THE BORDERING WORLDS OF MARCEL DUCHAMP, ROBERT DESNOS AND MINA LOY

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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ABSTRACT

THE BORDERING WORLDS OF MARCEL DUCHAMP, ROBERT DESNOS AND MINA LOY

by

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This interdisciplinary study seeks affinities in the works of Marcel Duchamp, Robert Desnos and Mina Loy. Its comparative analysis focuses primarily on American, British and French culture with some references to other European cultures. The study of relations between visual art and literature, specifically poetry, begins with Mallarméan Symbolism as a precursor to Dada-Surrealism. It concentrates mainly on the interaction between art and text from the World War I era up until the beginning of the 1930s. It discusses scientific and technological developments, including war technologies and the cinema. The criticism of Gilles Deleuze provides a framework to examine the evolution of modernism and postmodernism with specific attention to baroque concepts. The problem of representation and situated difference in Duchamp, Desnos and Loy is analyzed from a Deleuzian perspective. Deleuze's The Fold in conjunction with Bergsonism and Cinema 1 are considered in terms of their relevance for contemporary feminist criticism, particularly that of Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti and Dorothea Olkowski. The relationship between Deleuze's concept of difference and Derridean deconstruction is also explored as an alternative to examining the many collaborative writings Deleuze produced with other critics.

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INTRODUCTION

When Marcel Duchamp added motion to Cubism, he set himself apart from the genius of Pablo Picasso. If Picasso's brand of Cubism enabled a static object to be looked at from multiple perspectives through a process of abstraction, Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* transformed movement itself into an abstraction. This innovation earned Duchamp a place alongside Picasso in art history as one of the most important artistic minds of the twentieth century. Once we move outside the discipline of art history into literary studies, we must negotiate a sense of place for Duchamp. Incontestably, in other words, nineteenth-century French symbolist literature played a major role in the development of his artistic career. This career, in turn, affected careers of French and Anglo-American writers of the early twentieth-century. Despite the increasingly large amount of visual art criticism on Duchamp, therefore, a need arises for comparatists to examine crosscultural thinking about how he shaped modernist and even postmodernist literature. For this reason, it should prove valuable to consider the impact of Duchamp's contributions to both French and Anglo-American visual art (including cinema), on the one hand, and literature, on the other. Within this interdisciplinary and crosscultural context, it will specifically be useful to look at how the worlds of the French poet Robert Desnos and the British expatriate poet and visual artist Mina Loy encounter that of Duchamp. Elaborating upon the critical framework will clarify my reasons for bringing these three figures together.

In order to interrelate the worlds of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy, it is necessary to establish the scope of such an endeavor within the limits of literary and visual art criticism. The criticism of Gilles Deleuze offers a vast framework for comparatists seeking to make crosscultural connections within the disciplines of literature and visual

art. Deleuze's The Fold (Le Pli) is one of his most significant works because it bridges the gap between German and French traditions of criticism by heralding Germany's Gottfried Leibniz as one of the most prominent thinkers of the Baroque, rather than as is often understood, France's René Descartes. Deleuze's reading of Leibniz makes it possible for comparatists to look differently at both French and Anglo-American visual art and literature. By considering the relevance of the Leibnizian Baroque to a comparative study of Duchamp, Desnos, and Loy, it should be possible to avoid a senseless binary opposition between French and Anglo-American culture. The Leibnizian Baroque paves the way for multicultural criticism that looks at difference *within the same* culture (i.e. within every Self) as opposed to difference between cultures.

The Fold begins with a definition of the "operative trait" that allows a critic to work through a labyrinth of multiple forms. As the name of the title indicates, folding is an "operative trait" of the Leibnizian Baroque, where it serves to determine and materialize form into "expressive matter." The European baroque "trait" intrigues Deleuze (possibly more than any other "trait") because it "twists and turns its folds," as he remarks, "pushing them to infinity." The European Baroque thus proves to be an excellent point of departure in bridging cultural gaps because the movement began as a pan-European one and eventually expanded to attain a global reach. Baroque "traits" made their way into the New World, as can be discerned in the motifs of hand-woven tapestries from the Andes (1530-1830) and, in this manner, even entered into the history of colonial expansion. It therefore becomes possible to make historical connections through an analysis of baroque "traits." Folds may be discovered in a wide range of Eastern and Western cultures. As a result, he appeals to his readers to compare various types of folds and their "traits" in order to study similarities and differences between

Eastern and Western cultural forms. With this aim in mind, he compares folding or "pleating" surfaces to the overlaying folds of fabric of paper. The function of endless folding might resemble a three-dimensional Japanese origami form. This explains the rationale behind his remark that the Japanese art of folding paper has more to do with a model for the sciences than do Cartesian mathematical models. Descartes himself seems to have encountered baroque "traits" manifesting themselves in various cultures at a time when continental philosophers were still seeking a universal system to describe the phenomenological world, and to replace that of Ptolemy. I certainly accept Deleuze's view that Descartes did not know how to push his way out of the labyrinthine twists of baroque "traits." In geometrical terms, Descartes made the mistake of pursuing continuity along "rectilinear" tracks to maintain cohesion through a three-axis coordinate grid or "Euclidean" plane.

In opposition to the Cartesian grid or "Euclidean" plane, Deleuze develops his own concept of "nomadism" that defines a "nomad" as a consciousness always in the process of becoming; as such, the "nomad" participates in the folded forms of space, movement and time. He derives his conception of the nomad from Leibniz's baroque notion of the monad. The transposition of letters from "monad" to "nomad" ought not go unnoticed by Anglo-American critics for it indicates how Deleuze's thinking evolved out of Leibniz's main concept of the monad, as defined in Monadology (1714). Leibniz defines the monad as a simple substance without parts; a composite is a collection of simple substances, which are the elements of all things. It is not possible to explain, in Leibniz's thinking, how a monad can be changed in its inner being, since there is no possibility of transposition within it. Monads have no windows through which anything may come in or go out; yet every created monad is subject to change that comes from an

internal principle. For Leibniz, the entire universe resembles a pond of matter in which there exist different flows and waves. The texture of matter is infinitely "porous" ("porous" being defined as "spongy" or "cavernous" in texture) without being empty but, to the contrary, always full of caverns endlessly contained in other caverns. Deleuze bases his definition of matter on this idea of "porousness" and he defines matter as having a porous, spongy or cavernous texture that can be enveloped and penetrated by vaporous flows and waves of fluid. This contrasts with the Cartesian assertion that the real distinction between parts entails separability. For Leibniz, a fluid or elastic body has cohering parts that form a fold, in such a way that they are not divided into parts but rather divided to infinity into smaller folds—which retain a cohesive form. A continuous labyrinth does not dissolve into independent points (the way that flowing sand dissolves into grains) but resembles a sheet of paper or a tunic separated into bending movements divided into folds. The folds appears as an elastic body whose cohering parts do not seem to be separated, either through the effect of a "multiple modulating surface of color" (i.e. *chiaroscuro*—the effect of *chiaroscuro* is also a baroque trait for it can be understood as the folding that catches illumination and varies according to the hour and light of day) or through an endless division into an infinity of smaller folds.

While no transposition may take place with individual monads, extensivity occurs when simple substances form composites. No substance is purely passive for Leibniz because a substance is defined as action or force. *Monads of relation* may be conceived of as "patches of motion" that reference our individual self-variations. Deleuze developed his "nomadology" out of monadology to make *transpositions* between substances possible. In The Fold he describes these transitions in terms of "non-Euclidean" (i.e. dynamic, vectorial, transitional, or durational) spaces that do not fit into the Cartesian

triple-axis coordinate space. The visual surface in "non-Euclidean" curving space is *transpositional*, meaning that it *transcends* point-positions that constitute the Euclidean space of a coordinate plane. Deleuzian *extension* is the outward movement of objects or events along the surface of planes rather than downward in depth. The variable curvature of theses elastic folding surfaces is the *inflection* of "pure event." Despite continuous divisions, these folding surfaces maintain their cohesion for, in fact, they occur in the folds of natural geography (i.e. water, wind, veins of metal ore and marble) that flow and fragment into countless permutations. A complex folding and unfolding can explain changes in form (which may be used to explain sudden or catastrophic events in natural geography).

Nomadology becomes an effective tool for bridging the gaps between disciplines, sets of laws or particular situations experienced by individuals within cultural contexts. A nomad may cross boundaries and blur languages while seeking to reclarify relations that have become "depersonalized." The endgame of nomadology is that, through effects of depersonalization or "deterritorialization," a nomad does not travel but remains always in the process of becoming. This concept takes shape in The Fold and is refined further by Deleuze and Guattari in Nomadology: The War Machine. A nomad must be patient and comfortable with *delay* and *waiting*. Although critics sometimes object to the idea of a nomad who does not travel, such paradoxes occur in Surrealism, namely, the "always-arriving train" that rushes out of nowhere and never arrives anywhere (as in the paintings of Belgian surrealist René Magritte). How do similar paradoxes in the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy challenge Euclidean and Cartesian thought? Can we discern transpositions from the "monad" to the "nomad" in their works?

Deleuze attacks the linguistic distinction between subject and predicate that grounds Cartesian logic. His style of writing, notably different from that of Derrida, is itself an expression of baroque logic. He uses the connector *c'est* (meaning *it is* in French) to link concepts into serial chains that are joined to other sentences. Whereas Cartesian logic links subject and predicate terms with *to be*, his use of *c'est* as a connector varies the copula *to be*. Duchamp mocked the classical *devise* (pithy motto) and philosophical maxim (that culminated in the Cartesian *cogito*) by creating his own motto—*Eros, c'est la vie*, meaning *Eros, that's life*. This motto makes use of a connector to undermine traditional relations between subject and predicate. The operative function of transposition exemplifies the effect of the fold/unfold as defined by Deleuze. Duchamp transposed his motto into a fictitious name—*Rrose Sélavy*. The transposition of letters creates a pun in French, making *Rrose Sélavy* the phonetic equivalent of *Eros, c'est la vie*. The transposition of *Eros, c'est la vie* produces a mobile effect in language; this effect finds its visual counterpart in the abstract movement of the *Nude Descending a Staircase* where a figure appears to move within the fall of frames on the picture plane. Duchamp establishes a new relation between language, thought and vision, as would later be observed by the American Pop artist Jasper Johns. This new relation is evident in one of Duchamp's most important projects, the *Large Glass*. The artistic process of the *Large Glass* abstracts phenomena into simpler substances in a process of distillation. The verbal origin of Duchamp's process is clearly explained by him in his writings where he discusses his desire to distill or purify language into "prime words," so that they can no longer be divided into smaller units of communication. The English name—the *Large Glass*—reveals less to the spectator about these new relations than does the French

name—*La Mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même*—which refers self-reflexively to the artistic process of "stripping" relations back to "bare" form.

Shortly before his death in 1968, Duchamp recorded statements in Cadaquès, Spain, (now part of the Museum of Modern Art's videotape Marcel Duchamp In His Own Words) in which he claims to be a Cartesian in his impulse toward mathematical logic. Duchamp received instruction in Cartesian thought and mathematics as a young boy in Normandy, France, but, at the same time, his childhood took place during the blossoming of French Symbolism. The impulse to purification or distillation in the *Large Glass* betrays the symbolist origins of the work. Symbolism gave rise to new relations between linguistic and visual representations, as well as between the arts and sciences. Symbolists created correspondences between objects, forms and colors in the external world and their expression in an inner reality. This unity relied on an "Orphic explanation" of the universe; the "Orphic explanation" is exemplified in the work of French poet Stéphane Mallarmé, who adhered to a belief in a cyclical, underlying unity in a world where thoughts reflect only a fragment of a whole in the absence of pure principles. Mallarmé's text *Un coup de dés* responds to a world that has lost its principles. The title name *Un coup de dés* indicates that chance enters a world distanced from pure principles. The text proclaims: a toss of the dice will never abolish chance. The final line of *Un coup de dés* returns cyclically to the title. In it, Mallarmé issues the dictum that every thought gives off a throw of the dice ("Toute Pensée émet un Coup de Dés"). In the absence of one pure Idea, combinations of thoughts spring up from multiple sources. Thinking is a game of chance because it involves freedom of expression. Thoughts are only approximations of ideals but Mallarmé's dictum attests to the fact that chance may

be converted in law. In short, art is defined as *play* and *game* for both Duchamp and Mallarmé.

Duchamp's belief that art operates according to its own dictums gives us insight into his need for an imaginary co-creator who churns out spoonerisms and delimits the rules of the game. The name given to the imagined co-creator of his artistic works is none other than the aforementioned Rrose Sélavy. This female co-creator gives the artist the right to assume a new role and perceive the world differently. In a real-life performance, Duchamp cross-dressed as Rrose by donning "female" attire. I cannot accept feminist scholarship that disparages "avant-garde male masquerade," a confusing term used by art critic Amelia Jones that places Duchamp's cross-dressing in a category distinct from male homosexual "drag." Jones views Duchamp's cross-dressing as a symptom of a crisis in masculinity rather than as a radical creative act and seems to reinforce stereotypes about masculinity, femininity and homosexuality, as has been noted also by David Joselit (an art critic who reviewed her Postmodernism and the En-Gendering of Marcel Duchamp). As Joselit remarks, she falls into a Lacanian trap that results when self-identity depends on a purely linguistic construction belonging to nobody, or, worse, to *others* who view the "I" or "me" of the speaking subject as a "we." This causes her to return to a canonical concept of "author" as self-identity in her assessment of Duchamp as artist, while, at the same time, she suggests that there is an eroticization of the artist/spectator relation based on a model of seduction implicit in Duchamp's creative process. In my view, through the assuming of a female persona, a feminine presence enters Duchamp's works. Rrose is not present in reality but functions as a form of meta-irony in the absence of pure Ideas. Rrose can be transformed into the speculative pure Idea of Eros because art is being transformed into life, and vice versa. It is important to

emphasize that the connector *c'est* in *Eros, c'est la vie* (as in Deleuze's style) joins Eros and life.

Poet and critic Octavio Paz in the essay "Water Writes Always in Plural" asserts that Duchamp's universe is maintained by a "hinge system." Paz describes the "hinge" as a pivot that embodies the circularity of thought. He explains that Duchamp's *Large Glass* and *Etant donnés*, both now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a feminine presence operates as a pivot between "appearance" (apprehended by the senses) and "apparition" (a conjunction of forces, as, for example, a knot of desire). The Bride, as feminine presence, must be deciphered in the *Large Glass* for she is a composite, at once myth and motor, human and machine. He considers Duchamp to have pursued the Mallarméan concept of the work of art as a problematic of criticism. For this reason, he regards the Bride in the *Large Glass* as the "involuntary representation" of the only Idea-Myth of the Western World; this Idea-Myth is criticism itself. He continues to explain that in *Etant donnés*, by contrast, the spectator contemplates a feminine presence—as if contemplating a waterfall—that reveals what is hidden within the folds of the world. In this "hinge system" of meta-irony Eros can become speculative and self-reflexive; as in Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés*, meta-irony, negation and criticism remain. In *Etant donnés* a gas lamp burns only to make us doubt the reality of what we see. Paradoxically, the lamp produces the darkness that lets us glimpse the Void on the other side of presence. Paz concludes that the reflexive element makes the work enigmatic.

In my opinion, Paz's terms lend themselves to a *deconstruction* (in the sense of the critical practice expounded by Jacques Derrida) of the metaphysics of presence, particularly the idea of a "hinge." While Paz makes a case for Derridean deconstruction, his use of the term "involuntary representation" in reference to the Bride of the *Large*

Glass raises issues about non-representational art. Without a doubt, Paz is more interested in the metaphysics of presence (Derrida's focus) rather than a critique of representation (Deleuze's focus). When Paz comments that the Bride must be deciphered, he, in fact, reinforces Deleuze's comparison of the critic to a "cryptographer" of traits (a term from The Fold). If the Bride may not be viewed within the parameters of a representational model, she may be conceived of as a series of diagrams (a woman trapped in a suit of armor, an onanistic machine, etc.). We may make sense out of the *Large Glass* by using the non-representational concept of a "diagram" or "mapping project," as opposed to a representational model. Models can be deceptive in their attempt to represent reality but maps draw connections in which objects and boundaries materialize.

What can Deleuze tell us about the role of criticism in Duchamp's work? The act of criticism has the potential to disrupt an all-too centered (i.e. Cartesian) subject because it makes an event happen in the meeting of artist and critic. Later in his career, Duchamp developed a "theory" about the creative act; in it, he stated that the creative act involves two poles of exchange—that of the critic and the artist. I intend to go beyond discussing the affinities between Deleuze and Derrida in order to argue that Deleuze's criticism helps us understand the operative mode of Duchamp's creative process. The loss of the centered subject in the artist/critic dynamic enables the critic to inhabit canonical texts in order to transform, or even deform, the thought in question. The critic must find his or her way through a labyrinth generated by the artist. The critic must also find his or her own voice by deciphering a work of art as a cryptographer. Deleuze finds his own voice through a process of depersonalization as he opens himself up to multiplicities generated by a labyrinth of forms.

Later, after The Fold, Deleuze worked in collaboration with Félix Guattari to develop a concept of love as an experience of openness and depersonalization (in contrast to Derrida's notion that love is an experience of *aporia* or obstacle resulting from a plurality of meanings). My own interest stops short of examining these collaborative works, such as Deleuze and Claire Parnet's Dialogues and Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus, because many of them involve the idea of *assemblage* rather than the Fold. Dialogues defines *assemblages* as "becomings and intensities" that are "populated by intensive circulation" and "various multiplicities" (packs, masses, species, races, populations, tribes). There are several types of *assemblages*; the *collective machine assemblage* is a material production of desire as well as a chain of expression that has no subject of enunciation. Duchamp, Desnos and Loy created works that may be analyzed as *assemblages* but I am limiting my discussion to those that may be viewed as expressions of the Fold. I consider the *Large Glass* to be an expression of the Fold and *Etant donnés* to be an *assemblage*. Consequently, I focus on the *Large Glass* and not *Etant donnés*. Duchamp's motto *Eros, c'est la vie* posits an affective relationship within a "depersonalized" figuration or organizational dynamic, evident in the giving over of the artist's name and identity to Rrose Sélavy. This is just what Deleuze and Guattari were later to advocate as a positive critical practice. Dada-Surrealism, expressed specifically in literature and visual art of the World War I and interwar periods, experimented with the relationship between affectivity and depersonalization within the context of a *networked consciousness*.

Desnos explored the possibility of a *networked consciousness* as he made a transition from dadaist to surrealist. In 1922 to 1923 Desnos published his first major work "Rrose Sélavy," consisting of 150 aphorisms supposedly communicated to him in a

dream by Rrose Sélavy. Most critics associate the onset of Surrealism with the new subjectivity of Freudian psychoanalysis. In my reading of Desnos's "Rrose Sélavy," I do not consider the Freudian model of initiator/initiated (Duchamp as initiator/Desnos as initiated*)* to be an adequate description of its textual and graphic effects. The Freudian initiator/initiated model relies on the reductionism of the self/other dialectic. Moreover, this model reifies concepts of the subject, identity and individuality that naturalize the humanist fallacy of a strict binary dialectic. Desnos's "Rrose Sélavy" contains textual and graphic effects (of a combinatorial process) that challenge the "politics of the personal" limited strictly to a psychoanalytic model. Therefore, I employ a Deleuzian critique as a challenge not only to the Freudian model but to those of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and postmodernist theorist Jean-François Lyotard. Lacan's self/other dialectic is too simple and has been challenged by Luce Irigaray in Speculum de l'autre femme on the grounds that Lacan does not acknowledge history and he defines desire as "lack." (Irigaray's critique is not pursued in my study, although her ideas are commensurate with Deleuze's anti-representational stance. Irigaray's critique of western philosophy leads to Henri Bergson and to the Bergsonian anti-phenomenology of Deleuze that I discuss at length with respect to the feminist criticism of Dorothea Olkowski in Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation). As for Lyotard, the human/nonhuman dialectic in La condition postmoderne establishes the "human" as a necessary reference point for theoretical investigation. Deleuze prefers to examine how objects and ideas combine the categories of self, other, human and non-human in a single moment that escapes the traps of self/world or self/other constructs. In Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia (1972) Deleuze and Guattari oppose the Lacanian notion of desire as lack. Some readers

of this text objected to their use of the term "desiring machine;" consequently, they introduced the idea of *assemblage* in later publications.

The effect of the combinatorial in the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy may be understood as baroque traits. Desnos's "Rrose Sélavy" exemplifies the combinatorial form *par excellence* of the Fold. The many puns in this text form a network of potentialities but the randomness of the combinations undermines any attempt to totalize or systematize the citations. The pseudo-mathematical logic of "Rrose Sélavy" is, at once, a precise science and a random art. I regard its logic to be an empirical one. Because there is no single paradigm for "Rrose Sélavy," the space of the text is a cluster of effects. As for Loy, she develops hybrid forms derived through a series of nomadic border-crossings in her texts. She creates the concept of a Mongrel Rose that enables her to participate in a networked consciousness without reification of too-simple binary dialectics. My study does not consider Loy's Mongrel Rose from an autobiographical perspective, as has been done previously in several feminist studies of her works. It does, however, posit a connection between an inner reality and an external world through an operative mode of the combinatory. In examining Loy, I focus on the boundaries between two forms of expression rather than the dialectic of self and other. The encounter between verbal and visual forms of expression is made possible through the elasticity of boundaries. The concept of the *elastic* is a Deleuzian one; it offers an alternative to taking the idea of the "human" as a point of departure. The "elastic" defines the Deleuzian impulse to connect concepts through a process of expansion.

Duchamp experimented with *elasticity* as spatial transformation during his transition from Dadaism to Surrealism. On the one hand, the surrealists affirmed the "human" through the idea of an open boundary as a positive affirmation; on the other

hand, the open boundaries of the surrealists perturbed the delineation between the human and its other (i.e. the machine). Surrealist automatism, as defined by the leader of the surrealists André Breton in his first manifesto of Surrealism (1924), is "pure psychic automatism through which one proposes to express, either verbally or in writing or in any other manner, the real functioning of thought." Breton's definition of Surrealism as automatism raises questions about the elasticity of the idea of the human that we continue to debate today. Terms such as "prosthesis" and "post-human" have now become key concepts in debates about the elasticity of the idea of the human and today's critics actively debate their meaning. Feminist critic Donna Haraway discovers a positive meaning in the blurring of boundaries between the human and the inhuman. She insists that there must be accountability for the creation of biological and technological hybrids, namely "cyborgs" or human/machine hybrids. Her "cyborg manifesto" has come under attack by some feminists who view the hybrid as part of a dualist trap that posits the "human" in relation to its non-human other, thus reinforcing the dialectic self/other. I consider Haraway's call for hybridization as a means to reinforce *elasticity*, whereby no linear relationship between the human and the inhuman can be drawn. Her conceptions are, in the final analysis, not too limiting and binary. She calls for the proliferation of translations in order to support her central argument that boundaries materialize in social constructs. Finally, despite the necessity to mold, blur and deform the idea of the "human," she recognizes the persistence of vision in modernist and postmodernist culture.

In Loy's texts, we find a critique of masculine surrealist conceptions of the *elastic*, which she finds to be, in certain instances, reifications of the human as subject despite the male surrealists' "pretensions" towards scientific detachment and objectivity. Her most consistent critique of the masculine subject in Dada-Surrealism appears in the novel

entitled Insel, generally regarded by critics as a feminist commentary on Nadja (a semi-autobiographical novel first published by Breton in 1928). The opening of Nadja poses the question "Whom Do I Haunt?" as a reworking of "Who am I?" In Nadja Breton disrupts the tradition of subjectivation in art forms that only serve to obscure perceptions of reality. He opposes the "porousness" of subjective thought that generates too many ideas in the absence of an absolute. How is this different from the Leibnizian idea of a monad being spongy, porous and always full? The force of Leibniz's monadology is in the fact of individuality; Leibniz requires us to pass from the objective to the subjective standpoint because it is in *consciousness* that individuality manifests itself. Breton revised Nadja many years after its initial publication and explained that it addresses the idea of a "combat" experienced between subjectivity and objectivity.

During the course of his career, Breton adapted Freudian ideas of free association to his own notions of desire and automatic writing, such as the optimistic idea of linking objects together with a "conducting wire" (*fil conducteur*) to reconcile opposites, as well as the ideas of active admiration and participation. Duchamp, Desnos and Loy did not adhere to Freudian dogma but all three developed surrealist styles that share Breton's notions of active looking and optimistic reconciliation of opposites in the first phase of Surrealism in the 1920s. At the beginning of the 1930s Breton's ideas changed and both Desnos and Loy looked backed at the first phase of Surrealism with a more critical eye. In 1932 Breton published Les vases communicants (Communicating Vessels), a text that sums up his surrealist practice at the time of its publication. Breton structures his text as a conversation with Freud about the relationship between the intellect and everyday life. The idea of communicating vessels refers to a science experiment in which a liquid is placed in tubes that are connected at the bottom in order to obtain the equilibrium of the

liquid along a horizontal line. The liquid flows from one vessel to another. In Les vases communicants Breton proposed a method in which dream and waking, day and night, or any pair of opposites may converge into a *sublime point*. Like Freud, Breton was interested foremost in lived experience. Breton's ideas for creating a revolution of the mind became increasingly political throughout the 1930s. In 1938 Breton collaborated in Mexico with Leon Trotsky on the "Manifesto for an Independent Revolutionary Art." Because Duchamp, Desnos and Loy did not adhere to Breton's concepts in a strict manner, his work does not constitute a consistent "fourth prong" of my analysis but its relevance must be pointed out whenever it is appropriate. While Breton's second phase of Surrealism created ruptures between himself and other artists, the fissures spread sometimes like conducting wires that reached out to Duchamp, Desnos and Loy. Breton's role in the first phase of Surrealism, which is often referred to as its heroic phase, is more significant for this study because he called for active looking and participation. In his art, he subverted the traps of subjective representation and sought to liberate his thinking. Following in the steps of Mallarmé, Breton sought to free himself from clichés that petrify the creative process and he developed the method of psychic automatism as a method to reconcile binary opposites. In sum, the problem of subjective representation in Surrealism led Breton and his circle to search for a new objectivism.

In Chapter One we are going to consider the problem of subjective representation within the critical framework of Deleuze's The Fold. As a signature of the baroque aesthetic, the Fold frees the virtual from the process of actualization. A baroque painting, for example, makes possible a perception of multiple positions, since its subject is not in the painting itself. The bordering world of the painting contains the sum of all possible worlds and may be compared to the Leibnizian monad. The subject that perceives the

painting is thus situated in a virtual space, like a soul, with shifting boundaries. In this way, baroque inflection is tightly bound up with the problem of perception. Deleuze did not turn toward Freud because he thought that there was too much piling up of images in his description of the organization of the subject. He developed his own method for overcoming the distance between language and consciousness. He proposes a notion of "combat" (as does Breton) that is not dialectical but rather a means to suspend judgment and the delineation of categories. His ethics takes inspiration from the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza. Due to the vast scope of Deleuze's criticism, understanding the important relation to Spinoza would entail another study beyond this one which, instead, emphasizes Leibnizian notions.

The baroque moment, which suspends the past, present and future in a virtual flow of different layers of reality, exists only in the mind of the viewer who perceives the representation of the real as it occurs. Deleuze does not conceive of time in terms of the "present." He mentions Henri Bergson in The Fold because he adheres to a theory of the infinite division of the present. In analyzing Deleuze's conception of unfolding as a paradoxical instance, it is useful to compare and contrast his conceptions with those of Derrida (who also does not conceive of time in terms of the present). Duchamp's key notions about art involve ironic stances that expose spatio-temporal paradoxes. His ideas may be explained within the Deleuzian framework of "pragmatism," in other words, in a way of thinking that accounts for the reality of temporal and spatial change in terms of substances. He coined the term *inframince* to describe the encounter of two substances brought together. The inframince is an effect through which he constitutes the world from a situated point of view, which is a particular temporalization and spatialization. He refused to "put up with superstitious blindness" and emphasized the verbal origin of his

work. He remarked that Mallarmé was a "great figure" and modern art must return in the direction traced by him because art must be intellectual and not merely an "animal expression." Duchamp sought veracity by opening a "window onto something else," as he told Pierre Cabanne in an interview. As previously mentioned, the impetus behind the *Nude Descending a Staircase* was the desire to create movement in abstraction.

Feminist critiques of representation can benefit from Deleuzian pragmatism and Duchamp's inframince because they challenge objectivity that is only assumed to be neutral. Normative expectations must be challenged by the feminist because they represent a standpoint that has already been constructed as a site of knowledge based on accepted standards of measurement that exclude feminine (and/or minority) perspectives. The act of superimposing perspectives destabilizes representation in which the identity of the concept as center subordinates all differences. The distorting tendencies of the *Large Glass* combine the view from above with the view from below, in the sense that the work is divided into two panes of glass (an upper pane and a lower one). The *Large Glass* cracked eventually but the physical cracks improved it because they manifest distorting tendencies that challenge accepted hierarchies. Dorothea Olkowski argues in Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation that distorting tendencies have always been present in selected works of art and, to some extent, even in the work of representational artists, as the crack or the catastrophe that emerges in the midst of representation. Olkowski's argument is persuasive except for one weakness that she herself identifies in the presentation of her thesis. Her thesis focuses on the works of the visual artist Mary Kelly, whose work proposes a feminist alternative to Lacan's definition of desire as lack; Kelly's creative acts are in themselves the ruin of representation as a whole. The problem is that Olkowski's focus on visual art exclusively subordinates text to image. The need

for an interdisciplinary study of problems in representation becomes evident in reading her thesis. In order to think problematically about representation, we must open our thinking to multiple affirmations across traditional divisions of academic disciplines. Limits impose themselves upon our investigations by the fact alone of adopting a particular focus within a single discipline. Placing this issue in the foreground, Chapter Four discusses the need to adopt a "partial viewpoint" within multiple modes of inquiry (linguistic, visual, scientific, etc.). First and foremost, however, it is imperative to isolate the question of the limit itself within the "logic of multiple affirmations," and this articulation of the problem of the limit constitutes the starting point for Chapter Two.

In Chapter Two the problem of the limit and the logic of the infinite is addressed primarily in relation to surrealist poetics. Surrealism's love of juxtaposition entails a process of formalizing the informal that may be compared to the baroque tension between "infinite expansion" and "formal constraint." Deleuze offers a new relation with logic that affirms the powers of thought. To affirm life, in his view, is never to affirm a proposition or thesis about life but to engage in another "nonassertional" (and therefore "passive"?) style of thinking; to affirm is then to *disburden* or *lighten* in order to attain the innocence of other possibilities. His logic is not one of justified belief or warranted assertability but a matter of pushing the question of belief beyond the assurance of knowledge or faith to what he calls a *belief in the world*. Affirmation requires a belief or trust in the world beyond what one is warranted to assert.

A Deleuzian reading of Desnos and Loy provides a method to access the open form of their poetry. Deleuze proposes that one should read an image just as one reads a text, such that illusionism and writing "fold" or dovetail into one another. Most of Desnos's texts present a theater of illusions; in "Désespoir du soleil" Desnos avoids

making traditional categorical separations between elements in favor of a baroque labyrinth of connections. He confronts empirical conceptions similar to those conceived of later by Deleuze. Many of Loy's texts may be read as the folding of illusionism with writing, particularly her "Songs to Joannes" and "Lunar Baedeker."

Chapter Three situates the discussions begun in the two previous chapters more specifically within the historical context of World War I scientific and technological developments. Vision entails a "topography of subjectivity" that is multidimensional because it requires instruments that mediate particular stances or vantage points. Paul Virilio's thesis in Esthétique de la disparition identifies a progressive disintegration of faith in perception as a consequence of World War I. Vision became "accidental" during World War I and the logistics of perception delocalized geometric optics. After the trauma of the war, people could no longer believe their eyes. When the eye becomes indifferent through demobilization, the mind can no longer determine the veracity of what it perceives. Not being able to grasp what lies ahead destroys the "map of the I can." Despite the "machinery of transfer," to borrow Virilio's words, one gets no closer to the productive unconscious of sight. Thus, he finds it no longer possible to arrive at an "optical unconscious" necessary as an underpinning for subjective representation. Virilio maintains that the disintegration of sight is evident in modernist painting; it is even obvious in Pointillism because the observer has to focus his or her eye on the painting exactly as with an optical apparatus. He is convinced that it reached a limit with Duchamp's retinal stimulators and Mondrian's Op Art. He concludes his thoughts with Duchamp's statement that every painting exists in the mind before it materializes on the canvas but something is always lost in the process; this statement implies that Duchamp opposed the aesthetic of "making a spectacle out of the fleeting" in his *Nude Descending*

a Staircase and the *Large Glass*. Is the sense of sight unproductive in Duchamp's work? Virilio makes a sweeping claim that the surrealists never attained a "productive unconscious sight" but only an unconscious. How do the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy support or refute Virilio's claim?

Subjectivity depends on the persistence of vision, if not the productive unconscious of sight. This poses the additional problem that vision can never truly be infinite. While Virilio acknowledges the fact that vision can never be infinite, he does not sufficiently understand Duchamp's project of interweaving vision, language and thought. Although I support most of Virilio's claims about the aesthetics of disappearance, I cannot accept his opinion that Duchamp's retinal stimulators reduce vision to a Morse code message. Duchamp's retinal stimulators are optical illusions that allow visualization of the process of interpretation that would normally be unconscious, since optical illusions cause vision to become regressive. In the 1920s Duchamp concerned himself with precision optics and produced many optical illusions. He experimented with the medium of film and produced *Anémic Cinéma* (1926), in which he alternated optical illusions with verbal puns in the form of a spiral. These "optical illusions" present an apparent contradiction to his rejection of the retinal tradition. In 1935 he created "rotoreliefs" that appear to be three-dimensional when displayed on a rotation surface (for example, the turntable of a phonograph). When the rotoreliefs are set in motion, they display a pulsating "relief" that oscillates between positive and negative space. He tried to stimulate the productive unconscious of sight through the liminality of optical illusions. His retinal stimulators challenge psychoanalytic models, in my opinion, by creating "indeterminate" visual effects. It is important to consider the use of Morse-code dashes in his writings that accompany the *Large Glass*. Furthermore, Loy made use of frequent

dashes in her texts. Their experimentation with Morse code effects is indicative of new perceptions of time and space. Similarly, Desnos experimented with dashes and brackets, and spatio-temporalization as a whole, in the series of texts collected under the title "L'Aumonyme."

At the beginning of the twentieth century, parallel developments in physics, especially Einstein's theory of relativity, psychology, philosophy, mathematics, communication and transportation methods altered the perception of time and space. Visual artists and poets explored the inner worlds of subjective visions and manipulated form, space, time and color. This new ordering of space and time is constituted through the open network of science, nature, language, and the unconscious mind. Transforming the inner world into a reality parallels the baroque aspiration to "realize" reality in illusion. Whereas Chapter One focuses on how Surrealism's proponents find themselves at odds with Freudian conceptions, such as the "uncanny," Chapter Three foregrounds the larger confrontation between psychoanalysis and empirical objectivity that produced friction within artistic circles. In Chapter Three Loy's non-Freudian conception of instinct as avalanche is analyzed within the scientific and socio-cultural contexts of Dada-Surrealism. At this point, the idea of "avalanche" may be viewed in relation to "complex folding and unfolding," since, as Deleuze claims, this may be used to explain sudden or catastrophic events in natural geography. Thus, a material-libidinal connection develops in Loy's work that may be understood in terms of, or as a precursor to, the functioning of the fold/unfold. Loy's texts problematize Freudian notions about instinct, and, being aware of this conflict herself, Loy met Freud personally and formulated her own ideas about instinct from a feminist perspective. Her "Giovanni Franchi," in which a composite

figure of "threewomen" represents three different instincts, offers a critique of Freudian notions of instinct in the form of satire.

In Chapter Four Loy's reevaluation of instinct and intuition serves as a point of departure for looking at modernist and postmodernist ideas about feminist objectivity. The evaluation of instinct and intuition makes it possible to gage changes in materialist thought, science and technology at the rise of modernism. The popular cinema, along with scientific and technological developments, shaped a modern double consciousness. Did it also shape a productive feminine consciousness or unconsciousness? Deleuze's arguments in The Fold about instinct and intuition led him to pursue the cinema and Bergsonism. Which concepts in The Fold relate to the cinema and how may we use them to comprehend both the development of modernist and postmodernist (or post-structuralist) feminism? Donna Haraway remarks that the split and contradictory self is the one that can interrogate positioning and be accountable and, as such, splitting is the privileged image for feminist epistemologies. Haraway maintains that the boundaries of objects materialize in social interaction; objects do not pre-exist mapping projects. Objects themselves are boundary projects since boundaries shift from within. Objectivity entails risk-taking in a world where there is no final control and, therefore, the sighting/siting of boundaries is a risky practice. The persistence of vision, as Haraway has defined it, offers an alternative to the passivity of vision implied by infinite mobility and interchangeability. Active perceptual "systems" (Haraway's word) that elaborate specificity and difference may offer possible allegories of feminist subjectivity. Haraway places irony at the center of her feminist manifesto, the cyborg manifesto, which aims to integrate science, technology and politics (socialism, feminism, etc.). Within this context, the significance of irony in the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy will be examined.

Despite Loy's acceptance of irony as a textual strategy, she faces the problem of representation as a logic that depends on the solidities of extended labyrinths and mirrored forms. Her intuitive powers lead her to affirm the rhythms of change in life. Loy goes beyond Bergson and moves in the direction of Deleuze to recover fluidity and think through the logic of life's many rhythms. For Bergson, the materiality of language creates poetic sentiments that burst into distinct verses, lines and words. His theory of co-existing pieces has a pragmatic design that may be applied to "piecing together countries" as well as thoughts. Bergson advocated the establishment of political organizations to restore peaceful co-existence among countries. In fact, the British and French governments sent Bergson on a secret mission to inform President Woodrow Wilson of their support for the founding of the League of Nations. Unfortunately, France and England promised support for the League only if the United States would join the Allies in fighting the battles of World War I. Bergson did eventually participate in the newly established League as chairman of the Committee for International Intellectual Cooperation in 1923-24 before an abrupt decline in his health. Despite his political aims, Dorothea Olkowski argues convincingly that Bergson's full attention seemed to be focused on the heterogeneity of duration and the homogeneity of space. Bergson viewed the "word" as free and transferable from "thing" to "memory" to "image" to "idea" but he could only conclude that the forms language applies to these entities are those meant for material objects. Deleuze, however, goes further than Bergson in exploring the affective content of poetic sentiment. Olkowski analyzes how Deleuze's ontology of change enters the whole of virtual memory by pushing deep into the passionate creativity memory actualizes. She emphasizes that at the end of Bergsonism, in the passage where Deleuze writes about the genesis of intelligence in intuition, he values action and creation

over contemplation. For Deleuze, everything happens as if intelligence were already imbued with emotion.

Creative action requires emotion in order to accede to open creative totality. The poet seeks to "affirm life in life" while bearing witness to the disappearance of an event. Through the emotive force of memory, Duchamp, Desnos and Loy gain access to a poetics that frees the virtual from its everyday functions. In 1924 Desnos proposed a method to free forms with closed eyes through automatic drawing. The chaos of figures takes free rein of a sheet of paper in the intuitional process of automatic drawing. Parisian artistic salons opened themselves up to such adventures of the mind. Loy shared her intuitions with Parisian circles in a series of poetry readings. In 1927 she read her "Apology of Genius" at the famous salon of Natalie Clifford Barney, a lesbian expatriate writer and feminist. "Apology of Genius" intuited "curious disciplines" beyond the laws of the status quo. Barney, being very moved by Loy's reading, translated the text in French. (It was Loy's first text to be translated into French.) In Aventures de l'esprit (1929), a series of portraits of modern artists, Barney recounts that Loy offers an apology of genius and an entire prismatic poetry that she manages to escape by a perception of a "fourth dimension." Barney shows her insight into Loy's strategy of subverting the traps of thinking by reabsorbing identity as difference. Barney's allusion to a "fourth dimension" is a metaphor for the powers of the imagination, artistic license and an aspiration towards the infinite. The idea of the "fourth dimension" circulated among intellectuals and artists of the day, including Duchamp in particular. Aside from its metaphorical meaning, Duchamp explored the scientific possibility of creating a "fourth dimension." This permitted him to bring the domains of art and science together, as did

many of the surrealists, in an effort to envision a new spatio-temporal relationship that escapes spatial and temporal subjectivation.

Today we acknowledge Duchamp as one of the first major artists to relate the new scientific laws of relativity to his art. At the time of the outbreak of World War I, Albert Einstein's theory of relativity was being discussed in the popular press. Loy and Desnos would have been among those who read about relativity in the newspapers. Around this time Duchamp created a work of art entitled Three Standard Stoppages that, in fact, mocks the new conception of space-time by suggesting that a standard meter may be modified through time and space. In his notes explaining the idea behind Three Standard Stoppages Duchamp writes that a "horizontal thread one meter in length falls from a height of one meter onto a horizontal plane while twisting as it pleases and creates a new image of the unit of length." To mock an idea, however, is to engage with it and assess its seriousness. This is the purpose of irony and this explains why Duchamp gave an ironic twist to scientific notions throughout his career. Soon after Three Standard Stoppages Duchamp began the *Large Glass* project and, eventually, he was to declare it "definitively unfinished." He remarked later that society insists on a work being finished. For art critics, the work's completion—generally agreed upon as happening in the year 1923—coincided with the beginning of Surrealism's first phase. Duchamp's reason for declaring the *Large Glass* unfinished is that it proposes a life of chance that transforms "life into art" and "art into life" ad infinitum.

Feminists take an interest now in the *Large Glass* because it changes the way we view ourselves and our relation to space-time. In this project Duchamp shifted to a non-representational image of time that subverts the traps that have traditionally defined subjectivity. In my opinion, this shift to a non-representational image has an important

correlation with the cinema and the development of visual prostheses and apparatuses. Bergson's concept of the cinematographic image remains pertinent to feminist debates because it concerns a non-representational image of time, as well as an active synthesis of memory. Some feminists, such as Tamsin Lorraine, prefer to work with more of a Dada-inspired *nonsense* (that manifests itself in the nonsensical verbal play of Tristan Tzara's texts) than surrealist notions of "passivity" and "activity." Indeed, many years after The Fold Deleuze studied Lewis Carroll's nonsensical writing in Alice and Wonderland (which can be found in his The Logic of Sense). I find more value for feminist arguments in the surrealist surpassing of Dada *nonsense*. Therefore, I chose to escape the dialectical strategy of subjectivation by not taking the active human subject as a point of departure. Branka Arsić searches for a "passivity that would go beyond the difference between activity and passivity." Arsić's new concept of passivity shows how Deleuze's ultimate critique of Leibniz has significance for feminists (let me reiterate that for Leibniz no passivity can ever be possible in the monad). I find this notion of passivity to be relevant to Loy's strategy in her novel Insel where she comments that the passivity of the male surrealists enables her to *see her own passivity* more clearly. In this way, Loy exposes the active looking propagated by Breton as being only a *degree* of passivity (a difference in *degree*, not in *kind*, which is a Bergsonian distinction). Her strategy of learning through *passivity* has an affinity with Arsić's attempt to envision a "passivity that would go beyond the difference between activity and passivity." The reliance on a prosthetic or new apparatus like the movie camera entails passivity but it permits a new possibility of vision that does not continue the perverse dialectic between the human and its others. The cinema slowly evolved in this direction; hence the title of my first chapter, "The Poetics of Eclipse." It implies a detachment from the retinal tradition and prepares

us to encounter Duchamp, who, in turn, prepares us to grapple with a new conception of "post-human" culture. The upside of thinking in terms of the eclipse would be that new possibilities arise when we no longer measure space and time starting from the human. Michelangelo Antonioni's 1962 L'Eclisse (The Eclipse) follows Duchamp's lead in showing its spectator a world where the representation of the human no longer finds its place. This development of a *time-image*, as Deleuze was to define it in Cinema 2, goes beyond the period I am analyzing (which concentrates more on the *movement-image* in his Cinema 1) but it is the ultimate expression of how the possibilities of cinema open up when human beings no longer become the point of departure or continue to be the measure of themselves.

My task would not be complete without addressing the additional concern that we do not want to eclipse affectivity; nor do we want to create cyborgs that still posit an all-too simple dialectic between the human and its other (or multiple others). Feminists disagree about how to work through the traps of binary oppositions. The idea of a cyborg proves limiting for some feminists who prefer to think in terms of "hives," "herds" and "networked consciousness" as a way to undermine the dialectic of self/other or human/other. I do not prefer concepts of the "hive" and "herd" to Haraway's cyborg. Haraway herself takes care to emphasize that the relation between the human and the non-human is not a linear one. Deleuze describes the situation of perception as the event of the approach of an "army" or "herd" under what he refers to as a "hallucinated gaze." This perception of a cluster within the delocalized optic of a "hallucinated gaze" is a common characteristic in surrealist texts and visual art. Androids (humans transformed into machines, such as typewriters) and cyborgs (human/machine hybrids) form part of surrealist strategies to disrupt the overly simplistic embodiment/disembodiment

opposition. Duchamp, Desnos and Loy created projects of networked consciousness that do not take their departure in the human/other dialectic but in elasticity, connectivity, maps, diagrams, and collective relations. Surrealist experimentation with the cinema developed further strategies to overturn linear relations between the human and its other (or others). Desnos's texts introduce his readers to the nomadic conception of a herd, as in his text about a "flower of love" and "migratory horses" ("De la fleur d'amour et des cheveux migrateurs"). The depersonalization inherent in the mentality of the herd is part of the process that leads the reader to experience the emotion of love in Desnos's text. As for Loy, in order to find her voice, she experiments with a networked consciousness in her view of the artist as a medium (i.e. an impersonal transmitter of ideas to be communicated to the public). The artist as medium is a surreal idea that most critics associate with Duchamp and Desnos but few connect to Loy. How is her concept of the artist as medium similar or different to those of Duchamp and Desnos?

Duchamp's *Three Standard Stoppages*, previously mentioned in terms of relativity, developed into a *Network of Stoppages* (early 1914). In *Network of Stoppages* three compositions are superimposed on a canvas, the uppermost layer of which is a view of nine "capillary tubes" with numbered circles drawn using the template of the *Three Standard Stoppages* three times. In *Network of Stoppages* there are also nine "malic moulds" that display an effort to mold the human male figure into a different form. These nine anthropomorphic figures become further transformed in the *Large Glass* into nine shapes that map out the domain of bachelors without representing them completely as humans. Does a similar evolution take place conceptually in Loy's works? "Human Cylinders" (circa 1915) interrogates the question of singularity in a world that opposes humankind to the machine by inventing a new form of hybrid, as the title name suggests,

the "human cylinder." The idea of a network begins to take shape in the text as the "frenzied reaching out of intellect to intellect." In her text "Songs to Joannes" a networked consciousness develops in the idea of a shuttling or relay of information. In one of the final texts of her literary career, Loy searches for a feminine voice by identifying with a bee in a hive ("Mass-Production on 14th Street). She participates as a feminist in a cyborg consciousness, as well as in the networked consciousness of the herd. Therefore, her works show that we can support both the cyborg and the open network as feminist strategies to subvert the perverse fallacy inherent to binary structures.

Duchamp experimented with an open network and declared art to be definitively unfinished. Desnos pursued the possibility of poetic language beyond the imposition of forms, even beyond surrealist forms. His Corps et biens juxtaposes "bodies" in the plural to "goods," and, thus, avoids a too-simple human/inhuman binary distinction. Loy's The Lost Lunar Baedeker, deemed by some critics to be written in a form of Esperanto, opens up language to multiplicities. Resisting society's demand for closure in a work of art, the possibility of Esperanto declares all language to be an open-ended process of creation. Her "guidebook to the moon" or "lunar Baedeker," Baedeker being a German travel guide popular in her day, makes a demand for both a new language and media in an age of machines. We might suggest, also, that her lunar Baedeker offers a new adaptation of the Leibnizian Book and the Mallarméan Book with a twist of the imaginative quality of Jules Verne and other science fiction writers. As for Duchamp, his science-fiction inspired coupling of living tissue and metal in the *Large Glass* results in a form that is intelligent but not completely conscious. In the *Large Glass* the human body is blurred, molded and transformed by technology and culture. Duchamp, Desnos and Loy may be regarded as twentieth-century explorers who confront new territories and bodies made of

machines, images, and information. Their works of art create "cultural" bodies in a world inhabited by machines; these machines were to evolve eventually into postmodern cyborgs, clones, genetically modified animals, and innumerable species of human/information hybrids. Deleuze and Haraway remain relevant to our understanding of how science and technology transformed the way we perceive the world. The human/machine entanglement altered the lives and works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy and this new relation continues to change our lives today. In my opinion, feminists have not gone beyond Haraway's cyborg manifesto and we still need her terms to make the new cultural biology intelligible, whether or not we choose to label it as "post-human."

CHAPTER ONE: THE POETICS OF ECLIPSE

Stéphane Mallarmé's "Un coup de dés" explores the role of catastrophe in the genesis of a poetic image or sensation. "Un coup de dés" opposes the fixity of the cliché to the indeterminacy of chance. The idea of a shipwreck generates a nonlinear ordering of the perceptual space of the text. Mallarmé works within a crisis of the linear model whose collapse opens up the spatial field of the text. The postmodernist critic Gilles Deleuze takes up the Mallarméan notion of the fold in order to free textual space from the cliché and to undo the optical organization of the synthesis of perception. Deleuze's theories delve into the heart of the Leibnizian Baroque and posit an empirical solution to the rational organization of space. Marcel Duchamp's works oppose retinal "stupidity" whereby the sensual appeal of the painterly aesthetic obfuscates religious, moral, philosophical or other functions of visual art. Duchamp's *Large Glass* and its many accompanying notes (known as the "Box" of 1913-1914) experiment with the multidimensional space of the fold. The "glass" must not be "looked at" in the aesthetic sense of the word but should be considered in conjunction with the box of notes which Duchamp refers to as the "book."[1] An incessant movement or *va-et-vient* between glass and book generates a dynamic interplay, as conceptualized in the Mallarméan idea of a "solitaire tacite concert [qui] se donne, par la lecture."[2] Just as Mallarmé harnesses the force of a hurricane at sea, Duchamp transforms the forces of gravity and wind into perceptible inner realities of the mind. Because convention presents an obstacle to the genesis of thought, a painter must strive to capture the *appleyness* of apples or the folded masses of energy in a mountain, as Cézanne succeeded in doing in the nineteenth century. Duchamp believed that twentieth-century painters were "completely retinal" except for the surrealists.[3]

Duchamp proclaimed that "it was much better to be influenced by a writer than by another painter."[4] He made this comment regarding the influence of Raymond Roussel's Impressions d'Afrique on his artistic development but, ironically, it was not Roussel's text that interested Duchamp. As Calvin Tomkins points out, Roussel's attitude towards creativity appealed to Duchamp because it valued the "madness of the unexpected." Roussel created artistic works "out of nowhere" that bore no resemblance to those of his predecessors.[5] Writing that comes from out of the blue can only consist of nonsensical wordplay. Despite Roussel's claim at originality, one could compare his writing to Flaubert's Madame Bovary, known as the novel "about nothing." Duchamp grew up in Normandy and one might easily discern Flaubert's influence on him, as well. Julia Dür's critical look at the relation between literature and painting in Duchamp's works does not restrict his remark about the influence of writers to Roussel or any writer in particular. As she explains, it is not a question of adhering to a single model of writing but of the interaction between painting and literature in general. In her opinion, Duchamp's remark expresses a desire to "erase the borders between different arts."[6] Duchamp informed Cabanne that he did not completely understand Mallarmé, which implies that his poetry is very difficult; then Duchamp followed up with the contradictory remark that Mallarmé "is a bit too simple for those who understand him well" (Cabanne 105). In light of such remarks, one must conclude that conversations with Duchamp do not always lead to a complete understanding of his works. Mallarmé's ideas of infinity and chance fascinated Duchamp when he read, undoubtedly, the line from "Le Minuit" in "Igitur" where the poet speaks of "Chaos de l'ombre avorté et de la parole qui absolut Minuit." Arturo Schwarz has interpreted the interdependence of chance and infinity in Mallarmé as the paradox of "infinity [derived] from chance that has been denied."[7] Schwarz argues that

this paradox can be explained by androgynous psychic patterns found in myth. Schwarz does not suggest that Duchamp experienced an "anxiety of influence" (in the sense of Harold Bloom) from Mallarmé but that a stock of mythological symbols creates unconscious patterns in the artist's psyche. Duchamp acknowledged the relevance of fragmented patterns to the creative process but he emphasized his obsession with pieces of glass more directly than mythological symbols. He claimed to have formulated the main concept of a nonlinear system based on chance while pondering shards of glass. He observed that "a stained glass window that has fallen out and lay more or less together on the ground is of far greater interest than the thing conventionally composed *in situ*."[8]

Rather than compare Duchamp's ideas to those of other painters, it would be more in keeping with his frame of mind to understand his works in their relation to literature. The texts of two poets in particular—Mina Loy and Robert Desnos—illuminate Duchamp's works as they are in turn illuminated by them. Although Loy acquired a reputation as a painter and Desnos composed many drawings and watercolors, their poetic texts engage a marvelous dynamic of verbal and visual play that calls for an interdisciplinary method of analysis. Mapping out the tangents where the works of Duchamp, Loy and Desnos intersect shapes a new reality that posits a fourth dimension. This virtual reality presents itself in the form of baroque irony and surprise that surpasses traditional expectations. Such an effect of irony and surprise is created in the exchange of gazes between the figures of Velázquez's *Three Musicians* (currently in Berlin's Gemäldegalerie). The picture plane is divided into intersecting diagonals formed by the different directions of the gazes but the most youthful musician looks out beyond the limits of the canvas into the space of the spectator. He grins at the spectator who is surprised to discover a fourth figure in the composition; there is a monkey on his back.

The spectator grins in turn to affirm the ironic performance of audible silence. The "virtual" music of *Three Musicians* is a baroque conception that Mallarmé later developed into the notion of reading poetry as a "solitaire tacite concert." Picasso's Synthetic Cubism culminated in his own "solitaire tacite concert" with his 1921 *Three Musicians* (one of two existing versions can be found at the Museum of Modern Art in New York). Picasso's opaque colors and abstract shapes form a two-dimensional "flat" collage whose performativity is derived less from irony than from the circularity of the sign, as Rosalind Krauss has noted in her analysis of Picasso in The Picasso Papers. (In The Picasso Papers Krauss looks at the relationship between Picasso and Mallarmé. Her argument is indebted to Jacques Derrida's "The Double Session," which deconstructs the Mallarméan concept of the Fold. From Derrida's explanation of the Mallarméan Fold, Krauss concludes that Picasso ultimately diverges from this concept.) Unlike Picasso's version, at the center of Velázquez's painting one discovers the illusion of a transparent glass of wine achieved through the opaque medium of oil paint. The viewer's attention is riveted away from the three figures to the transparent wine glass raised up by the hand of the musician in a gesture towards the Infinite. Duchamp may be distinguished from Picasso on the basis of his baroque qualities.[9] As opposed to looking at opaque signs fragmented in a flat collage, the viewer looks both "through" and "at" Duchamp's *Large Glass*. One looks at the fountain visibly spurting forth its exuberance form the courtyard of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and not the figures painted on the *Large Glass*. The ironic effect transforms transparency into opaqueness. Loy's fascination with stained glass from her early childhood contributed to the shaping of a poetic consciousness that has an affinity with that of the Duchampian looking glass. Looking at stained glass taught Loy how to go beyond satisfying the eye with normative expectations. Loy conceived of

art as a Divine Joke, as she noted in *The Blind Man* (the dadaist "little magazine"): *Art is the Divine Joke, and any Public . . . can see a nice easy simple joke such as the sun.* Loy counted Duchamp among her friends; in contradistinction, Desnos never met either of them in person. His predilection for Mallarméan shipwrecks and baroque folds led him to obsess over the possibility of encountering Duchamp in the mirrors of a dream. At once lucid and delirious, the baroque texts of Desnos transform painterly chiaroscuro effects into the voluminous folds of poetic desire. His experiments with automatism channeled these recurring obsessions beyond reality into surreality, as though the wind were being funneled down a corridor or oil into a machine. Desnos published essays about empiricism, language and eroticism that brought together the unlike domains of art and science. Rejecting Freud on the basis that instinct unleashes an avalanche of sensations, Loy desired that her poetry explode with what she called "seismic" activity. The interference of the visual and the verbal in Desnos, and in Loy and Duchamp as well, generates convulsive energy.

Loy's son-in-law Julien Levy became an important art dealer in New York during the prime years of Surrealism, a fact that encouraged her participation in mostly male artistic circles. In "Duchampiana" Levy issued a warning to people against the pitfalls of assessing Duchamp's work based on what he does <u>not</u> do and on what he has <u>not</u> said. Duchamp had a way of becoming the opposite of what he set about to be. If he intended to create indifference in an object of art, it became a full-blown scandal. Duchamp has been considered as the painter who refused to paint; he has also enjoyed the equivocal status of an iconoclast well-versed in iconography. He studied Da Vinci's concept of pyramidal vision but he mocked the master's icon by painting a goatee and moustache on his own *Mona Lisa* painting. Despite the iconoclasm of the *Mona Lisa*, the gesture of the

pointing hand in the composition of his painting *Tu m'* recalls Da Vinci's hand gestures in paintings like *Madonna of the Rocks, St. John the Baptist* and *The Last Supper*. In *St. John the Baptist* John points upward to a higher dimension, as does Thomas in *The Last Supper*. An extra "disembodied" hand holds a knife in *The Last Supper* to prefigure the death of Christ. A composition of three hand gestures in *Madonna of the Rocks* combines the precision of anatomical drawing with allegory: Mary's hand hovers over the Christ child in protection, an angel points at John, and Christ points both at John and upward towards a higher dimension. The merging of science and anatomy heightens the tension in the hand gesture, not unlike the tension in the two fingers of God and Adam pointing at each other—almost touching but separated—in Michelangelo's *Creation of Man*. The two fingers point at a virtual point that creates an equilibrium between God and Man. The fingers are portrayed with anatomical precision, as are the muscular bodies of God and Man, but the tension of the pointing fingers conveys the idea of an invisible presence or life force sparked by God. The tension in the hand gestures in the works of Da Vinci and Michelangelo expresses a desire to separate the inner depth of the human real from the layer of external appearances. Duchamp confronted the fact that a canvas is already filled with visual clichés of normative expectations but like baroque or mannerist artists he asked his spectators to go beyond outer appearances to discover the inner reality of the mind. What one sees habitually when observing a nude in a painting is a figure derived from the normative expectations of shared learning. Duchamp conveyed this concept to the spectator in his series of nude paintings, particularly in *Nude Descending a Staircase*.

Nude Descending a Staircase exists in several versions that expose the tension between a creative act and normative expectations. Duchamp had intended to exhibit his first *Nude* at the 1912 *Section d'Or* exhibition at the *Galerie de la Boëtie* in Paris. This

exhibit introduced a style of Cubism that diverged from that of Picasso and Braque. The artists who exhibited at the *Section d'Or* identified themselves as the Puteaux Group. Puteaux, a suburb of Paris, may be found on today's map of Paris near La Défense. All of the artists who met at Puteaux were interested in the rational organization of a painted canvas derived from the ancient idea of the Golden Section. In 1911 the painter and printmaker Jacques Villon discovered a recent translation of Da Vinci's *Trattato della pittura* which explained how forms may be divided into pyramids to achieve greater solidity. The Puteaux group came to prominence after its controversial show at the *Salon des Indépendants* in 1911 and the 1912 *Section d'Or* exhibit. The members of the Puteaux group distanced themselves physically from the center of Paris by meeting on Sundays at the garden or in Villon's studio. Villon was Duchamp's older brother; he used an alias in honor of the medieval poet Villon and a character named Jacques from a Daudet novel. Another one of Duchamp's brothers named Raymond Duchamp-Villon met with the group regularly. The three Duchamp sisters (Suzanne, Yvonne and Magdeleine) posed often as models. Suzanne became a dadaist painter and actively participated in Duchamp's artistic circle. His brothers knew the entire set of the *Salon d'Automne* and there were frequent visitors like Jean Cocteau at the Puteaux group meetings. Sometimes the group met on Tuesdays in Courbevoie at the home of Albert Gleizes. Visual artists and poets alike attended the fraternal conversations, including: Juan Gris, Roger de La Fresnaye, František Kupka, Albert Gleizes, Jean Metzinger, Fernand Léger, Francis Picabia, Guillaume Apollinaire,[10] Gabrielle Buffet, Olivier Hourcade, Maurice Raynal, Pierre Reverdy, Louis Marcoussis, Henri Le Fauconnier, André Salmon and Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes. Despite Duchamp's move to New York in 1915 the three brothers remained in contact between 1910 and 1918 (the trio

being disrupted when Duchamp-Villon died of typhoid fever during his service as an army doctor at the end of World War I). The brothers played chess together and exchanged ideas among themselves and then with other artists in the group. Duchamp-Villon's sculpture *Horse* (1914) explores modern dynamism by resisting the representation of an animal, an idea that Duchamp advocated also as a reaction to Fauvism. The sculpture's construction of the form of a horse is effectuated through shafts and pistons. Duchamp was to become interested in how physical forces could move pistons and other mechanical parts of a machine. His interests resembled those of his brother Duchamp-Villon more than those of adherents to the manifestos of Futurism. Duchamp-Villon believed that art should "reveal the vibration of thought itself" and "provoke states of consciousness unexpected or unknown."[11] This idea accorded well with Duchamp's interest in going against the grain. He acknoweledged his lack of interest in Futurism at this time in an interview with Pierre Cabanne. Duchamp toyed equally with ideas of Villon who made paintings and prints with crosshatchings, shifting outlines and dynamic planes.

Ruth Brandon's Surreal Lives offers a biographical interpretation of Duchamp's artistic development. She mentions the influence of the Puteaux group; however, she does not analyze in depth the theories and works of the Puteaux group. Her analysis leaps quickly to the 1912 *Section d'Or* exhibit where the Puteaux group refused to accept Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*. His *Nude* was turned away from the exhibit on the grounds that its geometry distorted the composition in a manner "other than Cubism."[12] Duchamp broke with the Puteaux Group at this time and became a librarian. He described his feelings afterwards in an interview with Cabanne. He comments that people like Gleizes, "who were, nevertheless extremely intelligent, found that this 'Nude'

wasn't in the line that they had predicted" (17). Duchamp was not attacking the Puteaux group but the problem of normative expectations. Apparently, his brothers had only urged him to change the name of the *Nude Descending a Staircase* submitted at the *Section d'Or*. Ribemont-Dessainges expresses support of Duchamp for his superior studies of the mathematical theories of non-Euclidean geometry. He reports that Duchamp discussed mathematical ideas with the other members of the Puteaux group but Duchamp's attitude was viewed as "going too far" in challenging traditional views about art; it could not be accommodated within an established school of thought or artistic movement.[13] Some of the mathematical ideas that Ribemont-Dessainges mentions came from a high-school math teacher (Maurice Princet) whom Duchamp considered to be a "fake mathematician."[14] Despite the confusing label of "fake" in regards to Princet, Duchamp commented later in less ambiguous terms that the movement of form in time "ushered us into geometry and mathematics" so that the artist came to resemble the engineer who builds a machine. Duchamp would invent a Bachelor Machine in the spirit of a modern Da Vinci (as noted by Katherine Dreier).[15] If this associates Duchamp with an established school, it is not quite what he intended. His experiments with machines were still in the germ at the time of the *Nude*. It is important to note that his *Nude* was accepted[16] without much stir by the Dalmau Gallery in Barcelona. The fact that it did not upset the public meant that it did not overturn norms and was misunderstood. Duchamp would eventually look towards New York for a venue that would accomodate his desire to jolt the public beyond its normative expectations.

Duchamp's relationship with the Puteaux group involves more than the events of the 1912 exhibit. Understanding how the members of the Puteaux group diverged from the style of Cubism found in Picasso and Braque offers valuable insight into the shaping

of Duchamp's artistic development. Innis Howe Shoemaker's Jacques Villon and His Cubist Prints explains how the theories of the Puteaux group relate to their artistic works. Villon's prints, aquatint etchings and drypoint etchings merit some discussion because they analyze and perfect constructions first developed in his paintings. Villon's precise constructions were often formed by illuminated pyramids that became pure abstractions of motion. The graphic medium enabled Villon to move away from retinal painting and become more analytical. In *La Table servie* Villon substituted black and white lines for color values. His 1910 *Bal du Moulin Rouge* opens up the operatic space with baroque diagonals formed by the balcony and the orchestra box; its chiaroscuro shading casts dark shadows over white spaces. Villon began shading his geometric surfaces in 1912 to create a veil of parallel crosshatchings through infinite tonal variations in order to achieve greater solidity. As previously mentioned, Villon had discovered Da Vinci's *Trattato della pittura* that advocated dividing forms into volumes based on the Golden Section. Perhaps this experimentation inspired the perspectival play of the Bride's Veil in Duchamp's *Large Glass*. Villon's 1913 *Portrait d'acteur* shows more experimentation with diagonal lines, volume, directional movement, and contrasts of black and white planes. The same year Villon painted a tightrope walker (*L'Equilibriste*) whose downward trajectory is constituted through a simultaneity of viewpoints similar to that of Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* painted a year earlier. By 1920 Villon had mastered a graphic means for creating volumes through the cubist faceting of planes, as evident in his *Baudelaire au socle* based on Duchamp-Villon's sculpture shown in the 1913 Armory Show. The bust had been the topic of many conversations at Puteaux during the 1910s. Villon remarked "that if Baudelaire's bust were to explode, it would do so along certain lines of force."[17] Shoemaker finds it remarkable that Villon

"approximates in black and white gradations of tone characteristic of light falling on sculptural planes" with only the "microscopic differentiation in density and spacing of lines" (48). A chessboard emerges from the darkness in the 1920 *Table d'échecs* (*The Chessboard*) as if floating to the top of a "pool of impenetrable darkness" (46). Villon claimed that his technique of "constructive decomposition" in *Table d'échecs* was an extension of his application of Da Vinci's pyramidal vision (46). Duchamp had been experimenting with stacked planes of color in the "receding diamond shapes" that may be observed in the 1918 *Tu m'* (46). He had already been extending the application of cubist techniques to express the infinite thought processes of the mind in paintings like *Portrait of Chess Players* (1911). *Portrait of Chess Players* composes a network of abstract forms that correspond to his brothers' inner thoughts as they play a game of chess. A virtual chess games emerges from the canvas like a rushing train of abstraction. Villon's chessboard composition may be understood as abstract thought emerging from the obscurity of the mind. His constructive decomposition in *Table d'échecs* consists of stacked planes infused with light and color like Duchamp's *Tu m'* painted two years earlier. The two paintings superimpose layers of colored planes. Villon organizes his picture plane from a "view from above." Duchamp constructs a lateral or diagonal thrust of movement and takes more of an interest in the concept of cast shadows (an idea related to non-Euclidean representation). Furthermore, the protruding bristle brush makes the aerial perspective of the colored planes recede in the viewer's eye. Shoemaker maintains that Villon's use of the "view from above" took its inspiration from geographical relief maps, made of superimposed layers of paper that the artist had encountered during his service in World War I (46). Duchamp did not serve in the war and did not have the same exposure to the designs from a camouflage unit as did his brother. Duchamp had

probably learned of aerial perspectives from military photographs at the same time as his brother. Perhaps Duchamp's play with the protruding brush is a form of resistance to the dominating vantage point of the aerial perspective exploited by the military. Stein's double narrator (Stein/Toklas) in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas splits point of view, as does the "tu" and the "me" in Duchamp's painting, and provides a critique of modern art that derives its collage aesthetic from the layering of colors and planes used in various military tactics of camouflage.[18]

In 1911 Duchamp began to formulate concepts that would take years to develop into a complex web of interrelated works. That year Duchamp-Villon suggested that he make an object for his kitchen in Neuilly, France. This simple request produced the *Coffee Mill* that now belongs to the Tate Gallery collection. The work whose idea initiated with his brother proved to be significant in the development of Duchamp's career. It began as a painting (oil on cardboard) of a coffee mill, also referred to as a grinder. The handle of the coffee mill rotates around a stationary rod and an arrow completes the circular motion of movement in the virtual space of a diagram. Duchamp's experimentation with the diagrammatic has much in common with theories later developed by Deleuze. Deleuze encouraged the artist and spectator to conceive of the diagram as something other than a copy of intelligible relations or coordinates. Deleuze defined the diagrammatic as an abstract machine that constructs a real that is yet to come.[19] Duchamp told Pierre Cabanne in an interview that he made the coffee mill explode and, without fully realizing it, had "opened a window onto something else;" the innovation of the arrrow pleased Duchamp because the "diagrammatic aspect was interesting from an aesthetic point of view" (Cabanne 31). In rejecting the iconic status of the diagram, Duchamp was beginning to experiment with mathematical ideas and the

conceptualization of a new reality. The concept intrigued his older brother Jacques Villon who made an etching based on the *Coffee Mill* in 1912. This etching was circulated among the Puteaux group and reproduced as a photogravure in the manifesto "Du Cubisme" by Gleizes and Metzinger. In 1947, "Du Cubisme" was republished in a limited edition of 455 copies with eleven original etchings, including the *Coffee Mill.* Ribemont-Dessaignes sheds some light on the relationship between the ideas of Duchamp and Metzinger:

> The Golden Number, dear to Metzinger, and the motive force of the Section of the same name, seemed to be based upon a certain confusion. Far more effective, but in another sense, were Marcel Duchamp's contributions that had nothing to do with representation but concerned non-Euclidean geometry and Lobachevsky's four-dimensional space. He went beyond the figurative possibilities of painting and questioned the usual concepts of the universe, with such far-reaching negative consequences as to shake the most minimal stability for a school that sought above all to be taken seriously . . . .[20]

Duchamp discussed the significance of paintings from 1911 with Cabanne. He explained that in *Jeune homme triste dans un train* (*Sad Young Man on a Train*) there is the idea of the movement of the train and then that of the sad young man. The young man is moving around in the corridor of the train. There are two parallel movements corresponding to each other, the movement of the train and that of the young man in the train. In 1904 Henri Poincaré introduced a principle of relativity that described the laws of motion as being constant (i.e. the speed of light is a constant) but explained why the perception of motion in the mind of the observer is relative to his or her position.

Although some scientists contest the fact, many academics maintain that Einstein developed Poincaré's idea into his own Theory of Relativity (1916). The idea of a movement inside a movement may be conceived of as parallel (as in the theory of relativity) or recursive (as in fractal theory where the same shape repeats itself within its own boundaries internally like a snowflake design). According to Roberto Giunti, Duchamp's study of recursive motion is an early intuition of a fractal idea, known as dimensional scaling. Giunti argues that the sadness of the man on the train, as the title of the painting implies, is caused by the fact that "in his motion the young man is twice bound (by both the binary and the corridor) to a *linear* pathway, which Duchamp feels is strongly limiting, so there seems to be the perception of the narrowness of the linearity . . ."[21] The restrictiveness of the linear model forced Duchamp to introduce the element of circularity into his works. There is also an effect of distortion in the representation of the young man which Duchamp referred to later as elementary parallelism or formal decomposition. This method would be used to compose the *Nude Descending a Staircase*. It consists of stretching an object out, as if it were elastic. Linear elements follow each other like parallels and distort the object.

The elastic organization of Duchamp's 1911 compositions and the *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912) may be analyzed in Deleuzian terms as a topological distortion of the surface. Baroque anamorphosis involves a similar concept. An application of Deleuze's concepts helps the contemporary critic understand baroque anamorphosis but it also demonstrates how the plural, the multidimensional and the virtual operate in both avant-garde and post-Duchampian cultures. Deleuze's The Fold is a critique of representation that examines the virtual and the multidimensional. In this quasi-mathematical study, Deleuze is interested in how the dynamic force of life in its

unfolding, like that of the *Nude Descending a Staircase*, exceeds representation. One of Duchamp's contemporaries referred to the excess of dynamic forces in the *Nude* as an explosion in a shingle factory. The baroque excesses of the *Nude,* as well as the *Large Glass* and other works from Duchamp's early period, may best be explained from a Deleuzian point of view. The dynamic force of life in its unfolding exceeds representation and must be comprehended as a logical paradox. Deleuze's paradoxical logic of the fold involves a conglomerate of spatial concepts that form the multiple roots of his critical approach.

Duchamp makes use of a paradoxical logic that resists institutional control and closure. His paradoxes enable the flow from one idea to another and open up a space for breathing. Duchamp commented to Cabanne that he liked "living and breathing" better than working: "Therefore, if you wish, my art would be that of living: each second, each breath, is a work which is inscribed nowhere, which is neither visual nor cerebral. It's a sort of constant euphoria."[22] The euphoric or "ecstatic" state epitomizes the baroque metaphysical and aesthetic attitude as exemplified in Bernini's sculpture of St. Theresa. Romanticism and Symbolism transposed this conception into the idea of the breath of inspiration known to French poets like Hugo and Mallarmé as the *souffle*. Twentieth-century psychoanalysis reexamined love and death and Georges Bataille developed a modernist notion of the ecstatic state in *Les larmes d'Eros*. Antonin Artaud sought a surrealist state of mind through a performance of forces unleashed by the "inspired word" or *parole soufflé* of a theater of cruelty. Jacques Derrida deconstructed Artaud's conception of the inspired breath as an overturning of the conceptual order in his essay "La parole soufflé." According to Artaud, the *parole soufflé* is capable of delivering humanity from the diseases of the badly constructed body by making a *body without*

organs; the *body without organs* is created through an absolute mastery over breath. Derrida considers this concept to be a deconstructive "return of the conceptual to the non-conceptual." Writing is originally secondary and hermetic for Derrida. Like the separation of the fingers of God and Man in Michelangelo's mannerist painting, God has "separated himself from himself," as Derrida explains, "in order to let us speak, in order to astonish and interrogate us."[23] The breath of the letter, specifically the written letter, is *signifying absence* and separation.

In his essay "Le génie sans miroir" (1924) Desnos presents the idea of human separation from the divine through the neoplatonic image of a staircase. To be left lingering in the stairwell between the human and the divine is to accept the complacency of those people whose breath ("haleine") denotes nothing but absence ("sent le vide"): "Des complaisances horribles nous permettent de vivre chaque jour avec ces hommes dont l'haleine sent le vide." The poet speaks in order to interrogate his own complacency with normative expectations: "Resterons-nous dans ce couloir?" The poet interrogates the space distancing him from his sources of inspiration in "Si tu savais." The absence of divine presence becomes displaced onto an absent beloved. Her absence makes it possible for him to create poetry. The concept of divine breath is transposed into the figure of a shooting star that the poet catches in his "nocturnal bottle." The sparks of light from the captured star create constellations on the interior glass walls of the bottle: "Loin de moi, une étoile filante choit dans la bouteille nocturne du poète. Il met vivement le bouchon et dès lors il guette l'étoile enclose sur les parois, loin de moi, tu es loin de moi." In "Vieille clameur" the beloved is present and the poet watches vigilantly over her, noting the rhythm of her breath: "Je surveillerai le lent balancement du temps et de ta respiration." In "Coeur en bouche" the poet breathes in the scent of roses at dawn and

inspiration comes to him in the form of a nocturnal visitor. The idea of breathing in the scent of roses may be connected to one of Duchamp's readymade objects, a bottle of perfume whose label contains the words *Belle Haleine* or Beautiful Breath. This object evolved from the 1919 glass ampoule of Paris air that Duchamp brought as a souvenir to Walter Arensberg. The air alludes to the Paris air from Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*.[24] In 1921 Duchamp made several copies of the perfume bottle that included a label with a copy of Man Ray's photograph of Duchamp crossdressed as Rrose Sélavy. An image of the readymade was placed on the cover of *New York Dada* in 1921 with a pun on the French words for toilette and violet: *eau de toilette/eau de voilette*. The word "voilette" contains "voile" or the French word for veil and, thus, connects the ideas of breath and the bride's veil from the *Large Glass*. The idea of breathing relates to the metaphysical concept of a veil.

Loy's "Songs to Joannes" have several important references to breathing. The relationship between breathing and creating is often problematic if not outright troubled. There are several mentions of substances that pollute the lungs, as in VII where the wind "stuffs the scum of the white street" into the lungs and nostrils of the poet who makes an effort to communicate. This text resembles "O Hell," a short text written several years after "Songs to Joannes," in which the poetic consciousness who writes and speaks is described as "choked" with the "tatters of tradition." In XII from "Songs to Joannes" voices "break" in the "confusion of passion" yet references to "carnage," "dissonance" and the "boom of escaping breath" indicate acts of violence associated with language and desire. In XVII Loy juxtaposes the image of a red battlefield to a round vacuum dilating with breath. In XVIII and XIX notions of separation that associate breathing and

communicating ("telling") with violent rupture include: severing, interim, cool cleaving, carving, and breath-giving.

During the World War II era Desnos, following in the path of the seventeenth-century Boileau, wrote his own "Art poétique" as kind of manifesto of self-reflexivity. David Fontaine considers Desnos's "Art poétique" to be a response, of a poet who was experiencing the violence of the World War II era to the Cartesian *cogito* or the Pascalian notion of man being a thinking reed (*roseau pensant*). The following line from the beginning of "Art poétique" is the one that Fontaine correctly emphasizes: "Je suis le vers témoin du souffle de mon maître . . ." He considers the first line of the poem "Par le travers de la gueule" to be the initial impulse that leads the poet to turn inwards as an ironic affirmation of the *cogito* during the violent times of World War II. The word "gueule" is used to refer to the mouth but in the cruder slang sense of a "trap." He observes what he refers to as the genesis of the alexandrine in the poem. At the end a refrain composed in alexandrines occurs as a return of the thinking subject after a long eclipse, or as he explains, "…le poème se résorbe dans cet alexandrin-refrain, qui reparaît comme point d'orgue à la fin du poème après une longue éclipse."[25] His idea of the genesis of the alexandrine involves the idea of a cosmogony of the creation of the world, if not a distant parody of the biblical text Genesis. Desnos's poem begins with a reference to mud, a mixture of the elements of earth and water. The wind creates the muddy earth through wind and snow, as through the power of the Divine Breath. A cosmic interplay exists in the poem among the elements comprising a myth of creation: sun, fire, moon, forests, water. The moon reflects itself in the mud of the earth: "Une lune d'il y a pas mal de temps/Se reflète dans cette pourriture." Fontaine explains that through assimilation to the little creatures of the ground ("bêtes du sol"), who receive the breath of life ("souffle

de vie"), the "vers" (ligne) of the poem is also the "ver" (worm), who dwells in the mud or rotten ground ("pourriture") and witnesses creation. Fontaine recalls a line from one of Hugo's poems: "ver de terre amoureux d'une étoile."[26] A "ver de terre" is an earthworm but the play with the homonym "vers" and the rhyme with "terre" evoke the concept of an earthly poetic line created through the genesis of a cosmogony.

Derrida has written several essays about language, metaphysics and violence. He raises the following questions: Does the maintenance of separation entail an original violence?[27] If peace cannot be declared in language, is silent metaphysical intuition to be equated with speech "lost" to metaphysics? How does one think the other if the other can only be spoken as exteriority? Derrida discusses what it means to give oneself the "right" to breathe and questions whether or not philosophers of metaphysical intuition like Henri Bergson are correct in giving themselves the right to abandon language to its own insufficiency through intuitive contact. What happens when the right is no longer given? Jean Suquet, an expert on Duchamp, examines the *souffle* in relation to Bergsonism in the *Large Glass*. Suquet does not view the meditative stillness of the breath as the autodestruction of language but as the affirmation of the blossoming of the Bride. The full title of the work indicates that the Bride is being "stripped bare" by her Bachelors (*The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even*). The "breathing letters" or *lettres haletantes* of the Bride are the vehicles through which she gives commandments to the Bachelors. The Bride's blossoming or, to use the French term, *épanouissment* (which contains the French word *oui* meaning "yes"), is the affirmation of her right to dictate the law.[28] To follow Duchamp's reasoning about the blossoming of the Bride one must not exclude the adjective *cinematic* that he attaches to the term in his explanatory notes accompanying the *Large Glass*. This connection will be discussed later in this study

because it entails a thorough understanding of Duchamp's project before it may be related to Bergson's concept of the cinema. Deleuze offers an interpretation of Bergsonism and the cinema which will be examined in the last chapter of this study. A few more words about Derrida are necessary at this time, as well as an introduction to key concepts in Deleuze.

Without mentioning the cinema, one may analyze the stillness and meditative quality of the *Large Glass* by describing how the poetic vistas of the *Large Glass* unfold before the spectator. This is the method of Octavio Paz, poet and Duchamp aficionado. What is interesting about Paz's point of view is the fact that it supports a deconstructive interpretation. For Paz, the folds of a waterfall in one of the panes of the *Large Glass* represent a metaphysical, feminine presence, an Idea incarnate in a naked girl. Paz's critical article "Water Writes Always in Plural" has recourse to a clustering of "undecidable" concepts, such as hinge, delay, breach, and convergence. The Bride is undecidable because she is at once nude, skeleton, motor, and myth. Paz discusses the significance of the "hinge" as an image of contradiction in the *Large Glass*:

> At once a scientific description, a monument to a virgin, and an enigma made up of fearful clarities, *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* is a nude. [. . .] it is an assertion that belies itself even as we affirm it: the nude is a skeleton. Erotic myth and negation of the myth by the machine, public monument and secret creation, nude that is a skeleton, and skeleton that is a motor, the *Large Glass* opens out before us like the image of contradiction. But the contradiction is apparent rather than real: what we see are only moments and states of an invisible object, stages in the process of manifestation and concealment of a phenomenon. With that

> lucidity that is no less unique in him because it is constant, Duchamp alludes to the duplicity of his attempt in one of the first notes in the *Green Box*: 'Perhaps make a *hinge picture*' (*tableau de charnière*). This expression, applicable to all his work, is particularly apt in the case of the *Large Glass:* we are facing a hinge picture that, as it opens out or folds back, physically and mentally, shows us other vistas, other apparitions of the same elusive object. (93-4)

The concepts cited above from Paz lend themselves to a Derridean interpretation because they involve the ideas of *aporia* and deferral of meaning in relation to a metaphysics of presence. Paz remarks that the observer of the *Large Glass* sees only moments and states of an invisible object, which are stages in the process of manifestation (presence) and concealment (absence) of a phenomenon. Duchamp's hinge picture "opens out or folds back" in a paradoxical process in which ideas open while remaining closed. The Real and the Ideal may only be comprehended as incommensurable realms but they mirror each other such that the one folds inside of the other. The idea of the *hinge picture* exposes the problem of immediacy and truth in a pluralistic universe. Derrida's concept of the hinge approaches the problem of undecidability in terms of presence. Language enters into the problem because the plurality of languages (the Tower of Babel) makes the immediacy of spoken truth impossible. Because truth can never be uttered immediately, Derrida must also take his departure in the Mallarméan point of view that poetry compensates philosophically for what languages lack.

Deleuze approaches the problem of undecidability differently from Derrida. Deleuze's paradoxical logic of the fold entails a conglomeration of spatial concepts that include three main notions: *topology*, *topography* and *topos*. The multi-faceted Deleuzian

fold provides a critical method to approach the work of Duchamp, particularly the spatial arrangement and perceptual organization of the *Large Glass.* First, one may speak of a *topology* of the *Large Glass,* which is the division into two planes. Second, these two planes correspond to the *topos* of the two halves of the brain (as analytical and creative). Third, the division of the two planes creates a *topographical* partitioning of space (into male and female territories, as well as into the dual hemispheres of earth and sky). A topographical map of the two regions was generated by a computer in 2002 according to the design of Richard and Roderic Hamilton. Key notes from Duchamp's writings are typed onto the map in order to combine the visual topographical space with the typographical space of language. Like the *camera obscura*, the *Large Glass* is an apparatus that transforms the perception of space. Unlike the *camera obscura*, the apparatus of the *Large Glass* does not produce a representation of figural space in three dimensions. The *camera obscura* requires the application of a technique of representation and a postulate about how to lose the eye in illusionistic depth perception. The *Large Glass* refers its spectator not to an object poised on the other side of a lens but to the process of multidimensional perception itself. Therefore, the *Large Glass* does not involve the application of a technique. Through understanding the relation of the apparatus to the process of visual perception itself, the spectator may connect different types of spatial transformation. The "folding" of different spaces of perception (topoi, topology and topography) occurs in a virtual dimension and is not effectuated through traditional stereoscopic vision.

