intitule de «Camera eye» et il nomme d'autres segments textuels «newsreel». Magny, outre certains aspects comme l'usage de l'ellipse ou la question du «découpage» du temps et de l'espace, a noté justement dans ces textes l'emploi d'une présentation et d'un registre objectif proche de l'impartialité d'une caméra. Le champ de conscience des personnages et la manipulation omnisciente de celles-ci se rejettent et se vident en faveur de visualisations extérieures et neutres de leur conduite (gestes, comportements, interactions verbales, changements physiologiques, etc.) qui servent de stimulus à l'inférence des motivations introspectives. C'est-à-dire, comme le formule Tzvetan Todorov (1971: 41): le *moi* du narrateur s'occulte complètement derrière le *il* du héros. La littérature de cette époque historique et littéraire a puisé dans le cinéma un moyen de perception et de représentation du réel réglé par la primauté du registre de la surface, à travers un discours objectif et impersonnel («réalisme objectif»). Les textes sont, disons, limpides et transparents. Personnages et ambiances sont *montrés* et non *expliqués*. Nous prenons connaissance de l'indécision d'un personnage, de son irritation ou alors de sa satisfaction, non à travers d'un quelconque commentaire du narrateur, mais à travers le visage qui nous est montré. Un regard plus sévère, un sourire plus prononcé, un corps moins tendu. Tout, comme à l'écran, dépend de notre talent à savoir observer. Le narrateur

n'est plus là pour nous dire quoi penser. C'est la surface du corps qui dévoile une profondeur (in)soupçonnée. La vérité de chaque être s'inscrit sur son corps comme un tatouage qui permet de voir au-delà de sa peau, au-delà de la perception du corps en tant que morphologie simple d'une surface plane. Le corps attire des regards jusqu'à la limite de sa visibilité. Il rend compte d'une manière d'être. C'est à nous, spectateur-lecteur, d'observer la communication des corps. D'interpréter leur signification. Ce qu'ils ont à nous dire, sans qu'ils le disent par la voix explicative et rassurante d'un narrateur, mobilisé à chaque page pour nous expliquer et nous conduire par la main au texte. À nous de lire la focalisation externe des corps. C'est ce qui se passe avec Dashiell Hammett, écrivain qui, selon Claude Edmonde Magny, «ne rapporte que ce que nous pourrions voir ou entendre si nous assistions à la scène, comme y assiste le *caméraman* qu'il y a délégué pour notre bénéfice» (1948: 51). Nous avons, par conséquent, une énonciation dotée d'une nette prédisposition filmique: montrer des événements, accordant au lecteur la liberté de les voir et de les entendre. Quant au lecteur, conformément à la situation représentative (privilegiée) de type «monstration» assumée par le texte, celui-ci se trouve en position analogue au narrateur, tous deux proches de la situation du spectateur. On pourrait dire qu'en eux s'activent des modes de compréhension-interprétation proches de ceux qui structurent la connaissance de celui-ci. L'inférence directe des aspects de la vie intérieure du personnage est de la responsabilité du lecteur, dans la mesure où on ne dispose que d'une perception externe, à savoir limité, de l'action narrative, à l'image du prototype du texte filmique. C'est au corps des personnages de restituer ce qu'un narrateur a décidé de ne pas nous dire. Chaque corps devient une représentation sensible, dans laquelle nous pouvons reconnaître un mode d'incarnation singulier. Chaque corps matérialise une médiation subjective.

Cependant ne soyons pas dupes, il y a bel et bien un narrateur dans ce genre de textes comme il y en a plusieurs au cinéma. Vouloir cacher le sujet qui gouverne la représentation de l'histoire ne veut pas dire qu'il n'y a pas le filtre de quelqu'un qui lit le corps et nous le présente à sa façon. Il est important de retenir que la présentation du corps, aussi neutre qu'elle le sera, c'est-à-dire sans description et sans analyse ni commentaire, cette présentation, dans la manière dont elle se constitue, est déjà une grille de lecture. C'est la même chose au cinéma: même si le narrateur n'est pas aussi perceptible que dans la littérature (à coups de déictiques et de

signes grammaticaux), il faut admettre que quelqu'un nous a mis le corps devant les yeux. Et, en plus, sous un certain angle et avec une certaine prise de vue. Supposer le contraire reviendrait à vouloir admettre, contre toute évidence, qu'un narrateur pour l'être doit se montrer sous l'aspect d'un être humanisé, à la limite avec une certaine corporalité. Il nous faudrait l'impression qu'il y ait quelqu'un derrière la caméra, malgré la transparence discursive à laquelle Hollywood nous a habitués.

André Gaudreault analyse cette question dans *Du Littéraire au Filmique. Système du Récit* (1989), et aussi (avec François Jost) dans *Le Récit Cinématographique* (1990), quand il se propose de préciser la bipolarisation de la modalité narrative de l'information fictionnelle cinématographique en deux régimes de couches superposés de «narrativité» que le texte filmique englobe spécifiquement:

a) la «monstration» (mot qu'il récupère de Betty Rotjman et, peut-être, de Jean Mitry), type de modalité de communication narrative propre au cinéma et à la représentation dramatique, puisque dans ces circuits esthétiques et sémiotiques, le narrateur, comme il fonctionne traditionnellement en littérature, se trouve pratiquement absent, la transmission des contenus informatifs revenant aux acteurs par l'action qu'ils accomplissent au niveau du comportement et au niveau du verbal. Autrement dit, il s'agit d'une technique de communication d'une histoire à travers les personnages en action corporelle (ou verbale) au lieu d'une voix qui nous dit à chaque instant les péripéties qu'ils subissent. Gaudreault institue comme instance responsable de cette modalité communicative le «monstrateur», entité plurielle avec des capacités et des facultés narratives distinctes de celles du «narrateur». Il lui appartient, en situation cinématographique, d'opérer dans le dispositif profilmique («mise en scène», telle qu'on l'entend au théâtre) et d'agir dans la manipulation de «prises de vue» («mise en cadre»), niveau filmographique correspondant à celui du filmage proposé par Tom Gunning (1991).

b) la «narration», type de modalité communicative qui découle du montage («mise en chaîne») des unités diégétiques et qui, pour cette raison, appartient à l'articulation des plans, alors que la «monstration» concerne l'articulation de photogrammes. C'est à ce niveau que s'effectuent des modelages temporels et que le «narrateur» (instance responsable au niveau de la «narration») inscrit un

parcours singulier de lecture pour en arriver ainsi à la construction de l'histoire. L'existence du «narrateur», entité qui structure en narration l'objet cinématographique, peut se démontrer, donc, par la possibilité que le cinéma a de manipuler, pour ce qui est de l'ordre et de la durée du temps, l'histoire. De plus, souvenons-nous, qu'au cinéma, le dérobement de marques et de vestiges concernant la présence du «narrateur» peut être dû à des exigences de nature esthétique et stylistique. Ceci a été noté par Christian Metz à propos du cinéma classique et de la distinction établie par Émile Benveniste entre histoire et discours. Selon Metz, ce qui caractérise le discours cinématographique c'est sa capacité de s'effacer en tant que discours, d'éteindre les marques de son énonciation et de se voiler en histoire (Metz, 1975: 118). En ce sens, c'est au spectateur de vivre l'omniscience du regard, en assumant les vestiges supprimés par le sujet de l'énonciation (*idem*: 122). D'ailleurs, l'occultation n'est pas absolue, comme l'a prouvé Raymond Bellour en montrant dans des films d'Hitchcock des traits de présence d'énonciation typiquement hitchcockiens (Bellour, 1979). Au surplus, il faut noter que tout le discours filmique comporte des marques apparentées aux déictiques de la langue, qui correspondent à des cas de subjectivité de l'image (Gaudreault et Jost, 1990: 43 e ss.).

Dans le système du discours filmique préconisé par Gaudreault, les deux instances de communication narrative (le «monstrateur» et le «narrateur»), exigées par la nature sémiotique du discours filmique, sont modulées, régulées et fusionnées par une instance fondamentale désignée «méganarrateur filmique», qui rappelle le «grand imagier» de Laffay, c'est-à-dire, le narrateur extradiégétique.

En résumé, au cinéma, même s'il ne s'agit pas de l'idiosyncrasie d'auteur dont fait preuve «La Nouvelle Vague» ou le «Underground/New American Cinema», ce qui est montré fait preuve de celui qui pourvoit la monstration. Il suffit de penser au fameux effet Kulechov. Le visage inexpressif de Moszhukhin ne saurait à lui seul transmettre le sentiment de tristesse, de désir et de faim. Il a fallu que Kulechov intercale la nudité de ce visage, la nudité d'un corps, avec l'image d'un plat de soupe, d'une femme nue et du corps d'un enfant mort, pour le rendre parlant. C'est toute une rhétorique du montage, l'apposition de deux corps concrets, qui a permis la lecture d'un sentiment, c'est-à-dire, d'un concept abstrait (visage + corps d'enfant mort = tristesse). Aucune voix «off», ni légende ne nous dit la tristesse du visage pourtant froid de Moszhukin. C'est

l'image suivante du cadavre enfantin qui le dit. C'est l'articulation idéographique du narrateur Lev Kulechov.

En ce qui concerne la littérature, nous trouvons une correspondance de cette visée à transmettre à travers la jonction et la manipulation d'objets et de corps dans les récits du nouveau-roman. Avec les écrivains américains de l'après guerre «On saisit l'intérieur d'une conscience par le dehors et l'analyse, toujours descriptive, est conséquente d'une série d'implications déterminées par des «*observables*» (Mitry, 1963: 137). Maintenant, avec les nouveaux romanciers, également connus sous la désignation de «cinéastes du langage» (Billard, 1997: 22), le mécanisme s'approfondit. Une page de Robbe-Grillet ressemble plutôt à une succession d'images enregistrées par une caméra, mais, à la différence de Hemingway ou de Faulkner, l'extériorité visuelle des objets ou des corps qu'on décrit n'a rien à voir avec la volonté de suggérer ou de traduire l'intériorité des sentiments des personnages. Pas la moindre trace de subjectivité ou d'affectivité. Les descriptions de corps résistent à laisser «voir». Elles sont aussi froides et neutres que le visage inexpressif de Moszukhin. Chez Kulechov, comme chez Robbe-Grillet, le corps est surtout occasion de vide, il n'a pas de liaisons, ni de références. Le corps n'est plus directement la représentation sensible d'une pensée ou d'une émotion. Pas de contenu intérieur, on ne suggère aucune valeur et le corps d'un visage se renferme sans laisser dévoiler un état psychologique, une attitude émotionnelle. La vision est purement mécanique, surdéterminée de descriptions absolument débridées. Aucune charge affective n'est engendrée. C'est d'ailleurs dû à ces raisons que la citation d'un fragment d'un texte de Robbe-Grillet fait obtenir un résultat identique à celui de l'image de Moszhukin sans soupe, sans femme nue ou sans cadavre d'enfant. On n'aurait tout simplement un morceau de texte tout aussi stérile qu'une image filmique retirée de la séquence filmique à laquelle elle appartient.

D'ou provient alors la signification du corps dans ce genre d'écriture, selon laquelle, l'important c'est précisément de vider ? Et bien, il provient de la capacité du narrateur à manipuler le vide de ces corps, de son agilité à nous faire comprendre ou sentir sans nous le dire directement, ni même par la voie plus indirecte d'un corps expressif. Le contenu viendra par collision d'images, comme chez Kulechov. Donnons un bref exemple pour attester ce que nous disons. À l'écran, c'est le regard que la caméra nous fait jeter sur les choses qui parle, et non forcément la parole explicative et narratrice

de quelqu'un. La caméra s'affirme, tout autant que le montage, comme un outil à prendre en compte lorsque nous voulons faire signifier des objets et des images inexpressives. C'est ce qui arrive quand la caméra se déplace dans l'intention de communiquer un meurtre, concentriquement autour du corps, dirigeant l'attention du public vers des objets sans signification, mais qui gagnent de l'intensité expressive au moment ou subitement l'image du cadavre nous est présentée. Robbe-Grillet, dans *Le Voyeur*, fait usage de cette stratégie, structurant ce roman autour de la représentation d'une jeune fille violée (Bloch-Michel, 1967: 107-111). De même, le visage sans vie de Moszukhin ne dirait rien s'il n'avait justement été juxtaposé à l'image d'un plat de soupe fumant. Nous ne devinerions pas sa faim.

Cet effet de montage – $A + B = C$ et non pas AB comme chez Pudovkin –, on le retrouvera chez bien d'autres cinéastes de la Révolution bolchévique, comme Dziga Vertov. Mais nous pouvons encore aller un peu plus loin dans l'art de manipuler l'image sans parole et de la rendre chaque fois plus intense en ce qui concerne l'expression d'émotions, avec Eisenstein. Ce réalisateur, inspiré aussi bien par Kulechov que par le théâtre Kabuki et l'écriture idéographique japonaise, à lui seul représente tout un cinéma. Nous retrouvons aujourd'hui l'une des techniques qu'il a développées, puisée d'ailleurs dans la littérature de Maupassant, abondamment associée aux films d'action d'Hollywood mais aussi à la télévision, lorsqu'il s'agit de nous montrer avec pleine émotion un but au football ou la chute en chaîne d'un groupe de cyclistes. Pour ce qui est du cinéma d'Hollywood, c'est l'image répétée, mais sous tous ses angles et toutes les prises de vues possibles, d'un coup de poing – naturellement celui que le héros inflige au bandit. Dans le sport, nous voyons le but comme si nous étions derrière le buteur, à ses cotés et même à la place du gardien. Il en va de même pour les cyclistes. La télévision nous fait percevoir leur chute de tous les cotés. Dans ce type de montage, un corps, qu'il effectue une action ou qu'il soit figé, est montré par particularisation de ses différentes parties. On le démonte afin de le montrer dans sa totalité, sans rien cacher.

Selon Eisenstein, montrer la somme des multiples visions possibles de quelque chose permettrait, sans souci de la continuité narrative, que le spectateur participe de la jouissance et de la pensée que le cinéaste a éprouvées lors de la réalisation. Mais l'effet le plus visible de cette stratégie de montage est surtout celui

d'intensifier l'expression de quelque chose. Montrer le mouvement du corps d'un héros lorsqu'il agit en décomposant son corps agissant c'est montrer la multiplication, à chaque image parcellaire, de son héroïsme. Les différents schémas géométriques de chaque prise de vue sous-tendent une image totalisante de la scène qui a pour but de fixer et de communiquer son abstraction (sa jouissance, sa douleur, sa haine, etc.). Cette technique se démarque de celle de Kuleshov. Le visage de Moszukhin ne disait rien, sauf quand il était suivi d'une autre image. Avec Eisenstein, le visage ou le corps expriment d'avance quelque chose. On ne veut pas suggérer, tout court, une émotion. Il n'est pas question de savoir si Moszukhin est triste ou s'il a faim. Il est question de savoir à quel point il est triste et jusqu'où va sa faim. C'est la profondeur de l'expression qui compte et pas simplement son sens. Le corps nous dit quelque chose, mais il le dit avec intensité.

