https://dspace.org/

Ecriture as political practice: an analysis of the Journal Tel Quel with particular reference to the work of Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes

Carusi, Annamaria

2015-01-13
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/16491

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ÉCRITURE AS POLITICAL PRACTICE : AN ANALYSIS OF THE JOURNAL TEL QUEL WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE WORK OF JULIA KRISTEVA AND ROLAND BARTHES

Annamaria Carusi

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Johannesburg 1986

ABSTRACT

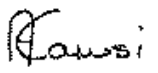
This dissertation is an analysis of écriture as theoretical concept and scriptural practice as it is developed in the journal Tel Quel and by Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes. It is postulated that there is an inherent contradiction in the notion of écriture as a form of political practice, or as an agent for *political and* ideological transformation. This contradiction is based in the definition of écriture as the underlying structure of literary systems of signification : as an underlying structure, the structure of écriture precludes the possiblity of operating transformations in systems extraneous to it, such as the political and the ideological.

A distinction is made between what may be termed Kristeva's 'theory of transformation' and Barthes' 'theory of revelation', which may in turn be seen to be founded on a critique of the sign and of articulation respectively. While it may be said that a theory of transformation ultimately occludes the underlying structure, the texts which construct themselves as critiques of articulation reveal the functioning of the underlying structure.

Finally, it is postulated that a theory of commitment must *account not only* for the subject of writing but also for the subject of reading, since the disruptive effects of écriture on the unity of the subject cannot be localised in the writer, but are carried over to the reader.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University, nor has it been prepared under the aegis or with the assistance of any other body or organization or person outside the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.



Financial assistance rendered by the Human Sciences Research Council towards the cost of this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed or conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not to be regarded as those of the Human Sciences Research Council.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Peter-John Delport, who initially introduced me to semiotics, and whose excellent training provided the impetus for the undertaking of a project such as this. His guidance as co-supervisor (with Prof. R. Nethersole) of this dissertation has been invaluable. I would also like to thank Prof. Nethersole whose comments and suggestions in her overview of the dissertation were extremely helpful. Prof. Ina Gräbe of the Department of Theory of Literature at Unisa has been very generous with recess leave. Her encouragement and support are very much appreciated.

I am grateful also to Gerhard van der Linde of the Unisa Library, whose assistance in compiling the bibliography and checking references has been invaluable.

To my fellow-students of the 'class of '84', especcially Orsolya Richter, Lukas Fitschen and Ingo Lambrecht, who were always around for discussion and to clarify areas in which they are more expert than I, infinite gratitude for the friendship and moral support.

Finally, I wish to thank my family, for having faith in me, particularly my husband, not only for always being there, but also for the practical assistance in setting up the word-processor for me, my mother for baby-sitting and practically running my home for me so that I could have time to complete this dissertation, and my sister for assisting me with the final draft. And of course, my daughter Bianca, for simply being herself and providing a sweet distraction when I became too engrossed in my work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Introduction..... 1

Chapter

1. Tel Quel : écriture as political practice..... 5
2. Kristeva : The possibility of commitment..... 44
3. Barthes : The limitations of commitment..... 74
4. Kristeva : The critique of the sign..... 98
5. Barthes : The critique of articulation..... 132
6. The subject of écriture..... 170

Conclusion..... 188

Appendix A..... 191

Bibliography..... 207

INTRODUCTION

I am forced to introduce this dissertation with an apology for its incompletion. The topic has its source in an interest in the notion of écriture as it is presented in the work of Mallarmé and particularly in Derrida's reading of Mallarmé in 'La Double Séance' (1970), which was the subject of my Honour's dissertation. Derrida's work on écriture was initially to have complemented a consideration of Barthes and Kristeva, with the magnificent edifice of écriture as it is constructed by Mallarmé as a backdrop, together with the experimentation of the 'Tel Quel' group. The 'vision' had to be somewhat curtailed however, since it was not possible to cover all this ground within the bounds of a Master's dissertation. I thus decided to limit myself to a consideration of only one aspect of the notion of écriture: its effectiveness as a possible form of political practice, and more particulary, to an analysis of the contradiction apparent between the deployment of écriture as an agent for political and ideological transformation, and écriture as a purely formal category. This contradiction is evident in a comparison between the theories of Kristeva and Barthes, which is used as a point of entrance to the questions posed by écriture.

It will sometimes appear that the term 'écriture' has been used in a rather wide sense, covering, for example, both Kristeva's notion of 'signifiance', and Barthes' use of 'symbolic functioning'. However, the use of the term 'écriture' is commensurate with these applications, which are extensions or elucidations of particular aspects of its functioning. I have attempted to follow the ways in which écriture is defined in the

three areas of the 'Tel Quel' project, the theories of Kristeva, and the work of Barthes as theorist and as critic, a trajectory in which, however, many overlapping and sometimes contradicting terms are used for 'écriture'. For this reason, I have used the term 'écriture' as a blanket-term, which however retains its specificity as that which pertains to a graphism as opposed to a phoneticism.

Due to the restriction of the topic to the political implications of écriture, I have focussed on relatively early writings. While Tel Quel was published from 1960 to 1982, when it was replaced by Infini, it is the emergence and development of écriture in the Sixties which is most relevant to the topic. I have thus not considered the preoccupation of the 'Tel Quel' group with Maoism, nor its later shift to an interest in the USA, focussing instead on the impetus of marxism-leninism on the project. Similary, I have dealt with Kristeva's and Barthes' work up to roughly 1975; later developments in the work of both explore fields beyond that of écriture, perhaps precisely because of the limitations of this notion.

The background of the 'Tel Quel' project is examined in the first chapter, as well as its goals and the ways in which écriture is defined in terms of these goals. The project is then mapped onto the structuralist model postulated by Deleuze (1975) and in the elaboration of which the 'Tel Quel' group is used as an example. This model is used as a reference point throughout the [illegible]rtation.

The second and third chapters respectively examine the ways in which Kristeva and Barthes account for the embedding of the text

in the socio-historical, and thus outline the possiblities as well as the limitations of a committed écriture. It is proposed that whereas Kristeva deploys a critique of the sign in order to operate a theory of transformation, Barthes postulates a critique of articulation in order to operate a theory of revelation. The ways in which these critiques function is elaborated in chapters four and five, while chapter six deals with the question of the subject.

Since the topic of the dissertation is quite specific it was rather difficult to find appropriate secondary literature. While many sources did not have a direct bearing on the topic, others were not available to me at the time of writing the dissertation, despite attempts to obtain them. Amongst the latter are J. Risset (1982) I venti anni di Tel Quel, M. Charvet (1974) Tel Quel: un avanguardia per il materialismo as well as M.A. Caws (1976) About French poetry from Dada to Tel Quel. Several overviews of Barthes' work have not been explicitly referred to, but were consulted in background reading for the dissertation. These include Lavers (1982), Unger (1983), Jouve (1986), Sontag (1982) and Heath (1974).

I have worked from the original French texts wherever possible. Quotations from these texts are in French; translations are provided at the end of the dissertation, and are my own unless otherwise indicated. I was obliged to work from the Italian translations of Deleuze's "Comment reconnaît-on le structuralisme?" (1975) and of the preface to the first edition of Kristeva's Semeiotikè: Recherches pour une sémanalyse (1969).

The Harvard system for reference material has been used throughout the dissertation; footnotes are at the end of each chapter and are used only to provide additional information or to make cross-references where necessary.

CHAPTER ONE

Tel Quel : écriture as political practice

1.1 Introduction

The journal Tel Quel represents one of the most ambitious projects of the '60's and '70's. Its problematization of the great Literary Institution has not yet been fully absorbed : one may indeed shelve or recuperate its problematic, yet it still stands as a question to any knowledge we may hope to gain not only in the field of literary studies proper, but also much further afield. Tel Quel has not only made it impossible to return to beckneyed presuppositions about literature, it also forces one to proceed with much greater care and a feeling of unease when approaching any form of discourse. Emerging in the context of the radical and all-pervasive interrogation of the Sixties, it is a forum which brings together and at the same time puts on trial some of the most important proposals of the time. This is possible because of the double-edgedness of the journal : the notion of écriture[1] implicates both theory and practice; the relation between these is one of mutual problematization.

It is the aim of this dissertation to define the problematic which underlies the theory and practice of écriture, in the journal Tel Quel, by analysing what may loosely be called 'editorials' as well as the work of the two theorists who have had perhaps the closest relation to the journal, Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva. It will appear from the outset that one is faced with a document on the question of commitment: the origins of écriture in the journal are unquestionably ethical. However

écriture as an ethic is beset with internal contradictions. I wish to propose that the aporia with which we are faced result from the fact that écriture as ethic and as graphism are necessarily set on opposing and contradicting trajectories.

1.2 Tel Quel : Opposing previous discourses

The 'déclaration' which heads the first issue of Tel Quel is the first of a number of manifesto-like documents, which abound in the journal, particularly in the period 1966-1972. As all manifestos, it is both a negation of previous discourses, and an optimistic thrust into a new one, which however remains vague and indefinite in its outline. Here, it is the gesture of breaking away or of clearing a space which is more definitive. Far from defining an object to fill this space in advance, the object is left to define itself and its directions :

> "Rien, en définitive, ne nous sera plus agréable que d'être accusés d'éclectisme. Et y-a-t-il meilleur prétention que celle qui nous fait espérer réunir ici tout ce qui s'écrit - ou s'est écrit - de meilleur dans toutes les directions où il nous paraîtra bon d'avancer?" (no.1:4)[21]

The charge of eclecticism would not however be regarded so favourably by them later on, when their choice of discourse becomes more definitively outlined and purposeful. Within this initial 'space' however, there is the intrusion of two discourses, which are extremely significant in view of the later theoretisation of the Journal : one initiated by Formalism and one initiated by Nietzsche, which in no way delimitate the project, but function rather as its vectors.

1.3 Écriture, formalism and the Nietzschean discourse

Parts of the 'déclaration' are strong echoes of the theories of the Russian Formalists, and it was in fact the Tel Quel group which, both in the journal and in the publications published by the Éditions du Seuil in the 'Collection Tel Quel', was instrumental in making the writings of the Russian formalists accessible in France. This formalist moment is manifested in the 'déclaration' firstly by the desire to return to the text itself - without submitting it to 'moral and political imperatives' : "Les idéologues ont suffisamment regné sur l'expression pour que celle-ci se permette enfin de leur fausser compagnie, de ne plus s'occuper que d'elle-meme, de sa fatalité et de ses règles particulières." [ii] (no.1:3) This may seem a surprising stand to take for a journal noted primarily for its fiercely political stance, and becomes comprehensible within the general project of Tel Quel only when Nietzsche is taken into consideration. The formalism of Tel Quel never functions in precisely the same way as that of the Russian Formalists. For, from the outset, it does not function on the level of theory only but also on the level of practice. While this opposition later becomes problematized by the Tel Quel group, the 'déclaration' was primarily a call for a new type of writing :

> "Ce qu'il faut dire aujourd'hui, c'est que l'écriture n'est plus concevable sans une claire prévision de ses pouvoirs, un sang-froid à la mesure du chaos ou elle s'éveille, une détermination qui mettra la poésie à la plus haute place de l'esprit. Tout le reste ne sera pas littérature." [iii] (no.1:3)

The type of writing called for here - écriture at the first moment of its development - is at once an apparent retreat back into the specifically literary, an attempt to determine what the literary is once all that is extraneous to it has been removed, and what the powers peculiar to it are. Firstly, it underscores the pre-occupation with the project of the Nouveau Roman and its meta-lingual[3] interrogation of the possiblitites and limitations of ecriture - Sollers' "Sept propositionss sur Alain Robbe-Grillet" in the second issue is almost a second 'déclaration' as Foucault poin' out(1968:11). Secondly it brings us to the pre-occupation with Nietzsche, which informs the Journal throughout its development. The quotation which functions as an epigraph to the first issue is significantly drawn from Nietzsche :

> "Je veux le monde et le veux TEL QUEL, et le veux encore, le veux éternellement, et je crie insatiablement : bis! et non seulement pour moi seul, mais pour toute la pièce et pour tout le spectacle; et non pour le spectacle seul, mais au fond pour moi, parce que le spectacle m'est nécessaire - parce qu'il me rend nécessaire - parce que je lui suis nécessaire - et parce que je le rends nécessaire."[iv]

The significance of Nietzsche to the Tel Quel project cannot be overestimated, and in fact determines and defines the formalism inherent to the Journal. It is precisely because the 'powers' of écriture are determined formally, that is, by the functioning of the signifier, that it ultimatly has to do with what the world can be for us. The retreat into the specifically literary would appear to be a supremely a-political gesture. The interrogation of the literary word as a 'pathological' or hypostatic sign in

which the signifier is overdetermined and conditions the signified and the referent is however eminently political, since it provides a knowledge of the operations of the language which we use to communicate. This language would appear to be ideologically neutral, providing direct access to truth. When however a poetics based on the possible disfunctions (most importantly, the rhetorical tropes of metaphor and metonymy) of the sign is embarked upon, it can be shown that the conditions for referentiality (truth) are laid down precisely by a rhetoric, and that similarly truth and true knowledge depend upon an overdetermination of the signifier. In his work on aphasia and on the equivalence thesis, Jakobson shows that it is poetics which underlies language, as a coherent, non-contradictory system of representation[4]. Nietzsche on the other hand, shows that truth, and knowledge itself operate only on the basis of force relations which over-determine the 'spectacle' or the system of representation[5]. An interrogation of the 'spectacle', as a formal category, is therefore immediately political.

Through the text and respecting its specificity Tel Quel is thus a commitment to and desire of the world 'as such' or 'as it is'. With the re-consideration of Nietzsche, this 'commitment to the world' does not take the form of a crude collapse of the text onto reality. It is the appropriation of the world not as being, but as 'spectacle', determined by relations of domination and force, and hence as a formal entity which allow for this type of commitment. What is indicated here is the desire to see the spectacle as spectacle, stripped of the occlusions of the ideologues. To cite another passage taken from Nietzsche and used by Jean-Louis Baudry in his article "Écriture, Fiction, Idéologie"(1968:134) :

"Qu'est pour moi l'apparence! Certainement pas le contraire d'un être;... Que saurais-je dire de quelque être que ce fût, si ce ne sont les attributs de son apparence! Certainement pas un masque inanimé que l'on peut mettre ou enlever à un X inconnu! L'apparence est pour moi la vie et l'action meme, la vie que se moque assez de soi pour me faire sentir qu'il n'y a qu'apparence."[v]

The 'spectacle' is a representation and is visible as such only by an interrogation of its formal structure. But it is a representation only of itself : the representation-being dichotomy functions only to occlude the relations of force which over-determine the 'spectacle'. It is not 'surprising' then that li[illegible]ure has a priveleged relation to the 'spectacle'. P[illegible] because it is made of language, the primary mediator of our [illegible]elligibility, it has the ability to either reinforce the force relations, or in the text of écriture, to subvert them by a display of its formal nature. Formal concepts developed by the Russian Formalists return but with an added dimension occluded by the insistence in Russian Formalism to divorce the text from anything considered as extrinsic to it - that of its relation to the 'spectacle' by a formal cohesion : by the very fact that what can be called 'literary beauty' is disengaged from reality "elle touchera aux qualités que établissent dans l'instant nos rapports entre nous et nous, notre justification immédiate la plus pure" (no.1:4)[vi] Functioning both as an epistemological project and as a form of commitment in the strongest sense of the word, this is what defines the neo-formalism of Tel Quel.

This is of course an anticipation of the project. The

déclaration is merely an initial glimmering of the later development of the Journal - but the later project does not deviate from this in any significant way. The reason for this is its formalism, but perhaps more so its relation to Nietzsche , who together with Marx and Freud, is used to delineate the area of a new knowledge. Tel Quel is embedded in the Nietzschean discourse from its inception - the Marx-Freud articulation is defined in 1966-67. Superimposed on the background of Nietzsche, this is the area which comes to be defined with a scientific rigour not found in any other type of literary study. But to call this enterprise literary is in fact not to do it justice : it is precisely this label which it seeks to undermine, and which we continue to use only for lack of a better word. While studying *the specificity of the literary text*, *other modes of* signification, other modes of intelligibility are put into question :

> "L'écriture, qui est un peu notre fonction vis-à-vis du monde extérieur, notre façon de le saluer, de créer entre lui et nous une connivence, une intimité, une amitié de plus en plus grandes, n'est en définitive, qu'une entrée en matière" (no.1:4)[vii]

The question which remains to be answered is : what are the forms of commitment which can be considered as valid and open to the literary text? It is here precisely that the notion of écriture can be deployed in the most critical and productive way.

1.4 Écriture and its theory

While until 1966-1967 the contributions to the Journal are taken mostly from experimental writings by such writers as Marcelin Pleynet, Jean Thibaudeau, Jean Cayrol, Jean-Louis Baudry, Francis Ponge to name but a few, theoretical works later come to have a major impact. The period from 1960-66 is in fact characterised as a period of experimentation and formalism in the chronology of the Journal published in the 1971 issue of Tel Quel (no.47:143-144); politically it has leftist tendencies. The massive theoretisation of the Journal after 1966 is far from being gratuitous, but is instead part of the process through which previous assumptions are radicalised - the questions inherent to experimental writing as well as to formalism are now explicitly posed, in their most radical form. This is the point at which the notion of écriture comes to take on its specificity in the Journal. It is also in 1967 that the subtitle 'Science/Littérature' (no.29) appears for the first time. This is an important shift in the development of the Journal : just three issues later Sollers' "Programme" appears. This is the preface to his work 'of écriture' Logiques, and in it the notion of écriture and the possibilities particular to it are specified. Sollers is one of the predominant personalities of the Tel Quel group, often acting as a spokesman. One can in fact say that "Programme" defines not only the project of Logiques but also of Tel Quel itself. Whereas the word 'écriture' is used in a vague sense in the 1960 déclaration, marking an unspecified collusion with the world, in "Programme" it becomes evident that the notion of écriture, as it is used by the Tel Quel group from then on, cannot be thought outside of a scientific/theoretical perspective or outside of political commitment. What must be specified is the

relation between these two discourses, theory and practice. When asked to explain the subtitle 'Science/Littérature' in an interview with Jacques Henric, entitled "Écriture et Révolution" (1968:67-79), Sollers answers that it is not a matter of reducing practice to theory, or of illustrating a preceding theory by a narrative or poetic practice. Theory, as he points out, must be understood in the Althusserian sense of "a specific form of practice" (1968:79). He goes on to quote this passage from Althusser's Pour Marx:

> "La seule Théorie capable (...) de critiquer l'idéologie dans tous ses déguisements, y compris les déguisements des pratiques techniques en sciences, c'est la Théorie de la pratique théorique (en sa distinction de la pratique idéologique) : la dialectique matérialiste, ou matérialisme dialectique marxiste dans sa spécificité."(1968:79) viii

Écriture, as a specific mode of production, is itself a science or theoretical practice which coexists with scriptural practice. In order for it not to be subsumed under ideology, écriture must be maintained strictly within the borders of its own scriptural / theoretical practice, that is, it must elaborate itself as the 'science' of its own system of functioning. Écriture is conceived of as a practice which is not assimilable to the concept of literature : it implies the complete overturning and undermining of this concept, and of its very status as an object which may be grasped by another discourse. Écriture can be studied only through its own process, implying a "massive disengagement from *myth and from representation."(no.32:30) However, at the same* time, the need for the elaboration of a theoretical practice which takes as its object the practice of écriture - a Theory

of écriture as theoretical practice, is put forward in "Programme". One may wonder at the necessity of such a theory. If écriture, as a practice, is capable of acting as a critique both of myth and of representation, the Theory of this practice can only be redundant to the already massive work done by it. Écriture in fact brings to the surface and functions as the underside of both myth and representation, and all those concepts subsumed by them; it functions as the inscription of their hitherto occluded conditions of possiblity. Theory is necessary to écriture precisely because it is a process and not an object : it can be defined only in terms of a negativity[6]. That is, écriture does not offer any positive knowledge. While its practice must be defined on the level of the text as a function of *which écriture disposes*, it does not and cannot express this function, if it is to remain ecriture : "Économie dramatique dont le 'lieu géometrique' n'est pas représentable (il se joue)" (no.31:3)[ix]. Expressivity, representation : these are the concepts immediately and directly subverted by écriture. Working within the logic of language, écriture cannot even be said to be language, according to Sollers; its process is one of negativity, *it is a destruction of language. A destruction and negativity* which can be spoken only by theory. This is then the function of theory, which is placed on the fine dividing line between speaking the 'text' of écriture and reifying it, whereby it would regain its status as an object. This is precisely the problematic of the theory of écriture.

If the theory of écriture is to follow Althusserian lines it must provide for both a critical and an architectonic function, the former being:

> "the principle of all the 'breaks' which provide a guarantee for the autonomy of theoretical reflection : the structural break that separates it from all other types of production and the epistemological breaks that distinguish between science and ideology within theoretical activity itself"

and the latter :

> "the principle of all the 'joints' of the 'historical *materialism' that attempts to reassemble the different real* practices with the same mode of production as well as of the 'dialectical materialism' that promises a general theory, 'the theory of practice in general, itself elaborated on the basis of the theory of existing theoretical practices.' " (Gluckmann 1977:285)

The theory of écriture would thus take as its object on the one hand the specificity of écriture - the operation of the 'text' of which it disposes, and on the other, a recognition of that which unites it with other modes of production through the category of production itself, which as Gluckmann points out (1977) is the unifying principle of Althusser's theory.

1.6 The 'text' of écriture

What then is this 'text' located in and by the process of écriture? Turning to Foucault's articles "Le langage à l'infini" (1963:no.15:43-61) and "Distance, aspect, origine" (which heads the anthology of theoretical works published collectively by the Tel Quel group - Théorie d'ensemble(1968:11-24)), it is evident that what for Sollers is the function within the process of

écriture which brings with it the destruction of expressivity and thus ultimately of language, is for Foucault the very condition of possibility of language itself. Language is an expressivity[7], or a positivity, only when this condition is occluded beneath the constant movement towards the urgency of a Presence - Truth, Law - which however remain inaccessible to it by an infinitesimal shift, necessary to it for its very existence. For it is this shift away from 'being' that allows for any system of representation. More precisely, if we are to search for an origin of language at all, we are likely to find it only in the most definitive of absences : death.

> "Il se peut bien que l'approche de la mort, son geste souverain, son ressaut dans la memoire des hommes creusent *dans* l'être et le présent le vide à partir duquel et vers lequel on parle." (no.15:45)[x]

In 'Le langage à l'infini' Foucault postulates that language emerges in order to approach and at the same time to resist death. The limit of death is rendered intelligible only if it can be represented; by the same token representation itself is founded on an absence, which functions therefore as its necessary condition of possibility. In approaching this sovereign absence, representation must necessarily recoil from it, if it is not to be this absence, and no longer to represent it. Any system of representation is constituted only by its relation to absence. By definition, representation cannot entail identity with being[8]. The resistance to death which is the function of language can only take the fom of engendering within itself images of itself, thereby constantly renewing its relation to absence - hence language to infinity.

> "Le langage, sur la ligne de la mort, se réfléchit : il y rencontre comme un miroir: et pour arrêter cette mort que va l'arrêter, il n'a qu'un pouvoir : celui de faire naître en lui sa propre image dans un jeu de glace qui, lui, n'a pas de limites." (no.15:46) [xi]

Death is to language the condition for a reflexion of itself : its limit opens up to language a virtual space where "la parole trouve la ressource indéfinie de sa propre image et où à l'infini il peut se représenter déjà là en arrière de lui-même, encore là au-delà de lui-même." (no.15:46) [xii] Language is thus constituted as a series of duplicating folds [9] : the originary fold being that which enables it to recoil from the ultimate absence of death to reflect instead only on itself as a system of *representation*. Language is an infinitisation of absence in order to avoid the definitive absence of death. Writing itself is made possible by this originary fold, specifically in Western culture since alphabetic writing does not represent the signified but the phonetic *elements which signify* it :

> "Écrire, pour la culture occidentale, ce serait d'entrée de *jeu se placer* dans l'espace virtuel de l'auto-représentation et du redoublement, l'écriture signifiant non la chose, mais la parole, l'oeuvre de langage ne ferait rien d'autre qu'avancer plus profondément dans cette impalpable épaisseur du miroir, susciter le double de ce double qu'est déjà l'écriture, découvrir ainsi un infini possible et impossible, poursuivre sans terme la parole, la maintenir au-delà de la mort qui la condamne, et libérer le ruissellement d'un murmure." *(no.15:45)* [xiii]

In "Distance, aspect, origine", Foucault specifies the text which functions within écriture, by specifying the relation between the Tel Quel writers (Sollers, Thibaudeau, Baudry) and Robbe-Grillet. This relation is not merely an influence or a borrowing, but takes the form of a discursive articulation, functioning within each work as well as from one to the other, and is a relation of isomorphism. Isomorphism in the space of literary language does not imply a vision of the world, as Foucault points out, but rather is the form of a 'fold interior to language.'

The articulations within and between these works form a network or web ('réseau') in which figures function not as the evocation of the presence or absence of an object, but of its distance. Through this play on distance, a fictive or specular space is constructed as a series of reflections or simulacra, which is identical only to itself. The 'réseau' which is thus formed functions both in and across discourses, such that a similar 'reseau' exists both in the language deployed by the text, and from text to text. *The possibility of a discursive articulation* or isomorphism between texts is constituted by the power of language to function as a mirror of itself, and therefore by its relation to itself and to absence, creating "un rapport tel que les oeuvres puissent s'y définir les unes en face, à côté et à distance des autre, prenant appui à la fois sur leur différence et leur simultanéité, et définissant, sans privilège ni culmination, l'étendue d'un réseau." (1968:17)[10 xiv]. The 'réseau' is formed by the act of writing : it is a fiction specific to the activity of writing, and which while not being reducible to language, has a relation of support and contestation to language. If language is a system of representation founded on

a constitutive absence, fiction is the "nervure verbale de ce qui n'existe pas, tel qu'il est." (1968:19)[xv]. If the only power of language is to point to the distance of objects, the language which maintains itself within this distance is the language of fiction. The language of fiction is the distancing inherent in all language where the myths of origin and of presence are untenable. "Le langage de la fiction s'insère dans du langage déjà dit, dans un murmure qui n'a jamais débuté." (1968:20)[xvi] There is no presence which acts as a source for fiction - the 'source' of language is absence and the language of fiction plays out this absence, 'speaks' only an absence. Fiction has only one moment of pure origin: the activity of writing itself, that is to say the instant when the pen begins to inscribe a word on paper; it *has only one moment of actuality* or *of presence* : the termination of writing once language is no longer possible. Between these extremities, language is determined by the aspect or perspective, visible only in the movement of arriving or departing; thus it is a spatial rather than a temporal network which establishes the order of the aspect[11]. Just as the simulacrum gives way to fiction, fiction gives way to the aspect:

> "Et si je m'arrête volontiers au mot d'aspect, après celui de fiction et de simulacre, c'est à la fois pour sa précison grammaticale et pour tout un noyau sémantique qui tourne autour de lui (la species du miroir et l'espèce de l'analogie; la diffraction du spectre; le dédoublement des spectres; l'aspect extérieur, qui n'est ni la chose même ni son pourtour certain; l'aspect qui se modifie avec la distance; l'aspect qui trompe souvent mais qui ne s'efface pas, etc." (1968:21)[xvii]

Literature of the aspect and of distance pertain thus to the irremediable dispersion of language within language, which cannot be seen as a closed system, but as the system within which this dispersion is the essential function. Writing is the blind recognition of the emptiness in which the space of language is inscribed. "Le langage, c'est ce vide, cet extérieur a l'intérieur duquel il ne cesse de parler : l'éternel ruissellement du dehors." [xviii] (1968:23)

The 'textes du réseau' are this empty, specular and infinite language spread out before us. They are the only texts able to function within the conditions of possiblity of language, precisely because their only a priori is language. If a critique of literature is possible today, it is only because these texts offer their own critique, in the most rigorous sense of the word, but in a mute form. For that which makes them possible - the 'réseau' - is at the same time that which they make apparent but which they cannot speak. It is at this point that a critical theory is simultaneously possible and necessary :

> "...et si la critique a un role, je veux dire si le langage nécessairement second de la critique peut cesser d'être un language dérivé, aléatoire, s'il peut être à la fois second et fondamental, c'est dans la mesure ou il fait venir pour la première fois jusqu'aux mots ce réseau des oeuvres qui est bien pour chacune d'elles son propre mutisme." [xix] (1968:17)

The significance of this article to the Tel Quel project is evident. Firstly, it makes it clear that what would appear to be the destruction of language as a system of representation is

precisely that which makes language possible. The 'text' within écriture is not an annihilation; it is the stripping away of any illusion of presence[12] by the functioning inherent to language itself, showing once again, that it is a negativity which makes the positivity of language possible at all. Secondly, it articulates the relation of theory to écriture on the basis of the conditions of possibility of both : the existence of a Theory of écriture *can be constituted only by the folds internal to* language, which allow one language to 'speak' the silences of another, while at the same time remaining isomorphic to it. It is Barthes who exemplifies this type of criticism at its most effective. This is at the same time the reason why there exists both a (silent) theoretical practice within écriture, and a Theory of écriture. Thirdly, it allows us to re-read the first declaration in the light of the 1966-67 project of *Tel Quel*. For how can the 'powers' of écriture be clearly forecast without a critical interrogation of its conditions of possibility? Forthly, it takes us back to the Nietzschean enterprise at the inception of the journal, by specifying why and how literature and language, are a spectacle (in all the senses of the word), and why the real is the 'impossible' to both - to use Lacan's terms[13]. At this point we can return to the project of Tel Quel as it is delineated in "Programme", always bearing in mind the form of critique-which underlies the project.

1.6 'Textes de la rupture'

In "Programme" Sollers specifies that the texts which inscribe the process of écriture as well as the theory which speak this process have their source in the texts of rupture, defined as such only in terms of their 'coefficient of formal-theoretical

contestation.' (no.32:4) Texts of rupture are exemplified especially by the texts of Mallarmé and of Lautréamont, but also by Dante/Sade and Artaud/Bataille at different socio-historical junctures. What must be disclosed is the logic of these ruptures. It is precisely at the site of these ruptures that the Theory of écriture as theoretical practice and écriture as theoretical-scriptural practice must situate themselves in order to maintain their critical and architectonic functions[14]. This permits a knowledge of écriture in its specificity as well as in the ways in which it interarticulates with other practices, most importantly, the economic. Just as realism may be said to share the status of the capitalist mode of production, the critique of representation found in the texts of Mallarmé and of Lautréamont has the same implications as Marx's critique of capitalist political economy. Furthermore they are the symptom of a *crisis* of language homologous to that of this mode of production. Écriture is the "crise même, et la révolution violente, le saut, de la lisibilité." (no.32:4)[xx]. This crisis of readability is *brought on by the critique of the forms of exchange* underlying representation[16]. The word as a communicational entity is structured along the same lines as the commodity as an exchangeably one. It is then critique of exchange in representational discourse which underlies the political commitment of Tel Quel from this point onwards, a critique operated by the 'text' or the 'réseau' of écritures, where the critical and the architectonic functions of theory are fused, and where the category of production prevails.

