

https://dspace.org/

Textual pleasure and production: three texts by Roland Barthes

Roodt, Daniel Francois

2015
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/19230

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

TEXTUAL PLEASURE AND PRODUCTION: THREE TEXTS BY ROLAND BARTHES

Daniel François Roodt

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Arts
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
for the Degree of Master of Arts

Johannesburg 1983

Acknowledgements

Financial aid from both the Human Sciences Research Council and the Senior Bursary Fund of the University of the Witwatersrand towards this dissertation is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

TEXTUAL PLEASURE AND PRODUCTION: THREE TEXTS BY ROLAND BARTHES

ROODT, Daniel François, M.A. University of the Witwatersrand, 1983.

This dissertation concerns itself with three texts by Roland Barthes, namely The Pleasure of the Text, Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes and A Lover's Discourse, as well as a fourth one by Georges Bataille, ie. Story of the Eye. These three texts are unusual in that they deviate from the traditional language in which literary theory has been presented, but this is in accordance with a general post-structuralist tendency towards new and paradoxical forms of discourse.

Various concepts are to be found in these three texts, deriving from semiology, psychoanalysis, as well as Nietzsche; by being used in another context they are partly transformed. The important notion of pleasure holds a radical possibility for textual theory in that it provides for a type of textual production that proceeds from a sensual or erotic experience of texts.

Love, like pleasure, is a theoretically disparaged term; the type of thought that employs such terms is productivist and non-humanist. Such thought displaces, rather than founds truths: in the textual domain it brings out the non-representational sensation of textuality, which has nothing to do with representational eroticism, even in a text containing elements of the latter, such as Story of the Eye.

Contents

1. Introduction 1

2. Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes and The Pleasure of the Text
   a. (Introductory remarks) 15
   b. Concepts in Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes and The Pleasure of the Text
      i. The Intertext 16
      ii. Pleasure/Jouissance 19
      iii. The Text as Body 30
      iv. Textuality 32
      v. Play 38
      vi. The Imaginary 47
      vii. Doxa/Paradoxa 51
      viii. Criticism as Perversion 54
      ix. Transgression 57
      x. Split 62
      xi. Textual Desire: a Preliminary Conclusion 68

3. A Lover's Discourse
   a. Fragmentation Continued 72
   b. The Cover of Fragments d'un discours amoureux 75
   c. Tobit, Werther, Balzac, Barthes 81
   d. Loving and Reading 85
      i. The Lover 88
      ii. The Other 89
      iii. Love, Jouissance and Zen 91

4. Story of the Eye
   a. "The Metaphor of the Eye" Reconsidered 95

b. Jouissance and Representational Eroticism 100
c. Two Readings: One Reported and One Spoken 102
i. The Reported Reading 104
ii. The Spoken Reading 113

Love and the Flow of Textual Desire: Final Conclusion 122

b. Jouissance and Representational Eroticism 100
c. Two Readings: One Reported and One Spoken 102
i. The Reported Reading 104
ii. The Spoken Reading 113

5. Love and the Flow of Textual Desire: Final Conclusion 122

1. Introduction

This study aims to elucidate three texts by Roland Barthes, namely The Pleasure of the Text[1], Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes[2] and A Lover's Discourse[3]. These texts differ in various respects from the accepted or conventional form in which literary theory has been presented. They are aphoristic and make use of various devices usually associated with fiction, rather than theory, such as metaphor, juxtapositions amounting to montage, stylistic variations, as well as interchanging of pronouns from "I" to "he" to "us", and the like. They also tend to be highly ambiguous in places, thereby lending themselves to various and conflicting readings.

Such conflicting readings are exemplified by the fact that these texts are, on the one hand, quoted in attempts to assimilate elements of them to Marxism[4], while on the other end of the politico-literary spectrum, they are as readily used by a right-wing literatus who has been closely associated with South Africa's draconian censorship system[5]. Although literary theories are not necessarily bound to political positions on the left or the right, such utilisations of, specifically, PT, to opposing ends[6], are indicative of the diverse appropriations in which the unusual and aphoristic form of these texts may result.

Such diverse appropriations may also include the misrepresentation of the texts, and reduction of concepts in them, such as in the following example:

> "Barthes's literary theories often reflect ideas commonplace in Anglo-Saxon literary discourse since the 1920s... while his views on the Death of the Author are a repetition

> in more grandiose terms of an attitude axiomatic in the American 'New Critics' of the 1950s and most elegantly expressed in the early essays of T.S. Eliot."[1]

To liken Barthes's theories to "New Criticism", as well as T.S. Eliot's views on literature - which were primarily written apropos of [illegible][5] - as Philip Thody does here, is an extraordinary act of theoretical reduction, for, ever since Writing Degree Zero[9], Barthes has always kept his distance from the type of formalism that would regard the text as an isolated object whose intrinsic meanings are to be ascertained by a given critical or "new critical" method.

In the case of Barthes's earlier texts, it would be quite easy to point out their difference vis a vis New Criticism or to enunciate their specificity against any other misreading. But as regards these three "later" texts - they were all published within the past ten years, shortly before Barthes's death it is more difficult, precisely on account of their ambiguity and departure from a conventional theoretical language.

However, this departure is not unique to Barthes but relates to the development of structuralist theories of literature into what has now become widely known as "post-structuralism". It is the hypothesis of this study that PT, RB and LD are to be regarded and read as post-structuralist theoretical texts.

The distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism is not a hard and fast one. Even the more definite notion of the two, structuralism, has been defined variously, such as in this passage:

> "Structuralism has been described as a method,

> a movement, an intellectual fad, and an ideology. Each of these characterizations is in part valid. For structuralism is a loose, amorphous, many-faceted phenomenon with no clear lines of demarcation, no tightly knit group spearheading it, no specific set of doctrines held by all those whom one usually thinks of as being associated with it. It cuts across many disciplines - linguistics, anthropology, literary criticism, psychology, philosophy."[10]

This definition, like others, stresses the diversity of structuralism, or even structuralisms. However, because the specificity of any notion of post-structuralism is immediately dependent on at least a clear and workable circumscription of literary or philosophico-literary structuralism, we need to be more precise.

Literary structuralism relates specifically to the development of the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure in his famous Cours de linguistique generale[11] towards a textual application, ie. as a method of analysing texts. Although Saussure was the major precursor of literary structuralism, as well as semiology, which he envisaged as a general albeit rigorous science of signs - attempts to distinguish between "semiology" and "semiotics" seem mostly inspired by a personal preference for the one or the other - there were inputs from other fields apart from linguistics. Of note are of course Claude Levi-Strauss who developed a structural anthropology that came to be very significant for the reading of texts, as well as the Russian-born linguist, Roman Jakobson, who constructed a linguistically derived poetics[12]. Various other authors, such as the American linguist, C.S. Peirce, and the Russian Formalists, contributed to structuralism. As we are not

concerned here with the history of semiology or structuralism, but merely with its distinction vis à vis post-structuralism, we are citing the main historical structuralists by way of summary.

Saussure founded structuralism with his distinction between lan ue and parole, or a generalised language system and actualised speech. Through this distinction, he provided for a type of analysis, or knowledge, or science, depending on how one wishes to define it, that would consist not in deducing from observable data, ie. the parole, but in the attempt to uncover intrinsic principles that make these concrete utterances possible. The langue was in the first instance a system, an abstraction which consisted of elements whose meaning was not defined by their content but by the structural relations between them. Saussure distinguished further between two types of structural relations, namely syntagmatic and associative (later to be called paradigmatic) ones. Thus the meanings of what he called linguistic signs depended both on the syntagmatic relations of a given sign with other ones present in a certain structure, such as a sentence for example, and on associative relations with other signs that were not present.

In his notion of the linguis ic sign, Saussure provided for different levels of structure, for the sign is composed of two elements, the signifier and the signified. At its most basic level, the signifier is the concrete phonic unit made up of a sound or sounds, whereas the signified is the meaning or concept attached to such a phonic unit.

Saussure's structural linguistics was synchronic, to use yet another important distinction that he made, ie. between the diachronic or historical study of

language and the synchronic or simultaneous study of a present langue. It was also consciously scientific.

Although Saussure foresaw that his type of structural analysis could also be applied to other fields apart from language as such, the next generation of structuralists, of which Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss are perhaps the most well-known representatives, extended this type of analysis to anthropology and poetry, respectively. They too were concerned with founding sciences of anthropology and of literature.

Like Lévi-Strauss, Barthes too attained prominence in the nineteen fifties and early sixties with the publication of works such as Writing Degree Zero[13], Mythologies[14], his Critical Essays[15] and Elements of Semiology[16]. In these works he discussed Saussure and Jakobson, and used a Saussurian type of structural analysis along with Marxist notions of class and ideology; a decade or two later he was to remark that the more he tried to displace the definition of semiology, the more he became constituted as a representative of it[17].

Already in an essay published in 1964[18], Barthes anticipated the supercession of structuralism:

> "And precisely because all thought about the historically intelligible is also a participation in that intelligibility, structural man is scarcely concerned to last; he knows that structuralism, too, is a certain form of the world, which will change with the world; just as he experiences his validity (but not his truth) in his power to speak the old languages of the world in a new way, so he knows that it will suffice that a new language rise out of history, a new language which speaks him in his turn, for his task to be done."[19]

Such a "new language", which has taken for its task a critique of the classical structuralist proposition of Saussure, Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss has indeed arisen, and in a variety of forms. This diverse collection of theories whose only common characteristic is a certain tangential relationship to structuralism or aspects of structuralism, has become known as post-structuralism, a problematically open [illegible] that nonetheless conveys the openness of this problematic.

[illegible], in an attempt to define post-structuralism[20], [illegible] issue of the relation between structuralism and post-structuralism succinctly when he speaks [illegible] problematics: one of delimitation, ie. where [illegible] of the one and the beginning of the other [illegible] situated, as well as the epistemological issue [illegible] form and specificity of this transition. Although [illegible] does not, due to the diversity of both structuralism and post-structuralism, render any final [illegible] these two problematics, he does suggest

"...the fundamental difference between the structuralist and post-structuralist enterprises can be seen in the shift from the problematic of the subject to the deconstruction of the concept of representation."[21]

[illegible] concern with the synchronic analysis of structures, structuralism constituted an implicit problematic [illegible] philosophies, theories or sciences that [illegible] themselves with the human subject, his consciousness, history and subjective relation to [illegible] object, which may be either the world or a field of study. The means by which structuralism made the [illegible] "dissolve" so to speak, was basically the [illegible] the linguistic sign as formulated by [illegible] by encapsulating simultaneously a concrete [illegible] and abstract signified, the sign made possible

the fusion of reality and discourse. Everything, if not a language, could be analysed in the manner of language. By according language and its science, linguistics, a primary position in the order of discourse, all the sciences that hitherto took the study of the human subject for their object, could now be radically revised to make way for the structural science, and the analysis of structural relations between linguistic, mythological, textual, [illegible] signs and the like[22].

If we are to accept Harari's characterisation, the post-structuralist enterprise would consist of the dismantling of this central notion of the sign in structuralism and the critique of its representative form, for in positing the simultaneity of signifier and signified, the sign is inextricably caught as "sign of", a signifier that represents a signified, a process of signification that consists in a closed movement from representative to representation. To circumscribe post-structuralism as the deconstruction of representation, as Harari does, entails taking Jacques Derrida as the typical post-structuralist figure[23].

However, if we enumerate some well-known post-structuralists, as they occur in Harari's post-structuralist anthology, as well as comparable expressly post-structuralist collections[24], it would comprise the following names: Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Paul de Man, Gilles Deleuze, [illegible] Kristeva, Edward Said, as well as the "later" Barthes. A deconstruction of representation is only very indirectly attributable to the work of some of them, for their objects of study range from psychoanalysis to the history of confinement to Nietzsche to love, etc. Although all of them tend to undermine any form of representational thought in some way or another,

there are other similarities which may be less dependent on a characterisation deriving from the work of one specific thinker, such as Derrida.

Because of the relatively controversial form of these three texts by Barthes regarding that of conventional literary theory, inviting as they do to be read in a similarly piecemeal fashion to that in which they are written, their relation to a general post-structuralist tendency needs to be stressed in this introduction.

Generally speaking, post-structuralism could be defined by the following attributes: (1) use of structuralist concepts in a displaced way; (2) a critical attitude towards science and scientific truth; (3) the negation of conventional authorship; (4) theory as auto-critique; (5) dismissal of metalanguage and (6) the conception of language as heterogeneous plurality.

Some of these attributes could of course be characteristic of other theoretical writings such as, for example, the work of renegade philosopher of science, Paul Feyerabend, who through his iconoclastic theorisation of paradigm incommensurability, has also dealt the death-knell to any notion of a metalanguage or progress in knowledge[2]. Although he does not engage in verbal ambiguity in the way of a Lacan or Derrida, through his wildly humorous and sarcastic style he, however, deviates at least as recognisably from the accepted language of philosophical theory. But Feyerabend nonetheless, through the strategic force of his texts which is directed at Popperian critical rationalism, belongs to the tradition of Anglo-American philosophy of science as its negative counterpart.

In the same way, post-structuralism is a type of

negative structuralism. Whereas Saussure founded a science with his distinction between signifier and signified, Derrida opens up an anti-metaphysics with his notion of a signifier of a signifier.

To elaborate on the six points mentioned above: (1) by using the Saussurian signifier in this way not within a scientific semiology but an anti-metaphysical and anti-scientific "grammatology"[26], the concept of signifier is displaced, which is to say that although it is altered by being used in an entirely new domain, its new meaning in some sense still partly derives from the old domain.

(2) All post-structuralist writings display a very critical attitude towards science and scientific truth. For Foucault, for example, truth is implicated in pouvoir-savoir, the power-knowledge that aims to enslave in the moment of knowing. Truth is already a repression of the heterogeneity of meaning, and of the inconsistent and contradictory productivity manifested in art and in madness. For post-structuralism, scientific truth is merely an artificial closure of the signifier into a firm signified. This attitude would equally extend towards logical argument as a progression of established validity.

(3) Post-structuralism entails the most far-reaching rejection of authorship yet. Whereas structuralism only denounced authorship implicitly by ignoring it in its analysis of texts, Lacan, Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze have all in one way or another stated that, in Barthes's words, "the author is dead"[27]. Also in their texts do they evade the consistency and unity that authorship implies. As Robert Young puts it,

> "Foucault, Lacan, and Derrida are the names of problems, not 'authors' of doctrines. Their work is interrelated, but in no way homogeneous."

(4) The lack of homogeneity in post-structuralist texts is an effect of their profoundly auto-critical nature. In criticising metaphysical categories of thought, Derrida also constantly displaces his own categories, lest they become metaphysical themselves. For Barthes, the auto-critique consists in the notion of paradox that never "hardens" into accepted opinion or doxa, but remains productive of ever-new meanings.

(5) If metaphysics and science are anathema to post-structuralism, so is the idea of metalanguage. As Barthes has it,

> "...the text liquidates all metalanguage, whereby it is text: no voice (Science, Cause, Institution) is behind what it is saying."

Metalanguage is implied in the notion of progress in science or in knowledge; Foucault's notion of self-enclosed epistemes that divide and follow one another arbitrarily constitutes a negation of metalanguage[20]. Lacan, too, has noted that "no metalanguage can be spoken."[21]

(6) From structuralism, post-structuralism has inherited an overwhelming concern with language. But whereas structuralism, or at least structural linguistics, sought to describe language scientifically, post-structuralism would stress the heterogeneous plurality of language that falls outside scientific description. The concern with writing, or écriture - rather than the spoken language that Saussure took as the concrete manifestation of language - serves to underline the post-structuralist conception of language as a multiple and infinitely open productivity.

We have said that PT, Kr and LE are post-structuralist texts, or that they belong within a general post-structuralist tendency which has major characteristics we have outlined above.

Robert Young, whom we have already quoted, has defined the problem of reading a post-structuralist text in this way:

> "As a self-reflexive discourse, which constantly divides itself against itself and transgresses its own systems, post-structuralist criticism avoids becoming fixed, avoids becoming an established method. It is this self-critical, self-transforming aspect that is often found so irritating and so confusing in post-structuralist thinkers. Looking (mistakenly) for a completed system, the reader finds it impossible to pin down and systematise a series of texts. Instead, all he gets is the uncertainty of, for instance, Lacan's 'Ecrits' ('Writings'). Once this aspect is recognised, however, the reader can feel less bewildered, and reassured that at least his being at sea is to the point. The breakthrough occurs when he realises that his unease and uncertainty are not the product of a failure to understand, but an anticipated critique of his own will to knowledge."[32]

However, the realisation that is to Young a breakthrough is precisely for us the extension of the problem, for what we shall be attempting will be to present three texts which indeed constitute a critique of our will to knowledge, as part of a thesis, which is essentially a will to knowledge in microcosm. In short, how does one treat open, autocritical writings within the closure that a thesis both by its etymology and by tradition seems to present and require?

The immediate option would be to ignore the specificity of the texts within the post-structuralist tendency in favour of discussing them as a belated lapse in the evolution of Barthes as a structuralist theoretician. We would then be able to offer a series

of well-founded criticisms of their inconsistency, contradictoriness, sloppy thinking, rhetorical excess, as well as their lack of systematicity and argumentative unity. Such an approach would not be without precedent, as Barthes has already been biographically discussed by Thody:

> "Like Valéry, he (Barthes) maintains that once a text is published an author has no intellectual property rights over it. The critic and reader are free to make of it what they can, and to apply what methods they please to bring out what the official English translation of S/Z calls 'the plurality of its systems, its infinite (circular) "transcribability".' And if Barthes can write about Racine, as he did in the early 1960s, in terms of the recurring and unconscious structures in his work, there is no reason why I should not write about Barthes as if he were a man and not what he calls a mere 'emitter of codes'.[11]

Now the question arises whether, by ignoring the specificity of a post-structuralist text in the interests of systematising it for one's own causal discourse, by treating Barthes as just another author, in other words, one would not be perpetrating an act of fabrication in itself without any cause whatsoever.

It is therefore a question of finding a methodology, a way of reading that does justice to the text by not reducing it or treating it naïvely sociologically as an example of the fashion for enigma amongst Parisian intellectuals, and at the same time showing the necessary order, consistency and lucid expression defined by the notion of a thesis. It could therefore only be a matter of compromise - given the post-structuralist project that aims exactly at undermining characteristics of the latter order.

It is of course possible to see the language of a thesis as a metalanguage wherein various conflicting and inconsistent theories may be measured against each other or ambiguity and equivocality done away with for the sake of lucidity and unequivocality. If such a characterisation is to be feasible, it would have to be substantiated, especially in view of the vast amount of contemporary work that has been severely critical of the tenability of a metalanguage. This would include the work of Quine [35], Kuhn [35] and Feyerabend [36] in the Anglo-American context, as well as various contemporary varieties of Marxism, such as that of Althusser[37], not to mention all the post-structuralist figures referred to earlier on. The concern with the epistemological break that has entered most debates on methodology has had its concomitant in the rejection of metalanguage or any theory of radical translation[38] whereby terms from one theoretical language could be translated into either another theoretical language or a metalanguage.

In the absence of a metalanguage, it remains for us to briefly state the conditions of our compromise.

In the first instance, we shall be deviating from any hypothetico-deductive format that may be expected. Instead, we shall approach the texts on their terms, ie. acknowledge that they are plural, heterogeneous, contradictory, etc. Furthermore, we shall not impose a model on them and try to discern an argument or set of definitive statements in them that is not there.

Our way of ordering our reading of these texts will be to select certain key concepts in them, which will be used as headings under which to discuss aspects of these texts. These aspects will from time to time be situated in the general context of

post-structuralism and indetermined discourse in an attempt to render them more intelligible than they would be if viewed in isolation.

We shall accept the post-structuralist rejection of authorship as principle that separates texts, unites others and scatters itself within a text in the form of authorial intentions[39].

Finally, we shall offer a reading of a literary text which will not constitute the application of a critical model gleaned from the texts - which is, needless to say, impossible as neither they nor post-structuralism as such provide for models - to another text. Rather, such a reading will comprise the bringing into contact of these three quasi-theoretical texts with a fictional one by employing some, if not all, of the significant concepts to be found in them.

2. Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes and The Pleasure of the Text

a. In certain respects RB and PT are very similar, both being composed of short aphorisms and sharing a number of primary concepts, but in others they are very dissimilar. Whereas PT remains close to pleasure/jouissance, which is not really its subject matter in the usual sense, but a site which is posed, elaborated, crossed, cicled, ect., RB is more spread out, relating the most diverse of sites and ideas, such as, for example, the aphorism entitled, "The rib chop"[4], which electrifies what could otherwise have been an inconsequential personal anecdote with significance for a textual theory. (Apart from the obvious Christian mythological association with the rib, a phallic element around which the pre-eminence of the male - God manufactured Eve from Adam's rib - is articulated, the rib as part of the body which is cast out quite carelessly, is also a metaphor for the text, the latter having been part of the writer's body too.) Whereas PT maintains a given degree of ellipsis, RB vacillates between a relatively direct theoretical language on the one hand, and playful, ambiguous utterances on the other, thereby not limiting itself to any sites whatsoever.

Such a characterisation is, naturally, provisional as it is only valid at first glance and from within the kind of closure that would register PT or RB as "one, whole text". Rather, each aphorism is a text on its own, so that both PT and RB are series of short texts. This is borne out by the organisation of both books, which contain no analytic or synthetic structure - by which meanings are layered to form a persuasive argument

in the manner of a conventional theoretical text - but merely an alphabetic, and therefore arbitrary, sequence of short, fragmentary writings.

b. Concepts in Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes and The Pleasure of the Text

i. The Intertext

Kristeva, who introduced the term "intertextuality" into its current usage, also proposes the notion of transposition as complementary and perhaps preferable to intertextuality, because it does not lend itself to the "banal sense of 'criticism of sources'":

> "Le terme d'inter-textualité designe cette transposition d'un (ou de plusieurs) syteme(s) de signes en un autre; mais puisque ce terme a été souvent entendu dans le sens banal de 'critique des sources' d'un texte, nous lui preferons celui de transposition, qui a l'avantage de préciser que le passage d'un système signifiant à un autre exige une nouvelle articulation du thétique - de la positicnnalite enonciative et dénotative."[41]

Intertextuality has thus nothing to do with another text, or "influences" of texts on each other, as a literal understanding of the term may suggest. However, intertextuality also has a direct bearing on the subject, such as a reader or author. For whereas intertextuality is the transposition of sign systems into each other, the effects of the transpositions on the subject constitute what Kristeva calls a signifying practice:

> "...I shall call signifying practice the establishment and the countervailing of a sign system. Establishing a sign system calls for the identity of a speaking subject within a social framework... Countervailing a sign system

> is done by having the subject undergo an unsettling, questionable process..."

We can see that Kristeva's conception of intertextuality is partly semiological and partly psychoanalytic. The semiological aspect of intertextuality lies, of course, in the notion of sign systems, whereas the psychoanalytic dimension consists in the effects of intertextual transposition on a speaking subject; the two are conjoined wherever signification takes place. Despite the subsequent loosening of "intertextuality" by especially English-language commentators, nowhere in Kristeva do we find a deviation from the rigour with which she first postulated it; the quotation in French above from La revolution du langage poetique[43], being an attempt to restore some rigour to intertextuality by reterming it "transposition", bears this out. In contrast with Kristeva, Barthes dispenses with the strictly psycho-semiological - or, to use Kristeva's own neologism, semanalytical - conception of intertextuality and, in fact, also loosens it drastically, but in an altogether different fashion from those who reduced it to a literal 'inter'-play of themes and influences between texts.