Voyons par exemple la première séquence du film *Bezhin Lug* (URSS, 1935-1937). Nous y trouvons le cadavre d'une femme éten due sur une charrue face à la tristesse du fils et du père. Chaque nouveau cadre remet ces éléments de deuil, alternant la disposition spatiale à travers des modifications de l'échelle et des angles. Ainsi se produisent des variations spatiales d'un même thème. L'expression du thème de la douleur s'intensifie, ce qui serait difficile à communiquer par une simple prise de vue, correspondante à un angle unique de vision. Cette technique, dont Eisenstein fait abondamment l'usage, a influencé des cinéastes comme Mikhail Romm ou bien Akira Kurosawa, surtout lorsqu'il s'agit d'éviter des situations de monotonie propres à des scènes d'espace fermés (Burch, 1992: 60-62). Elle se rapproche de la construction littéraire d'un livre de Maria Teresa Horta, intitulé *Ema* (1985). Ce texte semble supposer justement ce principe de montage enseigné par Eisenstein, selon lequel le flux diégétique se suspend pour que l'on montre une multiplicité de plans des angles de vision d'une réalité, et cela afin de communiquer sous l'aspect d'une totalité qu'une expression univoque (un point de vue unique) ne permettrait pas. Plusieurs épisodes de l'histoire de *Ema* sont décomposés. On les voit de manière différente. Cette configuration se trouve présente, par exemple, dans la séquence textuelle qui nous décrit la scène où le mari d'*Ema* lui attache un collier de pierres précieuses, sous le regard attentif des invités, la veille de Noël. Cette action («image intégrale», dirait Eisenstein) est fragmentée par le discours. Elle nous est décrite selon plusieurs perspectives. Elle perd donc son

unité temporelle, puisque la continuité de l'histoire est arrêtée. On garantit, de cette façon, l'articulation d'un ensemble de fragments textuels, parcelles représentatives de la totalité de l'action communiquée. On parvient à l'accès de l'intégralité de la scène et à son signifié profond. La composition de «l'image intégrale», en établissant des relations entre les différentes représentations fragmentaires, met en évidence la dimension symbolique de l'œuvre: la dépendance matrimoniale de la femme.

Pour terminer très rapidement, sans vouloir retracer ou récapituler les points de ce qui a été dit, limitons-nous, sans épuiser la question, à retenir que la littérature exprime le corps d'une manière assez différente de celle du cinéma. Seymour Chatman le résume en disant que le septième art «tells by showing», tandis que la littérature «shows by telling». Mais ce genre de dualité n'empêche pas la littérature de se rapprocher de la prégnance de l'écran. La contribution capitale apportée par le cinéma au «camera eye style» de la *Lost Generation* et au «stylo-caméra» des nouveaux-romanciers l'a suffisamment démontré. Mais écrire un corps avec des mots ou avec l'image, il faut le reconnaître, c'est écrire encore et toujours en recherche. Et il est à peu près impossible que cinéma et littérature marchent tous deux du même pas. Ils feront toujours l'objet d'un rapport confiance-méfiance. On aurait tort de le croire autrement.

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Corpos visuais – imagens do feminino na publicidade

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Esta comunicação pretende interrogar de que forma o corpo feminino se torna imagem visual, se materializa em imagens, e que corpo de mulher é esse que é dado a ver nas imagens da cultura popular, mais especificamente nos anúncios publicitários. Importa saber que imagens do corpo feminino são estas, construídas a partir do discurso visual, e que são incorporadas pelas mulheres como desejáveis para si; ou seja, que modelos de corpo feminino estão em jogo na publicidade e que determinam não só as construções identitárias do feminino face à sua aparência, mas também as atitudes e comportamentos percebidos pelas mulheres como apropriados face ao seu corpo, segundo aqueles padrões.

Assim, proponho uma primeira reflexão acerca da relevância da aparência, do corpo e do *eu* visual para a mulher – a ideia da mulher-visão. Seguidamente, apontarei para a pertinência da análise de mensagens visuais (representações visuais), mais especificamente de anúncios publicitários, como modo de leitura do imaginário social e das práticas construídas à volta do feminino. Por fim, convido-vos a um mergulho nestas imagens que falam por si, mas que devemos fazer falar. Para as enquadrar, apontarei para a tese de que a mulher representada na publicidade cumpre a função de superfície visual e corporal onde se inscrevem dois modelos de mulher: a mulher bela e a mulher erótica.

As reflexões aqui apresentadas e as imagens com que as ilustraremos inserem-se no âmbito de uma tese de carácter mais vasto (não apenas centrada no corpo) que procura interrogar as relações entre o visual e o social no que diz respeito ao feminino. A análise do *corpus* ainda está a decorrer, logo, a reflexão aqui apresentada será necessariamente uma tentativa, exploratória e sujeita a revi-

são. De qualquer forma, talvez seja interessante explorar visualmente alguns dos traços relevantes que já foi possível determinar.

1. A relevância do visual e da aparência no feminino

Para a mulher, a aparência e o corpo parecem assumir uma importância nas relações sociais e na auto-percepção das mulheres sem paralelo nos homens. Apesar de não haver nada de fisicamente inerente à mulher que torne a sua aparência, o seu *eu* visual, tão fundamental para a interação social, uma série de práticas e de resíduos culturais sedimentados codificam e enformam as concepções do feminino realçando a importância vital daquilo que a mulher dá a ver de si. Este é um ponto fundamental, uma vez que culturalmente o sexo feminino está mais predisposto para uma preocupação com a aparência.

Segundo Tseëlon (1995), a aparência (e disciplina socio-cultural que a enforma) não só define a posição social da mulher, como influencia também aquilo que ela acaba por pensar de si própria e a modo como se apresenta. A autora aponta ainda para um curioso paradoxo: a existência feminina é fisicamente visível, apesar de ser socialmente invisível, constituindo-se como espectáculo visual e como objecto do olhar. Esta visibilidade permanente é interiorizada pela mulher como um traço constante do seu *eu*, uma vez que a torna *permanentemente* auto-consciente do seu corpo e da sua aparência face ao outro.

Porém, à mulher não basta estar sempre em cena, constituir-se como visão, como o visível, espera-se igualmente (e ela também o espera) que seja uma exibição corporal de beleza e de sexualidade. É exigido, pois, ao sexo feminino que cuide do seu aspecto físico, sob pena de não corresponder ao papel que deveria desempenhar. Para corresponder às expectativas, a mulher deve encarar o seu corpo como um «material a melhorar» e viver numa constante insegurança face à sua aparência física.

2. Representações visuais: as imagens do feminino

A pertinência da análise do discurso visual acerca do feminino reside precisamente na relação estreita (mas construída) do visual com o feminino. É que o visual é particularmente importante na

definição da feminilidade por duas razões: em primeiro lugar, por aquilo que acabamos de ver, pela importância social da aparência feminina; como afirma Betterton, «o carácter e o estatuto da mulher são frequentemente avaliados a partir da sua aparência» (1987: 7); em segundo lugar, por causa da significância associada às imagens na cultura moderna.

Estamos cercados por imagens de feminilidade e estas constroem um discurso acerca do que significa ser feminino na nossa cultura, elas agem de forma a definir a essa feminilidade, isto é, implicam um processo social no qual são atribuídas ao sexo feminino qualidades e características específicas. Assim, não é surpreendente que um dos pontos mais importantes da crítica feminista tenha sido a sua preocupação em analisar e desconstruir o modo como as representações visuais produzem e despertam significados e fazem circular ideologias acerca do que é, e do que deve ser, a mulher.

Neste âmbito, a publicidade tem sido um foco particular de lutas e ataques, por se assumir como um dos mais relevantes discursos visuais da cultura popular. No caso das imagens publicitárias, são fornecidos não apenas modelos do feminino que contribuem para a construção das identidades das mulheres, mas também significados relativos ao modo como o género feminino se deve apropriar dos sentidos existentes por detrás dos comportamentos e padrões que são dados a ver.

A importância da publicidade enquanto discurso social advém do facto de ela não apenas reflectir, espelhar, modelos socialmente aprovados, mas também contribuir para a incorporação de valores e tendências sociais. Não se perspectiva, portanto, as imagens publicitárias «apenas» enquanto mensagens entre outras, mas essencialmente como manifestações de um sistema que lida com ideias, atitudes e valores, dando-lhes uma «forma cultural através das práticas significativas» (Sinclair, 1987). Gerando significado nas palavras e imagens visuais de que se serve, a publicidade difunde igualmente estes significados construídos no sistema de crenças e valores da sociedade. É, então, relevante questionar que mensagens acerca das mulheres são fornecidas à sociedade através dos anúncios e, mais especificamente, o que é que essas mensagens dizem acerca do corpo feminino.

Segundo Betterton, «os ideais actuais reforçam uma visão de que ser feminina implica possuir determinados atributos físicos, o que torna difícil perspectivar a feminilidade fora das atitudes domi-

nantes para com o corpo feminino e das representações do mesmo» (1987: 8). O sistema ideológico da publicidade parece contribuir decisivamente para a estereotipificação das imagens das mulheres, mostrando alguns estudos anteriores que a imagem da mulher veiculada pelos anúncios tem vindo a confiná-la, nas últimas décadas, aos tradicionais papéis ligados à maternidade, ao lar ou à beleza e ao sexo (Kang, 1997). Estas imagens parecem espelhar uma construção do feminino que circunscreve as mulheres a determinados papéis, deixando os restantes para o género masculino.

Os estudos efectuados recentemente nesta área não apontam para grandes mudanças nas imagens da mulher mostradas na publicidade nos últimos anos, entrevedo apenas lentas alterações. Isto pode levar-nos a concluir, com Umiker-Sebeok (referido por Kang, 1997), que só as mudanças superficiais ao nível cultural são transferidas para a publicidade, enquanto que os fundamentos ideológicos que lhe subjazem permanecem intocados. Assim, as imagens publicitárias poderão estar «agarradas» a uma ideologia prevalecente na nossa cultura, tendo a capacidade de mostrar as mulheres não necessariamente como elas se comportam de facto, mas como a sociedade aprendeu a pensar que elas se comportam. Goffman (1979), no seu conhecido estudo *Gender Advertisements*, vai ainda mais longe: estas imagens servem uma função social de nos convencer de que é assim, realmente, que as mulheres são, ou querem ser, ou devem ser.

3. Imagens do feminino na publicidade: a mulher-visão e o corpo enquanto superfície visual

A recolha das imagens visuais teve como fonte todas as revistas femininas publicadas em Portugal, no mês de Agosto de 2001: *Ana*, *Guia*, *Maria*, *Mulher Moderna*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Máxima*, *Activa* e *Lux Woman*. A preocupação da maior diversidade possível de imagens da mulher fez com que a escolha recaísse sobre as revistas femininas, considerando-se que estas são as publicações que fornecem uma maior diversidade e quantidade de anúncios contendo imagens visuais de mulher. Por outro lado, não se perdeu de vista a tese de que, a partir de imagens visuais, outras imagens, mentais e sociais, são interiorizadas pelas mulheres. Interessando, pois, esta ideia de interiorização por parte das mulheres, parece mais útil a recolha dos anúncios em fontes dirigidas essencialmente ao género

feminino. Deste modo, foram seleccionadas todas as imagens que representassem visualmente seres humanos do sexo feminino e adultos. Obteve-se, assim, cento e nove imagens.

A partir da análise daquelas foi possível determinar os traços mais relevantes destas representações de feminilidade no que diz respeito ao corpo. Passemos, então, aos traços encontrados e à sua ilustração com exemplos do *corpus*. Avançarei, na análise, a pertinência e persistência do conceito de mulher-visão, disponível visualmente e objecto do olhar e enquadrarei o corpo feminino enquanto superfície visual.

Mas é necessário interrogar que corpos femininos são estes mostrados, dados ao olhar nas imagens. O que se inscreve enquanto ideal do feminino e de feminilidade nos corpos que, através das imagens, se tornam visuais (superfícies visuais)? Dois traços serão destacados: a mulher bela (o corpo enquanto objecto estético, sujeito a um ideal de beleza bem definido) e a mulher erótica (o corpo enquanto objecto erótico e sexual, gerido por relação ao masculino e objecto de desejo).

A mulher visão

Um traço geral marcante decorrente do percurso pelas imagens é, então, a objectivação visual do feminino, o facto de a mulher se tornar visão. A mulher é aqui objecto do olhar de um observador que muitas vezes não aparece no espaço de representação, e que apenas se imagina. Há uma estreita e determinante relação da mulher representada com um observador que caracteriza a quase totalidade das imagens, uma relação que se opera entre o espaço dentro da imagem e um espaço de observação imaginado fora da imagem. Por vezes, no entanto, o observador está dentro do espaço de representação com a figura feminina. Exemplos extremos da objectivação visual do corpo

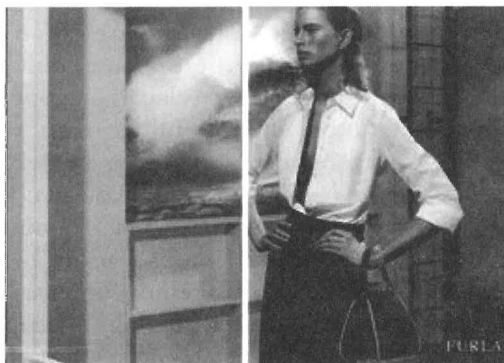


Figura 1



Figura 2

feminino são as imagens que se seguem (Figura 1 e Figura 2).

As mulheres daquelas duas imagens encontram-se numa montra, enquanto que a da Figura 3 está exposta em volumes geométricos que se assemelham a expositores de mercadoria em espaços comerciais ou de objectos a olhar (de arte, por exemplo) em museus.

a) *A mulher bela*

Nas imagens do *corpus*, uma tendência, um primeiro traço, é dominante no contexto da mulher visão: é a mulher bela que aparece. A noção de beleza não é simples e presta-se a considerações de carácter cultural. De qualquer forma, a beleza física, em termos de aparência, está sem dúvida, entre os traços do feminino mais marcantes e transversais das imagens publicitárias. As imagens femininas são manifestações visuais de um ideal de beleza; enquanto tal, enquanto ideal, ele é necessariamente rígido e moldado culturalmente. Pode afirmar-se que é a beleza ideal por relação às concepções ocidentais do que é a beleza e do que é uma mulher bela.

