

Concerns of The Self 1800 / 1900:
Freud and The Making of Modern Subjectivity

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MY image of the ‘ghosts,’ including everything conventional about its appearance as well as its blind submission to certain contingencies of time and place, is particularly significant for me as the finite representation of a torment that may be eternal. Perhaps my life is nothing but an image of this kind; perhaps I am doomed to retrace my steps under the illusion that I am exploring, doomed to try and learn what I should simply recognize, learning a mere fraction of what I have forgotten. This sense of myself seems inadequate only insofar as it *presupposes* myself, arbitrarily preferring a completed image of my mind which need not be reconciled with time, and insofar as it implies—within this same time—an idea of irreparable loss, of punishment, of a fall whose lack of moral basis is, as I see it, indisputable. What matters is that the particular aptitudes my day-to-day life gradually reveals should not distract me from my search for a general aptitude which would be peculiar to me and which is not innate.

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How came any reasonable being to subject himself to such a yoke of misery, voluntarily to incur a captivity so servile, and knowingly to fetter himself with such a seven-fold chain?

Abstract

This thesis draws on conceptual tools developed in Michel Foucault's late work on 'technologies of the self' to historically reposition *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), not as the inaugural text of the 'psychoanalytic movement', but instead as belonging to a long-standing tradition of practices and writings, which view the self as an object of cultivation, representation, and knowledge. In order to historicize psychoanalysis in this way I critically examine practices and techniques employed within hypnotism and experimental psychology, in addition to literary discourses on self-representation in 19th century autobiography. As a scientific treatise, a technical manual and a quasi-autobiographical text, *Interpretation* borrows from each of these approaches. In doing so, however, Freud would install a tension at the heart of the modern self that radically undermined the liberal conception of the individual as transparent, coherent, and responsible. My conviction is that positioning psychoanalysis within the history of practices of the self, and charting its 'pre-history' in these terms will deepen our understanding of Freud's oeuvre as a significant event and agent in the history of subjectivity. For as this thesis contends, Freud contributed to the emergence of the notion that the self was an object that could be critically renegotiated via the relation of the self to itself, rather than submission to religious *values*, universal notions of *duty*, or bourgeois aesthetics. In doing so, Freud provided certain techniques of self-reflection to individuals who would not have had the *authority* or *expertise* to give an account of, or alter themselves in this way before. Finally, this reading also subverts Foucault's critique of psychoanalysis (represented in his middle works) by arguing that Freud's 'technology of the self' cannot be subsumed under the rubric of 'governmentality,' and instead constitutes a 'caustic' technology that enables individuals to identify and renegotiate prior subjections.

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The initial trajectory of my research and the form this thesis was expected to take changed dramatically approximately one year into writing it. This shift was the result of a concerted 'close' reading of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* and, perhaps more significantly, coincided with the time at which I met my partner Alice Lilley, who reminds me each day that there is much to be found, to live for and to be concerned with beyond the office in which I have spent nearly every day for the past four years and the books in which I have dwelt for so long. That this thesis is entitled *Concerns of the Self* evidences a shift not only in my thinking but also in my living, which I owe to Alice—to whom I am most grateful.

Introduction: Historiographical and Conceptual Departures

'In the summer of 1897 the spell began to break, and Freud undertook his most heroic feat—a psycho-analysis of his own unconscious. It is hard for us nowadays to imagine how momentous this achievement was, that difficulty being the fate of most pioneering exploits. Yet the uniqueness of the feat remains. Once done it is done forever. For no one again can be the first to explore those depths' (Jones, 1972, 351). So begins the Freud legend—or at least one version of it. With the publication of Freud's correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess, and a vast array of scholarship concerning the broader political, cultural and intellectual context out of which psychoanalysis was born, there has been a collective push away from 'person centered' historiographies of psychoanalysis that locate the responsibility of its inception squarely with Freud, in Vienna, sometime around 1900.¹ Today, one might simply say there are histories of psychoanalysis and there are biographies of Freud. On one hand, the decoupling of the history of psychoanalysis from the person of Freud has had undeniably advantageous results. And yet, something has also been lost; namely, the extent to which psychoanalysis is indelibly marked by a

¹ See Marie Bonaparte, Anna Freud and Ernst Kris (ed.) (1954) *The Origins of Psycho-Analysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and notes: 1887-1902*; Mark Solms (2000) 'Freud, Luria and the Clinical Method' *Psychoanalysis and History* 2(1); M. Luprecht (1991) 'What People Call Pessimism': Sigmund Freud, Arthur Schnitzler, and Nineteenth-Century Controversy at the University of Vienna Medical School; S. Bernfield (1994) 'Freud's Earliest Theories and The School of Helmholtz' *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 13; F. Sulloway (1979) *Freud, Biologist of The Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend*; L. Ritvo (1990) *Darwin's Influence on Freud: A Tale of Two Sciences*; Matt ffytche (2012) *Foundation of The Unconscious: Schelling, Freud and the Birth of the Modern Psyche*; Carl Schorske (1980) 'Politics and Parricide in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*' in *Fin-De-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*.

concern with the self—most clearly exemplified in Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900)² and the prolonged self-analysis that paralleled its composition. Importantly, laying emphasis on this underlying concern with the self need not imply a return to the Freud legend (as it appears to in both Didier Anzieu and Alexander Grinstein’s accounts);³ turning to these factors provides an alternative way to locate psychoanalysis historically.

This study is founded upon a reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, not as the inaugural text of the ‘psychoanalytic movement’, but instead as belonging to a long-standing tradition of writings and practices relating to the self. Positioning Freud’s dream book in this way does not mean simply ignoring, or divorcing Freud from the institution his writings and professional activities spawned. Instead, it seeks to *provide a foundation* for those who have already begun to recast psychoanalysis as a modern practice of the self. *This history of psychoanalysis* involves various individuals, both professional and lay, whose engagement with Freud’s ideas was not limited to their status as intellectual objects to be lauded or rebuffed, criticized or refined; instead, Freud’s writings would enabled these individuals to develop new and complex ways in which to understand, relate to, and alter themselves.

John Forrester and Laura Cameron’s *Freud In Cambridge* (2017) has already begun this project by looking beyond the institutional history of psychoanalysis, as well as

² I use Joyce Crick’s (1999 [1900]) translation of *The Interpretation of Dreams* throughout this thesis—where it has been necessary to do otherwise James Strachey’s translation has been referenced as (1900) and the original German text has been referenced as (1900a). For a further discussion of the difference between Crick and Strachey’s translations see the extended footnote ‘2’ in Chapter Three.

³ See Didier Anzieu’s *Freud’s Self-Analysis* (1986); Alexander Grinstein’s *Sigmund Freud’s Dreams* (1980).

expanding the disciplinary fields against which its history has previously been charted and in which its theorems have been tested: ‘There was a wide road to the unconscious which was neither altogether medical nor psychological, neither philosophical nor literary’ (Forrester and Cameron, 2017, 614). Most significantly, their research has called attention to the ways in which individuals made personal use of Freud’s writings (particularly *The Interpretation of Dreams*):

[T]hese individuals explored their dreams, underwent personal analyses, published papers in psychoanalytic journals, wrote popular treatises on psychoanalysis, corresponded with Freud, and were admitted to membership in the BPaS. What they perhaps had most in common to bring them together was ‘scientific curiosity’. [...] And they were the first to admit that this new field of inquiry required ‘self-knowledge’ – in time-honored fashion, submitting themselves, first and foremost, to the tools of inquiry’ (Forrester and Cameron, 2017, 614-15).

The language of ‘tools’ and ‘self-knowledge’ employed by Forrester and Cameron is in keeping with a broader tradition of self-cultivation, which acknowledges that the self—by subjecting itself to certain techniques of observation, examination and judgment—can become the object of one’s own knowledge, and in so doing, be transformed. This tradition, which we might term as the ‘arts of existence’, the ‘practices of the self’ or indeed the ‘technologies of the self’ as Michel Foucault did in his late works (Foucault, 1988; 1992; 1997; 2014; 2016), has a history that reaches back to antiquity and perhaps has deeper and still unknown roots. The object of this study is to draw out the various points of reference by which those techniques developed and employed by Freud—each part of the broader ‘technology’ he called psychoanalysis—can be understood in relation to their more immediate historical situation. There has yet to be any sustained scholarship on the emergence of specifically ‘Freudian subjects’ relative to those techniques and practices by which individuals endeavored to work upon, cultivate or

know themselves in the century preceding the advent of psychoanalysis. In order to fill this gap, this study moves beyond the explicitly ‘technical’ conception of psychoanalysis—i.e. psychoanalytic techniques—in order to provide a richer account of the historical context out of which Freud’s psychoanalytic technology of the self emerged at the outset of the 20th century.

The question concerning the status of Freudian psychoanalysis as a practice or technology of the self is not merely one that stems from the work of Foucault or those who have continued to pursue other dimensions of Foucault’s critical project (both of which I consider further below). It has become a significant question, or indeed a presupposition, in a recent work that has dramatically altered and enlarged the historical field in which psychoanalysis and its effects on the 20th century may be understood. Eli Zaretsky’s social and cultural history of psychoanalysis, *Secrets of the Soul* (2005), charts the ‘paradoxical’ status of psychoanalysis in the 20th century. Its central claim—which acts as the enabling principle for Zaretsky’s expansion of the sphere within which psychoanalysis can be historicized—is that it should be viewed as ‘the *first great theory and practice of “personal life”*’ (Zaretsky, 2005, 5). Framing psychoanalysis in this way accentuates its impact as a more diffuse agent of change in the historical dynamics of the 20th century by implicating psychoanalysis within broader social shifts that result from material determinants such as ‘the second industrial revolution’, as well as allowing for the partial detachment of psychoanalysis from its institutional locus in the ‘psychoanalytic movement.’

George Makari’s *Revolution in Mind* (2008) finds similar footing by claiming that the ‘goal’ of psychoanalysis ‘was to win for science the traditional object of humanist

culture—the inner life of human beings’ (Makari, 2008, 3). However, unlike Zaretsky, Makari’s account, as he frequently reminds his reader, is ‘a story’. And his overt desire to develop a coherent narrative, capable of accommodating the mass of crossed wires that constitute the antecedents of psychoanalysis, has the effect of obscuring more than it reveals. If we were to follow Makari, it would appear that psychoanalysis could be essentially decomposed into the admixture of bio- and psychophysics, French psychopathology and turn of the century sexology that he views as its essential building blocks. This tactic, which reduces psychoanalysis to the combination of scientific debates (see Makari, 2008, 4-5), presents itself as an apology that seeks to retroactively restore the aura and stamp of serious science to psychoanalysis. When Makari does move beyond these ‘scientific origins’ of psychoanalysis, the historical narrative he charts remains close to the ‘psychoanalytic movement’ and as such, does not, as Zaretsky does, manage to provide broader points of reference that would allow the wider historical implications of Freud’s ideas to be made apparent.

Zaretsky’s positioning of ‘personal life’ as an emergent practice at the end of the 19th century relies on his reading of the “second industrial revolution”—the experience of which he conjures via a collection of tropes, images, and novelties e.g. ‘new urban spaces, and media—popular theatre, music halls, [and] the kinetoscope’ (Zaretsky, 2005, 5). Zaretsky also draws upon canonical accounts of Modernity as expressed by Poe, Valéry and Baudelaire in order to outline the emergence of new ‘character types’, as well as those particularly modern forms of experience famously encapsulated in Baudelaire’s definition thereof, i.e. ‘the transient, the fleeting, the contingent’. However, all of these are, ultimately, subordinated to the convergence of two decisive factors: the ‘outbreak of

neuroses' and the 'transfer of production from the household to the office and corporation', which, claims Zaretsky, 'psychologized and individualized family life' (Ibid., 23). According to Zaretsky, these innovations in the use of urban-public space and media technology in conjunction with the increase in industrialized labor 'provided reference points from which individuals could imaginatively construct extrafamilial identities. As a result, personal identity became a problem and a project for individuals as opposed to something given to them by their place in the family or the economy' (Zaretsky, 2005, 5).

For all the merits of Zaretsky's study, my own is anchored in three objections to it. First, while Zaretsky maintains that psychoanalysis should be recognized as the '*first great modern practice of personal life*', he is more intent on delineating the social and cultural dynamics peripheral to this practice, and provides his reader with little in the way of a conceptually rigorous account of what such a practice consists of, or indeed, how it might be understood relative to other practices of the self. Second, the framework through which Zaretsky sets out the *conditions* for the emergence of psychoanalysis may indeed act as a powerful counter-narrative to the traditional framing of psychoanalysis as the sole invention of Sigmund Freud. However, this approach implicitly positions psychoanalysis as a kind of historical inevitability and in doing so, overemphasizes the degree to which it was swiftly reabsorbed into the dialectical progression of history, thereby obscuring the extent to which psychoanalysis represents a potential rupture in the successive phases of such a progressive historical movement. Third, as Matt ffytche has already observed, both Zaretsky's and Makari's accounts of psychoanalysis 'strangely eclipse that moment, a hundred years earlier, which saw the production of Rousseau's *Confessions*, Fichte's theory of subjectivity, Goethe's *Willhelm Meister* and Wordsworth's

Prelude. This same period gave rise to both the various kinds of self-investigation practiced by German Romantics such as Friedrich Schlegel, J.W. Ritter and Novalis, and also J.C. Reil's coinage of *psychotherapie*, Carl Moritz's *Magazine for Empirical Psychology* and many other similar initiatives, all organized around the secular investigation of personal and interior life' (ffytche, 2012, 3).⁴

A similar backdating is indicated by Peter Gay, who began his weighty history of bourgeois experience, *The Naked Heart* (1996), by claiming that '[t]he nineteenth century was intensely preoccupied with the self, to the point of neurosis' (Gay, 1996, 3). While the Freudian tilt with which Gay reads and to some extent muddies this 19th century culture of the self by presenting it as the riddle that Freud was destined to solve, he is nonetheless right to assert this preoccupation with the self as a fundamental pursuit in the 19th century. Indeed, the dramatic upsurge in the production and consumption of autobiographical writing and its fictional counterpart, the *Bildungsroman*, evidence the degree to which the 19th century brought the self to prominence as an object that could be artfully cultivated and represented. As such, understanding the Freudian commitment to the study and development of the personal self must be sought in a more distant past than either Zaretsky or Makari acknowledge.

⁴ Zaretsky's timeline also seems strangely out of sync with the one established in Jürgen Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeoisie Society* (1996 [1962]), which locates the emergence of the public sphere and the contemporaneous development of liberal individuality in the late 18th century. While it is not made explicit by either author, Zaretsky implicitly posits the emergence of 'private life', and the cultivation of the 'personal self', as the corollary to the emergence of public spaces in which processes of individuation allow for individuals to be recognized as such.

1800/1900: The Technical Turn

The prevailing account of the technical antecedents of psychoanalysis and ‘dynamic psychiatry’ more broadly, is still Henri Ellenberger’s landmark study *The Discovery of The Unconscious* (1970). While Ellenberger’s work remains unparalleled in its scholarship and the vastness of perspectives it manages to hold together, its attempts to historicize the technical dimensions of psychoanalysis fall short. In part, this results from the ‘evolutionary’ presupposition upon which Ellenberger’s history relies in order to represent a vast and heterogeneous array of technical paradigms—ranging from those designed to locate and re-embody lost souls, exorcise demons and induce hypnotic states—as continuous with the later techniques employed by Freud, Jung, Adler and Janet. Following Lévi-Strauss,⁵ who Ellenberger cites as a point of reference in this regard (Ellenberger, 1970, 6), an ‘unbroken chain’ is forged between these various modes of ‘therapy’ by subsuming them all under a singular function: the symbolic dissolution of conflicts, often embodied in an individual, while being constituted by the broader social structure that marks this individual as mad, sick, possessed etc. In doing so, Ellenberger sets out to historicize the problem of suggestion as a curative agent. ‘Why is it’, he asks ‘that certain patients respond to a certain type of cure while others do not?’ (Ellenberger, 1970, 3). This line of questioning results in a quasi-naturalization of the subject of suggestibility, precisely because without such a trans-cultural and trans-historical subject, Ellenberger would be unable to accommodate the continuity he stresses between practices

⁵ See Lévi-Strauss. ‘Sorcières et Psychanalyse’ In: *Le Courrier de l’Unesco*, Paris., juillet-août 1956, pp. 8-10.

located in apparently heterogeneous traditions, cultures and historical periods, while at the same time relating them to a stable conception of subjectivity.

More recently, Andreas Mayer's exceptional monograph *Sites of the Unconscious* (2013) has deepened and complicated the long-standing narrative that traces the development of psychoanalysis from Charcot's experiments with hypnotic techniques to their therapeutic redeployment by Freud and Joseph Breuer.⁶ As Mayer argues, 'while language may appear today, to analysts and scholars alike, as the only "stuff" psychoanalytic practice has to deal with, the historical constitution of this practice can hardly be understood without taking into account its material and social components' (Mayer, 2013, 5). Mayer carefully examines 'concrete sites of knowledge production' and argues that 'the material setup of clinics, museums, laboratories, [and] consulting rooms played a critical role in the project of making hypnotism into an experimental science of the unconscious mind' (Ibid., 4). His account is, however, restricted to the specifically clinical sites in which these techniques and technologies were developed and employed, and does not, as this study does, stress the extent to which the techniques developed by Freud lent themselves to extra-clinical applications.

Comparatively, Zaretsky, as already noted, does draw attention to the broader technological backdrop against which Freudian practices emerged. However, the emphasis placed on the advent of certain material technologies, which his argument relies on, must also be questioned—for in laying stress upon the industrial and reproductive technologies of the late 19th and early 20th century Zaretsky's account overstates the effects of technologies upon social structures and institutions (namely the family), while

⁶ See Freud's *Autobiographical Study* (1925), especially pages 19–28.

not attending to the effects these new forms of technical mediation had upon the life of individuals. Indeed, Zaretsky omits any serious consideration of the impact of wide spread literacy and the burgeoning literary marketplace in the early 19th century, both of which contributed to an equally forceful, and potentially less coercive, engagement with questions of selfhood and activities of self-cultivation.⁷

As the media theorist and literary historian Friedrich Kittler argues, ‘aided by compulsory education and new alphabetization techniques, the book became both film and record around 1800—not as a media technological reality, but in the imaginary of reader’s souls. As a surrogate of unstorable data flows, books came to power and glory’ (Kittler, 1999, 9).⁸ As Kittler’s argument suggests, it is not the advent of those media technologies that would replace imagination at the end of the 19th century, but the technology of the written word and the widespread condition of literacy that announced the self as an object of personal cultivation at its outset. From this perspective, those identities developed in the 19th century were all the more personal; for their cultivation was not yet the province of both the individual *and* a burgeoning culture industry that was rapidly developing the techno-ideological means by which to invoke personal life as a desirable goal and commodity. Accordingly, it is the advent of those media technologies that would emerge in the latter half of the 19th century, and still prevail in a variety of forms as the fundamental substitute for, or mediators of, experience today, that would

⁷ William Wordsworth’s poem ‘Illustrated Books and Newspapers’, which he composed in 1846, expresses his discontent with the regressive effect of images alongside text in the ever expanding industry of mass printing: ‘A backward movement surely have we here, / From manhood—back to Childhood; for the age— / Back towards caverned life’s first career’ (Wordsworth, 1981, 900-901).

⁸ See also, S.H. Steinberg’s *Five Hundred Years of Printing* (1974) p. 324-5.

lessen the extent to which such experiences could be claimed as the sole preserve of the personal self.⁹ In historicizing those practices of the self specific to Freud, one must take account of the transitional period that stands between the imaginative constructions of personal identity practiced in the 18th and early 19th century and the emergence of increasingly technologically mediated modes of self-experience and subjectification at its close.

The growing availability and development of ever more sophisticated technology—whether employed as means of entertainment, convenience, or scientific inquiry—significantly impacted the way in which self-experience was mediated, constrained, and reinvented, while at the same time recasting the traditional mediums through which truth was transmitted and revealed. Revolutions in printing facilitated first by Friedrich König, and then Augustus Applegath and Edward Cowper, transformed the written word into a highly available and *consumable* medium through which an increasingly literate populous would encounter new representations of personal identity in the emergent and quickly growing genres of autobiography and the *Bildungsroman*. The same spirit of technological innovation would soon result in other alterations that, while not directly impinging upon the domain of personal identity, would mediate and transform the import of those forms of experiences upon which earlier accounts of selfhood had been founded. With Louis Daguerre's innovations in photography the boundary that had clearly divided imagination from reality was blurred; and by the close of the century the divine *Logos* would find its technological analogue in Edison's

⁹ See Walter Benjamin's 'Some Motifs In Baudelaire' for an account of the 'atrophy of experience' in relation to modern forms of communication technology (Benjamin, 1999, 155-56).

gramophone, which would finally transform the acoustically perceptible and ephemeral Word into a tangible and reproducible medium.¹⁰ These technological advances, which allowed sensible reality a second life as reproduction, were quickly adapted and employed as the means by which individuals could be studied with increasing precision and objectivity.

With the advent of photographic technology in the mid-19th century, the famed French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot turned his incisive gaze to that most enigmatic nervous disease—hysteria. Employing older techniques borrowed from animal magnetism, and armed with the ability to capture and store visual impressions faster than the eye could comprehend them, Charcot would combine his keen observational powers with techniques by which the unconscious could be elicited in the compilation of a vast collection of data, which amounted to a veritable museum of hysteria aptly named the Musée Charcot. Its holdings would, for the first time, materialize a grand taxonomy in which manifestations of hysteria could be classified in accordance with distinct forms and categories. While Mayer's account has shed new light on the historical nexus that stands between Charcot and Freud, there remains a seemingly impenetrable disciplinary and historiographical barrier separating psychoanalysis (which represents the self as personal and unconscious) from academic and experimental psychology (which does so on the basis of the universal regularities of consciousness)—that has been continually reinforced

¹⁰ Indicatively, Edison first advocated the use of his gramophone as a device as a means of technological resurrection; by enabling one to record the words of a dying loved one, and posthumously to make audible that which is not—the voice of the dead. By 1919, Rainer Maria Rilke would push this principle to its absolute limit in his essay 'Primal Sound', wherein he elaborates a rather morbid fantasy involving the use of gramophone stylus and a human skull. By tracing the coronal suture of the skull with a stylus, not only the words of the dead, but nature itself could finally speak (see Rilke in Kittler, 1999 [1919], 38-42).

by a battery of methodological, theoretical and epistemological differences—leaving this contemporaneous technical paradigm as of yet unexamined.

By the late 19th century, experimental currents of academic psychology had also adopted technological instruments in order to both justify their departure from philosophy and to transform the borderline between the body and consciousness into a scientifically valid field of inquiry. Wilhelm Wundt opened Germany's first laboratory for experimental psychology in 1879 at the University of Leipzig, followed soon after by G.E. Müller's lab at Göttingen in 1881, and Francis Galton's 'Anthropometric Laboratory' in 1884.¹¹ These laboratories became the testing grounds in which experimentalists set out to develop and refine technological instruments capable of precisely measuring and recording data procured via techniques of introspection and other forms of self-observation. Wilhelm Wundt's disciple Edward Titchener would go so far as to claim that 'the experimenter of the early nineties trusted, first of all, in his instruments; chronoscope and kymograph and tachistoscope were—it is hardly an exaggeration to say—of more importance than the observer [...] There were still vast reaches of mental life which experiment had not touched' admits Titchener, but 'we believed, at least the enthusiasts among us, that the method would carry us to them' (Titchener, 1912, 427). By the end of the 19th century experimentalism had been imported to the United States. Once there it would merged with methods borrowed from Galton and the aims of Taylorism, thereby transforming not only Wundt's science, but the very conceptual core of the self, which no longer stood at the centre of personal

¹¹ C.G. Jung would open his own laboratory for experimental psychology in 1904-5 with his then collaborator Franz Riklin (see Jung, 1963, 120).

experience and meaning, but instead, as a the primary unit of a rapidly growing social-industrial apparatus, bent on efficiency and progress. It was in this spirit that James McKeen Cattell, Wundt's first laboratory assistant, would claim that 'Control of the physical world,' the principle achievement of the 19th century, 'is secondary to the control of ourselves and of our fellow men [...] All our systems of education, our churches, our legal systems, our governments, and the rest [shall become the objects of] applied psychology (Cattell, 1907 [1904] 603).

Freud was unequivocal in his rejection of the optimism that Titchner, Cattell and their fellow experimentalists displayed when he warned that 'what is called experimental psychology [is in no] position to tell you anything serviceable of the relation between body and mind or to provide you with the key to an understanding of possible disturbances of the mental functions' (Freud, 1916 [1915], 20). And yet, one cannot ignore the extent to which both Freud and his experimentalist counterparts were embarking on a common project: to develop a new vocabulary in and through which to represent mental life. Such is the premise with which Kurt Danziger begins his aptly named *Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research*:

In talking about a field like scientific psychology we are talking about a domain of constructions. [...] Although this seems quite obvious, certain implications are usually evaded. If the world of scientific psychology is a constructed world, then the key to understanding its historical development would seem to lie in those constructive activities that produced it. But this insight has not guided many historical studies. In the past the effects of a naïve empiricism may have assigned an essentially passive role to investigators, as though they merely had to observe or register what went on outside them (Danziger, 1990, 2).¹²

¹² See also Henderikus Stam's essay 'Psychology and The Production of New Bodies', in which he argues that 'Psychologists of the founding generations severed the ties between knowledge and aesthetics altogether, or between the body and desire. In their hast to produce a science they engendered a subjectivity that was at once wholly aesthetic as well as scientific' (Stam, 1999, 339).

The role these constructions would play in Freud's work and that of his experimentalist counterparts is, however, separated by the extent to which Freud was acutely aware of the role that such artifices—whether conceived of as conceptual models, material instruments or else more subtle forms of elicitation and interpretation—would play in the mediation of experience and the production of knowledge. Indicatively, Freud instructs his reader to 'think of the instrument serving the functions of the psyche as acting like a composite microscope, or a photographic apparatus' while at once cautioning them not to 'mistake the scaffolding for the building' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 349). This awareness of the *metapsychological* terrain upon which Freud's account of the subject's interiority was to be traversed finds its concrete analogue in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), where it is not theory, but the existentially responsive life-techniques (*Lebenstechniken*) of the individual, that perpetually dissatisfied 'prosthetic God', which demonstrate the same consciousness of technical mediation: 'with every tool man is perfecting his own organs, whether motor or sensory, or is removing the limits of their functioning' (Freud, 1930, 92, 90). When articulating the parameters of construction—*itself* a primary analytic technique—Freud likens it to the work of the archeologist; significantly, what separates the archeologist from the psychoanalyst, claims Freud, is that the psychoanalyst is not working with 'something destroyed but something that is still alive' (Freud, 1937, 259).

This vitality would come to define the Freudian subject as an active participant in the construction of its own identity and self-understanding, rather than a passive object prepared to accept the authoritative pronouncements of experts. Indeed, Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* would reveal the extent to which the self is a fundamentally

compromised entity, constituted in by a continuous tension between identity as prescribed by figures of authority, institutions and the societal language of self-consciousness, and the struggle for the requisite autonomy that would enable the self to author, or invent itself. On one hand, Freud's dream book is concerned with the representation of its author's self in all 'its peculiarities, its details, its indiscretions, and its bad jokes' (Freud, 1954 [1899], 290). On the other hand, *Interpretation* sets itself apart from such ostensibly literary aspirations, for as Philip Rieff notes in response to Ernst Jones' account of Freud's self analysis: 'Freud himself laid out the possible uniqueness of his self-analysis, with reasons more closely related to the technical character of his science' (Rieff, 1959, 67). In other words, it is, perhaps paradoxically, the repeatability of Freud's self-analysis, facilitated by the various techniques supplied and applied therein, that sets it apart as both *repeatable* and *unique*. In this sense, *The Interpretation of Dreams* shares qualities with the those currents in late-19th century experimental psychology that sought to develop techniques capable of providing an objective ground for the scientific study of the subject via the repeatability of its experiments; while at the same time, Freud's dream book is equally committed to the imaginative and idiosyncratic dimensions of selfhood represented in the autobiographical tradition of the 19th century. In order to account for this tension, this study traces the development of techniques of self-examination in experimental psychology and hypnotism, as well as literary discourses on the representability and cultivation of the self in 19th century autobiography.

Self-Writing

Freud's psychoanalytic project has left an indelible mark upon the auto/biographical discourse of the 20th century. In fact, one would be hard pressed to find an edited volume on the subject that does not address Freud in one way or another. Italo Svevo's novel *Zeno's Conscience*, published in 1923, is framed as an autobiography written under the prescription of a psychoanalyst and subsequently published in order to exhort his patient into returning to therapy. By the time Vladimir Nabokov set out to write his autobiography—*Speak, Memory* (1951)—he felt compelled to begin by telling his reader 'I reject completely the vulgar, shabby, fundamentally medieval world of Freud' (Nabokov, 2016 [1951], 6). Freud had, by this point, become so embedded in the culture of self-reflection, and autobiography in particular, that one had to address him, if only to distance oneself from him. W. H. Auden's 'Psychology and Art Today' (1935), parodies what had already emerged as a common misapprehension of psychoanalysis' relation to autobiography when he wrote: 'to the man in the street, the cure for all ills is (a) indiscriminate sexual intercourse; (b) autobiography' (Auden, 1981 [1935], 69).

Here, I want only to point out these confused and overlapping 20th century discourses, which intermingle psychoanalysis and autobiography to such an extent that one might believe there to be something inherently psychoanalytic about the writing of autobiography. The psychoanalyst Charles Rycroft, for example, portrays autobiography as essentially paralleling psychoanalytic treatment. He claims that 'the process of writing an autobiography is one [...] in which a dialectic takes place between present "I" and past "me", at the end of which both have changed and the author-subject could say equally

truthfully, “I wrote it” and “It wrote me” (Rycroft, 1985, 192). This kind of anachronistic conflation of psychoanalysis and autobiography obscures entirely the extent to which they are two distinct traditions, as well as failing to account for the heterogeneity of autobiographical writing, which resists attempts to collect its various purposes and practices within a single rubric. Rycroft’s inclination to read psychoanalytic functions into the autobiographical is mirrored by its literary counterpart: the attempt to use psychoanalysis as a cypher through which to read Freud *into* autobiographies written long before his time.¹³

There are, of course, legitimate narratives that relate the development of auto/biography to psychoanalysis. The earliest and most notable intersection between the two is commonly located in the emergence of the ‘new biography’. Unlike traditional quasi-historical biography that focused on the external circumstances of its subject’s life, the ‘new biography’ relocated the domain of biographical writing in ‘the psychological problems suggested by [the individual’s] inner history’ (Strachey, 2009 [1918], 9). This innovation is invariably attributed to Lytton Strachey and his sardonically titled *Eminent Victorians* (1918). In commenting on Strachey’s turn to the ‘inner history’ of his subjects, John Sutherland clearly attributes this shift in perspective to the influence of Freud:

¹³ Deborah Epstein Nord, for example, makes use of the Oedipal trope, in its particularly Freudian form, in order to reread a selection of Victorian autobiographies. This treatment results in a blurring of lines: ‘Each of these autobiographers [Mill, Goethe, Coleridge, Carlyle and Gosse] would concur with Freud’s formulation that such generational conflict would end in something like progress, in the individual’s advancement into maturity and independence, but also in the epoch’s march towards greater enlightenment’ (Nord, 2014, 91). By the end of Nord’s essay one can no longer tell where literature ends and psychoanalysis begins; Freud is replaced with ‘Dickens’, who Nord claims, ‘understood what other autobiographers, fictional and otherwise, did not quite grasp but conveyed nonetheless: that self-invention and the weight of paternity—or origins—could not be separated’ (Nord, 2014, 98). It would seem that this sort of platitude, the ‘*did not grasp but conveyed nonetheless*’, haunts so many efforts to bring together psychoanalysis with autobiography, and literature more generally.

‘Strachey was steeped in the theories of psychoanalysis. His brother James had been Freud’s pupil and translator. It is not far fetched to see *Eminent Victorians* as Oedipal biography, a striking of the father dead’ (Sutherland, 2009, x-xi). It is telling that historians and literary commentators alike attribute this new form of biographical practice to Lytton Strachey—who read and knew of Freud—rather than Freud, who wrote psycho-biographies.¹⁴

Others, like Michel de Certeau—without reference to Strachey—imply that this recasting of the auto/biographical subject is not merely predicated on the absorption of Freudian ideas, but is itself one of the first and most central of Freudian projects. ‘The psychoanalytic interest in biography’, writes de Certeau, ‘dates to its very inception’:

topics of the “Wednesday meetings” included studies of Lenau, Wedekind, Jean-Paul, K.F. Meyer, Kleist, Leonardo da Vinci. That interest remains central. Biography is the *self-critique* of liberal, bourgeois society, based on the primary unit that society created. The individual—the central epistemological and historical figure of the modern Western world, the foundation of capitalist economy and democratic politics [...] Psychoanalytic biography effects a reversal at the place delimited by an ambition, and affirms an erosion of its own postulates. Working from within, it dismantles [...] the historical and social figure that is the standard unit of the system within which Freudianism was developed (de Certeau, 2000, 15).

On this view, not only does psychoanalysis itself initiate the distinctly modern form of the auto/biography as self-critique; but the particular strain of individualism developed in and through the auto/biographical writings of the 19th century stands as a vital presupposition relative to the technology of psychoanalysis—that is, by preparing the way for its critical interventions.

¹⁴ See also, Freud’s lecture on the ‘Dissection of the Psychological Personality’ (1933), in which he writes: ‘Now in writing a biography it may well be difficult to suppress a need to plumb the psychological depths’ (Freud, 1933, 66).

Thomas Carlyle's great admirer and American contemporary Ralph Waldo Emerson began his now famous essay 'Nature' (1836) by proclaiming: 'Our age is retrospective', citing 'biographies, criticism and histories' as the hallmarks of this tendency to look to the past for answers (Emerson, 1971 [1836], 7). Emerson was quick to remind his readers of those marginal yet fundamental phenomena that such retroactive methods had left 'not only unexplained but inexplicable'; among them Emerson identified 'language, sleep, madness, dreams, beasts, sex' (Ibid., 8). If this were not enough to evidence the extent to which Freud addressed a series of long standing riddles concerning the speaking, sleeping, mad, dreaming, bestial and desiring subject of the 19th century, a careful reading of the 19th century tradition of autobiography encourages the following additions: parapsychological experiences, which collectively designate the field of unconscious phenomena, such as reverie, hallucination, the spontaneous reemergence of forgotten memories and experimentation with the artificial replication of these and other experiences via intoxicants; certain social and moral complications—regarding the individual's relation to authority, its identity, truth(fullness), self-accountability and responsibility—which emerge in the space between the apparent, but still marginal, irrationality of the self, and its transparent, coherent, rational and uncompromised double; and finally, the production of quasi-secular narratives of the self and its development in terms of the plenitude of childhood, the entrance into the juridical-normative sphere of personal responsibility, the experiences of loss (whether of one's self, or an object of personal investment), and the drive towards wholeness or a return to one's true nature, which cumulatively define a new psychological interiority of the self, which Harold Bloom termed as the 'internalization of the quest-romance' (Bloom, 1970).

Scholarship on the relation between psychoanalysis and 19th century literature—and Romanticism in particular—has tended to blur the lines between the two by reading Freud into Romantic notions of the self, imagination, memory, and the unconscious. Such a treatment of 19th century literature has stemmed from the, perhaps overzealous, uptake of ‘Freudish’ as a primary language and conceptual tool in 20th century literary criticism. Harold Bloom, one of the most ardent proponents of Freud inflected criticism writes: ‘Whatever else the love that the full Romantic quest aims at may be, it cannot be a therapy. It must make all things new, and then marry what it has made’ (Ibid., 24).

More recent attempts to draw these two movements together, such as Joel Faflak’s *Romantic Psychoanalysis* (2008), have done so armed with an awareness of the blind spot earlier treatments had unintentionally cultivated. ‘Genealogies constructed to link Romanticism and psychoanalysis’, writes Faflak, ‘have tended to diminish Romanticism as an earlier blindness cured by the theoretical insight of a later psychoanalysis’ (Faflak, 2008, 9). While Faflak correctly diagnoses the tendency to read Romanticism as a failed or unresolved anticipation of psychoanalysis, his use and characterization of the latter is too broad to give any clear indication as to the relationship between particularly Freudian notions of subjectivity or else the other attendant dimensions of selfhood that form the still undetermined points of correspondence between Freud’s writings and those of his Romantic predecessors. The conception of ‘psychoanalysis’ with which Faflak works—‘psychoanalysis as a phantasmal and destabilizing process’ (Ibid., 12)—is derived from a reading of psychoanalysis through the lens of French post-structuralism, particular as it

has been advanced through the work of Lacan and Derrida.¹⁵ In this regard, Faflak's treatment of psychoanalysis joins company with many others who have made use of 'psychoanalysis' as a more general discourse that shares certain concerns related to the 'de-centered subject' of 20th century continental philosophy, rather than examining its pre-philosophical conceptualization in Freud's oeuvre as this study does.¹⁶ My own aim in treating the autobiographical literature of the 19th century is not to stress a continuity between these authors and Freud, or else to laud Freud as having escaped what they could not. Instead, I examine both the strategies of self-accounting implicated in autobiographical writing as a practice of the self, as well as the extent to which Freud's later psychoanalytic techniques are indebted to, or are a departure from, this tradition and the broader literary-representational approach to selfhood.

Foucault & Company

In addition to the work of Eli Zaretsky, this study is indebted to, and in conversation with Michel Foucault. While Zaretsky's *Secrets of The Soul* has provided a new set of coordinates for the historian working to understand the emergence, and to a greater extent, the absorption of psychoanalysis in the 20th century, Foucault's work is more

¹⁵ It is indicative that one of Faflak's most cited authorities on psychoanalysis is Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, whose study *The Freudian Subject* (1988) makes use of various figures in 20th century continental philosophy ranging from Heidegger and Derrida to Lacan and Lyotard in arguing that Freud failed to grasp the radical 'otherness' of the subject. Indeed, since Borch-Jacobsen's initial work his trajectory has decisively shifted; and he, not unlike Frederick Crews, has become one of the central figures in a vein of literature bent on debunking those 'Freudian myths' regarding both the inception, reliability and efficacy of psychoanalysis.

¹⁶ See also, Matt ffytche's comments on Slavoj Zizek and Andrew Bowie in this regard (ffytche, 2012, 4-5).

conceptually engaged with Freudian psychoanalysis relative to the history of subjectivity. And while it would be a mistake to neglect Foucault's obvious concern with the history of psychoanalysis¹⁷, the late works in which he developed the conceptual framework designated by 'technologies of the self' do not include any sustained treatment of psychoanalysis. In the following pages I attempt to come to grips with what doing so might have involved by piecing together and critically assessing the various instances in which Foucault did comment on psychoanalysis in these late works, in conjunction with its treatment in his earlier writings and those who have continued Foucault's critical project.

After the publication of *The History of Sexuality Vol. I: The Will to Knowledge* (1976), the trajectory of Foucault's work underwent a significant transition. The program of research that would occupy him for the remaining years of his life no longer concerned the discursive and institutional games of truth, or the historical periods (roughly 1600-1900), that had occupied his middle works. Instead, Foucault would turn his gaze away from coercive modes of subjectification and immerse himself in the world of antiquity, wherein he would set himself the task of elucidating a variety of practices employed in the autonomous formation of the self.¹⁸ These 'technologies of the self', as Foucault defined them:

¹⁷ See John Forrester's 'Michel Foucault and The History of Psychoanalysis' (1980) for a detailed account of Foucault's various engagements with the history of psychoanalysis.

¹⁸ While Foucault maintains that 'the long history of [the] aesthetics of existence and technologies of the self remained to be done' (Foucault, 1992, 11); he nonetheless identifies Walter's Benjamin's essay 'Some Motifs In Baudelaire' (1999) and Stephen Greenblatt's work *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980) as having initiated a return to the history of the subject *qua* technologies of the self.

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality (Foucault, 1988, 18).¹⁹

Following this path would allow Foucault to pursue the positive / productive effects of power understood in terms of autonomous self-constitution, while at the same time focusing his attention more acutely on a dimension of his work that had long been present but had been eclipsed by other considerations; that being, the extent to which the self can become the object of the history of subjectivity by framing it in terms of ‘care’ or the relation of the self to itself.²⁰ In doing so, Foucault sought to delineate the techniques and practices in and through ‘which being is historically constituted as experience; that is, as something that can and must be thought’ (Foucault, 1992, 6-7).

While numerous authors have continued the project initiated in Foucault’s middle works, there has yet to be any substantive treatment of Foucault’s late work on technologies of the self relative to Freud or psychoanalysis more broadly.²¹ Patrick

¹⁹ For analogous definitions see Foucault’s Louvain lectures (2014, 23-24); his lectures at the Collège de France (1997, 87-88); his lectures at University of Berkeley (2016, 25); the essay ‘Sexuality and Solitude’ (1997, 177); and finally Foucault’s introductory comments in *The Use of Pleasure*, wherein technologies of the self become synonymous with ‘the arts of existence’ (1992, 10-11).

²⁰ In this regard Foucault’s late work is predicated upon Heidegger’s conception of ‘concern’, or *Besorgen*, as that which ‘designate[s] the Being of a possible way of Being-in-the-world’ (Heidegger, 2013, 83), i.e. as the visibility of the Being of Dasein indicated by the practices or activities (‘care’ or *Sorge*) by which Dasein’s being towards the world is revealed. Foucault’s late work would implicitly seek to rearticulate the history of Dasein by examining the practices by which individuals constituted themselves as their own objects of experience, precisely by concerning themselves with themselves.

²¹ There is a growing body of literature that examines the parallels between Foucault’s treatment of the ancient practice of ‘fearless speech,’ or *parrhesia*, and psychoanalysis. However, these studies have a purely conceptual interest in the relation between these two and do not consider either form of practice in terms of the vast historical expanse that separates them. Moreover, with the exception of Nancy Luxon’s *Crisis of Authority* (2013), which draws on Freud and Foucault in order to develop an account of contemporary political agency and ethics, these treatments focus

Hutton, a historian present for Foucault's brief stay at the University of Vermont in 1982, contributed a paper entitled 'Foucault, Freud and the Technologies of the Self' to the research colloquium convened during Foucault's time there. Hutton's paper is curious in two related ways; first, because it was the only contribution by a historian to the colloquium, and second because it is the only paper that does *not* apply the conceptual frame of technologies of the self as 'a way of doing the *history* of subjectivity' (Foucault, 88, 1997, my italics). Instead, Hutton sets out to compare the conceptual dimensions of Freudian psychoanalysis with Foucault's middle works, and subsequently compares Freudian psychoanalysis with a cross-section of the Greco-Roman technologies of the self which Foucault had already treated in his own seminar—thereby violating precisely the interdiction Foucault himself had made regarding 'retrospective histories' (Foucault, 2016, 96).²² While Hutton's account leaves much to be desired, it evidences the extent to which there was an immediate recognition of the affinities between the kind of self-practice developed by Freud, and the ones Foucault had begun to investigate in the ancient world. Indeed, questions concerning the status and positioning of Freudian

their comparative efforts on Lacanian psychoanalysis and Foucault's late work—e.g. O'Sullivan (2010); Sjöholm (2010); Lobb (2015); Ruti (2017).

²² Hutton's concluding comments manage to both assimilate and conflate (it is not clear what Hutton intended) Freudian psychoanalysis with Foucauldian historicism: 'What fathoming the past teaches us is that there are options among which we are free to choose, not simply continuities to which we must adapt' (Hutton in Foucault, 1988, 139). It would be difficult to imagine that either Foucault or Freud would endorse this rather numinous claim, i.e. that knowing the past (whether collective or personal) somehow endows one with some kind of uninhibited freedom of choice. Ultimately, Hutton concludes by intimating that Foucault's project is merely one intended to undermine the originality of psychoanalysis by showing that similar forms of self-practice can be found in antiquity—'the quest for such knowledge is itself a form of self-care, as ancient practitioners of the technologies of the self taught long before Freud' (Ibid., 140).

psychoanalysis, relative to the history of these ‘technologies of the self’, appear in Foucault’s late works repeatedly.²³

The three most sustained of Foucault’s comments dealing with Freud in this regard all place psychoanalysis in different ways. After being asked to elaborate on the apparent similarity between Freudian psychoanalysis and early Christian monastic practices Foucault admits to the striking similarity between them—noting that it may be an ‘illusion’ but that ultimately such a correspondence is ‘a problem with no answer’ (Foucault, 2016, 98-7). On another occasion, Foucault claims that the conditions under which autonomous self-formation was made possible in the Greco-Roman period have been lessened due to the rise of ‘religious, pedagogical, medical or psychiatric institutions’ (Foucault, 1997, 433).²⁴ As such, it would seem that psychoanalysis would either be

²³ While delivering a seminar at the University of Vermont in 1984 Foucault could not resist noting what he identified as ‘a pre-Freudian machine of censorship’, which is ‘described word for word in the tests of Epictetus and Cassian’ (Foucault, 38, 1988; 1997, 240). Indeed, in the midst of delivering a similar lecture four years earlier at Dartmouth, Foucault elaborated this comment still further, adding: ‘I don’t want to go further in such a parallel; it’s only an indication, but I think the relationship between Freudian practice and the Christian techniques of spirituality could be, if seriously done, a very interesting field of research’ (Foucault, 2016, 69). In other instances it is the striking absence of any reference to Freud that is remarkable; *Vol. III* of Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* (1986)—the second volume in this series to be carried out within the conceptual frame of technologies or care of the self—takes as its central paradigm of self-care Artemidorus’ *Interpretation of Dreams*, while entirely omitting any reference to Freud or his own work by the same name. This omission becomes all the more striking given that Foucault had clearly read Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* closely, as indicated by the introduction he contributed to a volume entitled *Dream and Existence* (1954), containing a relatively brief paper by Ludwig Binswanger, the founder of *Danseinsanalysis*—an existential variant of Freudian psychoanalysis—and a correspondent of both Freud and Heidegger (see Foucault, 1993 [1954]).

²⁴ Indicatively, the classicist and philosopher Pierre Hadot, who is often credited as inspiring Foucault’s turn to the Ancient world, takes issue with this point in particular, arguing that many of the spiritual practices the Foucault analyzed as technologies of the self have maintained their transformative power even in the modern world (Hadot in Armstrong, 1992). Foucault himself makes somewhat contradictory claims regarding the conditions under which certain ‘technologies of the self, experienced an extensive development in the Hellenistic and Roman period’, a development that, Foucault claims, ‘cannot be dissociated from the growth of urban society, from

considered one among other institutionalizing movements, which Foucault understands as a hindrance to autonomous modes of self-formation, or else it would simply be disallowed from operating autonomously qua self-constitution due to the historical conditions to which its practice is subject, i.e. the extent to which the powers of self-constitution, which Foucault identified in the world of antiquity, have passed into the network of discourses and institutions he subsumed under his conception of ‘Liberal Governmentality’ which ‘produces freedom’ but does so relative to ‘the establishment of limitations, controls, forms of coercion, and obligations relying on threats, etcetera’ (Foucault, 2010, 64).

Finally, during a lecture delivered at Louvain in 1981, Foucault adumbrates the argument he had initially presented in *The Order of Things* (1966). According to this account, the emergence of the Freudian unconscious forced a rupture in the episteme that had constellated in the human sciences after Kant’s destabilization of the classical episteme in which knowledge and representation were coextensive. On this occasion, however, Foucault’s emphasis is upon the historical vicissitudes of self-delusion as a fundamental problem in the practices of self-examination specific to Christian spirituality. Ultimately, Foucault locates the reemergence of this problem in the nexus between ‘Kant’s critique’ and Schopenhauer’s ‘rediscovery not only of the possibility, but also of the fundamental connection between, individuality of the self and illusion’ (Foucault, 2014, 170). As such, the scene of recognition in which the unconscious emerges is credited to Schopenhauer, rather than Freud—as it had been in *The Order of*

the new distribution of political power, or from the importance assumed by the new service aristocracy in the Roman Empire’ (Foucault, *Subjectivity and Truth*, 1997, 89).

*Things*²⁵—and Freud is subordinated to the position of ‘a Schopenhauerian’ (Ibid.).

Foucault then goes on to echo his argument (see above, Foucault, 1997, 433) regarding the institutionalization of practices of the self, claiming that by making it ‘possible to root the behaviors of a subject in a meaningful whole’ Freud directly contributed to the entrance of such a hermeneutics into the register of criminology, i.e. ‘once the hermeneutics of the self took this form, crime would emerge as a meaningful act’ in addition to being determined by a causal conception of responsibility (Foucault, 2014, 225).

Once again, Foucault’s tact is to fold psychoanalysis in with other institutional currents, in this instance, those of criminology and penology; however, when one subjects this argument to scrutiny its fragility becomes apparent. Foucault’s claim that psychoanalysis made it possible to ‘root the behaviors of a subject in a meaningful whole’ is derived from a particularly selective reading of Freud; one that draws piecemeal from certain theoretical arguments in which Freud attempts (against the grain of academic psychology) to secure certain psychical processes’ validity by demonstrating their meaningfulness—though certainly such claims do not extend themselves to the kind of holism one finds, for example, in C.G. Jung, who more than Freud laid out the possible applications of ‘depth psychology’ in the fields of criminology and penology.²⁶ Moreover,

²⁵ For Foucault’s alternate account of the emergence of the unconscious centering on Freud rather than Schopenhauer, see *The Order of Things* (Foucault, 2002 [1966], 407-9).

²⁶ C.G. Jung—who upon his visit to Clark University with Freud in 1909 received an honorary doctorate in Law or ‘LL.D.’ (see Jung, 1910, 326, n1)—had developed the word-association tests first pioneered by Wilhelm Wundt in two directions at once. On one hand their ability to correlate associations with a physiological substratum promised to provide an empirical ground for Freud’s early psychoanalytic researches; while, at the same time, Jung also recognized the applications that the instrumentation he had developed in these experiments might have for

Foucault entirely neglects the practical dimensions of psychoanalysis (which one would imagine to be more germane in a discussion of psychoanalysis as a technology of the self). Doing so would make clear that the *meaning*, which Freudian hermeneutics yield, is not an objective meaning that could allow for its smooth transition into the juridical sphere. Conversely, such meaning is derived from subjective determinants, and for this reason, the ‘meaningful whole’ that Foucault deploys as the vanishing mediator between the meaning of the self, and the meaning of the law, falls apart. At best, one might say that these three brief instances in which Foucault attempts to integrate psychoanalysis into his history of subjectivity qua technologies of the self are incomplete.

While I remain suspicious of those like Joel Whitebook who have attempted to resolve Foucault’s ‘ambivalence’ to Freud by drawing on factors related to his personal life, there is an undeniable resistance to any sustained treatment of Freud or psychoanalysis throughout Foucault’s late works (see Whitebook, 1999, 30; 2005). Even Foucault’s *History of Sexuality, Vol. I: The Will to Knowledge* (1976) eclipses Freud, who has often been presumed its antagonist, when Foucault declares that at the end of the 19th century ‘sex was constituted as a problem of truth’, and ‘what needs to be situated, therefore, is not the threshold of a new rationality, whose discovery was marked by Freud—or *someone else*—but the progressive formation (and also the transformations) of

criminology; indeed it would become the prototype for the modern ‘lie detector’. While giving a lecture at the Tavistock Clinic in 1935, Jung reflected upon his earlier work with the galvanometric measure of word associations and reaction-times saying: ‘All these reactions are beyond the control of the will. If you submit to the experiment you are done for, and if you do not submit you are done for too, because one knows why you are unwilling to do so. If you put it to a criminal he can refuse, and that is fatal because one knows why he refuses. If he gives in he hangs himself. In Zurich I am called in by the Court when they have a difficult case; I am the last straw’ (Jung, 1980 [1935], para. 101; Jung, 1963, 120).

that “interplay of truth and sex” which was bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century’ (Foucault, 1990 [1976], 56-7, my italics). At very least, Foucault exhibits a reticence in declaring himself either for, or against, psychoanalysis. But rather than read this as a sign of his antipathy for psychoanalysis, it seems to mark a potential in Freud’s work that is at once dangerous and undecided. Indeed, this view seems to be confirmed by more recent works that have continued Foucault’s critical interrogation of psychoanalysis and those disciplines peripheral to it.²⁷

The sociologist and historian Nikolas Rose’s *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of The Private Self* (1989) and *Inventing Ourselves: Psychology, Power and Personhood* (1998), both trace the emergence of the self as articulated by what he refers to as the ‘psy’ disciplines. While Rose draws heavily from a conceptual armory borrowed from Foucault, his emphasis is laid most concertedly upon the overlapping effects of power-knowledge as they are exercised in the discursive and institutionally facilitated production of ‘manageable’ subjects, i.e. ‘governmentality’.²⁸ When Rose does engage with the

²⁷ Amy Allen’s ‘Foucault, Psychoanalysis, Critique’ (2018) systematically addresses the most contested *conceptual* differences between Foucault and Freudian psychoanalysis, while arguing that both share a common commitment to ‘problematization and critique’ and might be collectively understood as ‘histories of the present’ (Allen, 2018, 171). See also, Joel Whitebook’s ‘Against Interiority: Foucault’s Struggle with Psychoanalysis’ (2006) and ‘Freud, Foucault, and “the dialogue with unreason”’ (1999) both of which chart Foucault’s engagements with Freudian psychoanalysis. Deborah Cook’s article ‘Foucault, Freud, and the Repressive Hypothesis’ (2014), sets out the ambiguities that arise from the influence of Freud’s theorization of the super-ego upon Foucault’s middle works on disciplinary power and internalization, relative to the ways in which Foucault will criticize Freud for *making possible* the very forms of self-policing his own critical insights *made visible* (Cook, 2014, 151-6).

²⁸ Rose makes this explicit in the preface to the second edition to *Governing the Soul* (see Rose, 1999, xxi). There is an ongoing debate regarding the extent to which Foucault’s understandings of ‘governmentality’ and ‘technologies of the self’ can be clearly isolated from one another. On one hand, they can be differentiated by pointing to the dynamics of power, and the kinds of relations by which they operate, in the constitution of subjects: in the case of ‘governmentality’ the emphasis falls on the relation between the subject and other agents or institutions that

methodological framework that Foucault suggested via the phrase ‘technologies of the self’, he does so in attempting to account for ‘the therapeutic’ understood as both an institution and culture of self-relation, in which he locates the transformation of authority, the invention of new forms of expertise, and the development of new ethical techniques by which individuals are enabled to understand and act upon themselves in the name of truth.

Rose’s treatment of the emergence of the therapeutic finds resonance in the company of those who identified it as a corollary to the individualization and self-sufficiency encouraged by capitalism (Rieff, 1966; Lasch, 1979), or else those like Theodor Adorno who lamented the absorption and ubiquity of psycho-jargon, which ‘cut off’ those channels that would otherwise allow one to experience ‘the abyss of the self’ (Adorno, 2005 [1951], 65). Rose, however, views the therapeutic not merely as an attempt to fill the void created by the decline of ‘religion, cultural solidarities, or parental authority’ but instead, as a continuation thereof (Rose, 1998, 156, 247). And yet, it is clear that Rose finds in classical Freudian psychoanalysis a lacuna that cannot be so easily

exercise power-knowledge upon it, whereas ‘technologies of the self’ emphasizes the intrasubjective relations in and through which one constitutes themselves as subject. Of course, these distinctions become unstable when one attempts to account for the fact that their operations, or cooperations, are not mutually exclusive. As Foucault himself admits in an interview entitled ‘Ethics of The Concern for Self: ‘I do not believe that the only possible point of resistance to political power—understood, of course, as a state of dominion—lies in the relationship of the self to the self. I am saying that “governmentality” implies the relationship with the self with itself, and I intend this concept of “governmentality” to cover the whole range of practices which constitute, define, organize and instrumentalized the strategies individuals in their freedom can use in dealing with each other. Those who try to control, determine and limit the freedom of others are themselves free individuals who have at their disposal certain instruments that they can use to govern others. Thus the basis for all this is freedom, the relationship of the self to itself and the relationship to the other’ (Foucault, 1996, 448). However, even these comments leave ambiguous the extent to which the two concepts might be distinguished in terms of the process of subjectification, rather than the continuous exercise of power.

subsumed by the critical framework he borrows from Foucault. In both of his sustained treatments of the therapeutic, Freud is glossed before moving on to a more prolonged criticism of later instrumentalized forms of therapy derived therefrom:

Freud, it will be recalled, advertised psychoanalysis thus: 'You will be able to convince yourself,' he wrote to an imaginary patient, 'that much will be gained if we succeed in transforming hysterical misery into common unhappiness. With a mental life that is restored to health you will be better armed against that unhappiness' [...] His successors formulate their powers rather differently (Rose, 1998, 157; 1990, 245).

Rose juxtaposes Freud's pessimistic pronouncement, that wreathes itself with a decidedly 'un-ideal' conception of what can be promised by psychotherapy, with vignettes that evidence the degree to which therapy has since emerged as a technology that promises its subjects a utopian vision of individual autonomy, wholeness and the return to a natural, uninhibited and harmonious state of being (Rose, 1990, 245-7). In doing so, the sustained indeterminate practices of self-relation developed by Freud are elided as Rose pursues a criticism of later forms of therapeutic practice and culture. The promise of 'Truth', 'Wholeness' or indeed, the return to some 'original' state of being, binds the subject ineluctably to both the discursive parameters of these idealized states of being and the expertise and authority of the intuitions and individuals that promise to bring about their realization.

But what of Freud? How are we to understand the apparent similarities between Freudian psychoanalysis and the tradition to which Foucault gestured in his late works on technologies of the self? How, in other words can we reconcile these earlier forms of self-formation—employed as the means by which 'happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or

immortality' could be attained (Foucault, 1988, 18)—with the decided lack of any ideal notion of being, the self, or its uninhibited freedom and wholeness in Freud's works?

It would appear that Foucault—who remarked that it was not his intention to study the history of solutions, but rather, 'to do the genealogy of problems, of *problématiques*' (Foucault in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, 231)—found something in Freud that was indeed *problématique*, insofar as Freudian psychoanalysis would seem to constitute a technology of the self that subverts the very premises upon which selfhood had been founded in prior forms of self-cultivation. While Foucault was first concerned with the effects of power-knowledge conceived of as domination, and later turned to their productive dimensions, it is not clear that the kind of self-practice developed by Freud can be entirely subsumed by either of these. This is precisely the recognition that Freud and psychoanalysis are accorded in *The Order of Things* (1966), wherein Foucault lauds psychoanalysis as occupying a 'privileged position' among the human sciences due to its 'perpetual principle of dissatisfaction, of calling into question, of criticism and contestation of what may seem, in other respects, to be established' (Foucault, 2002 [1966], 407).²⁹ However, this assessment is made on the basis of the epistemic rupture that Foucault locates in the emergence of the unconscious as articulated by Freud; which begs the question: can this principle of dissatisfaction and calling into question be transferred into the domain of practical reason? And if so, in what ways does it manifest in the subject produced in and through such Freudian practices?

²⁹ In positioning psychoanalysis this way, Foucault briefly joins with Paul Ricoeur, who had declared Freud—in company with Nietzsche and Marx—as one of his 'masters of suspicion' (1965).