It is important not to view Duchamp as the rebel of the retinal but as the instigator of a major innovation in modern culture. Thus, it is necessary to study Duchamp in relation to his contemporaries rather than considering him in isolation. Uttering

statements like Duchamp "could have been the exemplary artist of the movement" but he "was unwilling to lend himself to a collective"[29] does not help to understand his connection with other artists or his relation to modernism. André Breton singled out Duchamp not to isolate him but to point out that he enjoyed a "unique prestige" among the surrealists.[30] Gertrude Stein's narrator in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas speaks of the enthusiasm Duchamp aroused in New York; everybody loved him, the narrator exclaims, so much so "that it was a joke in Paris that when any American arrived in Paris the first thing he said was, and how is Marcel" (133-34).

The poetry and criticism of Desnos help to illuminate the significance of Duchamp's role as an innovator in modern art. Critical texts, such as Desnos's 1923 preface to a Duchamp exhibition (conceived of as five versions forming a whole)[31] are of cardinal importance to an appreciation of Duchamp. In these five texts Desnos bears witness to the "supreme victory" of Duchamp: *la technique n'a plus d'importance*. Because technique no longer had significance for him, Duchamp avoided showing the hand of the creator in his works (such as *Tu m'* and the *Large Glass*). Desnos adds that the word "abstraction" alone does not suffice to express Duchamp's way of thinking. The prefaces all begin with the question "Where are you going?" and end with Desnos's desire for Duchamp to send him a blank piece of paper with his signature on it. Duchamp's signature would be the most beautiful painting imaginable. In all of the versions of the preface to the exhibit Desnos writes about a continent (a far away continent in the first version and a nearby continent in the remaining four versions) that Duchamp constructs with a new mathematics without postulates or conclusions. In all but the first version Desnos names this continent the *Pays de Rrose Sélavy*. Desnos never met Duchamp but was so taken by the uniqueness of his vision that he believed himself to

communicate in dreams with Rrose Sélavy, Duchamp's feminine persona. The variations in the preface to the exhibit appear like a dream sequence in which the poet visits the curious country of Rrose Sélavy. It is the country also of the Swift Nudes and the Bride, described by Desnos as having an atmosphere of violent emotion that is untranslatable by gestures and cries. It is a mechanized world inhabited by platinum creatures whose words are made of metal. The mechanical laws operating in this world are those of automatism. Marie-Claire Dumas explains that from 1922 on Desnos wrote aphorisms in which automatic writing operated within the constraints of language. As a surrealist, he submitted himself to the marvels that he discovered in the country of the "never seen" or "jamais vu" (17). If Desnos the explorer asks "Where are you going?" the response must be an act of faith, as Dumas explains, that reaffirms the reality of the world of dreams (17).

Mina Loy had the fortune to meet Duchamp and befriend him when he moved to New York. Loy's literary productivity was stimulated by the wake set in motion by Duchamp's craft. Loy invented a grammar to express Duchampian topoi, as exemplified by the term "Omniprevalent Dimension" from one of her poetic texts entitled "The Dead." The complexity of the paradoxical logic of "The Dead" projects new topologies and new topographies, as well. The arrangement of bodies in space in "The Dead" turns conventional topography inside out; "cities lie digesting" in stomachs and street lights "footle" in "ocular darkness." The "infinite elastic" topology created in "The Dead" corresponds to the concept of a feminine tissue with edgeless contours. The delirious and lucid avenues of her famous "Lunar Baedeker" transform topoi into surreal topology. Elsewhere, in texts such as "Parturition," Loy employs the metaphor of the fold. The speaker of "Parturition" declares: "I am knowing/All about/Unfolding." Throughout her

many texts Loy combines the idea of retinal blindness with the metaphor of lunar eclipse to conceptualize the relation between spaces of projection and transformation. As in Duchamp and Desnos, these spaces open up conventional dualisms (like masculine/feminine). The "eclipse" becomes a metaphor for the overturning of values that reinforce stereotypes, and, thus, offers the possibility of *openness* to new forms. Likewise, Breton's Clair de terre plays with the arrangement and projection of bodies and spaces and it should be discussed in reference to Duchamp, Desnos and Loy. However, the texts of Desnos and Loy reflect best Duchampian paradoxes of the virtual, especially his transformations of masculine and feminine spaces of perception and projection.

In order to understand the virtual dimension of the *Large Glass*, it is necessary to review traditional stereoscopic vision and its apparatuses. Interestingly, Loy's lunar eclipse metaphor finds its relevance to conventional ideas about vision that began first with the exploration of topography. Visual perception has been associated with topography since ancient times both in the Orient and the Occident. Tools were invented in antiquity that improved the perception of grand-scale topographical vistas. Aristotle made use of a rudimentary *camera obscura* device to observe solar eclipses and to explore the cosmos. European Renaissance and Baroque painters from Da Vinci to Vermeer exploited the *camera obscura* as a tool in the design of landscapes and townscapes. Occidental poets have been fascinated with topographical representation since The Odyssey and Jason and the Argonauts. The British poet Andrew Marvel made use of topographical images to create satires, as in his witty poem "The Character of Holland," probably written in 1653 just after the English defeated the Dutch near Portland (Brown 3).

European literature and painting from the Baroque period onward were influenced by technological developments, especially the *camera obscura*. The *camera obscura* can be constructed either as a self-enclosed room or a box. One may dwell inside the space of a *camera obscura* or it may exist in the form of a moveable space. The notion of an eye dwelling "inside" or "outside" does not necessarily define the *camera obscura* because it may simply be constructed as a sheet of paper with a hole in it that enables the passage and refraction of a light ray. The inverted image of an object will be projected onto the floor or wall of the *camera obscura* room or, in the case of the portable box, inside the device itself. In the third instance, the gaze of the eye must pass through the sheet of paper in order to perceive its object. In sum, the various models of the *camera obscura* involve different notions of perceptual space: inside, outside, passage, "looking through" and "looking at."

Nineteenth-century Americans and Europeans rediscovered the *camera obscura*, which ushered in the age of modern photography. In the United States *camera obscura* rooms were erected as a source of entertainment and pleasure. The topography of beautiful seascapes and park scenery could be observed in the inverted reflection of the *camera obscura* rooms; *flâneurs* could be observed without their knowing from the omniscient vantage point of the *camera obscura* room. Nineteenth-century art critics, particularly John Ruskin, encouraged the painting of unembellished topographical scenes. Painterly techniques provided the model for much of nineteenth-century American and European literature. Romantic poets transposed landscapes into mindscapes. Nature served as a mirror for Realism and Naturalism, as well. Observation of natural landscapes became the fashion again for literature and painting at the turn of the nineteenth century, either as an offshoot of the Industrial Revolution or as a reaction to the inhuman void it

created. Symbolist poets and painters invented a cosmos of correspondences in each work of art.

Deleuze's The Fold examines the development of modern visual culture from its origins in the Baroque Age of Empiricism. Consequently, a thorough comprehension of how Duchamp affected Desnos and Loy within a Deleuzian critical perspective requires one to consider the Age of Empiricism as the precursor of modern culture. The climate of the Reformation fostered the study of Empiricism, an important branch of which concerned the study of optics. Dutch Empiricism attracted the attention of the German-born Leibniz, who stopped in Holland for a visit on his way to France and England in order to meet Baruch Spinoza and otherwise immerse himself in Dutch culture. The exiled Jewish philosopher Spinoza made his living in Holland grinding optical lenses and then published treatises, such as a critique of the philosophy of Descartes, in his spare time. Optics and Calvinist iconoclasm accelerated the development of secular painting in Holland that included the categories of landscape, townscape, still life, marine and genre painting. A new public, the common farmer, created a lucrative market for secular art. The *camera obscura* aided in the technical design of these types of secular representations. The painter had only to trace the outline of a scene projected in the box of the *camera obscura* onto a piece of paper, making it less costly to produce a painting. Dutch townscape painters like Jan van der Heyden and Carel Fabritius (known for *A View of Delft*) achieved a realistic account of the way in which the eye observes buildings in a town. Dutch painting of the seventeenth-century resolved differences in Flemish and Italian approaches to the representation of visual space and perspective dating from the Renaissance. Dutch painters reconciled the mathematical precision of Renaissance one-point perspective with Northern Empiricism. Typical one-point perspective (in the Italian

tradition begun with Brunelleschi) presupposes one eye only and does not take the spherical nature of vision into consideration, as would be later evidenced by Fabritius's *A View of Delft* during the Dutch Baroque Age. The Italian one-point perspective eye gazes fixedly at a vanishing-point whose central focus enables lines of vision (known as *orthogonals*) to encounter each other. Because vision most often involves two eyes, it may best be described by a spherical field. In looking at a building, the viewer moves his or her head to view it instead of staring straight ahead. In order to view a town, one must walk around and make empirical observations of the buildings from various angles of vision.

In The Fold Deleuze remarks that the Baroque *camera obscura* has only one small opening through which light passes onto a relay of two mirrors that project objects, not seen by the viewer, onto a sheet; the second mirror must be tilted according to the position of the sheet (28). The objects projected in the monad of the *camera obscura* are represented only as *trompe l'oeil.* Deleuze comments on the architectural ideal of the Baroque as a room in black marble that constrains the penetration of light to bent orifices, such that nothing on the outside can be seen through these orifices. In this way, the constrained light projections entering through the orifices illuminate the décor of a "pure inside." Deleuze asks, "Is it not the Baroque manner, such as this, that inspires Le Corbusier in the Abbey of La Tourette?" Deleuze concludes that the Leibnizian monad and what he refers to as its system of "light-mirror-point of view-inner décor" cannot be understood without being compared to Baroque architecture (28). The idea of a spatial field is of primary importance. The distinction and division into two levels or floors defines the Baroque. Platonic tradition separated the universe into two worlds but each world was thought to have an infinite number of floors; Neoplatonism configured the

universe as a stairwell.[32] The Baroque conception entailed only two floors separated by a fold that echoed itself, thus transforming the cosmos into a mundus (29). The ideal Baroque Fold echoes itself in that it differentiates and is differentiable. Deleuze comprehends it in terms of the representation of space that is at once mental and physical. The architectural conception involves physical space, which is the cosmos transformed into the topography of the mundus. The topography of the Baroque Mundus interfaces with the *topos* which constitutes the allegory of the Baroque House.

John Rajchman, in Constructions, provides a definition of the Neobaroque House in a post-Leibnizian age. He explains that in Deleuze's Leibnizian account of the Baroque House, the real and the ideal inhabit the same "uncentered perspectival possible world," which is the world that God has selected as "best." Does the post-Leibnizian age still have use for the Baroque idea of a God who predetermines the best possible combination of substances?[33] Is Leibniz's postulate of *compossibility* among different perspectives necessary in the modern age? Rajchman investigates the problem of how a virtual house might involve the idea of construction. He concludes that the virtual house "holds together the most, and most complicated, 'different possible worlds' in the same container, allowing them to exist together along a constructed plane with no need of a preestablished harmony." Notwithstanding Leibniz's Baroque Salvationism, the "best world" is derived from the principle of selection and not based in divine perfection. Leibniz defines the best world as the one with the greatest virtuality. If one fails to develop the virtuality of which one is capable, then one will not be saved.

Rajchman draws his conclusions from Deleuze's concept of virtuality in The Fold. Deleuze makes a distinction between the virtual and the possible, or the actualization of the virtual and the realization of the possible. Rather than focus on the

predetermined selections of a perfect God, Deleuze proposes a principle in which the best world is the most multiple and, consequently, the most virtual. The virtual house is the one whose plan or construction generates the most connections possible. A virtual construction frees forms through its smooth geometry that has no fixed points. To virtualize nature is to multiply it, Rajchman argues, by throwing together singular points and inserting chance. It is the "ruse of the possible" that makes any plan that is not specifiable or probable appear chaotic and irrational. The virtual construction is free because it is neither ideal nor impossible. If it is not actual, can its design be conceived of architecturally? Traditionally, architects have not thought in terms of virtual construction but in terms of an ideal or an ideology. Virtuality requires one to think in terms of arrangements of body and soul, which may not be reduced to any law of possibilities.[34]

Thinking beyond the laws of possibilities, in terms of arrangements of body and soul, may require architecture and mathematics but how does the construction of the virtual occur in the process of creating poetry? What kind of paintings or objects of art may be produced virtually? Deleuze insists that Leibniz conceived of the fold as creases of matter that resemble veins in marble, on the one hand, and as inflections of inclusion within the folds of the soul, on the other hand. Leibniz began to use the word "read" to refer to an act of God in the monad itself, as well as an inner act in the privileged region of the monad (The Fold 31). The architectural allegory of the Baroque House, according to Deleuze, was also represented by Leibniz in terms of a metaphor for reading. Deleuze comments that the "total book is as much Leibniz's dream as it is Mallarmé's, even though they never stopped working in fragments. . . . they made this unique Book perfectly, the book of monads, in letters and little circumstantial pieces that could sustain as many dispersions as combinations" (31). Combinations of the visible and the legible

constitute the “emblems” of Baroque allegory, which create the mutual or *entr’expression* of a new kind of sensibility.

The *topoi* of the Mallarméan fold pertain to sensitivity as much as to sensibility in Deleuze’s view. Deleuze explains that the sensitivity of the Mallarméan fold may be compared to the side of a fan that stirs up the dust through which it is visible (30). Inseparable from the wind, the fold is not made up of matter but of the soul in which we read the multiple leaves of the monad (31). In his essay “The Castle of Purity” Paz finds a resolution between the freedom of form and the wisdom of systems of knowledge in the idea of purity, an idea from Mallarmé’s “Igitur.” On numerous occasions Duchamp revealed his indebtedness to Mallarmé, whose hermeticism took shape within the purity of a self-enclosed monad. In Paz’s view, there is a neoplatonic hermeticism in both Duchamp and Mallarmé that posits a reality obscured by shadows. These shadows are cast by a “free” geometry, made up of combinatorial forms that can never be completely perceived by our senses. The many forms of the Bride in the *Large Glass* make up a free geometry based on mere appearances and shadows of ideas. Paz argues that Duchamp’s note about the Bride, which was recorded and stored in what he referred to as the *Green Box*, gives an excess of information that shrouds any interpretation of her form in ambiguity, contradiction and uncertainty. For all its hermeticism of form (indeed, Duchamp had aimed to seal the paint of the *Large Glass* hermetically between its two plates), the Bride can only be understood through the paradoxical logic of a free geometry that enables a plurality of meanings.

The following logical paradox, from the critic Paul Virilio, points to the dynamics of undecidability underlying all forms of modern representation: *When one innovates the ship, one already innovates the shipwreck.*[35] In writing this idea, Virilio was without a

doubt inspired by Mallarmé's "Un coup de dés." Virilio's critique of the innovation of forms and the construction of multiple spaces of encounter examines the embodiment of desired change in open forms. Any innovation of the Cartesian grid would have to introduce additional axes that would generate new meanings. New forms must emerge out of old clusters of meaning but they are haunted by the fear of negation and nonsense. In "Un coup de dés" the mental energy needed to produce change creates an excess of symbolic forces. Mallarméan critics suggest that this internal abyss causes the hermetic world of the monad to collapse under its own weight. The internal abyss merges with an external abyss, which is figured in the text as a shipwreck. The shipwreck signals the collapse of the logic of linearity, and, by extension, the book itself. Although Mallarmé innovated modern poetry with the rejection of the linear tradition and the logic of the book, he still absorbed the retinal tradition, particularly that of Impressionism. Mallarmé studied the disintegrating effects of the Impressionistic aesthetic of Manet and Redon and how these painters perceived ambiguities of space and light.

Duchamp innovated modern painting as he masterminded the eclipse of the retinal tradition. Now art no longer had to depend on retinal sight but on an "oculist witness." The spectator of the *Nude Descending a Staircase* witnesses the unfolding of stages in a process. These fragmented stages unfold, fan-like, in a horizontal "flattening-out" on the canvas. The horizontal movement of unfolding frames enters into a tension with the verticality of the nude's descent from the top of the stairs to the bottom. An "oculist witness" is necessary to make sense out of the formal decomposition and the effects of movement. Duchamp sought the effect of static dynamism in the medium of painting. Virilio remarks that the stillness of art creates the effect of movement in the *Nude*, not an effect of cinematic motion.[36] Duchamp explained that he wanted to create a static image

of movement in the *Nude* to show that movement is an abstraction in the eye of the beholder. Duchamp rejected the tenets of the schools of Impressionism and Naturalism that define movement as a series of impressions striking the retina of the viewer. He defined movement as a "deduction articulated within the painting" that the viewer incorporates into the painting by use of abstraction. Mathematics and geometry enter into the process of abstracting the effects of movement from the painting. Duchamp explained further that, when developing the idea for the *Nude*, he was influenced by the chronophotography of Etienne Marey and his formula of parallelism. Duchamp saw one of Marey's illustrations in a book that made use of a system of dots delineating movement (of people fencing and horses galloping). To a certain degree, Marey's study of sets of dots may be categorized as a study of *point set topology*, which is the mathematical study of the limits of sets. The *Nude's* undecidable topology explores the interaction of a vertical and horizontal organization of points delineating movement. A study of the topological organization of the painting proves crucial to determining its veracity and incorporating abstraction into it.[37]

According to Arkady Plotnitsky, Deleuze provides a *philosophically geometrical/topological* perspective on the fold (derived from, but different from, the Leibnizian concept of the monad).[38] Plotnitsky interprets Deleuze's concept of the fold as baroque topology defined, paradoxically, as both interactiveness and separation. Plotnitsky discusses how the concept of the fold evolves from the Leibnizian monad to Riemannian space. Deleuze's mathematical model in The Fold is a heterogeneous "smooth" space. [In A Thousand Plateaus Deleuze worked with Félix Guattari to show how multiply interactive models allegorically describe the space of a book, a conglomerate of sayings and sentences that have potentially a thousand plateaus.] The

development from the monad (figured by Deleuze as a closed space divided into two communicating floors, as in a house) to the plural "nomadic" space of Riemann marks a passage from a vertically organized spiral to a horizontal one. Deleuze prefers the horizontally organized spiral. Plotnitsky opposes Deleuze's geometric spiral to the Mallarméan/Derridean algebraic fold. Nevertheless, Plotnitsky concludes that algebra, topology and geometry always exceed themselves in representation and eventually mix with each other. Plotnitsky toggles between Deleuze and Derrida, despite his claim to present a Deleuzian difference within post-structuralist criticism.[39]

The issue of topology versus a dynamic play of forces is broached by Plotnitsky but not sufficiently addressed in his article on topologies of the fold. Plotnitsky claims that Deleuze's horizontal spiral enters into a tension with vertically organized space and, as a result, forms a diagonal spiral. If the vertical spiral is that of the Leibnizian fold and the horizontal spiral is that of the Deleuzian fold, then what constitutes the diagonal spiral? First of all, from a strictly mathematical perspective, the interaction of algebra and geometry by no means contradicts a Cartesian grid; to the contrary, it is a pure manifestation of the Cartesian method. Secondly, the idea of a spiral does not completely correspond to the idea of a folded form, as, for example, the pleats in a cloth. Perhaps Anthony Vidler's architectural interpretation of Deleuzian topology in terms of neobaroque, warped space can help to work through Plotnitsky's quasi-mathematical entanglements of algebra and geometry. Vidler, as an architect, reminds the Deleuzian critic that Leibniz's model was that of an allegory of a house and not of folded forms. One should consider that folds exist in space, but also in things and ideas, and their distinguishing property is the ability to combine all of these categories in a single

moment. The combinatorial, thus, is the key to understanding the fold, be it a mathematical conceptualization or not.

Desnos's "Rrose Sélavy" exemplifies the combinatorial form *par excellence* of the fold. The text consists of 150 notes, which relate intertextually to those of Duchamp's *Green Box*. The notes were supposedly communicated to Desnos by Duchamp's feminine persona, Rrose Sélavy, in a dream. The words of the poem have no originary site and are placed at a second, third, and potentially infinite remove. Language belongs to the person who pronounces or writes down words. Note 124 in "Rrose Sélavy" attributes this technique to Tristan Tzara, the founder of Dadaism. In this note there is a visual and verbal pun on the words "verre" and "vers" ("glass" and "line of verse"). The word "vers" does not follow "verre" sequentially but is, instead, placed directly below it. The two words are themselves placed within the mathematical brackets of set notation. This topological conjoining of the two words breaks up the poetic line. If the visual/verbal pun shatters the poetic line, its shattering effect functions as a mirror. The effects of Duchamp's *Large Glass* converge with the textual space of "Rrose Sélavy." The wordplay in the text expands towards an infinite possibility of combinations. Desnos's geometric topology combines with algebra as the wordplay creates proportions based on effects of sound in rhyme schemes. The many puns in the text form a network of potentialities but the randomness of the combinations undermines any attempt to totalize or systematize the citations. The pseudo-mathematical logic of "Rrose Sélavy" is, at once, a precise science and a random art. Its logic is empirical because the random selection of data is the gold standard of Empiricism. There is no single paradigm for "Rrose Sélavy;" like the Deleuzian fold, the space of the text is a conglomerate of effects.

In one series of texts, from the volume Destinée arbitraire, Desnos achieved a geometrically purer topology than that of the hybrid "Rrose Sélavy." This series, subtitled "La géométrie de Daniel," includes seven texts, the titles and content of which represent geometric figures. "Le carré pointu" posits a purely geometrical paradox in its conception of space, both mental and physical, as a "circle squared." The problem of the "circle squared" has plagued geometricians for centuries: given a square of a certain area, can one devise a circle with exactly the same area? (More than fifty years after Desnos's "La géométrie de Daniel," the American installation artist Walter de Maria would create the *Equal Area Series*, consisting of twenty-five pairs of circles and squares made of stainless steel that ostensibly have the same area. The curious result is that, even if the measurements are mathematically precise and the dimensions are truly equal, the naked eye cannot detect or verify the exact areas. The viewer enters into a relation with given laws and first principles but he or she can never attain the perfection of a machine and must, instead, approximate it). "L'anneau de Moebius" takes up the subject of the topologically puzzling Möbius strip. In "Parabole (1)" and "Parabole (2)" Desnos makes an analogy between a bird and a parabola. The bird-parabola becomes bored in its cage and wants to perch on a branch, but the branch is too low and the sun is too high. The topological frustration of "Parabole (1)" and "Parabole (2)" resembles that of "La chambre close" (from "Bagatelles" in Destinée arbitraire). This text interrogates the problem of the baroque monad as a self-enclosed space of representation. The text conveys a sense of regret that a woman closed up in her room will never see the flight of a distant bird. Fountains, which murmur and flow, regret the absence of a bird that flies freely from place to place. "La chambre close" ends with the desire for nomadic spaces of encounter and proclaims that connectivity is life itself.

Loy's experiments with combinations of words, sounds, and blank spaces, constituting verbal and visual puns, have an affinity with those of Desnos and Duchamp. The Lost Lunar Baedeker volume begins with several poems published under the heading *Futurism x Feminism: The Circle Squared*. Like the texts of Desnos's "La géométrie de Daniel," Loy's texts in *The Circle Squared* are indicative of the collapse of Cartesian synthesis, whereby the summit has domination over the base and the center over the peripheries. Loy satirizes the feminine alliance with Futurism through her presentation of a mathematical equation that exposes the false synthesis of the two logical systems. The title of a poem from this section, "Virgins Plus Curtains Minus Dots," toys further with Cartesian, algebraic logic. This section also contains a three-part poem, "Three Moments in Paris," which takes formal decomposition as its subject. The erratic organization of the verses on the page and the blank spaces contribute to the sense of decomposition that verges on the abyss of nonsense, as in Mallarmé's "Un coup de dés." Working from within a crisis of form, Loy presents a critique of identifiably "masculine" systems that prohibit the feminine gaze. The third part, "Magasins du Louvre," begins with the axiom-like statement: *All the virgin eyes in the world are made of glass*. Loy devises a Duchampian strategy of renunciation, in order to expand the feminine field of vision. In "Magasins du Louvre" a pair of "cocotte" women double as dolls, who stare without seeing; the dolls multiply in "long lines of boxes" in the gallery of a shop. Exceeding the grid-like space of the rows of boxes, the dolls are propped up haphazardly against pillars and walls and also dangled from the ceiling. The women-dolls, who stare vacuously, reject the sense of sight as an "act of effrontery." The text opens with an initial tension between the "glass" of the eyes and the "boxes" containing dolls; this tension harks back to the interaction between the *Large Glass* and the *Green Box*. As the women try to look

at each other, their gazes deflected off the glass of the dolls' eyes, a process of continual expansion of the visual field occurs through an encounter of multiple relations. Loy could be more derisive in some of her texts, such as one cited by Burke where a disdain for "marriage boxes" makes a connection between boxes, marriage and breeding:

> Oh God
>
> That men and women
>
> Having undertaken to vanquish one another
>
> Should be allowed
>
> to shup themselves up in hot boxes and breed[40]

A few years after the 1915 *Circle Squared* texts were written, Loy created a thirty-four-part collection of untitled (numbered) texts, published together as "Songs to Joannes." In XXVIII the metaphor of a lunar eclipse represents the emergence of a feminine subjectivity. The "climacteric" withdrawal of the sun enables the poet to "emerge." This eclipse converges with the space of an ascending staircase that goes on infinitely. A new field of vision becomes possible; one that is multidimensional. Loy organizes the textual space geometrically as two interpenetrating spheres (the masculine sphere of the sun and the feminine sphere of the moon). Her paradoxical topology is inscribed within the "unthinkable" whiteness of the blank page. The problem of whiteness in Loy's text may be compared to the paradoxical status of glass, as both obstacle and transparency, in the *Large Glass*.

Her text "At the Door of the House" emphasizes the process of transformation and projection of virtual space in ways that recall the paradoxes of the *Large Glass*. The title "At the Door of the House" indicates that the text concerns the positioning of a subject at a threshold space, neither on the exterior nor in the interior of a house. The idea

of a house as a metaphor for spatial organization recalls the monad of the Baroque House. The traditional perspective of the subject who is located at the threshold of an interior/exterior space becomes displaced by the opening of Loy's text. The reader must wait until the fourth stanza (or subdivision of the text, as indicated by the delineations of a double white space between lines) to recuperate the point of view indicated by the title. The fourth stanza begins with a variation on the title, not a complete repetition, which is "At the door of *your* house." The ideal model of a house becomes the site of a crisis of possession and control. Displacing the traditional idea of the masculinist perspective, the opening of the text begins with "A thousand women's eyes/Riveted to the unrealizable/Scatter the wash-stand of the card-teller." The first stanza will continue to disrupt the organizational topography of the house, alluded to in the title, with its references to "scattering" cards, defiling marble and spreading "color-picture maps of destiny" in the corner of an "inconducive bed-room." The many eyes riveting towards the unrealizable, the chance scattering, the references to fortune-telling, card-playing and destiny connect the topoi of hazard with topological surfaces, such as the corner of an "inconducive bed-room." The idea of a corner implies the meeting of two surfaces, or two geometric planes of a conic section. It may be understood in terms of baroque suspension in "in-between" space, such as Deleuze conceives of it in The Fold. Derrida makes use of the idea of the corner in his essay "The Double Session" concerning Mallarméan spaces of textual suspension. Derrida takes an interest in the "corner" between literature and truth, which is figured by a "folding back" or an "angle ensured by a fold" ("The Double Session" 177). The corner entails the necessary suspension of the textual space of production. For Loy, the "inconducive" (inconducive meaning "not productive" or "not leading to a favorable result") bedroom is not a positive place of

production for women; it is injurious. The space of the bedroom is not described; instead, its corner is presented through the distortion of the riveting of women's eyes.

The "riveting" or convergence of the eyes, being unrealizable, forms a virtual space of projection; here Loy exploits an organizational strategy that has a parallel with the composition of baroque painting. If one examines the direction of the gaze of the eyes in baroque paintings, one discovers that the eyes look out towards the world, up towards infinite Heaven, or anywhere to meet the gaze of others. The rhythm of expansion and redirection of lines of energy creates a virtual theater of gazes in many paintings by the Baroque master Velázquez, as, for example, *The Waterseller of Seville*, *Las Meninas*, *The Feast of Bacchus*, *The Surrender of Granada*, *Joseph's Bloody Coat Brought to Jacob*, *The Forge of Vulcan* and *Three Musicians* (previously mentioned). The composition of *Three Musicians* opens up the traditional Renaissance pyramid by projecting the gaze of each of the figures outward in three different directions. At the apex of the composition a musician with a guitar looks upward infinitely towards Heaven. A second musician on the right holds a violin and looks directly at the figure with the guitar. The third musician on the left stares out at the viewer and the vast expanse of the world beyond the picture plane. *The Feast of Bacchus* displays an energetic theater of gazes but the composition of the painting is not a Da Vinci pyramid; it illustrates the Leibnizian concept of a diagonally slanting axis of direction superimposed by an S-shape gradually curving on both ends towards positive and negative infinity. This represents the graph of a function from differential calculus. In *The Feast of Bacchus* the central figure of Bacchus placing a wreath on the head of another figure kneeling before him forms the diagonal S-shape of the function. An even greater illustration of the S-shape function can be clearly perceived in Caravaggio's *The Deposition* in which the curved shape of the body and shoulder

blades of Christ and that of the figure taking his body down from the cross form a precisely constructed S-shape. This curved shape enters into tension with the thrust of a diagonal line formed from the raised hand of a woman at the top corner of the composition down to the edge of Christ's drapery in the lower left corner. The effects of foreshortening complete the gradual curving of space along the diagonal line. The pleat in the fold of Christ's drapery in the lower corner helps to produce the effect of an infinite curvature like the pull of gravity on a body.

Loy conceptualizes a specifically feminine space as a virtual projection into the traditional masculine space of the inconducive bedroom of the ideal house. The bedroom is the space of deceptive transformation and the text will continue to develop this concept until its conclusion. At the end of "At the Door of the House" the reader encounters an image of a man cut in half. The interpretation of this image follows immediately in the words of the next line: "Means a deception." Perception of space occurs through a self-referential act of reading. The image of a nude woman appears, as if finally the female body can be perceived by exposing the deception of the masculine point of view. The nude as symbol is then interpreted by a self-referential act as the text reads itself—by looking through itself with a Duchampian gesture the nude can be comprehended as an image that "stands for the world." The idea of a naked woman, who cannot be viewed through a traditional lens but through virtual projection is the central concept of both the *Large Glass* and "At the Door of the House." In Duchamp's notes collected under the title "The Bride's Veil" he makes a distinction between *appearance* and *apparition*. He defines *appearance* as the sum of the usual (i.e. retinal) sensory evidence enabling one to have an ordinary perception of the object and its *apparition* is the mold of it (Writings 84-5).

Considering Loy's more overt critique of Breton in her novel written at a later time (Insel[41] dates from the 1930s), the advantage of hindsight makes the reader suspect that Loy had Breton in mind when she created the image of a man cut in half in "At the Door of the House." Breton attributed his discovery of surrealist automatism to an image of a "man cut in two by a window." The image appeared in a phrase that came to mind while he was falling asleep.[42] Most likely, she did not know Breton in 1915 because he was serving in a psychiatric ward in France and treating shell-shocked soldiers with his medical knowledge. Breton states that he was influenced by Sigmund Freud in his search for a method to "speak thought"[43] while he watched patients unleash a stream of words issuing from a productive unconscious. Later, he would find the achievement of automatism not in the methods of Freud but in the poetry of Desnos, who could "speak surrealist." It is not probable that Loy had exposure to Breton's concept of automatism or poetry in 1915. Breton did not publish his first poetry until 1919 ("Mont de piété"), the same year he claimed the image of the "man cut in two" came to him. What makes Breton worth mentioning at this point is the fact that Loy was undergoing an experience similar to his. In 1915 Loy volunteered in a surgical hospital in Florence, an experience which inspired her to write "Babies in Hospital." This text prefigures surrealist concepts that later developed in Loy's works in much the same way as they did in Breton's. In a letter dated February 13, 1915, Loy wrote: ". . . you should hear what a tramp calls Madonna when he is having his abdomen cut open without anesthetic" (Conover 181). Loy's experience in the surgical unit made it possible for her to examine the relationship between the mind and body differently than she had before. It introduced her to the science of the scalpel more than it did to psychoanalysis. It should be noted that Freud published several essays in 1915 on the topic of instinct, repression, and the unconscious.

Loy did acquire knowledge of psychoanalysis and met Freud personally. Her 1915 "Giovanni Franchi" provides a satire of the psychoanalysis of instincts. In the first lines of Loy's text a composite figure of "threewomen" walks in the "same dress;" the figure is made up of three instincts. The poet presents her version of the three instincts in a mocking tone and undermines the logic unifying the organization of the "ego." The poet makes a satire out of puzzling through the pieces of her own enigma. The gaps or white spaces in the text infuse dadaist blankness into the masculine model of triangular desire:

> The first instinct first again may
> Renascent gods save us from the enigmatic
> Pentralia of Firstness
> Was to be faithful to a man first
> The second to be loyal to herself first
> She would have to find which self first
> The third which might as well have been first
> Was to find out how many toes the
> Philosopher Giovanni Bapini had first

Critics who analyze Loy's text from an autobiographical perspective point out that Loy was involved in her own love triangle before divorcing. Giovanni Bapini represents Giovanni Papini, who began his career as an anti-philosopher and whose Twilight of the Philosophers was one of the foundations of Futurism; Giovanni Franchi, the name in the title of the text, represents Filippo Marinetti, the futurist leader who proclaimed an end to the adulterous triangle and whom, therefore, Loy reveals to be a hypocrite. Loy disturbs the balance in which "Loy equals loyal."

The exploration of liminal states of mind and body should not be confined to Freudian psychoanalysis when approaching Loy's texts or any of the surrealists for that matter. Loy's image of a man cut in half (by a scalpel) has much in common with Baroque science's interest in anatomy and "cutting the body." Baroque painters from Rembrandt to Caravaggio were obsessed with images of the body being cut by sharp blades or scalpels, as in Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolas Tulp* (1632). Loy's image of a man cut in half indicates a liminal state between the conscious and the unconscious, although it is not accompanied by the window that appears in Breton's image as a barrier to the unconscious. If Duchamp's *Large Glass* may be conceived of as a window-barrier, it contains sieves that enable forces to pass through it. Theses forces become eroticized in the *Large Glass* through a machine-like reproduction of fluid desire. A more ludic interpretation of the window as a liminal threshold may be found in Duchamp's *Fresh Widow* (with its pun on "French window") since the work to which the title refers consists of a wooden frame painted in white and eight panes of glass covered with black leather (the work is now at the Museum of Modern Art in New York). The black leather makes the window impenetrable by eyesight. What if the eye itself becomes the window-barrier? The famous "slit-screen" image of an eye cut by a razor blade in the surreal film *Un Chien andalou* produced by Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel in 1928 might only be interpreted as a Freudian psychoanalytic construct. Nevertheless, the same year Magritte painted a clouded eye in *The False Mirror* which may be interpreted as a Baroque fascination with indeterminacy and change.[44] The single eye in *The False Mirror* is a visualization of the concept that the whole must be intuited from the part.

In any case, Breton and Loy both experimented with liminal constructions while trying to shape a poetic consciousness as a form of resistance to wartime violence.

Liminal conceptions reveal the ambivalence of creating an identity during a war economy for both sexes but they expose how much more challenged women artists were in their endeavors to forge an identity. Loy was soon to leave Europe for New York because she was aware of the opportunities for women artists there. She would have heard of American artists like Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who was commissioned to sculpt a memorial of the *Titanic* in 1914. Although she probably did not know the American sculptor Anna Hyatt, her 1915 *Joan of Arc* exemplifies the ambiguity of the female artist during the war. Hyatt's androgynous female warrior was viewed as a tribute to the "spirit of France" and the ideals of World War I. Before coming to New York, Loy had already been working on her feminist politics between 1914 and 1915. She wrote a series of texts that critique the social, psychological and economic control of women. These texts address the destinies of Italian women. As a feminist, Loy was a comparatist. The experiences of Italian women enabled her to make comparisons to women in her own culture. Referring to these texts as "Mina's house poems," Carolyn Burke concludes that the texts "assume that women's lives will not change until they are offered alternatives to the requirements for their sex" (199). The house functions as a metaphor of female destiny, "one in which the inner spaces of domesticity and corporeality overlap" (199). The process of looking exposes the falsity of the "little love-tale" that "never came true" for the Italian women (terms Loy employs in "At the Door of the House"). In order to mark the gap between reality and illusion, the speaker of the Loy's "house poems" takes a distance from the female "other" in the text (199).

"At the Door of the House" transforms traditional narrative by exposing it as an "inconducive" genre; Loy uses the term "inconducive" meaning unproductive or leading nowhere to describe the bedroom in the house. The traditional narrative structure does not

"conduct" or lead the reader to a consciousness of the heroine as a desiring subject whereas poetry offers the possibility of an open form. Burke remarks that in Loy's "At the Door of the House" a fortune-teller spreads out "color-picture maps of destiny" to shape the future for a woman who cannot envision it for herself (199); the text might be read also as a critique of irrational systems of belief like astrology in favor of a more scientific intuitive approach. The scattering of the "card-teller's" washstand in "At the Door of the House" does not represent a positive model for shaping feminine consciousness through the technical form of the text. It serves, instead, as a critique of Futurism, particularly Marinetti's brand of "unreason." His technical manifesto advised the literary avant-garde to destroy syntax by scattering nouns at random and abolishing adverbs and adjectives. Loy does not find a particular stylistic technique that can resolve her difficulties in shaping a modern feminine consciousness. In this way, she resembles Duchamp in his renunciation of art defined only as technique.

Loy's "The Effectual Marriage or the Insipid Narrative of Gina and Miovanni" is not a specific critique of Futurism but of causality in general. The "Effectual Marriage" indicates from its title that it concerns a view of an insipid narrative about marriage. The word effectual plays with the concept of causality, as well as the idea of "effectiveness" or proper functioning. The double title implies that a binary system is operative in the marriage but the words "effectual" and "insipid" contradict that system. The text begins with the assertion that the "door was an absurd thing" but "passable." The paradoxical logic of this statement may be compared to Duchampian irony (certainly that of the *Large Glass's* acausality, as well as the 1927 creation of *Door: 11 rue Larrey*, whose system of doorways between the bedroom, bathroom and studio contradicts the saying that a door must be either open or shut). Loy met Duchamp in New York the year after she wrote the

text but she would have been familiar with the 1913 Amory Show that made him famous. The text in "The Effectual Marriage" partitions the house of the couple Gina and Miovanni into two domains, like that of the Bride and the Bachelor. Gina's perspective as she looks out of her own kitchen window differs from that of Miovanni, who looks out of his library window. Gina is described as an *incipience* (something that is developing, nascent, and not wholly formed, as Eve taken from the rib of Adam), a correlative and an "instigation of the reaction of man." Miovanni is characterized as "magnificently man" in contrast to Gina's insignificance. His realm is that of work; hers is that of love. Gina represents variegate space and she revolves around Miovanni, who remains monumentally the same. Gina knows that she must alter her perspective in order to expose the visual system of Miovanni. She makes an initial attempt to look at seeing by adopting a Duchampian strategy of "peeping" (one thinks of Duchamp's final apotheosis of the *Large Glass* in his *Etant donnés* installation, in which the spectator looks through two peep holes at the distorted body of a nude female who holds up a lamp).[45] However, Gina remains in the incipient stage and does not progress because she fears retinal blindness and the Void (and, thus, does not adequately resist the Cartesian subject's powerful drive to master the external world and inherent horror of the Void), as evident in the passage below:

> While Miovanni thought alone in the dark
>
> Gina supposed that peeping she might see
>
> A round light shining where his mind was
>
> She never opened the door
>
> Fearing that she should see Nothing at all
>
> So while he thought

She hung out of the window

Watching for falling stars

And when a star fell

She wished that still

Miovanni would love her to-morrow

And as Miovanni

Never gave any heed to the matter

He did

Later in the text, Gina attempts to communicate with poetry but will write only *Good morning* and *Good night*. The narrative of Gina and Miovanni is "halted" with the testimony of a witness, named Forte dei Marmi, who perceives that the house inhabited by the couple is the "home of a mad woman." What inhabits the house can no longer be perceived within a rational logic. The emerging order in the text cannot be comprehended from a traditional stance. The witness at the end of the "Effectual Marriage" observes the emerging of a new order. In my opinion, Loy adopts a feminist stance towards writing by acknowledging it as a form of witnessing. The witnessing of the "mad woman" enables the reader to recognize "other" voices that inhabit the text. Loy gains more confidence in the activity of thinking as a "nomadic subject," in the sense that Rosi Braidotti defines it as an activity of "constantly evolving creating drifting" (Patterns of Dissonance 15). Braidotti comments that, as a feminist, she "writes in witness" of her "intellectual gratitude for the vast theoretical, philosophical AND feminist corpus" which has nurtured her reflection (Patterns of Dissonance 15). For Braidotti, the only guiding thread through the feminist corpus is a "tightrope stretched over the void." Loy accepts the challenge of

such a position, even if she does not have access to such a vast corpus as does Braidotti. As a feminist in the bud, Loy senses her precarious position at the tip of an iceberg.

The "incipience" of Gina's perceptual development refers to the beginning of twentieth-century modernism itself. In "Parturition" the speaker of the text gives birth to modernism as a "leap with nature" into the essence of "unpredicted Maternity." The maternal metaphor is conjoined to the scientific conception of "infinitesimal motion." This motion is the "stir of incipient life" that "precipitates" the contents of the universe into the speaker's consciousness and body. The genesis of modern forms takes place within a consciousness undergoing plural "crises" ("Giving life/For consciousness in crises"). The process defies the category of the verb "to be" as it constructs the "was—is—ever—shall—be" of "cosmic reproductivity." The autobiographical element makes Loy the repository of the experience of turn-of-the-century artists who "become modern" by shuttling back and forth between tradition and experiment. Her Italian series barely disguises the three futurist men who influenced her. Gabrunzio represents D'Annunzio; Raminetti is Marinetti; Bapini is Papini. Loy had been personally involved with both Marinetti and Papini. Giovanni Papini was a Florentine writer who engaged in polemical arguments. Burke criticizes the Papini circle for not having a clearly defined set of beliefs, ethics or aesthetics. Instead, Papini's circle tossed around Futurism, Pragmatism, Occultism and Bergsonism. Papini viewed the past as a "disease" and called for the "fresh air" of Futurism to dispel asphyxiation of the oppressive "trecento" of 1913 (Burke 112). The futurists held funerals to "kill off" past generations. One finds this element in Loy's work where she "kills off" her Romantic heroine in "Costa Magic" from "Italian Pictures." These futurist parades, whose mock solemnity was sometimes accompanied by funeral marches, served as a precursor to dadaist events. Burke highlights the sentiment

of revenge on the past that provoked futurists and dadaists alike to commit “generational murder—as if the old order would simply die of ridicule” (167). Whether or not Loy knew of the Zurich dadaists “next door” in Switzerland (the dadaists were gathering then in Zurich due to Switzerland’s neutrality), Loy’s Italian series opens the door towards Dadaism, then in its embryonic phase, more than it does towards Futurism. The dadaists began to “attack” the futurist “attackers” themselves when they rejected the political ambitions of the movement that had been once viewed as its predecessor. Loy bids farewell to Futurism in “Lions’ Jaws,” a satire of the three ringleaders of Futurism and the movement as a whole.

Although Duchamp did not offer a formal critique of Futurism, he took care to distinguish himself from the movement. Duchamp visited the 1912 futurist exhibit in Paris when he was working on *Nude Descending a Staircase* and commented that the Italian futurists were merely “urban impressionists" (Burke 214). Loy’s critique of Futurism has much in common with Duchamp’s intuition about the disappearance of the social function of art. Duchamp’s disparaging of urban impressionism reflects his attitude toward the burgeoning of mass culture in the machine age. Duchamp perceived the rise of the urban society of the spectacle when he attended events like the Paris Air Show that dazzled the spectators from the ground. Recognizing the sensation that aeromania stirred in the masses, Duchamp made a famous observation that art could not improve upon the propeller.[46] He was not only speaking about the advancement of technology but of the use that an artist could make of technology to stage his or her celebrity, as the futurist leaders did. According to Pierpaolo Antonello, D’Annunzio staged his celebrity over the Italian sky as its leader while Marinetti claimed to be born of a coupling between D’Annunzio and a turbine.[47] Marinetti and D’Annunzio entered into a rivalry for

preeminence because the artist's visibility as a star, or *vedette* in the Guy Debord sense defined in The Society of the Spectacle, took on more significance as the social function of the work of art changed. Antonello argues that Loy's "Lions' Jaws" exposes the rivalry for preeminence as a public "star" between D'Annunzio and Marinetti. Antonello cites the following passages from "Lions' Jaws" that suggest how D'Annunzio's successful public image seduced Marinetti into a competition of self-staging (particularly evident in Loy's references to "the Celebrated," as well as the circus):

> Danriel Gabrunzio's compatriots
> concoct new courtship
> to intrigue
> the myriad-fleshed Mistress
> of "the Celebrated"
>
> The antique envious thunder
> of Latin littérateurs
> rivaling Gabrunzio's satiety
> burst in a manifesto
> notifying women's wombs
> of Man's immediate agamogenesis . . .
>
> [. . .] and Raminetti
> anxious to get a move on this beating-Gabrunzio-business
> possesses the women of two generations
> except a few

who jump the train at the next station . . .

How was Loy able to develop such self-reflexivity and insight into the social function of art? Loy's refusal to play the role of wife to her first husband Stephen Haweis and mother to her son and daughter enabled her to participate in many of the artistic groups throughout Europe and eventually New York. Her nomadism permitted her to cross between cultures as Duchamp and Desnos had. Loy, Desnos and Duchamp did not need to travel in physical space because their imaginations never allowed them to cross the same river twice. All three artists adhered to the belief that they were always looking at what lay in front of them for the first time (a Bretonian concept). All three artists could invent their own odyssey. Loy's aesthetic, consequently, did not accommodate the art of pastiche. Her dynamic interaction of forms and the structuring of language as consciousness anticipated postmodernism. Loy's ability to be self-reflexive of the tendencies in her work enabled her to take a distance from the traditions influencing her painting and poetry. Loy continued to develop the painting career that she had always dreamed of pursuing professionally. She had connections to the Bloomsbury group and managed to have some of her paintings exhibited at the Friday Club (Burke 159). She exhibited *Women's Head* and *Maria con Bruno* at the 1914 exhibition of the Friday Club. Although Lord Henry Bentinck purchased one of her paintings, Loy examined her work self-consciously and proclaimed that she had not evolved out of Post-Impressionism (Burke 160).

The untitled introductory work of 1914 that prefaces Roger Conover's edition of The Lost Lunar Baedeker Poems does not show the same degree of self-reflexive irony present in texts from 1917, texts written during and after Loy's travels in America. Burke analyzes the *va-et-vient* between tradition and experiment in the untitled 1914 work. She

determines that the result is “something like a crossing of Emily Dickinson’s spatial sense with Marinetti’s immediacy” that “might have been punctuated by Gertrude.” Burke’s comment refers to Stein’s unpunctuated verse. Loy’s appreciation of Stein’s style is acknowledged in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas where the narrator writes that “Mina Loy equally interested was able to understand without the commas” (132). Loy’s text begins: “There is no Life or Death,/Only activity/And in the absolute/Is no declivity.” In reading the manuscript of the work, Burke discovered inconsistencies in the first two stanzas with the final stanzas; these inconsistencies indicate that Loy tried to compromise between the old and the new (159).

Loy’s self-reflexive irony enabled her to take a distance from the metaphors and images in “Songs to Joannes.” For example, the speaker of VI declares: “I know the Wire-Puller intimately.” The term wire-puller conjures up the image of a marionette, often associated with Futurism. Loy’s choice of wording “strips the marionette bare” of any connotations of playfulness. The idea of an automaton takes on a negative connotation. Futurists like Fortunato Depero incorporated marionettes into theatrical performances accompanied by music. In 1918 Depero's *Balli Plastici* (*Plastic Dances*) was performed by the marionettes of the *Compagnia Marionettistica Dell'Acqua*, with music by Casella, Malipiero and Bartok. In collaboration with Balla, Depero formulated the ideas for the 1915 manifesto “La ricostruzione futurista dell'universo” (“The futurist reconstruction of the universe”). Depero issued the poetry manifesto “Onomalingua” in 1915 and composed onomalinguistic poems in 1916. For Depero, onomatopoeia taps into the language of natural forces. The poet must develop the natural forces of language to the maximum of sonic intensity. Depero does not describe objects, sensations or states of mind; instead, he makes them act sonically. Depero shared Marinetti’s interest in the

forces of compression and expansion, speed, solidity, cohesion and disintegration, heat, and the "incomprehensible and inhuman alliance" of molecules and electrons. The following citation from Marinetti expresses these ideas:

> Avoid giving to material human sentiments but, rather, intuit its different directive impulses, its forces of compression, of expansion, of cohesion and of disintegration . . . It is not a case of rendering the dramas of a humanized material. It is the solidity of a sheet of steel that we are interested in for its own sake, that is, the incomprehensible and inhuman alliance of its molecules and electrons . . . the heat of a piece of iron or of wood is now more vitally interesting to us than the smile or tears of a woman.[48]

The new world emerging incorporated scientific and mathematical ideas that Loy was just barely beginning to grasp. In her years as an art student in England she had been embarrassed by her lack of knowledge about Auguste Comte and the school of Positivism. She made an effort to educate herself about Darwinism and Freudianism (her visit with Freud in 1922 has been documented by Keith Tuma), as well as Christian Science, eugenics, Bergsonism, and Pragmatism (as conceived of by Papini and also by Stein in the American form of Jamesian Pragmatism). Not much documentation informs Loy's critics about her knowledge of Einstein and mathematics; one must assume that her contact with Duchamp enabled her to obtain scientific knowledge indirectly in the Arensberg circle discussions.

According to Karl Chu, in "Genetic Space," a new world order emerged in the dawn of twentieth century modernism. Chu describes this world order in terms of a topology rather than a topography. Chu argues that the topology of the emerging order

can best be described as an hourglass composed of two inverted funnels. The two funnels are formally nested within each other and involuted at the apex to enable information to be propagated back and forth. An *inframince,* or *infrathin,* separates every infrastructure from a hyperstructure. Infrastructure is the plane of content and hyperstructure is the plane of expression. Duchamp invented the term inframince to "designate a subtle phenomenological differential to that which almost appears not to have an indiscernible difference," as Chu explains. Inframince designates the interval or delay between cause and effect where reciprocal forms of interactive transactions seem instantaneous.

Chu finds Duchamp's concept of the inframince to be "somewhat analogous" to the two floors of the Baroque House described by Deleuze in The Fold. The top half of the house corresponds to the emerging sphere of virtuality, which is projected by the generative mechanism in the bottom half. The top half exfoliates "out into the expanse of the hypersphere" as it evolves a "complex web of epigenetic landscapes to form the multi-layered fluxstratums of virtual ecologies over time." The bottom half of the cone is described by Chu as an abstract machine of the physical world, which acts as the "progenitor of chromogenic patterns that permeate throughout the virtual cone of the upper half." A dynamic reciprocity is effectuated between the two cones. The logic of computability, transmissibility and translatability among information-theoretic systems govern boundary conditions that Chu refers to as "event horizons." This channeling out into the conic sphere of virtuality occurs through the mechanism of the Universal Turing Machine (UTM). The UTM is described as the "modern equivalent of Prometheus's gift of fire and the soul of a new breed of bio-mechanical species evolving at an exponential rate within the machinic phylum of the lower cone." Chu adds that Duchamp, in his *Large Glass,* already had "premonitions of a somewhat homologous structure." The

division of the *Large Glass* into an upper and lower level symbolizes the slippage of the finite into the "transfinite," induced by desiring machines. Chu considers the *Large Glass* to be a semiotic machine that unfolds the alchemy of desire through a transmutation of allegories. The genetic space of the hourglass is, consequently, a spectral economy. This spectral economy is "instantiated by what may ultimately prove to be the obscure logic of the demiurge, an autopoetic system dynamically evolving and synthesizing into an alchemy of chronogeometry." Chu's analysis involves semiotics and, ultimately, a spectral economy that depends on alchemy and allegory. John Rajchman disagrees with the model of a Turing Machine as an interpretation of a Deleuzian model of organization. He states clearly in Constructions that the Deleuzian dynamic model is not a Turing Machine.[49] Reason is always bifurcating and can never be reduced to predication or identification. It has no localizing orientation and cannot be identified with the semiotic model of a Turing Machine. Conceptual experimentation involves the mode of existence of the believer (more in a Pascalian sense) and not that of the alchemist who must adhere to the priority of images to argument. Rajchman opposes constructivism to deconstructivism and interprets Leibniz's "disjunctive synthesis" as an attempt to cast himself as a "defense attorney for God in a world that seems to have abandoned him over adducing new principles" (42). It is not a matter of creating an esoteric language but of a "foreign language" (something akin to the conscious construction of language in Duchamp, Desnos and Loy) that would be "spoken by a people that does not yet exist" (10). What cannot be said in the dominant language necessitates a violence of strangeness but it is different from that of esoterism. It aims to combat stupidity in the same manner that Duchamp attacked "retinal stupidity." It opposes the melancholy model of the blank page that is always covered with too many clichés (13). The alchemist remains in a

melancholic state, attached to the primacy of the image. The body must break out of stupidity and be "extracted" for "organistic representation" in the manner of Artaud's concept of a body without organs in order to destroy the cliché, a concept that inspired Deleuze (10). Duchamp's dadaist poem on the back page of the March 1945 issue of *View* magazine destroys clichés by playing with typography and capitalization as it extracts the body from organistic representation through the idea of the inframince. The short text reads as follows: "Quand la fumée de tabac sent aussi de la bouche qui l'exhale, les Deux Odeurs s'épousent par INFRA-mince." The idea of two odors merging, the odor of the mouth and the smoke, illustrates the joining of the two funnels inherent to the concept of the inframince. The idea of the body is extracted through the metaphor of a marriage between bodies, as in the marriage of the domains of the Bride and the Bachelor in the *Large Glass* or the marriage between the verbal and the visual in the *Large Glass* and the *Green Box*.

Apart from the model of the Turing Machine, Chu's reinforcement of the esoteric tradition as an explanation of the dynamics of the *Large Glass* depends on a mirror mechanism. To this degree Chu presents an interpretation similar to that of Schwarz in The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp. For Schwarz, it is no accident that the Oculist Witnesses in the *Large Glass* are composed of three elliptical shapes "crowned by a perfect circle with a dot in the middle" because it is the oldest symbol of the reconciliation of contraries in the esoteric tradition. (The perspective of the *Large Glass* turns the circles into ellipses.) In the esoteric tradition, the center of the circle stands for the creative principle and the dot represents the egocentricity of that force (Schwarz 169). Chu's topological analysis depends on the topic (or *topos*) of alchemical or allegorical hermeticism and, thus, leads in a different direction than that of Deleuze. It is widely

known that Duchamp refused any connection between his art and alchemical hermeticism. His wife, Teeny Duchamp, has stated that Duchamp meant what he said when he claimed to be unaware of any links with the alchemical tradition.[50] The actual wording of Duchamp's response (i.e. that if he practiced alchemy it was *sans le savoir*) appears to some people to be a cryptic denial of conscious involvement in order to protect the secrecy of those traditions. If Duchamp associated himself with Orphism, it was due to experimentation with the fourth dimension and simultaneity. In 1912 the French term *orphisme* designated the works of Robert and Sonia Delaunay. The Delaunay's paintings departed from the Cubism of Braque and Picasso in their use of circular forms and bright colors based on the laws of simultaneous contrast developed in the nineteenth century by the French chemist Michel-Eugène Chevreul. Underplaying the scientific underpinning of contemporary *orphisme* and highlighting instead esoteric Greek Orphism (an ancient Greek mystery religion arising in the sixth century B.C. from a synthesis of pre-Hellenic beliefs with the Thracian cult of Zagreus and soon becoming mingled with the Eleusinian mysteries and the doctrines of Pythagoras), critics such as Arturo Schwarz and John F. Moffitt insist on the alchemical tradition as a key to unlock the meaning of Duchamp's works. Moffitt's thesis in his Alchemist of the Avant-Garde: The Case of Marcel Duchamp proposes that hermeticism is the "principal topic organizing Duchamp's operational philosophy." In his view, the critic should not take Duchamp at his word when he denied having an interest in the hermeticism of poets like Mallarmé. Moffitt's analysis studies the relation between the topic of hermeticism and what he perceives as the iconographic elements in Duchamp's art. Although Moffitt acknowledges the validity of Linda Henderson's scientific study[51] of the fourth dimension in relation to Duchamp's art, he argues that the concept of the fourth dimension has esoteric meanings in

Duchamp's works. Since Apollinaire was the first to bring up the concept of the fourth dimension in art in Les peintres cubistes, the issue has been much debated already. What Moffitt emphasizes, however, is not Apollinaire's influence on Duchamp but that of František Kupka. Moffitt interprets Henderson's avowal of Kupka's interest in "higher dimensions" and vibratory (molecular) communication as proof that "occultist theories of telepathic projection" formed the base for the transmission of visual images in contemporary art.[52] This is how Moffitt explains the cultural shaping of Duchamp as an artist-iconoclast. Moffitt concludes that Duchamp's contemporaries criticized him overtly (rather than mentioning the favorable critique in Les peintres cubistes, Moffitt makes a vague reference to a printed remark of Apollinaire's vis à vis the "ugly nudes" of Duchamp).[53] Moffitt claims that Duchamp arrived at a professional impasse in 1911 and turned towards alchemical iconography as a solution, a solution that had already been popularized by the symbolist avant-garde. Moffitt states that "Alchemy seemed to have it all: a major statement propelled by unique, already pictorialized or ready-made topoi" (94).

Moffitt's interpretation does not provide a topological analysis, as does that of Chu. Instead, it explores the topoi of alchemy and finds a solution in "ready-made" iconographical images. That makes Duchamp a cultural iconoclast and not a visual one. Moffit views Duchamp's rejection of the retinal tradition as an obscuring process effectuated by hermeticism (the triumph of Symbolist Idealism over Realism and Naturalism). Moffitt does not provide a mathematical explanation nor does he think in terms of space and measurement, as does David Joselit in Infinite Regress. Unlike Chu or Moffitt, Joselit does not make references to alchemy. He makes use of semiotics to discuss Duchamp's Cubism and to distinguish it from Picasso's analytic Cubism. His

two models of semiotic analysis come from Lyotard's notion of the tensor sign extracted from a libidinal field and Saussure's concept of linguistic value as an economic marketplace. He discusses the fourth dimension in terms of topography and not topology. Joselit situates Duchamp's depiction of the nude not within a professional impasse, as does Moffitt, but within his own brand of Cubism. Joselit comments that Apollinaire understood Duchamp's use of the nude as the persistence of the body in Cubism, whereas Picasso's analytic Cubism made the nude disappear into an arbitrary economy of graphic signifiers (60). Duchamp, like Marey, transposed the nude into a "language immanent to it" (60). Like Lyotard's semiotics, Duchamp's Cubism emphasizes the body as a "point of transfer between libidinal flux and signification" and his painting of 1910-14 "evokes a visceral field" (60). Duchamp's concept of language involves an unresolved or suspended opposition between mensurability and immensurability, in which "measurement" is conceived of an "act of exchange in or all of its three dimensions" (60). Duchamp's cubist project attempts to divide the body into signifying units, to "chart its unruly topography" (61). The body retains enough opacity to constitute a topography, which requires depth (unlike topology). It is also subjected to a standard of measurement or "mensuration." The 1912 paintings (*Nude Descending a Staircase*, *The Passage from Virgin to Bride*, and *Bride*) are characterized by a poetics of mensuration. Through this poetics of mensuration, "immensurable" flesh is captured by a diagrammatic armature drawn from deep within the body's architecture (71). Joselit identifies a progression that begins with the *Network of Stoppages* and ends with what he describes as Duchamp's last true painting of 1918, *Tu m'*. In *Network of Stoppages* (1914) the body is subjected to a standard of measurement but it is one that collapses back into the carnal. Even as the nude is carved up into semiotic units, it retains the irreducible opacity of the body and

never loses its tendency to fall back into the pure intensity of the libidinal field. For Duchamp, the signifier was neither completely arbitrary nor completely transparent to its signified. It *performs* the endless cycle of being cut from the body and falling back into the presemiotic "noise" of its unconscious, aleatory flows (61).

The *Network of Stoppages* is a painting that consists of three superimposed compositions. The uppermost layer consists of nine "capillary tubes" with numbered circles indicating the position intended for the Nine Malic Moulds to be realized not in this composition but later in the *Large Glass*. The nine curved lines that constitute the capillaries were drawn using the template of *Three Standard Stoppages* three times to produce the nine curved lines. In 1913-14 Duchamp fabricated *Three Standard Stoppages* by considering three patterns in relation to one another. His notes from "The Bride's Veil" explain that the *Three Standard Stoppages* are the "meter diminished." The approximate length of the stoppages is based on a unit of measurement invented by Duchamp through a combination of chance and intentionality. He chose a thread intentionally to create the unit of measurement by letting it fall haphazardly to produce a new shape. He repeated the event three times and described it thus in his notes as an explanation of the idea of fabrication: "—If a straight horizontal thread one meter long falls from a height of one meter onto a horizontal plane distorting itself *as it pleases* and creates a new shape of measurement." Chance and intentionality, in combination with the force of gravity, act upon the thread. The idea of intentionality is considered by Duchamp to be a force (which he refers to as "aim"), along with the idea of "draft" as a force (he stated that if one captures the force of draft, one can make a piston move). All of these forces may be described in terms of the physical reality of the natural world. Duchamp makes use of chance intentionally to arrive at a new unit of measurement. The idea of

"draft" inspired Paz's "Pasado en claro" or "A Draft of Shadows," whose final line reads: "Soy la sombra que arrojan mis palabras" ("I am the shadow my words cast").

In Joselit's opinion, the *Network of Stoppages* creates an unstable but nonetheless dichotomous opposition between the body and a standard of measure and *Tu m'* initiates an infinite regress of measurement. *Tu m'* pushes the cycle of semiotic mensurability and immensurability to the extreme of an infinite regress. Joselit concludes that Duchamp's "rhetoric of the fourth dimension" establishes a metaphor for a world in which any object is the measure of another. In the infinite regress or anamorphosis of *Tu m'* every element becomes the figure of something else. The title itself functions as a shifting index within the anamorphic system. How can one translate it into English? A French person would immediately think of completing the phrase, *Tu m'emmerdes* ("You bore me"). Was Duchamp expressing his boredom with the limitations of retinal painting? The subject "you" and the object "me" enter into a relationship that depends upon an absent predicate. The subject and the object are "stripped bare" of their predicate and can only point at each other. The reader or the spectator must enter into an "existential" situation and "fill in the blank" to determine what the "you" and the "me" decide to do. Duchamp's painting, and this is the last time he referred to any of his works as a painting, consists of a series of stacked "receding diamond" color planes aligned in a diagonal from the upper left toward the center of the picture plane. The diagonal line recedes to a vanishing point in the upper left corner. The surface of the picture plane reveals the shadows cast by three Readymades, everyday objects selected by Duchamp for their indifference to the subject matter of the painting. The viewer may discern the cast shadow of a bicycle wheel on the left, a hat rack on the right and a corkscrew in the center. There is a simulated rip in the canvas; real safety pins clasp the "rip" together. A

real bristle brush projects out of the picture plane from a hole in the otherwise *trompe l'oeil* tear. A hand points to an area located on the right side of the picture plane. It refers back to the indexical sign in the exchange between the "you" and "me" of the title. Lightly sketched lines point at the idea of another work, the *Three Standard Stoppages*. The two pronouns in the title point to another interesting fact about the painting—it is the work of two artists. Duchamp brought in a local artisan to paint the figure on the sign with the pointing hand. The pointing hand is a sign painter's cliché. Duchamp sought to break the "stupidity" of the cliché in finding forms that could be produced independently of the hand. As Desnos said in praise of Duchamp, *la technique n'a plus d'importance*. Duchamp's selection of a particular element enters before and after the fact; it is highly charged with irony. Nicolas Calas remarks that chance, as a subcategory of irony, "springs from the ironic point of view" and its application is "highly charged with mockery" ("Cheat to Cheat" 53). Calas argues that the "results of his experiments with chance are applied with the precision and detachment of mathematics" ("Cheat to Cheat" 53). Katherine Dreier wrote about Duchamp as a modern Da Vinci and believed that the two artists shared a common inclination for science and machinery:

> It was the year 1919. He was young,—popular—shy. Many loved him—Many doubted and hated him. . . . He loved the purity of lines which machinery demands. He would spend weeks—months—getting a series of curves and circles. Then he would call it art. . . . He had vague recollections of spending years in search of inventing flying-machine . . .[54]

Duchamp's own description of the fourth dimension in his writings involve imagining an instantaneous crossing of a space by "recalling certain effects with 3-sided mirrors in which the images disappear (behind) new images" ("Bride's Veil" 94). One

may think of a series of bottles placed in front of mirrors whose angles of reflection make the bottles appear to stretch out infinitely as one image disappears behind another. The idea of infinite regress may be conceptualized as an effect of mirroring, a concept to which the title of a recent Duchamp exhibit in Japan attests—"Mirrorical Returns." In his writings Duchamp describes the four-dimensional eye not as an enumeration to infinity of the three-dimensional features of a surface but of a "retinal formula synthesizing this surface" (94). The space of a four-dimensional field is a "continuum the basic element of which is a sphere of infinitely small radius . . ." ("Bride's Veil" 94). A line of space conceals a plane and is, therefore, like a section of a plane that is visible to the eye. A plane is the intersection of two spaces; a plane in a continuum intersects a space along a line. However, Duchamp emphasized that an object in a space does not conceal: "It is on the contrary attacked, cut up by all the *lines, volumes, planes of the continuum,* ending, in its space, at its construction in points, planes, lines" ("Bride's Veil" 95). He continues to explain that each "ordinary 3-dim'l body, inkpot, house, captive balloon is *the* perspective projected by *numerous* 4-dim'l bodies upon the 3-dim'l medium" ("Bride's Veil" 96).

Joselit's semiotic analysis does not fully explain the mathematical foundations of the fourth dimension. Joselit considers the fourth dimension to be a metaphor or a type of rhetoric that Duchamp employed whether he comprehended its mathematical foundations or not. Joselit views the body in terms of signifying units and opacity, which explain the body in terms of topography but not topology. However, Duchamp's rejection of the retinal tradition drew its impetus from mathematical theories concerning the virtuality of perceptual space. Duchamp maintained a close friendship with Apollinaire, who first wrote about poetry and painting in the fourth dimension in his Les peintres cubistes. A

blending of Cubism and Orphism inspired Apollinaire to write, in Les peintres cubistes, that the three dimensions of Euclidean geometry sufficed up until now but the new painters have been led by intuition to contemplate the fourth dimension. Apollinaire defines the fourth dimension as space itself, or the dimension of infinity. Duchamp never considered Apollinaire's ideas to be the definitive foundation of modern art and Apollinaire's premature death in 1918 did not enable him to further his ideas. The experiments of Villon, as mentioned earlier in regard to his contributions to the Puteaux group, encouraged Duchamp to explore mathematical conceptions. Duchamp did not want to adhere strictly to the idea of expanding the Golden Section but the experimentation with stacked planes of color in *Tu m'* may be considered as an extension of Villon's "constructive decomposition" technique. Villon and Duchamp had both been experimenting with the infinite thought process in the creation of an abstract network of forms. The Renaissance directed the focus of vision towards a vanishing point but Villon went beyond this aesthetic in his *Table d'échecs* (which makes the chessboard float up to the surface of the painting). Perhaps Villon's chessboard does not reemerge from the obscure murk of the mind as a language, as Duchamp would have personally strived to do, but it does reemerge as a consciousness within a rationally-organized spatial field. The fact that Duchamp was influenced by the Puteaux group is not disputed but he grew bored quickly with the ideas of any group. Dreier wrote that Duchamp introdued his concept of the third dimension into *Tu m'*. When he installed the painting in her library, he attached a long wire ice-box cleaner that became part of the composition (the bristle brush protruding at right angles from the fissure). In Dreier's library the "effect at night" was to unify the "picture with the ceiling through the shadow" that it cast and extend "the realm of the painting" through conscious "forethought" on Duchamp's part.[55]

Duchamp wrote some cryptic notes at the outbreak of World War I that reveal his intention to formulate a new theoretical perspective, not only within the optimism of science but also within the chaos of political upheaval. These notes, collected in what is now called the *Box of 1914*, reveal his discouragement at the prospect of being drafted into the war. He was to be twice declared unfit for military service in France due to a heart murmur. He writes about a distancing of each soldier from the military corps and he makes a specific reference to a heart:

> Contre le service militaire obligatoire: / un "éloignement" de chaque membre, / du Coeur et des autres unités anatomiques; /chaque soldat ne pouvant/déjà plus revêtir un uniforme, son/ Coeur alimentant *téléphoniquement*/un bras éloigné, etc./ *Puis*, plus d'alimentation; chaque "*éloigné* s'isolant./ Enfin une Réglementation /des regrets *d'éloigné à éloigné*. (4)

Burke interprets the word "éloignement" as deferment and is convinced that the action upset Duchamp who did not want to be taken for a "shirker." He opposed himself to all systems of classification because of his personal experience of being declared unfit (225). I admonish against indulging in opinions that reinforce stereotypes about masculinity, as implied by Burke's use of the term "shirker." I insist that, to the contrary, Duchamp envisions the project of the *Large Glass* at this moment within the context of humanitarian protest. The Bachelor/Soldier is described by Duchamp in the note as "éloigné" from the military corps and imperfectly related to distance. The heart of the soldier is "téléphoniquement" connected to a distant arm, thus indicating that the solidier's body itself has been decentralized. It is less of a matter of cutting the body up

into signifying units than of perceptual distance. The soldier's body must be nude because it can no longer wear a uniform; however, no perspective would enable the body to be seen or its distance from the observer to be measured. In demobilizing the military corps, Duchamp destabilizes its centralizing coordinates. It is necessary to reject the eye that would unify the composition or systematize the units as a military corps.

It is crucial not to fall into the trap of reinforcing canonical notions about the "modernist male subject" and to posit Duchamp as having an iconic stature in the shaping of the "modern consciousness" and even the "postmodern consciousness." It is such a trap that Amelia Jones falls into in her Postmodernism and the En-Gendering of Marcel Duchamp (1995) and "The Ambivalence of Male Masquerade: Duchamp as Rrose Sélavy" (1993). Postmodernism and the En-Gendering of Marcel Duchamp offers a critical analysis of postmodernism in the visual arts since the 1960s and focuses mainly on American texts that consider Marcel Duchamp to be the originator of postmodern art. Jones argues that through his "readymades" Duchamp has paradoxically served in a paternal role for post-1960s American artists, critics, and art historians, who have endeavored to construct a new tradition of artistic practice in opposition to the masculinist ideologies of Abstract Expressionism and "Greenbergian" modernism. She "reconstructs" Duchamp as an indeterminately gendered author whose legacy might best be viewed in terms of the potential of his "readymades" to destructure the contradictory notions of sexual difference and subjectivity. Rather than look at the "readymades," we must take into consideration that Duchamp cross-dressed as Rrose by donning "female" attire in a "real life" performance. Jones disparages this performance as "avant-garde male masquerade," a confusing term that places Duchamp's cross-dressing in a category distinct from male homosexual "drag." Jones views Duchamp's cross-dressing as a

symptom of a crisis in masculinity rather than as a radical creative act and seems to reinforce stereotypes about masculinity, femininity and homosexuality, as has been noted also by David Joselit (an art critic who reviewed her Postmodernism and the En-Gendering of Marcel Duchamp). According to Joselit, she succumbs to the Lacanian error that occurs when self-identity depends on a purely linguistic construction belonging to nobody, or, worse, to *others* who view the "I" or "me" of the speaking subject as a "we." This error forces her to return to a canonical concept of "author" as self-identity in her assessment of Duchamp as artist, while, at the same time, she suggests that there is an eroticization of the artist/spectator relation based on a model of seduction implicit in Duchamp's creative process. In my opinion, through the assuming of a female persona, a feminine presence enters Duchamp's works. Rrose is not present in reality but functions as a form of meta-irony in the absence of pure Ideas. Rrose can be transformed into the speculative pure Idea of Eros because art is being transformed into life, and vice versa. It is important to emphasize that the connector *c'est* in *Eros, c'est la vie* (as in Deleuze's style in The Fold) joins Eros and life.

If we return to 1912, we may examine closely a moment that indicates a shift in Duchamp's methodology. In turning away from the retinal tradition, Duchamp began to take notes in 1912 that indicate a shift in methodology. Eventually, his notes became part of the *Large Glass* project itself, as his methodology incorporated more visual and verbal interaction. Some of the first notes that indicate such a shift in methodology were produced when Duchamp (accompanied by Picabia, Picabia's wife, and Apollinaire) made a journey by car from the French Alps to Paris in 1912. These notes describe a fantastic voyage and omit any description of the spatial topography or the events of the journey. Instead, Duchamp attempted to write a fictional account of a networked

consciousness shared by the driver, the passengers, the vehicle itself and the fluctuations of the road passing from the Alps to Paris. He did not carry out his plan, never finishing the project, but the note was later placed in the *Green Box*. The note describes a competition between humanized machines to conquer the Jura-Paris road. Duchamp refers to the vehicle that dominates the road as a "machine with five hearts, the pure child, of nickel and platinum." The instrument controlling the road is the "headlight child" figured graphically as a comet, whose front tail pulverizes the road into gold dust. Duchamp mentions specifically that the Paris-Jura road itself must not have a topographical dimension and should only be represented as a pure, geometric line. He adds that this line "finds its opening into the infinite" in the headlight child.[56]

Why did Duchamp suppress the topographical in the plan for the Paris-Jura prose project? One reason is that he was evading French military duty at the time of his journey, and he resisted the representation of the war culture by imagining an *elsewhere* in his writings. He tried to visualize a fluid and multidimensional space, where he could be at once separate and other, and, paradoxically, in the *elsewhere* necessary for a sense of resistance. A second reason that Duchamp hesitated between topography and topology is that he did not yet conceive of conjoining the two concepts in a multidimensional field. He regarded the geometry of the line as purer than topographical representation. The methodological shift to an interaction of forms and a networking of consciousness, within a multidimensional space, would not manifest itself fully until the subsequent *Large Glass* project. Duchamp abandoned the idea of working with prose and turned towards the abstract language of poetry as a model. Duchamp played with effects of transformation through projection in poetic language in the same way that he sought spatial effects of transformation in the plastic arts.

Jean François Lyotard explains in the seminal work les TRANSformateurs Duchamp how Duchamp's verbal and visual play with effects of transformation and projection developed out of topology, or what used to be named *Analysis situs.* Unlike Deleuze, Lyotard does not refer to Leibniz but he does discuss the mathematical logic of virtual n-dimensional space considered in its geometric infinity. Lyotard emphasizes the significance of the theories of Dedekind, Poincaré and Kant in the development of non-Euclidean geometry:

> Alors se développe, à partir de l'Analysis situs, la topologie, machine géometrique fonctionnant "à l'envers", non pour commensurer, mais pour démesurer. C'est cette théorie des grandeurs non mesurables que Duchamp rencontre en lisant Poincaré, lequel reprend Dedekind. C'est à elle qu'il doit l'idée de la "coupure" dont l'usage doit permettre selon Dedekind de construire des espaces *n-dimensionnels* par-delà la forme intuitive que nous impose l'espace perceptif, l'espace absolu de Kant. Poincaré: "Pour diviser l'espace, il faut des coupures qu'on appelle surfaces; pour diviser les surfaces, il faut des coupures que l'on appelle des lignes; pour diviser les lignes, il faut des coupures que l'on appelle points; on ne peut aller plus loin et le point ne peut être divisé, le point n'est pas un continu . . . (79)

Lyotard attributes Duchamp's *stupidité rétinienne* to the Dedekind cut that may occur when a 3-D object is considered in its geometric infinity. It is not the idea of empirical law that Duchamp rejected but rather a type of law that could only be understood from a stereoscopic of three-dimensional perspective. According to Lyotard,

Duchamp acknowledged the insufficiencies of Dada as an oppositional movement. Literary Dada opposed and, in opposing, became the tale of what it opposed (102). In other words, Duchamp denounced the drôle irony of the dadaist movement that mocked the idea of law and derided it as arbitrary.

Lyotard discusses the *Nude Descending the Staircase* as a precursor to the *Large Glass* project. The *Nude* involves "inoptic vision" which displaces the idea of chronological movement, or passage, as a transformational channel. The idea of passage from one plane to another originated with Cézanne; it involved the representation of figures and planes. The *Nude* of 1912 no longer represents the chronological passage of a moving figure in space (or time). In Marey's studies of the moving figure the eye is authorized to recreate the synthesis of the stopped motion in order to form a static composition. The *Nude* seeks passage in the relation between the eye to its supporting apparatus and not in figural representation. The *Large Glass* continues with the displacement of passage into multiple projections of transformative space that escape the effects of control and synthesis (66-67).

Lyotard argues that the plastic problem of the *Large Glass* is one of projection in which the spaces are incongruent, not the represented figures (55). The lower pane, that of the bachelor, is treated from a traditional Italian one-point perspective in which 3-dimensional objects are projected onto a 2-dimensional surface. Virtual depth is created by this effect. Since Duchamp constructs the supporting apparatus of this system through transparent glass, as opposed to an opaque canvas with oil paint, the eye cannot explore the virtual space of the apparatus. The eye tries to cross through the virtual space of the apparatus but it encounters real objects placed behind the glass. Now the *Large Glass* is located in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and a window of the exhibition room, as well

as a fountain in the exterior court of the museum, can be seen behind/through the glass. The eye does not become lost in the illusion of virtual depth in the reality effect but, instead, turns back on its own activity, that of transforming perspective. A duplicitous wall exists between the two panes of glass; it is the hinge between two virtual spaces of metamorphosis or anamorphosis. Lyotard reiterates Duchamp's own comments on this point: "Ma Mariée est une projection en surface plane d'une mariée tridimensionnelle, qui à son tour est la projection d'une mariée quatridimensionnelle" (61).

Despite the fact that Lyotard eventually connects the topological transformations in the *Large Glass* to a critique of democracy based on an idea of equality implying conformity to a grid pattern, I find his argument to be weak in its positioning of the human and its Other—the projection machine. As a feminist scholar, I find his notion of the human subject to be caught up in the trap of the too-simple dialectic human/other. This is the same objection I make to his definition of the postmodern condition in his La condition postmoderne (1979). His working hypothesis is that the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter the "postindustrial age" and cultures enter the "postmodern" age. The proliferation of information-processing machines is having and will continue to have as much of an effect on the circulation of learning as did advancements in human circulation (transportation systems) and later, in the circulation of sounds and visual images (the media). He argues that we may expect a thorough *exteriorization* of knowledge with respect to the "knower," at whatever point he or she may occupy in the knowledge process. The principle that the acquisition of knowledge is indissociable from the training (*Bildung*) of minds, in his view, is becoming obsolete and will become ever more so. The idea of positive networking and connectivity is not underscored in his thesis that focuses, rather, on a critique of the "use-value" of information proliferated in the

postmodern age. Instead of addressing the new possibilities of visual culture, he accords no interiority to the knowing subject who, consequently, cannot take up a partial viewpoint. His thesis does not permit me to go far in my assessment of how Duchamp conceptualized the "virtual."

I find that Craig Adcock's N-Dimensional Analysis provides a comprehensive study of how Duchamp conceptualized the virtual. In his opinion, Duchamp was influenced by mathematical studies in the field of topology that proposed theories about the infinite proportions of space. Adcock examines the topological theories known as "n-dimensional analyses" that discuss how a dimension of a higher power may be conceptualized or projected from a lower one. Adcock explains that in 4-D space normal space folds back upon itself infinitely (108). The 4-D perspective englobes the 3-D perspective. The virtual representation of a volume is not a reality in sensorial appearance but more of a reflection in a mirror. Duchamp's Oculist Witnesses have a mirror coating and the lower panel on the right hand side of the *Large Glass* is also mirror-coated. An object translated into the fourth dimension would vanish but 4-D is not about making an object disappear.[57] It is employed as a metaphor for multiple viewpoints from multiple spaces. Or is it a metaphor for the impossibility of arriving at a perception of the 4-D from within the 3-D? Where the spectator fixes the eye, there is contingency, anamorphosis and topological distortion.

What is a topological transformation? Curved line segments are equivalent to straight lines, which is what Duchamp tries to demonstrate in his *Three Standard Stoppages*. Two figures correspond to each other by means of a continuous deformation. Anamorphic deformations are the equivalent of a topological transformation in two dimensions. Topology can be best defined as the properties that remain invariant when

figures are bent, stretched, deformed. A circle and a square are topologically the same in the case of a rubber band. The topological transformation depends on an elastic quality, like a moved and stretched rubber band that can be distorted into the shape of a circle or a square (145). Topological transformations of surfaces include cloth deformed by wind, irregular holes, etc. The lower panel of the *Large Glass* constitutes the Bachelor apparatus, which is only partially mensurated and imperfect since it is formed through projective geometry. The upper panel, that of the Bride, is purely qualitative or topological. The Bride is unrelated to distance, whereas the Bachelor is imperfectly related to distance as represented by the fictitious and the dotted. According to Adcock, the *Nude* and the *Large Glass* are conceptually close. One may compare the topological transformation of the Nude's passage to the 4-dimensional space of the Bride's domain. In addition, the cloud-like concept of the Milky Way in the *Large Glass* consists of instantaneous states of rest like the deformational "instantanés" that characterize the distorted passage of the Nude.

In the *Large Glass* the Bride talks to the Bachelor by means of a topologically deformed sign system. The commands of the Bride are communicated by alphabetical units known as the three standard stoppages. Writing itself becomes a geometrically deformed set of signs. Duchamp desired to construct a topological language through the conflation of geometry and non-geometry (151). The elastic space of the *Large Glass* shapes language into rubber words, just as it creates male-female transformations. Adcock argues that the interconnectedness between different spatial configurations produces a spiral effect that involves the "geometrical, the perspectival, the two dimensional, the three dimensional, the mensurated, the fictitious and dotted . . . projection and reprojection, shadows, sieves, scissors, witnesses, blossomings,

expansions, the outstretched and the farfetched" (205). Adcock concludes that the components of the *Large Glass* are tightly folded into n-dimensional hyperbolas (205).

Duchamp's dadaist rejection of topography led him to invent abstract topologies in which the cerebral and the physical converged. Duchamp's work eventually evolved into a surreal topology that fused abstract and concrete topological space with the *topoi* of the mind. It is precisely this shift towards a surreal topology that Breton emphasizes in his poetic praise of Surrealism in the quote:

> Pour Dada, c'est un petit vieux. Nous cheminons maintenant dans une sorte de désert ignoré des cartes. La pureté des banquises s'y allie à la solennelle chaleur des Savannes. [. . .] (Le numéro 5 de *Littérature*, 1er octobre 1922)

Breton describes the moment when Surrealism surpasses Dadaism as a collective nomadism in which the artists move in a desert space with no maps. The refusal of any precise topographical description cedes to an undecidable topography in which the purity of ice floes merges with the heat of savannahs.

The transformation of topology into topoi involves a process of interiorisation and distancing from real space. What kind of model or paradigm might be able to account for surreal topology? The question of the architectural design of such a space must be addressed at this point. The concept of surrealist architecture does not fit into the schemas of critics who equate modern architecture with construction and the age of machines and technological rationalism. If one were to conceive of Surrealism as a reaction to the overly rational technologies of modernism, then a notion of surrealist architecture would not be possible. If, in the Deleuzian sense, one were to equate nascent surreal topologies with a fusion between baroque and modern forms, one would have recourse to the idea of

the Baroque House (i.e., Leibniz's description of the space of the monad through the allegory of a house with two floors).