For Sollers, the texts of rupture and their theory constitute a discontinuous notion of history, aimed primarily at the destruction of the pseudo-continuity of literary history, itself

founded on a speculative thought which misrecognises the fact that the economic is the a priori determination of all thought (no.32:4). This speculative thought can be maintained only by a series of exclusions, repressions and negations. Once again, the functioning of écriture and its theory as a critique is underscored, for these exclusion, etc., are the indication that it is textual écriture, that is discontinuity, which underlies a *'cursive', 'figurative' and 'teleological' history : textual* écriture is to history what the 'textes du reseau' are to language. A history of écriture is in a position to think the completion of a phase of history and its passage to another level of history as well as the entrance into history of other dominant cultures. A history of this type is made possible by an awareness of the inter-articulation of the literary as an ideological form and the economic[17]. Dialectical and historical materialism are thus the two forms of knowledge with a claim to validity in the theoretical practice of écriture, the theory of this practice and its history. These fields of knowledge are at the same time that which define the contestatory power of these practices (including theoretical practice) beginning with the definitive break with and complete undermining of the concept of ideology. What is at stake here is the overturning of capitalist ideology:

> "La théorie considere la "litterature" (et l'ensemble' de la culture ou elle se situe) comme close. Elle expose desormais l'enveloppe de ce qui s'est pense sous ce nom. Elle élabore les conditions réelles (économiques), les strutures systématiques a priori et les conditions d'effacement de l'écriture textuelle en suppimant toute fixation à "l'oeuvre" ou à l'"autour" (à la fétichisation culturelle et

founded on a speculative thought which misrecognises the fact that the economic is the a priori determination of all thought (no.32:4). This speculative thought can be maintained only by a series of exclusions, repressions and negations. Once again, the functioning of écriture and its theory as a critique is underscored, for these exclusion, etc., are the indication that it is textual écriture, that is discontinuity, which underlies a *'cursive', 'figurative' and 'teleological' history : textual* écriture is to history what the 'textes du reseau' are to language. A history of écriture is in a position to think the completion of a phase of history and its passage to another level of history as well as the entrance into history of other dominant cultures. A history of this type is made possible by an awareness of the inter-articulation of the literary as an ideological form and the economic[17]. Dialectical and historical materialism are thus the two forms of knowledge with a claim to validity in the theoretical practice of écriture, the theory of this practice and its history. These fields of knowledge are at the same time that which define the contestatory power of these practices (including theoretical practice) beginning with the definitive break with and complete undermining of the concept of ideology. What is at stake here is the overturning of capitalist ideology:

> "La théorie considere la "litterature" (et l'ensemble' de la culture ou elle se situe) comme close. Elle expose desormais l'enveloppe de ce qui s'est pensé sous ce nom. Elle élabore les conditions réelles (économiques), les struturas systématiques a priori et les conditions d'effacement de l'écriture textuelle en suppimant toute fixation à "l'oeuvre" ou à l'"auteur" (à la fétichisation culturelle et

à la fiction corollaire d'une "subjectivité créatrice"). Comme "conscience historique", elle se trouve nécessairement du côté de l'action révolutionnaire en cours." (no.31:7)[xxi]

1.6 Critical/ transformative practice

The theory and practice of écriture : this is the Tel Quelian form of commitment, for which it is attacked from every possible platform both on the Right and the Left, attacks to which it responds with a vigorous polemic, in almost every issue following the Autumn 1966 issue. The most important document to be produced during this period of intensive theoretisation is the collection of theoretical articles written by members of the group entitled Théorie d'ensemble (1968) and which contains seminal contributions by Foucault, Barthes, Derrida and Kristeva. In this collection the Tel Quel project is clearly delineated : the notion of écriture is seen as functioning within a constellation, the other terms of which are 'text', 'unconscious', 'history', 'work', 'trace', 'production', 'science'(1968:7). There can be no clearer outline of the space in which the project is inscribed than the simple enumeration of these terms. The constellation which they form has traversed the terms 'formalism', 'structuralism', which were the indications of a break in the approach to the'literary' text, placing itself at a point preceding these latter three terms in order to locate itself instead around the Lautréamont, Mallarmé, Marx, Freud articulation (1968:7) It is precisely around this articulation that the theory of écriture develops. The reformalisations of Marx and Freud by Althusser and Lacan respectively, together with that of language by semiotics, and the elaboration of grammatology by Derrida : such are the co-ordinates of the theory

of écriture. The choice of heroes is of course by no means random: it enables the theory to cover a significant area, as well as indicating the inter-articulations of the economic, the constitution of the subject, and the 'literary' and thus gain acces to the 'textes de rupture'. The ambition of the project is to carry through a systematic critique of the closure bearing within it not only a mode of production, but more significantly, a system of intelligibility. Critique may be seen as the first moment of the project, the second being the desire to carry through this critique as political practice. This is the point at which theory becomes practice in the political sense: to reveal the functioning of a particular system of intelligibility is inevitably to enter into a contestatory practice, which for the Tel Quel group is political. Political practice itself does not stop here: what is affirmed is the ability of écriture, and its theory together with it, to transform symbolic structures. "Ce qui est en cause, c'est d'agrandir la déchirure du système symbolique dans lequel vient de vivre et vis encore l'Occident moderne..." (Barthes 1968:9)[xxii] Thus a theory of écriture, such as that postulated by Kristeva, is committed to a revelation not only of its functioning, but also of its "transformative lining"(1968:10). The final point of the delineation of the project in the preface to this anthology reads as follows :

> "*d'articuler une politique* liée logiquement à une dynamique non representative de l'écriture, c'est-a-dire : analyse des malentendus provoqués par cette position, explication de leurs caractères socieux et économiques, construction des rapports de cette écriture avec le matérialisme historique et le matérialisme dialectique." (1968:10)[xxiii]

The project is thus immediately and ultimately poitical, both as an articulation of a critical practice and of transformative practice. The basis for this period (1966-71) is marxism-leninism, *a union which is necessary* to the elaboration of a materialist political philosophy capable of sustaining the rigour of what is seen as a transformative practice as well as a critical practice, without allowing it to become an idealist-utopia. The success or failure of this project is rooted in the possibility of maintaining écriture, both as theory and as practice, in a strictly materialist line. Dialectical and historical materialism is seen to be the most urgent question, and the only one which is scientifcaliy based. *In 1970 (no.43)* the 'Science/Littérature' subtitle is significantly changed to 'Littérature/ Philosophie/ Science/ Politique' signifying "dans l'ordre - le reflect - l'inversion calculée - d'un procès social et historique réel, c'est-à-dire son exposition analytique dans sa *détermination vers sa cause*" (*no.*43:1) [xxiv]. A materialist analysis provides a knowledge of social and historical processes; materialism is at the same time that which is occluded by them, their inverse, and their underlying cause :

> "La forme achevée que revêtent les rapports économiques telle qu'elle se manifeste en surface, dans son existence concrète, donc aussi telle que se les représentent les agents de ces rapports et ceux que les *incarnent* quand ils essayent de les comprendre, est très différente de leur structure interne éssentielle, mais cachée, et du concept qui lui correspond. En fait, elle en est même l'inverse, l'opposée." (Marx no.43:epigraph) [xxv]

What must not be obscured is the irreversible ascent of the materialist base : we are both in materialism and moving towards materialism. Literature, philosopy, science and politics - these are the series which must converge in order to push through this symbolic *transformation*.

1.7 Interarticulations

Écriture and its theory (both as scriptural theory and as Theory of theoretical practice) unfold simultaneously in two directions. The first may be said to be 'synchronic', and consists in a stripping away of imaginary[18] or ideological[19] structures to determine instead what the *underlying symbolic* structure of these imaginary structures may be. The second may be said to be diachronic, consisting in the establishment of a discontinuous history, the location of a rupture in historical and symbolic structures (the Lautréamont, Mallarmé, Marx, Freud articulation). *This movement may be* better described as temporal or transformative since its ultimate goal is not only to analyse but also to transform history by anticipating and projecting inevitable and radical changes in symbolic structures.

Critique and transformation do not exist seperately in the project - one is always the underside of the other. A critique of existing structures is always contestatory and thus is always already political. The participation in the transformation *of* those structures would be an idealism if it did not arise out of critique, since it is the latter which provides a knowledge of the structure as it is, as well as of its conditions of possibility, which in Tel Quelien theory can never be other than materialist. *If the anticipation and projection* spoken of earlier

are to avoid idealism, the only method they can adopt is that of a formalism, articulated with logic, with materialism, and with psychoanalysis, and whose object is the determination of the Symbolic through a critique of the Imaginary.

The fist upshot of this is that both écriture and its theory are seen as political practices, at first in a Leninist and then in a Maoist sense. Secondly, these practices are radically interdependent - never before, has a theory and its object been so closely intertwined to the point that one is in fact impossible without the other. Theory and practice already coexist in the texts of Lautréamont and especially of Mallarmé. A Theory of these strata must be articulated with materialism and psychoanalysis in order to establish itself as a critique of the Symbolic. At the same time, écriture is a concept which arises out of the interarticulation of materialism and psychoanalysis. As Sollers points out in "Thèses générales" (1971:no.44) a crisis in the capitalist mode of production may be grasped ideologically within modes of signification. The theoretical bases for such an analysis are firstly historical and dialectical materialism on the one hand and the unconscious on the other. *The tools of knowledge for this analysis are firstly* an experimental practice (the literary avant-garde - the texts of Lautréamont and Mallarmé) and then the sciences of language (linguistics and semiotics).

> "A la jonction de cette pratique et de ces sciences - et en regard de la psychanalyse et du marxisme-leninisme - surgissent des concepts opératoires nouveaux : ceux d'écriture, de texte."(no.44:96) [xvi]

Returning to the four terms of the subtitle 'Littérature/ Philosophie/ Science/ Politique' : écriture being that mode of writing, which works within the literary, and yet at the same time causes it to collapse precisely because object language and metalanguage coexist in its practice, is also the process which can demonstrate the conditions under which literature is a philosophical 'laboratory' in a process of *transformation within* historical materialism (no.44:97) That is, if it knows its materialist basis, it will work within materialist philosophy (Lenin) dramatising this process of transformation. In this sense, écriture is not a philosophical derivation, but is instead the *'productive reduplication' of philosophy*. At the same time it is a science, constituting a scientific knowledge of language and of of the activity of writing. While its participation is limited to the ideological struggle, its function is to cause literature as an imaginary structure and an ideological effect to collapse. Its only means of avoiding the Imaginary is to establish itself as a theoretical science on the basis of materialist philosophy. The ideological struggle can never however be directly political : its political duty, which is more a *taking of sides*, *can be* carried out only if the above conditions pertain, only if, that is, it is founded simultaneously on the sciences of language, of history, and of the unconscious. What must be determined is whether or not- and thus far in the Tel Quelian project, the *reply would be affirmative* - a revolutionary theory of the economic will find its counter-part in the revolutionary theory of the text, and whether or not this will be tenable.

> "Il s'agit de savoir si la théorie révolutionnaire du prolétariat, le marxisme-leninisme, sera diffusée ou non dans les superstructures (soit, entre autres, dans notre

champ de travail spécifique, le point de non-retour que marque le concept de pratique signifiante par rapport à toute idéologie de la création, et de l'*expressivité*." (no.44:99) [xvii]

1.8 Deleuze : structuralist-critique

The Tel Quel project entails a scriptural-theoretical practice and a Theory of theoretical practice which aim both to formulate a critique of systems of intelligibility and to transform them. It is the possibility of the coexistence of critique and transformative practice which is problematic here. A recasting of the project in terms of the structuralist model postulated by Deleuze [20] provides an elucidation of this problematic. Deleuze explicitly includes Tel Quel in this endeavour to define structuralist thought. In terms of this model it may be possible to see both écriture and its theory as a structuralism, aiming to reveal an underlying structure, or the conditions of possibility of specific modes of signification.

In terms of the model postulated by Deleuze, structuralism is defined by:

- The discovery of a third order, the Symbolic, which exists beyond the first and second orders of the Real and of the Imaginary and is irreducible to them [21].

- The postulation of an element which acts as a third term to an unreal and unimaginary system and which underlies the Real and the Imaginary. The third term is the eminently symbolic element of the structure.

- The *definition of* the underlying structure as a coexistence of purely formal symbolic elements, which have no intrinsic or extrinsic meaning but only a meaning of position. The order dependence of the symbolic elements and the system of positions in which they are located is primary to any real objects or beings or imaginary attitudes or roles which occupy them only subsequently. For example, when Althusser speaks of economic structure, it is the positions in a topological and structural space, defined by the relations of *production*, which are of primary importance in the structure, and not the real beings which come to occupy its positions, nor the roles they assume (Deleuze 1975:198).

- The reciprocal determination of symbolic elements, held in differential relations.[22] The reciprocal determination of symbolic elements is prolonged into the complete determination of singular points which correspond to and derive from the differential relations of the symbolic elements but cannot be reduced to them. While the differential relations between symbolic elements are actualized or constitute qualifiers for the occupants of the positions of the structure, the singular points are actualized or *constitute attitudes*.

- The necessarily unconscious nature of the underlying structure since this structure is not and can never be, actual. Deleuze defines the underlying structures as virtual since "the virtual *has* a reality of its own, and which cannot be confused with any actual reality, or with any present or past possible image, or with any abstract idea" (1975:202)[23]. The underlying structure is defined as a virtuality of coexistences which pre-exist the

objects or beings which come to occupy its positions. The structure as virtuality is differential but undifferentiated; it *has a differentiating effect.* The actualized structures are or become differentiated since actualization is equivalent to differentiation[24]. Although the underlying structure is not generative, *actualization necessarily occurs* in a certain amount of substructures, and according to two directions : species and parts. The differential relations are actualized in qualitatively distinct species *and the singular points in the extended* parts and figures which characterize each species[25].

- The postulation that the *underlying structure is essentially* problematizing. The structure itself poses the questions or forms those questions which it will be possible to ask as well as the solutions which must necessarily *be coherent with the point of* actualization reached. In this sense the individuation of a structure is purely objective.

- The constitution of at least a second series corresponding to but irreducible to the first is necessary for the functioning of the structure. The series are subject to variations which *are not* secondary to the structure but immanent and essential to it. In this sense it is possible to speak of metaphor and metonomy as the two structural factors, defining the *two degrees of liberty* in shifting : from one series to another or internal to one series.

- The postulation that this shifting and variation is made possible by the existence of an empty set or empty position, which is defined also as the 'object=x' or as the 'third term'.

objects or beings which come to occupy its positions. The structure as virtuality is differential but undifferentiated; it *has a differentiating effect.* The actualized structures are or become differentiated since actualization is equivalent to differentiation[24]. Although the underlying structure is not generative, *actualization necessarily* occurs in a certain amount of substructures, and according to two directions : species and parts. The differential relations are actualized in qualitatively distinct species and the *singular points in the* extended parts and figures which characterize each species[25].

- The postulation that the *underlying structure is essentially* problematizing. The structure itself poses the questions or forms those questions which it will be possible to ask as well as the solutions which must *necessarily be coherent with the point of* actualization reached. In this sense the individuation of a structure is purely objective.

- The constitution of at least a second series corresponding to but irreducible to the first is necessary for the functioning of the structure. The series are subject to variations *which are not* secondary to the structure but immanent and essential to it. In this sense it is possible to speak of metaphor and metonomy as the two structural factors, defining the two degrees of *liberty* in shifting : from one series to another or internal to one series.

- The postulation that this shifting and variation is made possible by the existence of an empty set or empty position, which is defined also as the 'object=x' or as the '*third* term'.

The empty set is defined as being always shifted or lacking with respect to itself. It belongs to none of the series: in this it is the eminently symbolic element, which because of its constant shifts, allows the relative shifting of all other elements of the series. *Because it is an empty position, defining a zero degree*, it is that element of the structure which allows the articulation of the series and structures with one another. Being undefinable in itself, it makes the setting up of a hierarchy between the different structures impossible[26].

- The impossibility of either a being or an object occupying the empty set. Unoccupied it is nonetheless accompanied by an eminently symbolic instance - the subject. The subject in structuralism is a nomadic subject, accompanying the shifts of the empty set, and constituted by them. In this sense it is unstable and dispersed.

- The subjection of the structure to two 'accidents' - either the complete emptying (the loss of accompaniment) or the filling up of the empty set, both of which lead to the occlusion of the empty set, giving rise to contradiction within the structure. Since the structure is necessarily primary to any possible actualisation, contradictions within the structure are not imaginarily or ideologically imposed on it but are made possible by its functioning and derive from it. Structuralism aims to reveal the functioning of the structure by releasing the empty set from that which occludes or fills it. It is at this point that the 'structuralist hero' comes into play, being that nomadic subject devoid of identity, and constituted by non-personal individuations and pre-individual singularities. The only guarantee that the structure will not once again initiate

contradiction will be the ability of this hero to survive the *shifts in the structure* and to himself set in motion the variations of the relations of symbolic elements and the redistribution of singular points, according to the functioning of the structure.

A structuralist analysis can however only proceed once the given structures are conceptualized as systems of signification, i.e. structuralism proper would be preceded by a semiotic moment in which the structure could be apprehended as a significatory system. Embedded in the significatory,, and interarticulating with materialism and psychoanlysis, écriture and its theory may be seen as eminently structuralist. This is at the same time the reason why the theory of écriture will be based essentially on semiotics. Moreover the fundamental impulse of semiotics is a structuralist one [27].

Apart from being in a position to apprehend all structures as significatory systems, and thus to tackle head on the problematic of the signifier and of écriture itself, semiotics is able to account for the inter-articulation of language, materialism and psychoanlaysis. Semiotics is in the unique position of offering an analysis which may *in fact function as* a structuralism/critique in the Deleuzian sense, of intelligibility in general in its fundamental dependence on signification while taking into account historical and social determinations on the *one hand, and the constitution* of the subject on the other. That is, it is able to hold within its range the interrelationships and interdeterminations of language, production and desire [28]. What this implies is a complete and thorough critique of what constitutes the Imaginary structure : the commodity and the

symptom as significatory instances. While the subject's experience of the Real occurs wholly within the Imaginary, the possible relations of the subject to the Real are constituted by the Symbolic- that is, by the unconscious and by production[28], or more precisely by the 'lack' (the empty set) which enables the functioning of both as underlying structures. The Real then appears as an entirely inaccessible structure in itself, within which it is fundametally the raw force of subjective and social need which can be seen to be functioning[30].

Here, the significance of the two Foucault articles cited earlier ("Le langage à l'infini", "Distance, aspect, origine") cannot be underestimated. The Real is necessarily impossible to language - as it is to all system of representation. These systems find their source in a fundamental and inevitable absence[31]. In the Deleuzian model, this lack is located in the underlying symbolic structure.

Semiotics could thus be deployed as a critique. Ultimately what it provides is precisely the critique of exchange necessary to the theory of écriture, on all of the inter-articulating levels of language, production and desire, as well as those concepts or processes capable of subverting exchange. Exchange as the instance which governs and maintains the capitalist mode of production, as well as the acceptance of the subject as a transcendental and unified subject, and the realist system of signfication (or all communicative discourse) operates the occlusion of the 'lack' : one 'fullness' is exchanged for another. If it can be shown that all of these systems interarticulate and are dependent on a constitutive emptiness, the ideological system on which they are based may be exploded.

Écriture, which directly implicates its subject, and is embedded in the socioeconomic, is thus indissociable from the Marx-Freud articulation. An articulation which is *in itself* subversive, and predictably every attempt is made to recuperate, institutionalise or attack it . Sollers' "De Quelques Contradictions" (no.38) is an attack against bourgeois-invested *rightist and so-called 'leftist' discourses.* Restating the commitment of the Journal to a Marxist-Leninist materialism, to the class struggle and to a new ideological basis, he cites the attack on Lacan and Althusser, as well as on Tel Quel itself, as examples of the attempts to devaluate and recuperate practices capable of transforming Western knowledge:

> "Ce qui se joue ici est décisif : c'est le problème de l'articulation de Marx et de Lenine avec Freud. Nous disons que la possiblité de cette articulation subversive va être empêchée à tout prix. Soit en tirant la psychanalyse "à droite" (vers l'idealisme : Freud sans Marx et Lenine); soit en essayant de maintenir le marxisme-leninisme dans un personnalisme psychologique ou, à l'inverse, dans une activité stéréotypé (révisionnisme de droite ou "de gauche" : Marx et Lenine sans Freud)." (no.38:iii)[xviii]

The Marx-Freud articulation is subversive in so far as it replaces the positions of history and culture on the one hand and personnalism or subjectivism on the other with sytematisations able to reveal the underside of both. What is at stake here is the complete subversion of the *ideological force of* the myths of history/culture and personalism/subjectivism, through a critique which can reveal the disguises and lacunae which enable them to function as ideologies, which would

seemingly appear to be seperate, but which are radically interdependent. When language is included in this articulatory system, an entire system of intelligibility will be put into question. If this interrogation is necessary as a revelation, its effectiveness as a political practice hinges around the possiblity of transforming that system of intelligibility. Returning to the Deleuzian model, what is necessary is a transformation of the imaginary structure which mediates the relation to the real, through a tranformation of symbolic structures, by accentuating and attempting to 'push through' the schism which is already operative in the symbolic structure, and which makes the 'texts of rupture' possible. This would in turn, implement a relation to the Real which is different from that which is maintained in Western thought.

While semiotics as the Theory of theoretical practice may provide knowledge of the underlying structure, écriture as a signifying practice is the setting in motion and functioning of those concepts which semiotics/grammatology, interarticulated with materialism and psychoanlalysis, as well as (and this is of primary significance) with the rediscovery of the 'texts of rupture' reveal as being the conditions of possibility of representation itself, and all that is concomitant with it : procès, productivity, desire, jouissance, trace, différance. What is postulated then is that ecriture is in a position to transform the system of intelligibility. As Sollers states in an interview (no.43:76) : "L'écriture n'est pas la domestique du réel, ou de l'économie, elle en est la force de transformation symbolique"[xix]. He goes on to say that écriture is one specific level in a multilinear and discontinuous history caught in the

general course of history, that is, in the transformation of modes of production. It is not a matter of a linguistic functioning which accounts for a so-called revolutionary reality, but of a revolutionary practice, acting in correlation with other specific practices. *A social and economic revolution cannot take* place in a significant manner without a concomitant ideological revolution. The need for an ideological revolution accounts for the massive impact which maoist thought and the Chinese cultural revolution had on Tel Quel, manifested especially in the *'mouvement de juin 1971'*, but which had already had an influence on the members of the group from as early as 1966, most notably on Sollers himself. What is labelled an ideological revolution here would imply a rupture with the prevailing imaginary structures of language which are dependent upon an occlusion of the terms listed above as being those terms which would define écriture (in its relation to the unconscious and to production) and a movement towards an imaginary structure which would not occlude these terms - if this is in fact not impossible, by definition. The symbolic structure would shift according to the possibilities already inherent to it, since it is impossible to impose anything upon the Symbolic, being that which necessarily precedes any Real or Imaginary actualisation. The text of écriture would then be that text which never loses sight of the constitutive lack, constantly pointing to it but never speaking it, never filling this empty space, for to fill it is necessarily to occlude it. Écriture as a scriptural practice functions as a 'dramatisation' of the symbolic, in that it cannot provide a positive knowledge of its underlying structure. It does nevertheless reveal its functioning by the fact that it operates in precisely the same manner. The danger which constantly *threatens the notion of écriture, as political practice, is that*

it will precipitate further occlusions and contradictions by attempting to impose a transformation upon the structure. The underlying problematic of écriture would then be the possible contradiction between écriture in its specificity on the one hand and écriture as political practice on the other.

It is to the work of *Kristeva and Barthes, the two theorists* most closely connected with the Journal to which we now turn in order to examine what this practice of writing can and cannot achieve. Of the two it is Kristeva who is more directly involved with the Journal, becoming a member of the editorial board in 1970. Barthes too participates in this project : many of his articles were first published in the journal , and a number of his books were first published in the 'Collection Tel Quel'. More fundamentally however, throughout his career as theorist, critic and writer the preoccupation with écriture remains almost obsessive. Barthes and Kristeva are undoubtedly the most important figures to arise at this particular juncture of the development of that mode of signification which we call literature. *Yet their views of the possibilities of commitment in* écriture are very different. It is these differences which I will endeavour to explore.

NOTES

1. The term 'écriture' will remain untranslated throughout, in order to avoid confusion and to retain its specificity.
2. For a translation of all French quotations, see *Appendix A*. All translations are my own, and are indicated by Roman numerals.
3. By the term 'metalingual' is implied the self-reflective nature of écriture, within which there is a coexistence of the *meta- and object-language*. This self-reflectivity is one of the marks of écriture. As such the Nouveau Roman is a form of ecriture. See Stephen Heath (1972): The Nouveau Roman.
4. See Jakobson (1971)
5. See Deleuze (1983)
6. For an elaboration of écriture as negativity, see chapter 4.
7. That is, evokes a 'being' foreign to the process specific to it.
8. Thus representation depends, for an ontology, on those techniques and functions which constitute it as representation.
9. The word 'originary' is used here only in a loose sense. The *object is not to* discover the origins of language, but that which makes it possible. Derrida, in his article "La Double Séance"(1970) also speaks of the 'folds' of language, here made possible by the blank space as absence.
10. The concept of 'réseau' is strikingly similar to the notion of intertextuality developed by Kristeva and derived from Bakhtin. See chapter 2.
11. See chapter 2. This is congruent with Kristeva's understanding *of the intertext as a necessarily* spatial

category.

12. See Lacan (1977) esp. "The function and the field of speech and language in psychoanalysis" (pp.30-114) and "On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis." (pp.179-22)

13. That is, of an identity between language and an ontology extraneous to it.

14. See p.14 above .

15. See Balibar and Macherey (1981)

16. See Baudrillard (1981)

17. See Balibar and Macherey (1981). It is of course Barthes in Writing Degree Zero (1968a) who first attempts a history of this type - see also chapter three.

18. By the term 'imaginary' is meant the structure through which a relation to the real is established and maintained.

19. 'Symbolic' is used here in the sense of a structure which underlies and constitutes the possibility of real and imaginary structures. See Deleuze (1975) and Lacan (1977).

20. Deleuze (1975). All translations from this article are my own. See also Carusi, A. (1986) from which this section is adapted.

21. These terms are used in a psychoanalytic (Lacanian) sense, but are further qualified as in Barthes (1975).

22. Deleuze uses the following to clarify this point : while $\frac{2}{3}$ is an instance of a real relation, and $x2 + y2 - Rl = 0$ is an instance of an imaginary relation, $\frac{dy}{dx}$ is an instance of a symbolic relation, where the elements have no determinate value in themselves but are nonetheless reciprocally determined within the relation. Examples of this are modern algebra, the system of phonemes, and Lévi-Strauss' kinship system.

23. The phoneme, for example, is not an actual letter, syllable or sound, but neither is it a fiction or associated image. (Jakobson 1963 as referred to by Deleuze 1975:202)

24. Since the underlying structure consists of symbolic elements held in differential relations and defined by their un-real and un-imaginary status, it is not possible to think of them, or of the symbolic structure to which they belong, or of the differential relations in which they are held, as being in any way actual. The terms 'differentiation' and 'differential' as used by Deleuze, have a generic sense and a mathematical sense (linked to differential calculus) respectively.

25. Deleuze uses Althusser's specification of the economic structure as an example of this : firstly, a total society comprising every possible element, relation and value of production is not possible. The underlying economic structure is actualized in various substructures, e.g. capitalism. Secondly, every mode of production is defined as a 'species' made up of 'parts' corresponding to each of the possible modes. (Althusser 1965 as referred to by Deleuze 1975:203)

26. Examples of different characterisations of the empty position are 'mana' or the 'floating signifier' in Lévi-Strauss' individuation of mythological structures, the zero-phoneme in Jakobson's terms or the phallic symbol in Lacan's terms. None of the above can be considered to be identifications of the empty position, since to identify it would be to 'fill' its emptiness and thus to occlude it.

27. Semiotics is understood here in the sense give it by Barthes' later work (roughly from the time of S/Z) and by

Kristeva's development of semanalysis.

28. See Delaporte, J-P & S. van Zyl (1984:60-72)

29. "In any practice thus conceived, the determinant moment (or element) is neither the raw material, nor the product, but the practice in the narrow sense : the moment of the labour of transformation itself, which sets to work, in a specific structure, men, means and a technical method of utilizing the means." Althusser (1965:166) cited in Gluckmann, A. (1977:284)

30. See Lacan :Écrits (1977)

31. It is interesting to note that the operation of 'différance' as it is postulated by Derrida, works on precisely the same principle. The differential-supplementary structure of ecriture is make possible by the blank-space, i.e. a lack or gap. See Derrida : "La Double Séance" (1970).

CHAPTER TWO

Kristeva : the possibility of commitment

2.1 Semanalysis

A discussion of the Tel Quelian notion of écriture and of its possibilities of commitment would remain truncated without an exposition of Kristeva's position with respect to écriture and the social. Echoes of Kristeva's work and particularly of semanalysis, the theory postulated by her in order to account for signification (signifiance), are strongly felt in Tel Quel after 1968. It is undoubtedly Kristeva who is closest to mainstream Tel Quelian thought, obviously because it is also she who played a major role in actually forming that thought.

Sémiotikê. Recherches pour une sémanalyse(1979)[1], the first collection of articles published by Kristeva, although often neglected in overviews of her work[2], is of crucial importance since it is here that the broad outlines of semanalysis are sketched out. Not only do the studies included in this collection indicate the main thrust of Kristeva's work , ie. to establish the specificity of poetic language as a signifying practice, but they also demonstrate what semanalysis must be and with which fields of knowledge it must articulate, if it is to be able to account for this specificity as well as for the socially and ideologically transformative powers of this signifying practice.

In the article "The system and the speaking subject" (1975a) Kristeva claims that a theory such as semanalysis is necessary in order to move away from two trends in semiotic studies. The first

of these is the limitation to merely descriptive studies of signifying systems. The second is the exclusion of the subject in semiotic studies. Both of these limitations are caused by the dependence of semiotics on the linguistic model, and result in an inability to account for signifying systems in their materiality, as well as in a chronic disability when approaching the literary text, which does not operate entirely within the linguistic model or even within communicative interaction. What a classic semiotics cannot account for ultimately, is production or the productivity of poetic language since what it focusses upon is the text as (linguistic) product. Thus the major discovery of semiotics, i.e. that every social practice signifies in much the same way as a language, is also its major limitation. What is called for then is a theory of meaning which will not be limited to a description of the semiology of systems, but will articulate itself as a critique of these systems. This theory of meaning takes the form of a theory of the speaking subject, undertaken by semanalysis. The inclusion of the speaking subject when approaching the literary text is necessitated by the specificity of its structure:

> "Directly implying its subject, up to the point of exhibiting, through the linguistic organisation, its unconscious economy, and also its social position (the text) is not intelligible in its specificity if not placed in the context of the contradictions of the subject through signification and within the socio-political field." (1978b:2)[3]

Semanalysis thus places itself firmly within the bounds of the Tel Quelian project, as a semiotics which interarticulates with

materialism on the one hand and with psychoanalysis on the other, accounting for the double embedding of the literary text in the socio-historical and in the unconscious , through its acception of the speaking subject as being fundamentally split, and as being constituted through socio-familial constraints on the one hand and physiological drives on the other[4] .In thus delimitating the sphere of semanalytic studies, semanalyis is established as a materialist theory which is also the only semiotic theory capable of broaching the question of literary production.[5]

However, in the articles contained in Semeiotikê , which as its subtitle indicates is a search for a semanalysis, the foundations of this theory are by no means as clear-cut. The collection is marked by hesitancy and by the testing out of various bases which could be used for an analysis of the specificity of poetic language. Linguistics, formal logics and mathematics amongst others are all used as levers in the analysis of the 'otherness' of poetic language, as well as Oriental and Asian thought. The book presents an object of analysis - poetic language - converged upon from several different perspectives. This seeming eclecticism in no way detracts from the value of the collection, which is perhaps one of the most insightful theories we have of the literary text in its specificity. It is particularly valuable in two major areas : 1)th participation of the literary text in social systems and 2)the analysis of the logical operations which underlie the specificity of poetic language. La Révolution du langage poétique(1974) provides the analysis of the unconscious determinations[6] of the literary text .In this chapter I shall be concentrating on those aspects of Semeiotikê dealing with the literary text and socio- historical or ideological systems.

2.2 Poetic language and the social

Kristeva accounts for the participation of the literary text in social systems in three ways :

1)by the elaboration of Bakhtin's notion of dialogism.

2)by accounting for a specific ideologème at particular historical junctures.

3)by the postulation of the notion of intertextuality.

There are of course overlaps between these three notions and the existence of any one of the three may be said to necessarily imply the others; thus where dialogism may be seen to be operating, intertextuality will also be in operation. However dialogism, the notion of ideologème and intertextuality are not interchangeable terms. Each does specific work in the theory, and the combination of their operations results in the paragrammatism of the literary text, paragrammatisme being a term borrowed from Saussure's Anagrammes, which is used as a 'label' for the specificity of poetic language[7].

2.2.1 Dialogism

This notion is taken from Mikhail Bakhtine's Problemi poetiki Dostoievskovo and Tvorchestvo Francois Rabelais[8] and is evidence of Kristeva's willingness to search for useful tools from various sources and to set them to work in semanalysis. The exposition of dialogism is to be found in the article 'Le mot, le dialogue et le roman' in Semeiotikê (1979:82-112) as well as in Le Texte du Roman (1970).

In Bakhtine's analysis the status of the word is introduced as the minimal unit of the structure, which is studied with respect

to its status as a semic complex in its articulations with other words in a sentence or sequence. What must then be estxblished is that the same functions or relations exist in larger sequences as those which exist in more restricted sequences. The basis for this attention to the word and its articulations is that the dialogism implicit in the word as minimal unit of the utterance causes the utterance to be studied as discouse and not merely as language. That is, the utterance is always geared towards and arises out of a concrete context, whereby it gains its non-reiterative and unique character, as opposed to signification in language which is reiterative (Todorov 1984:45) The space in which the word functions is three dimensional or is defined by the interaction of three different elements : the addresser or the subject of writing, the addressee, and exterior texts. Thus the status of the word is defined both horizontally (the word belongs to both the subject of ecriture and the addressee) and vertically (the word in the text is oriented towards the anterior or synchronic literary corpus)(1979:84) The horizontal axis of the text is thus defined as being that of the subject and addressee, and the vertical axis as being that of the text and context. However, while the word is shared by both addresser and addressee, the addressee exists in the text only as a discourse, which merges with the discourse of the subject in the text. The discourse of the addressee brings with it the corpus of other texts and contexts (social texts) in which the addressee (as well as the subject or addresser) operates. This interaction defines the necessarily sociological character of the utterance. Despite the fact that the utterance is seen as a unique phenomenon which implicates both speaker and addressee, it in no way points to the individuality of the speaker. Bakhtin points out that "the entire

verbal part of human existence (external and internal discourse) cannot be charged to the account of the unique subject, taken in isolation; it does not belong to the individual but to his social group (his social environment)" (Todorov 1984:30)[9]. The utterance therefore brings with it the entire gamut of the social relations of a particular socio-historical juncture : "No utterance in general can be attributed to the speaker exclusively; it is the product of the interaction of the interlocutors, and, broadly speaking, the product of the whole complex social situation in which it has occurred" (Todorov 1984:30). As a result of the interaction between the horizontal and vertical axes, the word (and therefore the utterance) is never univocal but always at least double : "le mot (le texte) est un croisement de mots (de textes) ou on lit au moins un autre mot (texte)" (1979:84)[i]. The same relations can be seen to extend throughout the whole text, by the principle of articulation stated above: what functions in a minimal sequence functions also in larger sequences. The notion of intertextuality is directly drawn from this : "tout texte se construit comme mosaique de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte. A la place de la notion d'intersubjectivité s'installe celle d'intertextualité, et le langage poétique se lit, au moins, comme double" (1979:85)[ii].

Bakhtin's notion of dialogism enables Kristeva to determine exactly how the literary text is embedded in and to a certain extent determined by the social. The word, as the minimal structural unit is a mediator between the text and the cultural and historical surroundings, as well as the regulator of the transformation of the diachrony into a synchrony. The latter aspect plays a central role in the transformational analysis of narrative in Le Texte du Roman(1970). This text is an elaboration

of the crux of "Le dialogue, le mot et le roman", in that dialogisme is seen as underlying the very possibility of any utterance, as opposed to the Russian Formalist understanding of linguistic dialogue, in which it was accepted that monologism always exists prior to dialogism. Bakhtin claims however that dialogism is inherent to language stating that "le dialogue est la seule sphère possible de la vie du langage"(quoted in 1970:89)[iii] While Bakhtine does not develop this claim further, Kristeva points out that dialogical relations can be found at different levels of language : in the langue / parole distinction, in double articulation (paradigm / syntagm) and in the relations between code and message in Jakobson's communication model. Dialogism must necessarily be seen as underlying monologism since without the possibility of addressing an-other, there could be no intelligible utterance, even if this possibility were to remain virtual only.