In attempting to answer these questions it is useful to think through the justifications that Foucault provides his reader in articulating the methodological shifts he felt compelled to undertake between the publications of the first and second volumes of *The History of Sexuality*. Foucault first presents his motivation in terms of a kind of curiosity—‘not the curiosity that seeks to assimilate what it is proper for one to know, but that which enables one to get free of oneself’ (Foucault, 1992 [1984], 9). Foucault then elaborates this emancipatory dimension of his project, the object of which ‘was to learn to what extent the effort to think one’s own history can free thought from what it silently thinks, and so enable it to think differently’ (Ibid., 9).³⁰ It is not difficult to imagine this very sentence being deployed as a kind of succinct definition of Freudian psychoanalysis, precisely because, unlike other forms of self-examination that I explore in Chapters 1 and 2, Freud’s conception of the space one must traverse in reformulating the relation of the self to itself, is necessarily a space defined predominantly by its historicity *and* the extent to which one is inherently subject to the claims that such a history (whether personal, or collective) makes upon one. Such, it would seem, is the condition of the modern Freudian subject.

³⁰ See Beatrice Han-Pile’s ‘Foucault, normativity and critique as a practice of the self’ (2016) in which Han-Pile reads Foucauldian critique as a performative practice of the self.

The Argument

If one accepts that historicizing psychoanalysis as ‘*the first great theory and practice of personal life*’, requires a closer examination of those techniques of self-representation and examination specific to the 19th century, there are still certain questions that this thesis endeavors to raise; namely: in what ways does the ‘technology of the self’—performed in, and supplied by, Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams*—borrow, or else depart from, earlier forms of self-practice or else techniques which permit one to alter the relation of the self to itself? How might we position Freud’s dream book and the techniques of the self developed therein relative to other available forms of self-cultivation, techniques of self-knowledge, or models of subjectivity? And, finally, by virtue of *what* does psychoanalysis become, as Zaretsky puts it, ‘the first great theory and practice of personal life’?

My conviction is that positioning psychoanalysis relative to a broader history of 19th century self-practice, and charting its ‘pre-history’ in these terms will not only deepen our understanding of Freud’s oeuvre as a significant event and agent in the history of subjectivity; doing so will also demonstrate the degree to which it is a unique object of inquiry in this regard. For as this study contends, Freud contributed to the emergence of a particularly modern comportment to the self; one that framed the self as an object that could be *critically* renegotiated via the relation of the self to itself, rather than submission to religious *values*, universal notions of *duty*, or the aesthetics of bourgeois culture. Freud is, for Philip Rieff, ‘the first completely irreligious moralist, [...] a moralist without even a moralizing message’ (Rieff, 1959, xi). Indeed, the techniques developed by Freud are situated outside of the ‘idealizing’ and ‘moralizing’ tradition one finds in earlier forms of

ethical and theological practices of the self. As such, Freud marks a departure from these traditions by approaching the subject, not in terms of its positivity or else by instantiating and buttressing prescribed forms or models of self-understanding, but instead, by developing a ‘caustic’ or ‘negative’ technology by which prior subjections can be revived, examined and renegotiated. Doing so, counter to other traditions I examine in this thesis, involved both a concerted attempt to intentionally divide the self, rather than seeking to unify its fragmented parts, and embracing, rather than working to artificially overcome, the limitations of self-knowledge.

In addition, that the reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* presented in Chapter 3 of this thesis emphasizes the dialectical exchange, which Freud rhetorically enacts, between authority, antiauthority and the self, is in keeping with the subversive potential that this thesis attempts to revive in Freud’s early writings. In contrast, the practices of self-constitution and self-examination discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis all required that one possess the kind of authority, expertise or genius bestowed via certain social, cultural, professional, or economic institutions, e.g. the family, the literary marketplace, the academy or the hospital, etc. In contrast, Freud’s dream book provided certain techniques that allowed for a critical renegotiation of one’s self-relation, without requiring that one possess any form of authority, expertise or genius conceived in terms of such institutional determinates.

Significantly, Freud’s dream book addresses questions regarding the self only indirectly. The self is, one might say, a *latent* motif running throughout his dream book; one that emerges in and through the forms of dream-experience that Freud outlines therein. In some instances, observes Freud, we experience our dreams as if they are

‘produces of our own soul-activity’, however, at other times, we experience them as ‘something alien’ and cannot ‘confess’ to their ‘authorship’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 42). The incongruence, or uncanniness, of this dream-experience leads Freud to formulate the question: ‘Where does this “soul-alienation” come from?’ (Ibid., translation modified). In response to this question, Freud begins an inquiry into the dynamics of self-alienation that results in a series of techniques designed to elicit, identify and renegotiate one’s relation to those parts of oneself that have been disowned or alienated.

Of course, one need not restrict the implications of this dialectical self-relation, and the techniques that make it possible, to the sphere of the oneiric. So much becomes explicit in Freud’s paper ‘Negation’ (1925), in which the same problematic tension reemerges relative to apparently volitional behaviors and speech acts. Indeed, by the time Freud published his paper ‘On the Question of Lay Analysis’ in 1926, the tension initiated by the ‘dream problem’ would extend itself as a more general problem of the self, of which Freud would write: ‘it looks as though his own self were no longer the unity which he had always considered it to be, as though there were something else as well in him that could confront that self’ (Freud, 1926, 188). This division of the self, the techniques by which one could effectively elicit it, and the kind of self-relation they engendered (a tension between the self—as it takes itself to be—and itself as *ein Fremder* or ‘a stranger’); would decisively set Freud’s technology of the self apart from those of the preceding century. For in Freud, there is no clear sense in which either of these—‘the stranger’ or the familiar and socially endorsed self—should prevail over and above the other.

This thesis is divided into three Chapters, each of which consists of several shorter sections. In Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis, I examine a series of examples taken from 19th century literature, medicine and psychology and discuss the alternate ways in which they devised certain means by which to cultivate, represent or know the self. In Chapter 1, I develop a series of ‘autobiographical models’ based on the writings of William Wordsworth, J.S. Mill and Thomas De Quincey. In doing so, I chart the tensions that emerge from the alternate approaches to self-invention and self-justification. I explore the poetic practices developed in Wordsworth’s *Lyrical Ballads* and the subsequent deployment of these poetics as a form of autonomous self-invention in his autobiographical poem *The Prelude*. I then contrast this approach to the self with the utilitarianism and associationism of J.S. Mill, which I discuss in relation to the practice of self-justification Mill employs in his own *Autobiography*.

This tension, between the imaginative practice of making oneself in Wordsworth and the emphasis on the self’s empirical development in Mill are then discussed in relation to De Quincey’s *Confessions of An English Opium Eater*, which I frame as a ‘failed synthesis’ of these alternate approaches to the self. In the final section of Chapter 1, I turn to Thomas Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus*, which is discussed as a form of *autocritique* relative to other positive models of self-representation or definition in the autobiographical tradition. In this regard, Carlyle is viewed as anticipating Freud’s later rhetorical strategies in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which, *unlike* Carlyle, do not fall into nihilism, or else the deferment of personal ethics and self-knowledge to the world historical.

In Chapter 2, I examine the work of Jean-Martin Charcot and Wilhelm Wundt, and trace the trajectory of Wundt's students who blended the psychological techniques he developed with the work of Francis Galton. In opposition to the personal and idiosyncratic self represented in Romantic autobiography, these neurologists and experimental psychologists of the mid to late 19th century set out to isolate, document and examine the self using a variety of technological instruments in order to distinguish truth from fiction, to develop certain schemata that might contain and order aberrant forms of subjectivity and pathology, and to obtain true knowledge of the elementary forms of human experience. As the result of the technologization of these disciplines, the self was increasingly subject to epistemic determinates and the technical expertise that promised to provide true knowledge of it.

I begin Chapter 2 by discussing the historiographical links between Freud's work and Charcot's earlier hypnotic experiments. In particular, I examine the epistemic foundation of Charcot's clinical practice in the anatomo-clinical method. Subsequently, I argue that his use of photographic technology and hypnotic techniques both served to preserve the epistemological foundation of his anatomo-clinical technique, as well as to resolve certain political, religious and moral concerns that emerged in response to Charcot's work on hysteria. I then discuss Charcot's use of 'isolation therapy' in light of his distinction between 'true hysterics' and 'simulators' in relation to the function of authority, influence, and alienation relative to his conception of hysteria.

In the later sections of Chapter 2 I turn to the work of Wilhelm Wundt and explicate the development of his experimental psychology, which, unlike Charcot's clinical techniques, endeavored to experimentally stabilize self-knowledge. In doing so,

however, Wundt's experimental techniques produced a standardized form of subjectivity detached from personal experience. In the final sections of Chapter 2 I trace the cross-pollination of Wundt's experimental methods with those developed by Francis Galton, which, I argue, lead to the commodification of knowledge of the self in the work of figures like J.M. Cattell and Hugo Münsterberg, both of whom sought to secure the legitimacy of experimental psychology by adapting its methods for social and industrial purposes. Finally, in Chapter 3 I discuss *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a technology of the self that both combines and reformulates attributes from both the autobiographical tradition and the more technically inclined disciplines of medicine and science.

1 Writing The Self: 19th Century Autobiographical Practices

Autobiographical Models

This chapter is primarily concerned with identifying and examining models of self-representation developed within the autobiographical literature of the 19th century.¹ My aim in developing these models is to relate the concerns they address (relative to the self as an object of representation, meaning, aesthetic, epistemological and ethical import) to the specific practices they employ in writing the self. In using the term ‘model’ to designate these literary artifacts my intention is to draw attention to the double status of life-writing (or ‘self-writing’) in the 19th century. Autobiographies, like other literary products, were subject to the demands of the literary marketplace, as well as those critical voices that actively cultivated and reshaped the boundaries, ideals and conventions

¹ In this regard, the autobiographical ‘models’ that I develop in this chapter should not be confused with the kind of *formal* categories developed, for example, by William Spengemann in *The Forms of Autobiography* (1980), which are devised on the basis of formal characteristics. In my own schema, autobiographies are evaluated and catalogued based on the ways in which they respond to certain concerns regarding selfhood, e.g. what it means to be a self, to make oneself, to be responsible for oneself, in and through the medium of autobiography. My own treatment of autobiography is, in this sense, closer to the one presented by Felicity Nussbaum in her (1989) *The Autobiographical Subject*, insofar as Nussbaum is also concerned with the relation of the autobiographical self to ‘self-knowledge’, ‘authority’ and ‘freedom’ (Nussbaum, 1989, xi). However, Nussbaum’s fundamental aim is to pull ‘marginalized texts, [...] from the periphery to the center’ in order to ‘revise’ the ‘literary canon’ (Ibid., xii) and while doing so is an undeniably important task, it is outside the parameters of my own historical project, which terminates in the early 20th century and therefore responds to the ‘canon’ recognized by Freud and other contemporaneous thinkers.

associated with the genre.² At the same time, autobiographies occupied an alternate position, insofar as they provided an increasingly literate populous with representations, or indeed models, that exemplified what it meant to be a self. Before delving into these autobiographies, however, I want to foreground this study by anticipating its endpoint in Freud.

In Chapter 3 I will return to Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* in order to evaluate the extent to which it both borrows and departs from earlier literary concerns related to selfhood, and those medico-scientific techniques by which it could be transformed into an object of knowledge. Like other medico-scientifically oriented thinkers of the late 19th century, Freud's use of techniques engenders a kind of subjectivation;³ however, as I will argue in Chapter 3, the particular way in which Freud deploys these techniques results in a form of subjectivity, and a way in which to relate to the self, markedly different from those produced by his predecessors and contemporaries. While Freud does indeed supply and apply certain techniques, their effect is to elicit and amplify preexistent forms of self-relation—especially self-alienation, self-deception, and the relation of the self to authority—and in doing so Freud allowed for the *critical* renegotiation of these constitutive dimensions of subjectivity, rather than formulating identity on the basis of

² See Laura Marcus' *Auto/Biographical Discourses* (1994), especially chapter one 'Identity into form: nineteenth-century auto/biographical discourses' for a detailed account of the critical discourses that actively shaped the genre.

³ Here I am explicitly referring to the Foucault's use of this term in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), which Judith Butler elegantly defines as 'the becoming of the subject and the process of subjection—[by which] one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power, a subjection which implies a radical dependency' (Butler, 1997, 83). Where I depart from Foucault, while remaining firmly in agreement with Butler, is in insisting that such a process cannot be reduced to a bodily conception of subjectivization, and should also be recognized relative to the subject's psychic interiority.

their tacit acceptance. While these forms of self-relation parallel those traditionally addressed in the context of confession (and later within the clinic), Freud displaces them from such ostensibly impersonal and interrogatory sites of address and relocates them in the individual's personal relation to their dreams and the wider network of concerns associatively derived therefrom. In this regard, the techniques developed by Freud emerged outside the institutional contexts to which they had been traditionally bound. Perhaps more radically, the dream is not only enigmatically dislocated from institutional scenes of address, but its position remains undetermined with respect to the psyche itself: 'The place of dreams in the interconnected life of the psyche is yet to be located' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 347). Moreover, unlike many clinical techniques derived from the medical antecedents of psychoanalysis, Freud's 'technology of the self' was developed, and rearticulated, through his own self-subjection to it; 'One learns psycho-analysis on oneself, by studying one's own personality' (Freud, 1916, 19).

Reading *The Interpretation of Dreams* in this way relies upon the recognition of its tripartite character, as not only a scientific treatise and a technical manual, but *also* as an autobiographical text that implicates its author in what John Forrester has termed the 'dialectics of revealing and concealing', the antecedents of which, I argue, are firmly rooted within the autobiographical tradition of the 19th century (Forrester, 1997, 146). Viewed this way, it is not *only* the theorization of the 'psychic apparatus' and the personal unconscious, or the delineation of interpretive techniques that are at stake in Freud's

dream book; it also evidences his abiding concern with and for his own self, which emerges in and through the reenactment of his own self-analysis.⁴

For Freud, the dream is an exemplary form of experience relative to the dynamics of self-alienation and self-deception, which affords a privileged, albeit distorted, glimpse into the interiority of the self. Dreams, observes Freud, ‘are all of them absolutely self-centered; in all of them the self, our own dear self, makes an appearance, even though it is disguised’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 205). In order to unmask these disguised self-expressions Freud would formulate a series of interpretive techniques that, while ostensibly epistemic, enable one to recover those parts of oneself that have been alienated or disowned by the very societal languages of self-consciousness that obscure them. Ultimately, the use of these techniques results in an active comportment to oneself that involves self-questioning and attending to one’s personal concerns.

This active comportment to oneself, that is, being ‘concerned’ with oneself, recalls those perennial concerns with selfhood expressed in Romantic life-writing—whether conceived in terms of the ‘transcendental subject’ that ‘writes’ itself, or the *particular sentiment* of one’s own existence, first articulated by Rousseau, which has since become the collective concern of a whole philosophical tradition.⁵ Freud’s emphasis on the empirical development of the individual would, however, relate him more closely to Romantic autobiography’s Victorian successor. Freud’s dream book is, without question,

⁴ During a discussion of one of his dreams, Freud substantiates its significance by framing it as ‘a passionate and emotional plea for my freedom to act as I do and arrange my life in the way that seems right to me and me alone’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 305).

⁵ See, for example, Book Four of *Emile*, in which Rousseau’s Savoyard Vicar asks: ‘Do I have a particular sentiment of my existence, or do I sense it only through my sensations?’ (Rousseau, 1979 [1762], 270). See also, the fifth of Rousseau’s *Reveries of A Solitary Walker* (1782) in which the ‘sentiment of existence’ reemerges relative to the empirical self.

an account of self-treatment consisting of certain technical interventions made upon himself—i.e. on his self—in response to those concerns that initiate and maintain his self-analysis. However, the position that it occupies relative to earlier intellectual currents of the 19th century rests uncomfortably between two traditions: one that stems from Rousseau’s ‘sentiment of existence’, and another that finds its basis in Humean objection to idealism—that it ascribed to the self the power both to order its own ideas and associations and to act as the foundation for its own beliefs, and indeed for its own existence.

As such, it would appear that Freud’s dream book is a hybrid of sorts, equally indebted to a variety of intellectual and existential concerns developed in the philosophy and literature of the early 19th century, as well as those epistemic concerns and technical innovations that emerge later in the human sciences. The intent of *this chapter*, then, is to trace those concerns of the self that emerged in the autobiographical productions of the 19th century and the measures by which they were addressed. Doing so will enable us to ask: In what way is the autobiographical component of Freud’s *Interpretation* indebted to, or a departure from, earlier literary examples of self-representation? Put differently: Is it the autobiographical dimension of *Interpretation* (the *activity* of self-accounting—rather than the *passive* form of being accounted for by an other) that enables Freud to produce such a technology of the self? In order to answer these questions I examine four examples of autobiographical writing; examples that share certain features and subject matter with Freud’s *Interpretation*; in particular, childhood, imagination, the unconscious, memory, self-deception, dreams and the influence of authority. Doing so will help to determine whether the particular mode of self-fashioning outlined by Freud is original, and more

significantly, reliant on the specifically *technical* dimensions of his dream book and subsequent writings, which are not to be found in literary models of self-representation.

I want to be clear that it is in no way my intention to ‘psychoanalyze’ Wordsworth, J.S. Mill, De Quincey—or anyone else for that matter. Doing so would not only be fruitless given the nature of this project, which seeks to understand the differences between these and other approaches to the self, but also anachronistic—as I have already made clear in the introduction to this thesis.⁶ Throughout this study, however, I will periodically pause to ‘check in’ with Freud, if only to flag up certain *differences* and *similarities* between his later work and the various examples explored in Chapters 1 and 2. In doing so, my aim is to anticipate my discussion of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in Chapter 3 by identifying those concerns, regarding the self, that Freud shares with his autobiographical predecessors, while, at the same time, pursuing their resolution via different avenues.

In charting these autobiographies, I argue that a certain discursive and conceptual tension regarding the self can be observed dialectically in the autobiographical productions of the 19th century. This tension develops in terms of the thematic and conceptual parameters that implicate creativity and imagination, personal responsibility

⁶ For psychoanalytic accounts of 19th century autobiography see, for example, Richard J. Onorato’s Oedipal reading of Wordsworth in *The Character of the Poet: Wordsworth in The Prelude* (1971); Barbara Shapiro offers a Kleinian reading of Wordsworth in terms of primary narcissism and maternal ambivalence in *The Romantic Mother: Narcissistic Patterns in Romantic Poetry* (1983, 93–129); and Keith Hanley’s Lacanian account *Wordsworth: A Poet’s History* (2001) among other essayistic treatments of 19th century auto/biography in psychoanalytic terms. In another vein, Joel Faflack reads Wordsworth, Coleridge, De Quincey and Keats as all representing different forms of *Romantic Psychoanalysis* (2008). Finally, Mary Jacobus’ *The Poetics of Psychoanalysis: In The Wake of Klein* (2005), inverts the tradition of reading literature psychoanalytically, by reading the object relations school as a kind a poetic tradition.

and origins, the moral problem of influence, suffering and pleasure, as well as truth and truthfulness relative to the self's ability to accurately and felicitously know and represent itself. Paul Hamilton identifies an analogous tension which 'becomes a central Romantic negotiation' in contemporaneous philosophical exchanges that center on the problem of

how to explain and use [the] common purpose [of Nature and human nature] without either traducing the distinctiveness of self-consciousness or eschewing science for animism or pathetic fallacy [...]. The collapse of the self into the world, or world into self remains a perpetual threat (Hamilton, 2009a, 83).

I do not want to claim that this tension can be smoothly charted in a continuous development, e.g. from Romantic autobiography to its Victorian successor. Certainly, these eras may be taken to represent particular creative and intellectual pursuits, as well as collecting around them a general 'spirit of the age.' However, in order to draw out this tension I make use of a distinction between two *models* of autobiographical writing, which, though they might roughly cohere with certain Romantic and Victorian trends, I shall simply refer to as autobiographies of '*self-invention*' and '*self-justification*'.⁷

The model of self-invention belongs to the poetic variant of the autobiographical genre and, as we shall see, its most accomplished practitioners, Wordsworth and Coleridge, are perhaps better known for their artistic accomplishments than they are for their unabashed self-exposure.⁸ In brief, this model refers to *autogenesis*, i.e. a making of oneself; while *invention* denotes the ambiguity underlying the autotelic self, which may

⁷ To be sure, the typical features of these models hardly, if ever, appear in a pure form. For this reason we must imagine the borders designated by this a conceptual schema to be clearly separable for heuristic purposes alone; while recognizing that in actuality they are often blended together. In order to clearly develop my own account of these types I have selected texts that exemplify them, in the strong sense of the term. Though it will certainly be apparent to my reader that in some cases it is difficult to disentangle these functions of life writing.

⁸ One also finds similar concerns and strategies represented in the fictive life writing of the 19th century.

be viewed, alternately, as either a fiction, as in a fib or a lie, or as the advent of something new (a 'novelty') that cannot be easily assimilated to, or recognized within, the preexistent orders of things.⁹

The second model of autobiographical practice that I discuss as a form of self-justification requires some additional comments here. It could equally be characterized as one of self-*explanation*—for it does not seek to invent, or even reinvent, the self, so much as it aims to give an account of the empirical conditions of individual development. It does so by paying special attention to the relation between one's *personal* development and the *responsibilities* to which one is ultimately subject. However, approaching the self in this way risks effacing the personal and idiosyncratic dimensions of the self by privileging the normative registers to which it is subject as a responsible agent that must, therefore, justify or account for itself relative to factors external to itself.¹⁰ It is important to recognize the two directions in which 'justification' and 'explanation' pull at once. Explanation denotes the impetus to provide an account of the subject (by determining the factors responsible for the self that one has become); while justification (in the juridical sense of the word) recalls the antique antecedent of autobiography in *apologia*, as a defense of one's conduct that seeks to establish the extent of one's responsibility to itself and others. In this sense, the autobiography understood as a means of self-justification presents itself as an attempt to meet out the demands of the other, the law, the norm, and the general social order to which the individual is beholden. To be clear, both of these

⁹ For further discussion of this conception of 'invention' see Derrida's *Psyche: Invention of the Other* (2007, 1-48).

¹⁰ On this point, see Judith Butler's 'Scenes of Address' in *Giving an Account of Oneself* (2005, 9-22).

threads—the moral obligation to justify one’s self and the social-scientific drive to provide an account of one’s individual development—are difficult to separate; for while they appear to be conceptually isolable their presence in the autobiographical literature of the 19th century is more often than not tightly enmeshed.

In making these ostensibly categorical distinctions I mean to draw attention to the purposive and practical dimensions of autobiography, which mark its as a potentially autonomous practice of self-making, i.e. as a form of self-subjection. The practical functions of these autobiographical models separate them along two axes. First, they are separated by distinct temporal orientations. While autobiography is, by necessity, written in retrospect, the autobiography of self-invention is *prospective*, insofar as it projects a self into the future by anchoring its roots in a mythic or imaginary past (often represented via the secularization of Edenic attributes, i.e. plenitude, unity, innocence etc.). Ultimately, however, such a self is (un)founded in the mystery of an unknowable origin. In another sense, self-invention can also be viewed (following the secondary meaning I attribute to invention above) relative to the growing demands of the literary marketplace; insofar as the self, represented in and through literary products, attains a certain kind of recognition via the act of self-publication and the subsequent recognition of the self, so published, by readers.¹¹ Conversely, the autobiography of self-justification inverts this temporal comportment to the self by approaching the present self as a product of its past, thereby leading to an ever-deepening quest for its origin, founding moment or ‘primal scene’.

¹¹ Paul Hamilton, for example, argues that the ‘[p]oetic and critical establishments [of the 19th century] interacted to the mutual enhancement of each other’s authority’ (Hamilton, 2009, 437). See also, Laura Marcus’ nuanced discussion of 19th century periodical literature on autobiography (Marcus, 1994, 11-48) and Patrick Parrinder’s in *Authors and Authority* (1977).

The second axis upon which we might chart these models is that of activity-passivity. While autobiography, as I have already noted, implies an active comportment to oneself, there are still varying degrees and permutations of the particular form such activity may take. The inventive autobiography, as we shall see in Wordsworth, is primarily active, it is about self-making—‘The poet, described in ideal perfection,’ announced Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria*, ‘brings the whole soul of man into activity’ (Coleridge, 1967 [1817], xiv, 173). Even in moments of contemplative retrospection or recollection, this model of life-writing maintains a commitment to activity as the term *poiesis* (the activity by which one brings something into existence that did not exist before) invites us to imagine.

Comparatively, the self-justificatory (or explanatory) model is not aligned with what we might call a ‘poetics’ of the self. Instead, it represents the transition from aesthetic to epistemic concern for the self—a trajectory that draws it closer to the third personal (discussed in Chapter 2). In this model the self re-emerges as a problem to be solved, something that must be understood in terms of those forces that have impressed upon it a particular shape, identity, or way of being. Moreover, the autobiography of self-justification is principally concerned with identifying the cause or causes of the self, if only, as is often the case, to identify the moral responsibility of the self, or else to identify the general principals at work in the formation of one’s character or personality. Doing so may be viewed (in the ethical as opposed to epistemic register) as a delimiting of the object of moral action, which seeks to answer the questions: How did I come to be the self that I am? And: For what may this self be held responsible? Rather paradoxically, such attempts to ascertain the moral obligations of particular individuals in accordance

with general principles effectively erases agency from the story of their own development, thereby rendering them as a *passive* object of knowledge.

A tension emerges from these alternative modes of self-accounting and the respective conceptions of individual autonomy and responsibility that emerge therefrom. While self-invention provides a literary practice and representation of the self in all its eccentricities, it concomitantly diminishes the critical relation of the self to itself, as well as the critical capacity of the self in relation to others. The conception of a creative power that enables one to create or cause themselves is predicated on the *unknown root* that stands as the origin of one's personal history—which Joel Faflack locates in the 'phantasmal matrix' that bestows a 'dark legitimacy' upon the self (Faflack, 2008, 13). The self-creating individual must, to some degree, remain obscured from the grasp of explanation that threatens to reduce the self to its constitutive parts even if doing so would, as Novalis claimed, equate to grasping 'a handful of darkness' (Novalis, 2003, 3).¹² Indeed, enjoining such an opacity as the condition by which the self's particularity might come into representation has significant implications for the moral responsibility of the individual, as well as its position relative to those other spheres, e.g. social and political, that require, to some extent, that one can 'appear' and be 'recognized' relative to certain normative categories. 'Romantic fiction could not be translated into fact', claims Richard Kearney in

¹² See, for example, Hegel's remarks on the limitations of scientific inquiry into the imagination: 'For the expression *nature* at once gives us the idea of necessity and uniformity—that is to say, of behavior which may be hoped to be akin to science and capable of submitting thereto. But in the mind generally, and more particularly in the imagination, compared with nature, caprice and lawlessness are supposed to be peculiarly at home; and these withdraw themselves as a matter of course from all scientific explanation' (Hegel, 1970 [1818], 28).

his discussion of the recession of the productive imagination; ‘individuality so conceived could only survive as a recluse’ (Kearney, 1988, 185).

Conversely, the autobiography of self-justification—which seeks to *explain* the origins, and the originating powers of the individual—eclipses, if not erases, the creative, personal, and idiosyncratic dimensions of the self that it sought to elucidate by explaining them in accordance with general principals. This tension emerges not only on an epistemic, but also on a descriptive level prompting Thomas Babington Macaulay to write that

Generalisation is necessary to the advancement of knowledge; but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyse human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect’ (Macaulay, 1850 [1825], 6).

In this sense the autobiographical presents two distinct avenues. Firstly, one that provides an account of the self in terms of its relation to others (on the basis of categories such as class, sex, nationality, race, vocation, familial position etc.) and which, in doing so, accounts for its moral obligation relative to the collective to which it belongs. And, secondly, one that stakes out a claim for the self as singular, creative, and idiosyncratic, but also radically isolated from the coordinates that would allow it to be recognized as one among other selves of the same kind.

These two axes, that I have presented as separating invention from justification, implicate a more obvious third, that of truth. Truth and truthfulness are perennial concerns for autobiography. Truthfulness, i.e. being true to oneself, acts as a kind of gold

standard throughout the autobiographical tradition; for even in cases where authors elect not to disclose certain facts about themselves, doing so may be viewed as their own prerogative so long as their intent is not to present a false impression of the self. Truth, in the strong sense of the word, however, emerges more clearly in late 19th century autobiographies such as J.S. Mill's, which are concerned not only with the truthfulness of the autobiographical subject, but with the epistemic value of autobiography as a potential object of social scientific study.

Finally, in addition to these models of autobiography, I discuss Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* as a critique, or 'anti-model', of 19th century autobiography. Carlyle's anti-model is defined by its self-reflexive recognition of the multitude of (false) selves available to the autobiographer, which act as an unending supply of masks concealing more than they reveal. Carlyle ironically redeploys narratives and themes typical to autobiography and fictive life-writing in order to induce a controlled collapse of the genre. Through his artful portrayal of the self as a hall of mirrors, Carlyle calls into question the value of inwardness so often associated with his Romantic predecessors and advocates for a 'return' to the present (one's being in the world), rather than an unending project of self-examination. For Carlyle, the self must not be passive in assuming a role that is provided for it—whether such a role is provided by the narrative, social or epistemic frameworks available to them. Equally, Carlyle finds 'archeological' accounts of the self, which rely on 'origins' and the developmental narratives built thereon, illusory distractions from the present because such approaches to the self do not penetrate the 'Phantasmagoria and Dream-grotto' in which we find ourselves 'enveloped'. In drawing attention to these dimensions of autobiography, Carlyle equally undermines claims to authenticity or

truthfulness that emerge in the inventive model of autobiography, as well as the search for truth that acts as the catalyzing force behind the model of self-justification.

In Chapter 3 I will argue that by refusing to discount either the imaginative activity of self-invention or the explanatory mode of self-justification Freud exposes the tension at the core of the self that these earlier autobiographical models conceal. In part, this refusal is informed by Freud's acute sensitivity to forms of self-deception that he inherits, at least in part, from Carlyle. While Freud does not ultimately defer to the doctrine of will and radical individualism that Carlyle would come to advocate—'Our grand business undoubtedly is, not to *see* what lies dimly at a distance, but to *do* what lies clearly at hand' (Carlyle, 1950 [1829], 223)—the suspicion which he derives from the multitude of (false) selves, which Carlyle so artfully performs in *Sartor*, informs Freud's treatment of the self as not only a bodily entity with clearly identifiable origins, but also as a symbolic creature of appropriation, that is at all times engaged in a process of transformation.

Finally, a note on the order of presentation employed in the following pages is required. Rather than arrange the autobiographical models I discuss in chronological order, I have elected to present them in an order that emphasizes the conceptual positions they occupy relative to one another. I begin by discussing Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, in which self-constitution emerges as a function of poetics and the unknowable origins of the personal self; subsequently I turn to J.S. Mill's *Autobiography*, which, I argue, exemplifies the model of self-justification. These first two models are then discussed in relation to Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of An English Opium-Eater* and his later *Susperia De Profundis* which are presented as an indication of both the tension between

the first two models, and ultimately, their incommensurability, i.e. as a kind of ‘failed synthesis’. I then discuss this trajectory relative to Thomas Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus*, which is viewed as a critique of these two currents in autobiographical writing. Unlike the other autobiographers we shall encounter in this chapter, Carlyle advocates for an abandonment of the self, which he believes to be an epistemologically and ontologically groundless entity and a distraction from the present. In doing so, Carlyle locates the self, not in the third personal register of biography (as Mill does) but instead, in a register that is all the more distant from self-consciousness and the sentiment of existence that it confers—that of world history. Finally, I briefly foreshadow the ways in which Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* will redeploy these models and the concerns they raise relative to the self.

Self-Invention: Wordsworth’s *The Prelude*

Painting with perhaps too broad a brush, M.H. Abrams consolidates Romantic lyricism within a single rubric: the secularization of Biblical narratives and Christian confession.

These ‘extended poems of description and meditation,’ claims Abrams:

are in fact fragments of reshaped autobiography, in which the poet confronts a particular scene at a significant stage of his life, in a colloquy that specifies the present, evokes the past, and anticipates the future, and thereby defines and evaluates what it means to have suffered and to grow older. In some of these poems the confrontation occurs at a time of spiritual crisis which is called “dejection” (the *acedia*, or spiritual aridity of the Christian experts of the interior life); and the ancient struggle for the blessedness of reconciliation with an

alienated God becomes the attempt to recover in maturity an earlier stage of integrity with oneself and the outer world (Abrams, 1971, 123).

Elsewhere, Abrams specifies the Biblical 'fall' as the terrain onto which Romantic poets would seek to map themselves. Perhaps the most fundamental shift to occur in the secularization of this Biblical narrative takes shape in and through attempts to find an adequate substitute for the eternal and the divine; one capable of providing the finite human being with a path towards transcendence and a stable point of reference against which to position itself without the misgivings of the arbitrary or the contingent.

I want to pause here and outline the commitments of Wordsworth's poetics as expressed in the *Lyrical Ballads*, if only to foreground my later discussion of his autobiographical poem *The Prelude* therein. Doing so will provide a clearer picture of the points of reference available to Wordsworth, as well as distinctly poetic and performative characteristics of his autobiography. Wordsworth's poetic project, particularly as articulated in the Preface to the *Ballads*, is best characterized as a *re-naturing*;¹³ one that is pursued by restoring both the 'diction' (form) and 'subject matter' (content) of poetry to 'common life' and 'ordinary things.' Both of these have been selected in aid of what Wordsworth refers to as an 'experiment' (Wordsworth, 2003 [1805], 5).¹⁴

The principle object, then, which I proposed to myself in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language used by men; and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way; and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in

¹³ Abrams claims that many of the 'distinctive and recurrent' features of the literature of the Romantic period had their origins in 'theological concepts, images, and plot patterns' that were 'translated' to fit into a 'naturalistic cosmology' (see Abrams, 1971, 65).

¹⁴ See Mary Jacobus' (1976) *Tradition and Experiment in Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads 1798*, for an incisive account of Wordsworth's experimental poetics relative to early lyrical practices.

them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement (Ibid., 7).

Thus, Wordsworth sets himself the ostensibly scientific task of determining the relationship between ‘the primary laws of *our* nature’ and nature as such. This experiment does not, however, result in a set of epistemological determinates; instead, Wordsworth develops an aesthetics that bind the self to nature through a teleological principle traced in and through ‘the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which [man] knows, and feels, and lives, and moves’ (Ibid. 15). Therefore, the poetics that enable Wordsworth to evoke pleasure are set over and above other modes of representation, which are not ‘pure and universally intelligible’ (Ibid., 7).

For Wordsworth, the development of a *natural* poetics is, perhaps unequivocally, the aim of the *Ballads*. However, it should already be evident that the project outlined and initiated in the *Ballads* is also a psychological one. In Wordsworth the boundaries between the poetic and the psychological begin to fade, precisely because he is deeply concerned with the question ‘What is a poet?’ (Ibid., 13)—that is, he is concerned with himself *as* a poet.¹⁵ Wordsworth compares ‘The Poet’ with ‘The Man of Science’ who ‘knows and feels’ that ‘knowledge is pleasure,’ however, ‘where he has no knowledge he has no pleasure’ (Ibid., 15). The poet, then, is installed in a position superior to the scientist because the poet studies the ‘immediate’ and ‘intuitive’ ways in which pleasure ‘cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and *unalienable inheritance*’

¹⁵ Wordsworth’s concern with the status of the poet is echoed in Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria*, he identifies it with the more general question of poetry: ‘What is poetry? Is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. (Coleridge, 1967 [1817], xiv, 173)

(my emphasis, *Ibid.*, 16). While the scientist studies nature by artificially rending it into observable objects, Wordsworth goes so far as to position the poet as capable of uniting ‘passion and knowledge’ (i.e. the ‘universal language’ that evokes ‘the grand elementary principle of pleasure’) that, in combination with the permanence Wordsworth attributes to both nature and the human relation thereto, promises to bind together all that intellection tore apart (*Ibid.*, 16). So much becomes evident when we observe the *Lyrical Ballads* as the intersection between the development of a poetics capable of ‘giving immediate pleasure to a human Being’ and a concomitant attempt to ascertain the primary laws of *our nature*; the former acting as the experiment against which the latter may be established (*Ibid.*, 15). And so it would be in and through the poetic capacity to reflect upon nature—nature as reflected in *our nature*—that the finitude of the human being might relate itself to something permanent, durable, necessary and shared—its new divine element.¹⁶

This primary relation with nature, constituted by a certain kind of reflection thereon, stands as a central theme in many of the poems Wordsworth included in the

¹⁶ While Wordsworth maintains this essentially Kantian distinction, i.e. between nature and *human nature*, there is at once a striving to reunite the subject and object that modern philosophy had severed from one another, and to do so by reflecting upon certain *pleasurable* or *joyous* experiences that bridge the gap between those dimensions of the self that have been alienated by its scientific treatment and its originary and natural unity. In parallel with this point, see Paul Hamilton’s discussion of Kant’s ‘Critique of Teleological Judgment’, wherein he claims that ‘Nature’s tractability to scientific systematization actually leads to a deeper understanding of how it holds together, one modeled on the teleological coherence introspected in the self. Nature, fortunately, has aligned itself as if on purpose with our own capabilities for understanding it. This difficulty alleviates the difficulties which the self finds in securing adequate expression’ (Hamilton, 2009a, 83).

Ballads.¹⁷ Though to be sure, its presence is not relegated to their content, it also emerges in Wordsworth's famous poetic formula:

Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, similar to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on (Wordsworth, 2003 [1805], 21).

The type of reflection Wordsworth has in mind is retrospective and involves the way in which nature and human nature find resonance in memory, and can then be reunited in their poetic expression. While the *Lyrical Ballads* presents many examples of this poetic formula (i.e. the depiction of scenarios which evoke or elicit an emotional response in the reader, rather than merely describing emotions)¹⁸ I want to draw attention to those instances in which Wordsworth makes the reflective practice of the poet the explicit subject matter of his poetry.

The activity of reflection forms a bridge between the present self and its ever-fading past, and, in doing so, brings into focus one of the central problems for 19th century autobiographers: the apparent irreconcilability of the present self and its past

¹⁷ This movement from a sensuous explosion of natural imagery in which the object of the poem and its subject are united, followed by reflections thereon can be found in 'Tintern Abbey', 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' and the Immortality 'Ode' etc. One can find a similar formal tact in Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan' as well, although in this instance the reflective precedes the explosion of sensuous dream imagery, thereby imbuing it with a sense of foreboding in anticipation of the loss that has already been announced in its opening stanza.

¹⁸ The success of this tact, which Wordsworth recognized already in the preface to the second edition, is held in the highest regard by J.S. Mill, of all people, who turned to Wordsworth's poetry after finding Byron, 'whose particular department was supposed to be that of the intenser feelings', to be wanting in this regard (see Mill, 2018 [1873], 84-5).

iterations. Take, for example, the evocative oscillation between past and present in Wordsworth's 'Tintern Abbey':

I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads that one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(the courser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. [...]
[...] —That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Thoughtless youth; (Wordsworth, 2003 [1798], 92:69-91).

Wordsworth draws on conventional sympathies attached to the simplicity, plenitude and effortless pleasures of childhood, thereby juxtaposing the burdensome consciousness of adulthood with the image of the child bounding without intention '[w]herever nature led'. It soon becomes apparent, however, that this nostalgic conception of the child's relation with nature is not simply to be taken as a memorial—a tombstone marking the inevitable passage into adulthood. Wordsworth has '*learned* / To look on nature, *not as in the hour of / Thoughtless youth*'. Something has been lost, but through that loss something still greater has been gained:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels

All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty world
 O eye, and ear,—both what they half create
 And what perceived; well pleased to recognise
 In nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being (Wordsworth, 2003 [1798], 93-4:94-112).

The attunement to nature, described by Wordsworth as the ‘anchor’, ‘guide’ and ‘guardian’ of his soul, is elaborated elsewhere in the *Lyrical Ballads* as a kind of mediopassive receptivity. ‘Nor less I deem that there are powers, / Which of themselves our minds impress, / That we can feed this mind of ours, / In wise passiveness’ (Wordsworth, 2003 [1798], 82:21-4), writes Wordsworth in ‘Expostulation and Reply’, yet another reflection upon the maturation of his consciousness.

This dual theme gives expression to both the temporal schism that constitutes a central problem of the self for Wordsworth, and his provisional solution thereto; a way of being with oneself and nature that heals the laceration between past and present—that persistent threat to the unity of the self. It finds expression again in the immortality ‘Ode’ included in *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807), though perhaps the richest treatment of this theme is to be found in books XI and XII of *The Prelude* (‘Imagination, How Impaired and Restored’), which I consider further below. It would seem that the roots of *The Prelude* are themselves firmly anchored in the thematics of the *Ballads*. However, in *The Prelude* Wordsworth would attempt what had only been broached as a problem in these earlier fragments of self reflection: to direct the poetics honed within the *Ballads* to the temporally divided self that finds expression therein, and in doing so, to take himself—

rather than the ‘incidents and situations from common life’—as the subject of his own poetic practice in what Coleridge would come to call that ‘divine self-Biography’ (Coleridge, 1957, 1801).

Growth of a Poet's Mind

For as any thing to be *natural* must be referable to a consistent principle, and as the face of things is open and familiar to all, how can any imitation be new and striking, without being liable to the charge of extravagance, distortion, and singularity? (Hazlitt, 1934 [1830], 296).

In 1805 Wordsworth reflected on his autobiographical poem, and claimed that it was ‘a thing unprecedented in Literary history that a man should talk to much about himself’ (Wordsworth, 1967 [1805], 586). Perhaps Wordsworth was mistaken; certainly there are numerous examples of equally sustained self-reflection in the work of Rousseau, Goethe, Cellini and others. However, there is indeed something distinct about the particular way in which Wordsworth set out to not only represent himself, but to do so in a manner singularly his own. *The Prelude or, Growth of a Poet's Mind* does not, for example, present us with the same kind of progressive narrative of self-cultivation that we might expect to find in the *Bildungsgeschichte* genre, in which the ‘painful process of self-formation, crisis, and self-recognition, culminates in a stage of self-coherence, self-awareness, and assured power that is its own reward’ (Abrams, 1971, 96). Certainly *The Prelude's* trajectory finds resonance with this form; and yet, it does not deliver the same kind of progressive building up of the self that we find in this other model of self-writing.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up

Foster'd alike by beauty and by fear;
 Much favour'd in my birthplace, and no less
 In that beloved Vale to which, ere long,
 I was transplanted (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 1:305-309).¹⁹

As the above stanza, taken from book I of *The Prelude*, indicates, its narrative trajectory is one of *return* and of *transplanting* at once. Wordsworth's poetic strategy is to imbue its beginning (the beginning of his poem, that is the poem of his own becoming) with the wisdom gleaned from the vantage point of its end; to write, and thereby reposition, himself as at once outside of himself, and yet as the cause of himself. In part, the constant temporal oscillations that characterize the perspective on the various events contained within *The Prelude* force upon us the realization that its aim is not to give an illusory impression of the self in its successive phases of development—to allow the reader to experience Wordsworth's life as he *did*—but rather, to re-write the self from the position arrived at by Wordsworth in the *Ballads*:

Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies; Oh! Then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should by thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations!
 (Wordsworth, 2003 [1798] 93-4:140-147).

¹⁹ See Wordsworth's *The Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind*, (1942 [1805]). I have elected work with the 1805 edition of *The Prelude* as it is more complete than the 1799 edition, while maintaining a degree of freshness that has vanished from the overly reworked 1850 edition. The final edition of *The Prelude* also begins to muddle the initial 'purity' of Wordsworth's Naturalism; as De Selincourt notes in his introduction to the poem, the alterations made to the 1850 edition demonstrate the degree to which Wordsworth 'took pains to relate, as far as possible, his naturalistic religion to the definitively Christian dogma' (De Selincourt, 1942, xxxv). See Paul Jay's *Being in the Text*, for an account of the role this process of ongoing revision played in Wordsworth's autobiographic practice (Jay, 1984, 73-91).

While *The Prelude* does contain a developmental narrative, the poem itself is written so as to interlace past events with the reflections of the present self; and it is precisely this activity that constitutes Wordsworth's 'healing thoughts'.

In this way Wordsworth begins to pull together the temporal tension we have already identified. Youthful scenes are re-presented and subsequently re-collected into the growing memory 'mansion' of the present self, thereby binding together the apparently contingent or accidental past so as to forge an enduring sense of identity. 'I would enshrine the spirit of the past / For future restoration' (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 11:342-3). Memory becomes knowledge when it links the self, not to what it has lost, but to those epiphanic memories that recall and restore its relation to the super-personal dimension of its being in nature. As such, Wordsworth does not engage in mere self-accounting so much as a setting of his accounts *in order*, a re-collection, or a re-curation of the self's contents as Wordsworth's own figurations invite us to imagine:

Carelessly,
 I gaz'd, roving as though a Cabinet
 Or wide Museum (throng'd with fishes, gems,
 Birds, crocodiles, shells) where little can be seen
 Well understood, or naturally endear'd,
 Yet still does every step bring something forth
 That quickens, pleases, stings; and here and there
 A casual rarity is singled out,
 And has its brief perusal, then gives way
 To others, all supplanted in their turn.
 Meanwhile, amid this gaudy Congress, fram'd
 Of things, by nature, most unneighbourly,
 The head turns round, and cannot right itself;
 And, thought an aching and a barren sense
 Of gay confusion still be uppermost,
 With few wise longings and but little love,
 Yet something to the memory sticks at last,
 Whence profit may be drawn in times to come
 (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 3:651-668).

The image of the museum, which we might aptly call the museum of experience, is at first haphazardly curated. This is not to say that its exhibits do not ‘stick’ in ‘memory’, but rather, that the ‘gaze’ ‘Of thoughtless youth’ does not ensure that the relationship between identity and experience is meaningfully established. Indeed, even when something does become fixed in memory, it is not clear why it should be so. For Wordsworth, it is only through a certain kind of reflection—one that acts in accordance with ‘our nature’—that a re-curation of these events and objects yields meaningful relation to each other (thereby altering one’s relation to their past) and to the self in its present form.

Doing so—as Wordsworth demonstrates implicitly throughout *The Prelude*, and explicitly in books XI–XII ‘Imagination, How Impaired and Restored’—involves one’s becoming sensitive to the elective affinities between the self and epiphanic forms of experience.²⁰ It is through the memorial recapitulation of these epiphanic experiences—‘the hiding places of my power’ (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 11:336)—that one begins to reinvent the self in accordance with the teleological principle of the self’s nature.

There are in our existence spots of time,
Which with distinct pre-eminence retain
A vivifying Virtue, whence, depress’d
By false opinion and contentious thought,
Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
In trivial occupations, and the round
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
Are nourished and invisibly repair’d

²⁰ See, for example, Wordsworth’s commentary on the relation between the Poet and nature in the 1805 preface to *Lyrical Ballads*: ‘[The Poet] considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting qualities of nature’ (Wordsworth, 2003 [1805], 16).

(Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 11:258-265).

The attunement that we have already seen described in the *Ballads* is now directed inwardly upon the self. Doing so, however, requires the addition of a kind of *activity*, one that Wordsworth attributes to the powers of imagination. Imagination, as we shall see, is understood as synthetic, and surpasses even the type of activity that we have thus far referred to as a kind of re-membering or reparation in that it has the power to create or to invent a new self in and through the relation between one's present self-consciousness and memory.

Paul Jay (1984) develops a similar line of thought regarding the process of filtering experience through mind in Wordsworth by drawing on its parallel in Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik* (1818), wherein Hegel addresses the de-spiritualization of the work of art and relocates the divine element of art in the activity of its production:

The universal and absolute need out of which art, on its formal side, arises has its source in the fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness, i.e. that he draws out of himself, and makes explicit *for himself*, that which he is, and, generally, whatever is. The things of nature are only *immediate and single*, but man as mind *reduplicates* himself [...] is *for himself*, perceives himself, has ideas of himself, thinks himself, and thus is active self-realizedness, This consciousness of himself man obtains [...] for himself by *practical* activity, inasmuch as he has the impulse, in the medium which is directly given to him, to produce himself, and therein at the same time to recognize himself (Hegel, 1970 [1818], 57-58).

The activity of self-production, perhaps even self-reduplication, that Hegel describes as emerging out of the passage of the 'immediate and single' through the subject's capacity to recognize the self-invented self as itself, cleaves closely to the kind of self-invention Wordsworth employs in *The Prelude*. Wordsworth's project is not only to give an account of the growth of his mind—or in a detached language: how he became the poet that

wrote *The Ballads*, i.e. biographically—but rather, to *reinvent* himself through his own poetic practice.

The Productive Imagination

For Wordsworth, the question of *poiesis*, or making, and the poet, the one who makes, are inseparable, and it is this inseparability that distinguishes Wordsworth most clearly as an exemplar of *autobiography*, understood not as writing about *a* life, but as a practice of *life-writing* that necessarily enjoins the self in its activity. We have already seen the ways in which Wordsworth metaphorically links his own development to nature through the image of the seed (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 1:305-309). Indeed, the *Prelude* may be read as a sustained attempt to write the self in the transcendental space between itself and the natural world, whereby the subject's alignment with the natural does not determine it, but is instead the very condition that allows for an autonomous mode of self-creation.

Its opening lines demonstrate as much—to the 'gentle breeze' that 'seems half-conscious of the *joy* it gives' Wordsworth responds: 'O welcome Messenger! O welcome Friend!' (emphasis added, Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], I: 1-5). This greeting is delivered by 'a captive [...] coming from a house / Of bondage, from yon City's walls set free, / a prison where he hath been long immured' (Ibid., I: 6-9). Wordsworth binds the individual's creative powers to the free movement and omnipresence of the breeze or breath—'I breathe again' (Ibid, I:18)—that is at once the vehicle of the lyric poet's verse. Moreover, the role played by the elementary principle of *joy*, or *pleasure*, returns here, recalling its transcendental status in the *Ballads*, which is now tied to the recurrent motif

of the 'breeze' that becomes synonymous with the lyric poet's 'breath'. The practice of self-invention, therefore, is constituted by the inalienable (natural) principle of pleasure as expressed in the performance of poetry.²¹

Trances of thought and mountings of the mind
Come faster upon me: it is shaken off,
As if by miraculous gift 'tis shaken off,
That burthen of my own unnatural self,
The heavy weight of many a weary day
Not mine, and such as were not made for me (Ibid., I: 20-25).

Nature returns in *The Prelude*, once again playing a kind of double role. It both surrounds and contains Wordsworth, but in doing so it stands in opposition to the prison of the city's walls (Ibid., I: 8-9). The Natural is, perhaps paradoxically, both the inescapable medium of life, as well as the vehicle of Wordsworth's freedom.

This paradox unfolds through the extension of the seed metaphor, which is repeated throughout the poem, marking both the self's intrinsic tie to nature and the impenetrable veil of the self's unknowable origin. In a well-known passage addressed to Coleridge, Wordsworth calls into question the possibility of knowing one's being.

But who shall parcel out
His intellect, by geometric rules,
Split, like a province, into round and square?
Who knows the individual hour in which
His habits were first sown, even as a seed,
Who that shall point, as with a wand, and say,
'This portion of the river of my mind
Came from yon fountain?' [...]
Science appears but, what in truth she is,
Nor as our glory and our absolute boast,
But as a succedaneum, and a prop
To our infirmity [...]

²¹ Later in Book I Wordsworth writes: 'Wisdom and Spirit of the universe! / Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought! / That giv'st to forms and images a breath' (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], I: 401-404).

In weakness, we create distinctions, then
 Deem that our puny boundaries are things
 Which we perceive, and not which we have made [...]
 Run through the history and birth of each,
 As of a single independent thing.
 Hard task to analyse a soul, [...]
 But in the words of reason deeply weigh'd
 Hath no beginning (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], II: 203-232).

The 'geometric rules' of science are unable to provide Wordsworth with an account of the soul's beginning, which he has contemplated 'in the words of reason deeply weigh'd' and in the wake of their failings Wordsworth is freed to imaginatively reconstruct his own unknowable beginning.²² Now, the 'breeze' that occasioned the poem's beginning returns as the initiating agent of consciousness and of the soul. This 'awakening breeze'—an allusion to the divine breath (*ruach* or *Pneuma*)—allows Wordsworth to depict, not the birth of the organism, but instead, the birth of self-consciousness (*his own self-consciousness*), which 'Even in its first trial of powers / Is prompt and watchful, eager to combine / In one appearance, all the elements / And parts of the same object' (Ibid., II: 246-50). Wordsworth thereby sets the synthetic powers of the mind as the primary sign of consciousness—'eager to combine'—'Such, verily, is the first / Poetic spirit of our human life' (Ibid., II: 260-1). This is Wordsworthian autogenesis in its most explicit form; the scientifically ungraspable advent of the self presents itself as a *caesura*, not between lines of an already established meter, but vitally, at the moment of its inception. In this way, the self may now ascribe to itself a meter, or measure, that is *of* the self and throughout the poem Wordsworth reworks the self in and through the poetic

²² This stanza is addressed to Coleridge, and so it would seem plausible that the inability of science to account for the origins of the self includes the alternative 'first philosophies' of Fichte, 'I am I', and Spinoza/Schelling 'it is', in which Coleridge was then absorbed. See Paul Hamilton's discussion of Coleridge and pantheism (2009a, 93-4).

performance he can now attribute to *his own* 'awakening breath' by which the combinative powers of his mind become the measure of his own poetics, and of his own life.

Throughout *The Prelude* Wordsworth interlaces narrative with his subjective experience so as to make them inseparable.²³ This is not to say that there are no events, no external circumstances that drive the narrative dimension of Wordsworth's autobiographical poem. Rather, all that occurs, occurs to and through him and thereby emerges as a form of experience that articulates the personhood of the one who experiences:

A track pursuing not untrod before,
From deep analogies by thought supplied,
Or consciousness not to be subdued,
To every natural form, rock, fruit or flower,
Even the loose stones that cover the high-way,
I gave a moral life, I saw them feel,
Or linked them with some feeling: the great mass
That I beheld respired with inward meaning
(Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], III: 127-135).

Even in the banal retracing of a well-trod path Wordsworth's experience thereof is not a matter of course; it is distinguished by the ways in which the subject animates 'every natural form', which in turn 'respire[s] with inward meaning.' The personal identity that emerges via the lines of the poem is indistinguishable from the way in which the self mediates experience, i.e. self-representation becomes precisely the means by which

²³ Much the way Hegel conceives of 'active self-realizedness' relative to the '*immediate and single*' 'things of nature' (Hegel, 1970 [1818], 57), Wordsworth will subsume this kind of experience under the rubric of imagination—— 'imagination is a subjective term: it deals with objects not as they are, but as they appear to the mind of the poet' (Wordsworth, 1974, 464).

experience, memory and self are knit together in the creative synthesis of the poetic imagination.²⁴

One of the most telling episodes in this regard occurs when Wordsworth encounters a blind beggar who ‘Stood propp’d against a Wall, upon his Chest / Wearing a written paper, to explain / The story of the man, and who he was’ (Ibid., VII: 640-2). This tableau strikes Wordsworth ‘with the might of waters’—his response to it is indicative of the imaginative foundations on which such an account of the self is given: ‘it seem’d / To me that in this Label was a type, / Or emblem, of the utmost that we know, Both of ourselves and of the universe [...] though rear’d upon the base of outward things, / These, chiefly, are such structures as the mind / Builds for itself’ (Ibid., VII: 644-652). The blind man’s ‘Label’ or ‘emblem’, which represents him to passers-by, does not find its cause in an outward gaze, rather, such a self-understanding is derived from structures that ‘the mind builds for itself’. Indeed, in the lines that follow Wordsworth expounds upon the distracting spectacle of the city and the showman’s platform, ‘what a hell / For eyes and ears! what anarchy and din / Barbarian and infernal!’ in view of which ‘The whole creative powers of man asleep!’ (Ibid., VII: 685-7, 682).²⁵ In this regard, the model of autobiographical self-invention enacted by Wordsworth privileges the inner world of the self, or the world that the self creates for itself, over and above the social and material world into which one is thrown.

²⁴ See Geoffrey Hartman’s ‘Wordsworth and Metapsychology’ in which he charts the ‘impact of matter on the imagination’ in Wordsworth (Hartman, 2010, 195); see also Simon Jarvis’ conflicting account of imagination as specifying the experience of a non-object: ‘that particular bit of matter where imagination is lodged turns out not to be a bit of matter at all, but the absence of one. It is a cut, a gap, a ‘chasm’ or ‘breach’ (Jarvis, 2006, 221).

²⁵ See also Wordsworth (pg. 41), wherein the imagination is depressed, or disabled, in response to superficial social preoccupations.

The risk, then, is that by replacing the real with its imaginary alternative and accounting for oneself on the basis of the latter, one may in fact be indulging in a kind of fantasy, rather than engaging with the realities to which one is subject, realities that must be responded to if the self is to occupy a position that is not radically isolated. In the *Ballads* Wordsworth positioned ‘the Poet’ as one whose ‘passion and knowledge’ enable them to ‘bind together [...] the vast empire of human society’ (Wordsworth, 2003 [1805], 16), however, doing so seems to be at odds with the project of self-invention with which he is preoccupied in *The Prelude*. For this reason, the power to create oneself in Wordsworth’s *Prelude* is increasingly predicated upon the relative neglect of the social world and its normative demands, in favor of the singularity of the personal self.

Wordsworth thus allies the creative powers of the individual with an inwardness capable of revealing something profound and more fundamental than mere appearance, as derived from the senses alone; one that he can find in ‘night, for instance,’ which reunites the self with its natural disposition: ‘the solemnity / Of nature’s intermediate hours of rest, / When the great tide of human life stands still’ (Ibid.). Wordsworth is not alone in relating creativity to a secondary mode of perception. In his Platonic reading of the Romantics, C. M. Bowra claims that despite their many differences ‘Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats [...] agreed on one vital point: that the creative imagination is closely connected with a peculiar insight into an unseen order behind visible things’ (Bowra, 1964 [1953], 171). In his study of Romantic theory and criticism, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), Abrams takes issue with this rather generalizing claim: ‘it is misleading’ he writes, ‘to put Blake and Shelley, instead of Wordsworth and Coleridge, at the intellectual center of English romanticism, and

consequently to make the keystone of romantic aesthetics the doctrine that the poetic imagination is the organ of intuition beyond experience, and that poetry is a mode of discourse which reveals the eternal verities' (Abrams, 1953, 313-14).

The more recent scholarship of Simon Jarvis maintains Abrams' suspicion regarding Bowra's framing of imagination, while also departing from Abrams whose overt focus on the philosophical antecedents of English Romanticism threatens to eclipse the relative independence of poetic lyricism. Jarvis attempts to rescue Wordsworthian imagination by rejecting such ostensibly philosophical inheritances and instead examining it within a more immediate and existentially sensitive register, one that emphasizes the kind of primary self-awareness that, as Jarvis argues, ensures its anteriority to ideologically tinged constructions of the self. In doing so, Wordsworth's 'imagination' is distinguished from the 'idolotrous' tendency to 'house divine powers in a particular bit of matter' (Jarvis, 2006, 220). Instead, Jarvis suggests that in Wordsworth, 'imagination [is] the capacity for experience', not simply 'the condition of the possibility of experience' but a 'breach' or 'interruption' by which one is 'brought emphatically to affirm that [they] live' (Jarvis, 2006, 223). By this account, the imagination becomes the faculty responsible for precisely the sentiment of existence that is particular to oneself, not as an empirical object, but as a self-conscious being.