Vidler, in Warped Space, insists on adhering strictly to the Leibnizian allegory of a house, as opposed to folded forms, in order to explain the baroque monad. Since folds exist in space, as well as in things and ideas, their distinguishing property is the ability to combine all of these categories in a single moment. The combinatorial, in Vidler's view, is the key to understanding the fold; it may involve both a mathematical conceptualization and an architectural one. Both Dalibor Vesely and Kenneth Frampton argue that architecture never became an integral part of surrealist thought. Vidler offers a more radical extension of Vesely's theory that Surrealism was to be found in the hermetic thought of the Renaissance and the mythic thought of Romanticism since, in Vesely's words, "Surrealism does not represent another artistic or political avant-garde, but a sub-stratum of the whole modern culture" ("Papers" 5). According to Vidler, it was not the modern that began with the Renaissance but the specific culture of modernism in the interwar period (avant-garde) of the 1920s. Architecture, despite the apparent obliviousness of the surrealists to it, would seem to be the most fruitful of all media for surrealist practice. Architecture provides the physical and psychical structures of a home, which is a concept akin to the womb in surrealist thought:

> It construes a topology of symbolic forms, form the stair to the cellar, that, from Freud on, have become topoi of dream analysis. Furthermore, and more importantly, it manifests itself in that most ambiguous of all elements – space- within which psychic projection and introjection move freely and without fixed boundaries." ("Papers" 3)

Vidler argues also that the surrealist uncanny did not adhere to the Freudian definition of the uncanny. Surrealism motivated the uncanny of the Other, which was the "real" for Surrealism. Surrealists did not adhere to Freud but to the uncanny sense that the "normal" is a complex of repressed objects, that of the repressed of modernism itself. In architectural terms, three domains that the modernists identified as the basis of their attack on tradition were: 1) the solid, load-bearing wall that afforded traditional protection and privacy; 2) the bourgeois house; and 3) the objects of everyday life (mostly mass-produced). Le Corbusier asserted the technological and ideological virtues of the glass wall and its transparency to light, air and nature. Led by Breton, the surrealists challenged each of these domains. Breton's views on the transparency of the glass house opposed those of modernists like Le Corbusier who regarded the glass house as a "machine for living" ("Papers" 4).

The following passage from Breton's Nadja reveals his view of the glass house as an oneiric machine:

> Pour moi, je continuerai à habiter ma maison de verre, où l'on peut voir à toute heure qui vient me rendre visite, où tout ce qui est suspendu aux plafonds et aux murs tient comme par enchantement, où je repose la nuit sur un lit de verre aux draps de verre, où *qui je suis* m'apparaîtra tôt ou tard gravé au diamant. (18-19)

Vidler's reading of the above passage is that Breton proposes a concept of a "glass house of the soul," a psycho-geographic glass house, in contrast to the ideology of the glass house of the body, or the "aerobic" glass house. Man Ray and Georges Bataille did not praise the virtues of transparency. Man Ray photographed Duchamp's *Large Glass* in its

opacity as it gathered dust. Bataille praises not transparency but dust in the following passage that Vidler highlights in his essay:

> . . . sad blankets of dust endlessly invade earthly dwellings and soil them uniformly: as if attics and old rooms were being arranged for the imminent entrance of obsessions, of ghosts, of larvae fed and inebriated by the worm-eaten smell of old dust. ("Papers" 4)

Glass, once conceived of only in its transparency, becomes opaque. For Breton, modern functionalism was the "unhappy dream of the collective unconscious." Tzara indicted modern architecture as the "complete negation of the image of the dwelling." Breton, Jean Arp, and Tzara "posed a volatile and elusive sensibility of mental-physical life against what was seen as a sterile and over-rationalized technological realism: the life of the interior psyche against the externalizing ratio" ("Papers" 5). What makes Surrealism ultimately modern, Vidler concludes, is that it reveals the uncanny in the other, blurring the boundaries between the organic and the inorganic.

Surrealists attempted to reincarnate the mythological configuration repressed by modernism, as in collage or in paintings such as Max Ernst's that blend the animal and the human. Semi-organic and dream objects counter the "implacable" rationalism of purely technological modernism. The more abstract the house, the more it is not there. The new mythology of the counterabstract creates houses such as Tzara's intra-uterine space ("Papers" 6). For Tzara, modern architecture, as hygienic and stripped of ornaments as it wants to appear, negates the image of dwelling (from "D'un certain automatisme du goût," *Minotaure* 3-4 Dec 1933). In opposition to horizontal extensions and the dissolution of barriers between the public and the private Tzara valued the maternal and sheltering images of "uterine" constructions which, from the cave to the

grotto and the tent, comprised the fundamental forms of human habitation. For Tzara as for Freud, well-being resides in prenatal comfort. The cave, the grotto and the conical afford the clair-obscur in which well-being resides ("Papers" 7). Scientist and philosopher Gaston Bachelard advocated a nostalgic return to pre-linguistic stages of development through poetry in Poetics of Space. Bachelard differed from Freud in that he believed the exploration of the material world depends on a "will to intellectuality" and not instincts or sexual drives.[58] For Bachelard, the poet, and perhaps the architect, can liberate the imagination that would otherwise be restricted through habitual metaphors and limited spatial perceptions like one-point perspective and Cartesian models.[59] Bachelard published the first significant work in French to discuss the problem of the Baroque in relation to poetics under the title L'air et les songes (Air and Dreams) in 1943. In this critical text he makes a connection between the human faculty of imagination and the Baroque. The baroque poetic imagination manifests itself in modern art forms as a sublimated space into which figures of fleeting desire project themselves, as escapism or evasion. Because the baroque dynamic involves the interpenetration of realms, such as the mental and the physical, Bachelard defines it as a material imagination (*imagination matérielle*). Through a process of *pénétration* (insight), one may think, dream and live matter. The function of the imagination is that of *ouverture* or openness and the *irréel* or unreal. Bachelard posed the problem of the Baroque in ontological and psychoanalytic terms as an *élan* of transcendence and a desire for sublimation. The mobility of images in the imagination creates a coherent psyche as language, thought and vision interact. Through dreams or aesthetic creation, the human imagination may dwell in volume-spaces that belong to the realm of birds, fish and angels. The fundamental elements of matter carry the human psyche into the realm of the

imaginary. Unlike Bachelard, the surrealist painter Matta conceived of an architecture of time, not space. He opposed a “mathématique sensible” to a “mathématique raisonnable” (Le Corbusier). Breton requested Matta to come up with this project in 1938; Duchamp’s influence on his paintings is evident. Matta suggested that materials like rubber and plastic be used to create an artificial womb. The idea of the soft houses relates to the verticality of human consciousness; the artist must find an umbilical cord to put him or her in touch with an area of psychological interaction. Vidler supports the thesis that Surrealism’s attack on modernist functionalism was entirely founded in psychoanalysis (“Papers” 8). A blurring occurs that produces such phenomena as cyborgs, in which technology becomes transformed into the human (“Papers” 11).[60]

One might want to consider that poetry from the Baroque Age, predating cyberspace and psychoanalysis, proposed an irrational conception of feminine time that was inherited from Ovid. In Book IX of Ovid’s Metamorphoses in the Passion of Byblis a reference to “soft hours” evokes an irrational concept of time that is associated with love: “'Twas thought no sin to wonder at his charms,/Hang on his neck, and languish in his arms;/ Thus wing'd with joy, fled the soft hours away,/And all the fatal guilt on harmless Nature lay.” The Baroque seized upon the images of soft hours, as in texts by Shakespeare and Dryden. In Antony and Cleopatra Antony proclaims “Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours.” In Dryden’s play The State of Innocence and the Fall of Man the angel Raphael informs Adam that his equal Eve has been designed for “soft hours” to “unbend the mind.” The image of the mind unfolding and the softness of the time of passion reinforce a Deleuzian Baroque that defines an unconscious in terms other than those of Freudian psychoanalysis. Romanticism would continue the tradition with John Keats (“Revive, or these soft hours will hurry by” from “Endymion”) and Lord Byron

(whose effeminately dressed Sardanapalus proclaims, “Fair Nymphs, who deign/To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus” from Sardanapalus).

Another point for consideration is that Vidler’s establishment of a relation between Surrealism and psychoanalysis distances him from Deleuze’s interpretation of Le Corbusier’s relation to the Baroque and Leibniz. As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Deleuze establishes a close relationship between the architectural and the Baroque that functions as a precursor for modern architecture. He asks in The Fold, “Is it not the Baroque manner . . . that inspires Le Corbusier in the Abbey of La Tourette?” (28) In a discussion of the relationship between mathematics and architecture in the structure of La Tourette Colin Rowe characterizes it as “labyrinthine.” Rowe asserts that Le Corbusier “managed to design a building that is apparently labyrinthine and inaccessible to the outside world yet is perfectly intelligible within the context of religion and the monk’s ongoing daily life” (Henze 36). The structure interrogates the relationship between faith and reason, as well as the rational and irrational.

During the twenties Duchamp’s *Large Glass* was acknowledged by Breton in his “Lighthouse of the Bride” as the most valid statement about the relation between the rational and the irrational. Breton places the *Large Glass* within the parameters of Surrealism. It is not only through critical works, such as “Les mots sans rides” and “Marcel Duchamp,” collected in Les pas perdus, that Breton praises Duchamp. Breton’s poetry, particularly those texts collected in Clair de terre (1923), is characterized by the type of surreal topology that Breton identified as a Duchampian innovation. Clair de terre creates paths of convergence between Desnos and Duchamp through its shifting boundaries of poetic consciousness and form. The volume itself consists of a composite of forms that overturn normative expectations for what a volume of poetry should

contain. Breton ran the risk of tossing together various forms that would encounter each other in a poetic text: five dream narratives, poems written in free verse, a page from a telephone book, two image-texts consisting of block letters (one of which contains only the word ILE), and a dedication to Rrose Sélavy appearing in reverse order at the close of the volume. The chiaroscuro play of light and dark letters throughout the volume creates an inverted concept of poetry. Operating through effects of surprise, Clair de terre illuminates thought through the materiality of language instead of through traditional stylistic techniques. The mediumistic function of the artist as communicator in Clair de terre pays homage to Desnos and automatic writing. The ironic dedication to Rrose claims that Breton will no longer write (the dadaist poet communicates through "blank" spaces and the surrealist poet is a medium for automatic transmission of thoughts rather than a conscious writer); however, the positioning of the dedication at the end of the volume affirms that the conscious renunciation of writing has been surpassed in the creation of the preceding texts. The poet affirms his thoughts ironically by accepting the toss of the dice as the new form and "law" for his automatic writing. Clair de terre affirms the thoughts of Breton just as much as does his prosaic work Nadja, which ostensibly takes the thoughts of a woman named Nadja as its subject but concerns those of Breton instead. Similarly, Breton's text "Le Corset mystère" (published in the June 1919 edition of Littérature), composed of advertisement clippings, figures himself as a poet in the act of writing while strapped into furniture attached to the walls. In sum, Breton affirms writing ironically through acts of renunciation and risk, as well as through abandoning himself to the constraint and "law" of automatism.

The dedicatory inscription to Clair de terre serves as an ironic affirmation of Surrealism. Its two-sentence citation is attributed to the sky (Le Ciel): "La terre brille

dans le ciel comme un astre énorme au milieu des étoiles. Notre globe projette sur la lune un intense clair de terre." Breton cites as a source for the quote Nouvelle astronomie pour tous, which serves as a guidebook to the sky (like Loy's lunar guidebook). This scientific guidebook is needed to verify the existence of a sky ("ciel") that has lost its meaning as an absolute. Breton does not name the author of Nouvelle astronomie pour tous but the prominent critic of Surrealism Rémi Labrusse attributes the work to the nineteenth-century French astrophysicist Camille Flammarion.[61] Flammarion's declaration that "nous sommes tous des citoyens du Ciel" earned him notoriety in his day. The translation of this statement poses a problem for the English speaker: "we are all citizens of the Sky" or "we are all citizens of Heaven." In French, the word "Ciel" is always ambiguous because it means both "heaven" and "sky." The confusion between the worldly and the otherworldly in the English translation reveals the crisis of pluralism that has a long history in Western culture. Flammarion's publications Astronomie populaire (1879) and La Pluralité des mondes habités (1882) popularized pluralist traditions of skeptical inquiry in Western science and philosophy. From the early Christian era to the late Middle Ages the geocentric model of the cosmos reinforced the Aristotelean and Ptolemaic belief in Earth as the center of all life in the universe. The belief in Earth as the only world to sustain life in the universe was also upheld by the Christian Church and that of other monotheistic religions. The new doctrine of skeptical inquiry advocated pluralism and, following Copernicus, no longer placed Earth at the center of the universe. Christian Huygens, Johannes Keller and Bernard Fontanelle promulgated the new skepticism. The problem with attributing this philosophical skepticism directly to French symbolists and surrealists is that pluralistic beliefs became popularized and distorted in the nineteenth century. Flammarion advocated pluralism but he also believed in

extraterrestrial life, in other words, aliens, and devoted many pages of his writings to support his argument. Breton's reference to the text by Flammarion reveals how artists in the late nineteenth century encountered the "spiritual crisis" of the plurality of worlds in both popular and canonical texts.

As previously mentioned, the French the word "ciel" is ambiguous because it means both "heaven" and "sky." Mallarmé made much of the spiritual crisis of language and substituted the word "azur" for "ciel" in his poetry. Mallarmé's "Les Fenêtres" reveals also that the crisis is that of the poet in search of absolute purity who finds himself powerless in confronting bourgeois *lieux communs* or clichés: "Et le vomissement impur de la Bêtise / Me force à me boucher le nez devant l'azur." Likewise, in "Eclipses" (part three of Les Champs magnétiques) Breton and Soupault evoke the "simplicities of ancient moons" as an antidote for "eyes injected with *lieux communs*." Thus, the skeptical tradition in philosophy may be at the origin of poetic creation in the works of Mallarmé and Breton but in abandoning themselves to Chance they sought an aesthetic of "shock" and "surprise." A fortuitous encounter with cracks in a wall or specks of dust could plunge the artists into a marvelous world. As critic Rémi Labrusse explains in relation to surrealist painter Joan Miró, it is not skepticism but, to the contrary, *faith* in Chance that characterizes Surrealism: "A cette confiance accordée au hasard—soumission passive de l'activité créatrice à un débordement énigmatique de la perception—répond de manière frappante, chez Miró, une morale ascétique de l'organisation . . ." (Labrusse 186). In 1930 Roger Vitrac made a similar affirmation between art and science in a remark about the work of painter Paul Klee: "A chaque progrès de la science correspond mystérieusement un progrès des arts" (Labrusse 148). I accept Labrusse's conclusion that Breton and the surrealists turned toward pure science

(Einstein's relativity and non-Euclidean science) because the marriage between the arts and sciences in the early twentieth century set a trap in which the individual might be crushed in the gears of mechanization. In 1922 Breton denounces "les prétendues conditions nouvelles faites à la vie par la machinisme" and in his second manifesto of Surrealism he wrote about "le petit système d'avilissement et de crétinisation en vigueur" (Labrusse 148).

Breton's new astronomy may be considered by some critics as playful physics or the type of pataphysics associated with Alfred Jarry. In my opinion, the paradox of Earthshine (as "Earth's aura") and the linguistic wordplay in Clair de terre exemplify surrealist poetics in the works of Duchamp, Desnos, Loy. The rhyming of "clair" (light/clear/transparent) and "terre" (earth/land/opaque) brings together contradictory concepts and creates the seemingly nonsensical composite "earthlight." In French, "clair de lune" means moonlight but "clair de terre" is not used in everyday vocabulary. It does exist in the form of a scientific neologism: earthshine. In an evening about two days after a new moon one can observe the young waxing moon deep above the western horizon. The same holds true for the old waning moon two days before a new moon. In the morning it will rise above the eastern horizon. Due to the small angular distance to the sun the lunar sphere is illuminated almost from behind and the moon appears as a small sickle. However, under a clear sky one can see the rest of the lunar surface in a faint grey, the so-called earthshine. It is sunlight reflected back from earth to the moon and vice versa. The surreal topology of the idea of earthshine consists of a displacement in the cerebral and physical space of the eclipse of "lune" with "terre." During an eclipse the shadow cast by the earth onto the moon becomes visible through projection of the spherical body of the earth onto that of the sun. Breton displaces the idea of eclipse as

transformation by creating a surreal paradox: the *aura of the Earth* (Earthshine). Breton displaces the figure of the eclipse as a representation and logical frame of reference. Instead of reinforcing self-identification through a representational figure (the eclipse), he disrupts the *cogito* of the poetic line and the traditional symbolic order that imposes itself on consciousness by creating a strange "active passivity" in the ecstatic creation of Earthshine. Romantic poets like Victor Hugo have conveyed the idea of self-conscious language and poetic self-reflexivity through the *cogito du vers*, in which the poetic line mirrors the poet's consciousness of being created. Breton's idea of "clair de terre" disrupts the process of *thinking through* the poetic line, which the Cartesian notion of the *cogito* requires of both the text's creator and reader. He allows the chaos of the unstable and uncertain rules of metamorphosis to break frames of reference that structure thought as self-identification. His new "astronomy" creates a cosmology where the unreal (the extraterrestrial) becomes integrated with the real (the Earth).

The displacement disrupts the *cogito* of the poetic line and the traditional symbolic order that imposes itself on consciousness. Romantic poets like Victor Hugo have conveyed the idea of self-conscious language and poetic self-reflexivity through the *cogito du vers*, in which the poetic line mirrors the poet's consciousness of being created. Breton's idea of "clair de terre" disrupts the process of *thinking through* the poetic line, which the Cartesian notion of the *cogito* requires of both the text's creator and reader.

The critic Etienne-Alain Hubert in "Desnos/Cosmos" states that from the end of the nineteenth century literature orients itself in new directions and proposes a sense of orientation that is globally *other*. Claudel's Conaissance de l'Est and Reverdy's review *Nord-Sud* (1917) are indicative of the new orientation of space. Hubert discerns a cosmos in the poetic work of Desnos from 1923 where the traditional four cardinal points or

spatial organization become weakened in favor of a vertical axis joining Zenith and Nadir. Breton's Clair de terre (1923) presents observations viewed from an extra-terrestrial perspective. The expression *clair de terre* plays upon other contents. The title page of the volume contains letters that must be deciphered at a distance, as the black suggests. The problem of distance from a center first evoked by Duchamp's idea of *éloignement* persists in the works of other surrealists. Later, in 1942, Breton and Duchamp contributed to a catalogue entitled *De la survivance de certains mythes et de quelques autres mythes en croissance ou en formation*. The myths include Original Sin and the *Grands Transparents*. The surrealists became more and more interested in what lay beyond the terrestrial, be it from a mythical or scientific perspective. Breton and Miró collaborated to produce Constellations; Desnos and Miró created poetic prose of a similar inspiration. In 1940, when Miró worked on Constellations, he claimed that painting was the only way to "remain standing" among the ruins of war and the catastrophe of the current era (Labrusse 56). Duchamp collaborated with Man Ray to create a photographic image of the *Large Glass* seen from an aerial view. This image of the Bachelor apparatus creates an otherworldly effect because of the dust that was allowed to collect for months. Its lunar-like topology and aerial perspective distance the object from its viewer. Whereas Flammarion actually believed that aliens inhabited the moon, Duchamp, Man Ray, Desnos, Miró and, as I will soon discuss, Loy, sought the "extraterrestrial" perspective as a means to make their public "see otherwise." In other words, the distorted, otherworldly perspective was a way to make the public confront the horrors of the first World War and attack stereotypes that reinforced hostile prejudices among nations. Miró's "otherworldly" landscape in *Carnaval d'Arlequin* (1924-25) kept him "standing up" during periods of famine when he did not have enough to eat. He experienced

hallucinations from hunger and these distorted images appear in his painting. Breton, as part of his revolutionary political fervor, declared in Le Surréalisme et la peinture that the only paintings he liked were "ceux qui tiennent devant la famine" (Labrusse 224). In one of the sections of his prose work La liberté ou l'amour! Desnos writes about the "Bay of Hunger" in which the diseases of the body produce "diseases of the mind" or, in his words, "Maux pour le corps, mots pour la pensée" (Dumas 348). "Bay of Hunger" begins with a description of a ship of explorers trapped in the glaciers while heading toward the North Pole. It is an otherworldly expedition in which the reader encounters the Sphinx of the Sands and the Sphinx of Ice. These hallucinatory images fuse body and mind, disrupting the Cartesian mind/body dualism, and transform the status of the image from a "mere representation" to an authoritative world in and of itself—each image forms part of a private cartography.

Duchamp collaborated with Man Ray to create several photographic images of the *Large Glass* seen from an aerial view. The image of the Bachelor apparatus in these long-exposure photographs creates an otherworldly effect because of the dust and lint that was allowed to collect for months while the *Large Glass* was placed flat on a sawhorse. Names were given to these photographs: the simplest name translates into English as *Dust Breeding* and the most complicated translates as *Here is Rrose Sélavy's domain. Seen from an aeroplane 1921. How dry it is. How fertile it is. How joyous it is. How sad it is.* The more complicated title suggests contradictory emotional states ("joyous" and "sad") that belong to the uncertain terrain of desire itself—the "domain of Eros (Rrose)." The lunar-like topology and aerial perspective of both photographs distance the object from its viewer. Loy's "Lunar Baedeker" explores extraterrestrial perspectives like those invented by Duchamp and Desnos. This text envisions an imaginary journey to the moon

and provides descriptions of its eerie surface, as, for example, the "eye-white sky-light/ white-light district/ of lunar lusts." Her reference to cyclones of "ecstatic dust" brings to mind the image of the dust breeding on the *Large Glass*, as seen from Man Ray's aerial perspective. The full citation reads: "Cyclones/of ecstatic dust/and ashes whirl/crusaders/from hallucinatory citadels/of shattered glass/into evacuate craters." Two other texts, in particular, show a fascination for the extraterrestrial—"'The Starry Sky' of Wyndham Lewis" and "Songs to Joannes." Images in "The Starry Sky" include: "cycloramas of space," "celestial conservatories," and the "theater of the Infinite." In "Songs to Joannes" one finds references to an "eternity in a sky-rocket" and "constellations in an ocean." Finally, a meteor-like flickering in a glass lantern transforms the celestial into the terrestrial, as often happens in the images of Desnos: "I must live in my lantern/Trimming subliminal flicker/Virginal/to the bellows/Of Experience/Coloured glass." The exploration of celestial bodies and the development of perspectives from beyond the Earth continue the ideas of baroque expansionism and its challenge to Cartesian optics. In making the celestial and terrestrial merge, Loy transposes the exploration of outer space into a discovery of a specifically feminine space that is "virginal" territory (since female sexuality is unexplored by science). While she associates "subliminal flicker" with "Virginal," the speaker of the texts asserts that she must live in the lantern by "trimming" the virginal flicker to the "bellows" of colored glass. Why must the virginal be "trimmed" and what is the experience of colored glass? Rachel Blau DuPlessis in The Pink Guitar: Writing as Feminist Practice explains that Loy called for the "unconscious surgical destruction of virginity" in order to critique the traditions of representation and challenge Cartesian optics (80). DuPlessis argues that Loy took an interest in Duchamp's "open[ing] the vulva of the nude" (80). Marisa

Januzzi raises the issue of Duchamp's influence on Loy but admits that a lengthier study is needed. Januzzi points out that Duchamp's interest in constructions and destructions of female virginity date from 1912 when "Cubism still seemed a promising means of exploring and representing the fourth dimension via an exploration of the properties of matter itself" (597). Loy's reference to colored glass evolves from her personal shaping of feminine consciousness (the significance of which Burke emphasizes in her biography) and, at the same time, it is also a reference to Duchamp's *Large Glass* that "trims" the virgin by stripping her bare. The *Large Glass* opens up the inner experience of the "vulva" through an exploration of the extraterrestrial space of the Milky Way as a feminized zone of fertility.

The relationship between the inner realms of the mind and body to earthly or cosmic regions evolves less systematically in Desnos's work than in that of Duchamp. In 1919 he wrote "Le Fard des Argonautes," which involves the quest of the Golden Fleece and a mythic navigation towards the Orient. The cardinal points do not always represent distinct directions of orientation, as shown in the line "la vague est la même à l'orient comme au nord." In the 1923 Desnos wrote a prosaic piece in "Aumonymes" in which the cosmic level becomes transformed into a play of homonyms. The text, which reads like a poem in prose, begins with a "fâcheuse aventure" and ends with a scene that recalls a luxury liner. The passengers look upon a clandestine stowaway, who hides within the propeller of a ship and spins around with it. The faces of the passengers and their reflection in the water are intermittently perceived by the stowaway. As through a whirl of the dice, the cardinal points of orientation become interchanged; the "Polaire" takes up the position of the "Croix du Sud." The exchange of the cosmic passes to the level of language and it is brought about by the exchange of homonyms.

The play of language becomes obsessional in texts like "Caractères des flots," where the series *sirènes, reines, rênes, rennes* and the syntagm *étoile de mer* form anguished or playful modes of configuration. Love, sea, death, and woman combine; the inversion of the cosmos leaves only the vertical axis remaining. The sea and sky are reflected into each, through mirroring effects. Populations of sea anemones and stars are interchanged; the Nadir recuperates the privileges of the Zenith. The universe is without weight or gravity, but the gravitational pull exerts itself on trajectories; there is no common measure since everything is subjected to a systematic demensuration. Many critics agree, however, that Desnos reorients himself towards the North after the thirties, when he finds himself again anchored in the immediate. The cardinal points return—the North Star, Ursa Major, Ursa Minor. In the poetry of his later years, Desnos would return to a more self-conscious poetic aesthetic.[62]

In Breton's "Il n'y a pas à sortir de là" from Clair de terre the openness of the text enables a constant movement and connectivity of spatial amalgams. The title "Il n'y a pas à sortir de là" indicates that there is no escaping the mirroring effects generated by the initial play of homonyms in Clair de terre. The image "le ver luisant" suggests the concept of the *vers luisant* or the crisis of the *vers libre* in an open text. The amalgams that represent the sky may be interchanged with those that represent the earth, thus making the earth transparent like a mirror and the sky impenetrable like the earth. The image *clair de terre* transforms into *terre de verre*. Breton represents a virtual reality, one that "n'existera pas" except through the superimposed space of thoughts mirrored in a "terre de verre" in which "s'agitent les squelettes de verre." *Il n'y a pas à sortir de là* ends with the reference to a shipwreck, or more precisely the sinking of a raft which is an allusion to Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* painting: "Tout le monde a entendu parler du

Radeau de la /Méduse/Et peut à la rigeur concevoir un équivalent de ce/ radeau dans le ciel." The merging of the sky and ocean and idea of the shipwreck do not go beyond a Mallarméan sense of the crisis of representation. During this period Breton felt himself to be in a crisis of consciousness and declared that he wanted to give up writing. Brandon suggests that Breton desired to commit artistic suicide as a result of depression after his friend Vaché committed suicide (208). In April 1923 Breton declared that he would stop writing and that Eluard and Desnos would also renounce it. Brandon notes that Breton gave the following reason for his renunciation: "I see the situation of everything I defend as desperate. In fact, the game seems altogether lost . . . as far as I can see the possibilities of literature and of politics are about as boring as each other" (208). Brandon thinks it was not a mere coincidence that Duchamp had just pronounced his *Large Glass* "definitively unfinished," after working on it for eight years (209). The Arensbergs had purchased the *Large Glass* and sold it to Katherine Dreier. In any case, Breton continued writing and published Clair de terre. He included a text dedicated to Rrose Sélavy that included two sentences: "André Breton n'écrira plus" (Journal du Peuple—Avril 1923) and "J'ai quitté mes effets,/mes beaux effets de neige!"

In looking at Breton's surrealist texts from this period, I discern a transition from the tensions of the Baroque House to a newly created "figuration" exemplified by the figure of a Tightrope Walker Over the Void. In "Hôtel des étincelles" the perspective seems to be from a balancing pole as the subject (le balancier de l'absence) of the text oscillates between the four walls of a transparent structure that shatters open heads from which escape bands of fighting kings: "Le balancier de l'absence oscille entre les quatre murs/ Fendant les têtes/D'où s'échappent des bandes de rois qui se font aussitôt/ la guerre . . ." A struggle for equilibrium takes place until the moment that an eclipse enables the

turquoise of the sky or sea to be exchanged for the bottom of a cup and an equilibrium to be discovered: “Jusqu’à ce que l’éclipse orientale/Turquoises au fond des tasses/Découvre le lit équilatéral aux draps couleur de ces/fleurs dites boules-de-neige.” The image of the eclipse permits the impulse towards discovery, equilibrium and poetic accomplishment to coexist with the temptation towards the inchoate violence of the oscillating walls, the shattering heads and the fighting kings that emerge from the ruptured space. The collapse of the four walls of the House in Breton’s text indicates a shift away from the Monad to the figuration of the Nomad. The Tightrope Walker over the Void is a nomadic figuration, in my view. Let me reiterate that the Cartesian subject has horror of the Void. The idea of a tightrope walker depicted through cubist planes harks back to Villon’s *L’Equilibriste* and, thus, marks a shift away from representation as self-legitimation. Many years after Breton’s text or Villon’s work of art, the figure of the Tightrope Walker of the Void was to be taken up again by post-structuralist feminist Rosi Braidotti in Patterns of Dissonance. In Patterns of Dissonance Braidotti defines the nomadic style of thinking as requiring the talents of a tightrope walker or an acrobat: “To avoid falling headlong, I will seek after a precarious balance: the dis/conjunctions, the sheer size of the field, all force me to concentrate on a precarious conceptual geometry of the non-Euclidean type” (Braidotti 14). The nomadic style of thinking, for Braidotti, creates what she identifies as an “effect of dissonance,” which results from a dynamical theoretical field. “Other” voices inhabit the theoretical field in which she must work. She allows “free play” within her text to the others’ voices (Braidotti 15). Because there is “no longer any ultimate truth to establish,” feminist thinkers are free from the encumbering pursuit of completion, synthesis and fullness (Braidotti 15). “For if Ariadne has fled from the labyrinth of old,” she concludes, “the only guiding thread for all of us

now, women and men alike, is a tightrope stretched above the void" (Braidotti 15). The precarious balance involves strategies of transposition, transferal and translation.

I consider the textual strategies of Desnos to display a similar strategy of precarious balance, paving the way for the nomadic subject. According to Michel Murat, "Dans *Rrose Sélavy*, la rigueur de l'*équation* opposait aux tentations de la folie un accomplissement poétique, équilibre et trouvailles. Dans l'exploration des homonymes Desnos s'aventure seul; il semble qu'il pénètre au coeur d'un tourbillon, comme si la faille ouverte entre l'identité du son et l'altérité du sens avait mis le langage en roue libre" (83). Murat describes the style of "Amour des homonyms" as an enveloping one in which there is a confusion between the homonyms, the female passengers ("belles passagères érotiquement vêtues"), and the stowaway (lié à l'hélice pour faire à peu de frais la traverse"). The poet's desire gives itself over to confusion. Women become fleeting creatures without speech or language; hence, they are nomadic subjects. The text becomes a mirror of mirages that the poet places under the sign of the "génie sans miroir" (83).

Murat's comment about the "génie sans miroir" refers to an article that Desnos wrote and illustrated with his own drawings. ("Le génie sans miroir" has been attributed to the poet Eluard; A manuscript annotation from Eluard, however, claims that this article was really the work of Desnos, not just the drawings.)[63] The text reveals the poet's desire for a book that reads itself or an eye that sees itself without the aid of a pane of glass or a body that contemplates itself; this is how Desnos defines the *merveilleux cérébral*. In 1924 Desnos made a design with "crayon rehaussé de gouache sur fond aquarelle." This work is entitled *La comptabilité du poète*. The narrator queries, "When will books read themselves?" The eye and the body itself have become alienated. "Mais

bien malin celui qui a pu voir son oeil sans le secours d'une vitre, celui qui a pu promener son regard sur le creux voluptueux de sa nuque. Nous avons aimé des idoles flexibles qui ignorent toujours quel charme peut avoir la cambrure de leurs reins. Ah! Vienne le jour où nous briserons le miroir, cette dernière fenêtre, où nos yeux miraculeux pourront contempler le *merveilleux cérébral*" (223). Desnos analyzes the cerebral mechanism of madness and comments that it is not a divine punishment but a form of deliverance, supreme compensation, a paradise on earth, a vision towards the infinite and a movement of rapid ascension that "climbs like a vulture with the brain of Prometheus in its beak." In discussing the relationship between religious faith and insanity, Desnos cites mysticism and humor as being the two characteristics of the production of crazy people. He mentions poets such as Sade, Nerval, Lautréamont, Poe, Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Mallarmé, among others. Painters that have been classified as insane include Moreau, Redon, De Chirico, Ernst, Chagall, Klee and Picabia.

Desnos's definition of the *merveilleux cérébral* (the desire for a book that reads itself, an eye that sees itself without the aid of a pane of glass or a body that contemplates itself) is an extension of baroque *folie du voir*. Christrine Buci-Glucksmann wrote about the baroque eye that desired to see itself all the way to infinity; the modern concept of the virtual makes this desire a reality. The virtual "technological eye" today constitutes a new folly of seeing that evolved from baroque models. The virtual eye is inseparable from a theory of the image-flux and an aesthetic of transparencies and fluidities that form an ethics and a politics. This fluid time, at once fluid and mechanical, stimulates an intersensorial work of the imagination that may also be characterized as a post-Duchampian aesthetic. The cinematography of the visible will be discussed in a subsequent chapter in depth. Buci-Glucksmann incorporates some Lacanian ideas about

the double structure of baroque vision, that of science and trap (*leurre*), in her analysis but she situates her discussion of the origin of baroque anamorphosis within a Leibnizian framework as a form of resistance to the Cartesian *cogito*. She emphasizes the relevance of the baroque profusion of differences, which makes each object into something marvelous, to the Leibnizian principle of indiscernibles: “En dépit de la plus grande diversité, aucune feuille d’aucune plante, aucune plume d’oiseau ne se confondent avec celles des espèces différents” (31). From a privileged point, like the apex of a cone, one can perceive the law of variations and of correspondences regulated between the original and its images. The idea of an absence of center or *errance baroque* is fundamental to Leibnizian thinking. The permanent shifting between equilibrium and disequilibrium (or dynamism and catastrophe) will coincide only in the fixity of God, the Great Architect and Mathematician (78). Buci-Glucksmann finds a comment of Michel Serres about Leibniz to be particularly important: “… entre la loi et ses variations, entre l’un et le multiple, entre une forme et ses projections, tout un modèle d’engendrement des apparences se construit au point que “construire c’est voir…” (77). Science engenders “effects of mass” in order to seduce the eye through a formless form (49-50). The illusion of a body in motion, and not simply a surface effect, makes the idea of a limit undecidable; Buci-Glucksmann identifies this undecidable limit as the unconscious of baroque vision (44-5). Her interpretation is anti-platonic; she defines a Leibnizian topology of indiscernibles that produces an *entre-expressif* persepectivism of overabundance and affirmation of being. Ultimately, her solution depends upon a Lacanian topology to counter the schizophrenic crisis of models or the Nietzschean profusion of forms and their lack of reality. Without turning towards Lacan, she resumes her explanation of the interdependency between the body and space in a simple way that

accords with Leibnizian terms: Baroque sense perception involves a triple nature: 1) vision, 2) form-force and 3) memory (traces and signs of an alphabet). The baroque aesthetic is at once a mirror, a book (a writing in palimpsest), and a form-force in permanent equilibrium and disequilibrium (79). Baroque space is a space of catastrophe, that of a "discordant concordance," within a space occupied by a science of vision; it is a paradox in scientificity (20-21). It is difficult for me to follow how she relates Leibnizian terms to what she refers to as "anti-platonic" Lacanian topology because she does not look closely at Surrealism in La folie du voir. However, her La raison baroque considers the works of Paul Klee and Walter Benjamin. I can accept her connection between Leibniz and Lacan on only the most basic grounds (i.e. that both critique the Cartesian "knowing subject"). For Lacan, the human subject is decentered in relation to the deep structures of consciousness. Therefore, he is convinced about the primacy of the unconscious. As Braidotti explains, for Lacan, "philosophy as a consciousness-based. logocentric discourse, cannot ever include the dimension of the unconscious, except as its dialectical opposite, that is, within the logic of the same logocentrism" (Patterns of Dissonance 23). Lacan questions the conceptual compatibility between psychoanalysis and philosophy and he does not think that psychoanalysis is responsible for explaining philosophical error to philosophy (Patterns of Dissonance 22). This point makes me not able to pursue a connection between Lacan and Leibniz, as does Buci-Glucksmann, because the two domains are not completely commensurate. It would not be possible to think through connections in a Deleuzian manner, according to Lacanian thinking, between Empiricism and psychoanalysis.

What do the surrealists themselves have to say about the connection between Empiricism and desire (conscious or unconscious) in art? In order to examine more

closely how the surrealists connected Empiricism and art, it would be beneficial to read Desnos's review of one of Breton's articles from Les pas perdus. In June 1924 Desnos published in *Littérature* an article entitled "André Breton ou face à l'infini." Desnos interrogates how the artist who sees with "too large pupils" (*la folie du voir*) or writes with "words that escape the exclusive control of logic" can be empirical at the same time. Desnos begins the article with a discussion of the traditional stereoscopic point of view and then comments upon Empiricism, mathematics, the infinite, the absolute, perspective, and scientific exactitude. At the beginning of the article Desnos discusses the traditional viewpoint of the stereoscope that enables the superposition of several different levels of time, past and the present. He comments that he is the author of all of the books that constitute his library. His group of friends, no more tangible than the books in his library, become transformed into a play of light and shadow. Although one shares in the sensation of others in name only, these sensations form a crossroad that creates a "theater of perpetual communion." Absolute solitude does not exist because it is a "populous" solitude; Desnos writes: ". . . la moindre de nos pensées crée des univers populeux autour de nous, les phrases que nous énonçons ont des significations précises dans des langues innommées dans la nôtre. Ces deux plateaux de la balance abstrait et concret sont identiques et se font mouvoir l'un l'autre" (233). Eternal questions, dreams and paradoxes will remain beyond the reach of any science that abandons Empiricism. Desnos concludes with the remark that the empiricist will wake up with a "curiously crystallized stone" in his hand and smile at the positivist scientists, enunciating the law of constancy of the relationship between the known and the unknown, sickness and health, the finite and the infinite. The crystallized stone indicates a crisis in ontological mimesis.

Many of Desnos's pen and ink drawings consist of diagrams that create a surreal topography – an opening to the infinite. One such drawing, *La Ville aux rues sans nom du cirque cérébral*, accompanies Breton's text published in a 1922 volume of *Littérature* (reprinted in Les pas perdus as "Les Mots sans rides"). In this drawing one discerns buildings that double as books; the books form a library or a cerebral "poetic shelf." The buildings doubling as books are located at a kind of port that has no bank (as indicated with the words "port sans rive"). Only the smokestacks of the ship *La* S*émillante* are visible in the area designated as water. Because of the abstract quality and the distorted topology of the design, the viewer does not impose the idea of a shipwreck upon the series of images.

While the paradox of the *merveilleux cérébral* is not a tragic one, tragic love and a sense of loss can be found in some of the poetry of Desnos. Bataille's psychoanalytic interpretation of Surrealism lends a tragic sense to the works of both Desnos and Duchamp. Bataille studies the relationship between love and death, specifically "la petite mort" that occurs when the intensity of the love embrace presupposes the eclipse of the Other. It is the woman who is effaced in heterosexual eroticism. Rrose Sélavy, from the point of view of Bataille, means tragic love. "Eros, c'est la vie" transforms tragically into "Eros, c'est la mort." However, the tragic interpretation does not hold true for all of the texts of Desnos. Desnos's "La prairie du revenez-y" turns the romantic taste for catastrophe into the positive affirmation of rescue. The poet calls for regeneration ("ainsi va la vie") and takes the side of life. "Non l'amour n'est pas mort" makes a similar affirmation of life. The light of the beloved's eyes may dim but "jamais ne mourra l'amour." Here Desnos affirms the creative act of poetry as a safeguard against death and forgetfulness. Towards the end of his life, during the catastrophes of WWII, Desnos

wrote a volume of texts in 1944 entitled Contrée; many of these texts do not make such a positive affirmation of life but interrogate whether or not poetic topoi can defend memory against forgetfulness. Texts such as *Le cimetière*, *La clarière*, and *La caverne* employ topoi of the eclipse, the shipwreck and the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. When Desnos was deported by the Nazis to a camp in Compiègne, he displaced the experience of automatism into the rigorous form of the sonnet. He dedicated a text to Rrose Sélavy in which he addressed her for the last time: "Tu, Rrose Sélavy, hors de ces bornes erres . . ." Marie-Claire Dumas interprets the Rrose of this last sonnet as both "captive and wandering;" for Rrose is a being of language at once "violent and controlled" who is capable of creating poetry and painting (28).

Some of Loy's texts are about loss, given the personal tragedy she experienced in her life (particularly the loss of her husband Arthur Cravan, who disappeared in a boat in Mexico, and the deaths of two of her four children due to illness). Loy's untitled poem of 1914, previously mentioned, opens with a refutation of choosing between life and death ("There is no Life or Death,/Only activity/And in the absolute/Is no declivity"). The activity to which Loy refers is that of the suspension of intermediaries. The freedom not to choose between life or death would become an important concept for Desnos and the surrealists who experimented with *l'écriture automatique*. Maurice Blanchot defines automatic writing in the following way: "L'écriture automatique tendait à supprimer les contraintes, à suspender les intermédiaires, à repousser toute médiation, mettait en contact la main qui écrit avec quelque chose d'originel, faisait de cette main active une passivité souveraine, non plus une 'main à plume,' un instrument, un outil servile, mais une puissance indépendante, sur laquelle personne n'avait plus de droit, qui n'appartenait à personne, qui ne pouvait et ne savait plus rien faire – qu'écrire: une main morte

analogue à cette main de gloire dont parle la magie (laquelle avait précisément le tort de vouloir s'en servir)" (L'espace littéraire 238).

The texts of Desnos express a paradoxical desire to communicate in a language without form. Desnos's FORMES-PRISONS provides one of the best examples of his experiments to free language from imposed forms:

syllabes
Prisonnier des { et non des sens
mots
Pris au nier ……?
ser
Des cils a bai {
Ssés

Haï

Oh! hais non des sens

mais des FORMES-PRISONS

The space of the poem consists of a topologically and typographically deformed sign system. There are blank spaces, open-ended brackets, broken syllables, phonetic puns, capital and small letter combinations. The open form takes Mallarmé's "Un coup de dés" as its model. The spatial field across which Desnos casts his words is not gratuitous but an integral part of the poem itself. A free-play of combinations takes place within the spatial field of FORMES-PRISONS. One recalls the n-dimensional casting process of Duchamp, as well.

The spatial field is an integral part of the texts that make up Loy's "Songs to Joannes." These texts are characterized by their wordplay and usage of white space, in addition to their obsession with dashes and lack of punctuation. Song XXX interrogates the problem of form:

In some

Prenatal plagiarism

Foetal buffoons

Caught tricks

— — — — —

From archetypal pantomime

Stringing emotions

Looped aloft

— — — —

For the blind eyes

That Nature knows us with

And the most of Nature is green

— — — — — — — — — —

What guaranty

For the proto-form

We fumble

Our souvenir ethics to

— — — — — — —

Loy's "Lunar Baedeker" ends with a similar open form stanza that includes a reference to the waxing and waning of the moon, at once an archetypal feminine symbol (a static "fossil virgin of the skies") and a moving image that increases, decreases, disappears and reappears. The celestial body is personified both as a virgin and a "crystal concubine."

Loy's topological deformations derive from the mechanisms at play in the *Large Glass*. Loy's Song XXX, part of which is cited above, concerns the mensurated and the nonmensurated as the relation between language, space, perspective and color are explored. A statement from Loy's text underscores such relations: "For the blind eyes/ That Nature knows us with/ And the most of Nature is green." Duchamp's notes about the *Large Glass*, gathered together under the title "A l'Infinitif," discuss the relationship between language, space, perspective and color. One section of the notes contains the same Morse code type dashes that Loy favored. Duchamp wrote his thoughts in the open form of a poetic text:

A thing to be looked at with one eye

— — — — — —with the left eye

— — — — — — — — right—

What one must hear with one ear

— — — — — the right ear

— — — — — — left —

to put in the Crash-splash.

Duchamp clarifies what the above text means with two statements in prose that follow. He claims that : (1) "One could base a whole series of *things to be looked at with a single eye* (left or right); and (2) "One could find a whole series of things to be heard (or listened to) with a single ear" (The Writings of Marcel Duchamp 76). The dashes relate to the concept of mensuration and the standard stoppages. The dashes remind one, too, of the dots in the *Large Glass*. The "crash-splash" alluded to in Duchamp's text will be explained later in his notes as an element of the *Large Glass*. Duchamp's own notes do not give a Freudian description of the splash (indeed, one thinks of the passage of semen

from the Bride to the Bachelor's domain.)[64] The freed forms of the splash may pass through the nine holes in the Bride's domain. (The nine shots are to be formed by shooting a match tip with paint through a toy cannon and then making perforations in the glass at the point of impact. The target represents a traditional vanishing point but the figure obtained on the glass is the projection of the principal points of a 3-dimensional body.) The trajectory of the splash entails perspective because it is the trajectory of observation, seen from the corner of the eye. Further references to the crash-splash include a package of white cards, an inclined ramp and slopes of flow (reminiscent of the slope formed by the pack of cascading colored squares in *Tu m'*), silver (like a mirror), blue, ground glass and rust of different metals.

The idea of an arrangement of color is interconnected with the *Large Glass* and its system of freeing the forms of mensurability. The classification of the color system occurs though a color key, as in geographic maps, in order to determine the substantive meaning of each color used (i.e., aluminum is white, Prussian blue, or ochre). Duchamp not only provides a color key but also give directions for color selection. The pink motif of the Bride is obtained by White (silver) and the light burnt ochre. The Bachelors will be of Prussian blue, in contrast to the Bride. Duchamp theorizes that several differently-colored light sources exposed at the same time would involve a kind of "inopticity" in the passage from one color to the next. When one speaks about different colors, it is a "little like the passage of a present participle to a past one."[65] (Writings 83). Language, color and perspective are intricately interwoven in the *Large Glass*'s system of selection.

Along with the classification of colors, Duchamp invents a dictionary and an atlas for classifying the words and texts in the *Large Glass*. The dictionary will consist of a language that is translatable but not speakable; it would have its own grammar. Duchamp

makes notes for the creation of an abstract language that would be freed of the constraints of ordinary language. The abstract dictionary would be conflated with the invention of geographic landscapism. The raw materials of the earth, or substantive meaning of a color, would then be used to invent the color key to determine the make-up of the conventional color system (an abstraction of the color wheel system used by the Impressionists and the Simultaneists).

This system was referred to earlier in the chapter as "rubber words" in Adcock's explanation of the topological deformations of the n-dimensional system in the *Large Glass*. Loy's Song XVII from "Songs to Joannes" invents an abstract grammar by conflating language, color and perspectival systems. In it the name of the color red appears with a white space gap and then a color key term that provides a definition. The words "counterpane," "Count," "counter," and "counted" constitute an abstract grammar in which nouns and the conjugations of verbs have a phonetic relationship. Two systems of grammar become conflated—that governing subject/verb agreement and the phonetic system. The image of a square room collapsing into a round vacuum that dilates like a balloon (a reference is made to the poet breathing into the space) reinforces the idea of rubber words and the elastic stretching of shapes through topological transformations.

Loy's "Songs to Joannes" contain more radical transformations than Desnos's "FORMES-PRISONS" because this text does not conflate two grammatical systems but experiments with a rebus-like play of variations on syllables. The same can be said for Desnos's "P'OASIS." The text makes repeated mention of "arborescent thoughts" and "cerebral gardens" but, as Murat remarks, the syllabic play reaches a limit point that falls short of revolutionary qualities. Murat provides the following analysis of lines such as "Je vois les mains DCD":

> Réfléchissant (sur) le langage, l'évidence à laquelle Desnos se trouve confronté est celle des "FORMES-PRISONS": face au sens engagé et enfermé dans la forme, le désir qui s'offre est celui d'un langage sans forme, comme le génie est sans miroir. Son exploration en fait est tributiare d'une conception traditionnelle du langage, selon laquelle le sens est contenu dans un mot, fait des syllables et des lettres, qui en est l'enveloppe formelle —comme une âme dans un corps. Cette extériorité de la forme semble permettre toutes sortes de manipulations; mais elle ne conduit qu'à une analyse syllabique suivie d'une redistribution de la chaîne. Comme point-limite, elle propose un traitement syllabique de la lettre, conforme aux règles scolaires d'épellation . . . (Robert Desnos Les Beaux Effets du Surréel 84).

Murat concludes that some of Desnos's text do not fulfill the intended project of the author. It is more on the side of the subject than on that of language that Desnos succeeds, in his opinion. The body becomes dislocated and the eyes blinded without the mirror of reason (note that an untitled text from the 1923 "L'Aumonyme" begins with "Cataracte des flots cataracte des yeux"). The text will then refer to eyes transformed into those of Medusa. In 1934 Desnos will write a volume entitled Les sans cou that Murat considers to have achieved the concept of a body free to move as it will (85).

Murat argues that Desnos developed a freeing of the subject in his post-surreal poems of the thirties. Before discussing the validity of Murat's argument (and looking at poetry from the thirties), one must consider Desnos's own remarks about the relationship between eroticism and language from a 1923 manuscript, "De L'Erotisme considéré dans ses manifestations écrites et du point de vue de l'esprit moderne." In the preface to "De

L'Erotisme," Desnos asks: "Aussi bien, quel homme préoccupé de l'infini, dans le temps et l'espace, n'a pas construit cette "ÉROTIQUE" dans le secret de son âme; quel homme soucieux de poésie, inquiet des mystères contingents ou éloignés, n'aime pas à se retirer dans cette retraite spirituelle où l'amour est à la fois pur et licencieux dans l'absolu?" (Desnos Oeuvres 179). After the preface, Desnos cites the Petit Larousse definition of eroticism ("amour maladif") and comments that we are all in disagreement with the dictionary. "Eroticism is an individual science" and its language is "relative," he continues to explain. It is also a "spiritual mirror" that makes lying impossible. Superficial people who obey conventions fall into error; they remain at a distance from tropical oceans and seas in which the steamship LOVE is ceaselessly reborn from its shipwrecks ["Loin d'eux, par les océans tropicaux et les mers boréales, précédé de son étrave invincible, vogue le steamer AMOUR qui renaît sans cesse de ses naufrages" (180).

The arrangement of bodies in space, the search for the infinite, and Empiricism are tightly connected to the language of eroticism, at least in the thinking promulgated by Desnos in the 1920s. How the body and the erotic relate to the Deleuzian concept of the Virtual Fold will be discussed in a subsequent chapter, specifically in relation to Duchamp and Loy. One must ask how a scientific model can accommodate the splitting of senses that make up the complex visions of Desnos, Loy and Duchamp. Virilio questions whether or not subjectivity can exist without the persistence of vision. He argues that vision can never truly be infinite. Should the body be conceived of as a theoretical *topos* since vision and consciousness, never being infinite, must be physically embodied somewhere? Is such a place of embodiment objectively verifiable? Deleuzian

critics are currently debating these issues and they have important repercussions for feminism.

Notes

[1] Cited in "A Window onto Something Else," from Pierre Cabanne's Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp, trans. Ron Padgett. Reprint. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971) 43.

[2] "Quant au livre" 270.

[3] Cabanne 43.

[4] This statement was made in 1946 during and interview with James Johnson Sweeney, *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art*, Vol. XIII, no. 4-5, pp. 19-21.

[5] Calvin Tomkins, Duchamp: A Biography (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996) 92-93.

[6] See Dür's article in *tout-fait* (The Marcel Duchamp Online Studies Journal, < http://www.toutfait.com/issues/volume2/issue_5/articles/dur/dur4.html>).

[7] Arturo Schwarz, The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp (New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 2000) 97.

[8] Dickran Tashjian, Henry Adams and Marcel Duchamp: Liminal Views of the Dynamo and the Virgin (speech at The Whitney Museum of American Art, 26 April 1976), 22.

[9] This does not signify that Picasso never experimented with the Baroque. In fact, he made a series of drawings to illustrate poems by the Spanish Baroque poet Góngora. See GONGORA: Illustrations by Pablo Picasso (New York: George Braziller Inc., 1985).

[10] Duchamp told Cabanne that he knew Apollinaire very little at this point and found it difficult to get to know him. He described Apollinaire as a butterfly floating from idea to idea and as a poet still immersed in Symbolism.

[11] George Heard Hamilton and William C. Agee, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, 1816-1918 (New York: Walker and Company, 1967) 112.

[12] Ruth Brandon, Surreal Lives (New York: Grove Press, 1999) 47.

[13] Schwarz 12.

[14] Cited in "A Window onto Something Else," 39.

[15] Cabanne 30-31.

[16] Cabanne 31.

[17] Dora Vallier, Jacques Villon: Oeuvres de 1897 à 1956 (Paris: Editions "Cahiers d'Art," 1957) 117.

[18] Stein revealed the significance of camouflage to Cubism and art in general in this statement: "Another thing that interested us enormously was how different the camouflage of the french looked from the camouflage of the germans, and then once we came across some very neat camouflage and it was american. The idea was the same but as after all it was different nationalities who did it the difference was inevitable. The colour schemes were different, the way of placing them was different, it made plain the whole theory of art and its inevitability." See Gertrude Stein, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (New York: Random House, Inc., 1993) 187.

[19] Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 142.

[20] Cited in Arturo Schwarz, 12.

[21] <http://www.toutfait.com/issues/volume2/issue_4/articles/giunti/giunti6.html>.

[22] Cited in Cabanne, "I Like Breathing Better than Working," 72.

[23] Jacques Derrida, "Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book," 66.

[24] Schwarz 202.

[25] See David Fontaine, "L'*Art Poétique* de Desnos: Genèse ou Dislocation de l'Alexandrin?" in Poétiques de Robert Desnos en homage à Marie-Claire Dumas, (Paris: Laurent Flieder, 1995), 110.

[26] Fontaine 110.

[27] See Derrida's "Violence and Metaphysics," 116.

[28] Jean Suquet, "Le Grand Verre: Visite Guidée (Paris: L'Echoppe, 1992).

[29] Herbert Lottman, Man Ray's Montparnasse (New York: Harry Abrams, 2001) 12-13.

[30] Lottman 220.

[31] Robert Desnos, Ecrits sur les peintres (Paris: Flammarion, 1984). See the preface of Marie-Claire Dumas.

[32] Perhaps Duchamp's motivation in choosing a staircase for his *Nude* was the transformation of the Neoplatonic configuration of the universe as a stairwell.

[33] In order to purse this question further, one might examine how the Deleuzian conception of the Baroque Fold compares to the Leibnizian definition of the monad. Leibniz's monad corresponds to the Deleuzian conception to the degree that it is a substance which unfolds spontaneously but not in space or time as ordinarily conceived. In Monadology (1714) Leibniz defines the monad as a simple substance without parts making up composites. A composite is a collection of simple substances, which are the elements of all things. One cannot explain how a monad can be changed in its inner being by any other created thing, since there is no possibility of transposition within it. The monads have no windows through which anything may come in or go out. Yet, every created monad is subject to change that comes from an internal principle. Each monad differs from every other monad and this difference enables the perception of change. The passing condition, which involves and represents a multiplicity in the unity or in the simple substance, is called *perception*. Perception should be distinguished from apperception or consciousness. (The Cartesians deny the existence of those perceptions of which one is not conscious. Leibniz's monad challenged Cartesian notions of the Baroque era but it would, in turn, be challenged by thinkers from the Enlightenment.) The action of the internal principle, which brings about the change or the passing from one perception to another, is called *appetition*. Desire is not always able to attain to the whole of the perception for which it grasps, but it always attains a portion of it and reaches new perceptions. Perception cannot be explained by mechanical causes (i.e. by figures and motions). The same city, regarded from different sides, appears completely different and is multiplied because of the infinite number of simple substances. The infinite universes are, in fact, diverse aspects of a single universe as seen from the unique perspective of each monad. The greatest possible variety can be obtained thus, as well as the greatest possible perfection. In Monadology Leibniz states that God alone is the ultimate unity or the original simple substance.

[34] John Rajchman, Constructions (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1977).

[35] Paul Virilio, Un paysage d'événements (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1996) 109.

[36]Paul Virilio, *A Topographical Amnesia*, The Visual Culture Reader, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (New York: Routledge, 1999) 108-22.

[37] *A Window onto Something Else* 30-31.

[38] See Arkady Plotnitsky's *Algebras, Geometries and Topologies of the Fold: Deleuze, Derrida and Quasi-Mathematical Thinking (with Leibniz and Mallarmé)* in Between Deleuze and Derrida, ed. Paul Patton and John Protevi (New York: Continuum, 2003) 98-119.

[39] One should note also that Gayatri Spivak, in the preface to her translation of Grammatology, makes a distinction between a topological and a dynamic model in a Derridean economy of presence and absence. Although Spivak does not distinguish the difference between the topological and the topographical, she does argue that the dynamics of economy take over the topographical/topological in Derrida, as in Freud. The Derridean economy maintains disjunction by constituting identity as difference, as in an algebraic equation ($a = a$ because $a \neq -a$).

[40] Carolyn Burke, Becoming Modern The Life of Mina Loy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) 220.

[41] See Chapter Two for a discussion of Insel and Loy's critique of Breton.

[42] Breton's comments may be found in the pamphlet issued after his lecture "What is Surrealism?" given to the Belgian surrealists in 1934.

[43] Breton "What is Surrealism?".

[44] In examining Magritte's *The False Mirror* Mary Ann Caws states: "The ways the baroque approach teaches us to think about reversals, upside-downness, and in-outness I would summarize

briefly as fascination with what is complex, multiple, clouded, and changeable." See The Surrealist Look (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999) 4.

[45] In "Twisting Our Memory of the Past 'For the Fun of It' Craig Adcock explains how the idea of peeping through two holes in the *Etant donnés* installation relates to what he refers to as n-dimensional casting processes. Adcock asserts that for Duchamp the fourth dimension was and aesthetic judgment, as well as a matter of time and space. Geometrical shifts are conflated with historical shifts. The installation recalls Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Le gardien du harem* and, thus, "Duchamp shifts the 'modern' form language of the *Large Glass* into the 'moribund' form language of nineteenth-century realism" (319) Adcock's article is in The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp, ed. Thierry de Duve (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991).

[46] <http://www.brynmawr.edu/visualculture/journal/p_duchamp.shtml>.

[47] Pierpaolo Antonello, "On an Airfield in Montichiari, Near Brescia. Staging Rivalry Through Technology: Marinetti and D'Annunzio," Stanford Humanities Review 7.1 (1999), <http://www.stanford.edu/group/SHR/7-1/html/body_antonello.html>.

[48] <http://www.ubu.com/sound/depero.html>.

[49] The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy gives the following information about the Turing machine: "Turing machines, first described by Alan Turing in (Turing 1937), are simple abstract computational devices intended to help investigate the extent and limitations of what can be computed. Turing, writing before the invention of the modern digital computer, was interested in the question of what it means to be computable. Intuitively a task is computable if one can specify a sequence of instructions which when followed will result in the completion of the task. Such a set of instructions is called an *effective procedure*, or *algorithm*, for the task. This intuition must be made precise by defining the capabilities of the device that is to carry out the instructions. Devices with different capabilities may be able to complete different instruction sets, and therefore may result in different classes of computable tasks (see the entry on computability and complexity). Turing proposed a class of devices that came to be known as Turing machines. These devices lead to a formal notion of computation that we will call *Turing-computability*. The proposition that Turing's notion captures exactly the intuitive idea of effective procedure is called the Church-Turing thesis. This proposition, being a claim about the relationship between a formal concept and intuition, is not provable, though it would be refuted by an intuitively acceptable algorithm for a task that is not Turing-computable. That no such counterexample has been found, together with the fact that Turing-computability is equivalent to independently defined notions of computability based on alternative foundations, such as recursive functions and abacus machines, indicates that there is at least something natural about this notion of computability. Turing machines are not physical objects but mathematical ones. We require neither soldering irons nor silicon chips to build one. The architecture is simply described, and the actions that may be carried out by the machine are simple and unambiguously specified. Turing recognized that it is not necessary to talk about *how* the machine carries out its actions, but merely to take as given the twin ideas that the machine can carry out the specified actions, and that those actions may be uniquely described." See <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/turing-machine/>.

A Turing machine that is able to simulate any other Turing machine is called a *universal Turing machine* or simply a universal machine as Turing described it in 1947. Turing machines should not be confused with the *Turing test*, Turing's attempt to capture the notion of artificial intelligence. Arthur Danto in provides a defintion of the Turing Test and finds it applicable to the following situation: "There is another anecdote concerning Juan de Pareja. Because Pareja was a slave, Velazquez – 'for the honor of art - refused to allow him to have anything to do with drawing or painting as such, restricting him to the grinding of pigment or the priming of canvas, as if a drawing by a slave would be a perversion of art. (I recall an episode in Elvira Madigan in which the starving performer seeks to sell a portrait of herself by Toulouse-Lautrec, only to be told that drawings by dwarves are worth very little.) In any case, Juan de Pareja learned to draw and paint,

and the anecdote has him placing one of his own paintings where the King ordinarily would have expected to see the new work of Velazquez, If the King were to admire the work, believing it to be by Velazquez he would, in consistency, be acknowledging parity between slave and master. The mathematician Alan Turing proposed exactly such a test in connection with machines: if the only plausible explanation of a given output is that it is due to intelligence when coming from a human, then consistency would require ascribing intelligence to a machine whose output is identical. The King in effect endorsed the Turing test by saying to Juan, "Be advised that any man that has this skill cannot be a slave." See Danto's Embodied Meanings and Aesthetic Meditations (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994) 50.

[50] Gianfranco Baruchello and Henry Martin, Why Duchamp (Kingston, New York: McPherson and Company, 1985) 14.

[51] Linda Dalrymple Henderson, Duchamp in Context: Science and Technology in the *Large Glass* and Related Works. Duchamp's Bride and Bachelor in the *Large Glass* are biomechanical creatures: a Bride Motor in the upper panel hovers over a Bachelor Apparatus in the panel below, stimulating the Bachelors with "love gasoline" for an "electrical stripping." Linda Henderson provides a systematic study of the *Large Glass* in relation to the entire corpus of Duchamp's notes. She focuses on the scientific and technological themes in the notes and the imagery of the *Large Glass*. Henderson provides a history of science as popularly known at the turn of the century, centered on late Victorian physics. In addition to electromagnetic waves, including X-rays and the Hertzian waves of wireless telegraphy, the areas of science to which Duchamp responded ranged from chemistry and classical mechanics to thermodynamics, Brownian movement, radioactivity, and atomic theory. Henderson examines Duchamp's literary and artistic models for artistic invention based on science, including Alfred Jarry, Raymond Roussel, Frantisek Kupka, and Guillaume Apollinaire.

[52] John F. Moffitt, Alchemist of the Avant-Garde. The Case of Marcel Duchamp (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2003) 85.

[53] Moffitt 94.

[54] From a typed unsigned manuscript of four pages, dated 13 October 1920, in the Dreier Papers, Beinecke, Yale University.

[55] Katherine Dreier, Western Art and the New Era: An Introduction To Modern Art (New York: Brentano's, 1923), 90, 92.

[56] From the 1912 note published by Da Capo Press in The Writings of Marcel Duchamp, edited by Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (1973), 26-27.

[57] Edward Powers, in a website article "Fasten Your Seatlbelts As We Prepare For Our *Nude Descending*," emphasizes Duchamp's connection between fourth dimensional circum-embraceability and sexuality. Powers remarks:

In this way, the surrounding space, which Duchamp's glass artworks really slice in three dimensions, "mirrorically returns" as the virtual glass enclosure which *Tu m'* inversely assumes in four dimensions. Nor is the complementary nature of the *Large Glass* (as really slicing space) and *Tu m'* (as virtually enclosing it) especially surprising insofar as both works, in the 1930s, originally complemented and, in this sense, even completed each other in one and the same room: Katherine Dreier's West Redding, Connecticut library.

Although we can no more see the fourth dimension than we normally do see glass, by specifically directing our attention to "the other side of the glass," which is always-already "inside-out," rather than ourselves taking a walk around the glass, during an impossibly hallucinatory hour of zero

focal distance ("with one eye, close to, for almost an hour"), in effect, the glass takes a walk around us. In the fourth dimension, Duchamp explains, three-dimensional objects (e.g. spectators, penises...) are felt to be "circumhyperhypo-embraced (as if grasped with the hand and not seen with the eyes)" (DDS 126; WMD 89). If "circum-embraceability" is not itself without sexual suggestion, Duchamp makes his sexual-as-spatial premise explicit when he describes ideas like the fourth dimension as grasped by "the mind the way the penis is... by the vagina." Like a specimen in a glass bottle, the spectator of *Tu m'* thus becomes an object of surveillance, just as by colluding with the key-hole of *Etant Donnés*, in the self-conscious process of peeping, the spectator himself becomes the actual show. <http://www.toutfait.com/issues/volume2/issue_5/articles/powers/powers5.html.>

[58] Matthew Watts, "Gaston Bachelard and the Poetic Imagination," <http://www.dayglow.ndirect.co.uk/work/bach/>.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Walter Benjamin stated that when the critic embraces Breton and Le Corbusier he/she embraces contemporary art as a whole.

[61] See Rémi Labrusse, Miró: une feu dans les ruines, (Paris: Editions Hazan, 2004), 185.

[62] See David Fontaine, "L'*Art Poétique* de Desnos: Genèse ou Dislocation de l'Alexandrin?" in Poétiques de Robert Desnos en homage à Marie-Claire Dumas, (Paris: Laurent Flieder, 1995).

[63] Desnos produced many drawings throughout his lifetime, most of which were made using pencil or ink, as well as some watercolors. During his surrealist period, his automatic drawings (dessins automatiques) were published and commented upon in journals like *Les Cahiers d'art (no. 8, 1926)*. The titles of three are *Claudienne ou confidences du poisson et de l'étoile* (1924), *Plus belle qu'une étoile*, and *Le Détective et le centaure* (1925, redone in watercolor). In the January-February edition of *Les Feuilles libres* (1924), an article appeared with illustrations by Desnos.

[64] In The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp Schwarz follows the "malic" (a term invented by Duchamp to indicate maleness) element in the lower half of the *Large Glass*, known as the Bachelor's Apparatus. Schwarz combines an iconographic interpretation with a psychoanalytic one. Schwarz justifies the fact that his psychoanalytic interpretation was not one provided consciously by Duchamp: "It should be clear, of course, that these patterns were entirely unconscious. The extraordinary poetic quality of the *Large Glass* resides precisely in the fact that its creator was led by forces and drives of which he was not aware" (162). Schwarz provides the following analysis on page 162 (the numbers refer to a diagram that appears next to his description in the book):

> When the "malic" element or Illuminating Gas is cast into an image of Narcissus in Eros's matrix to form the Malic Moulds in the shape of the nine bachelors (11a-i), it hears the onanistic litanies of the Chariot in the neighboring Water Mill (14a-C). As soon as the gas has taken on its identity as Narcissus, it escapes through a hole in the top of each of the molds and empties into one of the Capillary Tubes (12), where it is frozen and cut into spangles and them converted into a semisolid fog.
>
> The Capillary Tubes lead the Spangles to the opening of the first Sieve (16). Sucked by the Butterfly Pump (17), the Spangles pass through the seven Sieves, and in the process are condensed into a liquid suspension. This liquid suspension falls into the Tobaggan (18) and "crashes" at its base (19).
>
> The Splashes formed by the fall of the liquid suspension are channeled into a stream by a Mobile Weight with nine holes (20), which directs the stream of Splashes to the Oculist

Witnesses (21a-d). The Scissors (15e) control the impetus of the Splashes as they issue from the Oculist Witnesses. Some of these Splashes will then form a Sculpture of Drops (24), which will undergo the Wilson-Lincoln Effect (25).

The reflection of the drops passes through the Bride's Garments (2)—three narrow strips of glass that separate the Bride from the Bachelor's Domain—and is mirrored upward toward the Bride's Domain to form the Picture of Cast Shadows (8). The kinetic energy of the other Splashes is transformed into light energy when the Splashes are dazzled through the Oculist Charts, the last Element of which should have been a lens whose position in the *Glass* is merely indicated by a circle (21d)

[65] It is important to note that a fully Euclidean representation of perceptual color space has eluded researchers to date. For a recent discussion of the whether or not perceptual color space has a metric see the website "Is Perceptual Color Space a Metric Space?" <http://kiptron.psyc.virginia.edu/steven_boker?ColorVision2/note12.html>.

CHAPTER TWO: THE FOLDS OF LIBERTY AND CONSTRAINT

Baroque art and science oppose the idea of *infinite expansion* to closed forms, self-contained structures, organizing principles or systems of constraint. Surrealism's love of juxtaposition entails a process of *formalizing the informal* that we may compare to baroque tensions between expansion and constraint. We will investigate how the concept of "liberty" (or "freedom") differs from mere "expansion" or "extensivity" in looking at baroque and surreal forms together. How does the idea of a *limit* relate to the *infinite*, or to freedom and constraint within the complexity of the Deleuzian fold/unfold? The problem of the limit in Desnos's surrealist poetics has been effectively addressed in Marie-Claire Dumas's Robert Desnos ou l'exploration des limites. In particular, the chapter "Désordre formel ou aux limites de la langue" argues that Desnos's surreal poetics does not define freedom as an absence of constraints in language. The freedom to explore the limits in language opens the mind through the activity of automatism. An explorer has a need to look at the horizon as a point of convergence towards a limit because no actual infinite exists. Influenced by Breton's conception of automatic writing in Les Champs magnétiques, Desnos confronts the commonplaces of daily life that obscure the dynamic reality of verbal matter. Texts such as "Rrose Sélavy," "L'Aumonymne" and "Langage cuit" interrogate the very substance of language, in Dumas's opinion. Desnos explores the effervescence of the verb and strives, to paraphrase the words of Dumas, to bring language to the point where meaning is perpetually fleeting and words weave between themselves unpredictable and peremptory associations (300).

Dumas's critique does not make explicit reference to Derrida or the terms of deconstruction but her analysis has much in common with the concept of the limit of

language as an *aporia*. Dumas interprets such lines as "*O laps des sens, gage des années aux pensées sans langage*" and "*Mots, êtes-vous des mythes et pareils aux myrtes des morts?*" (from Corps et biens) as indicative of a perpetual slippage of meaning. This slippage of meaning to which Dumas refers would accord with the Derridean notions of *dérive* and *brisure*. In Of Grammatology Derrida writes that a phenomenology of writing is impossible (68). No intuition can be realized in the Mallarméan space where "whites" take on an importance; one can never conceive of writing under the category of the subject because it is "other" than the subject (68). Writing constitutes and dislocates the subject at the same time and is, therefore, not simply a reversal of the metaphysics of presence (68). Spacing as writing is the movement of drift/derivation [*dérive*] that emancipates the sign and constitutes a desire for presence (69). Language is thus considered to be a form and not a substance because the sign is not a function of the speaker (as noted by Saussure). Meaning is produced only within discontinuity and the presence-absence of *trace* and *différance*. Derrida explains that spacing as writing is the becoming-absent and the becoming-unconscious of the subject (69). The *brisure* or hinge marks the impossibility that a sign, the unity of the signifier and the signified, may be produced within the plenitude of presence (69).

Derrida discusses the discontinuity of presence-absence and the production of meaning in his essay "Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book." Here the idea of the hinge is extended to the principle of discontinuity as an essential *lapse* between significations since language is the *rupture* with totality itself (71). The fragment is the form of that which is written. As opposed to the Leibnizian Book, which Derrida defines as Being, our writing is responsible for the rationality of Logos; it obeys the principle of discontinuity. The caesura does not fix meaning but makes it emerge. Absence is the

"breath" of the letter; absence gives letters "permission" to signify (72). Absence attempts to produce itself in the book and is "lost in being pronounced" within a labyrinth of nonidentification with itself (69). The writer is absent, too, because he/she must exchange his/her existence with or for the letter (70). The book, as a kind of silent displacement toward the essential, is one long metonymy. Poetry and history enable the book to be folded and bound to itself (and also "bounded" to itself in the mathematical sense of a limit) in a movement through which the book becomes a subject *in itself* and *for itself*; writing is ruined in its own representation because it infinitely reflects itself and develops the painful questioning of its own possibility (64). If this painful folding of itself permits history, it is also the Jew who "elects writing which elects the Jew, in an exchange responsible for truth's thorough suffusion with historicity and for history's *assignment* of itself to its empiricity" (64-65). Derrida's "Force and Signification" presents the Baroque as an example of historical dislocation in which a "frenzy of experimentation and a proliferation of schematizations" occur within the "burst structure" of a "historico-metaphysical threatening of foundations" (6). The title of his essay refers to Jean Rousset's Forme et Signification: Essais sur les structures littéraires de Corneille à Claudel. Rousset's book is lauded by Derrida as an exemplary study of the "rent poem whose structure appears to be burst apart" (6). If a critic finds liberty in a "solicitude for and an opening into totality," the opening "hides at the same moment it reveals" because meaning cannot be made to precede writing. To write is to "conceive the Leibnizian book as an impossible possibility;" it is to name the limit of the impossible possibility, which is the limit named by Mallarmé (10).[1]

The notion of an idea or design anterior to a work is an idealist prejudice. Written meaning is constituted through a process of redoubling or secondarity since it presents

itself "prerequisitely and simultaneously as *read*" (11). Meaning presents itself at the point at which the other is found, "the other who maintains both the vigil and the back-and-forth motion, the work, that comes between writing and reading, making his work irreducible" (11). In Of Grammatology Derrida states that a signifier is, from the beginning, the possibility of its own repetition and the signified relates to it and could never be a unique and singular reality. He finds a possible exception to this rule in Chinese graphism. In his opinion, the "primitive prestige" of Chinese graphism might be analyzed as having a symbolic relationship with a "reality singular and unique like itself" (91). Derrida questions the ethnocentric presuppositions that would bestow upon Chinese writing the values of the West in which writing eclipses speech. This eclipse of speech by writing is what Derrida refers to as the Chinese prejudice. Western philosophical projects of a universal script, such as those of Descartes, Leibniz and Athanasius Kircher (a Jesuit expert on Chinese and Egyptian culture), encourage "seeing in the recently discovered Chinese script a model of the philosophical language thus removed from history" (76).[2] For Leibniz, what liberates Chinese script from voice is also that which "arbitrarily and by the artifice of invention, wrenches it from history and gives it to philosophy" (76). The philosophical exigency in Leibniz's project decenters the history of writing and then recenters it upon a-historical, philosophical grounds. Derrida proposes that contemporary critics should question the heliocentric concept of speech (in which *logos* resembles the sun) that transforms all differences into delays, divergences, accidents or deviations. Derrida opens up a space for interrogation and asks the following questions about writing:

> What must writing be in order to threaten this analogical system in its vulnerable and secret center? What must it be in order to signify the

> *eclipse* of what is *good* and of the *father*? Should one not stop considering writing as the eclipse that comes to surprise and obscure the glory of the world? And if there is some necessity of eclipse, the relationship of shadow and light, of writing and speech, should it not itself appear in a different way? (91-92).

The Chinese ideogram, the graphic poetics of Ernest Fenellosa and the work of Mallarmé dislocate the link between speech and writing that has entrenched Western tradition. Derrida concludes that a science or philosophy of this new conception of writing is a difficult but necessary task. The unnameable movement of *différance* or *trace* that he proposes as a "different way of writing" could be called writing only within the limits of science and philosophy. Grammatology, the name Derrida gives to such a science of writing, must still be "walled-in within presence" (93). When thinking is measured against the shape of writing, it can only be "broached within the *epistémè*" (93).

Derrida's proposal to recover a different structure of unity must first de-sediment "four thousand years of linear writing" (86). The linear norm throughout the ages repressed pluri-dimensionality, although it never imposed itself absolutely since its limits opened up a space for discreteness, difference and spacing. The end of linear writing is the end of the book. To write differently is to read differently. Science is preoccupied today with the problem of reading because it involves a new organization of space. When writing exceeds the linear model, one must reread past writing according to a different organization of space. The revolutions in science, philosophy and literature are destroying the linear model. Derrida notes that what is thought today cannot be written according to the line and the book, "except by imitating the operation implicit in teaching

modern mathematics with an abacus" (87). Derrida resorts to quasi-mathematical thinking to define his grammatology.

In "Algebras, Geometries and Topologies of the Fold: Deleuze, Derrida and Quasi-Mathematical Thinking (with Leibniz and Mallarmé)" Arkady Plotnitsky discusses the fact that a certain mathematical stratum appears to be irreducible in philosophy. He offers an explanation of Derrida's reference to algebra in the section from Of Grammatology where Derrida discusses Leibniz. The title of the section is "Algebra: Arcanum and Transparence," which indicates that Derrida's philosophical undecidability stems from a logical algebra of writing. Plotnisky argues that both Deleuze and Derrida have an affinity in their conceptualization of undecidability as a quasi-mathematical problem. Algebra may be considered as a trope (a topos) or a concept of formalization. In this sense, algebra refers to a conglomerate of formal elements and relations between them (99). Plotnisky makes a distinction between Derrida's algebra and that of Mallarmé. Derrida's philosophical algebra, particularly the algebra of undecidables, develops out of Kurt Gödel's work on the mathematical-scientific side, whereas the algebra of Mallarmé, on the literary side, taps into the mathematics of Leibniz (99). Plotnitsky traces Derrida's algebra and Deleuze's geometry or topology to two different facets of Leibniz's thought. In his view, Mallarmé's work links that of Deleuze and Derrida through the Leibnizian figure of the fold:

> Deleuze offers us a *philosophically* geometrical/topological perspective on or approach to the fold, albeit not without some algebra to it, especially in the case of Mallarmé's fold. Derrida offers us a *philosophically* algebraic one, although this algebra entails a certain topology or at least spatiality as well. (100)

Derrida tends toward a-topology in his reading of Plato's *khōra* and in his notion of *différance*. These concepts relate the efficacities of any conceivable spatiality because they are as multiple as their effects (100). Deleuze's thought is more spatial and topological and has a different distribution of algebra and geometry/topology than can be found in Derrida's conceptuality.

Marie-Claire Dumas's analysis of Desnos's "formal disorder" proposes the idea that "Rrose Sélavy" places language into equations, according to a linguistic algebra (301). Sentence 61 of "Rrose Sélavy" initiates the reader into an apprenticeship of the linguistic rules of the text. The reader is invited to learn the rules of its "celestial algebra" (l'algèbre céleste). Although Dumas refers to the verbal play of the celestial algebra as a practice of alchemy, it is a unique concept of alchemy as a transforming energy in language. No reference to a chemical reaction appears in Sentence 61; instead, the word "inscription" (*inscrite*) indicates that the rules are communicated through written language. In order to illustrate how Desnos transposes linguistic relations into algebraic proportions, Dumas constructs a table of proportions that map out the logic of the verbal puns. These proportions can be discovered in the various "theorems" of the text. For example, an equality is established between the words "mots/morts" and "mythes/myrtes" in the sentence: "*Mots, êtes-vous des mythes et pareils aux myrtes des morts?*" Dumas points out that the same relationship exists between "mots/morts" as between "mythes/myrtes" (310). The second and fourth terms distinguish themselves from the first and third terms by the addition of an "r" that relates the doubling of the "r" in "Rrose." A transforming energy is derived from the Mother Equation: Rrose Sélavy = Eros c'est la vie. The signifying kernel expands throughout the text in its development of a series of proportions. Dumas highlights the fact that all of the enunciations in the text

occur within a doubling process that always repeats the same thing twice (310). The fact that the sentences are numbered reinforces the mathematical rigorousness of the text, an idea that can be traced to Duchamp. Sentence 13 converts the name Marcel Duchamp into "marchand du sel" (salt seller) but the linguistic play goes beyond the Saussurian anagram. An erotic energy develops from the verbal play and this idea of Eros becoming language generates the poesis of free verbal expression.

"Rrose Sélavy" undermines the relation between word and thought without destroying language, as Dumas explains, but by enabling new rules to exist within the accepted rules of grammar (323). Such a practice does not create a new language but shows how language has the means to transform its rules of functioning without erupting into incommunicability (323). Here Dumas makes use of concepts that recall those of Derrida. A perpetual slippage of meaning characterizes thought beyond its enunciation. She concludes that through this language without thought meaning slips and becomes displaced but inscribes its trace. What she identifies as "mental materiality" does not erupt into incommunicability but reaches a limit: the border of intelligibility. For example, in "P'oasis" a rupture exists between the verb and thought that designates a mental materiality beyond articulable thought. At the moment when Desnos evokes this mental substance ("Nous sommes les arborescences qui fleurissent"), the text becomes silent, indicating a limit – "sur les déserts des jardins cérébraux" – that cannot be crossed (301).

Katherine Conley, in Robert Desnos, Surrealism, and the Marvelous in Everyday Life, locates Dumas's algebraic interpretation within the baroque space of the fold. Conley considers Dumas's interpretation to be compatible with a Deleuzian definition of baroque space. She examines Dumas's statement that "Rrose Sélavy" brings discourse to

coincide with itself through folding back on itself in a reiterative process (34). She regards this doubling effect as a baroque mirror which explores the limits of the surrealist "in-between" where meaning and incoherence touch the "space of possibility" (a term used by Marjorie Garber in Vested Interests)[3]; the limits at the border of intelligibility become visible through a baroque "fulcrum between two meanings" (33). What Conley identifies as baroque is, in fact, the Deleuzian definition of the fold as suspension. She makes a brief reference to Deleuze's description of baroque suspension as a fold "that goes towards infinity" (20). Desnos's *Infinitif* expresses a desire to suspend time in its use of infinitive verbs, Conley argues, "which represent actions and states of being outside of chronological time, and with its theme of love that outlives death" (52). In "Words from the Rocks" sight disappears into infinite space, she concludes, "in a surge of baroque time in which the instant and the eternal remain in suspended animation" until the vertiginous sense of space "spirals back into the material present" (53).

Conley makes an important point that unfolding defines time not in terms of the present. Deleuze, like Derrida, conceives of time not in terms of the present. Deleuze mentions Henri Bergson in The Fold because he adheres to a conception of the infinite division of the present. In order to understand Deleuze's conception of unfolding as a paradoxical instance it is useful to compare and contrast his conceptions with those of Derrida. For Deleuze, the infinite division of the present is becoming; therefore, it is a-topic (a *non-lieu*). Derrida's fold is a displaced field but, according to Leonard Lawlor, it is a halfway place (a *mi-lieu*), "which never quite but almost gathers presence and non-presence into a unity: the same."[4] For Derrida, the experience of the impossible is a double bind. The hinge or double bind of the aporetic experience is a desire for the absolute other. It is a desire that is infinitely deferred or suspended. As Daniel Smith

explains in "Deleuze and Derrida, Immanence and Transcendence," the possibility of openness for Derrida is necessarily linked to the absolute other as a transcendent idea (60). Smith concludes that Deleuze agrees with Derrida's analyses and provides variations in his own but "they are always a prelude to eliminating transcendence and providing an *immanent* account of the same phenomenon: an immanent ontology (univocity), an immanent theory of Ideas (defined in terms of multiplicities and singularities), and an immanent theory of desire (defined as the prolongation or synthesis of singularities)" (61).

Conley does not provide a systematic analysis of the Deleuzian notion because she intertwines many notions of the Baroque and their relevance to Desnosian Surrealism. Conley cites also the art historian Heinrich Wöfflin who viewed the Baroque as "the relation of oscillating balance" (33). She refers to the idea of "language as transformation" and the "shape-shifting tenets" of the Baroque in the works of Mary Ann Caws (36).[5] Conley connects Breton's comment that in Desnos "words are making love" to automatic writing and baroque mirror-effects (31). Words have a baroque materiality for Desnos; when they can "make love," they have double meanings. Conley states that "out of one come two" from which a kind of play is engendered; this "nonreproductive" lovemaking "spins out multiple readings . . ." (35). She cites the opening of Desnos's "De l'érotisme," which links love and eroticism to language. Words are compared to wax, and written language is an "infinitely maneuverable and protean substance," she explains (350). As an agent of transformation, the embodiment of language enables the double (and ultimately multiple) meaning of words. A body of language is connected to the physical body of the poet, "requiring the participatory activity of speaking, laughing, listening" (35-36).