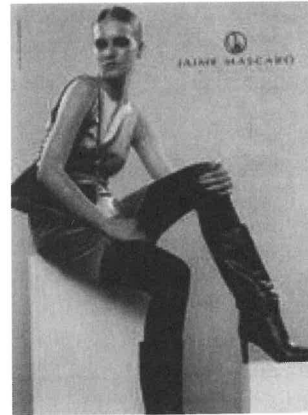


Figura 3

Se se refere o ideal, não se pode deixar de apontar para a noção de beleza irreal que da anterior decorre. Não são as mulheres reais que são dadas a ver, mas antes aquelas que se adequam a um ideal bem definido e circunscrito de beleza. Daqui decorre que as mulheres «reais», divergentes necessariamente do tipo ideal de beleza, quase não encontram aqui o seu lugar. Um padrão bem definido de beleza, que deixa de fora «imperfeições» (não ser jovem, não ser magra, etc.), afasta a mulher comum em termos de aparência.

Estas imagens visuais afirmam-se como um «mundo à parte» face aos corpos concretos das mulheres reais, que naturalmente comportam algumas (e muitas) variações e desvios por relação ao ideal. Algumas imagens surgem, todavia, como exemplos onde figuram mulheres que se pretendem comuns, com uma aparência física que pode ser considerada média, portanto, não representativas do tipo ideal, nem conformes aos seus parâmetros. Assumem-se nas imagens precisamente como exemplos da mulher comum; é esse o seu objectivo: mostrar alguém que poderia, teoricamente, ser qualquer mulher. Porém, são apenas três no conjunto das 109 imagens.

Quando se aponta como traço marcante a beleza ideal, torna-se necessário definir os eixos que enformam esse ideal, ou seja, definir os aspectos concretos da aparência visual feminina que marcam esse ideal. A análise das imagens permite concluir que a beleza ideal presente é limitada por rígidos parâmetros no que diz respeito de forma mais marcada à idade e ao peso.

Juventude

Relativamente à idade, dominam as mulheres bastante jovens. A juventude é um traço muito marcante, situando-se as idades, na sua esmagadora maioria, entre os 20 e os 30 anos. Vejamos algumas imagens.

A preponderância deste tipo de mulheres, jovens, deixa, no entanto, espaço para algumas excepções, nomeadamente no caso mais ou menos óbvio dos produtos cosméticos anti-envelhecimento



Figura 4

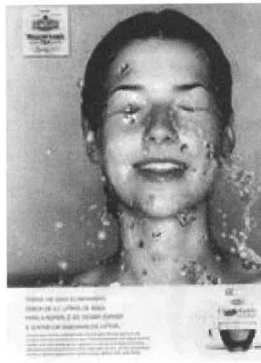


Figura 5



Figura 6



Figura 7

e dos bens relacionados com a prevenção ou resolução de problemas de saúde. Só nestes casos, parece ser aceitável que a mulher não seja extremamente jovem. Adicionalmente, e como se verá de seguida, mesmo para estes produtos, apenas excepcionalmente a idade aparente das mulheres ultrapassa os 40 anos. Além disso, estas excepções são apenas sete, no conjunto das 109 imagens analisadas.

No caso da cosmética anti-envelhecimento, as imagens apresentadas são curiosas e merecem considerações adicionais, relativas às referências directas

às idades e aos pressupostos por detrás da relação entre beleza e juventude.

A imagem da Figura 7 apresenta uma mulher como a face de um produto anti-envelhecimento da pele. A sua aparência parece não ultrapassar os 35 anos, no entanto, o texto «após os 40 anos» remete para uma idade mais avançada. Há, no anúncio, uma promessa de rejuvenescimento e de juventude dada a partir do exterior, ou seja, da pele sem rugas, da beleza. O produto não só contribui para a beleza facial como «torna a vida mais bela», donde se depreende que ser mais bela por fora (através da acção do produto) proporciona uma «vida mais bela».

Na imagem à direita, colocam-se visualmente as consequências da perda de juventude no rosto de uma mulher. O rosto feminino que se destaca, de perfil, é o de uma mulher entre os 40 e os 50 anos. É uma imagem que choca visualmente. A fotografia destina-se a mostrar o problema que o produto resolve, e, de certa forma, a «aterrozar» as mulheres não muito jovens.

O segundo grupo de excepções relativamente à norma da mulher jovem liga-se a imagens de produtos que se destinam a problemas de saúde que podem decorrer do facto de já não se ser jovem e são apenas três.



Figura 8



Figura 9



Figura 10



Figura 11

Passemos então ao segundo critério do ideal de beleza feminino apresentado pelas imagens: o peso, neste caso, a magreza.

Magreza

A mulher magra é a norma quase totalitária das representações visuais do feminino, aqui analisadas. Põe-se, claro está, a questão de saber o que é uma mulher magra, que não é objectivável do ponto de vista quantitativo; ela é aqui, necessariamente, uma impressão visual que retiramos da imagem, daí que tenha uma componente subjectiva marcada. A exemplificação deste traço, o domínio quase total da mulher magra, pode ser feita através de qualquer uma das imagens (excepto algumas que serão desatacadas



Figura 12



Figura 13

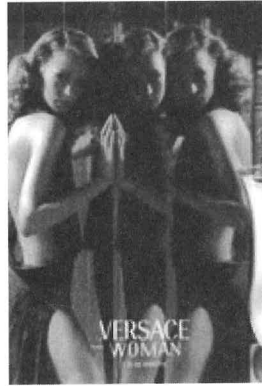


Figura 14

de seguida), tal é a hegemonia destas representações. Esta ilustração sairá beneficiada, obviamente, da utilização de imagens onde o corpo é mais visível. Todavia, mesmo que se esteja perante imagens que apenas contemplam, por exemplo, a face, a percepção de que a figura feminina é magra afirma-se com clareza, ainda que de uma forma impressionante.

A representação de corpos magros é, como foi referido, de tal modo dominante que será mais interessante a análise das exceções, ou seja, os exemplos de mulheres não magras, do que reforçar, com ilustrações suplementares, a norma. Estas exceções ao corpo magro são apenas três!

Uma delas, não pode ser de facto considerada uma ruptura com o ideal do corpo magro, uma vez que se trata de uma mulher grávida; sendo a gravidez uma situação transitória. As restantes imagens (duas) representam corpos femininos não magros. Porém, em ambas as mulheres representadas não poderiam ser magras, por circunstâncias particulares dos produtos. É que estamos perante anúncios de marcas de vestuário que se destinam especificamente a mulheres volumosas.

Na Figura 15, a mensagem linguística explicita o tipo de produto e contextualiza o corpo feminino apresentado. Trata-se de pronto-a-vestir apenas de tamanho acima do 40. O «headline», «Energia acima do 40», justifica o corpo pouco comum (não magro, de tamanho superior ao número 40). «Olá, magrinhas!» é uma espécie de desafio e afirmação face às mulheres consideradas magras. A ideia dominante é a da possibilidade de apresentar uma mulher bela mas não magra, de tamanho acima do 40, com energia e bem consigo própria. Aparentemente, esta imagem é uma contestação de um tipo ideal de feminino do corpo magro. Porém, uma leitura mais aprofundada revela que as mesmas normas do tipo ideal se aplicam. A face da figura feminina é bastante bonita. Por outro lado, o corpo volumoso não é totalmente mostrado, tornado visível, como provavelmente o seria se fosse magro. Aquilo



Figura 15

que é habitualmente considerado desagradável em termos de volume corporal (as ancas e as pernas) é coberto por uma manta. A tentativa da imagem é a de dar a ideia de leveza, com cores suaves e claras e braços elevados; para tal, o corpo pesado tem de ser escondido. Muito visível, pelo contrário, é algo cujo volume não é considerado tão desagradável, ou seja, o peito feminino. Assim, a camisa desabotoada permite avistar o *soutien* e o peito.

Deste modo, e apesar de a magreza não de afirmar nesta imagem como obrigatória, subsiste a subordinação do corpo feminino aquele ideal, já que, ao contrário do corpo magro, explorado visualmente, este corpo volumoso é escondido e utilizado visualmente apenas na medida em que consegue ir de encontro a um conjunto de preferências masculinas (até) dominantes face aquilo que deve ser ou não volumoso num corpo de mulher.

Na imagem abaixo, vemos uma bela mulher rodeada de homens em ambiente cosmopolita. À sua volta a frase «Estilo não é tamanho é atitude» – esta mensagem linguística domina a imagem com letras de dimensão assinalável. No canto inferior direito, uma outra pista: «do 42 ao 56». Percebe-se que se trata de vestuário dentro destes tamanhos, depreendendo-se que a ideia é afirmar que o estilo não é exclusivo das pessoas magras, não é uma questão de tamanho. Este conceito, de que se pode ter um estilo sem ser magra, remete, na imagem, para o universo masculino. Vemos uma mulher atraente rodeada por homens, daí que se possa admitir que o anúncio pretende afirmar que esta figura feminina tem a capacidade de atrair homens apesar de não ser magra. No entanto, o facto de a mulher não ser magra não é muito explícito visualmente. Aliás, não fosse a mensagem linguística não seria muito claro que o seu corpo é volumoso. No caso presente, de uma marca que vende números entre o 42 e o 56, é curioso que não se acentue esta características específica dos produtos com uma mulher mais volumosa, ou seja, com um corpo que se adequa ao consumo do vestuário. Assim, esta imagem parece esconder, encobrir, com um



Figura 16

grande casaco, algo que parece afinal não ser entendido como particularmente atraente, isto é, um corpo pesado.

b) *A mulher erótica*

O segundo traço marcante das representações visuais do corpo feminino presente no *corpus* relaciona-se com a vertente erótica, ligada à erotização do corpo feminino. Diversos indicadores visuais remetem para exibição do corpo e a erotização do mesmo através dos recursos da imagem. Também é visível a sugestão / insinuação da dis-ponibilidade sexual e da objectivação do corpo enquanto objecto de desejo sexual.

Uma das formas de o fazer é enfatizar o corpo, tornando-o visível, através do vestuário reduzido ou da nudez. As peças de vestuário podem descair, serem afastadas ou retiradas, tornarem visível o corpo devido a movimentos, serem, pois, manipuladas pela mulher.

O próprio vestuário pode ser já reduzido. O corpo pode apresentar-se sem vestígios de vestuário; é aqui considerado nu mesmo quando a imagem apenas permite visualizar a figura feminina até aos ombros, uma vez que se adivinha o restante corpo nu.



Figura 17



Figura 18

Figura 19

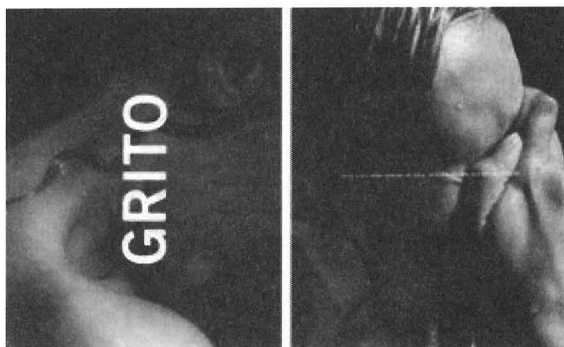
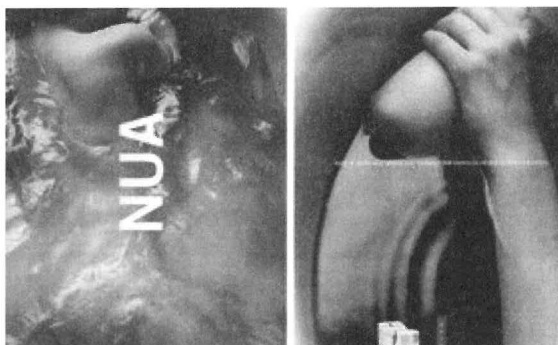


Figura 20

A pose ou o movimento corporal podem também dar uma conotação erótica ao corpo feminino e contribuir para a objectificação do corpo enquanto objecto de desejo.

A insinuação de erotismo, disponibilidade sexual, ou simplesmente a enfatização da sensualidade do feminino, não tem necessariamente que se socorrer de pistas visuais baseadas no corpo. O olhar, o posicionamento dos lábios / boca ou a expressão facial são importantes indicadores. Basta olhar.

A insinuação de erotismo, disponibilidade sexual,

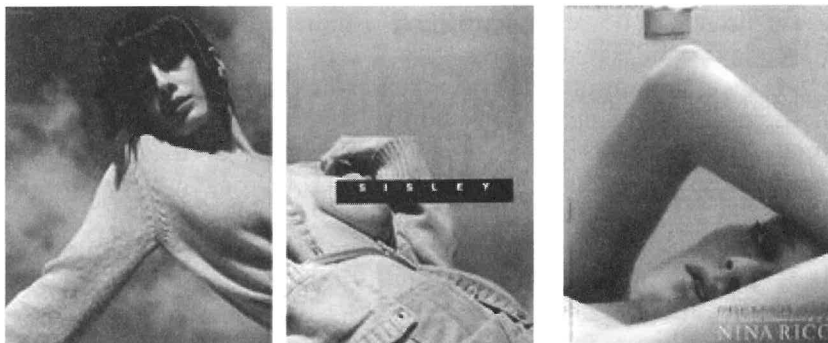


Figura 21

Figura 22

Em termos de insinuação de disponibilidade sexual e erotização do corpo, encontramos, como seria de esperar, exemplos de imagens que representam situações de interação masculino / feminino.