In his own autobiography, or so-called 'biographical sketch', Coleridge provides a more philosophically tinged account of imagination that provides us with some helpful

points of reference in regard to its parallel deployment in Wordsworth.²⁶ Coleridge describes the imagination as ‘resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts and emotions of the poet’s own mind’ (Coleridge, 1967 [1817], xiv, 173). Moreover, the imagination ‘reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual with the representative’ (Ibid., 174). As Orsini observes, in this instance the definition of the imagination provided by Coleridge has a philosophical lineage that reaches back through Schelling’s conception of the imagination as ‘the only faculty by which we are able to think and understand even the contradictory’; and further, to Kant’s ‘things in themselves’ which contains *in itself* a contradiction, ‘because it seeks to represent the unconditioned through the conditioned, to make the infinite finite’ (Orsini, 1969, 227).²⁷

So conceived, the individual imbued with the magical powers of productive imagination appears, a little too conveniently, as the answer to everything. As Coleridge writes, in perhaps the most well known passage of his *Biographia Literaria*: ‘The primary imagination I hold to be the living power and the prime agent of all human perception and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM’ (Coleridge, 1967 [1817], xiii, 167).²⁸ Coleridge goes on to distinguish between this

²⁶ Coleridge is here treated primarily as a commentator on imagination, and not as occupying the same position as Wordsworth relative to self-invention due to aim of his own autobiography, i.e. to secure Coleridge’s intellectual authority and philosophical mastery.

²⁷ See also Abrams, wherein a similar lineage of imagination is also derived via Kant and Schelling, albeit in terms of the synthesis that Coleridge effects between teleological and mechanistic conceptions of organic development (Abram, 1953, 171-6).

²⁸ Wordsworth echoes this sentiment in book XIV of the 1850 edition of *The Prelude* in which he claims that the imagination ‘Is but another name for absolute power / And clearest insight,

apparently divine power of the mind, and a secondary form of imagination, which he considers ‘an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will’; the latter, is in fact, only chronologically secondary, while in fact being the superior of the two functions due to its alignment with the conscious will.²⁹

To be sure, the same distinction appears in Wordsworth’s *Prelude*, without, however, being so intellectually framed. In the stanzas that follow from the speculatively reconstructed birth of his consciousness (discussed above) Wordsworth writes: ‘Emphatically such a Being lives, / An inmate of this *active* universe; / From nature largely he receives; nor so / Is satisfied but largely gives again, / [...] his mind / Even as an agent of the one great mind, / Creates, creator, and receiver both’ (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], II: 245-258). So it is through the power of the imagination that both Wordsworth and Coleridge grant the self ‘full freedom of artistic invention,’ thereby ensuring the poet’s creative autonomy, which in Wordsworth emerges as the power to create ‘creator, and receiver both.’ Doing so represents, on the theoretical descriptive level, rather than the practical, an attempt to reframe the self, paradoxically, as something that cannot be mastered by science (due to its unknowable and unconscious origins), and

amplitude of mind, / And Reason in her most exalted mood’ (Wordsworth, 1995 [1850], xiv:168-70)

²⁹ Richard Kearney makes a similar argument, by claiming that ‘we should take Coleridge’s admission that the secondary imagination is identical with the primary in *kind* (i.e. as a creative act) and differs only in *degree* (i.e. as a conscious rather than unconscious mode of application). The difference in degree does not signal a *diminution* of power; it actually establishes the superiority of the secondary function over the primary. For while the primary apprehends the given objects of nature according to the *a priori* laws of perception and apperception, the secondary transforms these “fixed” objects in the full freedom of artistic invention (Kearney, 1988, 184).

that is at the same time capable of mastering itself, precisely because that which cannot be determined by science or reason can be consciously controlled by the self.

There are, however, significant consequences when the self, and the account it gives, are so grounded. By making the ‘secondary imagination’ conscious, Coleridge unites the powers of the productive imagination with the will; while at the same time preserving the unknown root of such a creative power in the primary (unconscious) imagination. He thereby conceives of the subject as capable of self-invention, yet lacking the ability to account for or understand its own self-inventive capacity. Ultimately, what so many commentators have failed to grasp in the countless writings on Romantic conceptions of imagination—particularly those espoused by Coleridge and Wordsworth—is that the autonomous powers of the imagination, relative to the kind of autogenesis it appears to enable, depends less upon the particular attributes that we might accord this all-important faculty than it does upon the foundational assumption that the origins of the self cannot be known. Paul Hamilton offers a refreshingly sober assessment of precisely this point:

The structure of the problem is like the one celebrated by psychoanalysis: that of how we define an unconscious authority, responsible for conscious expression, but only indirectly accessible in the myths with which we construct that retrieval retrospectively (Hamilton, 2009, 434).

Elsewhere, Hamilton relates the same fundamental problem to the paradoxical status of the transcendental subject, which, he claims ‘can never submit to be the means of another’s ends’—in this case scientific explicability—‘without forfeiting its claims to signify our exemplary individuality’ (Hamilton, 2009a, 83).

From this perspective, if Wordsworth's poetic autogenesis presents an autonomous model of self-making, it does so only by eschewing its empirical double that must abide by the mechanical, rule governed and predictable world that is the preserve of science. By grounding itself in its own unknown root, the self may unfold from itself, from its own intentions and of its own will, but will also be *radically* unstable. A self (un)grounded in this way would not be able to recognize and respond to collective concerns that emerge in the political, ethical and social spheres of action, as Wordsworth appreciates—'Unto myself, the face of every one / That passes by me is a mystery' (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805] VII: 628-9)—though it is precisely those spheres, one might argue, in which autonomy is most vital.

Equally telling in this regard is Matt ffytche's treatment of the tensions within Schelling's contemporaneous attempts to provide an absolute ground to the self. Schelling's philosophy, as ffytche describes it, on the one hand seems to

desire to connect individual identity to some absolute foundation, insofar as the self is to be grounded, and is to enjoy the sense of some relatively stable cosmos of values, in which meaningful freedom can be developed.

On the other hand, however, for Schelling

identity must also be detached from such hypothesised absolute foundations, insofar as the individual is plagued by the sense that its freedom, its existence as self-developing entity in its own right, is denied if it is inserted too deterministically into such a static or pre-organized system (ffytche, 2012, 94).

A parallel set of tensions emerges equally in the autobiographical, as opposed to strictly philosophical, writings of the 19th century, which are distinguished from the latter by

their attempts to perform its resolution rather than merely speculating on its possibility.³⁰ The model furnished by Wordsworth, as we have seen, exemplifies a practice of self-invention predicated upon the unknown origins of self-consciousness. If it can be known, this self-knowledge is not scientific, but aesthetic insofar as it derives from the same kind of teleological affinity with nature that acted as the guiding principle of Wordsworth's poetics in *The Ballads*. Still, the principle that licenses the self to 'boot strap' itself up from its own mytho-poetically constructed origin retains a deep-seated precarity. Precisely because the *representational contents* that extend its reach from elementary, yet collective, aesthetic structures, to the particular person of Wordsworth are personal as opposed to collective.

As such, autobiographies produced under this principle cannot present an account of the self in empirical or developmental terms or, by extension, in terms of mutually recognizable relations to others without risking the autonomy they strove to implicate at the very beginnings of the self.³¹ Doing so would require a more general framework in which first and third personal perspectives might hang together, as well as the recasting of the autobiographer's intent, to provide an account of the self's responsibility in regard to others. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that both Wordsworth and Coleridge would prefer a life of seclusion, living within the natural delights of the Lake District, and lamenting the horrors of urban and industrial life. Perhaps there is no better articulation

³⁰ Here I am referring specifically to Hegel's attempt to resolve this problem, i.e. the origins of self-consciousness, through the speculative scene of recognition that results from the master slave dialectic in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

³¹ This is not to say that they are not interested in childhood, but rather, that this interest is informed by the opposition to determinates of character formation in relation to general principles, schemas or 'geometric rules' that relate the self's development to certain objective coordinates (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 2:204).

of the solitude that such a path of pure self-invention would cement than Coleridge's response after reading Wordsworth's *Prelude*; for Coleridge, such an account betrayed the perils of 'the dread watchtower of man's absolute self'.

Freud on Poets: Epic and Lyric

Before leaving Wordsworth behind, and turning to autobiographical self-justification, I want to pause here and gesture to the ways in which certain concerns exhibited in *The Prelude* reemerge in Freud's later work. To begin with—it should not be overlooked that Wordsworth's principle aim in *The Prelude*, to poetically unite his present self with its past iterations, resembles in several respects Freud's later conceptualization of 'construction' as both the 'reconstitution' of the 'subject's childhood history in both its real and its phantasy aspects' (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, 88), and the fundamental end towards which psychoanalysis tends (Freud, 1937). As Freud makes clear, such a construction is not merely an 'apologia' (Ibid., 257); instead it aims to reconstitute the self by stitching together the 'fragments' of 'ideas' and 'memories', that have become disowned or repressed, with the connective thread of 'affects' and 'emotions' that are repeatedly performed and experienced by the subject (Ibid., 258). Viewed in this way, the role played by Wordsworthian aesthetics, which are grounded in an elementary and *inalienable* principle of pleasure, come to resemble that of affectivity in Freud; for these

too are framed in terms of their inalienability,³² relative, for example, to the translations effected by dream censorship, or indeed by other kinds of compromise formation that do not succeed in altering the affect underlying them (see Freud, 1999 [1900], 305). Even more explicit is the commitment to ‘pleasure’ as the elementary and universal marker of something like human nature in both Freud and Wordsworth, which enables both of them to make broader claims about the naturalness, or unnaturalness, of certain experiences, activities, and dimensions of selfhood.

However, their most pronounced difference relates to the way in which memories are regarded: In Wordsworth, memories are the key to recovering a lost past indicated, qualitatively, by the experience of joy that they revive; in Freud, contrastingly, memories are the key to recovering a past that has been concealed by appropriating pleasure to mask a painful truth. Exemplary in this regard are the ‘spots of time’ that enabled Wordsworth to knit together his present and past in a continuous self-understanding descriptively identified with organic growth, while for Freud, the equivalent memorial experience is explored in the terminology of ‘screen memories’, that have already been assimilated to the present self in order to present the illusion of a continuous and untraumatic self-narrative (Freud, 1899). David Ellis has objected to this reading by arguing that Wordsworth’s ‘spots of time’ are too self-conscious to be considered as repressed screen memories (Ellis, 1985, 18-19). Ellis is right, of course, to claim that Wordsworth cannot be easily or flawlessly fitted into the framework provided by Freud; however, what is

³² Freud claims that it is an ‘indisputable fact that so many dreams may appear superficial, even trivial, whereas we cannot enter into the dream-thoughts without being deeply moved’ precisely because the original affect attached to the latent thoughts behind the manifest content of the dream has not undergone the same transformations to which ideas and images are subject (Freud, 1999 [1900], 305).

really at stake, relative to the arguments I am pursuing here, is how these approaches to the self respond to alternate concerns and bear them out in significantly different ways.

In Wordsworth, the placement of a conscious and volitional imagination at the origins of the self, and as the condition upon which we can invent the self, reflects the extent to which he sought to locate autonomy precisely where it unravels in Freud: i.e. in the radical dependence of the infant. In other words, Wordsworth sought to position autonomy at the root of the self, precisely where science could not penetrate, thereby ensuring that the freedom and independence of the self were prior to any subsequent subjection. Freedom, then, is something that can be lost, but it is granted by the ontological foundation of the self—where it is preserved and can potentially be recovered. Freud tends to view any kind of developmental trajectory by looking at its beginning from its end point—as Juliet Mitchell has claimed ‘from last things first’ (Mitchell, 1974, 27). This perspective inverts the temporal succession that allows Wordsworth to maintain autonomy by placing it at the birth of the self; conversely, autonomy can, for Freud, only ever be something won, not something granted as a first principle. Such is the supposition that grounds the Freudian approach to the self in a radical hermeneutic of suspicion, as Paul Ricoeur maintained (1970)—one that leaves no stone unturned in its attempts to discern the extent to which one’s self-understanding is maintained by accepting pleasant fictions overlaid upon unpleasant truths. One can, of course, embrace delusion, or even attribute intention to the productions of the unconscious in order to secure their own autonomy over and against threat of natural or social determinations, but in doing so, one must also relinquish any claim to autonomy qua oneself, and *its nature*. The autogenic route pursued by Wordsworth, which makes the kind of certainty

sought by scientific methods subservient to the personal sense of existence that his poetry celebrates, requires the concomitant sacrifice of that which would enable one to distinguish fiction from reality.³³

Moreover, the Freudian unconscious departs from its Romantic antecedent by reframing it, not only as a kind of primary (natural) process preserved within the self that has been alienated from their nature, but also as an other within oneself—thereby allowing for a kind of exchange or interlocution that might occur with oneself without sacrificing the dialogical framework that structures the self relationally, rather than positing it in a radically isolated, yet autonomous, way. In this regard, Freud is concerned with the extent to which the self must *censor itself*, thereby screening off and re-appropriating the past in order to smooth over trauma, as well as buttressing typical-ideal conceptions of selfhood. On this view, Wordsworth's attempt to 'enshrine the spirit of the past / For future restoration' becomes tangled in the increasingly complex vicissitudes of unconsciousness, and the mechanisms of the psychical apparatus, not merely because such memories may be, in the first place, inaccessible to consciousness or for 'restoration', but because this accessibility is itself predicated upon a delusory conception of self, one that is supported by such a selective self-disclosure, because it relies upon *joy* or *pleasure* as the indication of its legitimacy (Wordsworth, 1942 [1805], 11:342-3).

Indicatively, Freud will unintuitively break with tradition by viewing pleasure as the absence, rather than a plenum (of stimuli), thereby instigating the recognition of

³³ Hamilton draws on Novalis' treatment of genius in *Blümenstaub* to make a similar point. Novalis writes: 'Without genius all of us wouldn't as such exist', which Hamilton interprets in terms of 'the incorrigibility of genius' observing that 'we are all geniuses in this sense where our autobiographies are concerned' precisely because such an incorrigibility is rooted in our 'failure to distinguish fiction from reality' (Hamilton, 2009a, 86-7).

pleasurable experiences as precisely that which betrays the artificiality or falsity of a recollection or other psychical phenomenon: the wish, for example, is 'a current in an apparatus, issuing from unpleasure' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 394). This route threatens to turn the autonomous self into an automaton, because 'only a wish can set the apparatus into motion, and [...] the course of excitation in it is automatically regulated by the perceptions of pleasure and unpleasure' (Ibid.). Pleasure, then, cannot be trusted as a guide, but must be regarded as fundamentally deceptive. It is at this level that Freud most clearly departs from Wordsworth, who in Freud's scheme would appear as a fantasist or indeed, as an artist

who turns away from reality because he cannot come to terms with the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction which it at first demands, and who allows his erotic and ambitious wishes full play in the life of phantasy. He finds the way back to reality, however, from this world of phantasy by making use of special gifts to mould his phantasies into truths of a new kind, which are valued by men as precious reflections of reality (Freud, 1911, 244).

Here Freud's pessimism regarding the poet/fantasist reflects the second sense of invention; that is the making of something new, that nonetheless affords one a place within the collective that is marked primarily by standing in for the unfulfilled desires of others.³⁴ Like Wordsworth, Freud implicates pleasure as both fundamental and natural, but unlike Wordsworth, Freud does not believe that following pleasure will inherently

³⁴ To be sure, one need not turn to Freud, or even the repressed unconscious, here; one finds a similar critique of authorship as self-grounding in Kierkegaard, who writes 'the self in despair [...] constantly relates to itself only by way of imaginary constructions' and as an 'imaginatively constructed God' (Kierkegaard, 1983 [1849], 68, 69); and that 'this is the self that a person in despair wills to be, severing the self from any relation to a power that has established it, or severing it from the idea that there is such a power [...] the self in despair wants to be master of itself or to create itself' (Ibid., 68). For Kierkegaard, however, unlike Freud, the means by which to overcome this self-delusion is through faith or revelation, as opposed to suspicion.

provide one with the means by which to return to a pre-alienated form of self. Put differently, the inability to renounce pleasure understood by Freud in terms of ‘instinctual satisfaction’ is not a means to recapture an initial autonomy, but instead, a regression that leads to dependency.

Of course this depreciative view of the artist is not Freud’s last word on the subject, in his paper on ‘Dostoyevsky and Parricide’ he carves out a privileged space for the artist outside the grasp of analytic insight (Freud, 1928, 177); and his *Group Psychology and Analysis of The Ego* (1921) closes by turning to the figure of the ‘epic poet’ in whom Freud places the distinction of being the first individual to ‘free himself from the group’—and adds that ‘this advance was achieved in his imagination’ (Freud, 1921, 136). Not only is the epic poet the first individual, they also provide the essential framework that maintains the integrity of the group, because it is their ‘lying poetic fancies’ that are responsible for bestowing an identity upon the group in the form of an ‘ego-ideal’ (Ibid.). ‘The myth, then,’ continues Freud,

is the step by which the individual emerges from group psychology. The first myth was certainly the psychological, the hero myth; [...] The poet who had taken this step and had in this way set himself free from the group in his imagination, [...] for he goes and relates to the group his hero’s deeds which he has invented. [...] The lie of the heroic myth culminates in the deification of the hero (Freud, 1921, 136-7).

In relating Freud’s ascription of communal identity to the epic poet, one cannot help but be reminded of the refrain with which Harold Bloom closes his essay on the Romantic quest, which, claims Bloom

must make all things new, and then marry what it has made. Less urgently it seeks to define itself though the analogue of each man’s creative potential. But it learns, through its poets, that it cannot define what it is, but only what it will be. The man prophesied by the Romantics is a central man who is always in the process of

becoming his own begetter, and though his major poems perhaps have been written, he has not as yet fleshed out his prophecy (Bloom, 1970, 24).

Autogenesis—being one's 'own begetter'—is unquestionably a more desirable option than any alternative (whether scientific, spiritual, social, or economic) that deterministically inserts the individual into a prearranged set of relations. However, it is difficult to imagine what it would be like to live within a community of autotelic beings, each constituting themselves on the basis of their own personal myth. Such would seem to constitute a kind of paradoxical anti-community, one that could be defined as a 'community' only on the basis of its constituent's *essential* commonality in being uncommon, isolated, singular etc. Such is the inverse proposition upon which Freud bases his later discussion of Moses and the rise of Ahknaten's monotheism. '[T]he idea arose', writes Freud, 'of a universal god Aten to whom restriction to a single country and a single people no longer applied' (Freud, 1939, 59). For Freud, the coherence of the group, community or nation is conditioned upon its members' dual identification, first with a singular leader, ideal, myth or deity, by virtue of which they are able to form a secondary identification with one another (Freud, 1921).

If one were to frame Wordsworth's self-invention this way, i.e. as supplying a mytho-poetic ground capable of sustaining identity, it does not appear that it could accommodate the demands of collective recognition, as its principle of composition is deeply personal and singular. Put differently, Wordsworth occupies the privileged position of 'The Poet' that, in the 19th century, provided a flexible, epistemologically and sociologically suspended, frame in which identity could be formulated. This privileged position meant that, *as* poet, Wordsworth was not subject to the same demands as other

nonpoetical subjects, subjects who required an identity that could enable their recognition within the normative spheres in which they lived. And in this regard, one might view Freud as representing a continuity, as well as a subversion, relative to Wordsworth, whose poetic experiments revealed that while the identity of the group may require *epic* poets, sustaining a personal identity distinct from that of the group to which one belongs, equally requires their lyric counterparts. Such becomes the premise of the *personal* (Freudian) unconscious that, while not the vaunt of Romantic autogenesis, may still be as Hamilton claims ‘the other within ourselves responsible for the invention of the conscious patterns by which we repress it’ (Hamilton, 2009a, 84). In other words, Freud’s achievement may be recognized, as it has by Eli Zaretsky, as bound up in the ways that psychoanalysis ‘provided reference points from which individuals could imaginatively construct extrafamilial identities’ (Zaretsky, 2005, 5). If indeed, this was the result of psychoanalysis, one must recognize its impact not only in terms of the ways in which it reformulated the self, but provided the means by which it could become an object of artful cultivation for the many, rather than the few.

In the following section I discuss certain developments external to 19th century autobiography in order to provide context for my subsequent discussion of J.S. Mill’s *Autobiography*. By examining these developments in tandem with Mill, I argue that in the second half of the 19th century there was a growing concern regarding the extent to which auto/biography might offer certain insights into the regularities by which individuals develop. The identification and schematization of this development might, it seemed to some, allow for both an explication of ‘genius’ and of the means by which to intervene in the process of development and thereby artificially adjust its course to meet certain

emergent socio-political ideals. In doing so, these efforts to know the autobiographical self invert the relation between knowledge and autonomy that we have identified in Wordsworth and Coleridge; Mill in particular places general knowledge of the self as the condition upon which it might become capable of exercising autonomy, if only within certain circumscribed spheres.

Self-Justification: J.S. Mill's *Autobiography*

Virginia Woolf's 'A Sketch of the Past' evidences the degree to which, for the Bloomsbury Set, the practice of writing about oneself had developed far beyond the telling of a story, insofar as it implied an engagement with subjective experience as opposed to the objective events that constellate around the individual:

Here I come to one of the memoir writer's difficulties—one of the reasons why [...] so many are failures. *They leave out the person to whom things happened.* The reason is that it is so difficult to describe any human being. So they say: "This is what happened"; but they do not say what the person was like to whom it happened. *And the events mean very little unless we know first to whom they happened* (Woolf, 1985 [1939-40], 65, my italics).

Woolf's insistence, that meaning is accessible only through the relation between events and the particularity of the subject to which they occur, recalls the principle role played by the dreamer/subject in Freudian dream interpretation, i.e. that the meaning of a dream is a function of the particular individual to which it belongs (Freud, 1900 [1999], 83).

Woolf's grievance addresses the primary deficiency in the autobiographical model that I have outlined under the designation of self-justification. Principally, this treatment is characterized by the overvaluation of the subject's formation, that is, the events that

determine their personhood, and often results in the neglect of the experiencing subject—or as Woolf puts it, ‘what the person was like to whom it happened.’ In the following pages I examine another autobiography; one that turns almost exclusively to the question of subject formation in its attempts to give an explanatory account of the self: John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography*. But first some context is in order—if only to provide a boarder view of the intellectual trends that frame autobiographical writing in the later part of the 19th century.

In her *Auto/biographical Discourses* Laura Marcus locates a variety of modern oppositions in the autobiographical form, and suggests that the attempts to control the autobiographical self parallel broader social and scientific trends in the 19th century:

the perception of autobiography’s hybridity and instability incites a variety of attempts to control and contain it, primarily through generic and characterological classification and schemata. On the other hand, autobiography is itself viewed as the form which has the potential to resolve oppositions, for example between subject and object (hence the emphasis on the fact that the autobiographical “I” both writes and is written, is the knower and the known) and between self and world. In this sense, autobiography can be understood as a Utopian form (Marcus, 1994, 12-13).³⁵

As Marcus goes on to explain, this utopian potential marks the autobiography as dangerous and in need of strict control: ‘once the analysis of the self ceases to be for the self and/or for God, it must inevitably become a display of some kind – hence the drive to control the production and consumption of self-expression in the public sphere’ (Marcus, 1994, 13).

Certainly Rousseau’s *Confessions* posed a threat to both normative and institutionally endorsed conceptions of the self and of moral conduct. If the autobiographical model on which Wordsworth, and others intent on following in the

³⁵ See also, Marcus, 1995, 14.

spirit of self-invention, derived from Coleridge's claim that it is 'poetic genius itself, which sustains and modified the images, thoughts and emotions of the poet's own mind' (Coleridge, 1967 [1817], XIV, 173), then the response to such self-inventive writings was to locate, dissect and explain genius in order to bring this source of self-invention within the broader rubric of the knowable self.

To be sure, the auto/biography had already offered itself up as a particularly docile body for those engaging in examinatory and classificatory procedures. As Marcus observes, by the time the *Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*) was published (between 1885 and 1900), the subject of auto/biographical writing had become a rich source for the scientific study of character. No longer was the auto/biographical only a means for producing a desired subjectivity, or representing oneself in accordance with 'conditions internal to the self' (Corbett, 1992, 11). This idealizing and ideal, or indeed 'Utopian form', incited numerous studies; all of them intent on exposing and identifying the general principles at work behind genius and character formation more generally.

Francis Galton, the psychologist and founder of eugenics, drew heavily on existing biographical sources in his study *Hereditary Genius*, first published in 1869; Havelock Ellis, whose *A Study of British Genius* was published in 1904, used the *DNB* as his primary source. At around the same time, Ellis' less well-known contemporary, the psychologist J. McKeen Cattell, [...] published *A Statistical Study of Eminent Men*, drawing on six biographical dictionaries [...] Both Cattell's list and Ellis proceed by measuring the space allotted to eminent figures in the dictionaries; the longer the entry, the greater the degree of eminence (Marcus, 1994, 59).

The notion that one could develop a robust scientific theory of genius via the measurement of dictionary entries presupposes a direct relation between the amount of words it would take to account for a life and its relative merits: a perfect correlation between the quantity of signification and its quality or significance. Thus, a kind of

absurd standardization of life-writing is presumed in these curious works of Cattell and Ellis; one that resembles a less literary and more actuarial means of evaluation.³⁶

These attempts to locate and explain manifestations of poetic or intellectual genius in auto/biography are particularly representative of the Victorian reception of the genre. While the Romantic conception of the self emphasized its ‘uncommonness and strangeness’ (Ellermann, 2016, 313), the classificatory schemas in and through which the Victorian’s defined individuals began to eclipse the personal and idiosyncratic dimensions of selfhood that Romanticism had brought to prominence. No longer would the individual be the locus of the unique, the eccentric, or the strange, instead it would be classified into character or personality types—which normalize, or at least order and contain aberrant subjectivities.

For his own part, John Stuart Mill proposed a ‘science of the formation of character,’ or of ‘ethology,’ that might account for how it is that human beings come to exhibit such diversity while being all of the same kind.

Human beings do not all feel and act alike in the same circumstances; but it is possible to determine what makes one person, in a given position, feel or act in one way, another in another; how any given mode of feeling and conduct, compatible with the general laws (physical and mental) of human nature, has been, or may be, formed. In other words, mankind has not one universal character, but there exists universal laws of the Formation of Character. And since it is by these laws, combined with the facts of each particular case, that the whole of the phenomenon of human action and feeling are produced, it is on these that every rational attempt to construct the science of human nature in the concrete, and for practical purposes must proceed (Mill, 1972 [1868], 865).

Significantly, Mill begins by observing that individuals act differently when faced with the same situation; in order to account for this Mill proposes that we examine three

³⁶ I discuss Galton and Cattell in greater detail in Chapter 2 in the context of experimental psychology.

factors: ‘the general laws of human nature’, ‘character’ and the ‘universal laws’ by which it is formed. By this account, all human beings are equally subject to their nature, however, their ‘general’ nature represents a set of potentialities rather than determinates, the expression of which, as ‘character’, is *determined* by ‘universal laws’—the universal here supervenes upon the general.

While this view may appear to simply weaken the kind of determinism traditionally associated with human nature by softening its import relative to environmental factors, there is also a striving for a kind of autonomy in Mill. In his quasi-biography of J.S. Mill, Alexander Bain writes:

He was all his life possessed of the idea that differences of character, individual and rational, were due to accidents and circumstances that might possibly be, in fact, controlled; on this doctrine rested his chief hope in the future (Bain, 1882, 79).

So much hangs upon these last words. Whose future? The future of the ‘species,’ of the ‘race,’ of society? Bain does not tell us. The ambiguity here invites us to wonder if it might have been Mill’s own future upon which ‘his chief hope’ rested.³⁷ I will return to this point in my subsequent discussion of Mill’s *Autobiography*, however, before leaving behind Mill’s ethology I want to clearly outline its significance relative to the way in which Mill thinks through the problem of freedom relative to individual development.

For Mill, the self’s lack of autonomy results primarily from the *apparent* contingency of its formation, which binds the individual to a fatalistic outlook. If, thinks

³⁷ There is a passage in Mill’s *System of Logic* that appears to echo this sentiment and to relate it specifically to the ‘future history of the human race’ (Mill, 1846, 587). However, this comment is made in the context of a discussion of the implications of Comte’s positivism (specifically its relation to sociology and the implications it has for political philosophy and philosophy of history).

Mill, a method were available that would enable one to explain such apparently accidental occurrences, one might then be in a position to exercise their freedom by controlling them. At the same time, such a method, which promises to provide the individual with the means by which to attain freedom through self-knowledge, should be recognized as belonging to the broader project of liberal democracy; insofar as it stands as an attempt to make self-knowledge possible for the many, and thereby displace it from the preserve of the few, i.e. 'The Poet', or 'The Genius'. In this regard, one must also recognize the extent to which the generality of identity that marks Mill, as well as the other figures that populate his *Autobiography*, is not merely the result of his terse prose. Mill's later works, primary those influenced most by Harriet Taylor, such as *On Liberty* (1859) and *The Subjection of Women* (1869) put forward a vision of a liberal democratic society founded firstly upon *equality* as the principle that will allow for the appropriate balance between the authority of society and the freedom of the individual. As such, it seems appropriate to view the kind of subjectivity that emerges from Mill's *Autobiography* as a reflection of this commitment to a society that respects an individual not on the basis of their particularity, but upon their equal status.

At the same time, a project that seeks to 'operationalize' or 'technologize' self-knowledge is inherently a dangerous one; for while it may deliver on its promise to make self-knowledge accessible to the many, it concomitantly offers itself up to those who might use it as an instrument of control. As Foucault observes, 'those who try to control, determine and limit the freedom of others are themselves free individuals who have at their disposal certain instruments that they can use to govern others' (Foucault, 1996, 448). And hereby hangs a long tale; one that finds expression in a variety of attempts to

know and thereby artificially alter the development of the individual—by certain forms of behavioral training, or via genetic modifications—all in the name of progress. In the late 19th century, Francis Galton’s eugenics, for example, pursued the latter route, which influenced a whole generation of experimental psychologists in Britain and America, leading eventually to the ontogenetically focused behaviorism of J.B. Watson and its apotheosis in B.F. Skinner’s ‘technology of behavior’, the ‘design of culture’ and his impassioned plea for the ‘abolition’ of ‘the autonomous inner man’ (Skinner, 1972, 205).³⁸

While there is an undeniable affinity between the kind of control described by Mill and the forms of genetic and social engineering proposed and developed by others, one must be careful not to conflate Mill’s intention with the subsequent developments that cast a pall over it. Here it shall suffice to recognize that Mill’s ethological pursuits rest uncomfortably between an overly deterministic outlook and the liberal conception of autonomy that is dependent upon identifying the conditions under which freedom can be exercised appropriately. At this point, I want to turn to Mill’s own *Autobiography* (1873) which exemplifies the precarity that stands between self-determination and the determining framework that threatens to engulf the self in its very attempts to elucidate its structure and identify a means of escape therefrom. Ultimately, Mill’s empiricism and adherence to his father’s ‘doctrine of associationism’³⁹ would fundamentally cripple his efforts to recover a sense of autonomy from his own life story; which, in its very attempts

³⁸ I discuss these and other figures relative to the technologizing of self-knowledge in Chapter 2.

³⁹ Mill states that his own self-understanding was predicated on the belief that ‘all mental and moral feelings and qualities, whether of a good or of a bad kind, were the results of association; that we love one thing and hate another, take pleasure in one sort of action or contemplation, and pain in another sort, through the clinging of pleasurable painful ideas to those things, from the effects of education or experience’ (Mill, 2018 [1873], 79).

to extricate Mill from paternal influence becomes ineluctably rooted in those figures that impressed themselves upon him, and determined the trajectory of his intellectual, moral and emotional development.

In Search of First Impressions

The transition from Wordsworth to Mill is perhaps best indicated by recognizing that in the *Ballads* Wordsworth had endeavored to make ‘ordinary things’ ‘interesting’ by ‘throw[ing] over them a certain colouring of imagination’ and later, throwing the same ‘colouring of imagination’ over himself in *The Prelude* (Wordsworth, 2003 [1805], 7). Alternatively, Mill begins his own ‘biographical sketch’ by stating: ‘I do not for a moment imagine that any part of what I have to relate, can be interesting to the public as a narrative, or as being connected with myself’ (Mill, 2018 [1873], 5). It is clear from these remarks that, for Mill, *autobiography* merely signifies a claim to first personal knowledge of certain events, events that *happened to him*, but does not extend into the subjective and experiential domains of life-writing. What remains unclear, however, is the extent to which such an account could maintain its focus on the self while investing so deeply in those factors external to it.

In this sense, Mill’s unwillingness to *imagine* himself as being in any way *interesting* parallels the general purpose of his *Autobiography*, which seeks to *explain* the formation of his character in such a way that it might be ‘useful’:

I have thought that in an age in which education, and its improvement, are the subject of more, if not of profounder study than at any former period of English history, it may be useful that there should be some record of an education which was unusual and remarkable, and which, whatever else it may have done, has

proved how much more than is commonly supposed may be taught, and well taught, in those early years which, in the common modes of what is called instruction, are little better than wasted (Ibid.).

Mill's evaluation of his autobiography, then, is bound up in its utility for *others* who might learn by its example—that is, by elucidating the apparently contingent occurrences of his own life, Mill intends to provide others with the means by which to freely chart their own. However, doing so requires that one treat the person subject to such occurrences as interchangeable, a subject like any other. In this sense, Mill treads the line between autobiography and biography by occupying the first personal perspective but focusing his attention on those events external to himself (primarily his education), while neglecting his inner life, precisely that domain in which autobiography retains its privilege to introspection and its strongest claim to authority.

Mill claims that he has yet another motive for committing his life to writing: 'to make acknowledgement of the debts which my intellectual and moral development owes to other persons' (Ibid.). In this sense, Mill is not simply intent on explaining himself in terms that might elucidate our understanding of individual development or its relation to pedagogy, but equally to *justify* his intellectual independence by giving credit, where it is due, to those influences that left a lasting mark upon him. Ultimately these two motives, to record the means by which he came to think as he did and to candidly enumerate his moral and intellectual debts, constitute the terrain on which Mill will attempt to extricate himself from his father's influence and demonstrate that he came to think and act independently—that is, to demonstrate that his 'was not an education of cram' (Ibid., 21).

Indicatively, Mill's *Autobiography* devotes the first six of its seven chapters to events that occurred in roughly the first thirty years of his life, while the final chapter

deals with the remaining forty years of his life. The disproportionate attention paid to his formative years reflects Mill's own concerns regarding the extent to which he is the product of his father's rather strict program of moral and intellectual education, which began with lessons in Greek at age three. Chapter five, 'A Crisis in My Mental History', details Mill's mental breakdown, which centers upon the revelation that he has not been living for himself, but has instead lived his life in accordance with his father's direction. Mill recalls that in the autumn of 1826 (Mill was then twenty), he found himself in a 'dull state of nerves' in which he was 'unsusceptible to enjoyment or pleasurable excitement' (Ibid., 77). 'In this frame of mind' Mill reflects on the course his life has taken and questions himself as follows:

Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to, could be completely effected at this very instant: would this be of great joy and happiness to you? (Ibid., 77-8).

To this query an 'irresistible self-consciousness distinctly answered, "No!"' (Ibid.). Finding that the ends towards which he had strived would not bring him happiness Mill 'seemed to have nothing to live for' (Ibid.). So begins the search for a new direction and meaning for Mill's life, which had so far consisted in pursuing 'the public good' with 'complete disinterestedness' (Mill, 1988 [1854], 643). In this sense, the crisis, which represents this turning point in Mill's life, is marked by his recognition of having failed to take care of himself (to be concerned with himself)—in the sense of caring *for* his self. Concomitantly, this crisis resulted from Mill's failure to exercise his own autonomy in charting the course his life would take, which had up to this point involved blindly pursuing only those ends his father deemed valuable.

Mill's ensuing mental crisis is characterized by an emotional deficiency that emerges in response to the parallel emptiness of his life's pursuits. Rather than giving an account of this emptiness in descriptive terms, however, Mill relies on the poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge (Mill, 2018 [1873], 85, 82). Mill's *use* of Wordsworth is particularly telling in relation to the emptiness that marks his autobiography. Mill writes:

What made Wordsworth's poems a medicine for my state of mind, was that they expressed, not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, and of thought coloured by feeling, under the excitement of beauty. They seemed to be the very culture of the feelings, which I was in quest of (Mill, 2018 [1873], 85).

Recounting this emotionally placid and troubling period becomes an opportunity to enumerate certain vital events, readings, and practices, all of which served to return Mill to a relatively normal and balanced state of mind. In the end, even Mill's suffering is not particular to himself, instead Mill can only understand its significance in terms of its generality: 'In all probability my case was by no means so peculiar as I fancied it, and I doubt not that many others have passed through a similar state' (Mill, 2018 [1873], 81). So it would seem that, for Mill, such prescriptions (the reading of Wordsworth and other emotionally provoking works) could only be effectively generalized if they addressed a general state of crisis affecting an equally general subject.

Mill may have found emotion in Wordsworth, but he could not generate it for himself. Poetry not only supplies Mill with emotion, but also the language with which to describe its absence. Mill quotes the following stanza from Coleridge's 'Dejection', which he claimed 'exactly described my case':

A grief without a pang, void, dark and drear,
A drowsy, stifled, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet or relief
In word, or sigh, or tear (Coleridge in Ibid., 78).

The recognition that his life had been for his father rather than for himself would lead to a string of appropriations, each an attempt to fill the ‘void’ that marks the person of Mill. First, he would appropriate the ‘states of feeling’ he found in Wordsworth in order to compensate for his own emotional deficiencies, and in the wake of his father’s death Mill would replace the ends he had inherited from James Mill with those of Harriet Taylor, whose influence marks much of Mill’s subsequent intellectual output.⁴⁰

The emptiness that comes to define Mill in this period of mental upheaval is already discernable in its early sections when Mill insists that, unlike others, he has not been subject to an education of ‘cram’ (Mill, 2018 [1873], 21).⁴¹ That is, his education was guided by his father’s insistence that the young Mill should develop *his own opinions*, and should do so by exercising his critical faculties upon problems before looking to the ways in which others had attempted their solution. But even by putting things this way, it would appear that what little autonomy Mill is able to rescue by claiming that his father did not force him to swallow facts, but taught him how to procure them for himself, circles back on Mill, i.e. the justification for his own intellectual autonomy is itself grounded in the principles instilled in him by his father. The clearest evidence of which is the *Autobiography* itself, which seeks to free Mill from the influence of his father by

⁴⁰ Of Taylor’s influence upon him Mill writes ‘What I owe, even intellectually, to her, is, in its detail, almost infinite; [...] I have acquired more from her teaching, than from all other sources taken together’ (Mill, 2018 [1873], 107).

⁴¹ Mill makes the same claim in a letter to Thomas Carlyle, e.g. ‘I was not *crammed*; my own thinking faculties were called into strong though partial play; & by their means I have been enabled to *remake* all my opinions’ (Mill, 1972 [1832], 128).

drawing on precisely those methodological frameworks (empiricism, utilitarianism, and associationism) the importance of which his father so vigorously impressed upon him.

Thomas Carlyle had already sensed a kind of vacancy in Mill when they struck up a friendship in 1830; in a letter to Jane Welsh Carlyle, Mill is characterized as ‘a fine clear enthusiast, who will one day come to something; yet to nothing poetical, I think: his fancy is not rich; furthermore, he cannot *laugh* with any compass’ (Carlyle in Froude, [1831] 1891, 205). This early impression pales in comparison to the caustic assessment of Mill’s *Autobiography* that, at the age of seventy-eight, Carlyle related to his brother:

You have lost nothing by missing the autobiography of Mill. I have never read a more uninteresting book, nor should I say a sillier, by a man of sense, integrity, and seriousness of mind.... It is wholly the life of a logic-chopping engine, little more of human in it than if it had been done by a thing of mechanized iron. Autobiography of a steam-engine... (Carlyle in Neff, 1926, 52).

Freud, it would seem, was in thorough agreement with Carlyle on this point. In a letter to his then fiancée Martha Bernays, Freud wrote:

[Mill’s] autobiography is so prudish or so unearthy that one would never learn from it that humanity is divided between men and women, and that this difference is the most important one. His relationship to his own wife strikes one as inhuman, too. He marries her late in life, has no children from her, the question of love as we know it is never mentioned (Freud, 1961 [1883], 74-5).

One may claim without fear of inaccuracy that there is in fact no poetry in John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography*, save for those stanzas appropriated from others for medicinal purposes. What becomes most clear in tracing the contours of Mill’s life-writing is that this overtly rational approach to the self, as something that must be justified or explained, seems to require that one sacrifice those dimensions of the self that mark it as idiosyncratic, personal and particular. In order to give an account of individual

development in terms of the ‘universal laws of the Formation of Character’ (Mill, 1972 [1868], 865); one must reduce the self, as Mill does, to those associations effected by ‘education or experience’ from which ‘all mental and moral feelings and qualities’ result (Mill, 2018 [1873], 79).

At the same time, one cannot escape the extent to which Mill’s *Autobiography* offers itself up as a prime example of the ambivalence that Freud would designate as the master signifier of Oedipal relation to the father. This ambivalence manifests clearly in Mill’s awkward attempt to both portray his father as his primary educator and intellectual influence, and mitigate the extent to which his own intellectual achievements can be reduced to this influence (Mill, 2018 [1873], 20-8). Mill’s relationship with his father becomes all the more volatile in respect to what he later considers the greatest deficiencies in his upbringing, which result in existential crises rather than intellectual triumphs. Mill faults his father for failing to equip him with the practical skills he required later in life—‘the education my father gave me, was in itself much more fitted for training me to *know* than to *do*’ (Ibid., 24)—as well as blaming him for retarding Mill’s emotional development, ‘[t]he element which was chiefly deficient in his moral relation to his children, was that of tenderness’ (Ibid., 32). The same ambivalence emerges in statements like ‘I do not, then, believe that fear, as an element in education, can be dispensed with; but I am sure that it ought not to be the main element’ (Ibid., 33), or ‘mine was not an education of love but of fear’ (Ibid., 179); a remark that, significantly, was stricken from the final draft of his *Autobiography*. Perhaps most telling of all is that Mill should have

attributed the ultimate cessation of his mental crisis to the accidental reading of an episode in Marmontel's *Memoires*:

I [...] came to the passage which relates his father's death, the distressed position of the family, and the sudden inspiration by which he, then a mere boy, felt and made them feel that he would be everything to them—would supply the place of all that they had lost. A vivid conception of the scene and its feelings came over me, and I was moved to tears. From this moment my burthen grew lighter (Ibid., 81).

It would seem, then, that the alleviation of his mental crisis had less to do with the emotional life he could lead vicariously through Wordsworth and Coleridge than it did with this moment in which he could experience a kind of release from paternal influence, and thereby glimpse, as if in a kind of fantasy he was himself unable to produce, what it might be like to take his father's place as Marmontel did so heroically.

Mill's *Autobiography* has already been identified, by ffytche, as a prime precedent of the 'structural emphasis on the father' that comes to prominence in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (ffytche, 2013, 262).⁴² This 'structural emphasis' occupies roughly the same position as Wordsworth's imagined scene of autogenesis, though it does so within an alternate tradition that stems not from idealism, but from empiricism and associationism, and which therefore locates the 'ultimate causal priority [in] the original laying down of impressions and ideas in the mind' that are empirically identified with the 'father-son relation' (Ibid.). Mill, does not, however, as Freud will, question or critically rethink this founding principle of the self. Instead, its tacit acceptance is performed through Mill's attempts to extricate himself from his father, and later, to replace him

⁴² For other examples of the particularly Victorian weight of paternity one might look to Edmund Gosse's later *Father and Son* (1907).

with another idealized figure, his wife Harriet Taylor, in order to re-anchor his identity in a fresh set of principles.

Ultimately, the kind of causal determinism into which Mill installed himself extends beyond the hollow it leaves where Mill's own person might have been. Both James Mill and Harriet Taylor are subject to the same kind of treatment to which Mill subjects himself. Their personhood vanishes in the verbiage that constitutes Mill's articulation of their 'character' in terms taken not from poetry but instead from a kind of scientific diction that reduces them to their attributes—'perfect candour', 'natural distinction' 'a woman of deep and strong feeling'—that come to form a classification system populated by such 'fine specimen[s]' (Ibid., 20, 105-6). Significantly, the section in which Mill details his relationship with Taylor is titled 'The Most Valuable Friendship of My Life' and subtitled 'My Father's Death', thereby indicating that even his love for Taylor is primarily conceived in terms of its utility or value, and implying that it could fill the space left by his father's passing.

Before concluding this discussion of Mill, I want to explore a final point regarding the potentially autonomous act of self-concealment, which is evidenced by the restraint exercised by Mill in choosing what to include and what to omit from his life-writing. The importance of this stems from the emphasis Mill places on his ostensibly empirical approach to life-writing, which unlike Wordsworth's, puts itself forward with the express intention of discerning fiction from fact—that is, of being *true*. In a letter written to Harriet Taylor dated February 10th 1854, Mill writes:

I [...] have read through all that is written of the Life—I find it wants revision, which I shall give it [...] Of course one does not, in writing a life, either one's own or another's, undertake to tell everything—& it will be right to put

something into *this* which shall prevent any one from being able to suppose or to pretend, that we undertake to keep nothing back' (Mill, [1854], 155)

It should come as no surprise that Mill would seek hold certain things back in the name of propriety.

We have already seen that the treatment James Mill receives was substantially softened in subsequent drafts of the *Autobiography*; later in Mill's letter to Taylor, however, it becomes clear that it is the intimate nature of their relationship—'what particularly concerns *our* life together' (Ibid.)—that he is intent on effacing. Mill has included

the descriptions of you, & of your effect on me; which are at all events a permanent memorial of what I know you to be, & (so far as it can be shewn by generalities) of what I owe to you intellectually. That, though it is the smallest part of what you are to me [...]. But we have to consider, which we can only do together, how much of our story it is advisable to tell (Mill, [1854], 155).

While Mill remains vague about why exactly they should omit the more tender dimensions of their relationship it is not a far leap to assume that the longevity of their relationship, which reached far back into Taylor's previous marriage to John Taylor, might raise eyebrows. Certainly Mill, who then occupied the second highest position in the East India Company, hoped to maintain his public persona, as well as taking pains to protect his wife from any embarrassment she might be made to suffer from his memoir. However, there is perhaps another more powerful motive behind Mill's omission, for which Bain provides crucial insight in his own account of Mill's life. 'It is a painful fact that this marriage' writes Bain, 'was the occasion of [Mill's] utter estrangement from his mother and sisters' (Bain, 1882, 172). Mill's father, who died fifteen years earlier, cannot be listed among those members of his family who estranged themselves from Mill in the

wake of his union with Taylor. However, given the overbearing authority he exercised over them during his life it is not a far leap to speculate that this estrangement was the result of the strict propriety James Mill had inculcated in his family. From this perspective, it would seem that even where Mill might have exercised his freedom to omit certain aspects of his life from his *Autobiography*, he was still haunted by the ghost of his father.

In another letter, to his then mentor Fliess, Freud, rather than Mill, would write:

I am reasonable enough to recognize that I need your critical help, because in this instance I myself have lost the feeling of shame required of an author. So the dream is condemned. Now that the sentence has been passed, however, I would like to shed a tear over it and confess that I regret it and that I have no hopes of finding a better one as a substitute. As you know, a beautiful dream and no indiscretion—do not coincide (Freud, 1898, 315).

This letter, written in response to Fliess' insistence that Freud remove his only completely analyzed dream from an earlier draft of *Interpretation*, carries with it one of Freud's most incisive remarks on the nature of authorship—and perhaps on the nature of fatherhood as well. One wonders: what *is* the shame required of an author? And in response finds that it is the same shame required of a father. In exposing too much of himself in his dream, Freud risked losing the position of authority that, as we shall see in Chapter 3, becomes a vital component of the rhetorical game in which he intends to implicate his reader.

Here, it will suffice to point out that while shame induced Mill to censor his *Autobiography*, Freud felt himself lacking in shame, because in the course of his self-analysis he has lost it. Freud, who, unlike Mill, had not only a father but also children of his own, understood that a certain balance must be struck in one's self-representation, as a father and equally as an author, one that involves a measure of intimate exposure and

indiscretion—‘But I now ask my reader’, writes Freud, ‘to make my interests his own for some little time, and immerse himself with me in the minutest of details of my life, for our interests in the hidden significance of dreams absolutely demands a transference of this kind’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 84)—without at once losing the shame required of an author. If Mill ‘grew up in the absence of love and in the presence of fear’ (Mill, 2018 [1873], 180), Freud would attempt to place the author of his dream book in the space between these. In this regard, Freud—who is party to the same philosophical commitments that lead Mill, perhaps without him realizing it, to center his autobiography on the dynamics of autonomy relative to the father-son relation—recognized that autonomy is not derived from the absence of the father (as Mill’s Marmontel fantasy would have us believe) but instead from becoming a ‘father’ of sorts: *‘It’s nonsense to be proud of one’s forebears. I prefer to be a forebear myself, an ancestor’* (Freud, 1999 [1900], 277). In this sense, being a forbearer entails concerning oneself with something for which one is responsible. Such is the concern that confers not only paternity, but in certain respects, authorship as well. Put differently, one is an author by virtue of the responsibility one takes for the self that publishes and the self that is so published.

In the next section I discuss two of Thomas De Quincey’s autobiographical works relative to the way in which they exhibit concerns that we have already encountered in Wordsworth’s model of self-invention and Mill’s attempt to justify and explain himself. As such, De Quincey provides us with the opportunity to observe how these two models, which alternately privilege idealist and empiricist notions of personal autonomy, result in a kind of failed synthesis.

A Failed Synthesis: De Quincey's *Confessions*

Pure autobiographies are written either by neurotics who are fascinated by their ego, as in Rousseau's case; or by authors who are of a robust artistic or adventuresome self-love, such as Benvenuto Cellini; or by women who also coquette with posterity; or by pedantic minds who want to bring even the most minute things in order before they die and cannot let themselves leave the world without commentaries. Autobiographies can also be regarded as mere plaidoyers before the public. Another great group among the autobiographers is formed by the autopseusts (Schlegel, 1968, 143).

In this particularly caustic aphorism Friedrich Schlegel passed judgment upon the various types who engage in autobiographical self-representation. Schlegel's inclination to order these autobiographers into 'neurotics', 'pedantic minds', 'plaidoyers' (apologists), 'autopseusts' (self-deceivers) etc., foreshadows the later Victorian impulse to categorize autobiographies—and by extension, their authors—in accordance with characterological schemas. For Schlegel, however, the autobiography still appears as a means by which to shape the self in accordance with one's own desires, no matter how self-deceived or manipulative these might be.

Thomas De Quincey's initial foray into the autobiographical, *The Confessions of An English-Opium Eater* (1821), appears to be, on one hand, party to this apologetic trend, while at the same time clearly separating itself therefrom. On its very first page De Quincey declares himself in opposition to 'such acts of gratuitous self-humiliation'.

Nothing, indeed, is more revolting to English feelings, than the spectacle of a human being obtruding on our notice his moral ulcers or scars, and tearing away that "decent drapery," which time, or indulgence to human frailty, may have drawn over them' (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 4).

It would seem that De Quincey, whilst intent on taking full advantage of the highly marketable genre of salacious tell-all writings,⁴³ was equally keen to place himself alongside Schlegel in his disparagement of Rousseau (see Wu, 2016, 180). As Robert Morrison puts it, ‘when De Quincey stepped forward with his *Confessions*, he made it plain that he knew the history of the genre but also that he intended to transform it’ (Morrison, 2013, xi).

Virginia Woolf, commenting on De Quincey’s many ventures into the autobiographical, depicts him as a master of self-concealment and selective disclosures. He tells us only what he wants us to know, and perhaps ‘even that has been chosen for the sake of some advantageous quality [...] never for its truth’ (Woolf, 2011, 366). As such, De Quincey’s *Confessions* do not belong to the tradition of autobiographical writings that Anna Robeson Burr—the author of the first sustained critical study on the subject—would describe as ‘*exact, absolute, strict* truth’ (Burr, 1909, 30).⁴⁴ It seems that beyond his principle sin, already communicated in the title itself—the inherent excesses of the opium fiend—there is little to suggest that De Quincey planned to engage in anything resembling confession. Indeed, in those instances where potential scenes of transgression

⁴³ De Quincey’s, friend Charles Lamb, had already achieved much success with the publication of his ‘Confessions of A Drunkard’ (1813).

⁴⁴ Burr gives a more detailed iteration of this criteria, claiming that autobiographies must be ‘written “as if no one in the world were to read it,” *i.e.* with the utmost candor, [...] “yet with the purpose of being read.” It is this purpose which adds to the impulse dignity and measure, and which, as we shall see, tends to establish and confirm its sincerity. This “purpose of being read” raises a merely evanescent mood of introspection to a point where it may generate power’ (Burr, 1909, 30).

begin to unfold he quickly conceals them, or else De Quincey deploys them seductively, and thereby downplays their significance with a knowing wink to his reader.⁴⁵

Rather than follow the route provided by Rousseau, De Quincey—who Frances Wilson calls the ‘greatest literary imitator of the age’ (Wilson, 2014, 71)—follows Wordsworth’s *Prelude*,⁴⁶ which supplied a model of autobiography as a means by which to represent and attain a desirable form of subjectivity. As concerns the distinction between autobiographies of self-invention and self-justification, De Quincey occupies an uneasy, almost transitional position, with one foot in each camp. His filiations with Wordsworth and Coleridge, as well as the novelistic tropes deployed in his *Confessions*, point towards the model of self-invention. However, it is more accurate to locate De Quincey’s *Confession* as a failed synthesis of the two models we have just discussed, one that collapses in its attempts to draw together the autogenic features of Wordsworth’s idealism and the empirical concerns that characterize Mill’s attempt to justify himself.

The imagination which, as Coleridge held, ‘reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities’, can be seen at work in De Quincey’s own self-formulation, populated as it is with the delicate balance of just such ‘discordant qualities’, e.g. the image of the oriental addict comingled with the English gentleman, the combining of the Etonian-Oxonian type with the runaway and tramp, the conservative and traditionalist who at once quotes Edmund Burke and lauds the revolutionary ideas of

⁴⁵ The principle example of De Quincey’s lack of candor being his representation of his relationship with the prostitute ‘Ann of Oxford street’; which, according to De Quincey was entirely innocent. Though as commentators have noted, there is overwhelming circumstantial evidence to suggest that their relationship was more than platonic (see Rzepka, 1995, 147; Morrison, 2013, xv).

⁴⁶ De Quincey had read *The Prelude* in 1810 whilst enjoying a period of great intimacy with Wordsworth.

David Ricardo etc. As we shall see, it is in attempting to resolve these, and other, contradictory self-formulations that De Quincey is drawn ineluctably into his past, wherein he searches for a stable point in which to anchor himself. As such, De Quincey presents us with a particularly useful example of 19th century autobiographical writing. While some, including David Write, have called De Quincey a ‘transcendental hack’ (Write, 1970, ii), it is perhaps more accurate to view De Quincey’s failure as indicative of the intellectual lineage he hoped to install himself within, and its own failure to materialize itself historically.

The structure of De Quincey’s *Confessions* recasts the poetic formula developed by Wordsworth and Coleridge, by beginning with the wandering narrative of his youthful adventures and subsequently turning to a form of introspective mediation. However, De Quincey’s deployment of this structure in service of his autobiographical *Confessions* alters its function in unforeseen ways. The ‘Preliminary Confessions’ (hereafter ‘PC’), which comprise its first half, provide an account of the period of De Quincey’s life between 1802 and 1804, during which he flees from his grammar school in Manchester, roams the countryside of Wales and eventually finds himself in London, where he wanders the streets penniless and strikes up a tender friendship with Ann (another homeless runaway). At the close of this first section De Quincey has reconciled himself with his guardians and secured a place at Oxford, however, in returning to his patrician milieu Ann is lost forever. These ‘adventures’ as De Quincey calls them, stand in stark contrast to his later communications in ‘The Pleasures of Opium’ and ‘The Pains of Opium’; the sections that make up the second half of the *Confessions*. While the ‘PC’ is populated by action—episodes in which De Quincey *does things*—the later sections are marked by a

definitive turn inward. There is little in the way of action, and much more attention is paid to De Quincey's thoughts, his dreams, and his emotions—no longer *active*, but instead, *retroactive* and introspective.

In addition to borrowing this overarching structure, which we have already become familiar with in Wordsworth's poetry, De Quincey also makes use of narrative tropes established by the *Bildungsroman* and fictive life-writing more generally; the self-emancipated runaway stands on par with the orphan (or indeed the idealist) who, extricated from parental or other authoritative influence, has cleared a space for their own self-invention. While De Quincey deploys the trope expertly, there is little sense of the character that emerges from these formative experiences. Indeed, it is not until the later sections of his *Confessions* that his identity is clearly formulated. Instead, the 'PC' leaves upon the reader a lasting impression in the form of an absence—the loss of Ann, which De Quincey claims, has been his 'heaviest affliction', and potentially the loss of some irretrievable part of himself (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 34).

Sublime Personas

I want to take pause before relating the later sections of De Quincey's *Confessions* to this initial episode, and in doing so provide some useful context. In his 'Dreams and the Unconscious in Coleridge and De Quincey' (1993) Daniel Roberts provides some insight into the formative influences that actively shaped the persona De Quincey would adopt within the later sections of his *Confessions*. In a series of early journal entries, made at approximately the time at which De Quincey had ended his stint on the streets of

London and reconciled with his guardians, he records a fantasy in which he imagines looking 'through a glass' and there finds 'a man in the dim and shadowy perspective and (as it were) in a dream. [...] a man darkly wonderful—above the beings of this world;' (De Quincey; quoted in Roberts, 1993, 91). A further entry made just four days later (May 9, 1803) retraces this initial fantasy, though now it is more clearly an attempt to decide upon a suitable persona:

'What shall be my character? I have been thinking this afternoon—wild—impetuous—*splendidly* sublime? dignified—melancholy—*gloomily* sublime? or shrouded in mystery—supernatural—like the 'ancient Mariner'—*awfully* sublime? (Ibid.).

In addition to identifying the object of his fantasy as himself, this passage also indicates, by way of the 'ancient Mariner', the figure of Coleridge as the prototype for his own identity. A third entry in his diary, made on June 1st of the same year, solidifies Coleridge as the principle figure on which De Quincey hopes to model himself: 'I walk home thinking of *Coleridge*;—am in transports of love and admiration for him [...] go to bed—still thinking of Coleridge who strikes me (as I believe he always did) with a resemblance to my mysterious character' (Ibid., 92).