If it is so that dialogism underlies monologism in all *linguistic utterances*, *the analysis of the text* as dialogue can in no way be limited to the linguistic model. The necessity to move outside the linguistic model is maintained both in the earlier article and in Le Texte du Roman. Semiotics must adopt a translinguistic[10] procedure when analysing the specific functioning of utterances in different literary genres or texts, if the text is seen as operating within the dialogue. In this case, the study of the literary text calls for a translinguistic procedure since the literary text or genre is seen as an impure semiological system, which may not function without language, but which also signifies 'beneath' linguistic structures. The translinguistic procedure is justified by the principle of

semantic expansion which allows for the hypothesis that the evolution of literary genres is the unconscious exteriorisation of linguistic structures at their different levels (1979:85) and it is precisely this hypothesis which is demonstrated in the transformational analysis of the novel undertaken in Le Texte du Roman.

In Le Texte du Roman the word as the minimal structural unit of the text is replaced by the consideration of the status of the utterance, which is defined in the same terms as the status of *the word* (1970:86-87) This is an interesting move since it implies that the utterance - in this case the novel - may be seen as an exteriorisation of linguistic structures which does not necessarily fall entirely within the realm of linguistic studies, precisely because linguistics cannot account for the role played by the other in the formation of utterances. Dialogical relations, in turn, are irreducable to linguistic structures, as well as to logical and significatory structures :

> "Ils (rapports dialogiques) doivent être habillés de mots, devenir des énonciations, des expressions par des mots des positions de divers sujets, pour que des rapports dialogiques apparaissent entre eux... Les rapports dialogiques sont absolument impossibles sans des rapports de logique et de signification mais ne se réduisent pas a eux, ayant leur propre spécificité." (1970:89)[iv]

Thus the literary text functions both within and without

linguistic and logical structures. Being both a dialogue and an ambivalence, since it necessarily implies the double, poetic *language does not in any instance,* function without a logic. It is not the illogical, nor the irrational, operating instead by another logic, which is formalisable. The task now set to *semiotics (semanalysis)* is the following : "trouver les formalismes correspondant aux différents modes de jonction des énoncés (des séquences) dans l'espace dialogique du texte." *(1978:87)* v *The determination* of this 'other logic' would then mark the specificity of poetic language, the analysis of which the articles "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes" (1979:113-147) and *"Poésie et négativité"* (1979:185-217) are instances.

The consequences of the embedding of the literary text in the *social through the notion of* dialogism, in which it is the participation of the discourse of the other which is of fundamental importance, establishes the literary text as radically *ambivalent, polyvalent* and polymorphous. The polyvalency of the text may only be restricted by a logic exterior or foreign to it (aristotelian 0-1 logic, subject - predicate *structures*[11]*). This logic is the means* by which the text is constrained to limit ambivalence, and to utter a Truth - or a univocal meaning. This is the same mechanism which underlies the view of *the text as product, and occludes the text as* productivity. Multivocal meanings and productivity always go hand in hand. Bakhtin's notion of dialogism enables one to see the literary structure not as *something which is but as something* which elaborates itself in relation to the discourse of the other (1979:83) Thus it is in every sense, an extremely useful basis for the study of the literary text *as one which participates in* social and ideological structures and which is also able to

contest and transform these structures. The contestation of social and ideological structures is made possible by the very fact that the text is a transformation of the diachrony into a synchrony, or of a linear history into an abstraction in the discourse of the other, which is present in the text as another structure. The writer, in forming his utterance in which the presence of the other's discourse is always implied, may transgress this abstraction by an "écriture-lecture, c'est-à-dire par une pratique d'une structure signifiante en fonction de ou en opposition avec une autre structure." (1979:83)[vi] Since the operation of ecriture always exceeds that of reading (i.e. that of the other structure regulated by 0-1 logic) that is, it exceeds the logic of codified discourse, it may only exist on the *margins of official culture*. As soon as the text transgresses grammatical and semantic rules, it inscribes itself as a social and political contestation. This is a crucial factor in Kristeva's theory of the text, in which the view that the contestation of the offical linguistic code and the contestation of official law are not only equivalent but identical, remains a consistent feature.

2.2.2 Intertextuality

Every word, utterance and text being a dialogue of several texts, the literary text exists only in intertextuality, or as a fragment of the intertext. Intertextuality is then the immediate upshot of dialogism, and is made evident in the text by a diachronic as opposed to a synchronic transformational analysis (1970:66-69). Kristeva arrives at the notion of intertextuality through the application of the transformational method in Le

Texte du Roman, in order to account for the generation and the constitution of the novel or narrative discourse. The particular way in which transformation from the intertext to the text occurs, would then constitute a specific literary genre.

While transformational analysis is usually synchronic, describing the transformations within a text, without concerning itself with the diachronic (socio-historical) framework which produced the text, a diachronic transformational analysis is possible on the same basis as synchronic analysis. The latter proceeds according to the hypothesis that an equivalence may be postulated between two structures (signifying and signified), despite the fact that the signifiers may differ. Diachronic transformational analyses would then postulate diachronic equivalence by distinguishing signifying units which may be different on the level of the signifier, but which may belong to the same class of signifieds. A diachronic application of the transformational method could be utilised when the historical knowledge of a certain period is insufficient. In this case, the text could be reconstituted according to anterior or synchronic texts, through an interior reconstruction which would allow for a distinction between two different systems : that of the text in question seen as an ensemble of utterances and that of other texts inscribed within it. The correlation of the text with that which is 'other' permits the study of the structuration of the text. The procedure would then consist of three steps :

1) the situation of the text in the corpus of anterior and synchronic literary texts, which allows for :

2) the distinction between different units which constitute the text (the novel), revealed by their distinctive traits

once they may be attributed to other texts.

3) the submission of these distinctive units to transformational rules within the text itself.

What may then be seen is that units which come to the text from other texts do not remain unchanged, but are transformed by the dominant function in the text (in this case non-disjunction [12]). At this point the principle of equivalence breaks down, since the transformed units (signifiers) are no longer related to the same class of signifieds. Therefore the principle of equivalence is valid only in synchronic transformational analysis, within only one discursive structure, but collapses when applied to the literary text which is a transformation of a diachrony and which is radically ambivalent as a result of dialogism. When approaching the literary text in its specificity, a diachronic transformational analysis must be applied, since it is in the diachrony that a global transformation of both signifier and signified occurs, and which makes the productivity of the text apparent. The text may then be seen as constructing itself from other texts and as transforming other texts in a process which is never finite, but which is instead ongoing, in the entire intertextual space. Textual productivity may only be grasped as intertextuality.

A diachronic transformational analysis, such as that undertaken in Le Texte du Roman, based on the notion of dialogism, permits the definition of literary discourse as an intertextuality, a notion which may then be seen as a generator of the literary text.

> "Nous définirons comme littérature tout discours qui relève du mode de l'intertextualité, c'est-à-dire qui se spatialise en ajoutant à la SURFACE de sa propre structure définie par le rapport sujet/destinataire, l'espace d'un texte étranger qu'il modifie." *(1970:67)*[vii]

Intertextuality can thus only be operated by a spatialisation and the activity of writing, or écriture itself, is essentially a spatial category.

Intertextuality is by no means limited to the interarticulation between the text and other literary texts. All literary texts may be defined as both a synchrony and a diachrony, and by the implication of the discourse of the other, are embedded in the social and the historical. The text is in a sense, 'doubly' embedded in the socio-historical, through the presence in it of the other, and through its construction by the inclusion and transformation of other texts, which themselves are made up of the subject/addressee axis, and the inclusion/transformation of other texts. Furthermore the socio-historical is inscribed in the text as a discourse or as a discursive practice. It exists in the text only as text. Kristeva goes further to claim that the socio-historical's only mode of existence is as a text, and she will then speak of the social and the historical texts, which may then also be included in the literary text as instances of the other (foreign, exterior) text. Intertextuality is then a network (recalling Foucault's notion of 'réseau') which cannot be limited or fixed at any point.

While intertextuality underlies every literary practice, it is particularly evident in the avant-garde text which is eminently

contestatory:

> "Pour les textes poétiques de la modernité c'est (l'intertextualité), pourrions-nous dire sans exagérer, une loi fondamentale: ils se font en absorbant et en détruisant en même temps les autres textes de l'espace intertextuel; ils sont pour ainsi dire des alter-jonction discursives." [viii] (1979:196)

It is because the text exists only in the intertext that it may be seen as constructing itself as an écriture-lecture (writing-reading) : a process of writing which is simultaneously a reading and assimilation of other texts, which it may affirm or negate or both affirm and negate simultaneously (Lautréamont and all avant-garde texts [13]). Intertextuality is a point of entrance to the determination of the 'other' logic whereby poetic language operates, as well as to the process of production or the productivity of the literary text. It allows one to place the text within its social, political and historical co-ordinates, by which it may be determined, but which it may also contest. The link between intertextuality and contestation is further clarified by the notion of the ideologeme.

2.2.3 The ideologème

The ideologème is the function which relates the text to the intertext. Kristeva defines the ideologème as

> "le foyer dans lequel la rationalité connaissante saisit la transformation des énoncés (auxquels le texte est irréductible) en un tout (le texte), de même que les

insertions de cette totalité dans le texte historique et social." (1979:53)[ix]

The ideologeme may be said to be the 'materialisation' of the ideological in the text. It is a concept which is at once broader and more 'tangible' than intertextuality, for it concerns the relations between a society and its significatory systems. It is based on the possibility of constituting a typology of cultures on the basis of the type of relations between a culture and the sign or the type of negation operated by the signifying unit, a typology which is particularly accessible to semiotics, and which more importantly, establishes semiotics as a science of the ideologies which subtend all signifying practices. (1968:316)

Kristeva initially distinguishes between two ideologèmes : that of the symbol and that of the sign. The ideologème of the symbol characterises European society up to about the 13th century, and may be defined as a cosmogonic 'semiotic' practice, the elements of which refer to universal, unrepresentable and unknoweable transcendentals (1979:55). There is a univocal connection between these transcendentals and the symbols which evoke them; the symbolised transcendental is considered to be irreduceable to the symbol itself, which is merely a mark. Symbolic units (in the épopée, contes populaires, chansons de geste) are units of restriction in relation to the symbolised universals (heroism, courage, nobility, virtue, etc). Therefore in its vertical dimension (universals - marks) the symbol has a function of restriction, and in its horizontal dimension (articulation of signifying units) its function is the avoidance of paradox, since in the logic of the symbol, oppositional units are exclusive.

Where contadiction does occur, it must be immediately resolved, and is therefore occluded.

The period from the 13th to the 15th centuries sees the contestation and attenuation of the symbol. The ideologème of the sign begins to appear, but maintains the fundamental characteristic of the symbol. The sign too is marked by the irreduceability of its terms (referent to signified and signified to signifier); the sign, like the symbol is dualist, hierarchical and hierarchising. However, in its vertical function the sign refers to entities which are more restricted and more concretised. These entities are described as reified universals[14] which, related within the structure of the sign, are immediately transcendentalised, thus becoming theological units.

> "La pratique sémiotique du signe assimile ainsi la demarche métophysique du symbole et la projette sur l''immédiatement perceptible'; ainsi valorisé, l''immédiatement perceptible' se transforme en objectivité qui sera la loi maîtresse du discours de la civilisation du signe." (1979:57)*

Thus the transformation from the symbol to the sign in no way implies the disappearance of transcendentals, but only the objectification of transcendentals, which may also be termed a transcendence of the referent vis-à-vis the sign. Neither is the semiotic practice of the sign more tolerent of contradiction than that of the symbol, although it may appear to be so because of its horizontal structure. The sign is articulated as a metonymic sequence of displacements which signifies a progressive creation of metaphors (1979:57). In this way, the text appears to be an

open structure, in which an arbitrary ending is possible, since the oppositional terms appear to be linked together in an unpredictable way. This is however illusory since the trajectory of these sequences is programmed by the ideologeme of the sign, that is, by a closed or finite dyadic procedure, which installs a hierarchy amongs the the terms of the sign (referent - signified - signifier), and which interiorises oppositional dyads in the articulation of terms, constructing itself as a resolution of contradictions. In the transformational analysis of the novel, it becomes apparent that the novel, constituted by the ideologeme of the sign, has a programmed ending identical to that to be found in the symbolic semiotic practice, constructing itself as a series of loops, with an overlap of beginning and ending. Therefore even if the oppositional dyad is ambiguated in the non-disjunctive structure of the novel, its resolution is pre-given.

In the ideologeme of the symbol, contradiction is resolved by an exclusive disjunction (non-equivalence $--\not\equiv--$) or by non-conjunction ($--/--$), while in the ideologeme of the sign, resolution occurs by means of non-disjunction ($--\bar{\vee}--$). Non-disjunction becomes possible only with the ideologeme of the sign since the sign 1) does not refer to a univocal reality, but evokes a number of images and associated ideas; 2)it's articulation is combinatory and therefore correlative - it's meaning arises out of its combination with other signs; 3) most importantly, the sign implies a transformational field in which structures may be engendered and transformed. (1970:35) It is the [illegible] of transformation which makes the synthesis of [illegible]tional terms possible, creating a situation where it momentarily becomes impossible to definitively place an entity in the positive or negative axis of an oppositional dyad. Thus the

'Dame' in Jéhan de Saintré, analysed by Kristeva in "Le texte clos" (1979:62-81) and in Le Texte du Roman is sometimes marked by love, sometimes by hatred. The immediate figures to appear by virtue of non-disjunction are those of the double, the mask, dissimulation, etc., all of which have ambivalence or a (temporary) 'undecidability' as a common feature. Thus the sign fills in the gap between opposing or contradictory terms by a play of ambivalences : it therefore makes the entire trajectory of the novel possible, in the obvious sense that if the transformation of the oppositional dyad where foreclosed, as it is in the symbol, the spatialisation and temporalisation particular to narrative would not be possible[15].

The novel as a specific genre is thus constituted by the ideologeme of the sign, which allows for a measure of unpredictability and surprise in the sequence of displacements of its articulation. Displacements are not however, arbitrary and unlimited as they appear to be, since although non-disjunction may allow some freedom in the space between the oppositional dyad, the terms of the dyad nevertheless programme both the ending and the beginning of the novel. For example, in Jéhan de Saintré, the oppositional dyad is present in the form of a thematic loop (life - death), the terms of which are non-alternating and exclusive, and which reinstall a definitive positive-negative axis, which ultimately, comes to mark all the oppositional dyads in the text, which otherwise functioned as non-disjunctive. Thus the ending of the novel is programmed in its beginning, since the exigencies of the exclusivity of terms are always pre-existent. Although ambivalence exists within the narrative, its conclusion will always be a condemnation of

ambiguity. In the same way as the ideologeme which constitutes its possibility, the novel (and every other signifying practice based upon the sign) is therefore hierarchising. Such signifying practices are always expressive, and transcendentalise the referent, which exists exterior to the text but which controls it.

The hierarchisation implicit in the ideologeme of the sign is a result of the type of negation which the sign operates. Kristeva argues in "Le texte clos" and in Le Texte du Roman that in comparison to dialectical negation, the negation of the sign is incomplete, since it does not totalise negation in the same way as dialectical negation. That is it does not introduce a complementary negation, which would result in the transformation of the bipartition into a rythmic totality with a permutation of terms (1970:57). In this case (dialectical negation) the opposition of terms is simultaneously thought of as a reciprocity or a symetric reunion; both terms are both negated and affirmed in a double negation, which results in the fact that neither of the terms may be marked as either positive or negative, making hierarchisation impossible. Instead of a double negation, the negation of the sign is a divided dialectical negation, or a division of the negative movement of dialectical negation into two steps: disjunction and non-disjunction. Disjunction is a pseudo-negation, which results in a pseudo-opposition of terms: if there is no complementary negation, the difference of the terms cannot be reduced to a radical disjunction of terms (with permutation), and as a result, the negation remains incomplete. Non-disjunction intervenes only in the second phase, and is programmed by disjunction. It is a negative function which however results not in a symetric reunion, but in a synthesis of

two into one, possible only because the opposition is momentarily 'forgotten', and which has as its hallmark, the figure of the double and of pretence. Therefore, the second phase of the negation particular to the sign, is also a pseudo-negation. Programmed by the the closure of disjunction, non-disjunction, although appearing as an unpredictable sequence of articulations, it entails a marking of the oppositional terms as a positive or a negative, and therefore results in hierarchisation. "Le dédoublement de la négation dialectique entraîne de même une finalité, un principe théologique (Dieu, le 'sens'" (1970:57)[xi]. Kristeva goes on to claim that all mimesis is born in this divided negation. "La négation non-alternante est la loi du récit; toute narration est faite, se nourrit de temps et de finalité, d'histoire et de Dieu." (1970:57)[xii]

The marking of terms brought about by hierarchisation, evident in the transition from symbol to sign, appears in the system of the sign as : 1) referent, 2) signified, 3) signifier. This results in the elision of productivity and in the exchange- value of the realist text, and of all expressive or representational literature, and is particularly evident in the manner of completing or closing off a discourse, in this case, the novel. Kristeva states that every ideological activity presents itself in the form of compositionally complete utterances. Compositional completion must not however be confused with structural completion, which characterises the literary object or product. "La notion de littérature coincide avec la notion de roman tant dans ses origines chronologiques que dans le fait de leur clôture structurale." (1979:50)[xiii]. Kristeva reaches the conclusion in analysing the ending of Jéhan de Saintré that the

novel has both a structural and a compositional ending, the latter being made redundant in the realist novel, once the productivity of the text is occluded (i.e. once the transition from symbol to sign is complete). Jehan de Saintré (in fact, all novels) is made up of two narratives : the story of Saintré, and the story of the process of writing. The first entails a structural completion, the second, a compositional completion. Structural completion is achieved by the closing of a thematic loop, or an oppositional dyad announced at the beginning, i.e. the condemnation of ambiguity, (the narrative ends with the punishment of the 'Dame') and it is determined by the closure of the ideologeme of the sign 'disjunction; non-disjunction). The completion of the novel (the discourse of the author) is however brought about by the intervention in the textual space, of the activity of writing itself. It is the appearance in the text of the process of inscription, i.e. that which brings us back to the fact that this is a written text, which completes the novel compositionally. Antoine de la Sale, writing in a period of transition between the symbol and the sign, naively closes his novel off twice, i.e. both structurally and compositionally. While the structural completion of the novel is determined by the ideologeme of the sign, and characterises both as ideological, the compositional completion of the discourse is a cultural fact, which is later occluded by bourgeois literature. The explicit appearance in the text of that which produced it (work, productivity) marks the ending of the novel (its death). In relation to the word écriture is considered as "une fonction qui ossifie, pétrifie, arrête"[xiv] : "Pour la conscience phonétique de la Renaissance jusqu'à aujourd'hui, l'écriture est une limite artificielle, une loi arbitraire, une finition subjective." (1970:54)[xv] This indicates that the practice of writing, écriture

itself, is not determined by the ideologème of the sign; it does not participate in the hierarchical closure necessarily implied by the sign. In Jehan de Saintre a distinction is made between a phonetic and a scriptural practice, and although the latter is marked pejoratively, the instance of production underlies that of 'artificial limit, arbitrary law and subjective completion'. Ecriture, as a productivity can only be closed off arbitrarily, since it has no finite hierarchy.

> "L'acte de l'écriture que est l'acte différentiel par excellence, réservant au texte le statut d'un autre irréductible à son différent, qui est aussi l'acte correlationnel par excellence, évitant toute clôture des séquences dans un ideologème fini et les ouvrant à un agencement infini, cet acte sera supprimé et on ne l'évoquera que pour opposer à la 'realité objective' (l'énoncé, le discours phonétique) un 'artificel subjectif' (la pratique scripturale)." (1970:54) [16 xvi]

It is precisely the productivity of the activity of writing, which although marked pejoratively at the inception of the novel as a genre, is still inscribed within the text, that comes to be occluded in the realist novel. The status of the text as product is made possible by the ideologème of the sign, which allows for a structural closure. The realist novel is completed structurally but not compositionally : a compositional completion is in fact not necessary to it since the novel at this stage of its evolution, does not appear as discourse. Thus the realist novel appears as an expressivity of pre-existent meaning, an exchangeable product, as littérature : "le règne de la littérature

est le règne de la valeur marchande, et elle occulte meme ce qu'Antoine de la Sale avait confusément pratique : les origines discursives du fait littéraire." [xvii] (1970:53)

The ideologème of the sign constitutes literature as a product, whereby what is exchanged is a closed and hierarchical text, for a closed and hierarchical meaning or truth. The God of the symbol comes to be replaced by the author, who is the proprietor of the text, and who 'disposes' of its meanings. The appropriation of the text is similarly made possible by the ideologème of the sign. The author of the novel is distinguished into two instances: the author (auteur), and the actor (acteur). The actor is the authorial instance included in the text, he is the agent of the discourse, a character of the narrative who is both spectator and locutor, assumed by an anonymous 'I' which functions only as a sign of the locutionary instance, but not as a defined concept. The 'I' of the actor is thus empty, since it does not refer to a proper name. The 'I' which refers to the author instead, appears only when reference is made to the author as a concrete entity (Antoine de la Sale), and only when the text is considered by him to be an exchange value in the circuit of social communication. This leads Kristeva to postulate the following :

> "*Ainsi, nous pourrons formuler ici l'hypothèse* que l'instance de l'auteur s'organise lorsque le discours est considéré comme oeuvre (lettre, litterature, roman) qui suppose un possesseur et un vendeur ayant un nom propre et par conséquent pouvent être assumé par un 'je'". [xviii] (1970:100T)

In contrast to the emptiness of the actor's 'I', the author's 'I' is a fullness. The concretising of the instance of the author is necessitated by the structural closure of the narrative, i.e. by the need to halt the displacement of sequences. The author then becomes God, who controls and halts the vagaries of the text, and ultimately imposes a hierarchisation. The appropriation of a discourse in this way is similarly made possible only once the universal transcendentals of the ideologème of the symbol are replaced by the reified transcendentals of the sign : i.e. author and meaning.

2.3 Participation, contestation and transformation

In Sémeiotiké as well as in Le Texte du Roman Kristeva establishes how the text participates in social structures. This participation is also the indice of its contestation and of its ability to transform these structures. If the text includes social and historical texts within its structure, by the inclusion in it of the discourse of the other, and of texts exterior and foreign to it, it is also in a position to contest and transform them. This possibility is indicated in the following ways :

i) by the notion of the ideologème, the novel is seen as straddling two different signifying systems : that of the symbol and that of the sign. If the novel becomes an exchangeable product by virtue of its constitution by the ideologème of the sign, it also makes it possible to glimpse how a non-hierarchising and non-finite system would operate. The negation of the ideologème of the sign remains incomplete essentially because of the vestiges of the ideologème of the symbol inherent

to it, i.e. the reification of transcendentals, programming by disjunction. It is because disjunction implies a non-alternating oppositional dyad that non-disjunction, programmed by disjunction, is ultimately halted by hierarchisation. However non-disjunction could potentially result in a truly infinite and arbitrary sequence of displacements. Novels in which those elements of the ideologème of the symbol which infiltrate that of the sign are preponderant are non-contestatory. (Kristeva places in this category the novels of Tolstoy, and of most 19th century realism). Novels which tend to operate predominantly in non-disjunction, introduced by the ideologème of the sign, however are contestatory. The novels of Cervantes, Swift, but also of Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Joyce are examples of attempts to 'overcome the closed (expressive, representative) programming of the novel ... to accentuate its self-annihilation' (1970:190)

> "Ce dédoublement du roman entre le symbole et le signe est propre à tout notre discours, de sorte que l'on pourrait considérer toute victoire du roman contre le symbolisme comme un pas de notre civilisation dans la direction qu'elle s'est choisie en refusant le platonisme et le christianisme." (1970:190)[xix]

ii) The transformations which occur in the novel and in any rhetoric are essentially transformations of the signifier, which are 'recorded' at the level of the signified. This is possible in the ideologeme of the sign since even though the signifier / signified dichotomy is maintained, it is not as stable as it is in the ideologeme of the symbol. It is precisely for this reason that transformations as well as the study of denotative and connotative language are made possible by the sign. This

instability also results in the disequilibration of the solidarity between signifier and signified, in Saussure's notion of the sign. This is the first step of a critique of the sign as an unit of exchange, which causes the status of the text as expressivity and as product to collapse.

iii) Intertextuality and dialogism result in the existence in the literary text of other texts which are exterior and foreign to it. Poetic language then appears as an écriture-lecture, i.e. a structuration in which two different systems or logics are apparent : that of poetic language and that of social/historical/cultural texts. Écriture however operates by a different logic to that of the phonetic word, as was indicated by the fact that écriture cannot be brought to completion by any mechanism of the word, but is always completed arbitrarily. This points to the fact that écriture is not determined by the closure and hierarchisation of disjunction, as is the case with the narrative. Consequently, écriture does not operate according to the exigencies of truth (0-1 logic). It operates instead in another space which Kristeva defines as paragrammatic.[17]

Intertextuality is operated in the text by negation or affirmation, or by a simultaneous negation and affirmation of other texts, the latter resulting in their effective collapse. Furthermore, intertextuality itself is made possible only by the spatialisation operated by écriture. This implies not only the contestation of these texts or logics, but their transformation within the text. That the text may operate outside of a dominant logic, and may transform it within its own structure (as occurs in Jehan de Saintré), and that it may participate in the

transformation of a signifying system is then evident. What remains to be considered is just how active a role the literary text plays in this transformation, and if the revolution of poetic language is only the indice of a broader revolution of signifying structures, or if it may actively revolutionise these structures.

In 'L'engendrement de la formule' (1979:217-310) Kristeva indicates that the text does have an actively transformative potential (i.e. that it may in some sense initiate transformation) since it is able to produce new symbolic notations in much the same way as the formulation of logico-mathematical operations (e.g. imaginary and unreal numbers). The production of new symbolic notations is possible because of the transformation of signifiers which occurs in the text. The only question which now remains for Kristeva is to determine exactly how the the text comes to have this transformative function :

> "Un travail immense s'ouvre devant nous: trouver comment les textes au cours des ages se sont faits les agents des transformations des systèmes de pensée, et ont porté dans l'idéologie ces refontes du signifiant qu'ils sont seuls, avec le travail logico-mathématique, à produire." (1979:225) xx

Barthes, however, is a little more sceptical about the ability of the literary text to carry into ideology the transformations it can effect in its own system. The difference of their conception of the transformative power of the text centres around a slightly different understanding of écriture.

NOTES

1. First edition 1969. References made are to the second edition (1978) unless otherwise indicated.
2. "Le mot, le dialogue et le roman" (1979:82-112) appears in translation in both Desire in Language (1980) and in Toril Moi's The Kristeva Reader (1986), while "Le texte clos" (1979:52-81) appears only in Desire in language. The other essays contained in Sémeiotiké do not appear to have been translated into English. Commentary of her work usually focusses on the psychoanalytic or feminist aspects, and tends to ignore such seminal articles as "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes" (113-147)and "Poésie et négativité" (185-217), amongst others. See for example Coward and Ellis (1977), Gallop (1982), Moi (1985) and White (1977).
3. Translation my own.
4. Macherey's A Theory of Literary Production (1978) would thus be found inadequate on the grounds that it does not account for the subject.
5. 'Drive' is used here in the Freudian term of 'Trieb' sometimes translated as instinct which is defined as follows: "dynamic process consisting in a pressure (charge of energy, motricity factor) which directs the organism towards an aim. According to Freud, an instinct has its source in a bodily stimulus; its aim is to eliminate the state of tension obtaining at the instincual souce; and it is in the object, or thanks to it, that the instinct may achieve its aim." (Laplanche & Pontalis 1983:214)
6. These are of course very broad distinctions, which are made

only for the purposes of making the material manageable.

7. See chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of paragrammatism.

8. Bakhtin 1963 and 1968 respectively, Moscow, as quoted by Kristeva (1979). For a detailed discussion of dialogism and intertextuality in the work of Bakhtin, see Todorov, T. (1984)

9. Such an analysis is undertaken in "Pour une semiologie des paragrammes" (1979:113-146).

10. The reference to this quotation in Todorov (1984) is Voloshinov / Bakhtin (1976) : Freudianism : A Marxist Critique trans. by I.R. Titunik New York : Academic Press pp.128-130. There is some doubt as to the authorship of this text, and others. While it has been ascribed to Voloshinov, recent evidence implies that it was actually written by Bakhtin, or at least that the ideas developed were originally Bakhtin's. The same goes for several texts ascribed to Medvedev.

11. For a discussion of Bakhtin's notion of translinguistics see Todorov (1984:24-28)

12. See chapter 4.

13. See pp 54 - 66 for a discussion of non-disjunction.

14. This simultaneous negation and affirmation is essentially operated by the complementary logic of the paragrammatic space. See chapter 4.

15. The concept of 'reified universals' is borrowed from W.V. Quine (1953) : "Reification of universals" in From a logical point of view Harvard Univereity Press, as is "the differentiation between two acceptions of the signfiyng unit : one in the space of the symbol, the other in the space of the sign..." (Kristeva 1979:55, footnote 4). Translation my own.

16. That is a spatialisation and temporalisation based on the distance between or the time taken to traverse the trajectory formed by the 'loop' : disjunction / non-disjunction. It is at the same time this deployment of space and time make possible by the ideologeme of the sign which allows for the character and its psychology in the novel. In contrast to the novel, in the epic, determined by the ideologeme of the symbol, the individual is either good or bad (disjunction) : because non-disjunction does not pertain, there can be no possibility of engendering a psychological character.

17. The definition of ecriture as differential and correlational is congruent with Derrida's postulation of the differential-supplementary structure of ecriture. See "La Double Séance" (1970)

18. See chapter 4.

CHAPTER THREE

Barthes : the limitations of commitment

In the constant shifts and discontinuities in Barthes' thought it seems almost impossible to hold on to something stable. His work is at once flexible and fleeting; modest in its formulation it is at times the very simplicity of his expression which disarms. Amongst semioticians, it is Barthes who has the profoundest understanding of the sign; there is a sense in which one can say that he lived signs[1], articulating and disarticulating them with the utmost ease. And amongst literary theorists and critics, it is again he who has the keenest insight into what it is *to write*, perhaps because there is a point at which one can no longer call him a theorist, but a writer, in his own sense of *scripteur*. Whatever one says about his work will necessarily appear excessively heavyhanded, since his own formulations are couched in such subtlety. I have here only attempted to deal with certain consistent preoccupations, and to follow the directions they point to; however it is extremely difficult to write about Barthes without being overly reductive.

3.1 Ethics and History

Barthes' broadest preoccupation may be said to be the activity of writing itself. Within this, we may distinguish between 1) a concern with the ethics of *écriture* and 2) the attempt to determine what may be called a 'transhistorical and permanent form of literature.' (1972:167) In this, Barthes may be said to be the Foucault of literature. Both projects are announced in *Writing Degree Zero* which is defined by Barthes as being "no more

than an Introduction to what a History of Writing might be." (Barthes 1968a:6) Although this project is never explicitly carried out by Barthes, it remains in the background of future works, which may in a sense be seen as the testing out of the manner in which this history could be undertaken. Writing Degree Zero questions not only what literature is, in its most permanent form, but also what a committed literature can be. However the two strands are inextricably bound in Barthes' thought, fused as they are in the notion of écriture[2].

Écriture, as it is defined in Writing Degree Zero, is from the outset bound to an ethic. The curiosity of this work stems from the fact that while an ethic of literature can be defined only in terms of écriture, it is écriture itself which must be banished, or at least neutralised, if an effective literary commitment is to be possible. Thus, already in this very early work, the essential 'catch 22' of the problematic of commitment is sketched out : literature itself is defined by écriture, and it is at the same time écriture which makes the committed writer's task impossible. However, Writing Degree Zero is not only a demonstration of that which hampers the writer's impulse towards commitment : it also lays the ground for a discussion of the options open to a committed form of writing, within the limits imposed on it by the Literary Institution. It is the language-style-ecriture configuration which forms the basis of these options, and to which I now turn, in order at the same time to clarify the issue of écriture.