Firstly, we encounter in IT[44] and [illegible] the term "intertext", which differs qualitatively from "intertextuality". Kristevan intertextuality circumscribes a specific mechanism, amongst others, within sign systems, namely that they transpose themselves into each other so that any sign system, as soon as it operates as such, is in fact an amalgam of various sign systems interacting. A sign system such as a text, for example, may consist of any number of transpositions from cinematic, journalistic, familial, ideological and such-like systems of signification.

We may differentiate the Barthesian intertext from intertextuality by characterising it as Nietzschean, rather than semiological or even semanalytical. Rather than rigorous, the intertext is a loose notion which easily translates into the ostensible imprecision of "a circular memory"[1]; instead of pointing out a mechanism whose effects we may observe but which is itself immanent to such effects, the intertext names the flow of intertextuality itself.

If we are not to dissolve the intertext into a kind of textual mysticism, it is important that we examine it quite carefully. In RB, the following formulation is to be found:

> "The intertext is not necessarily a field of influences; rather it is a music of figures, metaphors, thought-words; it is the signifier as siren..."[2]

This sentence is best read backwards: the word 'siren' has three distinct meanings, all three of which are brought into play here. Firstly it refers to the Greek mythological creatures who were half woman, half bird or sometimes fish, and who caused sailors to wreck their ships upon following their enchanting singing; secondly, the shrill and piercing noise produced by ambulances, police cars, etc.; and in the third instance, a siren is also an acoustical instrument giving off a sound for the purpose of measuring the number of vibrations within a tone. The signifier as siren, which is the signifier of the intertext, therefore carries with it an enchantment as beautiful as it is lethal, a possible message of blood, mutilation or death, and stands in a leading relation to a ship or another tone which will trace its dangerous course.

The siren-signifier serves to extend the idea of a "music of figures (the figure being the body seen and apprehended at any given instant, the body passing through a kind of stroboscopically lit-up series of "sightings" none of which stands in a continuous or transcendental relationship to any preceding or following one), metaphors, thought-words" (is a "thought-word" not the word in its amorphous, rising, pre-expressed state?). Elsewhere, the intertext is defined as "the impossibility of living outside the infinite text"[16]. The intertext, unlike intertextuality, is therefore entirely unsystematic; it is purely a negative possibility, the apprehension of that force, in the Nietzschean sense, which is diverted, blocked, passed through various permutations to form relationships between which fields of activity are constituted which we term texts. That force may properly be called pleasure, which, like Nietzsche's will, is forever in a state of becoming.

Extrapolating then, we may say the following about the intertext: that it stands in a definite relation to pleasure. Without pleasure, no intertext is possible, for hearing the music of the intertext, seeing the siren-signifier glimmering in the distance, involves being sustained by the flow of pleasure. Taking pleasure in a text is akin to the dangerous form of understanding that Nietzsche proposed; it entails placing oneself at a risk which, in the case of pleasure, is the imminent seizure of jouissance which may bring ecstacy but, as we shall see below, also a dissolve similar to death.

ii. Pleasure/Jouissance

The concepts of pleasure and jouissance, as well as the distinction between them, are never rigidly

defined; they are always prone to a shifting, and despite their frequent invocation in PT and RB, the discourse forming between and around them remains "incomplete"[49].

To the literary theorist, probably, a certain amount of jocularity surrounds the notion of "pleasure". To those who seek to gain knowledge from texts, ie. to bring the practice of reading under the sceptre of science, pleasure is an untheoretical notion which does not deserve to be mentioned in scholarly debate. Within the various intuitionist and formalist traditions of literary thought, on the other hand, aesthetic contemplation may bring a kind of pleasure, but this form of enjoyment is always linked to the morally good, the beautiful and aesthetically valuable; in short, the latter pleasure is always of the mind, as opposed to that other element within the oldest of the occidental dualisms, the body.

It is therefore possible, even if one rejects the aforementioned approaches, to underestimate pleasure as a radical concept; to deem it a highly interesting, thought-provoking but nonetheless minor deviation from other available apparati critici.

Again, we may point to Nietzsche, not as an originator of the meaning of pleasure, but as an initiator of the discursive practice[50] which provided for the possibility of thinking it. In Thus Spoke Zarathustra, "sensual pleasure" is held as one of the three most-cursed things in the world[51], the other two being "lust for power" and "selfishness". Zarathustra renders six maxims in glorification of sensual pleasure; the first may suffice to indicate for us the potentially revolutionary position, from both a literary and philosophical point of view, that pleasure assumes:

> "Sensual pleasure: goad and stake to all hair-shirted despisers of the body and anathematized as 'the world' by all afterworldsmen: for it mocks and makes fools of all teachers of confusion and error."[52]

As this passage bears out, the crux of Nietzsche's conception of pleasure is that it is antipathetic to the entire Western metaphysical tradition, for pleasure and its domain, the body, is a 'negative' to both the old Judaeo-Christian schema of soul-flesh (only the soul being enduring) and the more recent rationalist episteme which has strengthened this dichotomy by positing the mind as the supreme locus of human awareness and furthermore reducing the body to a simple physicality mostly defined by medical science.

Deleuze has commented that the alternate view of the body as an object for theory and for science does not only derive from Nietzsche, but was already being posed in Spinoza [53].

In the second instance, because pleasure is essentially a thing of the present, it pits itself against most of our histories and epistemologies which accord a primary importance to the past and to the knowledge that has accumulated in it. Thirdly, needlesss to mention, pleasure lends itself to hedonism, the bogey of Western ethics ever since Aristotle defined happiness in terms of moderation.

However, in Nietzsche's evocation of pleasure we should not merely read the word negatively, ie. in the sense that the "afterworldsmen" - priests and Christians, but also all other spiritualists and idealists - dismiss, forbid or administer it, but also regard it positively as a force the study of which may hold an anti-metaphysical possibility.

We may now return to Barthes. Like Nietzsche, he too sketches the "negative" of pleasure whilst at the same time admiring it and suggesting its affirmation[11]:

> "Imagine someone (a kind of Monsieur Teste in reverse) who abolishes within himself all barriers, all classes, all exclusions, not by syncretism but by simple discard of that old spectre: logical contradiction; who mixes every language, even those said to be incompatible; who silently accepts every charge of illogicality, of incongruity; who remains passive in the face of Socratic irony (leading the interlocutor to the supreme disgrace: self-contradiction) and legal terrorism (how much penal evidence is based on a psychology of consistency!). Such a man would be the mockery of our society: court, school, asylum, polite conversation would cast him out: who endures contradiction without shame? Now this anti-hero exists: he is the reader of the text at the moment he takes his pleasure. Thus the Biblical myth is reversed, the confusion of tongues is no longer a punishment, the subject gains access to jouissance by the cohabitation of languages working side by side: the text of pleasure is a sanctioned Babel.[12]

This passage, which is being quoted in full on the grounds of its significance, enumerates the effects of pleasure on the reading subject, ie. that it engages him in a process of radical dispersion and de-structuring. The latter is certainly obvious; not so obvious, and more important in this quotation, are the points of reference which define the substance and the limits of this dispersion. These are, inter alia: the abolition of classes and exclusions, logical contradiction, Socratic irony, penal evidence, court, school, asylum, the myth of Babel. These reference

points are extremely succinct signs pointing towards those vast domains, institutions and activities that produced, and still produce, that Western subject against whom Nietzsche fulminated with his "afterworlds-men", and whom we are attempting to leave behind in our reading of texts. All of these, be it the class system first illumined by Marx, the exclusion of perversion, madness and criminality, Plato's dialogues in which the adversary is forced to surrender by means of the snares in which his own utterances catch him, as well as the disciplinary mechanisms of the court, school, asylum[51], etc., depend on logical non-contradiction for supplying the necessary links that unite them into the edifices of cultural power which produce the subject. The discarding of the principle of non-contradiction is therefore the only way to disrupt the fixity of the subject within determinate power relations, and to give him "access to jouissance"[57]. Thus the reversal of the myth of Babel signifies not only a reversal of the relation between linguistic diversity and punishment but, in a wider sense, indicates that fundamental rupture of the subject with his Judaeo-Christian tradition.

The pleasure-jouissance distinction bears a superficial resemblance to some of the binary oppositions to be found in earlier texts by Barthes. This resemblance has led commentators to construct a certain systematic Barthesian theory:

> "The experience offered by the reading of writerly texts has been described by Barthes in his book Le plaisir du texte... Plaisir seems to come from the more straight-forward processes of reading, jouissance from a sense of breakdown or interruption... Translated into literary terms this suggests that where pleasure inheres in the overt linguistic ordering imposed by the 'readerly' text on its material, bliss comes

comes about in 'writerly' texts, or at climactic moments in 'readerly' ones, when that order breaks down..."[58]

And further:

"Our creative responses to these latter texts (ie. texts of jouissance - parentheses mine) or moments is what turns us into ecstatic écrivains as we read."[59]

Here then we have a tidy ordering of the binary oppositions in S/Z[60], together with pleasure and jouissance, which could schematically be represented as:

Readerly (lisible) text	Writerly (scriptible) text
écrivant	écrivain
consumption	production
pleasure	jouissance
"order"	"gaps" or "breakdown"

If pleasure is the radical force containing alternate cultural, epistemological and literary possibilities that we have sketched above, then certainly it cannot be merely a self-explanatory element in a series of binary oppositions relating to texts.

Whereas the notions of écrivain-écrivant, scriptible do stand in a certain constant relation of opposition to one another, the case of pleasure and jouissance is substantially different. However, even where the oppositions of S/Z are concerned, they also admit of the "margin of indecision" to which pleasure and jouissance are prone[61], although to a lesser degree. Thus the relation between écrivant and écrivain deviates from a binary one in that the écrivain is also the opposite of the consumptive reader; the consumptive reader, the écrivant and the écrivain stand in a kind of triangular relation, a triangle of which two points occupy a subjective, authorial space and the third point a non-subjective,

non-authorial space; the mutually supportive relation between the ecrivant and the consumptive reader causes a further imbalance in the triangle. And then, as far as the lisible-scriptible opposition is concerned, in RB a third term which does not entirely supercede it but at least undermines its pretensions towards a universal typology, is proposed, namely the receivable[64], to which we would want to return in our discussion of textuality below.

It follows that any combination of these notions from S/Z into a theoretical set must be somewhat tenuous. When they are then linked to pleasure and jouissance, the entire series of connections becomes highly putative, if not untenable, not least because of the fact that the relation between pleasure and jouissance is not binary, but rather continuously altering depending on the flow of desire in the text.

Jouissance is not an extreme degree of pleasure, nor is pleasure a "minor jouissance"[65]. An "incommunication"[66] exists between the two; the subject who enjoys both the text of pleasure and the text of jouissance is therefore a "split subject"[65] (ie. historically, as it is impossible to experience both pleasure and jouissance at the same time).

Before we proceed further, it is necessary to mention pleasure and jouissance as they occur in the texts of Lacan. The word "jouissance" is, of course, well-known as colloquial French for "coming" in the sexual sense (jouir). As such, it has been widely used, especially by the French Surrealists as well as Picasso in various works featuring puns such as "JOUrnal" ("jou" also being played off against "jeu", meaning "game" and "jouer", meaning "to play")[67]. However, Lacan, in conjunction with his associates,

such as Leclaire, seems to have been the first to adorn the term with a special theoretical significance. Leclaire sums up the function of the subject in relation to jouissance in the following way:

> "The function of the subject is to support the most perfect of antinomies: this antinomy may be described as being that between the assertation of truth and its transgression, that between zero and one, between speech and jouissance."[67]

The "split subject"[68] of PT, divided between pleasure and jouissance, and by the incommunication between the two, corresponds closely to the antinomic subject described by Leclaire; in PT too, pleasure falls on the side of speech whereas jouissance is by definition beyond it. As the quotations from Lacan and Leclaire on page 21 of PT bear out, the concept of jouissance as it occurs in the latter and in RB is very much Lacanian. As such we may summarise jouissance as follows:

1. That it takes place in a body, whether it be linguistic or human.
2. That it is always associated with a mark, a letter, a split or a cut.
3. That the symbol of jouissance is the phallus, object of both male and female desire.
4. That jouissance entails the annihilation of the subject.
5. That jouissance is an absolute.
6. That jouissance cannot be spoken; as soon as such an attempt is made, the subject is re-constituted.

Lacan, unlike Barthes, holds a Freudian notion of pleasure as the satisfaction of need and demand, giving rise to the following relation between pleasure and jouissance:

> "...For it is pleasure that sets the limits

> on jouissance, pleasure as that which binds incoherent life together, until another, unchallengeable prohibition arises from the regulation that Freud discovered as the primary process and appropriate law of pleasure."[69]

This quotation appears, of course, out of context and, especially with Lacan, one should not draw too many conclusions from it. However, we merely need to note the ideas that, firstly, "pleasure binds incoherent life together" and, secondly, that pleasure limits jouissance. Clearly, what we may define here as the psychoanalytic concept of pleasure, is quite incompatible with the eminently decodifying, productivist pleasure of Nietzsche and Barthes. In psychoanalysis, pleasure as the satisfaction of demand, is always a conjunct of demand, but in Nietzschean discourse[70] it is self-productive as a force.

The question now arises: how can a basically psychoanalytical concept of jouissance be married to a Nietzschean notion of pleasure, as is evidently the case in our two texts? In traditional theory, subject to the theory of non-contradiction and an overriding systematicity, an epistemological rift of this kind would have been demolishing. But for groundless thought, thought that does not found itself on a firm basis - which could be either an a priori or a more general order of consistency - the cracks between incompatible elements do not cause a collapse, but rather augments the productivity of such thought. The thought of PT and RB is probably not completely exempt from a foundation; it nevertheless, in its diversity, its borrowings, its playful intercourse with psycoanalysis, assumes the theoretical mode of a bricolage[71].

Again, it must be emphasised that there is vast

difference between this kind of theoretical bricolage that consists in making certain incomplete connections, and the completing connections perpetrated by oevre-makers, criticised above, which consists in a smoothing-over of differences for the sake of theoretical coherence.

It remains to address ourselves to the question of how pleasure is produced and in what manner jouissance occurs. Naturally, in the present instance, we are concerned with textual pleasure which, nonetheless, is not necessarily related to books, but may manifest itself anywhere in any kind of language in the wider sense; because jouissance takes place outside language and independant of any situation, no differentiation between textual, erotic, or any other sort of jouissance is possible.

To reiterate, pleasure is connected to the body:

> "The pleasure of the text is that moment when my body pursues its own ideas - for my body does not have the same ideas I do."[72]

The body rather than the "I" - the subject, person, ego - is therefore the field of pleasure. However, the text is a body too. The connection of the subject's body and the textual body thus makes operative the production of pleasure. Before such a connection, no such pleasure is produced or, rather, if the subject's body is producing pleasure during a pre-connective moment, it is doing so as another body. Mutatis mutandis, the body is always producing pleasure, as it is constantly being crossed by intertextual transpositions; because the body is always the locus of the text, a particular text is merely a certain articulation of the body's register of pleasure. The following may be a useful hint as to this actvity.

> "The more a story is told in a proper, well-spoken, straightfoward way, in an even tone,

> the easier it is to reverse it, to read it inside out (Mme. de Segur read by Sade). This reversal, being a pure production, wonderfully develops the pleasure of the text."[73]

Whereas Mme. de Segur read by Sade is an extreme example of such a "reversal", it takes place, to a varying degree, in all texts. Thus, a pure production[74] is always in operation in the text, and in the production of pleasure.

Here we arrive at another incompatibility in our texts, namely that between the concept of pure production - which, in an unstated way, informs the entire elaboration of pleasure and an "open" textuality - and that of the psychoanalytical subject. Pure production belongs to the domain of mechanism - and connections between mechanisms, organs and bodies - where any reference to the "subject" is always ironic, as a suspect term for a rather pernicious illusion of humanism.

As a pure production, there is not "pleasure" on the one hand, and "spoken pleasure", its expression, on the other hand. Both belong to the same "moment", the same production within language (togrther with, as we shall see, the "reported pleasure" of criticism).

Jouissance, however, is outside the latter production, not only as a breakdown and a seizure, but also because its correlates, the subject and psychoanalytical pleasure, are "missing". Implicit in Lacanian jouissance as a kind of lapse in subjective continuity, it seems, is a return to subjecthood after the seizure has passed. In this respect the kind of jouissance refered to in PT and RB is of special interest in that it never entails a return to subjecthood. The subject does not recuperate from his jouissance, but the mechanics of pleasure-production take over instead after jouissance. Whenever jouissance does not interrupt the flow of

pleasure, the former is felt as boredom[75]; boredom is that form the continuous absence of jouissance.

iii. b. Text as Body

In Ecrits, Lacan already suggested that language - and, by extrapolation, the text - is a body:

> "Language is not immaterial. It is a subtle body, but body it is. Words are trapped in all the corporeal images that captivate the subject; they may make the hysteric pregnant, be identified with the object of penis-neid (penis-envy), represent the flood of urethral ambition."[76]

To conceive of the text as a body is thus, in the first place, to regard language as a materiality. Secondly, as we have already indicated in our remarks concerning Nietzsche, the "body" circumscribed is the Dionysian - as opposed to the Apollonic - aspect of western culture.

Barthes's conception of the text as a body also does away with the subject-object problematic:

> "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."[77]

The textual body is not an object, nor is it the fusion between subject and object; it is merely one body amongst others. A further distinction arises between the body of the so-called "pheno-text" - the body as seen and discussed by science, in Barthes's ordering - and the body of "erotic relations" which produces jouissance[78]; the first is a stable text not prone to sudden changes or disruptions, whereas the body of jouissance - to which

the text of pleasure/jouissance is related - "is no more than the open list of the fires of language."[79]

The use of the fire image vis à vis the body of jouissance is significant in that it immediately invokes, for us at least, the German word "Brandung", a well-known term in Nietzsche's The Gay Science, which is discussed by Jacques Derrida in Eperons[80]. A paradigm of Brand is set up by the words, "Hier stehe ich inmitten des Brandes der Brandung." This paradigm of Brand, related to the "burning surf", could well be extended by us to encompass/ignite desire, whose restless movement and amorphous incompleteness is also a burning.

The fascination of the flame is obvious; in pre-Socratic philosophy it provided for the paradox of empty being, or a form without substance. Both Nietzsche in The Gay Science and Barthes in PT revive the old paradox: the flame is an ever-changing material effect, but nonetheless no comfortably apprehended existent.

We have thus two distinct bodies: the physiological or pheno-textual body seen by science, and the body of jouissance, the flaming sea of erotic relations, which cannot be grasped because of its fleeting production. The textual body is always related to the body of jouissance, and never to the body as seen by science.

Let us consider this carefully. The physiological body is, of course, not "naturally" our body, even though accepted opinion may have it so. The physiological body is merely an epistemological construct mapped onto us under the terms "body" or "anatomy", and thus seen by science, in the same way as quasi-scientific criticism and commentary sees an explicable, interpretable pheno-text where there is a

productivity of pleasure.

The erotic body as an extra-scientific Brandung stands in the same relation of utter distinction to the scientific body as the textual body stands to the pheno-text of criticism. Furthermore, both the pheno-text and the physiological body are produced by the same ensemble of structures within the rational-scientific episteme; they are in very many respects much the same. However, according to PT, the text has "human form" and is a "figure", an "anagram" of our erotic body[1]. The idea, here, of an anagrammatical relation between the erotic body and the textual body is interesting. As in, say, Breton's famous anagram, AVIDA DOLLARS consists of the same letter elements as SALVADOR DALI, but in another combination, and with an altogether different effect. And, as in many, but not all, anagrams, the anagram parodies the original combination, ie., in this instance, the vulgar American commercial success of the painter in question. Perhaps one could say about an anagrammatical relation that it always scrambles the original combination to effects of difference. And is this not what one could expect of the erotic body as it composes its elements and relations into a textual body? This activity of scrambling could possibly be compared to Freudian displacement, were it not for the fact that the latter takes place by means of associative paths between ideas, which are to some extent predictable, whereas scrambling is tied to the arbitrariness and unpredictability of letter, or anagrammatical, combinations.

iv. Textuality

The text is a body, but apart from that, it must be clear by now that the use of the word "text" in RB and PT is relatively unusual, if not unique. It is necessary to point this out, especially in

productivity of pleasure.

The erotic body as an extra-scientific Brandung stands in the same relation of utter distinction to the scientific body as the textual body stands to the pheno-text of criticism. Furthermore, both the pheno-text and the physiological body are produced by the same ensemble of structures within the rational-scientific episteme; they are in very many respects much the same. However, according to PT, the text has "human form" and is a "figure", an "anagram" of our erotic body[1]. The idea, here, of an anagrammatical relation between the erotic body and the textual body is interesting. As in, say, Breton's famous anagram, AVIDA DOLLARS consists of the same letter elements as SALVADOR DALI, but in another combination, and with an altogether different effect. And, as in many, but not all, anagrams, the anagram parodies the original combination, ie., in this instance, the vulgar American commercial success of the painter in question. Perhaps one could say about an anagrammatical relation that it always scrambles the original combination to effects of difference. And is this not what one could expect of the erotic body as it composes its elements and relations into a textual body? This activity of scrambling could possibly be compared to Freudian displacement, were it not for the fact that the latter takes place by means of associative paths between ideas, which are to some extent predictable, whereas scrambling is tied to the arbitrariness and unpredictability of letter, or anagrammatical, combinations.

iv. Textuality

The text is a body, but apart from that, it must be clear by now that the use of the word "text" in RB and PT is relatively unusual, if not unique. It is necessary to point this out, especially in

view of the widespread popularity of the word, which has almost become a more fashionable synonym for "novel" or "story" without any sacrifice of the structural and narrative coherence associated with the latter two terms.

Many aspects of textuality have already been dealt with above, as everything that we have been discussing ultimately pertains to it. However, we have to delimit a few ideas that revolve perhaps closer than others around the sometimes less than easily comprehended notion of "the text" as it occurs in PT and RB.

In the first place, "the text" in the latter two texts, is not only a descriptive term, but also prescriptive in the sense that if one is able to discern the kind of Text talked about here, then one is already free of certain inhibitions, dogmas and codifications. To put it in Barthes's terms, the reader who is capable of "taking pleasure in a text" has already been socially and ideologically "subverted". Theoretically, such a "reader", if it is at all meaningful to still refer to him as such, need not turn the pages of a book in order to take pleasure in the production of textuality. Rather, he is constantly enveloped in The Text everywhere, the global production of language that does not stop when one closes one's eyes, but rather continues in a similar way to the "movies on the back of one's eye-lids" induced by a drug such as LSD[52]. Thus, in RB, it is proclaimed:

> "I have a disease: I see language. What I should simply hear, a strange pulsion - perverse in that in it desire mistakes its object, reveals it to me as a 'vision', analogous (all allowances made) to the one Scipio had in his dream of the musical shperes of the world. The primal scene , in which I listen without seeing, is followed by a perverse scene, in which I

> imagine seeing what I am hearing. Hearing deviates to scopia: I feel myself to be the visionary and voyeur of language."[82]

Although the Text is omnipresent, it is of course extremely diverse and we may distinguish small islets rising out of its mass, attaining a certain focus of their own; islets which we call "texts".