These diary fragments go some way in providing us with an understanding of the persona that De Quincey was working to fashion, or appropriate, in his formative years. And not surprisingly, it coheres with the persona he adopts in the later sections of his *Confessions*: the opium addicted dreamer, who lives in the solitude of the Lake District, imagining cities and scenes from the Orient whilst reading German Idealism and pondering gothic esoteria. Who might one so describe? Surely the answer is Coleridge. The question then arises: in what way does representing himself as a Coleridge by

another name forward De Quincey's attempt at self-invention? Surely, by giving an account of himself in the form of Coleridge, De Quincey is operating under the aegis of influence, rather than any genuinely inventive force.

Mary Jean Corbett provides us with a potential solution to this apparent contradiction. Corbett's exploration of Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* and William Wordsworth's *Prelude* establishes a model of authorship constituted by the relationship between authors and readers as mediated by the literary marketplace. In doing so she argues that, for figures like Wordsworth and Carlyle, 'authorial identity is not determined by the marketplace but is rather a function of conditions internal to the self' and further, that 'writing autobiography becomes a way of attaining both literary legitimacy and a desired subjectivity' (Corbett, 1992, 11).⁴⁷ De Quincey, then, seems to occupy a liminal position between these two claims. On one hand, by donning the all too recognizable persona of Coleridge, and making use of the 'confessional' sub-genre of autobiographical writing, it would appear that De Quincey 'authorial identity' *is*, to this extent, *determined by* the marketplace rather than being a function of conditions internal to the self, insofar as it is the former that provides him the conditions for his recognition as a 'true author'. On the other hand, De Quincey seems to use the latitude afforded him (within the literary marketplace) by the all too recognizable persona of Coleridge, as well as the

⁴⁷ Corbett describes the means by which 'authorship' could be legitimized in terms of 'vocation' which is posited 'as a worthy, honorable vocation for the middle-class man; the end of each writer's "apprenticeship" is the production of the work which verifies the authenticity of his calling and the particularity of his "genius," and the process by which this end is achieved is represented in the autobiographical text' (Corbett, 1992, 11). See also Paul Hamilton's more recent article on 'Romanticism and poetic autonomy' in which he analyses the relationship between critics and the poets who attempted to dictate the parameters against which their own work would be judged (Hamilton, 2009).

growing demand for salacious and confessional literature, as a means by which to attain literary legitimacy and to be recognized in accordance with his own desires.

Understood in these terms, the guise of Coleridge provides De Quincey with the means by which to be recognized as an author. This appropriation, however, has consequences that only become apparent when De Quincey begins to question the generative power of the imagination and dreams that had acted to ground the kind of self-invention practiced by Wordsworth. In *The Excursion*, for example, Wordsworth provides a vivid description of his imagination's power to create a 'mighty city without end':

The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn from wondrous depth,
Far sinking into splendor—without end!⁴⁸

It was in this very poetic imagining that De Quincey would find echoes of his own experience of reverie: "With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams' (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 70). The 'endless growth' of De Quincey's dream 'architecture', however, is not *productive*. Instead, De Quincey's conception of the dream appears only capable of re-presenting the subjectivity of the dreamer:

He whose talk is of oxen, will probably dream of oxen: and the condition of human life, which yokes so vast a majority to a daily experience incompatible with much elevation of thought, often times neutralizes the tone of grandeur in the reproductive faculty of dreaming (De Quincey, 2013 [1845], 81).⁴⁹

⁴⁸ (Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, 834-51, ii, quoted in De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 70-1).

⁴⁹ This quotation is taken from De Quincey's *Suspiria de Profundis* (1845), though a nearly identical passage is contained in his earlier *Confessions*: 'If a man 'whose talk is of oxen,' should

As a merely 'reproductive faculty', dreaming is no longer to be regarded as a privileged window, or synthetic facilitator, that would allow one access to the sublime or the numinous. In this regard De Quincey's conception of the unconscious, as articulated through dreams and imagination, come to more closely resemble Freud's, which is no longer to be accorded the absolute powers it had been endowed with by Coleridge. Indeed, where he had hoped to find a lamp, De Quincey resigns himself to 'the mirrors of the sleeping mind' in whose shadowy reflection 'the brain is haunted' (De Quincey, 82, 81). We can already begin to observe the deterioration of the paradigm of self-invention relative to Wordsworth and Coleridge's conception of the imagination. By finding in dreams, one of the principle sites of imaginative experience, a mere reproduction of his past, De Quincey's *Confessions* turn decisively from the pursuit of self-invention to that of self-justification and self-explanation.

The implications of the dream as reproductive, yet still infinite, have torturous implications for De Quincey. The image of the once placid waters that occupied his dream thoughts now turns to a tumultuous upheaval of ghostly apparitions from his past:

[N]ow it was that upon the rocking waters of the ocean the human face began to appear: the sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens: faces, imploring, wrathful, despairing, surged upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations, by centuries:—my agitation was infinite,—my mind tossed—and surged with the ocean (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 71-2).

The bad infinities of De Quincey's dreams recall Edmund Burke's writing on the same subject in his *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*

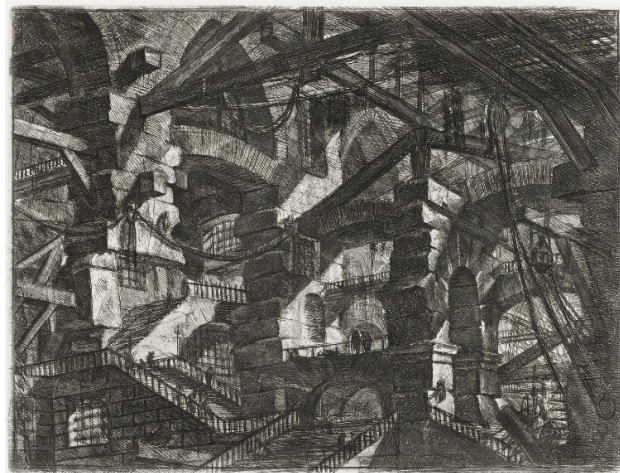
become an Opium-eater, the probability is, that (if he is not too dull to dream at all)—he will dream about oxen...' (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 6).

(1757).⁵⁰ Burke relates the experience of infinity to a ‘sort of delightful horror’, one that he illustrates by comparing it to the resounding echoes of hammers that persist ‘in the imagination long after the first sounds have ceased to affect it’ (Burke, 1958 [1757], 73).

Burke amplifies this initial example with recourse to the madman, in whom the repetition may persist for

whole days and nights, sometimes whole years, in the constant repetition of some remark, some plaint, or song; which having struck powerfully on their disordered imagination, in the beginning of their phrensy, every repetition reinforces it with new strength; and the hurry of their spirits, unrestrained by the curb of reason, continues it to the end of their lives (Ibid., 74).

For De Quincey, the promise of the imagination that loomed so large in the writings of his predecessors, is found wanting in his own experience. Instead, the turn inward that his laudanum habit had so exquisitely facilitated would become a tether and rather than aiding the creative powers of imagination, results in what Jill Rubenstein has termed ‘the curse of subjectivity’ (Rubenstein, 1973, 72). In particular, Rubenstein relates De



—Giovanni Battista Piranesi,
Carceri Series, Plate XIV, 1745—

Quincey’s obsession with the

engravings of Giovanni Battista Piranesi—which depict vast Gothic halls containing innumerable staircases leading nowhere to his own ‘subjective consciousness’ that is ‘hopelessly seeking to transcend itself’ (Ibid.).

⁵⁰ De Quincey was acquainted with Burke’s treatise and Kant’s later treatment of it in the first introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*; both of which were foundational texts for English Romanticism.

As his dreams transform from the sublime Coleridgean eroticism of ‘pleasure-domes’ and the ‘deep romantic chasm’ of Xanadu to the nightmarish repetition of traumatic memories, De Quincey becomes increasingly haunted by his past (Coleridge, 2009 [1798], 31).

Those vast clouds of gloomy grandeur which overhung my dreams at all stages of opium, but which grew into the darkest of miseries in the last, and that haunting of the human face, which latterly towered into a curse—were they not partly derived from childish experience? (De Quincey, 2013 [1845], 86).

In the sequel to *Confessions—Suspiria de Profundis* (1845)—De Quincey endeavors to locate the origins of his suffering by tracing the recurrent and haunting imagery of his dreams back to ‘the earliest incidents in [his] life which affected [him] so deeply as to be rememberable at this day’ (Ibid., 90). The twin episodes with which *Suspiria de Profundis* begins are indicative of the return to childhood as a means by which to explain the trajectory of one’s life. De Quincey begins by describing the Edenic innocence and safety of his childhood:

That blessing had we, being neither too high nor too low; high enough we were to see models of good manners; obscure enough to be left in the sweetest of solitudes. [...] we had no motives for shame, we had none for pride (Ibid.).

This picture of innocence and solitude soon comes to an abrupt end and is followed by a series of episodes in which De Quincey locates the transformation of his consciousness. These later episodes mark De Quincey’s initial encounters with finitude (via the death of his sisters),⁵¹ and with personal responsibility—as related through his own enigmatic memories of his sister Jane who was punished ‘brutally’ by a servant (Ibid., 91). It is in the

⁵¹ De Quincey also recalls, in this vein, the death of his maternal grandmother and a favorite bird, ‘a kingfisher that had been injured by accident’, as well as the death of a young boy roughly his own age (Ibid., 91-2).

wake of these twin episodes that De Quincey states: '[h]enceforward the character of my thoughts must have changed greatly;' never again could he return to that 'silent garden' in which he had been protected 'from all knowledge of poverty, or oppression, or outrage' (Ibid.).

What began as an attempt at self-invention, through the trope of the orphan / runaway, and the generative powers of imagination, is ultimately confounded by De Quincey's inability to escape these first traumatic memories. In recounting his initial encounter with punishment—one that is decidedly unjust in his opinion—De Quincey's account recalls Rousseau's—'Carnifax! carnifax! carnifax!' the cries of two young boys seized with 'indignation and rage' (Rousseau, 1954 [1781], 30). In recounting a similar ordeal, Rousseau feels his 'pulse beat faster once more':

I shall always remember that time if I live to be a thousand. That first meeting with violence and injustice has remained so deeply engraved on my heart that any thought which recalls it summons back this first emotion. [...] There ended the serenity of my childish life. From that moment I never again enjoyed pure happiness, and even to-day I am conscious that memory of childhood's delights stops short at that point. [...] We lived as are told the first man lived in the earthly paradise, but we no longer enjoyed it; in appearance our situation was unchanged, but in reality it was an entirely different kind of existence. [...] we were less ashamed of wrongdoing, and more afraid of being caught (Ibid., 30-31).

The ubiquity of the fall from Edenic innocence, plenitude and the natural that we have seen in Wordsworth, De Quincey and Rousseau, in and through which the mind becomes forever impressed by the coordination of action and responsibility, closely parallels the birth of conscience put forward in Nietzsche's *On The Genealogy of Morals*. Therein our status as reflective and responsible agents results from an accusation, which implicates the subject in a judicial scene—'Punishment' claims Nietzsche, 'is the making of a memory' (Nietzsche, 1989, 80). De Quincey falls prey to the very same coordination

of cause and effect that Nietzsche would attribute to the birth of the conscience, which displaces the self from the center of its own creation and relocates the cause of the self in factors external to itself (see Nietzsche, 1969, 84). In the wake of accounts such as these, the spirit of self-invention begins to fade and is replaced with an emphasis on the empirical conditions of subject formation which concomitantly instigate the disappearance of the imaginative, the poetic and the idiosyncratic, in favor of a form of self-justification that resembles a kind of actuarial accounting of the self.

De Quincey's *Confessions* may not entirely satisfy what is to be expected of a work bearing such a title. However, his attempt to self-author, or indeed to invent himself, ultimately falls prey to the justificatory principals of *apologia*, if not confession properly speaking. As De Quincey searches his past for the origins of his suffering, he only enters more deeply into the determinative hold to which such an activity commits one. As Judith Butler reminds us: 'telling a story about oneself is not the same as giving an account of oneself. [...] [B]ut a narrative that responds to allegation must, from the outset, accept the possibility that the self has causal agency, even if, in a given instance, the self may not have been the cause of the suffering in question' (Butler, 2005, 12). For De Quincey, then, the attempt to answer the initiating question: 'How came any reasonable being to subject himself to such a yoke of misery, voluntarily to incur a captivity so servile, and knowingly to fetter himself with such a seven-fold chain?' (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 6) results in an ever-deepening search for his origin, and the origins of his suffering. Ostensibly, De Quincey's *Confessions* and his later *Suspiria de Profundis* share a variety of preoccupations with Freud's later *Interpretation of Dreams*. They are all concerned with the psychological processes underlying dreams and memory and

the ways in which they might bear meaning for the individual to whom they belong. Additionally, both of them are drawn into the complex, and oft contradictory, positions on these that are implicated from a commitment to their exploration in terms of their empirical ‘reality’ in parallel with their alternate status as more abstract, even metaphysical, systems whose regularities and laws might be determined. In Freud’s dream book, it is untangling the mass of crossed wires that constitute the associative register of the unconscious which emerges in the foreground as the ‘true reality of the psyche’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 405). De Quincey, however, finds it immensely difficult to find any identifiable means by which to separate these two pursuits, resulting in the conflation of what we might term psychical reality and its empirical equivalent.

It would, however, be a mistake to view Freud as entirely unsympathetic to the route pursued by De Quincey. In his ‘History of an Infantile Neurosis’ (1918 [1914])—or the ‘Wolf Man’ case study—Freud presents two alternate ways to understand the ‘primal scene’ to which his patient’s infantile neurosis has been traced. These alternatives mirror the distinction between empirical and ‘imaginary’ (or psychical reality), that we have already opposed. While Freud is intent on arguing for the former, which he regards as providing a more certain explanation—‘I should myself be glad to know whether the primal scene in my present patient’s case was a phantasy or a real experience’—ultimately, Freud will concede ‘that the answer to this question is not in fact a matter of very great importance’ (Freud, 1918, 97). Why, then, is the answer to this question not a matter of great importance? Surely it is for De Quincey. The answer to *this* question, as pertains to the distinction I am trying to make here between De Quincey and Freud’s alternate conceptions of the relation between psychical and empirical reality, depends

upon the way in which we regard responsibility. De Quincey's aim is to locate the source of his suffering in an event or agent external to himself and, in doing so, to relieve himself of responsibility for his suffering. By framing things this way, however, De Quincey conflates the epistemic and the ethical registers of responsibility. In Freud, responsibility emerges in different ways in accordance with these two registers. There is, on one hand, an ethically inert kind of reflexive responsibility understood in terms of cause and effect as they are implicated, for example, in the functioning of the 'psychical apparatus' that does not implicate the self as a *responsible* agent. On the other hand, there is another kind of reflective responsibility that is intimately tied to the self, insofar as it is responsible for engaging with 'the real tasks' of life as opposed to becoming engrossed in phantasy. Freud introduces *this* kind of responsibility, however, only at the end of analysis, because it is only then—after the patient's unconscious phantasies have been raised to consciousness and elucidated—that they can be expected to act responsibly:

We should then say to the patient: 'Very well, then; your neurosis proceeded *as though* you had received these impressions and spun them out in your childhood. You will see, of course, that that is out of the question. They were products of your imagination which were intended to divert you from the real tasks that lay before you. Let us now enquire what these tasks were, and what lines of communication ran between them and your phantasies' (Freud, 1918, 50).

On this view, the retreat to the past in search of causes, of origins, of responsibility, is an attempt to shirk one's responsibilities in the present. As Mary Jacobus observes:

Ann's wandering on the London streets and De Quincey's never-ending quest for her become a metaphor for his own attempt to recover the past through memory. The retrospective and confessional movement of autobiography is De Quincey's primary addiction, which is also the compulsion of autobiography to repeat (Jacobus, 1989, 224-5).

Indeed, the figure of Ann and the impression that she leaves, if only in the form of an absence—that ‘heaviest affliction’ (De Quincey, 2013 [1821], 34)—is retroactively displaced as De Quincey searches for the origin of his suffering. This return to the past is, paradoxically, both an attempt to locate the origin of De Quincey as a responsible agent, and an attempt to recuse himself from responsibility, i.e. to locate the origin of his suffering in an other, thereby disallowing the possibility of its resolution within himself—that is, in terms of his own psychic life. In this way, De Quincey’s return to the past becomes a sustained exercise in self-deception as much as it is a self-justification—a ‘plaidoyer’ and an ‘autopseust’ indeed.

In his attempt to replicate the results of Wordsworth’s radical autogenesis, De Quincey’s autobiographical experiments led him to formulate a subjectivity that is both responsible and instrumentally committed to a causally determined self-understanding. Indicatively, Wordsworth’s retrospection was guided by the elementary principle of pleasure and sought to restore the joyous experiences of childhood to his adult self by tracing pleasure in and through those epiphanic experiences preserved in memory. Alternately, both De Quincey and Mill’s engagements with childhood were instigated by suffering and the hope that determining or locating its cause would explain, if not alleviate, it. Joy and suffering, or pleasure and pain, then, engender rather different comportments to one’s past. The former underwrites the aim of reuniting the self with a pre-alienated consciousness associated with experiences of youthful joy; alternately, the latter endeavors to decouple the self from the sources of its suffering but must first identify, by remembering, the traumatic source of such suffering. In this regard, the attempt to escape trauma becomes thwarted by the repetitive practice of recollection by

which one seeks to pinpoint and master it. Later, the same problematic will emerge as a central thread in the development of psychoanalytic theory and technique, which would, however, seek its resolution through what Freud would call ‘working through’ and ultimately, forgetting. In the following section, which concludes this chapter, I discuss Carlyle’s critique of autobiography, which among other things, champions the abandonment of precisely the retrospective preoccupations that have decisively marked the autobiographical texts we have so far examined.

Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus*: The Masked Self and Auto-critique

If there is an activity which has to constitute one of the first levels among the innumerable human activities, it must be that of *disguise*’ (Leiris, 2015 [1930], 68).

In a playful letter, dated August 13th 1874, the young Sigmund Freud wrote to his friend Eduard Silberstein: ‘To be paper is the common property and also the common destiny of all books’ (Freud, 1990[1874], 49). Though perhaps not all books. Freud goes on to single out some exceptions: ‘The books which I [am reading] deserve this fate so little that they might as well be engraved in bronze’ (Ibid.). Two of these deserving, or indeed underserving, books point towards familiar intellectual influences on the classically educated and scientifically minded Freud: Aristotle’s *Ethica Nicomachaea*, and Helmholtz’s *Populäre Wissenschaftliche Vorträge*. The third, Thomas Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus*, is perhaps more surprising, and for our own purposes a welcome inclusion. Welcome because Freud’s reference to this text reminds us that although it is not

necessary to draw explicit connections between the writings with which we are currently occupied and Freud, it would be a mistake to ignore his familiarity with many of the intellectual currents under consideration in this chapter. As we have already seen, Freud is not only an enthusiastic reader of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, but an equally unenthusiastic reader of J.S. Mill's *Autobiography*.

Freud's excitement is palpable when introducing his friend Silberstein to Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*. Certainly there is something uncanny for Freud in this book, written by a Scot, yet with the 'sparkle' of Jean Paul Richter. Indeed, Carlyle's grasp of the German language, as well as those poets and philosophers who wrote in it, has depth enough that his playful reflections thereon are much appreciated by the young Freud, who marvels at more than the double entendre and witticisms through which Carlyle communicates.

Under all these funny names⁵², however, lies a profound wisdom, and the motley scraps of folly cover the open sores of mankind and of the tale's hero. What we are told about the philosophy of clothes is part parody and part witty reflection, which starts from the assumption that clothes are a representation of the manifest and "physical, behind which the spiritual hides in shame" (Freud, 1990 [1874], 49-50).

The young Freud's appreciation for the stratification of meaning, particularly that which 'hides in shame' below the 'manifest'—a remarkable foreshadowing of things to come—is already evident here. As Freud's comments make clear, *Sartor* is a text that plays with the hidden dimensions of writing and speech, but perhaps more significantly, it is a text that also hides its seriousness behind a playful façade—again, foreshadowing the dynamics of

⁵² Freud is referencing the many proper and place names used within *Sartor Resartus*, many of which are meant as insider jokes to the few English readers capable of reading German, e.g. *Teufelsdröckh*, devil's shit; *Weissnichtwo*, who knows where; *Heuschrecke*, grasshopper; *Entepfuhl*, duck puddle etc.

censorship that will become so instrumental for Freud nearly a quarter of a century later. For the time being, let us leave the young Freud's literary infatuation behind and turn to the place this text occupies relative to the other examples we have discussed.

In particular, my discussion of *Sartor Resartus* centers upon the critique it levels against earlier auto/biographical writings by presenting itself as a hyper-inflated parody of them. In this sense, Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* presents a model of autobiographical self-representation that does not clearly fit into the earlier paradigm of imaginative self-invention, nor does it appear to square neatly with the later model of self-justification exemplified in the *Autobiography* of J.S. Mill. Carlyle is, however, deeply concerned with the kind of self-concealment that we have already seen in both Mill and De Quincey. In Carlyle's writing, however, the kind of concealment and appropriation we found at work elsewhere is amplified to such an extent that the possibility of identifying any coherent or authentic self is foreclosed—in place of which one finds only a multitude of false selves.

To begin with, *Sartor* may indeed be read as a sustained criticism of early 19th century auto/biographical writings. As Paul Jay claims: 'While Wordsworth's poem is in its way an experiment [in the tradition of intellectual autobiography], it remained for Carlyle to launch in *Sartor* a full-scale critique of it' (Jay, 1984, 94). In an earlier essay titled 'Characteristics' Carlyle took aim at '[t]he memory of that first state of Freedom and paradisiac Unconsciousness', the enabling principle of Wordsworth's autogenesis, which, he claims, 'has faded away into an ideal poetic dream' (Carlyle, 1940 [1831], 187). In *Sartor Resartus*, Carlyle broadens the scope of his attack: 'High air castles are cunningly built out of Words, the Words well bedded also in good Logic-mortar; wherein, however, no Knowledge will come to lodge' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 43). Both the

limitless potential of the poetic imagination, and the philosophical currents in which it was rooted, were now under full assault. The central figure of Carlyle's *Sartor*, the enigmatic Diogenes Teufelsdröckh (roughly, 'god-born devil-shit')—a German Professor of 'Things in General' and the author of a remarkable work of transcendental philosophy titled *Clothes, Their Origin and Influence*—reminds us that Carlyle was intent on satirizing the literary traditions of autobiography, as well as its relation to the tradition of German Idealism.

While *Sartor* is often approached as an autobiography, it would be a mistake to read *Sartor* as offering either a coherent account of Teufelsdröckh, or indeed, as doing so via the singular avenue of narrative reportage. Writing to James Fraser, Carlyle characterized the manuscript as a 'Satirical Extravaganza on Things in General' that would 'astonish most that read it, [and] be wholly understood by very few' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833], 227, 228). The layers of deception by which Carlyle constructs this text are best broached, to begin with, by examining its formal structure. *Sartor* is divided between three books, the first and last of which are presented as excerpts of Teufelsdröckh's philosophy of clothes with accompanying commentary provided by the seemingly incompetent Editor; while the second book is presented as a series of auto/biographical episodes concerning the life of Teufelsdröckh. This kind of parallel treatment had already become a common practice when Carlyle began writing *Sartor*. In point of fact, Carlyle was a seasoned practitioner of it, having written various 'life and works' articles for

periodicals on figures such as Schiller, Goethe, Jean Paul Richter and Robert Burns.⁵³

The relationship between life and work becomes increasingly problematized within *Sartor*, forming a perplexing hermeneutic circle that proves untenable in the hands of the inept Editor.

While recognizing that it is Teufelsdröckh who emerges as the protagonist of *Sartor Resartus*, we must place equal emphasis on the role played by the Editor.⁵⁴ At the close of Book I Carlyle's fictional Editor is at his wits end, finding himself incapable of explicating Teufelsdröckh's philosophy for his readers, let alone comprehending it himself. Out of desperation the Editor seeks out Hofrath Heuschrecke ('councillor grasshopper'), an intermediary between himself and Teufelsdröckh, in the hope of obtaining some biographical information that might shed light on Teufelsdröckh's enigmatic philosophy of clothes. In framing things this way, Carlyle draws our attention to the presupposition of such a request, i.e. that knowledge of an individual's life is a means to, if not equivalent to, understanding their work. The Editor's request is met with enthusiasm by Heuschrecke, who responds by passing on a fragmentary autobiography that has been supplied by Teufelsdröckh himself:

And now let the sympathizing reader judge of our feeling when, in place of this same Autobiography with "fullest insight," we find—Six considerable PAPER-

⁵³ The specific form of biography to which I am referring is what is generally known as the 'intellectual biography' which, as Wayne Shumaker explains, aims to describe 'the origin of the author's ideas and the genesis of each of his works' (Shumaker, 1954, 26).

⁵⁴ Vanessa Ryan has made a compelling case for the reading of *Sartor* as a sort of rebuttal and sustained mockery of J.W. Croker's 1831 edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* in particular (see Ryan, 2003); on this reading, the Editor of Teufelsdröckh's philosophy of clothes acts as a stand in for Croker, who Carlyle had lambasted in his review of the newly published edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (see Carlyle, 1940 [1832], 1-64). Though, it is perhaps best to acknowledge that like Teufelsdröckh himself, it is impossible to separate one mask from another; Carlyle from the Editor, Teufelsdröckh from Carlyle etc.

BAGS, carefully sealed, and marked successively, in gilt China-ink, with the symbols of the Six southern Zodiacal Signs, beginning at Libra; in the inside of which sealed Bags, lie miscellaneous masses of Sheets, and oftener Shreds and Snips, written in Professor Teufelsdröckh's scarce-legible *cursive-schrift*; and treating of all imaginable things under the Zodiac and above it, but of his own personal history only at rare intervals, and then in the most enigmatic manner! [...] On certain sheets stand Dreams, authentic or not, while the circumjacent waking Actions are omitted. Anecdotes, oftenest without date of place or time, fly loosely on separate slips, like Sibylline leaves. Interspersed also are long purely Autobiographical delineations, yet without connexion, without recognizable coherence; so unimportant, so superfluously minute... (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 60-61).

For a time it would seem that the Editor's confusion is only intensified when faced with the contents of Teufelsdröckh's labyrinthine autobiography; resulting in the declaration that no autobiography of Teufelsdröckh can be 'gleaned here: *at most a sketchy, shadowy, fugitive likeness of him may, by unheard-of efforts, partly of intellect partly of imagination [...] rise up between them*' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 61).

To the reader's surprise, what emerges from the Editor's grappling with these 'Six considerable PAPER-BAGS' is a remarkably coherent autobiography; one that neatly pieces together the most familiar themes and narrative arcs of the Romantic tradition. The Editor's rearrangement of Teufelsdröckh's raw materials yields episodes that include an origin story (the infant Teufelsdröckh is delivered to his foster parents by a 'mysterious' and 'noble-looking Stranger'), an 'Idyllic' childhood (spent in harmonious commune with the plenitude of nature), an arduous passage into the world of social conventions and punishment,⁵⁵ a tragic romance (Teufelsdröckh falls in love with the beautiful Blumine only to be thwarted in his courtship by his closest friend), and finally a

⁵⁵ Teufelsdröckh attends the Hinterschlag ('slap behind') school where the primary means of education is 'the appliance of birch rods' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 82).

sort of spiritual conversion (which proceeds through the stages of ‘The Everlasting No’, ‘The Centre of Indifference’, and finally ‘The Everlasting Yea’).

As one might expect, numerous commentators have performed the task of sifting through the details of book II in the hope of linking them with Carlyle’s own life—and to the surprise of none, they have found many. However, problematizing the distinction between fiction and fact is itself strategic—for Carlyle is intent on demonstrating that these two enterprises are ontologically inseparable; hence all life-writing is to be considered ‘*partly of intellect partly of imagination*’ (Carlyle, 2008 [1833–4], 61). The entanglement between the two becomes all the more apparent to the reader when they are forced to recognize the incongruity between Teufelsdröckh’s scattered and enigmatic autobiography, and the remarkably coherent biographical narrative the Editor derives therefrom. As such, the reader is put in the awkward position of having to square this circle, but how?

The answer to this predicament is provided through the ironic commentary of Teufelsdröckh himself. Teufelsdröckh’s criticizes the biographical presupposition—that equates life events with the totality of the self—by calling into question the primary connection that stands between the philosophy of clothes and its author—*his name*.

The Name is the earliest Garment you wrap round the Earth-visiting ME; to which it thenceforth cleaves [...] Not only all common Speech, but Science, Poetry itself is no other, if thou consider it, than a right *Naming* (Carlyle, 2008 [1833–4], 67–8).

Teufelsdröckh sardonically flaunts the naïve naturalistic perspective that would treat the name as that which provides an accurate and essential representation of the individual it

designates, while at once marking out and determining the course of their life.⁵⁶ The point is made all the more plain when Teufelsdröckh jests that '[i]n a very plain sense the Proverb says, *Call one a thief and he will steal*; in an almost similar sense, may we not perhaps say, *Call one Diogenes Teufelsdröckh and he will open the Philosophy of Clothes*' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 68). This comment receives ever renewed poignancy over the course of subsequent pages as Teufelsdröckh is deemed: 'The Professor of Things in General', 'The Solitary Walker', 'The Wanderer', 'A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening infinitude', 'The Traveler', 'The inexorable Teufelsdröckh', 'Poor Teufelsdröckh', 'our Autobiographer', 'our Professor', 'The Son of Time', 'a pretended man', 'a Seer', 'the born of Heaven', 'the Wandering Jew, Everlasting', 'a German Professor, of unequalled learning and acumen' and so on...

In the face of this ever-expanding list of monikers, masks and appropriated narratives, the reader begins to recognize the significance of what Teufelsdröckh has said from the very start. That one's name and other emblems of identity, such as one's clothing, must sometimes be retailed in order to suit the demands of one's present situation. This is of course the meaning, and the call to action implicated in Carlyle's enigmatic title *Sartor Resartus*, or 'The Tailor Retailed'. In this sense, Carlyle's position implies the subordination of identity conceived in terms of knowledge, to identity instrumentally conceived, i.e. as a means to an end. In this regard, Carlyle may be viewed as stripping the epistemic edifice from the model of self-invention by emphasizing its

⁵⁶ See also Carlyle's later commentary in 'Natural Supernatural' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 193-202) wherein he returns to the same kind of naïve naturalism as it appears in our reliance on the 'right naming' of which sciences consist.

necessarily fictive character, while at the same time championing its utility as an invention that might allow one to *do things*.

In this sense, *Sartor* may be viewed as a response to the crisis of identity that has come to be associated with the rise of industrialism in the 19th century, which deprived the individual of traditional sources of identity such as family and vocation. The tailor is an exemplary figure in this regard, for their art reminds us that identity must be constructed rather than received or discovered. '[T]he Tailor' claims Carlyle's Teufelsdröckh, 'is not only a Man, but something of a Creator or Divinity' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 219). Still, the tailor's lofty position as a 'Creator or Divinity' is not recognized; and it is in the hope that they might be that Teufelsdröckh sets out to write his philosophy of clothes, the inspiration for which stems from his youthful travels in Edinburgh where he once observed a sign announcing the local tailor as 'Breeches-Maker to his Majesty'. This notice is accompanied by 'Effigies of a Pair of Leather Breeches, and between the knees these memorable words, SIC ITUR AD ASTRA' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 220).

It was in this high moment, when the soul, rent, as it were, and shed asunder, is open to inspiring influence, that I first conceived this Work on Clothes; the greatest I can ever hope to do; which has already, after long retardations, occupied, and will yet occupy, so large a section of my Life (Ibid.).

In this final utterance of Teufelsdröckh we are forced to reconsider the relation between life and work that had so far been made to appear as distinct, while also grounding the Editor's hermeneutic activities.

The scene described above is palpably absurd, even laughable when compared to the poignancy with which such inspirational or epiphanic events are depicted in

Wordsworth. One cannot help but chuckle at the thought of a person dedicating their life to the pursuit of a thought initiated by the chance observation of a sign featuring some trousers emblazoned with the Latin maxim: thus one journeys to the stars! And yet, the patent absurdity of this scene masks a more serious point. So many of life's occurrences might appear significant if we choose to lay such weight upon them. Such is the joke for Carlyle; such is the dilemma faced by anyone who would seek to explain the work one produces in life, indeed, the meaning of one's life, by relating it to the often arbitrary and sometimes absurd events by which such a life is constituted. For Teufelsdröckh, his life, conceived as separable from his work—that is, as a series of events whose relation resides on the mere fact of his being subject to them—is but a collection of 'Shreds and Snips' contained in 'Six considerable PAPER-BAGS'. But of course, as Teufelsdröckh's comments make apparent, his own conception of life is one that is ineluctably bound up in his works.

In this way Carlyle argues for the subordination of the self to work. This alteration in the traditional avenues by which one approaches their existential situation is at the core of Carlyle's writings both in and beyond its performative expression in *Sartor*. The final twist, by which Carlyle leaves his reader's head spinning, is the insinuation that the Editor and Teufelsdröckh may in fact be one and the same. This, of course, has the effect of doubling down on the already dizzying array of deceptions deployed by Carlyle throughout the text. By reduplicating the uneasy distinction that stood between Carlyle and his writing, and in relation to the internal reality of the text, the reader is forced to recognize the seams that hold together this patchwork autobiography.

If Wordsworth's method was one of re-collection that insisted upon the capacity of the mind to synthetically bind the fragments time had torn asunder into a unitary self, Carlyle emphatically denies that any such self can be represented, let alone realized: 'well at ease are the Sleepers for whom Existence is a shallow Dream' (Carlyle, 2008 [1833-4], 223). Carlyle holds that both the intellectual approach to the self, e.g. Mill, and its imaginary imaginary-poetic counterpart, e.g. Wordsworth, are distractions that seek either explanation or nostalgia in the past rather being concerned with the self's present existential situation. Moreover, Carlyle reframes self-invention and self-explanation as equally comprised of selective appropriations—or, indeed, the editorializing of the self undertaken in the vain hope that one can manage to find meaning in the contingent events of their past. Indeed, if Wordsworth's attempt to reinvent himself through poetic activity is premised on the return to nature, or indeed one's own nature, the path illuminated by Carlyle has its roots in the mythological plights of Narcissus and Sisyphus, rather than the Biblical plenitude of Eden. In Carlyle, the seductive and illusionary sense of coherence that one experiences through their identification with any form of self-representation must be regarded with the utmost suspicion. Doing so, however, does not mean engaging in prolonged self-examination—that way lies the hall of mirrors of which Carlyle takes the self to be constructed, which draws one ineluctably into the same bad infinities to which De Quincey falls prey. Instead, Carlyle's satirical treatment of the *Bildung* tradition is meant as a call to action, and a provocation to forgo retrospection: 'Happy men are full of the present,' writes Carlyle, 'for its bounty suffices them; and the wise men also, for its duties engage them' (Carlyle, 1950 [1829], 223). Carlyle's turn away from self-reflection or analysis is a denouncement of retrospection and the

epistemic treatment of the self that is at the heart of so many autobiographical writings. As such, Carlyle does not advocate for a return to the past, imaginary or empirical, personal or collective, but instead a return to the present from which so many romantic authors had fled. For it is in engaging with the present through work, thought Carlyle, that one could be rescued from the melancholia of the past.

In his rather anecdotal account of Carlyle, Jorge Luis Borges relates the overarching message of *Sartor Resartus* to Carlyle's Calvinist background, with which he maintains a connection even after losing his faith.

Carlyle had become an atheist; he did not believe in God. But the melancholy of Calvinism continued to haunt him even when he thought he had left it behind [...] Carlyle did not believe any human labor had any lasting value. He thought that anything aesthetic or intellectual man did was despicable and ephemeral. But at the same time he believed that the fact of working, the fact of doing something, even if that *thing* was despicable, was not despicable (Borges, 2013, 149).⁵⁷

If Carlyle's 'Characteristics' had been an assault on self-consciousness, his later treatise *Past and Present* (1843) represented an attempt to take the long defended citadel of self-knowledge by storm, and concomitantly, to champion the individual's immersion in work as the only means by which existential meaning might be achieved:

The latest Gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it. 'Know thyself;' long enough has that poor 'self of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to 'know' it, I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual; know what thou canst work at; and work at it, like a Hercules! That will be thy better plan (Carlyle, 1897 [1843], 269).

⁵⁷ This dimension of Carlyle work resonated both within and outside the Anglosphere in which it was composed. Perhaps the most enthusiastic reader of *Sartor Resartus* was Ralph Waldo Emerson, who ensured that the first non-serial publication of it was in the United States rather than Britain. The uptake of Carlyle's work is best characterized by the German anthology of his work published during the First World War, which was entitled *Arbeiten und nicht Verzweifeln* (*Work and Do Not Despair*).

The attempt to redirect the individual from the epistemic comportment to the self—which Carlyle identifies as the source of ‘Doubt, Desire, Sorrow, Remorse, Indignation, and Despair itself’ (Ibid., 270)—could not stand in starker contrast to the pronouncements with which Coleridge had contextualized the place of Wordsworth’s *Prelude* relative to their collective philosophical-poetic project: ‘the postulate of philosophy and at the same time the test of philosophic capacity, is no other than the heaven-descended Know thyself’ (Coleridge, 1983, I:252). As such, the *Prelude* was to satisfy, at least by Coleridge’s account, the initial phase of a broader project modeled upon the Socratic tradition, which took self-knowledge as the prerequisite for subsequent inquiry; it remained for Carlyle to denounce the project as a distraction from the present situation of the ‘unknowable individual’.

The tension that arises from Carlyle’s treatment of the relation between self-knowledge and work emerges most clearly in its later iterations as well as its absorption into a broader discursive network at the close the century. On one hand, the message that resounds throughout *Sartor Resartus*, that the human being is fundamentally a symbol-making animal (*homo symbolicus*), has the effect of lessening the divide between those entitled to self-definition and those who must tacitly accept the identity into which they are born. At very least it would appear to blur the boundaries that traditionally separated the poet (who works to produce meaning) from those who merely appropriate it. In *Sartor Resartus*, however, it is clear that these traditional boundaries are not being destroyed; instead the explanation on which they are predicated and maintained is simply being revised.

At a stroke the worker and the artist are put in the same category, for the symbolic imagination is no longer the prerogative of the artists. Nevertheless, there are degrees of adequacy. The great man is the one who, by experiencing within himself the failure of the old symbols, perceives that new symbols must be created. In that sense he is ahead of his society (Peckham, 1962, 185).

This ability to intuit the misalignment between one's self and one's socio-symbolic environment emerges as the mark of 'the great man' or of 'the hero' elsewhere in Carlyle's writings. The implications of such a revision are far reaching, though for our purposes their most significant effect concerning the development of 19th century autobiography was to broaden the scope in and through which the individual was to be evaluated: 'For, as I take it, Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here' (Carlyle, 1870 [1840], 3).⁵⁸ Identifying the degree to which the individual could navigate the narrow path that stood between genuine innovation and charlatanism required a world historical perspective against which they could be judged. As such, it is no wonder that Carlyle preferred to dwell in the wide-open spaces of biography and history rather than the intimate confines of the confessional or inventive autobiography.

Paradoxically, then, Carlyle champions the return to one's present existential situation, in which identity is conceived primarily in terms of its utility while, at the same time, radically destabilizing the self's relation to any unwavering set of values that might inform, and provide some surety, as it acts in the world. If, for Carlyle, personal history

⁵⁸ See also Carlyle's comments in his earlier essay 'On History': 'History is the essence of innumerable Biographies. But if one Biography, nay, our own Biography, study and recapitulate it as we may, remains in so many points unintelligible to us, how much more must these million, the very facts of which, to say nothing of the purport of them, we know not, and cannot know!' (Carlyle, 1940 [1830], 82).

cannot provide the basis for self-knowledge, conceived as the first principle of ethics, then one must turn instead to world history for vindication. However, by framing it in this way, Carlyle transfers the eschatological principle of 'judgment day' into the register of world history, while at the same time dissolving the bond between the self and its judgment in the 'after life'. Not only is judgment, and therefore responsibility, deferred by defining them in terms of world history, but by severing the self from its redemption in a religious eschatology the experiencing subject is equally severed from any kind of direct responsibility for either its bodily self or its soul.

The most obvious point of contact between the view advanced by Carlyle and Freud can be found in *Moses and Monotheism*, where the intellectualism, asceticism and ethical attributes of Judaism are located in guilt consciousness—defined as the latent guilt for a crime that is empirically enigmatic and yet prehistorically assumed. Here, as in other places, Freud forwards an ethical position defined by self-suspicion: the question is not how one's actions will be judged by God, or else by historians. Instead, Freud frames ethics in terms of a kind of guilt that is presumed but not self-evident, one that instigates, rather than forgoes, self-examination, precisely because 'our intellect very easily goes astray without any warning, and that nothing is more easily believed by us than what, without reference to the truth, comes to meet our wishful illusions' (Freud, 1939, 129). What is at stake here, however, is not the way in which Freud will formulate the self, and the ethical framework to which its activities are beholden. More germane to the arguments I am making are the ways in which Carlyle's immanent critique of the autobiographical self shares certain features with Freud's later critique of the bourgeois subject, while, at the same time, charting an entirely different course from the one

prescribed by Carlyle. The alternate course that Freud would travel is already evident in his apparent misreading of Carlyle's *Sartor*.

Recall the passage that prefaced our discussion of Carlyle, in which Freud remarked to Silberstein that 'under all these funny names [...] lies a profound wisdom' and that 'motely scraps of folly cover the open sores of mankind [...] behind which the spiritual hides in shame' (Freud, 1990 [1874] 49-50). It is evident that the youthful Freud was unable to digest the full import of Carlyle's debasement of the self; which holds not only that something 'hides in shame', but also that there is at bottom nothing to be found beneath such 'motely scraps of folly'. That Freud's pessimism increased with age is evident, however, it is equally evident that Freud never renounced his firm belief in some kind of truth, even in regard to the most enigmatic and obscure reaches of the self; indeed, Freud will find in the unconscious both 'the heart of our being' and 'the true reality of the psyche' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 398, 405).

Much as it might be traduced by later commentators in their eagerness to absorb Freud into the cannon of those 'critical thinkers' who contributed to the overthrow of God, Truth and bourgeois morality,⁵⁹ Freud's own commitment to the natural scientific

⁵⁹ One might, for example, turn to the position assigned to Freud by commentators such as Leo Bresani who will emphasize the postmodern dimensions of Freud's work that 'problematize the identity of the thinker "in" or "behind" the discourse' (Bresani, 1986, 12). Likewise, Rosi Braidotti praises 'the discourse of psychoanalysis' for 'shaking up the unitary consciousness of the subject' (Braidotti, 1991, 100); though it is in the adjoined and sometimes discordant works of the 'Jacques', Lacan and Derrida, in whom the primal scene of the decentered Freudian subject, and all that accompanies it, ought to be attributed: Lacan, for instance, writes: 'So hysteria places us, I would say, on the track of some kind of original sin in psychoanalysis. There has to be one. The truth is perhaps simply one thing, namely, the desire of Freud himself, the fact that something, in Freud, was never analyzed' (Lacan, 1981, 12). Here, what truth can be salvaged from Freud also indicates the *kind* of truth that both Lacan and Derrida will derive from psychoanalysis, an endlessly deferred truth that can be traced to Freud's unanalyzed desire, which at the same time, must not be named as its point of origin.

tradition was unflinching. Certainly, Freud hinted at a personal desire to occupy the position of an agent provocateur. That he did so, however, with references to key figures within the tradition of natural science, e.g. Copernicus and Darwin (Freud, 1916 [1915], 285), forces us to recognize that Freud had no intention of maligning or indeed abandoning the Enlightenment project that took true knowledge as its ultimate end. If anything, that ‘most wounding blow’ which Freud attributed to himself—by demonstrating that the *man of reason* is not ‘even master in his own house’—follows from his strict adherence to, rather than subversion of, the very project of Enlightenment (Ibid.).

Rejoinder: Freud and the subject of Autobiography

The examples I have discussed in the preceding sections evidence the ways in which 19th century autobiography gave voice to a series of perennial concerns regarding selfhood, particularly in terms of the form of self-relation constituted by the activity of reflecting upon, and writing about, oneself. They have not, however, been included here in order to provide anything approaching a systematic account of the autobiographical tradition. This would require, of course, not only a concerted effort to formulate something approaching an essential definition of what constitutes autobiography (i.e. should it include memoirs, diaries and other forms of self-reflective writings such as one might find in epistolary exchanges or in fictive life writing?). Such an account might also involve attempting to determine a point of origin in which it could be anchored (i.e. should the history of autobiography begin with Augustine’s *Confessions*, or be backdated to

Xenophon's *Anabasis*, or else be restricted to its particularly modern form in Rousseau's *Confessions* and so on?), in addition to requiring the examination of a much broader cross-section of autobiographical writings in general. The examples included in this chapter serve, instead, to demonstrate the tension between poetic (or creative) autonomy and ethical and epistemological responsibility as they are implicated relative to the self; and in doing so, to foreshadow the ways in which similar concerns regarding the self will reemerge in Freud. In this sense, my intention is not to trace those intellectual filiations or 'lines of influence' that might connect Freud back to 19th century autobiography, but the implications that stem from the combination of these 'autobiographical concerns' with the explicitly *technical* dimensions of Freudian psychoanalysis.

For this reason, it would seem that some restraint is required here. A whole series of themes present in the autobiographical texts examined in this chapter find expression again in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, as well as his broader psychoanalytic project. By way of recapitulation, these themes include: giving an account of one's *personal* history; attempting to define, enigmatically, the limit points of knowledge concerning the self; the reliance on an elementary principle of pleasure; questions regarding the extent to which the self may be regarded as grounded in nature or regarded as artifice; the relationship between fact and fiction relative to one's self-understanding; the attempt to know the self by tracing its development empirically; a theory of subjectivity grounded in associationism; the tendency to anchor the self in the structure of the family (or paternal authority) and its disownment via the trope of the orphan; the admixture of love and hate directed towards the same person; developmental progression conceived in terms of crises, maturation, and the potential to regress to a

state of dependence; the psychic relation between adult suffering and childhood trauma; the search for a 'primal scene' in which to anchor oneself; an emphasis on the psychical and subjective significance of reverie, dreams, and the imagination; the therapeutic value of introspection; the use of selective and strategic self-concealment; the vicissitudes of self-deception; the tension between creativity, knowledge and appropriation; the self as a symbolically constituted entity. However, it would be an error to take this as somehow conferring, retroactively, the status of 'psychoanalysis' upon these 19th century autobiographies, or else viewing psychoanalysis as the logical result of a kind of 'evolutionary' process traceable to autobiography.

Freud's commitment to materialism and to bridging the gap between the corporeal existence of the self and its inner life result in an alternate set of coordinates by which to theorize the self and its development; a set of coordinates that are maintained alongside those concerns I have identified in 19th century autobiography. Additionally, it should not be overlooked that these commitments to science place Freud firmly in the *medico*-scientific, rather than literary, tradition of the late 19th century. From this medico-scientific tradition Freud would inherit a more standardized vocabulary and taxonomy by which to describe and group individuals in accordance with particular symptoms and their underlying bodily pathologies, thereby positioning psychoanalytic discourse on the self, somewhat awkwardly, between a medical treatment designed to transform 'hysterical misery into common unhappiness' and a less clearly defined ethics of self-reflection that addresses itself to 'common unhappiness' (Freud, 1893, 305). More importantly, Freud's psychoanalytic project must be recognized as party to the increasingly technical ideal towards which both science and medicine were striving in the second half of the 19th

century; an ideal that stands in direct opposition to the intuitively grounded activities that define autobiographical practice as a function of a particular self's relation to itself.

This relation, of the self to itself, which we have viewed through the lens of certain concerns and the responses they engender in different persons, defined autobiography as a mode of self-representation, and even self-constitution, that, in its ideal form, promised to provide an autonomous route to self-knowledge. However, it also relied on a constellation of factors, ranging from one's socio-economic status to more ephemeral designations such as 'genius,' that conferred the requisite legitimacy that enabled one's recognition as a 'true author'—indeed as a miraculous self-author. Conversely, the rise of technology as a primary means of knowledge production in medicine and science ushered in a new set of epistemic considerations and allowances. No longer would knowledge of the self be the preserve of 'the poet' or 'the genius' but of the scientist and the doctor—and not because they were in possession of some inexplicable 'gift' that allowed them to see and feel what others could not, but because they were in possession of superior tools and training. Significantly, expertise would come to fill the place that had been occupied by genius, and authority that of authorship. Together, these culminated in 'the figure of the doctor' that emerged on a par with the enigmatic status of 'the poet', not because the doctor was in possession of some shadowy or indefinable genius, but because their authoritative position—itsself constituted by the hierarchical structure that rose to prominence in the medical institutions of the 19th century—came to define an equally enigmatic power of suggestion.

Suggestion and suggestability emerged as mysterious stowaways from a less rationally inclined epoch, and as concepts which challenged the predominant conception

of the individual as transparent, rational and unitary. Perhaps more troubling was the way in which suggestion, as a form of manipulation, threatened to malign the figure of the doctor by placing them on equal footing with the charlatan or the showman.⁶⁰

Techniques, and precision technological instrumentation, then, entered onto the scene as precisely the means by which the enigma of suggestion might be unraveled while maintaining the objectivity and scientificity that distinguished medical professionals from their lay counterparts.

Moreover, these medico-scientific techniques were intended to operate with equal acuity upon all and, concomitantly, to procure a kind of knowledge that had equal bearing upon all, reproducing and amplifying thereby the exchange—one already glimpsed in Mill's ethologically geared *Autobiography*—of the particular for the general. In the following Chapter I trace the development and instantiation of these techniques in terms of the role they played in transforming the self into an object of scientific knowledge.

⁶⁰ See Andreas Mayer's discussion of this point in Chapter Four of *Sites of The Unconscious*, 'The Question of Lay Hypnosis' (Mayer, 2013, 93-111).

Historiography

There is a certain appeal in turning to the medico-scientific in order to trace the current by which the discursive unit called ‘the self’ finds its way into the hands of Freud. The work of Jean-Martin Charcot in particular has long acted as a pivot in the historiographical narrative that grounds Freud’s work, first in neuroanatomical research, and subsequently in the psychosomatic enigma of hysteria to which Charcot, the most celebrated neurologist and medical observer of the 19th century, turned his incisive gaze in the final years of his life. This period of Freud’s intellectual development has largely been understood in terms of his inheritance of certain theoretical problems (primarily the relation between the body and the psyche), however, relatively little attention has been paid to the ways in which the technical and methodological dimensions of Charcot’s work, as well as those developed by other figures in the history of science and medicine, relate to those techniques developed by Freud in his early psychoanalytic writings such as *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

Histories of psychoanalysis and biographies of Freud focus on Charcot’s status as what the French called a *prince de la science* and ‘the Napoléon of Neuroses’, as well as his direct influence on Freud—who worked under Charcot at the Salpêtrière from September 1885 until February 1886. ‘This was the turning-point in [Freud’s] career,’ writes James Strachey, ‘for it was during this period that his interest shifted from

neuropathology to psychopathology—from physical science to psychology’ (Strachey, 1962, 9).¹ Freud’s own account of his time with Charcot and the influence wrought upon him by the ‘the great man’ is at once complementary and cautious. Written in 1925, Freud had by then fully metabolized the disappointment he had come to feel after he returned from Paris as a proponent of Charcot’s theory of hysteria, only to later quietly withdraw his support when the controversy between Charcot and Hippolyte Bernheim’s competing theories of hysteria was resolved in favor of the latter. Freud, then, has much to say of Charcot, his character, his gifts, but less about what he took from him, save for one line, ‘theory is good but it does not stop things from existing’ (Freud, 1925, 13), which now appears ironically self-effacing in light of Charcot’s inability to see past his own dogmatic conception of hysteria.

What is missed in accounts such as these is the extent to which the ‘Charcotian paradigm’—with all its methodological and technical innovations—stands in relation to a broader history of those practices and techniques of the self. To be sure, this lacuna need

¹ The same sentiment is echoed throughout the historiography of psychoanalysis; Ernest Jones provides a somewhat contradictory take on this episode claiming at one point that it was Freud’s experience in Brücke’s laboratory, rather than Charcot or Breuer’s influence, that played the decisive role in Freud later work (Jones, 1972, 50), while later stating that ‘[i]t was assuredly the experience with Charcot in Paris that aroused Freud’s interest in hysteria, then in psychopathology in general, and so paved the way for resuscitating Breuer’s observation and developing psycho-analysis’ (Ibid., 83). Zaretsky is the most reserved in his appraisal of this brief intellectual rendezvous—entirely omitting any explicit claims about the influence of Charcot upon Freud and instead emphasizing that it was Freud who would transform Charcot’s ideas into a dynamic theory of the unconscious (Zaretsky, 2005, 26). Ellenberger has Charcot providing Freud ‘a world of new ideas’ (Ellenberger, 1970, 436); while Makari presents this encounter with Charcot as an event that turned ‘Freud’s world [...] upside down’, and resulted in his resolution to become ‘Charcot’s man in Vienna’ (Makari, 2008, 28). Louis Berger—author of *Freud: Darkness in the Midst of Vision*—is perhaps the most overzealous in emphasizing the impact of Charcot upon Freud, stating plainly that ‘Charcot had a very important influence on Freud [...]’. The famous neurologist possessed a number of qualities that led Freud to adopt him as an idol’ (Berger, 2000 84-5).

not be approached simply in terms of Charcot's direct influence upon Freud. The task is rather to establish the ways in which the production of certain forms of subjectivity was undertaken—to chart the contours of subjects as they were given to the recognition of doctors and scientists as an object of knowledge, pathology and truth, and to relate them to the techniques and practices that cohere with, or depart from the models that we have surveyed in the literary domain of autobiography, and those that we shall examine later.

Andreas Mayer's *Sites of The Unconscious* (2013) remains the only work to treat the historical nexus between Charcot and Freud relative to its technical dimensions; and while Mayer's reading is meticulous, scholarly and well argued, it purposefully sidesteps deeper conceptual and philosophical issues regarding selfhood and subjectivity. Here, it would seem that Mayer's intention is to avoid the considerable baggage that has come to haunt this episode in the history of psychoanalysis, which has become a kind of tourist attraction for those looking for a soft target (Charcot) and a clear victor (Freud). This story has been told in a number of ways, but more often than not it draws from the conceptual armory of postcolonial and feminist theory—domination, the male gaze and objectificatory practices etc.—in order to vilify Charcot (his use of photography and practice of objectifying the bodies of hysterical women is often the principle exhibit) while at the same time juxtaposing these with Freud's work on hysteria, *in which women are not silenced, but listened to*.² The *Urszene* of this historiographical current can be found

² See, for example, R. Harris' *Murders and Madness. Medicine, Law and Society in the Fin de Siècle* (1989) M.N. Evans' *Fits and Starts: A Genealogy of Hysteria in Modern France* (1991); E. Showalter's *Hystories* (1997) and 'Hysteria, Feminism, and Gender' in *Hysteria Beyond Freud*, (1993); A. Scull's 'A Hysterical Circus' in *Hysteria: The Disturbing History* (2011); D. Marneffe's 'Looking and Listening: The Construction of Clinical Knowledge in Charcot and Freud' In: *Signs*, 17:71-111 (1991); J. Goldstein's 'The uses of male hysteria: medical and literary discourse

in Foucault's *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I* (1976), in which Charcot is positioned as a principle agent in the 'hystericalization of women's bodies' (Foucault, 1990 [1976], 104). In Foucault's treatment Charcot receives numerous mentions in this regard (indeed, more so than Freud), and yet Charcot's most decisive achievements are strangely eclipsed by Foucault's attempts to claim him as an agent of the medico-scientific current *scientia sexualis* that would bind the subject's truth to their sexuality (Ibid., 55-9).

This historical reconstruction is, if not false, only partially true. Charcot advocated for the recognition of hysteria as a pathology that could be found universally (see Charcot, 1991 [1889], 13), i.e. in men³, in all ethnic backgrounds and classes, as well as insisting that its pathogenesis was not intrinsically tied to sexual promiscuity, as many still believed. The historian of medicine and psychiatry Andrew Scull claims that it was Charcot 'who made hysteria a spectacle and a circus' (Scull, 2011, 104), while at the same time feeling compelled to admit that Charcot

cannot be easily typecast as a crude misogynist, for he adopted liberal positions by the standards of his time on women's rights, and his students and externs included women training for the medical profession. Moreover, one of Charcot's more striking departures from the conventional wisdom of his time had been his insistence that hysteria was not just a female disease' (Ibid., 124).

in nineteenth-century France' In: *Representations*, 34:135-165 (1991); among others. There is also a subgenre of literature on Charcot and the Salpêtrière that stems from Georges Didi-Huberman (the art historian / 'philosopher') and author of *Invention of Hysteria* (2003 [1982]), which has inspired numerous works on the intersection between medical and art history. Jonathan Marshall, for example, recasts Charcot's work in terms borrowed from dramaturgy—see *Performing Neurology* (2016).

³ In this regard Charcot followed Pierre Briquet's *Traité Clinique et Thérapeutique de l'Hystérie* (1859) in which a wealth of clinical case studies were presented in order to demonstrate that hysteria affected both men and women.

Indeed, the inaccuracy of Foucault's claim is perhaps best demonstrated by simply pointing to the fact of its discursive inaccuracy, for Charcot in fact advocated the replacement of the term 'hysteria' with 'neuroses'.⁴

On the other side of the spectrum, there is a body of hagiographical literature dealing with Charcot and the Salpêtrière (written mostly between his death and the 1950s).⁵ This literature draws on predictable tropes such as Charcot's ascension from his humble beginnings, his relationships with politicians like Léon Gambetta, Désiré-Magloire Bourneville and other prominent Parisians of The Third Republic, his many medical discoveries, his aptitude for visual arts, as well as including the obligatory ornamentations common to such 'life and work' compositions. By definition, this literature has little to offer in the way of critical commentary, however, the wealth of intimate details it provides has proved an invaluable research aid—for many of these texts, particularly Georges Guillain's *J.-M. Charcot: His Life His Work* ([1955] 1959), offer unique insights into the working conditions of the Salpêtrière during Charcot's time there.

Perhaps most significantly, the literature that charts the passage from Charcot to Freud has traditionally overlooked the extent to which the objectifying and alienating dimensions of Charcot's work—to say nothing of similar techniques developed in late

⁴ As Charcot's biographer Georges Guillain writes: "The word 'hysteria' has been applied since ancient antiquity to those neurotic reactions seen in women who have never been pregnant or who have abused the pleasures of sexual intercourse. Charcot never considered this kind of pathogenesis and very often he replaced the word 'hysteria' with the word 'neuroses'" (Guillain, 1959, 134).

⁵ See, Achille Souques and Henry Meige's account of Charcot in *Les Biographies Médicales* (May-June-July 1939); George Guillain's *J.-M. Charcot, His Life-His Work*, trans. Pearce Bailey, ([1955] 1959); and Christopher G. Goetz, Michel Boduelle, and Toby Gelfand's *Charcot: Constructing Neurology* (1995).