Because Conley is more interested in general concepts of the Baroque, her analysis does not explore in depth the connection that Desnos makes between language, eroticism and Empiricism. She develops the staging of a baroque self through what she identifies as the appropriation of signs that have a collage-like quality about them. The appropriation of signs from everyday life into the poetic life occurs through a process of alchemical transformation in the symbolist tradition à la Rimbaud (38). In Desnos's "Door to a Second Infinity" the body disappears, as in collage, and is sublimated into writing:

> The inkwell doubles as a "periscope," indicating that its "eye" is controlled by an invisible power that is literally under the surface of the ink in the well. The blank page, whose untouched whiteness recalls Stéphane Mallarmé's obsession with the void and absolute potentiality of the empty page, metamorphoses into a predatory bird that rips out the poet's eyes. Putting oneself in a state receptive to those subterranean forces of the psyche that surge out in automatic states is, in other words, a risky business, because such a state attacks a sense of the whole person: the body disappears. And yet here the sublimation of the body into writing is presented in concrete images that have the effect of paradoxically materializing the process of sublimation and consequently of negating it (38-39).

The problem of activity and passivity in the second state of an automatic trance is explained by Conley both as a form of collage and a baroque event. Time is suspended and marvels hidden within the folds of the psyche are revealed. As a resolution to the neoplatonic problem of Narcissus staring at his own image (i.e., how does one know the

forms?), the induced trance enables a plunge through the surface of one's own reflection in a moment of baroque time. In real-life experiences of induced trance, Desnos is reported to have descended into *alert dream consciousness* with "eyes wide shut" during a "period of sleep" (21). The "baroque moment" of induced trance requires a body for the performance of the automatic activity but the physicality of the experience is translated through the mind and body as though on a screen—in this way, the body is a witness of its own performance. The embodied objectivity of this performance involves a dualism of immediacy and distance. Desnos transforms the "detritus pulled by chance out of his own unconscious" into a surreal collage that is self-verifying (22). An oscillating self reveals the slippage of identity and the multi-faceted undecidability of the "automatic sibyl" alias Rrose Sélavy (23).

Desnos's "Porte du second infini" begins with these lines: "L'encrier périscope me guette au tournant/mon porte-plume rentre dans sa coquille/La feuille de papier déploie ses grandes ailes blanches/Avant peu ses deux serres/m'arracheront les yeux/Je n'y verrai que du feu mon corps/feu mon corps!" An inkwell periscope scans space with an intimidating gesture. From the void of the white space of a sheet of paper wings of a bird take flight. The bird blinds the poet, who will henceforth only be able to see his "defunct" body ("feu mon corps"). The merging of the periscope and the inkwell forges an identity between the technology of optics and writing. The periscope is an optical device that can have many functions. It can be a mirrored tube in the ceiling of a *camera obscura* room that directs light onto a circular disk or it can be adapted to a microscope (the periscope microscope was already in use during the nineteenth century). In World War I the periscope was employed to see outside of the trenches, as well as above the surface of a submarine. War technology intimidates and demobilizes the optics of vision

through an act of violence to the subject. The violence of the plucking out of the eyes and the intimidation of the sighting instrument reveal the perils of a "second state" when the subject can longer control the trance.

The baroque moment, which suspends the past, present and future in a virtual flow of different layers of reality, exists only in the mind of the viewer who perceives the representation of the real as it occurs. The simultaneous projection is a kind of death but the viewer must actively ascribe reality to the virtual representation projected in the *camera obscura.* Art has no existence as veracity, as Duchamp stated, and the onlooker is just as important as the artist. Only through active participation and with the aid of memory can the virtual reality of the "second state" be recorded and preserved. The body does not disappear in Desnos's text but it is perceived as an obscurity by the mind ("Je n'y verrai que du feu mon corps"). The reiteration of "feu mon corps" creates a mirroring effect within the obscurity. Fire is at once light and dark; it is a substance that consumes and reflects. At one pole fire represents changes in the natural world (as in the myth of Proteus); at the other pole fire represents scientific invention (as in the myth of Prometheus). The catastrophic force of the fire makes a third force enter into the tension (as in the myth of Icarus). The idea of fire as a catastrophic dynamic entails the oscillating balance between the effect of empirical certitude (ascertained by an optical device, the periscope) and *trompe-l'oeil* (chiaroscuro effects produced by fire and ink). The body is neither wholly illuminated nor obscured by the fire. At this point in the text the "I" doubles into a "you;" the perspective of the Other is able to see the body. The doubling effect develops with images of women who place jewels in their mouths, mirroring the gesture of the mythic Démosthène. "Feu" in the French language, by definition, can also refer to the flash of light from a precious stone. Jewels flash from

within the orifices of women's mouths. The link between eroticism and language occurs in the body. In this text language takes place within a feminized space where objects do not allow themselves to be measured and empirical certitudes waver in the balance of undecidables. It is a mythic space that is at once cosmic and lunar.

The text concludes with the "I" as inventor of an apparatus that will restore communicability ("Mais je suis inventeur d'un téléphone de /verre de Bohème"). The glass telephone enables vision because it is transparent; it is a convergence between the idea of the glass house of Breton and the "telephonic" distancing of Duchamp's bachelor-soldiers. The apparatus enables sight but it is also substance, being half tobacco plant ("verre de Bohème et de/tabac anglais"). Both the glass and the tobacco have a direct relationship with fear ("en relation directe/avec la peur!"). The encounter between the glass and the tobacco produces fear in the person trying to communicate through the apparatus. The bringing together of two incongruent objects in the apparatus stimulates a search for meaning in the void of rational explanation. A fear of overdetermination of meaning results from openness to too many possibilities. Many passages of communication may be open but how does one communicate substance? The concept of *substance* must be examined in relation to the creation of new channels of communication. It is not simply a matter of auditory communication but of the need to grasp intelligently the substance of communication. The intellect, in the Duchampian sense (following in the steps of Mallarmé), explores the possibilities of meaning that may be engendered through the elasticity of the two poles of the surrealist metaphor. The door to the second infinity requires an apparatus to makes sense of reality, which is not an actualized reality. Like the periscope, the telephone makes a connection with another world, that of a second state or a second infinity. The door to the second infinity takes on

meaning only as an intellectual standpoint on the idea of reality. For Conley, the veracity of the senses in "Porte du second infini" takes precedence over empirical veracity (whether technological or intellectual). Conley insists that the sense of sight yields to sound, which may be produced by a disembodied voice transmitted by the telephone. Communication happens through auditory imagination; the sense of sight is no longer the medium for communication. The communication that takes place through auditory imagination occurs in a state of surreality. Telephone technology permits an immediacy of communication that is not made possible by sight or by writing; it is "that point between one state and another," the "door to the second infinity" and "that other dimension accessible only through a second state or automatist experience exterior to chronological time" (39-40).

Conley acknowledges the loss of primacy of retinal vision and identifies a splitting of the senses that the automatic state cannot accommodate. This splitting of the senses leads to the triumph of the voice over text and written word. Conley supports her argument by the fact that Desnos would end his surrealist period before the 1930s and focus his career on radio transmissions and the primacy of the voice over the pen. Her analysis is diachronic (the *oeuvre*) rather than synchronic (the surrealist *oeuvre*) and she presents the texts of Desnos in this critical framework. She does not investigate how the splitting of the senses that occurs (i.e the separation of the aural/verbal from the visual) may be accommodated within an empirical model; however, her suggestion that Deleuze's critical concepts "work" for Desnos should be pursued further. Conley's astute recognition that a splitting of the senses occurs in the works of Desnos attests to a crisis in the subject's ability to define order and disorder. The crisis in the definition of order and disorder disorients the subject's perspective through relativism. One way to

understand Deleuze's relation to relativism is through fractal analysis. In fractal complexity cause and effect fold into one another in an acceleration of possible infinities. Fractal complexity places autosimilarity in competition with broken symmetry and engenders a meta-fractal, to borrow the term of Susan Condé, where input becomes output and output becomes input (Fractalité 150). Fractal complexity involves metalanguage; this metalanguage functions as the synthesis of a "form in perpetual formation" (150). On the one hand, there are fissures and splitting in the fractal model; on the other, the injections of the aleatory make the accumulation of perceptions possible. The auto-genesis of fractal complexity creates an optic in which the chaotic energy of the macrocosm can be found in each detail of the microcosm. The artist becomes a fractal subject who creates an art that expresses the interstices, the blurring and the in-between of life and perception (146). Condé's remarks refer to the fractal machines of contemporary visual artists who have followed in the footprints of Duchamp. This group of artists includes Jean-Paul Agosti, Carlos Ginzburg and Jean-Claude Meynard. Yet she notes that fractal machines are also *fractal gardens of the mind*, an idea that could be applied equally to literature and visual art. She cites, as examples, Virginia Woolf and Marcel Proust, in particular. Desnos's concepts of "arborescences qui fleurissent" and "déserts des jardins cérébraux" reinforce the meta-fractal model as both organic garden (auto-genesis) and machine. Desnos's model engenders both an accumulation of images and a cacophony of sounds but, in any case, it requires the subject to make selections to focus on particular details within the interaction of verbal and visual forms. A subject may choose to focus on sounds rather than sights but this does not involve reductionism. The mind does not select input from a single organ because it is itself a fractal machine—like the cortex of the brain. The human body is a fractal and it is viewed as such by the

technologies of modern science. The nervous system consists of motor reflexes and biofeedback; blood coagulates. Fractal space is that of proliferation and not reductionism. It replaces the modern concept of the discrete with that of the entangled (51). The interference of different stimuli brings about a saturation point in the fractal subject who is not free from constraint but may still invent and create. Fractal identity entails a dynamic of constant metamorphosis with itself. It is a place of continuous exchange on the borders of the foreseeable and the uncertain, the limits of the physical body and the infinity of the mind (46-7).

Three additional points relating to verbal/visual interference in Desnos should be considered along with Conley's study. The first point concerns the essays that Desnos wrote in his later career in the 1940s. His famous 1944 essay "Réflexions sur la poésie" reveals something of a postmodern theory based on the baroque interaction of forms. He writes that distinct schools of art may be defined but they interact dynamically with each other. Desnos disrupts the chronological succession of artistic ideas and opts for a postmodern interaction of forms. He asserts in 1944 that the school of Romanticism has encompassed all of Parnassianism, Symbolism and Naturalism (Destinée arbitraire 237). Other reflections in the essay indicate that Desnos pursued a mechanism of the poetic image at this time in his career. He mentions being inspired by Pierre Devaux's imagery in a reading of Dieux verts. Other poetic models that interest him as possible subjects for current reflections on poetic technique are Villon, Nerval and Góngora. Desnos expresses an interest in uniting popular language with "sharp imagery": "Unir le langage populaire, le plus populaire, à une atmosphere inexprimable, à une imagerie aiguë . . ." (236-37). When writing about music and sound in another essay from the 1940s, Desnos expresses a desire to devote himself passionately to the "quasi-mathematical but at the same time

intuitive" work of adapting word to music. Desnos writes: "Toute substance poétique gratuite, toute inspiration étant pour longtemps consommés, je me livrai au travail quasi mathématique mais cependant intuitif de l'adaptation des paroles à la musique, de la fabrication des sentences, proverbes et devises publicitaires, travail dont la première exigence était un retour aux règles proprement populaires en matière de rythme" (Oeuvres 998).

The second point concerns Duchamp's idea of the inframince as an overturning of the hierarchies of organic representation (such as the fixed proportions of Renaissance perspectivism based on an Aristotelian distribution of Being that mediates without any form of motion). The convergence of the glass telephone and the tobacco plant in "Porte du second infini" disturbs representational norms by creating an effect similar to that of the inframince. In his dadaist poem at the back of *View* magazine's March 1945 issue (mentioned in Chapter One) Duchamp makes the idea of the inframince intelligible as the encounter of two substances, breath and smoke. The merging of the smoke and breath is not an example of synaesthesia in the aesthetic tradition of Symbolism; it is, rather, an effect through which Duchamp constitutes the world from a situated point of view, which is a particular temporalization and spatialization. It is not merely a question of explaining empirically how one substance becomes transformed into another or turns into a composite. The inframince may be understood in Deleuzian terms that account for the reality of temporal and spatial change on a pragmatic level. Feminist critiques of objectified representation can only benefit from Deleuzian pragmatism and Duchamp's inframince because they challenge objectivity that is only assumed to be neutral. Normative expectations must be challenged by the feminist because they represent a standpoint that has already been constructed as a site of knowledge based on accepted

standards of measurement that exclude feminine (and/or minority) perspectives. Superimposing and mixing perspectives involves a plurality of centers that destabilizes representation in which the identity of the concept as center subordinates all differences. The distorting tendencies of the *Large Glass* combine the view from above with the view from below. The physical cracks improved upon the project because they manifest the distorting tendencies of works that challenge accepted hierarchies through the "ruin of representation." Dorothea Olkowski argues in Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation that these distorting tendencies "have always been present in selected works of art, and to some extent even in the work of representational artists, as the crack or the catastrophe that emerges in the midst of representation" (25). Olkowski examines the work of contemporary artist Mary Kelly and she emphasizes how Kelly's creative acts are in themselves the ruin of representation itself. Olkowski considers also how Deleuze and Bergson recast materiality in terms of images that transmit movement. Perception cannot be construed as knowledge because it varies with molecular change within the body or any living organism. Perception occurs because the material world consists of closely linked images organized around a center of real action (living matter). An organism selects from its surroundings an image that interests it and separates it from the environment. The brain does not manufacture perceptual representations. Perception consists of an object minus everything else that does not interest the organism who detaches its image from a zone of indetermination (97). As a feminist, she values the Bergsonian conception of the universe as a "system of images that exist and influence each other through movement and for which the image of one's own body occupies a central position, but only because everything else changes as the body moves" (98). For Bergson as for Deleuze, all life perceives and is open to the influence of external

stimulation. Duration and memory are not merely psychological; they are real because they are open to external stimulation from living beings on the outside (98). External images influence the body image by transmitting movement to it; the body responds by choosing how it returns what it receives and bringing about changes in its surrounding images (98). Olkowski admits in the conclusion of her argument that she has subordinated language to vision in her analysis of Deleuze, Bergson and Kelly. She recognizes a tension between the verbal and the visual in the works of Kelly and proposes that this interference be considered in a future study.

Despite Olkowski's personal focus on Deleuze's conceptions of the image, The Fold is a broad analysis of image, text and sound. Deleuze acknowledges clearly that the body image is open to external stimulation through the movement of light as well as sound. This is what Duchamp had in mind when he wrote in "The Bride's Veil" that *One can look at seeing; one can't hear hearing*. Desnos's "Porte du second infini" takes this idea one step further by suggesting that, even if one cannot hear hearing, one can look at hearing. Desnos "Porte du second infini" interrogates the possibility of looking at speaking or looking at hearing. The reader of the text (who is also an auditor and a spectator) is invited to look at speaking or at the process of verbal production itself as the two sensations interfere. The reader finds himself or herself in the position of a spectator at the opera who looks at people singing, which leads to the third point of this argument about perception and transmission in "Porte du second infini"; the third point takes into consideration the interference of the visual and the verbal in the opera. The auditory voice and the concept of the Baroque have enjoyed a harmonious integration in the idea of the opera. Desnos took a personal interest in the opera and collaborated with musical author Kurt Weill on *Fantômas, Opéra*. It was diffused over Radio-Paris, destined for the

ear, but the ensemble of tenors, street singers, concert soloists, actors, clowns and accordionists created a Bizet-like opera mixing high and low cultural forms. Although Conley highlights the mixing of the registers of everyday marvels, as the title of her book indicates, she places this vibrant fusion under the category of the auditory. Bodies may not be visible but they are present in the case of a radio transmission of opera in the sense that voices issue forth from bodies. The operatic experience, as Christine Buci-Glucksmann has shown, is one of exchange between voice and vision. It is an allegorical knot or a hybrid genre at the border of the visible and the nonvisible, as in *L'Orfeo de Monteverdi* (27). In *L'Orfeo de Monteverdi* Orpheus descends in the dark caverns of the underworld in search of the dead body of Eurydice. While trying to lull the gatekeeper to sleep with his song, Orpheus's mouth emits vibrations at the threshold of the underworld, in a state between life and death (conscious and unconscious). In a Deleuzian vein, the movement of molecules transmits an image to Eurydice and acts upon her. The body of Eurydice transmits its image to Orpheus who extracts the image of the body from its organicity. Orpheus loses her when he physically looks at her because she becomes real to him in his perceptual representation. Eurydice does not have a body that can be seen because it is a "becoming of a body" conceptualized by Orpheus. Orpheus loses the sense of sight as a retinal impression on the eye; however, he gains the plenitude of the "body as a becoming" through his perception of Eurydice not as an object but as the flux of desire to which he is "subjected" and which he endures as an experience of the real.

The surreal Desnos of the 1920s identified the loss of the sense of sight as an indication of the ills of society. Searching in other cultures for a renewal of vision, he was enthralled by the vibrant dances and erotic spectacles that he encountered during his visit to Cuba. Desnos wrote about his 1928 voyage to Cuba in an article "Moeurs de Cuba"

and he regretted that in France one could not find erotic spectacles with nudes as in Havana. Desnos's apparent suppression of the connection between eroticism and visual culture in France resulted in his adventure in a brothel with five "Négresses" pressed one against the other in a single bed, as he recounts in the article. He mentions that French prostitutes dominate the trade in Havana and maintain the "prestige" of the country abroad. While he is reproachful of the prestige of French prostitutes, his one-time fling with five prostitutes in Havana transports him into a lost world of Rubenesque flesh tones. His article retells an encounter with the victims of male eroticism rather than the exploitation of them. (Desnos's "Calixto," written much later towards the end of World War II, exposes the exploitation of prostitutes and the evils of society. Its hermetic slang makes the text less accessible than the more visually-oriented baroque style of other texts.) The experience is revolutionary for Desnos but it is not the unleashed eroticism of Sade that he explored in other writings (particularly La liberté ou l'amour!). "Moeurs de Cuba" is a voyeuristic but visually erotic baroque experience. It is something other than a sentimental education through the back door of prostitution. The description of the five exotic prostitutes in "Moeurs de Cuba" is Desnos's response to Picasso's 1907 *Demoiselles d'Avignon,* which was exhibited publicly after World War I. Desnos equated visual eroticism with liberation and his article attests to his faith in visual perceptions and practices denied him by his own culture.

Duchamp and Breton articulated their surrealist stance as an attack on the idea of love as prostitution. In "André Breton," published in *Arts-Loisirs (Paris)*[6], Duchamp remarks about Breton that he was the "lover of love in a world that believes in prostitution." Duchamp's statement about Breton underscores explicitly the relation between belief and eroticism. In a January 1956 television interview with James Johnson

Sweeney, Duchamp maintained that his interest in the intellectual side may best be understood as a "belief":

> I am in interested in the intellectual side, although I don't like the word "intellect." For me "intellect" is too dry a word, too inexpressive. I like the word "belief." I think in general that when people say "I know," they don't know, they believe. I believe that art is the only form of activity in which man as man shows himself to be a true individual. Only art is capable of going beyond the animal state, because art is an outlet towards regions which are not ruled by time and space. To live is to believe; that's my belief, at any rate. (137)

Believing means going beyond the animal state and roaming in regions not ruled by time and space. Duchamp's belief that the artist must surpass the animal state derives from Mallarmé, as noted by Octavio Paz. Duchamp refused to "put up with superstitious blindness" and emphasized the verbal origin of his work. Duchamp remarked that Mallarmé was a "great figure" and modern art must return in the direction traced by him because art must be intellectual and not merely an animal expression.[7] In 1946 Duchamp confessed that he was "sick of the expression *bête comme un peintre.*"[8] Duchamp experimented with Fauvism but distanced himself from the aesthetic of the *Cage aux fauves* (or Wildcat's Cage), as the 1905 exposition came to be labeled. One may think of his 1921 birdcage filled with marble cubes, *Why Not Sneeze Rose Selavy?*, as an ironic distancing from any association with animals (Fauvism) and also a mocking of the overly analytic phase of cubism. Involuntary sneezing, as a creative act, challenges the assumption that a work of art is produced through the mastery of mind and body since sneezing occurs without conscious control. Duchamp may have been familiar with the

1894 Edison/Dickson *Kinetoscopic Record of a Sneeze* in which close-ups of an actor document the physiological changes in the body during the involuntary act of sneezing. This idea was taken up again later in his career in a talk given by him in Houston at the American Federation of the Arts in April 1957. In this talk, "The Creative Act," Duchamp spoke of a missing link in the chain of reactions accompanying the creative act. Something acausal occurs in the creative act because of the difference between what the artists intends and ultimately realizes. Duchamp refers to this gap as the "personal art coefficient." He compares the art coefficient to an arithmetical relation between the unexpressed but intended and the unintentionally expressed. A transmutation or "transubstantiation" occurs when the raw state (*l'état brut*) is refined like sugar from molasses. The artist, as a medium who is not conscious of what he is doing, forms only one pole of the creative act; the spectator forms the other. The artist "acts like a mediumistic being who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing."[9] The reaction of the spectator completes the missing link through the experience of *surprise* as opposed to filling in the gap with normative experience. The spectator observes the cubes that appear to be light-weight chunks of sugar. When he or she sets out to verify the validity of that perception, the result is kinesthetic surprise.[10] He or she is startled or surprised at the weight of the cubes that prove to be marble. (Duchamp intended the viewer to interact with the object and not stare at it behind glass in a museum.) Duchamp succeeds in making the spectator experience the idea of a cube differently than if he or she were looking at a cubist composition. The spectator becomes part of an empirical examination of affectivity.

Duchamp sought veracity by opening a "window onto something else," as he told Cabanne. The impetus behind the *Nude Descending a Staircase* was the desire to create

movement in abstraction. “Fundamentally,” Duchamp asserts, “movement is in the eye of the spectator, who incorporates it into painting” (30). The spectator must believe in the idea of the nude without being certain if “a real person is or isn’t descending an equally real staircase” (30). The status of the nude, as static movement, is equivocal. The spectator must believe in a nude somewhere in the chaotic fall of frames that knock up against one another in space. The incertitude produces a vertiginous spiral in the mind of the spectator; it is from the murky depth of the mind that the clarity of the figure must issue. Duchamp stated also that it is not a question of the truth or falsehood of a particular aesthetic interpretation. People believe one interpretation or another, according to what they feel closest to (42). One must have faith in perception because something is always lost in the process of painting from its inception in the mind to its realization on canvas.

In 1925 Duchamp designed in Nice a *Poster for the Third French Chess Championship* from a photograph. Francis Naumann argues that the position of the cubes--their three visible sides colored black, white and beige--was determined, as Duchamp later explained, by tossing them into the air and taking a picture" (101, 103). Other critics, Rhonda Roland Shearer and Robert Slawinski, note the similarity between the “shifting sense from distortion to regularity” (or non-cubes to cubes) in the *Chess Poster* and a class of optical illusions named "impossible figures" by Penrose and Penrose in the 1950s (Shearer “Marcel Duchamp’s Impossible Bed”). Shearer and Slawinski remark that Impossible Figures like "The Impossible Tri-Bar" discovered by Oscar Reutersvärd in 1934 characteristically capture the spectator in a “cycle of acceptance based on familiar visual cues, followed by a looping back to rejection resulting from nagging contradictory information” and then “after further mental examination” the spectator may visually accept, but then again reject, what he or she

sees, "*ad infinitum*." The paradoxical positionings in Reutersvärd's impossible cube drawings remind Shearer and Slawinski of Duchamp's 1925 chess poster cubes. Shearer and Slawinski observe that Reutersvärd squeezed into his representation more degrees of freedom than would be allowed by real 3D space. He invented triangles whose total angle measure exceeds the limit of 180 degrees imposed by Euclidean space. Although Reutersvärd has been credited as the first developer of Impossible Objects before Escher, the chess poster indicates that Duchamp himself was actually first. Shearer has also claimed that Duchamp's impossible bed in *Apolinère Enameled* (1916-17) demonstrates that "Duchamp already understood the concept of impossible objects, and the optical illusions based upon them, eighteen years before Reutersvärd's discovery in 1934 . . ."[11] In New York, in 1968, Duchamp made a series of etchings on the theme of lovers. In one etching the accumulation of dice, adapted from the Nice chess poster of 1925, separates a pair of lovers (the King and Queen), who are separated by chance during the toss.

The incorporation of the idea of the chess game into the creative process enabled Duchamp to integrate the idea of science (mathematical precision and logic), empirical testing of evidence presented to the eyes and mind, faith in perception, chance, and eroticism. Some critics consider this experimentation to have triggered the end of painting in his career since Duchamp ostensibly gave up producing visual art for chess. Duchamp, however, insisted that he never stopped painting; he desired to see his painting "without the murk."[12] In order to avoid using the term painting, he chose the word "delay" to describe the creative process. The *Large Glass* project evolved from a concept that conflates belief, science and Mallarméan poetics. In his interview with Cabanne Duchamp comments upon the conception of the Bride of the *Large Glass* as a "delay in glass" (40). He emphasizes that he set out to give a poetic sense to the word delay in the

"most Mallarméan sense of the word" (40). He was equally pleased that Breton valued the "antisense" inherent in the idea of "stripping language bare" in the *Large Glass*. The adverb "even" (*même*) relates to nothing in the title *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* nor the work itself. It is non-sense because it has no connection to anything in the title or work. Duchamp explains that the lack of referentiality enables the adverb to function as an "absolute adverb" (40). It forces one to think of the "adverbness" (Duchamp's term) of the adverb in the same way that Cézanne's works make one think of the appleyness of the apple. The function of the adverb is to bring words together in a sentence. The poetic potential of the adverb lies in its ability to open up an infinite play of word combinations.

Anti-sense or non-sense interested Duchamp on the poetical level; his open-ended works are in search of meaning. Paz compares Mallarmé's poetry to the paintings of Duchamp since their *sum total in formation* is never complete but always in a state of continual change (80). "Un coup de dés" initiates a plurality of meanings that have no final interpretation; in this sense, it is a critical poem: an act of criticism: ". . . in its very movement, in its double rhythm of contraction and expansion, of negation that annuls itself and turns itself into an uncertain affirmation of itself, engenders its own interpretations, its successive reading . . ." (79). The role that chance plays in "Un coup de dés," as Paz concludes, is the "same as that assumed by humor and meta-irony in Duchamp" (78). In 1923, when Duchamp turned away from traditional painting, he immersed himself in the study of numbers and became a master of chess. He wrote Le Jeu de la reine to analyze the probable outcomes of maneuvers on the chessboard. In the Mallarméan spirit, he developed a new law of "dynamic equilibrium" in which the sum total of gain would always cancel out the sum total of loss. Julien Levy reports in

"Duchampiana" that Duchamp paid his bills in Monte Carlo from an investment trust based on the law of "dynamic equilibrium" (33). Stockholders could neither gain nor earn profits. This law of dynamic equilibrium lends another level of irony to the title of his *La mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même*. The irony of the word "même," meaning "even" in French, discloses the intention of the artist to "break even" in the sum total of financial loss and profit.

In The Surrealist Voice of Robert Desnos Caws explains the metapoetical stance of Desnos as self-reflective irony. Each Desnosian text carries within itself its own criticism; the "poet's speaking is seen as separate from the poet's being, so that he becomes only the spectator or auditor for the poem, removed from it as we are, and still more critical" (5). The surrealist poet does not simply give the visual up in favor of the auditory but may become either the spectator or the auditor of the poem (or perhaps both the spectator and the auditor). In projecting the shadow of Desnos against the background of Surrealism, in a Mallarméan gesture, Caws finds the texts of Desnos to be coherent and "profiled in an extraordinary clarity" (14). Clusters or constellations of images may be potentially infinite but the obsessive focus of the poet details only a limited number of images in each text. Desnos creates ambiguities in language but his texts are characterized by a constant metamorphosis of only a small number of images (for example: sea horse, mermaid, star, starfish, coral, anemone, voyage, ship, shipwreck, bottle, forest, sea, night, shadows). The shipwreck is often the nocturnal prelude to the discovery of an unbounded landscape where the poet exhausts his chosen limits in an act of "going beyond" (17). The amassing of repeated elements in a cycle of compression, dispersion and self-cancelling builds up energy that may lead to a *dépassement* in an exterior, migrating element. The poet may pursue the adventure beyond the space of the

poem, which may appear to deny the participation of the reader in the text. The convergence of images may seem to suppress any central image as the original impulse. The reader may choose, however, from a plurality of readings and focus on a central chain of obsessive imagery. The reader experiments with a set of paradigms that constitute Surrealism's positive direction. Obsessive participation, as Caws maintains, energizes the language and creates verbal force. In texts such as "Idéal maîtresse" nouns change to verbs; any sense of the static becomes lost "as the entire text serves for the gesture of the I or the eye verbalized" (67). The idea of the eye verbalized evolves both from Mallarmé and Duchamp. Desnos invents nonsensical verbs in this text, as for example, "Je mauve" (I mauve), "je miroir" (I mirror), "je crystal" (I crystal) and "L'escalier, toujours l'escalier qui bibiliothèque . . ." (The stairs, still the stairs, that library . . .").

"Idéal maîtresse" plays upon the ambiguity inherent in the word *expérience*. The dual meaning of the word in French is experience/experiment. Rajchman finds this dualism to be related to a problematic establishment of an intersubjective consciousness. The single consciousness of an individual becomes "pushed into a zone without the establishment of a stable intersubjective *we*." To paraphrase Rajchman, it is not a matter of recognizing ourselves or the things in our world but rather of encountering what we cannot yet determine; we do not even have the words to describe an encounter with an indiscernible zone of consciousness (The Deleuze Connections 20). His remarks elucidate the fundamentals of Deleuzian Empiricism whose central problem focuses not on *is* but on *and*. Empirical concepts are not fabricated in response to problems in preexisting dogma. Empiricism exposes the dogmatic innateness of thought, namely the problem of seeing forms, which is the problem of the *unparticipable* (33). The main

problem inherent to the notion of simulacra is that it cannot be made to participate. In Rajchman's view, Plotinus posed the problem of seeing forms in relation to a complication in things and thus anticipated Leibniz and Proust (36). The empiricist must free his or her thought from Cartesian common sense. The Cartesian idiot is not an "error to correct" but a "stupidity (bêtise) to be attacked" (44). The empiricist must be presuppositionless and start with an encounter with something that does not fit in habitual ways of seeing and thinking in order to "shake up thinking" and put up something new to be thought (44). Logic must be thought of as conceptual art that confronts what is problematic and complicating in what happens in consciousness; logic is not predication, nor is it a poisoned gift of transcendence (Plato) but sense and event (52).

Deleuze offers a new relation with logic that affirms the powers of thought. To affirm life is never to affirm a proposition or thesis about life but to engage in another nonassertional style of thinking; to affirm is then to *disburden* or *lighten* in order to attain the innocence of other possibilities (75). His logic is not a logic of justified belief or warranted assertability but a matter of pushing the question of belief beyond the assurance of knowledge or of faith to what he calls a *belief in the world*; it is a matter of credit or trust that is akin to American pragmatism's endeavor to introduce a problem of *trust and truth* no longer subject to Salvationism (in the image of thought, it would substitute for the figure of a judge that of an experimenter who starts to move in a world and in relation to a self that is never "given or conditioned" but "in the making") (75-76). Affirmation requires a belief or trust in the world beyond what one is "warranted" to assert; affirmation entails a logic of multiplicity.[13]

In The Fold Deleuze states that the Baroque solution to the crisis in theological Reason (when the world could not "stop accumulating its 'proofs' against it") was the multiplication of principles. It was no longer a question of asking what object corresponded to what luminous principle but what hidden principle could respond to whatever "perplexing case" might be given (67). For Mallarmé, the world had lost its principles. The Thought-world that throws dice thinks of chance in sum, which is the absence of all principle. The Leibnizian game, in Deleuze's view, is opposed to the roll of the dice because it is a proliferation of principles (67). The game is performed through an excess and not an absence of principles; it is the game of inventing principles, like chess or checkers, "where skill (not chance) replaces old gifts of wisdom or prudence" (68). It is a game of filling in holes; the Baroque is that moment just before the world lost its principles when "Some Thing is kept rather than nothing, and where response to the world's misery is made through an excess of principles, a hubris of principles, and a hubris inherent to principles" (68). Passing from one principle or proposition to another entails an act of change that is opposed to Cartesian (and Aristotelian) essentialism.

The Leibnizian Baroque inherited a sense of Stoic Mannerism that implemented what Deleuze identifies as the logic of the event. Thought is not a constant attribute but "a predicate passing endlessly from one thought to another" (53). The predicate is a verb that is irreducible to the attribute. Leibniz's concept of the event issues from Stoic logic in which a proposition states a "manner of being" that exceeds Aristotelian "essence-accident"; for the verb "to be" they substitute "follow" and "they put manner in place of essence" (53). The predicate of a subject of a proposition would be "the tree greens" instead of "the tree is green." In Leibniz's baroque grammar the predicate is a relation and an event; the world itself is an event, as a virtual predicate, that must be included in

every subject as a basis "from which each one extracts the manners that correspond to its point of view" (53). Manners are particular predicates; the world is predication itself; the subject is what goes from one predicate to another "as if from one aspect of the world to another" (53). Deleuze concludes that the coupling of "basis-manners" disenfranchises form or essence.

The examples of predication given by Deleuze (i.e "the tree greens") may be compared to Desnos's "Je mauve," "je miroir," and "je crystal." Desnos transforms attributes like "mauve" into predicates. The subject of the text moves from one predicate to another as if from one aspect of the world to another. "Mauve," "miroir," and "crystal" are all aspects of the basis "light." The movement from one aspect to another creates the thought of light as an event and not an essence. According to Caws:

> Boundaries no longer hold between place and place, and the collective suffix "je" makes one statement cohere with another, one element of the text with its neighbor, beyond the bounds of simple contiguity. "Je crystal" thus replies to "je mauve" as a defining opposition, where the dull copula of an *être* (I am mauve-colored, I am crystalline) would never find its place. (67-68)

Another of Desnos's texts "De la rose de marbre à la rose de fer," a prose poem from Corps et biens, is particularly suitable for a discussion of predication. It is not the ideal beauty of the rose that the reader grasps in his or her mind but the movement from the Marble Rose to the Iron Rose. Desnos foregrounds the movement from one substance to another rather than describe various aspects of an ideal rose. The way to experience the rose is through an experiment with the Periodic Table of Elements of the Rose. In French the word *expérience* has a double meaning of both *experience* and *experiment* (in the

scientific sense). The verbal force of Desnosian poetics and Surrealism's positive direction may be accommodated within Deleuze's definition of Empiricism and liberty of movement. In "De la rose de marbre à la rose de fer" it is not a question of movement from the invisible "aspectual" essence of the rose to the visible "existent" rose. Desnos creates a relation out of non-relation through the movement from one substance to another. A reaction occurs like that of a chemical experiment and it produces energy. The text maps the components of the relation and achieves a spiral effect, like that of a DNA strand. Rajchman refers to this event as "multiple accretion through encounter" that is opposed to a branching out from roots or a building up from foundations (14).[14] Years after Desnos's surreal period ended in a breach with Breton and other practitioners, Breton defined the poetic analogy still in terms of Empiricism. In Signe ascendant Breton writes: *Elle est tout empirique dans sa démarche, seul en effet l'empirisme pouvant lui assurer la totale liberté de movement nécessaire au bond qu'elle doit fournir.*

Desnos's Empiricism has affinities with the type of experimentation practiced by Duchamp. Desnos's "Noise descending a staircase*"* recasts Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* as an empirical investigation of different states of consciousness. Duchamp's *Nude* takes it departure in the idea of Mallarmé's "Igitur." Igitur explores the equivocal shadows of a sepulchral staircase and hears at first the panels of doors clanking; then the sound of a heartbeat disturbs Igitur with its "too clear perfection." Finally, Igitur investigates the nature of a chanting sound that he hears in the staircase: *Ce scandement n'était-il pas le bruit du progrès de mon personnage qui maintenant le continue dans la spirale, et ce frôlement, le frôlement incertain de sa dualité?* Igitur affirms that the sound is not a heartbeat but the chanting of his "own measure" (the measure of himself, his finitude) evoked by the noise of the door of the sepulchral steps. The sound of chanting is

opposed to noise; it is a silent reverberation in his memory of his own limits within the infinity of the void. A clock chimes that indicates the time for Igitur to leave the stairwell. The movement from sound to sound enables the coherence of language in a space where boundaries no longer cohere. When Igitur leaves, the sound gives way to the silence of a pure image: a dream agonizing in a glass flask. Duchamp's *Nude* creates the effect of panels colliding against each other, like the panels clanking against each other in "Igitur." The effect evokes the idea of sound, the sound of an explosion of panels which is movement within infinite space. It is only through the reminiscence of the figure of a nude that the viewer can discern the limits of a figure in Duchamp's composition. In "Igitur" the reminiscence of the sound of panels colliding recalls the limits of the human form during the descent in the shadows of eternal Midnight. The following passage shows the certitude of self-consciousness brought about through the collision of panels creating a noise that is the progress of the subject's self-awareness of its boundaries. The vision of a space appears in the certitude of the exploratory moment:

> Cette fois, plus nul doute; la certitude se mire en l'évidence : en vain, réminiscence d'un mensonge, dont elle était la conséquence, la vision d'un lieu apparaissait-elle encore, telle que devait être, par exemple, l'intervalle attendu, ayant, en effet, par parois latérales l'opposition double des panneaux, et pour vis-à-vis, devant et derrière, l'ouverture de doute nul répercutée par le prolongement du bruit des panneaux, où s'enfuit le plumage, et dédoublée par l'équivoque exploré, la symétrie parfaite des déductions prévues démentait sa réalité; il n'y avait pas à s'y tromper c'était la conscience de soi (à laquelle l'absurde même devait servir de lieu) — sa réussite.

The positive note moves towards shadow in the next phase of the descent because Igitur does not like the certitude of his own volume nor the clarity of "opaline" science: "Je n'aime pas ce bruit : cette perfection de ma certitude me gêne : tout est trop clair. . . ."

Most of Desnos's texts present a theater of shadows, like that of "Igitur." Nevertheless, the positive pole is explored in texts like "Désespoir du soleil." Caws explains that in this text "the two poles of optimism and pessimism meet"; however, the "general tone seems to deny the despairing element, in keeping with the positive direction of Surrealism" (92). The text is constructed through a series of questions about a strange noise descending a staircase. The noise is embodied as it is described gliding along the banister at the base of which a transparent apple dreams: "Quel bruit étrange glissait le long de la rampe d'escalier au base de laquelle rêvait la pomme transparente." The difference between Mallarmé's text and that of Desnos is the embodiment of the sound that will not yield to the silence of a dream. Desnos's embodied sound takes the ramp, whereas Mallarmé indicates specifically that Igitur descends the steps instead of taking the ramp ("au lieu de descendre à cheval sur la rampe"). Igitur's descent is the progressive clarification in memory out of the obscurity of dream. Igitur's descent takes place in the absolute hour of an eternal midnight and all thoughts take the path towards the Absolute. Desnos's interrogation of the sound represents a progressive movement toward empirical clarification; the following lines continue the positive direction of the inquiry: "L'escalier s'enfoncera-t-il toujours plus avant?/ montera-t-il toujours plus haut?/ Rêvons acceptons de rêver c'est le poème du jour qui commence." The interrogation shifts from the idea of sound to the observation of movement itself. The staircase itself moves in two directions, low and high. Paradoxically, "Désespoir du soleil*"* suggests both a waking to the clarity of the dawn and an invocation to keep on

dreaming. The answers to the interrogation during this threshold moment are, as Caws points out, the "definitely positive answer about the fresh beginning of the dream of the day" and the "entire mood is optimistic, with the accent falling on the question of widened range" (92-93). The text is divided into a summit and base, like that of a baroque house; at the base of the staircase positive objects like the transparent apple (the round banister knob) can be found in contrast to the virtual sound that slips down from the summit. Caws argues that this text does not form the center of the Desnosian oeuvre, nor any surrealist collection of texts, and most of his texts bear witness to the power of shadow. Texts like "Identité des images" attest to Desnos's refusal to "make traditional categorical separations between elements, real or imaginary" so that all elements become the equivalent of one another; the elements of the texts become "equivalent paths leading finally to the center of the labyrinth hidden inside the obvious fabric of the text" (93).

The refusal to make traditional categorical separations between elements in favor of a baroque labyrinth of identities indicates the moment when Desnos confronts empirical conceptions similar to those that would be theorized later by Deleuze. This confrontation involves, first and foremost, the problem of the limit. Deleuze has a Mallarméan side but critics dispute the degree to which they share affinities, as they do with the affinities between Deleuze and Derrida. Although Alain Badiou's Deleuze "La Clameur de l'Etre" concludes with a viewpoint that favors Mallarmé over Deleuze, it does admit to affinities between the two in their conception of a limit. Badiou's preference for Mallarmé appears to be a matter of taste and ultimately supports the value of a Deleuzian approach by its recognition of the ability to look at various viewpoints. Badiou points out areas where both Mallarmé and Deleuze gain and lose ground in their logic. Deleuze worked in collaboration with other thinkers in some of his theoretical

writings because he did not want to situate his personal point of view as the final truth. An analysis of these collaborative writings goes beyond the scope of this study, as does an examination of the idea of *assemblage*.

In Badiou's chapter "Le dehors et le pli" he begins by stating that Deleuze's philosophically empirical questioning about being, thought and identity leads to the following conclusions: "l'Etre se décline univoquement comme Un, comme vie inorganique, comme immanence, comme donation insensée du sens, comme virtuel, comme durée pure, comme relation, comme affirmation du hasard et comme retour éternel. Et que le penser est synthèse disjunctive et intuition, lancer des dés, contrainte ascétique d'un cas, force de la mémoire" (117-118). The important question raised by Badiou is in what sense are thought and being identical since logical identity for Deleuze (A = A) is not "receivable" (because it is a category of Platonism). Deleuze rejects the long tradition that conceives of the identity of thought and being as a principle (hence the Cartesian cogito).[15] Badiou asserts that Deleuze, as a radical thinker of the One, does not believe in the irremediable disjunction of thought and being. In other words, the virtual is the foundation of the actual. An actual being draws the univocity of its existence from virtuality. Thought is always an affirmation of what is and not a choice between divergence or convergence. The virtual is not a new foundation of being but the collapse of the foundation as a positive event. This concept of the virtual separates Badiou from Deleuze because he considers it to be a Platonism of the virtual; Badiou is interested in a Platonism of the multiple.[16]

For Deleuze, there is no constitutive interiority of a subject of thought that identifies itself, reflexively, as being. Instead, Deleuze proposes the identity of being with the act of folding from the outside (le dehors) that creates an interiority (120). The

outside (le dehors) in the Deleuzian sense is not an external world, according to Badiou; it is a simulacrum that has no relation with others. The automaton is the pure assumption of the outside which only manifests itself as an imposition of a force. This is not spontaneity because "we are forced to think" in Deleuze's opinion (128). The outside explains the exteriority of forms that must be intuitively grasped in order to construct a relation or diagram of forces. This construction of forces would be the first step in the process of thinking the One; it is only the first stage because the diagram of forces has no interiority and cannot communicate with the One. A formal composition of disparate objects, or instances of objects like the "visible" and the "speakable," activates the exteriority through a grasping "en force" (128). Deleuze passes from a disjunctive logic of exteriority to a topology of the outside as the place of an inscription of forces. How, then, does intuition surpass the establishment of a topology of forces towards the act of its identity with the One? (129) This surpassing engages topological concepts that think in depth the outside as a space of forces. Intuitive identification of thought with being is accomplished, according to Deleuze, as the topological densification of the exterior to the point where the outside proves to be the envelope of the inside. Thought is the fold of being that coparticipates in the power of one as the envelopment from the outside to the inside develops inside out. The topological operator is a pivot that functions as the limit at which non-relation relates its terms to each other. The disjunction of terms becomes topologically active as a production of a limit; this limit presents itself as a line separating fields of force traced in the space of the outside from external forces that deploy the forces (130). [17]

Badiou objects to the precariousness of Deleuze's logic. If the One gives itself as a disjunctive limit or the tracing of a limit on the space of the outside, is it not still

necessary to distinguish between the topology of space, the One of topology, and that which inscribes itself there as lines of force (that Deleuze sometimes declares to be floating, which means "abandoned to space, mobile, but nevertheless distinct from the outside itself and unscriptable on the surface")? (131). This is the point where Deleuze is Mallarméan. Because Badiou declares himself to be Mallarméan, he must also agree with Deleuze here:

> La différence entre la disjunction et l'Un, entre, si l'on veut, la différence des simulacres et l'Un de la différence elle-même, ou encore la différence entre les coupes immobiles de la durée et le changement qualitative du Tout, ou encore la différence entre la différence des coups de dés et le lancer unique qui les hante et les fonde, ou encore la différence entre la divergence des series et le retour éternel, bref: la différence entre le non-rapport et la Relation, tout cela est réduit à *presque rien*, à ce que Mallarmé pense comme la différence nulle entre la blancheur du papier et les tracés qui l'affectent, différence qui n'en est pas une, puisque deux tracés ne diffèrent qu'autant qu'un blanc fait limite entre eux, et que réciproquement deux blancs sans tracés sont indiscernables. (132)

Badiou asserts, however, that the Mallarméan "composition-multiple du vide" is already too negative for Deleuze. If the limit is only thinkable as a mobile trace affecting the outside, then the univocity may not be saved in Deleuze's opinion. The fold is simultaneously movement of a surface and tracing of a limit. The act of thought must conform to the surface on the outside as to that which is in and of itself the limit: "Car l'Etre se dira encore selon deux sens, le dehors et la limite, l'espace et la trace, l'être et

l'événement" (132). The fold presents itself as a limit on the sheet of paper as a pure outside, which, is, in its being, a movement of the paper itself (133).

Mallarmé's dual-polarity is explained by Badiou in terms of absence (the void) and presence (the trace) that have more of an affinity with Derridean terms than those of Deleuze. While Badiou shows what is Mallarméan in Deleuze, he diverges at the point of univocity. The paradox of uni-dimensionality is discussed at length by Robert Cohn in his exegesis of "Un coup de dés." Cohn maintains that the concept of dual-polarity moves within a cycle that he identifies as a four-fold division of unity-duality-multiplicity-recorso. The recorso is the "intuitional apprehension of the One rejoining the original metaphysical unity" (13). According to Cohn, the text is an Orphic explanation of the universe that tells of the rise and fall of all (9). A word or a letter may be a monad, a microcosm of the total structure, and at the time may be only one unit or a dot on the "curve of a meandering Mallarméan phrase" (9). Each page of the text corresponds to a hierarchy of sciences and to a stage in the development of art: metaphysics, physical sciences, biological sciences, early art and ritual, drama, poetry, synthesis of all the arts, the empty ocean, lonely space, and a single constellation as the "last dying cluster of reality, multiplicity returning to the One from which it emerged" (11).

Dual-polarity constitutes a phase of multi-polarity which is an epistemological system based on paradox. The two phases of the paradox are the joining or synthesis phase (A=A) and the splitting or analysis phase (A≠A). One can visualize the synthesis phase horizontally and the analysis phase vertically. The uni-dimensional paradox is now operative between two-dimensions; the dimensions collapse through synthesis and can be re-opened through analysis (14). The paradox is now of a paradox and there is a danger of infinite regress but Cohn argues that nature supplies an escape because there is an

excess of analysis over synthesis (total synthesis being death); the description of a paradox is a fixing of it which is permitted by the one-sided excess of analysis that splits things from the rest of reality so that they can be named. A dual-polar relationship may be described by fixing it in a cross pattern (14-15).

Cohn notes that both "Igitur" and "Un coup de dés" form a consistent pattern of an attempt at fixing symmetry based on dual-polarity and multi-polarity. The fixing-process creates a pair of parent terms that form an identity A=A from which a chain of proportions may be generated. Cohn gives the following chain as an example: A_1/A_2 = positive/negative : synthesis/analysis : stasis/kinesis : male/female : unity/multiplicity : One/Two : convexity/concavity, etc. (15-16). The linearity expresses the fixity of the chain which expands like an algebraic equation. The removal of fixity would make the chain collapse like a tautology. Cohn is convinced that the world is made of something like this collapsible chain in which "all terms are profoundly identical while being yet distinct;" he highlights the fact that this "purest, tautological world is, of course, stubbornly incommunicable and has a way of exacting ironic revenge on whoever attempts to fix the unfixable" (16). What Cohn refers to as "second-best strung-out" chains may be recorded in poems so that words having common elements, roots or rhymes can be linked in "clusters" (16). The particular page of a poetic text, being two-dimensional, may convey a dual-polar relationship by position on it in the sense of a "crest" (a word placed on top of the page) versus a "trough" (a word placed on the bottom of the page). The first "male" *coup* is the creation of the universe at the top or crest of the page by vertical opposition to the female trough but it is also the female creation site or womb in relation to the horizontal reality that will follow in the next pages of the poetic text—that are conceived of as children-events (16).The oscillations of

paradox generate a wave-movement which is the fixing of a dual-polar stage and "to this corresponds the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the book as a whole" (21). The poetic text is a splitting away from the universe itself like the Fall of humankind, cut off from Purity or Stasis. The excess of kinesis (splitting involves movement) is expressed by linearity but aspires towards purity (20).

On the first page sky is whiteness (male) and mirrors itself in the water (feminine); time and space are split apart (time as horizontal and space as vertical) on page two. The mid-point of the page is the dividing line. Page one and two are the father and the mother of the book (metaphysics) (23-24). On the third page, identified with mathematico-physical science, a gigantic pen and ink-well appear (male and female). The pen and ink-well are identified with other modes such as pen and page, wing and bird, sail and boat, master and boat, etc. (29). The ink-well symbol requires some explanation as it is described as "crystal like a conscience" with a drop of shadow in its depth. Cohn suggests that the ink in the ink-well is separated from total blackness by the crystal:

> . . . if the ink on the page were returned to the ink-well, if the ink of the ink-well were returned to total blackness, and if negation were emptied from the mind by a pure act (drinking poison or losing all to gain all and leaving the flask as a symbol of the gained purity . . .), then the empty ink-well, the empty mind (*folie*) and the empty page would remain as emblems of purity, blank tomb-stones, what Mallarmé called in *Igitur* "château de la pureté." The pure dice absorb the black dots of Number (*hasard*) in a corollary result anticipated in *Igitur*. (46-47)

The parallel movements of collapsing two into one reverse the "positing-unity-creates-duality" pattern from the third page of the text (47). The third page constitutes a site then

for the fourth as, in Mallarmé's words, "le cercle que perpétuellement ferme, ouvre la rime" and the white space following the last words of the text is the static phase of the act of writing or reading, the closing-up of what was blasphemously opened: "Virginité [the Page] qui solitairement, devant une transparence du regard adéquate, elle-même s'est comme divisée en ses fragments de candeur, l'un et l'autre, preuves nuptiales de l'Idée" (48).

The male master (LE MAITRE) will be launched on page four onto the virgin page. He is an emanation of the original *coup* and occupies the crest position of the page. He is also a shipwreck and further down on the page one finds "naufrage cela direct de l'homme" because, once launched, he will return to his element as a fragment "leaving a surplus of maleness which is an aspect of the linear or kinetic excess discussed earlier, and which creates, spirally, life's expansion" (49). Man will return fully to his element only in death; the life-death rhythm becomes a sub-rhythm of partial death as in military victory-defeat (49). The master arises out of "old clusters of reality" (*hors d'anciens calculs*) that include all former dice-throws and the mathematical and physical laws which lead up to man's emergence; but *calculs* is a negative word and the master-as-writer must rise beyond calculations (50-51).

The only thing left (on page 11) in a "rapidly shrinking universe" is the constellation, a final cluster of reality itself shrinking impatiently to some last point, which it does not reach as long as the poem continues (94-95). The first four words of the title emanate a wave-movement of expansion until the final line: Toute Pensée émet un Coup de Dés. The text ends with the first four words of the poem so that the reader is left with "a strong feeling of total circularity as well as the even firmer linearity established by any conclusion" (107).

Following Mallarmé, Desnos wondered how the poet could escape the hermeneutic circle of imposed forms to become free. In "Réflexions sur la poésie" (1944) Desnos writes: *La poésie peut être ceci ou cela. Elle ne doit pas être forcément ceci ou cela…sauf délirante et lucide*. In order to liberate himself as an artist, Desnos had to go beyond the imposed limits of conventional forms. Desnos invented a nighttime world, a shadowy world of retinal eclipse, where liminal points converge. His nighttime world is a baroque space of solitude; it is a populous solitude that makes possible an *ouverture* to encounter. "Espaces du sommeil" (from Corps et biens) describes a convergence of liminal states "in-between" waking and dreaming: *Dans la nuit il y a les étoiles et le mouvement ténébreux de la mer, des fleuves, des forêts, des villes, des herbes, des poumons de millions et millions d'êtres.*

In "Le fard des Argonautes" (from Corps et biens), the realms of the real and the virtual interpenetrate. The text's subject is artifice, as the word *fard* (make-up) suggests in the title. Seeing is no longer believing. The Argonauts navigate in a labyrinthine sea of illusion ["Une à une, agonie harmonieuse et multiple,/ Les vagues sont venues mourir contre la proue,"]. The sea mirrors the scintillating sky "semé de lys lunaires." The sea and sky mirror the folds of the Golden Fleece, the sought-after object in the classical myth of Jason and the Argonauts. The poem displaces the classical topography of the quest. Comprised of resonances and inflections, the space of the text is paradoxical. It is the space of embodied dreams, as in the line: "Car nous incarnerons nos rêves mirifiques." The fleece cannot be perceived by conventional sight because it disappears at the horizon, recalling the frustrated vanishing point perspective of the Bride disrobing in the *Large Glass*. Desnos's fleece is a mental image that disrupts traditional viewpoints; like vision itself, it is multidimensional. Desnos maps out a topography of interconnected

clusters that create a networked consciousness, the "nef Argo." The human and the mechanical interact when the consciousness of the passengers encounters the dynamic force of the ship. Humans do not become machines; the human and the machine enter into a *rendez-vous* where there is no vector of linearity demarcating one from the other. (This idea will be discussed in Chapter Four with respect to the feminist ideas of Donna Haraway vis à vis the cyborg.)

Argo is the name of the ship in the classical myth; according to the classical version the ship was built from an enchanted wood that gave it a voice. Having no sails or rudder to guide it, the "nef Argo" is the idea of adventure itself that gives itself over to the forces of chance, dream and illusion. Before it is an enclosed habitat the ship is a means of exploration like Rimbaud's "Bateau ivre." As Roland Barthes stated in his comparison of Jules Verne and Rimbaud, the eye verbalized becomes a "voyager-eye" and the boat that says "I" is liberated from its concavity. Mankind can pass from the *Nautilus* to the "Bateau ivre" (Mythologies 92).

The title of the text "Le Fard des Argonautes" places the accent on artifice and not on the object of a quest (the golden fleece in classical mythology). Since the fleece could only deceive, the navigation seeks something new, not yet discovered, in the dark shadows. The expedition takes place without a "phare" or light; instead, as Dumas explains:

> En déplaçant le titre de la toison d'or aux Argonautes, le texte porte l'accent de l'objet de la conquête aux conquérants eux-mêmes: l'important c'est l'expédition elle-même, l'arrachement à l'acquis pour découvrir du nouveau, du fabuleux, bien que le résultat-toison qui ne peut que décevoir les espoirs placés en elle (21).

Dumas comments that to mask the Argonauts with make-up is to place them in different roles so that they may experience something new. The Desnosian texts of 1919 create a dynamic interactiveness between classical, baroque and symbolist forms in a manner that prefigures surrealist convergences. These texts are in search of Surrealism and other forms that have not yet emerged. They seek also a modern language that has not yet come into being. The Desnosian text, at the threshold of the surreal, exploited traditional forms and often achieved a burlesque effect, as Dumas points out, which had not yet evolved into surrealist irony or humor (29). Another text from this period "L'Ode à Coco*"* displays a similar burlesque tone. In "L'Ode à Coco" one finds an accumulation of images within the *chiaroscuro* merging of the sun and the night. What is ultimately significant is the fact that the adventure of the text takes place under closed eyelids ("sous l'écorce paupière"). Dumas emphasizes that from out of the Blackness form takes shape. She refers to this creative process as the "alchemy of the dreamer," which requires an act of faith in the moving space behind closed eyelids. This moving space is that of mirage but, on the positive side, it is also that of perpetual innovation (118).

Dumas's interpretation of the Desnosian texts from 1919 shows an affinity with Duchampian and Deleuzian notions, even if her analysis of texts from other periods may have more in common with Derrida's concept of the "trace" or algebraic writing that decenters heliocentrism. In fact, Dumas's "alchemy of the dreamer" is a kind of Empiricism despite the term alchemy. Her usage of the terms differs from that of Moffitt or Schwarz and relates more to the Duchampian idea of cast shadows or Deleuzian notions of the fold as limit. Certainly, the "alchemy of the dreamer" has nothing to do with the idea of an unconscious use of the black art. Desnosian surrealist texts are characterized by the their exploration of limits as a process of self-validation. Caws

identifies the culmination of this exploration in "Sirène-Anémone," a text from 1929 considered to be Desnos's farewell to Surrealism. She explains how the shipwreck intensifies under closed eyelids. The anemone of the night blooms "à l'ombre des paupières." La nuit naufrage/La nuit? Voici sonner les grelots! Carnaval/Ferme l'oeil!" Caws interprets the alchemy of the dreamer as a scientific experiment that tries to quantify sleep, as if accumulating and arranging so many night flasks filled with meteor showers, while, at the same time, pushing the ambiguities of the sleepy state to an extreme limit (108).

In 1920 Man Ray photographed Mina Loy in New York with her eyes shut. Loy's stance, captured by Man Ray, conveys the idea of a poetic act of faith. The photograph depicts Loy in profile with her eyes shut. Loy wears a darkroom thermometer as an earring; this earring-thermometer casts a shadow onto the skin of her neck and collarbone. The thermometer, an instrument of measurement, is transformed into an ornament for the body. The viewer makes a connection between the mercury of the instrument and the imagination of the dreaming adventurer. As in the texts of Desnos, a positive affirmation intensifies from behind Mina Loy's closed eyes and not from the gage's measurements of pressure or temperature. Loy's biographer Burke interprets the gage as a measurement of her depressed mood after the loss of her husband. A positive idea may be understood in a citation from Proust: the true dreamer is the one who sets out to verify something.

Man Ray's photograph provides a key to understanding the poetic works of Loy. In "Three Moments in Paris" Loy explores the blackness of the void. The title of the first part of the text—"Café du Néant*"*—implies that what follows will be an Ode to the Void. Loy's title sets up a spatial paradox as she locates the void in the everyday space of a

café. The spatiality of the imagery prevents the tone from falling into the burlesque as it does in Desnos's "Ode à Coco." Loy exploits the Baroque/Mallarméan concept of diagonal space in the first lines of the text: "Little tapers leaning lighted diagonally/stuck in coffin tables of the *Café du Néant*." The alliteration of the "l" establishes the letter as a monadic unit (with reference to the first letter of Loy's name as a paradigm). The accumulation of black "l's" juxtaposed with a white space in the middle contributes to the mental imagery of trees hanging over a river in a state of attentiveness to the life-giving element. The vertical space of the trees merges with the horizontal flow of the river in the diagonal of mental space. The last word of the line is the adverb "diagonally." Its double "l" repeats the double "l" in the first word of the line ("little"), thus expanding the monad as Loy achieves the idea of total circularity within the linearity of the poetic line. The adverb "diagonally" at the end of the line is at once the conclusion of the linear proposition and an open pivot towards the next line. The pivot word "diagonally" closes the repetition of the monadic space of the first line and it opens up a space for contradiction in the second line. The affirmation of life and light in the first line becomes transformed into death and darkness in the second line in which the tapers are described as "stuck" diagonally in coffin tables of the Café du Néant. Loy's play with the adverb recalls Mallarmé or rather a Mallarmé tempered by Duchamp. In reading the lines of Loy's text, the eye of the reader does not need to traverse the page diagonally as in reading "Un coup de dés"; the adverb "diagonally" reinforces the idea of mental spatiality rather than a physical one, as in Duchamp's play with the adverb "même" in the title of the *Large Glass*. The final lines of the stanza display a return to life through the idea of "leaning to the breath of baited bodies" and the image of "young poplars fringing the Loire river."

The second stanza of Loy's "Café du Néant" begins with the mention of pairs of eyes filled with love; these eyes double into the image of eyes filled with kohl. If eyes are a receptacle for light and love, they are equally (and equivocally) a space filled with darkness and artifice: "Eyes that are full of love/And eyes that are full of kohl." Kohl is exotic make-up for the eyes, usually associated with femininity. In Loy's text, the explorer of space will make use of artifice just as Desnos's Argonauts use make-up. Unlike the ornamented Argonauts, however, Loy's explorers are a pair of lovers who have both artifice and light at their disposal. The lovers possess the absolute *disponsibility*[18] or mental freedom required for a surrealist stance. In the next lines of the stanza the dark eyes project light across the plenitude of the enveloping space of a monad, "the fulsome ambiente" ("Projecting the light across the fulsome ambiente"). In the following line the pairs of eyes are described as "trailing an animal body behind them" and "telling a tale without words." The eyes are connected to but distinct from the animal's body whose language is devoid of meaning. Eroticism is located in the projecting force of the human gaze and not in the animal body that has no language.

The third stanza presents the idea of the young lovers hermetically sealed in black clothing; they are described as "buttoned up in black/To black cravat." The movement from black to black will then shift towards color in the following lines: "To the blue powder edge dusting the yellow throat/What color could have been your bodies/When last you put them away." The incertitude of the interrogation "What color could have been your bodies/When last you put them away" marks an opening up of the black/white dichotomy. The tone of the fourth stanza shifts from incertitude to the nostalgia of lost youth holding its mistress's pricked finger in the flame of the taper. The taper has become transformed into an indifferent symbol; it synthesizes life and death. The symbol of a

flame in the chamber of death becomes indifferent when the chamber is shown to be factitious. The factitious death chamber yields to the image in the final stanza of brandy cherries decomposing in "winking glasses." Loy makes an analogy between the decomposition of the fruit and the breaking down of the human flesh of spectators. The text ends with the image of one woman who has concentric light placed on her and who "Prophetically blossoms imperfect putrefaction." The paradox of blossoming in putrefaction takes Duchamp's "cinematic blossoming" of the Bride to a new level. A final blank space and a reference to cabs outside the door marks the ambiguous closure of the text with the idea of an outside, a vehicle of movement and a pivot point, the door.

*"*Virgin Plus Curtains Minus Dots*"* begins with the image of a dwelling place that contains a pure "virginal" inside. The first line of the text ("Houses hold virgins") takes its inspiration from a Mallarméan/Duchampian castle of purity. Several lines later white spaces appear after the words "Virgins" and "Stare" ("Virgins without dots/Stare beyond probability"). The white space in the first line is followed by the words "without dots," thus reinforcing the idea of a void. Loy draws a parallel between the virgin and white space. The virgin who has no dowry or "dot" may not blossom into a bride and fulfill her potential in society; the white space cannot be defined without black traces (or "dots" in the sense of marks on the page). The white space after "Stare" negates the idea of visibility, which, in turn, becomes negated by the words "beyond probability." The virgins without dots stare blindly into a space without logic. In the next stanza the virgins see men passing. Loy makes distinctions between "men's eyes" and "our eyes" (the distinction being heightened by the use of white space between the two references to eyes). The use of white space has the opposite effect found in the previous stanza because it increases the idea of distinction instead of reinforcing the idea of a void. Men's eyes

differ from women's because the eyes of the former look inward and those of the latter look outwards. Loy associates the baroque idea of looking outward with women: "Men's eyes look into things/Our eyes look out." Several lines later Loy writes: "We have been taught/Love is a god/White with soft wings." White corresponds to purity within the traditional categories of love, metaphysics, race and religion. The appearance of a white space after the word "white" (typed in black on the page) makes the word seem different from the white space of the page. Loy's strategy is to create a difference within the idea of whiteness that explodes the stereotyped idea. Loy creates difference within "same" to "same." The algebra of "plus and minus" in the title "Virgin Plus Curtains Minus Dots*"* is supplanted with a differential equation of a non-Cartesian system.

One may juxtapose "Virgin Plus Curtains Minus Dots*"* to "The Black Virginity;" in "The Black Virginity" Loy creates a paradox by fusing blackness and whiteness in the idea of a black virgin. In this text blackness may represent the conformity of "uniform segregation," the opposite of Deleuzian connectivity. The idea of "cloaking in black" leads to a "union in severity" that transforms humans into "Ebony statues training for immobility." Distinctions do not arise out of the void of blackness since women, men, babies, adolescents or priests all appear the same when cloaked in the homogeneity of black. No passage from "baby" to adult or from virgin to bride develops. There are no distinct zones as in Duchamp's *Large Glass*. The text ends with the image of an old man "eyeing a white muslin girl's school." When the idea of white appears, it is associated with subjugation to a dominant point of view. The bewildered "I" of the text concludes: "What nonsense/It is noon/And salvation's seedlings/Are headed off for the refectory." The clarity of noon yields only nonsense.

The 1917 “Songs to Joannes” have more positive imagery associated with new colors and the possibility of new forms taking shape. In VIII the “I” of the text supposes that “Behind God’s eyes/There might/Be other lights.” The “I” in VIII becomes a “we” in IX as the closed eye lids lift towards a colored cosmos of love: “When we lifted/Our eye-lids on love/A cosmos/Of coloured voices/And laughing honey.” This moment takes on a sexual connotation as the Void becomes associated with the “core of Nothing” and the “milk of the Moon” becomes infused with spermatozoa: “And spermatozoa/At the core of Nothing/In the milk of the Moon.” In X love is described as pink (rose). In XIII the speaking “I” cannot find words to describe the new forms and dimensions taking shape.

At the beginning of XXVIII the image of a white staircase ascending to infinity makes possible the perception of “Coloured conclusions” (the white space between “coloured” and “conclusions” opens up the idea of closure implied in the idea of conclusion). The newly-forged colors become “smelt” into a “synthetic” whiteness. The idea of white heat as a transforming power engenders the erotic energy of the text. The whiteness of an emerging body takes on the connotation of female sexual pleasure with the idea of being “burnt white by the climacteric withdrawal of your sun.” After the climax of the white heat there is no longer anything to see but a white towel that wipes sweat off of a body. The idea of a white dawn indicates the arrival of a new day. At the end of the text the “unthinkable” white of smoke from “your” house represents a masculine idea that is different from the feminine white heat in the previous lines. The entire text is cited below:

> The steps go up for ever
>
> And they are white
>
> And the first step is the last white

Forever

Coloured conclusions

Smelt to synthetic

Whiteness

Of my

Emergence

And I am burnt quite white

In the climacteric

Withdrawal of your sun

And wills and words all white

Suffuse

Illimitable monotone

White where there is nothing to see

But a white towel

Wipes the cymphanous sweat

—Mist rise of living—

From your

Etiolate body

And the white dawn

Of your New Day

Shuts down on me

Unthinkable that white over there

— — — Is smoke from your house

Loy's ecstatic evocation of the lover's body is perhaps her attempt to answer Emily Dickinson's dare, "Dare you see a soul *at the White Heat*?" The visualization of the lover's body no longer seems possible with the concept of "White where there is nothing to see." The adjective "etiolate" indicates that the body of the beloved has withered and turned pale like a plant deprived of sunlight. The final stage of the encounter "at the white heat" yields white smoke, the product of a chemical reaction. As pure chemical substance, the "unthinkable" whiteness is that of an alien smoke ("that white over there") drifting out of "your" house. No longer does the whiteness weld the "I" and the "You" into an intersubjective unit or a complex perspective. The white dawn of "your" New Day "shuts down" on the eroticized object, "me." The end of the text does not continue the expansion of the concept of whiteness; it is as if a machine runs out of energy and suddenly stops. The separation between the "I" and "You" coupling is not an unbreachable scission at the end of this text. The use of the white space and the three dashes, in addition to the idea of "unthinkable," contribute to the sense of indeterminacy in the separation. The final lines open up and distance meaning at once. The central problem of the text shifts from the body to that of feedback and circulation of messages. The body relies on the transmission of Morse-code-like messages to assert its presence. The source of indeterminacy results from a distancing of meaning in the transmission of the transtextual but the positive effect of expansion is also part of transtextual communication. The reference to smoke may also have the positive connotation of rapid drift, which explains why it is unthinkable; it is the rapid drift of transoceanic feedback in the expanse between two communicating machines.

Two brief texts from "Songs to Joannes," VI and X, employ metaphors for the feedback and transmission of thoughts:

VI

I know the Wire-Puller intimately

And if it were not for the people

On whom you keep one eye

You could look straight at me

And Time would be set back

X

Shuttle-cock and battle-door

A little pink-love

And feathers are strewn

The Wire-Puller metaphor in VI and the shuttle-cock in X are concepts relating to structures of exchange, feedback and transmission. Just as a pulley or wire-puller lifts up a heavy object that weighs it down, the concept of telecommunication allows thought to float freely back and forth within the dynamic of global exchange. What weighs thoughts down is also the collective pulling of other people's ideas and structures of control. Loy conveys a desire to free the rational mind in order to be able to look someone straight in the eye: "And if it were not for the people/On whom you keep one eye/You could look straight at me/And Time would be set back." Time is a mental concept that may also be released from the "blinkers" of fixed perceptual control. The idea of the shuttle-cock is another conceptualization of the mind releasing thoughts to be transported elsewhere.

Scientific technology during the WWI era will be discussed further in Chapter Three in relation to Deleuzian concepts and Dada-Surrealism.

Although the problematic encounter of the Other "at the white heat" can be found in the poetics of female poets, namely Loy and Dickinson, as a form of resistance to masculine models, Edward Hirsch situates this paradox within a long line of Orphic poets, including Desnos.[19] Hirsch discusses the problem within the context of the disembodied voice of the poet who tries to bring back the absent body of the beloved. Desnos is perhaps most widely known for his Orphic poem in which he manages to make the world respond to him except for his beloved. The poet charms the sleeping world and stirs up natural disasters. He calls up typhoons, tidal waves and earthquakes. He calls up his beloved but she does not listen. The eroticized voice keeps on calling beyond the text's conclusion and takes on mythic proportions. Desnos's Orphic call extends language through space and time and places infinite desire between the lover and the beloved. The text extends itself in a continuous movement of "going beyond." The poet goes beyond the absence of the lover by calling up the unconscious forces of an alternate reality. It is not about the supremacy of the voice over vision but open-ended movement. The focus on the beloved as an object to which the poet returns ceaselessly provides a line of energy that keeps pulling in the movement of expansion. The structure of the text begins with the baroque tension of energized directionality and expansion but ultimately finds a surreal resolution in the exploration of states of mind. As discussed earlier, Desnos reflected about poetry later in his career and defined it as the movement of "going beyond" any ideology or aesthetic towards freedom.[20] Loy's use of white space between "coloured" and "conclusions" generates a creative process that points beyond the end of her text. Desnos's evocation of the void in the absence of the beloved and his transformation of

the destructive acts of nature into a creative force may be compared to Loy's use of blank or white space, as well as verbal images of blankness and whiteness, as a shaping force.

Leaving aside the already much debated problem of voice in the texts of Desnos, one must ask what the reader is made to see "at the white heat" and how that differs from what Loy makes her readers see. Some critics have explained the indeterminacy of the visual experience "at the white heat" in terms of Derridean deconstruction. Desnos's cycle of destruction/creation takes place within the matrix of the night that generates the indeterminacy of the act of self-creation. According to Janet Lyon in "Mina Loy's Pregnant Pauses," throughout "Love Songs" the night is the matrix that bears the weight of meaning. Lyon states that the "dialectical movement of negativity, perhaps most familiar on the level of interpretation as a species of *différance*, is the focal point of Loy's parallax vision—and, as we shall see, it is in part a function of female and maternal experience" (391). Lyon asserts that vision persists in Loy's text but it is a specifically feminine experience. Lyon argues that no positivistic discourse, such as futuristic discourse, can accommodate Loy's parallax vision. She concludes that Loy's project of critiquing avant-garde discourse may be understood as an exploration of *aporias* arising from the gendering of aesthetics (399).

The female matrix identified as a deconstructionist collapsing of cultural dichotomies is also considered by Lyon to be a rejection of Freudianism and futurist sexual imperatives concerning maternity and conception. Lyon departs from the "majoritarian" point of view among critics that Loy acknowledges an unbreachable ontological difference between the sexes in her early work. In Lyon's view, Loy reveals the instability of the divide that separates men from women. The modern artist should expose the shell game that offers biological and cultural differences as transcendental

Difference. Rachel Blau DuPlessis argues that the separation between the sexes in "Songs to Joannes*"* is Loy's self-induced exile from men because she could not separate emotion from sexual experience (thus violating the terms of Futurism). DuPlessis underscores how Loy reworks Sapphic fragments in her article "Seismic Orgasm." Loy's expression from XXIX of "Songs to Joannes*"* combines notions of danger and pleasure and betrays her anti-Freudian stance with its suggestion that sexual instinct releases an avalanche mechanism that unsettles the taboos of Victorian social purity. Nascent Surrealism was critical of Freud, especially of Freud's failure to recognize instinct and impulse as "the mechanism of an avalanche," ultimately a revolution (Chénieux-Gendron 180). Freud's various strategies for liberating subconscious impulses were, nonetheless, promulgated by many of the surrealists. Loy's quasi-autobiographical "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose," written in Paris between 1923-1925, was critical of Freud and the various discourses of instinct prevalent in European circles.

Loy's seismic orgasm exceeds the Orphic call of the beloved to a *rendez-vous* "at the white heat"; the convulsiveness of the surreal image surges out of the juxtaposition between scientific and poetic language. The title of "Songs to Joannes*"* implies that the language is lyrical like a song. What happens to the lyric voice of the Orphic poet who charms the beloved through singing? Loy's most direct reference to sexual fulfillment occurs in the scientific words "seismic" and "orgasm," which are not at all lyrical. The coupling of unlike domains, poetry and science, places Loy's text within Dada-Surrealism and, in this regard, it has an affinity with the works of Desnos and Duchamp. The connection between eroticism and Empiricism in Loy's texts is often affirmed ironically as in Desnos and Duchamp. In XXIX the ironic attitude towards mainstream nineteenth-century science (i.e. Darwinism) is evident in the idea of "unnatural selection"

breeding sons and daughters that "jibber at each other" in "cryptonyms." The text opens with a critique of evolution as the "fall foul of sexual equality:"

Evolution fall foul of

Sexual equality

Prettily miscalculate

Similitude

Unnatural selection

Breed such sons and daughters

As shall jibber at each other

Uninterpretable cryptonyms

Under the moon

Scientific knowledge "breeds" children who speak jibberish that cannot be interpreted "under the moon." Loy takes an ironic stance towards scientific language and proposes new laws: "Let meeting be the turning/To the antipodean/And Form a blurr/Anything." The new laws open up the door to unlimited possibilities where "anything" is possible. These laws may clash together, as in a simultaneous construction of multiple planes, from their "incognitoes" (which is to say, their anti-retinal representationalism). The last lines of the text call for differentiation as opposed to observation through a distorting lens. The phonetic play of alliteration with the letter "f" (as in feminine) reinforces the effect of variation: "For far further/Differentiation/Rather than watch/Own-self distortion/Wince in the alien ego."

Loy's use of the word "breed" forms an important part of her poetic strategies. As Elisabeth Frost has demonstrated, Loy "breeds" feminist politics from racist and

patriarchal rhetoric, grafting a feminist subjectivity onto a masculine tradition of "high art." Loy satirizes the high art of masculine epic in "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose*"* and employs the trope of mongrelization as a critique of her mixed linguistic, national and religious inheritance. In satirizing the form of epic satire itself, Loy resists the racism of eugenics that the genre promotes. Frost maintains that the racist creed of eugenics "is a powerful unnamed presence in Loy's manifesto, as it was as well in wider literary, political, and scientific circles" (154). The manifesto to which Frost alludes is called "Psycho-Democracy*"* (1921). The eugenics movement was founded in England by Sir Francis Galton and led to xenophobia in England and America at the turn of the century. It sparked xenophobia particularly in New York at the time Loy lived there during WWI. Eugencists advocated racial purity and viewed racial "hybrids" as "errors," to use to expression of Madison Grant (a eugenicist and racist prominent in New York in the 1910s and 1920s). Darwin's theory of evolution spawned eugenics by its proponents who envisioned an improved human "race" by better breeding. The complexity of Loy's interpretation of the term is derived from that fact that Fabian Socialists and the sexual liberation movement aligned their politics with what was considered to be a socially progressive notion of eugenics that advocated reproduction outside of the institution of marriage.[21]

Frost states that the concept of breeding in "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose*"* represents a perverse alchemy: the lead of the child is transformed into the gold of the father's culture (174). The child Ova (a quasi-autobiographical representation of Loy as a young girl) is expelled from the house and travels as an exile towards the "horizon of liberty" (172). "In the 'Noman's land' of the female speaker, and the female body, Ova is doomed to an impossible alchemy," Frost explains. Loy's Ova is an ethnic mongrel bred

from a Hungarian Jewish father and an English Protestant mother. Ova inherits a masculine intellect in a female body which characterizes her eugenical history as an ethnic mongrel and hybrid of male and female traits. Loy's writing is full of excess, polysemy and overdetermined meanings. Frost recognizes that Loy's idiosyncratic doctrine does not accept mainstream scientific categories and her "ironic use of tropes of eugenics struggle ultimately against cultural and biological determinism" (155).

In "Lunar Baedeker" the idea of dust breeding recalls Duchamp. The reference to cyclones of "ecstatic dust," as seen in the following line, may be compared to the irony inherent in Duchamp's breeding dust on the *Large Glass*: "Cyclones/of ecstatic dust/and ashes whirl/crusaders/from hallucinatory citadels/of shattered glass/into evacuate craters." The presence of crusaders in citadels engenders a history of eugenics that is caught up in the whirl of ecstatic dust breeding. As part of the hazardous path of the cyclone, the floating dust resists the teleology of biological determinism. The hallucinatory structures may be penetrated through the transparency made possible by the shattered glass. The ironic trope of dust breeding enables the deceptiveness of dominant cultural forms to be penetrated.

Loy's materialist critique of race and social inequities is evident in her texts "The Widow's Jazz*"* and "Nancy Cunard." Scientific language is merged with poetic imagery in the first line of "The Widow's Jazz*"* where "white flesh quakes to the negro soul." Cunard advocated racial equality and Loy's homage to her transforms her into a conjurer of "long-vanquished dragons." Loy associates the concept of "drifting hands" and "exotic snow" with an opening up of boundaries and a distancing of meaning that spreads "silver silence." Cunard is a nomad drifting between cultures and multiple viewpoints. Cunard's voice tears open a pure lily to release a carnival "dew" loaded inside: "Your chiffon

voice/tears with soft mystery/a lily loaded with a sucrose dew/of vigil carnival. . . .” Desnos wrote a brief tribute to Cunard on a napkin in a restaurant, which was never published but is noted in Michel Murat’s Robert Desnos:

> Nancy Cunard aimée de maintes tribus nègres
>
> En suçant lentement une asperge soupire :
>
> "ah! j'expire!”
>
> *moralité*
>
> que c'est bon le vît nègre[22]

Desnos portrays Cunard, loved by many “negro tribes,” as sucking an asparagus that will cause her to release “ah! I expire!” and then the word “morality.” The ironic distortion of the last line transforms the “negro life” into “being seen as a negro” by a play on the word “life” and “seen” (vie/vît) in French: “que c’est bon le *vît* nègre” (emphasis added). The echo of *Eros, c’est la vie* can be discerned, as well as a play on the phallus through the presence and absence of the circumflex in “vie” and “vît.”

In a text dedicated to Gertrude Stein Loy presents Stein as the Curie “of the laboratory” who extracts “a radium of the word” from the crushed “tonnage” of consciousness “congealed to phrases.” The pulley and shuttle-cock metaphor used in other texts as metaphors for a release of freed thoughts have been reconceptualized in this text as the scientific extraction of radioactive energy in a laboratory. Words have been released from the crushing weight of meanings attributed to them by the collective consciousness of others. Loy met Stein in Paris and became acquainted with her ideas about American Pragmatism that first developed while listening to William James lecture at Harvard University and then became influenced by European forms of automatism. From James she learned to actively seek knowledge instead of accepting it as readymade.

John Diggins, who has written much on the relationship between James and Stein, discusses the pragmatist stance whereby an idea becomes valid or is *made* valid through the process of its own validation (hence the title of Stein's The Making of Americans). Duchamp informed Cabanne that he thought his artistic life resembled that of Stein and many critics believe that he chose the name Rrose for his feminine identity out of admiration for Stein's "A rose is a rose is a rose." Mapping the connections between Loy, Duchamp and Desnos involves moving from one rose to another (from the Roman de la Rose to the Tudor Rose to Rrose Sélavy to the rose of iron to the rose of marble). Making connections between objects defines much postmodern poetry and prose where often inanimate materials become the motivation for writing a text. For instance, Primo Levi's novel The Periodic Table of Elements exemplifies how objects (in this case chemical elements) motivate connections in the production of a text that has no traditional narrative structure. Levi's text explores the relation between the making of a human history and the process of validation in conducting chemical experiments. Like Duchamp, Levi is fascinated by the pliancy of glass, a manmade substance, that can be pulled into very thin filaments (Levi's description of the "unimaginably thin" filaments of glass provides a chemist's insight into Duchamp's notion of the *inframince*).[23]

The development of x-rays intrigued Loy as it did many artists of her time. The significance of x-rays in the theories of Duchamp has been thoroughly addressed by Henderson in Duchamp in Context. Evidence suggests that Loy wrote the novel Insel at the end of her stay in Paris in the mid-1930s about the German surrealist painter Richard Oelze as a critique of the entire movement of Surrealism. The significance of x-ray technology for the surrealists is highlighted in Loy's description of the painter as a fluoroscope, an instrument used to observe x-ray shadows cast by objects:

> Any student of ancient occultism would recognize them for elementals. Imbecilic, vampiric–here and there an obsessive absence of a mouth implied an inconceivable constipation. A conspicuous liver, so personal he might have served as his own fluoroscope, clear as a pale coral was painted as only the Master painted. He had no need to portray. His pictures grew, out of him, seeding through the inter–atomic spaces in his digital substance to urge tenacious roots into a plane surface. (103)

Another passage that describes Insel as an electrified organism constituted by "vibratory flux" insists that an instrument more delicate than the eye is required to observe the infrared or invisible rays he gives off:

> In exact description–he did not consistently appear to the naked eye, as a bonfire, in a normal degree of comparison to the morning murk sifting through the glassed environment. As a thread in the general mass, he retained his depth of tone. But as if his astounding vibratory flux required a more delicate instrument than the eye for registration. Some infrared or there invisible ray he gave off, was immediately transferred on one's neural current to some dark room in the brain for instantaneous development in all its brilliancy. So one saw him as a gray man and an electrified organism at one and the same time—. (96)

Because Insel does not consistently "appear to the naked eye," a transfer of "neural current" to a "dark room in the brain" must receive the vibrations for instantaneous development.

Loy's quasi-autobiographical protagonist endeavors to heal the sickly Insel, who is a fictionalized version of Oelze. Critics emphasize that Oelze was a drug addict instead

of claiming him to be mentally ill. In any case, his works of art depict tormented visions of distorted shapes and forms.[24] It is not without significance that he produced works of art in various mediums for more than forty years, as, for example: *Baumstudie* (1927; pencil), *Farnlandschaft* (1935; gouache), *Landschaft Worpswede* (1949; pastel), *La Reine des Roses* (1949; oil) and *Anthropomorphe Landschaft* (1954; oil). From 1921 to 1925 he was a Bauhaus student and he lived, subsequently, in France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Loy's graphic descriptions of the diseased Insel are replete with scientific terminology only serving to obscure the details of his drug addiction. The healing of Insel is considered by some to be a Christian Scientist's response to Freud. Richard Cook has spun a whole article around the question of Christian Science and Loy based on the use of terms such as "infinitarian" and "macro-cosmic presence" in her writing. Mary Baker Eddy's doctrine holds that the notion of healing the mind of error attests to the empirically scientific element of religion. In "Notes on Religion" Loy confronts the boundlessness of the human mind; she used the term "infinitarian" in a short piece of fiction called "Street Sister." Cook argues that some ideas in Christian Science were radical to the point of challenging both patriarchal religious ideas as well as empiricist science; on the other hand, Eddy's religion promoted a conservative feminine morality that denied the benefits of sex (461). He explains that the limits to affinities between Loy and Christian Science are evidenced in "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose" where a physically–embodied Christ figure stands in opposition to conservative ideas about the repulsive nature of flesh (462). The idea of communing with the "limitless presence of space" in this text may have been informed by Christian Science. Ultimately, Loy's knowledge of Christian Science may work its way into her poetic texts but the affinities

with Eddy's definition of the movement only go so far. Loy's positive affirmation of mind is materialist and contradicts the Christian Science doctrine (464).