In PT, we find a distinction between "texts of pleasure" and "texts of jouissance". The former derives from, and remains within, culture, whereas the latter unsettles the reading subject to the point of "bringing to a crisis his relation with language."[84] Rather than being, like lisible and scriptible, a typology of texts, by which certain texts would be classified as "texts of pleasure" and others as "texts of jouissance", it defines the perennial split[85] of textuality itself. Thus, any text, except perhaps for the most boring - in the sense of an absence of jouissance - and prosaïc realistic products such as commercial bestsellers, wich contain no possibility of pleasure or jouissance because their production is so rigidly repetitive, is always split between the ongoing intra-cultural production of pleasure and the violent eruptions of jouissance. The text of pleasure and the text of jouissance are not two "levels" within an adumbrating textuality, but two thoroughly distinct activities, one being more or less intraneous to textuality in the broad sense, and the other completely extraneous.

The traditional debate in literary theory has always been spread along the axis of essence-history, with most formalists claiming an historically transcendental aesthetic essence and most historicists opting for an historically determinate topos mostly tied to the figure of the author. The text of PT and RB is neither transcendental, nor topic:

> "The text itself is atopic, if not in its

> consumption at least in its production. It is not a jargon, a fiction, in it the system is overcome, undone (this overcoming, this defection, is signification). From this atopia the text catches and communicates to its reader a strange condition: at once excluded and at peace. There can be tranquil moments in the war of languages, and these moments are texts...[65]

Because texts do not lend themselves to a ready conceptualisation, ie. an identifiable combative position within the war of languages (which is also a war between ideologies), they are "tranquil moments"[66] where combat is suspended for the production of pleasure and the play of languages. Unlike the self-enclosed discourse of ideological language, the text, although certainly not free of ideology, is always open to the play of various ideologies; as it is put in PT, "ideology passes over the text and its reading like the blush over a face (in love, some take erotic pleasure in this colouring)."[67] Rather than bringing about combat as it does elsewhere, ideology in a text can actually cause a split where it encounters another ideology, and thus be a source of desire and even of jouissance.

We have said that the notion of textuality in these texts is both descriptive and prescriptive. In its prescriptive aspects, this textuality not only defines an already existing kind of text, but also tends to anticipate a radically new text of which we at present have only an inkling. The latter text is entitled the "receivable" in the following passage from RB:

> "In S/Z, an opposition was proposed: readerly/writerly. A readerly text is one I cannot rewrite (can I write today like Balzac?); a writerly text is one I read with difficulty, unless I completely transform my

> reading regime. I now conceive (certain texts that have been sent to me suggest as much) that there may be a third textual entity. alongside the readerly and the writerly, there would be something like the receivable. The receivable would be the unreaderly text which catches hold, the red-hot text, a product continuously outside of any likelihood and whose function - visibly assumed by its scriptor - would be to contest the mercantile constraint of what is written; this text, guided, armed by a notion of the unpublishable, would require the following response: I can neither read nor write what you produce, but I receive it, like a fire, a drug, an enigmatic disorganisation."[88]

All indications are that we cannot conceive of a receivable text in any detail, as our most far-reaching and transgressive texts at present only [illegible] its possiblity. Let us, however, consider the two characteristics of the receivable mentioned above, namely that, firstly, it would have the function of "contesting the mercantile constraint of what is written" and, secondly, that it would be "guided, armed by a notion of the unpublishable."

The mercantile constraint of literature has been well put by Deleuze:

> "...Another sort of book reflects the bourgeois contractual relationship, which is at the basis of secular literature in its commercial aspects:'I buy from you, you give me something to read.' This contractual relationship involves everyone: author, publisher, reader. There is also the political book (revolutionary in inclination) presented as a book of extant or future institutions. All sorts of mixtures among these types take place (contractual or institutional books may be

> treated as sacred texts, for example), for the various kinds of codification are so pervasive, so frequently overlapping, that one is found embedded in the other."[91]

It is obvious that the bourgeois contractual basis of literature goes much further than a mere co-optation or aufhebung by a state or capitalist apparatus, as was at one time thought, especially during the Frankfurt School vogue, specifically as a result of Marcuse's formulation in his essay on "repressive tolerance"[91]. It is neither affected by an undertaking not to sell books or to distribute them on a non-profit basis, nor by a socially or commercially unacceptable content, which may include formalism for formalism's sake, esotericism, as well as the various heavily codified forms of pseudo-transgressive pornography or politicism. In addition, one may well imagine the continuence of this relationship within any of the present-day socialist economies. (We need not mention the host of other, more naive "solutions", such as paid or non-paid public recitation, "happenings", anonymous texts, etc.).

The receivable text, if it is to be more than an optimistic avant-gardist fantasy for us, ought to be the question: how can the contractual relationship and its seemingly infinite capacity for displacement, be disrupted? In this regard, unpublishability may be a guide and a weapon, but it is certainly not an answer in a literal way, if we contemplate the possibility that a contractual relationship may already be manifest in the subject's relation with language, long before that language is literally written dow . Rather, unpublishability must be deemed an indication of transgression, of a socially and literarily belligerent text that confronts all relevant codes in such a way that no present set of norms regarding legal, commercial

or aesthetic acceptability, could possibly accomodate it, regardless of whether such a text is actually printed or not.

The "receivable" would never be "written": as "enigmatic disorganisation", the receivable text would never attain to the degree of fixity that would constitute a "written". As such, ostensibly, it is difficult to distinguish the receivable text from the "writerly" (scriptible) one, for the latter too remains ever-productive as a play of signifiers never closed by becoming signifieds. If the new problematic of the receivable is therefore to be distinguished from the scriptible, it would probably have to be with reference to its transgressiveness.

Who can visualise, today, a contemporary Marquis de Sade, declared insane and criminal, and incarcerated on account of his writings? Censorship may no longer be an issue in Western Europe, but in other parts of the world, such as South Africa, it is not ing to end soon. That fact, together with the widespread confinement and controls made possible by the various micro-political discourses of power illumined by Foucault, may well provide for the kinds of discursive and textual confrontations that would banish certain texts to an "outside" from where they could only be received and never written.

v. Play

At various moments in PT and [illegible] there are references to "play", "the game", etc.[2] These literal mentionings are not that frequent, and relatively devoid of an overwhelming degree of complexity. However, it would be highly impossible to appreciate the conception of language and especially of writing (écriture) in these texts without sketching a certain background which does not support them, but rather

extends behind them as a depth providing a very specific resonance. As an example, the following passage from RB may be quoted, not for its content but for its resonances:

> "...Then there are the countless antitheses (deliberate, farfetched, corseted) and word play from which a whole system is derived (pleasure: precarious / bliss: precocious). In short, countless traces of the work of style, in the oldest sense of the word. Yet this style serves to praise a new value, writing, which is excess, overflow of style toward other regions of language and subject, far from a classed literary code (exhausted code of a doomed class). This contradiction may perhaps be explained and justified as follows: his way of writing was formed at a moment when the writing of the essay sought a renewal by the combination of political intentions, philosophical notions, and true rhetorical figures (Sartre is full of them). But above all, style is somehow the beginning of writing: however timidly, by committing itself to great risks of recuperation, it sketches the reign of the signifier."

Actual terms (like "writing", "trace", etc.) do not, of themselves, resonate; but when they are used in connection with a writing conceived as an "excess" and "overflowing", they do - one could almost say inevitably, if it were not for the fact that the locus of a text is always relative not only to a specific "reader", but even to when, where and how it is written (in the sense of "read") - acquire an echo which could only belong to the problematic, in the sense of a space that has been opened up, founded by Jacques Derrida, in turn traceable to Nietzsche.

It is in this regard that the play of PT and of RB is not tied to the term itself, the paradigms of "jeu" or "Spiel", but rather occurs as a series of resonances. Of cours , these resonances do not extend exclusively towards the texts of Derrida, but by ressing them we could do much to affirm the Nietzschean "openness" of these texts, also in keeping with their status as post-structuralist theorising.

We have already mentioned the "anti-metaphysical" possibility harboured by these texts, that they are "groundless", "de-centred", etc. All of these characterisations are related to their status as "play" and as *écriture*.

We may begin with the distinction introduced by Derrida between the two kinds of thinking about play: on the one hand, a *Rousseauistic* conception of play which includes structuralism as represented by Levi-Strauss and, opposed to it, the *Nietzschean* thinking of it, a distinction summarised at the end of "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences":

> "Turned towards the lost or impossible presence of the absent origin, this structura. st thematic of broken immediacy is therefore the saddened, *negative*, nostalgic, guilty, Rousseauistic side of the thinking of play whose other side would be the Nietzschean *affirmation*, that is the joyous affirmation of the play of the world and of the innocence of becoming, the affirmation of a world of signs without fault, without truth, and without origin which is offered to an active interpretation. *This affirmation then determines the noncentre otherwise than as loss of the centre*. And it plays without security. For there is a *sure* play: that which is limited

to the substitution of given and existing, present, pieces. In absolute chance, affirmation also surrenders itself to genetic indetermination, to the seminal adventure of the trace.

There are thus two interpretations of interpretation, of structure, of sign, of play. The one seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering a truth or an origin which escapes play and the order of the sign, and which lives the necessity of interpretation as an exile. The other, which is no longer turned toward the origin, affirms play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism, the name of man being the name of that being who, throughout the history of metaphysics or of ontotheology - in other words, throughout his entire history - has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring foundation, the origin and the end of play

Out of context, this passage could possibly be seen as cryptic, but it is an excellent synopsis not only of the purport of the essay in question, but also of the main thrust of Derrida s deconstruction of metaphysics. As we go along, it will become clearer.

A preliminary definition of play would be a "substitution of elements". In the classical episteme, this play was both anchored and limited by a centre within a totality; the centre was both inside and outside the totality in that it determined the play of elements and structures within the totality, but was itself beyond this play. The centre assumed various forms such as arche (beginning), telos (end), God, man, etc., which succeeded each other in the evolution of Western thought. With the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, as was the case with Nietzsche and Freud previously, a de-centering is introduced: the sign, the primary element of the structuralist totality, rather than being a centre beyond play, is

itself subject to such play. However, the thought of Lévi-Strauss and of structuralism is "negative, nostalgic, guilty, Rousseauistic" in the sense that its de-centredness is defined in relation to classical metaphysics; it is a negative of the very old conception of a play of presence and absence.

This rather vulgar paraphrase of "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" must suffice for the moment, if only because our concern here is not a precise analysis of structuralist play, but merely a definition of it vis à vis the Nietzschean affirmative play that we wish to elaborate.

Elsewhere, on the same page , we read:

> "Play is always play of absence and presence, but if it is to be thought radically, play must be conceived of before the alternative of presence and absence."[95]

This radical conception of play - a concep ion that we would also want to ascribe, broadly, to PT and RB - is exemplified in the equally radical notions of écriture, différance and the trace.

In short, the advent of ecriture signals a disruption of the strict logic of the sign. The sign has never provided for a distinction between writing and speech, but merely for a distinction between speech (parole) and an abstract system of language rules (langue). Thus a kind of chauvinism of speech has prevailed, as the signifier has always firstly been the phone as it is heard in spoken language. The paradox of written language within this logic is that it entails a "signifier of a signifier", ie. a written signifier that signifies the phone that signifies the signified. Rather than being only pertinent to written language, this paradox affects all signifieds, whether spoken or written

to the extent that no signified can ever be certain; the result is that the chauvinistic prevalence of speech over writing is replaced by a general, primordial écriture which consists of a play of written marks or grammes, traces or graphemes.

The play of écriture is a play of differences. However the difference of one element in relation to others is always constituted by the trace of other elements within it. Thus, taking a simple example, in the sentence, "John is going home", the difference of "home" in relation to all other possible uses of the word is constituted by traces of "John is going" in it. The presence or the absence of the trace is therefore the basic constituent of play.

However, if we are to believe the quotation above, a radical conception of play must be conceived of "before the alternative of presence or absence". Here the problem, mentioned in various instances by Derrida, arises as to how one is to think such a play, seeing that our entire language is inherently metaphysical in its allegiance to presence. Rather than attempting to solve this problem by a futile idealistic attempt at jumping out of language, it can be articulated in such a way that presence is not circumvented or circumlocuted but arrested amid its own production. One such articulation, which is crucial for any so-called radical conception of play, is the notion of différance.

> "Différance is neither a word nor a concept. In it, however, we shall see the juncture - rather than the summation - of what has been most incisively inscribed in the thought of what is conveniently called our "epoch": the difference of forces in Nietzsche, Saussure's principle of semiological difference, differing as the possibility of (neurone) facilitation,

> impression and delayed effect in Freud, difference as the irreducibility of the trace of the other in Levinas, and the ontic-ontological difference in Heidegger."[97]

What distinguishes the thought of "our epoch", ie. that of Nietzsche, Freud, Levinas, Heidegger, is that it no longer recognises a "full sign": the significance of the sign is now always understood in relation to a chain of other signifying elements as a play of differences between such elements. However, and this is really what the quoted passage is all about, the differences themselves cannot be grasped by any ordinary means, for such differences are never perceived, nor do they inhere in any concept. Whence the explicitly extraordinary device introduced by Derrida in the form of a purely graphic, non-verbal, non-conceptual differance.

Differance, if it has to be defined, can be seen as a kind of primal difference, that which is at the basis not merely of differences, but of differences between differences, ie. the play of differences.

It follows that differance cannot be "brought to light" by some or other means, as it cannot be made present. By definition, differance encompasses that which is not present and not perceptible. Neither is differance an absence, for absence is merely the negative of presence; differance is therefore alien to any category of being.

The relationship between differance and writing (écriture) is the following: The problem of writing is posed by a questioning of the arche (origin), thereby undermining all postulates and certainties to the extent that everything becomes embroiled in strategy and risk. The play of writing is the operation of strategies and riks, entailing an infinite, complex meshing of chance and necessity.

Differance is a strategy within this play of writing, it has no enduring significance or value, and may pass into its strategic opposite at a later stage of the play.

Etymologically, differance derives from the two distinct meanings of the Latin differre, one of which is the common sense of "to differ", ie. "not being identical", a meaning which Derrida likens to a spacing that occurs between elements when they are thus separated in a dynamic way on grounds of identity.[11] The other sense of differre is lacking in our notions of "differing" or "differentiating", namely "deferring", a temporalizing, a postponement until later which could be seen as a detour of "desire" or "will". In addition to this further meaning bequeathed to it by the Latin, the a in differance also indicates difference as polemos, ie. an immediately and irreducibly multivalent difference. Furthermore, differance is neither active nor passive but a "middle voice" between the two in the same way as "resonance" is not merely the infinitive, ie. the activity, of "resonate", which is "resonating", nor just a passive noun.

Differance is profoundly at odds with the entire logic of representation. Classical semiology must also be reckoned amongst the categories of representational thought, for in it the sign is always the representation of the present in its absence. the sign defers the moment of encountering the thing itself. The sign is, within classical semiology, a substitution for the thing itself, and therefore secondary and provisional. Differance lends itself to a questioning of the secondarity and provisionality of the sign, for differance is neither a "sign" nor a substitute in any sense; it does not represent any presence within a system of presence. Consequently, differance militates against the authority of

both presence and its contrary of absence or lack.

In its links with the thought of "our epoch", differance as "temporalizing-temporalization" may be compared to Heidegger's critique of the metaphysical domination of the present as "now", as well as Saussure's notion of the arbitrary and differential character of signs; these signs are arbitrary because they are constituted by a system of differences and not by their own "fullness". Thus, in Saussure, we no longer have concepts, but only the possibility of conceptuality. Within language there are only differences, but these differences are themselves only effects. Differance defines the movement of the play that produces effects of difference. Differance is therefore the non-full, non-simple "origin" of differences. However these "effects" are not the results of causes, therefore it might be more proper to speak of "traces" rather than effects.

We may summarise the propensities of differance towards a radical critique of presence - and of any play that is conceived on its basis - in Derrida's own words:

> "...Differance is what makes the movement of signification possible only if each element that is said to be 'present', appearing on the stage of presence, is related to something other than itself but retains the mark of a past element and already lets itself be hollowed out by the mark of its relation to a future element. This trace relates no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past, and it constitutes what is called the present by this very relation to what it is not, to what it absolutely is not; that is, not even to a past or future considered as a modified present. In order for it to be,

an interval must separate it from what it is not; but the interval that constitutes it in the present must also, and by the same token, divide the present in itself, thus dividing, along with the present, everything that can be conceived on its basis, that is, every being - in particular, for our metaphysical language, the substance or subject. Constituting itself, dynamically dividing itself, this interval is what could be called spacing; time's becoming-spatial or space's becoming-temporal (temporalizing). And it is this constitution of the present as a 'primordial' and irreducibly nonsimple, and, therefore, in the strict sense nonprimordial, synthesis of traces, retentions, and protentions (to reproduce here, analogically and provisionally, a phenomenological and transcendental language that will presently be revealed as inadequate) that I propose to call protowriting, prototrace, or differance.[99]

As we have been concerned here not with differance itself but with the latter as a concomitant for a theory of play, we need not elaborate any further.

vi. The Imaginary

The translation of Lacan's term, imaginaire, frequently used by Barthes, seems to have given cause for problems. Both Richard Howard, who translated RB, and Richard Miller, who rendered FT into English, use the terms "image-reservoir", "image-repertoire" and "image-system" variously. Part of the dilemma is of course that Barthes combines the term with others in a sometimes relatively novel way, such as [illegible]

Miller and Howard are not without merit, their terminology can be confusing, not only because three different English terms are employed for the single French one, but also because it may tend to completely divorce Barthes's concept from that of Lacan, which would seriously impoverise our understanding of it. Lacan's translators, as well as the translator of the authoritative psychoanalytic dictionary of Laplanche and Pontalis, The Language of Psychoanalysis[101], use the capitalised "Imaginary" throughout which, although something of a neologism in english, seems to lend itself more readily to standardisation as an English equivalent of imaginaire, while at the same time avoiding the possible confusion and imprecision that may result from using a combination of English terms.

The definition of Laplanche and Pontalis is as good a place as any to start our reading of Barthes's notion:

> "In the sense given to this term by Jacques Lacan (and generally used substantively): one of the three essential orders of the psychoanalytic field, namely the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. The imaginary order is characterised by the prevalence of the relation to the image of the counterpart (le semblable)."[102]

For Lacan, the imaginary order is first constituted during the mirror stage when, due to the physical prematurity of the infant, its ego is formed not on the basis of an image of itself, but on the basis of the counterpart's image. From then on the subject is caught up in the deceptive milieu consisting resemblances to itself, as well as erotic and aggressive tendencies ensuing from such resemblances, that is the Imaginary.

As is usually the case when a concept is imported

Miller and Howard are not without merit, their terminology can be confusing, not only because three different English terms are employed for the single French one, but also because it may tend to completely divorce Barthes's concept from that of Lacan, which would seriously impoverise our understanding of it. Lacan's translators, as well as the translator of the authoritative psychoanalytic dictionary of Laplanche and Pontalis, The Language of Psychoanalysis[111], use the capitalised "Imaginary" throughout which, although something of a neologism in English, seems to lend itself more readily to standardisation as an english equivalent of imaginaire, while at the same time avoiding the possible confusion and imprecision that may result from using a combination of English terms.

The definition of Laplanche and Pontalis is as good a place as any to start our reading of Barthes's notion:

> "In the sense given to this term by Jacques Lacan (and generally used substantively : one of the three essential orders of the psychoanalytic field, namely the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. The imaginary order is characterised by the prevalence of the relation to the image of the counterpart (le semblable)

For Lacan, the imaginary order is first constituted during the mirror stage when, due to the physical prematurity of the infant, its ego is formed not on the basis of an image of itself, but on the basis of the counterpart's image. From then on the subject is caught up in the deceptive milieu consisting of resemblances to itself, as well as erotic and aggressive tendencies ensuing from such resemblances, that is the Imaginary.

As is usually the case when a concept is imported

from elsewhere into the present texts, it undergoes a certain change, mostly accompanied by an ironic or playful "loosening" of its meaning. Not only is the fictionality of Barthes's childhood self stressed, but the concept of the Imaginary is subjected to a pun involving the ordinary sense of "imaginary" and "image", the latter referring to the photo-images with which RB starts:

> "To begin with, some images: they are the author's treat to himself, for finishing his book. His pleasure is a matter of fascination (and thereby quite selfish). I have kept only the images which enthrall me, <u>without my knowing why</u> (such ignorance is the very nature of fascination, and what I shall say about each image will never be anything but... imaginary).

The effect of the pun is the following: firstly, it disarms the Imaginary as to its scientific pretentions; secondly, it restores the etymological relations of "imaginary"; thirdly, it makes the psychoanalyical, theoretical, conceptual, into the textual, for the photographs do not represent the (abstract, subjective) Imaginary of the early Barthes-subject, rather they are merely the images of a bodily exterior and therefore a text to be looked at and to be read.

The a-scientific use of "Imaginary" is quite consistent throughout IT and RB. In fact, science is noted as one of the Imaginaries of language.

> "To identify accurately language's image-reservoirs, to wit: the word as singular unit, magic monad; speech as instrument or expression of thought; writing as transliteration of speech, the very deficiency or denial of language as a primary, spontaneous, pragmatic force. All these artifacts are governed by the image-reservoir of science (science as image-reservoir): liguistics expresses the truth about language, but solely

in this regard: '<u>that no conscious illusion is perpetrated</u>': now, that is the very definition of the image-reservoir: the unconscious of the unconscious."[104]

Again one is struck by the kind of subversive eclecticism practised here: an Imaginary as well as an unconscious is ascribed to language itself. However, rather than being a usual form of eclecticism that proceeds from half-knowledge and disregard for the specificity of concepts, this is an example of the constant <u>textualisation</u> found in RB and PT. Levels of thought, as well as all the commonly transmitted distinctions between theory/fiction, reality/reflection, etc., are all relegated to the realm of the text. The text is therefore "language without its Imaginary"[105], a language sans the units, divisions and proprieties imposed by science.

In the fragment dealing with the Imaginary in RB, the concept is described as "<u>epistemologically</u>, a coming category" [illegible] ("<u>épistémologiquement</u>, une catégorie d'avenir" in the original [illegible]). Clearly, the Imaginary is for Barthes a type of instrument with which to check the hold of science on language, rather than a strictly psychoanalytical notion; by characterising science as the Imaginary of language, the epistemological consequence is to preclude the scientific possibility as such when it comes to texts. Just as the ego is a fiction constituted on the basis of images of counterparts, so the scientific object of language is an illusory effect of a constellation of images of other scientific objects. However, and this is probably where the importance of the Imaginary lies as an epistemological concept for the future, that is not to say that science and linguistics must cease to exist now that it is without basis. It continues as an imaginary order, a paradox-

(which is entirely removed from any notion of a meta-language which at least by implication entails conscious intelligibility), whereas the text is that region beyond it[10].

vii. Doxa/Paradoxa

A continual theme in all of Barthes's texts is, of course, the critique of Nature. Wherever the natural appears, one must look for the ideological underneath that sustains such apparent naturalness. The latter defines more or less the concern of, say, the early Mythologies[10]: ideology is like a mask that has to be lifted in order to espy an approximate reality underneath. In this respect, the oft-mentioned example of the Paris-Match cover showing a black soldier saluting the French flag may be mentioned[10]. However, in PT and RF there can be no question of a real and its masks, for the concept of Doxa as perennially changing acceptable opinion precludes any certainty or reality underneath it; it is now not a question of tearing away the natural mask, but of displacing the Doxa by means of ever-new intellectual and artistic productions which may be appropriated by the Doxa at some later stage but eludes it at present.