19th century psychology—are in fact an instrumental component of the technology of the self that Freud would formulate in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Such, it seems to me, is the insightful, if not enigmatic, implication of the remark with which Foucault leaves his reader when he writes

To the doctor, Freud transferred all the structures Pinel and Tuke had set up within confinement. He did deliver the patient from the existence of the asylum within which his “liberators” had alienated him; but he did not deliver him from what was essential in this existence; he regrouped its powers, extended them to the maximum by uniting them in the doctor’s hands; he created the psychoanalytic situation where *by an inspired short-circuit, alienation becomes disalienating because, in the doctor, it becomes a subject* (Foucault, 1988 [1961], 278, my italics).

Here, Freud’s role in the history of madness is portrayed somewhat ambiguously. On one hand, by gesturing towards the ‘transference’ and ‘extension’ of those structures and powers of alienation that had once physically confined the mad, Foucault suggests that Freud exchanged the physical manacles of confinement for ‘mind forged’ ones. On the other hand, by reformulating them in such a way that they become disalienating Freud seems to provide alternatives to the medico-scientific regimes of the 18th and 19th century—perhaps even liberating ones. I discuss these alternatives in greater detail in Chapter 3 in the context of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). Here, however, I want to briefly recall the coordinates established in the previous chapter so as to relate them to the ground we shall cover as the self passes into the domain of the medico-scientific.

If we are tracing those practices and techniques in and through which the self has been historically constituted—the technologies of the self or the aesthetics of the self (Foucault, 1984), as Foucault alternately terms them—then the transition from the literary to the scientific enacts a transformation in both the strategies by which the self is

formed, as well as the very meaning to which we may accord 'aesthetics.' In Wordsworth, this term managed to hold together the seemingly opposed realms of sensible experience and imagination, and in so doing, paved the way for the kind of *autogenesis* which Susan Buck-Morss defines as 'a fairy-tale promise that wishes are granted—without the fairy tale's wisdom that the consequences can be disastrous' (Buck-Morss, 1992, 8). As we have seen, however, subsequent efforts to maintain the relation between the various tensions that inhere in this concept, and the self born thereof, begin to falter as such 'disastrous consequences' became apparent. In the wake of these failures to unite the empirical and imaginary in the synthesizing being called *homo autotelus*, its scientific counterpart, *homo natura*, emerges, true knowledge of which requires, if not the total banishment of the imagination, then its relegation to what Frederic Jameson conceives of as 'a kind of sandbox to which one consigns all those vague things [...] under the heading of the irrational [...] where] they can be monitored and, in case of need, controlled' (Jameson, 1990, 232). The same inclination to control the 'irrational' dimensions of the self is evident in the decline of spiritual or literary *practices* of the self in favor of *techniques*. While the former may have provided a freer mode of acting upon and relating to oneself, the technological promised security, predictability, and bore an aura of rationality that did not require one to understand how it functioned, but could, nonetheless, be made use of. As Walter Benjamin observed, such 'mechanical devices represent important achievements of a society in which practice is in decline' (Benjamin, 1999, 182).

If, at the outset of the 19th century the self had begun to show itself, in and through its literary representations, as idiosyncratic, unpredictable, irrational and even

volatile, then those efforts to identify its regularities, and remake it as a uniform and transparent object must be recognized as belonging not only to the pursuits of science, but to society at large. Technology had, it seemed, delivered on its promise to control nature; increasingly its powers were turned inwards in a variety of efforts to know and control human nature. In this regard a double movement emerges in ‘the technical turn’, one in which the scientific drive for true knowledge of the self emerges in parallel with the drive to realize society as a rational and manageable apparatus beginning with its primary unit: the individual. In this double endeavor the employment of technical instruments and procedures, by which to secure scientifically valid knowledge of the self, emerge as the mirror image of the social drive to remake the self as a stable object—that is manageable, predictable, transparent and rational—in many ways resembling the characteristics of a machine that can be explained in terms of its constitutive parts, disassembled, reassembled, repaired and exchanged so as to ensure the efficiency of the whole to which it belongs.

These two inverse strategies, the social *construction* of a manageable self, and the scientific drive to *discover* true knowledge of the self, are coterminous insofar as both require authority in order to be legitimately recognized and put into practice beyond their immediate confines. Significantly, the kind of authority we encountered as isolated authorship in the previous chapter is gradually displaced from its locus in the self, knowledge of which increasingly becomes the province of figures of authority such as ‘the doctor,’ ‘the scientist’ and ‘the psychologist’; until such person centered authority is finally diffused into the technocratic, technoscientific, and technoindustrial institutions to which the self would become subject at the outset of the 20th century. The techniques of

experimental psychology in particular became coterminous with that of early 20th century industrialism insofar as the former could be legitimately recognized as *scientifically* and *socially* valuable because it provided the means by which one could obtain scientific (and therefore authoritative) knowledge of the self, while at the same time, reducing the individual to a series of metrics, which would in turn allow it to be evaluated and allocated within the broader social-industrial network of value, labor and exchange.

In turning to these scientific and medical discourses on the self in the second half of the 19th century we are tracing the overlapping logics and strategies that Foucault has subsumed under the rubric of ‘Liberal Governmentality’, which extends itself over a vast spectrum of objects, but is founded upon the selective freedoms enjoyed by the individual under liberalism, that are the reward for its submission in other spheres of life (Foucault, 2007 [1977-79], 108-9; 2010, 64). In this way, the manageability and the truth of the self become conjoined in a dual project that seeks, paradoxically, to both reveal the true nature of the individual and at the same time, to construct it in terms of an emergent social ideal. I want to be careful here, however, and not be tempted to throw the baby out with the bathwater; Foucault’s treatment of this intersection of knowledge, power, and the management of human beings tends to overlook the intentions of those who were, after all, trying to do something sensible: to provide the means by which the individual could be known, not simply by those of ‘genius,’ but by anyone capable of following the methods and techniques they prescribed. At the same time, what first appears as a democratizing trend gives way to one in which knowledge of the self is increasingly the preserve of experts, particularly as the human sciences eagerly sought out applications that might make them socially and scientifically valuable.

As Foucault observes in *The Birth of The Clinic*: 'It is when death became the concrete a priori of medical experience that death could detach itself from counter-nature and become *embodied* in the *living bodies* of individuals' (Foucault, 1976 [1963], 196). In the 19th century, the epistemic foundation of corporeal finitude repeatedly came under threat when the medical gaze turned to those forms of pathology that could not be located in the body. Significantly, Charcot's time at the Salpêtrière coincided with the advent of photography, as well as the reemergence of hypnotism and animal magnetism in French psychiatry and medicine. This technology, and this technique, would become instrumental for Charcot, first as means by which to materialize and thereby transmit his clinical gaze, and later, to solve the riddle of hysteria, which, against the prevailing logic of the medico-scientific regime, challenged the principle that *bodies cannot lie*; a challenge that lead to a reevaluation of truth and deception in terms of the divisions that constituted the clinician as a figure of authority and the patient as the source of their knowledge.

In a sense, photography and hypnotism served to rescue the truth-value that inhered in the body, by acting as the means by which the *living bodies of hysterics*, which lacked any anatomically identifiable pathology, could be studied in an artificial state of morbidity. As such, the means by which to solve the epistemic issues posed by the mediations of subjectivity was to replace them with technical ones; such was the 'appropriate' response to the mystery of the hysterical body, which threatened the predominant methods and logics operating within the medico-scientific domain. Charcot's decisive contribution to the history of the self emerges from the tug-of-war between the preservation of the diagnostic methods and nosological categories that he

had worked so carefully to derive from strict empiricism, and the extent to which the ‘inextricable labyrinth’ of hysteria threatened to tear them to the ground (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 13). Charcot’s solution to this double bind was to technically and materially reconstitute his method and the categories derived therefrom around the enigma of hysteria, by reframing truth, not in terms of the anatomical localization of pathology in the corpse (i.e. *organic* lesions), but instead in terms of the stability of symptomatology and diatheses in living bodies. This tactic, by which the exception to the guiding epistemological principle of the anatomo-clinical method is reabsorbed, is only possible because through the combination of photography and hypnotism the living body could be made to approach the status of a corpse—static, unresponsive and suitable for analytic dissection. As such, the subjects of hypnotism and of photography offer themselves up to the same ways of knowing that had previously prevailed in the medico-scientific episteme. This should not be read simply as an episode in which the ‘invisible’ episteme supervenes in and through the visible actions of doctors and scientists, rather, it can equally be viewed as an instance in which the embattled authority of the doctor (knower) reconsolidates its powers by installing certain techniques and technologies in the ever-widening space between themselves and their objects of knowledge.

La Salpêtrière: Charcot's Total Clinic

Pathology, should not be subordinated to physiology. Quite the reverse. Set up first the medical problem which arises from the observation of a malady, and afterwards seek for a physiological explanation. To act otherwise would be to risk overlooking the patient, and distorting the malady (Claude Bernard quoted in Charcot, 1991 [1889], 8).⁶

The anatomo-clinical method can be understood as the medical equivalent of a strict empiricism, which is defined in opposition to the type

of medical knowledge derived from a priori

knowledge of physiology. As such, this method

follows from two disciplines: first, clinical observation

of living subjects, and second, the post-mortem

examination, followed by the a posteriori correlation

of the two. It was this method, practiced with

longanimity and without clouded judgment, that

enabled Jean-Martin Charcot to 'fill spaces hitherto

empty, or occupied with confused ideas, with animated living shapes [and] concrete

realities,' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 9). Significantly, this method, by which knowledge of

the living could be derived from the dead, was not the invention of Charcot.⁷ It was



—Édouard Brissaud, 'Charcot examining a brain', *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière* (1875)—

⁶ Charcot's choice to cite Bernard in this regard during his lecture on his own anatomo-clinical method is, as Andreas Mayer has already observed, ironic because it was Bernard advocated for the transformation of the passive observational method, by which medicine had so far proceeded, into an active and experimental one in which nosology and pathological anatomy would be subordinated to experimental physiology (see Mayer, 2013, 29).

⁷ Before him the *méthode anatomo-pathologique* had been formalized and applied by the French physician René Laennec 1781-1826 (see Goetz et al., 1995, 66).

Charcot, however, who refined and extended this method beyond the realm of practice and transformed it into a form of medical technology.

Charcot's use of the anatomo-clinical method resulted in a battery of landmark discoveries including Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, or 'Charcot's disease'), 'Amyotrophy of Charcot-Marie' (now called 'Charcot-Marie-Tooth'). It also enabled Charcot to give the first description of the form of arthropathy specific to progressive locomotor ataxia (or 'Tabes Dorsalis')—known today as 'Charcot joint', to locate the neurological seat of Parkinson's disease ('Paralysis Agitans'), and to distinguish it clearly from multiple sclerosis (MS).⁸ The neurologist Joseph Babinski described the impact of Charcot's career by stating that 'to take from neurology all the discoveries made by Charcot would be to render it unrecognizable' (Babinski in Guillain, 1959, 181). Professor Joseph Jules Dejerine echoed Babinski's sentiment, stating plainly that 'we no longer speak the language of the clinician of 1850, but rather *we speak the one of Charcot*' (Ibid. my italics). As Charcot's many discoveries attest, this method was extremely effective, particularly when practiced by an adept clinician and pathologist such as Charcot. Recognizing this, we should feel compelled to ask what so few historians of medicine and psychiatry have: Why should Charcot have abandoned, or even doubted, the method that had afforded him unparalleled prestige and an equally unparalleled number of medical discoveries? Why, when that most enigmatic form of pathology called hysteria finally captured his attention, 'like so many Sphinx,' should Charcot have

⁸ See Charcot, 1991 [1889], 165; Goetz et al., 1995, 101-2; for a comprehensive account of *all* Charcot's medical discoveries see Guillain, 1959, 106-130. It should not go unnoticed that Charcot still lays claim to more than twelve eponyms for diseases and conditions he discovered.

thought to do other than he did by pursuing its solution via his anatomo-clinical method (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 12)?

Before these questions can be answered, one must understand not only the conceptual dimensions of Charcot's methodology, but also the extent to which the various discoveries Charcot made were dependent upon its transformation from a *practice* to a *systematically applied set of technical procedures*—a transformation that required a vast technical apparatus and a team of expert technicians capable of operating its various instruments. For this reason, the destiny of Charcot's method is ineluctably bound to the infrastructural expansion of the Salpêtrière, which he transformed from a hospice and poor house into a *total clinic* in which his method, and the diagnostic technologies and techniques required to support it, enabled him to isolate, document and catalogue every conceivable dimension of his research subjects so as to discover the precise anatomical seat of their illness.⁹ In order to achieve this ideal, Charcot wedded the practice of clinical observation to state of the art instruments capable of extending, and to some extent replacing, the perceptual and mnemonic capacities of the clinician. As such, the asceticism of the rigorously trained and disciplined medical observer gave way to a paradigm in which able clinicians were increasingly defined by their technical aptitude.

The medical historian Mark Micale consolidates Charcot's impact upon the Salpêtrière under the rubric of 'medical modernization' (Micale, 1985, 709), the principle features of which included the construction of new teaching, research and treatment facilities, the laicization of staff in favor of trained and licensed medical experts (see

⁹ For accounts of the technologization of the Salpêtrière see (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 5; Marshall, 2016; Mayer, 2013; Goetz et al., 1995; Micale, 1985).

Goldstein, 1982), and increasingly selective criteria for patient admittance. As a result of these infrastructural, personnel, and administrative alterations, the Salpêtrière was transformed from an asylum and poor house into a ‘health-workshop or medical factory’ (Micale, 1985, 712). Advances in microscopy, for example, allowed Charcot to extend and refine macro diagnostics to the microscopic level, thereby transforming anatomic-clinical method. However, it was the other additions to the hospital that turned the Salpêtrière into a research machine designed to account for every possible variant and subtlety, every disguise, that the pathologies of the nervous system might dawn in order to conceal themselves in the patient’s body. These include the construction of casting and photography studios, an office of ophthalmology, the acquisition of various electro-diagnostic instruments, the opening of the *Policlinique*, which introduced outpatients into the ‘vast wealth of material’ available for research (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 1), the establishment of two journals (*Progres Medical* and *Archives de Neurologie*) that served to publicize the various medical discoveries made under Charcot’s supervision to the broader medico-scientific community. Perhaps most significant of all of these was the replacement of nursing personnel (traditionally nuns provided by the church) with expert practitioners who had undergone secular medical training (Micale, 1985, 710-11; Goetz et al., 1995, 277).

At the same time, Charcot endeavored to transform the Salpêtrière into a world-renowned teaching hospital capable of producing the next generation of clinical researchers who could support, and some day continue, his work. In 1882 Charcot expressed great pride in announcing that his ‘hope that this asylum of human miseries

[...] would some day become a regularly organized center for research and instruction in the area of the neurological disorders [...] had finally been realized' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 1-2). One of the primary obstacles that Charcot had faced in realizing this dream was pedagogical. While his method, and the instruments that supported its increasingly precise findings far exceeded their diagnostic forerunners, Charcot still required a means by which to transfer the clinical gaze from one generation to the next. What was required, then, was a medium capable of transmitting the denatured gaze of clinical observation, in and through which discrete (symptomatic) information presents itself in the place of the experience of the same phenomena as an undifferentiated and evocative gestalt.

Benjamin identified precisely the logic that made photography an ideal pedagogical tool for illustrating and transmitting the clinical gaze: '[t]he perpetual readiness of volitional, discursive memory, encouraged by the technique of mechanical reproduction, reduces the scope for the play of the imagination' (Benjamin, 1999, 183). Because the photograph promised, like many other contemporaneous technical devices, to re-present the real unmolested by the subjectivity of the observer, it provided both the perfect analogy for Charcot's ability as a skilled clinical observer—'I stand here merely as a photographer, I write down what I see' (Charcot in Schade, 1995, 510)—while, at the same time, acting as the ideal means by which to transfer the clinical gaze to a new generation. Ultimately, the heuristic and pedagogical function of photography in the Salpêtrière would prove so effective that the photographic camera would replace the clinical observer, transforming the practice of observation into a technical mode of seeing.

The introduction of photographic technology into the technical armory of the Salpêtrière was due to its potential as a means of transmission (Goetz et al., 1995, 52) and subsequently as a replacement for practices of observation/documentation; however, it would soon be called upon to buoy the epistemological foundations of Charcot's program of localization when the anatomo-clinical method failed in the face of hysteria 'which leave[s] in the dead body no material trace that can be discovered' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 12).

The Imaginary Real

The anatomo-clinical method was not the sole preserve of Charcot; it was also employed by Duchenne de Boulogne, whom Charcot often referred to as that 'great representative of French neuro-pathology' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 8). In 1835, Duchenne became interested in the electric excitation of muscles, as a means by which to extend the mapping of human anatomy, after accidentally stimulating an isolated muscular contraction during an electro-puncture procedure (Guillain, 1959, 101). This chance observation led to Duchenne's publication of *Localized Electrification and Its Application to Pathology and Therapeutics* (1855), followed by another volume in 1862 on facial expressions titled *The Mechanism of Human Facial Expression* in which Duchenne employed electrical stimulation in order to isolate the muscle (or muscle groups) responsible for the expression of certain 'emotions'—Duchenne's *Mechanism* includes entries on pain, attention, reflection, aggression, joy, lasciviousness, sadness, whimpering, surprise and terror (see Duchenne, 1990 [1862]). Significantly, this strange book was the first work on

human emotions to include photographs. Duchenne rejected other methods of documentation such as painting and drawing: ‘Only photography, as truthful as a mirror,’ stated Duchenne, ‘could attain such desirable perfection’ (Duchenne, 1990 [1862], 36).

Duchenne was one of many who believed that photography could serve as the mirror of nature—preserving its fleeting impressions without the subjective mediations inherent in descriptive or artistic modes of documentation. Indeed, in an advertisement placed in 1838 Louis Daguerre had anticipated the scientific application of his new invention when he claimed that ‘[t]he daguerreotype is not merely an instrument which serves to draw nature... [it] gives her the power to



—Duchenne de Boulogne ‘synoptic plate 4’
The Mechanism of Human Facial Expression
(1862), albumen print—

reproduce herself’ (Daguerre in Sontag, 2002, 188). The British medical doctor and photography enthusiast Hugh Welch Diamond (1809-1886) claimed that ‘the picture speaks for itself’, a claim which he extended into the realm of psychopathology, ‘the Photographer secures with unerring accuracy the external phenomena of each passion, as the really certain indication of internal derangement, and exhibits to the eye *the well known sympathy that exists between the diseased brain and the organs and features of the body*’ (Diamond in Gilman, 1982, 164, my italics).

Photography promised the ideal of unmediated observation and documentation, and in so doing, *also* provided a means by which to engage with a form of interiority that was not entirely physical nor metaphysical via the ‘well known *sympathy*’ that exists

between the mind and the body, which would enable a kind of knowledge of the self that could be adduced without the pitfalls of introspection, or having to rely on the subject's inexpert account of their interiority. In this regard the process of photographic technology shares its logical structure with the clinical gaze—both take from the real and (re)produce it through its negative; the clinical gaze produces a positive knowledge of the *living* through its negation in death, and the photograph must first record the impressions of the *real* as a negative, before they can be reproduced in their original and positive form.

If we examine the premise from which Duchenne's study was to proceed, it becomes apparent that mapping the correlation between the signs of emotion and their physio-mechanical means of expression meant nothing less than identifying what Duchenne called a 'universal and immutable language' which he attributed to the 'divine fantasy' of God (Duchenne, 1990 [1862], 19). This strange experiment, in which the simulacrum of human emotions superseded their actual expression, would soon reproduce itself in the photographic iconography of the Salpêtrière, in which Charcot would seek to identify the same universal and immutable language or '*stigmata*' in the gestures, poses and attitudes that constituted the 'hysterical diatheses' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 279).

Impressed with Duchenne's use of photography to document the correlation between muscle groups and facial expressions, Charcot took on his service in the same year that *Mechanism* was published. The two quickly exchanged skills; significantly, Duchenne would teach Charcot 'all his secrets of medical photography' (Guillain, 1959, 103; Goetz et al., 1995, 79). In this exchange, two logics were to cohere in a single object. The logics that grounded knowledge of the living in death merged through the medium

of photography, for as Diamond had already observed, ‘photography gives permanence’ to its subject, making ‘them observable not only now but forever’ (Diamond in Gilman, 1982, 24). In an 1884 advertisement for the *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*, Albert Londe, Paul Richter and Gilles de la Tourette described the use and advantages of such an ‘immediate record’, which enabled them ‘to freeze the abnormality, to decompose the various abnormal movements one by one, and thereby capture the disorder with precision (quoted in Goetz et al., 1995 [1884], 145-6).¹⁰ By retaining the most subtle and fleeting gestures in a manner that preserved life, while approaching the status of the corpse in its suitability for analysis, this perfect medium provided a new means by which the living subject’s truth could be observed, documented and cataloged in order to form a ‘collection of great significance’ (Ibid.).

Photography, then, entered into the Salpêtrière as a means of transmitting the clinical gaze, of providing exemplary ‘gazes’ to its students, however, it would come to serve a second and far more significant function precisely because the temporal augmentation that photography makes possible, by which living bodies are frozen and preserved in a manner analogous to their lifeless counterparts, would emerge as one of the technical means by which Charcot was able to reconfigure the living body into a body of knowledge capable of rivaling the corpse in its dissectability.¹¹

¹⁰ In his introduction to the first volume of *Iconographie de la Salpêtrière* (1876/77) Bourneville notes that while attempts had been made to capture hysterical and epileptic attacks photographically they had not succeeded until the arrival of Monsieur P. Régner in 1875 (see Bourneville, 1876/77, I: iv).

¹¹ Indicatively, two years before photography emerged as primary technique by which to capture the evanescent gestures of the hysteric at the Salpêtrière, Pierre Gaëtan Leymarie, head of the *Revue spirite* and leader of the French Spiritualist movement, stated that ‘[p]hotography is a means made available to the Spirits to give irrefutable proof of their existence and their presence

Hysteria, or Bodies That Lie

According to Pierre Marie, Charcot first began working on hysteria after the Bâtiment Sainte-Laure, a ward that housed epileptics and hysterics, became so dilapidated that the hospital was forced to close it and relocate the patients living there. Charcot was made responsible for the ‘non-psychotic epileptics and the hysterics’ because ‘both of these patients manifested episodic behavior, and therefore it was considered logical to group them together and establish a special quarter called “Quartier des épileptiques simples” [...] Thus, quite involuntarily and by force of circumstance, Charcot found himself engulfed in the problem of hysteria (Marie in Guillaín, 1959 [1925], 135-6). While Marie could, in retrospect, understand this as a chance occurrence, the symptomatology of hysteria, which Charcot would eventually class as a form of ‘*neuromimesis*’ (see Charcot, 1991 [1889], 14), made it appear an entirely reasonable choice to house them alongside epileptics, and study them with the same methods that Charcot had already employed to unravel similar forms of neuropathology. As Goetz observes, ‘at that time (1870-72) and in large measure for the rest of his career, Charcot perceived the move to hysteria as flowing smoothly and logically from his ongoing studies of the nervous system. It was not a change but a natural extension’ (Goetz et al, 1995, 170).

Goetz is right to point out that Charcot maintained, throughout his engagement with hysteria, that it was indeed a nervous disease and that some day its seat would be discovered. ‘[I]t is in the grey cortex of the cerebral hemisphere that we must seek for the

among you’ (Leymarie in Chéroux, 2005 [1873], 48). Roland Barthes would later observe the relation between the preservation of life and the dead inherent in photography when he referred to it as that which ‘produces Death while trying to preserve life’ (Barthes, 2000 [1980], 92).

dynamic lesion whence emanate the symptoms in question' claimed Charcot, after inducing hysterical mutism in a female patient (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 373). It is, however, difficult to ignore the significance of the shift in terminology adopted by Charcot in his lectures on hysteria. Ever so subtly one finds the *organic* lesions—that for years Charcot had correlated with careful observations of living patients in order to isolate the precise 'seat' of distinct forms of neuropathology—were suddenly replaced by *dynamic* (or *functional*) lesions; a term that acted as a kind of placeholder for Charcot, thereby maintaining 'the organicity of hysteria in the absence of a morphological lesion' (Bogousslavsky et al., 2009, 194).¹² Since the corpses of hysterics did 'not present themselves to the mind of the physician with the appearance of solidity, of objectivity, which belong to affectations connected with an appreciable organic lesion' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 12), Charcot was left with two choices: either admit that his anatomico-clinical method had failed, or exclude hysteria from the category of nervous diseases. The latter would appear as the choice best suited to Charcot, insofar as it would preserve the epistemic and methodological paradigm he had worked to construct. However, hysteria, and other associated phenomena such as somnambulism and split personality, had already

¹² Writing in 1888, in a paper on 'Some Points For a Comparative Study of Organic and Hysterical Motor Paralyses', Freud was already aware of the rhetorical conceit that Charcot's '*dynamic or functional lesion*' was intended to serve: 'We have several times heard from M. Charcot that it is a cortical lesion, but one that is purely dynamic or functional. This is a thesis whose negative aspect we can well understand: it is equivalent to asserting that no appreciable tissue changes will be found *post mortem*. But in its positive aspect its interpretation is far from being unequivocal. What, after all, is a dynamic lesion? I am quite sure that many who read M. Charcot's works believe that a dynamic lesion is indeed a lesion, but one of which no trace is found after death, such as an oedema, an anaemia or an active hyperaemia. These, however, although they may not necessarily persist after death, are true organic lesions even if they are slight and transitory. Paralyses produced by lesions of this order would necessarily share the characteristics of organic paralyses. Neither oedema nor anaemia, any more than haemorrhage or softening, could produce the dissociation and intensity of hysterical paralyses' (Freud, 1888, 168).

emerged as a point at which the concerns of law, science and religion all intersected. As such, admitting its inexplicability via scientific investigation would mean leaving it open to the pronouncements of superstition and chicanery.

Charcot, who had strong links to the anticlerical movement through Bourneville and Gambetta, met hysteria with the same secular ethos that made the Salpêtrière the first Parisian medical institution to laicize its staff.¹³ The strategy by which Charcot would seek to win hysteria, among other phenomena wreathed in superstition, was by demonstrating its universality, beginning at the level of sex. By showing that hysteria affected men and women equally Charcot could sever it from those superstitions and religious beliefs that defined hysteria as an essentially female malady. Indicatively, during the period when Charcot was most absorbed in the study of hysteria he co-authored *Les Démoniaques dans l'Art* (1887), or *Demoniacs in Art*, in collaboration with Paul Richter, in which historical artistic depictions of demonic possession were used to support Charcot's claim that 'hysteria is in no way [...] a sickness typical to our century and that in the archives of the past there also is proof that it attacks the male as well as the female' (Charcot in Guillaín, 1959, 24). Charcot's final publication, *La Foi qui guérit* (1992) or *The Faith-Cure* (then perceived as an antireligious manifesto by the parochial press),¹⁴

¹³ Andreas Mayer observes the same tact act work in Charcot's attempts to win back authority from lay practitioners of hypnosis by using the 'technological resources of modern science in divesting [hypnotic] phenomena of any "miraculous" traits and describing them in objective clinical terms' (Mayer, 2013, 97).

¹⁴ Goetz has compiled an impressive list of testimonies to Charcot's personal antagonism to religion in general and Catholicism in particular, citing comments from Léon Daudet, Valléry-Radot, and his son Jean-Baptiste Charcot. Daudet claimed that 'Not only was [Charcot] an agnostic, he often was overtly hostile to Catholicism, which he considered as reactionary.... Charcot considered Our Lord Jesus Christ, a bit like his personal enemy' (Daudet in Goetz et al., 1995 [1915, 1930], 278).

used the same universalizing tactic to win faith-healing for science: ‘the cure of a particular symptom directly produced by faith healing [is] a natural phenomena that has occurred in all ages, among the most varied civilizations and religions, and even a phenomena that is actually observed in all geographic regions’ (Charcot in Guillaín, 1959, 178). Universality, then, would serve as the basis upon which Charcot could claim hysteria for science in general and neuropathology in particular.

Correlatively, if hysteria did not only affect all people at all times, but could be shown to be ‘governed, in the same way as other morbid conditions, by rules and laws, which attentive and sufficiently numerous observations always permit [one] to establish’ (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 13), it could still be ‘located’, if not *in the body* of the hysteric, then in the body of nosological categories to which other nervous diseases belonged.

that which I am most concerned to demonstrate here is that in the [hysterical] attack, and I could almost say as much of the other phases of hysteria, nothing is left to chance, everything follows definite rules,—always the same, whether the case is met with in private or hospital practice, in all countries, all times, all races, in short universally (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 13).

Demonstrating this, however, would present significant challenges for Charcot, as all of his prior discoveries in neuropathology had been born out by the physical proof of post-mortem examination. What was required, then, was a way of materializing the ‘evanescent’ symptoms of hysteria, which ‘disappear all in a moment in a most unexpected way’ (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 32). Charcot believed his talents in clinical observation enabled him to see what others could not, but he still required a means by which to transform his own observations into material evidence capable of supporting his claim that hysteria presented with the same uniformity as any other organic disease.

One of the primary means by which such evidence could be secured had already made its entry into the technical repertoire of the Salpêtrière.

Photography provided Charcot with the power to anesthetize the living subject, effectively

transforming it into a corpse suitable for analytic

study. In 1878 Charcot retained the services of

Albert Londe who developed new photographic

instruments in order to capture the physical movements of hysterics, including a camera

with nine lenses (later replaced by a twelve lens model) that was triggered using

electromagnets and synchronized with a metronome in order to release the shutters

sequentially (Kemp, 1997, 134). This invention resulted in the prototype of

photomontage, which Londe termed as 'chronophotography' due to its capacity to not

only capture the subject's body in a still and

static frame, but to achieve the ultimate form

of vivisection, by presenting the body in such a

way that its continuity of movement was

preserved, while being represented in stasis.

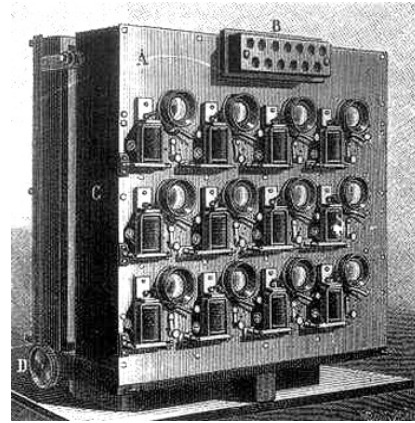
The photograph, as both visual and

material, promised to act as the perfect

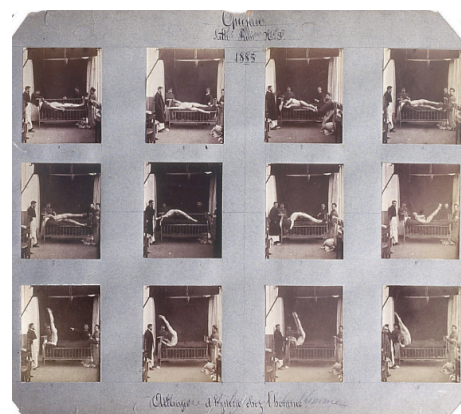
medium in which to capture and analyze the

fleeting pathology of the hysteric. Indicatively, these visual documents would result in a

museum of pathology (the Musée Charcot) that would form the basis for Charcot's own



—Étienne-Jules Marey: *Albert Londe's 12-lens camera* (1893)—



—Albert Londe: 'chronophotographic sequence of hysterical attack' (1885)—

studies on hysteria. It is on this basis, perhaps more than any other, that Freud's later *Studies* (1893) are distinct from Charcot's. Charcot's museum gave a meaningful 'form' to hysteria iconographically, i.e. by examining the relation of one image to another, while Freud's 'talking cure' exhibits a distinct distrust of the image and, alternately, proceeded by examining the personal idiom of the hysteric in relation to the *context* of those societal languages that actively concealed the very alienation they engender in the hysterical body.

While photographic technology served to provide material evidence of Charcot's claims regarding the universality of the laws that governed hysterical attacks, the technique of hypnotism served a diagnostic purpose. Stripped of the certainty offered by post mortem findings, Charcot required other means by which to secure a knowledge of *true* pathology in hysterics; particularly because hysteria was so difficult to know apart from epilepsy on one hand, and the staged performances of simulators, or 'malingerers', on the other.

You are well aware, gentlemen, that when we are treating of hysteria, the physician should always have present in his mind the possibility of simulation, under which the patients either exaggerate real symptoms, or sometimes even create an entirely imaginary symptomatology. Everyone knows that the desire to lie, to deceive, sometimes even without motive, by a disinterested cultivation of *art for art's sake*, sometimes with the view of making a sensation, of exciting pity, etc., is a characteristic common enough in hysteria (emphasis added, Charcot, 1991 [1889], 94).

If exaggeration and fabrication were characteristics 'common enough in hysteria', how was one to tell the 'true hysteric' apart from the simulator? In some cases Charcot was

able to detect simulators on the basis of their embellishments, which violated the laws of pathological anatomy and marked them as artificial.¹⁵

However, some simulators were, like Charcot, adept medical observers, and for this reason other means were required to identify them.

the clinical history of hysteria has been ransacked so many times and so thoroughly, is it truly so difficult as some would have us to believe, to discern to real from the false symptomatology, *i.e.* from that which is imaginary, simulated? No, gentlemen, it is not; and not to remain among vague generalities in regard to this matter any longer, allow me to recall to your minds a concrete example, chosen amongst many others, and upon which I dwelt last year. I refer to catalepsy induced in hysterical subjects. The question is this: Can this state be simulated so as to deceive a physician experienced in these matters?' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 94).

To test this hypothesis Charcot devised experiments

that could identify the physiological difference

between the simulators and hysterics in hypnotically

induced cataleptic states. In one experiment a

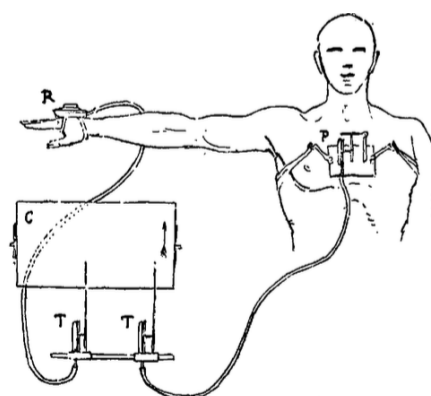
hysterical patient (in a cataleptic state) is compared

with a normal 'simulator'; each are fitted with an

apparatus consisting of a reaction drum, designed to

measures subtle oscillations in the arm, and a

pneumograph in order to measure respiratory patterns. The alterations in respiration and



—Diagram showing the apparatus used in experiments on cataleptic immobility (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 15)—

¹⁵ See Charcot's lecture on the detection of simulators in cases of hysterical mutism, in which he reminds his students that 'if the case occur in the army, or when it comes in some way within the jurisdiction of the law, the results [of the diagnosis] are very different. Under these circumstances, the ill-founded [diagnosis] of simulation may lead to far more serious consequences, to grave injustice, and possibly to the employment of barbarous means of treatment' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 368). Charcot, however, is quick to note that the majority of simulators (as opposed to genuine hysterics) do not have 'sufficient intelligence to combine and display, with the object of deceit, all the symptoms that belong to the natural history of hysterical mutism, without taking from or adding in any way to this group of symptoms, at once so special and so complex' (Ibid.).

muscular fatigue detected by these instruments were then inscribed upon a 'registering roller' as a form of automatic writing. The results of the experiment show a pronounced difference in the levels of fatigue in both respiration and muscle tension, which manifest clearly in the simulator but are absent in the cataleptic (see Charcot, 1991 [1889], 95). From these results, Charcot concluded that the fatigue expressed in the body of the simulator betrayed the falsity of their symptoms, which are merely imaginary, and correlatively, because the hysteric's symptoms do not let up in this state of diminished consciousness, they must have an organic basis. In this experiment Charcot had, as it were, *automated* automatic writing.

'Thus in *catalepsy*', states Charcot, 'the study of hypnotic suggestion ought to commence' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 290). Catalepsy occupied this privileged position because Charcot believed that when it was induced the subject was transformed into a perfect automaton—in which the mental faculties come to resemble the body's organs, functioning on the basis of definite rules. Indeed, Charcot goes so far as to compare the cataleptic subject to the '*human machine*, in all its simplicity, dreamt of by De la Mettrie' (Ibid.).

Charcot defines this mental state as subject to 'partial inertia', as in lethargy, but distinct in that it also involves a 'partial waking in the organ of the psychic faculties' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 290).

Consequently the idea, or group of ideas suggested, are met with in a state of isolation, free from the control of that large collection of personal ideas long accumulated and organized, which constitute the conscience properly so-called, the *ego*. It is for this reason that the movements which exteriorly represent the acts of unconscious cerebration are distinguished by their automatic and purely mechanical character (Ibid.).

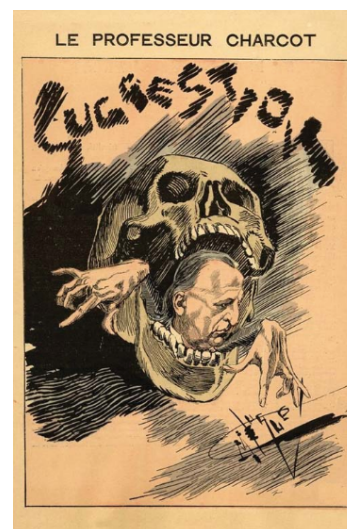
Therefore, in cases where simulators displayed symptoms true to Charcot's conception of hysteria, hypnotically induced catalepsy would enable him to distinguish them from true hysterics on two accounts. First, because according to Charcot's theory, hypnotism only affected hysterics, and secondly, because entering into a cataleptic state diminished the will, and thereby disallowed the hypnotized subject from acting under their own 'volition' or with 'intentionality', the two hallmarks that distinguished simulation from the kind of 'neuromimesis', or 'unconscious cerebrations', that defined hysteria (see Charcot, 1991 [1889], 14, 290). The first of these conditions functioned as a kind of 'catch-22' in the game of truth that Charcot was so adeptly playing: if an initial diagnosis was disproved by inducing a cataleptic state in a suspected simulator, it was not because the doctor's initial observations were incorrect, it was because the subject was simply a 'latent' hysteric.

Having secured hypnotism as a faithful means by which to distinguish simulators from hysterics, Charcot began to employ hypnotism as a means by which to artificially elicit hysterical attacks in his famous *Leçons du Mardi*. The Swedish medical doctor, psychiatrist and author of the memoir *The Story of San Michele* (1929) Axel Munthe reported that the hypnotized subjects of these demonstrations

would eat a piece of charcoal when presented to them as chocolate. Another would crawl on all fours on the floor, barking furiously when told she was a dog, flap her arms as if trying to fly when turned into a pigeon, lift her skirts with a shriek of terror when a glove was thrown at her feet with a suggestion of being a snake. Another would walk with a top-hat in her arms rocking it to and fro and kissing it tenderly when she was told it was her baby' (Munthe, 1936, 229).¹⁶

¹⁶ Munthe's account may have been embellished due to his personal resentment of Charcot (see Guillaín, 1959, n. 174-5).

While Charcot's *Leçons du Mardi* were designed to demonstrate the organicity of hysterical phenomena, and at the same time disabuse the public of the sensationalism that had been associated with it since Anton Mesmer's experiments at the end of the 18th century, they appear to have had the opposite effect. Hysteria, and other emergent forms of psychopathology such as 'split personality'—unlike forms of madness that encompassed the whole of the personality—were far more disconcerting to the public (see Hacking, 1995). Unlike more pronounced forms of madness, states of suggestibility induced via hypnotism called into question the transparency and coherence of the self by implying that even a sane and measured person might find themselves guilty of a horrific crime that they had not intended to commit. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Guy de Maupassant's *Le Horla* (1887) and George du Maurier's *Trilby* (1894) all speak to the public concern that the self could be compromised.



The most animated and public controversy over the legal status of hypnotism and somnambulism centered on the Eyraud-Bompard case (or 'Gouffé's trunk'), which took place between 1889 and 1890.¹⁷ In short, a young woman named Gabrielle Bompard had lured a bailiff, Toussaint-Augustin Gouffé, to her apartment and seductively placed her

¹⁷ The account given here of the events surrounding the murder of Toussaint-Augustin Gouffé, and the subsequent legal proceedings, is based on Julien Bogousslavsky, Olivier Walusinski and Denis Veyrune's (2009) article: 'Crime, Hysteria and *Belle Époque* Hypnotism: The Path Traced by Jean-Martin Charcot and Georges Gilles de la Tourette', Régine Plas' (1998) article 'Hysteria, Hypnosis, and Moral Sense in French 19th-Century Forensic Psychiatry: The Eyraud-Bompard Case', and Christopher Goetz' (2004) 'Medical-legal issues in Charcot's neurological career.'

belt around his neck; all the while Bompard's lover Michel Eyraud had been concealed behind a curtain, and when Bompard's belt was fitted around Gouffé's neck, Eyraud attached it to a swivel and hung the bailiff using a macabre pulley system. After searching Gouffé's person and quarters for money, the couple dumped his body on the outskirts of Lyon, where it was soon discovered and an investigation mounted, culminating some months later when Bompard gave herself up to authorities. Importantly, the way in which Bompard had turned herself in, as well as her childlike behavior, resulted in her lawyer, Henri Robert, contending that she had been hypnotized by Eyraud and therefore could not be held responsible for Gouffé's murder. The instructing judge responsible for the case was then forced to call upon medical experts in order to evaluate Bompard's mental state.

This case, which had already aroused public attention, would now become a showdown for the two most eminent schools of thought on hypnotism and its relation to somnambulism and hysteria. Hippolyte Bernheim, the head of The Nancy School, was represented by Jules Liégeois (professor of administrative law), who argued that

it was in fact possible for someone to commit a crime, against their will and even without their knowledge, under the influence of hypnosis or due to post hypnotic suggestion (Plas, 1998, 401). Liégeois' defense of Bompard was summarily ridiculed by The Salpêtrière's representatives, Brouardel, Mottet, and Ballet, who denied the possibility



—Henri Meyer, 'Affaire' Gouffé,
*Illustrated literary supplement, Le Petit
Parisien*, (20 December 1890)—

that a crime such as murder could be the result of hysteria, hypnotism or suggestion and strategically discredited Liégeois and Robert by accusing them of regressive thinking, which amounted to nothing more than a ‘love of the marvelous’ (Ibid.). In an attempt to mitigate the damage done by this rebuttal, Robert’s closing remarks omitted any mention of his initial defense and instead emphasized that while the contingent from the Salpêtrière did not believe Bompard to have been subject to hypnotic suggestion, she was nonetheless ill. For this reason Bompard was shown leniency and sentenced to twenty years of hard labor, unlike Eyraud, who was summarily executed by guillotine.

In the wake of the trial Bernheim vented his rage in a letter to Auguste Forel: “*How do you find this prosecuting attorney, inspired by Charcot and Company, who says that the Nancy School proceeds by assertion and has for motto: credo quia absurdum?*” (Bernheim in Forel, 1968 [January 1st, 1891]). In the meantime, Charcot had already capitalized on this public victory over the Nancy School by publishing an article in the American magazine *Forum of New York* titled ‘Hypnotism and crime’ (1890) in which he affirmed that the only crime associated with hypnotism was rape—because for Charcot the fundamental effect of hypnotism was to reduce volition, not to make it susceptible to manipulation by others. At the same time, Charcot reaffirmed that persons could not be compelled to commit crimes against their will while under hypnosis, or due to posthypnotic suggestion, stating plainly that these were ‘downright impossibilities’ (Charcot, 1890, 164).

The insistence that the rape was the only crime that could be associated with hypnosis reconfirms the paradoxical status of the ‘Charcotian hysteric’ as a subject that is at once *unresponsive* and yet *responsible*. The philosopher and mathematician Joseph

Delbœuf, who witnessed hypnotic demonstrations at both the Nancy School and the Salpêtrière, made as much clear when, at the height of the Bernheim-Charcot debate, he published an article ‘On Criminal Suggestion’ in which he claimed that ‘the somnambulist, in the hands of the hypnotist is less than a *corpse*’ (Delbœuf, 1892, 366). Perhaps without realizing, Charcot had vastly expanded the epistemic territory that had once been relegated to the corpse by relocating its coordinates in the living body. With the addition of hypnotism to the Salpêtrière’s technical arsenal the conflation between the Real and Living, which photographic technology enacted, would be compounded by the additional conflation of the Real and the True. In this way, the clinical and epistemic value that Charcot located in hypnotic techniques paralleled that of photographic technology; both enabled a form of anesthetization that could transform the living subject into something approaching a corpse—either as the dead image of a living body, or as a living body without a will. Both of them enabled the clinician to quiet those human features—intention, will, deceit, imagination and desire—that obstinately stand in the way of any attempt to observe objectively; once removed, the technically isolated remainder has been rendered into an object suitable for scientific study.

Authority: Truth, Influence and Isolation

I will prescribe: 1) isolation, so as to withdraw him from paternal solicitude, which serves only to perpetuate the excitable nervous condition... (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 82).

Thus far I have avoided confronting the role played by authority in Charcot's work and the broader sphere of medico-scientific practice. In part, this has been a strategic omission; too many accounts of Charcot in particular have centered on his domineering personality, and quickly turned this character trait into the key to understanding his work on hysteria—or as many would claim, his orchestration of the performance of hysteria. Narratives of this kind construe Charcot as the author of a kind of hysteria that, counter to his claims of universality, existed only within the confines of the Salpêtrière, and only under the influence of Charcot; as Pierre Janet put it, 'Charcot described a type of hysteria which disappeared with him' (Janet, 1925, 21). And while there is some truth in this way of viewing things, in subscribing to it, one risks subsuming the nuances of Charcot's work within a retroactive simplicity that omits any consideration of the real problems he faced, or indeed, the ways in which he endeavored to resolve them. The question, then, is: How can we understand the function of authority within this particular episode of the self without positioning it as a mere facet of Charcot's personality? It must be recognized that in asking this question, which implicates the relation between the self and authority, we are returning to a question previously posed in terms of authorship. As such, the question of authority cuts straight to the core of Charcot's project, precisely

because it is tantamount to asking if the self is invented, i.e. a work of fiction (*l'art pour l'art*), or discovered, i.e. as an object of natural science.

The scientist or doctor occupies an uneasy position relative to these poles; the examples I have so far given, and the techniques and technologies that I have discussed, all point to an ideal conception of the medico-scientific observer; one primarily defined by the kind of detached objectivity that is facilitated by technological mediation. However, this view of things has resulted from the coordinates against which we have charted Charcot's work, which have thus far been relegated to diagnostic methods and technologies. In the following pages, I want to change tack and examine those techniques by which Charcot sought to take action, and to intervene therapeutically in order to alter his patients, both physically and psychologically.

While hysteria was treated in a variety of ways within the Salpêtrière, Charcot's lectures make clear that there is only one form of treatment that is to be employed invariably in cases of hysteria: isolation. For Charcot, isolation acted as a means by which to sever the subject from 'their father and their mother, whose influence, as experience teaches, is particularly pernicious' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 210). As such, isolation *replaces* the authority that traditionally resided in the family with that of the doctor. It is clear that isolation had long served as a primary means of treatment for all forms of hysteria within the Salpêtrière; Charcot notes that '[isolation] is a subject on which I shall have occasion to return many times without doubt in the course of these lectures. I have spoken about it every year for nearly fifteen years, and several of the lectures that have been devoted to it have been published' (Ibid., 214). Charcot is emphatic about the efficacy of isolation in the treatment of hysteria: 'I cannot overemphasize to you the

paramount importance I attach to the isolation of patients in the treatment of hysteria', the most vital component of which involved 'separat[ing] both children and adults from their fathers and their mothers' (Ibid.). In one instance, Charcot reports the case of a young girl who was miraculously healed by isolation—though it becomes clear from the patient's own experience of this therapeutic intervention that its efficacy has more to do with the doctor's authoritative prescription than the treatment itself:

'It was then that the girl, when questioned, made the following confession to me: "As long as papa and mamma had not gone—in other words, as long as you had not triumphed (for I saw that you wished to shut me up), I was afraid that my illness was not serious, and as I had a horror of eating, I did not eat. *But when I saw that you were determined to be master, I was afraid*, and in spite of my repugnance I tried to eat, and I was able to, little by little." I thanked the child for her confidence, which as you will understand is a lesson in itself' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 214, *my italics*).

Ostensibly, Charcot's use of isolation resembles Foucault's conception of confinement—as an enactment of order and a 'third form of repression', which both preserves and defines normality and reason by clearly designating its other via a visible and material segregation (Foucault, 1988, [1961], 40). As such, it would seem that Charcot was merely redeploying the old tactics of the alienist in a manner that appeared more humane, while emphasizing the organicity of neuroses in place of the abstract quasi-spiritual conceptualization of similar phenomena that had predominated in the French alienism of the 18th and early 19th century. However, one can already begin to see in this vignette, which is exemplary in this regard, that Charcot's prescription of isolation amounted to no more and no less than a challenge to parental authority, and in this regard, it is both more imperious and more systematic than the kind of forced physical confinement that Foucault identifies with the asylum of the classical age. First, because

the use of isolation to treat hysteria does not contain unreason, as Foucault's conception of confinement does, instead it implicates unreason outside of the isolated subject, i.e. the subject is isolated *in order to protect it from others*, not to protect others from it: 'the parents are systematically excluded up to the time that a notable amelioration occurs' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 210).¹⁸ Second, because isolation does not represent the doctor exercising power over the one isolated, but instead over those who already have power over them—this technique expands the authority of the doctor beyond the realm of the asylum or the hospital and sets it over and against the family.¹⁹ And finally, because Charcot's isolation therapy required consent, it maintained authority *as authority* precisely because it did not sacrifice its symbolic status by resorting to physical domination.²⁰ As Hannah Arendt reminds us, 'authority precludes the use of external means of coercion; where force is used, authority itself has failed' (Arendt, 1993, 93).

If we return to the Gouffé affair—which solidified Charcot's theory of hysteria as a legal precedent—we encounter an incident in which the medical expert's authority extends decisively beyond the realm of the body and into the realm of parental authority and its influence upon children in a manner that indicates the extent to which health and

¹⁸ Charcot reports a case of three siblings (a girl and two boys) suffering from hysteria, all of whom recovered swiftly after begin prescribed strict isolation from their parents. In a footnote that provides more recent information on the progress of these patients, Charcot notes that both of the boys have been cured and the girl has suffered only one attack in the past week, indicatively, this attack coincided with a visit from her parents (see Charcot, 1991 [1889], 218).

¹⁹ In almost all the instances in which Charcot prescribes isolation it is to create a barrier between children and their parents. In an ideal situation the prescription is met with the parent's consent, i.e. 'that they should see their children' only with the express 'authorization' of the doctor (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 209).

²⁰ In several instances the symbolic dimension of isolation therapy becomes explicit when Charcot explains to overly concerned parents that it need only be a 'fictitious isolation,' i.e. that the patient need not actually be isolated, but only believe that they are (Charcot, 1991 [1889], n.83, 213).

morality had become conjoined. While the expert testimony of the Salpêtrière's representatives resulted in the failure of Bompard's defense strategy, i.e. diminished responsibility qua hypnotism, they still recommend leniency due to 'mitigating circumstances such as family background,' because, as the experts had stressed, she had been "a child without a mother," and subject to bad influences' (Plas, 1998, 402). The outcome of this case demonstrates that the influence of the family, upon both the subject's moral and physical health, could be legitimately recognized in a court of law as a significant factor relative to questions concerning both the ethical responsibility and legal culpability of the subject in question.

Charcot's authority is exercised over and against the traditional locus of authority in the family, and as such, it does not merely reconstitute and protect a preexistent social order, but instead, seeks to revise it on the basis of the doctor's knowledge, which is superior to that of the family. As such, the isolation of children from their parents also represents a radical break with tradition because it cuts off the primary means by which values, beliefs, customs, and the narratives in which they are embedded, are transmitted: '[a]mong family members there is a solidarity, a conspiracy of silence. To satisfy your questions they make up a tale based on lies, at times involuntary untruths. [...] And sometimes you will hear the child himself repeat the story, believing it is true because he was heard it told so often. The physician, whose duty it is to get to the bottom of things and see them as they are, must not be duped by such babbling' (Charcot in Mayer, 2013, 17). Here, the role of the physician extends itself beyond the point at which it is merely arbitrating the truth of things; by challenging parental authority, the first authority that

all are fated to encounter, it becomes directly involved in a struggle to replace the primary institution from which all other forms of authority are derived.

In this simple treatment of isolation, physical boundaries become a form of moral reconditioning that both parallels and materially reproduces the status of the cataleptic, severed as they are from ‘that large collection of personal ideas [...] which constitute the *ego*’ (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 290). The efficacy of this therapeutic technique is neatly encapsulated in a favorite refrain of Charcot’s: ‘I know from long experience, that *what one has done, one can undo*’ (Ibid., 259). The struggle for authority, for Charcot, is at once the struggle for the truth. Hysterics require doctors who can see their truth, and clearly divide it from the fictions projected upon them by mothers and fathers, and their reverberations ‘long accumulated and organized [in their] conscience’ (Ibid., 290). The hysteric is, in this sense, a fragile object, malleable, impressionable, suggestible—and therefore requires the superior influence of the one who knows how to discern truth from delusions and fictions. Curiously then, the treatment of hysteria via isolation implicates this medical technique as a means by which to defend society through its careful management, precisely because the malleability of the hysterical subject becomes the testing ground for a whole set of techniques that are equally applicable in the governance of society at large, beginning with its primary unit in the individual.

If the battle for true authority over the hysterical subject took place between doctors and parents, the simulator redefined the rules of the game by emerging as the doctor’s equal, because unlike the hysteric, the simulator is an active participant in the game of truth. So much becomes clear when Charcot states that ‘simulation, [...] is, in the actual state of our knowledge, only a bugbear, before which the fearful and novice

alone are stopped. For [in] the future it ought to be the province of the physician, well-informed in these matters, to dissipate chicanery wherever it occurs; and to sort out the symptoms which form a fundamental part of the malady, from those which are simulated, and added to it, by the artifice of the patient' (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 18). The distinction, then, between the hysteric and the simulator is defined on the basis of activity and passivity. The hysteric is a perfect subject because they are docile, malleable and readily conform to the object status bestowed upon them by the pronouncements of doctors. Conversely, the simulator is an active participant in this struggle for authority, authorship and power, whose symptoms, as *artifice*, occupy the status of an *autogenesis*, that flies in the face of the order of things precisely because they are unwilling to conform to the truth.

you will ask me, what possible motive could this young girl have for simulation? I have already had occasion to point out to you [p.14] that hysterical people often simulate without any very distinct end in view, by the worship of art for its own sake. But is not the love of notoriety motive sufficient? To deceive, or think she deceives, the physicians of St. Petersburg, then those of Paris, next the Faculty of Vienna, and thus to make a tour through the whole of Europe, is not this sufficient motive? (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 42).²¹

The doctor emerges victorious in this game of truth by incorporating the simulator as the double of the docile hysteric, precisely because the former becomes the representative of *art for art's sake*, which is analogous with deception, while the latter emerges as the object of truth *par excellence*, which reflects the medical gaze as its perfect mirror.

²¹ Indicatively, a footnote informs us that this patient was immediately isolated from her family, the significance of which parallels the outcome of the Gouffé affair, i.e. even in cases where the individual in question is not deemed a hysteric the family is still a powerful source of influence that must be removed before things can be observed clearly.

Holding the hysteric apart from the simulator stands as yet another strategic attempt to retain the epistemic foundation erected upon the body and its finitude, because in actuality the line by which Charcot separated simulators from hysterics had less to do with the presence of lesions (whether organic or dynamic) than it did with his ability to exercise influence over the latter, and in doing so, maintain authority within all those spheres (religious, legal, medical, and familial) in which hysteria was implicated. And it is for this reason that the hysterical subject would emerge as a central problematic in Modernity. When Charcot's division between the simulator and the hysteric was erased and the hysteric was no longer 'governed' by the 'rules and laws' of nature (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 13), this subject—which opens itself up to each and every subjection so entirely, and radiates its impressions back like a distorted reflection would come to exemplify the modern condition in which 'we can no longer fall back upon authentic and undisputable experiences common to all' (Arendt, 1993, 91). The hysteric, by acting as a human receiver/transmitter that enigmatically re-expresses experience, evidenced the multiplicity of experiences that the modern world, with all of its technologies, had yet to convert into objective information and thereby master. Viewed this way, the hysteric-simulator stands as the counter-image that reveals the impotence of technocratic authority, which, no matter how fast it works to consolidate experience as reproducible, measurable information, cannot reproduce itself as the kind of power that is recognized as authentic, indisputable and common to all. That Freud would follow Charcot in universalizing hysteria should not be overlooked. In doing so, however, Freud would subvert the Charcotian conception of the hysterical subject in two decisive ways. First, by recognizing the hysterical body as a medium of symbolic expression, and second,

by making his conception of the hysterical symptom as symbol a universal feature of subjectivity, rather than a sign of pathology.

To be sure, Freud never let go of the fundamental principle of observation as the primary investigative technique he borrowed from Charcot. Indeed, in the opening lines of his own *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud would attribute the whole of his and Breuer's project to a 'chance observation' that displaced the terrain upon which these two physicians were attempting to plot hysteria from the correlation of symptomatic diathesis and pathological anatomy to interconnections of personal meaning and memory (Freud, 1893, 3). 'We had often compared the symptomatology of hysteria with a pictographic script which has become intelligible after the discovery of a few bilingual inscriptions. In that alphabet being sick *means* disgust' (Freud, 1893, 128, my italics). Anna O., who acted as the Rosetta Stone upon which psychoanalysis was founded, allowed Freud to re-think the bodily symptoms of hysteria as speech acts caught up in the body, which, once decoded, could be restored to their proper place in language.

The implications of this displacement far exceed the common narrative that charts Freud's work on hysteria by emphasizing its status as a 'talking cure.' The simulator that Charcot had denigrated as aimless, and deceptive—simulating under the principle of art for art's sake—could now be *read*, and reading hysteria would lead Freud to formulate a theory of intention, the complexity of which derives from recognizing that the simulator-hysteric not only deceives their doctor but themselves as well. The vicissitudes of self-deception would, of course, draw Freud into the murky depths of the unconscious, from which he would emerge with an account of selfhood that was premised on *personal* intention, but also on the compromised intentions of the self, understood as a

bodily and animalistic entity, and one ineluctably bound to a network of socio-cultural meanings and relations. In his dream book, the notion of networks is redeployed to represent the latent dream thoughts, which ‘branch out in every direction into the intricate network of our world of thought’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 525). And again in Freud’s *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, the discussion of jokes as a ‘social process’ is grounded in Theodor Lipps’ claim that ‘at bottom no psychological problem can be treated in isolation’ (Lipps in Freud, 1905, 147). Of course, neither Freud nor Lipps had Charcot or his use of isolation in mind when they made this claim—and yet, it still speaks to an entirely different conception of the self, as a fundamentally relational entity that can only be understood on the basis of the associative networks that inhere in and constitute it as a particular subject of experience in relation to others.

While Charcot may have contributed directly to the historical process by which the authority that traditionally inhered in the family began to dissipate, he merely replaced it with the authority of the doctor. What remained to be traversed in the historical space between the mid-19th century and the advent of the 20th, would be to restore the power of authority to the self, and thereby provide the basis for an account of the self that was self-authorized, without lapsing into technocism, or casting the self as an isolated form of subjectivity, as an invention or a fiction, that cannot find its bearings in those spheres of action, the social, the political and the ethical spheres that require a relation to, and recognition by, others.