Loy continued developing her painting beyond the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites, Beardsley, and Post-Impressionism. She made portraits (mostly of drawing and gouache) of prominent people ranging from Brancusi, Freud, Joyce, Man Ray, Jules Pascin, Stephen Haweis to Marianne Moore. Her rediscovery of painting and collage developed into a Surrealist style and she exhibited some of her work in the gallery of her son-in-law Julien Levy in the early 1930s. One such collage is entitled *Surreal Scene*. Christine Temin of the *Boston Globe* (26 January 2005) recently described the collage in this way:

> Her "Surreal Scene" is a collage on a peach background that lends the work a happier air than most examples of Surrealism have. Loy's cheery group of visual non sequiturs includes people missing parts of their anatomy, a chair that looks like a buxom female, a harp that comes with its own hands, and a female protagonist, larger than the other figures. She's clothed with garlands of lilies, sheaves of wheat, and a chalice filled with what could be interpreted, in the context of these other religious symbols, as Communion wine.

Loy's *Surreal Scene* is a panoramic map of the multiple facets of Surrealism itself. It consists of various surreal objects brought together. There is a bicycle wheel with a mermaid holding a jar on top, as well as sea creatures, sand falling through an hour glass, a fountain of stars, and an "automatic" harp "that plays itself" (recalling Desnos's desire for "books that read themselves"). The largest figure of Loy's composition is a female

nude whose internal organs appear to be visible through a kind of x-ray optic. However, the organs appear to be displaced outside the figure; other objects (lilies, shafts of wheat and a communion cup) have apparently replaced them inside the woman's body. Loy's female nude is a body without organs like Duchamp's Bride in the *Large Glass*. However, in Loy's nude the organs have been displaced and not transformed into another shape or substance. Surrealists became obsessed with tissues and internal organs of the body so that they could explore the infinite terrain of both body and mind.

In the 1920s Loy had been making objects such as sconces and lamps in the shapes of stars and moons (for example, the 1927 *Globe célèste*). Her fascination with celestial bodies evident in the lamps and objects from the 1920s, in addition to her poetry from Lunar Baedeker, progressed into a surrealist style that many thought of as infused with Christian Science—despite the materialism that Cook identifies in her work. It is important to emphasize that the blue background and the ethereal quality of her paintings exhibited in the Julien Levy gallery in the 1930s drew the attention of Joseph Cornell who practiced Christian Science. He admired paintings like *Moons I* (c. 1932) and *Moons II*. Her canvasses left an impression on his mind and their eventual friendship grew out of a "feeling of familiarity in strange places" (Burke 405). When Cornell looked out at the moon before his daily lessons he thought of Loy, as he once told her (Burke 405). Cornell was intrigued by Loy's "Lunar Baedeker" because the reference to the travel guide appealed to him as a cultural relic from Europe. He began to collect boxes of relics and made one for Loy, which she gave to Oelze on a whim, that contained the head of a sleeping girl, a silver ball and one of "witch's blue" (Burke 404). (This incident appears thinly disguised in her novel Insel.) He made a box with a photograph that Man Ray had taken of her. Cornell and Loy admired sky maps covered with astrological signs and they

both thought in terms of "constellations of idea" and "networks of mutually illuminating forms and phrases" (Burke 405). The web of collections materialized in the form of boxes for Cornell. Even as late as 1950 Cornell made boxes that contained objects that functioned as miniature lighthouses to guide celestial navigation (in the absence of a lunar Baedeker guidebook). For example, a map of a starry sky appears in one box entitled *Hôtel de l'Etoile* and another entitled *Celestial Navigation, Box Construction with Glasses*. Burke views Cornell's influence on her as a form of "white magic" serving as a spiritual antidote to Surrealism's "black magic" (405). Cornell's assemblages influenced Loy well into the 1950s but her focus shifted from celestial collages (promoted by Levy in the 1930s) to assemblages of items collected from the trash that had the humanitarian goal of caring for the downtrodden and homeless (such as her 1950 *Househunting* or *Bums Praying*, a work admired by Duchamp).

Cornell's work had all the more of an impact on Loy because it took inspiration from Duchamp. Her friendship with the two men would have been easy to maintain since they appreciated each other's work. In my opinion, neither Cook nor Burke emphasize enough the idea of the Mallarméan/Duchampian "constellation" as a means to grasp at possible truth through the "piecing together" of partial truths (in the absence of an Absolute). I conclude, thus, that Cornell and Loy (like Mallarmé and Duchamp) should be viewed as materialists but not wholly skeptical. Their works redefine the relation between an object and its environment; in this way, the artist may overcome relativism by looking at an object from a particular viewpoint in order to connect it to the world and even the entire universe. Journal entries from Cornell's personal diary indicate that Duchamp produced work for Cornell and, in turn, Cornell took "much needed inspiration" from Duchamp.[25] Like Duchamp, Cornell had an eye for the way objects and

images fit together. Duchamp's *To Be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass),with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour* may explain why Cornell had been obsessed with a white piece of cake placed under a magnifying glass or had envisioned a fountain of sand.[26] Cornell's obsessions make one think of Desnos as well, particularly his fascination with a starfish floating in a sealed glass jar that he purchased at a second-hand store. Obsessions of this sort led Duchamp, Desnos and Cornell to experiment with cinematic images. Loy was still coming to terms with surrealist automatism during the 1930s long after Desnos bid farewell to the movement. Insel is Loy's continued exploration and critique of the first phase of Surrealism. The novel critiques what the surrealist state of mind is through her protagonist who is described as "too surrealistic for the surrealists" (125). Elizabeth Arnold in her Afterword of the novel suggests that the entire novel is structured after Breton's Nadja in order to satirize it. Insel offers a critique of Breton's figures of woman-as-muse in Nadja and surrealist automatism. For example, the narrator, upon discovering one day that she is "cleft in half," becomes frightened at her "bisectional automatism" (151). The reference is to Breton's image of a man cut in half by a window. In Arnold's opinion, Loy's narrator succeeds in shocking Insel into a new way of seeing, of noticing her for the first time. The novel's resolution does not reject Surrealism but succeeds in making a woman be "seen" by a surrealist. It is an extension of the surrealist literary concept that we are always reading for the first time; hence we may "learn to see" for the first time. (It is important to note that the opening of Rainer Maria Rilke's The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge contains the idea of "learning to see." Rilke frequented the literary circle of Natalie Barney, as did Loy, who may have been familiar with his ideas through Barney or Rilke himself. The character Insel in Loy's novel, however, expresses his debt to a different German literary figure—

Franz Kafka. Loy's protagonist accuses Insel of trying to turn his life into a parody of Kafka's.) Duchamp's *Large Glass* creates effects that intuit new ways of seeing the Bride. Loy's strategy is to try to turn the heads and open the eyes of the surrealist men who can no longer "see" the naked body of a woman. One thinks of the Magritte montage with the photographs of the surrealist men with their eyes closed, dreaming and looking inward instead of gazing at the female nude placed in the center of the group (*I Do Not See the [Woman] Hidden in the Forest*).[27] The woman is just as passive and self-absorbed as the men in Magritte's painting. Loy wrote Insel a few years after the photomontage appeared in the 1929 *La Révolution surréaliste* and understood it as a crisis in masculinity that, in turn, made her react to her own passivity.

Loy's protagonist struggles with adopting her own vantage point as she dismantles the dialectic relationship between activity and passivity inherent to "single" or "stereoscopic" vision. This strategy has an affinity with that of feminist Deleuzian scholar Branka Arsić in "Active Habits and Passive Events or Bartleby." Arsić takes up the Deleuzian critique of passivity in the thinking of Leibniz but she adds some fuel to her argument from Deleuze's Difference and Repetition (1994). In interpreting a key concept from this work, she writes: "To think passively does not mean only to try to escape 'a simple confrontation between opposing, contrary or contradictory propositions,' which is a 'long perversion' that 'begins with the dialectic itself, and attains its extreme form in Hegelianism'" (Patton and Protevi 136). She insists that it is not a matter of merely subverting the thinking that appropriates itself into the subject; instead, feminists should try to subvert the traps in which the thinking that wanted to escape this "long perversion" was caught. I support her view that such traps held together Leibnizian passive genesis. It was precisely Leibniz's invention of the "impersonal" force

of expression in the monad that envelops singularities within itself (constituting a "center" of expression that prevented the emergence of a *radically* impersonal field of a thought that thinks impersonally without appropriating itself. Therefore, the whole problem with Leibniz's thinking is the fact that this impersonal force is "inscribed" into each monad (Patton and Protevi 136). We can only conclude that passivity and activity are different degrees of activity of expressions. Also, the need to make a distinction between degree and kind pulls us back into Bergsonian thought. We return to the "toss of the dice" and Mallarméan thought that underlies the "passive synthesis" of Deleuzian nomadism. This connection between Deleuze, Bergson and Mallarmé can be discerned in the following observation made by Arsić:

> This other kind of passive synthesis that repeats the past as the difference of chance enables a different "reading" of the first kind: the repetition of the habit that is difference repeats itself as the repetition of chance. The repetition of the habit is the repetition of chance; habit is chance. The stationary being of a nomad is exposed to the chance of dice throws, of their *coups*, of the strikes of intensities that can blow them apart. (143)

We must investigate what kind of passivity is at stake in Deleuze's critique of Leibnizian passivity for Deleuze conceives of a concept of "passivity" beyond the distinction between activity and passivity. In Margins of Philosophy Derrida also identifies a paradoxical concept of passivity: "neither simply active nor simply passive," it is an operation "that cannot be conceived either as passion or as the action of a subject on an object, or on the basis of the categories of agent or patient" (9).

What makes passivity different in Nadja than in Insel? Ostensibly, the novels are both about protagonists named Nadja and Insel, respectively. Insel's personality is far

from that of Nadja (although she is regarded by some critics today to be a surrealist artist in he own right); it is not, however, a difference in the personality of the protagonists that makes Insel different from Nadja. I have ascertained that the difference between the two novels may be attributed to the way that the narrator fashions relations between Self and Other throughout the text. If the reader identifies the narrator of Nadja with Breton, the relation between Self and Other appears to be structured as a dialogue between Breton and Nadja. It soon becomes apparent that the Other is not Nadja; the Other emerges as the unconscious forces that the Self (i.e. Breton as the subject of enunciation) encounters by chance. Breton engages in a dialogue not with Nadja but with what the Self encounters by way of dreams and the marvelous. Because Breton must passively submit to these encounters, he exposes his dependency on the Other for self-legitimation. If he achieves a relation with himself, it is through passivity to chance encounters. In the end, the reader does not follow Breton through the phases of passivity, activity and then passivity again, as does Loy's reader.

Although Arnold does not mention it in her Afterword of Insel, the novel may be read as a critique of Duchampian concepts, as well. The narrator finds that Insel is not "elastic" enough to be topologically stretched. This gives the narrator a "creepy impression of ultimate tension, of a cerebral elastic taut for the snap" (95). Insel can only illuminate himself by casting his own shadow: "Always his self-illumination cast its own shadow. In shining he dragged an individual darkness into the world" (87) The cast shadows do not open up new dimensions for Insel as they do for Duchamp. The following passage constructs an abstract chess game whose sexualized images are reminiscent of Duchamp's:

> Where in the bottom of slumber an immobile oncome of elementals formed of a submarine snow, and some aflicker, like drowned diamonds blew out their rudimentary bellies–almost protruded foetal arms over all an aimless baton of inaudible orchestra–a colorless water-plant growing the stumpy battlements of a castle in a game of chess waved in an out of perceptibility its vaguely phallic reminder—. (61-62)

The above passage depicts a dream-like state in which submerged diamonds flicker amidst a "submarine snow." This part of the passage alludes to Breton's style, which the narrator characterizes as an "oncome of elementals." Further in the novel the narrator will develop an aesthetic that favors Duchamp over Breton. The narrator presents Loy's preferences in a statement about the "subliminal thin" (that alludes to Duchamp's inframince) as opposed to "elementals": "I'm not so fond of elementals–I find that strata in the subliminal thin—" (125). A splitting of viewpoint occurs between the narrator and Insel that recalls the different perspectives of the *Large Glass*. The feminine perspective perceives objects more clearly when the figure spills out into the unknown, whereas the male perspective seeks clarity in a narrowing of focus: "The less he seemed to be "there," the more he spilled into the unknown, the more clearly I apprehended him, whereas Insel himself seemed ever to be seeking a reduction of focus through which to penetrate into the real world" (56).

Other passages take inspiration from a Desnosian sense of the marvelous, as, for example, when the narrator speaks of herself and Insel as "insorcellated flotsam–never having left any land–never to arrive at any shore–static in an unsuspected magnitude of being alive in the "light of the eye" dilated to an all enclosing halo of unanalyzable insight, where wonder is its own revelation" (62). The floating flotsam may be compared

to the "bodies and goods" in a state of suspension after a shipwreck. The state of suspension in Loy's text resembles a Desnosian overture to a night of marvelous adventure. Loy's narrator interrogates the role of telepathy (cerebral vibrations) in this passage, bringing to mind Desnos's telepathic communication with Duchamp as Rrose: "Had he really intended as much in his challenge–or did this Polar region of a mania–these maps of Himalayan anthills with their scabs of pure vegetation embossed upon the backdrop of his clothes, depend for their pictorial clarity on some accord between his cerebral vibrations and mine?" (111). Duchamp's idea that an artist functions as a *medium*, a concept taken up by Desnos, is explored by Loy's narrator as she contemplates how Insel makes use of his body: "He might be using this body—with its interwoven identity of the living remains of a dead man and the dead remains of a man once alive—as a medium, from a distance to which his fluctuant spirit had been temporarily released" (99).

The idea of an artist functioning as a medium pervades Loy's poetic texts. The most obvious instance of it is her tapping into to the unconscious of the absent Colossus. Colossus is a fictional creation that functions in her poetic texts the same way that Rrose functions for both Duchamp and Desnos. The speaker in Loy's "The Widow's Jazz" channels the presence of "Cravan/the colossal absentee/the substitute dark." The idea of the "drifts of spring/Of our forebear's excrement" and the "subconscious archives" in her text "O Hell" describe a latent content that the mediumistic artist must clear away. The mediumistic body of the artist is "a covered entrance to infinity" but it is "choked with the tatters of tradition." The function of the artist is to communicate an intelligible content to the reader.

Loy transforms Insel by stretching his body over time, from one war to the next: "Insel, the animate cadaver, stretched with the pliancy of decay from the last war into the next—while walls of solid murder with soldiers for bricks came marching in on a living aspiration—to enclose it—waste it—it must not happen again" (69). Insel's body is a virtual one that allows information to be transmitted. His body does not move like a rushing locomotive, an airplane or a car; the clamor of collective passion is released through his body. The waste of disintegrating cultures, cultures that were once precisely localized, creates a "pliancy" through which new forms of connection can be constructed. Virtual constructions during WWI and the interwar era will be the main focus of the next chapter.

Notes

[1] Maurice Blanchot pursues the Mallarméan idea of the *livre irréalisable* with respect to the question of neutrality, thought and writing in The Writing of the Disaster (as well as other texts like The Space of Literature, The Demand of Writing, and The Infinite Conversation).

[2] Catherine Dale & Gregory Adamson interviewed Michel Serres, who did a lengthy study of Leibniz, and questioned him about the idea of the machine and Chinese symbolism: "CDGA: Leibniz had an intuitive idea of what constituted mechanism. In the Monadology he describes the body not as a machine but as the machine of machines where each part is itself a machine. It's interesting to read Leibniz beside someone like Alan Turing and related discussions on artificial intelligence. It is as if Leibniz ha[d] articulated exactly that which cannot be thought within the confines of artificial intelligence. MS: Did you know that Leibniz was in correspondence with Jesuit priests in Beijing, China? The Jesuits wrote to Leibniz about ancient Chinese symbolism. And when Leibniz was translating this ancient language he discovered binary arithmetic. After that, this became the language of the machine. But also, because the definition of life in Leibniz is the implication of an infinity of machines, is the involvement and implication of an infinity of machines, it is extremely apposite to contemporary discussions concerning evolution and cybernetics." See the website <thepander.co.nz/culture>.

[3]According to Garber, the multivalent identity of Rrose occupies the position of a "third sex" that defies all categorization because transvestism disrupts the crisis of category itself, not just the category crisis of male and female (17).

[4] Leonard Lawlor, "The Beginnings of Thought," 76-77.

[5] In The Surrealist Look (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999) Caws argues that Desnos "presents an image that *faces both ways*, crossing the boundaries of expectations in both public and private" (311).

[6] No. 54, October 5-11, 1966, pp. 5-7.

[7] Octavio Paz, "The Castle of Purity" in Marcel Duchamp Appearance Stripped Bare (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1978) 78.

[8] Quoted in Lawrence D. Steefel, Jr., "Marcel Duchamp and the Machine." In Marcel Duchamp, eds. Anne d'Harnoncourt and Kynaston McShine (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1989).

[9] "The Creative Act," in The Writings of Marcel Duchamp 138.

[10] The term kinesthetic surprise is used by Nicolas Calas in "Cheat to Cheat" 54.

[11] Rhonda Roland Shearer and Robert Slawinski, "Examining Evidence: Did Duchamp Simply Use a Photograph of "tossed cubes" to create his 1925 Chess Poster?" (*Tout-Fait. The Marcel Duchamp Studies Online Journal* Vol 2 Issue 4 January 2002).

[12] Quoted in Paul Virilio's, "A Topographical Amnesia" 121.

[13] Alain Badiou in Deleuze "La clameur de l'Etre" explains the logic of the multiple in Deleuze as a Platonism of the virtual. Badiou claims that the virtual occupies a strategic position in Deleuze's thought and this separates his thought from what Badiou refers to as Platonism of the multiple. Badiou contrasts himself to Deleuze because he adheres to a Platonism of the multiple: "Dans cette voie, le virtuel occupe chez Deleuze une position stratégique. C'est aussi le concept qui me sépare de lui le plus abruptement. Je dirais volontiers que, si je tente de fonder un platonisme du multiple, Deleuze s'est attaché à un platonisme du virtuel. Il retient de Platon la souveraineté univoque de l'Un, mais sacrifie que l'Idée soit toujours actuelle. Pour lui, l'Idée est la totalité virtuelle, l'Un est le réservoir infini des productions dissemblables. *A contrario*, je maintiens que les formes du multiples sont, comme les Idées, toujours actuelles, que le virtuel n'existe pas, mais je sacrifie l'Un (69). Badiou identifies both of their ways of thinking as classicist, with the exception that they are contrasted modes of classicism.

[14] Rajchman argues that the problem was to overcome a basic difficulty Kant had introduced into philosophy: that the transcendental conditions of thought or the determination of the "I think" were in fact always modeled on the "empirical doubling they were supposed to be founded on." The solution to such "transcendental empirical doubling" was to invent an experimentalism which, instead of asking for conditions of possible experience, would look for conditions under which something new, as yet unthought, arises. A positive affirmation is contained in the following question: "Is it not the noise of progress, contained within the spiral of uncertain dualism?"(The Deleuze Connections 16-17).

[15] Badiou explains: "Il ne faut surtout pas confondre l'intuition de Deleuze avec l'intuition des classiques, et singulièrement avec l'intuition au sens de Descartes (encore un adversaire, celui-là. Tout comme Platon et Hegel, encore un génial tenant de la "longue erreur," un partisan des catégories et un ennemi de la synthèse disjunctive). Pour Descartes, l'intuition est saisie immédiate d'une idée claire et distincte, elle procède instantanément, guidé par une éclaircie mentale localisée, à l'isolement de l'idée, sans adhérence à quelque fond obscure que ce soit. Elle est une atome de pensée, quand on est certain "*uno intuito*," d'un seul coup d'oeil. Ce genre d'intuition repose sur une théorie de la lumière naturelle, dont le principe est qu'une idée est d'autant plus distincte qu'elle est claire…" (55).

[16] Badiou's distinction from Deleuze rests in this point: "Il retient de Platon la souveraineté univoque de l'Un, mais sacrifie que l'Idée soit toujours actuelle. Pour lui, l'Idée est la totalité virtuelle, l'Un est le reservoir infini des production dissemblables. *A contrario*, je maintiens que les formes du multiples sont, comme les Idées, toujours actuelles, que le virtuel n'existe pas, mais je sacrifie l'Un. Il en résulte que, pour moi, le fondement virtuel de Deleuze reste une transcendence, tandis que, pour lui, c'est ma logique du multiple, qui n'étant pas originairement rapportée à l'acte de l'Un échoue à maintenir la pensée dans l'immanence" (69).

[17] Badiou discusses the relevance of the "outside topologized" to Foucault's thought: "Génial théoricien de l'extériorité, Foucault, ascétiquement, dans un formidable labeur archiviste, a installé chaque forme-savoir dans le dehors topologisé, ce qui veut dire qu'il a forcé (ce qui est la même chose que: il a été forcé par) chaque forme – les énoncés et les visibilitiés, la parole et la vue – à atteindre sa propre limite qui la sépare de l'autre, un visible qui ne peut être que vu, un énonçable qui ne peut être que parlé. Mais la topologie du dehors est telle, ainsi construite, que "la limite propre qui sépare chacune, c'est aussi la limite commune qui les rapporte l'une à l'autre, et qui aurait deux faces dissymétriques, parole aveugle et vision muette" (131).

[18] According to Caws, "All surrealist thought is based on the assumption of an absolute mental freedom or *disponibilité*: the exaltation of the possible is forever inseparable from the marvelous. The present era of mobility and metamorphosis is seen as succeeding the past epochs of fixed outline and the stasis of categories (Voice 31-32).

[19] See "At the White Heat" in Edward Hirsch's How to Read a Poem (New York: Harcourt, 1999).

[20] Robert Desnos, "Réflexions sur la poésie (1944)." Reprint. Destinée arbitraire, ed. Marie-Claire Dumas (Paris: Gallimard, 1975) 236-39.

[21] Daniel Kevles, In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity (New York: Knopf, 1985).

[22] Michel Murat, Robert Desnos, les grands jours du poète, (Paris: José Corti, 1988) 194.

[23] Primo Levi, The Periodic Table of Elements (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1984) 25.

[24] One of Oelze's most famous paintings from the mid-1930s appears on the cover of Bantam's From the Earth to the Moon (by Jules Verne). Oelze's "Expectation" depicts a group of people in suits and hats staring at an otherworldly landscape.

[25] See the selected diaries, letters and files of Cornell in Mary Ann Caws's Joseph Cornell's Theater of the Mind (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000). On March 26, 1942 Cornell wrote: "After rainy and dampest day in cellar I ever remember. Kept working through, straightened things out some, etc. Marcel Duchamp answered the telephone at Peggy Guggenheim Ernst's during a cloudburst. It was at once one of the most delightful and strangest experiences I ever had. He is coming out Friday which should prove a much needed inspiration to get some of the objects finished." On December 21, 1942 the following journal entry appears: "Time of exhibition with Duchamp and Vail at Art of This Century. Duchamp then living in pent-house of Kiesler's. Christian Science Lesson Sermon—furnace trouble—very cold. At Duchamp's 11:00-1:00. Gave me "ready made" done on spot. A glue carton 'gimme strength.' Room a mess with debris but pleasant looking out over East from the elevation." In his June 21, 1944 letter to Marianne Moore Cornell mentions a "little album-chest that will exhale a 'romantic vapor,' in the words of Marcel Duchamp, spoken as an unconscious contribution to it." Cornell's deep personal attachment to Duchamp is evident in his journal entry from February 11 to 14, 1969 in which he writes about a "desire to attempt the Duchamp dream — in wake of his passing 1968."

[26] A radio broadcast of All Things Considered (from November 26, 2003) discussed these seemingly nonsensical obsessions of Cornell.

[27] For a discussion of the similarities and differences between Duchamp's *Large Glass* and Magritte's *je ne vois pa la cachée dans la forêt* montage, see pp. 174-77 of Surrealism desire unbound (London: Tate Publishing, 2001).

CHAPTER THREE
TECHNIQUE AS ENIGMA: THE ENTANGLEMENTS OF ART, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter will situate the discussions begun in the two previous chapters more specifically within the historical context of World War I scientific and technological developments. Paul Virilio's thesis in Esthétique de la disparition states that World War I led to a progressive disintegration of faith in perception. Vision became "accidental" during World War I and the logistics of perception delocalized geometric optics. After the trauma of the war, people could no longer believe their eyes. From the development of Marey's chronophotography on, new technologies succeeded in making visible the "never seen" of an unstable world without memory. I accept Virilio's assertion that the viewing experience became "accidental," and, for the most part, it accords with Deleuze's study of "event" and "disappearance" in The Fold, Bergsonism and Cinema 1. In relating the idea of artificial manipulation of the viewing experience to Duchamp, and eventually to Desnos and Loy, we will be able to ascertain how surrealist effects succeed in creating an "altered reality" through distortions and "accidents." We will consider in what ways prosthesis may involve "active" and "passive" vision or transcend the distinction between the two terms. For Virilio and Deleuze, the creation of a "virtual" (or "artificially manipulated") image is a form of "accident." New technologies may succeed in making virtual reality more powerful than "actuality"; when this happens, an accident results. Losing our sense of bearing or frames of reference in a "virtual accident" produces effects of disorientation or *de-realization* in our minds.[1] Virtual reality leads to de-realization but on the scale of the whole world and not only on an individual scale, as in the case of madness. Virtual reality may substitute one reality for another but we may

negotiate “in-between” spaces that prevent the virtual from becoming indistinguishable from the actual.

Technological inventions by Joseph Plateau and Etienne-Jules Marey led to the discovery of virtual reality as an artificial manipulation of the viewing experience. Plateau’s research into the physiological effects of viewing apparatuses predates cinematography in its endeavor to produce a corporeal experience through the artificial manipulation of perception. Duchamp’s experiments sought a similar “pre-cinematic” effect of “intimate presence” through the manipulations of the Bachelor Machine in the *Large Glass*. (Curator and free-lance writer Edwin Carels points out that the Japanese translation of “virtual reality” is “intimate presence.”[2]) Marey’s invention of the chronophotograph in 1888 progressed out of earlier experiments with an apparatus called the *fusil photographique* that had been constructed by using a shotgun. The camera made twelve images on a rotating or octagonal glass disk in three seconds. The viewer did not look at the actual images but at their apparitions projected onto a mirror with a phantasmoscope or “phenakistiscope,” as its inventor (Plateau) named it. Virilio learned the following lesson from Marey: the acceleration of bodies and the transience of movement, in order to be perceived by the common eye, require a “piloting of sight” that is disengaged from mnemonic traces (58). This “piloting of sight” is obtained through the artificial manipulation of the viewing experience, which displaces us from an objective understanding of the world as horizon. We are no more than passengers in transit. The “human” becomes disqualified through “automatism” or instrumental conditioning. We lose *persistence* as a characteristic of the aesthetic of *appearance*. For Virilio, persistence becomes retinal; it becomes the persistence of the mental image. In his thesis about the

aesthetic of disappearance he defines at least three disappearances— that of subjectivity, objectivity, and history.

I am particularly interested in how Virilio's thesis in Esthétique de la disparition presents the downside of "passive vision" through artificial manipulation. He maintains that with the development of *teletopology* the eye lost its ability to focus. The eye became rigid and dependent on an artificial lens. The camera lens, which could be held at arm's length, made it possible for a person to abandon focusing altogether. The naked eye, demobilized, would become indifferent to objects surrounding it. Teletopological technology, such as that employed in the lenses of sighting instruments during World War I, led to *topographical amnesia*. Along with the increased use of instantaneous transmission and audiovisual prostheses comes a decline in retention and recall. When what we see is no longer within reach, mnemonic consolidation collapses. Not being able to grasp what lies ahead destroys the "map of the I can." Despite the "machinery of transfer," we get no closer to the productive unconscious of sight, and, in Virilio's opinion, we attain only its "unconsciousness" ("Topographical" 113). He remarks also that the surrealists once dreamed of attaining a productive unconscious of sight in relation to photography and cinema. Furthermore, he adds his opinion that Futurism did not last because it came too close to exposing the interconnection between totalitarianism and communication technologies. Futurism and Cubism were pre-emptively aborted through a "eugenics of sight" that doomed "image-beings" to remain unborn ("Topographical" 117). The disintegration of sight continued with Pointillism because the observer had to focus his or her eye on the painting exactly as with an optical apparatus. It reached a limit with Duchamp's "retinal stimulators" and Mondrian's Op Art, considered by Virilio to be no more than a visual message worthy of Morse code. Virilio concludes his thoughts with

Duchamp's statement that every painting exists in the mind before it materializes on the canvas but something is always lost in the process. Art may pose the "enigma of the body" but the "enigma of technique poses the enigma of art" ("Topographical" 121). Duchamp himself believed that many people mistakenly took Seurat and Mondrian for retinalists. While I support Virilio's general thesis about the aesthetic of disappearance, I cannot support his claim that Duchamp's retinal stimulators reduced visual perception to the equivalent of a Morse Code message. Duchamp's retinal stimulators are, in fact, optical illusions that allow visualization of the process of interpretation that would "normally" be unconscious. "Normal" optical illusions cause vision to become regressive. Although Virilio claims that the surrealists strived to attain a productive unconscious of sight, he does not make use of the same terms as Duchamp to describe the process of visualization. I do not think that Virilio's term "machinery of transfer" refers to the same process of visualization implied by Duchamp's term "precision optics." In the 1920s Duchamp concerned himself with "precision optics" and produced many optical illusions. He experimented with the medium of film and made *Anémic Cinéma* in 1926 that alternated optical illusions with verbal puns in the form of a spiral. The film converts optical play into a dynamic interaction of mechanico-sexual forms. Optical illusions present an apparent contradiction to Duchamp's rejection of the retinal tradition. In 1935 he created "rotoreliefs" that appear three-dimensional when displayed on a rotation surface (for example, the turntable of a phonograph). When the rotoreliefs are set in motion, they display a pulsating "relief" that oscillates between positive and negative space. Duchamp tried to stimulate the "productive unconscious" of sight through the liminality of optical illusions. In my opinion, he succeeded in obtaining productivity, despite Virilio's skepticism. The term "productive" is somewhat deceptive, admittedly. It

is a case of a prosthetic form of passivity that goes beyond a simple characterization as either passive or active. It is at once *both* passive *and* active. I prefer thinking through a new kind of passivity as opposed to shifting ambiguously between the adjective "unconscious" and the noun "unconsciousness," as does Virilio. In fact, I think that we should avoid using the substantive "unconsciousness" altogether because we cannot locate precisely where "it" ("the unconsciousness") is. The use of the adjective form makes more sense to me. It is not troubling, on the other hand, to use the term "surreal" as a substantive that refers to an empirically locatable reality.

The strength of Virilio's argument lies not in his explanation of the retinal stimulators but in his acknowledgement of a "new prosthetic synergy." He developed this concept in analyzing the war photography and chronophotographic techniques that developed in new ways after 1914 and contributed greatly to the aesthetic of disappearance. Reconnaissance airplanes produced photographs that were later exhibited in New York's Museum of Modern Art and other museums worldwide. Colonel Steichen preserved a large quantity of proofs that formed part of his private collection. What Virilio finds interesting about the development of millions of aerial photographic proofs is the "new prosthetic synergy" that came into play. He refers to this new mixture of the engine, the eye and the weapon as an "alchemy of meaning" and a "collage of instruments." The new prosthetic synergy enables the minute by minute reconstitution of the erosion of a building, a city or an entire landscape through the combined effect of aerial bombardments and the "ubiquitous eye" of military strategists (Esthétique 62). The exhibition of such photos in cultural institutions did not provide a means to reintegrate people, signs and objects decimated by the war into "normal" society (despite official government policies that ostensibly brought about a return to normalcy). Neither did

these photos serve as a memorial to bear witness to the loss of a generation. Instead, war photography contributed to the aesthetic of disappearance that characterized the World War I era; private collections of military images or public exhibits became spectacles of the "fleeting" through which vast topographies in the process of disappearing were reconstructed. The eye in combination with the vision machine forged multiple viewpoints that had the effect of splitting the subject from its perception of the world.

Duchamp opposed the aesthetic of making a spectacle out of the fleeting in his *Nude Descending a Staircase* and the *Large Glass*. As an alternative, Duchamp turned toward Marey's experiments with sets of points. Scientists during the World War I era continued to experiment with sets of points. The mathematician Gaston Julia first defined *set point topology* during World War I but it was forgotten until the 1970s, when Benoit Mandelbrot studied how points escape towards infinity within the context of fractal geometry. Duchamp pursued this type of mathematical logic to a certain extent. In Esthétique de la disparition Virilio acknowledges Mandelbrot's contributions to understanding the relation between the observed and the observer. He describes the well-known experiment in which Mandelbrot suspends a series of balls from wire and makes them "jump" a certain distance when struck by one other: "On pense . . . au 'sautillement' de la pelote de fil de Mandelbrot — le résultat numérique (de zéro à plusieurs dimensions) dépendant des rapports de distance entre l'observé et l'observant, de leurs écarts" (16).

The development of fractal geometry is an extension of Leibnizian, anti-Cartesian thought. The idea of fractals offers a new way of looking at the world that has continued to interest scientists and non-scientists alike. Many years after Julia and Mandelbrot the pertinence of fractals to contemporary thinking persists. For example, on June 21, 2000,

the *New York Times* reported that Vice-President Al Gore considers the idea of fractals "both as a body of knowledge and as a metaphor" to be "an incredibly important way of looking at the world." Fractal patterns occur in nature, as in the shape of snowflakes, and may be easily recognized. The algorithm needed to generate fractal pictures may be understood by anyone with basic arithmetic. The same is true for the algorithms of the Mandelbrot Set and the Julia Set. A recent study of fractal geometry from Yale University concludes that the Mandelbrot Set and Julia Set are remarkable deconstructions of the notions of simplicity and complexity: a single quadratic equation contains "infinitely detailed worlds of baroque splendor that pose mathematical questions unanswered even today" yet the "algorithm to generate these pictures can be understood by anyone familiar with basic arithmetic."[3] In this regard, I find it logical to connect post-structural deconstruction and set theory. Deleuze makes a reference to Mandelbrot in his discussion of inflection in The Fold. Inflection cannot be separated from an infinitely variable curve. Baroque requirements make the curve pass through an infinite number of angular points. Deleuze conceives of the curve in terms of Mandelbrot's fractal geometry: "It envelops an infinitely cavernous or porous world, constituting more than a line and less than a surface (Mandelbrot's fractal dimension as a fractional or irrational number, a nondimension, an interdimension)" (16).

Let me emphasize that the fractal form, found both in nature and scientific concepts, does not subjugate nature to science but indicates how science extends and continues the work of nature by reshaping, rebuilding and improving it. It is no longer a question of subjugating nature to science by creating a utopian or artificial paradise via technology. It becomes necessary to redefine the boundaries between nature and culture in terms of a "meta-fractal" form, which, in my opinion, has an almost complete affinity

with the post-structuralist terms of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. Many of the texts written by Michel Serres, an eminent French intellectual, are preoccupied with the complexities of fractal geometry and its relation to other non-scientific disciplines. The fact that Serres completed a lengthy study of Leibniz and is familiar with Deleuze informs his thinking about what he refers to as the *interference* of divisions and boundaries of knowledge. Serres is interested in what happens at the boundary or in the space between two divided parts (whether it be divisions in knowledge or in things themselves).[4] In other words, he is interested in the concept of the fold in neo-Leibnizian society. The interference between science and culture entails a complex geography of endless bifurcations, changes in form and pockets of information folded together. According to Steven Brown, "it is Serres' ability to convincingly describe similarities within apparently distant sources that links him at least methodologically to the investigations of someone like Mandelbrot, with his switches between cotton prices, coastlines and transmission errors."[5] Unlike Mandelbrot, but similar to Deleuze, Serres experiments outside the analyses and formal proofs of mathematics and ventures into literature, mythology, philosophy, biology, visual art, and other disciplines. Deleuze mentions Serres in The Fold in reference to the discovery of a new relation between the one and the multiple found in Leibniz's work (126).

The texts of Virilio, like those of Serres and Deleuze, focus on boundaries and liminal states. These liminal states disrupt the borders between reason and unreason through a *transe contrôlée*. Virilio uses the term *transe contrôlée* to explain how scientific observation at the beginning of the twentieth century came to depend upon "controlling the conscious mind, particularly the speed of its flows and intensities" (Esthétique 35). The quest for progress brought about a permanent state of disorientation

of the senses as technological civilization displaced the fixity of life. Science fabricated a new society of displaced mobility and transformed people into somnambulists. The speed of the infinity of dreams created the sensation of delirious joy. As speed turned vision into primary matter, the characteristics of bodies disappeared in the unidirectionnality of speed. The conformity of civil or military uniforms went hand in hand with the disappearance of bodies in unidirectionnality. Rational technologies distanced people from the objective world because the acceleration of movement caused the perpetual removal of the subject from his/her spatio-temporal context. Ultimately, the lyricism of the voyage and the seduction of the exotic cede to indifference. Virilio's critique of rational technologies as distancing us from the objective world has a strong parallel with Duchampian indifference. Duchamp's notes in the *Box of 1914* demobilizes the military corps that makes bodies disappear in the unidimensionality of the military uniform. The uniforms of the Nine Bachelors and the robe of the Bride make the body disappear in the *Large Glass*. The eye becomes indifferent as the technology of the virtual demobilizes it. The eye is no longer able to determine the veracity or objectivity of what is placed before it. Only a pluridimensional perspective that englobes or envelops the unidimensional one will enable the disrobing of the Bride to be grasped conceptually.

When the eye becomes indifferent through demobilization, the mind can no longer determine the veracity of what it perceives; hence de-realization occurs. Virilio makes a sweeping claim that the surrealists never attained a "productive unconscious sight" but only an unconscious. How do the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy support or refute Virilio's claim? Aside from the retinal stimulators previously discussed, the works from all three address the paradox of an embodied and a disembodied consciousness. How may the sense of sight be understood in terms of this paradox?

Duchamp's model of connectivity creates undecidable concepts that may be analyzed in terms of the Deleuzean paradox of an embodied and a disembodied consciousness. In The Fold Deleuze discusses the moral necessity of the body in Leibniz's arguments. Leibniz considers the mind to be obscure and he argues that its dark nature requires a body. It is not because we have a body that something obscure like the mind "dwells" in us. To the contrary, it is because there is an obscure object in us that we must have a body. Deleuze emphasizes, however, that this argument yields to another that seems to contradict it. Leibniz states that we must have a body because our mind possesses a "clear and distinct" zone of expression (85). The same argument can appeal to both obscurity and clarity, as Deleuze explains, "because for Leibniz clarity comes of obscurity and endlessly is plunging back into it" (89). Undecidability occurs when the body folds in upon itself and its zone of clarity shrinks. Deleuze explains that phenomenology (i.e. the philosophical parameters defining awareness of self, world and object) does not suffice to determine the sphere of *appurtenances* of a body. What belongs to a monad only partially and for how long? How does one take inventory of what one possesses? More importantly, how does a body dominate a territory?

Subjectivity depends on the persistence of vision, if not the productive unconscious of sight. This poses the additional problem, in Virilio's opinion, that vision can never truly be infinite. Virilio reinforces an argument made by Deleuze, namely that the modern world lacks a sufficient relationship between the one and the multiple. Deleuze emphasizes that a new relation between the one and the multiple is precisely what is lacking in the contemporary world but can be found in the Leibnizian baroque:

> Chaos does not exist; it is an abstraction because it is inseparable from a screen that makes something — something rather than nothing — emerge

> from it. Chaos would be a pure *Many*, a purely disjunctive diversity, while the something is a *One*, not a pregiven unity, but instead the indefinite article that designates a certain singularity. How can the Many become One? A great screen has to be placed between them. Like a formless elastic membrane, an electromagnetic field, or the receptacle of the *Timaeus*, the screen makes something issue from chaos, and *even if this something differs only slightly*. (76)

Perceptible objects are transformed into a series of figures or aspects that must submit themselves to a law of continuity. Both Virilio and Deleuze claim that one can no longer see the stars; only a screen is still visible. A cycle must exist such that the relations of one-to-multiple and multiple-to-one are completed by relations of one-to-one and multiple-to-multiple. Serres has demonstrated the distributive character of the "belonging-to" and its inversion. Deleuze asserts that "belonging-to" may be considered as the key to allegory and Leibniz's philosophy is not a symbol of the cosmos but an allegory of the world (126-27). Deleuze explores the relation of allegory to narrative in the passage where he discusses appurtenance; however, his opening remarks in The Fold about the allegory of the house extend beyond the idea of narrative and merit more consideration in their relation to poetics. Allegory has the paradoxical status of concretizing an abstraction in a hybrid form at the frontier of the interior and the exterior (or the visible and the invisible). The idea of appurtenance is linked to the unjustifiable primacy of the verb "to be." The true opposite of the self is not the non-self but the "had," as Deleuze explains. A monad does not have an abstract attribute as its property, such as movement, plasticity or elasticity, but other monads like cells or atoms (110). These are the phenomena of subjugation that fill up the domain of possessing: "To have or to

possess is to fold, in other words, to convey what one contains 'with a certain power.' If the Baroque has often been associated with capitalism, it is because the Baroque is linked to a crisis of property, a crisis that appears at once with the growth of new machines in the social field and the discovery of new living beings in the organism" (110). Appurtenance and possession have an inherent relation to domination. The paradox that Leibniz discovers is that the monad as pure interiority must have a minimum outside. How do allegory or topology resolve the problem?

Analyzing language and grammar reveals much about "appurtenance" as Deleuze conceives of it. Before considering the relation of allegory to Desnos's poetics, we are going to first consider how the idea of appurtenance relates to his work. The text "Vent nocturne" interrogates the sphere of appurtenance of bodies and substances. The nocturnal wind generates the exploratory movement from within the zone of obscurity. The grammatical play of adjectives derived from nouns and nouns derived from predicates produces an undecidability in the amalgams of language. In the first line of the text the noun "mer" generates the attribute "maritime" but this rule is immediately contradicted by the predicate "se perdent" from which the object "les perdus" is formed. The second line begins with a predicate derived from a noun, according to standard grammatical logic, but the meaning is nonsensical. "Les morts meurent ("The dead die") is not clarified as a concept when death in the noun-subject is immediately predicated by the verb "die." Does death belong to both the attribute and the predicate? How can one comprehend a concept that is at once subject and object? In addition, the attributes from which certain nouns are formed do not clarify meaning, such as "angoissante angoisse" and "maîtresses maîtrisées," "Dieux divins! Hommes humains!" and "cervelle cérébrale." Attributes like "cheveux chevulus" that stem from nouns (like the initial "mer maritime")

remain within the zone of obscurity as the text continues. In the entire text below one can recognize the undecidability of the embodiment of consciousness:

Sur la mer maritime se perdent les perdus
Les morts meurent en chassant
des chasseurs dansent en rond une ronde
Dieux divins! Hommes humains!
De mes doigts digitaux je déchire une cervelle
cérébrale.
Quelle angoissante angoisse!
Mais les maîtresses maîtrisées ont des cheveux chevelus
Cieux célestes
Terre terrestre
Mais où est la terre céleste?

Fingers dissect and tear the brain apart. Desnos's "De mes doigts digitaux je déchire une cervelle/ cérébrale" expresses an idea similar to that of Loy's "cerebral forager" in XXII of "Songs to Joannes" who searches (forages) through the gray matter (forage or fodder). The separation of the brain-as-subject (cervelle) from the brain-as-attribute (cérébrale) is reinforced by the break in the poetic line. The external struggle for domination begins with the sea, heavens and earth but it becomes displaced within the boundaries of the body as monad until finally the text marks a return to unity within the fold of transcendental immanence. The text ends with the opposition of the plural "celestial heavens" ("Cieux célestes") and the singular "terrestrial earth" ("Terre terrestre") that is followed by the interrogation "But where is the celestial earth?" The idea of "terre céleste" permits the poet to explore the possibility of transcendental immanence.

The division of the two halves of the *Large Glass* creates zones similar to the ones found in "Vent Nocturne." The split-brain model and the division into terrestrial and celestial zones in both works call out for a unifying paralogic (an immanent transcendence) that will slow down or delay the speed of an instantaneous act of cognition. Baruchello and Martin in Why Duchamp view Duchamp's "illogic" as an extension of an act of perception since one can fill anything with all the enigma that it can hold (76). The different zones of the *Large Glass* cross-fertilize one another; they are not separated by the viewer through analysis but brought together so that images, objects and words may be comprehended as a perceptual act. This interchange is the foundation for Duchampian poetics which gives an equal value to the images of the *Large Glass* and the words in the notes. Duchamp's mind was "always involved in flashing off flashes about things that had already themselves been flashed in the first place" and his mind flashed from word to image and back again (77). The interchange of flashes in Duchampian and Desnosian poetics creates an energy that is other than the prosthetic synergy of delocalized optics. It is other than the fluctuation of appearances that results when distance and depth give way to instantaneous transmitting power. The flickering confusion of near and far results from accelerated communication technologies. The "delay in glass" may be compared to the slowing down that occurs in reading the twisted grammar of "Vent nocturne." Duchamp and Desnos achieved something other than flickering confusion; the interchange of flashes in their work create an energy that may be viewed as a form of Leibnizian outflashing. In the Monadology Leibniz writes that "God alone is the ultimate unity or the original simple substance, of which all created or derivative monads are the products, and arise, so to speak, through the continual

outflashings (fulgurations) of the divinity from moment to moment, limited by the receptivity of the creature to whom limitation is an essential."[6]

The strategy of envelopment implies a time of slowness as folds unfurl their layers. This time of unfurling, unlike that of vehicular speed, does not result in indifference. This strategy is similar to that of "Le fard des Argonautes" in which desire is for the unfolding of the adventure itself. The oriental fleece may still be far away in an exotic land but it does not become mixed with a desire for the conquest of speed. Desnos's Argonauts do not resemble the heroes of the interwar era. Virilio describes one hero of the period, the 1927 and 1928 Boulogne Grand Prix auto race winner, Malcolm Campbell, who exemplified his era's desire to conquer speed. This desire, in which the object of the quest is mixed with the conquering of speed, opposes the desire of the great utopian quests like that of the Argonauts in search of a far-away Golden Fleece (121-122). Speed annihilates time and space by substituting the vastness of the void for the exoticism of the voyage; this is the supreme aim of technology (122). The theory of Einstein destroyed a conceptualization of signs and immobile bodies braced against time in the process of disappearing. Einstein's theory proposed a sense of time being created "locally" and not "given" as an immutable constant. This conceptualization was viewed with hostility by totalitarian regimes in Europe (123-24).

Parallel developments in physics, especially Einstein's theory of relativity, psychology, philosophy, mathematics, communication and transportation methods altered the perception of time and space. These scientific and technological inventions brought about a shift from a reality that was external, Euclidean and knowable to one that was internal, unknowable and subjective. The avant-garde opposed what is viewed as the bourgeois position vis-à-vis reality. The bourgeois position adhered to mimesis as an

ideology and aesthetic. The avant-garde explored the inner worlds of subjective visions and manipulated form, space, time and color. The four-dimensional web of Joyce's Ulysses orders reality in a subjective way. Loy refers to Joyce's idiosyncratic style as "meteoric idiom" in her tribute to him entitled "Joyce's Ulysses." Joyce is the "phoenix of Irish fires" who transforms word into flesh. Loy establishes a new relation between modern consciousness and language. It is the "loquent consciousness of living things" that "pours in torrential languages." The tensions of an embodied and disembodied consciousness shape the new ordering of reality. This new ordering is constituted through a network of science, nature, language, and the unconscious mind. Transforming the inner world into a reality parallels the baroque concept of realizing reality in illusion.

Nearly a decade after World War I the tensions of an embodied and disembodied consciousness would culminate in Desnos's celebrated "Paroles des rochers." Like Loy's "Costa Magic" and Duchamp's Jura-Paris notes, "Paroles des rochers" describes a fantastic car ride. In Desnos's poem, the identities of the passengers are unstable, for they are conglomerates of human characterizations and aspects of the landscape. The poem begins with the presentation of the "queen of the azure" and the "fool of the void" as they pass by in a cab. Attached to the glass windows of the cab are strands of hair (in a later line qualified as the *coiffures* of women). At first, the hair leans against the glass (the French word used for lean, *s'accouder*, ambiguously implies that the hair has elbows and is morphologically human). The source of transparency, the window, becomes an obstacle for the hair, since it cannot pass through. The hair, as a disembodied human consciousness, communicates with jellyfish (in French, *méduse*) that float by. The *méduse*s, by verbal association, are "medusas," whose gazes petrify the objects they behold into stone. The hair does not become petrified into the glass but forms a

conglomerate of *fenêtres chevelures*. The knots of hair belong to an allegorical organization of entangled forms. The interpenetration of realms marked by the convergence of the *fenêtres chevelures* brings about the paradoxical separation and joining of interior and exterior. The hair does not escape the entangled structure but neither does it become petrified into glass. The texture of the hair, comprised of folds, permits the window to be looked at and looked through. From the very depths of retinal blindness (*nuit des nuits sans lune*) the shadows communicate within infinite folds. A densification of the exterior (night piling upon night) takes place until it becomes the envelope of interior space. The baroque metaphor of folds enveloping limits restores vision and the network of *ténèbres bavardes*.

Mina Loy's Lost Lunar Baedeker Poems give poetic form to the Deleuzian undecidability of an embodied/disembodied consciousness. The title "Italian Pictures," Loy's triptych of poems from the World War I era, suggests that what follows will be a series of vignettes from scenes observed during a voyage in Italy. Overturning the reader's expectations, what ensues resembles the "anti-vignettes" and the topography *manqué* of Duchamp's notes from the Jura-Paris voyage. "Costa Magic," one of the "anti-vignettes" from "Italian Pictures," consists of a networked connectivity, comprised of passengers, an automobile, as well as fluctuations of the road, sky and landscape. An ordinary cab ride in the countryside transforms itself into a fantastic voyage. There is indeterminacy between the interior and the exterior of the cab, as can be seen in the lines: "The glass rattling/The rain slipping/I and the neighbour and her aunt/Bunched together/And Cesira/Droops across the cab." Humans and machines are arranged like so many constellations in a multidimensional map:

Fields and houses

Pass like the pulling out

Of sweetmeat ribbon

From a rascal's mouth

Till

A wheel in a rut

Jerks back my girl on the padding

And the hedges into the sky

Coming to the magic tree

Cesira becomes as a wild beast

A tree of age

The white spaces between words contribute to the effect of the suppression of the topography. If one imagines a viewer inside a car looking out the window at the fields and houses passing by, the gap after the word "pass" interrupts the description of the landscape. The gap in the line precedes a simile that transforms the perspective into a topological one. The passing of the landscape is compared to the "pulling out/Of sweetmeat ribbon/From a rascal's mouth." A wheel in a rut "jerks" a young girl onto the padding of the car and jolts some hedges into the sky. The car approaches a magic tree and the young girl turns into a wild beast. The struggle between humans and machines to dominate the road gives way to the unleashing of the forces of unreason. The young girl will ultimately be killed by consumption (phthisis), a disease that killed off many romantic heroines. A ride along the magic coast offers unreason as a form of resistance to

militarism but it, too, has its dangers. Romanticism spreads its contagion. Loy does not naively let her heroines be seduced by romantic unreason; instead, she eradicates the idea of a romantic heroine from an emerging consciousness. The scientific quality of the word *phthisis* places it within a rational model to safeguard against the seduction of unreason.

In "Der Blinde Junge" Loy identifies with dadaist antimilitarism and renounces the retinal tradition. This text opens with the presentation of war casualties and blind youth as the offspring of the Roman mythological war goddess, Bellona, sister of Mars:

> The dam Bellona
>
> littered
>
> her eyeless offspring
>
> Kreigsopfer
>
> Upon the pavements of Vienna

Kreigsopfer, meaning war victim in German, refers to the blind ("eyeless" is Loy's term) offspring of war. The personification of war in a female form opens up the text to ambiguity. The verb "litter" has the double meaning of "giving birth to a litter" and "dropping garbage" onto the pavement. An excess of meaning is generated in the concept of giving birth to blind offspring and littering the pavements with war victims. Carolyn Burke observes that Loy's eccentricities and excesses disturbed the public by challenging "too many pieties," particularly through her "diagnosis of sexual love as yet another casualty of war" (208). In the next lines the reader encounters a "visionless obstacle" and a "slow blind face/pushing/its virginal nonentity/against the light." The figure of the war goddess has been transformed into a "pure purposeless eremite," which is to say, an icon emptied of its meaning. An eremite is a hermit or Christian recluse. The idea of war

becomes associated with a martyr without a cause. The icon's purity is devoid of purpose because its sacred altar (the eye) has been destroyed by "black lightening." The idea of black lightening desecrating the retinal altar attests to a lack of faith in visual perception as a result of the destruction caused by war. The landscape and the mindscape have been transformed into an extinct planet: "Void and extinct/this planet of the soul." The first part of the text is a critique of romantic and epic poetic forms. The image of the female heroine in traditional poetic iconography becomes problematic. The use of the word "eremite" harks back to the romantic texts of John Keats; nature is described as an eternally watchful eremite in his text "Bright star! Would I were" and the lover is compared to an eremite who worships his beloved as his "heaven" in "Eve of St Agnes." In the Christian story of St. Agnes the virginity of the Roman martyr (Agnes) was preserved by the desecration of lightening. The Pre-Raphaelite painters who inspired Loy in her own painting had taken an interest in St. Agnes as a subject.

Having exploited the epic and romantic traditions at the beginning of the text, Loy turned toward a critique of modernist forms in the following lines: "strains from the craving throat/in static flight upslanting." The multiplicity of perspectives implied in "static flight upslanting" cannot serve the blind youth of the post-war generation. The text ends with a gibe at intellectuals who are urged not to look but to listen to an "expressionless 'thing'" that "blows out damnation and concussive dark / Upon a mouth-organ." Loy critiques Objectivism by creating an absurd idea of a war-machine reified into a mouth-organ. "Blind youth" refers to the real casualties of World War I, as the text's title indicates, but also to the idea of the poetic avant-garde and an entire generation as war victim.

Duchamp acknowledged that the *Large Glass* was a humanitarian protest against war. The division of the *Large Glass* into different zones interacting dynamically with each other functions as a mode of resistance to the Cartesian grids that map out zones of occupation into clear territories. The viewer looks at the domains of the Bride and the Bachelor in order to examine how a body dominates a territory and maps out a sphere of appurtenances. Duchamp's examination of rational ordering stems out of a dadaist concept that does not inherently involve vision. His first contact with European Dada as a protest movement came from literature. He did not "look at" Dada as an initial connection with the movement. He first experienced Dada in reading Tzara's The First Celestial Adventure of Mr. Fire Extinguisher at the end of 1916 or the beginning of 1917 as an exile in New York. Duchamp left Europe during the war because he was opposed to militarism. He had left at about the same time and for the same reason as Loy.

After being introduced to Dada, Duchamp, along with Man Ray, served as vice-presidents of the *Société Anonyme* founded by Katherine Dreier. Dreier helped to organize the Independents. Duchamp acquiesced out of friendship to join the society whose aim was to collect works for a permanent international collection. He opposed the idea of museums as arbiters of culture. The works collected by the *Société Anonyme* never found their way into a public museum and are now permanently showcased in the private collection of Yale Unversity. He considered himself to be an artist while living in New York at this time and invited guests to see his "work in progress," the *Large Glass*. He did not completely resist the idea of vision as conscious productivity of cultural works but resisted institutionalized art and overly rational systems of organization. He was appointed head of the hanging committee at the April 1917 First Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists and fulfilled his duty by resisting conventional means of

classifying art works. Burke insists that he used the Independents as an "arena for acts of sabotage against all systems of classification" partly as a response to being judged unfit for military service" (226). Duchamp developed a dynamic method of organization based on chance to display the works entered at the exhibit that disregarded the social class and reputation of the artist. The works were placed in alphabetical order and the letter "R" was drawn out of a hat as the starting place. This proved to be a disadvantage for Mina Loy who displayed her entry *Making Lampshades* in one of the last rooms of the exhibit. Because of the success of the *Nude Descending a Staircase* at the Armory Show Duchamp had a considerable reputation and his war protest was meant to reach the public. He earned further attention as a dadaist humanitarian protester with the help of friends like Picabia. Picabia and other artists published images of his works in little magazines. When Picabia published a version of the *Mona Lisa* in the magazine *391,* he put on the moustache himself and forgot the goatee. Picabia himself explained that he had forgotten the goatee in an inscription from a collage that he made using a copy of the *391* cover. His inscription functions as an exculpatory letter intending to correct the historical fallacy engendered by his manufacturing of a second *Mona Lisa* without the goatee (and mistitled *Tableau Dada*).[7] The magazine *391* (published in 1920) consisted of a collection of works from early twentieth century writers, including Desnos, Apollinaire and Breton.

Although Duchamp served as a co-editor of the magazine *The Blindman*, he resigned one month later after the second issue.[8] The first issue was published at the time of the First Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists that opened on April 10, 1917. The inaugural issue reminds us of Desnos's "Rrose Sélavy" because it opens with a manifesto of twenty-three aphoristic statements. The second issue has a more provocative

tone because its publication followed Duchamp's resignation from the Society of Independent Artists after the scandal of his submission of a urinal as art. The rejection of the white porcelain urinal, submitted under the alias R. Mutt, initiated a polemic about what constitutes a work of art. The intended indifference of the urinal as an object of art had the opposite effect of inciting scandal. The first issue of *The Blindman* contains a photograph by Stieglitz of the urinal and Duchamp's *Chocolate Mill* (on the cover). It includes an essay by Loy entitled "O Marcel: or I Too Have Been to Louise's" that was inspired by Duchamp. Loy commented afterwards on her contribution to *The Blind Man* and explained that it recounted an event at the Greenwich Village Blindman's Ball where she reportedly "saved" Marcel Duchamp. She recollects how Duchamp had climbed up a precarious rope made of paper:

> This was written at the Ball where I saved Marcel. With his robe afloat, the symmetry of his bronze hair rising from his beautiful profile, wavering as a flame, he was—actually—climbing a paper festoon hung from the top of the dome to the musician's gallery. In memoriam of the era—when my notes in "The Blind Boy" caused, in New York, a bewildering uproar as the base immorality of the modernists—I mention: Marcel let fall his 'favor'—a miniature American flag—into his champagne.[9]

Her account of Marcel's antics at the Ball shows her appreciation for Duchamp's sense of humor.[10] She would have seen Duchamp's work on exhibition because she had some of her paintings at the same venues. In her own right, she earned a reputation as a dadaist with a sense of humor and would be mentioned later in the 1921 *New York Dada* co-edited by Duchamp and Man Ray. (The issue included a spoof of a society-page announcement of a coming-out party given by Loy for the Marsden Hartleys and the

Joseph Stellas.) [11] The friendship and professional relationship between Loy and Duchamp did not have the chance to grow at this time since both would soon leave the United States.

Although Duchamp earned popularity in New York, he had a change of heart about living in America after the Unites States joined the war in 1917. Despite the French military's declaration that Duchamp was unfit for service due to a heart murmur, the United States passed a law making foreigners eligible for the draft and threatened to incarcerate war protesters. Burke maintains that flag-waving became a national pastime and overnight "those who showed anything less than wholehearted support for the war were deemed subversives" (225). Duchamp decided to leave the United States for a neutral country in 1918. He left for Buenos Aires, Argentina, on the *SS Crofton Hall* ship and stayed until the war ended (and some time after, too, since he left in June 1919).

On the day of his departure he made an ink and colored pencil drawing for his friend Florine Stettheimer to bid her farewell. The drawing consists of a map of North America and South America with a wavy line indicating the passage of the ship between the two continents. A house indicates his place of residence in New York from 1915-16. The words "cool" and "hot" are placed along the trajectory, as an indication of a changing environment. The final destination in South America is indicated only by a large question mark. The stability at the place of origin initiates an adventure with no clear object or final destination. Duchamp's map of his trajectory indicates a shift from an iconographic mode to an ichnographic one. The map reveals the tracks of a passage rather than an iconographic representation of the landscape and seascape. Ichnography never developed into a system like iconography but it stemmed from Leibniz. An ichnograph may be understood as an index like a footprint, mold or trace. Lars Kiel

Bertelsen argues in “Reading Photographs Iconographically or Ichnographically” that we may perceive photographs as either iconographic or ichnographic, depending on our interest in the picture. A photograph may be viewed as a flattened footprint or a luminous mold. (A photographic exhibit by Michael Light entitled *Full Moon* depicts snapshots taken by the Apollo 11 astronauts of the moon’s surface. The connection between the idea of footsteps on the moon and the photographic images is mirrored verbally by the astronaut’s accompanying statement: “That’s one small step for a man; one great leap for mankind.”[12]) The words “cool” and “hot” in Duchamp’s map function as indices of the environment rather than representations of its appearance. They reinforce global awareness and interdependence. I propose that the words could also be understood as recorded readings from a metaphorical “thermometer” measuring Duchamp’s reactions toward the political climate of the region. The overnight change in political climate in the United States would have contributed to the shift to a “cool” reaction by avant-garde artists. The marks on the page form a track that does not chart his precise passage but serves only as an index of movement like a vector of direction, toward the coast of South America. The name Buenos Aires does not appear on the map; only a question mark functions as an index of the final destination point. Europe does not appear on the map at all.

In 1918 Duchamp had also begun a *Small Glass*, now referred to as *To Be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour*. This study of the Bachelor Apparatus was supposed to be incorporated into the *Large Glass* but it never was included in the final work. In *To Be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour* the viewer finds a pyramid (rendered in color in an optically shifting three-dimensional perspective) above the third

eye chart of the Oculist Witnesses, as well as a magnifying glass through which the viewer is instructed (by the title of the work) to look for “almost an hour.” The viewer is forced to slow down the process of viewing and contemplate the hallucinatory effect produced by looking through glass. The process of viewing is effectuated through a surreal mode of communicating states in which the Bride’s desire to be unveiled coexists with the voyeuristic Bachelors’ desire to strip her bare. Duchamp experimented with the sum of what is possible and knowable in this project by unveiling the *ichnography* (i.e. the generating of a matrix of indices) of infinitesimal categorization. The *ichnograph* does not unveil its matrix of indices by rational methods but in Leibnizian fashion it reveals itself through chaos and indeterminacy.

The idea of ichnography, even though it was not systematized like iconography, originates in Leibniz. Deleuze’s explanation of perception in the folds of the monad focuses on concepts that we affiliate with Duchamp, such as “unveiling” and “hallucinatory effects.” Deleuze emphasizes that every perception is “hallucinatory” since perception has no object. This applies both to conscious and unconscious perceptions. All phenomena are collective and enter into differential relations. Macroperception is the product of differential relations that are established among microperceptions. Deleuze describes the situation of perception as the event of the approach of an army or a herd under a “hallucinated gaze” (94). Sometimes the process of unfolding entails a slow process of developing an infinite number of tiny folds; other times it is the unveiling in a single movement of the unfathomable depth of tiny and moving folds that “waft” the viewer around at excessive speeds in vertigo (93). In Duchamp’s writings where he discusses the veil of the Bride he makes a distinction between appearance and apparition that may also be understood as a distinction between

iconography and ichnography. In his writing referred to as “The Bride’s Veil” he distinguishes the sensory impression and the memory imprint that constitute appearance from the luminous substance of the mold. The apparition is a mold that produces active colors like “chocolate.” There is only one chocolate color from which all chocolate is determined. It is the viewer who decides to look at an object as an apparition or an appearance. In the transition from apparition (mold) to appearance (a chocolate object) a physical dye determines the color and mass of the object, which is luminous. The physical dye is the molecular form of the substance. The body of the object is composed of luminous molecules; it becomes the source of the lighted object’s substance. In his writings Duchamp identifies the “emanating object” as an apparition; the “emanating chocolate” is the atomic mold of the opaque chocolate substance having a physical existence verified by the five senses (85-6). Thus, there is an accord between Duchamp’s thoughts about color and Deleuze’s concepts of the “molecular” (or microperceptions) and the “molar” (or macroperceptions). A conscious perception brings together an infinite sum of minute perceptions that destabilize the preceding macroperception (or clear and distinct apperception) while preparing the following one (The Fold 86). Deleuze states that microperceptions (or representations of the world) “unravel in every direction, folds in folds, over folds, following folds, like one of Hantaï’s paintings, or one of Clérambault’s toxic hallucinations” (The Fold 86). It is a matter of knowing how we move from minute perceptions to conscious perceptions, from molecular perceptions to molar perceptions. For Deleuze, the question involves something other than the sum of homogeneous parts. The task of perception entails “pulverizing the world” but it is also one of “spiritualizing its dust” (The Fold 87). The world exists only in its representations as long as they are included in each monad; it is a “lapping of waves, a rumor, a fog, or a

mass of dancing particles in the dust" (The Fold 86). We can relate the concept of "spiritualizing dust" to ideas of Duchamp but also to images and notions in many of Loy's texts, as will be explained later in this chapter. Because Deleuze compares this state of existence to death, sleep, drowsiness or numbness, we can immediately see the relevance of this concept to Desnos's trance states.

Perception is the active expression of the monad, as a function of its point of view. I find it of critical importance to consider the pyramid in Duchamp's art object entitled *To Be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour* in the Deleuzian sense of "permanence born in flux." Figures like the pyramid determine an extension of an event. Things are always in flux; events are fluvia. A pyramid signifies two things, according to Deleuze: "a passage of Nature or a flux constantly gaining and losing molecules, but also an eternal object that remains the same over the succession of moments" (79). Desire enters into perception because prehension anticipates psychic life. Prehensions may be traces, reflections, echoes, folds, prismatic deformation, thresholds or perspectives (78). Each new prehension becomes a datum. The vector of prehension moves from the prehended datum to the prehending one (from the world to the subject). The final phase is self-enjoyment when the subject is filled with the data of its own becoming. These traits of prehension belong to Leibniz's monad but they are also biblical and neoplatonic concepts that English empiricists (for instance, Samuel Butler) adapted to their theories. Perception is the active expression of the monad as a function of its own perspective. A quality perceived by consciousness resembles the vibrations contracted by the organism. In this regard Leibniz's infinitesimal calculus has two aspects: a psycho-metaphysical mechanism of perception and a physico-organic mechanism of excitation (97).

Chaos and indeterminacy characterize Duchamp's work even after the war when he returned back to France. Duchamp returned to France after his brother Duchamp-Villon's death from typhoid fever (contracted while serving during the war as a medical assistant at Champagne). It was at this time that Duchamp painted his first version of the *Mona Lisa* in Paris. He looked back on this period of time in a 1961 interview and explained how he conceived of the idea for the *Mona Lisa*:

> I had the idea that a painting cannot, must not be looked at too much. It becomes desecrated by the very act of being seen too much. It reaches a point of exhaustion. In 1919, when Dada was in full blast, and we were demolishing many things, the *Mona Lisa* became a prime victim. I put a moustache and a goatee on her face simply with the idea of desecrating it. [. . .] We were also very pacifist. We saw the stupidity of the war. We were in a position to judge the results, which were no results at all. Our movement was another form of pacifist demonstration. In reference to the *Mona Lisa* I also added a sentence of initials on the bottom of the reproduction—L.H.O.O.Q. A loose translation of them would be 'there is fire down below.'

Duchamp's interviewer remarked that the 'fire down below' connects to the basic anxiety in Europe and he mentions Freud's interest in Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*. Duchamp added that Freud wanted to demonstrate the homosexuality of Da Vinci, if not as an active then a latent homosexual. The androgyny of Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* has often been noticed and discussed. Duchamp considers his own *Mona Lisa* to be curious because it "becomes a man" when you look at it and not simply a woman disguised as a man.[13]

In 1919 Duchamp's sister Suzanne married Jean Crotti (a painter who was first influenced by *orphisme* and then became involved in Parisian Dadaism). When she married, Duchamp gave her a gift—the *Unhappy Readymade*. The object consisted of a geometry book hung by strings on a balcony. In Duchamp's words, the idea behind this art object was that the "wind could go through the book, choose its own problems, turn and tear out the pages" (61). Just as natural forces cracked the *Large Glass*, the wind tore up the object. Suzanne had painted it before it was destroyed. The catastrophic force of nature preoccupied Duchamp as a possible creative force. In his notes he makes a distinction between happy chance and unhappy chance; thus, he accepts the forces of nature as inevitable. Prior to World War I he envisioned optimistically the possibility of harnessing the force of draft and gravity in the making of the *Three Standard Stoppages* (1913-14). The idea of maintaining a contract with nature became more problematic in the aftermath of World War I. Natural disasters like the flu pandemic (which first broke out on an American military base in the United States and killed more than 70 million lives around the world between 1918 and 1919)[14] compounded the devastation of human-initiated conflict. The idea of the wind as a vector or force choosing its own grammar haphazardly as it moves through the text of Desnos's "Vent nocturne" has a parallel with Duchamp's *Unhappy Readymade* and also with Mallarmé's chance shuffling of the pages in "Le Livre, instrument spiritual" (". . .je me réjouis si l'air, en passant, entr'ouvre, et, au hasard, anime, d'aspects, l'extérieur du livre . . ."). The notion of a *readymade* implies that the artist must select a form among those already found in nature in order to render it as an object of art. The title of Desnos's "Vent nocturne" makes a similar statement about the relationship of art to nature. Wind is a force of nature that can be captured in art by the idea of sound or movement. It is not a nocturnal wind but a "nocturne" wind; a

nocturne is a form of musical composition. The term nocturne refers to the abstract idea of a form of music rather than an association with a particular sound. It is the concept also of a funeral march; for instance, Chopin's famous funeral march evokes the sound of wind rushing over graves. Given the fact that "Vent nocturne" was published after World War I, it may have been Desnos's attempt to reconcile the force of nature with artistic creativity after the devastation of the war. (Even today during Christian funeral ceremonies a priest might place an open Bible outside the church or cathedral in order for the wind to shuffle the pages as a symbol of the dissemination of the spiritual word. This was evident at the funeral ceremony in front of St. Peter's Cathedral for Pope John Paul II.) Something other than the process of mourning occurs, however, when art encounters the forces of nature. Art and the forces of nature enter into a relation with the elements of chance, be they happy or unhappy. *Unhappy Readymade* and "Vent nocturne" make manifest nature's constant gain and loss of molecules in the flux between perception and excitation. Tension arises from the effort to maintain a state of dynamic equilibrium. This model describes a Leibnizian flux between the mechanisms of perception and excitation. In the search for Leibnizian connectivity, the absence of a contract with nature in the post-World War I destruction of the environment complicates the application of the monad as a model.

Dada-Surrealism presented the idea of accidents first as negative then as positive events when placed within an empirical mode. Breton wrote that the cubist concepts were only the beginning of a "tidal wave" of new forces being unleashed by modernity.[15] Extraterrestrial perspectives provided one alternative but in looking down to Earth sometimes the surrealists *could not see the forest for the trees*.[16] Surrealists posed the following question: how can one look at both the forest (i.e. the molar) and the trees (i.e.

the molecular) in going beyond traditional modes of perception? The connection with nature is as complicated as the relation of the body to the machine. The title of Desnos's 1926 "Mais je ne fus pas compris," whose title indicates a lack of being understood, problematizes the idea of connectivity. The allegory of the house no longer works in the world presented in this text; it is a world in which houses are washed "blue" by a tidal wave of forces ("un raz de marée lave les maisons/ elles sont bleues maintenant") and memory of the past is obliterated by the crest of mountains ("Crête des montagnes où se coupe le souvenir"). In another text "Corde" (1926) the poet sets himself against nature by resisting death. He prefers the speed of a train to the slowness of funerals: "Si j'aime les trains c'est sans doute parce qu'ils vont/plus vite que les enterrements." Nature becomes a source of alienation. The tension in the following lines from "Corde" stems from the paradoxical status of rivers that become at once suspended and oscillating in accordance with changes in the moon: "Les fleuves suspendus oscillent au gré des changements de lune." Finally, a "prodigious tide" begins and a sense of liberty is obtained. This tide originates from a human source, the emotional force of love: "il vient des amants de partout." Liberty as an emotional experience dissipates quickly and will soon no longer be recognizable in the text. The text ends not with liberation but a cry for help and the fear of being drowned: "Au secours!/Je vais être noyé!"

The experience/experiment with nature in "Corde" is much more menacing than in Desnos's texts from Corps et biens published several years earlier. The poet of "Corde" fears nature's destructive power manifest both externally (in waves and mountain crests) and internally (in sexual instinct). Desnos's idea of sexuality as an internal catastrophic force resembles Loy's notion of sexual instinct as an avalanche—in the positive sense of convulsive feminine desire and not in the Freudian sense of female

sexuality as the catastrophic experience of castration (here I am referring to basic Freudian notions of the "castration complex"). We may draw a parallel between *fearing nature* and *fearing sexuality* but the degree to which human beings remain innocent during a catastrophe is rendered problematic by the blurring of boundaries between nature and culture. "Corde" differs from the texts of Corps et biens in the representation of humanity's struggle with nature. The Mallarméan idea of the shipwreck, inherited from the romantic era, inspired Desnos's obsession with natural catastrophe and shipwreck in Corps et biens. Humankind's struggle for community against nature's destructive forces remains innocent in Corps et biens, whose title suggests the positive idea of bodies and goods floating in the hopes of being rescued. Optimism persists with the hope of rescue. Natural disasters, such as shipwrecks, maintain human beings in a state of innocence as opposed to manmade conflicts—namely, war—in which the aggressors and victims must be responsible for destructive acts. War problematizes relations between human beings, nature and communities. Human beings can no longer maintain a state of innocence vis-à-vis nature, even if nature threatens to destroy them. The idea of fearing nature in "Corde" plays upon the fear of both destroying and being destroyed by nature. Speaking in the twenty-first century, Michel Serres expresses the need for our technologically advanced world to enter into a contract with nature in order not to destroy it or be destroyed by it. He believes that humans must give something back to nature.[17] In order to clarify his argument, he remarks that in the event of a shipwreck caused by a natural force like a tidal wave everyone belongs to the same team in a struggle for survival; yet when the sinking of a ship is caused by enemy bombardment, the victims and the wreckage pollute the sea that devours them and, consequently, cannot remain innocent. Serres warns of the need to safeguard our present-day communities

against the erosion of the environment or possible disasters. In this case, those who stand idly by and watch the death of the common good are no longer innocent because they do not behave responsibly.

Ruminations on the relation between responsibility and catastrophe formed part of the nineteenth-century French symbolist tradition inherited from Romanticism. The idea of the shipwreck in Mallarmé's "Un coup de dés" explores the role of chance in the creative act, as I have already discussed at length. Whereas Romanticism's catastrophes revealed the pathos of the human condition (i.e. the plight of individuals against the forces of nature, as epitomized in Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa*), the idea of a shipwreck has a different function in the work of Mallarmé. Chaotic and informal, the shipwreck matrix generates a nonlinear ordering of the text's perceptual space. Another French symbolist poet who transformed the romantic notion of the shipwreck and served as a precursor to Surrealism is Lautréamont (or Isidore Ducasse dit le comte de Lautréamont). The protagonist of his text Les Chants de Maldoror (the "chant" being a genre in-between poetry and prose) finds himself removed from the sight of a ship in peril at sea. Looking on from a distance, he takes pleasure in its sinking. When the sole survivor swims to shore, Maldoror (the protagonist) shoots him to death. Instead of opposing humankind to the forces of nature, in which all are innocent in a struggle against the storm, Lautréamont depicts an indivual who finds himself too removed from the spectacle of a catastrophe to be able to intervene and, worse, this distance motivates him to cut off all social ties with the sole survivor in a violent way. As he looks upon the wreckage of the shipwreck from a detached vantage point, Maldoror discovers that the foundations of human society lack a basic state of democratic kinship.

Maldoror's distorted vantage point inverts that of the humanist subject present in Shakespeare's The Tempest, in which a shipwreck ultimately reinforces traditional structures in society. Maldoror's distance on the catastrophe gives the reader the impression that he invents the shipwreck. The protagonist of Mallarmé's "Igitur" experiences a similar lack of a sense of kinship in human society. Igitur's descent into the tomb of his ancestors may be compared to the alienated Hamlet's search for truth in Shakespeare's drama. I agree with an interpretation of Hamlet's alienation as madness; indeed, Igitur is mad and so are his ancestors. Igitur descends into the tomb and encounters figments of an irrational mind: inhuman shadows and otherworldly phantoms. I consider Igitur to be an inverted Hamlet who, in his moment of doubt, tosses dice to "fix" infinity. Madness is the disease of an individual consciousness but the creation of a "virtual" toss of the dice makes an "accident" happen that takes place on the scale of the entire world. Virtual reality may substitute one reality for another. Because of this, we may lose our sense of bearing in a "virtual accident" which produces effects of disorientation or *de-realization*. This is what happens when Maldoror substitutes his virtual shipwreck for the actual one; there is confusion between the two realities. In the case of Igitur's toss of the dice, the reader may negotiate spaces "in-between" the black marks and the white blanks (or "blancs") of the text. In "Igitur" the "in-between" refers to two fundamentally different notions of space whose intersection is continuously negotiated by the reader: the physical presence of a Self in the space of performance and the performative presence of "becoming in the virtual." Mallarmé's inscription on the title page of "Igitur" informs the reader that the text is addressed to his or her "intelligence." The reader must organize the events that unfold in the Book as an act of staging scenes from the inner world of the mind. A complete analysis of agency and

performativity exceeds the scope of this study, which, instead, focuses on undecidability and problems of representation.

The reader of Desnos's post-World War I "L'air homicide" experiences undecidability when trying to identify the specific catastrophe rendering the air "homicidal" — is it natural or manmade or a mixture of both? Do armies produce an avalanche or, vice versa, does chaos produce armies of hostile men? No causal system can be established in the absence of a relationship between humankind and nature in Desnos's text. The need to reestablish human connection with nature is its predominant theme. There is no innocent purity evoked by nature in this text; the air itself is homicidal. The personification of a pylon in the first line is difficult to unpack because the only human quality given to the pylon is that it "blackens its eyes": "Le pylône met du noir à ses yeux." The idea of obscuring vision enables a connection to be made between a human and a pylon. The word pylon is polysemous to the point that it does not immediately bring to mind a precise image. We have the potential to invest the word with as much enigma or meaning as we choose. A pylon may be an architectural tower, a marker for an airplane or racecar, a type of turn or airplane maneuver to capture a target, a memorial for the dead, a signal, or an electric powerline tower. Many pylons were constructed during World War I and were struck down often as targets. The post-war landscape was littered with pylons as memorials for the dead, such as the twin pylons of Vimy Ridge erected in 1922 to honor the Canadian capture of the territory in 1917 and the huge loss of life the battle incurred. Curiously, a pylon has been adopted by Dew Harrison as a conceptualization of his project to deconstruct the *Large Glass* by reconfiguring it into 25 interlinked elements across a network field.[18] The pylon forms part of a network in which no idea is given as an *a priori*. In "L'air homicide" the image

of the blinded pylon in the first line is juxtaposed to an amalgam of images evoking natural beauty (Olympus, paradise, forests) in the second line: “L’Olympe et le paradis et les forêts.” These images are juxtaposed to the image of old electric lightbulbs in the third line: “C’est comme les vieilles ampoules électriques.” The reference to electricity troubles the evocation of natural beauty, which is further disturbed in the next line with the declaration that one must now “suckle poetry from homicidal breasts” (“On suce maintenant la poésie au téton pointu/de ces seins homicides et lumineux.”) An analogy between a storm and a brand of automobile is made next. Then in the following lines cannon fire is compared to mouths of heroes and love is compared to a fish swimming in vitriol. At the end of the text an amalgamation of earth, breast, armies and sea “trembles like an avalanche.” The text closes with the final image of death personified as a beautiful alpinist. The only positive connection between nature and humankind occurs here in the personification of death as an alpinist—for the perspective of an alpinist at the summit contains all possible perspectives of the avalanche below.

Edward Hirsch’s “At the White Heat” discusses the 1926 “Voice of Robert Desnos” within the context of interwar history and offers a possible reading of the text as optimistic with respect to the apocalyptic natural forces envisioned by the poet. The text opposes itself to the violence of the devastating forces of history itself and creates a mythical world where the murdered “spring back to life,” as Hirsch explains (107). Hirsch cites a passage from a translation of the text in which gravediggers, hangmen and assassins come to greet the poet:

> the grave-diggers abandon the hardly-dug graves
>
> and declare that I alone may command their nightly work
>
> the assassins greet me

> the hangmen invoke the revolution
>
> invoke my voice
>
> invoke my name

Hirsch interprets the text as a "narcissistic magic show" and an "act of intervention"; this narcissistic act conquers the historical reign of death and replaces it with Breton's concept of mad love (107). Hirsch believes that Desnos discovered an optimistic power in a kind of astrological prophecy that would resurface again as a practice during his resistance to torture in the concentration camps of World War II:

> I feel as if I can recognize in that voice the person who would one day join the French Resistance to oppose fascist oppression, who refused to buckle down under torture and give up the names of his fellow Resistance workers, who met with a group to study astrology and literature at Compiègne, whose last letter from a concentration camp promised a "love story in an entirely new genre," who is said to have floated through the ranks of the doomed prisoners at Buchenwald telling fortunes, encouraging people awaiting the gas chambers by opening palms and predicting future happiness and long life. (107)

Although Hirsch's interpretation relies on the Freudian concept of narcissism, I propose that the ideas of prophecy, mad love and astrology may also be understood within the context of automatism. Desnos was obsessed with the idea of prophecy particularly in 1925 during his experiments with *sommeils hypnotiques*. He compiled three books of prophecy whose content varies from serious predictions of future deaths ("Man Ray part pour l'Amérique en 1932 et fait naufrage") and wars ("une bataille navale qui ne sera pas la dernière enrichit les îles Sandwich en 193 je ne sais plus," "1941 unira les cimetières")

to light-hearted humour (as exemplified in his prophecy about Duchamp: “Un grand silence vous couvre de 1930 à 34 Duchamp/Puis mystérieux vieillard à cheveux blancs vous [*mot illisible*] Portier. / Et le monde attendra votre mort d’ici 19 ans pour troubler le silence / que vous avez sollicité”). Desnos mocks the idea of Futurism, biblical prophecy and astrology but his humorous irony transforms playful science into an optimistic method. In this way, the role of prophecy in Desnos’s works may be placed within an empirical framework. As for Duchamp, Julien Levy comments about the role of prophecy in his works in “Duchampiana.” In his own ironic gesture as a critic Levy considers prophecy with the clarity afforded him by hindsight. He focuses on the relation between the capillaries in the *Network of Stoppages* to the capillary-like cracks in the *Large Glass*. The main role of prophecy in Duchamp’s creative process lies in the recognition that what makes a work of art significant is not what it means but *what it may come to mean*. Levy asserts that Duchamp intended for the *Large Glass* to break. Duchamp proved what his initial intentions were by showing Levy a sketch that he had drawn prior to the breakage “prophesying the shape of the fragments, so that the reconstructed glass could truly be said to have improved the composition with the addition of those ineradicable cracks” (34). The marks of the *Network of Stoppages* prefigure the form of the cracks in the *Large Glass*. Levy regarded the composition of the *Network of Stoppages* as a prophecy for the day when Duchamp would say farewell to painting.