> "Reactive formations: a Doxa (a popular opinion) is posited, intolerable; to free myself of it, I postulate a paradox; then this paradox turns bad, becomes a new concretion, itself becomes a new Doxa, and I must seek further for a new paradox."[11]

The relationship between Doxa and Paradoxa is that between the old and the new, but also, in the final instance, between the rule and the breaking of it. Interestingly, this relationship is not limited to

order:

> "There is only one way left to escape the alienation of present-day society: to retreat ahead of it: every old language is immediately compromised, and every language becomes old once it is repeated. Now, encratic language (the language produced and spread under the protection of power) is statutorily a language of repetition; all official institutions are repeating machines: school, sports, advertising, popular songs, news, all continually repeat the same structure, the same meaning, often the same words: the stereotype is a political fact, the major figure of ideology. Confronting it, the new is bliss (Freud: 'In the adult, novelty always constitutes the condition for orgasm'). Whence the present configuration of forces: on the one hand, a mass banalization (linked to the repetition of language) - a banalization outside bliss - but not necessarily outside pleasure - and on the other, a (marginal, eccentric) impulse toward the new - a desperate impulse that can reach the point of destroying discourse: an attempt to reproduce in historical terms the bliss repressed beneath the stereotype.
>
> The opposition (the knife of value) is not necessarily between consecrated, named contraries (materialism and idealism, revolution and reform, etc.); but it is always and throughout between the exception and the rule. For example, at certain moments it is possible to support the exception of the mystics. Anything, rather than the rule (generality, stereotype, doxa, dialect: the consistent language)
>
> The doxa and the rule entail stereotypes, whereas the

latter are defined as follows:

> "The stercotype is the word repeated without any magic, any enthusiasm, as though it were natural, as though by some miracle this recurring word were adequate on each occasion for different reasons, as though to imitate could no longer be sensed as an imitation: an unconstrained word that claims consistency and is unaware of its own insistence. Nietzsche has observed that 'truth' is only the solidification of old metaphors. So in this regard the stereotype is the present path of 'truth', the palpable feature which shifts the inverted ornament to the canonical, constraining form of the signified."[1]

These notions are clear enough, and may possibly be read as a slightly new formulation of the old innovation-recuperation schematic traditionally thought to be at the heart of literary progress. But, as is often the case in the present texts, we would miss the purport of the Doxa-Paradoxa relation if we were to ignore their etymological link, which also involves a measure of word play. The prefix "para" denotes, of course, "nearness" and, therefore, the paradox of the Paradoxa is that they are always close to or near the Doxa. Together with the passages quoted above, one may read the Barthesian paradox as an always-threatened entity. It is significantly described as a "retreat ahead", rather than a simple advance, which distinguishes the paradox from mere "innovation".

The militancy of the paradox resides therein that it becomes a basis for criticism:

> "The New is not a fashion, it is a value, the basis of all criticism: our evaluation of the world no longer depends, at least not directly,

> as in Nietzsche, on the opposition between noble and base, but on that between Old and New (the erotics of the New began in the eighteenth century: a long transformational process."[14]

What distinguishes this conception of the New from other theories of literary renewal, is that here the new does not proceed from "originality" - which is necessarily related to that class of ideals concerning "artistic creativity" which derives from the Renaissance, and which is still inordinately ubiquitous - but from a quasi-erotic, novel exception for its own sake. To posit the New as a critical value is not in itself extraordinary, on the contrary, but to make it the only critical value seems quite unusual, even, in this case, a radical reconstruction of literary critical evaluation.

viii. Criticism as Perversion

If it were ever so slightly dubious that the notion of the New could be rescued from its idealistic trappings in past and present critical practice, the idea of criticism as perversion will probably suffice to differentiate the critical activity as envisaged in A1 and A2 from most other forms.

In this notion, we encounter, then, a fundamental rupture with criticism as we know it, namely as a serious, evaluative, explicative, second-order activity which complements a first-order "creative" function. The dadaist may shout obscenities, but not the critic: his duty is to offer a post facto rationalisation, an integration of the paradoxical, transgressive and unacceptable into the accepted literary history. The perverse critic, however, as a concomitant to his productive readership, abolishes

this first-order - second-order distinction from the start. Nonetheless, the reader of criticism is a "second-degree reader", but in an altogether different sense to that of the traditional critic.

> "How can we take pleasure in a reported pleasure (boredom of all narratives of dreams, of parties)? Only one way: since I am here a second-degree reader, I must shift my position: instead of agreeing to be the confidant of this critical pleasure - a sure way to miss it - I can make myself its voyeur: I observe clandestinely the pleasure of others, I enter perversion; the commentary then becomes in my eyes a text, a fiction, a fissured envelope. The writer's perversity (his pleasure in writing is without function), the doubled, the trebled, the infinite perversity of the critic and of his reader."[115]

Intertextually, any reader of necessity participates in the "infinite perversity" of criticism. All texts take part in the pleasure of textuality itself; therefore they are all in some respect voyeuristic and perverse. "Perversity" here must not be taken morally or as a value judgement, but in the sense that Freud employed the term, namely to distinguish the undifferentiated (sexuality) from the normal (in Barthes's terms, the doxic).

> "Freud expresses the fact that sex is non-human, and that desire is fundamentally undifferentiated and ignorant of the distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality, by his use of the term 'polymorphously perverse'. It goes without saying that he simply borrowed the word 'perverse' from the conventional linguistic distinction between the 'normal person' and the 'pervert':
>
> > 'If I have described children as "polymorphously perverse", I was only using

> a terminology that was generally current; no moral judgement was implied by the phrase. Psychoanalysis has no concern whatever with such judgements of value.'"[11b]

Just as sexual perversity harks back to a pre-Oedipal "polymorphously perverse" state of undifferentiated sexuality, so critical perversity will show propensities towards the undifferentiated Inter-text, where pleasure is equally produced in a non-Oedipal, amorphous way.

Perverse criticism, then, would be a type of recording of pleasure as it is produced. Although it is oblivious to the work-text differentiation, it would not be just an anti-intellectual mouthing at random of what is being read, if we think of the question posed on page 23 of __ "and yet: what if knowledge itself were delicious?" Perverse criticism, in its textual analyses, would proceed not from a rationalistic injunction to knowledge, "better understanding", "appreciation of the work", etc., but from enjoyment for its own sake; in other words, in perusing knowledge, citing from scholarly works, the perverse critic is merely giving free reign to his perversely construed kowledgeable delectations.

In our reading of a text that is to follow this discussion, in order to demonstrate its uses in critical practice, we are going to relate the given text to other critical works and ideas, which would constitute a perverting of the text in the present sense.

As we know from our remarks on intertextuality, a text is never a delimited and defined object, but an open field. Whence the notion of voyeurism (viz. the first quotation, above), as regards criticism: critical texts participate immediately in the production of textuality and reading them is therefore

to approach the textual field and its pleasure from another, variant position, like a voyeur gains pleasure by observing the pleasure of others. The notion of critical perversion thus defines the mirror-within-a-mirror-like unfolding of texts that criticism helps to bring to bear on the text, an "infinite perversity", to use Barthes's term. This is even more trenchant in the light of the bodily status of texts: the reading of texts and their critical counterparts constitute the bringing together of bodies.

ix. Repression

The text is, as we have defined it, subversive, asocial, militant. But how does this subversion occur, and what form does it take?

In PT, we are informed that art seems historically and socially compromised; whence the attempt by the artist to destroy it'''. However, because of the [illegible] capacity of the exchange system to "recuperate" all destructions and all rebellions, an alternate, paradoxical form of attack is the only viable one. The latter is not chosen, rather one is doomed to it:

> "The awkwardness of this alternative is the consequence of the fact that destruction of discourse is not a dialectic term but a semantic term: it docilely takes its place within the great semiological 'versus' myth (white versus black); whence the destruction of art is doomed to only paradoxical formulae (those which proceed literally against the doxa): both sides of the paradigm are glued together in an ultimately complicitous fashion: there is a structural agreement between the contesting and the contested forms.

> (By subtle subversion I mean, on the contrary, what is not directly concerned with destruction, evades the paradigm, and seeks some other term: a third term, which is not, however, a synthesizing term but an eccentric, extraordinary term. An example? Perhaps Bataille, who eludes the idealist term by an unexpected materialism in which we find vice, devotion, play, impossible eroticism, etc.; thus Bataille does not counter modesty with sexual freedom but... with laughter.)"[118]

The reference to Bataille concerns, of course, his "literary" texts, rather than his theoretical ones and is not in itself cause for relating the above notion of paradoxical subversion to Bataille's concept of transgression. However, as is the case with Derridean "play", "transgression" seems to echo throughout our texts.

Although the very complete meditation on transgression by Bataille exists in Death and Sensuality[119], the essay by Foucault on the subject[120] is perhaps, for our purposes, more useful as an explanation of the concept itself, rather than an enumeration of the various loci of transgression found in Bataille's text, such as transgression in war, the orgy, marriage, etc. According to Foucault,

> "Transgression is an action which involves the limit, that narrow zone of a line where it displays the flash of its passage, but perhaps also its entire trajectory, even its origin; it is likely that transgression has its entire space in the line it crosses. The play of limits and transgression seems to be regulated by a simple obstinacy: transgression incessantly crosses and recrosses a line which closes up

> behind it in a wave of extremely short duration, and thus it is made to return once more right to the horison of the uncrossable. But this relationship is considerably more complex: these elements are situated in an uncertain context, in certainties which are immediately upset so that thought is ineffectual as soon as it attempts to seize them."[121]

And further:

> "Transgression, then, is not related to the limit as black to white, the prohibited to the lawful, the outside to the inside, or as the open area of a building to its enclosed spaces. Rather, their relationship takes the form of a spiral which no simple infraction can exhaust. Perhaps it is like a flash of lightning in the night which, from the beginning of time, gives a dense and black intensity to the night it denies, which lights up the night from the inside, from top to bottom, and yet owes to the dark the stark clarity of its manifestation, its harrowing and poised singularity; the flash loses itself in this space it marks with its sovereignty and becomes silent now that it has given a name to obscurity."[122]

Clearly, transgression has very little to do with the literal meaning of the word, as a crossing or violation of a moral, legal or whatever barrier. If the concept approximates the ordinary sense of the word at all, it does so as its absolute. Transgression in the usual sense seems to involve a <u>given</u> and <u>pre-existing</u> limit that is crossed. Thus, an absolute thinking of transgression necessarily disturbs the transitive tendency so important to the meaning of the word itself, for what is a transgression that does not work <u>upon</u> a law of some sort?

As Foucault points out, Bataillean transgression does, of course, "involve the limit", but in an entirely different way: it takes place in an "uncertain context". It is conceivable that transgression may take place within a certain context, such as, for example, the law that one plus one makes two; all errors and deviations from the law do not affect its certainty - naturally, it is possible to imagine a situation where the mistakes exceed the adherences to the law, when the certainty of the latter would be jeopardised, but let us, for argument's sake, accept the possibility of simple transgressions within certain contexts. Every moral, religious and social context is probably uncertain; Bataille gives an example from Christianity:

> "We feel like laughing when we consider the solemn commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' followed by a blessing to armies and the Te Deum of the apotheosis. No beating about the bush: murder is connived at immediately after being banned!"[123]

Within an uncertain context, there is no movement from within a system of rules to its outside. Rather, the rule or law is announced in the same instant as its transgression is advocated. Transgression is therefore not confined to the "crossing" of the law: in appearing to cross it, the transgressive act also illumines and calls attention to the law itself, as Foucault's very apposite metaphor of the lightning bolt in the night illustrates.

We could circumscribe transgression as the following: whereas laws and rules in general appear certain, every transgression, if only for a brief moment, restores the ubiquitous uncertainty of the world. During the moment of transgression, not only the specific limit concerned, but all limits, are called into question.

Foucault's essay emphasises, throughout, the significance

of the night for transgression[124]. The night is both the absence that ensues from the death of God in Western culture, as well as the unknown region not yet opened by a transgression. (The primordiality of the light-darkness theme within occidental culture is obvious.) The night also defines the space of transgression, for the transgressive space is always unknown or, more precisely, non-existent prior and posterior to the transgression that founds it in one illuminating eruption.

Another aspect, at least in Bataille, that is not to be divorced from transgression is its profound relation with sexuality and death. It seems that transgression is at least partly rooted, if such an idealistic term is permissible, in the paradoxical naturalism of the Marquis de Sade - and not on account of Bataille having written on Sade. Like Sade's hedonistic life's principle that, if adhered to, would destroy all life and consequently also all enjoyment of it, transgression, if affirmed to the fullest extent, would end in the nullification of all laws and rules, and thus also in the cancellation of the transgressive possibility. Unlike the relation between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, which provides for a predictable ratio between sex, work and death, with a kind of Aristotelian mean envisaged between the two principles which would limit both excessive sexuality and death, transgression defines a plane beyond rationalism where death, such as the death of a tribal king, may unleash both more death and unbridled sexual licence.

> "Basically death contravenes the taboo against the violence which is supposedly its cause. Most frequently the subsequent sense of rupture brings in its wake a minor disturbance which funeral rites and festivities with their ordered ritual, setting bounds to disorderly urges,

> are able to absorb. But if death prevails over a sovereign whose exalted position might seem to be a guarantee against it, that sense of rupture gets the upper hand and disorder knows no bounds."[125]

Transgression, as Bataille and after him, Foucault, deals with it, defines a "beyond" or "outside" where cultural systems break down. Not only do texts participate in cultural systems, but texts are equally systems unto themselves capable of transgressive breakdowns, for example when jouissance takes place. But perhaps more precisely, transgression always relates to a moral breakdown; textual transgression would therefore entail not so much jouissance, which is amoral, but disruptions of the text in its moral apects, which may or may not trigger off jouissance.

x. Split

We have already commented on the split between pleasure and jouissance, as well as introduced the idea of a split subject in the course of our discussion on other topics.

In Freud, splitting or Spaltung is used primarily in regard to so-called "splitting of the Ego".

> "Term used by Freud to denote a very specific phenomenon which he deems to be at work above all in fetishism and in the psychoses: the co-existence at the heart of the ego of two psychical attitudes towards external reality in so far as this stands in the way of an instinctual demand. The first of these attitudes takes a reality into consideration, while the second disavows it and replaces it by a product of desire. The two attitudes persist side by side without influencing each other."[127]

Unlike Freud, Lacan does not limit splitting primarily to fetishism and the psychoses, but considers it fundamental to the formation of the subject. The subject is, firstly, split between his "real" self and his representation within a chain of signifiers, the latter being the only self that he is conscious of. By definition, the subject is mediated by the symbolic order introduced between himself and the "real", and his image of himself derives from this mediation which includes a mediation through other subjects. Thus, the subject is founded by a splitting from his infantile self.

In RB, we encounter another of those strange literalizings of psychoanalytical concepts which at first seem reductive, but is soon realised to be an extension of the concept towards a more deconstructive use:

> "For classical metaphysics, there was no disadvantage in 'dividing' the person (Racine: J'ai deux hommes en moi); quite the contrary, decked out in two opposing terms, the person advanced like a good paradigm (high/low, flesh/spirit, heaven/earth); the parties to the conflict were reconciled in the establishment of meaning: the meaning of Man. This is why, when we speak today of a divided subject, it is never to acknowledge his simple contradictions, his double postulations, etc.; it is a diffraction which is intended, a dispersion of energy in which there remains neither a central core nor a structure of meaning: I am not contradictory, I am dispersed."[128]

The question is: why relate the splitting of the subject at all to the rather banal phrase, J'ai deux hommes en moi, and to the notion of contradiction, even if only to differentiate the split from these? Moreover, in PF, the subject who enjoys both the

pleasure and the text of jouissance, is
to be split on that account, to be a "living
diction"[12]. It seems that the notion of split
PI and RB have dual application: firstly, in
s psychoanalytic sense, especially as formulated
by Lacan and, secondly, as applied to literary dis-
course and to texts. It follows that a split subject
reading split texts lends itself to a multiplication
splits that is fittingly described as dispersion.

However, by differentiating dispersion from contra-
diction, the more limited split of psychoanalysis,
ie. the one fundamental split between self and others,
is implicitly extended: as Barthes says, "there re-
mains neither a central core nor a structure of
meaning." For a contradiction, which is also the
hallmark of dialectical thought, always implies
some stability of meaning, a recognisable fixity
in terms of which to establish that which is in
contradiction to it. The split of Lacanian psycho-
analysis, being a split from an infantile self,
could possibly be seen as a form of contradiction,
a contradiction in relation to a former, "lost"
self.

What the multiplicity of splits entails, therefore,
is no longer even a relative stability of meanings,
a mediation through others and a representation of
a self. The split subject as diffraction does not
participate in any stability, and has not even a
putatively "real" self. Rather, this split subject
is akin to the intertext, an immediate transposition
of subjectivities; in other words, what the notion
of the intertext is to the text, the multiplicitous
split is to the subject: both define the dynamic state
of their respective textual and subjective functions.

In the reading subject, the intertext and the split

subject more or less fuse in an ambient dispersion. Regarding the split between pleasure and jouissance, as well as between the text of pleasure and the text of jouissance, this is not a single or fundamental split either, because it takes place along a variety of "seams" and registers, and does not obey any set of recognisable or predictable principles.

Is it then still meaningful to talk of a human "subject" at all, or should we rather begin to see this dispersed and variously split entity as a non-humanist mechanism? In the following section, we attempt to do just that.

xi. Textual [illegible]: a Preliminary Conclusion

We have stressed that PT and RB are necessarily contradictory; to do away with their contradictoriness would be immensely truncating. But the question now arises whether, by preserving these contradictions, by even pointing them out as such, we are not lapsing back into maintaining an idealistic textual specificity and, secondly, an extremely watered-down, liberalised - in the sense of apportioning equal truth value to various competing statements - form of authorship.

Much of the architecture of PT and RB have been dealt with: the presence of a wide range of psychoanalytic, specifically Lacanian, concepts in them, the current of Nietzschean affirmation flowing through them. However, we would want to claim that the relationship of these texts towards psychoanalysis, for one, displays a rift. Jouissance, as we have seen, is the momentary dissolution of the subject, cut with the implication that the subject has been, and will return; jouissance entails therefore merely a series of dissolving punctuations of an otherwise continuous presence of subjecthood. Pleasure, on the other hand,

is a pure production which makes for a "split subject"[130], but nonetheless somehow accomodates the retention of the subject as such. Moreover the texts parade these and other contradictions quite openly. The cumulative effect is that the rift between these texts and psychoanalysis becomes so wide and fundamental that we have to abandon Freud, Lacan and any notion of the subject in favour of something like a "pleasure machine". The terminology itself is not that important, as long as we read the "subject" of TA and RB not as a subject at all, but as an arrangement of mechanisms engaged in the production of pleasure and of desire. (As we shall see, the latter would also circumscribe the "loving subject" of LD.)

In their Anti-Oedipus[131], Deleuze and Guattari have provided us with a theory of desiring-production that would, if read together with our texts, complete the break with conventional, even psychoanalytic conceptions of textuality, in the direction of an anti-humanist, non-subjective production of pleasure and (textual) desire. (In fact, Anti-Oedipus is actually mentioned[132], but that is of no direct concern here.)

In PT, a reference to desire occurs:

> "An old, a very old tradition: hedonism has been repressed by nearly every philosophy; we find it defended only by marginal figures, Sade, Fourier; for Nietzsche, hedonism is a pessimism. Pleasure is continually disappointed, reduced, deflated, in favour of strong, noble values: Truth, Death, Progress, Struggle, Joy, etc. Its victorious rival is Desire: we are always being told about Desire, never about Pleasure; Desire has an epistemic dignity, Pleasure does not...[133]"

The desire spoken of here is of course the oedipal

desire as thought within the framework of psychoanalysis, which bases itself on lack. The self-productive, anoedipal desire of the Anti-Oedipus corresponds very closely to pleasure as conceived in the above passage, as a gratuitous, marginal, declasse concept. Here, for example, is how a noted French Marxist historian views Anti-Oedipus:

> "By separating time from space, it turns the schizoid into an explanatory principle. It is the belated theorisation of a version of 'leftism' that has run aground on the politicisation of this or that real but peripheral issue (prison, drugs, insanity, etc.) and has then sunk back into a negation of the political..."[134]

Not only as theoretically déclasse problematics are the theory of pleasure and schizoanalysis related, but also intrinsically: both concern productions and, at least within our reading, transpose each other's conceptual ensembles intertextually.

The starting point of the Anti-Oedipus is the schizophrenic production of Judge Schreber, the well-known "case" analysed by Freud through the details of the Judge's experience published under the title Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken in 1903. Whereas Freud treats the Denkwürdigkeiten as a document of a delusion to be analysed across the distance that normality and scientific decorum interposes between the patient and the psychoanalyst[135], Deleuze and Guattari take Schreber's utterances on the terms of the utterances themselves:

> "Judge Schreber has sunbeams in his ass. A solar anus. And rest assured that it works: Judge Schreber feels something, produces something, and is capable of explaining the process theoretically. Something is produced: the effects

of a machine, not mere metaphors."[136]

The "desiring-machines" of the Anti-Oedipus are neither concrete nor abstract. Virtually anything can be a desiring-machine: a part of a body, a house, the sky, possibly even a thought. The distinguishing feature of the desiring-machine is its capacity to form connections with other machines. A definition of a machine would be: anything that interrupts a flow, the basic tenet of the Anti-Oedipus being that "everything flows". Thus an essential constituent of the infantile stage, namely the frustration of the child's desire for his mother's breast through competition with the father and his consequent insertion into the Oedipal triangle, is removed. Instead of it being a matter of an infantile and therefore pre-subject desiring the milk that he lacks, it is merely a machine composed of the mouth that interrupts the flow of milk. Even the senses and the sense-organs are machines that interrupt each other's sensory flows: the ear with its flow of noise would interrupt the flow of sight emanating from the eye; each sense-organ "sees" or interprets the world only in terms of itself, the eye observing a silent, impalpable world, the ear discerning only a spectrum of sounds. The machines "plug" into each other - such as, for example, the mouth-machine plugging into its energy-machine, the breast - and form other machines, arrangements, multiplicities, etc.

By interrupting and diverting the flows, the machines produce. This production is, of course, a pure production:

> "For the real truth of the matter - the glaring, sober truth that resides in delirium - is that there is no such thing as relatively independent spheres or circuits: production is immediately consumption and a recording process (enregistrement),

> without any sort of mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production process itself. Hence everything is production: production of productions, of actions and of passions; production of recording processes, of distributions and of co-ordinates that serve as points of reference; productions of consumptions, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties, and of pain. Everything is production, since the recording processes are immediately consumed, immediately consummated, and these consumptions directly reproduced."[137]

No distinction is made between producing and the product, which is termed a

> "...producing/product identity. It is this identity that constitutes a third term in the linear series: an enormous undifferentiated object. Everything stops dead for a moment, everything freezes in place - and then the whole process will begin over again."[138]

The connections between the machines are "binary-linear", thus the "third term". The latter is a static, anti-productive "body without organs" that, as the quotation bears out, is always intrinsic to, and simultaneously outside, the process of production. Within social production - there being, however, no distinction between social production (society) and desiring-production (the individual) - the body without organs is capital. Capital itself is, obviously, incapable of production and yet, at the same time, both the precondition and resultant of the production process. Capital as a body without organs attracts the machines to it, so that production takes place on its surface and so that the recording processes are appropriated by it: the only way in which production may be measured is in terms of

"growth of capital", and so forth.