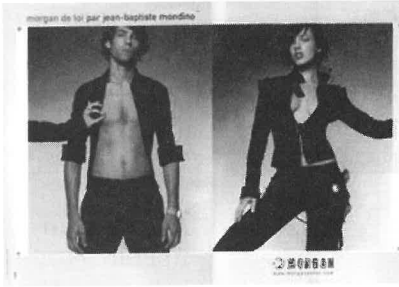


Figura 23

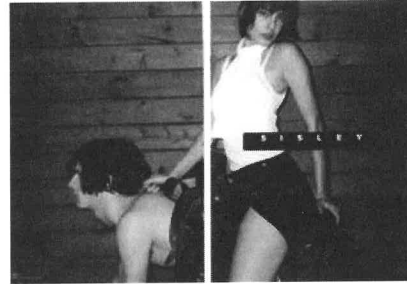


Figura 24

Conclusões e hipóteses de trabalho

A visibilidade em termos de corpo e de aparência física referida no início para as situações de interação social parece ser transposta para as imagens (para o universo da representação visual), numa fórmula hiper-ritualizada de exibição corporal. Esta ideia de transferência da realidade social, das práticas, para o espaço de representação visual está presente em Goffman (1979). O autor afirma que as diferenças de género, em termos de funções e de *status*, não só são transferidas do mundo real para os anúncios, mas encontram neles a sua forma mais pura / refinada, uma vez que criam uma pseudo-realidade (hiper-ritualizada) que ainda é mais marcada do que a real.

O ideal de feminilidade inscrito nestes corpos liga-se essencialmente a uma mulher-visão, disponível visualmente, e cujo corpo é uma superfície a ser percebida pelo olhar. O corpo feminino relaciona-se com dois traços emergentes das imagens, permitindo dois conjuntos de hipóteses de trabalho.

Em primeiro lugar, as imagens prescrevem claramente um ideal de beleza feminino. Destaquemos alguns pontos. Dois critérios balizam este ideal nos corpos dados a ver nas imagens: peso e idade; mulheres muito magras e mulheres muito jovens, na sua quase totalidade. O ideal de beleza apresentado afasta-se dos corpos

das mulheres reais que necessariamente não vão de encontro aos parâmetros e critérios do mesmo. As imagens apresentam, pois, corpos que encarnam uma beleza irreal, porque afastada necessariamente dos corpos reais, «imperfeitos» das mulheres concretas. Nas imagens, as excepções à norma, ao ideal, as mulheres que poderiam ser as «reais», não se adequando totalmente aos critérios apresentados acima, não parecem, no entanto, contrariar aquele ideal.

Tanto para o critério peso como para o critério idade, as aparentes excepções (mulheres não-jovens, mulheres não-magras) estão ainda dentro dos parâmetros que determinam o ideal devido à forma como representam estes corpos «a-normais». Vejamos: o corpo volumoso é escondido, portanto, continua a haver uma referência a esse corpo como desagradável e desviante; ele não é assumido visualmente tal qual. Por outro lado, o corpo não-jovem é afinal, em termos de aparência, bastante mais jovem do que as indicações objectivas da idade que são fornecidas; as imagens deste corpo não-jovem acabam, além disso, por prescrever a necessidade de manutenção de um aspecto físico mais jovem do que a idade real das mulheres e perpetuam a juventude visual como objectivo a perseguir e como critério de beleza e de felicidade para as mulheres.

Passemos então ao segundo conjunto de conclusões. As imagens erotizam o corpo feminino, transformam-no num objecto de desejo sexual dirigido ao olhar masculino. Nestas imagens, os recursos visuais que contribuem para este traço relacionam-se, em grande medida, com a exposição do corpo, a exibição corporal (através de vestuário reduzido e nudez ou ainda da pose e o movimento corporal).

Nas imagens, a erotização do corpo passa frequentemente, e de forma por vezes diminuidora para as mulheres, pela insinuação de disponibilidade sexual, conotada na pose, olhar, lábios, boca, etc. Adicionalmente, a transformação do corpo feminino em objecto erótico e disponível sexualmente não passa, na esmagadora maioria das imagens, pela presença na imagem do elemento masculino, ou seja, por uma interacção homem / mulher. Esta insinuação de disponibilidade é dirigida, quase sempre, a um elemento masculino que imaginamos fora da imagem.

Em síntese, a análise das imagens parece permitir concluir que a figura feminina está na imagem para ser vista, para se dar ao olhar. Ela não é «vista», ou representada, numa situação; a situação

existe para que a mulher seja visão, para que a mulher ofereça o seu corpo enquanto superfície visual bela e erótica. A mulher parece assumir-se como um ornamento visual da imagem, tendo um papel essencialmente decorativo. Ela não faz nem é (não se dá a conhecer como pessoa); só está. As funções/junções e o fazer são negligenciados; a ênfase é no estar para se dar ao olhar, de onde se deprende uma vertente decorativa. Tudo isto contribui para a ideia de uma existência para ser vista da mulher, como espectáculo visual e não como indivíduo que é, na sua vida concreta, a fazer algo, inserida em cenários reais ou a interagir com pessoas.

Face a isto é importante interrogar qual o sentido desta ditadura da beleza e desta erotização do corpo numa época em que a mulher rejeita um papel meramente decorativo; é preciso interrogar a relação entre emancipação feminina e objectivação visual feminina. Tanto em termos do traço beleza como da erotização do corpo estas imagens são ambíguas do ponto de vista interpretativo, sendo, por vezes, apontadas, não como representações da mulher diminuidoras ou opressivas, mas como imagens libertadoras de uma mulher que tem controlo sobre o seu corpo, em termos de idade e peso, e que tem uma relação liberta com a sua sexualidade.

Numa altura em que as mulheres ultrapassam barreiras ao nível do emprego, ao nível legal e familiar, o peso da beleza cai cada vez mais sobre elas, e este aspecto parece ser consensual. Será que podemos então avançar a hipótese de que a beleza feminina é uma arma política contra os avanços das mulheres? Ou será que esta perseguição da beleza pode ser antes uma forma de auto-determinação e de libertação das mulheres?

Naomi Wolf situa-se na primeira hipótese: «a ideologia da beleza é a última que resta das antigas ideologias femininas que ainda tem o poder de controlar as mulheres (...) e tornou-se mais poderosa para tomar em mãos o trabalho de coerção social que os mitos antigos da maternidade, domesticidade, castidade e passividade já não conseguem empreender» (1992: 10-11). Lipovetzky (2000) não concorda com esta perspectiva, e, referindo-se ao ideal do corpo magro, afirma que ele resulta, em parte, das transformações sociais. Na opinião deste autor, estamos perante uma forma de recusa da identificação do corpo feminino com a maternidade, devido ao enfraquecimento do valor social da maternidade e à valorização da mulher activa e independente. E pode ainda ser considerado como uma não-aceitação da fatalidade e uma extensão dos

«ideais de domínio do mundo e de posse de si mesmo constitutivos da cultura moderna do indivíduo» (139).

No entanto, podemos no mínimo questionar esta perspectiva, já que é inegável que a conformidade com os modelos dos corpos magros (e também jovens) difundidos (nomeadamente pelas imagens publicitárias) têm consequências gravíssimas para a vida concreta das mulheres, como as doenças do foro alimentar e as arriscadas cirurgias estéticas. Por outro lado, o descontentamento com o corpo tem que ser chamada à discussão, especialmente se falamos do confronto das mulheres com as imagens de beleza difundidas pelos *media*, que contrariam, como vimos, a situação real das mulheres, e os seus corpos reais. É importante perguntar, segundo Wolf, «por que é que a ordem social sente a necessidade de se defender elidindo as mulheres reais, as nossas faces e corpos e reduzir o significado das mulheres a estas imagens da beleza reproduzidas interminavelmente e formulares» (1992: 18).

Quanto à erotização do corpo e à insinuação de disponibilidade sexual, a ambiguidade e ambivalência das imagens manifesta-se, em termos de reflexão teórica, na oscilação entre interpretações dos anúncios como emancipadores em termos de relação da mulher com a sexualidade e tomada de iniciativa, como recusa da passividade sexual, e as interpretações que apontam para a objectivação sexual das mulheres e a negação de uma identidade liberta da heterossexualidade e da resposta ao desejo masculino.

De qualquer forma, as imagens analisadas parecem apontar para as mulheres como seres sociais que existem sobretudo através do parecer e não do fazer social, que são acima de tudo objectos visuais. A ser verdade, esta conclusão tem implicações em termos de relações de poder dos géneros, isto é, do feminino face ao masculino em termos de hierarquia. É que a esta visibilidade da mulher relativamente à aparência física (o espectáculo visível) parece corresponder a um olhar de um espectador que se imagina masculino. Imagina-se um olhar masculino invisível (fora do espaço de representação da imagem). Porém, o «invisível», o masculino, não surge aqui como passivo, ignorado ou desprovido de poder. Pelo contrário, apesar de invisível, ele é a fonte do olhar e aquele que olha constantemente sem ser olhado adquire, desde logo, uma posição de força. É o olhar disciplinador: «*É o facto de ser constantemente visto, de ser sempre susceptível de ser visto, que mantém o indivíduo disciplinado na sua sujeição*» (Foucault, 1975: 187).

Berger explica também a relação de poder masculino / feminino em termos do olhar: «Os homens olham para as mulheres. As mulheres vêem-se a serem vistas. (...) O vigilante da mulher dentro de si própria é o masculino: a vigiada, feminina. Assim, a mulher transforma-se a si própria em objecto – e muito especialmente num objecto visual: uma visão» (Berger, s/d: 51).

Para concluir, e relativamente às imagens de feminilidade presentes na publicidade, alguns parecem ter dúvidas e persistir na ideia de que quando se analisa estas imagens, com o objectivo de expor as desigualdades em termos da representação dos géneros e as especificidades da representação visual da feminilidade, apenas se vê o que se quer ver, como se a análise fosse uma espécie de fantasia escrita livremente, consoante a posição política da cada um. Remeto, assim, para a sugestão de Goffman (1979): para cada imagem, imaginar os sexos dos seres humanos trocados (homens em lugar de mulheres e mulheres onde figuram homens) e imaginar a aparência visual do resultado desta reversão.

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O corpo é a estrutura e o dicionário emocional da história individual

JOSÉ LUÍS GOMES
Psicólogo – Psicoterapeuta

*Ele tem olhos para ver e ouvidos para ouvir,
pode ter a certeza de que nenhum mortal pode
esconder um segredo.
Se os lábios estiverem em silêncio ele conversa
com os dedos.*

Sigmund Freud (1905)

Como Psicoterapeuta pretendo falar-vos do corpo com um significado muito próprio: um corpo que está para lá do funcionamento psicofisiológico ou neuropsicológico, um corpo que fala e que traduz a história do indivíduo. Para isso, pretendo falar-vos sucintamente da primeira história, a mais precoce, a mais primária, a relação materna. O corpo do bebé guarda tensões, sensações, memórias neuromusculares que, quando analisadas e desbloqueadas num processo psicoterapêutico, se associam a imagens, a representações verbais que permitem fazer ligações internas e passar do corpo à mente e da mente à relação com outra mente.

Desta forma, o corpo não é nada sem o corpo do outro. Assim, o corpo da mãe é que contém, regula, interpreta, acalma, dá segurança, aos ritmos, às tensões, às angústias, aos medos do bebé. Desta relação nasce um diálogo inicialmente tónico-emocional ou tónico-postural. O bebé fica hipertónico ou hipotónico, contraído ou relaxado perante os estados corporais e emocionais da mãe. A mãe apresenta-se com tensões, com um corpo duro ou mole, macio ou áspero, frio ou quente, ausente ou presente, vivo ou «morto». Aqui importa salientar as noções de «mãe morta», de «corpo morto», de «mãe prótese», respectivamente de André Green e Donald Winnicott. Uma mãe que apazigua, que promove con-

fiança e sensações agradáveis, de prazer corporal, a partir desta inter-relação de estados psicorporais. O bebé cria a noção de sensações boas e sensações más, que têm um reflexo corporal. Por vezes existem paradoxos na relação. O corpo quente da mãe, que dá calor, e a frieza do olhar, que mete medo, angústia. Estes paradoxos integram-se e o bebé começa a estruturar afectos na relação, afectos ora positivos, ora negativos, conforme as sensações e as memórias do corpo emocional, integra-se por exemplo, o olhar frio, negativo, o corpo quente, positivo.

Também nós adultos muitas vezes fazemos leituras desta natureza nos relacionamentos interpessoais e mais ainda nos relacionamentos amorosos. Sentimos, por exemplo, que quando abraçamos alguém e unimos o nosso corpo ao corpo do outro, podemos sentir a proximidade física, o calor, o cheiro do corpo, mas, pelo toque das mãos, pelas tensões dos braços, pelas tensões do peito ou pela rigidez das pernas, sentimos as defesas da pessoa e a sua ausência, ou a sua distância.

Neste sentido gostaria de referir que o que fazemos de mais íntimo com o outro é o abraço. Abraçar-se a alguém com o corpo todo significa estarmos perante a capacidade de se abandonar(-se) ao outro, que na posição vertical dos corpos podemos perder a gravidade se o outro desaparecer ou se ausentar.

Deixem-me citar Roland Barthes, a partir da sua excelente obra «Fragmentos de um discurso amoroso»:

«O seu corpo estava dividido: de um lado, o próprio corpo – a pele, os olhos –, terno, caloroso, e, do outro, a voz, breve, moderada, sujeita a momentos de afastamento, uma voz que não oferecia o que o corpo oferecia. Ou então: de um lado, o seu corpo macio, morno, débil na sua justa medida, protector, fingindo-se acanhado, e, do outro, a voz – a voz, sempre a voz – sonora, bem definida, mundana, etc.»

Continuando no meu percurso do desenvolvimento humano precoce, o bebé passará das sensações corporais aos afectos na relação e destes às representações internas. Afectos positivos geram representações próprias, afectos negativos geram outras representações negativas.

Finalmente refiro-vos que estes diálogos e comunicações precoces se estruturam num espaço e num tempo, e que se associam a determinados ritmos psico-corporais.

Se o psicanalista Jacques Lacan apresentou as noções de corpo real, corpo imaginário e corpo simbólico, gostaria de integrar aqui

a noção de corpo energético de Wilhem Reich. Para tal gostaria de citar-vos Lacan na sua obra «Écrits»: «Aqueles que, como Reich, vão muito longe no caminho de procurar, para além da palavra a inefável expressão orgânica».

Diria que o corpo energético apresenta-se-nos com um código próprio, com uma linguagem própria. Um corpo que regula e que desregula a circulação bioenergética, a partir das tensões, dos bloqueios, da anestesia face ao prazer, da hiperexcitabilidade, do encorajamento neuromuscular, etc.

Sabemos que o corpo fala o que tantas vezes as palavras tentam ocultar ou «não falar». O corpo não mente, tal como afirmou Alexander Lowen. Assim o corpo acompanha e apresenta-se da mesma forma, com as defesas e os bloqueios que são características de cada carácter, de cada estrutura de personalidade, de cada psicopatologia.