The same strategies are present in Loy’s texts published during World War I as, for example, “At the Door of the House.” In this text a card-teller predicts the future of a love affair but a second meaning is also generated in the idea of foretelling the outcome of the war, as implied in the line: “But here is the double Victory.” An association is made between the double victory of love and war. Other words make reference to the

machinery of war, or love as a war machine, such as “wheels with wings,” “rows on rows of goblets,” “Prison-fortresses,” and “Cudgels.” The text ends on a note of a deception, as a critique of the promises of love and war made to women by male poets and soldiers; yet the ability to see through the deception makes the feminine perspective a “clairvoyant” one in the final analysis.

Although the approach of this study is not an attempt to historicize Loy’s text with biographical data as Burke has done, it is imperative to acknowledge that Loy’s post-war writings were produced during a tumultuous period in her life in which she divorced and remarried, lost a husband, gave birth to another child, and moved back and forth between several continents. Indeed, this period of nomadism shaped her writing and it is within this context that her experiments with Surrealism would eventually take place. The shattering of the society and the devastation of the landscapes that she had known while growing up in Europe were compounded by personal loss. Her perceptions of the war and its aftermath were colored through a highly individualized lens that makes her post-war writings complex. An in-depth personal biography will not be provided in this study but some information helps to situate her vis-à-vis Duchamp and Desnos. Her struggle against the aesthetic of disappearance merged with a desire to perpetuate the myth of her drowned husband. Accident, disappearance, chance and shipwreck obsessed her imagination as much as it obsessed that of Desnos.

Loy’s life as an exile in New York did not outlast the war, a biographical fact that resembles a detail from Duchamp’s personal wartime history. Also similar to Duchamp, she found herself on a ship for Buenos Aires and then returned to Europe after the war ended. Her reasons for leaving the country had more to do with her soon-to-be husband’s evasion of military conscription than her own humanitarian protest. Loy had been

estranged from her first husband, painter Stephen Haweis (with whom she had three children: a daughter who died as an infant, a son who died at age fourteen, and a second daughter Joella who eventually married the New York art dealer Julien Levy) and she would eventually seek divorce in order to marry Arthur Cravan. Born Fabien Avenarius Lloyd in 1887, Cravan shaped his social identity on his being the nephew of Oscar Wilde and set himself at odds with social conventions. Known as the poet-boxer in dadaist circles, he had eluded military authorities and conscription officers for two years as he traveled through Central and Western Europe. While living in Paris, he met avant-garde artists and started the journal *Maintenant* in order to feature his own writings exclusively. He was exhilarated by the prospect of what America had to offer. Before moving to New York he had envisioned it as a marriage between science and industry in the tradition of Walt Whitman. By contrast with Duchamp's antiretinal stance, Cravan was fascinated by what he imagined to be a spectacular array of impressions "dazzling the retina" (to use Cravan's own words), as evident in his poetic text written in anticipation of a visit to America:

> The rhythm of the ocean cradles the transatlantics,
> And while the heroic express arriving at Havre
> Whistles into the air, where the gases dance like tops,
> The athletic sailors advance, like bears.
> New York! New York! I should like to inhabit you!
> I see there science married
> To industry,
> In an audacious modernity,
> And in the palaces,

Globes,

Dazzling the retina

By their ultra-violet rays . . .[19]

Cravan imagined himself as a new Colossus of Rhodes straddling the shores of New York harbor and shuttling himself across the ocean like a transatlantic ship. The audacity of American modernism appealed to him. In 1917 he had established connections with the Arensberg salon, where he met Loy. Cravan's verbal agressivity as a dadaist poet and his physical strength as a boxer, together with his penchant for the baroque aesthetic (particularly Rubens), made Loy perceive him as a "colossus." The word "colossus," which would begin to pervade her writings, connotes massivity, wide-open expanses and the optimism of an infinite horizon.

Cravan had to leave the United States in order to evade the military draft of foreigners (he had also obtained an American passport) and possible repercussions for his social image as an agitator. He reached Canada in September 1917 and then went to Mexico. He wrote to Loy from Mexico and asked her to go there. She left New York immediately after her divorce was finalized. She married Cravan in Mexico City. Her children remained in Florence with their nurse while she and Cravan lived off of money earned from boxing matches. She became pregnant and sailed on a hospital ship to Buenos Aires. She waited for Cravan to follow her but he disappeared on a small boat. Duchamp knew Cravan personally and did not like what he perceived as his rough manner. He felt more at ease in Loy's company than in Cravan's. Burke portrays the two men as rivals competing for the attention of Loy. She details a situation in which Duchamp encouraged Cravan to drink too much alcohol before a public event to embarrass him. In his notes from "The Bride's Veil" Duchamp describes a project to

create a “manoeuvering of the handler of gravity” in terms of a combat between forces in a boxing match. Cravan and he may have been the intended bachelors in combat. Duchamp discusses the incident of Cravan’s disappearance in his interview with Cabanne. Because Cravan had talked of suicide prior to his disappearance (he had fallen ill several times and was starving in Mexico with Loy), the possibility was not ruled out by those who knew him. He had been planning to leave Mexico without being noticed in a boat that was perhaps not seaworthy. After her husband’s disappearance Loy sailed alone to England. She spent the winter with her mother until her daughter Fabienne was born in April 1919. In the summer of that year, she returned to Florence to her two older children. She was severely affected by the loss of Cravan whose body was never found. She left Florence in March 1920 to look for him and left all three children behind. She sailed for New York where she renewed her contacts with artistic circles. A few years prior to her return to Paris in 1923 she saw the publication of some of her texts. In 1923 Loy returned to Paris with Fabienne just in time for the onset of European Surrealism. She tried to support her family by opening a lampshade business with the financial backing of Peggy Guggenheim.[20] Loy frequented Montparnasse artistic circles and reestablished contact with Duchamp, among others, at parties such as one thrown by amateur publisher (and aspiring writer) Robert McAlmon.[21] McAlmon published half of her autobiographical “Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose” in the Contact Collection of Contemporary Writers in 1925. Long sections of the first half had already been published in *The Little Review* and in an abridged form, as “The English Rose,” in McAlmon’s Lunar Baedeker. “The English Rose” was published as a separate text in the 1923 edition of Lunar Baedeker (Contact Editions, Dijon, France). The German guide book was spelled as Baedecker (with a “c”) in the 1923 edition.

Loy's decision to participate in Parisian circles rather than those of her native England can be understood within the context of England's post-war modernism. We need to examine both the big picture of World War I's relationship to modernism and the specific situation of England with respect to modernity. World War I had a mixed impact on modernism. Cultural historian Norman Cantor points out that the years between 1918 and 1928 were vital ones but the later years of the twenties revealed that neo-Victorian values had been stimulated by WWI (Cantor 164). World War I was the consequence of "arrogance on the part of ruling groups in European society" that began to "envision a military confrontation for rule and hegemony within Europe as well as for world power" (161). European nations no longer exported their military competition and began to turn it back into Europe. There are two ways of interpreting the relationship between WWI and modernism:

> One would be to claim that the First World War, the last gasp of the old order, had no relationship to modernism. The old order . . . played out in the war . . . its tired ideology. On the other hand, it could be said that modernism had played an unconscious role in the cause of World War I. The old culture in 1914 was threatened by cultural revolution, which was very much under way in the first decade of the twentieth century involving philosophy, the social sciences, the arts and literature, as much as the sciences themselves, developing in all fields new ways of perceiving the world that radically contradicted nineteenth-century modes of thinking. (163)

General consequences of the war recognized by most historians, including Cantor, were that England began its decline to the ranks of a second-class power and the United States

came out of its isolation. With this hindsight one may confirm that England was a shrinking empire and would continue to shrink throughout the next decades. Virginia Woolf wrote in her diary, "Civilisation has shrunk." Woolf's statement refers to the onset of World War II in 1939, as well as a long-term reversal of England's role (and Europe's) as a dominant world power.[22]

Loy's "The English Rose," published post-World War I in the beginning of the 1920s, is a shorter variant of the autobiographical "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose." "The English Rose" is the work of an expatriate British woman grappling with the post-war socio-cultural and political identity of England. In this text the Rose no longer serves as an icon for English Imperialism. The beginning of the text below makes it clear that England's power has been checked:

Early English everlasting
quadrate Rose
paradox-Imperial
trimmed with some travestied flesh
tinted with bloodless duties dewed
with Lipton's teas
and grimed with crack-packed
herd-housing
petalling
the prim gilt
penetralia
of a luster-scioned
core-crown

Rose of arrested impulses

self-pruned

of the primordial attributes

a tepid heart inhibiting

with tactful terrorism

the Blossom Populous

to mystic incest with its ancestry

establishing

by the divine right of self-assertion

the post-conceptual

virginity of Nature

wiping

its pink paralysis

A World-Blush

glowing from

a never-setting-sun

Conservative Rose

storage

of British Empire-made pot-pourri

of dry dead men making a sweetened smell

among a shrivelled collectivity

In the above passage the "Early English Rose everlasting/quadrate Rose" has become a "paradox-Imperial." The hyphenization of paradox-Imperial indicates the complexity of an identity that cannot be grasped within the Cartesian grid. The Rose has now been "trimmed with some travestied flesh" and "tinted with bloodless duties dewed"; it is a "self-pruned" symbol. The Rose is shrinking like the British Empire that begins to disappear. Loy exposes the aesthetic of disappearance in its relation to the war machine of the British Empire. The disappearance of bodies has "pruned" the empire and the subsequent reduction in economic power made the empire shrivel further. Loy's text presents the British Empire as a rose pulverized into a pot-pourri of "dry dead men making a sweetened smell/among a shriveled collectivity."

The arid desert landscape symbolizes a masculine landscape that is usually opposed to a feminine landscape of flowers and gardens in traditional poetry. In "Mexican Desert," published at the same time as "The English Rose," Loy creates a desert landscape whose dryness makes the earth crack open. The desert landscape is masculine in opposition to the train which is feminine, an unusual reversal of associations. It is the force of the wailing train that cracks open the dry earth. If one thinks of the wailing train as a symbol for Loy's mourning over a lost husband in Mexico, its shattering of the landscape takes on a more positive connotation of connectivity between the masculine and feminine territories of the text. One may compare the positive event of cracking open the landscape to Duchamp's insistence that the cracking of his *Large Glass* connects the domains of the Bride and the Bachelor through a chance event of nature. Loy's "seismic orgasm" extends to the idea of the train rushing through the landscape and breaking up the ground. Loy's poem is not an elegy but a rushing train of abstraction that takes on more significance than the Orphic call to

bring back the lost beloved. The train is "belching" convulsively more than it is wailing and, thus, it is not paralyzed by an impasse; it trails its "rattling wooden tail" into the sunset like a comet. Loy feminizes Duchamp's 1911-1912 *Sad Young Man on a Train* depicting the movement of a train as a form of cubist-inspired abstraction that also suggests a fractal.

Train imagery pervades surrealist painting, photography and film; either it indicates an exploration of new perceptual images made possible through technological developments or an obsession with the trainwreck as a new form of catastrophe (a modern shipwreck). A real train plowed through the walls of the Gare Montparnasse on October 22, 1895; a photograph commemorating the event has been compared to surrealist painting because it depicts a train dangling alongside the brick wall of the Gare Montparnasse.[23] The Lumière brothers experimented with the first films in France and one of their most effective films featured a train rushing at the viewer. In a scene from Charlie Chaplin's *A Woman of Paris* the effect of the arrival of a train is produced with reflecting lights cast by a spotlight moving across window shapes cut into a board. The technique would also be used in Carol Reed's *The Third Man* in 1949. Deleuze wrote two volumes on the cinema in which he analyzes the transformation of movement from stillness to motion, from action to affect to perception, from icon to index to symbol, from a far distance to close-up. Deleuze's schema of images, including action images and perception images, will be examined with more detail in Chapter Four.

In 1938 Magritte painted *Time Transfixed*; instead of painting an engine rushing out of a tunnel in accordance with normative expectations, he painted a train coming out of a fireplace. His painting, influenced by Giorgio de Chirico, challenges the idea of perception as "tunnel vision." De Chirico's paintings of always-arriving trains have a

cinematic quality to them because they explore perception-images. Giorgio de Chirico invested his train imagery with a metaphysical content that juxtaposed ancient mythology to the banality of modern forms and urban objects. De Chirico's father Evaristo de Chirico built a little steam train linking the port of Volos to otherwise inaccessible mountain villages of Pelio. In Greek mythology the fertile lands of Mount Pelio, where the gods of Olympus spend their summers, attracted centaurs and Argonauts (including Jason who launched his search of the Golden Fleece from Pelio). Desnos took an interest in the Argonauts and, according to Arturo Schwarz, Duchamp's androgynous *Mona Lisa* can be identified with a folk practice in ancient Argos requiring brides to wear false beards on their wedding night.[24] In addition to ancient Greek iconography, images of the modern Greek landscape (including towers, trains and factories) made their way into De Chirico's paintings, particularly the *Ariadne* series. De Chirico's *Ariadne* (1913) depicts a train rushing toward a white tower. The train appears to be rushing without ever arriving anywhere and the white tower takes on the connotation of an inaccessible woman. The always-arriving train challenges normative expectations of temporal and spatial organization of the picture plane. It questions the idea of progress because archaic mythology persists in modernity and appears more modern than urban "artefacts" (i.e. the train rushing nowhere). We would not be wrong to interpret the always-arriving train as a reaction to the perverse quality of modern fetish-objects (in the Freudian sense of the term). De Chirico's metaphysics linked unconscious fantasy to concrete objects. He depicts Ariadne either as dreaming or in a state of waking; she has been abandoned by Theseus and, in this respect, she resembles the train rushing nowhere. Is the train coming or going? Is Ariadne waking or dreaming? Ariadne is no longer the heroine who, sure of herself, gives the thread to Theseus to measure his way out of the Minotaur's maze. De

Chirico's urban artefacts have lost their ability to measure and are transformed into objects of indifference like Duchamp's readymades. Although Ariade is an icon, the viewer of De Chirico's paintings must shift his/her perception between icon, symbol and index. If one considers the entire series of Ariadne paintings, the viewer must shift his/her focus to see her now close-up in one painting, then horizontally-positioned in another painting and even vertically-positioned in yet another. Exile and loss of identity involve more than just a sense of Freudian melancholy and nostalgia in the surreal images of male painters. The idea of the feminine has a complex relation to the masculine identity of the always-arriving train in surreal imagery.[25] The ambiguity of Duchamp's Bachelors in quest of the virgin Bride entails a similar complexity of gender identification. De Chirico's train is always rushing toward or gesturing at a virgin forest of pure metaphysical symbols but the desire to create new concepts is impeded by always-already-present clichés. Although the always-already-present illustrates an important Derridean concept of deconstruction (specifically, the concept of presupposition), the necessity of the immanence of concrete objects in the works of De Chirico brings him closer to Deleuzian ideas of difference and the ruin of representation. The playfulness of ancient and modern forms is part of the interactive process of baroque Surrealism in De Chirico.

De Chirico's *The Anxious Journey* (1913) foregrounds a series of arcades that function as barriers to the representation of images; in the background there is a train rushing from nowhere headed straight for a brick wall. The image of the train is the "problem" of the painting itself. The viewer risks falling victim to illusions or stereotyped perceptions. Like the train in *The Anxious Journey*, the image comes from nowhere. The image moves in and out of contexts and can be transformed. Susan Buck-

Morss argues that the viewer stumbles upon an image without it ever having been lost.[26] Her argument challenges Freudian definitions of nostalgia and loss. Buck-Morss supports Deleuze's notion that images escape the generalization of the concept rather than fit within pre-existing frames of meaning. She is interested in the political implications of Deleuze's ideas about the singularity of the image and its ability to "name itself" and "propose its own caption." She studies the link between the critical heritage of visual culture and its empirical, socio-political concerns. Globalization and new technologies do not always bring about progress in a socio-cultural sense, an idea conveyed by the abandoned (or always-arriving from nowhere) train in Surrealism. Military and economic interests may appropriate a new technology and impede socio-cultural progress. Furthermore, the new technology may not be equally accessible in all regions of the world. Buck-Morss mentions also an anonymous photograph reproduced as an illustration for an article by Benjamin Péret (Desnos's close friend) in *Minotaure* (no. 10, Winter 1937) of an abandoned train coming from nowhere covered in vegetation, as if it were rushing into a virgin forest. The title of Péret's article could function as a caption for the image, which has the ability to choose its own caption—"La Nature dévore le progrès et le dépasse" (Nature devours progress and surpasses it).

Loy's identification with images, icons and symbols shifts from text to text because she has to move in and out of already complex masculine identities. Images do not fit within pre-existing frames of reference in her texts. Although the identification of the modern train with femininity has a positive connotation in her text "Mexican Desert," the rose as a symbolic force of nature becomes paralyzed in "The English Rose." She writes about a "post-conceptual/virginity of Nature/wiping/its pink paralysis." The "ideological pink" of the Empire effectuates a "World-blush/glowing from/a never-

setting-sun." The idea of an empire with a never-setting-sun goes against the diurnal cycle of nature. The concept of the never-setting-sun as pure heliocentrism eclipses the nighttime world of dream and shadow. In "Mexican Desert" the sun sets in the open landscape of the New World where the deformed cacti and palm trees "belabour the cinders of twilight." The following lines from "The English Rose" make a connection between delocalized optics and post-war perceptions:

> Which august dust
> stirred by
> the trouser-striped prongs of statesmanship
> (whenever politic)
> rises upon the puff of press alarum
> and whirling itself
> deliriously around the unseen
> Bolshevik subsides
> in ashy circularity
> "a wreath" upon the unknown
> soldier's grave

The vertigo of "august" dust "whirling itself /delirously around the unseen" has been stirred up by the "prongs of statesmanship." The dust cloud creates an obstacle to vision and prevents the revolutionary Bolshevik from being seen. The whirling of the dust is a manifestation of the baroque process of extension and redirection of lines of energy. This process of expansion and redirection of energy describes the baroque socio-cultural structure, a structure that has persisted continuously until present-day postmodernism with only a single disruption—the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. The Bolshevik revolution

attempted to create a new socio-cultural model and disrupt the one already in place. The whirlwind of dust enveloping the Bolshevik in Loy's text implies that it absorbs energy from the revolutionary movement for a while. The whirlwind of dust subsides eventually and settles into "ashy circularity" like a wreath upon the grave of the unknown soldier. Loy does not represent an iconic image of a tomb or evoke a sense of mourning for the dead Bolshevik soldier. Instead of an icongraphic image, there is a vertigo effect that yields to the tracing of a wreath-like shape upon a grave. The dust-breeding resists the category of the iconic and manifests instead the Duchampian notion of the apparition or the ichnographic. Loy believed in democracy and did not personally mourn the loss of Bolshevism; however, the presence of the wreath memorializes the past within the present and sets the stage for postmodern figurations. Loy's structure of faith and expansion envelops the revolutionary past within the folds of memory. The only difference between the baroque model (of expansion and redirection of energy) and modern/postmodern structures (of construction and deconstruction) is that Europe does not lie at the center of the modern/postmodern world as it did in the Baroque Age. In order to clarify this point, we must look again at baroque forms. For instance, we may think of Velázquez's *The Feast of Bacchus* in which a wreath is placed as the center of an S-shape structure along a diagonal axis, indicating a model of expansion—whose center is no longer circumscribed within the closed boundaries of a circle or pyramid. The political significance of expansion may be perceived in Vermeer's *Officer and Laughing Girl* where a navigational chart in the background of the painting represents Holland's dependency on travel to obtain resources. A light source originates from an open window enabling the outside world to penetrate the interior room at the center of the painting's composition. In Loy's text this baroque model interacts with a second one, the Bolshevik

revolution. The interaction of two cultural forms, the Bolshevik revolution and the baroque faith/expansion structure, develops into a structure that prefigures (Deleuzian) postmodern forms. On a political level, the two models may interact because the Baroque developed out of a crisis of property during the ascendancy of the mercantile class and Bolshevism reacted against private property in order to place the proletarian class in power. Loy would have been familiar with the model of Bolshevism, since Cravan had come to America on the same ship as the exiled Leon Trotsky before his return to the revolutionary state of his native country.

Loy personifies the rose as Albion (the name Albion harks back to medieval legend as does the rose from the Roman de la rose). Albion "salutes the alien Exodus" who personifies the "other" identities of England, such as Jews. Exodus "warms his nostalgia on her belligerent innocence." The idea of Exodus warming up to the military salute of Albion indicates a refusal to adhere to the traditional iconography of both Christian and Jewish traditions. Loy leaves her reader with the sense that no rituals (be they religious or secular) exist in post-war Europe that might help reintegrate people back into communities or cope with trauma and loss on a wide scale. Loy made another attempt during the 1930s to identify herself as a half-English/half-Jewish woman in the unpublished autobiographical novel Goy Israels. Amy Feinstein's "Goy Interrupted: Mina Loy's Unfinished Novel and Mongrel Jewish Fiction"[27] discusses how the novel as self-portrait of Loy draws on sources as diverse as its protagonist, from contemporary racialist scientism to John Bunyan. According to Feinstein, Loy considered her self-portrait in Goy Israels to be part of the modernist impulse to make a *new* work. The novel blends science and art, autobiography and experimentation, as well as allegory and ethnography. Loy makes use of complex narrative forms in Goy Israels to reflect and

better understand the complexities of modern Jewish identity and humanity as a whole. Burke interprets Goy Israels as a frustrated attempt to resolve an irresolvable conflict within its author's identity. Loy's self-conception as a "Goy Interrupted" is a matter for her biographers and for those who analyze her prose in great depth.

It is important to note that Loy's non-autobiographical poetry, such as "Apology of Genius," expresses the sentiments of a person who feels "ostracized" by the general community. Critics connect Loy's sentiments of being an outsider to her position as a female artist. Loy read this poem in the late 1920s at the salon of the famous lesbian writer and art patron Natalie Clifford Barney. She translated the text into French (it was the first of Loy's text to be translated into French). Barney recounts in her Aventures de l'esprit how Loy managed to escape from the apology presented in the text, as well as its poetic prisms, by aspiring toward the fourth dimension.[28] Loy's "Apology for Genius" makes an appeal to the intellect and imagination. The reference to "Lepers of the moon" is an attempt to give credit to Symbolism. What Barney does not emphasize in her appraisal of Loy's text is the usage of symbolist techniques as a direct response to the futurist condemnation of Symbolism. Hilda Bronstein argues persuasively that the employment of lunar imagery and decadent language in Loy's post-war poems was a defiant *riposte* to Marinetti and his proscription of such tropes. Loy had become profoundly disillusioned with Marinetti's belligerence and with the futurists' enthusiastic participation in war. In "Psycho-Democracy," which was written in 1918 and published privately in Florence in 1920, she expresses her personal cynicism concerning the nationalisms that had contributed to World War I. In contrast to Marinetti's description of war as "the world's only hygiene," she describes military conflict as "the cataclysmic factor in social evolution." In the poetry written during this period, she responds to

Marinetti by employing the symbolist tropes to which he had declared his aversion in the manifesto "We Abjure our Symbolist Masters, the Last Lovers of the Moon." Marinetti's scorn for Poe, Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Verlaine, as well as his disdain for women in general, was the fuel with which he had earlier launched an attack on his rival in literature and politics, the symbolist poet Gabriele D'Annunzio.[29] Loy's use of symbolist tropes formed part of her strategy to resist both Futurism and male chauvinism. The use of Morse-code-like dashes in her texts creates an intermittent effect that makes her poetry more elusive to the reader, as opposed to reducing her text to the mechanical repetition of a verbal cliché. In short, her use of dashes resists the closure of a single verbal or visual message.

Loy's poetic strategy of resistance to Futurism also included a resistance to anti-Semitism and racial scientism. The play with her Jewish family name as a symbol of resistance is obvious in "Lions' Jaws" where the letters shift from "Nima Lyo" to "Anim Yol" to "Imna Oly." This strategy serves as an active form of resistance to standard categorizations. Loy had become acquainted with the British vorticists (and even dedicated a text to the founder of Vorticism, Wyndham Lewis, who reformulated Imagism in 1914 to emphasize greater forcefulness through a radiant node or cluster) but she did not identify herself as a member of the group. Vorticism's energy drew in Ezra Pound, Christopher Nevinson and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska (who died in the trenches of World War I). The vorticists may have initially shared common goals with symbolists and dadaists but then they allied themselves with Marinetti's Futurism and eventually Fascism. Loy had been Pound's friend when she lived in Europe, all the more since he was very close to Natalie Clifford Barney. However, Loy left Europe in 1936 to reside in New York where her daughter Joella and Levy were also living. Burke reports that Loy

feared the "world crisis" would be blamed on the Jews and Hitler had announced in 1936 that the Germans needed more living space. Burke states also that Loy's need to establish "relations" stemmed from her identification with Jewish family values.[30] Whereas Loy no longer lived near Pound, Barney moved to Italy (where Pound resided) when Paris was occupied by the Germans. Barney felt an obligation to maintain her friendship with Pound even when he made fascist broadcasts on the Italian radio in the 1940s. She had respected Pound too much in the 1920s to be critical of his actions in the 1930s and 1940s. Suzanne Rodriguez notes that Barney was part Jewish and her sister was the widow of a Jewish man but, despite these facts, Barney appears to have been politically careless.[31] Some of Barney's friends, such as Renée Lang, claimed that she never revealed any signs of anti-Semitism to them.[32] Barney's mother Alice had been a victim of anti-Semitism; Alice and her other daughter Laura had actually converted to the Baha'i faith around the turn of the century. Barney feared persecution by the Nazis and tried to identify herself as a Protestant when they questioned her. At this time Pound was indicted for making broadcasts opposing the policies of the government of the United States. A New York reporter interviewed Loy about her old friend but Loy was unable to come up with an explanation for his behavior.[33] Most of Pound's friends, except Barney, abandoned him and people generally thought he had gone insane. His fascist rants on the radio were delusional and he ended up in a mental institution. We should consider, moreover, that Barney never loosened her close ties with Stein whose Jewish heritage was widely known. Stein had included Barney (as well as Loy) in her 1933 Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas.[34] In 1934 Barney visited Stein and Alice B. Toklas during her trip to the United States. In 1937 Stein and Toklas continued to attend Barney's Friday night events when they had a residence near her in Paris. Barney made

an attempt to reconnect with Loy on her second visit to the United States in 1938, when she learned of the poverty that she and her daughter Joella had fallen into as a result of the depressed economy and Joella's separation from Julien Levy. Both Burke and Rodriguez mention that Barney left an ice-box on Loy's doorstep as a gesture of support during hard times. We can see the logic of Rodriguez's opinion that Barney never gave up on her friends and that explains why she supported Pound as well as Stein and Loy. Barney was a wealthy heiress who was both politically conservative and privately radical. Her poetic verse sought to rekindle the flames of Sapphic verse as a model of lesbian desire. She managed to identify with ancient traditions by reinventing Lesbos and constructing a Greek temple in her backyard.

Identification with classical ideals proved more problematic for Loy than it did for Barney. As opposed to Barney's use of Sapphic verse for lesbian identification, Loy turned toward Sapphic verse as a precursor of frank treatment of sexual matters.[35] Loy's relationship to classical forms themselves, however, was strongly mediated by American and French male symbolist poets, such as Edgar Allen Poe and Mallarmé. At the same time that "The English Rose" appeared in publication in the early twenties so did Loy's "Poe." The title pays homage to Poe but the text is also a reference to Mallarmé's tribute to Poe, "Le Tombeau d'Edgar Poe." In Mallarmé's text a block of granite is the mark of a disaster, the death of Poe. The block is qualified as calm and the catastrophe of the poet's death is naturalized in the image of a falling star, as can be seen in the line: "Calme bloc, ici-bas chu d'un désastre obscure." Loy's homage to Poe differs from that of Mallarmé. Her text "Marble," dedicated to the shade of Apollo, draws its inspiration from a block of marble but unlike "Le Tombeau d'Edgar Poe" a sense of coldness and emotional impasse prevails instead of naturalized calmness. In addition to the idea of the coldness of the

marble, the idea of cast shadows on the shade of a lost hand builds upon the emptiness of a void: “A colonnade/Apollo haunts Apollo/with the shade of a lost hand.” “Marble” creates an impasse for Loy as she refuses an esoteric relationship with a block of marble (perhaps as a rejection of masculine traditions associated with Greek sculpture). Loy’s “Poe,” however, goes beyond the impasse created in “Marble.” The entire text of “Poe” is cited below:

a lyric elixir of death
embalms
the spindle spirits of your hour glass loves
on moon spun nights

sets
icicled canopy
for corpses of poesy
with roses and northern lights

where frozen nightingales in ilex aisles
sing burial rites

No idea of disaster or catastrophe predominates because the text does not address the idea of the death of a single poet but of a certain conception of poetry. Burke mentions Poe’s assertion in *A Philosophy of Composition* that the “death of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world” (297). Her reading of Loy’s homage to Poe is that Loy critiques the romantic vision of women as silenced “corpses of poetry” by reversing the dynamics of power and positioning a female voice in response to a male

perspective. Burke's final interpretation of the voice in the text is an autobiographical reading of the female voice mourning for the lost poet-lover Cravan in an inverted Orpheus theme.

In my opinion, Loy's "Poe" should be understood beyond the autobiographical level because it indicates the evolving modernism in the poet's development and not simply a critique of past forms. The text is more than a rueful ode to feminine passivity. In "Poe" the moon is associated with feminized poetic energy, which envelops the frozen corpse of poetry in a baroque fashion. This image brings to mind a Bernini sculpture in which the sculpted stone comes to life with movement in contrast to a static *pietà*. In "Poe" the moon is a matrix of lyricism that embalms the "corpses of poesy" with an "elixir of death." The embalmed corpses solidify into an "icicled canopy" that, again, evokes the image of sculpted fabric—with the difference that the bodies themselves become transformed into the frozen or "sculpted" canopy. Loy transforms Bernini's bronze canopy, the Baldachin in St. Peter's Basilica, into a verbal construction. The ambiguity of Bernini's sculpture as architecture carries over into her conceptualization of the "icicled canopy." Loy extends the paradox into the idea of nightingales, frozen in "ilex aisles" (ilex being the large genus of trees and shrubs bearing small flowers and berries) and nonetheless singing burial rites. The frozen nightingales modify the image of Parnassian-symbolist swans immobilized, and immortalized, in the purity of poetic form. The word choice, particularly "ilex" instead of the more familiar "holly," makes the language more Parnassian in scientific exactitude. Despite the addition of naturalizing elements (roses, northern lights), Loy's "icicled canopy/for corpses of poesy" has transformed the symbolism of burial rites into something akin to the surreal concept of an *exquisite corpse*. The surrealist concept of exquisite corpse was based on a parlor game

played by several people who would write a phrase on a sheet of paper, fold the paper to conceal part of it, and pass it on to the next player to contribute. A sentence from one of the games played generated the result from which the name exquisite corpse was obtained: "Le cadavre exquis boira le vin nouveau" (“The exquisite corpse will drink the young wine”).[36] This collective activity originated in the symbolist era and its invention has been attributed to Lautréamont. Surrealists would soon make Lautréamont’s concept of collective activity their own and would frequently cite his idea that "poetry must be made by all and not by one." Loy’s use of term *poesy* reinforces the collective sense of sharing words and poetic concepts. The term *poesy* is a Renaissance spelling of poetry adapted from the French word for poetry, *poésie*. In the sixteenth century Sidney’s *The Defence of Poesie* employs the French spelling whereas Henry Olney used yet a different variant of the term in his printing of *An Apologie for Poetrie*. Sidney’s first *Defense of Poesie* employs "poesy" for all literary forms, including lyric, drama, and prose. Such “defenses” aimed to support a logic of sense and to determine the “sense” of writing and language. Loy’s use of the term “poesy” combines all genres of writing into one concept, an idea that would become popular within surrealist circles. Sidney advocated rights for all creative writers at a time in the development of English literature when the Tudor Rose censored publications considered to be immoral or threatening to the English dynasty. Loy was certainly concerned about the censorship of her writing and its being “buried.” “Poe” offers an ironic stance toward the purity of traditions, be they from the Renaissance or symbolist periods, because this idea of purity disallows the incorporation of foreign words that threaten the purity of English words. Her use of *poesy* goes beyond a simple satire of traditional forms and presents new possibilities. The irony of frozen

birds singing a funeral rite in “Poe” for the dead body of poetry affirms the creation of a cosmopolitan concept in lieu of a nationalist conception of modern poetry.

Loy chose to dedicate a text to Poe because she believed that modern poetry composed in the English language was to be shaped mostly by the cosmopolitan culture of America. She organized her ideas about the enrichment of the English language through contact with dialects and foreign languages in her essay *Modern Poetry*. In her essay she writes:

> It was inevitable that the renaissance of poetry should proceed out of America, where latterly a thousand languages have been born, and each one, for purposes of communication at least, English—English enriched and variegated with the grammatical structure and voice-inflection of many races, in novel alloy with the fundamental time-is-money idiom of the United States, discovered by the newspaper cartoonists (158).

She continues her argument in making a contrast between the “God’s English” of the Harvard and Oxford elite and the melting-pot language of a more lowbrow variety. Despite America’s being a melting pot, she insists that there has “occurred no Europeanization of [the American poet’s] fundamental advantage” (159). The poetry of the modern American poet proceeds out of America alone. While she values the composite quality of American English, some of her statements offer an implicit critique of American culture. For example, the reason that highbrow and lowbrow societies communicate in the same English in America is due to the fact that “both have had to become adapted to a country where the mind has to put on its verbal clothes at terrific speed if it would speak in time; where no one will listen if you attack him twice with the

same missile of argument" (159). The references to speed and missile attacks draw a connection between American modernism, technological control and militarism.

Loy's concern about her writings being censored has been well documented by her biographers and critics. Her "Apology of Genius," published at the same time as "Poe," begins with a statement that poets are ostracized by God and the "watchers of civilized wastes" reverse their signals on the "tracks" of poetic genius. The poets are "magically diseased"; they are "Lepers of the moon" that have "luminous sores." Near the end of the text a positive concept of the artist takes shape: "In the raw caverns of the Increate/we forge the dusk of Chaos/to that imperious jewelry of the Universe/—The Beautiful— ." The idea of jewelry as a symbol for poetic creativity can be found in Mallarmé's definition of poetry pronounced during an interview with Jules Huret (which appeared in *L'Echo de Paris* in 1891). As the passage below reveals, the luminosity of a precious stone may convey the state of the soul:

> L'enfantillage de la littérature jusqu'ici a été de croire, par exemple, que de choisir un certain nombre de pierres précieuses et en mettre les noms sur le papier, même très bien, c'était faire des pierres précieuses. Eh bien ! non ! La poésie consistant à créer, il faut prendre dans l'âme humaine des états, des lueurs d'une pureté si absolue que, bien chantés et bien mis en lumière, cela constitue en effet les joyaux de l'homme : là, il y a symbole, il y a création, et le mot poésie a ici son sens ; c'est, en somme, la seule création humaine possible. Et si, véritablement, les pierres précieuses dont on se pare ne manifestent pas un état d'âme, c'est indûment qu'on s'en pare . . . La femme, par exemple, cette éternelle voleuse . . .[37]

Loy's revelation of poetic beauty is immediately followed by the last lines of the text in which artistic productivity is compared to a "delicate crop/of criminal mystic immortelles" that stands against the censor's scythe:

> While to your eyes
> A delicate crop
> of criminal mystic immortelles
> stands to the censor's scythe

The words "delicate crop" express a romantic sense of beauty at risk. Loy will immediately critique this idea of beauty at risk in search of a more surreal notion of convulsive beauty. The vulnerability of the "delicate crop" gives way to a hardier sense of convulsive beauty that "stands to the censor's scythe" in the final line. The agglomeration of "criminal mystic immortelles" builds up the convulsive energy in the second to last line. The image of a scythe symbolizes Death the Reaper in traditional postwar iconography, such as Homer's 1866 post-Civil War *Veteran in a New Field*. In Homer's painting the plowshare accompanies the scythe and contributes to a positive sense of renewal. Loy's text does not present a ritualized renewal by nature. The artifice of the jewelry metaphor and the convulsiveness of the crop of "criminal mystic immortelles" standing up to the scythe are possibilities that may exist for new realities in a world that lacks a ritual of renewal and a contract with nature. Her use of the feminine form "immortelles" alludes to the creation of new realities that may resist masculine appropriation and domination.

The guiding force behind her experimentation with forms from the Baroque, Symbolism and Dada-Surrealism was humanitarian protest. Burke argues that the "Songs to Joannes" for "all their emphasis on sex" cannot be understood without framing them

within the historical context of the Great War (207). She considers the difference in reception of Loy's texts between her contemporaries and critics from the postmodern era. In her view, the postmodern reader might interpret Loy's texts only for their sexual connotations. References to the Great War would have been more obvious to Loy's contemporaries, and more disturbing, than they are to today's readers. For example, the words "humid carnage" from XII of "Songs to Joannes" would have disturbed Loy's contemporaries with their reference to the human slaughter of war as well as sexuality (208). Burke notes that Loy compared a bed to a battlefield in XVII, lovers to hostile machines in XXV and sex to a contest between "shuttle-cock" and "battle-door" in X (207-8). Elizabeth Arnold has also shown that Loy embraced and then rejected Futurism because of its misogyny and investment in what she saw as the "war fever" of the 1910s.[38] I am convinced that these viewpoints from Burke and Arnold are valid and I intend to develop them further in this chapter.

The text "Lunar Baedeker" has elements of the Baroque, Symbolism and Dada-Surrealism. The general tone of the text is one of ironic distance from established poetic forms. The text opens with an ironic view of the idea of excess: "A silver Lucifer/serves/cocaine in cornucopia/ To some somnambulists/of adolescent thighs/ draped/in satirical draperies." The poet identifies herself with a devil serving hallucinogens in "excess" to somnambulists. She identifies herself with the devil at the beginning of the text because she empathizes with the decadence she saw in post-war Europe. The streets of post-war Berlin were filled with prostitutes, drug users, beggars, paralytics, traumatized veterans and starving masses. The exact date of composition of "Lunar Baedeker" is not known but it was published at the time of Loy's travels in post-war Europe. In 1922 Loy was traveling at a time when German artists were addressing

problems of postwar society, such as financial troubles and lack of democracy. Tzara and other dadaists met with exiled Russian abstractionists in Weimar. Anarchists, socialists and Bolsheviks fled to Berlin. Burke describes Berlin as “full of foreigners taking advantage of the nightlife, the inflation, and the air of perpetual crisis” (314).

After the opening of “Lunar Baedeker,” Loy takes a distance from her identification with decadence as she critiques the “adolescent thighs/ draped/ in satirical draperies.” The silver Lucifer attempts to maintain a state of controlled trance but the excess of “satirical” drapery resists the control of the trance by mocking the seriousness of that mental state. The enveloping drapery of the liminal state is described by Loy as satirical. The effectiveness of baroque forms, automatism and satire are challenged by the poet. Loy complicates Desnos’s injunction that poetry be at once delirious and lucid. For both Desnos and Loy the idea of controlling takes place within the language of Empiricism that exceeds the limits of Naturalism and Symbolism in search of new ways of connection. Desnos experimented with the limits of waking and dreaming in the manner of Heraclitus who acknowledged that the inner world of the dream had traditionally disconnected people from their common environment. Loy drapes her somnambulists within the folds of satire in order to mock the veracity or verifiability of the controlled trance. Hers is an ironic satire that does not take the performance seriously. It is not a question of productivity for Loy but of attitude.

Like Duchamp, Loy experiments with the language of scientific exactitude that she opposes to the hallucinatory delirium of delocalized optics. Multidimensional vision and paralogic resist the constraints that limit possibilities for new forms to develop. Because of its complex relationship to delocalized optics, that appear to contradict it, Loy’s scientific precision has more in common with Duchamp’s works than those of

Parnassian poets. Duchamp's readymade objects, particularly the *Bicycle Wheel*, have earned him much attention as manifestations of pure Parnassian forms; yet his precision optics surpasses Parnassian purity and plays with the concept of delocalized optics. Loy's delocalized optics have been described by one critic as "parallax vision."[39] In "parallax vision" each eye perceives what *appears* to be a slightly different version of the same thing (two photographic images in Loy's day or more recently two virtual images produced by computer software); both eyes together with the brain produce a total of *three* images. The central image among the three perceived by the viewer appears to be three dimensional. Which side is the virtual "third" image on, that of science or hallucination—or both? Loy's language has been considered by some critics to be Parnassian in its exactitude. Her contemporaries recognized the scientific precision of her poetic vocabulary, a fact that provoked Marianne Moore to dedicate a text to her entitled "Those Various Scalpels." Moore maps out Loy's body with the technical precision of cinematography and makes use of extended metaphors. Ezra Pound coined the term *logopoeia* to refer to the "arid clarity" of the American temperament of both Loy's and Moore's poetics, as Marisa Januzzi explains (404). Pound defines *logopoeia* as "poetry akin to nothing but language, which is a dance of the intelligence among words and ideas and modifications of ideas and characters" (404). As a vorticist, he found an affinity between himself and Loy because she also experimented with Vorticism through the influence of Wyndham Lewis. The movement's resistance to traditional forms of representation appealed to Loy and she created "'The Starry Sky' of Wyndham Lewis." In this text Loy combines a dance of the intellect with scientific vocabulary, as evident in the line "—The nerves of Heaven/flinching/from the antennae/of the intellect . . ." Jane

Dowson remarks that Loy's *logopoeia* anticipates postmodernism's linguistic construction of consciousness (165).

Januzzi asserts that Loy's early texts contain scientific vocabulary that is not naturalized but characterized by self-referential plasticity. She claims that Loy's early futurist-inspired texts make use of scientific language to "kill off the nineteenth century" rather than to "fulfill its poetic promise" (414). An example that illustrates this point can be found in "Italian Pictures," as Januzzi explains, in which the heroine is "killed by *phthisis*," a medical term for consumption, the disease that killed off the nineteenth-century heroes and heroines (414-415). The artist-heroes of "Lunar Baedeker" have a different disease; they are "magically diseased" lepers of the moon with luminous sores. The blending of the scientific with the marvelous reveals that Loy has rejected both pure Parnassianism and Futurism. As Marjorie Perloff argues, Loy's conceptual words are parabolic but they resist Marinetti's *parole in libertà* (138). Unpoetic "technical" terms slow down the reader and cause a delay in meaning. Mallarmé was influenced by the precise scientific language of Parnassian poetry but he rejected it in favor of evocative moods, as, for example, the calmness of a block of marble representing Poe's tomb. Loy rejected Futurism for its belligerence and pure Parnassianism for its over-rationalization of thought and feeling. Her 1915 "Babies in Hospital" describes her experience in a hospital where she volunteered during the war. The text reveals her fascination with clinical language and it is replete with terms like "atrophied," "tuberculosis," "microscope," and "thermometer."

In reference to the term "infusoria" in "Lunar Baedeker" Fields remarks that the "infusoria…are marvelous."[40] Infusoria is a collective term for minute aquatic organisms like algae, ciliate and protozoa. In sufficient numbers, these organisms can cloud the

water of a pond. Magritte's painting of a clouded eye (*The False Mirror*), as a mirror of the complex and changeable, is analogous to Loy's textual fabrication of infusoria. Magritte's clouded eye is a single eye because it conveys the idea that visual perception involves intuition. The singularity of any perception-image requires the viewer to intuit the part from the whole. Bergson's fascination with infusoria (or the Infusorian) in Creative Evolution results from the fact that the unicellular organism of the Infusorian is exhausted at the end of a certain number of divisions, which is a mirror of his own process of aging as a "thing that endures" (13). The discussion of the Infusorian leads Bergson to comment that everything is marvelous if one considers the human eye, in which thousands of elements are coordinated in a single function; in the Infusorian the eye is reduced to the almost purely chemical impressionability of a pigment-spot to light (50). Loy's "Delirious Avenues" are lucid because they are illuminated with the marvelous light of "infusoria/from Pharoah's tombstones." Duration and death, as in Bergson, are revealed even in the infusoria. The tombstones in Loy's texts do not evoke calm emotion as does Mallarmé's block of marble in his text about Poe's tomb. Loy's intention is not to create emotion but to interrogate the virtuality of scientific images in a way that anticipates post-structuralist thought. Delirious avenues lead to "mercurial doomsdays" and to an "odious oasis/in furrowed phosphorous." The idea of the ominous doomsday develops out of the paralogic of the virtual as an "oasis of phosphorous furrows." In Loy's variation of baroque Surrealism the Desnosian idea of mental *arboresence* at the limits of intelligibility has been tempered by a transcendental materialism (in the sense of Deleuze and Bergson):

> Delirious Avenues
>
> lit

with the chandelier souls

of infusoria

from Pharoah's tombstones

lead

to mercurial doomsdays

Odious oasis

in furrowed phosphorous

The ecstatic dust whirls crusaders (militant ideologies) out of illusory structures that shatter and fall into the void of “evacuate craters”:

Cyclones

of ecstatic dust

and ashes whirl

crusaders

from hallucinatory citadels

of shattered glass

into evacuate craters

This marvelous scientific language continues with the discovery of a Necropolis that spawns a flock of dreams from the shores of “oval oceans” in the “oxidized Orient”:

A flock of dreams

browse on Necropolis

From the shores

of oval oceans

in the oxidized Orient

The alliteration of the vowel O reinforces the sense of wonder, as if it were an exclamation “Oh!” in the presence of a marvel. The visual play of the repetition of the vowel continues in the next few lines. The marvelous fusion of scientific and poetic languages involves the interference of the verbal and the visual. The sense of the marvelous arises from the interference of boundaries of knowledge. Through the merging of “Onyx” and “Odalisques,” the geological reference to a black stone interferes with the exotic but arcane nineteenth-century image of odalisques. Exoticism has become an artifact in Loy’s text. An idea of women objectified under the lens of nineteenth-century science develops. Loy’s odalisques do not stare out daringly like Manet’s *Olympia* or petrify like Medusa. The image of the odalisque itself has been petrified. Loy contests the status of the image as a petrified “thing” perceived externally. Duchamp’s notion of visual experience being an act fulfilled by the spectator resists the concept of the image as an object but Loy’s text does not offer this strategy to her odalisques in this text. The onyx eyes of the odalisques have been petrified for they do not observe with their eyes as do scientific or artistic men. This idea will continue to develop with the addition of the next lines in which scientists (ornithologists) observe the flight of an obsolete concept of sexual beauty (Eros obsolete):

Onyx-eyed Odalisques

and ornithologists

observe the flight

of Eros obsolete

Odalisques and ornithologists are juxtaposed as they observe the flight of an obsolete Eros. Through juxtaposition of the clarity of science and the obscurity of desire Loy

creates a surreal text. Out of the defunct forms of nineteenth-century art and the arcane science of objectivity new possibilities take shape. Because the old gives way to the new, the concept of immortality must be reconfigured. The idea of an immortality that "mildews in museums of the moon" grasps at an idea of a transcendental materiality. The shift in the alliteration from the letter O to the letter M, from vowel to consonant, indicates a muffling of the energy expressed in the text. The letter M belongs to the word immortality but also to materiality. The "infusoria" of the O and the M combine the transcendental and the material in a Deleuzian manner:

> And "Immortality"
>
> mildews
>
> in the museums of the moon

The Duchampian idea of a work of art having only a limited lifespan may also be understood in the finale to Loy's text. The remnants of an era remain in museums but they are only the expression of its mediocrity; beautiful things do not endure the test of time. In his interview with Cabanne Duchamp claims that his own little "hobbyhorse" is that fact that the freshness of a painting or sculpture dies after forty or fifty years: "There's a huge difference between a Monet today, which is black as anything, and a Monet sixty or eighty years ago, when it was brilliant, when it was made" (67). The quality of the odalisques that Loy emphasizes is also a blackness in the eyes and the reference to onyx creates the idea that the color is not brilliant but has been petrified into a dark stone. The idea of the "mildew in the museums of the moon" expresses a point of view that works preserved in institutions degenerate in quality.

Duchamp asserted that he employed the language of science in his art only to mock it. Schwarz's The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp explains in depth how he

made use of science in an ironic way. Schwarz writes that by "opposing laws imbued with humor to laws supposedly serious, he indirectly casts doubts upon the absolute value of the latter. He makes them seem approximations, so that the arbitrary aspects of the system risk becoming obvious" (129-30). Duchamp's scientific games parallel those of Da Vinci, particularly his interest in mirror-writing and shadows (203). Duchamp's idea that painting should have something to do with the "gray matter of our understanding" may be compared to Da Vinci's "plea for painting to be more intellectual than physical" (203).

Duchamp and Loy would further develop their surrealist affirmations of irony but Desnos would say farewell to the movement around 1930 because his performances of somnambulism did not stand up to mockery of their veracity. The idea of Desnos's trances being feigned did not enable others to believe in them—and Desnos lived in a world where belief mattered. This problem contributed to the rupture between him and the rest of the surrealist circle. Aragon had been skeptical from the beginning, as indicated in *Une vague de rêves* in 1924:

> Il se trouve au coeur de quelques-unes une négation de cette aventure. L'idée de la simulation est remise en jeu. Pour moi je n'ai jamais pu me faire une idée claire de cette idée. Simuler une chose, est-ce autre chose que la penser? Vous ne me ferez pas sortir de là. Qu'on m'explique, d'ailleurs, par la simulation, le caractère génial des rêves parlés qui se déroulaient devant moi. (Desnos Oeuvres 122-23)

Automatism was not supposed to entail any conscious control and Desnos's simulation proved that it was a controlled trance and therefore not revolutionary. Breton would develop the concept of a conducting wire that linked the conscious and the unconscious.

For Desnos, the *trance event* provided a transgression of the separation that normally occurs between a dreaming person and the surrounding world. As noted earlier, Heraclitus proclaimed that those who sleep are in different worlds and he invented a philosophy that would transgress that separation. Desnos had already discovered something akin to a Deleuzian sense of the event. Breton did not view the *trance event* ultimately as an authentic act of revolutionary political engagement. Political involvement became increasingly important to Breton and his circle. In his essay "What is Surrealism?" (based on a lecture given in 1934 to Belgian surrealists) he distinguishes two epochs in the surrealist movement from its origins in 1919, the year of the publication of Champs Magnétiques, up until and including the 1930s: a purely intuitive epoch and a reasoning epoch. The first is characterized by the belief expressed in the all-powerfulness of thought, which is capable of freeing itself by means of its own resources. No coherent political or social attitude appeared in surrealist texts until the outbreak of the Moroccan war in 1925. The surrealist protest against armed conflict made itself known in La Révolution d'Abord et Toujours and resulted in joining the name of the surrealists to those of other intellectuals. It created a precedent that determined the future direction of the movement. Surrealist activity at this moment entered into its reasoning phase when it experienced the need to cross over the gap that separates idealism from dialectical materialism. For Breton, surrealist activity had to cease being content with the results (automatic texts, the recital of dreams, improvised speeches, spontaneous poems, drawings and actions) which it had originally planned. In 1929 Breton urged Desnos to adopt Communism as a model and his refusal to do so spurred the definitive rupture with Breton. Desnos believed that only non-surrealists could practice Surrealism and he turned toward radio communication as a way to reconnect with the public. From 1932 to 1939

Desnos worked for Paul Deharme in radio publicity doing what he considered to be another type of poetry. In the postface to Etat de veille he describes his new form of poetry as mathematical and intuitive. Desnos adapted poems, novels, plays, and popular songs for the radio because he recognized the importance of wide communication. Desnos became interested in the technology of radio communication and its potential to disseminate verbal messages. Desnos had developed his own political opinions during his military duty in France and Morocco (1920-22), as well as his travels to Cuba (1928). Since 1923 Desnos frequented the studio of André Masson where he encountered Artaud, Leiris (Michel), Stein and Hemingway (Desnos Oeuvres 1360). Not convinced of the political correctness of Desnos's projects, Breton did not support his work in radio advertising during the 1930s.[41]

Loy, following in the path of Duchamp, did not say farewell to Surrealism but offered a critique of masculinist forms and pursued ideas initiated by Duchamp. According to Paul Virilio, the splitting of viewpoint between a subject and a seeing machine led to a change into the status of mental imagery in France in post-1960 criticism about visual perception ("Vision Machine" 59-60). Philosophical and scientific debate has shifted from the question of the objectivity of mental images to that of their reality. The status of the mental images of consciousness no longer lies at the center of inquiry, which is now concerned with the instrumental virtual images of science and their "paradoxical facticity" ("Vision" 60). Duchamp and Loy experimented with the problem of the facticity of the virtual images of science at the onset of the war. Loy's "Songs to Joannes" published in 1917 have peculiar Morse code dashes throughout them. The dashes resemble those in the notes of Duchamp written during the war. Critics note that her dashes resemble those of Dickinson, who also challenged clichés, standard forms and

accepted use of punctuation. The reduction of the verbal message to a Morse code dash does not lead to the disintegration of sight in Loy's work. Furthermore, as stated earlier, I refute the implication that Duchamp's work consists of a *static* Morse Code message. Such an implication is made in a study of "kinetic art" (i.e. art that involves motion) by Zeki and Lamb,[42] who are convinced that artists like Duchamp did not detach motion from time and space to give it an autonomous existence. "Kinetic art" of the future would require the dissociation of motion from light and color. Zeki and Lamb discuss sculpture, mostly the works of Alexander Calder. Calder's mobiles move according to the unpredictability of the wind. They argue that there was never any motion in the early works of Duchamp even if he contemplated motion theoretically. Motion was created always by a machine (a car or a train). Likewise, in their opinion, the futurists were concerned with speed but there was none in their work. The active role of the wind in creating and eventually destroying the *Unhappy Readymade* and the harnessing of gravity and "draft" in the making of the *Large Glass* prove the contrary. Zeki and Lamb base their conclusions on neurological evidence about how areas of the brain respond to kinetic stimulation.

I cannot emphasize enough that Zeki and Lamb do not grasp the "intellectual" and "experiential" role of perception in the works of Duchamp and artists following in his lead. Movement is inextricably linked to time and space in Duchamp's works. His *Nude Descending a Staircase* demonstrates an interest in the "stepped duration" of chronophotography and the intellectual potential of representing differing rates of duration in the same space. This sense of experience as "duration" may be attributed to the influence of philosopher Henri Bergson on scientists, artists and writers of his era. Bergson posed a challenge both to science and art because he attempted to distinguish

philosophically an element of time that we cannot experience in a direct way through natural thought processes and habitual ways of thinking. He set out to determine that "real time" is irrecoverable because no moment is ever perceived as external to the living of it until the experience is over. The time in which we live is our "duration" and, therefore, it is *qualitative* rather than *quantitative*. He argues that the conscious or *prosthetic reconstruction of experience* in spatial terms involves analytic means to understand duration. Mental representations produce the necessarily distorted image of duration in an *illusion* of the present. He explains that duration takes the illusory shape of a "homogeneous medium" and the link between these two terms, space and duration, is the *simultaneity* that could be defined as the intersection of space with time.

In a paper presented to a symposium on contemporary visual art John Phillips makes use of the Bergsonian concept of *duration* to define the "contemporary": Whether the contemporary is defined as the present, modern, or postmodern, it must be seized in the moment and distinguished as the "now." The "now" entails a multiplicity of "nows" that ultimately "fall back on the technological conditions of contemporary life: the systematic self-mobilization of technology itself and its economic and military hinges." In his view, the question of the present always "folds back out into questions of the past (not necessarily that of any present) and the future (some part of which, if there is to be any, will remain incalculable)." Thus, he concludes: "The inevitable conditions for this illusionary tri-temporal sequence (past-present-future) emerge in the form of two small but utterly necessary logical operators—modes of thought without which there would be no thought—in their abstract forms: the *already-no-longer* and the *not-yet*. Wedged between these two types of non-temporality would be—if there was any—the contemporary."[43] History emerges as a form of "prosthetic" memory, a spatial distortion

of the passage or movement of time. The idea of the "prosthetic" is, consequently, necessary to explain time, space and motion in Duchamp's works and those of artists that followed him. It is not only history that emerges as a form of prosthetic memory but "contemporary" modes of scientific inquiry as well. Today's virtual images have a paradoxical "facticity" resulting from modes of vision and consciousness.

Post-structuralist feminists, especially Donna Haraway, Dorothea Olkowski and Rosi Braidotti, are currently debating the "paradoxical facticity" of the virtual images of science, art and literature. They question how a scientific model can accommodate the splitting of senses through which mulitperspectival vision is constituted. I will closely examine how they pursue issues raised by Deleuze. Should the body be conceived of as a theoretical *topos* since vision and consciousness, never being truly infinite, must be physically embodied somewhere? Is such a place of embodiment objectively verifiable? Or, to the contrary, should the mind be considered as a *topos* that exceeds the body, thus maintaining the Cartesian disjunction between mind and body? Phillips himself evokes his skeptical conscience concerning the elusiveness of time as a mental concept. For him, time still remains "entirely mysterious, confirming the metaphysical, even theological, status that the concept of time is granted whenever anyone attempts to thematize it." How can feminists resist "caving in" to Cartesian unity in their conception of time since, as Phillips argues, time "shares the status of the Cartesian *cogito* (*je pense*) in that it simultaneously eludes yet makes possible the forms of representation (chiefly analogies) that we adopt in order to understand it—it remains a transcendental power, resistant to its own forces"? Is Bergsonian intuition (and instinct) still relevant to feminism and, if so, how can we support a feminist reading of his concepts within a Deleuzian framework? These issues have important repercussions for feminism and Chapter Four will further

discuss competing interpretations of embodiment, difference and the complexity of the fold/unfold.

Notes

[1] "Cyberwar, God and Television: An Interview with Paul Virilio," <http://www.ctheory.net/articles>.

[2] "Plateau, Duchamp and the Machine Célibataire," <http://framework.v2.nl/archive/archive/node/event/default.xslt/nodenr-1977>.

[3] "Fractal Geometry," Michael Frame, Benoit Mandelbrot, and Nial Neger, Yale University, 16 Jan 2005. See the website <classes.yale.edu/fractals>.

[4] "Have you noticed the popularity among scientists of the word *interface* – which supposes that the junction between two sciences or two concepts is perfectly under control? On the contrary, I believe that these spaces *between* are more complicated than one thinks. This is why I have compared them to the Northwest Passage . . . with shores, islands, and fractal ice floes. Between the hard sciences and the so-called human sciences the passage resembles a jagged shore, sprinkled with ice, and variable . . . It's more fractal than simple. Less a juncture under control than an adventure to be had" (Serres with Latour, 1995: 70).

[5] "Caught Up in the Rapture: Serres translates Mandelbrot," Steven Brown, Centre for Social Theory and Technology, Keele University, <http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/stt/cstt/comp/rapture.htm>.

[6] See Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Discourse on Metaphysics. Correspondence with Arnauld and Monadology. Trans. George Montgomery. Rpt. (La Salle, IL: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1957).

[7] Arturo Schwarz suggests that the collage and its inscription were made to correct a "historical fallacy" in The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp, 852. Schwarz includes a picture of the collage and the inscription: *pour les besoins d'une reproduction rapide / dans 391 Picabia a dessiné / [lui-même] la moustache / et oublié le bouc / Marcel Duchamp* [Being in need of a speedy reproduction/ for {*391*} Picabia had drawn/himself the moustache/and forgot the goatee].

[8] The editors of "Charting the Here and There" (Eds. Guy Bennett and Béatrice Mousli, 2002) argue that the term Dada was not yet applied to the group affiliated with the magazine and its publication. Legend has it that Picabia and Henri-Pierre Roché, one of the co-editors of the magazine, placed a wager on the future of the publication during a chess game. Picabia won the chess game and Roché shut down the magazine (34).

[9] Loy's account was reprinted in the March 1945 issue (no. 1, series 5) *View* magazine, a special issue dedicated to Duchamp. Charles Henri Ford's was the editor and Duchamp served on the advisory board. Duchamp designed the cover based on an advertisement that he saw. The cover displays a smoking wine

bottle. The effect was created by Duchamp with a smoke pipe placed under the bottle. The background looks like outer space. Peter Lindamood describes the cover in a small commentary at the beginning of the text. It provides information that links the cover to Duchamp's war protest and explains how it serves as a critique of telescopic reality: "All this latter involves quite magical little half-tone screens which push the peppery stars way back into the telescopic reality of the Milky Way, at the same time isolating and pointing up the wind bottle in all its sculptural glory. What better place than this to tell of the Enormous Room-Surrealist Manifesto French War (I) veteran connotations of the bottle's etiquette, or label, which (look twice), has nothing to do with grape snobbery but is really Duchamp's Livret Militaire (Service Record)."

[10] Loy's son-in-law, the New York art dealer Julien Levy, produced another personal account of an experience of Duchamp's work in "Duchampiana." Levy was a gallery owner in New York from 1931 to 1948 and gave many of the early surrealist painters their first exhibit in the United States. Levy owned Duchamp's Réseaux des Stoppages painting. The March 1945 issue of *View* reprinted Levy's personal accounts of Duchamp.

[11] "Charting the Here and There" 38.

[12] Lars Kiel Bertelsen, "Reading Photographs Iconographically or Ichnographically," <http://siab.au.dk/data>.

[13] Schwarz 670.

[14] Note that Apollinaire died of this flu during the epidemic in 1918.

[15] Breton begins by describing the artistic context of the 1910s and 1920s. Cubism, he writes, offered a monolithic facade of greatness and dubious scientific goals. Its real achievement was little more than to prepare the way for a "*tidal wave* which soon came and put an end to it, not without upsetting from base to summit, far and wide, the artistic and moral landscape." Breton notes that "it is particularly important . . . to consider attentively the pace where the very first characteristic vibrations of that phenomenon chose to be recorded." Duchamp was at the head of that destructive change. In this introductory section, as in his 1922 Littérature essay, Breton characterizes Duchamp as an individual in opposition to an outdated system. And although Breton goes on to praise the intellectual aspects of Duchamp's work, he carefully contrasts Duchamp's intelligence with the plodding "purely mental adventure" of Cubism.

Breton admires Duchamp as the "artist who has proven himself on this occasion to be the most sensitive recording instrument." Duchamp, more than any other artist, was sensitive to the "characteristic vibrations" of tradition giving way to new ideas. This image suggests a similar one from Breton's first "Manifesto of Surrealism" in 1924. There, he described the true surrealists (including poets Philippe Soupault, Roger Vitrac, and Robert Desnos) as "we . . . who in our works have made ourselves into simple receptacles of so many echoes, modest *recording instruments* . . . (emphasis Breton's)." The similarity of the analogies of recording devices in the two essays is hardly accidental.

[16] The reference is to Magritte's paintings *Le blanc-seing* and *Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans la forêt* (1929).

[17] During an interview with the French television channel TV5 Michel Serres commented on the need for a contract with nature in the wake of the devastating Tsunami disaster on December 26, 2005 (9 Jan 2005 TV 5 broadcast).

[18] See "No. 9 Region of the Mirror Image of the Sculpture of Drops," <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/staff/nuttalt/duchamp.htm.>

[19] Cited in Burke, 237.

[20] Gillian Hanscombe and Virginia L. Smyers, Writing for Their Lives: The Modernist Women, 1910-1940 (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987) 112-128.

[21] Herbert Lottman, Man Ray's Montparnasse (New York: Harry Abrams, 2001) 105.

[22] Jed Esty, A Shrinking Island (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[23] Lawrence Weschler's "Convergences," in *The New Yorker* of November 16, 1992, points out how a photograph of the 1895 trainwreck resembles Magritte's 1938 *Time Transfixed*. Magritte's painting depicts an engine rushing out of a fireplace. The photograph hallucinates the paining and vice versa.

[24] Schwarz 203.

[25] In 2002 the French novelist Michel Thaler published Le Train de nulle part (The Train from Nowhere) which is written without a single verb. His constrained writing system seeks to enable language to speak for itself. In the preface to the novel Thaler refers to the verb as an invader, dictator and usurper of literature. Identifiying with Dadaism and Surrealism, he organized a "tongue-on-cheek funeral for the verb" at the Sorbonne in Paris.

[24] Susan Buck-Morss, "Visual Studies and Global Imagination," *Papers of Surrealism* (Issue 2 Summer 2004): 16, <http://www.surrealismcentre.ac.uk>.

[27] Amy Feinstein, "Goy Interrupted: Mina Loy's Unfinished Novel and Mongrel Jewish Fiction," Modern Fiction Studies 51.2, (Summer 2005): 335-353.

[28] Natalie Clifford Barney, Aventures de l'esprit reprint (New York: Arno Press Inc., 1975) 216.

[29] Hilda Bronstein, "Intermittent — Unfinishing: Mina Loy and the Elusive Text as Resistance," <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu>.

[30] Burke 386-387.

[31] See pp. 310-328 in Suzanne Rodriguez's Wild Heart: A Life (New York: HarperCollins, 2002). Such issues are discussed also in Mary Eichbauer's "Imagining a Life: Natalie Clifford Barney," Journal of Lesbian Studies 4: 3 (September 2000): 1-29.

[32] Rodriguez 311.

[33] Burke 395-396.

[34] Stein's narrator writes: "We went one afternoon to Natalie Barney's. There there was a very aged and a very charming french professor of history. Natalie Barney asked him to tell Gertrude Stein how to lecture. Talk as quickly as you can and never look up, was his advice" (233).

[35] See Rachel Blau DuPlessis's "Seismic Orgasm," pp. 58-59.

[36] For more of an explanation of the surrealist "exquisite corpse," see a selection first published in *La Révolution surréaliste* 9-10 October 1927. As Mary Ann Caws explains in Surrealism, "To make an exquisite corpse image the first player draws a 'head and folds over the paper so it cannot be seen by the second, as so on. At the end, a strange, composite person or creature emerges. Created by participants unaware of what the other contributions look like, the exquisite corpse deliberately invokes chance in producing a hybrid 'body.' The same principle is applied to sentences" (62).

[37] *Le magazine littéraire* no. 96 (July 1975), <http://www.magazine.litteraire.com/archives>. See also Jules Huret, Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire (Paris: Fasquelle, 1913) 55-65.

[38] "Mina Loy and the Futurists," *Sagetrieb* 8.1-2 (Spring and Fall 1989): 83-117.

[37] Janet Lyon states: "[W]hat I am calling Loy's 'parallax vision' is the shaping force behind her iconoclastic conceptual and visual sensibilities. . . . The notoriously difficult *Love Songs* puts this vision to a particular intellectual use: Loy trains it on the gaps in meaning produced by Futurism's gendered and polarized discursive field. Many of *Love Songs*' themes, if not its network of images, are developed through the heterogeneous vantage points of the poem's restless parallax vision. Significantly, the putative addressee of the poem, 'Joannes' (modelled on Loy's onetime Futurist lover, Giovanni Papini), appears not to have access to the poem's multiple vantage points; his blinkered conceptual apparatus limits his field to just a narrow strip of the poem's physical and emotional territory. Irony in this sense is structural to the poem: Joannes sees little of what the reader sees, and what the reader sees is subject to parallax shifting. In a series of short irregular poems, we are shown the fragments of a discontinuous sexual and intellectual relationship; but we are also shown alternative fragments, equally discontinuous, of a relationship that might have been. In short, we are made to see, almost immediately, that 'what is' is only one of several sets of charged fragments, the presence of which undermine any definitive claims to comprehensive representation. Furthermore, the 'meaning' of all those fragments is shaped by a kind of negativity, and constructed through invocations of emptiness or void, or by suggested absences frequently indicated in the poem by blank or white space, or by verbal images of whiteness or blankness. See Janet Lyons' *Mina Loy's Pregnant Pauses: The Space of Possibility in the Florence Writings*, pages 379-401.

[40] Kenneth Fields, "The Poetry of Mina Loy," *Southern Review* 3.3 (July 1967): 597-607.

[41] Mary Ann Caws, ed., The Yale Anthology of Twentieth-Century French Poetry (New Haven: Yale UP, 2004) 163.

[42] Matthew Lamb and Semir Zeki, "The Neurology of Kinetic Art," Brain 117 (1994): 607-636. <http://www.neuroesthetics.org/research/pdf/kinetic.pdf>.

[43] John Phillips, "The Contemporary or the Decelerating Logic of the Avant-Garde." Art and the Contemporary. 21 Nov. 2004. <http://www.senisingapore.org>.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE BORDER WARS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: AVALANCHES, CINEMATIC BLOSSOMING, AND CYBORGS

The previous chapters examined the Deleuzian concepts of "event" and "disappearance" within the context of early twentieth-century scientific developments and their relation to the socio-cultural context of the WWI and interwar eras. These chapters presented the argument that a non-Freudian conception of instinct is relevant to understanding the scientific and socio-cultural contexts of works by Duchamp, Desnos and Loy. Although these three figures derived some of their thinking from Mallarmé, their ideas of "instinct" and "intuition" differ from Mallarmé's conceptions because of evolutions in materialist thought, science and technology at the rise of twentieth-century modernism. Examining what Deleuze means by "instinct" and "intuition" provides insight into the ways in which concepts concerning the conscious mind evolve from Mallarmé's time to the early twentieth-century and beyond.

Alain Badiou identifies different types of Classicism to distinguish Mallarmé from Deleuze, as mentioned in Chapter Two. Badiou considers Deleuze's thought to be based on an intuitive model that must not be confused with the intuition of classical philosophers, particularly the intuition of Descartes. His study is useful because it examines two different kinds of Platonism; yet his justification for choosing between the two relies on taste, an aesthetic category that contradicts all that Duchamp ultimately tried to achieve in opposing taste and aesthetic judgment.[1] Duchamp tried to "short-circuit" the problem of aesthetics. The popular cinema along with scientific and technological developments shaped twentieth-century modernist consciousness in ways that may not simply be described in aesthetic terms. We would not be wrong to argue that twentieth-century modernism took shape as a series of manifestos (by Tzara, Breton,

Loy, Marinetti, to name only a few manifesto writers). The manifestos of Dada-Surrealism resisted the "disembodied" feminine subject of classical (Cartesian) thinking with the introduction of a new embodiment of the feminine subject. While this new embodiment is objective, its objectivity entails instinctual or intuitive thinking. In Chapter Four I propose to trace a path from the logic of dada-surrealist manifestos to the post-structural deconstructivist "Cyborg Manifesto" of feminist critic Donna Haraway. I will specifically be looking at connections between Deleuze and Haraway, as well as connections between Deleuze and two other feminist critics—Rosi Braidotti and Dorothea Olkowski.

Deleuze's arguments in The Fold about instinct and intuition led him to pursue the cinema and Bergsonism. What are the concepts in The Fold that contribute to an understanding of both the development of twentieth-century modernism and post-structuralist feminism? Deleuze focuses on the distinction between Descartes and Leibniz in order to oppose Classicism and Mannerism: Descartes exemplifies classicist Essentialism based on solid and constant attributes; in Leibniz's Mannerism fluidity and the "spontaneity of manners replaces the essentiality of the attribute" (The Fold 56). Deleuzian notions accord with the Stoic conception of a limit to the degree that nothing is either separable or separated but everything conspires, including substance, by virtue of requisites. The fluid and complex movement of Mannerism has an inner unity. Deleuze provides five criteria of a substance: (1) metaphysical, unity of being; (2) logical, inclusion of the predicate in the subject; (3) physical, inner unity in movement; (4) psychological, active unity of change; and (5) epistemological, the requisites of inseparability (56).

Deleuze points out that Leibniz attaches much importance to the question of the souls of animals in The Fold because he knows how to diagnose the universal anxiety of animals watching out for danger. An animal can grasp the imperceptible signs of what can turn its pleasure into pain. Let us consider the behavior of animals during the tsunami of December 2004: they fled the coast and instinctively moved towards higher ground. The "fuscum subnigrum" of the dark depths of the soul haunted Leibniz and he believed that the soul assigns itself pain which delivers to its consciousness a series of minute perceptions buried in its depths. Leibniz's explanation of the pleasure/pain relation entails an active unity because pain does not immediately follow pleasure but is prepared for it by a thousand minute perceptions: . . . *an imperceptible "anxiousness" from which pain will ensue "sua sponte," as if through a natural force integrating the preceding modifications* (56). The spontaneity of manners is opposed to the essentiality of the attribute. Substances draw everything from their own depths from which surges a spontaneity of manners. Mannerism or baroque reason may be summed up as follows: *All is born to them out of their own depths, through a perfect spontaneity*.

We can make a connection between baroque spontaneity and scientific break-throughs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both Dmitri Mendeleyev and Albert Einstein recount the experience of being assailed by an avalanche of dreams that led to a major scientific break-through. Mendeleyev's writings from 1869 reveal how he puzzled through the construction of the first Periodic Table of Elements. In a dream he saw a table where all the elements "fell into place." He recorded his dream on paper after waking up. Einstein told a reporter that his entire scientific career was a meditation on a dream he had about sledding down a hill at night. His sled sped down the hill faster and faster until it reached the speed of light. The stars and sky became transformed into a

spectrum of colors. In this way, the dreams of Mendeleyev and Einstein reveal the interrelationship between the marvelous and the scientific. Post-structuralism's interest in virtual science maintains continuity with preoccupations of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scientists like Mendeleyev and Einstein. Post-structuralist feminists are currently debating the paradoxical *facticity* of the virtual images of science. Furthermore, they question how a scientific model can accommodate the splitting of senses through which multiperspectival vision is constituted. In doing so, I believe that they pursue issues raised by Paul Virilio. Should the body be conceived of as a theoretical *topos* since vision and consciousness, never being truly infinite, must be physically embodied somewhere? Is such a place of embodiment objectively verifiable? Or, to the contrary, should the mind be considered as a *topos* that exceeds the body, thus maintaining the Cartesian disjunction between mind and body? To what extent does *conjunction* imply *disjunction* in Deleuze's criticism? Deleuzian scholars continue to investigate these questions which have a significant bearing on the shaping of contemporary feminist thought.

In what ways are the recent feminist readings of Deleuze as an anti-Cartesian tool for "thinking through the body" applicable to Duchamp, Desnos and Loy? Gillian Rose's Feminism and Geography discusses the logic of the gaze, the conventional "masculinist" representation of text as landscape, and the *plurilocality* and *paradoxical topography* of feminine subjectivity, in which a woman must occupy both center and periphery. Rosi Braidotti's Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory calls for a rooting of the subject in the spatial frame of the body. Does Braidotti's "thinking through the body" as an interplay of forces, as a theoretical *topos*, overcome the classical mind-body dualism of Cartesianism? Braidotti interprets

Deleuze's scheme of thought as a flow of connectivities and intensities that have no stable identities or any notion of a center. In "The Cyborg Manifesto" and "The Persistence of Vision" Donna Haraway calls for a new feminist objectivity based on *situated* or *embodied knowledges*. Haraway insists on the embodied nature of all vision, given that vision can never truly be infinite. Vision can provide a way out of Cartesian dualisms, in her view, if it is conceived of in terms of the partial viewpoints of embodied objectivity. In Volatile Bodies Elizabeth Grosz employs the model of the Möbius strip to represent the inflections of the mind into the body. The Möbius strip[2] functions as a model for her notion of corporeal feminism. The body as *topos* has no single paradigm, however, because it consists of connections, networks and intensities.

In my opinion, Deleuzian feminists do not have to assign a purely mental topography to the body or to conceive of it only as a theoretical topos. Like Deleuze, feminists must take into account both the embodiment of desired change, as well as the space in which a subject envisions change. Haraway makes a valid point in insisting that feminists should not simply frame a topos from a space theoretically posited as a body. We need to envision change brought about from a body entering into relations with other bodies. What would both a Deleuzian and a feminist interpretation of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy entail? Duchamp's methodological shift to an interactiveness of forms appealed to Loy, as a feminist, who played at positioning herself in the paradoxical topographies of female subjectivity. Duchamp, in turn, identified with feminine forms and spaces not only by collaborating with women artists but, most importantly, through the creation of a feminine persona, Rrose Sélavy, in whose name he produced many works of art. After encountering Duchamp's works, Desnos attributed the aphorisms of "Rrose Sélavy" to Duchamp/Rrose and extended the idea of open form as an interactive process of verbal

and visual play throughout the texts of Corps et biens. "RROSE SÉLAVY, ETC." is one of the best examples of how the typography of the letters in the name Rrose Sélavy and the play of homonyms interact to create different identities for Rrose/Duchamp. The title RROSE SÉLAVY, ETC is the matrix for the whole text that consists of variations of the name Rrose Sélavy. The inflections consist of variations in punctuation and verb tense, as well. In one case, the English words "have I" appear in the middle of a French sentence (indeed, Rrose does speak English): "Rose S, L, have I." This use of English words is ironic; the use of "have I" undermines the idea of appropriation and possession of identity in language. The text becomes a space of multiplicity where French is open to English.

Loy's critical positioning of a feminist consciousness depends upon the persistence of the visual. Loy is aware that a feminist consciousness must be an embodied one and that any critical position must be a partial view from somewhere. Her text "Parturition" strikes me as being more of a feminist manifesto than her satires of Futurism prove to be. In "Parturition" she employs the visual metaphor of the fold as a challenge to convention. The poet conceives of a feminine subjectivity within the paradoxical space of unfolding, as evident in the lines: "I am knowing/All about/Unfolding." The text begins with a spatial displacement from the center, as a subjective consciousness emerges through the exceeding of boundaries. The poet introduces the baroque concept of a distortion of the center and experiments with the concept of the infinite. Parturition means individuation while at the same time maintenance of a unity between the *life-giving* body and the new body *being given life*.

Would a position that the mind's potential exceeds that of the body, resulting in a disjunction of the corporeal and the incorporeal, offer more insight into Deleuze? This is Eleanor Kaufman's position. [3] The mind's potential for excess might be the *topos* of a

Deleuzian quest for disjunction. Do any of the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy maintain a disjunction of the corporeal and the incorporeal? Virilio and Kaufman examine the problem of the inflection of the past into the present. Virilio speaks of the importance of the acceleration of the reality of time and how it provokes a repulsion of living in the present. The coexistence of the past within the present forms a hostile and disjunctive relation. Kaufman speaks of the "solecism" of time in the *tableaux-vivants* of the cinema, which she generalizes as a theory of erotic tension between the corporeal and the incorporeal.[4] Duchamp's *Nude Descending the Staircase* and the *Large Glass* inflect different topological planes but they also inflect the past into the present. The time of the *Nude* is that of passage; its topography depends on the coexistence of the past and the present. This coexistence takes place in "real" time and provokes a disjunction with the present moment of perception. Loy's imaginary journey to the moon in "Lunar Baedeker" and Desnos's quest of the Argonauts may be perceived as a time out of joint, displaced from traditional mythologies of the past as well as from the immediate present. This is the time of accidental transfer from the present to the most recent past. An all-too omnipresent past prevents the future from arriving and menaces the present. Is disjunction a form of resistance, as Kaufman would have us believe? What kind of resistance does the spatio-temporal disjunction between the fixed shot and absolute speed of the cinematic effect afford to feminine subjectivity?

If cinema does not cede to a new mode of creativity, as did the "book," the "linear," the "retinal" and the "representational," it may invent a solution to the problem of the affirmation of the subject caught between spatio-temporal intervals. Duchamp and Desnos had a serious interest in cinematography and were involved in the production of films. While it is true that the *Nude Descending a Staircase* preceded Duchamp's film-

making experiments, the influence of the cinema was important during the early stages of the *Large Glass*. In a note from 1914 Duchamp explains that the Bride's desire should be figured, topologically, as a blossoming ellipse. This blossoming ellipse was supposed to create a cinematic effect that would affirm female desire. He describes the two foci of the ellipse as corresponding to two levels, a center of real blossoming controlled by electrical stripping and a center of "voluntarily imagined blossoming." It is the virtual blossoming effect—which is the envisioning of desire itself—that activates the actual gears of the Bride's desire. In this way, the cinematic effect affirms the Bride's desire, which occurs in the interval between the two poles of the ellipse (one virtual and the other real). Many years subsequent to the creation of the *Large Glass* in 1959 Duchamp praised Loy's poetry for what he identified as its two dimensions, "haut-reliefs et bas-fonds" (high relief and low depth). He used these terms on the invitation card that he designed for Loy's show at the Bodley Gallery in New York.

I cannot accept Kaufman's disjunctive position as the ultimate key to understanding the cinematic blossoming of the *Large Glass*. The envisioning of desire involves the cerebral but it does not necessarily mean that the mind's excesses maintain a disjunction with the body. Creative life eschews "conjunction" or continuity brought about by connecting habitual experiences together. The creative act does not rely on the intellect alone; it entails something more than the mind's instantaneous, peripheral or habitual perceptions. Nor is it simply a matter of framing a topos to make sense out of the world because that would lead to ingrained habits preventing us from seeing reality. This is the reason why Duchamp did not want artists to see or to act without involving thought processes. He rejected retinal representation in favor of artistic creations that had some element of the conceptual in them. The mind has the ability to eclipse the extension of

affective connections and relationships and, in doing thus, to suppress the creative impulse.

An idea from one of Virilio's critical texts entitled L'Espace critique explains the cinematic effect in terms that are different from Kaufman's concept of disjunction. Virilio defines the cinematic effect as one that produces *la longue durée*[5] of on-going affective life; his concept combines Bergson's philosophy of duration and Deleuze's notions about connectivity. Between every perception a new interval opens up but an immediate reconnecting takes place through the long *durée* of ongoing affective life. This duration of affective life expands the visual field and enables us to envision new modes of thought and creative acts but it threatens to ruin one's ability to make sense out of the world. Virilio's disjunction, in this sense, should be understood as the opening up of an interval during *la longue durée*. This "opening" displaces "seeing" with the envisioning of the production of sense. The envisioning of the production of sense may, in turn, also be displaced through an excess of signifiers. These intervals of displacement are not, ultimately, disjunctions but extensions of the field of vision, affectivity, creativity and modes of thought and life. The interval of extensivity permits new thoughts to emerge from the disruption of instantaneous, peripheral or habitual perceptions. What is virtual becomes actual. Virilio is, in fact, describing the multidimensionalism of the fold, as a Deleuzian "in-process" of extensive connectivity. The creative act does not eclipse extensivity but emerges from it, always as a "process" and never as a finished representation.

What emerges in the Deleuzian *in-process*? In order to understand the *in-process*, we need to clarify further his definition of the term *virtual reality*. The term *virtual reality* draws a borderline between "virtuality" and "reality" but, at the same time, also

indicates an *implicit hierarchy*. It implies that "virtuality" strives to be "real" in the sense of a *virtual real* that is indistinguishable from the "real" we know or are able to imagine. The term *virtual reality* posits a connection between the virtual and the real, while also evoking another concept of their relationship that emerges not from a process of negative differentiation, aiming for either real or virtual, but for both. In other words, *something in-between* emerges from a process of negotiation. The *in-between* refers to two different notions of space: the physical presence embodied in an actual space and the presence of *becoming* in the virtual. The first one is real, secure, measurable and predictable; the latter is virtual, uncertain, unscripted and unpredictable (arising either from "fantasy" or emerging entities from our dynamic surroundings). How is the boundary drawn between the two spaces? Is this boundary drawn through the contour of our body? An artist or writer may draw a boundary between the two spaces by defining a relationship between the two. The reader or viewer, as participants in the creative process, must then further redefine or reclarify the relationship defined by the artist or writer.

Loy's text "Ignoramus" (1915) investigates new perspectives made possible by cinematic effects and the emerging realities of virtual space. Loy invents new terms and modes of thought to describe these emerging realities. The hybrid term "window-eclipse" in her text negotiates an *in-between* space whose boundaries she defines through an "actual window space" and a "virtual eclipse space." Her reader participates in the process of reclarifying the new concept. It is not simply a matter of projection of two spaces, one virtual and the other actual, into a new territory of convergence. This is the problem that I find in Lyotard's analysis (in Les transformateurs Duchamp) of Duchamp's "machinic" transformative spaces: for Lyotard, it all just a matter of spatial projection. Here I support Virilio's attack on the *simulation* of virtual reality through

projection machines. Virilio is correct to underscore that we must define a virtual reality that may be *substituted* for an actual reality, instead of defining the virtual as a simulation of the actual. Both Duchamp and Loy experimented with the cinematic effects in Charlie Chaplin's films, effects that Deleuze explains in Cinema 1 as a "slight difference which makes a situation fluctuate" (169). Chaplin's viewer does not become lost in machinic projection but discovers the "laws" of the burlesque form. Chaplin plays a role in which he is "caught in the instant" between opposable situations. For example, he hangs on a sausage in a butcher's shop, as Deleuze points out, in order to disclose the distance separating a butcher's shop from a tramcar. I accept Deleuze's conclusion that what we find in most diversions of everyday objects is a slight difference that may induce opposable functions or situations. Again, the connection with Duchamp's definitions of the *readymade* or the *inframince* is obvious. Deleuze comments on the "potentiality of tools" as a new humanism in Chaplin's films. In fact, this humanism prepares us for the introduction of "post-human" concepts. A "mere nothing" in Chaplin's films is enough to set the machine against the "human" and to make it an instrument of imprisonment, immobilization and even torture (Deleuze 169). Even when Chaplin's characters confront machines, they "cling to the idea of a huge tool which is automatically converted into the opposing situation" (Deleuze 169).