Experiments in Self-Knowledge

Experiment is not meant to take the place of introspection, but is meant to make scientific introspection possible. The study of consciousness is, as we all know, fraught with peculiar difficulties: it is not easy to be at once the observer and the observed; 'the eye sees not itself,' and the phenomena are both complex and transient (Cattell, 1888, 38).

'As was to be expected,' writes Peter Gay, 'specialists in human nature supplied invaluable clues to the search for the self' (Gay, 1996, 3). Foremost among the 'specialists' identified by Gay are Wilhelm Wundt and Jean-Martin Charcot, both of whom 'made their discipline far more responsive to observation than it had even been and tried to earn it a reputation for being a science of man' (Ibid.). Although Gay is right to locate Charcot and Wundt as leading members of the project to develop a science of man, he erroneously identifies both as 'psychologists' (Ibid.); Charcot was, strictly speaking, a clinical neurologist specializing in pathological anatomy. Wundt, however, is indeed not only a psychologist, but as many would contend, the *first* scientific psychologist. And while both Charcot and Wundt championed the power of observation, the priority of observational techniques and experimental ones is inverted in their respective approaches to their objects of study.

Charcot took great pains to promote clinical observation as the means by which knowledge of the self could be acquired. Even still, it is evident that his work with hysteria drew him closer to experimental methods than he may have wished to admit; both the use of hypnotism and the means by which he secured it as a viable diagnostic technique were experimental, as opposed to purely observational. However, in

undertaking these experiments the positions of the patient and the doctor were unchanged; the latter occupied the position of knower, while the former served as their object of knowledge. At the same time that Charcot was working to unravel the mysteries of hysteria two other models of experimentation were being developed, each providing still different configurations relative to the parties involved in these experiments and the technologies that made them possible. In Britain, Charles Darwin's half-cousin Francis Galton was devising a new program of 'anthropometrics' by which to experimentally measure the self, and in Germany Wilhelm Wundt founded what is commonly recognized as the first laboratory for experimental psychology. Unlike Charcot, however, neither of these late 19th century developments in academic and experimental psychology have been incorporated into the historiography of psychoanalysis.

Wundt stands one branch removed from the family tree upon which historians commonly draw in sketching out the intellectual filiations of the young Freud; both of them having been influenced, in different ways, by the work of Hermann von Helmholtz, and by G.T. Fechner.²² Galton's place in the historiography of psychoanalysis, like

²² A survey of the historiography of psychoanalysis reveals the roots of this disciplinary schism between psychoanalysis and experimental psychology in Gustav Theodor Fechner and Hermann von Helmholtz (Makari, 2008, 76, 134, 317; Zaretsky, 2005, 27; Ellenberger, 1970, 218, 431, 479; Berger, 2000, 51; Sulloway, 1979, 66-67, 170, 235, 404-94), who are claimed as influences upon both Freud and Wundt. Freud's filiations to these figures are, however, less direct—the influence of Helmholtz is mediated by Freud's time in Ernst Brücke's laboratory, while the tie to Fechner is derived from Freud's independent scholarship and evidenced by his frequent references to Fechner in both his published writings and epistolary exchanges. Wundt's ties to these figures is, however, far more intimate owing to their common institutional affiliations, as well as the extent to which Fechner's pioneering work in psychophysics and Helmholtz' in physiological psychology, provided a number of key methods and practices upon which Wundt's experimental psychology would build. Wundt worked as Helmholtz' assistant at Heidelberg from 1858-1865 (Boring, 1950, 300; Diamond, 2001, 26-29), and was given his first appointment as a professor of philosophy at Leipzig in 1879, which had already been an intellectual epicenter for the intersectional study of philosophy, physiology and physics. For this reason, among others, Wundt

Wundt's, is generally relegated to the roles they both played in formulating the 'word association tests' that would later be employed by C.G. Jung, first as a means by which to serve his old master Eugene Bleuler in mapping the differences in associative processes within normal, schizophrenic, and neurotic patients, and later, in order to serve his new master, Freud:

In the alliance between the Vienna and Zurich schools the Swiss were by no means mere recipients. They had already produced very creditable scientific work, the results of which were of service to psycho-analysis. The association experiments started by the Wundt School had been interpreted by them in a psychoanalytic sense, and had proved applicable in unexpected ways. By this means it had become possible to arrive at rapid experimental confirmation of psycho-analytic observations and to demonstrate directly to students certain connections which an analyst would only have been able to tell them about. The first bridge linking up experimental psychology with psychoanalysis had been built (Freud, 1914, 28).

Jung's redeployment of Galton and Wundt's experiment served as powerful evidence of Freud's hypotheses, and did so by using the very methods of those who had opposed his views as relics of a passé nature philosophy. They were, however, ultimately disowned by Freud who argued that such experiments were unable to clearly determine whether the 'feeling-toned complex', elicited by experiments and tests, should be understood as a response to the controlled (objective) content of the experimental stimuli (a list of

would inherit the intellectual lineage of E.H. Weber, R.H. Lotze, J.F. Herbart and G.T. Fechner (Littman, 1979, 74). Commentaries on Wundt emphasize the extent to which he departed from the physiochemical reductivism of the Helmholtz school and the quasi-mysticism of Fechner while still retaining the experimental methods they collectively developed (Danziger, 1990, 17-18; Boring, 1950, 326-7), while historians of psychoanalysis tend to emphasize Freud's conceptual debts to these figures, particularly Fechner who, according to Ellenberger, provided Freud with some of his most fundamental metapsychological concepts, e.g. the concept of mental energy, the 'topographical' concept of the mind, and the principle of repetition (Ellenberger, 1970, 218).

carefully selected words) or the subject's associations to related, but peripheral, experiences outside the controlled parameters of the experiment:

I should also like to point out that [the word association] test may possibly be subject to a complication which does not, by its very nature, arise in psychoanalysis. In your examination you may be led astray by a neurotic who, although he is innocent, reacts as if he were guilty, because a lurking sense of guilt that already exists in him seizes upon the accusation made in the particular instance. [...] It can be that he has in fact not committed the particular crime with which you have charged him but that he has committed one of which you know nothing and of which you are not accusing him. He therefore quite truthfully denies being guilty of the one misdeed, while at the same time betraying his sense of guilt on account of the other (Freud, 1906, 113).

Ultimately, the once promising route paved by experimentalism was abandoned by Jung, who stated plainly that 'whosoever wishes to know about the human mind will learn nothing, or almost nothing, from experimental psychology' (Jung, 1980 [1917], para. 409).

Freud too consigned experimentation to the realm of the speculative and the frivolous when he stated that:

Neither speculative philosophy, nor descriptive psychology, nor what is called experimental psychology (which is closely allied to the physiology of the sense-organs), as they are taught in the Universities, are in a position to tell you anything serviceable of the relation between body and mind or to provide you with the key to an understanding of possible disturbances of the mental functions (Freud, 1916 [1915], 20).

How did it happen that this method, which assured the provision of a scientific knowledge of the self, came to be disowned by Jung and Freud alike? In the remainder of this chapter I trace the ever-widening space between the self, conceived of as the center of personal experience, and its double, the self of universal regularities, that, paradoxically, forms in the very attempt to re-unite the knowing self with itself as an object of knowledge through the introspective methods of experimental psychology. While

experimental psychology stands as yet another attempt, like autobiography, to reunite the object of knowledge with the knower, it also defines a movement that opposes self-knowledge. First, because the kind of self-knowledge derived from experimentalism is never knowledge of someone in particular, but of the regularities of psychological processes and elements. And secondly, because its dependence on technological and psychological expertise would reinstall the division between knower and known—effectively forming a division of labor-knowledge between those experts capable of producing true knowledge of the self, those who would be subject to it, and later eager consumers of it.

Foundations for An Experimental Psychology

The problem of psychology has sometimes been correspondingly defined as ‘self-knowledge of the subject’. This definition is, however, inadequate because the interaction of the subject with the outer world and with other similar subjects is just as much a problem of psychology as are the attributes of the single subject’ (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 4).

Wilhelm Wundt is commonly hailed as the founder of the discipline today called psychology. However, his achievement was in fact twofold: first, he secured psychology its autonomy from physiology and philosophy via the development of an independent methodological foundation (Boring, 1950), and at the same time, he produced the first institutionally recognized scientific community dedicated to experimental psychological research (Danziger, 1990). It is rather surprising then, and yet of the utmost significance, that so few commentaries on Wundt get past his philosophy of science and its relevance for the establishment of a scientific psychology, and a prevailing narrative that Wundt

was the founder of the autonomous *applied* science of experimental psychology. Wundt's historical position is defined through his double status as the one who founded a discipline on the method of experimental research and yet was not particularly enthusiastic, or even confident, in the kind of applications that it might have outside the strictly delimited role he had assigned it. Ultimately, Wundt's legacy is a tragic one, as Kurt Danziger, the preeminent Wundt scholar and historian, observes:

Wundt's historical role was in some ways akin to the fate of the sorcerer's apprentice. He successfully mobilized some very effective practical techniques in the service of certain limited goals, but then found that these techniques turned into forces that had passed completely out of his control and were about to destroy the very framework within which he had put them to work (Danziger, 1990, 34).

In order to understand the way in which the technological first explicitly encountered the self not merely as a body, but in its interiority, one must first grasp the epistemological framework that Wundt sought to support by means of these experimental techniques.

Wundt's voluminous writings frequently begin by distinguishing his own methods from those by which psychology had proceeded in the past, i.e. metaphysics, or else via the division of 'inner' and 'outer sense' (Wundt, 1897 [1896]; 1910). In order to separate his own approach from these, Wundt employed a kind of perspectivalism—a 'different point of view' separated his new psychology from those 'remnants of earlier stages of [psychology's] development' (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 6). Wundt's overarching project may be viewed as a sustained attempt to escape the objections Kant had made regarding the possibility of a scientific psychology. In brief, Kant had argued that I) psychology cannot be a *natural* science because it cannot mathematically represent the phenomena it endeavors to explain and therefore can only lay claim to a posteriori knowledge, II)

psychology cannot be an *experimental* science because it cannot isolate one thought or mental phenomena from another, and III) psychology cannot be an *empirical* science because in attempting to observe itself consciousness is altered (Kant, 2004, 6-9; Wundt, 1910 [1902], 6).²³

Wundt, along with Fechner and Helmholtz, had already inherited the possibility of overturning Kant's first two objections from the work of E.H. Weber (Wundt, 1910 [1902], 2-3), who demonstrated that the thresholds in which particular sensory stimuli become perceptible in consciousness could be mathematically formulated, e.g. 'Weber's Law'.²⁴ But Weber's discovery, which had already provided inroads for Helmholtz' work in physiology and Fechner's in psychophysics (Ibid., 7), still left Kant's final objection standing, and ultimately it was the problem of introspection that stood in the way of a scientific psychology, and that would therefore dominate much of Wundt's career. 'On this issue', observes Danziger, '[Wundt] never emerged from the shadow of Kant, which meant that he accepted the object of knowledge to which the method of introspection corresponded but denigrated the method itself' (Danziger, 1990, 34). Of what, then, did this 'denigration' consist? Wundt viewed 'pure introspection' as a mistaken path towards psychological knowledge, one that led to a psychology that was 'necessarily driven back to a metaphysical basis, because of its assumption of the difference between the physical and

²³ Patricia Kitcher also gives a systematic account of the most relevant points regarding Kant's objections to psychology as a real science in *Kant's Transcendental Psychology* (Kitchner, 1990, 11-13). Objection (III) is also raised by Kant in a number of other contexts not strictly related to the methodological requirements of natural sciences; see for example Kant's *Lectures on Anthropology* (2012).

²⁴ This experimental finding was first published by Weber in *De tactu* (1834), however, its relevance to psychology was not recognized until Fechner employed it in his psychophysics and termed it Weber's law, which he formulated as $\Delta I / I = k$ (see Boring, 1950, 112, 287).

the psychical contents of experience' (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 9). In order to solve this issue, Wundt relied on a dual strategy.

First, he would redefine the *kind* of experience that psychological introspection sought to observe; unlike the '*mediate experience*' that defined natural scientific objects by conceptually abstracting from the subject, his own brand of introspection, self-observation (*Selbstbeobachtung*), would seek to establish the regularities of '*immediate experience*' (Wundt, 1910 [1902], 3). Still, one issue remained: how to engender a kind of self-observation that did not fall back into the problem of introspection outlined by Kant. Instead of willfully attempting to observe consciousness, Wundt would contrive certain experimental protocols by which sensory stimuli could be applied to an experimental subject, thereby eliciting or '*occasioning*' an 'immediate experience to arise in the subject' without the subject initiating it, and thereby altering it (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 12).

In this way 'the psychological experiment [...] creates external conditions that look towards the production of a determinate mental process at a given moment' and thereby enables the *Selbstbeobachter* (self-observer) to observe 'the state of consciousness accompanying this process [...] approximately unchanged' (Wundt, 1910 [1902], 5).²⁵ The self-observer could then report upon this *immediate experience*, without running into the paradoxical identity of the knower and its object of knowledge. Significantly, these experimental conditions were designed to allow one to observe experience not by

²⁵ While the term *Selbstbeobachtung* had already been used by Kant and others in the tradition of Germanic philosophy to designate a general form of self-regard or introspection, the sense in which it is deployed in Wundt, and later Freud (see Freud, 1900 [1999], 81-82), bears greater resemblance to the distinction made in Chapter 2 of Franz Brentano's *Psychology From an Empirical Standpoint* (1995 [1874]), in which he outlines his conception of *intentionality* relative to consciousness; neither Wundt nor Freud would acknowledge this debt, though both were clearly familiar with Brentano's work.

conceptually abstracting from the subject, but in another sense, to experience as if they were not a self—that is, to observe experience in a form that was radically detached from the contexts of life, and was therefore in no way tied to the experiencing subject personally.²⁶ Additionally, Wundtian experiments presupposed a model of the self that is subject only to external stimuli, insofar as these experiments were designed to elicit experiences via controlled perceptual stimuli, i.e. visual, tactile and auditory stimuli.

Freud's later conception of 'self-observation' (also *Selbstbeobachtung*) parallels Wundt's insofar as it acknowledges that one's 'psyche requires a certain preparation' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 81). Like Wundt, Freud was intent on effecting a kind of self-observation that diminished volition. Unlike Wundt, however, Freud did so to silence 'critical judgment' and thereby 'become aware of the ideas arising in him' (Ibid.). Doing so, explains Freud, mirrors the state of consciousness as we fall asleep by diverting energy from our critical to our observational faculty: we '*turn the "involuntary" ideas into "voluntary" ones*' that can be analyzed *only* in relation to the particular subject in whom they arise (Ibid., 82). The fundamental distinction here is between a conception of the psyche as responding only to externally occurring stimuli (Wundt) and one that seeks to allow one to observe the endogenously occurring contents of a particular consciousness (Freud).²⁷

²⁶ C.G. Jung criticizes experimental psychology along similar lines when he claims that '[a] scientifically oriented psychology is bound to proceed abstractly; that is, it removes itself just sufficiently far from its object not to lose sight of it altogether. That is why the findings of laboratory psychology are, for all practical purposes, often so remarkably unenlightening and devoid of interest' (Jung, 1980 [1957], para. 534)

²⁷ I discuss this point in greater detail in Chapter 3

Significantly, Wundt acknowledged that psychological processes such as memory could not be studied experimentally. Indeed, when Hermann Ebbinghaus and others began conducting experiments in order to ascertain the regularities of memory, they could only account for ‘memorization’, or memory treated in terms of its inscriptional accuracy (see Ebbinghaus, 1998 [1885]). The ‘involuntary’, or spontaneous, reemergence of memories that would serve as the basis for Freud’s model of subjectivity (Freud, 1999 [1900], 82) was categorically barred from Wundt’s program of experimentalism because there was no way to objectively control the originary stimuli/experience upon which they were based. Here, as in other cases, it becomes evident that the method itself was designed to obtain unquestionable knowledge of the self, but also, that in doing so it was forced to severely delimit the kind of phenomena that it could submit to experimental protocols.

Indeed, observing such experimentally conditioned forms of experience would required a very particular kind of experimental subject; one that was naïve in regard to the stimulus that would arbitrarily prompt an immediate experience to arise in their consciousness, *while at the same time*, one that was highly trained in the techniques of introspection outlined by Wundt. This second criterion was of vital importance because Wundt’s ultimate intention, as an unyielding foundationalist, was to proceed from the experimental study of the most infinitesimal units of consciousness, and progressively build a systematic account of conscious experience therefrom. As such, the self-observer had to be capable of both observing consciousness, so as to test the particular hypotheses at stake in the experiment, as well as being able to report their experience in terms that would allow it to be integrated with the systematic account Wundt hoped to produce.

‘There is only *one* kind of causal explanation in psychology,’ writes Wundt, ‘and that is the derivation of more complex psychical processes from simpler ones’ (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 24). Wundt conceived of the range of psychological phenomena hierarchically, and arranged them from the most fleeting and elemental to the most complex and stable:

- (I) *Psychic elements*, i.e. tone.
- (II) *Psychic compounds*, i.e. ideas.
- (IIb) *Second degree (interconnection of) psychical compounds*, i.e. ideational complexes or regular successions.
- (III) *Third degree psychical developments: single mental trend*, i.e. development of intellectual functions, will, feelings.
- (IIIb) *Composite psychical developments*, i.e. total development of a psychical personality (individual).
- (VI) *General forms of psychical developments*, i.e. myth, language, custom (transindividual) (see Wundt, 1897 [1896], 25-7).²⁸

Experimental psychology (or ‘physiological psychology’)²⁹ would begin by experimentally determining the established relations and regularities of the most fundamental elements of consciousness in order to build a comprehensive account of psychological phenomena.³⁰ Wundt established the limit point of this systematic-experimental program in the ‘general forms of psychological development’. These ‘general forms’, argued

²⁸ The schematization presented above is my own, but is derived from a composite of Wundt’s treatment of this hierarchy in his ‘General Survey of The Subject’ and a less nuanced schema Wundt presents at the close of the same section (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 27).

²⁹ It is important to recognize, in regard to Wundt’s usage of ‘physiology’, that the meaning of *physiologische* did not imply a definite object of study, i.e. physiology, but instead the method that had been developed within that discipline. As such, Wundt’s choice to title his work *Physiological Psychology*, in no way represents the subordination of the psychological to the physiological, but rather the application of the method of experimentalism to psychology (see Blumenthal, 2001, n.121).

³⁰ ‘The solution of the last and most general psychological problem, the ascertainment of the *laws of psychological phenomena*, depends upon the investigation of all the combinations of different degrees, the combination of elements into compounds, of compounds into interconnections, and interconnections into developments. And as this investigation is the only things that can teach us the actual composition of psychical processes, so we can discover the attributes of *psychical causality*, which finds its expression in this processes, only from the laws followed by the contents of experience and their components in their various combinations’ (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 26-7).

Wundt, had already surmounted to the status of ‘objects’—having been historically constituted as ‘language, mythological ideas and customs’, which ‘gain the necessary degree of constancy only when they become collective’ (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 23)—and would, therefore, be studied by a separate branch of psychology that was not experimental and would instead follow in the tradition of Herder, Lazarus, Steinthal and von Hartmann’s work (Croog, 1947, 264; Danziger, 1983, 308-9, Wong, 2009, 244-46). English speakers have traditionally mistranslated this branch of Wundt’s psychology as ‘social psychology’ (see Judd trans., 1897) or ‘*ethnic* psychology’ (see Titchner trans., 1910). For his own part, Wundt termed it *Völkerpsychologie* and envisaged it as proceeding towards the same aim via a non-experimental method (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 23).

Thus, Wundt could rest assured that like the natural sciences psychology now had ‘*two* exact methods: the experimental method, serving for the analysis of elemental psychical processes, and the observation of general mental products, serving for the investigation of higher psychical processes and developments’ (Ibid., 23-4). Such was, at least, Wundt’s conception of how the field of psychological research would progress. However, as this condensed exposition of the methodological foundations he set out for his psychology should make clear, actually performing the sheer number and breadth of experiments necessary to realize this psychological program would be an enormous undertaking. It appeared that Wundt was capable of single-handedly clearing a space for a science of psychology by maneuvering through the obstacles Kant had put in place, but in order to actually apply this method he would require a veritable army of psychologists who were highly trained in Wundtian introspection and expert technicians capable of operating the instruments required for such precise experimental protocols.

Standardizing The Experimental Subject

‘There is, then, no fundamental psychical process to which experimental methods can not be applied, and therefore none in whose investigation they are not logically required’ (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 22).

Deborah J. Coon reads the early history of experimental psychology as one underwritten by the ‘technoscientific *means* of quantification, mechanization, and interchangeable parts, on standardization of both process and product in manufacture’ (Coon, 1993, 759). Equally, she admits, *this* technoscientific ideal was ineluctably tied to the instrumentality that had long been simmering behind those attempts to know the self and, in doing so, to realize it as useful and manageable (Ibid.). For his own part, Wundt had been adamant: ‘the great importance of the experimental method lies [...] essentially in the further fact that it makes observation itself possible for us’ (Wundt, 1910 [1902], 5). Significantly, the experimental stabilization of introspection is precisely what separated Wundt’s epistemology from the one we have already traced in Charcot. In other words, the same experiments conducted in Wundt’s laboratory had been employed by physiologists in order to map the systematic relations of bodily functions, and could in many cases be employed with equal success on living or dead subjects.³¹ Knowledge of one’s private consciousness, however, would require a method of observation that did not result in the alteration of consciousness. Further, making such knowledge experimentally valid meant that it would have to adhere to the fundamental principles of standardization and

³¹ Wundt gives the example of an experiment in which the dead tissue of a frog is faradized, thereby enabling the physiologist to measure the time interval between the application of the electrical stimulus and the muscular response of the dead frog (Wundt, 1910 [1902], 67-9).

reproducibility. A closer look at the actual conditions affected by both the technical and social dynamics of the Wundtian experimental situation evidences the degree to which interchangeability, standardization and reproducibility had already emerged as the key principles of robust experimentation in Leipzig and were not restricted to experimental protocols and instrumentation, but the necessary application of which extended to the subject of experimentation as well. As such, the psychological self would finally emerge as a valid scientific object, knowledge of which was, however, restricted to its most elementary and *impersonal* features.

Wundt's laboratory was fitted with an array of technical instruments from spectroscopes, heliostats, darkness chambers (tachistoscopes) and a collection of prisms for experiments related to color perception. Precision timepieces, or chronoscopes, were used to measure response times in reaction time experiments. Still other apparatuses were required for measuring auditory perceptions, such as electrically driven tuning forks, and a *Tonmesser* for measuring sound, as well as kymographs for recording changes in pressure (Haupt, 2001, 214-18). In almost all experiments, multiple instruments were required to ensure that experimental conditions were standardized, precise and documentable. In a paper written during his time in Wundt's lab, James Cattell claimed that experimentalism allowed the scientist to study psychological phenomena by controlling their occurrence in consciousness, and above all, that it 'enables us to *photograph* the transient phenomena and subject them to objective examination and measurement' (Cattell, 1888, 38).

Wundt's pioneering reaction-time experiments involved a complex array of instruments, some of which were intended to stimulate, and then monitor, the response of the experimental subject (an auditory stimulus, a rheostat, a chronoscope and a

response key served these functions), while other instruments were required to measure the stimulating and recording instruments and to ensure that they were triggered with precision (the accuracy of the chronoscope was determined by the ‘control hammer’, while a ‘see-saw’ switch enabled the synchronization of the apparatus as a whole). The results of such an experiment would then be plotted in relation to a five-part schema that prefaced any experimental publications to come out of the Leipzig Institute:

- (1) sensation, the movement of the nerve impulse from the sense organ into the brain;
- (2) perception, the entry of the signal into the field of consciousness;
- (3) apperception, the entry of the signal into the focus of attention
- (4) act of will, in which the appropriate response signal is released into the brain;
- (5) response movement, or more precisely, the movement of the response signal from the brain to where it initiates muscular movement (Rieber, 2001, 169).

Wundt maintained that (1) and (5) were purely physiological, however, (2), (3) and (4) were psychophysical and could therefore be accounted for in psychological terms. For this reason, many of the protocols developed in the Leipzig Institute were geared towards techniques of precision time measurement, or at least approximation, in order to determine the reaction times of *perception*, *apperception* and *act of will*.³²

The capacity to actually observe and distinguish one from the other, however, required experimental subjects highly trained in the art of self-observation. In his ‘Prolegomena to a Study of Introspection’, Wundt’s student Edward Titchener recalls that ‘systematic introspection demands the [...] ingrained habit of observation that has been moulded in the laboratory’ (Titchener, 1912, 444). According to Boring, ‘no observer who had performed less than 10,000 of these introspectively controlled reactions

³² See, for example, Cattell’s discussion of the experimental study of ‘The Duration of Mental Processes’ and of ‘The Time-Sense’ (Cattell, 1888, 45-49)

was suitable to provide data for published research from Wundt's laboratory' (Boring, 1950, 172); while Danziger reports that 'Wundt appeared regularly as a subject or data source in the experiments published by his students,' which suggests that 'the role of the psychological data source was considered to require more psychological sophistication than the role of the experimenter' (Danziger, 1990, 51).

Curiously then, the Wundtian program of experimentation subverts entirely the 'division of labor' that we found operating in Charcot's hypnotic experiments. Because the Wundtian experiment intended to technically stabilize introspection or self-observation, it would appear to stand as a candidate for a kind of self-knowledge, as opposed to knowledge of the self as such. That is to say, in the particular situation contrived by Wundt, the knower and the object of knowledge were once again united in one subject. However, any kind of self-relation that occurred in this experimental situation was *facilitated* by a fellow experimentalist, and *mediated* by a vast array of technical devices. Moreover, the very methodological premises of Wundt's experimentalism precluded these experiments from broaching the personal dimensions of the self because these were deemed too complex. Instead, these experiments were geared towards establishing a fundamental account of 'elementary,' and therefore universal, psychical processes via their isolation and measurement. For this reason, the role of experimental subject could be assumed by anyone, so long as they were sufficiently trained in self-observation, because in the experimental situation they did not represent themselves, but a standardized conception of the self as such (Danziger, 1990, 52).

While the subject-positions in these experiments subvert the hypnotic ones undertaken in the Salpêtrière, the industry with which Wundt pursued his experimental

program parallels that of Charcot almost exactly. During the last two decades of the 19th century Wundt recruited students from far and wide who came to learn his experimental method (Smith, 1997, 494); Arthur Blumenthal estimates the number of students to pass through Wundt's lecture hall and laboratory at an astounding 17,000 (Blumenthal, 2001, 123). James Cattell reported that most of Wundt's foreign students came from America and Russia, though many arrived from Scandinavia, Greece, Czechoslovakia, and France (Cattell, 1888, 39). With the exception of those doctoral students who became assistants to Wundt, most were only present at Leipzig for two years—hardly enough time to become familiar with both the rigor of experimental protocols and the vast philosophical edifice that was, for Wundt at least, the end to which these experiments were only a means; and more often than not, it appears that Wundt prescribed the kind of psychological phenomena upon which his doctoral students would conduct research. As such, the laboratory at Leipzig was in many ways a research factory with a clear division of labor: Wundt would direct the research agenda of the institute and his students would carry out the necessary experimental protocols to support his philosophical project. Increasingly, and perhaps without Wundt realizing it, the experimental (applied) branch of his psychology was gradually becoming detached from the carefully delimited purpose he had envisaged it serving, as students increasingly valued their technological instrumentation over and above techniques of introspection.

Titchener would go as far as to claim that 'the experimenter of the early nineties trusted, first of all, in his instruments; chronoscope and kymograph and tachistoscope were—it is hardly an exaggeration to say—of more importance than the observer [...]' There were still vast reaches of mental life which experiment had not touched' admits

Titchener, but ‘we believed, at least the enthusiasts among us, that the method would carry us to them’ (Titchener, 1912, 427). As Wundt’s laboratory grew in prestige and size it became a prime destination for students eager to master the techniques pioneered by Wundt, and by the turn of the century a new generation of experimental psychologists began to populate chairs in psychology, physiology and philosophy across Europe and America, nearly all of them students of Wundt. Each of them would, in their own way, diverge from the philosophical foundations of Wundt’s psychology while championing the uninhibited application of experimentation.

In his haste to train a future generation of experimentalists, however, Wundt failed to adequately instill in them an appreciation of the philosophical foundations of their discipline. Soon, Wundt’s efforts to demonstrate the legitimacy of his psychology would, in the hands of his many students, result in the reckless abandon of the carefully delimited role he had assigned experimentation. In its place, a vast and ever-increasing set of variants of psychological experimentation would emerge as both a repudiation of Wundtian ideals and as the foundation for a new kind of self, defined by its status as an object that could be scientifically, socially and industrially quantified in terms of its *capacities* and its *use value*.

Galton's Anthropometrics

Men are quite as variable by nature as other animals of like species (Galton, 1904, 2).

Many students who journeyed to Leipzig to study with Wundt were equally attracted to the contemporaneous work of Francis Galton. Though not as philosophically sophisticated, Galton had contrived various forms of psychological experimentation that were less restrictive than Wundt's in terms of the subject matter they could be used to test. The principle aim of Galton's experimentalism was also antithetical to Wundt's, insofar as Galton's was designed to identify and statistically analyze individual differences, as opposed to universal regularities. Moreover, Galton's experimental method resembled the more traditional experimental situation derived from the clinic, in which the experimental subject was merely a source of information and did not require training in order to accurately report their experience. Taken together, these three dimensions of Galton's program of research meant that experimentalists could leave behind Wundt's strictly enforced delimitations and begin to develop experimental protocols in order to study more complex psychic phenomena like personality and intellect. Additionally, drawing on a larger population would enable them to study individual differences—rather than the standardized conception of subjectivity Wundt was interested in—by comparing the way in which experimental subjects performed under the same experimental conditions.

Comparatively, the 'psychoanalytic situation' devised by Freud occupies an awkward position relative to these earlier models. On one hand it would appear (until the

later introduction of countertransference) that the patient was indeed the ‘primary source’ of the psychoanalyst’s knowledge. However, viewing things this way requires that one overlook the extent to which psychoanalysis was born out of self-analysis; Freud himself clearly places psychoanalysis within the tradition of self-knowledge when he states that ‘the conditions of self-observation are more favourable than the conditions of the observations of others’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 83). At the same time, it is important to recognize that the turn to individual differences in Galton should not be misinterpreted as subverting the standardized conception of subjectivity by turning instead to the particularity of the subject, as Freud would later. Instead, Galton intended to establish a baseline, a norm or a median, on the basis of individual differences that could then be used to measure deviations.³³

Galton, unlike Wundt, did not view experimental conditions as the means by which to stabilize introspection. In this regard, it is perhaps more appropriate to view Galton as the founder of experimental psychology as we understand it today.³⁴ If the positions occupied by experimenter and experimental subject in Galton’s work were essentially taken over unchanged from the clinical context, Galton’s experimental method also relied on statistical analysis rather than the skilled clinical observers or

³³ Galton, for example, made use of composite photographs in order to comparatively *view* multiple individuals overlaid upon one another so as to emphasize their commonalities and differences. Curiously Freud was much enamored by these artifacts and makes reference to them in both *Interpretation*, and his later essay on Moses as metaphoric examples of the way in which a series of associated ideas coalesce into a single form (see Galton, 1907 [1883]; Freud, 1900, 139; 1939, 10).

³⁴ Diamond argues that Galton has ultimately played a greater role in the history of experimentalism due his development of the methods of test batteries, word association, the questionnaire, twin comparison, classification based on normal disposition, and correlation and regression techniques (Diamond, 1998).

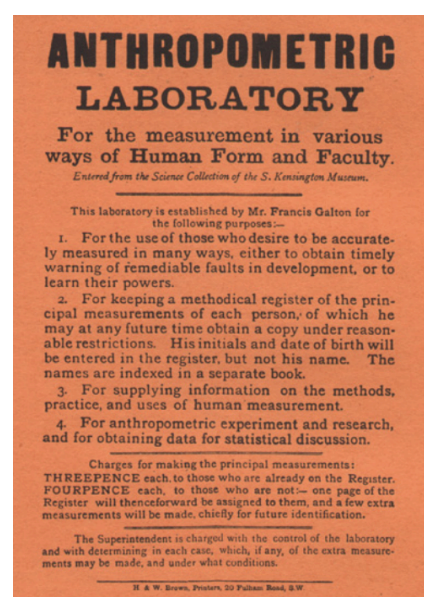
introspectionists upon which Charcot and Wundt had respectively depended. As such, Galton had developed a method by which to gather knowledge of the self that could be fully automated precisely because it did not require a skilled observer to collect data or to interpret it. A technician could administer the experimental protocols, ‘tests’ or ‘measurements’, the data gleaned therefrom could subsequently be recorded and organized by an administrative aid, and finally a statistician could render the data meaningful in accordance with a predetermined mathematical formula.

Significantly, the meaning matrix in which the Galtonian subject was to be plotted formed itself as the inverse of Charcot’s, which had been defined by the attempt to locate the precise seat of pathology in the body. Galton’s science of eugenics would, by contrast, aim to identify the ‘best specimens’ by determining the genetic factors that caused superior qualities to emerge in individuals—among these qualities Galton listed ‘health, energy, ability, manliness, and courteous disposition’ (Galton, 1904, 2).³⁵ Galton’s aim was a social one, but he believed it would be achieved not by reimagining and reconstructing society, but instead, by artificially accelerating the process of natural selection in order to ‘raise the average quality’ of the populace by weeding out ‘undesirable’ qualities and promoting ‘good’ ones (Galton, 1904, 2-3); ultimately, Galton believed that society would be best served by leaving these superior individuals ‘to work out their common civilization in their own way’ (Ibid.).

³⁵ In an earlier articulation of his new science Galton had listed ‘intellect, energy, and physique’ which were explicitly identified with ‘high civic worth’, as well as suggesting that the practice of eugenics be undertaken by ‘a committee’ that might be ‘entrusted to select the worthiest of the remaining candidates, much as they select for fellowships, honours, or official posts’ (Galton, 1901, 101).

In this regard, it is important to recognize that Galton's work, which is itself predicated upon Darwin's, departed from Wundt's by contriving experiments that were designed to allow the scientist to work from a developmental schema. However, Galton was concerned with development in terms of genetic expressions in large populations over time. As such, development was not conceptualized in terms that were meaningful to individuals, as it had been in autobiography, and would be later in psychoanalysis. While Wundt's experiments had taken aim at the most elemental acts of consciousness, Galton's turned to the developmental trajectory of 'mankind'; neither of which either presented knowledge of the personal self, or provided means by which to relate to oneself that were not made essentially inaccessible due to the degree of expertise required to engage with them.

From the outset, Galton experienced difficulty recruiting a sufficient number of participants for his experiments and tests (see Galton, 1874, 1884). However, in a rather inspired move, Galton's solution was to reverse his strategy completely: if individuals were not motivated to provide information, he would make doing so entertaining and novel. In 1884 Galton opened an 'Anthropometric Laboratory' at The International Health Exhibition in London, which was so successful that when the exhibition closed the laboratory was permanently installed in the South Kensington Museum of Science. Galton described his laboratory as follows:



A space 36 feet long by 6 feet wide is fenced off from the side of a gallery by open latticework. It is entered by a door at one end, and is quitted by a second door at the other. The public can easily see through the latticework, while they are prevented from crowding too close (Galton, 1885, 213).

Exposing the laboratory with lattice walls meant that that it was not only a working and highly efficient lab, but also a spectacle. This was science on show! However, it differed significantly from the theatrical performances enacted by Charcot. Galton was providing the public with a tantalizing glimpse into the realm of *real* laboratory science, with its precision instruments and techniques, which were endowed with a kind of mystique precisely because they had traditionally been the preserve of experts who toiled out of sight. With the advent of Galton's exhibition, not only could one witness science in action, one could experience it first-hand.

By the time the Exhibition closed, Galton had gathered extensive anthropometric data from 9,377 subjects (Galton, 1885, 206). This data would occupy him for the next ten years, during which he subjected it to a battery of statistical analysis intended to bear out his own eugenicist beliefs and the program of social engineering he would later propose (Smith, 2013, 57, 582). Galton's student Karl Pearson noted that '[f]or the race the value of such records is incontestable,' because not 'all men have Galton's power of calm self-introspection, and the effect of studying his family medical history in the case of a neurotic subject might well be disastrous for the individual' (Pearson, 1924, 369). With Galton, as with Charcot, the authority of the scientist is portrayed as both socially valuable and advantageous, because it provides superior knowledge, and protects those fragile and inferior members of society by supplying them with a truth that they are either incapable of obtaining, or could only obtain at great risk to themselves and others.

The most significant discovery to come out of Galton's Anthropometric Laboratory, therefore, resulted from neither the tests he conducted nor his statistical analysis of the data gleaned therefrom, but instead, from the very means by which he managed to convince so many private individuals to willingly submit to his battery of tests. Instead of entreating individuals to volunteer, he required that they pay to be tested. An initial trip through the Anthropometric Laboratory cost *fourpence*, however, once entered into the official 'Anthropometric Registry' any future measurements would cost only *threepence*. In return, 'the applicant' received self-knowledge in the form of a card upon which their measurements were listed (Galton, 1885, 214). What Galton had demonstrated, without realizing it, was that the kind of information that such apparently 'scientific experiments' or 'tests' could yield was not merely of value to the scientist studying the individual as a single unit of a larger aggregate, they were also of even greater value to the individual consumer, particularly when the tests purported to scientifically determine one's potential.

It would seem that there was still another application to which this experimental technology of the self might be suited, one that is clearly articulated in the statement that a young Gustav Janouch would make to his tutor Franz Kafka, after visiting an automatic photograph machine: 'For a couple of krone one can have oneself photographed from every angle. The apparatus is a mechanical *Know-Theyself!*' (Janouch in Sontag, 2002, 206). If self-knowledge was worth paying for, the skills that Wundt's students had acquired in service of his philosophical ends could now serve commercial ones, and soon some of his most talented students, foremost among them James Cattell and Hugo Münsterberg in America, and Charles Spearman in Britain, would begin to develop a

hybridization of Wundtian and Galtonian experimentalism that would serve neither philosophical ends, nor those of the private individual.

Proliferation and Industrialization

In the end there will be not only a science, but also a profession of psychology (Cattell, 1907 [1904], 604).

On the seventh of September 1904, Professor James McKeen Cattell of Columbia University addressed the attendees of the International Congress of Arts and Sciences in St. Louis Missouri. His lecture, on ‘The Conceptions and Methods of Psychology’ had a clear message: ‘any attempt at *a priori* limitation of the field of a science is futile. [...] As I claim for psychology the freedom of the universe in its subject-matter, so I believe that every method of science can be used by the psychologist’ (Cattell, 1907 [1904], 598, 599). This was not a general statement concerning Cattell’s own vehement pragmatism and enthusiasm for scientific progress; it was a striking of the father dead, and that father was Wilhelm Wundt.

In America many of the most prestigious chairs in psychology came to be occupied by former pupils of Wundt.³⁶ E.B. Titchener founded a laboratory at Cornell, James Baldwin opened another at the University of Toronto and Lightner Whitmer returned from studying with Wundt and became the director of the psychological laboratory that Cattell had already established at University of Pennsylvania in 1889.

³⁶ For a detailed account of the intellectual lineage that stems from Wundt see Wijzen et al., 2019.

Edward W. Scripture, yet another American student of Wundt, founded a laboratory at Yale, then headed by George T. Ladd, where he championed a reductionist reading of Wundt expressed in the dictum: 'If it can't be measured, then it can't be any good' (Scripture in Rieber, 2001, 155). Scripture, like many of his American contemporaries, believed that if psychology was going to catch up with other sciences, such as chemistry and physics, it would have to follow their example by demonstrating not only its scientific credentials but its ability to contribute to the kind of *progress* embodied by the technoscientific ideal:

'It is to the introduction of experiment that we owe our electric cars and lights, our bridges and tall buildings, our steam-power and factories, in fact, every particle of our modern civilization that depends on material goods. It is to the lack of experiment that we must attribute the medieval condition of our mental sciences' (Scripture, 1895, 24-5).

G. Stanley Hall (who had studied with Wundt briefly) had already set the stage for the kind of technoscientific applications of experimental psychology envisaged by Scripture. In his 1889 inaugural speech at Clark University, Hall expressed his hope that the laboratory methods developed for psychology would allow the United States to replicate the kind of industrial success that Germany had enjoyed after chemical techniques developed in laboratories revolutionized the German chemical dye industry (Hall, 1950 [1889], 368).

However, James Cattell—Wundt's first laboratory assistant—was the most influential in promoting his own hybridization of Wundtian and Galtonian experimentalism in the United States. When Cattell first arrived in Leipzig, he brought with him an enthusiasm for Darwin and began making use of Wundt's laboratory in order to study 'individual differences' (Boring, 1950, 319). Shortly after returning to the

United States, Cattell published an article on ‘Mental Tests and Measurements’—a thinly veiled attempt to cozy up to Galton by exalting his work and proposing that he adopt certain experimental protocols that Cattell had learned from his time in Leipzig (see Cattell, 1890). By the time Cattell addressed the International Congress of Arts and Sciences in 1904, it was clear that he harbored a deep resentment for Wundt, and in particular the emphasis he had placed upon the ‘schematic’ study of shared psychological processes while ‘ignoring individual differences’ (Cattell, 1904, 602). ‘There are those who hold that there is something particularly noble in art for art’s sake,’ stated Cattell chiding Wundt, ‘it seems to me that the conditions are most healthful when science and its applications proceed hand in hand, (Ibid., 603).

In this regard Cattell’s interests were defined more by Galton than by Wundt, and his later work increasingly developed into a psychology of individual *capacity* that was no longer motivated by the epistemological ends that Wundt had championed for psychology. Cattell adapted Wundt’s methods and aggressively pursued their commercial applications: ‘In the inevitable specialization of modern society,’ stated Cattell, ‘there will become increasing need of those who can be paid for expert psychological advice’ (Cattell, 1904, 604). Cattell’s efforts culminated in 1921 when he founded the Psychological Corporation, which would provide ‘expert psychological services to industry and to the public, and in many organized projects where his advice was sought’ (Boring, 1950, 523; see also Smith, 1997, 610). In the abiding spirit of Capitalism, the expertly trained scientific psychologist alone would be in a position to supply the demand Cattell believed he had identified.

Charles Spearman championed similar initiatives in Britain, where he conducted research aimed at determining the general factor (*g* factor) underlying individual differences in terms of intelligence. The outcome of Spearman's work on general intelligence testing is indicative of the broader impact of academic and experimental psychology on the self; the complex statistical algorithms employed by Spearman meant that the debate surrounding general intelligence became increasingly esoteric. In order to understand, let alone question it, one had to be well versed in statistical analysis, experimental methods, and psychological theory. At the same time, the esoterism of Spearman's work seemed to endow it with even greater authority, and by 1938 the following statement was published in a British governmental report on education:

Intellectual development during childhood appears to progress as if it were governed by a single central factor, usually known as 'general intelligence'... It appears to enter into everything which the child attempts to think, to say, or do... [and it is therefore] possible at a very early age to predict with some degree of accuracy the ultimate level of a child's intellectual powers (quoted in Simon, 1974, 249-50).

Importantly, the expertise required to challenge Spearman's theoretical claims, let alone their implementation as governmentally supported initiatives, meant that individuals were now subject to the claims of psychotechnical experts, which increasingly determined their intellectual value and social position. As Roger Smith argues, the 'psychological test, in origin, was first and foremost a technology to order the child's development in mass society', and by implication, to restructure mass society on the basis of this psychological technology (Smith, 1997, 588).

While Spearman, following Galton, had attempted to initiate social programs in eugenics, Hugo Münsterberg would merge experimental psychology with Taylorism.

Like Cattell and Spearman, Münsterberg had been a doctoral student and laboratory assistant of Wundt's before heading the psychology laboratory at Harvard on the invitation of William James. Münsterberg, however, soon diverged from Wundt and began publishing widely on the potential applications of experimentalism, including a collection of essays entitled *On The Witness Stand* (1908), which enumerated various forensic applications of experimental psychology. Later, Münsterberg, who was an admirer and correspondent of Frederick Winslow Taylor, began to publish works on the industrial application of psychology, first *Vocation and Learning* (1912), and later *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency*, which he began by announcing that his 'new science' would serve as the intermediary 'between the modern laboratory psychology and the problems of economics' by placing the 'psychological experiment [...] at the service of commerce and industry' (Münsterberg, 1913, 3). Münsterberg's new 'psychotechnic method' would allow for the selection of 'those personalities [...] fit for a particular kind of economic work' (Ibid., 27). Münsterberg conceived of 'personality' as including 'the habitual traits', 'the features of the individual temperament and character, of the intelligence and of the ability, of the collected knowledge and of the acquired experience. All variations of will and feeling, of perception and thought, of attention and emotion, of memory and imagination' (Ibid., 28).

Münsterberg's synthesis of Wundt's experimentalism, Galton's emphasis on individual differences and Taylorist efficiency is all the more totalizing because unlike Spearman, who had sought to isolate what he perceived as *positive* individual differences and to instate social policies in order to promote them, Münsterberg endeavored to order *all* individuals by pairing them with their most efficient function within the system of

labor. Doing so promised to realize a new social-industrial apparatus that thrived on the efficiency that results when all people have been put to work in the *appropriate* way.³⁷ In this regard Münsterberg had followed the trend initiated by Cattell in America, who had already formulated his own utopian ideal of applied psychology by proposing that

If each man were given the work he is most competent to do, and were prepared for this work in the best way, the work of the world, all the way from the highest manifestations of genius to the humblest daily labor, would be more than doubled. I see no reason why the application of systematized knowledge to the control of human nature may not in the course of the present century accomplish results commensurate with the nineteenth-century applications of physical science to the material world (Cattell, 1907 [1904], 603-4).

Thus, the industrialization of experimental psychology marks the point at which the concepts of *truth*, *function*, *value* and *efficiency* all intersect in the self, and in doing so, redefine its identity on the basis of its relation to those institutions and discourses in which these concepts are embedded—law and labor. Instead of being defined as it was in Wordsworth, on the basis of a kind of self-relation that was, indicatively, conditioned upon withdrawing oneself from precisely the urban-industrial atmosphere in which these structures are most pronounced, the conception of the self that would emerge from the technological advances of the medico-scientific was ineluctably bound to the network of institutions and discourses that lent authority, and therefore currency, to the self as an object of exchange. Only by submitting to and participating in this network of exchange

³⁷ John Forrester and Laura Cameron have made similar points regarding the contemporaneous founding of the National Institute for Industrial Psychology in Britain by C.S. Myers in 1921, i.e. ‘Myers envisaged a newly expanded Department of Psychology in Cambridge mirroring the reconstructed British Psychological Society in London, with educational, industrial and medical psychology sections. This was a new psychology that reached out to the enthusiastic interest in these branches of psychology’ (Forrester and Cameron, 2017, 289). When Myers’ efforts to transform psychology at Cambridge failed he departed from the university and founded his own private industrial institute, much like Cattell had done after leaving Columbia in the same year.

could one enjoy the luxury of social mobility that is itself conferred by the kind of identity that is simultaneously bestowed and recognized by these institutions and through these discourses.

With the rise of experimentalism, the type of Napoleonic authority exemplified by Charcot was transferred into this network of institutions, technologies and discourses, thereby becoming more diffuse, and yet all the more powerful. Cattell had realized as much when he claimed that ‘Control of the physical world,’ which marked the greatest achievements of the 19th century, ‘is secondary to the control of ourselves and of our fellow men [...] All our systems of education, our churches, our legal systems, our governments, and the rest are applied psychology (Cattell, 1907 [1904], 603). This is not, however, to suggest that experimental psychology had succeeded in transferring Wundt’s science from the isolated conditions of the laboratory to the broad spectrum of experiences to which the modern self was subject. Instead, psychology abandoned its initial preoccupation with elementary forms of experience; this concern with the fundamental regularities of experience was replaced by the concern with the practical uses to which both the individual and psychology itself might be put. In this way, the industrial preoccupations of Wundt’s students would subvert his own—no longer was psychology intent on providing a scientific ground for self-knowledge, instead, it would look to the practical spheres of life in order to identify those qualities deemed most valuable and subsequently contrive experiments capable of identifying and measuring their presence in individuals. Hence, the self would now become a function of value, rather than a function of knowledge.

Coda: From Information to Experience

It is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly use false standards of measurement – that they seek power, success and wealth for themselves and admire them in others, and that they underestimate what is of true value in life. And yet, in making any general judgment of this sort we are in danger of forgetting how variegated the human world and its mental life are (Freud, 1930, 64).

Isolation proved a key strategy in Charcot's treatment of hysteria, and perhaps it should be recognized as the principle upon which all sciences are founded, presupposing, as it does, that the complex can be made simple, if only by analytically de-composing the former into the latter. Wundt's experimentalism too was founded upon the technical isolability of the elements of experience. Once isolated, they could enter into the scientifically valid register of measurement and mathematization as information, only to subsequently be recognized as a means of valuation. If Cattell and Münsterberg endeavored to bring the powers of the experimental laboratory to bear on the practical spheres of life by forwarding a conception of the self primarily defined by *function* and *value*, Freud travelled another path, one that was defined by a series of attempts to restore personal experience to the self. Reflecting on his own sojourn into the world of experimentalism, Jung thought it 'ill-disposed towards the infinite variety and mobility of individual psychic life' (Jung, 1980 [1917], para. 409). Jung was not suggesting that experimentalism's misstep stemmed from its attempts to know the self, indeed, he

maintains that doing so is of paramount importance for anyone who wishes to heal themselves or others. However, the knowledge required to do so could not be found in the diagnostic categories of psychiatry textbooks or in the physiologically oriented knowledge of academic psychology; instead, claimed Jung, one must have ‘knowledge of the human psyche’ (Ibid.). Though Jung would go on to elaborate his own complex metapsychology, this was not simply a ploy to return to the metaphysics of Romantic psychology or alchemy (he *is* saying that too), but more significantly for the arguments I am pursuing here, he believed that one could not understand, let alone produce, a psychology that was more than a reified schematic if one was not *immersed in* and *concerned with* the full variety of experiences that constitute and sustain the self.

For Jung, doing so meant ‘wandering with human heart through the world’ (Ibid.), and while Jung’s parlance is decidedly esoteric, in sentiment he joins company with Horkheimer and Adorno’s critique of instrumental reason, Benjamin’s rebuke of the turn from experience to information and Heidegger’s indictment of the Western tradition for overlooking the question of the meaning of Being in favor of its substantive and ossified representations; all of whom agreed that human experience had been diminished in the modern world, but failed to articulate a practical response to this deficiency. Jung presented these ideas in an essay published in 1912 titled ‘New Paths in Psychology’. This was precisely the time at which his relationship with Freud was most vexed, and yet Jung still identified ‘this deficiency’ in experimental and academic psychology as the ‘starting-point for a new psychology, whose inception we owe first and foremost to Sigmund Freud of Vienna’ (Jung, 1980 [1912], para. 410). In this regard Freud’s psychoanalysis is explicitly identified as the alternative to academic psychology, insofar as

his was a psychology founded upon the full spectrum of modern experiences, which Jung locates

in the horrors of prisons, lunatic asylums and hospitals, in drab suburban pubs, in brothels and gambling-hells, in the salon of the elegant, the Stock Exchanges, Socialist meetings, churches, revivalist gatherings and ecstatic sects, through love and hate, through the experience of passion in every form (Ibid., 409).

Indeed, it would be from these sites that one ‘would reap richer stores of knowledge’, and at the same time, it was these diverse experiences of the self that constituted the ‘great gulf’ that stood between ‘the practical needs of daily life’ and the ‘science called psychology’ (Ibid.).³⁸

From the vantage point that only became available to Freud in the last decade of his life, he would rethink the process of individuation relative to the developmental processes of civilization as a whole—‘the development of civilization is a special process, comparable to the normal maturation of the individual’ (Freud, 1930, 98). Significantly, Freud’s account makes clear that the two cannot be reduced to a singular process or principle. Fundamentally, then, civilization and the individual may be comparable in terms of their developmental processes, but their irreducibility to one another is a function of the compromise that the individual makes by choosing to remain part of a collective, rather than the uninhibited, albeit unpredictable and vulnerable, life of radical isolation (Freud, 1930, 77).

³⁸ Ultimately, Jung’s psychology would find its terminus in the dictum that ‘Individuation, becoming a self [...] is the problem of all life’ and therefore, of psychology as well (Jung, 1980 [1936], para. 163). And while Jung had long abandoned his youthful attempts to wed the German philosophical tradition to the work of Darwin and Wundt, his conception of individuation, as the process by which one ‘becomes what he always was’ (Jung, 1980 [1954]), para. 84), still retains a quasi-naturalistic teleology, insofar as it defines not the *means* by which one can individuate, but that they *will* do so.

Of course, the individual's initial submission to the restrictions of communal life is not commensurate with permanent submission—'no doubt he will always defend his claim to individual liberty against the will of the group' (Freud, 1930, 96), and all the more so because we do not choose to live amongst our fellows, but are born into their presence. The individual, then, must navigate the tensions that result from living amongst others, and it is in pursuing these tensions that Freud's study of civilization turns to those 'methods of averting suffering' which 'seek to influence our own organism' (Freud, 1930, 78). Individuals may not choose the conditions in which they live, but they can exercise freedom in regard to the *way* they choose to live relative to themselves and others—Freud will term these ways of living *Lebensstechniken* (life-techniques). Ultimately, Freud's intent is not to prescribe how best to live, but instead, to reveal the fundamental *artificiality* of all ways of living—'There is no golden rule which applies to everyone: every man must find out for himself in what particular fashion he can be saved' (Freud, 1930, 83).

The question, then, is not one that derives from one's nature or the particular way it will unfold in and through the self. Instead, it relates more specifically to the *choices* made by the individual as it *navigates* the compromises that emerge from their relation to others, and *to their own self*. This is the presupposition that, in light of *Civilization and Its Discontents*, retroactively attaches itself to the earlier currents in Freud's oeuvre exemplified by *The Interpretation of Dreams*, to which I shall turn in the following chapter. In doing so, I will argue that in some ways this work surpasses the approaches to self-fashioning and self-examination we have so far surveyed. It would, however, be a mistake to view Freud as doing something altogether unprecedented or else to view him

as developing his own technology of the self ex nihilo. The aura of ambiguity that still wreathes the legacy of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, to say nothing of the legacy of psychoanalysis, marks the extent to which the status of psychoanalysis relative to the social, cultural and scientific contexts of the 20th century remains an open question. If one is, however, willing to grant that there is indeed an ethical current running through Freud's oeuvre, then it is my conviction that its fundamental import is to initiate a new self-relation, one that is prefaced upon the relation of the self to those dimensions of itself that have been alienated, because with Freud, the self must be treated as if it were an other to itself; such is the first task of his distinctly modern ethics of the self. Of course, the question of one's relation to their own self is a primary concern for psychoanalysis in general, insofar as it is the modern discipline that is most intent on questioning the unity and transparency of the self. It is in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* that these concerns receive their most artful and original treatment.

Recurrent Narrative: An Intervention

I want to begin with an intervention of sorts. That is, I want to intervene upon a certain recurrent narrative that has emerged in the work of those who have attempted to account for the development of psychoanalytic techniques.¹ This narrative traces the technical development of psychoanalysis from the hypnotism employed in the Salpêtrière and subsequently charts its gradual progression from the cathartic method employed by Freud and Breuer in their *Studies on Hysteria* (1894)—already a hybridization of ‘talking cure’ and hypnotism—to the later emphasis on interpretation and transference that marks the advent of psychoanalysis in its classical form via the publications of *The Interpretation of Dreams*² and ‘Fragments of an Analysis of A Case of Hysteria’ (1905 [1901]).

¹ Here I am referring to the commentators that have already been treated in detail within the Introduction of this thesis as well as the ‘Historiography’ section of Chapter 2.

² References to *The Interpretation of Dreams*, i.e. (Freud, 1900), direct the reader to Joyce Crick’s translation (1999). My choice to use Crick’s translation, rather than the variorum translation of James Strachey, was the result of two fundamental differences in these texts. First, the medical jargon adopted by Strachey turns what were rather intuitive and commonsensical formulations in Freud’s original text into Latin neologisms, thereby codifying them and in many cases detracting from the resonances these terms shared with the natural language of a speaking subject which it so often addresses or makes use of (see Bettelheim, 1983). Crick’s translation, more often than not, effects a more faithful translation of Freud in this regard; as well as being devoid of the rampant theoretical digressions occasioned by its pervasive footnotes that have become the hallmark of the *Standard Edition*. In this way, Crick’s translation puts the reader in the position of Freud’s first audience, and allows one to experience the text in its original form. Perhaps most importantly, Crick’s is a translation of the first edition of Freud’s dream book, which presents the unmolested original movement of Freud’s rhetorical tact, as well as preserving the original character of the book’s structure in addition to the dream examples which, in the first edition, are accompanied by ‘personalized interpretations’ as opposed to the ‘stock interpretations’ added in later additions (Forrester, 1980, 63). The latter editions are perhaps more valuable for those

In itself, this is not a bad story. It is a rather sensible account of the development of psychoanalysis, which draws on the inventiveness, experimental spirit, ingenuity and keen observations of Freud and his colleagues, Joseph Breuer and then Wilhelm Fliess, in the transition from hypnotic suggestion to the interpretive methods of classical psychoanalysis. What is perhaps most conspicuous in this account is the shift in emphasis from preparatory techniques to the role played by interpretation, specifically *the analyst's* interpretation of their patient's dreams, speech, and transference. Presumably, this shift in emphasis relates to the way in which the therapeutic aims of Freud's practice shifted from catharsis (or release) to identifying the patient's truth; in the earlier hypnotic paradigm the subject's entrance into a hypnotically induced state, in which suggestion could take root, was itself thought to have curative potential—and as such, emphasis was placed on the techniques by which such a state might be entered into. In contrast, the later technical paradigm that characterizes classical analysis emphasizes the work involved in connecting together the seemingly disparate and insignificant associations conveyed by

interested in charting the filiations within Freud's psychoanalytic movement. Particularly, as John Forrester has shown, in terms of those disciples such as Stekel, Ferenczi, Jones, Rank and Herbert Silberer who would contribute to later additions by supplying new examples or else confirmations and elaborations of those already present in the first edition—the true mark of a 'good Freudian' (see Forrester, 1997, 169-70). It is also worth noting that many of the additions made to Freud's dream book, which grew over one hundred pages between its 2nd (1908) and 4th (1914) editions, reflect both the internal political dynamics of the psychoanalytic movement, as well as Freud's interest in biologically grounding his theory. The period during which the dream book received its most decisive alterations coincides with Jung's departure from the psychoanalytic movement, and many of the changes that appear in the 1914 edition appear to be attempts to sure up party lines, as opposed to genuine theoretical advances. Additionally, the period between 1908 and the 1920's marks Freud's growing engagement with myth, as well as questions relating to phylogeny and ontogeny. These themes appear more frequently in the later editions of *Interpretation*, thereby coloring, and often obscuring, the original intentions of the text. In those instances where it has been necessary to cite the later editions of *The Interpretation of Dreams* I have included 'SE' in my citation to indicate this to my reader.

the patient in order to arrive at their truth in the form of an underlying event, a trauma, a primal scene or the failure to progress from a particular developmental phase.