This is a very sketchy paraphrase, but we can already see how schizoanalysis could be relevant for textual production. Is there not a correlation between the body without organs of capital or the capitalist, and the author? We know that the "writer", and the "reader" for that matter, are merely points of reference where the play of the infinite Text may be observed. Textual production never ceases, and it is well possible to imagine other reference points for noting its passage, apart from the entities of "writer" and "reader".

A possible lacuna within the textual theory as envisaged within previous chapters, would be its relative inability to account for the prevalence of reader-writer types of textual production. It is all very well to term such texts "closed" or "repressed", but what, we may insist, sustains these closures and repressions? In this respect, the textual theory of Rp and PT is probably quite normative: it tells us how texts [illegible] to be reproduced, rather than describing that vast textual industry of which the bestseller list is but one exemplification.

To fuse PT and RP with the Anti-Oedipus is, theoretically, a daunting task; within the problematic of asystematic discourses it is likely to be impossible, as well as undesirable. However, the Anti-Oedipus shows how a discourse on production can be used to analyse the repression and management of production to constitute the illusory entities of persons, families, state, etc. It seems almost a requirement for the theory of textual pleasure to enable us also, while at the same time affirming the pleasure, the eruptions of jouissance, the scrambling of codes and positions of reader, writer, and so forth, to analyse albeit

in a playful, deconstructive way, the closure of texts. The textual industry that consists in the repression of productive textuality, appropriating machines to it, is so vast as to predominate wherever a hand lifts a book so that an eye may plug into it. In this respect, another observation by Deleuze, one that we quoted more fully previously, is relevant, namely that literature always involves the contract: "I buy from you, you give me something to read"[158].

For the present, we are unable to offer any definitive views on textual desire, except that it would be that force within textual production relating to social production, the repressing codification of which fixes books in a closed circuit of exchange.

in a playful, deconstructive way, the closure of texts. The textual industry that consists in the repression of productive textuality, appropriating machines to it, is so vast as to predominate wherever a hand lifts a book so that an eye may plug into it. In this respect, another observation by Deleuze, one that we quoted more fully previously, is relevant, namely that literature always involves the contract: "I buy from you, you give me something to read"[15].

For the present, we are unable to offer any definitive views on textual desire, except that it would be that force within textual production relating to social production, the repressing codification of which fixes books in a closed circuit of exchange.

3. A Lover's Discourse

a. Fragmentation Continued

If PT and RB seemed to deviate from the usual format in which literary theory is presented, then LD tends towards the unclassifiable. It consists of eighty "fragments", spread across 234 pages[140] nd arranged alphabetically; nowhere do we find any noteworthy references to "literarture", "reading", etc. Instead, the subject of LD is something that, in our time at least, has been mainly associated with advertising slogans and popular novels, namely "love". Our remarks on pleasure and anoedipal desire, as being declasse problematics, are even more relevant to love, for, as the inscriptior at the start of LD reads:

> "The necessity for this book is to be found in the following consideration: that the lover's discourse is today of an extreme solitude. This discourse is spoken, perhaps, oy thousands of subjects (who knows?), but warranted by no one; it is completely forsaken by the surrounding languages: ignored, disparaged, or derided by them, severed not only from authority but also from the mechanisms of authority (sciences, techniques, arts)."[141]

Thus stated, the necessity of LD can also be seen in accordance with the already quoted statement in PT, namely that:

> "...There is only one way left to escape the alienation of present-day society: to retreat ahead of it: every old language is immediately compromised, and every language becomes old once it is repeated."[142]

The raison d'être of LD is thus also the perpetual movement of language and discourses, old languages becoming compromised, necessitating a further "retreat ahead". At one time, ie. during the Middle Ages, "love" of the courtly variety was the preponderant theme of epic poetry. Today, on the other hand, it has insinuated itself in an extremely banal form in the popular romance, sexistly advertised as "women's fiction". However, even in the latter genre, as the incitement to discourse about sex spreads[143], and sexology and popular psychology start to replace love as the primary thematic concern of the more effete examples of popular realism (hero and heroine no longer falling in love, rather their "personalities" or "selves" go together so well), love now becomes an outcast concept, "forsaken by the surrounding languages", as Barthes puts it. Thus, an "historical reversal" has taken place.

> "(Historical reversal: it is no longer the sexual which is indecent, it is the sentimental - censured in the name of what is in fact another morality.)"[144]

LD is more or less a catalogue of sentimentalities, no branch of possible feeling between lovers is deemed too tiny or inconsequential for inclusion in the text.

Although LD is ostensibly an alien object amidst known texts of literary theory, as we have indicated, it does show a certain resemblance to certain books habitually classified as fiction, such as for example the nouveaux romans of especially Nathalie Sarraute[145]. The latter texts also concern themselves with minute and precise delineations of human behaviour without fixing such behaviour to any specific personalities, characters or subjects. However, despite such resemblance it would be theoretical defeatism to discuss LD as a somewhat belated example of a nouveau

roman, simply because novelistic and fictional categories seem so limiting and truncating in regard to the degree of textual and theoretical multivalence encountered in it. The conception of discourse in LD is the following:

> "Dis-cursus - originally the action of running here and there, comings and goings, measures taken, "plots and plans": the lover, in fact, cannot keep his mind from racing, taking new measures and plotting against himself. His discourse exists only in outbursts of language, which occur at the whim of trivial, of aleatory circumstances.
>
> These fragments of discourse can be called figures. The word is to be understood, not in its rethorical sense, but rather in its gymnastic or choreographic acceptation...
>
> Figures take shape insofar as we can recognise, in passing discourse, something that has been read, heard, felt. The figure is outlined (like a sign) and memorable (like an image or a tale). A figure is established if at least someone can say:
> 'That is so true! I recognise that scene of language.' [146]

Each of the fragments of LD is such a figure[147], and a heading ("Absence", "Adorable", "Affirmation", etc.) as well as an introductory synopsis accompany it. A figure in its "gymnastic or choreographic acceptation" is, of course, a body frozen in time, a fleeting arrangement of limbs and features that is momentarily arrested by the intelligence in the way that one recognises, to remain close to Barthes' explanation, a certain movement in ballet. These

figures are both the "real", physical bodies of lovers in the most basic sense, and the signifying bodies constituted by their exchanges of words, looks, touches, etc., as well as the immediate order of textual body that is being act ised by the reader. Thus, the following comment appears between parentheses,

> "(Ideally, the book would be a co-operative: 'To the United Readers and Lovers.')"[14]

It follows that LD is by no means an untheoretical, "novelistic" text: in many respects it is a continuation and elaboration of PT and RB, using a slightly different vocabulary pertaining not to pleasure and certain textual or psychoanalytical concepts, but to "love"; similar elements of movement, bodily sensation, hedonistic enjoyment and self-reflexive textualisation are nonetheless to be found in all three texts. Before we proceed with the elaboration of "loving and reading", it is necessary to go into a series of intricacies arising from, as a starting point at least, the cover of the French edition of LD.

b. The cove of Fragments d'un discours amoureux

The cover of the original LD can be seen on the following page. It shows a detail from a painting by the Renaissance painter, Andrea del Verrocchio[15], "Tobias and the Angel". The purport of this visual fragment has been thoroughly researched by Randolph Runyon in his article, "Fragments of an Amorous Discourse"[16]. My own discussion will be dependent on the article for information about correspondences between LD, the apocryphal "Book of Tobit", Goethe's Die Leiden des junge Werthers as well as Balzac's La fausse maîtresse, but will draw somewhat different conclusions from these correspondences.

Now, the illustration, if one looks closely, seems



Collection "Tel Quel
AUX ÉDITIONS DU SEUIL

Illustration from the cover of Fragments d'un discours amoureux

to contain the letter "R" on the left hand side, made up of the lines formed by the left edge of the picture, the curve of the left arm and the edge of the downward flowing garment that the hand belonging to this arm is grasping. Although not mentioned by Runyon, the gaps on the right at top and bottom may provide for the outline of a "B", which would make Barthes's full initials; nonetheless, in the absence of any authorial intention, naturally, this is quite an enjoyable piece of graphic speculation. However, Runyon wishes to attach signi[illegible]e to this pictorial "R" apropos of the figure "Uni[illegible]" in LD:

> "...In the game of the _furet_ to which Barthes likens the way his book might be read, one may hold on to the ring - to one of the eighty figures of the _Fragments d'un discours amoureux_ - a second longer, if one desires, before passing it on: _Union_, the antepenultimate figure, will be our _furet_ here.
>
> Each of the figures is preceded by an 'argument' that defines the area of the topic: 'UNION. Dream of total union with the beloved.' If an amorous reading of the text leads us to see 'the reader' where Barthes says 'the beloved', if indeed one remembers that he describes the book as a co-operative venture in which readers and lovers are reunited, then this figure, speaking of _union_, suggests _reunion_. The difference between these two words, which can stand here for the difference between reading the book as a discourse on love and reading it as a discourse on writing, is practically reducible to one letter, the same letter the cover frames."[152]

Apart from the fact that the connection between the "R" and "Union" seems rather arbitrary, the interpretation of the former as standing for the

difference between reading the book as a discourse on love and reading it as a discourse on writing is dualistic: it supposes that loving and writing are two mutually exclusive, or at least separate, activities, something which the notion of a "co-operative of 'United Readers and Lovers'" explicitly denies. Runyon's remarks serve to highlight the hazards of approaching LD; for on the one hand one may dissolve it entirely into a generalised discourse on writing, ie. place it together with PT and RB, whereas on the other there might be a tendency to see LD as a kind of love manual or amorous catalogue without having any idea of its implications for a textual theory.

For an answer to the dilemma, we need merely recall the statement occurring in PT, namely that

> "...the text liquidates all metalanguage by which it is text: no voice (Science, Cause, Institution) is behind what it is saying."

If we are to accept this definition which, in relation to our texts and the type of thoght occurring in them, seems eminently plausible, then there cannot be two orders of discourse, one on writing and one on love, with a third metalinguistic realm which would presumably reside with the reader. Rather, we would prefer to stress the pervasive productivity of pleasure that encompasses both writing and love. Which is not to say that the text and love are but two forms of an ambient flow of pleasure; rather they designate two different domains of its occurrence.

We have said that as far as RB and PT go, the reading subject is the locus of the text and its flow; in LD the loving subject is the locus of all "amorous relations", or the flow of love: it is not an "interaction" between subjects, but a one-sided projection

of desire onto the other. If we are going to distinguish between PT and RB on the one hand, and LD on the other, then it would be as general as the following: whereas PT and RB concern the Text, LD concerns Life. Albeit in a very tentative fashion, LD is an attempt to extend the theoretical premises of textual pleasure from the text onto the plane of existence itself. (Let these remarks suffice for the moment as we are going to pursue this thought below.)

Despite grasping the profound link between the textual and the amorous project, we should however not lapse into the reduction of reading "writing" where it says "loving", or vice versa.

To return to the present issue, the cover: Runyon's alacrity at plunging straight into the "text behind the painting"[154], ie. the Book of Tobit, serves to disregard the simple elements of a play of visual signs ensuing from the isolation of the intertwined hands from the rest of the painting. As they appear on the cover, the slightly contorted fingers of the upper hand seem to betray at least a suggestion of erotic energy; the gold container in the top left hand corner is held in front of the chest almost like a stemless goblet.

Of course, the complete painting by Verrocchio signifies exactly the opposite to the truncated detail: the figure on the left is actually the angel Raphael and therefore supposedly devoid of any erotic meaning; the expression on Tobias's face is serene and trusting; Tobias's unusually bent fingers signify his mortal trepidations and human frailty, vis à vis the calm fingers of Raphael; the meaning of the gold box is similarly revealed as being quite innocently utilitarian: it will contain the heart, liver and gall of a fish to be killed by Tobias[155].



Tobias and the _____,

The National Gallery, London.

Thus, the tension between the painting itself and the use of a fragment (sic) from it on the cover of a book about love should forewarn us that the relationship between LD and the Book of Tobit will be one of play and varying consistency, and not a series of parallels.

c. Tobit, Werther, Balzac, Barthes

Although Runyon's essay offers a very elaborate enumeration of corresponding elements in The Book of Tobit, the Sorrows of Young Werther, La fausse maîtresse and Les secrets de la princesse de Cadignan of Balzac, as well as LD (in addition, he brings in RB which we shall disregard), we shall only point to some primary ones, and concern us with the significance of these rather than with their detail.

Briefly, the tale of The Book of Tobit goes as follows:

Tobit, a man of good works - his particular forte is the burial of executed persons not allowed a funeral - one night has to sleep outside in the courtyard after having buried another corpse. While asleep, some sparrows let their droppings fall into his eyes, thereby blinding him. Tobit

> "...prayed to God for deliverance. At that very moment, in a distant city, a woman named Sarah was praying for release from an affliction of her own. She had been given in marriage seven times, but each bridegroom was slain by an evil demon on the wedding night, and she was despairing of ever finding a lasting husband.
>
> The same day Tobit remembered that he had left a sum of money in trust with a friend in another city. Because of his blindness he could not make

the journey, but he decided to send his son, Tobias, to claim the money. The trip would be long and difficult, and the boy did not know the way. Tobit therefore chose to hire a trustworthy travelling companion for his son. The man who presented himself was none other than the angel Raphael, sent by God to answer Tobit's prayer, but neither father nor son knew his true identity.

Tobit's fatherly benediction ironically invokes the angelic guide: 'Go with this man: God who dwells in heaven will prosper your way, and may his angel attend you' (Tobit 5:6). Tobit is in that extraordinarily lucky position, although he does not yet know it, of being able to cause something to come about just by naming it. Barthes, similarly, can enjoy the dreamed of total union by pronouncing the right name for it..[15]

Coming to the Tigris river, a fish leaped out, threatening to swallow Tobias. However, the angel ordered Tobias to catch the fish and, after taking out the liver, heart and gall, they roasted and ate it.

As it happened, the heart and liver were later used by Tobias to frighten away the demons. That he will be able to wed Sarah (whom he has not met yet at this stage), is contained in the following passage, wherein Raphael tells Tobias of her:

> "'Do not be afraid, for she was destined for you from eternity...' When Tobias heard these things, he fell in love with her and yearned deeply for her."[16]

Interestingly, of course, Tobias falls in love with

Sarah purely on the grounds of a description, someone else's words about her, and before perceiving her in the flesh. Before commenting on the significance of the latter fact, let us name a few items concerning Goethe's Werther, singled out under its own grouping in the "Tabula gratulatoria" at the back of Fragments d'un discours amoureux [158] and frequently mentioned in the text.

Werther, too, first learns of Charlotte through a "fish", namely Heinrich: Werther meets him beside a river (sic) while he is looking for flowers to give to Charlotte: Heinrich refers to a time when he was "as happy, as merry, as light as a fish in water,"[159] which turns out to have been a period of madness. Shortly after recounting his encounter with Heinrich, Werther concludes with the following passage in which he addresses his heavenly Father:

> "Father, Whom I do not know! Father, Who once filled my whole soul but now turn Your countenance away from me, call me to You... Could a man, a father be angry if his son returned unexpectedly, threw his arms about his neck, and cried: 'I am back, father! Be not angry because I cut short my journey, which it was your will I should endure longer.'"[160]

As Runyon points out, the latter sentence is rather more reminiscent of the Book of Tobit than the more well-known parable of the Prodigal Son, for the latter is not sent on a journey by his father, but leaves of his own accord without any set purpose.

Regarding Balzac's Les secrets de la princesse de Cadignan, referred to on page 214 of LD, the elements that ought to interest us are the following. The princess, Diane d'Uxelles, unlike her male counterpart,

Daniel d'Arthez, a writer, is immensely experienced as a (sexual) lover. However, she has never experienced love as such: "'I have been amused, but I have not loved.'"[161] Through D'Arthez, she partakes of love for the very first time. The resemblance to Sarah, who has been married seven times without having had a single marriage consummated, is obvious. Whereas the intermediary figure in the Book of Tobit is the angel Raphael and the one in Werther is Heinrich, a close friend of D'Arthez going by the angelic name of Michel fulfills that rôle in the Secrets. Like Heinrich, who has admired Charlotte, Michel has been in love with Diane previously.

In this context, the second relevant work by Balzac is La fausse maîtresse; we shall quote from the passage in LD:

> "To impose upon my passion the mask of discretion (of impassivity): this is a strictly heroic value: 'It is unworthy of great souls to expose to those around them the distress they feel' (Clotilde de Vaux); Captain Paz, one of Balzac's heroes, invents a false mistress in order to be sure of keeping his best friend's wife from knowing that he loves her passionately.
>
> Yet to hide a passion totally (or even to hide, more simply, its excess) is inconceivable: not because the human subject is too weak, but because passion is in essence made to be seen... Larvatus prodeo: I advance pointing to my mask: I set a mask upon my passion, but with a discreet (and wily) finger I designate this mask. Every passion, ultimately, has its spectator: at the moment of his death, Captain Paz cannot keep from writing to the woman he has loved in silence: no amorous oblation without a final theatre: the sign is always victorious."[162]

In this case, the false mistress is the third figure, conveyor of the love relation between the protagonists. What then is the significance of these recurring intermediaries, whose appearance we are stressing at the expense of a host of other factors also unearthed by Runyon in these texts (such as recurring figure eights[100])?

Much of the answer is already evident in the passage we have just quoted in LD: they are literally transmitters of love in the same way that, as was said by Barthes on another occasion, an author is a transmitter of utterances, and therefore a textual intermediary. They are alter egos of either one of the pair of lovers who serve to make the love in question flow, and at the same time record and reveal that flow verbally. Mutatis mutandis they are the connective elements in a more or less triadic amorous exchange.

d. Loving and Reading

To love and to read are not reducible to each other, as we have already indicated. However, the discourse on love complements the theory of pleasure in a very important way, for textual pleasure and textual jouissance occur within the textual body whereas love is a factor concerning, at least primarily, the physical body of the subject.

It is difficult to assess exactly what the purport of LD in relation to PT and RB is, for on the one hand it is an extension of the latter two texts, and on the other a departure from them; Barthes's untimely death has made the entire project - even if we are to assume that all three texts are part of a unitary project - even more incomplete. But, in an extraordinary

way, LD, in constituting a discourse in a sphere as general and as encompassing as the sensual, amorous body of the subject, almost provides for, in conjunction with PT and RB, a new "philosophy". Of course, as we have reiterated so often, we are not dealing here with a systematic form of discourse. therefore we could not expect to find a philosophic system in the way that existentialism or Marxism forms a system. Nevertheless, there is an undeniable consistency - not in the logical sense, but in the more elusive sense that the thickness of a liquid is of a certain consistency - to these texts which separate them from most other texts, including others by Barthes. And especially with the addition of LD, what started as a relatively specific theory within a specific domain, ie. textual pleasure, in PT, becomes exceedingly more ambitious so as to aspire towards something akin to what was traditionally known as metaphysics, or "first philosophy". With the pejorative meaning that Derrida has given the word "metaphysics", it is necessary to consider it in the sense it is used by Foucault in his discussion of Deleuze's Logique du sens:

> "...Where natural theology contained metaphysical illusion in itself and where this illusion was always more or less related to natural theology, the metaphysics of the phantasm revolves around atheism and transgression. Sade and Bataille and somewhat later, the palm upturned in a gesture of defense and invitation, Roberte.
>
> Moreover, this series of liberated simulacrum is activated, or mimes itself, on two privileged stages: that of psychoanalysis, which should eventually be understood as a metaphysical practice since it concerns itself with phantasms; and that of the theatre, which is multiplied, polyscenic, simultaneous, broken into separate

> scenes that refer to each other, and where we encounter, without any trace of representation (copying or imitating), the dance of masks, the cries of bodies, and the gesturing of hands and fingers. And throughout each of these two recent and divergent series (the attempt to 'reconcile' these series, to reduce them to either perspective, to produce a ridiculous 'psychodrama', has been extremely naive), Freud and Artaud exclude each other and give rise to a mutual resonance. The philosophy of representation - of the original, the first time, resemblance, imitation, faithfulness - is dissolving; and the arrow of the simulacrum released by the Epicureans is headed in our direction. It gives birth - rebirth - to a 'phantasmaphysics'

Naturally, the discourse of the lover as it is presented in LD bases itself on bodies and quasi-theoretical gestures as signs and as a non-verbal language; in its references to an "other" which is obviously not the Other of psychoanalysis, it emphasises the illusory character of the other's appearances; therefore, this discourse would easily qualify for the category of "phantasmaphysics".

And more importantly, LD shows that the type of theorising encountered in it, as well as in PI and RB, could be extended almost infinitely to other fields as well. The significance of LD is thus not so much in regard to love or lovers as such, but as groundwork and an example of what can be said within the kind of non-representational problematic designated by a "phantasmaphysics". However, as we have pointed out earlier, "love", like "pleasure" too, is not a good concept: it has no philosophical or theoretical rigour and, as the preface states, it is "ignored,

disparaged" and "forsaken by the surrounding languages"[165]. Nonetheless, it is "spoken, perhaps, by thousands of subjects,"[166] and is therefore something of a ubiquitous discourse.

i. The Lover

LD is a record of a lover, but not any lover; certainly not Barthes. Rather, through a compilation of other writings indicated by footnotes and proper names in the margin of the text, LD strives to reproduce the language of the ubiquitous lover. Thus, albeit written in the first person, this lover is always the sum of a number of lovers brought together through writing.

> "I cannot write myself. What, after all, is this 'I' who would write himself? Even as he would enter the writing, the writing would take the wind out of his sails, would render him null and void - futile; a gradual delapidation would occur, in which the other's image, too, would be gradually involved..."[167]

On the next page, as part of the same fragment, a quote from Jakob Boehme is given:

> "'In the sensual language, all minds converge together, they need no other language, for this is the language of nature.'"[168]

The lover of LD is therefore, in the first place, constituted as such by a "sensual language", alternately called the lover's discourse. Like the writer-reader of FT, he is an atopical subject[169].

But the lover is something more physical than the writer reader, which is more of a function. How is this physical atopos provided? It follows from what Barthes calls the "tangle of amorous relations". the object

of the lover's desire is always caught up in a network of desires from other lovers or potential lovers.

> "Werther identifies himself with a madman, with the footman. As a reader, I can identify myself with Werther. Historically, thousands of subjects have done so, suffering, killing themselves, dressing, perfuming themselves, writing as if they were Werther (songs, poems, candy boxes, belt buckles, fans, colognes à la Werther). A long chain of equivalences links all the lovers in the world."[170]

The lover's physical atopos thus ensues from a positionality within a simple structure of equivalence and exchangability. This structure is so inevitable, so immune to influence as to the "persons" of the lover that it is likened to a bureaucracy[171].

ii. <u>The Other</u>

The other is, in the first instance, unknowable to the lover.