3.2 Language - style - ecriture

The language - style - ecriture configuration appears for the first time in Writing Degree Zero, and accounts for the way in which literature participates in the social. Although it is here a rather loose configuration as compared to its later conception, it already contains the ingredients for a freudo-marxist synthesis. Language and style are the 'raw material' of écriture, defining on the one hand the linguistic possibilities open to the writer, and on the other a "sub-language", which is the "carnal structure" of the author (1968a:11): "A language is therefore a horizon, and style a vertical dimension, which together map out for the writer a Nature" (1968a:11). Language and style constitute a nature for the writer since neither one is a matter of choice. Language functions negatively, as the initial limit of the possible, style is a Necessity which binds the writer's humour to his form of expression. In the former, he finds a familiar History, in the latter, a familiar personal past. In both cases he deals with a Nature, that is, "a familiar repertory of gestures, a gestuary, as it were, in which the energy expended is purely operative, serving here to enumerate, there to transform, but never to appraise or signify a choice." (1968a:13) Thus, briefly, language is what makes up the whole of a specific History and society; style, as it is conceived here, hints at the unconscious, desire, and the workings of the pleasure and reality principles ("a sub-language elaborated where flesh and external reality come together"(1968a:11)). These definitions of language and style call to mind Kristeva's notion of social and familial constraints, or the split speaking subject[3]. Not implying choice, neither of these constitute values, whereas "every Form is also a Value, which is why there is room, between a language and a

style, for another formal reality : writing" (1968a:13). Écriture is thus the formal reality of the literary work in which the writer necessarily commits himself,precisely because he chooses a mode of writing. While language and style are objets, écriture is a function : "it is the relationship between creation and society, the literary language transformed by its social finality, form considered as a human intention and thus linked to the great crises of History." (1968a:14)

Thus, in the language - style - ecriture configuration, ecriture will always be considered to be a structure, whose reality is only in its function and form. Écriture is a choice and thus implies a value, but it is an extemely limited choice : firstly because it is a choice only of origin, i.e. only of writing itself and not of consumption; secondly, because it is a choice which can be offered only by History, and this History is both a choice and the limits of a choice; finally because its most important limitation is paradoxically, that it can be only a literary choice, since écriture is that set of signs which signfies literature as a Ritual language, as a myth - the institution of Literature. It is this limitation of écriture which defines the failed commitment of Critical Essays (1972); since the writer can never signfiy his commitment outside of the literary institution, he is condemned to a commitment totally divorced from social praxis. The zero degree of writing as that mode of writing which would define an area of unity between literary and social languages, such that the literary institution would be scuttled, and the commitment of the writer fused with praxis, is a doomed project from the outset. But by the same token, neither can literature exist without an ethic : the existence of this formal reality is of fundamental necessity to

the literary act, since it can only institute itself as such through écriture. Thus "there is no Literature without an Ethic of language." (1968a:6)

Within the ethical limitations of écriture, however, one important possibility lies open to it : the revelation of profound layers of History :

> "It is because writing derives from a meaningful gesture of the writer that it reaches the deeper layers of History, much more palpably than does any other cross-section of literature. The unity of classical writing, which remained uniform for centuries, the plurality of its modes in modern times, increased in the last hundred years until it came near to questioning the very fact of literature, this kind of disintegration of French writing does indeed correspond to a great crisis in general History, which is noticeable in literary History proper, only much more confusedly. What separates the 'thought' of a Balzac from that of a Flaubert is a variation within the same school; what contrasts their mode of writing is an essential break, at the precise moment when a new economic structure is joined on to an older one, thereby bringing about decisive changes in mentality and consciousness." (1968a:17)

Here we find the same relation between the literary text and the socio-economic or socio-historical as is postulated for example in the theory of the texts of rupture[4]. For Barthes, this relation derives from a choice, even though it may be a limited choice. By the same gesture, the foundations of a conception of

écriture as a specific form of critique are laid down. It is precisely because écriture is a question of choice that it may reveal profound layers of History - the economic base-structure. What is at stake here is the ability of superstructures to in some way act upon the base-structure. To the participation and transformation postulated by Kristeva, we can perhaps add 'revelation'. Revelations of this kind are in this instance possible via the horizontal dimension of language, behind which "the whole of History stands unified and complete in the manner of a Natural Order" (1968a:10) The notion of idéologème could well be accomodated here, as is the possibility of the text to reveal/transform/participate precisely because it acts upon the linguistic order (law, logic). In Writing Degree Zero, écriture is not as yet placed in the very specific relation to language and style which is to be found in Critical Essays(1972) : its definition as a set of formal signs which signify something other than the content of the text and hence its function as critique, is to be more rigorously formalised in Critical Essays.

3.3 Écriture and Myth

In Mythologies(1973), the 'content' or discourse of the text is defined as a primary semiological system, of which écriture is the derived secondary semiological system and thus constitutes myth. In this case the Myth is the entire Literary institution - Literature as ritual language. Écriture is thus further formalised and delimitated in this connotative system, which places it more firmly within the field of a semiological systematics. At the same time, the zero degree of writing, which would, in the language of Mythologies, constitute a purely denotative system, is placed irretrievably beyond the

possibilities open to the literary text : in poetic language for example, the apparent disorder of signs, which aims at achieving a pre-semiological state, is made to function as the pure signifier of poetry:

> "Myth can reach everything, corrupt everything, and even the act of refusing oneself to it. So that the more the language-object resists at first, the greater its final prostitution; whoever here resists completely yields completely." (1973:132)

It is not possible for écriture to exist outside of the literary institution, since its very function is to signify this institution - it exists at the centre of the problematics of literature, which cannot exist prior to it. A History of écriture understood in this way, would reveal the historical (economic) factors which make this institution and the breaks in its development possible at all.

3.4 The 'options' open to commited literature

Écriture is co-extensive with a problematics of language - its status and deployment in the work. The options open to the 'modernist' work each imply this problematic. Also, each of these options can be mapped onto the language - style - ecriture configuration, with interesting implications. In Writing Degree Zero, these 'options' are : modern poetry, speech, the responsibility of form, to which correspond style, language and écriture respectively.

3.4.1 Modern poetry

The language of modern poetry, of which Barthes gives the examples of Mallarme and Char, is an interrupted, fragmentary language, which achieves the collapse of pre-existent relations within duration - an effect which cannot be achieved in the narrative. Total pre-eminence is given to the word, imposing a discontinuous non-hierarchised Nature. The lack of coherent relations implies the destruction of the horizontality of language : modern poetry is a vertical or erect discourse, attempting to burst out of man-made language in order to institute absolute and unrelated objects in their pre-semiological state, i.e. to make the real somehow directly accessible. Modern poetry operates, thus, in the 'style' dimension of literature, which, as we have seen, is in no way bound to an ethic. Its "violent drive towards autonomy destroys any ethical scope. The verbal gesture here aims at modifying Nature..."(1968a:53) This, in Writing Degree Zero constitutes for Barthes, the impossibility of attaching modern poetry to any form of écriture:

> "But when the poetic language radically questions Nature by virtue of its very structure, without any resort to the content of the discourse and without falling back on some ideology, there is no mode of writing left, there are only styles, thanks to which man turns his back on society and confronts the world of objects without going through any of the forms of History or of social life." (1968a:52)

The status of modern poetry as having already achieved a form of writing degree zero, is as has been seen, radically modified

in Mythologies, where even the most resistant literary forms are always susceptible to the one last remaining connotation - écriture as the connotative signifier of Literature. A further important modification is added in a footnote in Mythologies : referring to his conception of style as that which is beyond écriture in Writing Degree Zero, Barthes adds :

> "Style, at least as I defined it then, is not a form, it does not belong to the province of a semiological analysis of Literature. In fact, style is a substance constantly threatened with formalization. To start with, it can perfectly well become degraded into a mode of writing : there is a 'Malraux-type' writing, and even in Malraux himself. Then, style can also become a particular language, that used by the writer for himself alone. Style then becomes a sort of solpsistic myth, the language which the writer speaks to himself. It is easy to understand that at such a degree of solidification, style calls for a deciphering." (1973:134)

Here, it becomes evident that style is by no means immune from the threat of écriture - that it can in fact become wholly écriture, besides the fact that in the work, it will always carry the extra connotation of écriture and thus becomes a hardened form.

3.4.2. Writing and speech

The next 'option' open to the writer is that of speech or language and consists in the inscription in the text of 'real' speech. While it begins as a "playful mimicry of the picturesque"

it ends by "expressing the whole content of social contradiction" (1968a:81) since the spoken language of any person immediately proclaims his class and entire personal history. Proust, for example, fuses his characters with their language, and presents them only through their way of speaking. While this type of presentation is still an expression, and a description, of all the modes of description it is the only one which expels Literature from the form of writing, and displays it only as a category : "Literature is openly reduced to the problematics of language; and indeed that is all it can now be." (1968a:82) Of all the literary languages, it is the one closest to emulating social language, and of achieving some sort of unity with it. Of course the category of *ecriture* subsists - the work will still be consumed by a certain portion of society, and thus does not achieve universality; the poetic freedom of the writer "takes its place within a verbal condition whose limits are those of society and not those of a convention or a public." (1968a:83) The limitations of *ecriture* will disappear only once the literary work is no longer seperated from language - language in its entirety, that is consisting of the totality of speeches which make it up. If the whole of History stands behind language, this total History in turn must be seen as consisting of the entirety of social contradictions, captured in the speech of man.

3.4.3 The responsibility of form

If on the one hand, the 'writing and speech' option is a gesture towards the utopia of languages, indicative of a universality of languages, on the other, it addresses the work directly to the problematics of language, the responsibility towards which, is in turn the only possible gesture of commitment

for the writer. It addresses him once again to the responsibility of form, which is ultimately the only possible 'option' open to the writer, acting as a synthesis of both language and style. This is clarified in Barthes' articles on Brecht.

The Brechtian theatre dispels the myth of a magical theatre, and achieves a certain unity with social languages, since it is not directed at an elite sector of the public. Mother Courage is primarily a "popular work, for it is a work whose profound intention can be understood *only by the people.*" *(1972:33) This* unity is achieved by showing the human fabrication of what is accepted as a fatality, and depends entirely upon a manifest semiological deployment of meaning. Brecht's theatre shows that in order for the work to be committed, its technique must be committed. This responsibility of form (of technique), entails the suspension of judgement, or of an ultimate signified, and calls upon an intellectual and not emotional participation on the part of the audience, which is left to judge for itself. It results then, in a certain type of action, or praxis, even though this 'action' is limited to consciousness. The unity of the work and social language may thus be effectively achieved through the responsibility of form.

The responsibility of form is the 'option' most directly connected with écriture. It implies above all the consciousness of the author with respect to the *limitations of his commitment* [5]. It will also at first imply an acceptance of the restricted position in which society places the literary work. Beginning with the emphasis laid on craftsmanship by the Parnassiens of the late nineteenth century, it is however Flaubert who "methodically *laid down* the foundations for this conception of writing as

craft" (1968a:64) consisting of a rigorous codification of the technical rules of literary language, which confers upon the writer "the responsibility for his form, the transmutation of the writing handed down to him by History into an art; in other words, into an obvious convention, a sincere pact which would enable man to adopt a position he was familiar with in a nature still made of ill-matched realities." (1968a:65) This break in the conception of the literary work corresponds to the transformation of the value of the work from usage-value to work-value, which will at this point be its only justification.

The responsibility of form implies thus the lucid acceptance of the mythical status of Literature - against which the only really effective weapon is silence. This conscious acceptance of the *limitations of the literary work will necessarily result in a* manifest deployment of connotative discourse for two reasons : firstly because écriture is itself a connotation and secondly because connotation is the level of myth / ideology : if the work is to attempt to dismantle myth it is precisely amongst connotations that it must function. The attempt will no longer be to demythify myth, but rather to mythify it in turn : "All that is needed is to use it as the departure point for a third semiological chain, to take its signification as the first term of a second myth" (1973:135).-The power of the second myth is that "it gives the first its basis as a naivety which is looked at." (1973:136) Apart from thus dismantling mythical systems, it exposes realism in literature as a purely semiological system; écriture as formal technique thus absorbs the entire literary act and its commitment can now be measured only in semiological terms. The form of the literary work can henceforth only be

judged in the manner of instituting and producing significations. Responsibility of form, as an 'option', comes to absorb both language and style and acts as a fusion of them. Existing no longer merely between them, but at the very point of their intersection, écriture is their only mode of existence in the literary work. While in Writing Degree Zero, the language-style-écriture configuration can be regarded as a coexistence, in Critical Essays, écriture comes to be the form of forms, existing at the intersection of the social and the personal, as a synthesis of the two.

In the Barthian work, thus, the genesis of the notion of écriture is purely ethical. This concern with the ethical in turn, leads to the conception of the choice of a specific literary form as being a necessary act of commitment in the literary work : it is this gesture of choice of form which simultaneously makes the work possible ("there is no Literature without an Ethics of Language" (1968a:6)) and delimitates the sphere in which it functions at all. There is commitment only in form i.e. in the overt deployment of a semiological system.

Because for Barthes it is precisely the ethical - the imposition of a form which bears the signs of an ethics - which is a necessary condition for the existence of the literary work, literature, or at least its forms, interarticulates very closely with the historical and the social. Thus it is precisely the ethical function of the text which makes its revelatory function with regards to history possible. But écriture is a double-sided function : by the very fact that it binds the writer to society it also limits the possibilities of commitment, in the sense of a transformation which may have an effect on ideological practices.

It is within this structure of history - form (ethics) - history that the genesis of the necessary fusion of marxism and semiology lies. In Critical Essays, the necessity of the third structure - psychoanalysis - for the completion of this synthesis becomes evident.

3.6. Écriture and the interrogative

In Critical Essays the ethical project once again predominates and along with it the search for a solution for the problematics of commitment :

> "Is our literature forever doomed to this exhausting oscillation between political realism and art-for-art's sake, between an ethic of commitment and an esthetic purism, between compromise and asepsis? Must it always be poor (if it is merely itself) or embarrassed (if it is anything but itself)? Can it not have a proper place in this world?" (1972:133)

Critical Essays can be seen as the interrogation of the 'proper place' of literature, which in the Barthian perspective, would be a viable position of commitment in the literary text. In analysing the shifts or the radicalising of Barthes' thought, I will focus primarily on "Literature Today" (1972:151-163) and "Literature and Signification" (1972:261-279) both of which are interviews published initially in Tel Quel[6]

The search for the 'proper place' of the literary text 'in this world' is firstly a rigorous designation of the boundaries within which the text is forced to function. We have already seen how

ultimately the responsibility of form is the only choice open to the writer. This position is crystallised in Critical Essays. Since the text will always bear the signs of the Literary Institution, and since society cannot be disalienenated outside of a political and historical process from which literature is excluded, literature today is placed in a reduced state by history, for which there can be no apology : "it is not literature which is going to free the world." (1972:155) This does not mean that literature is liberated from its commitment to an ethics : within this reduced state "there is a choice, and consequently the writer has if not a morality at least a responsibility."(1972:155) Morality, in the Barthian terminology, would imply the offering of an alternative, which is foreclosed in literary forms of commitment, excluded as they are from praxis. Responsibility is as we have seen, bound to choice, and thus to value, which may be either assertive or interrogative. The assertive value entails creating the work either in repletion or in tension with society's conservative values. The interrogative value is the more radical of the two : the commitment of form can henceforth lie only in the interrogation of existing systems of signification.

The interrogative function is fundamental to Barthes' conception of écriture as a critique and implies a profound understanding of the status of the language of the literary work. Developing in a "zone of oversignification" in which the relations between words are primary, the realism of literature today, resides precisely in the fact that it knows itself to be fundamentally and constitutively unrealistic. It can be 'true' only "to the degree that it knows itself to be essentially

language" (1972:160). Realism is no longer a 'true imitation' but a knowledge of language and an exploration of its 'unreal reality', through an essentially interrogative form.

> "This 'linguistic status' of literature explains sufficiently, I think, the ethical contradictions which plague it. Each time we assign value, even a sacred value, to 'reality' (which has hitherto been the concern of progressive ideologies), we realize that literature is only language, and a second language at that, a parasitical meaning which can only connote reality, not denote it: logos thus appears irremediably severed from praxis, impotent to fulfill language, i.e. to transcend it in the direction of a transformation of reality, deprived of all transitivity, forever doomed to signify itself just when it wants to signify only the world, literature is a motionless object, seperated from a world in the making. But also, each time we do not close the description, each time we write ambiguously enough to suspend meaning, each time we proceed as if the world signified though without saying what, then writing releases a question, it troubles what exists, though without ever performing what does not yet exist, it gives the world an energy : in short, literature does not permit us to walk, but it permits us to breathe." (1972:267)

In this passage, the shift away from the denotative utopia of the text, in Writing Degree Zero, is evident. This shift is contained in the move from asking "why write?" to asking "how write?". This does not however constitute a break in Barthes' thought; the question "how write?" springs from the limitations implied in "why write?", from which it transpires that

"literature is only a means, devoid of cause and purpose" (1972:133). Thus, literature is an activity which entirely exhausts itself in its technqiue. The only 'truth' of literature, its very 'being' is in this 'how?'. All the literary work is, all it can be is a foregrounded semiological process, implying a formal and rigorous systematisation of signification which results in an interrogation of the world's significations. Its 'value' will lie in an unlimited and inconclusive productivity of signfication, which cannot be halted by any specific signified.

The text offers us a priveleged site of completion, since only the text can offer itself as a total question:

> "For to complete a work can never mean anything but to end it at the moment when it is about to signify something, when, having been a question, it is about to become an answer; we must construct the work as a complete system of signification, and yet so that this system remains inconclusive." (1972:157)[7]

It is in this definition of the literary work as existing wholly in technique that écriture can be seen to absorb the entire literary activity. Écriture as a formal and structural reality, implying an essentially connotative system, is the only reality, indeed the only intelligibility of the text, since all the text can say finally is "look at my words, I am language; look at my meaning, I am literature." (1972:266)

3.6 Écriture as a synthesis

Écriture, thus, is formulated as a form of forms, of which

interrogation is a defining factor. As soon as the value of literature is interrogative it becomes the "sign of historical opacity subjectively lived" (1972:155). Its interrogation will be directed as much to the subject as to history, since "language is this paradox : the institutionalization of a subjectivity." (1972:150) In Critical Essays, the 'style' dimension of literature comes to be positioned as the vertical axis of the synthesis between the personal and the social, its horizontal axis, and can at no time be seperated from écriture as it was in Writing Degree Zero. Écriture is no longer located between style and history, but at the intersection of the two. Écriture can thus be seen as the interarticulation of these two structures. Thus in Yves Velan's 'Je', the language of this 'I' which makes up the entire écriture of this work, exists at the intersection of a subjectivity (a libidinal language) and a political reality : this subjectivity "suffers, reflects, seeks its identity in a scrupulously defined, specified world whose reality is already apprehended, whose inhabitants are distributed and divided up according to political law" (1972:150) If in the first instance, it is language which operates this synthesis, écriture, as that form which derives from language can reveal the condition which make this synthesis possible. The technique of allusion as an endless productivity of signification in the work of Kafka, for example, becomes the only possible commitment to the world "since it expresses the relation of an individual man and a common world" (1972:136) and thus shows the process whereby an individual is related to an ideologically stable identity.

3.7 Écriture as the transhistorical and permanent form of literature

The ethical gesture which is so central to both Writing Degree Zero and Critical Essays is the hinge around which this configuration holds together : it is the meeting point of a personal gesture and a social reality. In the Barthian perspective, it is always the ethical gesture, which, underlying the possibility of the text, at the same time, makes its critical fucntion possible. If écriture can be defined as a critique, it is only because this is the only form of commitment possible today. The definition of écriture as that function which binds the writer to history and which is at the same time a set of formal signs which signify both the institution to which it belongs, as well as the necessary form of any literary text makes it possible for the text to carry out its critical function on at least three levels : the literary, the linguistic and the ideological.

At this point, let us recall Barthes' project of a history of the forms of literature, which is called for time and again in Critical Essays itself. Écriture as a technique and process of signification is itself the 'transhistorical and permanent form' of literature. Furthermore, it is forced into this position by the ethical limitations imposed upon any written 'creative' work from the moment that literature is recognised as a category and institutionalised in the 19th century. However, beneath the ethical gesture which is the genesis of the literary work, there lies a "form of forms" similer to the relation reason/unreason or inclusion/exclusion which underlies the forms of madness at any given historical moment, the analysis of which is found in

Foucault's Madness and Civilisation, the subject of Barthes' "Taking Sides"(1972:163-171). Barthes points out the existence of this type of underlying structure when he assimilates the function of the literary work in society to that of the witchdoctor, in the work of Lévi-Strauss : when asked, in "Literature and Signification" about the difference between the social functions of the writer and of the scientist, Barthes replies :

> "here we have an opposition whose mythic force rests on a vital economy of our societies, the artist's function being to exorcise the irrational by fixing it within the limits of an institution ("art"), at once acknowledged and contained - formally, the artist is the seperated man whose very seperation is assimilated as seperation, while the scientist (...) is today an entirely progressive figure." (1972:277)

Thus it may be said that écriture as the transhistorical and permanent form of the literary work is the formal actualization of an underlying relation of included exclusion of the text to society. It is this relation which is at the basis of the institutionalization of Literature. Thus it underlies both the necessity and the limitations of the ethical gesture in the literary work.

3.8 Écriture : critique of exchange?

If realist or expressive literature always offers a vision of the world in which bourgeois society may see itself mirrored, and its ideology as universal and eternal, it is only because it elides the constitutive inconclusiveness of écriture, which is

not a meaning, but a form a technique, and which is also the function which constitutes it as literature. Thus écriture is the instance underlying the contract between bourgeois society and literature, whereby literature offers the reader a tranquilising vision of himself and the way in which the world is intelligible to him, and in return the writer is accepted as mystical creator, as proprietor of an ineffable but all too evident meaning. The cohesiveness of literature to bourgeois society is indicated by the existence of the ultimate signified, which answers all questions, resolves all contradictions, and offers the text as a product to be consumed and cast aside, as are all products. The only evidence of its status as an artefact which the realist text will allow to remain is "the fateful gesture with which the writer draws attention to the mask he is wearing" (1968a:40) The preterite and the third person are in this instance the finger which points to the mask, which marks the text as belonging to the literary institution. This is imperative to the contract with society which the realist text upholds, since the categorization of literary discourse is a means to both transcendentalise its meaning and denigrate its form. Literature thus circulates in bourgeois society as an ornament, unimplicated in the business of the world.

The mask worn by the realist text is evidently écriture (in this case, realism as a mode of writing) in its function as the connotative signifier of literature. The functioning of écriture as that which underlies every instance of signification in the text, is however elided. The purpose of this elision is identical to that of the elision of the activity of writing in the narrative in the ideologeme of the sign: to impose a hierarchy and a closure upon significations, and ultimately to constitute

the work as Literature, an exchangeable product. It is for this reason that contestation, at its broadest level, necessarily takes the form of a critique of exchange, which brings with it a collapse of hierarchisation and of the closure of Western systems of thought.

Critique is not only the necessary form of the theory of écriture, but of écriture itself. In contrast to Kristeva, for Barthes the commitment of the literary text is limited to an activity of revelation of the profound structures of intelligibility. Écriture is in the strange position of simultaneously being the underlying structure, or the condition of possibility of the literary institution and of literary significations, and the critique of both. If its only possible form of commitment today is to interrogate the world's meaning but never to offer alternative meanings, it is because it is essentially a technique which is at no instance capable of producing a finite meaning. Its 'social' function then is to question and to reveal but never to state, and in this aspect of its functioning, it is not limited to the literary alone, but penentrates to that which constitutes all significatory systems. Defined as that which is inconclusive and intransitive, it posits itself as an effective critique of exchange in systems of intelligibility.

Although there are several divergencies in the conceptions of écriture held by Barthes and by Kristeva, the two are by no means exclusive or even contradictory of each other. Both account for the participation of the text in the socio-historical, both believe that the activity of writing operates 'differently' to

systems of meaning upheld by bourgeois ideology and ultimately, all Western systems of thought based on phonetisism. Although Kristeva accounts for this 'difference' or 'otherness' by means of determining the 'other' logic underlying écriture, and Barthes by a definition of écriture as formal technique, both see this 'otherness' as finally making closed and hierarchising systems of meaning possible. Écriture is seen as being a fundamentally productive activity by both. However, while Kristeva sees the function of the text being to actively transform ideology, Barthes limits the contestation of the text to revelation, the reason for this being that the Institution of Literature as an ideological apparatus which inevitably institutionalises and recuperates whatever happens within the text, constantly remains in the background of Barthes' thought. Kristeva puts into question the relation of base- and superstructures, postulating that not only is the text embedded in the socio-economic, and therefore generated by the base-structure, but that, by the same token, it may effect a transformation in these structures (the economic and the ideological). Nevertheless, the theories of both consistently work towards a critique of exchange, which Kristeva operates by a critique of the sign, and Barthes by a critique of articulation.

NOTES

1. In the same way as he 'sees' language : "J'ai une maladie : je vois le langage." (1975a:164) ("I have an illness : I see language.")
2. 'Écriture' is tranlated by Lavers and Smith as a 'mode of writing'. I have retained the term 'écriture' despite the fact that in this instance I worked from the English edition of the text, in order to ensure consistency of terminology, and also to retain the two-fold implications of the term 'écriture' in Barthes' work as that which defines both the possibility and the responsibility of literature.
3. See chapter 6.
4. The status of the subject remains problematic here however, since it would appear that only a unified transcendental subject could operate this kind of responsibility or choice. Écriture as a responsibility of form would thus appear to be irreconcileable with the symbolic functioning of literary language, which is constructed around an absent subject, but which in all other ways is not incommensurate with the observations made on the functioning of écriture.
5. See chapter 1.
6. "Literature and Signification" (Tel Quel no. 16 : 3-17); "Literature Today" (Tel Quel no. 7 : 32-41).
7. Not surprisingly, in Deleuze's structuralist model, the underlying structure is seen to be essentially problematizing. The third term or 'object = x' circulates in the structure as a question. (Deleuze 1975:211)

CHAPTER FOUR

KRISTEVA : THE CRITIQUE OF THE SIGN

4.1 Introduction

In "The Speaking Subject" (1986:210-220) Kristeva defines the semiotic raison d'etre as necessarily consisting "in its identifying the systematic constraint within each signifying practice (using for that purpose borrowed or original "models") but above all in going beyond that to specifying just what, within the practice, falls outside the system and characterizes the specifity of the practice as such." (1986:212) It is because the linguistic model cannot account for what 'falls outside the system' that it is insufficient when faced with marginal discourses such as the literary text. The exclusion of the subject in purely linguistic studies and in generative grammar has several repercussions : 1)not accounting for the subject, the subject implied by it will be the cartesian transcendental subject, either indirectly as in Saussure, or directly as in Chomsky. 2)As a result of this it is limited not only to description but to an adherence to and inability to contest ideological systems based on representation and truth. 3) It cannot account for a signifying practice as such, since by definition, a practice implicates its subject. 4) It cannot account for the transgression and transformation of a signifying system, and hence, once more, its inability to account for a signifying practice.

The signifying practice of artistic activities (but also psychosis) will be inaccessible to the linguistic model or to any type of systematic study (by which is meant the reduction of significations to a systematic superficial level only), precisely because transgression itself, or any type of transformation, is not generated within the superficial structure of the model, but by structures existing beyond the level of the model. The notion of 'practice' as we have seen, is defined by the implication of the subject. This transgression is made possible by the contradictions between the two sides of a split subject, and what is ultimately transgressed is not only the discourse of 'rationality' but the very concept of a unified subject:

> "The moment of transgression is the key moment in practice: we can speak of practice wherever there is a transgression of systematicity, i.e. a transgression of the unity proper to the <u>transcendental ego</u>." (1985:217)

In order to account for transgression, semiotics must postulate both a symbolic law, or linguistic 'norm', as a <u>frontier</u> and the transgression of that frontier, a frontier in this case being defined as "the fissure created by the act of naming and the logico-linguistic synthesis which it sets off", and transgression being marked by the "sudden appearance of new signifying chains" (1985:217). Therefore, the definition of practice will be "the acceptance of a symbolic law together with the transgression of that law for the purpose of renovating it." (1985:217)

The signifying practice of poetic language thus implies the existence of a law and the transgression/transformation of that law. Transgression in the text can be accounted for on two

levels, which are not however absolutely distinguishable from one another. These are 1)the embedding of the text in the socio-historic or socio-economic, or the ideological, by the fact that, as has already been established, the text is characterised by dialogism, intertextuality, and is made possible by a particular ideologeme, thus being defined as an écriture-lecture, or a synthesis of the activity of writing, with the specific logical laws inherent to it, and of the assimilation of texts exterior and foreign to it, which it may negate, affirm or simultaneously negate and affirm. These processes establish the signifying practice of the text as an ambivalence, and as being 'other' or 'different' to the a discourse governed by hierarchisation and truth.

2) The generation of the text in the operations specific to the two sides of the split subject (conscious/unconscious). As such, the subject would be understood as being constituted by the functions or relations between bio-physiological drives on the one hand, and social constraints on the other. Family structures and modes of production would fall in this last category. The literary text is then the signifying practice in which the contradictions between the two sides of the split are inscribed, the operations specific to each side being heterogenous to each other : the unconscious would then consist partly of primary processes, which can be reduced to displacement and condensation, and a "transversal to the logico-symbolic processes that function in the predicative synthesis towards establishing the language system", predication being the operation which maintains 0-1 logic. The heterogeneity of the drives to meaning or sense is the crucial point here, and leads Kristeva to postulate a distinction between two dispositions characteristic of the two sides of the

split : the semiotic and the symbolic, corresponding roughly to primary and secondary processes respectively. The transcendental ego or the unified subject is homogenous to meaning and is established by the thetic phase ; however the heterogeneity of the drives constantly threatens this unity. Thus the semiotic may intervene or emerge in the symbolic.

The 'otherness' of poetic language marked by dialogism and intertextuality is thus generated in or motivated by the semiotic disposition (the operations of the drive), itself necessarily defined as a unlimited process. This accounts for the fact that poetic language is a signifying practice in which there is a constant clash between a law and a process, and in which a transformation of that law may be effected. It is therefore only by accounting for the subject as split that semiotics develops as a materialist theory, able to account for the double embedding of the text in the social and in the unconscious indicating precisely the same synthesis as that of language and style in écriture, postulated by Barthes. But it is also because the text inscribes in its surface (in the pheno-text) social structures which are in a constant process of transformation that the text is not a sign, since it is never stable :

> "S'il dérange et transforme le système sémiotique que règle l'échange social, et en même temps dispose dans les instances discursives les instances actives du processus social, le text ne saura se construire comme un signe ni dans le premier ne dans le second temps de son articulation, ni dans son ensemble." (1979:12)

This is the point at which the paths of Kristeva and of Barthes seperate, since for Barthes, the text may have some freedom in the moment of its inscription, but not at the moment of its consumption, at which point it will be returned to the writer as a 'hardened form', or precisely as a sign. *This is the basis of* their diverging conceptions of the functions of the literary text.

The critique of the sign is necessitated by the view of the text as a transformative practice, marked not by signification but by signifiance, i.e. a process of signification which is radically unstable. Kristeva shows that the stability of the sign, which enables it to ensure an exchange in communication, is illusory, since it is subtended by an unstable process which may be elided, but which may also subvert the notion of sign. In discussing Kristeva's critique of the sign, three major areas present themselves : 1)the determination of a logic which may account for the discursive operations specific to poetic language; 2)the distinction between the semiotic and symbolic dispositions which motivate these operations; 3)the specific relation to the body implicated by the literary text.2

4.2 Poetic language as a paragrammaticism

We have so far spoken of the logic of poetic language as being 'other' than or 'different' to that of the linguistic code. This is however potentially misleading. Poetic language may be best defined as the infinity of the linguistic code, since it is only in poetic language that all the possibilities of that code may be explored and actualised. The linguistic code of that very broad and very vague category of 'ordinary' or 'every-day' language is

limited by a linear logic, which is accessible to and may be wholly determined by a scientific logic, which however has been elaborated by a society in order to explain itself, and therefore bears the traces of a particular system of thought. The ideological co-ordinates of such a logic are evident. A discrepancy arises then, not between poetic and 'ordinary' language, but between this scientific logic and poetic logic, which is not a linear but a <u>complementary</u> logic. In this case, poetic language no longer appears as a deviation from or violation of a norm, but as a discursive practice which <u>contains</u> the linear logic of the 'norm'. The linguistic code of the norm elides or obliterates the functioning of complementary logic, in order to establish subject-predicate structures, truth conditions, etc.3

Poetic language therefore contains both the law and its destruction or transgression in a complementary logic which is both the linear logic of 'ordinary' language and the infinity of the linguistic code :

> "Le lp (langage poétique) est une dyade inséparable de la <u>loi</u> (celle du discours usuel) et de sa <u>destruction</u> (spécifique du texte poétique), et cette coexistence indivisible du "+" et du "-" <u>est la complémentarité constitutive</u> du langage poétique, une complémentarité qui surgit à tous les niveaux des articulations textuelles non-monologiques (paragrammatiques)." (1979:118)ii

From this passage we may characterise paragrammaticism as 1) coinciding with non-monological and therefore dialogical (ambivalent) articulations and 2) a complementary logic which

simultaneously negates and affirms a recognised symbolic law.

The term paragrammatisme is taken from Saussure's Anagrammes, in which, on the basis of 1) anagrammatic relations laid down in a text, whereby the elements of a theme-word may be extended throughout the text, or in sequences of varied length, 2) the correspondences amongst the elements (e.g. rhyme), 3) the transgression of grammar by the binary laws of poetic language, it is shown that poetic language "donne une seconde façon d'être, factice, ajoutée pour ainsi dire, à l'original du mot". (quoted in 1979:114)[iii] These principles are the basis of a paragrammatic conception of poetic language, from which Kristeva derives her definition of poetic language as being the only infinity of the code, as being an écriture-lecture, and as being a network of connections.

The fact that poetic language is an écriture-lecture is implied in the definition of the text as an intertextuality, in which various texts coexist. These texts may initially be distinguished of those of the subject and the addressee, every text being a dialogue, and implying at least the double. A third dimension may be added to this, and that is the foreign text, made up of not only social and historical texts but of all the texts ever read by the author (in which social and historical texts are inscribed). Since the minimal sequence of paragrams is double, the logic of paragrams is not that of 'scientific logic' which are monological, held by 0-1 logic whereby a proposition may be true or false, existent or non-existent, rational or irrational, but not both at the same time. The procedures of 0-1 logic are geared towards identification, description, partition, non-contradiction, and the establishment of truth. The paragrammatic

text does not however exclude this logic, but is a coexistence of a monologic discourse and of a discourse which destroys monologism. Although monologism is transgressed it nevertheless remains implicit. This must necessarily be the case, since without the 1 of monologism, the text would have no meaning; without the interdiction of the 1 (meaning, sense), there could be no possibility of transgression, and therefore no paragram based upon the 2 of dialogism (ambivalence). In contradistinction to linear logic, which extends from 0 to 1, the paragram extends from 0 to 2 (0-2 logic).

Two further consequences may be drawn from the dialogism of the paragram : 1) the paragram is a set (ensemble) made up of at least two elements. Therefore Kristeva postulates that the modes of juncture of its sequences, and the rules which pertain in the paragrammatic network may be determined by the operations and theorems of set theory (theorie des ensembles).
2) Since the 'whole' of poetic language is made up of sequences in relation to one one another, it is a spatialisation and a putting into relation of sequences. This distinguishes the paragram from the sign, which always implies a linear division (signifier - signified, Sa - Se). For this reason, the relations within the text, and between texts must be formalised in terms of a complementary logic. Poetic language is thus not an anomaly or the irrational, since logical laws do pertain.

The first step in this formalisation is the conception of the paragrammatic network as a tabular model in which the pluridetermination of meaning is designated by a dynamic and spatial graphism ('graphisme dynamique et spatial' (1979:123)).

Within this tabular model, the elements of the network are seen as a dynamic mark, or as a moving gram (paragramme) "qui fait plutôt qu'il n'exprime' un sens." (1979:123)[4] iv The gram refers to at least one other gram - i.e. the dialogical relation.[5] The grams within the tabular model are then isolated as partial grams, and distinguished into sub-grams. This does not however imply a hierarchisation, since the grams are merely the expansion of a function which may appear at different levels, but which are all related to the expansion of the theme-word which overdetermines the network. It is precisely this function which may be defined as dialogical, and governed by 0-2 logic.