Se a psicanálise investigou e soube ler e interpretar no desenvolvimento as fases que estão implicadas em determinados caracteres e psicopatologias, a verdade é que este saber ficou preso, limitado na sua prática, à relação, aos fenómenos transferenciais, que traduziam a história do indivíduo e à palavra que, a partir da associação livre, suscitava uma análise ou interpretação do analista. O psicoterapeuta digeriria o conteúdo do paciente, promovendo e facilitando representações que criavam imagens, afectos e sensações novas. A intervenção corporal a partir do olhar, da voz, do desbloquear de zonas corporais tensas ou encorajadas, da respiração, do movimento promovem novas sensações, imagens, afectos e por sua vez novas representações que estavam ausente da prática clínica psicanalítica.

Diria assim que o trabalho psicoterapêutico fica enriquecido quando é integrado o trabalho corporal e verbal e desta forma a associação interna da história individual fica mais clara, mais sentida, diria que, com mais sentido.

Na história de todos os indivíduos, existiram pulsões internas, corporais, a que não foi possibilitada a descarga, por insuficiência energética, por obstrução neuromuscular ou por repressão exterior (que estrutura a instância super-egóica Freudiana) e que levará o indivíduo a criar defesas, numa espécie de protecção narcísica, aparecendo então um carácter que esconde sempre o material ou as pulsões recalçadas, os sintomas e as angústias flutuantes psico-corporais. Aparecem então as couraças, que não são mais do que o

conflito entre a pulsão e a tensão que é gerada entre a representação e a defesa.

Não se compreende como é que o corpo, que deverá ser objecto terapêutico, dado que apresenta uma linguagem própria, tenha sido esquecido durante décadas, após o nascimento da psicanálise Freudiana. Os próprios analistas e psicoterapeutas apresentavam as suas defesas, as suas resistências ao trabalho terapêutico corporal.

Os psicanalistas sabem falar da relação, mas criam distância e defesas perante o «encontro», o envolvimento, o vínculo psicocorporal com o paciente. Eles sabem criar limites, regras, mas têm pânico, resistência perante o toque, os fenómenos de transferência corporal, dos limites corporais entre o analista e o paciente. O corpo foi clivado, separado, apresentando-se na horizontalidade da relação analítica (o divã).

Na verdade, a associação entre verticalidade e «awareness» é reconhecida por muitas disciplinas espirituais. Para elevar a energia na consciência, essas disciplinas prescrevem a manutenção da espinha erecta. Os psicanalistas ocidentais usam a horizontalidade para chegar à fonte. Pedem ao paciente para se deitar, de modo a que ele possa sentir a sua dependência e desamparo. O corpo movimento, expressivo, tónico-emocional, das sensações, não é objecto de análise e de relação analítica.

O trabalho analítico-corporal visa uma integração psicocorporal, em que não haja uma descontinuidade entre o tónico-sensorial e o nível representacional, diria eu, entre o racional e o emocional. E nós sabemos os custos ou consequências da actual sociedade académica hiper-racional, que é a procura cada vez maior de práticas emocionais ou mesmo irracionais, sem qualquer julgamento científico, ético ou moral das mesmas práticas. Uma prática analítico-corporal visa uma reorganização do nível tónico-sensorial-emocional, afectivo e representacional.

O corpo do paciente não é clivado, está em interacção com o corpo do analista. O corpo fala. O corpo traduz o que as palavras calam. O corpo é o inconsciente. O inconsciente pode desta forma apresentar-se através de dois processos relacionais, intermediários: a palavra (e o analista será capaz de ler e interpretar nas entrelinhas, a partir das defesas próprias do paciente e do seu funcionamento psicológico), e o corpo, a partir da sua espontaneidade, da sua liberdade expressiva, ou a partir das suas defesas, couraças e bloqueios corporais, da sua estrutura corporal, fazendo uma arqueologia corporal, rumo ao seu «verdadeiro *self*», que, como o

grande pediatra e psicanalista Donald Winnicott soube tão bem definir, é «a soma da vida sensório-motora».

D. Winnicott e F. Tustin fizeram eficazmente a correlação, a repetição, o prolongamento da relação materna e da relação terapêutica, a partir das regulações tônico-relacionais, as partes moles e duras, a partir das tensões corporais e palavras. Para Tustin o «duro» era o abandono, a tristeza, a solidão interna, o ódio, o medo, a angústia.

Neste domínio gostaria brevemente de vos falar da minha experiência com crianças psicóticas, que é vulgar confundir-se com o diagnóstico de autismo infantil. O psicanalista francês Jean-Marie Gauthier, a partir da sua obra, «O corpo da criança psicótica», não tem dúvidas que o corpo e a sua dimensão relacional é a base criadora de toda a vida psíquica e que este mesmo (o corpo) deve ocupar um lugar central nos dispositivos e intervenções terapêuticas. Gauthier cria o conceito de «corpo relacional» para completar a oposição corpo real/ corpo imaginário pensado por Sami-Ali (Psicanalista árabe, Director do Centro Internacional de Psicossomática, sediado em Paris). Para Gauthier, a mãe ou o seu substituto é o primeiro intérprete e metabolizador do corpo da criança, ela dá «um corpo» à criança, organizando a sensorialidade, a motricidade, o espaço, o tempo, os gostos alimentares, o ritmo sono/vigília, etc.

Deixando agora a clínica psicoterapêutica, gostaria de referir Francisco Varela, neuro-biólogo chileno reconhecido internacionalmente, autor de obras e debates em Paris sobre teorias científicas ocidentais e teorizações/concepções orientais, nomeadamente budistas, e é autor da obra «Mente Corpórea». Varela afirma que: «É impossível pensar em usar a mente psicológica e, por conseguinte, o cérebro, para curar a doença, a não ser que a mente esteja a falar com outra mente que também seja capaz de regular o corpo e de incorporar essas mensagens de maneira inteligente».

A concepção budista de Varela, patente num diálogo com Dalai Lama, leva-o a afirmar que as doenças auto-imunes têm a sua contrapartida quando não reconhecemos os outros como iguais a nós mesmos. Afirma Varela neste contexto: «Começamos a destruí-los quando não reconhecemos a nossa integridade, quando não percebemos que, toda a vida, somos nós mesmos». Acrescentaria eu, ironicamente, que a sociobiologia teria aqui um terreno vastíssimo de investigação, em vez de se perder na perversidade e idiotice de reduzir atitudes e comportamentos meramente à genética.

O colega de F. Varela, Humberto Maturana (neuro-biólogo e cognitivo-construtivista) não tem dúvidas que as diferentes psicopatologias apresentam uma percentagem elevada de perturbações / patologias dos anos primários do desenvolvimento. Segundo Maturana: «Todas as práticas terapêuticas podem dar origem, nas mãos de um bom terapeuta, a terapias afortunadas», e acrescenta, «Eu penso que uma psicoterapia e todo o seu processo é sempre o mesmo, qualquer que seja a psicoterapia, mediante a interação / relação com o paciente (criança ou adulto), guiá-lo conscientemente ou inconscientemente, no sentido do abandono da negação sistemática de si mesmo e do outro e da recuperação da biologia do amor, como maneira ou fio central do seu viver». O ser humano é um ser amoroso, filho do amor na história evolutiva e adoece quando o nega. Por isso Maturana afirma que a biologia do amor é a parte do bem estar no viver. Por isso Marco da Silva, médico cardiologista e de saúde pública de S. Paulo, afirma na sua obra, que lhe dá o título: «Quem ama não adoece».

Desculpem este voltar atrás, volto agora às crianças psicóticas, e aqui relembro «Tiago», cujo corpo se apresentava sob a forma de carapaça, sem contacto ocular; se por vezes olhava, quando se encontrava longe e isolado no espaço terapêutico, era por breves momentos. Um corpo duro, rígido. A mãe «sólida», dura, arrogante, prepotente, manipuladora nos relacionamentos intra-familiares, com uma relação conjugal inexistente, ausente da parte do marido. A relação do «Tiago» com os objectos e com o terapeuta era «dura», com movimentos firmes e agressivos.

Vou chamar a outra criança psicótica «Filipe» seguida por mim em psicoterapia, o seu corpo era mole, mas entrava na relação. A relação era com objectos moles, suaves, macios. A mãe apresentava-se com um corpo pouco firme e cumprimentava-me com uma mão mole e um contacto ocular fugidio.

Assim verificamos que a teorização e a clínica da psicoterapeuta corporal – Suzanne Robert-Ouvray, fazem todo o sentido. O corpo da criança psicótica que se nos apresenta na clínica é um corpo «da relação». Da relação que a criança guardou, estruturou no corpo e que é sintónica com os estados emocionais e o «contínente» corporal que foi a mãe.

A minha prática clínica com crianças e adultos, leva-me a confirmar o «medo humano dos vínculos interpessoais «teorizado pelo meu supervisor clínico Guy Tonella: o medo da relação, o medo de viver não é um medo individual, é um medo interactivo,

assim (re)vive-se na relação interactiva (amorosa e terapêutica) o prazer de sentir-se a si próprio e o prazer de sentir o terapeuta na interacção.

Vou agora tentar relacionar o que o corpo tem a ver com a caracteriologia e as diferentes psicopatologias.

Selecionei quatro: Esquizóide, Oral (dependente), Psicopata e Masoquista.

No Esquizóide o seu contacto com o corpo é nulo. A energia está longe do rosto, mãos, pés e genitais. A energia encontra-se na área central. As tensões musculares mantêm a personalidade unida. Existe uma divisão muscular-energética na cintura, existem tensões na base do crânio, nas articulações, nos ombros, na pélvis e no diafragma. A face tem uma aparência de máscara e os olhos não contactam e não têm vivacidade normal. Os pés são contraídos e frios. É hipersensível, devido a um limite precário em torno do ego. Evita relacionamentos íntimos e afectuosos. A tonalidade é artificial, é «como se», parece ter sentimentos, mas as acções em si não os expressam.

O Oral e/ou dependente apresenta carência afectiva, baixa energia, vai até à periferia, mas é baixa. O contacto com o exterior é fraco, pode existir vista fraca, com miopia e o nível de excitação sexual genital é reduzido. O corpo é esguio, com musculatura subdesenvolvida. Existe imaturidade e pélvis pequena, tanto nos homens como nas mulheres. O crescimento é retardado e a respiração é superficial. Existe medo de ficar em cima dos pés, num balanço (instrumento de avaliação psicocorporal, a partir da tentativa de equilíbrio).

O Psicopata nega os sentimentos. A extremidade cefálica do corpo tem mais energia. Os olhos são atentos e desconfiados e não abertos para ver os inter-relacionamentos. A cabeça é na maioria das vezes erguida e o corpo ou é tirânico ou sedutor. A pélvis ou é rígida ou a sua carga energética é reduzida. Existem tensões nos olhos, na região occipital e na base do crânio. Existe a necessidade de controlar e o medo de ser controlado, não quer ser usado, quer estar por cima, de ter êxito. A sexualidade é percebida e confundida com poder. O prazer é diminuído e o importante é o desempenho e a conquista, negam-se assim os sentimentos e as necessidades, e o psicopata necessita que os outros precisem dele.

Para finalizar, falo-vos do Masoquista, que sofre e lamenta-se, sendo submisso. Apresenta-se com sentimentos de negatividade, de hostilidade, mas por vezes de superioridade. Existe o medo de

explodir, que conduz a um padrão muscular de contenção, com músculos densos e poderosos, que só permitem queixas e lamentos sucessivos. O masoquista tem muita energia, mas que está presa, bloqueada e os órgãos periféricos estão pouco carregados. Os impulsos são estrangulados no pescoço e cintura. O corpo é curto, grosso e musculado. A pélvis é projectada para a frente e a voz é expressa com dificuldade. Existe submissão e cordialidade e a tentativa de agradar, mas a nível inconsciente, a atitude é negada por negativismo e hostilidade.

Permitam-me que vos especifique com o Olhar. A percepção visual é um «saber do Corpo» que tem relação com a emoção e a representação. Existem razões subjectivas e intersubjectivas para sentirmos numa relação um olhar por vezes duro e agressivo, que tentamos evitar e outras vezes, um olhar sentido como sensual, suave, nada agressivo, que nos fazem aproximar.

E cito o poeta Fernando Pessoa:

De quem é o olhar que espreita pelos meus olhos?

Quando penso que vejo

Quem continua vendo enquanto estou pensando?

Na verdade olhar nada tem a ver com pensamento. O olhar tem mais a ver com uma sensação primária, corporal, de contacto, de vinculação. Por exemplo, a convergência visual é estabelecida na relação precoce mãe-bebé. A sua génese estabelece-se em função do rosto. Rosto (o do bebé) que não se tem à partida, mas que se adquire em seguida, enquanto rosto da mãe, que é também rosto de si mesmo. Primeiro rosto partilhado, sem sentimento de partilha e com certeza, aquém do reconhecimento do rosto do estranho, do ser outro, porque o outro é inteiramente o próprio. A visão binocular nasce nesta circularidade de trocas em que os olhos são ao mesmo tempo os seus e os do outro, em que o olhar é ao mesmo ser olhado, em que a distância pode surgir sem perda de si e do outro. Ao focalizar a visão, a mãe realiza esse milagre.

Daí que Alexander Lowen, eminente psicanalista e psicoterapeuta corporal afirme que apesar do aspecto expressivo dos olhos não estar dissociado da região circular dos olhos e do rosto como um todo, a expressão é basicamente determinada pelo que acontece no próprio olho. Para ler esta expressão, deve-se olhar suavemente nos olhos da pessoa, nem fixamente, nem de modo penetrante, mas permitindo que a expressão surja. Quando isto acontece, impres-

sionamo-nos com um sentimento, sente-se a outra pessoa. Podem ler-se olhares de súplica, de desejo, de cuidado, de desconfiança, de erotismo, de ódio, de confusão. O olhar é a melhor forma de avaliarmos o contacto relacional, físico, amoroso e emocional.

Vou apresentar-vos as mesmas estruturas de personalidade às quais me referi anteriormente e descrever-vos o olhar.

O carácter ou personalidade Esquizóide, tem um olhar típico que pode ser descrito como vazio ou inexpressivo. É a ausência de sentimento nos olhos que caracteriza esta personalidade. Quando um esquizóide olha, sente-se imediatamente a falta de contacto. O esquizóide evita a proximidade íntima.

O carácter Oral / dependente tem um olhar suplicante, de amor e de apoio. Pode estar mascarado por uma atitude de pseudo-independência, mas o olhar suplicante vem à tona, com uma frequência suficiente para tornar esta personalidade nítida. O olhar precisa de intimidade para sentir calor e apoio.