> "I am caught in this contradiction: on the one hand, I believe I know the other better than anyone and triumpantly assert my knowledge to the other ('I know you - I'm the only one who really knows you!'); and on the other hand, I am often struck by the obvious fact that the other is impenetrable, not to be found; I cannot open up the other, trace back the other's origins, solve the riddle. Where does the other come from? Who is the other? I wear myself out, I shall never know."[172]

What this contradiction entails, a vacillation between the best knowledge of the other and complete ignorance of him, is that any knowledge is always a "projection" on the part of the lover. The moment

of knowledge is based on

> "...a kind of evidence in which the game of reality and appearance is done away with. I am then seized with that exaltation of loving someone unknown, someone who will remain so forever: a mystic impulse: I know what I do not know."[173]

Still another conception of the other is possible, namely as

> "...a force and not as a person... And if I were to situate myself as another force confronting yours? This would happen: my other would be defined solely by the suffering or the pleasure he affords me."[174]

Thinking of the lover in this way, it is clear that although love is an erotic flow between bodies, the entities in question have nothing to do with the persons of humanist thought, but are equally machines, consisting of ensembles of organs. The lover is the active force, the one who speaks, and he drowns out any discourse that the other might be capable of:

> "The lover's discourse stifles the other, who finds no place for his own language beneath this massive utterance."[175]

The other is thus subject to the vicissitudes of the lover's discursive output; by himself he is not capable (in the amorous relation, that is) of assuming any appearance of his own.

It is important to distinguish this lover-other relation from subjectivism or a subject-object relation. The lover is not a subject who wells up in the world to illumine it with his consciousness, and who then interprets the loved object subjectively. The lover himself is only an effect of flows of desire and of discourse; Barthes gives this striking rendition of the lover and his other, suggesting that both

are disfigured by discourse:

> "(The other is disfigured by his persistent silence, as in those terrible dreams in which a loved person shows up with the lower part of his face quite erased, without any mouth at all; and I, the one who speaks, I too am disfigured: soliloquy makes me into a monster: one huge tongue.)"[176]

In the original "one huge tongue' is of course "une énorme langue"[177], which provides the necessary pun on language as such.

iii. Love, Jouissance and Zen

In its momentary intensity and explosion of subjecthood, there is a mystic aspect to jouissance. Unlike jouissance, love is a continual state; not only has it a mystic aspect, but it is thoroughly pervaded with links to mystic thought, especially Zen. Amongst the other works in the "Tabula gratulatoria" of Fragments d'un discours amoureux[178], is also to be found one of Alan Watts's works on Zen Buddhism. Apart from that, the text bristles with references to Zen. Does this not mean that we have to give in to Barthes's more hostile critics and acknowledge that the mystique of the text is a fact, and that, in the words of a British Marxist, the "still... essentially privatized, de-politicized notion of jouissance,"[179] was but the precursor to a full-scale degeneration into mysticism?

Certain naive appropriations of Oriental thought, as well as the predominance of Christianity within the Western mystic tradition, give cause for a theoretical distrust of mysticism. However, at least as far as Zen is concerned, the following words by Alan Watts may prove sobering:

> "During the past twenty years there has been

an extraordinary growth of interest in Zen Buddhism... The deeper reason for this interest is that the viewpoint of Zen lies so close to 'the growing edge' of Western thought.

The more alarming and destructive aspects of Western civilisation should not blind us to the fact that at this very time it is also in one of its most creative periods. Ideas and insights of the greatest fascination are appearing in some of the newer fields of Western science - in psychology and psychotherapy, in logic and the philosophy of science, in semantics and communications theory. Some of these developments might be due to suggestive influences from Asian philosophy, but on the whole I am inclined to feel that there is more of a parallelism than a direct influence...

...Familiar concepts of space, time, and motion, of nature and natural law, of history and social change, and of human personality itself have dissolved, and we find ourselves adrift without landmarks in a universe which more and more resembles the Buddhist principle of the 'Great Void'."[180]

Accordingly, it is hardly exceptional to encounter strains of Zen in a contemporary work such as LD. The amorous subject finds himself in a world in which "everything signifies": to make a telephone call or not, to gesture or not, to speak or not; all of these actions will convey something to the other' '. The Zen notion of Karma is brought to bear on this state of the lover:

"Karma is the (disastrous) concatenation of actions (of their causes and their effects). The Buddhist wants to withdraw from karma; to

> suspend the play of causality; he wants to vacate the signs, to ignore the practical question: what is to be done? I cannot stop asking it, and I sigh after that suspension of karma which is nirvana. Hence the situations which happen to impose no responsibility for behaviour upon me, however painful, are received in a sort of peace..."[182]

A concept which is probably of more fundamental importance to LD, is that of satori. Reading LD, forming a picture of the sort of world inhabited by the lover, a world of glances, telephone calls, words that are elaborate pretenses or evasions rather than "communication" in any sense, one forms the impression that the lover bases his discourse on a series of rather disjointed "moments of awakening", ie. satori's. The notion of the figure, the basic constituent of the amorous discourse, is only in one sense a sign within that discourse. In another sense the figure is totally isolated, both temporally and spatially; the apprehension of the figure would therefore be akin to a moment of experiencing the "suchness"[183] of a given configuration of limbs, facial as well as verbal expressions, and the like.

Satori and the suchness characterising it are usually, as it can by definition not be explained, illustrated by means of a short poem or haiku. In his study on Japan, L'empire des signes[184], Barthes himself gave the following account of suchness apropos of the haiku:

> "Ne décrivant ni ne définissant, le haïku (j'appelle ainsi finalement tout trait discontinu, tout evenement de la vie japonaise, tel qu'il s'offre à ma lecture), le haïku s'amincit jusqu'à la pure et seule désignation. C'est cela, c'est ainsi, dit le haïku, c'est tel.

> Ou mieux encore: Tel! dit-il, d'une touche si instantinée et si courte (sans vibration ni reprise) que la copule y apparaîtrait encore de trop, comme le remords d'une definition interdite, à jamais éloignée. Le sens n'y est qu'un flash... mais le flash du haïku n'eclaire, ne révèle rien; il est celui d'une photographie que l'on prendrait tres soigneusement (a la japonaise), mais en ayant omis de charger l'appareil de sa pellicule."[15]

The photographic simile ("le flash" in French usually denotes a photographic flash in any case) reinforces our remark concerning the figure, for figures are like photographs in that they entail frozen, instantaneous compositions. However, the figure is not a sort of mental photograph relating solely to perception in an empiricist way - the camera has not been loaded anyway, as Barthes says - but a concatenation of forces relating to both the lover and the other. The flash of satori would not be a flash radiating from the lover towards the other; it would be an omnidirectional incandescence.

This notion of a momentary illumination, similar to a flash of lightning occurs in various guises in both LD and the various other texts we have been considering. On the one hand, it indicates the concern with the instantaneous event, be it satori, jouissance, transgression, intertextual combination, or whatever. But on the other hand, these references to light and lightning are in themselves shifting signifiers, circumlocutions of events that are ultimately beyond language. Although they are linked by the leitmotiv of such images of light and lightning, it would be wrong to reduce these events to each other, for they are all very different, despite their superficial resemblance.

4. Story of the Eye

a. "The Metaphor of the Eye" Reconsidered

In an essay published in the journal, Critique, in 1963, Barthes gives an analysis of Story of the Eye by Bataille. This essay appears as an appendix to the English edition of SC[187]. "The Metaphor of the Eye", as it is entitled, enables us to further illustrate the discontinuity of earlier texts by Barthes vis a vis the later ones by briefly juxtaposing it with the type of reading advocated by the texts we have been considering.

"The Metaphor of the Eye", unlike the protracted discussion on pornography by Susan Sontag also included in SC, is exemplary; it is both subtle and powerful, delineating metaphoric - as opposed to metonymic, in Jakobson's distinction - series in SC. The essay is also undeniably structural, in the sense that the metaphoric chains described in it traverse the space of the novel in a definite way, independent of this specific reading. In short, by enumerating the metaphoric links connecting, firstly, eyes/eggs and, secondly, weeping/urinating, the essay enunciates a truth, ascertained by linguistic and therefore scientific means, about the novel.

If that were, however, all that "The Metaphor of the Eye" had to offer, we need not have mentioned it, if not relegated it to the scrapheap of criticism. But in its brief attentions to that which eludes a structural gaze, ie. [illegible]ich can only be defined in vague, unscientific terms in the essay - even though these terms occur within a scientific

analysis - it displays an inchoate receptivity towards textual pleasure. Which is not to say that we wish to trace MT, RB and LD back to this or any other essay; it is rather a case of the structural method revealing its own inadequacy when it comes to non-realistic, disturbed texts such as SO. Compare, for example, the ambiguity of this description:

> "But if we call metonymy this transfer of meaning from one chain to the other at different levels of metaphor (the 'eye sucked like a breast', 'drinking my left eye between her lips') we shall probably concede that Bataille s eroticism is essentially metonymic. Since the poetic technique employed here consists in demolisning the usual contiguities of objects and substituting fresh encounters that are nevertheless limited by the persistence of a single theme within each metaphor, the result is a general contagion of qualities and actions: by virtue of their metonymic freedom they endlessly exchange meanings and usages in such a way that breaking eggs in a bath tub, swallowing or peeling eggs (soft-boiled), cutting up or putting out an eye or using one in sex play, associating a saucer of milk with a cunt or a beam of light with a jet of urine, biting the bull's testicle like an egg or inserting it in the body - all these associations are at the same time identical and other. For the metaphor that varies them exhibits a controlled difference between them that the metonymy that interchanges them immediately sets about abolishing. The world becomes blurred; properties are no longer separate; spilling, sobbing, urinating, ejaculating form a wavy meaning, and the whole of Story of the Eye signifies in the manner of a vibration that always gives the same sound (but what sound?)." [188]

Although the characterisation of the effects of the various objects in the text is given as the metonymic interchange of metaphors, this very analysis becomes stretched and disrupted by the semantic and epistemological contradictions it is enunciating; the notion of a "wavy meaning" suddenly occurs within the otherwise lucid and controlled discourse. The question arises: apart from merely naming it linguistically, how can the latter be described or charted in a more direct and detailed manner?

Clearly, within the structural problematic of "The Metaphor of the Eye", that waviness and sonic vibration alluded to in the above passage, constitutes an exterior of the text of which it has a vague apprehension, but which falls beyond its field of intelligibility.

With a non-transgressive text, even if it is not realistic, a structural analysis may patiently circumscribe the space of the text, enumerate its matrixes, individuate metaphors and metonymies, find the fixed relationships between its elements.

But with a text such as SO which is violent and excessive as to its language and distribution of structural elements (eg. the metaphoric chain of eyes/eggs/testicles also has a distinctly transgressive function), a structural discourse, especially where it is appended to a text of this kind, strikes us as being somewhat amiss, in a not uncomical way. It is like someone remarking, after witnessing an extremely ghastly car accident in which several people died, "Did you notice that both the right hand tail lights of the cars sustained a relatively horizontal crack in them?" Admittedly, the fact that "The Metaphor of the Eye" completely omits, unlike Susan Sontag's pedestrian

and typically Anglo-Saxon analysis of "literary pornography", any particular reference to the "sexual content" of SO, has a critical allure all of its own. For to call, like Sontag, attention to the "pornographic nature of the text", despite her apology that "pornography" is a label which she is not prepared to uphold in court[189], and then to define texts like it as a literary variety of this dubious category, is only one step removed from the philistine puritanism which would censure SO as being pornographic regardless of literary niceties.

In a review that otherwise displays a similar embarassment apropos of "pornography" to Sontag's essay, Lem Coley makes the following point:

> "Place, for example, Georges Bataille's erotic novel, Story of the Eye, first published in 1928, next to works by Hemingway or Fitzgerald from the same period. The comparison is less perverse than it sounds. Story of the Eye has the sanatoriums and the incest of Tender is the Night, the bullfights of The Sun Also Rises, and the international rich - found in both American novels - who cruise Europe for sexual adventure. But Bataille's bullfight is not Hemingway's:
>
> > 'First, Simone bit into one of the raw balls, to my dismay, then Granero advanced toward the bull, waving his scarlet cloth; finally, almost at once, Simone, with a blood-red face and a suffocating lewdness, uncovered her long white thighs up to her moist vulva, into which she slowly and surely fitted the second pale globule - Granero was thrown back by the bull and wedged against the balustrade... at the third blow, one horn plunged into the right eye and through the head.'"[190]

Although Colcy lapses into a rather familiar "co-option" argument erotic literature, the latter passage conveys a fundamental problem concomitan with SO, namely how to differentiate it from other literature. Even on a prima facie level, SO differs quite radically from anything published by Hemingway or Fitzgerald, and has equally dissimilar effects on us. To say that the difference lies with its sexual depictions evades the issue, for do not other literary works deal with sexual activity in a more or less explicit way? If explicitness is our concern here, how is it quantified? Do we count the so-called four letter words? Even if we accept the nothing less than preposterous assumptions of the "sexual" argument, it still remains to differentiate something like SO from the less literary permutations of pornography. This is not a new debate, by any means[19], and it would not serve any purpose for us to reiterate it here.

Suffice it to say that, by virtue of the type of language encountered in it - even if we are so theoretically crude as to define it purely in terms of "sex" - SO is different. We can analyse it structurally, as in "The Metaphor of the Eye" or comment on its position within the pornographic order witnout however touching upon this difference in any satisfactory or meaningful way. In this respect, the task - if it is not entirely presumptuous to assign it a task - of the theory of pleasure would be to define for us the subtlety and the specificity of this difference. It is suited to this exactly because it concerns itself not with genres, themes and the like, nor with the asensual, cerebrally discerned structures of a work, but with the sensual, momentary, material flow of the text in a microcosmic way.

Whence the choice of SO to illustrate the theory of

pleasure in critical practice.

b. [illegible]

One of the most obvious postulates of R[illegible] following:

> "The text of pleasure is not necess[illegible] text that recounts pleasures; the ex[illegible] jouissance is never the text that recounts the kind of jouissance afforded li[illegible] an ejaculation. The pleasure of representa[illegible] is not attached to its object: pornography is not sure. In zoological terms, one could say that the site of textual pleasure is not the relation of mimic and model (imitative rela[illegible] but solely that of dupe and mimic (relatio[illegible] of desire, of production)."

Jouissance not having any direct connection with representational accounts of ejaculations, org[illegible] etc., it is obvious that even when we ex[illegible]erience textual jouissance upon reading about a character in SC attaining orga[illegible], that jouissance is attributable to a split in the reading, and not to the elements of representational eroticism in the text. A text such as Robbe-Grillet's Le Voyeur, [illegible] a well-known example, which contains absolutely no eroticism which could be remotely deemed to be "explicit" from a representational point of view, is nonetheless potentially a "text of jouissance on a par with SC.

In what way does the depiction of sexual excess in a text therefore lend itself to jouissance, if at all? Again, the jouissance of the erotic text is bound up with transgression. Through erotic excess, the limits of morality and religious taboos are announced

violated in the same stroke: these transgressions also entail systematic splits, and therefore eruptions of jouissance. Within the West, the religious system which holds the Christian God to be sacred, also defines as one of its taboos, blasphemy, the inverse of praising God, ie. desecrating him. In our reading of SO below, we shall attempt to detail the specific production of pleasure concomitant with blasphemy. For the moment, we need merely stress a few well-known motifs, namely that our reading machine, the quasi-subject who partakes of textual pleasure, is a matrix, a space for noting the play and breakdown of systems and textual or discursive productions. He, she or it is criss-crossed, inter alia, by the system of Christian, as well as sexual, taboos, in addition to the various discourses that aim, or have been aiming, at reducing the pervasiveness of Christianity, such as Marxism, or the spread of supposed sexual freedom. Christianity is by no means as dead a dog as some enlightened critics, amongst whom Coley[194], would like to think. Foucault's current project has been underlining the development of the Christian ordering of pleasure around sin and fallen bodies, through various discursive permutations, into the "sexual freedom" and "open" discourses on sex of the recent past[195]

Whether a given reading subject is a libertine or a minister of religion - not to mention the fact that libertinism is dependent on such religiously derived notions as incest, bestiality and the like - is immaterial: although the effects in either of them will be dissimilar, neither is immune to being caught up in the textual production which, in the case of the erotic text, is of a potentially disruptive order. Even boredom, we may recall, is merely the absence of jouissance.

lends
jouissance on account of an inner paradoxicality deriving from its transgressions, and not because it literally describes instances of jouissance.

c. Two Readings: [illegible] and One Spoken

[illegible] of being arranged [illegible] but with a surrounding culture, a literary tradition. But as we have seen, the critical text is perverse in the sense that it too is a text, a production shot through with other texts and intertextual transpositions. To read a critical text is a voyeuristic exercise, in that one observes from a distance the pleasure of another. This view of criticism certainly accords it a new basis, independent of an individual or subjective reading experience.

But together with this conception of criticism, comes another type of quasicritical writing, suited to the [illegible] of jouissance, which would not report on a text, but operate on it.

> [illegible] jouissance (and his reader) begins the untenable text, the impossible text. This text is outside criticism, unless it is reached through another text of jouissance: you cannot speak 'on' such a text, you can only speak 'in' it, in its fashion, enter into a desperate plagiarism, hysterically affirm [illegible]

repeat the letter of pleasure)."[199]

Is SO a text of jouissance or a text of pleasure? Of course, it depends on the production, the specific reading. "The Metaphor of the Eye" was capable of reporting on the text as if it were a text of pleasure, yet at the same time allowed us a glimpse of where it starts to break down into wavy meaning; still such a glimpse constitutes a report on jouissance: the breakdown does not occur within the critical text.

Perhaps a prototype of a spoken reading has already been offered by Kristeva in her reading of Sollers's H[200]. It is a text within a text, an infusion of her "heterogeneous" body into the body of the text; in its analytical aspects the text is also the unwinding in self-analytical fashion of Kristeva's body.

> "Words come to mind, but they are fuzzy, signifying nothing, more throbbing than meaning, and their stream goes to our breasts, genitals and irridescent skin. That could be all there is to it - an 'anonymous white conflict' as they said in the nineteenth century. But what would be the point? Now this is the point: my concern lies in the other, what is heterogeneous, my own negation erected as representation, but the consumption of which I can also decipher. This heterogeneous object is of course a body that invites me to identify with it (woman, child, androgyne?) and immediately forbids any identification; it is not me, it is a non-me in me, beside me, outside of me, where the me becomes lost. This heterogeneous object is a body, because it is a text. I have written down this much abused word and insist upon it so that you might understand how much risk there

> is in a text, how much nonidentity, nonauthenticity, impossibility, and corrosiveness it holds for those who chose to see themselves within it. A body, a text that bounces back to me echoes of a territory that I have lost but that I am seeking within the blackness of dreams in Bulgarian, French, Russian, Chinese tones, invocations, lifting up the dismembered, sleeping body... So I listen to the black, heterogeneous body/text; I coil my jouissance within it, I cast it off, I sidestep its own, in a cold fire where murder is no longer the murder of the other, but rather, of the other who thought she was I, of me who thought I was the other, of me, you, us - of personal pronouns therefore, which no longer have much to do with all this."[201]

In order to demonstrate the two forms of critical writing, one "reported" and one "spoken", we shall offer two readings of SO.

i. The Reported Reading

SO is a surreal text, not because its author had associations with the Surrealist movement, but intertextually. Certain images within the text can be appreciated as surreal ones only on the basis of having seen paintings by, especially, Magritte, De Chirico and Marcel Duchamp, as well as the films of Luis Bunuel[202].

Thus, the very graphic scenes in Chapter 5, after the narrator and Simone had visited Marcelle in the lunatic asylum, the two of them pedalling on a bicycle, naked except for their shoes in a "rainless tempest"[203], have a decidedly surreal allure. Making the transposition literal, these scenes exemplify

the objective humour of surrealism, of which Andre Breton wrote in 1936:

> "...objective humour, a synthesis in the Hegelian sense of the imitation of nature in its accidental forms on the one hand and of humour on the other. Humour, as a paradoxical triumph of the pleasure principle over real conditions at a moment when they may be considered to be particularly unfavourable..."[204]

The bicycle too, becomes a surreal sign: we are reminded of Duchamp's famous readymade, Bicycle Wheel[205].

To read SO is to activate a surreal transposition. Not only the bicycle, but other objects, the eyes, the eggs, the small pair of scissors used by Sir Edmund, as well as the motifs of urine, blood and dreams, display an enigmatic quality deriving from this transposition between the text and paintings or films or sculptures. (In Buñuel's Le Chien Andalou, on which Dali collaborated, an eye is similarly cut out to that of the priest in SO.) This is, of course, not limited to paintings, films or sculptures that are associated with surrealism, but includes anything that we as reading subjects have been exposed to. The reason why the strangeness of these objects and motifs is so recognisable is, however, particularly due to what has been called the "entire Dada and Surrealist cult of objects."[206]

These objects, although enigmatically surreal, are also signs. SO, as Barthes correctly observes in "The Metaphor of the Eye", is the history of an object, the eye[207]. The eye and its various near or full homophones are signs recurring throughout the text, but signs of what? What does the eye signify, apart

from sight itself? In this respect, SO is a text in the sense that we have given to this word: it is a texture, a weaving of signifiers without (fixed) signifieds. The eye signifies sight signifies sight signifies... and the process of signification extends itself along a continuum of possibilities without any one being definite or final.

Similarly, the eye and its homophones cannot be considered as if they constituted the "structure" of the text. The play on oeil, oeuf, les yeux and les oeufs do not form a constant pattern in the text, although eyes, eggs and testicles are put to all sorts of erotic usages. These are neither consistent, nor very clear if we think, for instance, of Simone biting into the testicle of the bull: the symbolism of the act is distorted, for the matadors usually eat the testicles cooked to augment their virility whereas Simone eats it raw and has, as a woman, no virility. Furthermore, the play on oeil and oeuf is sometimes confused by another pun on un, a numeral or indefinite article [illegible] of keeping with the other signs relating to objects.

Thus, despite the chain of objects that we could possibly discern, no meanings or significances fall neatly into place; the chain assumes the appearance of, precisely, a game, leading nowhere.

A certain commonplace view of the textual "gap" would have it that a pun, such as those we have just mentioned, constitutes a gap per se, centred on the particular word in question. Of course, this is an oversimplification, for the ambiguity of the basic pun never exists on a purely lexical level, but is always determined by the paradigmatic and syntagmatic orders in which the word occurs. Therefore the series

of puns, or as in the French, jeu de mots, a play on words, in SO do not in itself effect "gaps" or "splits" in the text. Rather, this word play is used destructively, and through the semantic and other lacerations they impose on the text, produce gaps, splits, etc.

Apart from the destructiveness of the shifting of meanings that the word play entails, it parodies the supposed sexual transgressiveness of the text. Indeed, it makes a mockery of Sontag's statement that "pornography cannot parody itself"[208]. (Sontag takes "characters" and "conventions" as reference points, and not the text or its language, but ultimately it is still her acceptance of the "pornographic" category that allows her the somewhat facile paradoxicality of:

> "Pornography is a theatre of types, never of individuals. A parody of pornography, so far as it has any real competence, always remains pornography. Indeed, parody is one common form of pornographic writing."[209]

The word play calls attention to the status of the text and the objects and actions in it, as "mere words", uttered in a game not to be taken seriously, and not to be offended by.