The grams are thus distinguished into grams of writing and grams of reading ('grammes scripturaux et grammes lecturaux'). The grams of writing may be further subdivided into three sub-grams : the phonetic, the semic and the syntagmatic; the grams of reading into two : the foreign text as a memory and as citation.

The formalisation of the function regulating the relations within and between the sub-grams , and between partial grams allows one to see very clearly the role of the empty set or of neutralisation in the production of meaning.

i) In the phonetic grams of writing, Kristeva takes as an example a passage from Lautréamont's Chants de Maldoror[6] and shows the anagrammatic relations at work there . Briefly, the passage is divided into two sections, the first dealing with the body of man, its materiality and the second with his conscience. (H1 and H2 (homme)). These are further subdivided into smaller sequences (A-E), all dealing with material or romantic aspects of man. It

is then shown that the word 'phallus' is phonetically inscribed into each of the sequences, and functions as the word-function at the basis of the utterance. The word-function, by a series of permutations of itself, has 'charged' the univocal meanings of the morphemes with a complementary signification, and the text, or sequences of a text may clearly be seen as expansions of a function. In this way the signifier - signified distinction is reduced, (i.e. since there is no longer a univocal relation between the two) and "le signe linguistique apparaît comme dynamisme que procède par charge quantique." (1970:126) The sign as stable unity is then revealed as being illusory.

ii) The expansion of a basic function is again evident in the semic grams of writing. Using the same passage it is shown that semic grams are held by two types of functions or relations : 'surjective' and 'injective'. 'Surjective' relations are operative where every element or seme of one series is related to or is the image of at least one element of another series, but the relation remains undefined. Injective relations/functions are operative where the relation is defined, in which case a function 'f' will be an injective application[7]. These relations hold both within and between series and show that the signification of poetic language is elaborated by relations or applications which establish equivalences amongst primary linguistic levels, which initially exclude equivalences. The semes or 'points' of signification are immediately reabsorbed into poetic functioning, and may never be said to halt at any particular re[illegible].

Surjective and injective functions result in an application of the basic function in the entire text, such that, in the same way

as was evident in phonetic grams, every sequence or series carries the global message of the text. This implies that set theory may be used to formalise these relations. Kristeva further postulates that the functioning of poetic language obeys the principle of the axiom of choice, which stipulates that 'there exists a univocal correspondance, represented by a class, which associates one of its elements to each of the non-empty sets of the system.' (1979:126)[8] This explains how the basic function of the text - its message - comes to be inscribed, by surjective or injective relations, in each sequence (non-empty set) of the text.

The generalised theorem of existence may in this case be used as a meta-theorem without which the above could not be posited. The theorem of existence postulates the following :

"If $\varphi(x_1,\ldots,x_n)$ is a primitive propositional function which contains no other free variables than $x_1,\ldots,x_n$, without it being necessary that it contains them all, there exists a class A such that, whatever the sets $x_1,\ldots,x_n$ may be,

$\langle x_1,\ldots,x_n\rangle \in A. \equiv . \varphi(x_1,\ldots,x_n).$" (1979:128)[9]

In poetic language, this means that the different functions are equivalent to the function which englobes them all. This theorem is important to poetic language since it permits its formalisation based not on causality but on the principle of expansion, and because it allows one to see that to work the signification of a language, means precisely to expand a signification such that it exists in all the relations of the text. A text which limits itself only to $(x_1,\ldots,x_n)$ is an incomplete poetic code, since what must be established in poetic functioning is a class such that :

$$\langle x_1,\ldots,x_n\rangle \in A. \equiv .\varphi(x_1,\ldots,x_n)$$

The axiom of choice, which implies constructibility, and the theorem of existance based simply on expansion explain the impossibility of establishing a contradiction in the space of poetic language. Interdiction exists in poetic language as a limit which at the same time as it is posited, is transgressed. Thus poetic language is a system of signification in which the affirmation and negation of a law occurs simultaneously. Therefore it is the only system in which contradiction is not a non-meaning or non-sense (since these terms lose their validity) but a defining feature and in which negation and not affirmation determines significations. It is also the only system in which empty sets are a particularly significant mode of linking sequences. This leads to the definition of poetic language as an undecidable formalism, which does not seek resolution.

> "Projetant ce raisonnement sur un fond linguistique nous arrivons à l'idée qu'à la base des mathématiques (et par extension, des stuctures du langage) on trouve les contradictions qui sont non seulement inhérentes, mais indestructibles, constituantes et non modifiables, le "texte" étant la coexistence d'opposition, une démonstration que 0≠0." (1979:130)[vi]

iii) It is in the syntagmatic grams of writing that the significance of empty sets is most evident. Kristeva postulates that one of the laws of the syntagmatic articulation of paragrams is the transformation of nothingness into a whole : this process is achieved by the fact that paragrammatic writing constructs itself on the basis of empty sets and of disjunctive totals Empty sets are caused by exclusive oppositional dyads (e.g. blood-tear, excrement- gold, etc. $A \cap B = \emptyset$) Disjunctive totals come about

when the terms of an oppositional dyad are considered as having certain semes in common (e.g. blood - tear have the seme "liquid" in common) but the dyad is still formed by elements or by the disjunctive total of all the elements which they do not have in common (S = A ∨ B or D=A∨B, where "or" is exclusive). Thus the disjunctive total also operates as an empty set. In this way the paragrammatic syntagm is formed by the linking together of sequences or of words by virtue of mutually exclusive grams, and not by any causal mechanism. The relations which exist within and between sequences, spoken of above, are then made possible by a syntagmatic articulation functioning according to the formation of empty sets, or even solely to produce empty sets. This formation of empty sets is, Kristeva says, following Lautreamont, the modesty of écriture : its refusal to codify. It is with Barthes' analysis of Butor's Mobile, of Bataille's Histoire de l'oeil[10] and most significantly of Balzac's Sarrasine that it becomes evident that the empty set, the functioning of which is dramatised by the text, is in fact the condition of possibility of all codification, and is the structural law of articulation.

The formation of sequences by the law of the empty set, revealed by Kristeva in an analysis of Chants de Maldoror, is shown to result in the immediate annihilation of the sequence, which, although it is structurally a 0 (a non-meaning) does signify : "le texte se structurant comme une chaine de zéros signifiants, conteste non seulement le système du code (romantisme,humanisme) avec lequel il dialogue, mais aussi sa propre texture."[vii] (L/9:132)

Nothingness is transformed into a whole by this construction of

'signifying zeros' : the zero is not non-signifying, but functions in the significatory space of 0-2. The emptiness of the empty set is not a nothingness in the paragram, by the fact that it is constructed as an opposing double - there can be no silence in the paragram. Therefore, both an undivided 1 and an empty 0 are excluded in the paragram, in which the 0 is simultaneously a 2, and so is never a stable 0.

> "Examinons de plus près cette "numérologie" paragrammatique, qui ne connaît ni 1 ni 0 mais 2 et tout. L'unité est vide, ne compte pas, le un est 0 mais il signifie : il commande l'espace entier du paragramme, il est là pour centrer, mais le paragramme refuse de lui prêter une valeur (un sens stable). Cette "unité" n'est pas une synthèse de A et de B; mais elle vaut un parce qu'elle est tout, et en même temps elle ne peut se distinguer de deux car c'est en elle que se résorbent tous les semes contrastant et qui s'opposent mais aussi s'unissent." (1979:132)[viii]

What must be kept in mind is the transformation of the zero into two, or an oppositional dyad, which never gains stability, but which at the same time functions as the whole (the text) and therefore as one, from which however, division is immediately relaunched, since this 1 is that which englobes or reabsorbs all the semic oppositions. The text (one) is constantly prevented from finding a unity, and is therefore radically unstable : thus its own texture is put into question. Poetic language thus does not function as a system : "étant un double, elle se nie elle-même en niant..." (1979:133)[ix]

4.3 Signifying zeros

The construction of signfying zeros is operated by the syntagmatic grams of writing, and therefore by the process of écriture as a spatial category, as it is defined by Kristeva Le Texte du Roman[11]. The instability of the topological space of écriture as a paragrammatism is thus due to the unbeltable flow between 0 and 2, with a 1 whose interdiction and transgression is always implicit. This process may be found at every level of the construction of the text, from écriture-lecture as the broadest defining category of poetic language, to the anagrammatic relations between phonetic grams, and surjective / injective functions between semic grams. The formation of this network, in which the basic function of the text is inscribed into each of its sequences, is explained by Kristeva by the use of set theory. The use of this model is particularly significant, since one of its principles is that in order for the system to function at all an empty set must be postulated.

The possibility of a process based on the expansion of a basic function, resulting however in the formation of oppositional dyads the terms of which exist simultaneously, and are never marked (neither of the terms may ever become 1)in poetic language, is due to the fact that poetic language, as the only infinity of the code, is the only 'system' which can simultaneously negate and affirm. In this way, the negation of disjunction implicit in the ideologems of the sign is completed, and results in the formation of the infinity complementary to bipartition with permutation of terms, effectively making any form of hierarchisation or closure impossible. The negation of the paragram is thus a radical negation, ultimately negating even

itself. There is thus no possibility of priveleging the text, since it can never be marked as 1. As we have seen, in Kristeva's analysis simultaneous negation and affirmation or complementary negation produces zeros which continue to signify and which are not 'nothingness'. What must now be examined is whether the notion of signifying zeros is not in fact an occlusion of the emptiness of the empty set, a filling in of its nothingness, in terms of the Deleuzian model.

For Kristeva, at least in "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes" this question would be irrelevant, since what she is primarily concerned with is the type of negation which operates in poetic language. The zero may signify, but it does not hierarchise, in fact it radically undermines the possiblity of establishing a hierarchy - it does not signify 1 but 2, simultaneously. Thus it signifies - but what it signifies is a contrediction, which does not however become a non-sense (0). What the Chants de Maldoror reveal is the possibility of continuing to signify outside the closure of the 0-1 logic of the sign, in this way undermining the status of this logic as law. But what must yet be shown is that the empty set is not in fact formed, that it is instead an a priori condition of possibility which makes all significations and codifications possible[12].

4.4 Negation and the subject

"Poésie et négativité"(1979:185-217), focussing once again on the type of negation operated in poetic language, in a sense fills in the space around the formalisation of poetic language attempted in "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes". Every level of the functioning of this particular signifying practice is accounted for by an orthocomplementary structure, borrowed from Dedekind, which is a simplification of the mathematico-logical structure used in the earlier essay, but in which the theorem of existence and the axiom of choice may still be inserted. In "Poésie et négativité", which takes the premise that signifying practices may be analysed in their specificity by an analysis of the operation of negation specific to them, as a starting point, Kristeva links negation to the subject, and thereby opens the way to the distinction between semiotic and symbolic dispositions in La Révolution du langage poétique (1974).

4.4.1 Negation and the Logos

The logical operation of negation is at the basis of every symbolic activity, since it is through negation that differentiation may be instituted. Thus it is the type of negation and hence the manner of differentiating between two units, and the relations which articulate these differences which lead to a typology of discourses. Within the Logos, or the logic of the word, there are two types of negation. The first is the negation of the logic of judgement in which the negated term is acknowledged as being at the origin of meaning (the word), but is censored in a negation - Aufhebung, or a triadic negation (negate, suppress, conserve - 'foncièrement soulever'). The second is the negation internal to judgement, which is not a

triadic negation,but which is instead governed by the law of the excluded third term, whereby the negated term is excluded. It is the non-existent and the ex-logical. This is the negation which defines what it is to speak for Plato,the most fundamental principle being that a non-existent entity cannot be spoken. When negation is acknowledged and hence conserved as the fundamental procedure of signification, as in the logic of judgement, the non-existent and the existent are englobed in the act of signification, which is in this case the utterance. The utterance is then marked by the coexistence of the logical and the extralogical. Plato finds that it is in the artistic utterance in particular that such a coexistence occurs, a coexistence to which he refers as 'the supreme degree of inextricability' or the process in which "le Non-Être s'entrelace à l'Être, et cela d'une façon tout à fait déroutante." (1979:190)[x]

4.4.2 Non-synthatic reunions

Basing her analysis on the assumptions that poetic language is an 'anomalous' discourse, which at the same time points to a different way of signifying and hence a different type of negation, Kristeva endeavours to characterise what on the level of the poetic signified falls within and without the logic of the Logos, which, need we say it, is a 0-1 logic, marking every term as true/false, existent/non-existent, rational/irrational, meaning/non-meaning. Because the poetic signified 1) is both concrete and non-individual (in contradistinction to 'ordinary' language, which is either concrete and individual, or general, but not both at the same time) and 2) both has and does not have a referent, since in any standard poetic metaphor, the signified is both existent at one level, but non-existent at another, it

may be said to be a non-synthetic reunion (A ⊖ B) which is simultaneously an affirmation, a negation, and a negation of the negation; i.e. 1)it utters a non-existent term (the example used is Baudelaire's "meubles voloptueux" - voluptuous furniture), thus affirming a non-existence, 2)it negates the affirmation, by the existence within it of 0-1 logic ('voluptuous furniture does not exist') and 3) it negates the negation ('it is not true that voluptuous furniture does not exist'). However, these functions are not the three stages of triadic negation; since they take place contemporaneously within the space in which the words 'voluptuous furniture' are inscribed[13], the negation of the poetic signified is a reunion of the three stages in one operation. Thus the bivalent logic of the Logos is implicit to the poetic signified, and is moreover the only perspective from which it is accessible to us - as 'rational' subjects. Within poetic language however, this is reversed, and bivalent logic functions only as a limit, or only as one particular instance of the actualisation of the infinity of the code, within which poetic language functions. Thus, as in "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes", the complementarity of the Logos and of poetic language must be posited, and once again it may be said that poetic significations are produced in a complex movement of simultaneous negation and affirmation. We may then postulate that 'application' or articulation by the syntagmatic grams of writing in the paragram, is the means by which an affirmation of a non-existent term is made on the basis of an intersection of semes coming from different series or classes, but that articulation itself is made possible by the negation of the negation.

4.4.3 Observable and inobservable

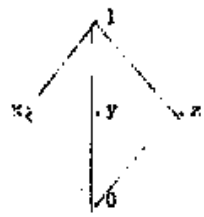
Kristeva accounts for the existence of 0-1 logic as a limit which is transgressed by distinguishing between two levels of semantic articulation : the observable and the inobservable. The observable level is 'the grammatical combination of lexical units as sememes' and simply the combination of words, and the inobservable level is that of 'a complex and multivocal operation between the semes of those lexemes and the numerous effects of signification which these lexemes provoke when they are replaced in the intertextual space or different possible contexts.' (1979:197). The latter is the level in which the paragrammatism of poetic language can be located - a network of relations formalisable by the theorem of existence and the axiom of choice, and in which effects of signification are produced which may be termed connotative effects. Thus it coincides with Barthes'definition of écriture as a technique, which produces effects only by connotations.

Kristeva goes on to show that certain logical laws are not valid for the inobservable level of the text, but may be valid for the observable level. Thus the laws of idempotency and of commutation do not hold since the repetition of a term will produce a change of meaning at the inobservable level (whereas repetition produces no change in non-poetic language), and since the ordering of the terms of a poetic utterance, in which even the spatial layout is significant, may not by changed without entailing a concommitant change in meaning. The law of distribution (the different interpretations of a signifying unit may be combined to produce its global meaning) may be valid for the observable level of the text, but states nothing about the

specifity of the inobservable level. The laws of association and absorption are valid for the inobservable level, expressing the possibility of applying semic units onto each other and therefore the expansion of the basic function, expressed by the theorem of existence and the axiom of choice. The law of modulation is attenuated since it is a combination of the laws of distribution and of association.

The relation of poetic language to 0-1 logic underlies the validity or non-validity of each of the six functions, however. Thus, while the law of distribution may or may not hold for poetic language, by the particular status of 0-1 logic, which similarly does and does not hold, the law of distribution may be said to be invalid (since, like 0-1 logic, it does not designate its specificity). Furthermore, the law of distribution contains within itself both of the other invalid laws. Therefore, the specificity of poetic language is fundamentally marked by the non-validity of two laws: the law of distribution, and the law of the excluded middle[14]. There are thus two possibilities open to a semiotic analysis of poetic language : the first is to search for a completely different logic, which could account for each of the innumerable figures of poetic language. The second is to use an existent logic which does not necessitate either one of the non-valid laws, while maintaining the other laws. At this point, Kristeva introduces Dedekind's orthocomplementary structure, which is not bivalent (X.X', X' being all that is not X, and thus implying an infinity of possible terms) and which does not exclude the negated term. But neither does it exclude the possibility of 0-1 logic. This type of structure thus allows for the functioning of 0-1 logic while not being defineable by it, as well as for the indeterminacy and plurality of paragrammaticism.

Kristeva uses the following diagram to demonstrate this:



in which 0 and 1 are orthocomplementary only to each other, and x,y and z have two orthocomplements each. Thus 0 and 1 would designate the observable level in which the laws of distribution and of the excluded third term are valid, and x,y and z designate the inobservable level of the paragrammatic space. The semantic unit is doubled, participating at once in 0-1 logic and the pluridimensional negation of this logic, wherein the relations between x,y and z are determinable by set theory, and as was shown in "Pour une semiologie des paragrammes" result in the production of signifying zeros or empty sets. This is precisely the 'other scene' in which écriture functions, the empty space ("sur quelque surface vacante et supérieure" - Mallarmé[15]) which is accessible to us only from the logic of the Logos. This is the point at which a type of negation may be seen as constructing a particular type of subject.

4.4.4 The speaking subject and the zerological subject

The rational subject, constituted by the triadic negation of the Logos cannot think the non-synthetic reunion of the poetic signified. The significations of the text are available to this subject only in so far as they are correlated to 0-1 logic, i.e. only in so far as it can understand 0-1 logic as being either negated or affirmed. This accounts for the fact that the text is

assimilated to irrational discourse by our civilisation. The orthocomplementary structure is thus the only structure which could be used by us, the rational, judging subject, since it allows for the inclusion of the Logos. For poetic language, the logic of the Logos is a distant limit, eclipsed by the hazardous activity of producing new meanings. By insisting on the existence of the Logos in the text, it may in fact be distinguished from the discourse of madness :

> "Ces coordonnées 0-1 sont là, toujours présentes à la lecture mais mises entre parenthèses, pour rappeler la différence fondamentale entre le discours "fou" (qui les ignore) et le travail transgressif de l'écriture poétique (qui les sait), ce travail qui, à l'intérieur du système de la parole - du système social -, déplace les limites de la parole et la remplit de nouvelles structures (orthocomplémentaires) que cette parole avec le sujet scientifique vient un jour découvrir." (1979:207)[xi]

It is thus not the rational subject of the Logos which is implicated in the paragrammatic space, in which new significations may be produced. Neither is it the split speaking subject, which Freud discovers to be constituted by the operation of denial (Verneinung), and which calls to mind the Hegelian Aufhebung, since it too is triadic - a repressed element is negated, but conserved and thus remains repressed. ("I hate you" becomes "I see that I do not hate you", but "hate" is still repressed) [illegible] scious is constituted or emerges in the line of this co[illegible] judgement ("I say that I do not hate you"). Through denial, the conscious obtains a degree of independence

from the constraints of the pleasure principle; denial operating in precisely the same way as the Aufhebung, then is at the basis of the constitution of the "intelligent" judging subject, the speaking subject which implicates the word (Logos), the sign : "l'operation - Aufhebung n'est repérable qu'à partir du lieu du sujet = de la parole = du signe" (1979:211)[xii] Thus the terms which must be thought together in the universe of the Logos are : triadic negation - 0-1 logic - sign - speaking subject. If any one of these is disturbed, it will bring about a corresponding disturbance throughout the whole edifice. The unconsious, which is necessarily implicated by the speaking subject is the one 'rebellious' zone, yet it is precisely that zone in which the repressed term - the excluded third term, or the ex-logical term is located. This does not imply that the unconscious is the area which coincides with a pure paragrammatic space, however, since the unconscious is defined from the perspective of the rational subject. as containing the residues which cannot function in rational discourse. It would then seem that it is rationality that is operative, and from which the unconscious may achieve some freedom in the dream and in the fantasy, but still remain bound to it This is exactly the same way as the poetic text is viewed by a society regulated by the Logos - or even by those texts which remain within this perspective, functioning as expression and as representation - as sign. It is for this reason that, as we shall see, the realist texts, or all texts of expression, shares the structure and function of the fantasy.

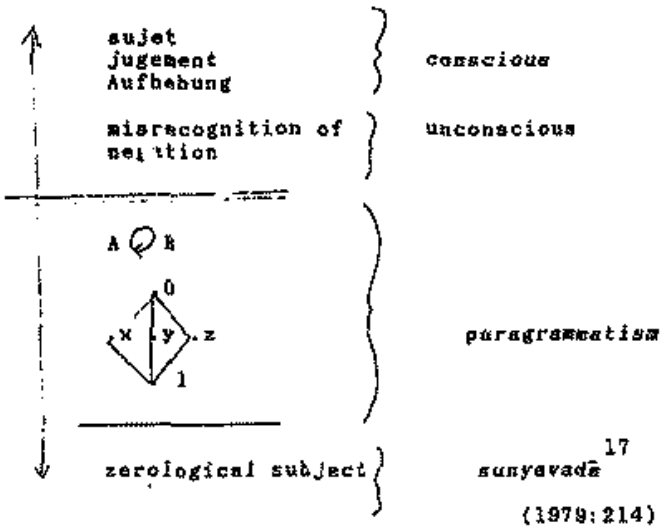
Thus the non-synthetic reunion of paragrammatism cannot be operated by the speaking subject, but is instead a production of signification which does not implicate a subject as we know it. When the relation of the sign to the denotatum is reduced to

zero, as is the case in the paragrammatic network, which produces only connotative effects, the subject, which appears at the same time as a denotative sign, is reduced to zero as well. Non-synthetic reunion is a generalised negativity, which dissolves the subject and designates a space in which signifiers annul each other. The subject implicated by paragrammatism is the zero degree of the subject : "un sujet 'zérologique' vient assumer cette pensée qui s'annule" (1979:212)[xix]. The significations which are produced by this structuration, cannot be identifed or recuperated by the structure of fantasy, precisely because it cannot be thought in the space of the sign : one cannot in this case speak of an unconscious.

Poetic language is not however a pure paragrammatism. The empty space of the zerological subject, and of annulled signifiers, is at the opposite pole to the Logos with its speaking subject. In this case poetic language may be the fusion of these two spaces in an incessant flow between the two.

> "...le paragrammatisme est pour nous (et nous nous permettons de paraphraser ici Lacan) un concept formé sur la voie de ce qui opère pour lier la déconstitution du sujet à sa constitution, la déconstitution de la parole à la constitution du texte, la déconstitution du signe à la constitution de l'écriture" (1979:213)[xiii]

This is demonstrated in the following diagram :



(1979:214)

4.4.5 Signifiance and the sign

Reading this structure in relation to that revealed in "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes", we see that there is a direct relationship between the type of subject implied by a *discourse* and the production of meaning. The signifying zeros of the paragram are produced by the application of exclusive semes to form semantic units which are empty sets (*contradictory and* exclusive) but which nonetheless not only continue to signify, but produce new significations. The production of new significations is only possible where the speaking *subject has no* sway, and therefore only where the discourse cannot function as a sign. It is only where signification is neutralised by a simultaneous negation and affirmation, or a *generalised negation* that a production of significations may occur in an incessant flow which prevents the discourse from constructing itself as a sign. Whether it will not ultimately *function as a sign* is questionable. The new significations produced by signifing zeros

result in a displacement of the limits of the Logos, and may be 'discovered by the word together with its scentific subject'. Thus they may be inserted into the Logos, added to its logical laws but "n'en donne pas moins un résultat que la société se communique, échange (...) comme une représentation d'un processus de production inobservable" (1979:209)[xv] Paragrammatism may then *be compared to Barthes' conception of the poetic text as striving* to reach a pre-semiological state, which is however immediately recuperated by myth to function as the pure signifier of poetry in general. New significations produced by poetic language - or more precisely 'signifiance' as an unhaltable process of signification - cannot therefore 'displace the limit of the word' since this very insertion into the law of the Logos is at the *same time its recuperation. They do not function as different* possibilities which may be glimpsed beyond 0-1 logic, precisely because their status as 'signifiance' is immediately transformed into a sign, which may be recuperated, exchanged, categorised in the class of the irrational - signifiance, like écriture, becomes a hardened form. Kristeva herself gives the best indication of the inevitability of this hardening, by showing that the text is *available to us only from the perspective of 0-1 logic, that is* from the perspective of the sign, and thus it is intelligible to us only in so far as it is a sign. Despite the fact that it is a sign of 'another space', by the very fact that this other space may be signified, its transgression of the law is crippled. Once again, écriture has freedom only at its source, but never at the moment of its consumption.

4.5 A typology

On the basis of the articles "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes" and "Poésie et négativité", a typology of texts may be made, similar to Barthes" distinction between readerly and writerly texts in S/Z(1970). From the Kristevean perspective, the crucial factor in a typology of this kind, is the question of negation. If we see the triadic negation of 0-1 logic as one pole of a continuum, and the generalised negativity of paragrammatism as the opposite pole, the text could be placed at a certain point in this continuum, depending on where point in the production of significations the limit of 0-1 logic is brought to bear and to what extent it is transgressed. Although all texts participate in both paragrammatism and the logic of the Logos, a distinction could be made between those texts which approach their own language from the perspective of 0-1 logic, *or from that of* paragrammatism : between those texts which operate primarily from 'above' the signifying practice, that is from the observable level, and those which operate from beneath - the question of *'approach' being the only freedom* the writer has. Thus texts of the first type would be construed as a sign both at the moment of their production and of their consumption, while texts of the second type would be construed as a sign only at the moment of their consumption[18]. For the sake of convenience, the texts could be labelled texts of the Logos and texts of the paragram, respectively.

Logos	Paragram
0-1 logic	0-2 logic
monologism	dialogism
phoneticism	écriture - 'graphism'
linear	pluridimensional
triadic negation	generalised negativity
hierarchising / finite	non-hierarchising / infinite
expressive /representational	non-expressive / non-representational
sign	significance
speaking subject	zerological subject

The purpose of doing a typology of this type is to then establish a comparison between the Barthian and Kristevean procedures, which would explain the differences in their conception of the 'social' function of the literary text. Point for point, there are no real contradictions between the two conceptions : in fact an application of one conception on the other usually leads to an elucidation of both theories. One finds that the understanding of paragrammatic texts is complementary to that of writerly texts, for example, or even in most instances to the broader category of écriture as the responsibility of form, and vice versa. If there is a difference then, it can only be one of procedure, of starting points and perspectives. The crucial difference between the two procedures is on the one hand the definition of paragrammatism from the perspective of negation and the concomitant logical structure, and on the other the definition of écriture as articulatory technique. It is this difference, which although leading both theorists along the same trajectory, causes them to finally locate themselves at different

positions. *Kristeva's view of the text as* transformation is formed precisely because she starts off with the sign and its particular ideologème. This category in turn is formed by the acception of negation as the crucial factor in the specification of discourses, leading to the linking of negation to the specification of the subject. There is no doubt that Kristeva is successful in her project of doing a critique of the sign : its status as law is no longer tenable, the processes underlying it are revealed, as are the structures *underlying the limiting or* halting of these processes. However Barthes, precisely because he starts off from an ethics, from the structure of Myth and denotative and connotative discourse, or perhaps because he is also a critic, is led to consider the problems of articulation : *how does* the text signify? what does it or can it signify? Although Kristeva produces a far more revolutionary theory of 'engagement' it is Barthes who is more conscious of the alienation of the writer from society, or of the conditions under which the writer is permitted to exist : it is finally Barthes for whom the problematic of commitment remains almost obsessional - one could even use the term 'tragic' here if it were not too histrionic a word. Perhaps because, right from Writing Degree Zero *Barthes is hyper-conscious* of the fact that écriture is a double-sided function, which frees but which also limits, binds the text to society, but severs the link as soon as soon as it circulates in that society, it is always the solitude of writing that one is brought back to, its unsociability. The question which both Barthes and Kristeva ask themselves from the outset is that of the exclusion of the text from the Logos, from praxis: for Kristeva this exclusion leads to transformation, for Barthes to the much more *limited activity of revelation*. An activity

which however cuts through layer upon layer of stagnated significations to reveal ultimately the void which makes them possible. Kristeva's zeros signify - Barthes' do not, cannot - and it is ultimately through the revelation of this shifting nothingness that the writer achieves at one and the same moment two of his options : to apply his technique responsibly and to fall silent - to scuttle his trade. Kristeva's zeros produce new significations, Barthes' produce knowledge - but a negative knowledge which does not state. It is under the conditions of an ethic and its limitation, of that which it is impossible to state that Barthes produces a critique of articulation.

NOTES

1. *The thetic phase is operated* by the mirror stage and the castration complex. Traversal of the thetic phase makes it possible for the infant to gain a unified identity and thus *to enter into the symbolic* - i.e. the acquisition of a signifying place in language. See La Révolution du langage poetique (1974:41-50).
2. *The second and third points* will be discussed in chapter 6.
3. Kristeva specifies this further by the following :
   "For us poetic language is not a code englobing the others, *but a class A which has the same power as the function* $\varphi(x_1 \ldots x_n)$ of the infinity of the linguistic code, and all the 'other languages' ('ordinary' language, 'metalanguages', *etc,) are quotients of A over more restricted areas* (limited by the laws of the subject-predicate construction, for example, as being at the basis of formal logic), and *camouflaging by means of limitations,* the morphology of the function $\varphi(x_1 \ldots x_n)$." (1979:117)
4. The moving '$\overline{gram}_1 \ldots \overline{gram}_n$' bears a strong resemblance to Derrida's *notion of 'trace'. See "La Difference"* (1968:41-66).
5. The grams may also be seen as the summits of a graph, as in Konig's theory. (1979:123)
6. *The passage from* Les Chants de Maldoror is the following :
   "Il y a des heures dans la vie ou l'homme, à la chevelure pouilleuse (A) jette, l'oeil fixe (B), des regards fauves (C) *sur les membranes vertes de l'espace* (D); car, il lui semble entendre devant lui, les ironiques huées d'un fantôme (E). Il chancelle et courbe la tête : ce qu'il a entendu, *c'est la voix de la conscience.*" Lautréamont (1966:164)

where A - E designates the sequences of the passage, and the underlined phrases the phonetic and graphic correspondances.

7. Formulae for surjective and injective relations are B(A)=B and f(a)=f(b) ⇒ a=b (a,b A) respectively.

8. $(\exists A)\{An\ (A).(x)[\sim Em(x).\supset.(\exists y)[y \in x.<yx> \in A]]\}$

where $(\exists A)$ - 'there exists an A such that'

An A - 'A is univocal'

Em (x) - 'the class x is empty'

$<xy>$ - 'the ordered pair of x and y'

$\in$ - 'binary relation'

$\sim$ - 'non'

. - 'and'

$\supset$ - 'implies'

9. The theorem of existence as a metatheorem has the same status as semiotics. Notation as above.

10. See chapter 5.

11. See chapter 2.

12. The other 'accident' (i.e. the loss of accompaniment of the *empty set, or its complete emptying*) to which the structure is prone, must also be considered. This is the point at which the notions of an unstable and dispersed subject and of desire carry much significance. See chapter 6.

13. The simultaneous negation and affirmation operated in paragrammatism is possible only on the basis of the activity of writing as a graphism, and as a spatialisation. This is of course linked to the notion of intertextuality, which is the first evidence of this simultaneous negation and affirmation, and which itself is based on a spatialisation. See chapter 2 as well as Derrida : "La Double Séance" (Tel Quel : no 41-42) and "La Différance" (1968:41-66).

14. The law of the excluded middle states that a term may be

marked either by 0 or by 1, but not by both at the same time, as is the case in the paragram.

15. Mallarmé's 'Un coup de dés' (1945:457-477) is one of the best examples of the operations of the paragram.

16. In the same way as *there is no pure writerly text*. See chapter 5.

17. That is, the empty space in which signifiers are annulled.

18. This is problematic however, since the subject of the paragram is already its first reader. Consumption then operates at the same time as the paragram.

CHAPTER FIVE

BARTHES : THE CRITIQUE OF ARTICULATION

5.1 The critic

In this chapter it is Barthes the critic who will draw our attention. If the writer has a responsibility, the critic has one too: he too is committed to the medium of writing. Recalling the two categories of commentary which Barthes distinguishes in Critique et vérité (1966), the science of literature and literary criticism, Kristeva's semanalysis could be placed in the first, and Barthes' particular brand of criticism in the second.

The science of literature, Barthes states in this book, is concerned with the generation of possible, or acceptable meanings in the text. It is the reduction of all texts to the empty form whereby they are engendered, of all significations to the void of meaning which supports them. Kristeva takes this science of literature much further than was envisaged by Barthes here, where it could be seen as relating most aptly to the structuralism of Todorov and Greimas, for example. Neither does Barthes, at this point see the necessity of moving away from the linguistic model.

Criticism as it is envisaged by Barthes in Critique et vérité, does not use a 'model' at all, working within the symbolic functioning of the text, in which its plurality resides. Symbolic functioning itself is conceived very differently from Kristeva's symbolic law[1] The symbolic functioning of the text as it is envisaged by Barthes has much in common with the paragrammatic

space as defined by Kristeva : it lies beyond the observable or purely lexical, philological level of the text, being a secondary language 'floating' above this level, in which, by definition, a univocal meaning is impossible :

> "la langue symbolique à laquelle appartiennent les oeuvres littéraires est par structure une langue plurielle, dont le code est fait de telle sorte que toute parole (toute oeuvre), par lui engendrée, a des sens multiples" (1966:53)[i].