O carácter Masoquista tem um olhar típico de dor e sofrimento. Por vezes encontra-se encoberto por uma expressão confusa. O masoquista sente-se ludibriado e está em maior contacto com este sentimento, do que com o seu sentido subjacente de sofrimento. Na personalidade sadomasoquista, ou seja, nas pessoas que apresentam um elemento sádico, actuante no seu perfil psicológico, os olhos são pequenos e duros. Isto pode ser explicado como uma inversão do olhar masoquista, normal, triste e dedicado. O masoquista relaciona-se numa atitude submissa.

O carácter Psicopático tem dois olhares típicos correspondentes às duas modalidades de psicopatia ou às duas atitudes psicopatas. O olhar constrangedor ou penetrante presente naqueles com necessidade de controlar e dominar os outros. Os olhos de pessoas assim, fixam como se impondo à vontade do outro. O outro tipo de olhar é suave, sedutor, intrigante, que seduz a pessoa à qual se dirige no sentido de esta se entregar nas mãos do psicopata. O psicopata relaciona-se com os que precisam dele.

Desta forma podemos verificar que os olhos reflectem de facto o espelho do psíquico – os afectos e emoções. Os olhos falam e mostram o que por vezes as palavras tentam ocultar, calar ou dificultar o acesso.

Os olhos informam-nos da interioridade e regulam a adaptação à exterioridade. O reflexo da visão do outro e a forma como o outro capta a nossa visão ou olhar, reflecte a sensação de sermos com-

preendidos, sentir que alguém segue empaticamente os nossos pensamentos, sentimentos e experiências. Não duvido nada de que, de facto, tal como afirmei no título que deu nome a esta comunicação, «o corpo é a estrutura e o dicionário emocional da história do indivíduo».

As práticas psicoterapêuticas corporais começam cada vez mais a proliferar e a diversificar-se de acordo com os estudos clínicos, de investigação, e com os diferentes olhares e análises que incidem sobre o corpo; refiro-me ao corpo energético-libidinal, ao corpo dinâmico e emocional. Falo-vos da Análise Bioenergética, o processo mais analítico-corporal dentro destes modelos, falo-vos da biodinâmica, da biossíntese e de tantas outras, como vos poderia falar da Biodança, criada pelo chileno Rolando Toro.

A Biodança foi para mim uma experiência muito enriquecedora, enquanto participante em seminários. Num grupo onde o corpo expressa uma variedade de emoções e afectos espontaneamente em liberdade e em movimento, da agressividade à violência, ao erotismo, à sexualidade, à ternura, à sensualidade, à criatividade, ao amor, ao ódio, à raiva e inclusive à transcendência, tudo se conjuga numa multiplicidade onde predomina o humano, do caos à harmonia, da violência à paz, da expressividade à interioridade. Tudo num ambiente de inter-relações próximas, onde o lúdico se conjuga com o espontâneo e a explicitação, sem medos ou inibições, de emoções que tantas vezes são distorcidas ou camufladas. A componente biológica do homem, a emoção próxima do arcaísmo onto e filogenético fica demonstrada pela biodança: a necessidade de relação, de segurança, de estima, de gratificação física e emocional. As emoções vivenciadas e associadas a músicas com ritmos e melodias diferentes, transporta o homem para o lado simbólico, da criatividade e da estética afectivo-relacional. O humanismo nas componentes bio-emocional e afectiva transporta o homem para a necessidade de grupo e para o simbolismo das associações ora mais sensoriais, ora mais imagéticas, ora ainda histórico-afectivo-relacionais próprias de cada um, mas também para a criatividade estética.

Do conjunto das práticas clínicas analítico-emocionais e psicocorporais, sabemos que o corpo na relação psicoterapêutica, apresenta-nos e apresenta-se com a história individual. Em cada fase do desenvolvimento, determinadas partes corporais apresentam marcas que conduziram a bloqueios e à diminuição da sensação de prazer.

Tensões nos olhos, ou dificuldades de contacto ocular, tensões nos maxilares, tensões no peito ou no pescoço, dificuldades respiratórias que bloqueiam o prazer e a circulação energética, por exemplo, podem clivar a respiração entre o tórax e o abdómen, a partir da rigidificação diafragmática, contracção da pélvis ou pélvis com nádegas contraídas ou mesmo fechadas, desequilíbrios ou rigidificação das pernas, etc.. O paciente conduz-nos com o apoio do analista, a partir de associações, de imagens, de sensações que obtém a partir de determinadas técnicas a relações precoces, a falhas, a lacunas, a representações internas, à sobreexcitação relacional.

A partir de diferentes técnicas o paciente sente dor, vibração, angústia, medo, ou mesmo emoções arquivadas, camufladas, tais como raiva, ódio, violência ou até, sensações de abandono, de pânico, de perdas precoces. O corpo é o intermediário privilegiado. O corpo-objecto, o corpo-relacional, os corpos do analista e do paciente que interagem, numa relação transfero-contratransferencial, que não é apenas verbal é também corporal. São os bloqueios e as defesas corporais do paciente que se libertam ou inibem, de acordo com a representação e a contratransferência corporal do analista.

São emoções e sensações precoces, primárias, que se interassociam e diversificam as representações ocultas, que são agora iluminadas e (re)estruturam o mundo interno psíquico, agora menos limitado ou concreto e transformam as sensações, as emoções, a imagem e estrutura corporal, consequência da (re)definição da circulação bioenergética, libidinal e neuro-muscular.

Desta forma não idealizamos estruturas ou funcionamentos psico-corporais. A idealização conduz-nos ao contacto com a realidade num determinado tempo, em que existe sempre desfasamento e a diferença conduz sempre à dor e à frustração. A intolerância à dor e à frustração pode conduzir à violência, à angústia, à prepotência e à tirania.

Sentimos que a clínica analítica é uma psicoterapia que respeita a diferença, que conjuga a delimitação e diferenciação na relação eu-não eu, eu-outro, paciente-analista e que promove a ligação corpo-mente, das sensações às representações e vice-versa, conseguindo delimitar a individualidade de cada paciente, sabendo este identificar, associar, com menos dor e mais tolerância interna ou mais colorido emocional, as partes sãs e as partes loucas, as dores e as tensões, sem se encapsular, delirar, psicossomatizar ou rigidificar de forma neurótica, a sua história e o seu funcionamento

psico-corporal. Sinto, aprendi e defendo teórico-clinicamente que quanto mais toleramos e conhecemos as nossas diferenças internas e corporais, mais toleramos e aceitamos as diferenças do exterior, as diferenças dos outros. Daí que Freud faça todo o sentido: quanto mais analisamos e aprofundamos um indivíduo, mais nos aproximamos da base idêntica, original em todos os seres humanos – as dores interiores, as perdas, as tensões corporais e as angústias mais primárias.

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Fernando Pessoa's way to heteronymy: Towards an aesthetics of denaveling and knotting

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Elisabeth Bronfen's idea to make the navel the centre of a new approach beyond Freudian phallic monism (Bronfen 1994) made me aware of my innocent use of 'denaveling' as a metaphor in order to define the discursive process towards heteronymy: when the 'umbilical cord' of editorial or biographical paratext is cut off, then the represented other gains apparently autonomy about life and work, both fictitious (Grossegese 1995, 157). The lack of depth in this description, confined to the surface of discursive structure, is the motive of the present essay that tries to apply Bronfen's theory onto Fernando Pessoa.

A few quotations from the first chapter of the book *The knotted subject* (1998) may be sufficient to sketch out the new approach, already developed in Bronfen (1994) and stemming directly from her previous *Over her dead body. Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (1992): death means a return to the original symbiotic unity that the new-born loses with the cutting of the umbilical cord. Thus the navel is seen as bodily inscription of death (id., 99). This concept leads directly to Bronfen's *omphalic rewriting* of Freud's *phallic reading* of female hysteria:

(...) shifting critical attention from phallus to omphalos [the Greek term for navel] implies confronting the way the subject emerges as a knot shielding itself from its originary wound by avoiding this traumatic knowledge of mortality. (Bronfen 1998, 14)

The interpretation of female hysterical cases, on which Freud based his early theory about anxiety, trauma, castration and femi-

ninity, «either overlooks the connection between hysterical trauma and mortality or translates it into issues of sexually encoded loss: castration (...) or abandonment (...).» (id., 16). The «castrated or the demonic woman (...) comes to harbour the denied recognition of death» (id., 17). Dismantling phallic reading and agreeing with Lacan who abandons «the distinction between a masculine and a feminine subject of castration» (id., 17), Bronfen developed the concept of *omphalos* (navel), based on Lacan's discussion of the «psychic history of the subject as structured by a fundamental loss of the maternal body (...).» (id., 19):

the initial incision produces a split in the subject from which sexual desire, cultural images of potency and immortality (...) may emerge as secondary screen fantasies. At the same time, this traumatic incision is also what knots the subject together at the navel of its being. (id., 17).

In this function, Bronfen argues that

the omphalos describes an aspect of the destiny of our anatomy distinct from Freud's story of the phallus. It invites us to think of the navel as a gravestone commemorating (...) the umbilical cord we have lost. (...) Although the omphalos thus functions as the edifice on which phantasies of potency and immortality can be erected, (...), this navel-grave also is the trace of incision we carry with us as we move into the paternal cultural order. It is, after all, the signature of the lost maternal body, admonishing us of our debt to death. (id., 19; cf. Bronfen 1994, 144)

By applying Bronfen's theory onto Fernando Pessoa, the intention is to link psychoanalytic approach to discourse analysis, mainly concerning the construction of authorship, instead of a plain psychoanalytic reading of Pessoa's life, because that's already done in many and sometimes dubious ways since João Gaspar Simões' *Vida e obra de Fernando Pessoa* (1950), the paradigm of «biografismo «psicologista»» responsible for the common-places of «folklore crítico».¹

Naturally the five year old boy was deeply affected by the death of his father in 1893 and suffering with the second marriage of his

¹ As Eduardo Lourenço stresses in «A fortuna crítica de Fernando Pessoa» (1985; in Lourenço 1993, 26).

mother, two years later, causing probably a life-long maternal fixation and repression of sexuality (*vd.* Centeno 1982). In January 1896, the family moved to Durban in South Africa where young Fernando received a traditional British education until the age of seventeen, when he came back to Lisbon, in August of 1905. Even without Oedipal storytelling, the experiences of death, affective frustration, loss of home, cultural and linguistic alienation create fertile psychic predispositions for the breeding of imaginary identities already in the Durban period, which increased in the following years, back in Lisbon. Among the texts written between 1904 and 1908, we find declarations about thinking too much, of solitude and self-alienation, fear of death (Nº 6) as well as a longing for death (Nº 11), later on followed by fragments of a diary in French (Nº 15) and life rules in English (Nº 16). Teresa Rita Lopes, who in 1990 published these texts for the first time ², already detects here a tendency to construct auto-fiction beyond mere self-confession (TRL I, 31).

If we continue this kind of biographical narration with more or less psychoanalytic ingredients we would reproduce to some extent Pessoa's own «narrations of conscience» (Baltrusch 1997, 35). As Teresa Rita Lopes (1990) has proved, these are of striking coherence from early youth to the end of his life. But instead of paraphrasing the fascinating (auto-)reflexivity, the analysis of the complex Pessoaan *meta-aesthetics of life* means a harder, almost impossible task.³ Our capacity to reconstruct the process of text production by reading is limited; moreover in the case of Pessoa it is difficult to find a meta-language of analysis able to tackle with the complexity of self-analysis and the reflexivity of his meta-discourse.⁴ Meanwhile Baltrusch argues for a figuration of «life as

² The numbers in parentheses refer to the texts published in the volume *Textos para um novo mapa*, conceived as supplement to Teresa Rita Lopes' interpretation in a first volume titled *Roteiro para uma expedição*. Both published in 1990 as parts of the work *Pessoa por conhecer*, Lisboa: Editorial Estampa. The abbreviations TRL I e TRL II refer to this edition that I will use, aware of the problematic character of this philological meta-narrative based on text investigation and interpretation.

³ Cf. Baltrusch (1997, 111-121) and Grossegese (1998 a, 56).

⁴ Or, as Eduardo Lourenço says in 1984, opening his essay «Fernando, Rei da nossa Baviera» with the sentence: «Custa-me imaginar que alguém possa um dia falar melhor de Fernando Pessoa que ele mesmo.» (*in* Lourenço 1993, 9).

total work of art» in the tradition of the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk* (id., 36; 356 f), we focus textual re-presentations of body, birth and death, that go beyond the (Freudian) dualism of desire and symbolic order of representation. In this sense, the Lacanian reading of Pessoa as *text* by Leyla Perrone-Moisés since 1973 against 'Freudism' is an often neglected landmark (Perrone-Moisés 1982, 76) that – in the perspective of this study – leads directly⁵ to our project to apply Bronfen's concept of *omphalic signification* onto Pessoaan meta-aesthetics:

(...) an omphalic signification neither directly satisfies desire by moving from representation to action (...) nor directly sublimates desire by keeping it unrealised, allowing the object at stake to remain lost. Rather, it addresses the mortal vulnerability of the subject; it enjoys the trace of this traumatic kernel. Sublimation would require that something be successfully repressed in order to be symbolized. The omphalos, in contrast, commemorating a lost body and the traumatic impact of vulnerability that could only be articulated in its wake, addresses a different knowledge. (Bronfen 1998, 20)

According to this approach «omphalic» is defined as a «strategy of representation» that «oscillates between sublimation and the celebration of a traumatic remnant harking back to the site of unbearable plenitude. Evoking anxiety, the traumatic impact calls for sublimation; never really repressed, however, it persistently wanders, as a foreign body, through the psychic and somatic systems.» (ibid., 21).

Already at the age of sixteen Fernando Pessoa wrote poems in English that reveal this oscillation. He signed them under the names of David Merrick and Charles Robert Anon, invented authors of unclear distinction (TRL I, 96). Among the three poems written between April and May 1904 in the notebook attributed to David Merrick, one is titled «The Death of the Titan» and characterized as «Epicurean» (N° 141; TRL II, 184f). The Titan's awakening, his destructive action while already in agony and final fall are arranged in the course from daybreak to dusk and framed by the acts of

⁵ Perrone-Moisés (1978) speaks of a «Vácuo-Pessoa», based on the Lacanian fundamental *béance* inscribed in the body and in the unconscious (*objet a*), making already reference to a «navel of dreams», empty and central place as the navel of the body (in Perrone-Moisés 1982, 84).

being born from mother earth⁶ and returning as dead into the split earth.⁷ Although the sonnet seems a mere exercise of poetical practice, it insinuates an embryonic conscience of *navel-grave* originating a poetic representation of rebellion against paternal order and the textual enacting of Promethean creation by attributing this poem to an invented author; C. R. Anon.