Significantly, the writings produced by Freud at the turn of the century appear to still occupy a transitional position relative to these two psychoanalytic paradigms.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud places emphasis on certain technical procedures designed to lessen one's critical faculty and to relax and relinquish control over the entrance of certain ideas into consciousness. However, this transitional phase of Freud's thinking also departs from the earlier cathartic/hypnotic model; as becomes clear throughout the 'method' section of Freud's dream book, in which Freud describes certain techniques designed to engender a particular state of mind in which one is acutely aware of their stream of consciousness without at once willing or controlling the ideas and images that emerge therein. It is precisely at this point that I want to intervene and argue that this technical paradigm still required a substantial amount of preparatory labor, albeit rather subtle labor, that aimed to *preposition*, or *prepare*, the subject and to make them susceptible to the attendant techniques that follow from, and address themselves to, certain forms of experience.

Perhaps the term 'susceptible' already likens these preparatory techniques to those of hypnosis, or else the strict delimitations placed upon the subjects of experimental psychology. However, the preparatory techniques devised by Freud operate in a fashion distinct from those employed in these other disciplines. As we have seen, Wundt's experimentalism relied on isolating 'elementary' forms of experience from one another, and in doing so, resulted in a type of introspection that concomitantly isolated consciousness from the personal dimensions of the self. Charcot's hypnotic experiments

and his employment of isolation therapy were both, albeit in different ways, designed to isolate the subject from their own will or familial influence. The techniques developed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, however, do not appear to position the subject of self-analysis artificially, that is, to place them in a situation entirely different from the one they would otherwise occupy; instead, these techniques endeavour to elicit and amplify particular aspects of one's subjectivity. In developing these techniques, Freud conceived of a situation in which individuals could be *subjected to their own subjectivity* in order to facilitate a form of discriminatory reflection that would allow one to critically renegotiate one's self-relation.

A second point of consideration concerns the situation that led Freud to formulate the techniques that appear explicitly and implicitly within *The Interpretation of Dreams*. 'The chief patient I am preoccupied with is myself', wrote Freud to Wilhelm Fliess in August of 1897 (Freud, 1954 [1897], 213-4). It should not escape our notice that perhaps the most decisive shift to occur in the development of the psychoanalytic method resulted not from Freud's treatment and examination of patients, but of himself. As such, the foundational moment of psychoanalysis should not be understood relative to the narrative to which I have referred—in which psychoanalysis is viewed as a continuation of other forms of objectification that result in the emergence of a science of the unconscious. Instead, it should be viewed as—and should take as its first point of reference—the reproduction of a pattern of *self-relation*, one that was trialled on Freud himself. As the ground already covered in this thesis suggests, focusing on *this* factor (Freud's self-subjection to his analytic techniques) places Freud within the literary

tradition of autobiographical writing, in addition to Wundtian experimentalism, which, as we have seen, was equally preoccupied with developing the technical means by which one might come to obtain self-knowledge.

Nevertheless, it is one of the central paradoxes of the institution of psychoanalysis that a method of therapy arrived at through Freud's own self-subjection should explicitly denounce the repeatability of such a feat. Ernest Jones' hagiographical account doubles down on Freud's self-analysis as the advent of psychoanalysis in its mature form, as well as the boundary of its practical efficacy.

In the summer of 1897 the spell began to break, and Freud undertook his most heroic feat—a psycho-analysis of his own unconscious. It is hard for us nowadays to imagine how momentous this achievement was, that difficulty being the fate of most pioneering exploits. Yet the uniqueness of the feat remains. Once done it is done forever. For no one again can be the first to explore those depths (Jones, 1972, 351).

Jones adds to this initial celebration of the 'uniqueness' of Freud's 'Herculean labour' an additional clause; while Freud himself held 'the opinion that someone who was honest, fairly normal and a *good dreamer*, could go a long way in self-analysis,' Jones intercedes, '*but then everyone is not a Freud*' (Jones, 1972, 353, my italics). Not only should Freud's pioneering self-analysis be seen as a success where others have failed to follow 'the advice of the Delphic oracle', claims Jones, but even more astoundingly, no one is capable of repeating it! John Forrester reflects on the zeal with which Jones and other have hailed Freud's self-analysis while, at the same time, setting it up as the boundary of analytic technique: 'true self-analysis, it is often argued, and even more often implied, is impossible: psychoanalysis as a practice utterly disdains the possibility of self-analysis

being in any sense comparable to the depth of understanding and transformation achieved through analysis by an other, by an analyst' (Forrester, 1997, 141).³

So it is that psychoanalysis began, like so many things before it, by transgressing the cardinal rule that would guide it henceforth in its institutionally endorsed application. There is, however, something peculiar about the treatment that Freud's self-analysis has received—Freud's transgression is not framed as a misstep; instead, it is lauded as heroic and unique, original yet unrepeatable. To be sure, Jones, as the ultimate purveyor of the 'Freud legend', appears to have blended technically relevant speculation regarding the difficulties of self-analysis with his hagiographic rhetoric by positioning Freud's self-analysis in this way. Philip Rieff's more nuanced remarks draw attention to the vacillations with which Freud's achievement is perceived, attributing its significance not to the limitations of his techniques, but instead, to 'the indifference and respect of a culture which has exchanged introspective ideals for various programs of adjustment and action, toward its last great (though defensive) exponent of the introspective art. With Freud, this art takes on some of the qualities of science, and loses its merely personal voice' (Rieff, 1959, 67).

As such, what sets Freud's self-analysis, and its textual re-enactment in his dream book, apart from other introspective and autobiographical endeavours is not its unabashed candidness, or indeed its comprehensiveness. As Rieff so rightly puts it: 'Freud himself laid out the possible uniqueness of his self-analysis, with reasons more closely

³ See also, Derrida's comments in his essay 'Freud's Legacy' in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (1987), wherein he asks: 'how can an autobiographical writing, in the abyss of an un-terminated self-analysis, give rise to a world-wide institution?' (Derrida, 1987 [1980], 305).

related to the technical character of his science' (Rieff, 1959, 67). Taken together, Rieff's remarks do not point to the same bold-faced notion of 'uniqueness' which Jones attributes to Freud's self-analysis via the formulation: 'once done it is done forever.'

Instead, Rieff directs our attention to the novelty of Freud's achievement, which unites two modes of self-examination that had until then remained isolated from one another. On one side, the dream book conveys a rather intimate portrait of its author: anecdotes relating to his family life, concerns for his children's future, his professional ambitions and frustrations, tender and traumatic memories from childhood, his political leanings, his favourite books, and even his dietary preferences are interlaced with other more 'serious' considerations, as if to suggest that one would be unable to understand Freud's technique of self-analysis without being intimately acquainted with (and perhaps even identifying with) his person, which is, to be sure neither typical nor entirely likeable. One emerges from the dream book with the distinct sense that one *knows* Freud and the extent to which he was willing to sacrifice his public persona (as a humble Viennese doctor) for the sake of what he took to be a more significant gain. In this regard, Freud's dream book appears to join in the ranks of those outsiders, like Montaigne, Rousseau, and even Wordsworth, who could, in their own way, subvert the pre-existing relations that linked one's will, and their use of reason, to authority. On the other side, Freud's dream book introduces its reader, sometimes explicitly and sometimes more subtly, to an array of rather peculiar techniques that are designed to aid them in the interpretation of their own dreams. To be sure, it soon becomes clear that this is only one of the many uses these techniques can serve. The techniques of self-observation and free-association described by Freud in the 'method' section of his dream book return in his later works on

jokes and mistakes, as well as playing significant roles in his more clinical writings.

Perhaps most significantly, the techniques that Freud sets out to describe to his reader, and to demonstrate by subjecting his own person to them, are clearly influenced by those we examined in the work of Charcot and Wundt, and yet Freud's employment of them serves an entirely different end.

Rather than setting out to objectify, or to measure the self against an externally imposed standard, Freud used these techniques to chart a course in the otherwise nebulous territories of the self's interiority—to surmount Nietzsche's challenge to the conventional assumption that each knows himself best in his own heart. Indeed, with these techniques ready to hand, Freud himself replies to those who would caution against the reliability of self-analysis: 'in my judgment, the conditions for self-observation are more favorable than the conditions for the observations of others' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 83). It is true, admits Freud, 'there are other difficulties which I will have to overcome within myself. There is an understandable diffidence about exposing so many intimate things in one's psychical life [...] But this is something one has to be able to go beyond' (Ibid.).

As we have already seen, shame does not act as the impasse through which self-analysis cannot precede, but as its very condition of possibility: "I am reasonable enough to recognize that I need your critical help," writes Freud to Fliess, 'because in this instance I have lost the feeling of shame required of an author' (Freud, 1985 [1898], 315). In an earlier letter to Fliess, Freud wrote: 'I can only analyse myself with the help of knowledge obtained objectively (like an outsider). Genuine self-analysis is impossible'

(Ibid., 271). The prevailing wisdom—as John Forrester has argued (Forrester, 1997)—is that Fliess acted as Freud’s analyst and his ‘other’. By viewing things this way the institutional parameters of clinical psychoanalysis are preserved and the ‘original sin’ of self-analysis that marks its advent is erased (see Lacan, 1981, 12). One should, however, be suspicious of this reading. After all, what, one might ask, would a ‘genuine analysis’ entail? Is it the exhaustive elucidation of one’s desire, as Lacan’s comment ‘that something, in Freud, was never analysed’ suggests (Ibid.)? Such would seem a far too demanding and ideal a standard to hold Freud’s, or for that matter, anyone’s analysis to. Beyond these considerations, it seems unwise to place so much emphasis on this letter of Freud’s—written at perhaps the lowest point of his self-analysis—particularly when even a casual perusal of *Interpretation* suggests the opposite view. Indeed, two of the most sustained themes of Freud’s dream book, the description of techniques designed for use upon oneself and the dynamics of self-alienation that they elicit and make apparent, suggest the opposite view. Indeed, it would seem that the two types of techniques presented by Freud are intended, on one hand, to allow one to become an ‘other’ to oneself (to view oneself ‘like an outsider’), while on the other hand, to enable (through hermeneutically oriented techniques) one to negotiate the tension that results from these self-severances. Certainly Freud was aware that any ‘analysis’, whether performed with or without the aid of an ‘other’, was sure to present difficulties. In ‘A Difficulty In the Path of Psycho-Analysis’ Freud defined this difficulty as ‘something that alienates the feelings of those who come into contact with it’ (Freud, 1917, 137), such, it would seem is both the difficulty and the condition of possibility of analysis, which, after all, ‘means breaking up or separating out’ (Freud, 1919, 159)—but what is difficult is not *impossible*. The

reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* I pursue in the following sections explores the *possibility* of self-analysis. Indeed, it would seem that the very argument Freud pursues therein depends on it being so.⁴

Setting The Scene

Naturally one cannot strip oneself naked, but perhaps a model would serve the purpose (Jung to Freud, 1911, 393).

In his discussion of the reception of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* Anthony Kauders outlines three 'distinct models of subjectivity' from which Germans could choose at the turn of the century. They are:

bourgeois (*bürgerlich*) norms associated with moderation, self-cultivation through culture and education; romantic norms upholding authenticity, including life reform, the return to nature, and holism; and norms calling for immoderation, personal liberation and expressiveness, all in the name of a transgressive subjectivity (Kauders, 2013, 2).⁵

Kauders proceeds by charting the way in which *Interpretation* was selectively appropriated by certain professional communities, social institutions and intellectuals in order to support these pre-existent models of subjectivity. Of course, one can find affinities with

⁴ In the abridged version of *Interpretation*, 'On Dreams' (1901), Freud emphasizes that his approach is grounded in certain techniques (to which he attributes 'invariable success'), and that they are best applied by oneself upon oneself: 'This is not the place in which to give a detailed account of the premises upon which this experiment was based, or the consequences which follow from its invariable success. It will therefore be enough to say that we obtain material that enables us to resolve any pathological idea if we turn our attention precisely to those associations which are 'involuntary', which 'interfere with our reflection', and which are normally dismissed by our critical faculty as worthless rubbish. If we make use of this procedure upon *ourselves*, we can best assist the investigation by at once writing down what are at first unintelligible associations' (Freud, 1901, 636).

⁵ Kauders draws these distinct models of subjectivity from the work of the sociologist Andreas Reckwitz (see Reckwitz, 2006, 19, 104-5, 293).

each of these ‘models of subjectivity’ in Freud’s writings, and yet it is not clear that either his writings, or the techniques he describes in them, lend themselves explicitly to any of the models outlined by Kauders.

Of course, Freud *does* present his reader with models: the ‘topographical’ later to be joined (or replaced) with the ‘structural’ model; a ‘model’ of psychosexual development; a ‘model’ of ego formation; a ‘model’ of mourning etc. At the close of *The Interpretation of Dreams* we encounter the so-called ‘psychical apparatus’—but this can, in company with the other examples I have just referred to, hardly be considered a ‘model of subjectivity’ in the same sense as those listed by Kauders. Conversely, Freud’s apparatus emerges as a kind of metapsychological anatomy, which recalls Charcot’s interest in forms of psychic automatism (catalepsy in particular); viewed this way Freud’s apparatus metaphorically represents certain functions and processes, as well as a kind of ‘psychic anatomy’ (parts of the self). It does not, however, define how this psychic apparatus *ought* to be used; what it *should* do; if it is good or bad etc. Freud is careful to avoid such evaluative judgments, especially in his early works. In this regard, I am less interested in tracing out the extent to which Freud’s dream book was co-opted to support pre-existent ‘models of subjectivity’ (and the ideological commitments they represent); instead, I am interested in the ways in which *Interpretation* articulated a kind of subjectivity different from those previously available at the turn of the century—one defined, most conspicuously, by the critical relation of the self to itself that it instigates in relation to pre-existent, and societally endorsed, ‘models of subjectivity’ and the societal languages that buttress and sustain them.

The aim of this chapter, then, is to develop a reading of Freud's dream book against the backdrop of those historical antecedents discussed in the previous parts of this thesis. As a text born out of these apparently disparate traditions, Freud's dream book resists being easily classified as a scientific treatise, a technical manual, or else a quasi-autobiography—it appears to maintain its ties to all three of these without holding one over and above the others.⁶ In framing things this way, I argue that, just as Freud's dream book resists being subsumed within a single 'genre', the form of subjectivity evoked within its pages is equally resistant to socio-cultural or ideological absorption. This resistance, which is itself a central concept and agent in all of Freud's writings, emerges here, in my own figurations, as a paradox: the resistant character of Freudian subjectivity emerges as a product of the very resistances against which it defines itself. If one can accept this premise, the arguments I pursue in the following pages attempt to elaborate and substantiate it by drawing on the literary and technical dimensions of Freud's dream book. In doing so, I argue that the fundamental end towards which Freud's techniques, and the literary performance he enacts, tend, is the overcoming of ostensibly *personal* resistances that Freud will reveal as anything but personal. Indeed, *Interpretation* stakes out its place in the history of subjectivity as a book that equally evidences the drive towards something like 'true authorship' and autonomy, and at the same time, one that travels a great distance in order to define the impossibility of autogenesis. Of course, Freud was not the first to recognize that the processes in and through which one emerges

⁶ Carl Schorske observes a similar hybridity in Freud's dream book, though he omits any consideration of its technical dimensions. Schorske invites his reader to 'imagine Saint Augustine weaving his *Confessions* into *The City of God*, or Rousseau integrating his *Confessions* as a subliminal plot into *The Origins of Inequality*' such, claims Schorske, 'is the procedure of Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*' (Schorske, 1980, 42).

as a self confer, paradoxically, a measure of both independence and dependence; Freud was, however, the first to present a series of practical measures that would enable one to identify and renegotiate the delicate balance between them. In this regard, Freud placed in the hands of his readers certain tools by which to critically rethink ‘the self’ relative to their own self-experience, without presupposing that the two are identical.

*

In his own treatment of Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams*, Matt ffytche draws a distinction between Freud and other figures within the psychoanalytic movement such as Otto Rank, C.G. Jung and Ludwig Binswanger. Ffytche observes that concerns regarding ‘how to become “a self”, or to reveal “truer” or more autonomous layers of the self’ emerge more explicitly in the writings of these other figures—all of whom split from Freud between 1914 and 1930 (ffytche, 2012, 229).⁷ At the same time, ffytche cannot escape the extent to which Freud’s dream book *is* preoccupied with selfhood and autonomy; which he subsequently charts against the countervailing determinism of which Freud has often been accused due to his methodological appeals to natural science and the biologicistic foundations of his dream theory.⁸ That ffytche identifies a variety of ways in which personal autonomy becomes implicated in Freud’s dream book is in keeping with the

⁷ ffytche suggests that this commitment only returned explicitly in the later work of D.W. Winnicott and Wilfred Bion—both of whom he identifies as indebted to the English Romanticism of Coleridge and Wordsworth, as well as American transcendentalists such as Emerson (ffytche, 2012, 228).

⁸ See Freud’s letter to Fliess in which he writes ‘[t]he whole matter again resolves itself for me into a commonplace. Invariably the dream seeks to fulfill *one* wish that has assumed various forms. It is the wish to sleep!’ (Freud, 1985 [1899], 354).

central claim of this thesis, i.e. that the *Interpretation of Dreams* should be viewed as belonging to a tradition of writings that take the self as its primary object; and indeed, one might go as far as to say that the initial alignment of figures like Rank, Binswanger and Jung with Freud stemmed from this preoccupation with the self. Where my own approach to *Interpretation* departs from ffytche's, however, is in my explicit focus on the practical, rather than the theoretical and descriptive, dimensions of Freud's dream book; that is, not what Freud is saying, but what Freud is *doing* when he says what he says.

As we shall see, Freud supplies his reader with a variety of techniques within *Interpretation*, some of which are presented explicitly as technical aids to 'self-observation', or else as hermeneutic techniques that enable one to uncover the hidden meaning of dreams. There are, however, other still more subtle techniques present in *Interpretation* that emerge through the performative dimensions of Freud's writing. This performative, or rhetorical, element of Freud's writing engenders a particular form of self-relation defined, most conspicuously, by a sensitivity to the ways in which one's concerns are reshaped at the level of desire in order to pacify, or satisfy, 'the self' by transforming aberrant desires and ideas so that they can enter smoothly into the network of social, ethical and political discourses that arbitrate self-consciousness. In other words, the critical self-relation that Freud's dream book works to elicit in its reader makes them aware of the extent to which their own self-understanding is predicated upon its relation to a societal language that contains, constrains and defines the self, by reining in those forms of experience, thought and language that threaten the broader integrity of social, ethical and perhaps even epistemological structures.

Moreover, these techniques enable Freud to renegotiate his own self-relation (the relation of his self to itself) in response to the societal languages of self-consciousness, which tend to obscure the very alienation they produce with their emphasis on the coherent ego, rationality, and prescribed forms of identity, or else other socially circumscribed parameters in and through which the self is made recognizable. Crucially, doing so does not entail a foreclosure of the individual's relation to these societal languages (or the values embedded therein). As we shall see, it is by becoming aware of the ways in which these traditional or authoritatively endorsed discourses on the self alienate the individual from itself that one can identify and critically renegotiate those subjections from which the self has emerged as a socially, ethically, and epistemologically recognizable object.

On this view, there is a clear affinity between the project Freud initiates in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and the one Foucault began in the last years of his life.⁹ In the introduction to *The Use of Pleasure*, Foucault distinguishes his project from one 'that seeks to assimilate what it is proper for one to know' and defines it, instead, in terms of 'that which enables one to get free of oneself' (Foucault, 1992 [1984], 8). Some pages later, this initial attempt at definition gives way to a more precise series of comments on the

⁹ In this instance I am not referring to an affinity between the 'technologies of the self' Foucault adumbrates, and the one Freud developed at the turn of the 20th century. To suggest as much would be to fundamentally overlook the extent to which 'the self' of antiquity and the one treated by Freud are entirely incompatible. See, in addition to Foucault's own writings on this point, Mikhail Bakhtin's earlier 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope' in which he clearly distinguishes the modern self, defined as it is by the private recesses of interiority, from the self of antiquity, which was public or '*on the surface*, in the most literal sense of the word' (Bakhtin, 1981, 133).

relation of the self to itself, which has been one of the primary currents this thesis has endeavoured to trace. Foucault writes:

a history of the way in which individuals are urged to constitute themselves as subjects of moral conduct would be concerned with the models proposed for setting up and developing relationships with the self, for self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-examination, for the decipherment of the self by oneself, for the transformations that one seeks to accomplish with oneself as object. This last is what might be called a history of 'ethics' and 'ascetics,' understood as a history of the forms of moral subjectivation and of the practices of the self that are meant to ensure it (Ibid., 29).

Foucault's project, then, is twofold. On the level of scholarship, Foucault's late works endeavour to bring to light alternate models of self-constitution by drawing upon certain practices and techniques that belong to the distant past of antiquity. Indicatively, Freud implies a similar intention by gesturing, at various points, to the ancient veneration of the dream and the techniques by which it could be interpreted. On another level, however, it becomes apparent that Foucault's scholarly project is secondary to a 'practice of freedom' that 'enables one to get free of oneself' by becoming aware of the apparently arbitrary or contingent form one's self has been made to take, i.e. to free the self from the presumption that its current form is the result of necessity (Foucault, 1996, 434).

I want to recall a speculative question (that is at once an accusation) already made in the introduction to this thesis: why might Foucault—who had written, often with great vigor, on Freud and psychoanalysis throughout the earlier stages of his career—omit any mention of Freud in this volume of his *History of Sexuality*, i.e. *The Use of Pleasure* (1984) or the subsequent volume, *The Care of The Self* (1984), which is almost entirely preoccupied with Artemidorus' *Interpretation of Dreams*? Surely Foucault cannot admit ignorance here—after all, one of his first extended publications ('Dream, Imagination and

Existence') centered on a detailed critique of Freudian dream interpretation (see Foucault, 1993). My suspicion is that by allowing Freud a place in *The Care of The Self* Foucault would have risked his own position as anti-authority and critical thinker; precisely because doing so would require Foucault to answer to Freud, to 'do justice to Freud'—to echo Derrida's own indictment of Foucault's failure to meet Freud head on (see Derrida, 1994). In order to 'do justice to Freud' Foucault would have had to face *himself*, would have had to recognize the extent to which his own methods, his conceptual lexicon and his '*problématiques*', are all haunted by Freud.

Openly acknowledging this spectral presence would not only amount to a debt—in the form a perpetually deferred reference—it would equally, and more damningly, place Foucault inside of history, and within a particular tradition of thought; precisely the position he was, in all of his works, striving to remove himself from. It is perhaps at this level (the relation of the critical thinker to history) that most clearly distinguishes the late works of Foucault from the early psychoanalytic works produced by Freud. Foucault's history of technologies of the self becomes a 'practice of freedom' only through the transcendental perspective it provides, i.e. that selves were once different suggests that one might think and be other than one does and is. Freud's critique of the self is not transcendent but immanent, and for this reason its effects are both more powerful and more far-reaching. Freud does not set out, as Foucault does, merely to demonstrate that the self was once subject to a radically different set of principles. Instead, Freud exposes the hypocrisy and contradictions that are alive and well within the subject of the present—the fundamental otherness (the unconscious), underlying 'the self' that results from processes of normalization, socialization and education. As Michel de Certeau put

it: 'Working from within, [Freud] dismantles [...] the historical and social figure that is the standard unit of the system within which Freudianism was developed (de Certeau, 2000, 15). Freud set out to dismantle the self by elucidating an 'other self', and did so with recourse to his own experiences of alienation (and self-alienation). By tracing out those instances in which 'the self' speaks against one's own personal experience (*contradiction*), Freud demonstrated that one could, by the use of certain techniques, become aware of this 'other self', and in doing so arrive at a different way to live with, represent and know oneself; not on the basis of an ancient past, but on the basis of one's own *personal* experiences.

Rather than continuing this interrogation of Foucault, I would like to highlight those themes in his late work that are most relevant to my own reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). First, the historical trajectory traced in Foucault's writing on technologies of the self is framed by the transition from the Greek doctrine of *epimelēsthai sautou*, 'to care for yourself' (Foucault, 1988, 19), and the later Delphic principle *gnothi sauton*, 'know yourself' (Ibid.). Foucault argues that the latter principle, which rose to prominence in both philosophical and religious discourses (particularly under the influence of Christianity), has historically eclipsed the earlier paradigm of care due to the overwhelming influence of modern philosophy, which takes truth as its guiding moral and philosophical principle. Using this transitional moment as a fulcrum of sorts, Foucault attempts to reframe the relationship between these two principles, claiming that the injunction to know oneself was 'subordinate' to the former and pertained to one's ability to differentiate themselves from others—to become *at home with*

oneself—rather than to know oneself as a definite object of knowledge that was subject to the same knowledge claims as all other selves (Ibid., 20-22).

Further, Foucault claims that these forms of self-relation were permanently altered under the influence of the Christian tradition that installed the moral principle of self-renunciation as the condition under which salvation could be achieved. By Foucault's account, this historical transformation forms itself as the paradox: to know oneself is the way to self-renunciation (Ibid., 22). The presumption appears to be that knowing oneself, within the parameters of Christian doctrine, was to realize one's sinful and transgressive nature and thereby induce one to recognize that self-renunciation, or disownment, is the only viable path to salvation.¹⁰ Of course, the pinnacle of this technology of the self emerges in the institutionalization of confessional techniques, which set up the relation between the subject and their experience of guilt in order to mobilize particular discourses on transgression and truth, which rely on the codification of what is, and is not, sinful. This is also the point of historical contiguity between Foucault's identification of psychoanalysis with confessional technology, and his later works on technologies of the self.

As I will argue in the following sections of this Chapter, the tension between being concerned with oneself and the injunction to know oneself emerges as a central theme in Freud's dream book, albeit in a form that subverts the Christian paradigm, as well as its antique predecessor. In Freud's *Interpretation*, being concerned with oneself

¹⁰ Freud appeared to be acutely aware of this paradox—in a letter to Martha Bernays he described an encounter with an anti-Semitic interlocutor who rebuked Freud for overly preoccupied with himself: 'We Christians consider other people, you'd better think less of your precious self' (Freud to Martha, 1883, 78).

and self-knowledge are intimately entwined; so much so that it is difficult to locate a suitable point of demarcation between self-knowledge and self-concern. One might say that, for Freud, one must answer the question ‘who am I?’—that is, to confront the Delphic interdiction to know oneself—before one can enter into a program of self-care. However, doing so would necessarily obscure the ongoing process of self-analysis that psychoanalysis appears to implicate. The very rhetorical movement by which Freud elicits his reader’s participation in the interpretation of dreams enacts a sort of ‘bait and switch’ by which the reader is lured into an apparently epistemic engagement with the dream and the self, only to realize that in order to know oneself one must first attend to one’s personal concerns, which are distinguished from those things with which one *ought to be concerned*, i.e. those concerns that are socially or morally inculcated in the self. Viewed this way, the technology developed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* does not rely on a pre-formulated conception of the self. Instead, it establishes a framework and a series of techniques that permit one to identify particular forms of self-severance in terms of alienation, denial and deception, i.e. those parts of oneself that have by certain means been made to appear other to oneself.

In this regard we might turn to Jung who, unlike Freud, would ultimately make ‘Individuation, [or] becoming a self [...] the problem of all life’, and the fundamental problem and pursuit of his own psychology (Jung, 1980 [1936], para. 163). It is from this alternate standpoint that Jung would malign what he regarded as the limited utility of Freudian psychoanalysis, which he deemed a ‘caustic remedy’ or a ‘critical method, having, like all criticism, the power to do good when there is something that must be destroyed, dissolved, or reduced, but capable only of harm when there is something to be

built' (Jung, 1980 [1916], para. 66-7).¹¹ Contrary to Jung's claims (and with full recognition of the standpoint from which he is writing), it becomes clear that the 'caustic' dimension of Freud's project is precisely what sets it apart from Kauders' three models of subjectivity—i.e. the 'bourgeois', the 'romantic', with which Jung's is closely allied, and the 'expressionistic' (Kauders, 2013, 2)—in addition to the models examined by Foucault in his late work. While all of these approach the self, practically, as something that must be fashioned, cultivated, 'built', or allowed to express itself without inhibition, Freud's own approach is one of negation, or of wearing away, that sets out to analyse the self, which, like the dream, is regarded as a 'conglomerate' that must be taken apart *en detail*, not *en masse*.

At the same time, this principle of *causticity* is implicated not only in the critique of the bourgeois 'self', or other models thereof, in terms of the way in which the self appears as a positive entity (defined in accordance with certain socio-culturally endorsed principles, standards and values). One of the central currents running throughout *Interpretation* relates to questions about self-severance or alienation; '[w]here does this 'soul alienation' come from?' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 42, translation modified), asks Freud in response to the tendency to disown our dreams and to say, 'like our authorities on the subject, "this dream is nonsense"' (Ibid., 103).¹² In this regard, it becomes clear that just

¹¹ Indicatively, Jung compares the effects of Freudian techniques with Nietzsche's 'destructive criticism of ideals, which he held to be morbid overgrowths in the soul of humanity' (Jung, 1980 [1916], para. 65). Thomas Mann characterized Freud's new therapeutic techniques similarly in a diary entry made in April 1916, writing 'Freud progressive-corrosive' (Mann, 1991, 19).

¹² The interest in self-alienation is central to psychoanalysis; it is restated in explicit terms in texts far removed from *Interpretation* evidencing the sustained import that this form of experience had for Freud, e.g. 'There are cases in which parts of a person's own body, even portions of his own

as Freud sought to approach the positive instantiation of the self critically, he was equally suspicious of those dimensions of subjectivity that had traditionally, or by the power of authority, been disowned or disallowed from coalescing in, or belonging to, the self.

Certainly ‘double consciousness’, as a source of self-alienation, has a long history in human experience and cannot be claimed as a novelty of psychoanalysis. However, foregrounding dream-experience as an exemplary situation in which *self-alienation has specific patterns of manifestation that are connected to identifiable modes of self-deception*, is conspicuous, and a novel contribution of Freud’s. Further, shifting the scene in which the confrontation between the self and its alienated parts unfolds has important implications relative to Foucault’s critique of psychoanalysis as a confessional technology. By addressing his technical procedures to the manifestations of double-consciousness in dreams, as opposed to the experience of guilt, Freud sets himself apart from those traditional figures of authority—‘the doctor’ or ‘the priest’—to which one might appeal in the search for self-knowledge. As we shall see, Freud’s dream book not only operates in a field separate from these traditional figures of authority, it also provides the basis on which one may critically reformulate the dynamics operating between the subject and authority. On one hand, Freud is intent on elucidating the structural relation between the self and authority via certain typical forms that this relation might take (the Oedipal being the most common of these). On the other hand, by reading the dream book in terms of its practical (rather than theoretical) implications, it becomes clear that the way in which the relation to authority manifests is dependent upon the particular individual in

mental life – his perceptions, thoughts and feelings – , appear alien to him’ (Freud, 1930, 66). See also ‘The Question of Lay Analysis’ wherein Freud makes a similar remark (Freud, 1926, 188).

question—just as Freud expects ‘to find that with different people and in different contexts the identical dream content might well conceal a quite different meaning’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 83).

Finally, the Freudian techniques elaborated in *Interpretation* are decidedly amoral in character;¹³ put simply: Freud’s approach is outside the framework of good and evil—or at very least it is resistant to being easily absorbed into modern ethical frameworks. As the political theorist Nancy Luxon argues: ‘psychoanalysis offers a vocabulary to raise issues in an ethical register other than that of individual responsibility or legal liability’ (Luxon, 2015, 129).¹⁴ Indeed, Freud took great pains to make clear that he was not intent on identifying ‘sinful’ parts of the self: ‘The physician will leave it to the jurist to construct for social purposes a responsibility that is artificially limited to the metapsychological ego’ (Freud, 1925, 134).¹⁵

Alternately, the techniques that emerge from *Interpretation*—in addition to the ‘joke book’ and the ‘mistake book’—enabled a growing number of individuals to enter

¹³ In this Chapter my use of ‘morality’ and ‘ethics’ follows the distinction between ethics in the Foucauldian sense, i.e. as a practice of freedom, and morality as a code of conduct that regulates actions in accordance with traditionally instantiated values.

¹⁴ When Luxon uses the term ‘psychoanalysis’ in this instance, she is specifically referring to Freud, rather than psychoanalysis in the more general sense.

¹⁵ See, for example, Freud’s comments in the final pages of *Interpretation*: ‘The complexity of human character, moved dynamically this way and that, can very seldom be resolved by deciding between simple alternatives, as our superannuated morality would have it’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 411). See also, ‘Lines of Advance In Psycho-Analytic Therapy’ wherein Freud writes: ‘We refused most emphatically to turn a patient who puts himself into our hands in search of help into our private property, to decide his fate for him, to force our own ideals upon him, and with the pride of a Creator to form him in our own image and see that it is good. I still adhere to this refusal, and I think that this is the proper place for the medical discretion which we have had to ignore in other connections. I have learnt by experience, too, that such a far-reaching activity towards patients is not in the least necessary for therapeutic purposes. For I have been able to help people with whom I had nothing in common—neither race, education, social position nor outlook upon life in general—without affecting their individuality’ (Freud, 1919, 164–5).

into more complex, and critical, relations with themselves at a time when they were subject to an increasingly impersonal social and political order. Indeed, it was out of a growing awareness of this self-analytic trend that Freud would dedicate the second edition of *Interpretation* not to the ‘professional circles’—‘psychiatric colleagues’ and ‘professional philosophers’—but instead to a ‘wider circle of educated and curious-minded readers’ (Freud, 1900, xxv).¹⁶ As such, the reading of *Interpretation* that I present in the following pages has in mind precisely those readers in whom psychoanalysis took on a life and a purpose outside the clinic, one that was not dictated by its institutional bounds. It was in these readers—with whom Freud identified himself when he wrote ‘*we* middle-class plebeians’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 275)—that psychoanalysis found an expression distinct from that which we are accustomed to encountering in overtly clinical representations of it. Whether a parallel can be forged between the technically determined defiles through which an analysand is led in analytic practice, and those to which Freud sought to subject his reader, is a question best left to clinicians.

¹⁶ When traveling to Clark University in 1909, Freud noticed, to his great satisfaction, that the cabin steward was reading *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (Gay, 1998, 209); a similar theme emerges in Freud’s realization that Ernst Lanzer (‘The Rat Man’) had also read the mistakes book before being treated by Freud (Freud, 1909, n.1 159).

The Model of An Imaginary Walk

As Freud neared the completion of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, only one task remained: to write a literature review. Curiously, doing so caused him more frustration than the later technical sections of the book, or else the deeply personal ones in which Freud reports and interprets his own dreams. Reflecting back upon this episode in 1914, Freud would write 'I have held fast to the habit of always studying things themselves before looking for information about them in books' (Freud, 1914, 19). What should it mean that Freud set out, not only to write his literature review, but to perform research, only after drafting the most fundamental sections of his dream book? On one hand, the order in which Freud went about writing *Interpretation* would seem to lend credence to my claim that it should be regarded as a quasi-autobiographical text, in that it is the product of Freud's self-analysis, rather than a scientific treatise on dreams that would, in accordance with scientific method, build upon an established body of knowledge. On the other hand, one might be inclined to ask why Freud decided to include such a literature review in the first place. Freud responded to similar questions posed by Fliess in a letter dated August 6th 1899:

When are you not right? Once again you put into words what I had dimly been thinking to myself, that this first chapter is apt to deter a lot of readers from going on to the following chapters. But there is little to be done about it [...] You did not want the literature in the body of the work and you were right; nor at the beginning and you are right again. You feel about it as I do; the secret probably is that we do not like it at all. But if we do not want to put a weapon into the hands of the "scientists" with which to slaughter the poor book, we must put up with it somewhere (Freud, 1954 [1899], 290, trans. modified).

Both Freud and Fliess were acutely aware of the issues that might result from placing a rather baggy literature review at the start of the book, indeed, one laden with arguments that threatened to undermine Freud's own. For his part, Freud appears to suggest that he is obliged to include it, if only to perform the role of the diligent researcher. However, following these remarks, Freud expounds the strategic purpose of his literature review, which is only manifestly a nod to diligence, but on a deeper level represents a more calculated aim:

The whole thing is planned on the model of an imaginary walk. First comes the dark wood of the authorities (who cannot see the trees), where there is no clear view and it is very easy to go astray. Then there is a cavernous defile through which I lead my readers—my specimen with its peculiarities, its details, its indiscretions, and its bad jokes—and then, all at once, the high ground and the prospect, and the question: "*Which way do you want to go?*" (Freud, 1954 [1899], 290, my italics).

In the following pages, I retrace and explicate Freud's 'imaginary walk' and, in doing so, elucidate the manner in which Freud sought to embroil his reader in a dialectical movement that rhetorically and performatively enacts the techniques Freud developed in his own self-analysis. Doing so, however, requires that we, as John Forrester suggests, 'guard against the assumption that Freud was in some sense naïve—that he might have been innocent of the effect of his own writing' (Forrester, 1997, 144).

Before entering into my discussion of Freud's rhetoric I need to pause here and acknowledge my indebtedness to John Forrester and Andreas Mayer, both of whom have already recognized the importance of this performative or rhetorical dimension of *Interpretation* (see Forrester, 1997; Mayer, 2013). In his exquisite essay 'Dream Readers', Forrester reconstructs the epistolary exchange between Freud and Fliess (Freud's first

reader and censor) and argues that it served as the basis for the ‘dialectic of revealing and concealing’ that runs throughout *Interpretation* (Forrester, 1997, 146). Forrester’s reading emphasizes the genetic implications of this epistolary exchange relative to the form the dream book would ultimately take in terms of the interplay between writing, reading and censorship. Andreas Mayer has built upon Forrester’s initial insights by reframing the rhetorical strategies of *Interpretation* in terms of developments within the history of hypnotherapy. According to Mayer, the bourgeois patients treated by Freud and other physicians in private practice were not only neurotic but also well-read, and the growing literature on hypnotic therapy lead to a patient population that was increasing resistant to suggestion due to their foreknowledge of its workings. On this basis, Mayer argues that the rhetoric that runs throughout *The Interpretation of Dreams* was designed to act as a corrective by which ‘[t]he reader is compelled to take the author’s position and tacitly endorse the method of self-analysis demonstrated by Freud on himself’ (Mayer, 2013, 204).

It is at this level that my own reading of *Interpretation* departs from Mayer’s and Forrester’s. On one hand, I am less interested in the extent to which Freud’s rhetorical strategies might be viewed as producing ideal subjects for the express purpose of clinical psychoanalysis, or else the extent to which one may find clues in it germane to the production of the dream book. On the other, as my earlier remarks make clear, I share Mayer’s inclination to view Freud’s rhetoric as serving, on some level, a kind of preparatory function. However, I maintain that in doing so Freud was decisively setting himself apart from the experimental tradition with which Mayer aligns him. Put simply,

the kind of experience that Freud set out to examine cannot be experimentally induced; one cannot, in the style of Wundt, for example, elicit, and thereby experimentally control and measure, dream-experience.¹⁷ Conversely, it is precisely the apparent spontaneity with which dreams arise that requires an unrestricted examination of the self because, as Freud claims, ‘there are no trivial initiators of dreams’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 140). In this sense, Freud may appear to reduce the dream to its essential function as a wish-fulfilment, but in each case this reduction can only be arrived at by the vast expansion of the dream, which one must interpret ‘*en detail*, not *en masse*’, because in Freud’s view the dream is not an elementary psychical process, but ‘something put together’ like a ‘conglomerate of psychical formations’ (Ibid., 83). Further, Freud makes clear that the techniques he employs in the interpretation of dreams regard the underlying wish as ineluctably tied to ‘a *care and concern*’ that ‘can only enter the dream and leave its mark [...] by making use of the congruent wish’ (Ibid., 205). In this regard, Freud does not attempt to experimentally isolate the dreamer in order to evaluate certain factors within a controlled setting. If anything, it would appear that Freud intended to do the opposite: ‘Which way do you want to go?’ asks Freud, implying a choice, rather than a preordained or prescribed route that follows from the one he plots out for his reader (Freud, 1954 [1899], 290). Additionally, Forrester and Mayer do not take into account the purpose of

¹⁷ In point of fact, Freud gives an example that contradicts precisely the point I am trying to make here: Freud refers to a certain ‘experiment’ that he can replicate without deviation: if he eats salty food before sleeping he will invariably wake in the night to drink water, but this waking is preceded by a dream in which he gulps ‘down water in deep draughts’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 99). However, on a deeper level, my point regarding the expansive, rather than reductive, holds true here, precisely because the only kind of dreams that can be experimentally elicited in this way are ‘dreams of convenience’ that represents the satisfaction of biological *needs*, in opposition to the more existentially sensitive dreams of *desire* that are the central focus of Freud’s study.

Freud's review of the authoritative literature on dreams, which I argue, positions the reader in relation to a historically contextualized conception of the dream, and of the self, that maps closely onto the points of reference I have already established in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis.

Ultimately, what distinguishes the parameters of my own reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* from those who have commented on it in terms of its genesis and subsequent revisions (Forrester, 1997; Marinelli and Mayer, 2003; Grubrich-Simitis, 2002); its self-analytic dimension (Anzieu, 1986; Grinstein, 1980); its rhetoric (Mayer, 2013; Forrester, 1997); its relation to prior dream theories (Pigman, 2001; Robertson, 2002); or the implicit questions it raises relative to the autonomous self and politics (Schorscke, 1979; ffytche, 2012); is that my intention is not to read *Interpretation* against the backdrop of Freud's personal life, or the context of *fin de siècle* Vienna, in order to reconstruct the scene of Freud's writing, or of the birth of psychoanalysis. Instead, I am interested in the extent to which Freud's dream book stands as a remarkable historical artefact precisely because it draws together the technical dimensions of late 19th century medicine, science and psychology (that as we have seen, tended towards the ends of scientific objectivity, or else those of industry and the management of populations) and redeployed them in service of the personal self.

Finally, by positioning the dream and its relation to the self as a problem that requires certain forms of self-examination, and performing such an examination upon himself, Freud spins out a vast network of associations on the thread of those concerns that find expression in and through his relation to his dreams, and to himself, which in

turn result in the textual occasions for a critique of the self in terms of personal autonomy, self-alienation, authority and the relation between the self and its broader socio-political environment. As we have seen in Chapters 1 and 2, the attempt to formulate the self on the basis of irreducibly personal experiences resulted in a radical form of isolation (or else gave in to stereotyped narratives, themes and tropes), while emphasising regularities and universal laws—which promised to bridge the gap between the individual and the collective, as well as imagination and empirical experience—resulted in the alternate sacrifice of the idiosyncratic and personal dimensions of selfhood. Contrastingly, I argue that by providing readers certain technical procedures and performing his own subjection to them in his quasi-autobiography, Freud both drew from the two traditions this thesis has traced in the 19th century, while equally departing from them. For unlike these prior forms of self-representation or technically supported examinations of the self, Freud provided a growing number of readers with the technical means by which to reformulate their personal identity on the basis of the irreducibly personal experience of dreaming, without at once sacrificing their relation to their social environment.

In the following sections it is my intention not only to elucidate the ways in which Freud's reader becomes implicated in a form of self-examination, but also to do so with recourse to the rhetorical and performative aspects of his writing. The intention here is to revive the *experience of reading* Freud's dream book as much as it is to identify the ways in which Freud appeals to *the reader's personal experience* in this piece of writing. For this reason, I must ask my reader's patience at certain points when they may feel that things

are, perhaps, moving slowly conceptually speaking. Moving at a slower pace, and reading Freud's dream book closely, has been necessary in order to recover the particular way in which Freud sought to order the presentation of certain 'revelatory moments', or indeed, to provide his reader a false sense of security, all while meticulously preparing to pull the rug out from under them.

*The dark wood of the authorities,
or Der Traumprobleme*

People follow only authority, after all, and that can be acquired only by doing something that is within their comprehension (Freud to Fliess, 1981 [1901], 435).

There is a rather nebulous quality to the first chapter of *Interpretation*. Put simply, one is liable to get lost in it if one is not careful to follow the path laid out by its author; though to be sure, Freud drops only a smattering of breadcrumbs in this dark wood and it would seem that it is precisely his intention to evoke a feeling of disorientation in his reader.

Ritchie Robertson (2001) and G.W. Pigman (2002) both read Freud's 'literature review' against the backdrop of earlier 19th century theories of dreams in order to determine the extent to which Freud's theory is original. Doing so, however, overlooks the guiding thread on which Freud strings together the various 'authorities' that are loosely constellated in terms of their perspectives on dreams. Significantly, Freud titled this chapter 'The Scientific Literature on the Problem of Dreams'. What then, we might ask, is the *problem*? To begin with, it would appear that dreams have yet to be satisfactorily

explained, and that this is a problem for science, which has repeatedly failed to explicate their strange and distorted images, their relationship to waking life, to identify their purpose, or else their cause.

As one slogs through Freud's 'dark wood of authorities' it seems as if he is merely cataloguing observations regarding certain aspects of dreams. In doing so Freud leads, or misleads, his reader for almost fifty pages before articulating the 'problem of dreams' in explicit terms which relate more immediately to the dreamer's personal experience than to the scientific inexplicability of dreams:

In the scientific consideration of dreams we start from the assumption' writes Freud, 'that [our dreams] are the products of our own soul activity; yet the finished dream seems to us something alien, and we feel so little disposed to confess to its authorship that we are just as happy to say "a dream came to me" as "I dreamed". Where does this "soul alienation" come from? (Freud, 1999 [1900], 42, translation modified).¹⁸

In this instance, Freud outlines the 'dream problem' so as to emphasize an underlying structure of experience, one that he will return to repeatedly. For this reason I want to pause here and examine this passage in detail.

The 'dream problem', according to Freud, relates first and foremost to the experience of dreaming and the subsequent experience of having dreamt; and it is the inconsistency of these two experiences that instigates the question: 'Where does this 'soul

¹⁸ *Wir gehen in der wissenschaftlichen Betrachtung des Traumes von der Annahme aus, daß der Traum ein Ergebnis unserer eigenen Seelentätigkeit ist; doch erscheint uns der fertige Traum als etwas Fremdes, zu dessen Urheberchaft zu bekennen es uns so wenig drängt, daß wir ebenso gerne sagen: "Mir hat geträumt" wie: "Ich habe geträumt." Woher rührt diese "Seelenfremdheit" des Traumes? (Freud, 1900a, 50).*

One finds a similar sensibility maintained in Jung's thought on the practical application of dream interpretation: 'Here we come upon something of the utmost importance for the applicability of dream-analysis: the dream describes the inner situation of the dreamer, but the conscious mind denies its truth and reality, or admits it only grudgingly' (Jung, 1980 [1934], para. 304).

alienation' come from?' The sentiment or assumption (*der Annahme*),¹⁹ that the dream is regarded as a product of our own soul activity (*unserer eigenen Seelentätigkeit*), or of our authorship (*Urheberschaft*), results from the active experience of dreaming. The latter passive experience, that of having dreamt, however, leads us to regard our dreams as something foreign or alien (*etwas Fremdes*), and concomitantly, to feel unable to confess (*bekennen*) to their ownership or authorship. On one level, these alternate responses to the dream—ownership and authorship, or else disownment and alienation—may be viewed in terms of the *immediate* experience (*Ich habe geträumt*) in the first case, and *mediate* experience (*mir hat geträumt*) in the latter; Freud's use of '*mir*' designates the dreamer as the indirect object of their dream, as a passive recipient rather than an active dreamer. The question instigated by this problem is, as Freud puts it: where does this 'soul alienation' come from? Or: why do we regard our dreams as our own, as something we have produced, only to disown them and malign them as nonsensical? In posing the 'dream problem' this way, the apparently insignificant experience of dreaming emerges as an exemplary form of self-experience, one that allows Freud to enter into a series of considerations with far reaching implications relative to the coherence and transparency of the self, while doing so under the pretence of a somewhat innocuous discussion of dreams. It is against the coordinates of self-experience defined by the 'dream problem' passage that Freud will proceed to evaluate the prior theories of dreams suggested by 'the authorities'.

¹⁹ Freud will later describe this 'assumption' as '*einer dunkeln Ahnung geleitet*' as a 'dim presentiment' or a 'hunch' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 78; Freud, 1900a, 100).

In the penultimate section of the chapter, ‘Theories of Dreams and the Function of Dreams’, Freud defines dream ‘theories’ in opposition to mere observations and descriptions of dreams:

A proposition about the dream which attempts to explain as many of its observed features as possible from a single standpoint, at the same time determining the position of the dream in relation to a more comprehensive field of phenomena, may be called a theory of the dream (Freud, 1999 [1900], 62-3).

Freud claims that four distinct dream theories of this kind can be identified; the first of which belongs to antiquity and regarded dreams as divine or prophetic messages requiring interpretation. Freud explains that this theory has since fallen out of favour because ‘the dream has become an object of biological research’ (Ibid.). The ancient tradition of dream interpretation is only glossed here—Freud will, however, return to it at the outset of his ‘method’ chapter. Freud then dismisses a second type of dream theory that endeavours to explain dreams by drawing attention to the different conditions to which the psyche is subject in waking life and sleep.²⁰ After these two ‘false starts’, Freud focuses the remainder of his discussion on two ‘dream theories’ that can be roughly divided in terms of their aims.

The first group (to which Freud will repeatedly refer as ‘the medical authorities’) is intent on explaining dreams by reducing them to somatic processes, while maintaining that the psyche plays no role in the formation of dreams. More concretely, Freud draws

²⁰ This second ‘dream theory’ is attributed to Joseph Delbœuf and summarily swept aside. Freud justifies doing so by arguing that theories of this kind ‘have no means of explaining the purpose of the dream’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 63). More recently, Sonu Shamdasani and Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen have argued that much of Freud’s dream theory was in fact derived from the work of Delbœuf’s earlier *Sleep and Dreams*; particularly the emphasis on the dreams ability to evoke or restore forgotten memories (Shamdasani & Borsch-Jacobsen, 2012, 43).

on the writings of Carl Binz, a German pharmacologist and physician, and Alfred Maury, a French physician and scholar, in fleshing out this medically oriented theory of dreams (Freud, 1999 [1900], 64). Maury, who Freud references several times in earlier sections of the literature review, acts as a metonymic stand-in for the Salpêtrière School, inclusive of both Charcot and Janet. Freud argues that Maury views dreams as a form of ‘*automatisme psychologique*’, i.e. a notion of ‘automatism that [Maury] conceives as being the absolute antithesis to psychical activity’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 62).²¹ Freud’s representation of Binz pushes the reduction of the dream, as a low or rudimentary form of psychical activity, to its extreme by reducing it entirely to physiology: ‘As we see, all the facts urge us to characterize the dream as a *physical* process, one which is in every instance useless, and in many instances downright pathological...’ (Binz in Freud, *Ibid.*, 65). Freud then quotes W. Robert’s theory, which also reduces the dream to ‘a physical process’, this time one ‘of elimination and excretion which we become aware of in our mental reaction to it’ (Robert in Freud, *Ibid.*, 66).

Ultimately Freud objects to this dream theory, and does so on grounds that act as an appeal to the reader/dreamer: ‘there is a further significance’, writes Freud, ‘to calling the dream, which after all is still an activity of the psyche, a physical process. The dream is denied the *dignity* of being a process of the psyche’ (Freud, *Ibid.*, 65).²² Freud’s defence

²¹ Freud’s portrayal of Maury recalls Charcot’s conception of catalepsy as a state in which the subject was transformed into a perfect automaton resembling the ‘*human machine*, in all its simplicity, dreamt of by De la Mettrie’ (Charcot, 1991 [1889], 290). For his own part, Janet had extended Charcot’s initial observations concerning catalepsy in order to provide a more general account of lower, or more rudimentary states of psychological activity in his 1889 book *l’Automatisme psychologique*.

²² A similar sentiment regarding the ‘materialism of the nineteenth century’ is espoused by Jung in his 1936 lecture on ‘Psychological Typology’, when he argues that it ‘gave the body first place and

of the dream's 'dignity' is not merely a reaction to Robert's characterization of it as a kind of excretion; the question of the dream's dignity reemerges later when Freud writes that the 'dream cannot be compared to the random resonation of a musical instrument struck not by the hand of player but by the impact of an external force' (Ibid., 98). On this second pass, it becomes clear that the dream's dignity is intimately tied up in the extent to which the dreamer is responsible for their dream, and concomitantly, the way in which this responsibility confers a meaning upon the dream that relates specifically to the dreamer. Put differently, the *dreamer's* dignity is equally denied when their dreams—which they hold to be a result of their own 'soul activity', or from their 'authorship'—are compared to the haphazard sounding of a musical instrument.

After considering the theories forwarded by 'the medical authorities', Freud turns to those theorists that 'ascribe to the dreaming psyche the capacity and inclination for exceptional psychical achievements that are either beyond its powers or that it can only carry out imperfectly when awake' (Ibid., 69). Freud locates the authorities responsible for promulgating this alternate theory in a more distant past than his physiologically inclined contemporaries; Freud has in mind the Romantics, Idealists, and proponents of *Naturphilosophie*, to whom he had already gestured via an allusion to 'the high value accorded to the dream-life by many schools of philosophy, for example, by Schelling's followers' (Ibid., 8). Freud unfolds this theory with reference to Karl Friedrich Burdach, an early 19th century biologist and nature philosopher, equally influenced by Schelling and

relegated the psyche to the rank of something secondary and derived, allowing it no more substantiality than that of a so-called "epiphenomenon" (Jung, 1980 [1936], para. 961).

Goethe (see Richards, 2002, 191, 453).²³ Burdach is quoted as defining the dream as ‘a natural activity of the soul, which the power of the individual does not restrict, self-consciousness does not disturb, self-determination does not direct, but is the vitality of our centres of sensibility revelling in free and uninhibited play’ (Burdach in Freud, *Ibid.*, 69). Freud then turns to J.E. Purkinje²⁴ in order to substantiate Burdach’s view:

‘Productive dreams [...] are effortless productions of the imagination in free play’, states Purkinje, ‘unconnected with the events of the day [and capable of curing] sadness with joy (Purkinje in Freud, *Ibid.*). In this regard, the dream’s dignity is restored, but only by severing it from the dreamer’s individual life experience, self-consciousness, and will.

Finally, Freud turns to K.A. Scherner’s account of dreams,²⁵ which is hailed as the ‘most original and far-reaching attempt to explain the dream as an activity peculiar to the psyche’ (*Ibid.*, 70); though it will, by Freud’s account, turn out to be neither of these.

Much of what Freud has to say about Scherner is, on one hand, a repetition of the view he has already attributed to Burdach and Purkinje, and on the other, Freud is clearly at

²³ Sonu Shamdasani places Burdach alongside other early 19th century vitalists who believed in a teleological life force that ‘created the whole world and produced each living thing’ (Shamdasani, 2003, 179-80). By referencing Burdach rather than a more established philosopher Freud continues his strategy of substitution, by which minor figures are attacked in place of the more substantive philosophical or scientific positions they are made to represent. In this case, Burdach stands in for Kant’s articulation of the free play of imagination in his *Critique of Judgement*, which Freud is able to malign without engaging with Kant because this position is disguised behind the more poetical expressions of Burdach. Novalis is glossed here too, thereby resubstantiating the link Freud is attempting to forge between the untethered powers of the imagination and the dream, and his caricature of Romanticism and Idealism.

²⁴ J.E. Purkinje was an early 19th century physiologist and anatomist best known for his work on cellular neuroanatomy.

²⁵ More recent scholarship has shown that Freud was most likely unfamiliar with Scherner’s actual writings and had only encountered his ideas via Johannes Volkelt who, indicatively, is most often referenced immediately before or after Scherner (see Pigman, 2002, 155 n.33). Freud seems to have had access to Scherner’s own dream book, which he describes as ‘written in a heady, florid style’, however is it not clear to what extent Freud was willing to put up with Scherner’s challenging prose style (Freud 1999 [1900], 70).

pains to preserve the originality of the ideas he will give expression to in later parts of his own dream book (Schermer has an account of the relation between the ego and the dream, the diminished role played by reason in dreams and the symbolizing activity of the imagination). Ultimately, Freud will locate the same shortcomings he had already identified with the physiologically oriented dream theorists in Schermer:

The material which the dream-imagination takes for its artistic powers to work upon is, according to Schermer, mainly that offered by the stimuli of the bodily organs so dimly perceived by day. So, though otherwise poles apart, *in this respect*—in their *assumptions* about what the sources and instigators of dreams may be—Schermer's all-too-fantastical theorizing and the perhaps overly sober theses put forward by Wundt and other physiologists are in entire agreement (Freud, *Ibid.*, 71, my italics).

The sudden mention of Wundt (perhaps a slip?), who is explicitly related to 'other physiologists', forces us to realize that just as Schelling and Kant (both Burdach and Purkinje are quoted in order to allude to Kant's third critique) have been attacked by proxy, Freud has all along intended to do the same to Wundt and his fellow experimentalists.²⁶

A few pages later, Freud traduces Schermer's theory of dreams not because they reduce the dream to the body in the manner of 'physiologists' like Wundt, but instead, due to its 'arbitrariness and disconnection from all the rules of scientific research' (Freud,

²⁶ While this is the only mention of Wundt in the section of dream theories, he is referenced seven times in the earlier sections of chapter one (see Freud, 1999 [1900], 26, 28, 36-7 50-1, 75). Wundt's follower E.B. Titchner's (1895) paper on 'Taste dreams' is also referenced by Freud in addition to Wundt's rival G.E. Müller who ran an experimental psychology laboratory in Göttingen (*Ibid.*, 28, 29). Freud also demonstrates his familiarity with other followers of Wundt such as G.T. Ladd (*Ibid.*, 29-30) and Paul Radestock (*Ibid.*, 10, 18, 24, 31, 36, 40, 48-49, 60, 74-7). Finally, the Herbartian Ludwig Strümpell who overlapped at Leipzig with Wundt during the mid 19th century is also cited numerous times (*Ibid.*, 10, 15-6, 20, 26-7, 30, 34, 38-41, 47, 49-51).

Ibid., 73). Scherner is, then, guilty of the same denigration of dreams of which Freud accuses the medical authorities, while at the same time being unscientific. Indeed, even if Freud's reader were to recognize the metonymic position Scherner is here being made to occupy (as representative of Idealism, Romanticism, and Nature Philosophy at once) and attempt to retreat to the position of Burdach and Purkinje, things would remain relatively unchanged; for while these other commentators accord the dream dignity, they do so only by detaching it from the personal dimensions and autonomous powers of the dreamer and aligning it with the suprapersonal, the supernatural or the divine. Freud concludes by appealing to 'popular feeling', which has 'for thousands of years' found the dream 'mysterious, but rich with associations'; 'rigorous science', however, 'has done little to elucidate it beyond attempting [...] *to deny it any meaning or importance*' (Freud, Ibid., 73, my italics). And it is with yet another appeal to the same popular feeling (*Laienmeinung*), that Freud will begin the following chapter on 'The Method of Interpreting Dreams' (Freud, 1900 [1999], 78; 1900a, 100).