But while the word play achieves this effect, the intertext which includes all of morality relating to sex and the sanctity and worth of human life, preserves the transgressiveness of the text, makes it "shocking", "dirty", "disgusting", to name a few moralistic cliches, regardless of the tone of humour and verbal invention in the text. The dichotomy between an intertextually transposed humanism of erotic pleasure and the dignity and value of human beings, and the marvellously jocular and innocent

narrative of SO, would constitute one of the most pervasive splits of the text and by definition a great source, if it is not a malapropism for it to have a source, of jouissance. When the priest is killed, and his eye inserted into Simone's "slobbery flesh, in the midst of the fur"[210], we laugh in jouissance.

It follows that if SO is a 'polyvalent" text, it does not specifically derive from its major - to avoid introducing the structural coherence implicit in the term "central" - pun. Its polyvalence ra her emanates from the variety of narrative tones and multiplicity of spaces in the text, as well as the great intertextual play-off of moral and intellectual (ie. artistic, literary) systems. In places SO pre-figures in an eminently more subtle way, the obvious and contrived epistemological contradictions - pitting themselves precisely against realism in an implicit reverence for the "given" and "naturalness" of the form - that have become the rather hackneyed hallmark of much contemporary, especially American[211], so-called fiction.

"Very soon, of course, her mother, who might enter the villa parlour at any moment, did catch us in our unusual act. But still, the first time this fine woman stumbled upon us, she was content, despite having led an exemplary life, to gape wordlessly, so that we did not notice a thing. I suppose she was too flabber-gasted to speak. But when we were done and trying to clean up the mess, we noticed her standing in the doorway.

'Pretend there's no one there,' Simone told me and she went on wiping her behind.

And indeed, we blithely strolled out as though

> the woman had been reduced to a family portrait."[212]

Although the text, as do certain contemporary ones, goes not so far as to literally erase Simone's mother out of the scene by describing her fading image, it nevertheless by means of the portrait image indicates its own "frame": the tenuous and arbitrary demarcation between a "fictional" space and a "real-life" one. Of course, this is yet another textual split. And again, it derives from the Interte- that accords a significance to frames and windows in texts or, especially, paintings; Magritte's canvases are full of them, amongst which La clé des champs[213], showing a window frame with a broken pane, with some of the sky and trees of the scene outside still imprinted on the jagged glass inside.

Through such a manoeuvre, the text displays the conditions of its own production, and the illusory quality of its representational effects. Apart from this intertextually produced significance of the frame, such an episode, together with the play of meanings productive of splits in the text, have the effect of erasing the boundaries that would fix the text within definable limits, epistemologically, morally and otherwise. It becomes limitless in the sense of an open field, traversable from many sides and in various directions. This open-endedness could also be related to the notion of a transgression of transgression.

If SO were just a limitless overstepping of, say, moral limits or norms regarding novelistic structure, the text would have constituted a very mild form of semi-transgression. But the way minute pleasures in the form of stylistic oddities and ironies that are

distributed through the text transgress the more grandiose normative transgressions in their turn, makes for such a multiple form of active self-transgression. In the above quotation, we could discern a series of transgressions, apart from the already mentioned epistemological de-framing. There is the obvious horror that must be experienced by Simone's mother, who in her silence personifies an outraged body of principles evoked by the term, traditional morality. We have said earlier in our remarks on transgression that it entails a silence signifying the end or the limit of meaning; the silence of the mother, her wordless gaping, would in this sense signify the transgression of her system and her language. The humorous tone of the text at this point, however, as elsewhere, effects a de-moralising, pleasurable transgression of the moral transgression.

These transgressions, according to our earlier definition of the concept, ultimately pertain to culture. Also in another respect does culture in the broad sense provide for a split in SC that is productive of pleasure, namely in that throughout the text the "two edges" spoken of in PT[214], a "conformist" one and a "mobile blank" one, operate. Still within the context of the above passage from SC, the grammatical correctness, style, comprehensibility, etc. of the text constitutes the "conformist" edge. The "mobile and blank" edge would be the plastically changing effects of the passage, the very specific "contours"[215] assumed by these effects; in this case, the effects would include the transgressive elements. The pleasure of the text is rightly to be found in the disparity, or split, between the two edges, being the site of our desire and the genuinely erotic aspect of the text.

SC also exemplifies the play between the doxic and

paradoxical very well. In essence, the text is one large paradox, a relentless assault on normality of thought and behaviour. Strangely enough, the text can only be read as paradoxical if one takes the doxa seriously, if one is outraged by sexual licence and murder; for a real-life sadist, the text would be in certain if not all respects, his doxa. Bataille has commented on this elsewhere, saying about the doctrine of sadism,

> "Obviously, if it were taken seriously, no society could accept it for a single instant. Indeed, those people who used to rate De Sade as a scoundrel responded better to his intentions than his admirers do in our own day: De Sade invokes indignation and protest, otherwise the paradox of pleasure would be nothing but a poetic fancy. I repeat that I prefer to discuss him only with people who are revolted by him, and from their point of view."[10]

In another Bataillean text, Madame Edwarda, which transposes itself into our reading of SO, these words occur before it as a motto:

> "Si tu as peur de tout, lis ce livre, mais d'abord, ecoute-moi: si tu ris, c'est que tu as peur. Un livre, il semble, est chose inerte. C'est possible. Et pourtant, si comme il arrive, tu ne sais pas lire? devrais-tu redouter...? Es-tu seul? as-tu froid? sais-tu jusqu'a quel point l'homme est 'toi-même'? imbecile? et nu?"[11]

Clearly, if one is to laugh at sadistic texts in a blasé and typically contemporary manner, their impact is lost. In other words, it is only by affirming a moral doxa that may be long lost that the paradoxicality of SO is thrown into relief. Thus the etymological play inhering in paradoxa, a closeness

to the doxa, must also be maintained in any reading of SO that aims to be attentive to its paradoxicalities. For, as the motto to Madame Edwarda attests, to shrug off the sadistic syllogism of desire that must be freed to the point of annihilation, is to repress a fundamental knowing, a primordial horror without which the paradox of these texts is lost. In order to free this paradox from being trapped in the advance of a permissive doxa, it is necessary to identify strenuously with the morose figure of Simone's mother and her speechless horror at the spectacle of the transgressions of the youths:

> "A few days later, however, when Simone was doing gymnastics with me in the rafters of a garage, she pissed on her mother, who had the misfortune to stop underneath without seeing her. The sad widow got out of the way and gazed at us with such dismal eyes and such a desperate expression that she egged us on..."[211]

Simone's mother would be, in the playful Barthesian sense of the Imaginary as both literally "an imagined and the unconscious relation to a counterpart, our imaginary self in a pleasurable textualisation of SO: it would be both a conscious and unconscious identification with her. Conscious, because in our desire to gain pleasure from the text, to activate its paradoxicality, we have to force ourselves into a prudish role; unconsciously, due to the fact that our liberal condonation and permissiveness, our laughing in terms of the Edwarda motto, is but the effect of an unconscious horror deriving from our Imaginary, ie. that jumble of sympathies and identifications with our other counterparts, in this case both the mother and the two youths. We are horrified on behalf of the mother, the doxic structure, and we share the glee of the youths, the paradoxical structure.

Despite Sontag's contention that erotic texts are capable of arousing the reader sexually[11], the pleasure of a text such as _ is, as we have demonstrated, certainly not connected with arousal on account of descriptions of erotic activity: such arousal would proceed from a representational experience of the text. Textual pleasure being polymorphously perverse, it may be equally produced by a certain placing of commas and full-stops, the lengths of sentences, a given adjective or other stylistic element. Pleasure, as stressed repeatedly, is produced by the body and not by the mind or intellect. When we read SO, pleasure encompasses both the most basic physical awareness, such as the weight of one's buttocks on the chair, as well as the infinitely detailed sensation of recording the spatial multiplicities of the text, the images and meanings conjured up by a series of signifiers operating on a changing scale of levels, and the extremely individual intertextual combinations that will never repeat themselves.

As it is difficult to convey the latter process without annotating the whole of S/Z, and as the jouissance of the text is completely beyond the field of a "reported reading", the next section will have to suffice as the final albeit incomplete rendering of both an experience of jouissance and a specific production of pleasure, in turn to be read elsewhere and produced under different conditions.

ii. The Spoken Reading

He, she, it reads/writes:

> "She had black silk stockings on covering her knees, but I was unable to see as far up as the cunt (this name, which I always used with Simone, is I think. by far the loveliest of the names

for the vagina). It merely struck me that by slightly lifting the pinafore from behind, I might see her private parts unveiled.

Now in the corner of a hallway there was a saucer of milk for the cat. 'Milk is for the pussy, isn't it?' said Simone. 'Do you dare me to sit in the saucer?'

'I dare you,' I answered, almost breathless.

The day was extremely hot. Simone put the saucer on a small bench, planted herself before me, and, with her eyes fixed on me, she sat down without my being able to see her burning buttocks under the skirt, dipping into the cool milk. The blood shot to my head, and I stood before her awhile, immobile and trembling, as she eyed my stiff cock bulging in my trousers. Then I lay down at her feet without stirring, and for the first time, I saw her 'pink and dark' flesh cooling in the white milk. We remained motionless, both of us equally overwhelmed..."[220]

"Cool" is a pleasurable adjective. As Simone's unseen pussy is lowered into the milk, we find the text to be, as in the American slang, "cool". (We are also lowered into the text, starting to read.)

One must also not be oblivious to the play of contradictions inherent in the situation. Simone and the narrator are related, thereby initially invoking a paradigm of an "innocent" familial gathering of cousins. Simone is also wearing a pinafore with starched white collar[221], somewhat staid and unprovocative apparel. The narrator cannot see her nakedness

underneath; he merely wishes for it. The situation, their clothes and their statements have a double edge: one normal, bourgeois, and the other radical, incestuous and perverse. Simone's words, "'Milk is for the pussy, isn't it?'", were it not for the perverse edge proceeding from the pun on lait. would have been an entirely accurate and cousin-like observation about the saucer of milk.

Chain of interlingual connectors: lait (French) is milk, but also slang for semen; milk is for the pussy, ie. cat, a metaphor for Simone's vagina and another slang word; in Afrikaans "poes" means cunt, derived from the Dutch for "cat"; Dutch slang for semen is "pap", giving rise to the common phrase in Afrikaans, "pap en melk". So the signifiers are jumbled by his available lexicon, the inadequacy of translation lending itself to random interlingual interferences.

On page 24 of SO, the asylum in which Marcelle is kept, is referred to as "a bogus château de plaisance", again playing on cat (chat) and water (eau); water finds, of course, its place amongst the liquid leitmotivs of milk, tears and urine.

The language of __ is exuberant. Even in its most intense or violent moments, it is full of joy, oblivious of the maudlin and moralistic discourses that define horror, sympathy, shame or sorrow.

> "I remember that one day, when we were in a car tooling along at top speed, we crashed into a cyclist, an apparently very young and very pretty girl. Her head was almost totally ripped off by the wheels. For a long time, we were parked a few yards beyond without getting out, fully absorbed in the sight of the corpse. The horror and despair at so much bloody flesh,

> nauseating in part, and in part very beautiful, was fairly equivalent to our usual impression upon seeing one another. Simone was tall and lovely. She was usually very natural, there was nothing heartbreaking in her eyes or her [illegible]

One enjoys the language of SO like enjoying the beauty of a lacerated body; of course, ultimately, the text is just that. There is no place for negative forces, only a positive, affirmative joy in writing the text. The "I", personal pronoun, of the text's anonymous narrator becomes the eye of God witnessing our transgression, which is the same eye by which we see Him[2.3]. Our I's and eyes plugged into the eye's tale, a flow of sight is produced, which is intersected at various points by other fluxes, those of pleasure, desire and intertextuality. My [illegible] is bathed in an expanding fluxus, expanding according to the principle by which contemporary physicists explain the becoming of the universe. (In writing texts, discipli[illegible] categories are discarded; theories enter the writing in an open bricolage.)

An eye is cut loose in S[illegible]. It is a sphere freed from itself, in the sense that a sphere is also a context. This liberation is made possible by death, which functions as the type of break that would constitute a transgression. The visit of the fly signifies this break:

> "All at once, Simone uttered a soft cry. Something bizarre and quite baffling had happened: this time, the insect had perched on the corpse's eye and was agitating its long nightmarish legs on the strange orb. The girl took her head in her hands and shook it, trembling, then she seemed to plunge into an abyss of

reflections."[225]

Simone, like the eye is going to do within moments, is taking a plunge. The loosened eye, no longer seeing, is made to wander. Sir Edmund rolls the eye between the bodies of Simone and the "I"; it is inserted into the various orifices of Simone's body.

Through the killing of the priest, symbol of a Christian idealism, the eye is given a materiality that enables it to form connections with bodies in an erotic game. In the head of the priest, the eye functions as a receptacle for an idealistically conceived "reality" of God's creation: it receives the world in the passive way that the priest listens to Simone's confession. The loosened eye, on the other hand, is capable of forming a connection that produces a sensation:

> "The caress of the eye over the skin is so utterly, so extraordinarily gentle, and the sensation is so bizarre that it has something of a rooster's horrible crowing. By means of the rooster metaphor, which previously surfaced apropos of Marcelle's associations [illegible], the sensation of the eye in contact with the skin is displaced into textual jouissance.

The religiously symbolic identification that we made a moment ago, like all textual identifications, was of course a fleeting one without any particular validity, for only a page or two later, Simone, Sir Edmund and the "I" don priestly garb themselves:

> "Sir Edmund evinced a humorous ingenuity in these circumstances: thus we marched down the main street of the small town of Ronda, he and I dressed as Spanish priests, wearing the small hairy felt hats and priestly cloaks, and manfully puffing on big cigars; as for Simone,

> who was walking between us in the costume of a Seville seminarist, she looked more angelic than ever."[228]

So the text proceeds by a constant disruption of identities. The adjective, "angelic", applied to the supremely erotic figure of Simone is in its humorous paradoxicality cause for an eruption of jouissance.

Simone, the whore who refuses to make love like a "housewife and mother",

> "'You're totally insane, little man,' she cried, 'I'm not interested - here, in a bed like this, like a housewife and mother! I'll only do it with Marcelle!'"[229]

and Simone the angel, belie these womanly archetypes altogether. Rather, she is the incarnation of an erotic madness, driven by wild and insatiable desires. her desires do not fix her into a sexual positionality: her desire for the "I" does not make of her a heterosexual woman, nor does her lusting after Marcelle make of her a lesbian; her body also elicits pleasure from eyes and egos. Her desires are not solely to be understood in terms of libertinage in the mould of, say, Sade's libertines, for she arranges erotic situations and objects in an extremely poetic way.

Simone is released into the space of SC much like the eye is cur loose from its socket. Her name itself plays on C'est mon oeuf/oeil. She is not a character, but a transformation principle that constantly poeticises and eroticises words, objects and situations. She is my eye, the open eye of the text through which spaces, pleasures, surreal landscapes, the dance of words and erotically charged bodies radiate. Everywhere that she goes; some ostensibly inconsequential feature of her environment is turned into a source of pleasure: this feature becomes an image in a continuous erotic poeticisation.

> "Simone had found a mud puddle, and was smearing herself wildly: she was jerking off with the earth and coming violently, whipped by the downpour.."[230]

The earth too becomes a body to form an erotic connection with; the rain "whips" her as if the whole of nature participates in a sado-masochistic act.

In various instances in SO, the sun, the sky, etc., are related to the motif of urination, coming, ejaculation, weeping, ie. all the bodily activities that entail a liquid flow. For example, the Milky Way is referred to as "that strange breach of astral sperm and heavenly urine"[231], whereas Andalusia is "a country of yellow earth and yellow sky, to my eyes an immense chamberpot flooded with sunlight"[232]. Such images are very pertinent to the spatial aspects of the text as a whole. The space flows, gushes forth with profusions of intense and colourful images; this spatial flow is sometimes interrupted by moments of repose, as if the surrounding natural body were recuperating from either orgasm or urinary release. The relationship between the bodily climaxes of the human figures and the flow of elemental properties or images pertaining to nature is sometimes one of correspondence, as at the end of Chapter 1, quoted above, where Simone's erotic gratifications coincide with the pouring rain and lightning, but at other times relative peace "outside" witnesses some form of erotic intensity in the human bodies.

> "At last, one day at six, when the oblique sunshine was directly lighting the bathroom, a half-sucked egg was suddenly invaded by the water, and after filling up with a bizarre noise, it was ship-wrecked before our very eyes. This incident was so extraordinarily meaningful to Simone that her body tautened

> "Simone had found a mud puddle, and was smearing herself wildly: she was jerking off with the earth and coming violently, whipped by the downpour..."[230]

The earth too becomes a body to form an erotic connection with; the rain "whips" her as if the whole of nature participates in a sado-masochistic act.

In various instances in SO, the sun, the sky, etc., are related to the motif of urination, coming, ejaculation, weeping, ie. all the bodily activities that entail a liquid flow. For example, the Milky Way is referred to as "that strange breach of astral sperm and heavenly urine"[231], whereas Andalusia is "a country of yellow earth and yellow sky, to my eyes an immense chamberpot flooded with sunlight"[232]. Such images are very pertinent to the spatial aspects of the text as a whole. The space flows, gushes forth with profusions of intense and colourful images; this spatial flow is sometimes interrupted by moments of repose, as if the surrounding natural body were recuperating from either orgasm or urinary release. The relationship between the bodily climaxes of the human figures and the flow of elemental properties or images pertaining to nature is sometimes one of correspondence, as at the end of Chapter 1, quoted above, where Simone's erotic gratifications coincide with the pouring rain and lightning, but at other times relative peace "outside" witnesses some form of erotic intensity in the human bodies.

> "At last, one day at six, when the oblique sunshine was directly lighting the bathroom, a half-sucked egg was suddenly invaded by the water, and after filling up with a bizarre noise, it was ship-wrecked before our very eyes. This incident was so extraordinarily meaningful to Simone that her body tautened

> and she had a long climax, virtually drinking
> my left eye between her lips."[2]

But always the ebb and flow of the various energies in the text stand in some active relation towards one another: all pertain ultimately to the transgressive function of the text and its language, which is defined thus:

> "But as of then, no doubt existed for me: I did not care for what is known as 'pleasures of the flesh' because they really are insipid; I cared only for what is classified as 'dirty'. On the other hand, I was not even satisfied with the usual debauchery, because the only thing it dirties is debauchery itself, while, in some way or other, anything sublime and perfect is left intact by it. My kind of debauchery soils not only my body and my thoughts, but also anything I may conceive in its course, that is to say, the vast starry universe, which merely serves as a backdrop.
>
> I associate the moon with the vaginal blood of mothers, sisters, that is, the menstrua with their sickening stench."[3]

This is the excessive principle at the basis of the text which is more of an anti-basis than a foundation, for it formulates a radical over-reaching, a puny collection of words pitting itself against the "vast, starry universe", which it desperately wants to "soil" and "dirty". Because it over-reaches, the text undermines its own demand for excessive transgression, creating a gap that is a potential site for affording us jouissance.

However, if we are to take this passage seriously, it unsettles the entire text. All the various and

subtle flows of space, pleasure, images, bodily formations, etc., start to revolve around and disappear down this vortex of the text's excessive and over-reaching demand for transgression. The delightful and poetic orchestrations, such as the killing of the priest, are reduced to a single desire to "soil", which could as well be erved by a constant uttering of four-letter expletives. Clearly, we are confronted with a series of impossibilities: the impossibility of words to soil the universe, the impossibility of this passage to erase and integrate the other flows into its single demand for transgression. These impossibilities indicate the schizophrenic aspects of the text: it adopts the principle that everything, human bodies, as well as the backdrop of the universe, the earth, the sky, sun, stars, are to be seen as urine, sperm, menstrua. It wishes to destroy all ordinary individuations in favour of an all-encompassing, manic, "dirtying" production.

In this sense, S/Z approximates the <u>receivable</u>: we do not read it, we do not even write or produce it, but we "<u>receive</u> it, like a fire, a drug, an enigmatic disorganisation"

5. [illegible] the Flow of [illegible]
Conclusion

In the previous chapter, we have [illegible] as a theoretical motif in Bataille's [illegible] of transgression. However, light operates similarly in these three texts by Barthes, occurring equally in the [illegible]ing passage in LD, around which our conclusion will [illegible]

> "I hallucinate what is empirically impossible: that our two profferings be made at the same time: that one does not follow the other, as if it depended on it. Proffering cannot be double (doubled): only the single flash will do, in which the two forces join (separate, [illegible] they would not exceed some ordinary agreement). For the single flash achieves this unheard-of thing: the abolition of all responsible exchange, gift, and theft (the only known [illegible] in its own way implies heterogeneous objects and a dislocated time: my desire against something else - and this [illegible] time for drawing up the [illegible] a movement whose model is socially unknown, unthinkable: neither exchange, nor gift, nor [illegible] nowhere [illegible] abolished [illegible] each by means of the other into absolute materialism.[235]

It should be noted that the original, the expression éclair unique is employed[237], which differs significantly from the translated "single flash"; i [illegible]

distinguishes the concept from le flash as used in the passage, quoted a chapter ago, from L'empire des signes.

Klossowski is indicated, together with Baudelaire, in the margin of this specific fragment. Although, ultimately, everything we have said about these writings by Barthes, on Zen, etc., is grossly inaccurate due to the fact that we are saying it in English - ie. engaging with both the texts by Barthes [illegible] concepts originally formulated in Japanese - by way of translation, with all the problematic transferences of meaning that it entails, we can still, be it termed flash, eclair, or satori, discern a certain notion that may be defined similarly in various languages. Let us therefore quote an English translation extracted from a French text by Pierre Klossowski wherein he, writing on Nietzsche - who wrote in German - also speaks of a type of satori or "awakening":

> "The idea of the Eternal Return came to Nietzsche as a sudden awakening, thanks to a feeling, a certain state or tonality of mind. Initially confused with this feeling, the idea itself emerges as a specific doctrine; nonetheless, it preserves the character of a revelation - a sudden unveiling...
>
> The accent must be placed on the loss of a given identity. The 'death of God' (of the God who guarantees the identity of the accountable self) opens the soul to all its possible identities, already apprehended through the diverse feelings of the Nietzschean soul. The revelation of the Eternal Return necessarily brings on the successive realisations of all possible identities: 'all the names of history,

> finally, are me' - in the end, 'Dionysus and the Crucified.' The 'death of God,' then, corresponds to a feeling in Nietzsche in the same way as the ecstatic moment of the Eternal Return does."[238]

Without [illegible] the one [illegible] of the one in LD, it is obvious that both quotations deal with a comparable process, "a loss of identity", defined in similar terms, an "éclair unique" and the "ecstatic moment of the Eternal Return".

To use the citation from Klossowski as evidence of the Nietzschean conceptualisation of the proffering of love in LD would amount to very little: Barthes's "éclair unique" is not just a synonym for what the former circumscribed as the "Eternal Return". However, by juxtaposing the two passages together with our earlier remarks on textual desire, which proceeded from Deleuze, an equally "Nietzschean" figure, we may arrive at a collection of statements general enough to constitute a conclusion of our readings of the theory of pleasure and the amorous discourse.