Symbolic functioning has much in common with the connotative system of écriture, although it cannot be restricted entirely to connotation, its plurality being far more radical. As Barthes shows in S/Z(1970), connotation is the apparatus of a limited plurality, whereas symbolic language is an absolute plurality. Symbolic functioning is the condition of existence of literature itself. If only univocal and denotative meanings were possible in language, that is if language where an absolutely sufficient system, in which there is no gap between the significatory system and the Real, Literature would not be possible. The language of literature thus functions by 'allusion', 'suggestion', 'evocation' which are not a matter of free play, but are engendered by a particular code. Barthes refers to Jakobson's definition of poetic language as being constitutively ambiguous, arrived at through the projection of the paradigm onto the syntagm, which then result in a play of equivalences and thus a dense and ambiguous message. Kristeva has formalised this functioning beyond this point : everything which applies to paragrammatism, applies also to symbolic functioning. Barthes uses this however to show that it is precisely because literature

can exist only in a plurality of meaning, in which ambiguity is absolutely pure, the text having no definitive context to limit its meanings, and thus existing only in the context of ambiguity, that it retains its value, and is open to a number of critical tools. Although, in contradistinction to the science of literature which is not interested in the meanings of the text, criticism's function is to assign a meaning to the text, the text cannot authenticate any of these meanings : they are all possible. The text is thus 'a form which history spends its time filling' : "l'oeuvre propose, l'homme dispose" (1966:52)[ii] But by the same token, because the text has no definitive situation, the work's 'truth' can reside only in the fact that it is language. This brings to mind Foucault's proposal that the 'textes du reseau' are those which recognise that their only 'a priori' is language. Directly from this stems the critical function of the work, in the specific sense of 'critique' :

> "Retirée de toute <u>situation</u>, l'oeuvre se donne par là-même a explorer : devant celui qui l'écrit ou la lit, elle devient une question posée au langage, dont on éprouve les fondements, dont on touche les limites. L'oeuvre se fait ainsi dépositaire d'une immense, d'une incessante enquête sur les mots. On veut toujours que le symbole ne soit qu'une propriété de l'imagination. Le symbole a aussi une fonction critique, et l'objet de sa critique, c'est le langage lui-même. Aux <u>Critiques de la Raison</u> que la philosophie nous a données, on peut imaginer d'ajouter une <u>Critique du Langage</u>, et c'est la littérature elle-même" (1966:55)[iii]

For the work to postulate itself as a critique is also, as we have seen, the only possibility of commitment open to it. Écriture, crit[illegible]s, responsibility of form are the terms which must be though together here. If this is the case, the responsibility of the critic, whose function it is to assign a meaning to the text, is to recognise this 'truth' : what this entails is the discovery not of a meaning, but of an absence of *meaning. The critic himself is forced to operate in the* symbolic functioning of the text, to add to the possible migrations of meanings, by following the constraints of the symbolic. That is he engenders a certain meaning, which is derived from the form of the text. The critic's procedure is that of a consistent enamorphosis or a regulated transformation, which must be coherent (indeed its only validity will be in its coherence, and *not in its truth): it must transform every element* of the text, according to certain laws[2] and always in the same direction. It is in the last of these conditions that the faithfulness of criticism to its object will be tested. And its object is not in fact the literary text but language, and ultimately the critic's own language. If the critic is limited to an 'investigation' of the symbolic functioning of the text, his own language too is *symbolic (secondary and engendering a plurality),* and adheres to the constraints of the symbol. The most fundamental constraint of the symbolic is the engendering of meanings around an absence. It is at this point that 'subjectivity' comes into question. Symbolic functioning brings the subject to acknowledge the fact that the language of the text is not its predicate : this language is the subject, "en sorte que toute écriture qui ne *veut pas désigne, non les attributs intérieurs du sujet, mais son* absence."[iv] (1966:70)

Symbolic functioning is structured around an absent subject : all it can designate is "le rien du je que je suis" (1966:70)[v]. Once again, if écriture cannot ultimately signify anything but a void, it is both because this is its condition of existence, and because it is the only truth it can designate, and thus the only form its responsibility can take[3]. The écriture of the critic is also caught in this condition "en sorte que la critique et l'oeuvre disent toujours : je suis littérature, et que, par leurs voix conjuguées, la littérature n'énonce jamais que l'absence du sujet." (1966:71)[vi]. Thus the écriture of the critic is responsible - committed - only to the extent to which it too is symbolic : the meaning it 'assigns' to the text is the absence of meaning on which the text is constructed, for there where one cannot speak of a subject, one cannot speak of meaning.

This is precisely the form of criticism we see Barthes put into practice in Critical Essays and in S/Z : criticism which becomes critique, in the most rigorous sense of the word. Symbolic criticism, as we may call it, replaces the 'truth' of interpretation with that of the condition of possibility of the text itself. This critical function, as Barthes points out, is inherently carried out in the text itself : scriptural and theoretical practice occur in the same space, one of the most fundamental premises of the Tel Quel project. Where it does not explicitly occur in the same space, we may speak of the readerly texts of S/Z. The distinction between readerly and writerly texts depends ultimately on whether the text explicitly carries out its critical function, or whether it occludes it. This is why the distinction is a question of 'value' : écriture, being the only choice the writer has, is the only point at which one may assign value to the text. The distinction between writerly and readerly

Symbolic functioning is structured around an absent subject : all it can designate is "le rien du je que je suis" (1966:70)[v]. Once again, if écriture cannot ultimately signify anything but a void, it is both because this is its condition of existence, and because it is the only truth it can designate, and thus the only form its responsibility can take[3]. The écriture of the critic is also caught in this condition "en sorte que le critique et l'oeuvre disent toujours : je suis littérature, et que, par leurs voix conjuguées, la littérature n'énonce jamais que l'absence du sujet." (1966:71)[vi]. Thus the écriture of the critic is responsible - committed - only to the extent to which it too is symbolic : the meaning it 'assigns' to the text is the absence of meaning on which the text is constructed, for there where one cannot speak of a subject, one cannot speak of meaning.

This is precisely the form of criticism we see Barthes put into practice in Critical Essays and in S/Z : criticism which becomes critique, in the most rigorous sense of the word. Symbolic criticism, as we may call it, replaces the 'truth' of interpretation with that of the condition of possibility of the text itself. This critical function, as Barthes points out, is inherently carried out in the text itself : scriptural and theoretical practice occur in the same space, one of the most fundamental premises of the Tel Quel project. Where it does not explicitly occur in the same space, we may speak of the readerly texts of S/Z. The distinction between readerly and writerly texts depends ultimately on whether the text explicitly carries out its critical function, or whether it occludes it. This is why the distinction is a question of 'value' : écriture, being the only choice the writer has, is the only point at which one may assign value to the text. The distinction between writerly and readerly

texts is well known : I will not give the details, except to say that writerly texts are obviously the explicitly written, as opposed to the readerly which are implicitly written but which operate as if they were dependent upon the phonetic. Although the writerly is occluded in readerly texts, it is obviously the underside of all readerly procedures : S/Z is a turning inside out of the readerly by the writerly.

Before we turn to the consideration of how a text which occludes its conditions of possibility, and thus eschews its function as critique, may be forced into that position, let us consider the functioning of the text as critique where that function is 'explicit'. A number of articles could have been used for this type of analysis, but I am limiting myself here to "Literature and Discontinuity"(1972:171-185) and "The Metaphor of the eye"(1972:139-149), since it is here that the relation of neutralisation to the subject is most pertinent. It is in these articles also, as well as in S/Z that the critique of articulation is carried out with the most striking results.

5.2 Structuralism as critique

Ecriture - in this case both as text and as criticism - in Critique et Vérité and Critical Essays, is conceived essentially as an activity, or more specifically, as a structuralist activity. There are several common features in Deleuze's conception of structuralism, and that of Barthes in "The Structuralist Activity"(1972:213-221)[4]. Although Barthes uses the linguistic model, the distinction of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes yields the distinction between the virtual and

actual structures. The typical operations of the structuralist activity are dissection and articulation corresponding to these two axes. The operation of dissection entails :

- the determination of mobile elements which have no meaning in themselves, but whose 'meaning' is engendered by their differential situation.
- these mobile elements thus have no significance except in so far as they can be distinguished from other virtual units of the same *class; they constitute a paradigm, which is an associative field,* virtual by definition.
- the elements are held within a particular paradigm by a relation of affinity and of dissimilarity with each other : they must "resemble each other somewhat in order that the difference which separtes them be indeed evident." (1972:217)
- thus the elements are held in a coexistence of differential *relations in the virtual structure of the paradigm.* Actualisation occurs through "an act of citation" (1972:217), whereby the elements gain an actual signification, i.e. articulation.
- the operation of articulation proceeds according to certain rules of association of the syntagm, and entails a submission to regular constraints which are both formal and stable (repeatable). The rules of combination are forms which guarantee *the intelligibility of the structure* : "it is by the regular return of the units and of the associations of units that the work appears constructed, i.e. endowed with meaning." (1972:217)

To Deleuze's structuralist hero (the nomadic subject devoid of identity, and constitued by non-personal individuations and pre-individual singularities[5]) corresponds 'structural man' "defined *not by his ideas or his languages,* but by his imagination - in other words by the way in which he mentally experiences

structure" (1972:214); this definition extends over the activities of both analyst and 'creator'. The concern of structural man is not meaning but *the fabrication of meaning* : structuralism is above all an activity which

> "refers the exercise of the work and the work itself to a single identity : a serial composition or an analysis by Levi-Strauss are not objects except insofar as they have been made : their present being is their past act, they are having-been-mades; the artist, the analyst recreates the course taken by meaning, he need not designate it." (1972:219)

In the case of literature, he cannot designate it. Thus structuralism as an analysis will resemble poetics; both are elaborated within the same space. The concern of he structuralist, analyst or 'creator', is the revelation of an underlying structure, through the construction of a "simulacrum" of the object which "makes something appear which remained invisible or, if one prefers, unintelligible in the natural world" (1972:215) The structuralist decomposes and then recomposes the real : while the operation is mimetic, it is based not on the analogy of substances but on the analogy of functions, or *homology (in the sense in which Levi-Strauss uses the term)* : "we recompose the object in order to make certain functions appear, and it is, so to speak, the way that makes the work; this is why we must speak of the structuralist activity rather than the structuralist work." (1972:216)

Reading Deleuze's definition of structuralism together with Barthes', we come to the conclusion that both function as

structure" (1972:214); this definition extends over the activities of both analyst and 'creator'. The concern of structural man is not meaning but the fabrication of *meaning* : structuralism is above all an activity which

> "refers the exercise of the work and the work itself to a single identity : a serial composition or an analysis by Levi-Strauss are not objects except insofar as they have been made : their present being is their past act, they are having-been-mades; the artist, the analyst recreates the course taken by meaning, he need not designate it." (1972:219)

In the case of literature, he cannot designate it. Thus structuralism as an analysis will resemble poetics; both are elaborated within the same space. The concern of he structuralist, analyst or 'creator', is the revelation of an underlying structure, through the construction of a "simulacrum" of the object which "makes something appear which remained invisible or, if one prefers, unintelligible in the natural world" (1972:215) The structuralist decomposes and then recomposes the real : while the operation is mimetic, it is based not on the analogy of substances but on the analogy of functions, or *homology (in the sense in which Levi-Strauss uses the term)* : "we recompose the object in order to make certain functions appear, and it is, so to speak, the way that makes the work; this is why we must speak of the structuralist activity rather than the structuralist work." (1972:216)

Reading Deleuze's definition of structuralism together with Barthes', we come to the conclusion that both function as

critiques. It seems however that the postulation of an empty position is significantly lacking in Barthes' view of structuralism. In the articles "Literature and Discontinuity" and "The Metaphor of the Eye", it becomes evident that the homology whereby structuralism operates is, in the functioning of écriture, a homology of the underlying structure, or its 'dramatisation', and what it makes visible is precisely the constant shifting of the empty position, and the process whereby this shifting results in the engendering of meaning, or articulation. This dramatisation, which results in a neutralisation of classification and of the hierarchies on which our systems of signification are built, takes the only form possible to écriture : that of "a particular table of signs" (1972:178) which presents but does not state. If the text attacks traditional literary language, it is only by an inversion of the mechanisms of this language; if it reveals, it reveals only by contrast.

Dramatisation is necessarily contestatory to the extent that it 'lays bare' the techniques of the literary production of meaning, the labour which underlies its apparently flowing and 'created' surface : when Butor's Mobile(1962) reveals that discontinuity underlies the apparent continuity of literary language, it is simultaneously attacking the very 'idea' of the-Book, "an object which connects, develops, runs and flows, in short has the profoundest horror vacui." (1972:273) Thus revelation and contestation necessarily go hand in hand, these activities being directed at several levels of signification at once : the literary is only its most apparent object, but it is the functioning of the signification of language and the insiduous

ideology which it inevitably bears, that are attacked in the final instance.

5.3 Critique at work

Any attempt to fragment continuity is viewed with mistrust, since it threatens the cohesion and order which literature is meant to convey. Thus attention may be paid to general schema, but never to minute detail. In Mobile instead, general schema is of no account, whereas detail is the bearer of structure. The discontinuity of Mobile reveals the fabricated and laboured artificiality of continuity in the language of the literary work, the occlusion of which is fundamental to the myth of literature as ineffable creation and tranquillising reflection of Life itself.

The attention paid to detail is manifested firstly in the essential function of typography. The disturbance of typographical norms reveals, once again by inversion, that what could be called the smallest unit of continuity in the literary work, or its basic guarantee is in fact its adherence to typographical norms :

> "If everything which happens on the surface of the page wakens so intense a susceptibility, it is clear that this surface is the depositary of an essential value, which is the continuity of literary discourse." (1972:173)

Similarly, to destroy (through neutralisation) accepted norms of classification is to reveal the extent to which classification is fundamental to all meaning : i.e. a system of oppositions

ideology which it inevitably bears, that are attacked in the final instance.

5.3 Critique at work

Any attempt to fragment continuity is viewed with mistrust, since it threatens the cohesion and order which literature is meant to convey. Thus attention may be paid to general schema, but never to minute detail. In Mobile instead, general schema is of no account, whereas detail is the bearer of structure. The discontinuity of Mobile reveals the fabricated and laboured artificiality of continuity in the language of the literary work, the occlusion of which is fundamental to the myth of literature as ineffable creation and tranquillising reflection of Life itself.

The attention paid to detail is manifested firstly in the essential function of typography. The disturbance of typographical norms reveals, once again by inversion, that what could be called the smallest unit of continuity in the literary work, or its basic guarantee is in fact its adherence to typographical norms :

> "If everything which happens on the surface of the page wakens so intense a susceptibility, it is clear that this surface is the depositary of an essential value, which is the continuity of literary discourse." (1972:173)

Similarly, to destroy (through neutralisation) accepted norms of classification is to reveal the extent to which classification is fundamental to all meaning : i.e. a system of oppositions

based on marked and unmarked terms (disjunction or 0-1 logic). In Mobile, cultural classification is reduced to a zero-degree by means of the alphabetical presentation of the states and cities of America. The alphabet - neither phoneme nor syntactical object - does not institute a negation, but is instead the institution of a neutrality of order : it is itself the void of meaning which is sytematically occluded by 'realist' literature. The use of the alphabet in Mobile constitutes a system homologous to neutrality; being non-significatory, it neutralises paradigmatic oppositions, as well as the denotative hierarchy on which continuity implicitly depends, replacing it with poetic contiguity of details.

The alphabet is the primary structuring factor of the work, controlling the distribution of details; as a formal device it has the power of 'surprising' "a particular collusion of man and nature, i.e. a meaning" (1972:177), and ulimately a system of intelligibility. What it reveals here "is a certain knowledge concerning America" (1972:178), by crossing the primary structuring factor with another : time. The fragments which form the structure of Mobile are arranged in three 'bundles' : the time of the Indians, 1890, today. The details taken from these 'bundles' are not however separated ; they are instead juxtaposed and are thus contiguous to one another. Through the repetition and shifts of these details, taken in a historical perspective, Mobile reveals "the institution of America for the Americans". the transformation of nature into culture, its subjection to an intelligible order. The real exists in Mobile in each object, each unit of nature as it is rendered intelligible through a process of institutionalization over time. This is not to say that the object is presented as a 'real' object, but rather as

what Barthes calls an 'oneiric' object - that which is grasped solely by the Imaginary. It is the "mediator of culture", a "producer of hallucinations" and is shown to be an "essential accessory" (1972:180) to the construction of the intelligible. The imaginary is that which constitutes the Real as intelligible for a civilisation, and it is at all instances the Imaginary, or the ideological in its acception as imaginary, which is revealed *as such, (precisely in so far as it is not the Real)* by Mobile.

The manner in which Mobile reveals this 'knowledge' is through a particular system of articulation : "That this knowledge should not be enunciated in intellectual terms, but according to a particular table of signs, is precisely ... literature" (1972:178). This system of articulation or "table of signs", *imposes a discontinuity which refers us to an* "infinitely sensitive mobility of closed elements" (1972:178). The arrangement of the elements, regulated by formal devices, allows only for the repetition and variety of units : a repetition without development and a variety which is not variation but purely combinatory. The units are defined only by their function; they are structural units which exist only in distribution i.e. *by relation to other units* :

> "These units are - and must be - beings so perfectly mobile that by shifting them throughout his poem the author engenders a kind of huge animate body whose movement is one of perpetual transmission, not of internal "growth" : thus, the title of the object : Mobile, i.e. a scrupulously *articulated armature all of whose breaks*, by shifting very slightly (which the delicacy of the combinatory method

permits), produce paradoxically the most connected movements." (1972:181)

The use of the alphabet is a formal aesthetic device artificially placed in the position of a symbolic structure and the arbitrariness of which guarantees the discontinuity of the elements. In itself it is non-significatory, being neither marked nor unmarked; it is unarticulated. It does however institute the system of articulation which is the work Mobile, by the very fact of neutralising paradigmatic oppositions, listing all of the possible paradigmatic oppositions one after another (as with the names of cars, or the flavours of ice-cream) thus bringing them into a relation of contiguity with each other, or by combining them with other paradigms (as with the colours of cars and of people), and thus forcing a contiguity with distant paradigms.

Thus it is the neutralisation of oppositions which makes the construction and mobility of this structure possible; it is the unarticulated which makes the articulated possible. The syntagm here consists entirely of the repetitions, combinations and shifts of the elements. Defined as a mobility of closed elements, the operation of varied connection as it is implemented here, is not subject to the syntagmatic rules of association, since it is constituted by a neutrality of order which erases paradigmatic oppositions : it thus exceeds the paradigmatic / syntagmatic distinction, revealing that underlying any system of articulation i.e. of meaning, is a neutrality of pure order, a zero-degree of meaning. In the same way the mobility of this structure institutes contiguities, but exceeds metonymic functioning : the technique of meaning used in Mobile is not rhetorical, but proceeds according to the total and irreducible arbitrariness of

the alphabet.

Mobile can thus be understood as a true dramatisation of a system of articulation which constructs itself, and is set in motion by a constitutive neutrality, which is at the same time a virtuality, regulating and constituting the positions and shifts of each element. Ultimately, the composition of such a work is concerned with the generation of possible meaning : the question which this type of literary formalism releases is addressed to the very possibility of the world's meanings. What it reveals is the neutrality which must be occluded in order to establish a continuity of discourse and a hierarchical system of classification, which underlies a system of intelligibility for Western culture. Mobile redistributes the imaginary, preventing it from constructing itself as a closed, continuous order. The establishment of a neutrality of meaning by means of the alphabet also makes it impossible for the discourse of the text to produce any psychologism, be it that of a character or of the author. The subject which accompanies this neutrality can thus only be a subject reduced to the zero degree.

While in Butor's Mobile it is the imaginary of a culture which is revealed as depending upon a neutrality, in Bataille's Histoire de l'oeil (1971) it is the imaginary of the subject which is at stake. The 'revelations' of the two texts are complementary : no subject can emerge in Mobile precisely because a cultural imaginary is not permitted to constitute itself as a fulness, and in Histoire de l'oeil, the transgression of the sexual as a transgression of classifications is possible only because the subjective imaginary is not permitted to erupt into a full and unified subject. Histoire de l'oeil dramatises the

insertion of a subjective imaginary into a cultural imaginary, (of style into language) by the operation of neutralisation, an operation carried out by embedding the constitution of series precisely in personal biography, but in such a way that these biographical details in no way guarantee the meaning of the text, but set it on the course of a metonymic formalism. In Histoire de l'oeil it is the very 'being' of the author, style or the personal imaginary, which acts as the virtual structure. The story of the eye as an object is here "that of a migration, the cycle of avatars it traverses far from its original being, according to the tendency of a certain imagination which distorts yet does not discard it" (1972:239) The personal imaginary contains and constitutes all the possible paradigmatic substitutions of the eye. Since in a rhetorical system of articulation, metaphor is the instance of the paradigmatic axis, Histoire de l'oeil is essentially a poetic, metaphoric composition, to which, however, the intervention of the metonymic is necessary. Barthes shows the personal imaginary to be a field of associations constitutive of the literary paradigmatic structure, the virtuality of which is actualized in the narrative, metonymic structure.

The substitutions and variations of the metaphor of the eye proceed according to the constraints of the paradigm : each substitutive object sustains with the eye a relation of affinity and dissimilarity. The form of the metaphor of the eye is that of an associative field which splits into two series. The first paradigm is consituted by the shift from 'eye' to 'egg', a variation of form : in French, the words 'oeil' and 'oeuf' have a common and a differentiated sound, and of content : both objects

can be said to have the common semenes of 'globular' and 'white'. To this series will be added 'testicles', reinforced by current French usage which refers to the testicles of certain animals as 'eggs'(1972:241). A second paradigm branches off from the first and is constituted by the liquids associated with each object : thus 'tears', 'egg yolk', 'sperm', etc. Any of the terms of one of the paradigms can act as a substitution for the terms of the other : "the mere presence of one of the two series invokes the other" (1972:241) None of the terms of either one of the paradigms predominates : the first term cannot be determined. The paradigms are not constituted in depth: they have no 'secret'; they are chains of signifiers which can only shift laterally : "the image system developed here has no sexual obsession for its "secret"; if this were the case, we should first have to explain why the erotic theme is never directly phallic" (1972:242). Furthermore any decipherment of the work is made futile by the fact that Bataille 'declares his sources', by giving the biographical details at the end of the book. Their appearance in the text ultimately function as just one more lateral shift :

> "Bataille thus leaves no other recourse than to consider, in Histoire de l'oeil, a perfectly spherical metaphor : each of the terms is always the signifier of another (no term is a simple signified), without our ever being able to stop the chain" (1972:242).

The lack of hierarchy in the terms of the paradigmatic series reproduces the unorganized nature of the associative field, in which, according to Saussure, no single term can be assigned pre-eminence. The lack around which the series are constituted is the lack of a definitive signified, or denotative meaning for the

'eye' of which this work is the 'story'. This lack is itself dramatised in the text by the exchanging of terms, which results in articulation.

The narrative as it is used here is only a vehicle for the metaphoric substance, but it is nonetheless necessary for its actualization :

> "As a reservoir of virtual signs, a metaphor in the pure state cannot constitute discourse in and of itself ; if we recite its terms -i.e., if we insert them in a narrative which cements them together, their paradigmatic nature already yields to the dimension of all speech, which is inevitably a syntagmatic extension" (1972:243)

The narrative is however wholly determined by the exchange of the terms of the double paradigm: it is this exchange which makes the syntagm immediately possible. The exchanging of the two chains is "possible by nature, since Bataille is not dealing with the same paradigm (the same metaphor), and because consequently, the two chains can establish relations of contiguity between themselves" (1972:243). The structuralist move here is to shift around the terms and dislocate their traditional associations (e.g. 'break and egg', 'poke out an eye'), assigning them instead to different lines; in this way a corresponding disturbance is brought about in both series: 'break an eye' produces 'poke out an egg'. It is the crossing of the two paradigms, the exchange of terms which has the immediate effect of crossing out the signified, such that the signifier is caused to float incessantly between the two paradigms : thus the paradigmatic oppositions of

the two series are neutralised. Neutralisation underlies the possiblity of the syntagm i.e. of articulation. The syntagm will thus consist entirely of the actualization of the technique of exchanging : once again the composition will be a dramatisation of the operation of neutralisation, through exchange :

> "all these associations are both the same and different; for metaphor, which varies them, manifests a regulated difference among them, a difference which metonymy, which exchanges them, immediately undertakes to abolish." (1972:245)

The eroticism of Histoire de l'oeil proceeds along the lines of metonymic displacement. The transgression of values here never exceeds literary techniques of transgression :

> "for metonymy is precisely a forced syntagm, the violation of a signifying limit of space; it permits, on the very level of discourse, a counterdivision of objects, usages, meanings, spaces, and properties, which is eroticism itself : thus what the interplay of metaphor and metonymy, in Histoire de l'oeil, ultimately make it possible to transgress is sex : not, of course to sublimate it; quite the contrary" (1972:246)

What is revealed in Histoire de l'oeil is not only (once more) that the neutral or the zero-degree of meaning is the condition of possibility of articulation but that a system of values is implicitly a system of classification which it is possible to transgress by a discursive violation or counterdivision of classification, set in motion by neutralisation.

5.4 Neutralisation and negation

Barthes shows in "Literature and Continuity" and in "The Metaphor of the Eye" that transgression is not necessarily brought about by negation. If negation may indeed account for a certain level of these systems of articulation, it is that level which results from a first operation : that of neutralisation. The systems which neutralisation produces can be said to consist of oppositional dyads which are however non-disjunctive, but the production of dyads is of secondary significance. For example, in Mobile terms from unrelated paradigms are brought into a relation of contiguity in a sequence and a 0-2 paragram may be said to be produced : however their instability is caused not by a generalised negativity, but by a constitutive neutrality which is not a negative function. Thus we may say that underlying the signifiance produced by paragrammatism is the function of neutralisation, or a void of meaning. If the paragram results in 'signifying zeros' it is because they are constituted by a zero which does not and cannot signify. This may be seen for example in the production of the sequence 'poke out an egg', which may at one level be a non-disjunctive oppositional dyad, brought about by the application of terms from exclusive classes of signifieds. What makes this application possible however, is the neutralisation of terms by the exchange between paradigms. Kristeva's definition of paragrammatism does hold for the system of articulation constituted by neutralisation : but the negative movement of paragrammatism may itself be said to be constituted by the neutral. One may say that generalised negation or non-synthetic reunions also result in neutralisati .., in which case it may become impossible to say which comes first : neutralisation or negation. However, neutralisation as it is

instituted in these two texts is not a negation : it cannot be since the neuter is neither positive nor negative, but simply empty. It is for this reason that we may oppose the production of 'signifying zeros' which continue to signify, to the institution of a neutral order, which in Mobile may be artificial, but which is nonetheless revealed to be constitutive of a system of articulation.

5.5. Neutralisation and the subject

It is particularly in Histoire de l'oeil that the economy of the subject in the text is dramatised. The 'origin' of the metaphor is cited in the text itself in the biographical details given at the end. Thus the transgression of the sexual (a cultural system of classification) is constituted by the insertion into this system of the personal imaginary. The declension of the metaphor proceeds however, along the lines of an unhaltable metonymy, or a chain which cannot be finitized, since none of the terms may be 'marked' : metonymy is produced by a neutralisation. In other words if neutralisation is not elided, but dramatised, the subject in the text can never posit itself as a full and unified subject. By giving us the biographical details Bataille reveals, by inversion, the conditions under which a finitizable text is produced. In the preface to Critical Essays Barthes states that a text is produced only by the emptying out of the existential reference of the 'I'. Citing Jakobson's definition of the 'I' as indexical symbol, which partakes in a lexical system, but which cannot be defined lexically, since its only 'reference is a constantly shifting one (the real person who says 'I'), Barthes goes on to show that the 'technique of combination and variation' which is écriture comes about (and is

finally acceptable) when the author accepts a total codification of his 'I', leaving behind his existential situation, so to speak. If one accepts that the structure of the realist text (or in fact of all narrative) is identical to that of fantasy or of delusion[6] and that this fantasy is acceptable, and may enter society as exchangeable product only in so far as it is 'fictional', and therefore does not refer to an 'I' in the real world, it is evident that the acceptability of the text is based precisely on what may be called the 'elision of the 'I' as shifter'. In this way the 'I' has only a fictional existence, its possibly disturbing (because transgressive) message is exorcised, and is permitted to circulate, as an exorcising agent. It is precisely this elision which defines the function of the text in bourgeois ideology, as well as its excluded-included status in society. This explains also the bourgeois predeliction for realism in art. Thus we may say that realist or expressive literature is based on the elision of an elision : the author's 'I' becomes the 'I' of the character, or of the proper name in the text, but his figure still operates as that of the 'creator', who appropriates the discourse, but not the fantasy.

Kristeva, in "Le texte clos"(1978:52:81) as well as in Le Texte du Roman(1970) explains this elision, and consequent appropriation by the split of the subject into the subject of the statement and of the utterance operated in the narrative. Her argument runs as follows: because the 'other' or the addressee (the subject of reading) exists in the text only as a discourse, it is reduced to a code: it is a signifier in relation to the text and a signified in relation to the subject or addresser. Since the discourse of the subject is dependent upon that of this code, the subject too is reduced to a code. Thus in order to

become discourse, the subject is forced to become a non-person, to pass through a zero-point, through which it is constituted as the subject of the utterance - the s/he of the character. The subject of the utterance is a mediator for the subject of the statement. The proper noun - the character - is the regulator of this transformation, and the means by which the 'story' (fantasy) of the subject/author becomes an acceptable signifier ('adequat au regard'). In this way the 'I' of the author is split into three types of pronoun : the transpronominal, the pronominal, and the personal. The pronominal 'I' is an empty pronoun, a simple sign of the locutory instance, at the level of the narrative as rhetorical system (the Acteur already referred to), or the subject of the utterance (this 'I' may remain empty as in the 'I' of a hidden narrator, or be transformed into the third person of the character). The personal 'I' intervenes only at the moment when the discourse is accepted as literary work, and thus as exchangeable product (possible by the ideologeme of the sign, the instance of the Auteur as referred to). This 'I' functions as indexical symbol - a full 'I', referring to the author, whereas the pronominal 'I' functions purely as codified, or lexical 'I'. The transpronominal 'I' is the subject of <u>ecriture</u>, the non-personal pronoun, which is neither the 'I' of the author nor that of the character, but which instead cannot be blocked by any reference to a person - the zerōlogical subject of the paragram. (1970:98-110)

Thus it is the neutralisation of the 'I' as shifter which permits the text (or any aesthetic practice) to function as a sublimation. However, in <u>Histoire de l'oeil</u>, this double elision does not occur. Because the biographical 'origin' of the metaphor

is acknowledged, the pronominal instances of the characters are explicitly attached to that of the author. The primary elision does occur - the character would not have been possible if this were not the case - but the second elision (of the elision) does not occur. Thus Bataille's text is the dramatisation of the neutralisation of the authorial 'I' in order to produce the character. The acknowledgement of this neutralisation is the only way in which an unfinitizeable discourse, which proceeds along the line of metonymic shifting, could be produced. The neutralisation of paradigmatic oppositions by the exchange of terms which underlies syntagmatic articulation, is possible only because the subject is maintained at a zero-degree and is severed from the second elision, which would permit it to constitute itself as a full subject, capable of appropriating a discourse. One can say then that the appropriation of the imaginary (the fantasy) excludes the appropriation of the discourse. This is precisely the reason why transgression of the sexual occurs, without the text transforming itself into a sublimation.

The possibility of finitizing a discourse thus appears to be constituted by the possibility of halting metonymic shifts, (and thus occluding the neutral which implicitly makes paradigmatic oppositions possible) by distinguishing an original or final term - a truth. This truth can only be posited by the imposition onto this system of something extraneous to it - the readerly. This is precisely what is revealed in S/Z.

5.6 Writerly and readerly

Balzac's Sarrasine is not a writerly text, more precisely it is not a text in which the writerly predominates, but it is a limit text. Existing on the margins of realism, it allows glimpses of the processes which constitute it, and of the contract on which all narratives depend. Barthes' reading of this narrative in S/Z pushes it to its limit, forcing it into the position of critique. It is an application of the writerly on the readerly, such that the structuring process of the writerly, and the limiting of this process by the readerly, are revealed. There are several ways in which this seminal text could be read, and none would do it justice. I will attempt to pick up a very few of the strands with which it is woven, and which elaborate on what has been revealed in "Literature and Discontinuity" and "The Metaphor of the Eye".

Following the 'structuration' of the text, through a step-by-step reading, that is by constantly interrupting the flow of the text, forcing it to branch out into "migrations of meaning" (1970:13), Barthes applies a type of reading which the realist text cannot withstand. The text is prevented from forming a unity, a coherent whole, and the construction of its realist effect is revealed. What the text refers to is shown not to be meaning but codes. Meaning is thus never denoted but only pointed to - the denotatum itself is but an effect, created by the naturalness of the syntax, its function being to make the construction innocent - for what can be more natural than the subject - predicate structure of language?

Of the five codes which structure the text, or through which

the text passes, it is the cultural, semic and symbolic which constitute the reversible plurality of the text, and the proairetic and hermeneutic, which force progressive and finitizing linearity upon the discourse. If Butor's Mobile explicitly posits itself as a table of signs, Sarrasine is a vectorised table of signs (1970:37), whose plurality is limited by the logico-temporal order of the proairetic and hermeneutic codes. The sequential order of these two codes, the imperative of action and of the unveiling of the truth are the major constraints of the realist text. The cultural and semic codes are the codes of limited plurality, and function primarily by the operation of connotation. The symbolic code is that of multivalence and reversibility, to which there are several entrances, which cannot be hierarchised. Thus the symbolic is accessible via the sexual, the economic, or the literary as representational systems. The symbolic, in the realist text, is not assigned pre-eminence, it is in fact a-symbolised. A lexia which has the symbolic as one of its codes, usually refers to one of the other codes as well. Thus if the word 'castrato' cannot be uttered, it is because symbolically it is a taboo, but anecdotally it is the truth towards which the text is propelled, but which it is not in the interests of the anecdote to reveal as yet. Thus the non-utterance of the word 'castrato' branches out into the symbolic and hermeneutic codes at the same time, and an effect of undecidability is produced. And undecidability, as is shown by both Kristeva and Barthes, but also by Derrida, is the proof of écriture, here of the writerly. The reading of consumerism would skim over this undecidesbility, and focus on the creation and release of suspense, that is the goal of this reading would be to discover the truth which the text offers. Step-by-step reading, however shows this coexistence of codes,

this interweaving of voices ("le tissu des voix"), and ultimately this undecidable plurality specific to the writerly, to be the structuring agent of the eminently readerly text.