If Chaplin inspired Loy to write "Ignoramus," one of his co-stars, Maria Dressler, provided Loy with the inspiration for "Film-Face" (presumably written after 1934). A look at "Film-Face," along with Loy's brief essay "Auto-Facial-Construction," within the critical framework of Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of faciality in "Year Zero: Faciality" from A Thousand Plateaus would be an interesting topic for a future study. This study concentrates, however, on Deleuze's ideas from The Fold and how they

evolved into Bergsonism and Cinema 1. The idea of hybridization from The Fold would develop into a theory of "machinic" propositions, deterritorialization and reterritorialization in A Thousand Plateaus. Two terms deterritorialize each other, as, for example, face-landscape. The close-up in silent films illustrates this concept, such as the close-up of "consciousness and passion" in Carl Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc* and Eisenstein's heightening of shame and anger in close-ups from *Potemkin*.

Loy's "Auto-Facial-Construction"[6] was published in a pamphlet in 1919 as an entrepreneurial concept that sought to "keep the body alive without prostituting art," as she explained to Mabel Dodge in a letter.[7] Loy warns that the initiation to this "esoteric anatomical science" is expensive but "economical in result." She explains that the foundation of beauty is embedded in three zones and centers of energy. The attachments of the muscles to the bones can become revitalized. It is the opposite of make-up and artifice because inner beauty reveals itself instead of being disguised. The face is the symbol of the personality. Years of specialized interest in physiognomy taught Loy how to understand the human face and, when necessary, how to reconstruct it.

The expressivity of the face grew out of manneristic/baroque tendencies and was mastered in the faces painted by Rubens. The expressivity of the face is just as important as the rest of the body in the nudes of Rubens. It was during the baroque period that the female nude supplanted the Renaissance male nude in the traditions of painting. This baroque expressivity would find its way into later surrealist paintings. The surreal female face is epitomized by Frida Kahlo's *Self-Portrait with Monkey* (1938) in which the jungle landscape and the face merge through a series of infinitely-connecting forms, patterns and textures (fur, pleats in braids, leaves, facial hair, jewelry, veins, arteries) whose entanglements lead to the inner self.

The inner world of innocent desire confronting the corruption of the external world is a theme in Loy's "Ignoramus," a text that she considered to be one of her best. Her technique of parallax vision enables the play of opposing perspectives to develop in the text. The juxtaposition of masculine and feminine perspectives permits distinctions to be made between two worlds operating in the text: the rich and the poor, the included and the outcast, the life of routine and the life of chance, the innocent and the corrupt, the instinct of the survivor and the knowledge of institutions, and, finally, night and day (dream versus reality). Chaplin's tramp, who made his debut on the screen in the 1910s, served as a model for Loy. As a film director, Chaplin developed a technique of parallax vision to juxtapose two perspectives. Loy's identification with the outcasts of society would continue throughout her career and culminate in the portraits of lowlife figures in her poetry about Bowery bums and *assemblages* (particularly *Househunting* and *Bums Praying*). The hybridization of the bum and the angel in her later visual works appeared in different forms in her earlier texts. The juxtaposition of the innocent and the worldly or the grotesque and the transcendent manifests itself in the circus setting for "Crab-Angel." Similarly, the "black brute-angels / in their human gloves" in the text "Widow's Jazz" alludes to the "hobo as artist" model provided to Loy by her dadaist-boxer-poet husband. Before he met Loy, Cravan had been a hobo traveling across the road by train and living from "other hands to mouth," to use an expression from another of her text's entitled "Perlun." Cravan is the model for the "pert blonde spirit" who "puts the world/to the test of intuition" in "Perlun." References to a "movie vamp" and "flappers," as well as to the rituals of two boxers, Dempsey and Carpentier, belong to the mass entertainment world of the 1910s and 1920s. A "close-up" of focus on the "pert" blonde's face in the text

borrows from the techniques of cinematography. Faciality awakens instinct in this line from the text: “The victorious silly beauty of his face / awakens to his instincts.”

Virginia Kouidis in Mina Loy: American Modernist Poet interrogates Loy’s identification with the “hobo as artist” as the speaker of the text. She questions the identity of Ignoramus as a persona. Does the identity of Ignoramus disagree with the position present in the poem or does his identity inspire the poem? Kouidis attaches particular significance to the way perspective moves in the text from the infinitesimally small to the infinite in the text, from the lining of a pocket to Empyrean. Ignoramus examines the world by counting the “glumes” (ultrathin membranes covering blades of grass) and the stars. Although Kouidis does not make connections between Loy and Duchamp, Loy’s image of thin membranes may be interpreted as a mental concept resembling Duchamp’s inframince. Her idea of counting stars expresses a desire for the infinite and recalls the image of counting flasks in Desnos’s “Il fait nuit.” In the universe of “Ignoramus” living things are ubiquitous; the “glumes” of the “day’s bargaining” make up the infinite composition of a baroque machine. This individuating machinery lies in the “lining” of a pocket; it is an internalization of the outside, or, in Deleuzian terms, “an invagination of the outside that could not occur all alone if no true interiorities did not exist *elsewhere*” (8). The “glumes” in the blades of glass constitute the folding-unfolding or involution-evolution of the fold, which is always twice-folded. Two blades of grass are never the same because of a process of internal individuation. It is a question of being one surface; whatever is on the outside can be found on the inside. Loy’s reference to a magician (see passage cited below) demonstrates how magic or fantasy may be used to illustrate scientific principles. Like riding on a magic carpet, the experience of the fold is about being one with a surface or edge of a plane. This idea

illustrates the scientific (and what some critics consider to be Deleuzian) paradigm of a Möbius strip that simultaneously contains all dimensions. The passage cited below from "Ignoramus" contains a plethora of images that generate infinite desire in the text:

> [. . .] Give half-a-crown
>
> To a magician
>
> Half a glance
>
> To window-eclipse
>
> And count the glumes
>
> Of your day's bargaining
>
> Lying
>
> In the lining
>
> Of your pocket
>
> [. . .] You can walk to Empyrean to-gether
>
> Under the same
>
> Oil-silk umbrella
>
> "I must have you
>
> Count stars for me
>
> Out of their numeral excess
>
> Please keep the brightest
>
> For the last

The idea of "half a glance" and "window-eclipse" indicate a partial view onto the world as opposed to infinite desire. Loy's image of "window-eclipse" is consistent with the Deleuzian concept of the fold whereby it is no longer necessary to look through a

window. Matter is a buoyant surface, a structure endowed with an organic fabric (115). The reference to two bodies or substances contained under the same "oil-silk" umbrella is another example of a structure endowed with organic fabric (oil-silk). The combination of oil and silk, functioning as an envelope, illustrates the Duchampian inframince, as well as the Deleuzian fold. The fold itself determines a thin and superimposable depth in the inframince, as in baroque *trompe-l'oeil*. Furthermore, Loy's choice of oil and silk to create an organic fabric incorporates oriental imagery associated with the concept of the fold. As Deleuze mentions, the problem of the fold and the Orient must be confronted: "It may be that the Baroque will have to confront the Orient profoundly. This happened to be Leibniz's adventure with his binary arithmetic: in one and zero Leibniz acknowledges the full and the void in a Chinese fashion; but the baroque Leibniz does not believe in a void . . . [. . .] . . .folds are always full" (36). Other than the problem of binary arithmetic, the idea of texture or the resistance of material (also studied by Leibniz) is found in oriental paradigms. Deleuze emphasizes that there is the "soft and overlaid depth of fabric that has never ceased to inspire painting" that is derived from a "line now coming from Islam" (37). Many years after Deleuze called for the need to explore oriental paradigms, the 2005 Matisse exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art was organized in a way that would permit the viewer to encounter his paintings in juxtaposition to the Islamic textiles and architecture (North African wall-hangings and screens, Turkish robes, among others) that influenced his choice of color, texture and pattern.

The last lines in the passage cited above from "Ignoramus" are the final ones in Loy's text and they do not have a final quotation mark to close the brackets (note the open quotation mark before *"I must have you*.) Loy's ultimate message, for Kouidis, is that the artist alone possesses the vision for intuiting the essence of life's chaos and the

skill to shape his/her intuitions into form — the divine principle. Loy's bum seeks transcendence, in Kouidis's opinion, not so much of the apparent voids that nature or the decimal system conceal, but of the false Elysiums produced from material desires and worldly care. Both the bum and the artist strive to transcend chaos but the bum has chosen a corrupt method. Kouidis concludes that Ignoramus is a clown who is "unable to compete in the counting houses of men" and "has taken a seat in nature's stock exchange, where he trades insubstantial 'glumes' and avoids his own failure by fastidiously mimicking the postures and speech of the world's 'busymen'" (129-30). Except for the bum/artist dichotomy in "Ignoramus," Kouidis maintains that most of Loy's texts indicate her self-identification as an artist with what she refers to as a "sacerdotal clown" who feeds upon the "wind and stars and pulverous pastures of poverty" in "Apology of Genius." In "Lunar Baedeker," "English Rose," "Joyce's Ulysses" and "Apology of Genius" Loy self-identifies with the artist as outcast (perhaps even divinely outcast, which the critic may relate to her self-identification as a Jewish woman).

We may also look at the figure of the tramp as a more positive figure in terms of parallax vision. Despite the frustration inherent in human potential, the tramp tries to enact consciously a guiding principle. The problem of distance and perspective in Loy's text (as in Duchamp's *Large Glass*) involves a relation between parallax vision and intuition in the Bergsonian sense. In order to understand the relation between Loy's parallax vision and intuition, we should consider first how she makes use of the tropes of Western metaphysics in "Parturition." The primary carnal instantiation of the trope by which western metaphysicians have traditionally rendered the problematic of God, Universe, and Nature is the trope of the sphere of cosmogony, as Janet Lyon argues. For Pascal, nature is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference

is nowhere. For Parmenides, the Divine Being is the mass of a well-rounded sphere whose force is constant from the center in any direction. Lyon proposes that the laboring female consciousness in Loy's text inhabits that sphere, as evident in the line from "Parturition" where the poet exclaims, "I am the centre / Of a circle of pain / Exceeding its boundaries in every direction." Loy maps out an identification with "infinite Maternity" in a register of modern double-consciousness:

> . . . she watches herself speak as a Mother even as her acute absorption into "cosmic reproductivity" signals a Bergsonian moment of *durée*—the "death of time and space," as Marinetti would call it—in which she preserves her individual ego-I-eye. She scrutinizes and narrates as an avant-garde artist; maternity has given her something that every avant-garde artist needs, but few have: to wit, the capacity for parallax vision, which will move her dialectically out of common sense and into knowledge (389-90).

Calvin Tomkins discusses Bergsonism in the Puteaux group.[8] The Puteaux Group referred often to Bergson's notion of duration (or the persistence of the past in the present) in conversations about intellect, intuition and the fourth dimension. Duchamp-Villon applied these concepts to his art the most effectively.[9] For example, Duchamp-Villon's *Horse* reveals the many complex rhythms of a horse's gait, as well as the passage of time, the metamorphosis of "horse into machine" as a symbol of the modern age and Bergsonian *élan vital*. Duchamp-Villon was by no means the only artist influenced by Bergson. Jacques Villon also made explicit statements about Bergson's influence on his art: "The need to observe life and catch it on the wing gave [my] art a special graphism that might be related to [Henri] Bergson's "line of intention." This line

becomes the vertebral column of the picture, the tightrope that determines the distribution of values. This is exemplified in *La Table Servie*."[10] For Bergson, duration is memory, consciousness and freedom, as well as the conservation and preservation of the past in the present. Objects must be perceived according to a line of intention because the pure presences of matter and memory can no longer be distinguished. By virtue of a gap or "cerebral interval," a human being can only retain from a material object those elements that are of interest along a particular line of matter and movement. This constitutes the line of objectivity, that of perception—object—matter. An object denotes not only what is divided but what does not change in kind. Representation, however, is divided into two lines that differ in kind. The line of objectivity places a being into "matter" but the line of subjectivity places him or her into the mind. The line of subjectivity involves memory and affectivity. According to Deleuze, the determination of each "line" involves a contradiction in which apparently diverse facts are grouped according to their natural affinities but, on the other hand, each line is pushed "beyond the turn" to the point where it goes beyond experience: "an extraordinary broadening out that forces us to think a pure perception identical to the whole of matter, a pure memory identical to the totality of the past" (Bergsonism 27). Bergson develops a method of intuition in Creative Evolution that makes it possible to regain a line of intention in the aesthetic sense. The artist breaks down the barrier between himself or herself and the model by a kind of sympathy or intuition (145). While the intellect is characterized by a natural inability to comprehend life, instinct, on the contrary, is molded on the very form of life and proceeds organically rather than mechanically. Instinct turns towards life; it is sympathy. Intellect turns towards matter (144). Instinct and intelligence are two divergent solutions to a single

problem. They represent two different kinds of knowledge. Instinct is more or less conscious in some cases, unconscious in others.

If aesthetic experience in Creative Evolution emphasizes intuition, Bergson provides an explanation of ironic distance as a function of the intellect in Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic (which originally appeared in the *Revue de Paris* in 1900). Irony, or the comic spirit, has a logic of its own and laughter can give us insight into the imagination. The comic results from the presence of an overly rigidified human or one who is too unstructured to exercise self-control. It is important to note the indifference of feeling that accompanies laughter due to the suspension of an affective response. We can relate this to dadaist irony of indifference (or what some critics refer to as "blankness") and meta-irony. Duchamp avowed that his intention in creating the *Large Glass* was to create a *hilarious picture*. This impulse is also baroque, as exemplified in the genre or pseudo-genre of the *bodegón*. In fact, the hilarious picture of the *Water Seller of Seville* (Velázquez) comes to my mind when I read the comic depiction of Duchamp as a "salt seller" in Desnos's "Rrose Sélavy" (this depiction appears in the form of an anagram that Desnos used for Duchamp—*le marchand du sel*).[11]

Duchamp wanted to put painting to the service of the mind and create an inner reality. He succeeded in accomplishing this in *Chess Players*; this painting visualizes the lines of intended moves imagined by chess players as they conceptualize their strategies for the game plan. Duchamp's mental games of chess were by no means his only form of intellectual activity. Henderson suggests that he considered his ruminations on the nature of signs and language as part of his scientific activity. In Creative Evolution Bergson regards the signs that compose language as central to the intellect and scientific practice but they are an analytical factor impeding the experience of duration and continuity.

Henderson claims that many characteristics of the Bride exist only verbally in Duchamp's notes so that plastic integration in a single form could not possible. The plastic integration of form was a compositional method adhered to by followers of Bergsonian Cubism (176). Henderson argues that Duchamp distanced himself from the Bergsonian cubist ideas set forth by Gleizes and Metzinger's Du Cubisme published in 1912. Valorizing the creative intuition of the artist, Bergson believed that the artistic self was an expression of the fundamental self (as discussed in Time and Free Will published in 1889). Henderson insists that Bergson had characterized the intellectual and scientific modes of thinking preferred by Duchamp as external to the innate psychic processes of the organic and profound self (63). Intellectual ideas that one receives readymade (*tout fait*) are external to the inner self of artistic creation. It is the faith in beauty and the laws of taste that enable a sensitive artist to create a work of art. Duchamp stated, nevertheless, that as soon as one starts to express thoughts in words "everything goes wrong." Therefore, chance and intuition would paint not the thing itself, but in a Mallarméan sense, the effect produced. Something more than intellect is needed to confront the reality of change. The early twentieth-century was a rapidly evolving world transformed by technological and scientific discoveries. Bergson believed that science could only offer a partial explanation because nature itself is indeterminate as a process of continuous change and creation. The vital instinct is indistinguishable from the creative urge. Life is a current sent through matter.[12] Duchamp may not have digested Bergsonism firsthand but he imbibed it from the conversations of the Puteaux group and stated in an interview that insofar as Bergson recognizes the primacy of change he is influenced by him. Change makes everything interesting; change and life are synonymous.[13]

The absurdity of the world is abolished by divine laughter, an idea that Loy expresses in her definition of art as a divine joke. Since positive reality is always changing, its character is humorous. Mallarmé's valorization of the intellect may at first strike one as being at odds with Bergsonian intuition. In examining Duchampian meta-irony, Lawrence Steefel in The Position of Duchamp's *Glass* in the Development of His Art[14] outlines the connection between Mallarmé and Bergson: "La poésie mallarméenne prend sa source dans le refus de ce positif en perpétuelle transformation, elle exprime tout d'abord une fuite devant cette fuite éternelle—elle est la recherche de l'infini" (299). Eros is *élan vital* or life force inherent in the universe which manifests itself in human eroticism, as a sublimated stimulus for art, and as a kind of attraction-repulsion dynamic in the mysterious flow of things.

Henderson admits that we can view the upper and lower halves of the *Large Glass* as an ironic commentary on the Bergsonian distinction between quality and quantity, the immeasurable and the measurable (84). Citing Mark Antliff, she remarks that the Bergsonian dichotomy set forth in Du Cubisme contrasts scientific, quantitative space identified with traditional perspective against an artistic, qualitative treatment of space associated with the ordering of space in a nonquantifiable manner.[15] Except for the Sculpture of Drops and the Nine Shots, the elements from the Bachelor's Domain never penetrate the Bride's Domain. When the Splash ascends in the form of the Nine Shots, according to Henderson, the Shots fail to collapse into a single point on the target in the fourth dimension (85). The Bride remains isolated in her domain and her cinematic blossoming is an intellectual orgasm produced by imagination. She does not entertain the possibility that the *Large Glass* could be a Platonism of the virtual. Why not consider Platonism? The Bride's orgasm is intellectual and there is no physical contact between

her and the Bachelors; desire remains at the level of intentions.[16] There are three models of desire: the stripping by the bachelors, the voluntary-imaginary of the stripping by the bride (onanism) and the collision of the two desires. The collision or fusion of the desire of the Bride and that of the Bachelors is unanalysable by logic and does not appear in the graphic design or mecanomorphic mechanism in which the combustion of air and gasoline is supposed to produce the orgasm of the bride.

Henderson does investigate the relevance of the development of X-rays in Bergson's thought. Like X-rays, the chronophotographs of Marey that interested Duchamp reveal a type of invisible reality in flux: "Such a dynamic conception of reality was encouraged in this era not only by Henri Bergson's antimaterialist philosophy of "becoming" but also by developments in physics following Henri Becquerel's discovery of the radioactivity of certain substances in 1896" (7). Contemporaries cited Gustave Le Bon's X-ray-like photographs of objects emitting the so-called black light he believed could be stimulated to flow from any material struck by rays of visible light as scientific support for Bergson's philosophy of continuity (7). X-rays and radioactivity had made it impossible for the layperson to think of matter as solid or of space as a void because it must be filled with electromagnetic rays (8). Avant-garde artists faced a serious challenge to the romantic notion that artists possess more highly developed sensibilities than the average individual. Could the modern artist be compared to the photosensitive plate that exposes an invisible reality? Duchamp had personal connections to X-ray practice in the field of medicine. Duchamp-Villon interned at the Salpêtrière where Albert Londe was based and his friend Ferdinand Tribout studied radiology and became prominent in the field. For Henderson, the contrast between external appearance and internal form is the theme of Duchamp's 1911 *Yvonne and Magdeleine Torn in Tatters*. *Sonata*, like *Yvonne*

and Magdeleine Torn in Tatters, uses transparent, partly dematerialized forms overlapping one another. The idea of "torn" connotes the ideas of "cutting" in the way X-rays cut a figure. In Duchamp's notes from the 1920s he connects X-rays to his idea of the infrathin: X-rays ? / infra thin / Transparency or cuttingness; the cutting edge of a blade and transparency / and X-Rays and the 4^{th} Dim. (9).

Henderson does not think through the event as do Virilio and Deleuze. According to Virilio, the ancient Greeks had a system based on the event which is judged by contemporary scientists to be naïve to the degree that its rational project presents itself as an incomplete program or a simple gamble on a universe where the real is invisible as in Platonism (Esthétique 36). Great inventions are events and they do not only belong to science. They are in the order of consciousness rather than that of science. For example, the phenomenon of aesthetic surprise (Archimedes, Newton or Einstein) enables the principle of relativity to be experienced by observing the flight of seagulls over the sea. This phenomenon of surprise affects the channel of sensations rather than law or reason, since law and reason are only spatio-temporal dimensions given to the image as units of measure. The scientific mind remains prisoner of its Promethean concept that has made it the unconditional ally of technology and the dream of reconstructing humankind by the image (Esthétique 51).

For Deleuze, the event is inseparably the objectification of one "prehension" and the subjectification of another; it is at once public and private, potential and real, participating in the becoming of another event and the subject of its own becoming (The Fold 78). He explains that a question first raised by Leibniz in philosophy was taken up later by Whitehead and Bergson. The question does not concern how we might attain eternity. Rather, the question posed by Leibniz and taken up by Bergson is the following:

In what conditions does the objective world allow for a subjective production of novelty, that is, of creation? The best of all worlds is neither the least horrible nor the least ugly; it is the one whose "All grants a production of novelty, *a liberation of true quanta of 'private' subjectivity*, even at the cost of the removal of the damned" (79). The best of all worlds is not the one that reproduces the eternal. It is the one in which new creations are produced. The best world is the one endowed with a capacity for innovation or creativity: *a teleological conversion of philosophy* (79). The creation of novelty mattered most for Duchamp, Desnos and Loy.

Leibniz does not define the perfect or completed act (entelechia) as an act of inclusion that returns to an essence. The condition of closure, of being shut off, has an entirely different meaning for him. For Deleuze, the completed act is that which receives from the soul that includes it the unity proper to a movement that is being made. In this respect, Deleuze considers Bergson to be very close to Leibniz. In Leibniz the present portends the future and is burdened with the past. It is not a question of determinism but of an interiority that constitutes liberty itself. The living present is variable in both extension and intensity. It is confused with the favored area or subdivision of the monad, the zone that it expresses clearly. This is what constitutes the amplitude of the soul at a given moment. More or less extended, the living present neither motivates the same action nor confers the same movement with a unity of its own. Because it expresses the wholeness of the soul in the present, the act is free (70-71).

Deleuze questions how the Multiple can become One. A great screen must be placed in between them. Like a "formless elastic membrane, an electromagnetic field, or the receptacle of the Timaeus, the screen makes something issue from chaos, and, *even if this something differs only* slightly" (76). Chaos is an abstraction because it is inseparable

from a screen that makes something rather than nothing emerge from it. It does not exist. Leibniz's conception of monads rests on the fact that no body will follow a law unless it has an inner nature to do so; monads are units of inner change (116). The extrinsic character of movement is mixed up in the condition of bodies, as a relation with a surrounding, a successive determination, or a mechanical linkage. All movement that goes, according to the law, to infinity under the force of exterior bodies possesses an inner unity without which it could not be ascribed as movement or discerned as inertia. In this way, Deleuze proves that the same holds for Leibniz as for Bergson. There is a determination inevitably extrinsic to the course; nonetheless, it supposes an inner unity of the trajectory. Elasticity is determined from without but not the inner force exerted upon it. This force becomes only "living" or "dead" in a proportion that conforms to the extrinsic state. There exists an active elastic force for the sum of movement in the universe and for each discernible movement in a determined aggregate. In this last case, the elastic force can only be impeded or released by other aggregates. They are tendencies that flash and twinkle, through the difference between the illuminators and the illuminated.

It is important to distinguish Bergson's vitalism from the plastic dynamism of Umberto Boccioni, Giacomo Balla, and Fortunato Depero. Duchamp insisted that he did not take an interest in Futurism but its leading proponents were familiar with Bergson's ideas about intuitive vitality and elasticity. In 1912 Boccioni painted a work entitled *Elasticità* (Elasticity). In 1914 he painted *Dinamismo plastico* (Plastic Dynamism) in order to invent an "infinite system" that would enable the renewal of plastic consciousness. Boccioni had most likely been inspired also by the ideas of Howard Hinton in The Fourth Dimension published in 1904. Hinton conceived of absolute speed

as a spiral moving through a plane. It was the influence of the 1915 manifesto of Balla and Depero that motivated Boccioni to adopt a socio-political program for transforming Italy and the world. The 1915 manifesto advocated a reconstruction of the universe based on avant-garde principles in opposition to the rationalism of nineteenth-century positivism. Futurism abandoned itself to the mechanization of the rational industrial age but it opposed democratic social principles. Its invention of a plastic complex depended on elastic concepts like virtual speed. Eventually, its heavy reliance on technology as a tool for social change opened the way for the elastic concepts of empire, as, for example, biophysics and multitude. Futurism made use of protean terms but it did not take into account the frustration of Icarus as he aimed too high. Unlike Zurich dadaists, the futurists abandoned themselves to the de-humanizing onslaught of modern technological inventions. They did not foresee the consequences of overly-rational technology, as did the dada-surrealists. Giorgio de Chirico's metaphysical paintings challenge the futurist idea of abandonment to mechanical forces. (As mentioned in Chapter Three, his recurrent image of a train rushing nowhere, abandoned to an always-arriving force, enables the viewer to reflect upon the consequences of modern progress.) Duchamp's *Large Glass* opposes futurist elasticity and dynamism because it is an irrational machine that exposes the frustrations inherent to technological progress.

In opposition to the overly-technological rationalism of Futurism, critics whose grounding is primarily in Freudian ideas have focused on an analysis of pleasure and desire in Duchamp's works. Some of Duchamp's comments about his optical illusions, however, suggest that "optical pleasure" was not always his primary goal. Rosalind Krauss has emphasized the sexual content of Duchamp's rotoreliefs, interpreting them as objects of optical pleasure embodying an optical unconscious and the projection of desire

into the field of vision. Spiraling forms and circles employed as a means to encode mechanical sexuality had already been established in the works of Remy de Gourmont's Physique de l'amour (1903) prior to Duchamp's experiments. In Henderson's opinion, such an interpretation may oversimplify Duchamp's project because it deemphasizes his exploration of perceptual effects of relief and "plastic illusion" as a form of virtuality. Duchamp's notes on the infrathin attest to his continued interest in such optical virtuality without necessarily sexual overtones. His related notes about film indicate that he was also concerned with nonsexual physiological effects, which were closer to the retinal exhaustion he had cultivated in *To Be Looked At*. In a note addressing a plan for an abstract film Duchamp writes about developing an undulating spiral that induces dizziness (212-213). Although Henderson does not want to oversimplify Duchamp's project, her critique of mechanical sexuality and its relation to Bergsonism remains superficial. When she discusses Alfred Jarry's influence on Duchamp, she acknowledges that fact that Jarry took an interest in the Bergsonian discussion of time as succession and space as simultaneity, which included references to four-dimensional space and n-dimensional geometry (47). The rejection of traditional laws enabled Jarry to subvert symbols, including sexual symbols. In Le Surmâle (1902) Jarry combines sex, the physics of electricity, human-machine analogies and humor. Henderson suggests that Jarry's commentary on the theme of repopulation ("Copulatively Speaking") may have been an influence on the *Large Glass* because a number of sexual elements appear in both Jarry's commentary and Duchamp's work, such as a virgin, a bride, *célibataires* and *célibataires militaires* in uniforms (49).

In Duchamp's optical experiments following World War I he took an interest in physiological effects and dimension-changing illusions. The investigation of spinning

disks and spirals began well before Duchamp with the experiments of Joseph Plateau in 1850. Such physiological experiments are not to be confused with investigations that further the "myth of the persistence of vision." A psychologist named Hugo Munsterberg writing in 1915 about the cinema was aware of the "myth of the persistence of vision" that was erroneously thought to account for the illusion of motion in the cinema. The "theory" of after-images explained why no interruptions were noticeable in a motion picture. What is the definition of the after-image? When the human eye is presented with a rapid succession of slightly different images, there is a brief period during which each image, after its disappearance, persists upon the retina, allowing that image to blend smoothly with the next image. Determining this explanation to be inadequate for the illusion of motion in the cinema, Munsterberg proposed an "impletion" process (a "filling-in) in which two stimuli are perceived at different locations at different times and the observer's mind fills in the gap. Movement is not seen from the exterior but "superadded" by the action of the mind. This resembles Duchamp's concept of the *art coefficient*. Joseph and Barbara Anderson in "The Myth of Persistence of Vision Revisited" believe that the Freudian psychoanalytic model (as well as Marxism) perpetuated the myth because these theories did not address the physiology of motion and implied a passive viewer. These models were rooted in nineteenth-century explanations. A new understanding of the motion picture must take into account that movement is processed in active meaning-seeking ways. People note what is moving in their field of vision and whether or not they are moving.[17]

Virilio discusses the myth of the persistence of vision or the science of the photogene. He locates Marey within this tradition. When Marey reduces the movement of a living body to photogenic (photogenes) signs, he plunges the spectator into the world of

the "never seen" where no form is "given" because all forms inhabit an already differed time, deprived of mnemonic traces (Esthétique 48-59). In the cinematic image, as Virilio explains, the oscillation between the production of persistent luminous impressions and "pure fascination" destroys the conscious perception of the spectator and opposes itself to the natural functioning of the eye. The fixity of the gaze only lasts for a brief second before the spectator falls into a hypnotic trance. Cinematic acceleration, conceived of as an active prosthesis, measures the world by means of a vector of movement.

Duchamp began to experiment with spinning disks and glass plates activated by an electric motor. The *Rotary Demsiphere (Precision Optics)* and the *Rotoreliefs (Optical Disks)* create effects of relief and recession into depth by combinations of spirals and circles in motion. Henderson explains that this was a new chapter in Duchamp's pursuit of an alternative to the plastic form of Cubism to the degree that the visual virtual effects became a means to create "plastic illusions," as Gabrielle Buffet commented in her article "Coeurs volants" translated in the 1945 *View* magazine (211). Sensory and cerebral processes work together to produce the illusions. Theories concerning the fourth dimension focused on the dimension-changing capability of the spiral. For Henderson, Duchamp's works do not often make use of the spiral alone because he considered the spiral to be more effective when combined with eccentric circles (212). In 1923 he experimented with optical illusion by creating a series of seven hand-drawn disks. His notes from the period explain how the illusion works. Although his notes entail several pages of technical description, Henderson's in-depth study of the science behind the process highlights the following ideas as being most useful:

> Primary experiment of 2 circles [diagram] / Turning on a center located between A and B on the line connecting them. Make different drawings of

> this exp. (diff. thicknesses of lines, different colors/one line passing over another) etc—
>
> The spiral at rest doesn't give any impression of relief (or at least only imagined psychologically) / Turning around the center of one of these circles the spiral gives the impression of corkscrewing up toward the eye—this is a partial case of the above named principle of the 2 circles.
>
> With the principle of the 2 circles one can draw any round object seen from above i.e. the line of sight going from the eye to the object *almost extending* the axis of the object (i.e., seen almost from the end and the circles constituting its form at different distances from the eye having their center on this axis) . . . *Spheres*. *Hemispheres* / *Convexity* / Cylinders (total eclipse)/same things as the objects (212)

The total eclipse in the above citation refers to one of the disks that creates the illusion of looking through a telescope at a solar eclipse as its concentric circles undulate. Duchamp's interest in the eclipse, as well as that of Loy in her Lost Lunar Baedeker poems, typifies an entire generation's fascination with optics. In 1919 observations of a solar eclipse confirmed Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. Henderson adds that Duchamp would have been familiar with the effects of virtual or "subjective" color produced in optical experiments through the rotation of black and white forms and, furthermore, in the context of his theorizing on infrathin, Duchamp pursued the study of interference patterns that produced virtual color (212). In the experiments with precision optics in the 1920s Duchamp created virtual relief using motion as a dimension-creating entity and an alternative to the effects of stereoscopic photographs. In 1920 he had personally obtained a motion picture camera because of his interest in films as a way to

express another dimension. In 1925 Duchamp and Man Ray experimented with the stereoscopic effect of filming the three-dimensional, spiraling *Rotary Demisphere* in red and green from two slightly different perspectives, "as if to raise its three-dimensional form to a fourth dimension" (212).

Henderson examines what she identifies as thematic collisions between Duchamp's anti-Bergsonism and new unities in the *Large Glass* and readymades. The contrast between the mensurability of the Bachelor's metrical realm and the freedom of the Bride in the fourth dimension presents the Bergsonian distinction between quality and quantity. This theme preoccupied the Puteaux Cubists and references to it may be found in Gleizes and Metzinger's Du Cubisme where the Cubist painter is described as a creator of unmeasurable rhythms who changes quantity into quality. Henderson considers the presence of Bergson in the Large Glass to be a parody of self-expression and intuition of an inner life in favor of a plastic form (199).

The rotoreliefs combine art and machine, as well as engineering and math. They consist of cardboard disks printed on both sides with color offset lithographs (or silkscreens) that are to be played on a turntable. These experiments continued throughout Duchamp's career. In 1935 he manufactured 500 sets of rotoreliefs. When the cardboard disks are rotated on the turntable their bright patterns create the effect of movement on a two-dimensional surface. The rotoreliefs react against the static quality of painting by evoking movement. He wrote titles in French directly on the outer edge of the disks in small letters and he numbered them. A series of rotoreliefs was recently exhibited at Boston College's 2005 tribute to Julien Levy entitled *Accommodations of Desire: Surrealist Works on Paper Collected by Julien Levy*. In the exhibit *Rotorelief No. 3 (Lanterne chinoise —modèle déplacé)* had two spirals, the outermost one in red and white

and the inner one in black and white. Some of the spirals showed the interaction of complementary colors, such as blue and orange. The title of *Rotorelief 11* was the most interesting—*Eclipse totale*. The title of *Rotorelief 7* (*Verre de bohème*) recalls the line from Desnos's poem "Porte du second infini" in which he mentions a glass telephone made from *verre de bohème*. The exhibit featured one rotorelief spinning in motion on a turntable. The design of concentric ellipses joined at one point brings to mind the shape of a polar equation (particularly $r = \cos\theta$).[18] The effect cannot be described within a Cartesian system. The spiral form itself belongs to the polar coordinate system and the basic form is known as the Spiral of Archimedes (whose equation is $r = \theta$). Other common equations resemble basic shapes known as the cardioid, which looks like a heart, and a rose, which looks like a flower with petals. All of these shapes appear frequently in Duchamp's works.

While Henderson thinks that the Bachelor is "pitifully laughable," she refuses to view the Bride as laughable. Neither realm is free of elements characterizing the other: "Although by contaminating her pure, organic internality with external, mechanical elements Duchamp might have created the conditions for humor as defined by Bergson, he does not seem to have seen the Bride herself as a laughable figure. He instead appears to have sought a subtle blending of organic and mechanical characteristics in this figure as he developed her many personae" (84). Duchamp emphasized quantity over quality, as well as intellect over intuition, and opposed the Bergsonism of the Puteaux Cubists. In Henderson's view, the "cinematic blossoming" of the Bride opposed the sensibility of Cubism and Duchamp wanted to replace the self-expressive Bergsonian artistic act with a scientific, mechanical technique. He wanted to create a Top Inscription associated with

the cloud-like blossoming that would function as an image of the Bride's imagined orgasm and as a practical vehicle for her communications to the Bachelors (77).

Bergson's description of the cinematographical mechanism of thought in Creative Evolution involves an external process in which "we place ourselves outside [objects] in order to recompense their becoming artificially" (252). The general character of knowledge forms itself on that of action. Knowledge entails the activity of going from an arrangement to a re-arrangement. Intelligence must always be present in action so that action may become "enlightened." Intelligence ensures the progress of this activity but it is discontinuous since it models itself on action. Each act aims at a certain insertion of will into a discontinuous reality. There is, however, "between our body and other bodies, an arrangement like that of the pieces of glass that compose a kaleidoscopic picture" (252-53). For Bergson, the mind constructs an idea only if its pieces are capable of coexisting together (231). Duchamp's ruminations on shards of glass (i.e., "a stained glass window that has fallen out and lay more or less together on the ground is of far greater interest than the thing conventionally composed *in situ*") takes it inspiration from Bergson's kaleidoscopic picture and idea of the composite. The kaleidocopic picture reconstitutes object in flux through instantaneous views because the reality of the flux itself cannot be humanly grasped. The *Large Glass* is an apparatus that reconstitutes fluid accidents within a space-time continuum. Levy remarks that in Duchamp's *Notebox* (known as the *Green Box*) many problems involve the concept of a space-time continuum. While painters have traditionally concerned themselves with space, the concept of space-time is modern.[19] Certainly, the idea of delay in the *Large Glass* involves time. Levy explains that the intention of Duchamp in the installation of the *Large Glass* in the middle of a gallery was to create a "time-

filter." The "skeletal" images of the *Large Glass* merge with the spectators moving in front of and behind the work, "so that the frame and the painting act as a sort of static composer of fluid accidents in the surrounding space" (26-27). The concept of "delay," as time-filter, is a "strainer of events."

Levy considered Duchamp's *Large Glass* to be a "time-filter" not only because of the presence of *sieves* in the work but, more importantly, as a conceptualization of the creative process itself. He presented the idea of a time-filter as a way to counteract Cartesian thinking. Levy did not particularly emphasize the importance of Duchamp's experiments in Cubism; however, it is crucial to understand how his cubist works implemented the concept of filtering as a critical process in the *Large Glass*. The *Nude Descending a Staircase* depicts the "nude" in the process of moving down the staircase rather than frozen in a static moment in time. Thus, the viewer does not "see" the nude but, in fact, what Duchamp "saw" in creating the painting. Duchamp's own subjective perceptions come between the figure of the nude and the spectator's perception of it. His perceptions have already undergone a filtering process that the spectator must then submit to a further process of filtering. The artist filters first what the viewer must filter even further afterwards. If we do not filter out some of the sensory data stimulating our brains, we might certainly be overwhelmed by an overabundance of stimuli. Here I recognize the fundamental Bergsonism in Duchamp's definition of the creative act. Bergson insists that we leave out all of the data that we do not find "interesting," since we must actively choose which elements to focus on in our perceptions. In this regard, a delay in time can be advantageous for the process of *clarification*, since we do not notice all objects placed in our paths immediately. We find it necessary, therefore, to filter out some of the contingencies or sensory data that we encounter, or that encounter

us, constantly. An artist finds it necessary to filter out what might not be included in a work of art to a greater degree than in everyday perception. This creative act of *filtering* and making active choices attests to the relationship between necessity and the aleatory that Derrida considered to be an important aspect in Deleuzian thinking. When we retrieve information that has already been filtered for us (in an artistic work or in any media for that matter), what we perceive is constrained by the process of filtering. On the one hand, the *Nude Descending a Staircase* is a "heightened" or "augmented" reality; on the other, it "alters" reality in the mind of the viewer. The downside of "delay" as a filter is that in both the encoding on the part of the artist and the decoding on the part of the viewer perceptions may be controlled. The work of art is a virtual reality whose intelligibility may be controlled by whoever is doing the encoding and decoding to actualize information. Duchamp learned that all drawings of encoding/decoding or inside/outside boundaries in knowledge are theorized as power moves and do not indicate moves *towards truth*. Vision always entails the power to see (indeed, this contestation issues forth from Duchamp's work and would be taken up by feminists such as Donna Haraway, among many others). As a way out of the dilemma that the *Nude Descending a Staircase* exposed, he improved upon his method in the *Large Glass*. When he progressed to the *Large Glass*, he created a delay in glass as a virtual reality that might produce a *surreality* in the mind of the viewer. The viewer is necessary to the filtering process so that a more valid perception of reality may be obtained through the surreal effects than would otherwise be possible. The viewer is, in this way, awakened into an unseen reality transforming his or her perceptions of the world.

In "The Cinematographical Mechanism of Thought," Bergson discusses the metaphysical "indecision" of Cartesianism. Descartes tried to reconcile a belief in free will with universal mechanism. He superimposed on the determinism of physical phenomena the indeterminsim of human actions, and, on time-length a time in which there is creation, invention and succession (285). Descartes did not acknowledge the fact that units of measure are already impure and mixed and, therefore, do not permit differences in kind to be assessed (only differences in degree). Levy expressed a desire to restore men and women to the center of the universe from which Copernicus and Descartes dispossessed them: "Put each of us, put you or me right in the middle, for our consciousness is all we really know, and next to us our mates and families, and then our friends and one, very far out. . . ." (107-108). Levy opposed humankind to the machine. He rejected Cartesianism because it set man against himself and his irrational being. Progress cannot be the only aim of humanity; art and religion are not "barbarous." The supremacy of reason was useful to the Renaissance because it opened the way for the theory of progress and the subservience of knowledge to human needs while countering the assumption that civilization had degenerated from that of ancient Greece and Rome. Moral and material improvement depend on the intellect, science and the politics of man as God. The deliberate ignoring of the fact that the natural world can change denies the fact that science cannot be based on certainties. Levy thought that people in modern times were beginning to realize that they have no guarantee that science can progress indefinitely, except to their possible detriment. For this reason, the surrealists valued intuition and the irrational. Breton and Dalí proclaimed the fall of Cartesian thought.

Levy acknowledged that there were "new changes unfolding in our concepts of time, space and consciousness" but the moment for "sterilized dissection of the classical

geometries" was a falling back to better leap forward (243). James Joyce experimented with slow-motion, simultaneity and speed immobilities. Levy stated that Loy based her entire approach on this sort of temporal disformation. In his eyes, Loy was "marvelous" for she conceived of beauty as a "surreality that perturbs our response with the indefinable extravagance of a dream" (244). She exploited the possibilities of variations of perspectives by whatever means possible: a conjure trick, myopia, telescopes, microscopes or anything else that would make it possible to see the seemingly flat earth as round (244-45). Her reputation had evolved beyond the Parnassianism that had inspired Marianne Moore to write "Those Various Scalpels."[20] Contrary to Loy, Levy turned to Freud and abhorred the "murderously selective scalpel that is logic" (193).

Levy's dream was that America, a country of pragmatism, would see the undoing of common sense in the manner of Duchamp, Klee, De Chirico and Picasso, who had undone their genius to find out how it ticked. Why did Levy turn to the cinema? On the one hand, he recognized that surrealist experimentation could involve all media. On the other hand, as a gallery owner, the reason for experimentation in film was monetary. He showed movies in his gallery every week and formed a collection of films from artists like Duchamp, Léger and Dalí. He wanted to make films of his own to showcase artists through "film portraits" in order to better promote them. Levy made a film portrait of Loy in the *Marché aux Puces* (flea market) in Paris. He chose this setting because she claimed that her true environment should be a dustbin (149). He drove with Lee Miller and Loy through the suburbs of Paris to see Dalí's banned film *L'Age d'or*. Loy thought that he should show the film in New York. If Levy's initial reason for making films was monetary, the cinema proved to be an epiphany for him. He stated that the viewing of *L'Age d'or* was the first time he had been forcibly brought to realize that the artist might

be considered a moving factor in immediate politics. He added that later "when the venomous Hitler propaganda drive aimed squarely at the intellectual front, a dignity and respect was granted the artist's position, where before he had been a creature apart, lightly tolerated and, in America, incredibly neglected" (151).

Difficulties of navigating the waters of the film industry were exacerbated by the fact that, ironically, the surrealists who loathed war were perceived as dangers to society. At the time Levy entered the film industry the terms of Romantic-Realism had still been defining popular movies as a pictorial genre. Similar to painting in the tradition of Romantic-Realism, the film medium fused romantic ideals about the sovereignty of feeling with details of visual currency. Chiaroscuro effects created by the film medium were exploited for the furthering of romantic-realist ideals that reinforced the force of the narrative. Unlike popular films that reinforced the story, avant-garde films went against the grain of Romantic-Realism's force of the story. For Anne Hollander, film-makers like Michelangelo Antonioni in *L'Eclisse* and *La Notte* satisfy the need for a narrative through the elaboration of an inner state; a graphic story with emotionally realistic drama need only be a sequence and not a narrative, not unlike the dramas of Vermeer and other illuminative painters (49). Levy considered Chaplin's use of chiaroscuro and crude motion to be a protest against the "banal excellencies" of popular Hollywood films. He claimed that Chaplin would dissolve in the "suave lighting which brings a Garbo to life" (49). Although Levy supported the pure photography of the three S's (Stieglitz, Strand and Sheeler), he defended the "snap-shotty" miracles of the "shockingly optimistic" Henri Cartier-Bresson who experimented with an ambivalent, accidental, anti-plastic and anti-graphic photography (48-49). Cartier-Bresson became known for his ability to find the "decisive moment" in making photographs with a Leica camera that relied partly on

intuition and partly on chance. This point of view is cinematic and Cartier-Bresson did eventually turn towards the cinema. He assisted Jean Renoir with major films later in his career. More than just capturing the fleeting moment, the camera places the eye, the heart and the head on the same line. Surrealists believed that the heart is an eye and the eye is thought. In a statement reminiscent of Duchamp, Cartier-Bresson remarked that the photographer of the instantaneous moment retains his breath (*souffle*) against the faculties of mind converging to capture the fleeting moment.

When one looks at films from the first decade of the twentieth century, their theatrical quality is immediately evident. Magic tricks and theatrical material resembling Vaudeville acts were presented in early films as if seen inside a stage frame. Despite the stage frame, camera imagery was secondary to effects of movement. The screen illusions of the medium's first master trickster, Georges Méliès, employed effects of movement. The camera imagery was secondary to the point that Méliès hand-colored his frames and penned in the narrative. Méliès manipulated the medium in any way possible, whether in editing, using double exposures, employing make-up or exploiting theatrical trickery. He blended slapstick comedy, Victorian ideas (about astronomy, superstition or beauty) and twentieth-century technology. *The Eclipse* (1907), *Long Distance Wireless Photography* (1908), *The Impossible Voyage* (1904), *The Mermaid* (1904) and *A Trip to the Moon* (1902) have earned him recognition as the cinema magician. In a baroque display of virtuosity Méliès uses science to heighten illusions. Virilio asserts that Méliès introduces a perpetual anamorphosis in cinematic metamorphosis: "Ce que la science essaye de mettre au jour, 'le non-vu des instants perdus,' devient chez Méliès *la base même de la production de l'apparence*, de son invention. Ce qu'il montre de la réalité c'est ce qui réagit continuellement aux absences de la réalité qui est passé. C'est leur 'entre-deux' qui

rend visibles ces formes qu'il qualifie 'd'impossibles, surnaturelles, merveilleuses'" (Esthétique 20). With the appearance of the motor, life changed because of its double role as a projector of speed and propagator of cinematic or cinematographic images.

In Cinema 1 Deleuze describes the imagery of the early or "classic" cinema as the *movement-image*. The movement-image can take three basic forms, that of the perception image, the affect-image and the action image. In Cinema 2 Deleuze discusses how in post-World War II cinema the unities of situation and action could no longer be maintained due to the disjointed world. The post-World War II world and image operate within a realm of incommensurability. The modern image is connected through irrational cuts between the non-linked. A confrontation exists between outside and inside that produces thought. (The present study focuses only on the movement-image.) Hollander's view of the movement-image is that the more the film medium advanced, the closer it came to its dramatic pictorial ancestor and the further from the stage. Authentic cinematic motion, being comprehensive, in her opinion, surges in and out of the frame and back and forth in time like psychic movement. She is in accord with Deleuze in this respect. The temporal language of the theater, which moves along at a fixed distance from the spectator while the stage space encloses the action, does not resemble cinematic motion (50-51).

Critics have observed a relation between the movement-image of cinema and baroque painting. Anne Hollander discovers a cinematic quality in the works of Velázquez or Vermeer and other Dutch artists' interiors. In Moving Pictures Hollander remarks that Velázquez's *Las Meninas*, *The Forge of Vulcan* or *The Spinners* seem projected like a film shot and display an ambiguous action and illumination. She argues persuasively that in Van Eyck or Vermeer the reality of the image depends on the sense

of light and movement. The light of the moving eye in Van Eyck or Vermeer has been directly engaged by the moving light on separate phenomena. Thus, Hollander maintains that painted light can give the sense that the world of the picture is momentarily actual and in uncertain motion. Pieter Bruegel created an "incandescent radiance in the sky that illuminates the whole world, and makes it visible as through a colored-glass screen" (94). In the *Fall of Icarus*, the paint film is thin and fresh, creating the effect of sunlight filling the air from behind the picture. The sun dazzles the viewer and the "shadows cast by the plow seem to move" (94). The viewer can almost see the world turning; Bruegel has given a slight curve to the horizon (95). In baroque paintings, particularly Dutch, music stood for the kind of pictures found in early movies. In the paintings of Dutch masters music is made *in* the picture to give the same message as the picture. A film has an excess of content or undifferentiated emotional power that may function like a melody even if it does not make any immediate sense. Hollander asserts that early cinema is underscored in the same way as opera where narrative proceeds through "translation into the larger irrational terms of music, so that getting the whole meaning at any moment means responding to the music and the story *as one*" (448).

The medium of film enables a moving viewpoint versus one-point perspective, as well as simultaneous viewpoints versus privileged ones. The paintings on the interior of baroque domes are the ancestors of the modern cinema. The perspective from the top of a baroque dome painting is that of the apex of a cone from which all things are intelligible. The eye travels up the ceiling of Andrea Pozzo's frescoes in the Roman church of Sant'Ignazio (circa 1691-1694) through specific viewpoints as opposed to the one-point perspective of the classical Albertian window. In a similar way, the film viewer encounters the multiple perspectives of camera angles, lighting schemes, rhetorical

framings and titles. The film viewer becomes actively engaged in trying to make sense of these shifts. He or she creates new rationales and revises them with each juxtaposition. The early cinema plays with optical perspectives, as exemplified by the magnifying glass in *Grandma's Reading Glasses* (G.A. Smith, 1900) and the restriction of the camera's field of vision to a telescope perspective in *The Telescope*. Méliès's *Trip to the Moon* displays an image of the earth seen from the moon (perhaps an inspiration for the otherworldly perspective of Breton's Clair de terre and Desnos's imaginary cosmogony in addition to the novels of Wells and Verne). Even around 1900 the perspectival play prefigured Surrealism to a certain extent. In *Grandma's Reading Glasses* the director privileges manipulations of visual perspective. The scenario of this short film centers on the voluptuous pleasure of the act of looking experienced by a young boy. Surrealism was to take an interest in the uncorrupted imagination of children who marvel at ordinary objects around them. In *Grandma's Reading Glasses* the objects of wonder include a newspaper, watch, bird, granny's eye and cat, all viewed through a magnifying glass.

Movie-making is intrinsically aleatory because it represents the combined efforts of diverse practitioners who are not all aiming for the same thing and are not even in complete agreement about immediate common goals. One single, absolute controlling artistic purpose was impossible for popular movies and, consequently, no single point of view shaped their consciousness. Moreover, the movie-camera eye itself can only come to some agreement with the phenomena under its gaze; it cannot totally control or shape them, having no hands. The human hands and eyes must work with the fundamental arbitrariness of film footage itself. Hollander would agree; she expresses a similar idea in stating that the "viewing eye allows for and comes to delight in the flux of chance in any shot, and that very arbitrariness becomes part of the stuff of the myth itself, the romance

as well as the reality" (50). Drama is provoked by the desire for luminosity pushed to its extreme limit. This luminosity is no longer theatrical but it is a type of architecture. Chaplin's *City of Lights* reveals that the city is no longer a theater but, to borrow a term from Virilio, the "cinema of the lights of the city." For Virilio, the question is not whether the cinema can do without space but if spaces can do without cinema:

> L'urbanisme dérive, l'architecture se déplace constamment, la demeure n'est plus que l'anamorphose d'un seuil. Malgré les nostalgiques de l'Histoire, Rome n'est plus dans Rome, l'architecture n'est plus dans l'architecture, mais dans la géométrie, l'espace-temps des vecteurs . . . l'art ne cesse de disparaître dans l'intense illumination des projecteurs et propagateurs. (71)

In 1923 the revolutionary film director Dziga Vertov, known for *Man With a Movie Camera*, conceived of himself as a mechanical eye in constant movement. John Berger examines how machine maneuvering in chaotic movements is able to record motion in complex combinations freed from the boundaries of time and space (Berger 17).

Man Ray and Desnos collaborated on *L'Etoile de mer* but no absolute controlling purpose guided the making of the film. Desnos wrote about the different artistic intentions entertained by Man Ray and himself. In "Morale du cinéma" (1923) Desnos wrote that cinema should permit the absolute in action. In "Le Rêve et le cinéma" (1923) Desnos stated that poetry has everything to expect from cinema. In "L'Erotisme," also from the same year, he declares that eroticism is one of the most admirable factors of the cinema and one of the causes for hatred by imbeciles. Luminous men and women of the screen accomplish acts in the name of the sensual. *L'Etoile de mer* began as a simple poem written by Desnos, the entirety of which is found below:

Qu'elle est belle

Après tout

Si les fleurs étaient en verre

Belle, belle comme une fleur en verre

Belle comme une fleur de chair

Vous ne rêvez pas!

Belle comme une fleur de feu

Les murs de la santé

Qu'elle "était" belle

Qu'elle "est" belle.

Desnos adapted the poetic text into a film scenario and envisioned musical accompaniment. The text was inspired by a starfish that he purchased from a Jewish second-hand furniture dealer. It looks like a science specimen floating in a jar. (The actual jar with the starfish was given to his wife Youki, who in turn gave it to a friend in thanks for having discovered the urn containing his ashes in Terezin, formerly known as Theresienstadt. He had been arrested by the Gestapo for his participation in the French Resistance. His glasses had been taken from him and he is reported to have "heroically" and "optimistically" helped other prisoners despite his personal hardship. He died of typhus fever shortly before WWII ended and the survivors of the concentration camp at Theresienstadt were released.) Desnos recounts[21] that the poetic text and film scenario were inspired by the starfish which symbolizes "lost love"; the idea is simple like a "hello" and terrible like a "goodbye." He claims that Man Ray alone could have conceived of the specters surging out of the paper and the film. These specters were to be incarnated by the actors André de la Rivière and Kiki. In Desnos's opinion, Man Ray

employed an "alchemy of appearances" that owed less to science than to inspiration. Man Ray triumphed over technique in incarnating the dreams of Desnos. The film was completed by Man Ray when Desnos was in Cuba. *L'Etoile de Mer* is the only film Man Ray financed by himself, as opposed to his Mallarméan-inspired *Le Mystère du château du dé* financed by the Vicomte de Noailles. Man Ray chose not professional actors but his friends due to the fact that film characters were simple marionettes to him.[22] Although there are only two principal roles in the film, a brief appearance by a third male role was assigned to Desnos himself. Man Ray knew that the nude scene would never be tolerated by the censors. He did not want to use the devices of partial dissimulation such as silhouettes used by other cinematographers. After several laborious experiments, Man Ray prepared a few gelatine plates and obtained an effect of clouded glass through which the nude photograph resembled a drawing or rudimentary painting. Levy considered the main purposes of the making of *L'Etoile de Mer* to be the cinematizing of a poem, the transposition of the word to image, speechless imagery and imaginary speech (230).

Man Ray had collaborated with Duchamp on *Anémic Cinéma* between 1924 and 1926 prior to his project with Desnos. *Anémic Cinéma* developed out of Duchamp's previous kinetic and optical experiments. Duchamp and Man Ray filmed the rotoreliefs after they had mounted them and rotated them on a wheel. The sequence of rotoreliefs function as "kinetic paintings" that are marked by an indifference to aesthetics. The series of visual puns in French reinforce Duchamp's poetic concerns with language. The content of the film consists of a series of spirals that are intercalated by nine alliterative verbal puns. The film's spectator cannot analyze it purely visually or discursively. Duchamp desired to transfer the significance of language from words into signs. Some critics, including Arturo Schwarz, compare Duchamp's signs to Chinese ideograms.

The title *Anémic Cinéma* contains an anagrammatic play with the word cinema. Dalia Judovitz in "Anemic Visions in Duchamp: Cinema as Readymade" comments on how the interplay between the title and object of the film rejects the formal language of abstraction in cinema in much the same way that optical illusions and readymades reject the formal language of abstraction in painting. Duchamp attempted to find kinetic solutions to pictorial problems and the film is not "cinematic" in terms of early avant-garde practices. The undecidabilty of the status of the words and images in *Anémic Cinéma* challenges the traditional cinematic medium by decomposing and analyzing its kinetic movement instead of being seduced by its dynamics (as typified by futurist works). *Anémic Cinéma* displays the same concerns about normative expectations within the structures of vision and language that are found in the series of *Nude* paintings (which may be thought of as conceptual "kinetic paintings"). The early avant-garde defined the cinema from a romantic perspective by highlighting its synthetic character and estheticizing cinema as a total art in the sense of Riccioto Canudo's seventh art (46). In opposition to this traditionalist point of view, the French Impressionist vanguard of the 1920s, which included Germaine Dulac, Jean Epstein and Louis Delluc, was interested in the abstract and formal character of film as an expression of the photogene of the image (46). (A photogene is a term from physiology that is synonomous with the more common terms "afterimage" or "aftersensation." Because the human eye converts light into energy that enters into the nervous system, a perception may linger after they eye has looked away from a source of light. For example, when we look at a bright spot and turn away, a dark spot lingers in our perception.) Challenging both the abstract and traditionalist notions of film, Duchamp questioned the visual aesthetic status of film as an object of sensation. His notion of indifference to aesthetics does not merely criticize the retinal

(sensational) character of film or painting but, rather, his attitude of indifference reflects his rejection of the logical oppositions that underlie the very notion of difference (48). Judovitz discusses the implications of the following remark made by Duchamp: "For me there is something else in addition to *yes*, *no* and *indifferent* — that is, for instance, *the absence of investigations of that type*."[23] In her opinion, Duchampian indifference comes to mean an operation upon objects and contexts marked by the oppositional difference of vision and discourse and, more radically, the rejection of difference in vision that is normally equated with knowledge, sexuality and power in a metaphysical sense (48). In both painting and film Duchamp moves from an erotics of vision to a transitional status of both art and eros (*eros, c'est la vie*). He does not equate painting with cinema in his critique of retinal vision. Judovitz's conclusions are based on the fact that his critique of retinal vision displaces both media to the degree that *Nude . . . 2* is a cinematic painting and *Anémic Cinéma* is a pictorial film (50). In this way, *Anémic Cinéma* may be considered to be an "anemic machine" whose kinetic character is produced through the visual literalization of graphic and discursive elements.

The film begins with the white letters of the title in the first frame projected against a black background in a chiaroscuro contrast that inverts the traditional concept of writing in which black letters create traces on a white page. The two words Anémic and Cinéma appear as diagonal mirrors slanting towards each other, with the two C's at the end of one word and the beginning of the other meeting in the center. The diagonal lines formed by the two words slant towards a hypothetical point as in traditional three-dimensional painting with the exception that the vanishing point would hypothetically be located in the space of the spectator beyond the limits of the frame of the film. In *Anémic Cinéma* Duchamp destabilizes the traditional spectator as in the perspectival play of the

Large Glass. Similarly, the traditional linear model for writing is overturned through the spiraling motion of the alliterative puns that require the reader to move his or her head or move physically to adapt to the rotating words. Further instability is created through the alternation of the rotoreliefs in different directions and the effect of a flickering light that interferes with the intelligibility of the verbal puns.

The eye of the viewer is represented figuratively and it is both the site and the screen of vision literally materialized before him or her (51). The interference of the flickering light may also be viewed as natural blinking. The eye is both screen and object of projection in Duchamp's films. The problem of perspective in three-dimensional space (and the possibility of four-dimensional space) is graphically figured in the film. The vanishing point of lines corresponds to a vanishing line of planes in perspective. Like color, perspectivity is not physically controllable by touch. The conceptual space of the fourth dimension emerges as the duel effect of optical and linguistic interference. As mentioned previously in relation to the rotoreliefs, the conceptual space created by Duchamp in the film may be understood as erotic. Certainly, as Rosalind Krauss has argued, the motion of the spiral alludes to the sexual act through the suggesting of interpenetrating spaces. Nevertheless, the film's eroticism cannot be reduced to traditional sexual difference in the Freudian sense. If one has to break eggs to make an omelet, Duchamp's travesty of sexual identity does not enable one to distinguish an egg from an omelet. The undecidability of the rotating spirals formed by concentric circles does not permit the viewer to identify male and female functions attributable to specific sexual organs. The viewer does not discern a breast, vagina or a penis. Judovitiz insists on the idea of travesty that finds its apotheosis in the signature Rrose Sélavy at the close of the film. The travesty of the signature corresponds to the visual indifferentiation

operating upon the sexual content of the film. Judovitz believes that the visual indifferentiation produced by the self-referential rotoreliefs occurs also on the phonetic level because of the similarity of sounds and letters in the alliterative puns that diffuse differential relations. The viewer must invest the verbal puns with a subjective inflection producing an endless train of associations, as in the line: *Esquivons les ecchymoses des esquimaux aux mots esquis* (53). Judovitz's conclusion regards the transitional eros of *Anémic Cinéma* as the staging of the unconscious mind. This mapping of the unconscious mind cannot be attributed to a personal subject because it is a circuit or relay of signifiers in motion (*eros, c'est la vie*). It affirms the transitional status of both art and eroticism. Eros may not be reduced to a sign because it is constituted through language as a signifying chain. The signifying chain does not produce a message but a fluidity of both the male and female perspectives. It is not an affirmation of differences between viewers but of the otherness of unconscious subjectivity as symbolic play (56).

In my opinion, the staging of the mind "in-process" in *Anémic Cinéma* is not personal; we can understand it in the Deleuzian sense of desire and inflection. Desire moves across a signifying chain because it has no object and cannot be conceived of within the subject/object dichotomy. The split screen may be understood as an affirmative split in which life affirms life. Is that not the subject of art? This affirmation of the subject is surreal. According to Ribemont-Dessaignes:[24] "Le Surréalisme se met en révolte ouverte contre [toutes les valeurs de ce monde] pour les supprimer, mais il croit en elles, il les affirme, il les solidifie pour mieux entrer en lutte contre elles. Le Surréalisme n'est pas un movement négatif. Il croit en tout ce qu'il affirme. Dada ne croyait en rien" (116). Deleuze insists that the postmodern age is still Leibnizian because what matters is still folding, unfolding and refolding. We witness a schizophrenic

reconstruction in Leibniz's selves who reconstitute the world through their inner spontaneity. Monads must be conceived of, therefore, as dancing a baroque dance in which the dancers are automata. Since the distance between two monads is indivisible, it requires a pathos of distance (68). In the contemporary postmodern world "accords" between monads no longer convey the world or a text because monads open up a trajectory or a spiral in expansion that moves further and further away from a center (137).

David Wills explores the affirmative split in surrealist film in "Split Screen." He asserts that it took fifty years until the surrealists' "naïve" intuitions concerning resemblances between a film and a dream were "productively opened up" by Christian Metz (86). The surrealist who did the most to explore the relation between the dream and the cinema was, in the opinion of Wills, not Duchamp but Desnos. Desnos wrote articles of criticism on film and published scenarios in the journal *Cinema*. His prose Pénalités de l'enfer ou Nouvelles Hébrides, edited by Marie-Claire Dumas, has been commented upon in relation to cinema because its protagonists go to the cinema at the end of the narrative. Wills analyzes the relation between cinema and film in Derridean terms. He examines the decentralization of language in Desnos's idea of the inkwell-periscope (discussed previously in Chapter Two of this study) in Derridean terms and then looks at Nouvelles Hébrides. He identifies "productive" unconscious subjectivity in the Derridean terms of rupture and fragmentation with respect to originary sense. The homonym serves as a paradigm in Desnos's poetics because it defers the establishment of a singular sense and always refers elsewhere. Rupture is conveyed in the surrealist image by an absence within normal linguistic articulation, as in Lautréamont's incongruous pairing of an umbrella with a sewing machine (this parodies any absolute concept of difference). Wills

highlights two key Derridean concepts about difference. First, the linguistic sign is structured by a difference that includes an absence of sense. Second, difference defined as a play between same and other represents a decadence of the referential function of language. He explains Desnos's use of the theme of shipwreck in relation to the risk of loss or death that the decentralization of language must necessarily bring about. Desnos equates writing with the casting of words upon waves (as flotsam) and murder in "Porte du second infini." He points out that Desnos figures a sheet of paper as a wing in this text because the "possibility of apotheosis never excludes the threat of a fall" (87).

Wills turns then to a Desnosian text from the "L'Aumonyme" flotsam of the Corps et biens volume called "Blanc seing" (whose title is also shared by a Magritte painting of a mutliperspectival view of a forest). The French term "Blanc seing" means a signature on a blank check and corresponds to the idea of having free rein or *carte blanche* to act. The text consists of a play of homonyms provoking a rupture in the chain of signification. The first of the six sections of "Blanc seing" is cited below. The visual disposition of the words on the page creates the *carte blanche* effect of open-endedness.

Hommes mangés aux mythes
Il est trop tard pour soupeser vos tares
aux cinq blancs seins si saints de n'être pas sains
nous sommes soumis.
L'appeau? La peau, peau-pierre.
Aimez-vous la paupière des seins?
Ces pots de peau simulent la pierre blanchie par les flots
Pour mesurer ces seins πr est inutile
Ces pots de lait sont laids, je les abandonne aux faiseurs de lais.

Moi, j'aime l'épaule de la femme,

les pôles de l'affame

et ses reins froids comme les cailloux du Rhin.

Wills interprets "Blanc seing" as a form of coherence shaped by writing as "trace" and "frame"—which may be conceptualized as "screen." This concept of "screen" is also found in the prose of Nouvelles Hébrides. He mentions the reference to the screen in the following passage from Nouvelles Hébrides, which he cites in English but is listed below in the original French as appears in Desnos: Oeuvres (edited by Dumas):

> . . . Sur l'écran blanc, un disque lumineux était projeté sans vue aucune de paysage ni de personnages.
>
> L'assemblée des fauteuils vides suivait avec attention le spectacle magnifique que je ne voyais plus.
>
> Furieux, je voulais voir de plus près. Je grimpai après la toile. Je fus aveuglé par la lumière de la lanterne et je vis dans la toile deux trous grands à donner passage à un homme. Je passai la tête dans l'un d'eux. (104-105)

The above passage indicates a radicalization of the normal cinematic experience in the case of relations between spectators. The relation between the blank screen of the spectacle that remains invisible to the narrator and the assembly of empty chairs resembles that of a child abandoned by his/her mother before experiencing the mirror stage in Lacanian terms. Wills recalls the distinction made by Metz between the experience of a spectator of a film and that of the Lacanian mirror stage: "The spectator is absent from the screen; contrary to the child in front of the mirror, he cannot identify with himself as object, but only with those objects of which he is not one. The screen, in this

sense, is not a mirror."[25] In the Lacanian mirror stage, the spectator can constitute a world of objects without necessarily recognizing himself or herself there with the objects. By contrast, Wills considers the case of the spectator in the passage by Desnos to be that of an individual spectator deprived to the point of lacking even this world of objects since the spectator must constitute the world from a blank surface of representation:

> The Desnosian spectator, having lived through not only the mirror stage but also the experience of cinema, finds himself lured by a world of objects which doesn't at all correspond to his desire. This cinema with a screen which is void of objects refers thus to the mirror stage, but in a disturbing way. (89)

The absent camera functions as the spectator's other. The light of the projection illumines a void and, "furious at being abused by his own desire," the spectator finds escape through the "renting of the veil that is the screen" as an expression of violence which represses all detours (89). The experience of the cinema as scopic displeasure leads to rupture and, as a result, the spectator experiences the lure of an unmediated libidinal operation "along a straight line with no separation between desire and object" (90). He concludes that in Nouvelles Hébrides the differential play with whiteness "inscribes a whole series of traces within the cinematic apparatus" and its "apparent silence speaks volumes concerning the visibility of this absence of words" (92). While the narrator may believe himself or herself to be excluded from a spectacle uniting himself/herself with the empty chairs of the audience, the void created by the empty places affirms the manner in which absence attends presence and the void speaks of its place "within the claimed system of coherence" (92). The structure of *différance* plays with the scene of representation. Meaning is constituted through the articulation of two planes but the

surrealist image interferes with the normative articulation of the syntagmatic and paradigmatic functions of these planes. The referent of the surrealist image is language itself because the conceptual referent is undermined by the nonsense that such a reference would imply in the presence of an incongruous term. How does the surrealist image resemble the cinematic image? Wills defines both images as tautological; the analogical relation between the cinematic image and real referent hides a tautological underside in the confusion between paradigmatic and syntagmatic operations (96). I agree with his analysis which shows the difficulty of applying Lacanian concepts to surreal images. There are serious drawbacks to entering into a dialectics of seeing and gazing despite Lacan's claim that unconscious thought is structured like a language.

In reconsidering the relation between the surrealist image and the cinematic image in more of a Deleuzian light, Loy's "Crab-Angel" comes to mind because it surpasses romantic-realist traditions and identifies eros with motion. Loy's image of the crab-angel is a hybrid fusion of the grotesque and the transcendent. The grotesque and the transcendent, or the innocent and worldly, establish the boundaries of human possibility as in a romantic aesthetic. Like a circus trapeze artist, the crab-angel is described as "clutching the tail-end of the Chimera." This image recalls Breton's conception of Surrealism as the prehensile tale of Romanticism. However, the end of the text is replete with kinetic surprises like the "startled rose" that "whirls in the chaos of the hoofs" and the "Jeering jangling jazz" that "crashes to silence." The final lines of the text complete the development of eros with motion as a dwarf sinks by a pull of gravity to the earth where he ploughs "laboriously" towards the exit. The final exit marks a path of divergence; in this way, the double-consciousness of the text is exposed. It is not a question of a subject/object dichotomy that fits neatly within the grid of a psychoanalytic

model. The staging of the self is as problematic in this text as in the critique of futurist self-staging in "Lions' Jaws." Loy has moved beyond a critique of the masculine staging of rivalry for preeminence in the public sphere in "Lions' Jaws" to a staging of a circus act performance in "Crab-Angel" that explores baroque possibilities of self-reflexivity. The allusion to a dwarf in "Crab-Angel" reinforces an identity with baroque images like those of Velázquez in *Las Meninas*. The salient features of the crab-angel resemble a dwarf's body. Loy describes the "squat body" as having "pigmy arms" and "bow legs" whose "baroque calves curve in a bi-circular attitude" to the ecstasy of a ballerina. The body of the "dwarf" crab-angel is all muscle and contour. The final image of the text is a gesture, the motion of the dwarf "waving a yellow farewell" with a perruque. To whom is the dwarf waving? The audience is strangely absent, as in Desnos's Nouvelles Hébrides. While the viewer of Veláquez's dwarves enters into a relation with a human spectacle, Loy's baroque dwarf requires the reader/spectator to identify with the "inhuman." Her crab-angel, a hybrid of human and machine, is also an "idiot dwarf hooked to a wire to make him jump." The theatrical performance has a mechanical dimension since the presence of a circus-master enables the illusion to take place through the manipulation of an "over-head pulley." The upward movement of the pulley lifts the dwarf into the "up-a-loft" space of the stage so that it may float "on the coiling lightning of the whirligig." After the climax of the upward lifting that produces a "jangling jazz," the dwarf crashes in silences back to earth. Yet this silent crash takes on the positive connotation of a consciousness that "ploughs" through the earth "laboriously" to the exit. The staging of conscious labor is transformed into a positive affirmation when, after floating through the "whirls in the chaos," the dwarf "subsides like an ironic sigh to the soft earth." The "ironic sigh" indicates a release of breath, with which the reader identifies as a form of

subjective agency. As the laboring of an artistic consciousness, it marks the trace of the event as a positive affirmation.

In examining the laboring consciousness in "Crab-Angel" it is also useful to compare the images of the text to those of Bruegel's *Fall of Icarus*. In Bruegel's painting the plowman, or common laborer, is indifferent to the excess ambition of Icarus. In Loy's text the ambitious dwarf as acrobat may be compared to an Icarus-like figure; however, what is complicated about this idenfication is that the dwarf doubles into the figure of the plowman as he falls to earth. One might deconstruct the image as a confusion of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic in terms of *différance*. The idea of identifying with the "furrows" of the plough might be interpreted as Loy's self-identification as part Jew (in the Derridean sense of the Jew as furrow.) On the other hand, the presence of burlesque irony in Loy's text attests to the cinematic aspect of the work. As in a Chaplin movie, Loy's text operates under the burlesque play of vectors and indices. The readability of the ending of "Crab-Angel" requires a shift from images of action to images of perception. The actions of the dwarf and the plowman are vectors that move in opposite directions; the dwarf plows through the air with the aid of gravity and the laborer plows through the ground against the pull of gravity. The two images are perceived as infinitely distant in situation by the reader/audience. The gesture of farewell on the part of the dwarf reveals him to be free to exit the performance (and free to diverge), while the laborer, with whom now the reader/audience identifies, must remain in the performance of routine actions. Deleuze remarks that the "law of the index — the slight difference in the action which brings out an infinite distance between two situations — seems to be omnipresent in burlesque in general" (Cinema 1 170). The laboring consciousness with which the audience identifies is the time or duration that opposes itself to the temporal marker of

death in the waving gesture of farewell. The laboring consciousness enables the actualization of the virtual performance. The mechanical is superimposed over the living according to the Bergsonian formula. The "yellow farewell" is a virtual concept that makes it possible for a new creative act to take shape. The waving of the perruque removes the artifice of a performance by pointing to devices that mask absence. The actor walks out on his own performance—which nevertheless endures as an ironic gesture of farewell. The farewell is not a futurist state of mind (as in Boccioni's 1911 *States of Mind: The Farewells*) but an intuition of time grasped only in the indices of its passage. Grasping the indexical markers of a text will turn reading into a form of viewing and, vice versa, looking at the indices of a painting will turn viewing into an act of reading. As T.J. Clark argues, when reading becomes viewing, writing and illusion turn in on themselves like a Möbius strip. Illusionism requires the spectator of a painting or the reader of a text to grasp at meaning but what he or she sees and reads is always already lost in what he or she knows.[26] Clark's remark relates to the subject of a study on modernism that he entitled Farewell to an Idea in homage to Wallace Steven's text "The Auroras of Autumn." His study begins with the citation of this passage from Steven's text:

> Farewell to an idea . . . The cancellings,
> The negations are never final. The father sits
> In space, wherever he sits, of bleak regard,
> As one that is strong in the bushes of his eyes,
> He says no to no and yes to yes. He says yes
> To no; and in saying yes he says farewell.

The farewell to an idea is an act of affirmation that endures ongoing "cancellings" and negations. One says "yes to no" and in saying "yes" bids farewell. Clark warns that postmodernism should not look on modernity from a vantage point that views it as a ruin. To the contrary, the contemporary critic is now living through modernity's triumph.[27]

Other texts by Loy include devices that "turn in" on their own illusionism such as the cab accident in which a young girl is hurled up toward the sky in "Costa Magic." Although Levy and others have interpreted this action as a symbol for the death of a child (within the autobiographical frame of Loy's life), it is possible that Loy's contemporaries would have viewed it within the same comic perspective as early films depicting the demolition of a wall, a cab accident, and an exploding car the hurls its passenger into space. The Hepworth Manufacturing Company's 1900 short film *Explosion of a Motor Car* depicts a group of people who are tossed up into the air during an explosion in a car. A passerby collects body parts (obviously fake parts of dummies) as they rain from the sky. The comic effect results from the "mechanical superimposed on the living" in the Bergsonian sense. R. W. Paul experimented with motion in *Extraodordinary Cab Accident* (1903). This short film depicts a man ostensibly run over by a horse-drawn carriage but the surprise effect at the end is that the man jumps back to life.

Desnos, like Loy, experimented with burlesque forms at the time he wrote "Le Fard des Argonautes." His "Voice of Robert Desnos" retains the burlesque cinematic device of bodies coming back to life. The burlesque subject of René Clair's film *Entr'acte* is concerned with cheating death. It has a climactic scene where a coffin comes to a halt and its magician-corpse comes back to life. The Lumière brothers' *Démolition d'un mur* was played backwards by exhibitors, so that the demolished wall was seen to come back to life. In *An Extraordinary Cab Accident* (R.W. Paul, 1903), *Mary Jane's*

Mishap and *An Interesting Story* (James Williamson, 1904) characters are resurrected from tragic outcomes. As a teenager Desnos became familiar with Chaplin's silent movies and references to "Charlot" appear in his early works from his adolescence and afterwards. "Neuve Jeunesse" reveals the in-between world of an adolescent who juxtaposes the fixity of childhood memories to the uncertain future in a war-torn world. To the child and adolescent, going to see Chaplin at the cinema is a duty: "Nous irons au cinema / Rendre nos devoirs à Charlot." In opposition to the fixity of the past, the uncertainty of the future may be read in the following query: "Mais n'irons-nous pas sur l'eau / Visiter YOKOHAMA?" The speaker of the text is caught between the world of dream and reality. The private world of the cinema enables the speaker to fantasize beyond the limits of time and space. The text ends with a tone of regret for the innocence of a lost childhood: "Je ne suis plus qu'un petit garçon / qui mange du chocolat / et qui joue au ballon." A few years later, after Desnos had begun his military duty in Morocco, he met the dadaists one evening between assignments. His military uniform made a bad impression on the group, which included Tzara, Breton, Riguad, Radiguet, Cendrars, and Ribemont-Dessaignes. In order to relax from the stress of the meeting, Desnos went with his friend Péret to see Chaplin's *The Rink*. Desnos writes: "Péret et moi nous nous engouffrâmes dans un cinéma où *Charlot patine* me fit oublier la gêne de cette soirée" (Desnos Oeuvres 39). Cinema was therapeutic for Desnos even if it was not the Freudian armchair type. In "Les Rêves de la nuit transportés sur l'écran" Desnos considers the possibilities of projecting dreams on the screen of the cinema. It is necessary to understand the essential nature of the dream, sensuality, the Baroque itself and a certain atmosphere that evokes the infinite and eternity. He establishes a relation between the "ténèbres" of the cinema and nocturnal "ténèbres" (Desnos Oeuvres 408-410). In

"Fantômas, Les Vampires, Les Mystères de New York" he describes the "aventures ténébreuses de l'amour" in the cinema.

In "Amour et cinéma" Desnos discusses the conservative viewpoints that the people of his day hold toward the cinema and their censorship of nudity. Hypocritically, these same people watch live nude shows at music halls but fear the cinema. They are the same people who censor Chaplin and burn Sade. He suggests that they impose the "empire of the dead on the living." His remark is an ironic twisting of Bergson's idea that the "mechanical is imposed upon the living." Desnos concludes with the optimistic statement that the hypocrites will not succeed anymore than they will prevent the *Potemkine* from moving ahead full steam under a sky filled with cries of brotherhood. If the cinema was a revolutionary medium for Desnos, it was also a means of escape from the frenzy of war and violence. His generation had a need to escape from the warlike frenzy that seized Paris and shattered its sky with projectors and bursts of shells. Cinema had a revolutionary potential that he considered to be poetic. The three films that most marked his generation's imagination were *Fantômas, Les Vampires* and *Les Mystères de New York*. He believed that the cinema was invented for his generation: "Pour nous, pour nous seuls les frères Lumière inventèrent le cinéma. Là nous étions chez nous. Cette obscurité était celle de notre chambre avant de nous endormir. L'écran pouvait peut-être égaler nos rêves" (410).

In "Mystère du cinéma" the night is necessary for the metamorphoses of the cinema in which millions of gazes converge. Desnos addresses the stars and asks them if they have dreamed about the metamorphoses they will undergo. They will die and become "artificial ténèbres." He associates iconoclasm and the end of the book with the cinema. He describes the rays of the sun passing through the stained-glass window of a

church; the rays projected through the stained-glass prevent the reading of manuals of instructions and guide books. (The idea of a guidebook here makes me think of Loy's Baedeker. His reference to stained-glass recalls the overturning of normative expectations that runs as a theme in her Lost Lunar Baedeker poetry.) He opposes bourgeois cinema, with artistic prejudices, to a cinema of dream, mystery, the impossible, and surprise. In "Puissances des fantômes" he speaks of the magic of the imagination and the marvelous.

Inez Hedges provides an interpretation of the film in her article "Constellated Visions: Robert Desnos's and Man Ray's *L'Etoile de Mer*" that considers it to be an alchemical spiritual journey like that in Breton's surrealist novel Nadja and Arcane 17. Although Hedges insists that her reading is not psychological, she admits nevertheless that it is consistent with Freudian views of narcissism and humor.[28] She analyzes the iconography and allegory of alchemical transformations in both *L'Etoile de Mer* and *Le Mystère du château du dé*. Her analysis is a thematic one that focuses on two central themes: the voyage into the unknown and the woman as *soror mystica*, the female soul mate of the alchemist most often represented as the mythical mermaid Melusina. Breton refers to Melusina in connection with Nadja and Elisa, the principal female characters from Nadja and Arcane 17, respectively. The poet's quest in *L'Etoile de Mer* resembles that of Breton's because the protagonist searches for an obscure object of desire (the starfish, the mermaid, etc.). *L'Etoile de Mer* makes several references to glass: the initial shot of a glass door (repeated at the end of the film), a glass jar that contains a starfish, a multiple screen effect that displays many moving glass objects, and the breaking of glass in the penultimate shot of the film where the glass through which the female protagonist is filmed shatters or "explodes." Hedges argues that glass objects were the "preferred

representation of the alchemical vessel" and the glass jar containing the starfish in Desnos's poem is the origin of the alchemical allegory in *L'Etoile de Mer* (107).

The problem with surreal allegory is that there is an indeterminacy of optical and psychological focus, whether it be a question of surrealist film, objects or texts. I interpret the spiraling optical effects in Desnos's film as an application of the *infrathin* similar to the spirals in Duchamp's *Anémic Cinéma*. The infrathin is a term that refers to the antiretinal exploration of the transition from one dimension or condition to another. This liminal transition makes any focal point indeterminate because it brings two different conditions together. The glass and the starfish are a conjunction of two things but this conjunction is not what effaces the retinal. It is the conjunction of the glass object (with the starfish) and Desnos's poetic text that eschews the retinal, in the same manner that the conjunction between Duchamp's notes and the *Large Glass* undermines the retinal. Although the *infrathin* is not a term that we can define with precision, it is at its best when it consists of the "indifferent difference" that distinguishes "same to same."[29] The idea of the readymade is an illustration of the inframince as indifferent difference. A bicycle wheel is an ordinary object but the viewer may perceive it as "different" from other bicycle wheels if he or she conceptualizes it as a work of art. The work of art is, therefore, located in the infrathin because it is a mental conception of the difference. The aesthetic experience for Duchamp consists of a collaboration between the viewer and the work of art because it is only in the mind of the viewer that the work of art is perceived as "different" from an ordinary object. The inframince refers to a difference between two objects but also an infinitesimal distance that one cannot perceive but can imagine, as the thickness of a shadow.

The indeterminacy of optical and psychological focus in Duchamp's *Large Glass* reminds Steefel of Dante's experience in Hell or Alice's adventure through the looking glass because normative expectations are overturned. Steefel identifies a pattern of development that continues throughout Duchamp's career, one that involves a cycle of introversion and then a re-emergence into the world. Distinct objects appear remote and more proximate forms are indistinct, suggesting a "simultaneity by which the spectator looks out from the depths of the painting towards the world at the same moment that he is still in the real world looking into the painting from outside" (101). The inversion of normal perspective and the indeterminacy of Duchamp's *Chess Players* lead Steefel to ask the following questions: "Do the chessmen on the horizon of the work imply a new interest in objectivity which will be achieved by passing beyond the fragmentation of the human in the foreground? Does *Chess Players* represent a new vantage point of inwardness which looks back to an objectivity which has been left behind?" (101) There is an interplay that involves internal emergence and disappearance, the human and the amorphous, the three-dimensional illusion and the two-dimensional surface, a constellation of dots in space and random focal points, a mapping of the picture surface and an abstract pattern of moves or positions (100). Similarly, *Two Sisters* is a pictorial "door which is both open and closed." The image hovers between two worlds, one of consciousness (reality) and duration, the other of instantaneity and unconsciousness (dream). We could say the same for the surrealist image of the starfish in the glass jar in *L'Etoile de mer*.