[illegible] that is of overriding importance, but the *type of thought* taking place in the texts we have been reading, utilising as they do *theoretically declassé* [illegible] in an *asystematic* way. In this, FT, RB and LD are not unique: in the Introduction to the sequel to L'Anti-[illegible], [illegible] who inhabits, of course, a uniformly pink space and [illegible] "insignificant breaks" in moving from

one incompletely delineated spatiality to the next.[240] Productivist thought is also self-productive, able to insinuate itself into any conceptual medium, from the rigorous and academically unimpeachable to that which is vulgar and compromised in belonging to popular culture.

What PI, RB and LD teach us, therefore, is not the latest way to read a text, a model to be studied and then "applied", but the heterogeneity not only of all textuality, but of "the world" in the widest sense of that wide term. That is not to say that these texts do not contain specific theorisations of specific domains, on the contrary; this is borne out by our reading. These theorisations are properly to be used in an active way, ie. in a way that will extend and transform them. Whence their aphoristic form.

Accordingly, they are invitations to engage in textualisation ourselves. We must give free rein to our desire for texts. The subject-object thinking of textuality, as well as the "I buy from you, you give me something to read" contract foisted on texts by the market mechanism, constitute blockages of the flow of textual desire. The fact that these blockages are produced and maintained by the machines of social power, the repressive and ideological apparati that fix identities like capitalists and communists, manual and intellectual workers, teachers and children, doctors and madmen, policemen and criminals, etc., does not make textual pleasure of minor consequence, socio-politically speaking. For the known forms of social emancipation, most of which advocate an "armed struggle" of sorts, depend for their grandiose allure on simple and hackneyed codes comprising heroism and altruism that are ultimately reducible to textual

repression. It is only within a humanist problematic and discourse that more significance is attached to the spilling of human blood - other animals are daily herded into abattoirs - than to the spilling of ink; ink being a metonym here for textual production, and not an empiricist reduction of textuality to, literally, black marks on paper.

By affirming the flow of textual desire, or by uttering the cliche, "I love you", in the manner of the lover of LD[241], we aspire towards the "absolute materialism" that, in social or textual terms, is revolutionary. It will not be the bloody and gory revolution that the realistic discourse of the mass media brings to our attention from time to time, and to the containment of which disciplinary regimes are so well adapted but, in the words of PT, a "subtle subversion"[242].

In their fragmented playing with literary theoretical concepts, PT, RB and LD are equally operating a theoretically subversive laughter - unlike conventional literary theoretical discourse which sets up a metalanguage which is not in itself to be regarded and read as a "text", according to the conditions and methods for reading that it espouses, PT, RB and LD are as much texts productive of pleasure, jouissance and laughter as the erotic text by Bataille that we have considered in the previous chapter. To adapt Deleuze's famous remark on reading Nietzsche[243], to read these texts by Barthes and not to be subverted, not to be cast adrift on the flow of pleasure, not to join one's force with that of the text in a single flash, is not to have read them at all.

Notes

1. Roland Barthes. The Pleasure of the Text. London: Jonathan Cape, 1976. Hereafter PT.
2. Roland Barthes. Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes. London: Macmillan, 1977. Hereafter RB.
3. Roland Barthes. [illegible] Discourse. London: Jonathan Cape, 1979. Hereafter LD.
4. Cf. Coward and Ellis. Language and Materi[illegible]. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977, p.54.
5. Cf. Kerwe Scholtz. [illegible] teken as teiken. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1979.
6. In the case of Coward and Ellis, the object of their theorizing is to engage in ideological [illegible] in the first appeal agaist the ban on the novel, Dennis van die aand by Andre Brink (Cape Town: Buren, 1973), he recommended that the novel should stay banned on account of its poor literary merit.
7. Philip Thody. Roland Barthes [illegible] Estimate. London: Macmillan, 1977, p. 10.
8. Cf. T.S. Eliot. The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism. London: Faber, 1933.
9. Roland Barthes. [illegible] Degree Zero. New York: Hill & Wang, 1968.
10. Richard & Fernande DeGeorge. [illegible] Structuralists. New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. xi.
11. Translated as: Ferdinand de Saussure. [illegible] General Linguistics. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1[illegible]
12. This succinct outline may be found detailed in various introductions to structuralism such as, for example: Terence Hawkes. Structuralism and Semiotics. London: Methuen, 1977.

13. Roland Barthes. op cit.
14. Roland Barthes. Mythologies. London: Paladin Books, 1973.
15. Roland Barthes. Critical Essays Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1972.
16. Roland Barthes. Elements of Semiology. New York: Hill & Wang, 1968.
17. Cf. Roland Barthes. Leçon. Paris: Seuil, 1978, pp. 7-8.
18. Roland Barthes. "The Structuralist Activity" in DeGeorge, eds. op. cit.
19. Ibid., p.154.
20. In his introduction to Josue V. Harari, ed. Textual Strategies. London: Methuen, 1[illegible]
21. Ibid., p. 29.
22. These general remarks, occurring as they do in an introduction, are just that, and are not to be taken as a sweeping paraphrase of Foucault's sophisticated epistemology of the contemporary human sciences in the last chapter of The Order of Things. Cf. Michel Foucault. The Order of Things. London: Tavistock, 1970, pp. 344 ff.
23. Cf. Harari. op. cit., p. [illegible]
24. Cf. also: Robert Young. Untying the Text - A Post-Structuralist [illegible], London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981.
25. Cf. Paul Feyerabend. Against Method. London: New Left Books, 1975 as well as Science in a Free Society. London: New Left Books, 1978.
26. Cf. Jacques Derrida. Of Grammatology. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1976.
27. Cf. Roland Barthes. "The Death of the Author" in his Image, Music, Text. London: Fontana, 1977.
28. op. cit., p. 8.
29. IT, p.30.
30. Cf. Foucault. op. cit.
31. Jacques Lacan. Ecrits. London: Tavistock, 1977, p. 311

32. op. cit., p. 7.
33. Thody, op. cit., p. 3.
34. Cf. Willard van Orman Quine. Word and Object. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1960.
35. Cf. Thomas Kuhn. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962, 1970.
36. [illegible]s. cit.
37. Cf. Louis Althusser. For Marx. London: Allen Lane, 1969.
38. Cf. Quine, op. cit., p. 26 f.
39. Cf. Michel Foucault. "What is an Author" [illegible] Counter-memory, Practice. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977.
40. [illegible] P. 201.
41. Julia Kristeva. [illegible] Paris: Seuil, 1974, pp. 59-60.
42. Quoted by [illegible] Kristeva [illegible] Univ. Press, 1980, p. 18.
43. loc. cit.
44. PT, pp. 35-36.
45. RB, p. 145.
46. PT, p. 36.
47. RB, p. 145.
48. PT, p. 36.
49. [illegible] PT
50. This term belongs to Foucault; according to him, certain nineteenth century authors in Europe, amongst whom Marx and Freud, were "initiators of discursive practices" in that they "established the endless possibility of discourse." (Foucault. Language, Counter-memory..., p. [illegible]
51. Friedrich Nietzsche. Thus Spoke [illegible] Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961, p. 206.
52. Ibid., p. 207.
53. Cf. Gilles Deleuze. "Active and Reactive" [illegible] David B. Allison, ed. The New Nietzsche. New York: Dell Publishing, 1977, p. 80.

54. For clarification of the term, "affirmation", cf. ibid., especially pp. [illegible].
55. [illegible] pp 3-4.
56. [illegible]chel Foucault. Discipline and [illegible] Harmondsworth: [illegible]eng [illegible], [illegible]
57. PT, p. 4.
58. Terence Hawkes, op. ci[illegible]., p. [illegible]15.
59. Ibid.
60. Roland Barthes. S/Z. New York: Hill & Wang, 1974.
61. Cf. PT, p. 4.
62. Cf. RE, p. 118.
63. PT, p. 20.
64. Ibid.
65. [illegible], p. [illegible]
66. Cf., for example, Picasso's Woman in an [illegible] and Card Player in William Rubin, ed. Pablo Picasso - A Retrospective. London/ New York: Thames & Hudson/ The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1980, p. 173 and p. 175 respectively.
67. Quoted by Anika Lemaire. Jacques Lacan. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977, p. 150.
68. Cf. PT, p. 21.
69. Ecrits, p. [illegible].
70. [illegible]. [illegible]t 50 a[illegible]
71. Cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss. The Savage Mind. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1966, pp. 16-33.
72. PT, p. 17.
73. PT, p. 2[illegible]
74. Cf. the discussion of desiring-production under 2.b.xi, below.
75. Cf. PT, p. 26.
76. Quoted by Lemaire. op cit., p. 151.
77. PT, p. 16.
78. Cf. PT, pp. 16-17.
79. Ib[illegible]
80. Cf. Jacques Derrida. Spurs/Eperons. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, p. [illegible]
81. PT, p. 17.

82. Cf. Tom Wolfe. The Electric Kool-aid Acid Test. New York: Bantam Books, 1969.
83. RB, p. [illegible]
84. Cf. [illegible]
85. Cf. [illegible]
86. PT, [illegible]
87. PT, [illegible]
88. RB, [illegible]
89. Cf. [illegible]
90. Gilles Deleuze. "Nomad Thought" in David B. Allison, ed. op. cit., pp. 142-143.
91. Cf. Herbert Marcuse. "Repressive Tolerance" in Wolff et al. A Critique of Pure Tolerance. London: Jonathan Cape, 1969, pp. 93-137.
92. Cf., for example, RB, p. 142.
93. RB, p. 67.
94. Jacques Derrida. Writing and Difference. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, p. 292.
95. Ibid.
96. Cf. Derrida. Of Grammatology. p. [illegible].
97. Jacques Derrida. Speech and Phenomena. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973, p. 130.
98. Ibid., pp. 136-137.
99. Ibid., pp. 142-143.
100. Cf. Roland Barthes. Le plaisir du texte. Paris: Seuil, 1973, p. 54.
101. Cf. J. Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis. The Language of psychoanalysis. London: The Hogarth Press, 1973, p. 210.
102. Ibid.
103. RB, p. 3.
104. IT, p. 33.
105. Ibid.
106. RB, p. 105.
107. Roland Barthes. Par Roland Barthes. Paris: Seuil, 1975, p. 109.
108. Cf. IT, p. 33.
109. Barthes. Mythologies, originally published in France in 1957.

110. Cf. ibid., p. 116.
111. RB, p. 71.
112. PT, pp. 40-41.
113. PT, pp. 42-43.
114. PT, p. 40.
115. [illegible]
116. Guy Hocquenhem. Homosexual Desire. London: Allison & Busby, 1978, pp. 60-61.
117. PT, p. 54.
118. PT, pp. 54-55.
119. Georges Bataille. Death and Sensuality. New York: Walker & Co., 1962.
120. "A Preface to Transgression" in Language, Counter-memory, Practice, pp. 29-52.
121. Ibid., pp. 33-34.
122. Ibid., p. 35.
123. Bataille. op cit., p. 63.
124. Cf., for example, Foucault, op cit., [illegible]
125. Bataille. op cit., p. 66. Cf. also the rest of the page and the one following.
126. PT, loc. cit.
127. Laplanche and Pontalis. op cit., p. 4[illegible]
128. RB, p. 143.
129. Cf. PT, pp. 14, 20-21.
130. [illegible]
131. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Anti-Oedipus. New York: Viking, 1977.
132. On p. 100.
133. PT, p. 57.
134. Henri Lefebvre, as quoted by Jeffrey [illegible] in Hocquenghem. op cit., p. 19.
135. Cf. Sigmund Freud. Case Histories II, Pelican Freud Library vol. 9. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979, pp. 141-195.
136. Deleuze, Guattari. op cit., p. 2.
137. Ibid., p. 4.
138. Ibid., p. 7.
139. Deleuze. "Nomad Thought". op. [illegible]

140. In the English edition, that is.
141. M, p. 1.
142. PT, p. 40.
143. Cf. Michel Foucault. The History of Sexuality Vol. 1. London: Allen Lane, 1979.
144. LD, p. 117.
145. Cf. Nathalie Sarraute. Tropisms. London: John Calder, 1963 and Fools Say. London: John Calder, 1977.
146. LD, pp 3-4.
147. Cf. LD, p. 5.
148. Ibid.
149. Roland Barthes. Fragments d'un discours amoureux. Paris: Seuil, 1977.
150. For a very brief account of him, see H W. Janson. A History of Art. London: Thames & Hudson, 1977, p. 408.
151. Randolph Runyon. "Fragments of an Amorous Discourse" in Visible Language, Vol. xi, Number 4, Autumn 1977, pp. 387 ff.
152. Ibid., pp. 395-396.
153. PT, p. 30.
154. op. cit., p. 398.
155. ibid., p. 402.
156. Recounted by Runyon. ibid., pp. 398-400.
157. Book of Tobit, 6:17, as quoted by Runyon in ibid.
158. op cit., p. 279.
159. Quoted by Runyon. ibid., p. 411.
160. ibid., pp. 411-412.
161. Quoted ibid., p. 416.
162. LD, pp. 42-43.
163. Cf. ibid. p. 424.
164. Foucault. Language, Counter-memory, Practice, pp. 171-172.
165. Cf. LD, p. 1.
166. loc. cit.
167. LD, p. 98.

168. LD, p. 99.
169. Ibid.
170. LD, p. 131.
171. Cf. LD, p. 130.
172. LD, p. 134.
173. LD, p. 135.
174. Ibid.
175. LD, p. 165.
176. LD, p. 166.
177. Cf. Fragments d'un discours amoureux, p. 198.
178. Ibid., p. 281.
179. Terry Eagleton. Walter Benjamin or [illegible] Revolutionary Criticism. London: Verso/NLB, 1981, p. 160.
180. Alan Watts. The Way of Zen. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, pp. 9-10.
181. Cf. LD, p. 63.
182. Ibid.
183. Cf. Watts. op. cit., p. 107 f.
184. Roland Barthes. L'empire des signes. Geneva: Skira, 1970.
185. Ibid., pp. 110-111.
186. Georges Bataille. Story of the Eye. London: Boyars, 1979. Hereafter SO.
187. Cf. ibid., pp. 119-127.
188. Ibid., p. 125.
189. SO, p. 84.
190. Lem Coley. Review of SO in Telos, no. 36, Summer 1978, p. 249.
191. Cf., for example, Beatrice Faust. Women, Sex and Pornography. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981, pp. 10-25.
192. PT, p. 55.
193. Alain Robbe-Grillet. Jealousy. London: Calder, 1960.
194. Cf. Coley, loc. cit.
195. Cf. The History of Sexuality.

196. For a brief account of the relationships between [illegible] Deel 1 in Stet, no. 1, October 1982. Johannesburg: Taurus.
197. [illegible], p. [illegible]
198. Cf. the discussion of "Criticism as perversion" under 2.c.viii, above.
199. [illegible], p. [illegible]
200. Cf. Kristeva. Desire in Language, pp. 159-209.
201. Ibid., p. [illegible]
202. Apropos of Bunuel, especially Le chien Andalou and L'âge d'or, as well as the more recent That Obscure Object of Desire.
203. [illegible]
204. [illegible] 1936, p. 103.
205. Cf. William S. Rubin. Dada and Surrealist [illegible]. London: Thames & Hudson, 1969, p. 27.
206. Ibid., p. 22.
207. SO, p. 119.
208. Cf. SO, p. 98.
209. Ibid.
210. SO, p. 87.
211. Eg. various publications by John Barth, Robert Coover, Donald Barthelme, Richard Brautigan, to name a few
212. SO, [illegible]-15.
213. Cf. Magritte. London: Eyere Methuen, 1979, plate 65.
214. PT, p. 6.
215. Cf. ibid.
216. Bataille. Death and Sensuality, p. 180.
217. Georges Bataille. Madame Edwarda in Madame Edwarda. Le Mort. Histoire de l'oeil. Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1967, p. 27.

220. SO, pp. 9-10.
221. Cf. ibid. supra.
222. SO, pp. 10-11.
223. Cf. PT, p. 16.
224. SO, p. 66.
225. SO, p. 65.
226. SO, p. 66.
227. Cf. SO, p. 40.
228. SO, p. 67.
229. SO, p. 21.
230. SO, p. 13.
231. SO, p. 42.
232. SO, p. 67.
233. SO, p. 34.
234. SO, p. 43.
235. RB, p. 118.
236. LD, pp. 150-151.
237. Fragments d'un discours amoureux, p. 179.
238. Pierre Klossowski. "Nietzsche's Experience of the Eternal Return" in David B. Allison, ed.
separately, the text of Rhizome now forms the Introduction to this work.
240. Cf. ibid., p. 18.
241. Cf. LD, loc. cit.
242. See quotation on p. 58 of this dissertation.
243. Cf. ibid.
244. Ie. "Those who read Nietzsche without laughing - without laughing often, richly, even hilariously - have, in a sense, not read Nietzsche at all."

Reference List

I. The four main texts, with their originals

Barthes, R. The Pleasure of the Text. Tr. by R. Miller. London: Jonathan Cape, 1976.

_____. Le plaisir du texte. Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 1973.

_____. Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes. Tr. by R. Howard. London: MacMillan, 1977.

_____. Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes. Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 1975.

_____. A Lover's Discourse. Tr. by R. Howard. London: Jonathan Cape, 1979.

_____. Fragments d'un discours amoureux. Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 1977.

Bataille, G. Story of the Eye. Tr. by J. Neugroschel. London: Marion Boyars, 1979.

_____. Histoire de l'oeil in Madame Edwarda, Le mort, Histoire de loeil. Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1967.

II. Other works referred to

Allison, D.B., ed. The New Nietzsche. New York: Dell Publishing, 1977.

Althusser, L. For Marx. Tr. by B. Brewster. London: Allen Lane, 1969.

Barth, J. Chimera. London: André Deutsch, 1974.

Barthes, R. "The Structuralist Activity" in De George, eds. Tr. by R. Howard.

_____. Writing Degree Zero. Tr. by A. Lavers & C. Smith. New York: Hill & Wang, 1968.

_____. L'empire des signes. Geneva: Skira, 1970.

———. Critical Essays. Tr. by R. Howard. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1972.

———. Mythologies. Tr. by A. Lavers. London: Paladin Books, 1973.

———. S/Z. Tr. by R. Miller. New York: Hill & Wang, 1974.

———. Image, Music, Text. Tr. by S. Heath. London: Fontana, 1977.

———. Leçon. Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 1978.

Bataille, G. Death and Sensuality. Tr. not noted. New York: Walker & Co., 1962.

Brautigan, R. Trout Fishing in America. London: Jonathan Cape, 1970.

Breton, A. "Limits not Frontiers of Surrealism" in Read, H., ed. Surrealism. London: Faber, 1936.

Brink, A. Kennis van die aand. Cape Town: Buren, 1973. Second edition: Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1982.

Bunuel, L., director. Le chien Andalou. (Film.)

———. L'âge d'or. (Film.)

———. That Obscure Object of Desire. (Film.)

Coley, L. Review of Story of the Eye in Telos, no. 36, Summer 1978.

Coover, R. The Public Burning. London: Allen Lane, 1978.

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

De George, R. & F., eds. The Structuralists. New York: Anchor Books, 1972.

Deleuze, G. "Active and Reactive" in Allison, D.B., ed. Tr. by R. Cohen.

———. "Nomad Thought" in Allison, D.B., ed. Tr. by D.B. Allison.

Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. Anti-Oedipus - Capitalism and Schizophrenia, vol. 1. Tr. by R. Hurley, M. Seem & H.R. Lane. New York: Viking, 1977.

———. Mille plateaux - capitalisme et schizophrenie, Tome 2. Paris: Ed. de Minuit, 1980.

Derrida, J. Speech and Phenomena. Tr. by D.B. Allison. Evanson, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973.

————. Of Grammatology. Tr. by G.C. Spivak. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1976.

————. Writing and Difference. Tr. by A. Bass. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

————. Spurs/Eperons. Tr. by B. Harlow. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1979.

Eagleton, T. Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism. London: Verso/NLB, 1981.

Eliot, T.S. The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism. London: Faber, 1933.

Faust, B. Women, Sex and Pornography. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981.

Feyerabend, P. Against Method. London: New Left Books, 1975.

————. Science in a Free Society. London: New Left Books, 1978.

Foucault, M. The Order of Things. Tr. by A. Sheridan. London: Tavistock, 1970.

————. Language, Counter-memory, Practice. Tr. by D. F. Bouchard & S. Simon. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977.

————. Discipline and Punish - The Birth of the Prison. Tr. by A. Sheridan. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979.

————. The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1. Tr. by R. Hurley. London: Allen Lane, 1979.

Freud, S. Case Histories II, Pelican Freud Library Vol. 9. Tr. ed. by J. Strachey. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979.

Harari, J.V., ed. Textual Strategies. London: Methuen, 1980.

Hawkes, T. Structuralism and Semiotics. London: Methuen, 1977.

Hocquenghem, G. Homosexual Desire. Tr. by D. Dangoor. London: Allison & Busby, 1978.

Janson, H.W. A History of Art. London: Thames & hudson, 1977.

Klossowski, P. "Nietzsche's Experience of the Eternal Return" in Allison, D.B., ed. Tr. by A. Weiss.

Kristeva, J. La revolution du langage poetique. Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 1974.

————————. Desire in Language. Tr. by T. Gora, A. Jardine & L.S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1980.

Kuhn, T. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962, 1970.

Lacan, J. Ecrits - A Selection. Tr. by A. Sheridan. London: Tavistock, 1977.

Laplanche, J. & Pontalis, J.B. The Language of Psychoanalysis. Tr. by D. Nicholson-Smith. London: The Hogarth Press, 1973.

Lemaire, A. Jacques Lacan. Tr. by D. Macey. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.

Lévi-Strauss, C. The Savage Mind. Tr. not noted. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1966.

Magritte, R. Magritte. London: Lyere Methuen, 1979.

Marcuse, H. "Repressive Tolerance" In Wolff, R.P., et al. A Critique of Pure Tolerance. London: Jonathan Cape, 1969.

Nietzsche, F. Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Tr. by R.J. Hollingdale. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.

Quine, W.V. Word and Object. Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1960.

Robbe-Grillet, A. Jealousy. Tr. by R. Howard. London: Calder, 1960.

Roodt, D. "Literatuur en die erotiese moontlikheid," Deel 1 in Stet, no. 1, October 1982. Johannesburg: Taurus.

Rubin, W.S. Dada and Surrealist Art. London: Thames & Hudson, 1969.

————————, ed. Pablo Picasso - A Retrospective. London/New York: Thames & Hudson/The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1980.

Runyon, R. "Fragments of a Lover's Discourse" in Visible Language, Vol. xi, Number 4, Autumn 1977.

Sarraute, N. Tropisms in Tropisms and The Age of Suspicion. Tr. by M. Jolas. London: John Calder, 1963.

_____. "Fools Say". Tr. by M. Jolas. London: John Calder, 1977.

Saussure, F. de. Course in General Linguistics. Tr. by W. Baskin. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

Scholtz, H.v.d.M. Die teken as teiken. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1979.

Thody, P. Roland Barthes - A Conservative Estimate. London: Macmillan, 1977.

Watts, A. The Way of Zen. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.

Wolfe, T. The Electric Koolaid Acid Test. New York: Bantam books, 1969.

Young, R., ed. Untying the Text - A Post-structuralist Reader. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981.

Author Roodt D F
Name of thesis Textual pleasure and production: three texts by Roland Barthes 1983

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.