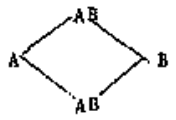
The achievement of Balzac in this limit text is precisely to "faire coincider la castrature, condition anecdotique, avec la castration, structure symbolique, (...) car l'une n'emportait pas fatalement l'autre" (1970:169)[vii]. By following the line of castration, one is able to thus pick out of the text the additions under which the narrative as contract holds or collapses. It must be stressed however that this is only one possible entrance, not only to Balzac's text, but to Barthes', which true to the responsibility of the critic, as outlined in Critique et Vérité, is itself constructed as an instance of writerly (symbolic) procedures.

5.7 The symbolic and the neutral

> "Moi, sur la frontière de ces deux tableaux si disparates, qui, mille fois répétés de diverses manières, rendent Paris la ville la plus amusant du monde et la plus philosophique, je faisais une macedoine morale, moitié plaisante, moitié funèbre. Du pied gauche, je marquais la mesure, et je croyais avoir l'autre dans un cercueil. Ma jambe était en effet glacée par un de ces vents coulis qui vous gèlent une moitié du corps, tandis que l'autre éprouve la chaleur moite des salons, accident assez frequent au bal." (1970:32 lexia 13)[viii]

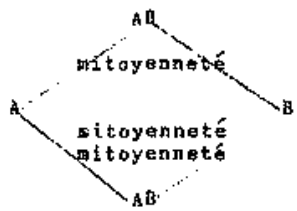
The symbolic initially constructs itself out of the rhetorical figure of the antithesis. Rhetorics, as Barthes points out, is a

system of classification 'destined to name the world'(1970:33). Of its figures, antithesis is the most stable, since it founds the irreduceability of two opposing terms. Antithesis is not simply a paradigmatic opposition : the terms do not differ by the lack or presence of a certain feature, they are opposed in that they are both marked. "l'Antithèse est la figure de l'opposition donnés, éternelle, éternellement recurrente : la figure de l'inexpiable" (1970:34)[ix]. To cross the wall between the two terms is transgressive, and is here operated by the body of the narrator, located between the two spaces : the garden and the ball-room. Initially the figure is saturated because the antithesis is posited, each of its terms are described separately , and then 'summarised' in the passage quoted above, thus presenting a 'harmoniously closed loop', of the type :



(1970:34)

The body of the author is added as a supplement onto this perfectly balanced and closed whole, as an element in which the two terms coexist ("mitoyenneté"). The loop is then disturbed :



mitoyenneté (1970:35)

Disturbance occurs by the insertion into the figure of a supplementary element, in which the opposing terms coexist, in other words, an excessive term. This element operates the non-disjunction which Kristeva sees as constituting the possibility of the novel. Barthes shares this view : "C'est par ce trop qui vient au discours après que la rhétorique l'a décemment saturé, que quelque chose peut être raconté et que le récit commence" (1970:36)[x] and which we see dramatised by the text itself. Here, however it is the body which operates as the exluded middle, whose inclusion comes to disturb and ultimately neutralise the classificatory system of antithesis. We may say that in Sarrasine it is the economy of the body in the narrative which is dramatised.

The figure of antithesis and its disturbance regulates the classification of characters in the narrative. The terms of the opposition are not however phallic; they are not, that is those of sexual classification but those of castration, i.e. castrating/castrated, active/passive. Classified in this way, the female characters, - or those which share female traits are the active castrators (Mme de Lanty, Bouchardon, Sapho), while the characters who can be classified as passive - the castrated - are the male characters (Sarrasine and the narrator, M. de Lanty, Filippo but also Marianina). The classification of two of the characters remains undecidable : these are Zambinella and Mme de Rochefide:

> "Quant au castrat lui-même, on aurait tort de le placer de droit du côté du châtré : il est la tache aveugle et mobile de ce système; il va et vient entre l'actif et le passif : châtré, il châtre; de même pour Mme de Rochefide :

contaminée par la castration qui vient de lui être racontée, elle y entraîne le narrateur." (1970:43)[xi]

The empty position, as it is defined by Deleuze, is as we have seen the eminently symbolic element, whose mobility allows for the shifting and movement of all the elements in the structure. The emptiness of the empty position can at no time be filled, or occupied by a real being or imaginary attribute, nor even by one of the other symbolic elements themselves : it is a constitutive nothingness, which must be maintained as such if further occlusions and contradictions are to be avoided. Furthermore, the empty position is said to circulate in the structure as a question. The fact that the hermeneutic and the symbolic are crossed and undecideable in this text is thus particularly illuminating. For what can one question ultimately but this void of meaning which comes to disturb all classifications, and the non-occlusion of which would thus constitute the primary transgressive element? The void operates both as truth - it is the only truth of language - and as a question to the stability of our systems of intelligibility, which are insidiously ideological. In the light of this, we may say that Zambinella and Mme de Rochefide do not occupy the empty position, except in the particular structure of the realist text, in which the void is occluded : but they are the symbolic elements which permit the dramatisation of the functioning of the empty position. They are neutralised elements since the active and the passive, the castrated and the castrating coexist in them. This recalls the inherent neutralisation of non-synthetic reunions, in which signifiers annihilate each other. However, that which sets them in action is the void of meaning, or of the subject, underlying

the symbolic functioning of écriture, and which is anecdotalised in this narrative. Anecdotalisation is the only way in which the neutral may be acknowledged in the narrative, which is forced to represent, hence the neutralising excess, in contrast to the 'explicit' neutral of the texts analysed above. In the character of the castrato, Zambinella, it is the body itself which is voided, in that of Mme de Rochefide it is desire. But it is the body of the castrato which sets off the metonymic shifts, in which Mme de Rochefide herself is caught, as we see her constantly changing position (the child-woman and the queen-woman). The castrated body, whose only reference is the ambiguous status of the masterpiece, operates as the neutral in the text, a neutral which is strangely active and determines the positions of each of the other 'bodies'.

5.8 The narrative as contract

The question "Who is Zambinella?" which is the primary 'propellent' of the narrative, is diffused over a metonymic series, in which the body is replicated in at least two codes : the literary or the legendary and that of the visual arts. It is through these codes that the realism of the text is legitimised. It is the latter which will be focussed upon here.

Description in the narrative proceeds according to the model of painting : the scene is framed, itemised and thus described. Realist description is thus determined by the gaze. In Sarrasine the gaze is brought into relation with desire, and through that, with the narrative as contract. The narrative within the narrative is set off by Mme de Rochefide's gazing upon the portrait of Adonis, immediately followed by the appearance of the

castrato, or the enigma. Girodet's portrait of Endymion, which acts as a frontispiece to Barthes' text, is modelled upon Vien's portrait of Adonis, in turn modelled upon the statue of Zambinella, sculpted as a woman by Sarrasine. Three art objects are brought into relation with one another, and a series of inversions takes place, whereby the two paintings can only be read together, becoming an Endymion-Adonis. This 'conglomerate' connotes femininity, both when described and when gazed upon. The maleness of Endymion and of Adonis is cast into doubt, by their passivity, by the active penetration by the light of the moon, mythically female, and by the fact that the sexual organ is indeterminable, just as it is on the Reference of this chain - the castrato's body. Whereas the statue is the only element which is female - albeit by misrecognition-, the other elements are ambiguous, neutral. Mme de Rochefide, gazing upon the portrait of Endymion, desires the void, but misrecognises this desire - the very definition of the Imaginary. The narrator desires Mme de Rochefide, and becomes jealous of the portrait - of the lack. In order to neutralise Mme de Rochefide's desire and turn it upon himself, he tells her that the model was a woman, a member of the Lanty family - thus, in the hermenutic code, he is both pointing to the truth and avoiding it; in the symbolic code, the taboo on naming castration is marked. Immediately afterwards, the castrato enters with Marianina; the enigma of the portrait is intersected by that of the castrato, and Mme de Rochefide demands to know the truth of both. The conditions for the narrative as contract are set up : a narrative for a night of love. It is thus desire and its misrecognition which set the narrative in motion, and it is the continuation of misrecognition which guarantees the acceptability of the narrative. What is exchanged is a body for a narrative: Mme de Rochefide will have access to the body of

Adonis by knowing its truth, recounted in the narrative; the narrator, who possesses the narrative (the Truth) will have access to Mme de Rochefide's body.(1970:95-96)

The finitisation of the realist text, as we have seen, is based on the elision of the 'I' as shifter, and the occlusion of this elision. Where this occlusion does not take place - as in Histoire de l'oeil - metonymic displacement is potentially infinite. It is obviously the unveiling of the truth which finitizes the discourse; resolution occurs by marking one of the two oppositional terms. Sarrasine presents a narrative within a narrative, dramatising the contractual terms on which it is based. Vectorised by its drive towards truth, which in the realist text, is a fullness, the truth in this case is made to coincide with the exposure of an absence or of a lack, and the contract on which the narrative is based, collapses - Mme de Rochefide refuses to carry out her part of the contract, effectively castrating the narrator. The adventures of the 'I' present a very interesting case here. Mme de Rochefide is the addressee of the narrator's discourse. Barthes points out that in the text, only the voice of the reader is heard : "l'écriture n'est pas la communication d'un message qui partirait de l'auteur et irait au lecteur; elle est spécifiquement la voix meme du lecteur : dans le texte, seul parle le lecteur" (1972:157)[xii]. This is essential if the contract is to be upheld:

> "A ce compte, l'écriture est active, car elle agit pour le lecteur : elle procède, non d'un auteur, mais d'un écrivain public, notaire chargé par l'institution, non de flatter les gouts de son client, mais de consigner sous sa dictée le

> relevé de ses intérêts, les opérations par lesquelles, à l'intérieur d'une économie du dévoilement, il gère cette marchandise : le récit." (1970:158)[xiii]

The predominance of the reader's voice in the text is not surprising considering the fact that écriture is the function which binds the writer to society. What it is in the reader's interests to hear, is a discourse finitized by a truth, which does not threaten to overflow the bounds of the fictional. In Sarrasine however, the truth of the narrative within the narrative cannot be enclosed within the fictional, precisely because it is the symbolic instance of the void which is exposed : anecdotal truth: what occurs then is that the metonymic series s not finitized, but continues to operate . 'side the narrative : contaminated by castration, Mme de Rochefide castrates the narrator. In this instance, the misrecognition of desire does not continue, and Mme de Rochefide is, so to speak, brought face to face whith the lack which constitutes desire. It thus becomes impossible for her - as the addressee - to elide the 'I' as shifter, and the narrative becomes unacceptable : it has mismanaged the addressee's interests. The 'I' of the narrator too is caught up in this chain, and is unable to codify itself : it too is forced to gain the uncomfortable heaviness of an existential situation. Castrated by the collapse of the narrative contract, his desire no longer runs diagonally to that of Mme de Rochfide's, towards the full body, but towards the absence which her body (her desire) has been revealed to be. Realism thus depends on an elision of the existential reference of the 'I' of both the sender and the addressee, it must be impossible for both to appropriate the fantasy. That this dramatisation could exist in a realist text is due to the fact that we are dealing with a

narrative within a narrative, and that the discourse is appropriated by the author, Balzac. The network formed by the replication of bodies and by the metonymic shifting set in action by the neutral is extremely dense.

What has been revealed by the reading applied by Barthes in S/Z and which has here been termed a critique of articulation, is the fact that the exchange which operates in systems of signification is dependent upon the occlusion of the neutral. That the sexual interarticulates with the economic in this text is not a coincidence. The void of the castrato is at the same time the basis of the Lanty's wealth, metonymically signifying the monetary wealth of the Parisian nouveaux rich. In the bourgeois system, money circulates, is exchanged, but has no origin : it is a sign as opposed to territorial wealth, which is an index, and has an origin. The shift from feudal to bourgeois society has an effect of flattening the sign :

> "passer de l'indice au signe, c'est abolir la dernière (ou la première) limite, l'origine, le fondement, la butée, c'est entrer dans le procès illimité des équivalences, des représentations que rien ne vient plus arrêter, orienter, fixer, consacrer."(1970:47)[xiv]

Capitalism is the exchange of the same for the same :

> "dans le signe, qui fonde un ordre de la représenttion (et non plus de la détermination, de la création, comme l'indice), les deux parties s'échangent, signifié et signifiant tournent dans un procès sans fin : ce que s'est

acheté peut de nouveau se vendre, le signifié peut devenir signifiant, et ainsi de suite." (1970:47)[xv]

The void of the body and the lack of origin, of fixed reference of money are intertwined in the text : the question "Who is Zambinella?" runs the same trajectory, in the same terms, as the question "Where does the wealth of the Lanty's originate?" and is resolved with the same truth which the family, and all of bourgeois society, go to great lengths to hide : the revelation of the neutral.

This is of course also a question of representation, a question which is posed by the writerly, the proof of which is undecidability. Underlying the undecidability of the sexual and the economic, is the instance of the writerly. As we have seen, the anecdotalisation of these terms, the coincidence of the symbolic with the proairetic and the hermeneutic, the two eminently readerly codes, inexorably forces the text to a finitisation, which in this text takes the form of the very element which prevents the writerly from being finitised, and allows the readerly finitisation only by its occlusion. The very fact that the writerly and the readerly are crossed, exchange their terms in the same way as is evident in Histoire de l'oeil forms the system of articulation, the table of signs, which is Sarrasine, the realist text. Barthes refers to the coincidence of the symbolic and the hermeneutic as a flattening of the sign, an illustration of the same by the same - i.e. of the truth of the enigma by the truth of the symbolic : absence. The crossing of the writerly and the readerly can result only in the undecideability peculiar to écriture, in a neutralisation of the terms of both. It is also the only condition under which a

representational system can by articulated : the writerly, with its constitutive void, underlies the readerly, and unoccluded, causes its status as representation to collapse. The 'explosion' of the void results in the fact that realism as a genre cannot continue : the contract collapses. Anecdotalised, it nonetheless results in the fact that representation itself cannot continue, thereby revealing the void as constitutive of the possiblity of exchange (of articulation), a condition which must however be occluded if exchange (representation) is to continue.

The fact that it is revealed by the economy of the body and desire bring écriture into a very specific relation with the body. What can now by postulated is that the body around which Barthes' critique revolves is that of the reader, while in the Kristevean critique of the sign, it is that of the subject / addresser, and that this in turn, may be linked to their respective projects of revelation and of transformation.

NOTES

1. While in semiology, symbolic systems are those in which there is a biunivocal correspondance between the unit of expression and the unit of content, semiotic systems necessitate two different forms for the expression and the content, which need not conform to one another (language and the dream). In terms of a semiology the symbolic funtioning postulated by Barthes would belong to a semiotic and not a symbolic system. Barthes is using the term in Ricoeur's sense, where 'a symbol is present where language produces signs of composite degree where meaning, not content with designating something, designates another meaning which could not be accessible except in and through its perspective.' (From De l'Interprétation, essai sur Freud Éditions du Seuil 1965) Barthes 1966:60-61 footnote 2.
2. These transformations have been specified by psychoanalysis and rhetoric. They are : 1)substitution - metaphor; 2) omission - ellipsis; 3) condensation - homonymy; 4) displacement - metonymy; 5) denial - antiphrase.(1966:68)
3. This however, places the notion of responsibility in a very difficult position, with regards to the subject which operates it. See chapter six.
4. See Carusi, A (1986) from which substantial parts of this section are adapted.
5. See chapter one.
6. See Baudry (1968) : "Freud et la création littéraire" as well as Robert (1972) : The Origins of the Novel in which it is postulated that all novels are structured by the infantile family romance.
7. See Derrida (1970:33-34). Derrida shows that Undecidability

is produced by syntax and typological factors of the text ; i.e. by the hallmarks of *écriture*.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SUBJECT OF ECRITURE

6.1 Signifiance

The term signifiance refers to the endless activity of producing meanings, which is the process of écriture. In Kristeva's 'theory of transformation' it is the production of 'newness' which occurs in the signifying practice of marginal discourses, a 'newness' or a 'difference' which may be inserted into the system of signification governed by the unified speaking subject. In Barthes' 'theory of revelation', it is an endless weaving upon the already named, the already expressed (1972:xvii). For Barthes, what signifiance produces is not new meanings (there are no new meanings : "there is no reality not already classified by men" (1972:xvii)), instead "the whole task of art is to unexpress the expressible, to kidnap from the world's language which is the poor and pwerful language of the passions, another speech, an exact speech." (1972:xvii) One can say that for Barthes, what an écriture must produce is exactitude concerning the impossible[1], since the real is essentially that which is wholly inaccessible to us, and the imaginary offers only the most banal affectivity and ultimately, recuperation. Thus while écriture is an exact 'speech', the only point about which it can offer a truth, is that which remains outside of our system of intelligibility, while at the same being constitutive of it : the void, or the neutral. It is for this reason that for Barthes, jouissance imposes a state of loss, a rupture between the subject and his culture, whereas for Kristeva it produces a

newness which may be inserted into that culture, and which guarantees the sociality of the text. In Barthes' work, it is that which is unsociable which is returned to, both in the practice of writing and of reading. But paradoxically, the sociality of Kristeva's theory focusses on the subject of écriture, while the unsociability of Barthes' focusses on the subject of reading.

While negativity defines écriture for both, there is a difference as to where negativity finally locates itself. This difference is difficult to pinpoint : it is a difference rather of tendency, and cannot be given a more definitive significance than that. Yet in the willingness or unwillingness to push the process of écriture beyond the negative resides the possibilities of all literature, and one is left with the perennial, if exhausted question : "What can the literary achieve?"

6.2 Kristeva : the subject of writing

In La Révolution du langage poétique(1974), Kristeva too arrives at a typology of texts, which could be added to that sketched out earlier, and which was based upon the search for a formalism able to account for poetic language in its specificity[2]. The typology postulated in La Revolution is based upon the status of the subject in the text. If the language of 'rationality' is possible on the basis of a unified speaking subject, the paragrammatic text is constituted on the basis of those operations which emerge in and threaten to disrupt this unity. The distinction between the semiotic and the symbolic dispositions enables one to conceptualise the two spaces with their respective 'subjets'. Based upon the processes of

projection / expulsion[3] which constitute the thetic phase, which enables the subject to gain access and control over an outside, and thus to accede to the symbolic (law), this distinction enables us to see the processes which define the text as practice.

A more concise and precise exposition of this distinction could not be found elsewhere than in Kristeva's own words in "The Speaking Subject" (1984) :

> "By semiotic, I mean the primary organization (in Freudian terms) of drives by rhythms, intonations, and primary processes (displacement, slippage, condensation). Genetically, the semiotic is found in the first echolalias of infants. Logically, it functions in all adult discourses as a supplementary register to that of sign and predicate synthesis. Plato speaks of this in the Timeus, in his invocation of a state of language anterior to the word, even to the syllable, and calls this the chora, the receptacle, the place before the space which is always already named, one, paternal, sign and predication.
>
> By symbolic, I mean precisely the functioning of the sign and predications. The symbolic is constituted beginning with what psychoanalysis calls the mirror stage and consequent capacities for absence, representation or abstraction. The symbolic is a matter, therefore, of language as a system of meaning (as structuralism and generative grammar study it) - a language with a foreclosed subject or with a transcendental subject-ego." (1984:217)[4]

projection / expulsion[3] which constitute the thetic phase, which enables the subject to gain access and control over an outside, and thus to accede to the symbolic (law), this distinction enables us to see the processes which define the text as practice.

A more concise and precise exposition of this distinction could not be found elsewhere than in Kristeve's own words in "The Speaking Subject" (1984) :

> "By semiotic, I mean the primary orgainization (in Freudian terms) of drives by rhythms, intonations, and primary processes (displacement, slippage, condensation). Genetically, the semiotic is found in the first echolalias of infancts. Logically, it functions in all adult discourses as a supplementary register to that of sign and predicate synthesis. Plato speaks of this in the Timaeus, in his invocation of a state of language anterior to the word, even to the syllable, and calls this the chora, the receptacle, the place before the space which is always already named, one, paternal, sign and predication.
>
> By symbolic, I mean precisely the functioning of the sign and predications. The symbolic is constituted beginning with what psychoanalysis calls the mirror stage and consequent capacities for absence, representation or abstraction. The symbolic is a matter, therefore, of language as a system of meaning (as structuralism and generative grammar study it) - a language with a foreclosed subject or with a transcendental subject-ego." (1984:217)

The very fact that the semiotic may emerge in the symbolic, and so disrupt the unity of the transcendental ego, gives rise to the signifying practice which we call écriture, set in operation by the fragmented subject of the semiotic chora. The emergence of the semiotic within the symbolic results in the various 'deviations' characteristic of poetic language or écriture : the focus on sound, the overdetermination of elements, syntactic irregularities, etc. In other words, the semiotic chora provides a motivation for the 0-2 logic specific to the paragram.

6.2.1 Experience and practice texts

As has been noted, a text may be defined as practice only in so far as it implicates its subject in the production of its meanings. More precisely, production of meaning cannot occur except where an operation heterogenous to meaning or sense is in process. This operation is that of the semiotic disposition which de-centres the subject and displaces meaning, and which is also the materialist basis of the theory. The avant-garde texts of the end of the nineteenth century are examples of those practices in which the subject is 'exploded' - a site of repression for bourgeois ideology. Thus the text offers a knowledge, a truth which is only now acceded to by science. The typology of texts in La Révolution is based upon where the text localises this 'truth': in the subject's experience, or in the social. The former are experience texxts and the latter are the more specifically practice texts, although both are obviously signifying practices. The objective truth which the text may offer is 'the moment of struggle, exploding the subject towards heterogenous materiality' (1974:186). In experience texts this moment of struggle is held, by the representational system of

these texts themselves, within subjective experience. The text is seen by Kristeva as abdicating from the social process : it exhibits the constitutive processes of that which is heterogenous to meaning, and which is repressed by bourgeois ideology, but ultimately serves this ideology since it provides a substitution for what it expels, without putting into question 'the system of its reproduction in representation (in signification)'. As an example of the experience text, she cites Mallarmé's work. Practice texts on the other hand, are those which do not limit this struggle between heterogeneous systems to the experiential, but introduce it into the social. The subjective however, remains a mediator :

> "La question est donc d'introduire la lutte de la signifiance, son procès, non plus seulement à l'intérieur de l'"expérience individuelle" ou elle est de toute façon puisqu'elle la détruit, mais dans le processus objectif de la science, de la technique et des rapports sociaux aujourd'hui." (1974:187)[i]

As examples of practice texts, Kristeva cites the work of Sollers, Lautreamont and Joyce. Experience texts are seen as being essentially impotent. With respect to this, Kristeva quotes Bataille :

> "...et nous ne pouvons manquer de saisir, à le voir, que l'existence poétique, ou nous apercevons la possibilité d'une <u>attitude souveraine</u>, est vraiment <u>l'attitude mineure</u>, qu'elle n'est qu'une attitude d'enfant, qu'un jeu gratuit." (Bataille 1957:38-39)[ii]

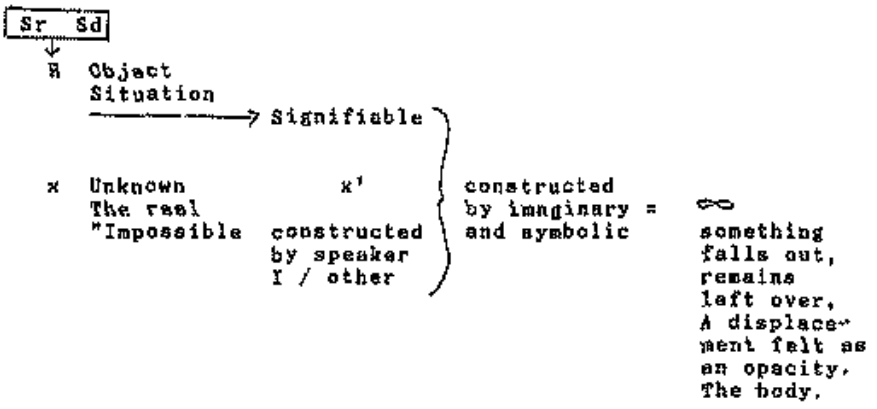
to which Kristeva adds :

> "Mais il (Bataille) prévoit, en conséquence, le dépassement de la poésie incapable d'assumer la positivité (le 'bien'), et tout en insistant sur le fait "qu'il n'y a dans le dépassement possible rien qui justifie le repos", Bataille semble prédire la décomposition de cette pratique se perdant dans "un parfait silence de la volonté." " (1984:187)[iii]

We have already seen in "Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes"[5] that the paragram produces 'signifying zeros'. It is the postulation that the empty set constitutive of signifiance produces the new (the good, the moral) that results in a positivisation of écriture, untenable in what we may call the text of 'revelation' - the critique text, which operates in pure negativity.

62.2 The subject on trial and in process

In the article "The Speaking Subject" (1984:210-220) Kristeva uses the following diagram to elucidate a theory of enunciation which accounts for the speaking subject :



where Sr/Sd- R designates theories of the enunciation or of discourse which open signification towards a sociology and psychology. However, if only this is considered, the speaking subject is not accounted for - what operates the sign here is a transcendental ego (1984:212). The signifiable is added in order to account for the speaking subject. The signifiable is that which is not the real (not x but x')[6]. The relation between the signifiable and the real is not one of identity, but of displacement. The signifiable expands in an attempt to exhaust signification, and to somehow make the real accessible, or to assimilate it. It has the potential to carry this process to infinity, "but something is left over, a remnant, experienced as the body" (1984:215) It is in poetic language that the expansion of the signifiable is most evident. Poetic language is in fact the only signifying practice which 'compensates' for the arbitrary relation between signifier and signified by instituting necessary relations amongst signifiers, thus providing for a motivated signifier. This results in a disturbance of the syntactic chain. The basis for this motivation is the semiotic chora, whose processes are 'exhibited' in poetic language such that this language constitutes a subject at once on trial and in process ('sujet en procès'). What is attacked by such a system is "the coherence of the sign and of the predicative syntheses (...) the guarantors of the unity of the speaking subject" (1984:215) an attack which is however prohibited - hence subject on trial. The subject is on trial thus for subverting that which guarantees subject-predicative logic, and a unified transcendental subject. However, the subject is also on trial for transgressing the most basic prohibition of symbolic systems : incest. Whereas the symbolic is paternal, and involves the acceptance of the law,

the semiotic chora is essentially infantile (pre-Oedipal) and maternal. As such poetic language is a form of incest :

> "S'il est vrai que c'est l'interdiction de l'inceste que constitue à la fois le langage comme code communicatif et les femmes comme objects d'échanges pour qu'une société puisse se fonder, le langage poétique serait, pour son sujet en procès, l'équivalent d'un inceste : c'est dans l'économie de la signification même que le sujet en procès s'approprie ce territoire archaïque, pulsionnel et maternel, en quoi il empêche à la fois le mot de devenir simplement signe et la mère de devenir un objet comme les autres, interdite." (1975:19) [iv]

The subject in the signifying practice of poetic language, is never in fact established as a subject : it is a process rather than an entity : produced by the interaction between the semiotic and the symbolic, the subject (and at the same time meaning) "undergoes a transition to a void, to zero = loss of identity, afflux of drive, and a return of symbolic capacities, but this time in order to take control of drive itself." (1984:217) The expansion of the signifiab'- hich occurs by this return of the semiotic, in which however the symbolic is not lost (this is what differentiates the discourse of the poet from that of the 'madman') results in the insertion of 'new' meanings thus produced in the symbolic order. It is in the semiotic disposition that the capacity for renewal is based : in the subject's capacity for enjoyment, for jouissance (1984:217). This renewal ultimately concerns the body : "a new aspect of the displacement between the referent / signifiable, a new aspect of the body, has thus found its signification."

Kristeva uses catastrophe theory[7] to explain this production of new signification within the signifiable by the operations of jouissance : the symbolic depends for its coherence on the semiotic as a 'space of control' or rather depends on the 'sufficient repression of the semiotic' (1984:218). The semiotic is an external space regulated by different laws from the internal space, but is related to it. The variation and augmentation of the semiotic drive produces a 'catastrophe' in the symbolic space, or a bifurcation within it, which is precisely the production of new signfications above the 'normal' lexical meanings within the symbolic space. Thus, jouissance, which produces precisely this type of 'explosion' of coherence, is directly related to the production of 'newness'. This process "opens the subject towards the body and society." (1984:219)

The negativity of desire, which shifts in relation to a lack, and of jouissance, a function of death drive (1974:108:151) are in this way positivised. Kristeva has moved a long way from her initial definition of écriture as the spatialisation which makes intertextuality possible, by making it possible to operate a simultaneous affirmation and negation, through a process of generalised negativity. When écriture erupts into a production of 'newness' which is not immediately re-inserted in its own process, but which may instead be inserted into the symbolic as law, we may say that the empty position which constitutes its process has been filled, and thus occluded. Thus, écriture is no longer a dramatisation of the underlying structure, which circulates around a neutral element, but falls prey to one of the 'accidents' of the structure : the filling of the empty position. At this point, the signifiance of the text may no longer strictly

speaking be defined as écriture. Furthermore, by focussing on the process of the subject or addresser of writing, Kristeva's theory is focussing precisely on those texts which she considers to be abdications of political commitment : experience texts. Despite the fact that the process of signifiance opens the subject towards the social, and a social intervention is in this way envisaged, Kristeva does not consider the possible effects of the text on its addressee, the reader, nor its possible reception in the society which it aims to transform. The reason for this is that Kristeva does not take into account the recuperative powers of the imaginary; instead she considers the imaginary only in so far as it participates in the construction of the signifiable, and not in so far as it is also a function of the ideological and therefore in a position to resist the absorption of the newness produced by signifiance. A politically committed theory will thus be obliged to take into account the consumption of the text by the society to whom it is addressed, beginning with a theory of the effect of the text on its reader.

6.3 Barthes, the theorist

For Barthes, the enemy of commitment is precisely recuperation operated both by the imaginary and by the ideological. Literary theory too is an agent of recuperation. For this reason his The Pleasure of the Text (1975) is a travesty of a theory : fragmentary, elliptic, unhierarchised, in short written, it is a bridging of the gap between writer and theorist - or metalinguist. For metalanguage itself has a responsibility, which takes the form of a work such as this.

"What we are seeking to establish in various ways is a theory

of the materialist subject" (1975:61). A theory of signifying practices which interarticulates with materialism and psychoanalysis, is , as we have seen, the project of not only Barthes and Kristeva, but also of the Tel Quel group. Barthes' method is, however, that of neutralising theory itself, by the application of an alphabetical ordering which we have already seen at work in Butor's Mobile, and which Barthes himself will use again with as affective results in Barthes par Barthes (1974) and in Fragments d'un discours amoureux (1977). Added to this is the very triviality of the point of entrance to the text : that of pleasure. It is perhaps this very hedonism which may finally make the text irrecuperable (or at least more difficult to recuperate) :

> "Although the theory of the text has specifically designated signifiance (in the sense Julia Kristeva has given this word) as the site of bliss, although it has affirmed the simultaneously erotic and critical value of textual practice, these propositions are often forgotten, repressed, stifled. And yet : is the radical materialism this theory tends toward conceivable without the notions of pleasure, of bliss?" (1975:64)

The theory of the text is in danger of becoming prescriptive, of erupting into something of a manifesto : the text of écriture must be committed, be responsible, be transformative, revolutionary, etc. And as with every manifesto which proposes alternatives, it becomes an ideolect, a hardened form, an écriture in the derogatory sense. At this point the theory of the text needs "the shock of a question. Pleasure is this question. As a trivial, unworthy name (who today would call himself a

hedonist with a straight face?), it can embarrass the text's return to morality, to truth : to the morality of truth : it is an oblique, a drag anchor, so to speak, without which the theory of the text would revert to a centered system, a philosophy of meaning." (1975:64-65) Pleasure is what can be opposed to Kristeva's form of commitment, which is to transform, to revolutionise, to produce the new - which is ultimately yet another disguise for the moral. Barthes shows that the only way to retain a 'morality' is to constantly undercut and to avoid it, at the very moment when it is about to congeal. Thus the notion of pleasure is a paradoxical one : trivial yet 'moral', or trivial in order to be 'moral'.