Back in Lisbon, Pessoa began reading books of psychiatry, afraid of (hereditary) insanity, present in his grandmother Dionísia. On the one hand Romantic literature and on the other psychoanalytic concepts were useful tools to breed the peculiar self-construction in a plurality of authors and works, giving them birth and death and subverting thus in a Titanic way paternal order (Zeus). The Pessoaan self-diagnosis of hysteria controlled by neurasthenia, already uttered in early writings as «Histoire d'une vie / d'une âme» (N° 24, TRL II, 36 f), and his apprenticeship of *auto-necrographic* writing in a Romantic tradition are closely linked, as we will see further on. One of the many short notes, written in English between 1904 and 1908, says:

Most horrid of all my inability to formulate, not even within myself some system of life or philosophy. I now would think my frame inhabited by the soul of some dead poet, (...). (N° 4; TRL II, 20)

Teresa Rita Lopes translated frame by «corpo» (body), reducing, as I argue, the meaning to a complement in the classic dyad body and soul. The «soul of some dead poet» invites to do so, but it is indeed absent in the textual surface. If we want to link frame to body, it would be more correct to think of the skin. But frame is a fleshless technical term, more proper to painting, thinking or writing. «My frame» is in my view related to the «inability to formulate» previously expressed, hence to thought and word; but «within myself» indicates an intrinsic yet unspecific physical relation. There is an inherent analogy between text and body, insinuating the desexualized desire to get pregnant by the soul of some dead poet as the-

⁶ «From night's great womb with pain the horrid morn has broke, / Far o'er the throbbing earth the clattering thunders roar, / The Titan wakes at last, his front begrimed with gore, (...).»

⁷ «He fell; the startl'd earth, with frantic fury stung, / Split, burst and broke; (...).»

rapy of his «inability to formulate, not even within myself some system of life or philosophy.»

As Teresa Rita Lopes suggests, this text could belong as well to the authors C.R.Anon or David Merrick.⁸ Indeed we find a striking stylistic and thematic similarity with texts attributed to C.R.Anon:

DEATH

Man's fear of death caused by the thought of how hard it is to leave this warm frame and become cold etc. (Nº 140; TRL II, 183)

Calling the body (or more precisely, skin and flesh) a «warm frame» in opposite to a *cold* frame that refers not only to corpse but also to any external arrangement of a work, Pessoa transforms physical references in discourse organization. At the same time, he *somatizes* discourse in a kind of mental chiasm, when he imagines his *frame* inhabited by the soul of some dead poet. The double figure of pregnancy and post-mortality is essential to this concept. In other words, this double figure embodies the conscience of *navel-grave* to be transferred into discursive strategy: a para-text (frame) inhabited by the core-text (soul) of a dead poet. This concept reminds Rilke's *Notes of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1909). There the pregnancy of the woman who bears «two fruits» in her womb, a child and death, works as allegory of fertile writing, because inhabited by death, reflecting thus the frame structure of Rilke's own text (Grossegese 1998 c, 80).

This discursive strategy reworks a Romantic tradition of *auto-necrographic* writing (Grossegese, 1996): on the frame-level, an author A has the task to write the biography (necrology) of a deceased author B, editing posthumously unpublished parts of his work. Both identities hide and expose in an ambiguous way their condition of being authors, and both identities incorporate autobiographic elements which more or less refer to their creator, hidden and exposed in the double representation of authorship. With the figure of the self as frame inhabited by the soul of some dead poet this discursive strategy is used by Pessoa to *psycho-somatize* textuality and to textualize *soma* (body) and *psyche* (soul), conceived as unity and not as duality. In the centre of this structure is the writing hand of a young man, occupying the site of *omphalos*, or in

⁸ «O eu que narra é já o «fingidor»: é possível que, se tivesse assinado, escrevesse Charles Robert Anon ou David Merrick.» (TRL I, 31).

other words, forming a shield to protect from the void created by elementary loss and from the traumatic knowledge of mortality. But this shield is not a hermetic seal: according to the *omphalic strategy*, discourse «oscillates between sublimation and the celebration of a traumatic remnant harking back to the site of unbearable plenitude» (Bronfen 1998, 21).

In this sense, Pessoa develops an aesthetics of denaveling and knotting that «enjoys the trace of this traumatic kernel» (ibid. 20) leading to a profound playfulness with mortality neglected by many critics. This playfulness must also be linked to the Pessoaan self-diagnosis of neurasthenic hysteria and newly interpreted in the light of Bronfen's reevaluation of hysteria based on Christina von Braun (1985): hysteria is normally attributed to women (by Freud) but also assumed by themselves. To avoid the destiny of being a woman equal to being dead, the hysterical transforms her cultural construction in role-playing. Simulating her death, that is hiding her 'authentic self' behind the roles she plays, she survives 'social death' (Bronfen 1992, 560) reaching to an existence which totally resides in the performance of these roles, all *authentic* ones, emerging from an originary psychic gap, the *omphalos* (Bronfen 1998, 38). In this way, language of hysteria contributes to omphalic strategy.

Already at the age of nineteen, Pessoa investigates about his own 'person' by enacting a correspondence in English: the invented (soul) doctor and detective Faustino Antunes⁹ writes a letter to a *real* former schoolmate, C.E. Geerds, about «F A N Pessôa who is thought to have committed suicide: at least he blew up a country house in which he was dying, he and several other people» (N° 22; TRL II, 32). The self is represented as (supposedly) dead or also as mentally ill in another two letters, indeed sent to former professors, Belcher and Haggar. The three of them answer.¹⁰ Hence the task of analysis or even necrology of his own is organised by an identity, named Faustino Antunes, embodied or born in the act of signature at the end of the letter, enacting thus a splitting. The importance of this act is proved by a sheet of paper where this new signature is

⁹ This study omits further references to the complex of detective fiction in Pessoa's work, already analysed in Grossegeisse (1998 d) and complementary to the present essay.

¹⁰ Opinion of C.E. Geerds reproduced in N° 23, TRL II, 33.

trained and mingled with «F. A. N. Pessoa», whose initials insinuate a sort of kinship not only to «F Antunes», a shortening of the extensive signature «Faustino Antunes», but also to C.R.Anon, that reveals clearly the common root of Anonymous.¹¹ Curiously enough, among the several signatures which cover the sheet of paper we also find the English word «gravestone».¹²

With Bronfen's theory in mind it's tempting to see this as the *enacted repetition* of denaveling and knotting carried out by the writing hand of a young male subject thoroughly aware of his signing as an ambiguous act of giving birth and death. This awareness of what Bronfen called «navel-grave» makes Pessoa erect phantasies of potency and immortality, embodied in man-created authors, but also reminding him of their un-dead existence in paternal order, subverted by feigning existence in bourgeois urban society, for instance by sending letters and publishing texts. This happens for the first time using the name C.R.Anon, assumed as simulated identity but also declared «pseudonym» in a letter to the editor of *Punch* (21st February, 1906): «(...) when a foreigner writes anything – especially a poem – it is better not to father it directly.» (*Correspondência*, 19). The verb «to father» reveals that Pessoa thinks of texts in terms of procreation; a thought innocently continued by the actual editor of the Pessoa correspondence, M. Parreira da Silva, who speaks of an omphalic link still existing between C.R.Anon and his «young creator» (*Correspondência*, 413 f).

The plural enactment of *denaveling* in discourse devices of splitting (represented) writing subjects means also a continuous plural knotting, though simulated, of the void created by the elementary loss, «shielding itself from its originary wound» not exactly «by avoiding this traumatic knowledge of mortality» (Bronfen 1998, 14), but by defusing it precisely by the playful multiple simulation of birth and death.

As Faustino Antunes announces in his letter, F.A.N. Pessoa is not the only one to die. It is significantly shortly after Pessoa's 20th

¹¹ About Anon as abbreviation of Anonymous see TRL I, 98. It seems to me that there exists an interest to maintain the initials of A and N or even the whole surname Nogueira in some signatures in the sense of a playful onomastic mystic, combining traces of ANO-nymity with the speaking surname Pessoa (cf. «Monsieur Ferdinand Personne» on the envelope of Ophélia Queiroz' love letter) that may reveal a certain predestination of becoming a no-name frame of many identities.

¹² Reproduced in TRL II, 238.

birthday, in July of 1908, that Alexander Search, said to be born only half a month before Pessoa himself¹³, appears as a dead mad poet in the first of three «Epitaphs» written in English.¹⁴ The hand that wrote them reclaims no authorship, but the reader is supposed to believe that Alexander Search did it by himself, following a romantic tradition intensified at the *fin de siècle*.¹⁵ In his case, the training of the signature is completed by the print of Alexander Search's visiting card with a Lisbon address, thus exhibiting existence in bourgeois society.¹⁶

This case becomes even more interesting by the fact that Alexander Search is presented as a transformation of Charles Robert Anon without interference of a creator. T.R.Lopes found a calligraphic manuscript where the last of five English poems is signed by «C.R.Anon» and right below, in the same handwriting, «*id est* Alexander Search». ¹⁷ This act means not only «naming somehow his successor», as T.R.Lopes comments in a footnote. It is in fact a paratextual performance of being born and dying that is cut off not only from a maternal body but also from a writing hand of a young man that creates in a narcissistic, auto-sexual way analogue to masturbation¹⁸: the small but decisive words *id est* bear no *omphalic mark* neither of a womb nor of a creator who replaced motherhood, simulating birth. Hence, this predicts a future dislocation of the (cold) *mother-frame*, working and representing the desexualized (pro-)creation of manuscripts.

Around 1909 or 1910, the sheet with the handwritten title in diagonal «The Transformation Book», added below «Book of Tasks»,

¹³ Alexander Search: «Born June 13th 1888, at Lisbon» (Nº 148, TRL II, 195). Pessoa himself was born on June 30th.

¹⁴ The latter epitaphs refer to entities like monarchy and religion (Nº 152; TRL II, 198).

¹⁵ *Vd.* the well-informed, almost encyclopaedic study of Jean-François Jeandillou (1989).

¹⁶ Reproduced in TRL II, 197-198.

¹⁷ Reproduced and translated in Nº 144, TRL II, 188.

¹⁸ The playful use of names and initials in signature commented above may include in the case of «C.R.Anon», as a complement to ANONymous, a hidden reference to ONANism, plausible by the sexual indications in the enacted auto-diagnosis by Faustino Antunes. If we add the initials, the reading CRANON may be an allusion to the Greek term of «kranion», also present in the English derivation «cranium» and the Portuguese «crânio», denoting the components of head (brain) and skull (death).

is still signed by F. Nogueira Pessoa (TRL II, 194 facs.), followed by biobibliographical files of Alexander Search, «Pantaleão», Jean Seul and Charles James Search (Nº 148-151). But this creation of «zone du péri-texte» (Genette 1987, 20) remains an incomplete sketch. Both, editorial paratexts and ‘scraps’ of (core-)text, are increasingly attributed to fictitious identities, whose birth, name and delimitations in relation to other identities are often blurred – therefore the *twin-constellation* of close friends or even brothers and changing authorships are frequent.¹⁹ In the case of Pantaleão, Pessoa created a complex personality, conceived as a satirist but also as political agitator and educator. Interpreting the indication «if necessary give true name» in Pantaleão’s file (Nº 149; TRL II, 195), T.R.Lopes suggests that Pantaleão is almost a pseudonym of Pessoa himself (TRL I, 110f), but I argue that the maintenance of quotation marks in the manuscripts, writing «Pantaleão», inscribes the trace of a Pessoa-editor who knows about the pseudonym status of this invented identity, because he omits the simulation of signature, extensively trained in other cases like Alexander Search (TRL II, 197). «Pantaleão» is not only declared author of a variety of titles, as usual only realised in forewords, beginnings and other types of fragments, but also editor of the work of another author, already deceased, Torquato Mendes Fonseca da Cunha Rey. Although there only exists a sketch of the «zone du péri-texte»²⁰ followed by Pantaleão’s short paratext²¹, totally within the tradition of Romantic *autonecrogaphy*, it’s for the first time that a fictitious identity assumes the role of editing posthumously the work of his friend²², essaying thus – different from the cases of F.A.N.Pessoa and the transformation of C.R.Anon in Alexander Search – the dislocated fictionalisation of *mother-frame*, main element in the genesis of Pessoaan heteronymy at the edge of textuality.

¹⁹ Also characteristic for the Romantic tradition, already in a playful way as for instance in the works of Jean Paul.

²⁰ With indication of author; (title ?), dedication and the editor, identified as an author: «publicado por «Pantaleão» – das *Visões*» (TRL II, 209; 210 facs.).

²¹ «Não sei o valor que terá este escripto; os entendidos que o digam. O meu único fim foi (...) a ultima vontade do meu querido e chorado [variante: malogrado] amigo. Nada mais. [indication of signature] «Pantaleão».» (TRL II, 209; 210 facs.).

²² Also fictitious, possibly even in second degree, if we imagine «Pantaleão» like young Pessoa himself as an author able to invent an author.

Before advancing to the kernel, let's see the case of another invented author, the aristocrat bachelor Barão de Teive, supposed to have committed suicide. An unnamed editor titles a short note in Portuguese as «the only manuscript» of the Baron, found (after his death) in a drawer. Curiously, the note itself is about hiding «the book» in a drawer in order to avoid exposure to the possibly unclean hands of the (female?) hotel servants, followed by a sort of summary comment: «a impossibilidade de fazer arte superior.» (Nº 196; TRL II, 242 and note 2).

Among the dactylographic (!) documents attributed to the Baron, one is about imagining a fire in his house that would destroy all his manuscripts, «toda a obra fragmentaria mais cuidada da minha vida» (Nº 199; TRL II, 245). Instead of interpreting this loss as mortal stroke or as trigger to craziness, he feels indifferent, almost happy about it, because this destruction would, as he says, simplify his life. This attitude turns the romantic concept of *Lebensbuch*, the creation of life as a novel (*vd.* Schanze 1987) which indeed underlies Pessoa's whole meta-aesthetics of life, into a mere phase of (meta-)biographic process:

Que iria de mim naquelles papeis escriptos? Antes, eu diria «tudo», hoje diria, ou «nada», ou «pouco», ou «uma cousa estranha». (ibid.)