Steefel considers distance to be the basic issue of the *Large Glass* just as Deleuze recognizes a pathos of distance in the idea of Leibniz's Selves dancing a baroque dance. For Steefel, the *Large Glass* is an instrument that enables us to achieve distance on the

world and on ourselves. Because distance involves perspective, it is a relationship of perception between ourselves and the world. Duchamp's perspectives help to order the world for him. What kind of world does Duchamp order and what type of artist is he? In Les Peintres cubistes Apollinaire identifies two types of artist: the first is the poet to whom the muse dictates his chants ("there is the artist whose hand is guided by an unknown being using him as an instrument"); artists of the second type exert themselves constantly and turn to nature but have no direct contact with it and draw everything from within themselves. Steefel's thesis argues that Duchamp plays the role of the first kind of artist but he is the second kind masquerading as the first. The irony of his art lies in the attempt to become a painting machine, an instrument of a muse, but the artist remains an instrument of himself. Duchamp decomposed the world around him but achieves self-composure. His art is a "weapon against despair (losing oneself in time)" that has poetic value as a "time machine" (244). The purpose of the *Large Glass* is to escape from history into a timeless realm of detached contemplation. The poet seeks an Archimedean point free from the conditioning parallax of time and space in a world of private fantasy where life and art are indistinguishable. It is a kind of Personism, in which the artist makes himself the most irreplaceable of individuals in an indifferent world. Nevertheless, in Steefel's view, Duchamp balances on a thin edge of sensitivity by "insisting on the inevitability of human limitation and, at the same time, by ironically refusing to be bound by it . . ." (264). Duchamp makes aesthetic freedom into an image of human freedom which is both in and out of time: "Precious in its ephemerality, infinite in its perspective, human freedom is a pledge which only time can redeem" (264).

Duchamp's works experiment with many types of motion. The stroboscopic effects in *Coffee Grinder, Nude* and *Sad Young Man on a Train* explore either the

displacement of objects in space or the simultaneity of time events in a single space. Speed and vibration are represented schematically as elements of action and as transforming events: 1. a problem of representation, 2. a force in the world, 3. a disembodied sensation of pure lubricity or frictionless effort valued for its own sake as pure automatism or "pure operation without objective or consciousness" (Steefel 44). Stroboscopic effects are more than static representations of motion. The successive stages of the figure's descent in the *Nude* are not only delineated as lines of demarcation in space and time but provoke a type of cinematic motion and elision of instantaneous positions by the sweep of the viewer's eyes and his participation in the life of the forms, an effect encouraged by the blurring of transitional areas between linear positions of outline and also by the pervasive smoothness of the curvature of line and smoothness of passage (45). The mecanomorphic use of Cubist fragments suggests more than is stated to evoke an emergent image either of general direction of flow or of a hallucinatory, hovering, emerging figure (45-46). Effects of motion may be simultaneously represented and evoked with the same forms. The illusion of inherent motion may be created through optical effects of contiguity, overlapping or figure-field contrasts in which backgrounds emerge as foregrounds.

Although Duchamp stated that his aim in the *Nude* was a static representation of movement with no attempt to give cinematic effects through painting, Steefel mentions that it is important to recognize Duchamp's desire to be different from what he calls the futurist's Impressionism of the modern world. Duchamp wishes to achieve a control over sensation as an overpowering eruptive force which penetrates the intellectual perspective on things. Despite Duchamp's claim of a static representation of motion, Steefel asserts that he has found no one who has been able to suppress "cinematic effects" in the *Nude*.

Early experiments in motion done in the nineteenth century by Eadweard Muybridge involved moving images of a naked woman descending a staircase, turning, and walking up a staircase. The effect of refining the image by a precision of style, unlike the effect of more violent energy produced by futurist touch and color, makes it possible to contemplate motion and makes it more subtle and mysteriously metaphysical rather than loud and overwhelmingly overpowering. The *Nude* is not static any more than it is completely abstract. Just as Duchamp will not call his mechanomorphic paintings "abstract," we should not accept what was a conscious direction of formulation (the static representation of motion) to be confused with what he actually succeeded in accomplishing (372-373). The kinesthetic perception of the body, entropy and optimistic materialism and the "armored" aspect of the *Nude* make the stasis of the composition erupt. Likewise, the early cinema experimented with the pull between exaggerated speed and stasis. The idea of a cinema projector and surreal light is one interpretation of Breton's conception of Duchamp's *Large Glass* as the "Lighthouse of the Bride." In writing about the *Large Glass* Breton marveled at the lighthouse of the Bride that projects its beam of light as a metaphor for Surrealism itself. The surrealist poet Georges Hugnet spoke of the light of Surrealism that beams across the human and the extrahuman.

In terms of the comic effect of the *Large Glass* as a light projected into a new dimension, Duchamp's description of it as a "hilarious picture" recalls Méliès's 1906 *The Hilarious Posters* in which figures appearing first as representations in posters magically come to life through the superimposition of frames with images of real actors. The effect of reality is actualized in illusion. The same effect was achieved in the previous year's *The Living Playing Cards*. In *The Eclipse* (1907) a frame of a sun superimposed with a humorous human face gravitates towards a frame of the moon also superimposed with a

human face. When the two frames meet, the moon and the sun encounter each other and the faces take on expressions of frustrated pleasure. If the encounter may be thought of as a traditional metaphor for sexual union, the sun is a masculine symbol and the moon is a feminine one. However, the human faces appear to be masculine and gesture towards homoerotic desire (an effect that can be seen in Chaplin films, as when the tramp kisses a man out of gratitude in *City of Lights* and elicits a startled and admonishing response from the other man).

Gender bending occurs often in the tricks of early cinema. In the 1920s René Clair experimented with comedy and gender bending in *Entr'acte* (1924), watched by viewers today as a unified 22-minute short with synchronized music. Based on a screenplay by Picabia, and featuring cameos by Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, *Entr'acte* is a dadaist film influenced by popular culture and slapstick comedy. In the film's scenario a ballerina on whom the camera lingers suggestively is eventually revealed to be a bearded lady. This gender-bending was inspired by Duchamp's *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919), in which he de-faces the Mona Lisa (and the inverted persona of Rrose Sélavy). The revelation of the bearded lady in the film creates an effect of surprise. The effect of kinesthetic surprise was exploited in films such as Hepworth's 1907 *That Fatal Sneeze* in which a man sneezes himself to death. The diagram of the peeping woman in the *Large Glass* may find its model in *Peeping Tom* (Pathé Frères 1901). Frustrated sexual desire is the theme of the 1901 *Rêve et Réalité*, also by the Pathé Frères, whose scenario recounts the adventure of a man who dreams of a beautiful woman and wakes up with his "ugly" wife in reality.

The Bride in the *Large Glass* maintains a baroque openness and relative unclarity that is both precise and inexact. Aside from conceiving of the Bride as four-dimensional,

the figure may be decomposed as a series of superimposed diagrams. Steefel has identified several of these diagrams: a woman wearing armor, a tortured or hung woman, a woman peeping, and a woman holding a joystick. Despite the various diagrams, the woman wearing armor or tortured in armor predominates. In my view, Duchamp was also pointing ironically to the formalized torso of the classical nude as a *cuirasse esthétique*. The classical nude, as Kenneth Clark explains, had involved "so complete a fusion of the sensual and the geometric as to provide a kind of armor . . ." (The Nude 462). Furthermore, the use of the diagram to reveal the various selves of the Bride should be considered within Deleuzian notions of antirepresentationalism.

Victorian morality covered up women's bodies at the turn-of-the nineteenth century and this became a subject of ridicule in the first films. In Bamforth and Company's *Ladies Skirts Nailed to a Fence* (circa 1900) a prankster nails the long dresses of two unsuspecting women to a fence and they are unhappily trapped by their clothing. Women in corsets make their way into the early cinema, as in Blue Movie's 1908 *Airy Fairy Lillian Tries on Her New Corsets*. In this film a large woman tries to squeeze into a corset with the help of a small man. Female sexuality has lost its appeal and become a comic subject. Loy designed fashions and made diagrams of clothing, some of which may be found in the Yale Beinecke archives. In one diagram she drew three figures: one of a young woman, another of a middle-aged woman and a third (more abstract) female figure with indications of how a "corselet" would affect areas of her body by a series a dots encircling the figure. In a drawing for *Rogue* magazine entitled "Consider Your Grandma's Stays" she portrays a woman in a corset in a deliberately Post-Impressionistic style. Several texts surrounding her drawing in the magazine discuss the new woman and

the custom of wearing corsets. According to Virilio, the abandonment of the right to beauty marked the beginning of a new order of illusion:

> Au début du XXe siècle, la femme abandonne à son tour progressivement le droit à la beauté, elle quitte son fameux corset au moment où l'armement de la course et la course aux armements deviennent des phénomènes de société: la libération de la femme libère la séduction de la technique. Elle peut s'adonner au record sportif, grimper dans des engines rapides; pour elle aussi, le nouveau corset-armure, c'est le cockpit de l'avion ou de l'automobile (103). [. . .] Cette disparition de la femme dans la fatalité de l'objet technique crée un nouveau langage de masse, reflet fidèle du langage fasciste de la vieille élite futuriste du début du siècle . . . . (104)

If women were portrayed as dancing beauties in the early cinema, they were equally evaporated into abstract shapes and forms on the screen.

Surrealist photographers and cinematographers resisted the disappearance of the nude and the objectification of women as exotic ornaments. In the photograph *Nu repos* Emmanuel Sougez creates a baroque instant of repose that is at once open and closed. The contortions of the nude body along with the folds of the drapery on which the body rests create the effect of movement within the static repose of the image. The upper and lower parts of the body rotate in opposite directions around the hidden sexual center. The torso turns around in the darkness that has become a metaphor for female sexuality. The body has become impossibly dynamic. Sougez's photograph bears an astonishing resemblance to a painting made by Rubens of his second wife Hélène Fourment. In the painting Hélène is naked under a fur coat and shown to her spectators in the act of

turning. In Ways of Seeing John Berger makes a distinction between the nude and the naked in analyzing the painting Rubens made of Hélène in the fur. It is difficult for a painter to create a static image of nakedness because the "naked" is a process in lived sexual experience rather than a state (60). In a superficial sense, capturing the naked in a painting is as instantaneous as a moment in a photograph. In a more profound sense, a painting of nakedness contains time and its experience: "It is easy to imagine that a moment ago before she pulled the fur round her shoulders, she was entirely naked. The consecutive stages up to and away from the moment of total disclosure have been transcended. She can belong to any or all of them simultaneously" (60-61). The naked body of the wife of Hélène Fourment confronts the spectator as the experience of the painter and not as an immediate sight. The viewer transcends the single instant through duration in the Bergsonian sense. This requires the detached distance of a voyeur who participates only by overturning normative expectations about the nude. The faciality and expressivity of Hélène Fourment create a wholeness in the image of the body that, in Kenneth Clark's opinion, indicates faith in the natural order. The nude is flesh, massivity, gravity and movement but an optimistic air of innocence affirms that, as Blake claimed, the nakedness of women is the work of God (199-200). The philosophy of participation in the nude requires the same faith in the natural order that Rubens affirms in *Triumph of the Sacrament* (200).

The spectator of Duchamp's *Large Glass* does not participate in the completeness of the work in the same way that he or she does when looking at the paintings of Rubens, such as *Triumph of the Sacrament* or *The Fur Cloak (Hélène Fourment)*. If the *Large Glass* strips appearance bare and affirms the idea of a naked woman, then she may be conceived of allegorically as purified matter in the antiworld of physics.[30] Nevertheless,

the Bride as allegory depends upon a burlesque attitude to allow the seriousness of the idea to enter via the hilarious picture. As Paz observes, the *Large Glass* turns itself into an uncertain affirmation of itself in a burlesque attitude where completeness depends upon an incomplete state. He comments that this "incomplete state of the *Large Glass* is similar to the last word that is never final of *Un coup de dés*" (79). In an interview with Lebel, Duchamp remarked that he would only accept the title "thinker" on the condition that it be used with the word "comic." Unlike Molière, Duchamp laughs less about man himself than about the abstractions he is highly conscious of. The comedy of thought is a lot more irresistible than that of character.[31] Francis Naumann discovers a burlesque model for Rrose Sélavy in Chaplin's masquerading as a woman in the 1915 film *A Woman*.[32] Similarly, the comedy of thought can be read in Duchamp's gesture of adding a little moustache to the Mona Lisa. What difference does the moustache make? The moustache is an action-image and functions the same way in Duchamp's painting as it does in the burlesque world of Chaplin. In Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* the difference between the little Jewish barber and Hitler is as slight as that between their two moustaches (Cinema 1 171). The slight difference makes the situation fluctuate and Chaplin is caught in the instant of opposable situations. The instant is an immobile section of movement, and therefore incomplete; conversely, movement is a mobile section of duration, of the whole. Movement expresses change in duration or in the whole. Movement occurs only if the whole is neither given or giveable. Deleuze considers Bergson's conclusions from Creative Evolution to be particularly relevant to modern cinema. Bergson has demonstrated that the cinematic movement is a function of space and time as a continuity constructed at each instant. Deleuze refers to Bergson's

conclusion that the whole is not giveable because it is Open; its nature is to change constantly or to give rise to something new, to endure (Cinema 1 9).

For Deleuze, the modern scientific movement has consisted in relating movement to "any-instant-whatever" instead of to privileged instants (Cinema 1 6). The scientific revolution did not produce an intelligent synthesis of movement but an intelligent analysis of it. Neither Marey nor Lumière thought that the cinema would evolve into art because it was neither an art nor a science. Marey and Lumière saw no purpose in a synthesis based on the principle of movement related to the any-instant-whatever. Art seemed to uphold the claims of a higher synthesis of movement and to remain linked to the poses and forms that science had rejected (Cinema 1 6). Deleuze suggests that contemporaries of Marey and Lumière may have been more sensitive to developments in dance, ballet, mime and even some forms of painting. These arts abandoned poses related to prior forms in favor of an idea of movement related to the any-instant-whatever (Cinema 1 6-7). In Chaplin's silent films one can observe action-mime that is distinct from poses. The action-image from a Chaplin film moves from one instant to the next. Chaplin knew how to create the minimum difference between two actions (as well as the maximum difference between corresponding situations). Although Deleuze does not mention Duchamp in his discussion, Chaplin's idea of creating a minimum difference between two action-images, and bringing this difference in conjunction with a difference in situation, may be related to the concept of the infrathin.

The infrathin lies in the work of art which is located in the "mind's eye" of the beholder. It is not merely a question of tapping into an inner reality. Active, partial ways of organizing the world teach people to see faithfully from another's point of view. The active organization from a partial viewpoint is an embodied objectivity that is a human

organization. This human focus must necessarily have an intentional unity. Creative intuition, for the scientist as well as for the artist, makes the dream erupt into waking experience. A partial viewpoint, as a personal vantage point, becomes an event and enters into a broader cycle. It may be understood as an image that breaks its frame to become part of an allegory. A projection emanating from a summit as a point of view maintains unity, just as a beam of light projects itself from the human to the extrahuman in surreality. Desnos's 1929 essay "Image de l'œil" intertwines notions about the human eye, science and allegory. The essay exams the "image of the eye" found in the language of poetry, proverbs, slang, arts and crafts, as well as other verbal forms of expression. The verbalization of the eye makes it possible for various types of language, such as allegorical and scientific, to interconnect. Desnos discusses the scientific and allegorical base of the expression *Ouvrir l'œil et le bon*, which translates roughly as *Aim with your best eye*. The expression is that of a policeman or hunter who needs to close one eye in order to aim with precision. He points out that the expression has a scientific base because rarely does anyone have the same visual acuity in each eye. The image of the eye enters into an allegorical framework in which the whole may be comprehended through partial objectivity. The image of the eye itself may be divided into parts that stand for the whole, as in common expressions like "to knit one's brows" (*froncer les sourcils*) or "to be reflected in one's pupils" (*se mirer dans les prunelles*). The boundaries of the eye shift from one verbal expression to another. The eye becomes an allegory for the objective structuring of knowledge. The expression *Aim with your best eye* reinforces the idea of vision as a sighting instrument that must also be a "siting" instrument. Vision entails a topography of subjectivity that is multidimensional. Vision has need of instruments to mediate particular stances or vantage points.

As Donna Haraway remarks in "Situated Knowledges," the split and contradictory self is the one who can interrogate positionings and be accountable and, as such, splitting is the privileged image for feminist epistemologies of scientific knowledge (Simians, Cyborgs and Women 193). The "knowing self" is always partial and "stitched together imperfectly"; the scientific knower seeks the subject position of "partial connection" or objectivity and not that of identity (193). Haraway concludes that the boundaries of objects materialize in social interaction; objects do not pre-exist these mapping projects (201). Objects are, in fact, boundary projects since boundaries shift from within (201). Objectivity requires taking risks in a world where there is no final control; therefore, sighting/siting boundaries is a risky practice (201). Haraway questions whether or not the sites of biological production are the same as those of literary production. She argues that like literary production, where language is an actor independent of intentions and authors, bodies as objects of knowledge are material-semiotic generative nodes. She considers herself to be a postmodernist rather than a romantic who advocates the coupling of poetry and biological organisms (as in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein). Instead of adopting a romantic point of view, feminists should learn to converse with the world as a "coding trickster" in order to be accountable for objective embodiments (201). The object of knowledge must be conceived of as an active, meaning-generating axis that constitutes a "potent node in fields of possible bodies and meanings" (201).

A commitment to mobile positioning and to passionate detachment is dependent on the impossibility of innocent 'identity' politics and epistemologies as strategies for seeing from the standpoints of the subjugated in order to see well. A person cannot 'be' either a cell or molecule -- or a woman, colonized person, labourer, and so on -- if that

person intends to see and see from these positions critically. 'Being' is much more problematic and contingent. Also, a person cannot relocate in any possible vantage point without being accountable for that movement. I accept her advocacy for a doctrine and practice of objectivity that privileges contestation, deconstruction, passionate construction, webbed connections, and hope for transformation of systems of knowledge and ways of seeing. In adopting a partial perspective, we must eschew easy relativisms and holisms built out of summing and subsuming parts. "Passionate detachment," thus, requires much more than self-critical partiality. The alternative to *relativism* is not totalization and single vision; single vision is the unmarked category whose power depends on systematic narrowing and obscuring. The alternative to relativism must be partial, locatable, critical knowledges; these "situated knowledges" sustain the possibility of webs of connections, which are called *solidarity* in politics and *shared conversations* in epistemology. According to Haraway, relativism is a means of being nowhere while claiming to be everywhere "equally." The "equality" of positioning, in fact, denies responsibility and critical enquiry. Relativism is the mirror opposite of totalization in the ideologies of objectivity. Relativism and totalization are both "god-tricks," she concludes, promising vision from everywhere and nowhere equally and fully. Nevertheless, it is in the politics and epistemology of partial perspectives that the possibility of objective enquiry rests.

The persistence of vision, as Haraway has defined it, offers an alternative to the passivity of vision implied by infinite mobility and interchangeability. Duchamp designates the Bride as an allegory of the Milky Way but he specifies in his notes that she is a milky way of flesh (*Voie lactée chair*). The Bride is an active, meaning-generating axis that opposes the passivity of an allegory of infinite mobility. The Bride is an allegory

of pure matter that embodies feminist objectivity. In "Le Grand Verre: Visite Guidée" Jean Suquet discusses the allegory of the Bride as pure matter. In addition to being an infinite spiral, the Milky Way emits stellar winds and currents of air. The current of air that travels across the porous flesh of the Bride is filled with letters; the *élan vital* transforms flesh into words. For Bergson, the generative idea of a poem is developed in thousands of imaginations and then materialized in phrases that spread themselves out in words; the more one descends from the motionless idea, "wound on itself, to the words that unwind it, the more room is left for contingency and choice" (Creative Evolution 264). Our mind leaps from words to images, from images to original idea, and "so gets back, from the perception of words—accidents called up by accidents—to the conception of the idea that posits its own being" (264). The Bride has a spokesperson: the juggler of the center of gravity who dances on the horizon. The Bride sends orders that become law to the juggler of gravity. The juggler of gravity can transform letters and, therefore, translate words. Suquet makes use of the Bergsonian notion of *élan vital* to explain the operative function of the *Large Glass*, as well as his concept of comic irony. Suquet concludes that through an irony of affirmation the *Large Glass* cures gravity with laughter. The irony of the *Large Glass* is that it accounts for literary production and bodily production in the same manner. Literary value emerges, along with biological bodies, at the intersection of living languages embodied in protean matter. Difference is situational and not intrinsic. The Bride must converse with a trickster, the juggler of gravity, because critical positioning is always interpretative and partial. Critical positioning is a process of translation that converts "oui" into "yes," as Suquet has remarked regarding the comic irony of the *Large Glass*. In "The Voice of Robert Desnos" literary production and bodily production are placed on an equivalent footing.

The generative images of the text call up bodies and objects. There is a movement from word to image to concept; accident upon accident builds up an active perceptual framework. The mind of the reader perceives a clustering of situated differences and makes partial connections to generate meaning.

Active perceptual "systems" (as organizing frameworks or figurations) that elaborate specificity and difference may offer possible allegories of feminist subjectivity. Haraway places irony at the center of her "Cyborg Manifesto" that aims to integrate science, technology and Socialist-Feminism. A cyborg is hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction. The relation between organism and machine has been a "border war" whose stakes have been production, reproduction and imagination. She advocates seeking pleasure in the confusion of boundaries and becoming accountable for their construction (150). She argues against unlocatable knowledge claims that cannot be called into account. Although there has been a "premium on establishing the capacity to see from the peripheries and the depths," feminists should not appropriate the "vantage points of the subjugated" while claiming to see from their positions ("Situated" 190-91).

Rosi Braidotti supports Haraway's cyborg figuration, in general, and insists that it is the same as a nomadic figuration. Nevertheless, Braidotti is troubled by the introduction of the term "post-gender" into the argumentation of the "Cyborg Manifesto." In Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory Braidotti remarks that the cyborg announces a world "beyond gender," stating that sexed identity is obsolete without showing the steps and points of exit from the "old, gender-polarized system" (170). On the positive side, the cyborg is a "powerful intervention on the level of political subjectivity" because it posits a multifaceted location

for feminist agency (i.e. through a realignment of differences of race, gender, class, age, etc.). On the negative side, it does not get Braidotti "very far" (as she insists) in resolving issues of identity, identification and unconscious desires (170). It is imperative to note that she finds a similar flaw in the "female mythology" of Luce Irigaray, in which Irigaray descends into a "female phantasmagoria of the unconscious as a privileged strategy that aims at redefining both female identity and feminist subjectivity" (170). In her opinion, Irigaray fails to account for multiplicity of differences among women, especially on the ground of culture and ethnic identity (170). Instead, Braidotti proposes a nomadic subject as a figuration that "emphasizes the need for action both at the level of identity, of subjectivity, and of difference among women" (171). In other words, these different requirements correspond to different moments (or locations in space); this multiplicity is contained in a multilayered temporal sequence in which discontinuities and even contradictions can find a place (171). Difference is not an effect of willpower or willful self-naming; transformation can only be achieved through de-essentialized embodiment or strategically re-essentialized embodiment by working through the multilayered structures of one's embodied Self (171).

As a response to Braidotti's problem with the term "post-gender" and the problem of identity, I must underscore that Haraway herself later stated that she felt uncomfortable with the term "post-gender." The term makes me uncomfortable also. Nevertheless, when I consider Braidotti's strategy of working through the "multilayered temporal sequence" of differences, Duchamp's multilayered Nude descending a staircase comes to mind. We may feel uncomfortable about "gender trouble" (a term employed by feminist critic Judith Butler) but we are not *shocked* by it as were contemporaries of Duchamp who viewed his *Nude Descending a Staircase* in 1913. The public then was shocked to see the

Nude rendered as a cinematographer or physicist might depict it rather than a painter. As a "body in motion," the Nude may be considered as "post-gender" (or "sexless") because multiple bodies descend the stairs as if in a pre-figuration of a strobe-light effect. The machine age overturned romanticized notions of the female and male nude in art. I regard this effect of multiplicity to be an early attempt to seek pleasure in the confusion of boundaries, as Haraway would later advocate in her "Cyborg Manifesto." Perturbing the boundaries of perception opens up the categories of everyday experience. Everyday mental experience involves the multiple synchronicity of social, perceptual, psychoanalytic, and emotional dimensions.

Loy's texts seek pleasure in the confusion of boundaries, as evident particularly in "Human Cylinders." In "Human Cylinders" Loy explores the "lucid rush-together of automatons" that generates pleasure in the "frenzied reaching-out of intellect to intellect." Positive connotations of "reciprocity" and the "abyss of potential" are associated with a communicative act that entails "leaning brow to brow" in a confusion of identity. The Other is characterized by "indistinctness" but this makes possible the pleasure of going "beyond the tangible." Confusion between human and animal is evident in the reference to a "whining beast" who longs to "slink back" to a state of "antediluvian burrow" and "one elastic tentacle of intuition" in order to "quiver among the stars." The final lines of the text favor an opening to "polemic," as opposed to the "impartiality of the absolute." The text ends by exposing the falsity of a problem that seeks to "destroy the universe" with a solution. The pleasure generated by the confusion of boundaries is preferable to a solution that would lead to a fixed identity. Here one finds a similarity with the point of view expressed in Duchamp's statement that "there is no solution because there is no problem." However, most feminist critics (including Braidotti) do not want to abandon

the term *woman* as an empirical referent; consequently, feminine identity remains "a problem." At least, "post-woman women" (to use Braidotti's term from Nomadic Subjects) do not want to give up the term *woman* until it has been fully deconstructed. Haraway desires also to keep some kind of agency but the tools she finds available to comprehend the world and its discourses are no longer viable due to rapid scientific and technological change. If the premises upon which these tools rest have, in the past, supported capitalism, imperialism and patriarchy, then it is a positive change to find them no longer viable. We may replace traditional tools with better ones but (and here lies the precariousness of the situation) we must take care not to replace them with worse ones.

If the "partly understandable" generates pleasure in Loy's dada-surrealist poetry, her texts from the World War II era expose the frustration of identifying with the vantage point of the subjugated. In the 1942 text "On Third Avenue" objects are presented from the perspective of an invisible person. They represent the view from nowhere, despite the title's reference to Manhattan's Third Avenue. The first line of the text requires its reader to identify with the perspective of someone who "should have disappeared years ago." An injunction is given to the reader (who must identify with the addressee of the text) to "disappear" on Third Avenue in order to "share the heedless incognito / of shuffling shadow-bodies / animate with frustration." The only potency of the shadow-bodies lies in silence or respiration but breathing does not seem possible in the air described as "monstrous." The "down-cast countenances" of the subjugated are qualified only as "hueless." What does this vantage point reveal? The second half of the text presents objects that are designated as the "compensations of poverty." An "electric fungus" generates spontaneously on the pavement out of its own "effulgence." No relief to the downtrodden is provided by a "ten-cent" cinema that harbors only "ritual

claustrophobia." The text ends with the image of a trolley car loaded with people ("luminous busts") who vanish in "anonymity" during the mirage of their passage. Some critics interpret Loy's text as her recognition of the spiritual compensations for poverty. The text's optimism lies less in the discovery of the spiritual life than in its movement toward a "spirited" life in the Bergsonian sense of creativity. Deleuze presents the argument that the task of perception consists of *pulverizing* and *spiritualizing* dust (The Fold 87). In his view, the "point is one of knowing how we move from minute perceptions, to conscious perceptions, or from molecular perceptions to molar perceptions" (The Fold 87). The world is a mass of dancing particles of dust: tiny perceptions may be conceived of as the passage from one perception to another but they may also be conceived of as the components of each perception (The Fold 87).

Loy's WWII and post-WWII era poetry oscillates between, on the one hand, faith in finding better tools for thinking through feminine agency and, on the other hand, pessimistic fear about replacing the old tools of patriarchy with worse ones. In her text "Moreover, the Moon — — — " she develops an argument about patriarchy's influence in women's lives. This brief text of about fifty words is found below:

Face of the skies
preside
over our wonder.

Fluorescent
truant of heaven
draw us under.

Silver, circular corpse
your decease
infects us with unendurable ease,

touching nerve-terminals
to thermal icicles

Coercive as coma, frail as bloom
innuendoes of your inverse dawn
suffuse the self;
our every corpuscle become an elf.

I agree with Thomson Gale's interpretation of this text ("Poetry for Students" Volume 20, Chapter 10) as Loy's troubled commentary on patriarchy as a dying institution. Loy's use of "corpse" and "decease" in reference to the moon or the man in the moon suggests that patriarchy is a dying institution; it is the moon's "decease" that "infects us with unendurable ease." Thomson Gale's "Poetry for Students" correctly highlights the fact that Loy selects the word "decease" instead of "death" and joins it in the same stanza with the word "ease." Perhaps the poet meant for readers to associate "decease" with the similar word "disease." (Here I think also of Loy's self-identification as an artist with "Lepers of the moon / all magically diseased" in her text "Apology of Genius.") Her choice of the word "infects" supports such a supposition. The poet employs the metaphor of infection (and hence dying) that begins with the moon's apparent "decease" and ends with women's "unendurable ease." The final interpretation of Thomson Gale's "Poetry for Students" is that Loy believes patriarchy will persist and women's lives will continue

to be "haunted" by its presence: "Just as the moon will never really disappear, or die, women will never know an 'ease,' or state of mental calm and relaxation, that is not tainted by the specter of patriarchy. For Loy, the lasting presence of patriarchy is 'unendurable,' and the ease is a false comfort. In fact, such ease is like a slow death brought on by an infectious illness." Thus, Loy feels *uncomfortable* about exiting from patriarchal structures; in a comparable way, the term "post-gender" makes post-structuralist feminist critics (including Haraway and myself) feel discomfort in the search for points of exit from patriarchal structures. Not only does Loy conclude that women will always have an affective response to the dying of patriarchy but she entertains the possibility that patriarchy may take on a new "face" or form and never really cease to exist. The closing words "our every corpuscle become an elf" in "Moreover, the Moon — — — " imply that women who feel comfortable with dying patriarchy adhere to a shared myth (an "elf"). The use of dashes in the title suggests extensivity, however, and, in my opinion, indicates a positive affirmation of new spatio-temporal structures. In the final analysis, the emotional level "lags behind" the conceptual. Be it in the figure of an elf, nomad or cyborg, myth persists for women.

Another text from the same period in her career bears the name of a street in Manhattan's garment district—"Mass-Production on 14th Street." Here Loy introduces the images of cyborgs and creates hybrids of humans and animals, as well as humans and machines. The text opens with the image of a confused mass forming a "pedestrian ocean." It is the "iris circus of Industry." Out of the "undertow"—the idea of the undertow referring to a view from below—the "eye/I" of the text emerges; it is both the eye of a "commodious bee" and that of a garment worker. The reader's eye follows the path of a bee that cross-pollinates flowers; double if not multiple vision is required on the

part of the reader who must also follow the eye of the garment worker gathering "infinite facets" of cloth. The "infinite facets" of cloth represent the various faces that the garment worker discerns from the crowd. The eye gathers the "unique unlikeness" of faces in the crowd. A hybrid between a tulip and a female consumer combines the ideas of creator and laborer. The glass aisles of commerce project images that are both static and moving. The "mobile simulacra" of a passing tidal wave is also described as paralysis. Robots and mannequins revolve on carousels in shop windows. Through the metaphor of the fold and the strategy of double vision, the text points toward its own illusionism; however, the "perspective from below" forces the reader to identify with the infinite interchangeability of terms instead of offering a partial view of situated difference. Ultimately, the text does not produce a feminine body but only a replica of a dress "doused in a reservoir of ruby neon." The final images of the text focus on interchangeable elements of clothing—buttons, clothespins, mannequins and harlequins. Like the activity of the bee and the garment worker, the poet's work consists of a drive for *fabrication* that treats everything it encounters like inert matter. Finally, the meaning of Loy's text becomes clear. All that is fluid (the passing tidal wave) disappears when projected into the simulacra (paralysis) of homogeneous space (that of industry).

The same drive of the intellect towards activity (fabrication, as represented by the idea of the fabric industry in Loy's text) operates in language, since language decomposes and recomposes. The connection between text and textile may be explained either in Deleuzian or Derridean terms of difference. For Derrida, the connection between text and textile is possible because of the simultaneous differing and deferring of meaning depending on repetition of signifiers within a situated context. The chances, or accidents, in language open up the text to a multitude of effects that enable plural

translations of the meaning encoded within it. Loy's many misspelled words should be analyzed within such a framework of chance effects in language. Language is only one of many competing structures and forms that mark a text. Deleuzian terms would emphasize the idea of fabrication as motion. The text resembles a textile in the sense that it may be considered as an infinite weave or a chaos of fractals. A dynamic interplay of "feedback" produces difference in iteration through which the reader may escape the overdetermination of structures (i.e. philosophical, political, phantasmatic and historical). Freud confronted a factory of thoughts and a multiplicity of symptoms when he tried to apply his method of dream analysis. The reader of a text confronts a multiplicity of structures and must decide where to begin his or her reading. Deleuze and Derrida oppose a Freudian notion of overdetermination with the concept of difference (in Derrida's case *différance*) that gives all determinations a chance. It is not a matter of searching for what provoked a symptom or set of symptoms in the Freudian manner. Derrida and Deleuze maintain a distinction between necessity and chance because they argue that the signifying forces of the unconscious mind presuppose chance. They oppose Freudian reductionism since the possibility of accidents is an *a priori* necessity. Derrida stated that Deleuze's ideas about the relation between necessity and the aleatory resembled his own closely (this was stated in his retrospective on Deleuze at the time of his death).[33]

In her later years Loy sought a practice of difference that would not exclude by marginalizing. In "Hot Cross Bums" the vantage point reaches beyond the veil of neon that serves as an obstacle in "Mass-Production on 14th Street." The reader discerns how the point of view in "Hot Cross Bums" merges with that of the Bowery sidewalk itself. "Faces of Inferno" appear inverted in their reflections on the sidewalk. If the littered pavement in "Der Blinde Junge" has a "slow blind face," the sidewalk in "Hot Cross

Bums" is like the compound eye of an insect. Loy's point of view merges with the street as a site of knowledge, which is also a particular temporalization and spatialization. This site of knowledge makes it possible for the poet to take a particular distance but also to experience the a-perspectivity of objective positioning. It is not merely an experience of difference from the point of view of the subjugated or the outsider who cannot be measured according to the standards of a dominant perspective assumed to be neutral. The street is a site with a plurality of centers where different components may co-exist. Loy tries to make sense out of the multiple points of view of the poor, women and other minorities through the differentiation of real but unactualized multiplicities. The street is the site of a "reception of the objective." It is a site in which the "bum-bungling" minority exchanges the "inobvious real for over-obvious irreal." Loy intuits creative concepts that enable her to explore different articulations of the real (the inobvious real, the over-obvious real). Her use of the term "inobvious" to express the status of the un-obvious reveals much about her state of mind as an artist. According to Keith Tuma, her texts exist in an *inobvious* and *unauthorized present* since "inobviousness was her fate, but it also became her aesthetic as the theatrical self contracted to a point of pain and an earlier irony turned to project the miraculous upon a staggering, everyday world of 'human rubble.'"[34] Loy confronts the solidity of the street where qualitative differences are resolved in the homogeneity of space as "human rubble." She is pulled into a logic of the infinite that functions independently of time and space. The constructions of the work itself prolong action into eternal baroque time. As a poet, she faces the problem of representation as a logic that depends on the solidities of extended labyrinths and mirrored forms. Her intuitive powers lead her to affirm the rhythms of change in the life of the street. She transforms the street into an infernal book where shadow-bodies emerge

from the shuffle of pages. The text ends with a restoration of the street as a site of rhythm, flux and breath. The street becomes pure inflection, "a vagabond in delirium / aping the rise and fall / of ocean / of inhalation / of coition." Loy goes beyond Bergson and moves in the direction of Deleuze to recover fluidity and think the logic of life's rhythms. For Bergson, the materiality of language creates the poetic sentiment that bursts into distinct verses, lines and words. Deleuze, however, goes further than Bergson in exploring the affective content of poetic sentiment. Dorothea Olkowski analyzes how Deleuze's ontology of change "enters the whole of virtual memory" by pushing deep into the passionate creativity memory actualizes" (134-35). In her opinion, Bergson's full attention seemed to be focused on the heterogeneity of duration and the homogeneity of space (134). Bergson viewed the "word" as free and transferable from "thing" to "memory" to "image" to "idea" but he could only conclude that the forms language applies to these entities are those meant for material objects (130). Olkowski emphasizes that at the end of Bergsonism, where Deleuze writes about the genesis of intelligence in intuition, he values action and creation over contemplation because everything happens as if the intelligence were already imbued with emotion. Creative action requires emotion in order to accede to the open creative totality.

Subsequent to "Mass-Production on 14th Street" and "Hot Cross Bums" Loy imbued her texts with a newly-discovered creative emotion, particularly in the 1943 "Aid of the Madonna" and the 1944 "Ephemerid." The emotions of "ecstacy" (one of Loy's misspelled words indicating the chance accidents of language) and felicity in "Aid of the Madonna" fabricate a maternal space of feminine desire. She immerses herself deep within virtual memory, not a homogeneous space but that of the "æon-moments of motherhood" where time is "surrounded by itself." This space where "Madonnas are

islands in memory" is not unlike that imagined by Duchamp in his dream of circumembraceability. The title "Ephemerid" is a hybrid concept of an ephemeral-mayfly-eyelid that accedes to the open creative totality of serial metamorphosis. "Ephemerid" is creative evolution; "metamorphosis surprises" form a composite of emotion, intuition and effects perceived in the mind's eye.

Desnos imagines such a space where time surrounds itself in his 1942 "Camarades." The poet calls up words and images to embrace his lost friends who have become cadavers incapable of responding to the word "camarade." He wills the paper to fold itself in order to become now a rose, now a rainbow, now a silk fabric. He restores the memory of a forgotten scythe lying at the side of a cadaver. The blade is the mirror of self-reflexivity that folds in upon itself; the blade of the scythe is reflected in the mirror of its own body ("se mire au miroir de son corps"). The blade opens its "eyes" and becomes spirited matter. Enabling vision, it becomes the site of virtual multiplicity like that of Loy's sidewalk reflecting infernal faces. The blade is invested with emotion as it reflects upon itself; it grows indignant and angry ("s'indigne, s'encolère"). The emotion reconstructs a virtual world of memory. The poet seeks to affirm life in life as he bears witness to the disappearance of an event: "Voici ce qu'était le paysage avant le fameux événement." Tunics and shirts of many different colors and fabrics are reflected in the mirror of the blade. Memory is reconstructed not only as perception of colors and images but also as recollection of scents carried by the wind. Through the emotive force of virtual memory, Desnos creates a cemetery of uniforms made up of spirited matter like that of the Cemetery of Uniforms and Liveries in the *Large Glass*.

If we look at the last "incarnation" of Rrose Sélavy in Desnos's 1944 text "Printemps," we observe that the poet addresses Rrose directly as he confronts his desire

for springtime and renewal in a violent world. The poet prophetically recognizes that this world has doomed him to death. Rrose enters into the text as a feminine element that wanders beyond fixed limits ("hors de ces bornes erres"). He returns to a figuration of desire as the prey" ("proie)" of love and, thus, associates the erotic with instinct. Desire becomes entangled in the rapture of love's convulsions ("aux sueurs de l'amour"). The poet then stages a theatrical scene in which a rose appears on the bloody "flanc" (flank, meaning both part of a *human* body and a *military* corps) of a dancer performing for an audience of blind and deaf mutes. The reader feels distanced from this audience deprived of its senses and hence "depersonalized." The spectators applaud the dance of death, all the more unnatural because it occurs during the springtime. The poet has distanced the reader or auditor from the violence of the spectacle and then invites him or her to participate with the connector "C'est" in the brief enunciation "C'est dit." The enunciation is no longer "C'est la vie" previously associated with Rrose (in the works of Desnos and Duchamp) but "C'est dit" ("It is said"). As readers and auditors, we witness the inscription of an event into memory and history through the poet's voice. The "dance of death" does not only occur in mythic space and time but becomes the actual event of World War II with which the reader and poet identify. Language ("la parole") is inscribed in sweat, which is to say, in body fluid itself. The connection between language, desire and body fluids accords well with a Deleuzian sense of libidinal-material desire rooted "nowhere" for, in Desnos's text, the "word-as-body fluid" becomes effaced under the winds and the "fingers" of the rain. The contours of the body itself set the boundaries between interior and exterior space. The poet places his confidence in language, however, and, joining our thoughts with his own, he uses the collective "we" to proclaim that "we hear (or understand) it and obey it." The word as desire has become *law*. The text closes

as the poet places the reader "au lavoir où l'eau coule" (at the washbasin where water runs). The water signals a return to life, movement and pluralism for, as Octavio Paz has remarked, "water writes always in plural." We discover that we are in an altered reality in the final lines of the text where a cloud simulates both soap (an agent of purification) and a tempest (a violent upheaval). When the cloud recoils, we perceive a constellation of pure desire that *blossoms* and endures in the sunlight ("l'instant où le soleil fleurira les buissons"); it is a reconstruction of virtual memory through the drifting by-ways of affective experience.

The reconstruction of virtual memory in the texts of Desnos, as in those of Loy, lead us to conclude that we are not immediately present to ourselves. If we adopt a point of view as the position from "ourselves," we discover that our partial viewpoints bear witness to violence inherent in our visualizing practices. We learn from Duchamp, Desnos and Loy that any creative *blossoming* achieved through grappling with multiplicity in an Age of Avalanches, such as the age of violent upheaval in which they lived, must necessarily be convulsive or "seismic," to use Loy's expression. In reconnecting with affectivity, we may find new confidence, however, in the activities of thinking and writing as forms of drifting—or the shifting of constellation patterns. This nomadic drifting should not be viewed as passive or active but as a process of ever-evolving transformation and desire to create new traits, patterns and forms that would not otherwise be possible.

Notes

[1] Badiou's more recent thought may be closer to that of Deleuze, specifically in relation to the ideology of war. A lecture, hosted by New York City's Lacanian Ink society on April 1, 2005, entitled "The Subject

of Art" discussed the postmodern idea of a war without end (such as the concept of a "war against terror"). He examined the problem of event and disappearance in relation to the war against terror. The body leaves its trace in the world, as does an event, but the event also disappears. Any affirmation of a subject depends upon a relation between the body/world and the trace/event. Two paradigms in the West affirm life, either "life in death" or "death in life." The experience of death in life is the experiment of the limits of the body. It is the experience of pleasure after pleasure (death in life), which the West opposes to the theological model of sacrifice for victory (life in death) whereby the subject is "split from the body." Badiou outlines five problems that must be resolved in order to affirm the subject: (1) the problem of immanent transcendence or chaotic sensibility, (2) the problem of affirming a new body, (3) the consequences of affirming a new body, (4) the problem of an affirmative split (subject and body), and (5) the problem of a transcendental infinity (infinity of forms). Badiou claims that no artistic creation can be possible without a paradigm for affirming life in life (for peace). In the idea of a war against terror death is the common denominator. No dialectic exists between war and peace since there is only a disjunction between the two terms. Thus, Badiou's thinking through the contemporary subject proposes terms that are not dialectical, as does Deleuze's thinking through the subject of war and nomadology.

[2] Desnos experimented with the form of the Möbius strip in *La géométrie de Daniel* but could the topology of the Möbius strip be a model for the poetics of Loy and the works of Duchamp? Grosz's Möbius strip model is not based on a Leibnizian model but on Spinoza's view of the mind as an idea of the body, which is another point of view that Deleuze adopted for his own theories. It is interesting to conceive of the smoothness of the fold as a Möbius strip because it implies the reversibility of a form both open-ended and closed (as a baroque form). One might consider Emmanuel Sougez's photograph *Film Strip* that shows a piece of film coiled in the shape of a Möbius strip. The film itself could be physically coiled into a reversible strip but the succession of images contained on the film strip does not make sense if they are shown backwards. Out of curiosity (or revolt) one may view a film backwards but this does not affirm a positive meaning. Reversibility works as a novelistic device (achieved by Alejo Carpentier whose experiments with the concept of time extends beyond all chronology and is wrapped in a baroque language that transcends immediate reality). It works when scanning a baroque painting and "panning" a specific scene in a film. It may also be a model for explaining how writing and illusionism dovetail into one another, as T.J. Clark notes in Farewell to an Idea. It does not work when explaining the narrative sequence of a film. Although fascinating as a concept, the Möbius strip as a single paradigm is not particularly of use to this chapter's focus on surrealist cinema and dada-surrealist poetry. Clark's concept will be addressed, however, further in the discussion.

[3] See Eleanor Kaufman's "*Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Mind*."

[4] Eleanor Kaufman proposes the erotics of the solecism of time in her article about film and philosophy on the website < 5-2001/n33Kaufman>.

[5] Paul Virilio, L'Espace critique (Paris: Christian Bourgeois, 1984), pp. 155-181.

[6] Cited in Mary Ann Caws's anthology Surrealist Painters and Poets (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001). 266-267.

[7] As noted by Roger Conover in his 1996 edition of The Lost Lunar Baedeker Poems.

[8] See Duchamp A Biography (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), p. 217.

[9] Tomkins 67.

[10] Villon, quoted in Steegmuller, in *Master Printmaker*, 1964.

[11] Art historians Jonathan Brown and Barry Wind have published on the *bodegón*. See Brown's Velázquez, painter and courtier (New Haven: Yale UP, 1986) and Wind's Velázquez's bodegones: a study in seventeenth-century Spanish genre painting (Lanham, MD: Distributed by arrangement with University

Pub. Associates, c. 1987). See also Velázquez in Seville (New Haven: Yale UP, 1996), eds. Michael Clarke, David Davies and Enriqueta Harris.

[12] This interpretation of Bergson is based on ideas presented in Tomkins (66-67) and Steefel (299).

[13] Tomkins 68.

[14] See Lawrence Steefel in The Position of La Mariée Mise à Nu Par Ses Célibataires, Même (1915-1923) in The Stylistic and Iconographic Development of the Art of Marcel Duchamp (May 1960 Department of Art and Archaeology Princeton University).

[15] See Antliff, "Bergson and Cubism," p. 343, and *Inventing Bergson*, p. 44.

[16] See Schwarz, p. 153.

[17] <www.uca.edu/org/ccsmi/ccsmi/classicwork/Myth%20Revisted.htm>.

[18] The Fibonacci Sequence, or the theory of the Golden Mean, may be represented as a spiral but on a Cartesian grid. A polar system would allow the spirals of the Nautilus shell or the path of the wind to be graphed beyond the constraints of the Cartesian grid.

[19] Levy cites a passage from Da Vinci's *Notebooks*:

> Concerning the local movements of flexible dry things
> such as dust and the like
> I say that when a table is struck
> In different places the dust
> that is upon it is reduced to various shapes
> of mounds and tiny hillocks. . . . (26)

He compares Da Vinci's passage to the following one from Duchamp's *Notebox*:

> Make tomorrow out of various shapes
> Of cardboard figures, falling from our jelly;
> and then draw the figures and the movements
> made by the descent of each,
> in various parts of its descent. (26)

[20] The second to last line of Moore's text questions whether or not Loy's scalpels are weapons against conventional opinion. The last line questions the necessity of dissecting destiny "with instruments more specialized than the components of destiny itself."

[21] Cited in Pierre Migennes, "Les Photographies de Man Ray," *Art et Décoration*, December 1928 and reprinted in Les Rayons et les ombres cinéma (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).

[22] Man Ray, Autoportrait, translated into French by Anne Guérin, Actes Sud, 1998.

[23] "Une Lettre de Marcel Duchamp," *Medium* (Paris, New York, Jan. 1955), p. 33; cited by Arturo Schwarz in Marcel Duchamp (New York: Abrams, 1975), p. xxxi.

[24] See Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes in Déjà jadis (Julliard: Paris, 1958).

[25] Le Signifiant imaginaire (Paris: Union générale d'éditions, 1977) 68.

[26] T.J. Clark, Farewell to an Idea (New Haven: Yale UP, 2001) 42.

[27] Clark 3.

[28] Humor, according to Freud, is part of a narcissistic structure. It is the "exaltation of the ego, to which the humorous displacement bears witness," and of which the translation would be, according to Hedges: 'I am too big (grossartig) to be distressed by these things " (102). In *L'Etoile de Mer* the male protagonist departs after undressing the female protagonist. Another object of quest, more androgynous, is the starfish, as the title of the film indicates. Hedges notes that Jung associates the starfish with the myth of psychic regeneration (102). The star is associated with the seventeenth card of the Tarot. Breton linked this arcanum to love in Arcane 17. Other critics (such as P. Adams Sitney, Lauren Rabinovitz and Alan Thiher) have discussed the fact that the protagonist of the film walks out on sex because he fears female sexuality that appears in male fantasies as *vagina dentata*.

[29] Thierry de Duve, Pictorial Nominalism: On Marcel Duchamp's Passage from Painting to the Readymade (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press,1991), 160.

[30] Robert Lebel presents a thesis about contemporary physics and antimatter in Sur Marcel Duchamp.

[31] See Robert Lebel's "The Inventor of Gratuitous Time" in the on-line issue 2 of *Tout-Fait* 2000.

[32] Francis Naumann, "Marcel Duchamp: A Reconciliation of Opposites," in Thierry de Duve's The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp p. 45.

[33] Jacques Derrida, "I'll Have to Wander All Alone," trans. David Kammerman, <www.usc.edu/dept/comp-lit/tympanum/1/derrida1.html>.

[34] Keith Tuma, "The Inobvious Mina Loy," <www.nd.edu/~ndr/issues/ndr5/reviews/minaloy1.html>.

CONCLUSION

We should be wary of trying to sum up the ideas of Deleuze into a critical "approach," since his essays differ in their point of view and often result from collaborative efforts. The same can be said of an attempt to synthesize Derrida's ideas. Both oppose the use of critical methods grounded in pre-existing concepts that "define" philosophical thinking as "reflection." Rather than define, they create concepts that resist images of thought formed historically as canonical philosophy. They practice "anti-philosophy" in the sense that they both look at philosophical *presuppositions* and their relationship to science and art. For Deleuze, concepts are active and affective, rather than signifiers of the contents of ideas. He insists that philosophy should not set up "transcendentals" but, instead, should approach the immanent conditions of that which it is trying to think. Thought must create movement and consequences. If we do not want to use the term "anti-philosophy," then we can place his thinking under the rubric of empiricism.

In Derrida's retrospective look at his relationship with Deleuze (in his speech "I'll Have to Wander All Alone" given on the occasion of Deleuze's death), he remarks that, despite dissimilarities, he enjoyed a "proximity of ideas" with no other thinker of his generation. He never felt the slightest objection arise in him against any of Deleuze's discourses, even if he did on occasion complain about one or two propositions in Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus. Despite obvious differences in manner of writing, speaking or reading, he concludes that they share a near total affinity in the "theses" of their criticism. The word "theses" does not quite work for him, though, given the fact that neither of them regarded their critical works as "theories" in the proper sense of the word. For lack of a better word, he continues to use "thesis" in emphasizing the affinity in their

shared “thesis” concerning a difference that is not reducible to dialectical opposition. This difference goes beyond contradiction, as for example, in the joyfully repeated affirmation of "*yes, yes*." Above all, he appreciates the fact that Deleuze never lost sight of the relation between “necessity” and the “aleatory.” He considers Deleuze as the “thinker of the event” and always of “this event here” (cet événement-ci).

Deleuze’s The Fold develops a solid argument for the connection between the Leibnizian Baroque and contemporary views of event and history. The significance of this critical essay lies in its presentation of the modernist and postmodernist subject as always in the process of becoming. The subject “in-process” presupposes a kind of frame of reference that closes one action and starts another so that they overlap and blur. In linking the baroque event to contemporary postmodernist views of the event, it is important to recognize that the idea of the Baroque entails both negative and positive poles. The force of divergence wrenched apart the foundation of classical reason in Leibniz’s day and threatened to disrupt unified forms with violent excess. This violence could be expressed both *through* and *against* geometry as a negative baroque conception. As a form of resistance to violence and excess, baroque reason could reconstitute classical logic by dividing divergences into as many worlds as possible and creating a multitude of borders between worlds. (The title of this dissertation reflects the positive baroque conception of creating many bordering worlds.) Deleuze employs the allegory of the two-floor baroque house to explain how classical reason could resist collapsing into violent excess by imposing a constraint on the force of divergence through the paradoxical *topoi* of “discordant accords.” He emphasizes that the “windowless” baroque house of the Leibnizian monad contains the sum of all *compossibilities* or co-existing tendencies. In examining the evolution of the Baroque in contemporary forms, critics

Paul Virilio and Anthony Vidler resist *topoi* that identify a *negative baroque* conception within modernism as a sign of ending (i.e. as the sum of all possible distortions) or disappearance. Virilio and Vidler seek alternatives to violence, expressed through and against geometry, evident in modernist and postmodernist fantasies of spatial explosion, fascination with hypertexts and interaction with empty allegorical frames. Vidler explores architectural forms and focuses on the problem of the dwelling space in modernist and postmodernist structures. Even though Deleuze's *positive baroque* conception of the Fold (more accurately conceived of as the complexity of the fold/unfold) is usually associated with fabric, the idea of a baroque house involves both allegory and architecture. For Virilio, architecture is no longer "in architecture" because the "human" is no longer a point of departure for measuring spatio-temporal constructions. Architecture resides in the space and time of vectors, as well as in the special effects produced by machines having the capacity to communicate. While architecture may find a positive expression in the cinema, he concludes that art keeps "disappearing in the illumination of projection machines."

Because movement and the object that moves are inseparable, no representative relationship can be established without artificially halting the flow of movement and misconstruing the mechanically "halted" or "frozen" object as self-sufficient. Virilio exposes a problem that Deleuze articulates in Bergsonism and in Cinema 1 and Cinema 2: there is only the flow of movement which expresses itself in different ways. This idea about the flow of movement is one of Deleuze's critiques of phenomenology. Henri Bergson in Creative Evolution explores the importance of motion and temporalization and how they relate to spatialization. The human eye perceives features as assembled but not mutually organized. "Intentionality" or will binds together "lines of perceptions" that

are not graspable by the intellect. When these “lines of perceptions” are made to co-exist in the mind, they form a composite that constitutes an idea. Bergson refers to the gap in perception as the *cerebral interval*, which forms part of his concept of *duration.* In default of knowledge in the “proper sense,” reserved to an unattainable pure intelligence, intuition may supplement it. Intuition brings the intellect to recognize that lived experience (the “vital process”) defies categorization. Life cannot be placed into the category of the Many or the One. Neither mechanical causality nor finality can sufficiently interpret the vital process. Duchamp, having been influenced by Bergson, experimented with the “cerebral interval” and developed the notion of a *delay in glass*. His idea of the *inframince* rejects the theory of retinal painting because it maintains that a work of art lies in a mental perception allowing the viewer to distinguish differences between objects. The *inframince* operates at its best when the viewer can make a distinction between “same” and “same” in the imagination. The same object may be perceived according to “normative” expectations (“normative” in the sense of functionalism, for example) or it may be perceived in the imagination as a work of art. This is the idea behind his *readymades*, such as the bicycle wheel. The external world is only a pretext to materialize the imagination. Both Bergson and Duchamp considered the idea of duration to be comparable to a cinematographic effect. The cinematographic method forces itself upon scientific methods that would not otherwise be concerned with what happens in the intervals between moments. Ancient science contented itself with knowledge of privileged moments, whereas modern science ponders the object at “any-moment-whatever” in the indefinite breaking up of time.

The early cinema is characterized by what he refers to as the “sensory-motor schema,” in which the unity of the “viewed” and the “eye that views” forms a dynamic

movement or “movement-image.” This movement-image does not extract segments by stringing them together in a representative fashion but, rather, creates a vast range of expressive images. It is not a question of “false,” illusionistic or disembodied vision promising transcendence of all limits but, instead, objective or embodied vision. The cinematic image-movement is the specific embodiment of a particular mode of seeing made possible through an apparatus, the movie camera. This relation between an apparatus and a mode of seeing, necessarily partial, opposes the illusion of infinite vision with an active viewpoint. Duchamp’s *Large Glass* contains its own *oculist witnesses* that delimit a particular viewpoint made possible through the objective relation between an apparatus and an active mode of seeing. It is all a matter of distance and partial perspective, as opposed to the splitting of subject and object and its transcendence. Although the apparatus of a technological vision machine, to borrow a term from Virilio, is a form of prosthesis, it precludes any idea of passive vision as “single vision” or “stereoscopic vision.” According to Donna Haraway, the “eyes” made available in modern technology “shatter any idea of passive vision.” Whereas the baroque *camera obscura* splits “subject and object” into “viewer and the viewed” (so that the visual act becomes a passive form of stereoscopic or single vision), modern technology makes it possible for the viewing subject to maintain a relationship with itself while, at the same time, encountering objects in the external world. The *Large Glass* structures the “glass” and “witness” as a self-reflexive intellect that, although not completely conscious, has a relation with itself. An external viewer is needed to make the perceptual act fully conscious. Doubling, folding and unfolding become the operative mode of the *Large Glass*.

Haraway's concept of "active vision" is commensurate with Deleuze's critique of Leibniz who did not admit to any passivity in the monad and, as a result, could not account for transposition (i.e. change) within it. Let me reiterate that Leibniz's monad is represented by a *camera obscura* requiring a "subject" to view the image of an "object" projected through the apparatus. Deleuze and Haraway's critique of Leibniz's *camera obscura*, which I accept and find compatible with Duchamp's antiretinal stance, is based on the fact that the "unified" subject sees only a representation of the object as projected "passively" onto the retina of the eye. Perception in the monad, in fact, does not lead to active vision, despite Leibniz's claims that the subject is active, but, to the contrary, to passive stereoscopic vision. Haraway's conception of "active vision" through prosthesis goes beyond the simple dialectic of active and passive. The complex function of the fold/unfold involves both "mobile positioning" and a "passionate detachment," to use Haraway's terms. Many feminist critics choose to emphasize a relation between the cyborg and the idea of *assemblage* (one of Deleuze and Guattari's most important concepts) but it is just as useful to look at the relation between a cyborg and the complexity of the fold/unfold. Haraway's terms (mobile positioning, passionate detachment) resemble the Deleuzian fold/unfold because they cannot be broken down into binary components. If we adopt a position, how could it be completely mobile? If we are detached, how can it be passionate? Vision is multidimensional and may be understood in terms of the complex fold/unfold. This is why Haraway maintains that "cyborg vision" must "fold inward and outward upon itself multiply and self-reflexively." Because "being" is problematic and contingent, the multiplicity of the cyborg entails an act of detachment, on the one hand (like that experienced by an artist who assumes aesthetic distance from his or her work in order to critique it), and, on the other hand, a

commitment to refuse innocent “identity” in favor of partiality. Without partiality and detachment, the cyborg consciousness would not be able to distinguish the real from the virtual, as Virilio points out. Partial vision is necessary to resist disorientation or the effects of “delocalized optics.”

Haraway does not subordinate writing to vision or image to text because she calls for a writing of the body that metaphorically emphasizes vision. Feminist objectivity involves embodiment whose partial perspective can be held accountable for both its limited location and situated knowledge. In the cyborg world the relationships for forming wholes from parts, including those of polarity and hierarchical domination, may produce, on the downside, monsters or, on the upside, liberated forms of consciousness. She envisions a possible allegory for feminist versions of objectivity that overcome alienating distance. She does not want to produce allegories of infinite mobility and interchangeability but insists that we elaborate specificity and difference. In this way, we might learn how to see faithfully from another's point of view, even when the other is our own machine. The writing of the body entails a kind of science fiction in which the boundaries of lived experience and fiction are blurred. Thus, cyborg politics is at once a critical consciousness of the women’s liberation movement and a political fiction. It is not the sort of blurring between politics and science fiction in Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein where the monster expects its father to save it through the fabrication of a heterosexual mate or seeks its completion in a finished whole on the model of a family, community, city and cosmos. If cyborgs have no father, then they must be regarded, as Haraway explains, as the illegitimate offspring of militarism, patriarchal capitalism and state socialism.

Rosi Braidotti helps to clarify this problematic of the cyborg as “illegitimate offspring” by linking Haraway’s argument to the Deleuzian conception of nomadic subjects in Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory. Braidotti adopts the term "figuration" to frame her theories of contemporary subjectivity. She conceives of the "nomadic subject" as a new kind of feminist figuration, which is a theoretical and political stance that avoids thinking in terms of the problematic modes of past epistemological representation. This figuration of the nomad is simultaneously a political fiction and a critical consciousness that takes as historical evidence the decline of metaphysically fixed or stable identities. Nomadism, as a constant state of "becoming," means working with the body as a mapping project or, in Braidotti’s words, "a point of overlapping between the physical, the symbolic, and the sociological." Locating subjectivity in the body is radically anti-essentialist because it forces subjective specificity according to lived and complex experience and orientation within multiple discourses and physical positions. She joins Deleuze's epistemological model of nomadism with Haraway’s notion of the body as figuration and as a point of entry for thinking about new kinds of subjectivities. These new subjectivities require vision but, in the final analysis, they depend on the persistence of a shared myth—namely, that of the nomad or cyborg, the two terms amounting to the same myth of shared community or collective political “identity.” Haraway does not merely reinforce juxtapositions of the human/inhuman, as some feminist critics have accused her of doing; she asks how it is possible to conceive of humans in a “post-human” world. Her “Cyborg Manifesto” suggests that the “post-human” implies “post-gender,” although she would later admit that the term “post-gender” makes her uncomfortable (and it makes me uncomfortable, as well). She places irony, however, at the center of her cyborg manifesto

because feminists should seek pleasure in the confusion of boundaries as long as they remain accountable for their hybrid constructions. Comprehending the “human” through the “inhuman” or the “post-human” may lead to an ironic affirmation of a new subjectivity within feminist objectivity. I conclude, therefore, that Haraway does not reinforce a binary dialectic between human and inhuman or between human and its multiple others. Braidotti herself holds on to the concept of “woman” as an empirical referent through her use of the term “post-woman women.” Until “woman” has been completely deconstructed Braidotti feels uncomfortable doing without it—for this reason, Haraway’s “post-gender” cyborg makes her feel uncomfortable. Nevertheless, I must conclude that even in Braidotti’s feminist strategy her “post-woman women” will continue to have affective responses and remain “uncomfortable” until they exit from patriarchal structures. Her position is not far from Haraway’s or my own (or, for that matter, Loy’s).

If the Cartesian, unitary subject is dismantled, how can we conceive of a collective political identity? If we take an anti-representational stance, how can women be “represented” as a group of socially constituted entities based on sexual difference? If, according to traditional epistemology, "universal" means "neutral," how can we conceive of radical political collectivities which are also highly specific? One way that both Haraway and Braidotti respond to this question is to conceive of the nomadic subject as a polyglot. A polyglot communicates in multiple languages and resists a unified “identity” or subject. Haraway advocates a cyborg consciousness that struggles *for* language and *against* perfect communication. As opposed to one code that translates all meanings, she proposes the proliferation of as many translations as possible. For Braidotti, the polyglot is a figuration of the nomadic subject that links us together in a web of mediated

communications. The polyglot does not lay claim to any kind of natural symbolic order, but, instead, translates through multiple languages. Loy's "Mongrel Rose" struggles *for* language and *against* perfect communication. Her curious intermixing of languages (from English to French to Italian to German to Latin) stimulates a proliferation of meanings that seek to reclarify relations, ultimately, and not to confuse them.

Although Braidotti and Haraway offer the polyglot as a variation of the nomadic subject, they recognize a disjuncture between language and affectivity. This disjuncture stems from the process of perceptual organization itself. Deleuze has ascertained that perception involves a dynamic between "motion" and "emotion." In Bergsonism, in fact, he comments on relations between emotion, perception and virtual memory and how they constitute the creative act. Dorothea Olkowski argues that Deleuze takes Bergson's ideas further by considering more than just temporalization and spatialization. Deleuze values action and creation over contemplation because, in her view, "everything happens as if the intelligence were already imbued with emotion." Creative action requires emotion in order to accede to "open creative totality," as Bergson explains. The artist may enter the whole of virtual memory by pushing deep into the passionate creativity that memory actualizes. As for Duchamp, he viewed the artistic process as an active one and he presented this theory formally in a lecture entitled "The Creative Act." Duchamp, along with Desnos and Loy, continued to move in the direction of recovering fluidity and thinking through the logic of life's many rhythms. All three enter a virtual memory where the rhythms and metamorphoses of life, including eroticism, can be recovered. Confronting the ruin of representation in the false mirror of external reality, they desire to wrest objects out of the flux of being in order to purify them and approximate them to their absolute value. When the spectator of Duchamp's *Large Glass* peers through its

panes and those of the window visible behind it in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the vista opens up onto a waterfall transformed into a marvelous site of encounter.

Desnos's textual effects in Corps et biens undermine the canonical representation of a unified subject structured through language as an "author." His attributing of the aphorisms of "Rrose Sélavy" to Marcel Duchamp-as-Rrose assigns multiple origins to linguistic utterances. The use of Duchamp's name itself does not reinforce canonical concepts of authorship because it is associated with a painter and not a writer. Furthermore, the coupling of Duchamp/Rrose creates a double mirror that becomes refracted into the multiple figurations and effects of the text. Ironically, dictionary entries attributed to the Dictionary of the Rose serve as anti-definitions and undermine any attempt to construct an individual consciousness through an external language belonging to others. One of the aphorisms is addressed directly to "nomads," while others include references to "caravans" and collective groups of people ("races"). These collective terms constitute a new subject through a process of depersonalization that seems at first to exclude the reader as well as any identifiable voice of a single author as origin of enunciation. In fact, the reader participates in the reconstitution of a voice through the linking of enunciations as "events" that fold and unfold in both textual and graphic space. Seemingly irrational utterances may be connected as the reader "moves" from text to image, as well as from part to whole. The figuration of a nomadic subject depends upon the artist-critic relation that displaces the model of initiator (Duchamp)/initiated (Desnos), a binary model reinforcing the origin of enunciation within a transcendent unified subject. A resolution to the problem of thinking in terms of collectivity is made possible through the construction of a network of relations and a necessary depersonalization that takes place within a labyrinth of forms. The reader or critic participates in the creative process

by making connections and establishing a voice that weaves itself through a labyrinth of multiplicities.

Randomness is an important part of the combinatorial process in “Rrose Sélavy.” The gold standard of empirical objectivity lies in the randomness of data samples and chance combinations needed for experimental validity. Thus, chance and empirical science maintain an important relationship. The combinatorial process enters also into the chance elements of life, making lived “experience” the equivalent of a random scientific “experiment” or a game of probability (the French word *expérience* contains the ambiguity of both experience and experiment). The creative act plays upon the freedom of lived experience and the ambiguity of imaginary constructs (or fictions) of the inner mind but does not stop there. An artist who adheres only to the doctrine of *art for art’s sake* may accept the ambiguities of multiple truths but if he or she has a social conscience these “undecidables” cannot not merely be accepted. Duchamp, Desnos and Loy may be counted among those artists who dream in order to arrive at a more truthful depiction of reality. The convergences in their works of art create a *surreality* that brings about a better perception of the objects and social constructs of the world than would otherwise be possible. The surrealist creative act is free of artificial pretenses, bourgeois clichés and elitism; it is at once the expression of individual and collective liberation.

Duchamp, Loy and Desnos sought the “beyond” of the imagination by aspiring towards a “fourth dimension.” In searching for a “beyond,” they reject the Cartesian rational subject that seeks only self-legitimation. The Cartesian method employs doubt as a tactic to banish all that may threaten the certitude of reason (i.e. dreams, errors, the senses, and madness). Unitary and self-mastering, the Cartesian subject governs the external reality in relation to which it remains transcendent. It cannot affirm what lies

beyond it and has horror of the Void. The conceptualization of the fourth dimension could be considered as a type of figuration of the Fold in a work of art. The Bride in Duchamp's *Large Glass* may be conceptualized within the complexity of the Fold as a process of becoming that makes possible a new mode of vision and a new subjectivity. Although the Bride is figured as a bizarre coupling of flesh and metal, her true form may only be intuited as it merges with the spiral of the Milky Way (and this disrupts the traditional figure/ground distinction). The viewer may also intuit the invisible force of solar wind and dust. Envisioning the Bride as a spiral in a fourth dimension releases the mind of immediate frames of reference and clears its dust storms to make way for the nomadic subject. This clearing of the "dust storms" of frames of reference may be figured as the complex fold/unfold always in the process of becoming. In the process of folding and unfolding, nomads "breed dust" during the delay or waiting period as they attempt to filter frames of reference. The delay is an active clearing that "breeds" new concepts. Duchamp referred to his *Large Glass* as a *delay in glass* in order to resist pre-existing concepts about representation and painting. To reinforce the sense of delay, Duchamp let dust collect on the *Large Glass* and Man Ray took photographs of it; they later referred to one of these photographs as *Dust Breeding* whose "perspective from above" permits the spectator to shift from the microscopic to the macroscopic. This shifting from the cosmological to the microscopic (and vice versa) has a strong affinity with Deleuze's idea about molecular and molar perceptions. The task of perception, for Deleuze, entails "pulverizing the world" but also "spiritualizing its dust," as we move from minute perceptions to conscious perceptions (or from the molecular to the molar). In Loy's text "Lunar Baedeker" we find active swirling citadels of dust that disperse traditional frames of reference; but we also find, on the other hand, museums whose artifacts "mildew" in

the moondust ("Immortality / mildews . . . . in the museums of the moon"). Delay is at once "active" and "passive" for Duchamp and Loy, who recognize that active concepts eventually lose their novelty and become petrified into thinking collectively preserved in cultural institutions, such as museums. In the end, their concept of delay surpasses any comprehension of the concept in terms of activity and passivity or as a too-simple binary dialectic. In "The Voice of Robert Desnos" a nomadic subject actively clears away the dust storms of tornadoes and volcanoes and their enveloping ash and smoke clouding the "I/eye" who tries to finds its individual voice and consciousness. On the other hand, the constant repetition of phrases induces a passive delay in the creation of a new subject, who tries to establish an affective relation between self and other (his beloved). The nomadic subject is bred from the complexity of the fold/unfold process but also from a monstrous hybridization that might potentially reinforce the violent imposition of collective thinking and forms. Desnos pursued an art beyond Surrealism itself and the imposition of all forms. In short, this is the fundamental problem of the "in-process" state of becoming that critics must confront in Duchamp, Desnos and Loy.

In my opinion, we may surpass the contestation of delay as part of an active/passive binarism by introducing the idea of a filter. Julien Levy considered Duchamp's *Large Glass* to be a "time filter" not only because of the presence of "sieves" in the work but, more importantly, as a conceptualization of the creative process itself. Levy presented his idea of a time filter as a means to counteract Cartesianism. Although Levy did not particularly emphasize the importance of Duchamp's experiments in Cubism, it is imperative to understand how his cubist works implemented the concept of filtering as a critical process in the *Large Glass*. The *Nude Descending a Staircase* shows the "nude" in the process of moving down the staircase rather than frozen in a static

moment in time. As a result, the viewer does not "see" the nude but, in fact, what Duchamp "saw" in creating the painting. Duchamp's own subjective perceptions come between the figure of the nude and the spectator's perception of it. His perceptions have already undergone a filtering process that the spectator must then submit to a further process of filtering. The artist filters first what the viewer (or critic) later must filter. If we did not filter out some of the sensory data stimulating our brains, we would be overwhelmed by an overabundance of stimuli. As I see it, here lies the fundamental Bergsonism in Duchamp's definition of the creative act. Bergson insists that we leave out all of the data that we do not find "interesting" and must actively choose which elements to focus on in our perceptions. In this sense, a delay in time is advantageous for the process of clarification, since we do not notice all objects placed in our paths immediately and all at once. We find it necessary to filter out some of the contingencies or sensory data that we encounter constantly. An artist finds it necessary to filter out what might not be included in a work of art to a greater degree than in everyday perception. This creative act of filtering and making active choices attests to the relationship between necessity and the aleatory that Derrida considered to be an important aspect in Deleuzian thinking. When we retrieve information that has already been filtered for us (in an artistic work or in any media for that matter), what we perceive is constrained by the process of filtering. The *Nude Descending a Staircase* is an "augmented" reality that becomes an "altered" reality in the mind of its viewer. The downside of "delay" as a filter is that in both the "encoding" on the part of the artist and the "decoding" on the part of the viewer perceptions may be controlled. The work of art is a virtual reality whose intelligibility may be controlled by whoever is doing the "encoding" and "decoding" to actualize information within a specific embodiment. When Duchamp progressed to the

Large Glass, he created a delay in glass as a virtual reality that might produce a *surreality* in the mind of the viewer. The viewer is necessary to the filtering process so that a more valid perception of reality may be obtained through the surreal effects than would otherwise be possible. He or she is awakened into an unseen reality that transforms his or her perceptions of the world.

Surrealist "awakenings" into an invisible realm of the imagination were prefigured in symbolist fabrications of bizarre animal-human couplings. Lautréamont's Les Chants de Maldoror has characters that often take on the characteristics of animals. These animal-human transformations foreshadow the perceptual and psychological transformations found in surrealist works of art (notably those of Breton). Although Duchamp disdained what he referred to as "animal expression" in art, he made use of metal and flesh couplings that merge human and inhuman traits. Lautréamont's famous "chance meeting of a sewing machine and an umbrella" in Les Chants de Maldoror is a precursor to the type of surrealist convergences that would later interest Duchamp. The mecanomorphism of the *Large Glass* does not completely disregard human elements in favor of objects; to the contrary, it maintains a relationship to symbolist transformations of the human. The transformations experienced by Lautréamont's protagonist Maldoror permit him to find kinship among beasts and similarly transformed humans that would otherwise be inaccessible in human society. As he ponders the wreckage of a shipwreck from a detached distance, Maldoror discovers that the foundations of human society lack a basic state of democratic kinship. This distorted vantage point inverts that of the humanist subject found in Shakespeare's The Tempest, in which a shipwreck ultimately reinforces traditional structures in society. Maldoror's distance on the catastrophe gives the reader the impression that he invents the shipwreck. The protagonist of Mallarmé's

"Igitur" experiences a similar lack of a sense of kinship in human society. Igitur's descent into the tomb of his ancestors may be compared to the alienated Hamlet's search for truth in Shakespeare's drama. Hamlet's alienation may be interpreted as madness; indeed, Igitur is mad and so are his ancestors. Igitur's descent into the tomb is an encounter with inhuman shadows and otherworldly phantoms. Igitur is an inverted Hamlet who, in his moment of doubt, tosses dice to "fix infinity." Mallarmé's inscription on the title page of "Igitur" informs us that the text is addressed to the "intelligence" of the reader who must organize the events that unfold in the Book as a performative act of staging scenes from the inner world of the mind.

Surrealist automatism unleashes the irrational forces of the mind and sets its fantastical creatures roaming across borders. Desnos's texts are replete with vampires, beasts and mythic hybrid creatures (the siren or mermaid being one of his favorites). Many critics comment on the presence of alchemical transformations in symbolist and surrealist poetry. I have ascertained in my study that these alchemical elements do not constitute a "system" aiming to make symbolist and surrealist works of art intelligible. They form part of a nomadic figuration of traits interweaved through an endless process of transformation. From this process of interweaving, I conclude that surrealist automatism has more in common with shamanistic trance states associated with Asian and American Native Indians and other nomadic tribes than it does with an alchemist's search for the philosopher's stone or any real attempt to transform lead into gold. We must keep focused on the fact that Surrealism is a state of mind. Desnos could self-induce a trance state in his experiments with surrealist automatism. Surrealist tenets affirm the transformative potential of shared myths but only to gain better access to the reality of social constructs. The irrational elements in Surrealism enable the human to be

comprehended through the inhuman. Mysterious elements make the works self-reflexive; figures of transformation and metamorphosis abound in Surrealism but they are not incompatible with the intuitive *élan* in Bergson's empirical philosophy. Rrose Sélavy enters the works of Duchamp as a mysterious presence or meta-irony that makes them self-reflexive. Duchamp declared that he preferred breathing to working and in his *Large Glass* the Bride may be intuited as pure wind, breath or *élan*. A connection may easily be made between the inhuman and the human in the case of the cinema. Surrealist cinema introduced a world of phantoms that obsessed the public, as Desnos underscores in writings about film in his day. The random sequences of surreal cinema could also induce a dream state.

The "haunted" consciousness of Surrealism has been analyzed by Derrida as the *parole soufflée* in relation to Antonin Artaud's work. Breton's Nadja poses the question, "Who is it that I haunt?" as a deconstruction and reconstruction of the question "Who am I?" Breton, as the narrative "I" of Nadja, poses a self-addressed question prompted by Nadja, the feminine Other; this question marks the discursive and non-discursive limits of the masculine Self. Autobiographical discourse investigates the humanist notion of a self-identical subject existing prior to the Other. The self-addressed question frames a moment of insufficiency because it can only scrutinize the dependency of the Self on the Other. Breton defamiliarizes the Self by acknowledging its constitutive limits within the reframing of the Self as a haunted consciousness, or a Self haunted by another consciousness. This defamiliarization of the Self counteracts the Cartesian impulse to master obsessions. To the extent that Breton used Nadja as a pretext to write about himself he is still haunted by the specter of the Cartesian unitary subject. By abandoning interest in her, he attempts to become self-sufficient.

Loy's Insel, as a rewriting of/commentary on Nadja, takes an interest in the "haunted consciousness" of the surrealist painter Richard Oelze whose paintings reveal the mind's encounter with otherworldly creatures. Oelze refuses a naturalized relation between Self and Other. The novel's protagonist, a thinly disguised version of Loy, tries to heal Oelze and reintegrate him back into human society by establishing a relation between the two of them. It is the protagonist herself who undergoes a transformation by passively looking beyond the tormented and fantastical visions of Oelze so that he may clear his frames of reference and finally look at her. Her self-affirmation exceeds the distinction between passive and active because her relation with Oelze establishes self-reflexivity as a relation of "subjectivation," which is to say that she becomes conscious of how she is being "seen" by the Other or Others. Deleuze's characterization of self-knowledge and self-creation as being produced through folding is considered to be "performative" by today's critics. He defines "subjectivation" as the *relation to oneself* that continues to create itself by transforming itself and changing its nature. This "performative" space of reversals, oscillations and interruptions is not entirely legible but can be "partially" traced in writing through the contours and trajectories of affect. Deleuze calls for writing projects that investigate intersubjective and intercorporeal moments in order to deconstruct the presupposed coherence of the self-authorising, rational and disembodied humanist subject. His essay The Fold, in my view, sets the stage for critical methodologies of the 1980s and 1990s concerning self-reflexivity. Whereas in previous criticism "reflexivity" often relied on the humanist assumption of the Self as a rational agent of reflexivity, critical writing of the 1980s and 1990s extends our understanding of how the entanglements of Self and Other play out across the entire spectrum of intersubjectivity, intercorporeality and interaffectivity. Today's critics study

the instability of “difference” by examining the limits, doublings and entanglements that “haunt” the subject or subjective agent. Subjectivity and interiority can be seen as the *relation to oneself* that folding creates. Deleuze suggests that to think is “to fold” or to double the outside with a co-extensive inside. In his study of Michel Foucault, Deleuze elaborates the concept of the “relation to oneself.” His study of Foucault explains how the relation to others is doubled by the relation to oneself; the relations of the outside, folded back to create a doubling, allow a “relation to oneself” to emerge. We might also recognize a similar concept in Luce Irigaray’s notion of “self-touching” in "Quand nos lèvres se parlent" and Ce sexe qui n’en est pas un. Exploring Irigaray and Foucault in depth would require another study beyond the scope of this one.

If the works of Duchamp, Desnos and Loy strike the critic as being elusive, it is due to their transformative and intuitive qualities. *Technique* remains hidden in *process* and becomes an enigma that makes their works self-reflexive. In piecing these three figures together, my purpose has not been to expose the hidden secrets of hermetic truth but to map relations among the cultural “bodies and goods” of nascent twentieth-century modernism. There is always a risk of drowning in an oversimplified pluralism of cultural bodies and goods. Without a doubt, the fold/unfold complexity and the nomadic subject offer no single critical paradigm. Consequently, the critic must not seek to polarize “good” nomads from “bad” nomads (or cyborgs). Instead, the task of the critic is to examine how multiple, even conflicting, forms and histories cross over and through one another, so that they mutate into unexpected and paradoxical forms and subjects. I consider the cyborg to exemplify the mutant form and paradoxical subject of “becoming.” As a feminist, I welcome the possibility of an enunciation beyond polarizing theoretical disputes over form versus concept, aesthetics versus language or pleasure

versus criticism. An artist may choose to blur the boundaries ambiguously between forms or even to work outside culturally recognizable forms, but, as a critic with a social conscience, I have a responsibility to situate the work within the specificity of a particular social reality and not within a blur of universal subjectivity.

Deleuze helps us bridge the gap between feminist criticism and art, since cultural constructs combine imaginary or intuited forms with social realities. Art forms, especially surrealist art forms, enable potentialities that look toward the future as well as to the past. Duchamp, Desnos and Loy recognized the prophetic potential of art. Julien Levy asserted that Duchamp had made prophesies about the *Large Glass* eventually cracking. Desnos wrote in the dedicatory "Notice" of his Trois livres de Prophéties that he (speaking as a poet) decided to obey the prophetic "souffle" or breath. Loy's temporary allegiance to Futurism misfired; she quickly became aware of the dangers of political "prophesy" aiming to make predictions about "future society" while negating the past. She wrote in "Aphorisms on Modernism" that modernism itself "is a prophet crying in the wilderness that Humanity is wasting its time." Modernism is defined by Loy in this aphorism as a critical consciousness that makes prophesy about humanity's impotency for the future. Her aphorism astutely raises the following issue: If the modern critical consciousness is placed in opposition to Humanity, then a gap exists between the modern critical consciousness and the socio-political reality of human society. As a resolution to the problem of a gap between art and socio-political theory (and social reality itself), I propose that the self-reflexivity (or agency) of the fold/unfold in Deleuze's criticism be considered along with the nomadic subject in order to reclarify social relations and realities. In other words, we need to examine *both* the Fold *and* the nomad or cyborg. Nomadic figuration must not be regarded as a kind of "figure-skating" on the surface of

external social relations and constructs. The contingencies of external social relations enter into a network that transforms reality into an "accident." This is, fundamentally, related to the Mallarméan conception of "shipwreck as human invention" in "Un coup de dés." As Virilio claims, to innovate the ship is to innovate the shipwreck. Virtual reality transforms the "real" into an accident that we invent. Catastrophe and the disappearance of an event are disastrous for the cohesion of social reality in the events of the world. The problem with *events in the world* is that events must disappear. Paradoxically, however, "thought" may reclarify reality by uncovering the unseen world no longer visible behind a screen or a false mirror, to use a surrealist concept; this screen may be penetrated through "cracks" and distorting tendencies resulting from chance and catastrophic events.

Art permits us to "read" the invisible in the emptiness of in-between spaces; it is for this reason that Deleuze compares cognition to the act of reading in The Fold. In navigating today's cyberspace we run the risk of no longer being able to distinguish "in-between spaces" due to the effects of *de-realization* in virtual reality. This effect prevents us from distinguishing the virtual from the actual and we lose sight of the *real* world that we inhabit. The risk of a purely optical Fold is that it creates effects of de-realization in virtual reality. A too-restrictive optical Fold traps the spectator in a dialectics of seeing and gazing that does not result in the reclarification of concepts. The extensiveness of the Fold, as an operative trait, offers us more possibilities to grasp at forms of knowledge than does a dialectics of seeing and gazing. The Deleuzian Fold displaces a binary signifier/signified structure through a process of abstraction that ultimately aims to discover how concrete effects in the world are produced. We can reconfigure traditional concepts beyond their historically defined parameters and create fold after fold. The networked thinking of everyday mental experiences involves a multiple synchronicity of

social, perceptual, psychoanalytic, emotional and intensive thoughts. This dynamic interaction creates a process of nomadic border crossing in which we pass from the in-between spaces of *unknowledge* into knowledge. We pass from the open-endedness of free-floating categories into the empirical objectivity of networked consciousness. In this way, we can better connect the psychic dimension of everyday experiences with the social and physical dimensions.

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