Just as we cannot operate a simple opposition between pleasure and the 'moral', neither can the critique of the text of bliss be opposed to the production inherent in Kristeva's notion of signifiance. The process of écriture as it is envisaged by Barthes is highly productive, since it allows for the unhindered functioning of the empty position, without which any system of articulation is impossible. What it produces is articulation in its most 'objective' form, i.e. unoccluded by the counter-production of the imaginary. Kristeva uses the example of 'portmanteau' words as an instance of the bifurcation of meaning produced by a 'catastrophe', or by jouissance (1984:219). Deleuze too uses this example, but sees it as an example of actualisation through the constitution of two series, which exchange terms as a result of the shifting and mobility of the empty position. It is precisely this production which Barthes reveals in "Literature and Discontinuity" and "The Metaphor of the Eye" and in S/Z[7]. The shifting of the empty position produces that of desire; bliss may

be said to be the experience of the body at that moment when the lack can no longer by contained by the seams of culture. The text of bliss is that which imposes a state of loss (1975:14) - that space where we can say the subject is dispersed, has no place. If we must locate ourselves somewhere in the text, if we must inhabit a space of meaning, it is simply in taking our pleasure in reading that we may avoid the alibi, the extenuating image-repertory of the imaginary, and paradoxically place ourselves nowhere. All systems of truth are topological, it is only pleasure which is atopic - which is neutral :

> "Pleasure's force of <u>suspension</u> can never be overstated : it is a veritable <u>époché</u>, a stoppage which congeals all recognized values (recognized by oneself). Pleasure is a <u>neuter</u> (the most perverse form of the demoniac)." (1975:65)

<u>The Pleasure of the Text</u> refers us to the most material aspect of the subject, the body. Drifting with the flow of pleasure, reduced to a zero-degree by the eruption of bliss, propelled by the lack constitutive of desire, the subject has no place in the text. What is returned to him is a fictional individuality,, which is not subjectivity but "the given which makes my body seperate from other bodies and appropriates its suffering or its pleasure : it is my body of bliss I encounter" (1975:62). It is to the fundamental a-sociality, unsociability of <u>style</u> to which we are returned. The body of bliss is the "historical subject", the conclusion of the interplay of biographical, historical, sociological, neurotic elements specific to <u>this</u> body, a mixture of "(cultural) pleasure and (non-cultural) bliss", and which is never in the right place, at the right time : "...a subject at present out of place, arriving too soon or too late (this <u>too</u>

designating neither regret, fault, nor bad luck, but merely calling for a non-site): anachronic subject, adrift." (1975:63)

Hence the profoundly a-social character of bliss : "it is the abrupt loss of sociality, and yet there follows no recurrence to the subject (subjectivity), the person, solitude : everything is lost, integrally." (1975:39) But this is not the 'experience' of the subject of writing alone. While neither the writer nor the reader may find their place in the text as speaking subjects, they are inscribed into the textuality of ecriture, since its driving force is desire, and the relation between writer, text and reader is one of desire : "The text you write must prove to me that it desires me. This proof exists : it is writing." (1975:6) Pleasure / bliss cause the reader's as well as the writer's subjectivity to be pulverized :

> "Now the subject who keeps the two texts in his field and in his hands the reins of pleasure and bliss is an anachronic subject, for he simultaneously and contradictorily participates in the profound hedonism of all culture (which permeates him quietly under cover of and art de vivre shared by the old books) and in the destruction of that culture : he enjoys the consistency of his selfhood (that is his pleasure) and seeks its loss (that is his bliss). He is a subject split twice over, doubly perverse." (1975:14)

Barthes not only allows for, but constructs his theory of the text on the active participation of the reader in the process of writing. His typologies of texts are based on the position of the reader in the text. Thus while we can say that the text of bliss

provides a form of 'motivation' for writerly texts, in the same way as the semiotic disposition is a motivation for the processes characteristic of the paragrammatic space, the notions of pleasure and of bliss are essentially constructed from the perspective of the reader. As was shown in S/Z, in order for the narrative to circulate as an 'exorcising agent' it must be impossible for both narrator and reader (listener) to appropriate the fantasy : if an elision of both instances of the 'I' does not occur, the contract whereby the narrative is upheld collapses. That is, if desire which underlies the construction of the fantasy is not occluded, realism as a genre is no longer possible. In fact, the entire edifice on which representation itself depends, will crumble, and we will find ourselves in the space of the writerly, and of the text of bliss.

Thus, the responsibility of forms which Barthes speaks of in Critical Essays, depends on the activity of the reader, who can no longer be considered as merely a passive consumer, but who is active in the process of producing meanings according to the symbolic functioning of the text, as it is presented in Critique et Verite :

> "On the stage of the text, no footlights : there is not, behind the text, someone active (the writer) and out front someone passive (the reader); there is not a subject and an object." (1975:16)

This inclusion of the reader is operated by the very trivial notion of pleasure; it is finally only in the very banality of this term that the text can hope to achieve any type of responsibility, since it is precisely only the notion of pleasure

which can remove the barrier between the literary as an institution and praxis :

> "The important thing is to equalize the field of pleasure, to abolish the false opposition of practical life and contemplative life. The pleasure of the text is just that: claim lodged against the separation of the text; for what the text says, through the particularity of its name, is the ubiquity of pleasure, the atopia of bliss." (1975:59)

However, the text cannot be overtly political, it cannot heroically construct itself as a revolutionary practice aiming to change the world, for this would merely be the ultimate alibi for a practice which needs no excuse : "The text is (should be) that uninhibited person who shows his behind to the Political Father." (1975:53)

The notion of pleasure by its very neutrality and apparent innocuousness, is the ultimate gesture of faithfullness to the zero-degree of meaning which is constitutive of all meaning. It is only through this neuter that the alibi of the image-repertory, be it realist or revolutionary, may be scuttled. However, this gesture is in itself revolutionary, for it forces the reader to participate in the neutralisation of all that which upholds his comfort as a unified speaking subject in a well-ordered and tranquilising culture, centred around a universal and eternal Truth. The ultimate gesture of commitment is then the production of a responsible reader, who is moreover forced into this position through the unleashing of those processes which constitute him/her as a subject.

which can remove the barrier between the literary as an institution and praxis :

> "The important thing is to equalize the field of pleasure, to abolish the false opposition of practical life and contemplative life. The pleasure of the text is just that: claim lodged against the separation of the text; for what the text says, through the particularity of its name, is the ubiquity of pleasure, the atopia of bliss." (1975:59)

However, the text cannot be overtly political, it cannot heroically construct itself as a revolutionary practice aiming to change the world, for this would merely be the ultimate alibi for a practice which needs no excuse : "The text is (should be) that uninhibited person who shows his behind to the Political Father." (1975:53)

The notion of pleasure by its very neutrality and apparent innocuousness, is the ultimate gesture of faithfullness to the zero-degree of meaning which is constitutive of all meaning. It is only through this neuter that the alibi of the image-repertory, be it realist or revolutionary, may be scuttled. However, this gesture is in itself revolutionary, for it forces the reader to participate in the neutralisation of all that which upholds his comfort as a unified speaking subject in a well-ordered and tranquilising culture, centred around a universal and eternal Truth. The ultimate gesture of commitment is then the production of a responsible reader, who is moreover forced into this position through the unleashing of those processes which constitute him/her as a subject.

However, the tenability of responsibility either in writing or reading remains in a very precarious position. In Writing Degree Zero, ecriture appears as a value precisely because it is the only area in which the writer has any choice, even if this choice is restricted. Responsibility itself is the product of a conscious decision of the writer to commit himself to the social and political process. What it entails however is the annihilation of the subject, or the acceptance on the part of the speaking subject of those unconscious factors which threaten to destroy it as a subject, since responsibility can only come from the speaking subject as a supposedly unified subject capable of taking a decision in a world governed by the symbolic law. This casts into doubt the good faith of the responsible subject, as well as any possibility of achieving a meaningful undermining of the extenuating image-repertoire which political commitment tends to become, since anything which emanates from the ego will necessarily bring with it its own defence mechanisms. Thus, the position taken up in The Pleasure of the Text is in many ways a position which has been forced on the notion of responsibility; for if it is impossible for the writing subject to maintain itself as 'responsible' and at the same time allow for the destruction of its subjectivity, it may be possible to force the reader into a position in which s/he momentarily experiences the eruption of profoundly a-cultural drives. The expression of responsibility is then its annihilation in a process of complete and unrelenting subversion, in which it is perhaps only the sparks of the profoundest destructive force which may remain irrecuperable.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to J-P Delaporte for this formulation.
2. See chapter four.
3. Sue Coward and Ellis (1977:137-152)
4. See also Kristeva (1975:10-27, 1974:76-101)
5. See chapter four.
6. This may be compared with Foucault's discussion of death as the absence underlying representational systems.
7. Derived from Thom's Catastrophe Theory :

   "This theory, if one extrapolates it onto an epistemological plane, supposes that all structures are the result of the interaction between two communicating spaces; spaces, however, which do not obey the same laws. In this way, an external space, called the control, which is related to an internal space, can behave in such a way vis-a-vis the internal space, that a continual variation of the control, beginning at a certain degree, produces a bifurcation in the internal space of reference. This bifurcation, which is either discontinuity or conflict, is called, precisely, a catastrophe."(Kristeva 1984:219)
8. See chapter five.

CONCLUSION

The contradiction inherent to the Tel Quel project of commitment, and which is evident in the analysis of the work of Kristeva and of Barthes, resides precisely in the fusion of écriture as underlying structure and as transformative practice. For in so far as écriture is the underlying structure of all literary systems of signfication, the 'text of écriture' must of necessity limit itself to dramatising the functioning of this structure. To attempt to effect a transformation, and in particular a transformation of systems which lie outside the parameters of the specifically literary, is to occlude the emptiness of the empty position, the condition of possiblity of signification. That is, it is to fall prey to one of the 'accidents' to which the structure is prone : the filling in of the empty position. As Deleuze points out, this accident may be avoided only by maintaining the structuralist hero as the symbolic elemet which accompanies but yet does not occupy the empty position. Thus by 'following' but not pre-empting the trajectory of desire, which shifts in relation to this lack, the infinite productivity of signification which is specific to écriture constructs itself, on condition however that these significations are themselves immediately reinserted into the textuality of écriture, and not into an imaginary structure which will immediately recuperate it as a sign, be it of political commitment. Thus it is imaginary exchange which must not be permitted to establish itself, by revealing its dependence on symbolic exchange, made possible by the shifting of the empty position.

If the structuration of écriture is seen as being wholly dependent on the "sujet en proces" as subject of writing, there is a danger that écriture will come to function as a form of neo-romanticism, where, despite the fact that we are dealing with a fragmented and dispersed subject, it is still the adventures of a subject from whom the discourse emanates that we are dealing with. The fragmentation of the subject can in no way be localised and must come to include the receivers of the discourse as well : if this were possible the attendant hazards of imaginary recuperation may also be avoided, if only in flashes in which the subject is forced to experience the complete loss of subjectivity. But this possibility is rather tenuous: the "pleasure of the text", even as the most anachronistic and neutral form of responsibility is constantly in danger of eminent recuperation. The very fact that a scholarly dissertation can be written on it is proof of this.

The project of commitment based on écriture as a theoretical concept and scritpural practice is thus untenable. The definition of écriture as underlying structure is irreconcileable with the thrust towards commitment. At best, the text 'of écriture' must be limited to revelation.

More recent developments in the work of Barthes and of Kristeva, such as Camera Lucida (1980) and Histoires d'amour (1983), and also in literature itself bear witness to this impossibility of active intervention in social and political processes. Faced with the aporia which the question of political commitment presents, it is increasingly towards the individual that both literature and its theory turn in a continuing if ill-fated effort to come to terms with or perhaps even to breach the

gap between the body as the instance of the Real and our systems of signification. It is not however ecriture which will operate this utopia.

It is fitting that the last word be left to Mallarme, who was also the first to realise the precariousness of ecriture on the limit between the articulation and the recuperation of significations :

> "Appuyer, selon la page, au blanc, que l'inaugure son ingénuité, à soi, oublieuse meme du titre qui parlerait trop haut : et quand s'aligne, dans une brisure, la moindre, disséminée, le hasard vaincu mot par mot, indéfectiblement le blanc revient, tout à l'heure gratuit, certain maintenant, pour conclure que rien au-delà et authentiquer le silence." (1957:387)

APPENDIX A

Translations of quotations

Chapter One

i. "Absolutely nothing will please us more than to be accused of eclecticism. And is there a better ambition than that which makes us hope to unite here the best of what is being written or has been written - in all the directions in which we should wish to advance?" (no 1:4)

ii. "The ideologues have reigned over expression for a sufficiently long time for it to permit itself at last to give them the slip, and to occupy itself entirely with itself, its fatality and its particular rules." (no 1:3)

iii. "What must be said today is that writing is no longer conceivable without a clear forecast of its powers, a sang-froid with regards to the chaos from which it rises, a determination which will place poetry at the highest intellectual level. All the rest will not be literature." (no. 1:3)

iv. "I want the world and I want it AS SUCH, and want it again, eternally, and I cry insatiably : encore! and not only for me alone, but for the whole play and for the whole spectacle; and not for the spectacle alone, but ultimately for me, because the spectacle is necessary to me - because it makes me necessary - because I am necessary to it - and because I make it necessary." (Neitzsche quoted in no. 1 : frontispiece)

v. "What is appearance for me! Certainly not the opposite of a being;... What could I know of any being whatsoever, if not the attributes of its appearance! Certainly not an inanimate

mask that one can put on or remove from an unknown X? Appearance is for me life and action itself, life which is enough of a mockery to let me feel that there is nothing but appearance." (Neitzsche quoted in Baudry (1968:134)

vi. "...it will touch those qualities which instantaneously establish the relations between ourselves, our immediate and most pure justification." (no. 1: 4)

vii. "Writing, which is in some respects our function towards the exterior world, our way of greeting it,of creating between it and us a complicity, an intimicy, a friendship ever greater, is definitely just an introduction." (no.1 : 4)

viii."The only Theory capable (...) of criticising ideology in all of its disguises, including the disguises of technical practices in the sciences, is the Theory of theoretical practice (as distinct from ideological practice) : a materialist dialectic, or dialectical materialism in its specificity." (Althusser quoted in Sollers 1968:79)

ix. "...dramatic economy of which the 'geometrical space' is not representable : it is played." (Sollers no.31 : 3)

x. "It could well be that the approach of death, its sovereign gesture, its projection into the memory of men,, hollow out in being and in the present the emptiness from which and towards which one speaks." (Foucault no.15 : 45)

xi. "Language, on the line of death, reflects itself : it encounters something like a mirror there: and in order to stop this death which is going to halt it, it has only one power : that of giving birth to its own image within itself in a play of mirrors, which has no limits." (Foucault no.15 : 45)

xii. "... the word finds the indefinite source of its own image

where it can represent itself to infinity, already behind itself, and yet beyond itself." (Foucault no.15 : 45)

xiii. "To write, for Western culture, would be to place oneself from the outset in the virtual space of self-representation and of reduplication, writing signifying not the thing, but the word, the work of language would do nothing but advance more profoundly in this impalpable thickness of the mirror, arouse the double of this double which ecriture already is, discover thus a possible and impossible infinity, maintain it beyond death which condemns it and free the rustling of a murmur." (Foucault no.15 : 45)

xiv. "...a relation such that the works can define themselves opposite, beside and at a distance from each other, supporting themselves on their difference and on their simultaneity at the same time, defining, without privelege nor culmination, the extent of a network." (Foucault 1968 : 17)

xv. "...the verbal vein of that which does not exist, such as it is." — (Foucault 1968 : 19)

xvi. "The language of fiction inserts itself in already spoken language, in the murmur which has never ended." (Foucault 1968 : 20)

xvii. "And if I willingly stop at the word aspect (perspective), after fiction and simulacrum, it is at once for its grammatical precision and for the semantic knot which turns around it (the species of the mirror and that of analogy; the diffraction of the spectre and the division of spectres; the exterior aspect, which is not the thing itself and neither its certain surround; the aspect which modifies itself with distance; the aspect which often tricks but

which is never effaced, etc.." (Foucault 1968 : 21)

xviii"Language is this emptiness, this exterior within which it never ceases to speak : 'the eternel rustling of the outside'" (Foucault 1968 : 23)

xix. "And if criticism has a role, I mean if the necessarily second language of the critic can cease to be a derived, aleatory language, if it can be at the same time secondary and fundamental, it is to the extent to which it puts in words for the first time this network of works which is for each of them, their silence." (Foucault 1968 : 17)

xx. "...the crisis, and the violent revolution, the leap of readability." (Sollers no.31 : 4)

xxi. "Theory considers 'literature' (and the culture in which it is situated) as closed. From now on it will expose the exterior covering of that which has been thought by this name. It elaborates the real (economic) conditions of a priori systematic structures and the conditions under which textual ecriture is effaced, by suppressing every fixation at the notion of work or of author (at the cultural fetishisation and the corollary fiction of a creative subjectivity). As 'historical consciousness', it is necessarily on the side of the revolutionary action in progress." (Sollers no.31 : 7)

xxii."What is at stake, is to widen the tearing of the symbolic system in which the modern West has lived and continues to live." (Barthes 1968 : 9)

xxiii"to articulate a politics logically linked to a non-representational dynamic of ecriture, that is : the analysis of the misunderstandings provoked by this position, the explanantion of their social and economic character, the

construction of the relations between this ecriture with historical and dialectical materialism." (1968:10)

xxiv. "in order - the reflection - the calculated inversion - of a real social and historical process, that is, the analytical exposition of its determination towards its cause." (no. 43:1)

xxv. "The completed form which economic relations take on such as they are manifested superficially, in their concrete existence, thus also such as the agents of these relations and those which incarnate them represent them when they try to understand them, is very different from their essential inernal but hidden structure, and from the concept which corresponds to it. In fact,, it is even the inverse, the opposite." (Marx - quoted in no.43 : 2)

xxvi. "At the juncture of this practice and of this science - and with regard to psychoanalysis and marxism-leninism) - new operative concepts arise - those of ecriture, of text." (no. 44 : 96)

xxvii. "It is a question of knowing if the revolutionary theory of the proletariat, marxism-leninism, will or will not be diffused in the superstructures (be it, amongst others, in our specific field of work, the concept of signifying practice which marks the point of no-return in relation to ideologies of creation and of expressivity." (Sollers no. 44:99)

xxviii. "That which is at stake here is decisive : it is the problem of the articulation of Marx and Lenin with Freud. We say that the possiblity of this subversive articulation is going to be stopped at any price. Either by pulling psychoanalysis to the right (towards idealism : Freud without Marx and Lenin); or by trying to keep marxxism-

leninism in a spychological personnalism or, the inverse, in a stereotypedactivity (rightist or leftist revisionism : Marx and Lenin without Freud." (Sollers no.38 : iii)

xxix. "Writing is not the servant of the real, it is the force of its symbolic transformation." (Sollers no. 43:76)

Chapter two

i. "the word (the text) is an intersection of words (of texts) where at least one other word (text) is read." (1978:84)

ii. "Every text constructs itself as a mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and the transformation of another text. In the place of the notion of intersubjectivity that of intertextuality is installed, and poetic language is read, at least as a double." (1978:85)

iii. "Dialogue is the only possible sphere of the life of language." (Bakhtin - quoted in 1970 :83)

iv. "Dialogical relations must be actualised (habilles de)in words and become utterances, expressions, through the words of various subjects in their positions, in order for dialogical relations to appear between them...Dialogical relations are absolutely impossible without relations of logic and of signfication but cannot be reduced to them, having their own specificity." (1970:83)

v. "to find the formalisms corresponding to the different modes of juncture of the utterances (of the sequences) in the dialogical space of the text." (1970:87)

vi. "a writing-reading, that is by a practice of a signifying structure according or in opposition to another structure." (1978:83)

vii. "We will define as literature every discourse which is a product of the mode of intertextuality, that is which spatialises itself, adding to the surface of its own structure defined by the subject / addressee relation, the space of a foreign text, which it modifies." (1970:67)

viii. "For the poetic texts of modernity we could say, without exaggerating, that it (intertextuality) is a fundamental law: they construct themselves by simultaneously absorbing and destroying the other texts of the intertexual space; they are so to speak discursive alter-junctions (alter-other)" (1978:196)

ix. "the focus from which the knowing rationality grasps the transformation of utterances (to which the text is irreduceable) into a whole (the text), as well as the inclusion of this totality in the historical and social text." (1978:53)

x. "The semiotic practice of the sign thus assimilates the metaphysical procedure of the symbol, and projects it on the 'immediately perceptible'; valorised in this way, the 'immediately perceptible' is transformed into an objectivity which will be the master law of the discourse of the civilisation of the sign." (1978:57)

xi. "The division of dialectical negation also entails a finality, a theological principle (God, 'meaning')." (1970:57)

xii. "Non-alternating negation is the law of the narrative; every narrative is made and nourished by time and finality, history and God." (1970:57)

xiii. "The notion of literature coincides with the notion of the novel in its chronological origins as well as in the fact of their structural closure." (1970:50)

xiv. "a function which ossifies, petrifies, halts." (1970:64)

xv. "For the phonetic consciousness from the Renaissance until today, writing is an artificial limit, an arbitrary law, a subjective completion." (1970:54)

xvi. "The act of writing which is the eminently differential act, reserving for the text the status of an-other irreducable to its difference, and which is also the eminently correlational act, avoiding the clsoure of sequences in a finite ideologeme and opening them to an infinite functioning, will be suppressed and will be evoked only in order to oppose to 'objective reality' (the utterance, phonetic discourse) a 'subjective artificiality' (scriptural practice)." (1970:54)

xvii."the reign of literature is the reign of exchange value, and it occludes even that which Antoine de la Sale practiced in a confused manner : thhe discursive origins of the literary fact." (1970:53)

xviii."Thus, we can here formulate the hypothesis that the instance of the suthor is organised on the discourse is considered to be a work (letter, literature, novel) whhich presupposes a possessor and a seller having a proper name and who is consequently capable of being assumed by an 'I'." (1970:100)

xix. "This division of the novel between the symbol and the sign is inherent to all our discourse, such that one could consider every victory of the novel against symbolism as a step of our civilisation in the direction which it has chosen for itself in refusing platonism and christianity." (1970:190)

xx. "We are faced with an immense labour : to discover how texts have made themselves the agents of the transformations of systems of thought throughout the ages, and how they have carried into ideology these recastings of the signifier,, which they alone, with logico-mathematical labour, can produce." (1978:225)

Chapter four

i. "If it disturbbs and transform the semiotic system which regulates social exchange,and at the same time deposits the active instances of the social process onto discursive instances, the texxt cannot construct itself as a sign neither in the fist nor in the second phase of its articulation, nor as a whole." (1978:12)

ii. "Poetic language is an inseperable dyad of the law (ordinary language) and of its destruction (specific to poetic language), and this indivisible coexistence of the "+" and the "-" is the constitutive complementarity of poetic language, a complementarity which arises at every level of non-monological (paragrammatic) textual articulations." (1978:118)

iii. "...gives a second way of being which is artificial, added so to speak, to the original of the word." (1978:114)

iv. "...which makes rather than expresses a meaning." (1978:123)

v. "...the linguistic sign appears as a dynamism which proceeds by quantum charge." (1978:126)

vi. "Projecting this reasoning on a linguistic background we arrive at the idea that at the basis of mathematics (and by extension, of the structures of language) one finds the contradictions which are not only inherent to it, but indestructible, constitutive and unmodifiable, the 'text' being a coexistence of oppositions, a demonstration that 0=0" (1978:130)

vii. "...the text, structuring itself as a chain of signifiying zeros, contests not only the system of the code

(romanticism, humanism) with which it is in dialogue, but also its own texture." (1978:132)

viii. "Let as examine this paragrammatic numerology which knows neither a 1 nor a 0 but 2 and the whole. The unity is empty, and does not count, the one is 0 but it signifies : it commands the entire space of the paragram, it is there in order to centre, but the paragram refuses to give it a value (a stable meaning). This unity is not a synthesis of A and of B; but it counts as one because it is the whole, and at the same time, it cannot be distinguished from two for it is in itself that all the contrasting semes, which oppose each other but which are also unified, are reabsorbed."(1978:132)

ix. "...being a double, it negates itself in negating..." (1978:133)

x. "...non-being is intertwined with being, and that in a completely disconcerting manner." (Plato quoted in 1978:198)

xi. "These 0-1 coordinates are there, always present to reading, but bracketed out, in order to recall the fundamental difference between 'mad' discourse (which is ignorant of them) and the transgressive work of poetic writing (which knows them), this work which, within the system of the word - the social system-, displaces the limits of the word and fills it with new (orthocomplementary) structures which this word, together with the scientific subject, come to discover one day." (1978:287)

xii. "...the Aufhebung operation cannot be located except from the place of the subject = of the word = of the sign." (1978:211)

xiii. "...a zerological subject assumes this thought which annuls itself." (1978:212)

xiv. "...paragrammatism is for us (and we permit ourselves to paraphrase Lacan here) a concept formed on the path of that which operates to link the deconstitution of the subject to its constitution, the deconstitution of the word to the constitution of the text, the deconstitution of the sign to constitution of ecriture." (1978:213)

xv. "...nevertheless have a result which society communicates, exchanges as the representation of an inobservable process of production." (1978:209)

Chapter five

i. "...symbolic language to which all literary works belong, is by its structure (structurally) a plural language, of which the code is such that every word (every work) engendered by it, has multiple meanings." (1966:53)

ii. "...the work proposes, man disposes." (1966:52)

iii. "Precisely because it is withdrawn from every situation, the work offers itself for exploration : before he who writes it or reads it, it becomes a question posed to language, of which one experiences the foundations, of which one touches the limits. The work thus makes itself the depositary of an immense, of an incessant interrogation of words. It is always held that the symbol is nothing but a property of the imagination. The symbol has also critical function, and the object of its critique is language itself. To the Critiques of Reason which philosophy has given us, one can imagine the addition of a Critique of Language, and this is literature itself." (1966:55)

iv. "such that every writing which does not lie designates not the interior attributes of the subject, but its absence." (1966:70)

v. "...the nothingness of the I that I am." (1966:71)

vi. "...such that the critic and work always say : I am literature, and never announce anything but the absence of the subject." (1966:71)

vii. "...to make castration as anecdotal condition coincide with castration as symbolic structure...for the one did not fatally entail the other." (1970:169)

viii. "On the borderline between these two so different scenes which, a thousand times repeated in various guises make

Paris the world's most amusing and most philosphical city, I was making for myself a moral macedoine, half pleasant, half funereal. With my left foot I beat time, and I felt as though the other were in the grave. My leg was in fact chilled by one of those insiduous drafts which freeze half our bodies while the other half feel the humid heat of rooms, an occurence rather frequent at balls." (Trans by R. Miller.)

ix. "...antithesis is the figure of the given, eternal, eternally recurring opposition : the figure of the inexpiable." (1970:39)

x. "It is by this excess which comes to the discourse after rhetorics has decently saturated it that something can be told, and the narrative begins." (1970:35)

xi. "As for the castrato himself, one would be wrong to place him on the side of the castrated : he is the blind and mobile spot in this system; he comes and goes between the active and the passive : castrated, he castrates; the same goes for Mme de Rochefide : contaminated by the castration narrated to her she drags the narrator there too." (1970:43)

xii. "...ecriture is not the communication of a message which would go from the author to the reader; it is specifically the vvoice of reading itself : <u>in the text, only the reader speaks.</u>" (1970:157)

xiii. "As such ecriture is active, for it acts for the reader : it proceeds, not from the author, but from a public writer, notary charged by the institution, not to flatter the tastes of his clients, but to consign, at its dictation, a statement of its interest, the operations by which, within an economy of unveiling, he manages this merchandise : the narrative." (1970:158)

xiv. "...to pass from the index to the sign, is to abolish the last

(or the first) limit, the origin, the foundation, the ending, it is to enter into the illimitable process of equivalences, representations which nothing halts, orients, fixes, consecrates." (1970:47)

xv. "...in the sign, which founds an order of representation (and no longer of determination, of creation, as in the index), the two parts are exchanged, signified and signifier revolve in an endless process : that which has been bought can be sold again, the signified can become the signifier, and so on." (1970:47)

Chapter six

i. "The question is thus to introduce the struggle of signifiance, its process, no longer only interior to 'individual experience' where it is anyway since it destroys it, but to introduce it into the objective process of science, of technique, on of social relations today." (1974:187)

ii. "...and we cannot but grasp, at seeing it, that poetic existence, where we perceive the possibility of a sovereign attitude, is actually the minor attitude, that it is nothing but a childish attitude, a gratuitous game." (Bataille quoted in 1974:187)

iii. "But he (Bataille) foresees, consequently, the surpassing of poetry incapable of assuming a positivity (the 'good'), and even as he insists that "there is nothing in possible surpassing which justifies repose", Bataille seems to predict the decomposition of this practice, losing itself in "the perfect silence of will"." (1974:187)

iv. "If it is true that the interdiction of incest which simultaneously constitues language as a communicative code and women as objects of exchange so that a society can be founded, poetic language would be, for its subject on trial and in process, the equivalent of an incestuous act : it is in the economy of signification itself that the subject on trial and in process appropriates this archaic, drive-governed and maternal territory, and in doing so, simultaneously prevents the word from becomming simply a sign, and the mother from becoming interdicted like all other objects." (1975:19)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Balibar,E. & P. Macherey (1981) "On literature as an ideological form" in R. Young (ed) Untying the Text. London : Routledge and Kegan Paul pp. 79-101

Barthes, R. (1966) Critique et vérité. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil

(1968a) Writing degree zero. Trans. A. Lavers and C. Smith. New York : Hill & Wang

(1968b) "Drame, poeme, roman" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil pp. 25-40

(1970) S/Z. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil

(1972) Critical Essays Trans. R. Howard. Evanston : Northwestern University Press

(1973) Mythologies. Trans. A. Lavers. London : Paladin

(1974) S/Z. Trans. R. Miller. New York : Hill & Wang

(1975a) The Pleasure of the Text. Trans. R. Miller. New York : Hill & Wang

(1975b) Barthes par Barthes. Paris : Éditions du Seuil

(1977a) Image-Music-Text. Trans. S. Heath. New York : Hill & Wang

(1977b) Fragments d'un discours amoureux Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil

(1980) Camera Lucida Paris : Éditions du Seuil

Bataille,G. (1971) Histoire de l'oeil in Oeuvres complètes. Paris : Gallimard

Baudrillard,J.
(1981) A critique of the political economy of the sign. St Louis : Telos

Baudry, J-L (1968a) "Écriture, fiction, idéologie" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil pp. 127-148

(1968b) "Freud et la création littéraire" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil pp. 148-176

Butor, M. (1962) Mobile. Étude pour une représentation des États-Unis. Paris : Gallimard

Carusi, A. (1986) "The productivity of the zero-degree" in Journal of Literary Studies vol. 2 no. 1 pp. 34-45

Caws, M.A. (1975) About French Poetry from Dada to Tel Quel : Text and Theory. Detroit : Wayne University Press

Charvet, M. (1974) Tel Quel. Un' avanguardia per il materialismo. Bari : Dedalo

Champagne,R (1977) Beyond the structuralist myth of ecriture. The Hague, Paris : Mouton

Coward, R. &
J. Ellis (1977) Language and Materialism. London : Routledge and Kegan Paul

Delaporte, J-P &
& S. van Zyl(1984) "On literature as an obstacle to the contestation of hierarchy" in SAVAL (Suid-Afrikaanse Vereeniging vir algemene literatuurwetenskap / South African Society for General Literary Theory, kongresreferate IV Wits/ Potchefstroom pp.60-72

Deleuze, G. (1975) "Da che cosa si riconosce lo strutturalismo?" in Chatelet, F. (ed) La Filosofia del XX secolo Trans. L. Sosio. Milan : Biblioteca Rizzoli pp. 194-217

(1983) Nietzsche and Philosophy. London : Athlone Press

Derrida, J. (1968) "La différance" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil

(1970) "La double séance" in Tel Quel no 41 & 42 pp. 3-43 and 4-46 respectively

Foucault, M.(1963) "Le langage à l'infini" in Tel Quel no. 15 pp. 44-53

(1968) "Distance, aspect, origine" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil

Gallop, J. (1982) Feminism and psychoanalysis : the daughter's seduction. London : Macmillan

Glucksmann,A(1977) "A Ventriloquist Structuralism" in New Left Review Western Marxism. London : NLB

Heath, S. (1972) The Nouveau Roman. London : Elek

(1974) Le vertige du déplacement : lecture de Barthes Paris : collection 'Digraphe' Éditions Fayard

Jakobson, R.(1963) Essais de linguistique générale. Paris : Éditions de Minuit

(1971) Selected Writings The Hague : Mouton

Jouve, V. (1986) Le littérature selon Barthes. Paris : Editions de Minuit

Kristeva, J.(1968a)"La sémiologie : science critique et / ou critique de la science" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel'

Éditions du Seuil pp.80-94

(1968b) "Problèmes de la structuration du texte" in Théorie d'ensemble". Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil pp. 297-317

(1968c) "Distance et anti-representation" in Tel Quel no. 32 pp. 59-53

(1970) Le Texte du Roman. The Hague, Paris : Mouton

(1971) "Matière, sens, dialectique" in Tel Quel no. 52 and 53 pp.12-30 and 17-38 respectively

(1974a) La révolution du langage poetique. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Editions du Seuil

(1974b) "Sujet dans le langage et pratique politique" in Tel Quel no. 58 pp. 22-27

(1975a) "The system and the speaking subject" in Sebeok (ed) The tell-tale sign. Lisse : De Ridder pp.47-55

(1975b) "D'une identité l'autre" in Tel Quel no. 62 pp.10-27

(1978) Semeiotikê : Ricerche per una semanalisi. Milano: Feltrinelli

(1979) Sémeiotikê : Recherches pour une sémanalyse. Paris : collection 'Points' Editions du Seuil

(1980) Desire in language. New York : Columbia University Press

(1983) Histoires d'amour. Paris : Denoel

(1985) "The speaking subject" in Blonsky, M. (ed) On signs. Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press pp.211-220

Lacan, J. (1977) Écrits. Trans. A. Sheridan. London : Tavistock

Laplanche, J. & Pontalis,J-B(1983) The Language of Psycho = Analysis. Trans. D. Nicholson-Smith. London : Hogarth Press

Lavers, A. (1982) Roland Barthes : Structuralism and After London: Methuen

Macherey, P.(1978) A Theory of Literary Production. Trans. G. Wall. London : Routledge and Kegan Paul

Mallarme, S.(1957) Oeuvres complètes. Paris : Gallimard

Moi, T. (1985) Sexual/Textual Politics : feminist literary theory. London : Methuen

(1986) The Kristeva Reader. New York : Columbia University Press

Risset, J. (1982) I venti anni di Tel Quel. Rome : Bulzoni

Robert, M. (1980) Origins of the Novel. Sussex : The Harvester Press

Sollers,Ph. (1967) "Programme" in Tel Quel no. 41 pp. 3-8

(1968a) Écriture et l'expérience des limites. Paris : collection 'Points' Éditions du Seuil

(1968b) "Écriture et révolution" in Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil. pp.67-80

(1970) "Réponses" in Tel Quel no. 43

(1971) "Thèses générales" in Tel Quel no. 46 pp. 90-101

Sontag, S. (1982) L'écriture même : à propos de Barthes. Paris: Christian Bourgeois

Tel Quel (1960-1982) Paris : Éditions du Seuil

(1968) Théorie d'ensemble. Paris : collection 'Tel Quel' Éditions du Seuil

Todorov, T. (1984) Mikhail Bakhtin : The Dialogical Principle.

Trans. W. Godzich. Manchester University Press.

Ungar, S. (1983) Roland Barthes : Professor of Desire. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press

Wright, E. (1984) Psychoanalytic Criticism : theory in practice London : Methuen

Author Carusi Annamaria
Name of thesis Ecriture As Political Practice: An Analysis Of The Journal Tel Quel With Particular Reference To The Work Of Julia Kristeva And Roland Barthes. 1986

PUBLISHER:
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg Library website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the Library website.