The awareness of self-alienation, ironically uttered by an invented identity, product of self-alienation itself, is reinforced at the end:

Tornara-me objectivo para mim mesmo. Mas não podia distinguir se com isso me achara ou me perdera.

Even without thinking of C.G.Jung's *Archetypes*, the (only) manuscript left in the drawer mentioned above (Nº 196) can easily be read as an ambivalent expression of regressive desire and auto-ironic play with the frustration of this desire. This expression is achieved by the simultaneous enactment of writing, hiding and dying. Instead of returning in into the warm womb, the only manuscript of the dead author is left into a drawer, material figure of a cold *mother-frame*: even life-text, not born from a womb, is threatened by dirt because being *manu*-script, once outside body, it is touched

by hands.²³ The short text hidden in the drawer tells about an analogue act in a *mîse-en-abyme* of discourse (Dällenbach 1977): psychoanalytic ingredients²⁴ are blended with the romantic tradition of crypto-auctorial strategy against (the paternal order of) bourgeois society.

Instead of encoding Pessoa's childhood and youth in a sexualized psychoanalytic pattern of Freudian provenience, these examples of constructing authorship make us focus – continuing the Lacanian mainstream (Perrone-Moisés) – on the textual elaborations that enact *denaveling* and *knotting*, repeating it on a discourse level. The deliberately developed life-long system of heteronyms, giving birth to a plurality of authors, erects not only fantasies of plenitude and immortality but also articulates loss, emptiness and longing for home or death.

The early examples as C.R.Anon, «Pantaleão» and Barão de Teive confirm that Pessoa's omphalic strategy loses the reference to the original centre, the *omphalos*, as unique signature of the lost maternal body, in favour of a wandering, nomadic bachelor concept.²⁵ Such a concept suggests an escape from the logic of Oedipal triangle as theorized in 1972 by the anti-Freudian *Anti-Oedipe* de Deleuze and Guattari, and links Pessoa's aesthetics with the principles of *machine célibataire*, when redefined as a discursive model (vd. Grossegesse 1998 b). A similar bridge between psychoanalysis and discourse can enrich the concept of denaveling that I used as innocent metaphor for the decisive step from crypto-auctorial or pseudo-allographic presentation of authorship (Genette 1987, 172) to plain fictive authorship, or in other words: when the 'umbilical cord' of editorial or biographical discourse is cut off, than the

²³ In the case of Kafka the theme of dirt related negatively to writing is more explicit (vd. Kremer 1998, 116, 138).

²⁴ See the effort necessary to open the drawer, the complaint about its shortness, in other words expressing the desire to go deeper, and the insinuation that the hotel servants may have unclean hands from which the book must be preserved (Nº 196; TRL II, 242).

²⁵ With this situation in mind, it's striking that the farewell-poem, signed by C.R.Anon *id est* Alexander Search, is addressed to an already deceased «you», talking of a nightly walk in the bedroom and evoking in a pejorative way procreation, bourgeois marriage and glory: «On a seeming-heavy baby to waste thy seeming-waning strength, / and as the husband of thy wife to reach the light of fame» (Nº 144, TRL II, 188).

(represented) other has apparently autonomy about life and work (Grossegesse 1995, 157). This process that can lead to heteronymity, is visible in the two versions of *A.O. Barnabooth* by Valery Larbaud (1908/13), therefore considered by Enrique Vila-Matas (1988) and Octavio Paz (1989) as first heteronym of modern literature. In their opinion, Larbaud might even have influenced Pessoa.

Instead of individualizing I prefer to consider the whole textual tradition of *auto-necrographic* writing, from Romanticism to *fin de siècle* (Grossegesse 1993, 237; id. 1996, 453), which matches perfectly with the psychic predispositions of young Pessoa: the enacting of the dead author and the posthumous revelation of fragments of life and text or better *life-text*. Since the beginning, this is linked to a sexual and psychic auto-analysis, also increasingly enacted according to the *auto-necrographic* scheme as we see in an extensive fragment of 63 pages (TRL I, 40), probably written in 1913: Dr. Florêncio Gomes' *Tratado de Doenças Mentais* contains the biography of Marcos Alves, ending in a precise description of his suicide and giving thus a (cold) frame to Alves' self-analysis in letters and notes, edited posthumously (Nº 25, TRL II, 38-44).

In my studies mentioned above I already refer to the possible influence of Charles Dickens in the genesis of Pessoaan heteronymity (ibid.) which seems to me more significant than Larbaud or even the tendencies towards heteronymity in Antero de Quental and Eça de Queiroz.²⁶

Since his youth, Pessoa mentioned his frequent reading and familiarity with the *Pickwick Papers*.²⁷ Quoting the whole title of Dickens' popular work, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1836/37), the genetic linkage to heteronymity already becomes quite evident: Dickens' work turns the Romantic tradition of the dead poet and his posthumous presentation into a playful plurality of fictitious identities. The lonely reader, young Pessoa, suffers with his condition of being non-contemporary and therefore *inexistent* in relation to Mr. Pickwick and his friends, transformed by his mystic reading into an imagined *real* company. The longing for the womb

²⁶ Concerned about the extent of the present study I won't enter in the discussion of this subject (vd. Grossegesse 1993: 227).

²⁷ «I have one book ever by me – *Pickwick Papers*», confesses young Pessoa, probably in 1910, and later on: «já não me lembro de quantas vezes li *Pickwick Papers*.» [I do not remember how often I have read *Pickwick Papers*] (*Páginas íntimas*, 21).

is replaced by the longing for the book, switching thus from warm frame to cold frame. This suffering is uttered as autobiographic experience by the semi-heteronym Vicente Guedes, later on transformed into Bernardo Soares, in one of the fragments that fill the *Livro do Desassossego*, in progress since 1914:

Ha criaturas que soffrem realmente por não poder ter vivido na vida real com o sr. Pickwick e ter apertado a mão ao sr. Wardle. Sou um desses. Tenho chorado lágrimas verdadeiras sobre esse romance, por não ter vivido n'aquela tempo, com aquela gente, gente real. (II, 254)

Further on in the same manuscript:

Quando o sr. Pickwick é ridículo, não é ridículo, porque o é n'um romance. Quem sabe se o romance será uma mais perfeita realidade e vida que Deus cria através de nós, que nós – quem sabe – existimos apenas para crear? (ibid.)

In *Livro do Desassossego* the Romantic concept of *Lebensbuch*, in the sense of Novalis, is transformed into the auto-ironic semi-fiction of an un-dead²⁸ and blended with the Pessoaan self-definiton as *medium* in a psychoanalytic and esoteric way, or in other words, as a *frame*.

Bronfen's theory of denaveling and knotting helps to be more precise about the transformations to heteronymity: in Romantic tradition, the *mother-frame* is usurped by an artistically procreating bachelor, who gives birth to invented authors and even attributes new paternities.²⁹ Beyond commonly applied criteria like plurality and autonomy in order to distinguish heteronyms from pseudonyms, we emphasize as essential achievement of (Pessoaan) heteronymity the specific dislocation of man-usurped *mother-frame*: the (cold) frames of unpublished books and works are announced by invented identities (in the function of posthumous editor and biographer) who comment these works, only realised in textual (frame-)fragments, mostly initial and terminal sequences, in dialogue with other invented identities. This *conversation* of 'gente real' is consequence of his reading of *Pickwick Papers* as written conver-

²⁸ Vicente Guedes: «Este livro é a biographia de alguém que nunca teve vida.» (Nº 184; TRL II, 228)

²⁹ Genette (1987, 172) also uses the term «paternity».

sation in order to speak to a wider and above all posthumous audience and to become immortal by a «sweet work»³⁰ of absolute relativity.³¹ Significantly on the margins of this conversation appears a minor poet named Fernando Pessoa as one of their kind or even *inexistent* in contrast with the self-asserted existence of heteronyms.³²

Thus, the bachelor-creator whose writing hand used to be the centre of usurped *mother-frame* now disappears totally, remaining without any umbilical link to his (former) creatures on the periphery of a dislocated fictitious *mother-frame*, usurped by an identity named Alberto Caeiro that one day appeared within *Pessoa-frame* as 'master': «aparecera em mim o meu mestre», as Pessoa tells in his famous self-analysis (letter from 20th of January 1935), answering Casais Monteiro's question about the genesis of heteronyms, a few months before his death. Pessoa defines thus the textual origin of the dislocated *mother-frame* as a psychosomatic phenomenon of *automatic writing* in a kind of ecstasy, occurred on the «dia triunfal da minha vida», 8th of March 1914, giving immediately birth not only to the disciples Ricardo Reis and Álvaro de Campos, but also to 'Fernando Pessoa' as minor poet and third disciple of Alberto Caeiro.

It is significant that this apparition takes place one year before the (fictitious) death of the master in 1915. This crucial imagined 'fact' allows the enacting of editorial and biographical discourse of the disciples that frame the posthumous publication of the *Poemas Completas* of Alberto Caeiro.³³ Mainly the «Prefacio do Dr. Ricardo

³⁰ This epithet of *Pickwick Papers* (*Páginas de Estética*, 254) matches with «este livro suave» [this sweet book] in the presentation of the Diary of Vicente Guedes (Nº 184, TRL II, 228).

³¹ In this sense, *Pickwick Papers* and his author will remain in posterity, not because of absolute value but thanks to absolute relativity, as Pessoa says in his study about the posthumous fame of literary works titled *Erostratus* (1925 and later on): «*Pickwick Papers* is bigger, in point of words, than *Paradise Lost*; it is certainly inferior, as values go; but I have read *Paradise Lost* only one time and a half, for I failed the second reading.» (*Páginas de Estética*, 215).

³² Álvaro de Campos: «Mais curioso é o caso de Fernando Pessoa, que não existe, propriamente falando.» (*Recordação*, 75).

³³ Edited in such a complete version by Teresa Sobral Cunha, *Poemas Completos de Alberto Caeiro*, Lisboa: Presença 1994. We must even add the fact that the presentation of Vicente Guedes' Diary occurs on the back of a sheet which contains the plan of Alberto Caeiro's work (note to Nº 184, TRL II, 228).

Reis» and the «Notas para a recordação do meu mestre Caeiro, por Álvaro de Campos» commemorate thus their master, understood as *being* absolute Paganism, not representing it. He appears as a mixture of Apollo, Titan and Pan (Feijó 1999). In terms of omphalic signification, Alberto Caeiro embodies a kind of un-aveled, almost divine father which covers the female navel-grave in a similar form as the Olympian Apollo the *omphalos*, the sanctuary of Gaia (Earth), namely visible in the myth of the Delphian oracle (Harrison 1927, 386-429). The study of James Ellen Harrison confirms Bronfen's omphalic approach precisely interested in the place of conflict between (old) matrilinear and patriarchal order (Bronfen 1998, 18f) adding an mythopoetic dimension. The Pessoaan concept of Dionysian base dominated by Apollo (Cuervo Hewitt 1988, 202) matches perfectly to the concept of Apollonian omphalos, «whose manifest function lays in marking the center of the world and the site of truth», but also has «a supplementary function as a grave-stone, rendering a displaced acknowledgement of death as well.» (ibid., 19; cf. Bronfen 1994, 140-143). Cuervo Hewitt speaks of Dionysos' repressed presence in Pessoaan poetics and the poet's attempt to harmonize both sides in the *Athena* project (ibid., 202), conceived as a leading enterprise of «Pagan Reconstruction» (TRL II, 283) in opposition to *Renascença Portuguesa*, a man-created maternal home for Portuguese avant-garde (Feijó 1999).

In this sense, Pessoa's mystic reading of *Pickwick Papers* is already fully anticipating, as we can see in an undated text about Charles Dickens written in English.³⁴ According to Pessoa, *Pickwick Papers* already contains a *male* Pagan universe, similar to the universe he is constructing onwards in his *Apollonian* omphalic system of heteronyms:

To read Dickens is to obtain a mystic vision – but, though he claims so often to be Christian, it has nothing to do with the Christian vision of the world. It is recasting of the old pagan noise, the old Bacchic joy at the world being ours, though transiently, at the coexistence and fullness of men, at the (ms.: meeting) a good [?] part of perennial mankind).

³⁴ See *Páginas de Estética*, 326-328. This subject deserves further study because as far as we know *Pickwick Papers* has not received any scholarly attention concerning the genesis of Pessoaan heteronymity, in spite of the proofs that this was his favorite book (cf. Severino 1969, 65, 157).

It is a human world, and so women are of no importance in it, as the Pagan criterion has it, and has truly. (...) The joy and zest of life does not include woman, and the old Greeks, who created paederasty as an institution of social joy, knew this to the final end. (*Páginas de Estética*, 327 f)

This complex confluence of omphalic signification, language of (female) hysteria framed by 'cold' (male) neurasthenia³⁵ and the innovative discursive construction of heteronymity, stemming directly from the textual tradition of *auto-necrographic* writing, goes beyond the limits of this study. My reluctance to conclude it emphasizes the benefits of Bronfen's approach to the reading of Pessoa.

With the consistent constellation of three major heteronyms (Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis, Álvaro de Campos) as result of a long process, the dramatized multiple self-narration transforms reflected psychic abnormality in an imaginary empire and mission for Paganism: «o romance-drama foi concebido como uma terapia individual e civilizacional» (TRL I, 180). The almost obsessive proliferation of discourses and meta-discourses goes on until the last months before his death as we can see in the famous letter, addressed to Adolfo Casais Monteiro (20th of January 1935). With this text that contains a retrospective narration about the birth-giving of heteronyms, Pessoa offers deliberately the basis for all posthumous psychoanalytic reading of life and work as a part of his own life-dramaturgy. He did it in a similar way already before, mainly in the letter to two French psychiatrists, Hector and Henry Durville, written on 10th of June 1919. His extensive self-analysis of inner hysteria dominated by neurasthenia ends up with the following words:

Il ne faut pas, toutefois, exagérer la portée de ces observations. Je ne suis pas tout à fait un cadavre conscient. (*Correspondência*, 288)

«Un cadavre conscient» allows a double reading: in first place, it confirms the self-definition as un-dead, vital to the basic psycho-

³⁵ I already argued for this concept analysing Pessoaan detective fiction as an important genre for the evolution towards heteronymity and for his life-work-construction (Grossegese 1998 d).

somatic concept of a cold frame being inhabited; but being not totally a conscious corpse means also that 'Pessoa' always resists to theory. In other words, he is still alive.

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