Before leaving Freud's literature review behind, I want to take stock of the ground we have covered, and clearly relate Freud's exposition of 19th century dream theories to his broader rhetorical strategy. To begin with, we must recall the polarity of dream experience designated by Freud's 'dream problem' and the question it engendered: 'where does this "soul alienation" come from?' It would seem that Freud has searched the authoritative literature on dreams in vain for a solution to this problem. At the same time, however, Freud has been diligently forging a bond between himself and the reader, the strength of which shall soon be tested. This bond has been formed through Freud's

appeals to the first half of the dream problem—phrases related to intuition and popular opinion (*den Ahnungen des Volkes, Volksbewußtseins, populären Empfindung*) have been repeatedly mobilized in Freud's ongoing campaign against those 'medical writers' or 'authorities' who would deny the dream the dignity it deserves as a *meaningful* process of the psyche (Freud, 1900a, 67, 86, 91; 1900 [1999], 54, 70). On one hand, the 'dream problem' begins to take on a new significance; the secondary pole of the dream problem, that marks it as something 'meaningless' or 'alien' whose authorship we cannot admit to, is increasingly identified with the 'medical writers' or 'authorities' on dreams who are not interested in the experience or meaning of dreams but only in reducing them to a physiological process (*the excretion of underdeveloped thoughts*). On the other hand, the 'dim presentiment' that dreams are indeed 'meaningful' and perhaps even 'authored' by the dreamer is aligned with the 'popular opinion' that Freud—the author of *the book* on dreams—intends to champion. In this way, Freud emerges as an advocate of the people—of their consciousness (*Volksbewußtseins*)—and of experience, as well as presenting himself as the decidedly antiauthoritarian author of *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

Techniques for Dreamers

The first sentence of Freud's second chapter on 'The Method of Interpreting Dreams' makes explicit what was so far only a subtle current in his literature review. 'The title I have given my treatise', states Freud, 'makes it clear which tradition I would like to take up in the way dreams are understood (Freud, 1999 [1900], 78). For those readers unapprised of ancient techniques of *oneiromancy* or else the systematic *Oneirocritica*

(which in German translates to *Traumdeutung*) in which these techniques were explicated, Freud will make this statement of intent explicit via his reference to Artemidorous of Daldis' *Oneirocritica* (or, *Interpretation of Dreams*). In doing so, Freud unites the 'dim presentiment' of 'popular opinion'—with which he has identified himself—with an 'ancient, stubbornly held popular belief' that 'comes closer to the truth of things than the judgment of contemporary science' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 78, 80).

These currents are then placed in opposition to 'the scientific theories on dreams', which

have no room for a problem of dream-interpretation, for to them the dream is not a psychical act at all but only a somatic process [...]. Popular opinion has at all times thought differently. Exercising its right to inconsistency, on the one hand admitting that dreams are incomprehensible and absurd, but on the other unable to bring itself to deny them all significance (Ibid., 78).

In this instance, Freud recasts the 'dream problem' relative to 'popular opinion's right to inconsistency',²⁷ which recognizes the incongruence with which we experience dreams as both belonging to us and yet alien. This is precisely the 'inconsistency' that the authoritative theories on dreams seem intent on either ignoring, by pronouncing dreams meaningless, or smoothing over by equating dreams with those 'physiological processes of elimination and excretion' that we know to be *of us*, but would prefer not to own up to (e.g. the dream takes on the status of a burp or the ill-timed breaking of wind).

With his position as antiauthoritarian and champion of experience restated, Freud unfolds the relation of his technique of dream interpretation to those employed in antiquity (Freud, 1999 [1900], 79). In doing so, Freud emphasizes that he, like the

²⁷ Freud reemphasizes this point when he states that 'philosophers and psychiatrists' dismiss 'the problem of dream interpretation as a chimera' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 80). Here, Freud's reference to the mythological 'chimera' alludes to both the 'inconsistency' with which popular opinion regards the dream (as both of the self and alien to it at once) and to the ancient roots of dream interpretation.

ancients, intends to take up the dream as a meaningful experience and to set out to determine how the dream's meaning can be revealed; at the same time, he is equally intent on distancing himself from those methods that proceed by decoding dreams, i.e. by relating their content to a fixed key. Conversely, the techniques Freud has developed yield meaning on the basis of the individuality of the dreamer: 'I expect to find that with different people and in different contexts the identical dream content might well conceal a quite different meaning' (Ibid., 83). In arriving at this position, which privileges the particularity of the individual over and above the regularities and laws governing bodies and souls, Freud draws upon an array of the technical antecedents to psychoanalysis that we examined in Chapter 2.

To begin with, the relation between the dream's meaning and the particular individual to whom it occurs is derived from Freud's equation of 'the method of interpretation developed for [neurotic] symptoms' with that of dreams (Ibid., 81). In this regard, Freud's conception of the neurotic (or hysterical) symptom has already departed significantly from the one I ascribed to Charcot, for whom they could be reduced to either pathological anatomy, or the simulator's predilection for deceit. For Freud, these symptoms have meaning that can be determined in relation to the patient's personal history; further, for Freud the symptom represents a specific intention, i.e. to avoid an unpleasant experience from resurfacing in memory. Of course, viewing the dream in this way will call into question the extent to which it can be self-interpreted, precisely because the meaning of the dream, like the neurotic symptom, is, as it were, *self-concealed* in order to protect the dreamer from some unpleasant truth.

In order to address the self's resistances Freud adumbrates a series of techniques that are clearly influenced by the ones we have already seen in the work of both Charcot and Wundt. However, Freud makes use of these techniques in a manner that subverts the purposes they were initially made to serve, by employing them as means by which to circumvent the critical faculty that would otherwise prevent certain ideas from emerging in consciousness. 'The patient's psyche requires a certain preparation' (Ibid., 81), writes Freud: first, one must 'pay attention to his psychical perceptions more intently', and subsequently 'switch off the critical faculty normally used to sift through the thoughts arising in them' (Ibid.).²⁸ Taken together, these techniques enable one to 'give all their attention' to 'self-observation' (*Selbstbeobachtung*), which is distinguished from the active role played by 'the critical faculty' in 'reflection' or 'thinking' (*Nachdenken*) (Ibid.; Freud, 1900a, 105-6). The distinction Freud draws between self-observation and reflection closely parallels the one made by Wundt,²⁹ whose co-deployment of self-observation and experimentally regulated stimuli were intended to '*occasion*' an 'immediate experience to arise in the subject' without the subject initiating, and thereby altering it (Wundt, 1897 [1896], 12).

It is at this level that the influence of French psychopathology and the use of hypnotic techniques to study forms of psychic automatism become evident in Freud's conceptualization of self-observation. Wundt's technique of self-observation enabled

²⁸ Freud does not give any clear sense of what this 'critical faculty' (or the 'judgment' it results in) is at this point—it will only reemerge explicitly in his later discussion of the 'dream censor' and 'counter-wish-dreams' (see Freud, 1999 [1900], 112-25).

²⁹ Indicatively, Freud cites the 1880 edition of Wundt's *Gründzüge der physiologischen Psychologie* in his bibliography (Freud, 1999 [1900], 416). The 1902 edition of the same work (translated by Titchner in 1910) features numerous instances in which Wundt makes the same distinction between 'pure self-observation' and 'simple self-observation' (Wundt, 1910 [1902], 2, 4, 6, 7, 8).

experimental subjects to observe their own consciousness as if perceiving a physical event. However, this arrangement restricted the type of psychic experiences that could be observed experimentally, i.e. they were relegated to those forms of 'inner' experience that could be instigated by the application of certain sensory stimuli. As such, experimentalists could not use this method to study complex psychical processes related to memory, precisely because memories, like dreams, could not be elicited, controlled, or isolated experimentally. Freud's use of the same technique is, conversely, intended to allow images, ideas, and feelings to emerge automatically.³⁰ In this sense, the purpose of self-observation is, for Freud, to relax the critical faculty so that psychic phenomena can freely emerge in consciousness. Perhaps more fundamentally, Freud's application of this technique is distinguished from Wundt's by the alternate epistemic framework that grounds it. For Wundt, experimental protocols were designed to produce knowledge that was universally valid; for Freud, however, the epistemic ground of this technique relates to the particular individual upon which it is employed. In this regard, questions concerning the precise nature and regularities of the process by which such elements of experience emerge in consciousness are bracketed, and the primary focus of the technique is, instead, the contents of experience as they relate to the self-observer personally.

Freud adumbrates still other techniques explicitly taken from hypnotherapy: 'it is helpful for [the patient] to lie down and close his eyes' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 81) in order to enter into a state of relaxation that resembles 'the condition present just before falling

³⁰ In a subsequent section on 'The Material and Sources of Dreams' Freud lists several sources, the last of which is 'A significant inner experience (a memory, or train of thought) which is then represented in the dream by reference to a recent but trivial impression' and a footnote in the first edition confirms that 'Most of [Freud's] patients dreams during analysis are of this kind' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 138, n.7).

asleep (and certainly the hypnotic state too)' (Ibid., 82). Freud relates the same state of uncritical self-observation to his technique of automatic writing: 'I myself can achieve [the state of uncritical self-observation] by writing down the thoughts that occur to me' (Ibid., 82). In framing things this way Freud distances himself from the hierarchical division that hypnotic techniques implied in Charcot's work, in which one's will was replaced with that of an other—indeed, the strength of Freud's argument, regarding the research he has performed on *himself*, depends upon upholding that such techniques can be employed by oneself and upon oneself, i.e. as technical self-subjections.

While Freud's use of automatic writing and free association draws heavily upon Charcot's hypnotic techniques, these techniques are also readapted in response to Freud's understanding of the hysteric's fundamentally compromised capacity for self-expression.³¹ Recall that Charcot had no need for his patient's side of the story because they 'make up a tale based on lies, [and] *involuntary* untruths.' Charcot had attributed these lies and involuntary untruths to the influence wrought upon the hysteric by their family, and had endeavored to remove such malinfluence via isolation, while replacing it with his own authority. For Freud, however, such influences are not merely external; instead they are viewed in terms of an autonomous internal agency, which Freud will later define as the 'censor'. In this regard, influence cannot be overcome via physical isolation; a more subtle set of psychological techniques would be required in order to distinguish between those ideas that originate in the self, and those that have come to reside within it, or indeed, to identify the ways in which ideas that appear to originate in the self have been obscured or

³¹ See, for example, my discussion of Charcot's experiments on cataleptics (in 'Hysteria, or Bodies that Lie') in which a form of technologically supported 'automatic writing' was used to tell 'true' cataleptics apart from simulators.

reshaped under the influence of this internal censor. As we shall see in the following section, Freud's theoretical exposition of the 'psychic apparatus', his rhetoric concerning 'the authorities' who denigrate the dream as meaningless, and the techniques of uncritical self-observation, all intersect in the question that he derives from the dream problem: where does this soul-alienation come from? In order to answer this question, Freud sets out to identify the ways in which dreams, like other symptoms, adhere to typical patterns of self-deception.

As Freud's section on method draws to a close, he continually emphasizes that the techniques he has laid out are distinct from those employed to observe patients in clinical medicine and science: 'in my judgment, the conditions for self-observation are more favourable than the conditions for the observation of others' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 83). A footnote added in 1914 reinforces this claim—in it, Freud states that his method 'imposes the task of interpretation upon the dreamer himself, because his method of interpretation is primarily concerned with 'what occurs to the *dreamer*' (Freud, 1900, 98, n.1). In keeping with these techniques of self-observation, Freud asks his reader to 'make *my* interests his own [and] immerse himself with me in the minutest details of my life [because] *our* interest in the hidden significance of dreams *absolutely demands* a transference of this kind' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 84, *my italics*). Observe the two purposes that this appeal serves at once: by requesting that the reader make Freud's interests their own, Freud, firstly, restates his claim that 'the conditions for self-observation are more favourable than the conditions for the observation of others'.

Secondly, Freud's appeal signals the resumption of the rhetorical strategy we have been tracing, i.e. if the reader is to observe Freud's dreams properly (that is, by following

his own technique of self-observation), they must ‘identify’ with him and be concerned with those things that concern him most dearly, because ultimately, it is by mapping out these ‘concerns’ (*Sorgen*) that Freud will arrive at the meaning of his dream. In this regard, Freud inverts the mechanism of hysterical identification ‘which enables patients to express in their symptoms the experiences of a large number of people, not just their own’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 117), by contriving a situation in which ‘a large group of people’ will experience Freud’s dream/symptom as if it was *their own*.

Perhaps most importantly, there is a third, albeit less pronounced way in which to read this invitation; one that pertains less to the reader and more to Freud’s own position relative to what follows. Just as Freud is inviting the reader to identify with *him*, this invitation enables Freud to suspend, or bracket, his own self-narration in the vignette that follows; precisely because doing so will enable him to treat himself as if he were not himself, to enumerate his concerns as if they did not belong to him; recall that just pages earlier Freud had identified ‘writing’ as an effective means by which to enter into uncritical self-observation. Additionally, Freud’s exposition of automatic writing and the technique of uncritical self-observation culminate in the rather enigmatic statement that: ‘*We thus turn the “involuntary” ideas into “voluntary” ones*’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 82). In this pronouncement, the voluntarism that Wundt used to characterize his own experimental self-observation, and the automatism studied in Charcot’s experiments on cataleptics, are combined and reconfigured. Freud envisages this reconfiguration, that will enable one to objectively observe the ideas that automatically arise in their consciousness, as resulting from the voluntary transfer of psychical energy from ‘critical activity’ that controls and

directs consciousness to the ‘attentive pursuit’ of those ideas that emerge spontaneously in it.

According to Freud, there is a second gain that results from this technique that is particularly significant relative to the study of dreams or other imagistic forms of psychic experience; in addition to transforming mental contents from involuntary to voluntary, this technique transforms images into linguistically expressible ideas and concepts. This, claims Freud, is the distinction between the technically supported condition of uncritical self-observation and ‘the one that attends falling asleep’ or the ‘hypnotic state’ in which ‘the involuntary ideas emerging are transformed into visual and acoustic images’ (Ibid., 82).

On this third pass, Freud sets out the inverse function of his reader’s identification with his writing, which now appears to strike a balance between autobiographical and biographical consciousness. What Freud gains from this tact is a kind of objectivity, one that does not, however, result in the decoupling of the observer from the self that it is observing, nor the concerns and experiences that populate its self-consciousness. Put differently, by suspending himself between auto- and biographical consciousness, Freud is able to maintain his I-ness and the intimate knowledge that it lends itself to, while at the same time preventing himself from becoming overly identified with himself.

This technique of self-suspension is the primary takeaway from Freud’s method section. Indeed, Freud relies on it repeatedly throughout the remainder of the dream book, precisely because it is the technique that enables Freud to elucidate the dynamics of alienation without losing sight of the *experience* of alienation or being captured by it.

Moreover, this technique of self-suspension facilitates the parallax relation that emerges in Freud's rhetoric, between a decidedly antiauthoritarian ethos that is accompanied, on a more personal level of self-narration, with a striving to author himself, to 'arrange my life in the way that seems right to me and me alone', to be recognized as the author of the book on dreams, and indeed, to be recognized as an authority in his own right (Freud, 1999 [1900], 305).

Caesura: Concerning Dreams

The term 'concern' (*Sorge*) occurs repeatedly in Freud's interpretation of his famous 'specimen dream' about Irma's injection: he is concerned with his 'daughter's illness' and a patient 'who bore the same name'; he is concerned with the 'injurious effect of cocaine' and 'the disorder' of a 'patient travelling in Egypt'; he is 'concerned' about his 'wife's health' and that of his brother and of 'Dr. M.'; and he is 'concerned' with his 'own physical ailments' and those of his 'absent friend' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 96). 'All of these things' concludes Freud, link together 'to form a single sphere of ideas [...]: concern for health (*Sorge um die Gesundheit*), my own and others, the physician's conscientiousness' (Ibid.; 1900a, 125). It is behind this 'sphere of ideas' that Freud will locate his wish: 'to be innocent of blame for Irma's illness' (Ibid.). So it is by becoming attentive to his personal concerns that Freud is able to unravel his perplexing dream. Significantly, the activity of constellating concerns is not relegated to this first specimen dream. In point of fact, it recurs in many of Freud's most thoroughly interpreted dreams.

When analyzing his *myope/Cyclops* dream, Freud's interpretation draws on his 'concern about' both 'physical' and 'intellectual one-sidedness', and the dream's 'craziness' is interpreted in terms of its attempts to mask 'these very concerns', just as the dream of Irma's injection had done (Freud, 1999 [1900], 285). One of Freud's *Rome dreams (of the fountain and his sons)* 'builds upon a tangle of thoughts' related to the 'Jewish question' and his 'concern for [his] children's future', 'concerns' regarding their ability to 'move freely from place to place' (Ibid., 283). Freud's *Autodidasker* dream derives from his wife's 'concern about the children' which reemerges in Freud (Ibid., 229). The same immensely complex dream also occasions Freud to reflect upon his 'concern about wasting one's life for a woman', which he associates with the figures of *Lasker* and *Lassalle* (Ibid., 230).³² In interpreting his dream of the *botanical monograph*, Freud begins to consider more seriously the relation between those things with which we are concerned in waking life and the way in which dreams seem to have recourse to *insignificant* events. Ultimately, however, Freud concludes that in 'dream-interpretation [...] everything leads to significant experience', that is, experiences with which we are personally concerned (Ibid., 133).

How should we understand the role that 'concern' plays relative to the dream and the self in Freud's technique of dream interpretation? Is it not the case, as commentators generally maintain, that the identification of the underlying wish is the end towards which Freudian dream interpretation strives? Perhaps. However, reducing the situation in this way privileges the epistemic claim Freud is trying to make over and above the

³² In a footnote Freud explains that '*Lasker* died of progressive paralysis, that is, as the consequence of an infection (lues) caught from a woman; *Lassalle*, it is well known, died in a duel fought on account of a lady' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 230 n.1).

practical dimension of Freud's interpretive techniques—precisely the means by which he can arrive at any knowledge claim regarding dreams. When examined closely, there is a deep-seated ambiguity running throughout the dream book regarding precisely these two levels at which Freud's interpretive techniques operate. Freud's comment that 'the unraveling and the cure, solution, and resolution, amount to the same thing' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 80), would appear to confirm that arriving at the (suppressed or repressed) wish that is hidden behind the manifest content of the dream—that is, to resolve or unravel the dream, to make it bare its truth—is in fact the ultimate aim of dream interpretation. However, there are a variety of instances in which the value of Freud's interpretive techniques appears to relate more immediately to the *activity* of interpreting one's dreams, and to the kind of self-relation that such an activity engenders. In some instances, Freud suggests that the wish is in fact a sort of byproduct of our concerns: 'what has claimed our attention by day', states Freud, 'also governs the thoughts of our dream, and *we put ourselves to the trouble of dreaming only on the basis of material such as would have given us occasion for thought in the daytime*' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 133, my italics). This emphasis on the dreamer's concerns reemerges in Freud's conclusive statement that '[i]n the dream-interpretation [...] everything leads to the significant experience that had rightly stirred me' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 133).

Freud makes his most explicit attempt to distinguish the role of the wish from the one played by concern in his later discussion of the dream processes. Freud writes:

‘the *driving-force* that the dream needed had to be contributed by a wish; it was up to the concern (*sorgen*) to find a wish for itself that would act as the driving-force of the dream’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 365, translation modified).³³

Subsequently, Freud develops this rather abstract discussion of ‘wishing’ and being ‘concerned’ within an economic metaphor:

the daytime thought might possibly play the part of the *entrepreneur* for the dream; but the entrepreneur who has the idea, as we say, and the will to translate it into action, still cannot do anything without capital; he needs a *capitalist* to take on the expenses, and the capitalist in this case, who contributes the psychical expenditure for the dream, is always and unfailingly, whatever the daytime thought might be, *a wish from the Unconscious*’ (Ibid.).

In this instance, Freud locates the origin of the dream in our ‘daytime thoughts’ (which are effectively synonymous with ‘concerns’ given the preceding context of this passage), while the psychical energy that brings these concerns into representation is derived from the wish. To make things still more complex, Freud holds that ‘*the wish represented in the dream has to be an infantile one*’ (Ibid., 363). The dream, then, becomes an amalgam of past and present, conscious and unconscious; it is catalyzed by the concerns of one’s present self, which refuse to abate even in sleep, and brought into representation by those wishes preserved from one’s infantile past—wishes that ‘are invariably the self’s wishes’ (Ibid., 205).

There is an even further ambiguity running throughout Freud’s dream book regarding the demonstrability of the claim that all wishes are infantile ones. In point of fact, nearly all the dreams enumerated above result in interpretations that portray their underlying meaning relative to particularly ‘adult’ wishes; one might ask, for example, how Freud’s wish to be ‘exonerated of responsibility for Irma’s condition’ is in any way

³³ In this instance Crick translates *sorgen* as ‘worry’, while Strachey renders it as ‘concern’ (see Freud, 1900, 556).

infantile, without at once reducing the wish to an abstraction (Ibid., 94). To be sure, Freud protects himself from precisely this sort of criticism by making statements like ‘I do not claim to have uncovered all the meaning of this dream or that its interpretation is without any gaps’ (Ibid., 96). Perhaps, more pointedly, these ambiguities appear to resolve themselves only if we view the wish in terms of the kind of ‘primary process’ thinking—which Freud only adumbrates in *Interpretation* (Ibid., 363-4)—that is *primarily* wishful thinking, i.e. a form of thinking that does not respect or take into account the exigencies of reality. In *this* sense, wishing that things would be other than they are, and presuming that such alterations may be made without taking action, *is*, of course, an infantile *mode* of thinking.

As these passages and the collection of dream examples presented above show, it is by constellating his personal concerns that Freud is able to discern the wish underlying the manifest content of his dreams. On this view, the question becomes one of means and ends: Is it the concealed wish that interpretation strives to uncover, or is it the personal concerns that one becomes aware of in the process of arriving at the former? Perhaps it is both; in this respect the activity of dream interpretation takes on a more existentially sensitive register, because it involves becoming conscious of those things with which one is personally concerned. Put differently, it is about becoming more conscious of one’s relation to certain ‘significant experiences’ in waking life, and not merely uncovering desire, or identifying the links between the dream’s content and the ‘residues’ of the preceding day. In a complementary way, arriving at the wish that was initially concealed by the passing dream scenery is the result of attuning oneself to one’s concerns and, at the same time, arriving at the wish confirms that one has correctly navigated the psychic

structure of the dream. In other words, the wish acts like a guiding star that allows the dream interpreter to orient their interpretive activities epistemologically, while engaging, on a practical level, with the concerns of the self—which the wish attempts to resolve—in a more existentially sensitive register. One might say that just as Freud frames the wish as providing the capital, or psychic energy, that propels the dream into representations, the ostensibly epistemic search for the truth of the dream in the wish propels the activity of interpretation.

Viewing things this way closely resembles Jonathan Lear's reading of Freud's dream book, which emphasizes the extent to which 'it is not dreams that provide the royal road to the unconscious so much as the conscious, waking activity of interpreting dream-memories' (Lear, 2005, 96). Further, Lear argues that engaging in the 'activity' of dream interpretation 'yields a very special kind of knowledge: not theoretical knowledge of a hidden realm, but practical knowledge of how to take split-off aspects of one's own imaginative activity and incorporate them into a living investigation of how to live' (Ibid.). In this regard, the *practical* purpose of dream interpretation is not to arrive at the wish concealed by the dream's disguise. Instead, the activity of interpretation enables one to become aware of those parts of the self that are expressed in and through *personal* concerns; the same parts of the self that have been obscured by idealized models of subjectivity and social languages of self-consciousness.

In the following section, I examine the ways in which Freud's use of dream interpretation enables him to identify and intervene upon precisely those societal languages that actively produce and maintain such an idealized conception of the self. In doing so, I demonstrate that Freud provides his reader with examples of typical forms of

self-alienation, or self-deception, that respond to these social expectations by denying or disowning parts of the self, or forms of self-expression that do not cohere with such ideal, or even normative, models of subjectivity.

Speaking of Dreams: Authority and Experience

At the outset of Chapter Three, Freud signals the resumption of his rhetorical strategy: '[a]fter passing through a narrow defile', he writes, 'and suddenly arriving at the top of a narrow rise where the paths divide and the most fertile prospect opens out in all directions, one may pause for a moment and consider where to make for next' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 98). Recall that when laying out the imaginary walk upon which he planned to model his dream book this 'high ground' was to be the occasion for 'the prospect, and the question: "Which way do you want to go?" What then is the question? Which is to say: what is the prospect? Up until this point, Freud's rhetorical strategy relied upon the bond he had forged with the reader via his appeals to 'popular opinion', and to the 'dignity' of the dream and the dreamer, which 'the authorities on the subject' undermine by attributing dreams to a meaningless 'expression of brain-activity in a state of fragmentation' (Ibid., 97). However, as Freud unfolds his own dream theory, which purports to 'explain as many of its observed features as possible from a single standpoint', he faces his greatest challenge yet (Ibid., 62-3). As such, the question and the prospect refer to the choice that Freud's reader will have to make. Will they side with 'the

authorities' who denigrate the dream as nonsense? Will they side with Freud? Or will they rebuff his theory as a bad joke?

At this stage, Freud has not yet announced that *all* dreams are wish fulfillments, though he has resolved the interpretation of his specimen dream as one. In order to ease his readers into 'the clear light' of this 'sudden insight', Freud presents a series of rather innocuous dreams. In doing so, Freud is able to maintain his antiauthoritarian position alongside popular opinion by illustrating that the authorities were wrong to designate dreams as meaningless. In order to evidence the meaningfulness of dreams, a string of children's dreams are presented—each one manifestly representing the fulfillment of a wish following the prohibition of the wished-for object during the preceding day. Freud then relates an anecdote in which his daughter³⁴ describes a rather strange dream involving 'a handful of big chocolate bars' and the adoption of a neighbor boy named Emil by the Freud family (Ibid., 103). Ultimately, the dream's content, and the fact that its interpretation reveals the wish it fulfills, are less important than the way in which Freud frames the scene in which his daughter's report of the dream was received by her brothers, who 'declared, *just like our authorities on the subject*', writes Freud, "This dream is nonsense" (Ibid., my italics). The remarks with which Freud closes this brief chapter on the wish-fulfilling function of dreams draw our attention to the role of 'linguistic usage' relative to our dreams.

Proverbial wisdom often speaks scornfully enough of dreams, it is true—it seems to me to admit that science is right when it judges: *Träume sind Schäume* [dreams are froth]—but in linguistic usage the dream is nevertheless the sweet fulfiller of

³⁴ Based on the context provided by Freud it would appear that the dreamer was his eldest daughter Mathilde who was then roughly eight.

wishes. 'I wouldn't have imagined it in my wildest dreams,' we cry in delight when we find our expectations surpassed in reality (Ibid., 105).

The societal languages, to which I have previously referred, emerge explicitly here in Freud's own writing as 'proverbial wisdom' (*Die Sprachweisheit*, literally 'language-wisdom') and 'linguistic usage'. Observe the two ways in which *these* societal languages are operating here: on one hand, language bares out the judgment of the authorities who, like Freud's sons, *say* that dreams are 'nonsense'; on the other hand, language also confers the status of wish fulfillment upon the dream (Freud, 1999 [1900], 105; 1900a, 138).

These two forms of 'linguistic usage' appear to be entirely incompatible with one another, and yet they both manifest in the 'proverbial wisdom' of language. In putting things this way, Freud recalls the 'dream problem': suddenly the apparent divisions between 'popular opinion', which exercises 'its right to inconsistency', and 'the authorities' who malign dreams as meaningless in order to maintain the consistency of their singular 'theoretical standpoint', emerge as two sides of the same coin. They coalesce in a discourse that shields the self from the potentially transgressive, irrational or else disintegrative significance of dream-experience, which, in this regard, serves as an exemplary analogy for the way in which the experience of the self is mediated by these languages. Significantly, the turns of phrase used by Freud in his appeals to 'popular opinion' or 'the people's consciousness' (*den Abnungen des Volkes, Volksbewußtseins, populären Empfindung, Laienmeinung*) all carry nationalistic and populist undertones, while the 'pronouncements of authority' that denigrate the dream have clearly been linked with a 'medical' or scientific standpoint. Viewing things this way recalls the 'double movement' (discussed Chapter 2) in which the true knowledge of the self, with which the

sciences are concerned, is reciprocated and buttressed by the concerns of society, i.e. to ground itself upon the unitary, rational and transparent individual. Freud relocates the same tension, which envelops and regulates self-consciousness, in the *language* of 'the self'.

In doing so, Freud redefines dream-experience in terms of the apparently external antagonism between social and scientific languages that hypocritically define dreams, alternately, as the 'sweet fulfillers of wishes', or, 'nonsense'. It is upon the basis of this inconsistency that Freud will formulate the function of his metapsychological 'censor', thereby recasting this external antagonism as an internal one. In other words, the 'inconsistency' with which one regards their dreams emerges as a mere kowtowing to censorship. If the dream is suitably innocuous (by the standards of the societal language that accepts dreams as the 'sweet fulfiller of wishes') one may admit to its meaningfulness. If, however, the censor is caught by surprise and allows potentially disturbing images or ideas to manifest in one's dream-consciousness, one can appeal to 'the authorities' and say 'this dream is nonsense.' Suddenly, the 'prospect' and 'the question' become clear. Freud is prompting his reader with a kind of Platonic ultimatum: would you prefer to stay here in the cave of pleasant untruths? Or would you prefer to *stir up the underworld*, disturbing and unpleasant as the results may be? "Which way do you want to go?" The question and the prospect, then, represent what might be termed the 'ethical moment' of Freud's dream book. It is ethical precisely because the reader is presented with a choice; they are informed about the options open to them, and therefore, they occupy a position of responsibility relative to the path that they choose going forward.

With the announcement that *all dreams are wish fulfillments*, which marks the outset of Chapter Four, Freud places himself in a position of authority. Like the authorities that populate his ‘dark wood’, he also claims to possess knowledge of *all dreams*. In order to mitigate the negative effects such a move might entail relative to the bond he has formed between himself and his reader, Freud deploys irony, effacing himself with a quip that frames his own theory as ‘just another one of those unfounded generalizations with which you have been pleased to draw attention to yourself of late’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 106). Following this remark, Freud makes two sacrifices: the first is rhetorical, the second personal. Freud references von Hartmann in addition to a quantitative study of dreams, both of which appear to invalidate his claim that all dreams are the ‘sweet fulfiller of wishes’. In doing so, Freud appeases the reader and popular opinion’s right to inconsistency, i.e. some dreams might indeed represent wishes, but certainly not all dreams! It is at this point that Freud will make what is perhaps the most fundamental distinction in his dream book—one that pervades all of psychoanalytic theory: ‘our theory’, writes Freud, ‘does not rest on a consideration of the manifest content of the dream, but refers to the thought-content which the work of interpretation enables us to recognize behind the dream’ (Ibid., 107).

The distinction between manifest and latent dream content occasions yet another question, one that alters the trajectory of the question posed in response to the ‘dream problem’ regarding ‘soul-alienation’: ‘Where does this dream distortion come from?’ (Ibid.). In order to answer this question, Freud will provide a second dream of his own. This time, however, Freud does not request that his reader make his interests his own, precisely because, by interpreting his dream, he intends to make a personal sacrifice; in

doing so he will show that even those dreams of which we would prefer not to claim ownership are in fact part of us, albeit a part to which we would prefer not to own up. Demonstrating as much, however, shall 'require a number of indiscretions, but a thorough clarification of the problem will,' Freud assures his reader as much as himself, 'compensate for this personal sacrifice' (Ibid., 108). What Freud represents as a 'personal sacrifice' is, ironically, only a sacrifice of Freud's persona as a humble yet diligent doctor and an amiable friend and colleague. It is by publicly sacrificing this socially acceptable, and even venerable, persona that Freud will expose the duplicity of the self in full view of his reader; by subjecting himself to his own interpretive technique, Freud will peel away 'the motley scraps of folly [that] cover the open sores of mankind and of the tale's hero' (Freud, 1990 [1874], 49).

In the wake of this preamble, which one might expect to preface a particularly lurid and scandalous dream, Freud presents the following dream, which consists of two contiguous images:

- I. *My friend R. is my uncle.—I feel great affection for him.*
- II. *I see his face before me, rather altered. It is as though elongated; a yellow beard framing it is emphasized with particular clarity* (Ibid., 109).

Certainly this dream is strange, but one can hardly see how it might be perceived as in any way denigrating Freud's character. In point of fact, it would appear that this is precisely why Freud chose to place this dream here. The reader, who is expecting something scandalous from the dream is now, for the sake of their own curiosity, more invested in the interpretation of the dream than its manifest content, which fails to deliver on the titillating revelation that they were expecting.

Ultimately, Freud will interpret this dream relative to his secret ambition, and his concern that he, like other Jewish friends and colleagues, will be denied professional advancement and recognition due to ‘considerations of religion’ (Ibid., 108). Freud interrogates the dream images as if they were ‘a composite photograph by Galton,’ and in doing so finds that two of his Jewish friends, who had been denied professional advancement due to discrimination, had been conflated in the dream with the person of his uncle. Doing so has the effect of pronouncing these men, like Freud’s uncle, as ‘a criminal’ and an ‘idiot’ (Ibid., 110). In this way Freud’s path to professional advancement is no longer barred by his Jewishness, because the dream represents his friends’ failures as the result of their personal shortcomings, rather than their religion.

What is most remarkable about Freud’s narration of this dream is, however, not the pathological ambition that underlies its strange composite images. Instead, it is the way in which Freud portrays his own experience of, and response to, the dream upon waking. In fact, one might view this episode as a synecdoche for the whole rhetorical performance Freud has painstakingly enmeshed within his literature review, his exposition of self-observation and interpretive techniques, and the ‘cavernous defile’ that is his specimen dream. Indicatively, Freud includes the waking experience in which he reflects upon his dream as part of its interpretation. Freud writes:

When the dream occurred to me in the course of the morning, I laughed aloud and said: ‘*The dream is nonsense.*’ I could not get rid of it, however; it pursued me all day, until in the evening I finally reproached myself with the words: ‘If one of your patients had nothing to contribute to the interpretation of a dream but “it is nonsense”, you would reprimand him and assume that the dream conceals an unpleasant history which he wants to spare himself the pain of acknowledging. *Deal with yourself in the same way:* your view that the dream is nonsense signifies only an *inner resistance* to interpreting it. Don’t be deterred’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 109, my italics).

Authority is implicated, and appears to be operating, on a number of different levels in this scene. First, we can observe the familiar voice of ‘the authorities’ that, as if by the powers of ventriloquism, issues forth from Freud’s mouth: ‘The dream is nonsense!’ In this regard, Freud, like other modern dreamers, is subject to the *pronouncements* of authority, which result in the tendency to disown one’s dreams, or indeed other parts of oneself, so as to conform to certain typical-ideal models of self and the kinds of experience endorsed thereby; in this case, that dreams must be either ‘positively pleasant’ or else *nonsense*. As such, this verbal act of disownment receives its power from one’s identification with ‘the authorities’ that endorse the view it conveys.

Second, authority is implicated on an ‘inner’ level, as ‘resistance’ which complements and colludes with the first instantiation of authority that manifests itself in language. The ‘censor’, or ‘critical faculty’, acts as an ‘inner’ authority, which regulates the entrance of ideas or images into consciousness, as well as maintaining an inner influence that steers one away from certain trains of thought that might lead back to them. Importantly, the censor does not simply decide what does and does not enter into consciousness—i.e. ‘restrictions and omissions’—but it is also ‘responsible for interpolations and additions’ (Freud, 1999 [1900], 319). In this regard, one might recall the games of authority played by Charcot, who had sought to undo the harmful effects of ‘involuntary untruths’ by isolating his patients from those primary figures of authority (the parents) in whom such untruths originate.

The problem of authority (and the influence it wields) as articulated by Freud is far more complex, precisely because its mechanism of influence cannot be removed or

thwarted via physical isolation; and secondly, because the inner authority exercised by the censor is *both* restrictive, insofar as it forces one to renounce parts of the self, and productive, insofar as it makes ‘additions’ and interpolates the self in order to cohere with the societal languages of self-consciousness. Indeed, if one takes the time to trace the permutation derivable from these two forms of authority, which are restrictive and productive, external and internal—it would appear that one’s ensnarement is total and inescapable; aberrant forms of self-experience are either transformed by the censor or, in case of the censor’s failure, they are verbally disowned. Indeed, authority, both inner and outer, and societal languages of self-consciousness seem to mutually support one another in precisely this way.

Finally, there is a third form of authority operating in this scene. Recall that Freud’s self-intervention was premised upon an appeal to *himself as an authority*. By treating himself as an ‘other’, just as he had done in the suspended narration of his specimen dream, Freud is able to act as his own doctor, *a doctor unto himself*. On this view, Freud appeals to authority at a local level, one that is not based on what *the* authorities say, or else upon an external measure, but instead, on what he knows from *his personal experience*. Freud’s paradoxical status as authority and antiauthority, then, is grounded in personal experience, precisely because it is by becoming concerned with personal experience that Freud becomes aware of the inconsistency, or hypocrisy, of authority. Such is not merely a return to something like *learning from experience*, where experience is understood to provide a stable, unitary and continuous conception of oneself. As we have seen, modern experience, especially self-experience, is fundamentally compromised by the various technical mediations that frame it in particular ways, or else

reduce it to information that can be categorized into certain ‘forms’ of experience, and subsequently digested and stored away in the appropriate place, or else jettisoned as ‘froth’ or ‘excrement’. As Freud claimed in a letter to Fliess: ‘people follow authority [...] and that can be acquired only by doing something that is within their comprehension’ (Freud, 1985 [1901], 435). Alternately, Freud provides a series of counter-techniques, which enable one to elicit and amplify experience in such a way that its contradictory and compromised status is made apparent. Recognizing experience in this way, then, is both the means by which Freud sets out to undermine traditional authority, and to ground his own.

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What I have attempted to lay out, in terms of Freud’s position relative to earlier practices and techniques of the self—by turning to the example of the dream and the techniques that Freud employs in order to reposition the subject relative to dream experience—is to show that the techniques developed and employed in *The Interpretation of Dreams* enable one to undertake an immanent critique of the self relative to authority and the languages that engender self-alienation. Doing so, I have argued, involves becoming attentive to oneself, becoming concerned with oneself, via certain techniques of uncritical self-observation that enable one to experience oneself as ‘other’ without at once losing sight of, or being captured by, the experience of alienation. Further, I have attempted to show that by not pre-empting the type of relation these parts should have over against one another by refusing to subject either the self, the soul, or the dream to any moralizing standard, the technology of the self developed in *The Interpretation of Dreams* is distinct

from those that seek to cultivate the self relative to an ideal or pre-established notion of what the self should be.

There is, however, a lingering issue relative to this line of argumentation; one that is clearly articulated by Adorno in *Minima Moralia* when he writes that ‘the fatality was rather that, in the teeth of bourgeois ideology, [Freud] tracked down conscious actions materialistically to their unconscious instinctual basis, but at the same time concurred with the bourgeois contempt of instinct which is itself a product of precisely the rationalizations that he dismantled’ (Adorno, 1974, 60). On one hand, Adorno’s comments are less applicable to Freud’s early writings, in which he was not yet preoccupied with questions related to phylogeny and the underlying primitive vestiges of subjectivity. Nonetheless, there is something in Adorno’s criticism that still requires further consideration; namely, is it the case that psychoanalysis rescues the subject from so-called ‘social pathology’ only to return them into the very society that engendered its symptoms? Is psychoanalysis, as Foucault would have it, merely a ‘normalizing technology’ that erases the discrepancies, the contradictions, the experiences of alienation that define the very forms of psychopathology to which it turns its attention most attentively? Certainly, later forms of psychoanalysis such as ego-psychology tend in this direction, to say nothing of more recent offshoots like cognitive behavioral therapy. However, there is a more nuanced answer to this question that is overlooked by the hyperbolic argumentation of Adorno, as well as Foucault; one that appreciates the possibility of reducing suffering without simply returning the individual to society as a normalized, and pacified, member thereof who is ready to occupy the subject position assigned to them. This alternate route involves the narrative and autobiographical aspect

of psychoanalysis that Freud himself performs throughout his dream book, and that remains central to his thought as evidenced by the literary quality of his case studies, as well as his comments in the late paper 'Constructions in Analysis' (1937), in which Freud continues to think through the therapeutic value of self-narration.

As early as *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud remarked that his case histories 'read like short stories', or, like 'the works of imaginative writers' (Freud, 1893, 160). Later, in the preface to his 'Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria', Freud's comments indicate a preoccupation with more than the mystery of hysteria or the peculiar form his narrations of it have taken. In this instance, one finds Freud reflecting upon the inability of his patient's to supply coherent self-narratives. He compares the patient's 'first account' with an 'unnavigable river whose stream is at one moment choked by masses of rock and at another divided and lost among shallows and sandbanks' (Freud, 1905 [1901], 16). In light of his experiences listening to the self-narrations of his patients Freud wonders 'how it is that the authorities can produce such smooth and precise histories in cases of hysteria', especially when their 'patients are incapable of giving such reports about themselves' (Ibid.). Of course, this speculative question is in fact an accusation; one that indicates, once again, Freud's acute awareness of the tension between self-authorship, and the extent to which it is thwarted by the authority that threatens to supervene upon it.

As Freud's comments on the technique of 'construction' make evident (Freud, 1937), the 'construction' derived from the analysis (as opposed to individual interpretations) endeavors to reintegrate, or reconstitute, the subject on a much more complex level, that is, to integrate the pre-social self (the 'archaic' structure that is maintained even as the conscious ego is increasingly subject to socialization) with 'the

self' produced by socialization/education. Just as the activity of dream interpretation, as I have argued, results in a process that brings one into contact with the infantile as it responds to the concerns of the present self, tracing one's personal history has the potential to provide more than mere justification or pacification by relinquishing one from perceived responsibility, or else binding together disassociated parts of the self or discontinuous fragments of experience. Instead, it enables one to become conscious of, and to recognize, the various forces that have worked upon and shaped oneself, and that continue to shape one's actions and identity, forces that are not merely good or bad, inner or outer, but dimensions of oneself that can, if cared for, be renegotiated and not merely *reacted* to. This does not necessarily mean that one must subsequently give oneself over to these forces (social or instinctual) for the sake of normalization or pacification. Instead it makes the once opaque mechanisms of social and instinctual power, that previously worked upon oneself in imperceptible ways, apparent and thereby affords one a new-found ability to critically evaluate one's actions—whether these conform with social norms from this point is, as Freud himself suggests, not the psychoanalyst's prerogative.

Dialectics of The Self

In the second Chapter of this thesis I referred to a particularly salient passage from Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*, in which Freud is 'credited' with creating 'the psychoanalytic situation where *by an inspired short-circuit, alienation becomes disalienating because, in the doctor, it becomes a subject* (Foucault, 1988 [1961], 278, my italics). In this

Chapter, I have pursued a reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a hybrid, or chimeric, text; one that is equally aligned with certain technical currents that stem from late 19th century medicine and science, as well as the autobiographical tradition that is defined, alternately, by its emphasis on the personal dimensions of subjectivity and the active comportment to self implicated in the act of self-writing. These intersect, I have argued, in the technically supported form of self-analysis that Freud both describes and performs in his dream book. Viewed from *this* perspective, the implications of Foucault's comment are significantly altered; precisely because the techniques developed in the dream book enable the reader to act as a doctor unto themselves.

What, then, might it mean that alienation becomes disalienating because *in oneself* it becomes a subject? It would seem to imply that the experience of alienation is altered when we become conscious of its effects, when we are able to identify those instances in which the self is complicit in its own alienation; when, paradoxically, the self must renounce a part of itself, in order to maintain its unity or its identity with itself. In this regard, the techniques Freud developed do not expose some radically new form of self-alienation. Instead, Freud carves out a space, in the overlooked territory of dreams, wherein he is able to elucidate the experience of self-alienation that had been both produced and obscured by the societal languages of self-consciousness, which emphasize and reinforce the coherence and unity of the self. As we have seen, the dream implicates one's present concerns and the wishful thinking that defines Freud's conception of infantile life. Dreams then, and the technique by which Freud suggests we may interpret them, reposition the self in the intersection between past and present, without at once

idealizing one or the other. In this regard, the dream serves as an exemplary form of experience that furnishes one with a dual-perspective upon selfhood.

Hannah Arendt points to the transformation of the self, from stranger to familiar, as the necessary condition of its entrance into the social and political domains in which authority becomes an active force:

The most significant symptom of the crisis [of authority], indicating its depth and seriousness, is that it has spread to such prepolitical areas as child-rearing and education, where authority in the widest sense has always been accepted as a natural necessity, obviously required as much by natural needs, the helplessness of the child, as by political necessity, the continuity of an established civilization which can be assured only if those who are newcomers by birth are guided through a pre-established world *into which they are born as strangers* (Arendt, 1961, 92, my italics).

If we follow Arendt's formulation, then it appears that by prepositioning, or indeed repositioning, the subject as *ein Fremder* (a stranger)—in regard to 'the self' that it takes itself to be—Freud initiates a process of critical self-reflection; one that involves attempting to understand which aspects of oneself have been disowned and, equally, which have been forced upon it. Freud articulates something very close to this in 'The Question of Lay Analysis' when referring to the point at which patients become aware of their own resistances and the secret or concealed reaches of themselves: 'it looks as though his own self were no longer the unity which he had always considered it to be, as though there were something else as well in him that could confront that self' (Freud, 1926, 188). The provision of techniques, by which to elicit this 'something else' that might confront one's self, then, is perhaps the most remarkable and distinct features of Freud's dream book.

I have argued that Freud problematizes the apparent unity of the self by both rhetorically positioning his reader and providing certain techniques that aid individuals in recognizing the *disunity* of self that is obscured by the societal languages in and through which 'the self' is articulated. The dream rebuke is exemplary in this regard. The self-reproach that is 'after all, it was only a dream' or 'this dream is nonsense' exemplifies a moment in which the subject reaffirms itself, precisely by conforming to the interdictions that constitute it as a knowable and recognizable subject: I assure myself that dreams are meaningless, and are not part of the self that I take myself to be. This is also the point at which the 'external' antagonism, between authority and the 'dim presentiment' that dreams are meaningful ('the dream problem'), emerge as an 'internal' antagonism. In light of which, the attempt to disown those aspects of oneself that are glimpsed in the dream via the rebuke exemplifies one's own compliance with the interdiction of the external authority, which engenders not a conscious renunciation but an automatic one—one which is *not recognizable as a renunciation* in the volitional sense of the term. At the same time, this moment of compliance via the rebuke also *marks the alienated portion of the self*—that aspect of myself that is not tolerable, that does not cohere with the ideal-typical subject position that one is expected to occupy.

Arendt's notion, that we enter into the social and the political as strangers, is of particular importance here; it reveals the extent to which the form of alienation operating within Freud's *Interpretation* is experienced as alien because the individual has been conditioned to experience it in this way. Recall the question that Freud derived from his 'dream problem': 'where does this soul-alienation come from?' The answer to this question is, put simply, soul-alienation comes from 'the soul' or 'the self' *as it is articulated*

in familiar and socially constituted languages that constitute the individual as a 'self' and in so doing, inculcate the limitations of self-experience in the individual. These languages shore up the self against the threat of disintegration, but equally and problematically, they also reduce the autonomy of the individual, which is subject to an imperious and unidentified 'censor' that inhibits their ability to self-author—that is, to develop a personal identity in their own terms and on the basis of their personal experience.

In this regard, 'the authorities' of Freud's 'dark wood' and the position he assigns them relative to the 'dream problem' serve a heuristic function. They exemplify the way in which the discourse of 'the self' is maintained and underwritten by an abstract and unseen authority (or 'censor'), which, by virtue of its invisibility, enforces those renunciations and interdictions that shape and delimit self-experience in order to support typical-ideal models of subjectivity. On another level, however, by disclosing and interpreting his personal dream-vignettes, Freud's techniques enable him to expose and concretize authority; thereby transforming it from an abstract unknown to a concrete and personally meaningful entity.

On this view, one might say that just as the preparatory techniques Freud develops allow one to regard oneself as an 'other', his interpretive techniques allow one to re-familiarize and renegotiate one's relation to authority, and by extension, one's self-relation as well. They allow one, that is, to identify the particular experiences, or subjections, that result in one's personal, as opposed to impersonal, relationship to authority.³⁵ In this regard, Freud shares with Foucault the understanding that self-

³⁵ The language with which Freud characterizes Dora's subjection to the will of Frau K. is indicative in this regard. Freud writes that 'from the point of view of [Dora's] supervalent thought

constitution results from an encounter with authority that is mediated by certain conditions and contingencies. At the same time, both reject any presumption that one might be liberated, absolutely, from authority. As such, it is by engaging *with* authority that one is able to renegotiate one's relation to it and thereby renegotiate one's own self-relation in the process of doing so.

Of course, Freud's own self-analysis bears out a personal confrontation with his father, a confrontation that Freud would later extend by formulating it as a typical rite of passage, a fated *first authority* that receives its priority from the primacy of this *first* subjection. Many commentators have already dealt with this dimension of *Interpretation* and the attendant issues that result from Freud's more rigid treatment of Oedipal dynamics in his later writings.³⁶ Here, however, my intent is to draw attention to the two levels at which authority is *technically* implicated in Freud's dream book, and to gesture to the broader implications of these two levels. On one hand, authority is implicated as an impersonal and abstract entity, which relates most immediately to the techniques Freud develops in order to allow one to become sensitive to, and to identify, typical forms of self-alienation. As we have already seen, self-alienation, or self-renunciation, is a form of compliance with authority, a submission that entitles one to certain freedoms within the parameters of a prescribed subject position. There is, however, a second level at which authority is implicated as a concrete entity, e.g. the authority of Freud's father, or indeed, the authority of the 'high official' that would stymie Freud's professional progress in the

[Frau K.] should have regarded her as the prime *author* of her misfortunes' (Freud, 1905 [1901], 62, my italics).

³⁶ See, for example, Rieff's 'The Authority of the Past' (186-220, 1959), in addition to Schorske's 'Freud—Politics and Patricide' (1980), ffytche's 'The first and sole authority' (2012, 260-273), and Luxon's 'Formative Relationships and the *Nacherziehung*' (2013, 53-64), among others.

dream of his uncle. These concrete and personal iterations of authority emerge from the interpretive techniques that Freud develops in his dream book, which restore personal experience by removing the obfuscations, disguises, and concealments that endeavor to maintain authority as an imperious and impersonal power external to oneself. As I have suggested, the technique of interpretation developed by Freud not only enables one to re-familiarize authority by identifying it with particular persons and experiences, it also enables one to reorient themselves relative to their personal concerns. In this sense, interpretation, and its extension in narrative self-construction, presents itself as a counter-balance to the alienating techniques that enable one to identify those parts of the self that have been disowned. By interpreting, one renegotiates the relation between the self and those alienated parts of itself, between the self and the power of authority that constitutes it, between past and present, and in doing so constructs a self-narrative that is not simply a fiction, or else a self-explanation. Instead, subjectivity emerges in the form of a story that one tells about oneself that responds to the heterogeneous concerns to which one is subject; concerns that are not merely societal, but personal as well. Finally, that all of these 'concerns' are triangulated through the vicissitudes of unconsciousness paradoxically grounds this activity of self-narration in its very unknowability. However, unlike the radical self-grounding that the unknown origins of the self were accorded in Wordsworth, Freud recasts this primary unconsciousness as a pervasive and ongoing threat to self-knowledge and self-accounting, one that emerges in an ethics of self-analysis that is, perhaps, without end. In it, the luxury of self-certainty is sacrificed in favor of an ethical precept that one must be concerned with the most personal dimensions of the self, precisely because the kind of self-certainty promised by ideal-typical models of

the self is bracketed by the very unconsciousness that undermines and challenges them. In this regard, self-knowledge becomes ineluctably tied to the concerns of the personal self, which enable one to identify those instances in which 'the self' has become something other than what one is.

Conclusion: Alternate Outcomes

The goal of this thesis has not been to revise or to rewrite the history of psychoanalysis that begins with Freud, in Vienna, sometime around 1900, and which traces the institutionalization of Freud's ideas in the 'psychoanalytic movement'. Instead, my intention has been to identify earlier points of reference and, in doing so, to place Freud's initial psychoanalytic writings, and the techniques developed therein, within a broader history of the self. More precisely, this history has been informed by, and framed in terms of, the work of Michel Foucault and Eli Zaretsky. In this sense, the historical material I have examined in this thesis has sought to challenge the blank spots, omissions, and assumptions operating in Foucault and Zaretsky's work; particularly Foucault's late work on 'technologies of the self' and in Zaretsky's claim that psychoanalysis ought to be considered the first great theory and practice of personal life. Much of this thesis has been dedicated to preparing the historical ground upon which I have challenged both Foucault and Zaretsky's claims, in addition to setting the scene for the reading of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* that I presented in Chapter 3. In these final pages, I want to reflect back upon the ground covered within this thesis, to present my conclusions and, finally, to suggest how these conclusions provide alternate avenues by which Freud's impact on the 20th century might be charted.

In Chapter 1, I examined a series of autobiographical models; each of which represented different concerns of the self. In Wordsworth, self-writing was primarily a means by which to achieve creative autonomy in and through a poetics of self-invention.

Alternately, J.S. Mill set out to justify his intellectual independence, and to proffer an explanation of his development by drawing on associationism and his proposed science of ethology. De Quincey's *Confessions* provided an example in which these two concerns, self-explicability and creative autonomy, met and ultimately resulted in an imperfect synthesis. In working through these autobiographical 'models' I concluded that while each of them provided their author with certain freedoms in regard to the ways in which the self entered into representation, they did little to provide concrete practices that might be followed by their readers. As such, each of them helped to bring the personal dimension of selfhood to prominence; however, they did not provide the means by which such a personal, and indeed desirable, form of subjectivity might be obtained. The cultivation of the personal self remained an elusive process fraught with uncertainty—one that, it would seem, could only be traversed by 'poets' and 'geniuses'. At the close of Chapter 1, I discussed *Sartor Resartus*, in which Carlyle expressed his concern that the autobiographical preoccupation with the self was a distraction from the present, from work, from the social fabric that must be retailored when it becomes worn out.

Indeed, Carlyle's *Sartor* and, to an even greater extent, his later anti-self-consciousness polemic 'Characteristics' (1831), evidence an increasing wariness regarding the culture of the personal self: 'the healthy know not their health, but only the sick' wrote Carlyle, before extending the import of this aphorism to 'the moral, intellectual, political, [and] poetical' spheres of life, all of which were plagued by the malignancy that is the overvaluation of, and preoccupation with, the self (Carlyle, 1950 [1831], 186). '[M]an is actually Here', proclaimed Carlyle, 'not to ask questions, but *to do work*' (Ibid.,

209). Carlyle held that the self ought not be concerned with itself; such was both the cause and the result of melancholy, nostalgia and neuroses.

Indeed, as Francis Galton's pupil Karl Pearson asserted, biographical self-consciousness ought to be the province of the scientist armed with the 'power of calm self-introspection', as the effects of such pursuits for others 'might well be disastrous for the individual' (Pearson, 1924, 359). In Chapter 2, I tracked two currents in mid to late 19th century science and medicine. First, I argued that in Charcot's treatment of hysteria the role of the doctor's authority played an increasingly significant role in bestowing superior knowledge upon the subject, and that this medical authority effectively replaced the *locus classicus* of authority in the family. Secondly, I traced the increasingly *technical* means by which knowledge of the self was pursued not by poets and philosophers, but by neurologists, psychologists and statisticians. While each of the figures examined in this respect were concerned with different dimensions of subjectivity, they could all agree on one thing: true knowledge of the self would now be the preserve of science and would, henceforth, be secured by certain techniques and technologies that promised to transform the self into an object suitable for natural-scientific study.

Ultimately, I argued that the effect of this collective drive to elicit knowledge from the self using technology resulted in two developments. On one hand, personal experience was devalued in favor of those forms of 'experience', and of selfhood, that could be objectively measured. In this regard, the self was increasingly defined in terms more immediately related to the technical means by which true knowledge of it could be obtained. Moreover, the self became an increasingly standardized unit, one that could be measured, exchanged and valued; by transforming the self in this way it could

legitimately enter into large-scale social engineering projects such as those undertaken by Francis Galton and Charles Spearman, or indeed the industrial ends towards which James Cattell and Hugo Münsterberg sought to adapt experimental psychology in conjunction with Taylorism. On the other hand, I argued that this ‘technical revolution’ also impacted the function of authority relative to the self. If Charcot had sought to replace the traditional locus of authority in the family with his own superior knowledge, this later development at the outset of the 20th century resulted in the depersonalization and decentralization of authority as its function became ever more diffuse and technocratic.

Between 1899 and 1905 Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901) and *Jokes and their Relation to The Unconscious* (1905); each of these works shared certain initial insights and a common pursuit: exposing the interplay between inner myths and societal languages of the self to concrete experience. My own reading of *Interpretation* emphasized the extent to which it presents an idiosyncratic and deeply personal depiction of its author while, at the same time, providing and making use of certain techniques that have much in common with those developed within late 19th century medicine and psychology. In doing so, Freud’s dream book emerged as a chimeric text—part autobiography, part scientific treatise and part technical manual. Ernest Jones hailed the book and the self-analysis upon which it was based as a unique and heroic effort. I have argued that what makes this book, and the self-analysis it represents, most remarkable is the way in which the personal dimensions of self-experience are elicited in it, not by poetry, or by a stroke of genius, but by certain psychological and material techniques. Significantly, these techniques did not require one

to be a highly trained technician or a skilled experimental psychologist, but they could be employed by anyone who wished to accept Freud's challenge to authority and to proverbial wisdom, and in doing so to begin to explore subjectivity on a more personal and complex level. This means of navigating subjectivity was at odds with the traditional avenues by which the individual might be permitted 'to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves' (Foucault, 1900, 18). In this regard, the technology of the self imparted by Freud in his dream book provided a means by which individuals could begin to rethink their identities with a degree of autonomy that was lacking in those other models of subjectivity available to them. *The Interpretation of Dreams* supplied its readers with the tools with which they could renegotiate their relation to those figures of authority, those experiences of subjection, and those languages of self-consciousness, that threaten to obscure the very forms of self-alienation they engendered. Such, I have argued, is the radical potential that my own account has revealed in Freud's early psychoanalytic writings.

In later years, it is true, Freud set out to justify psychoanalysis sociologically, and in doing so, to justify psychoanalysis *to* society, by universalizing and reifying its core theoretical precepts by drawing on anthropology, colonial discourse, and discourses of social control.³⁷ These discourses, as Adorno observed, tended to view the primitive and

³⁷ For example, the universality of the Oedipus complex was increasingly emphasized in Freud's later writings, especially following the publication of 'Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-year-old Boy' in 1909; perhaps most indicatively, later editions of the dream book (especially those published after 1914) entirely effaced the initial insight that dreams are meaningful only in relation to their dreamer. In place of this fundamental interpretive determinant a series of baggy sections on the 'symbolic' interpretation of 'typical' dreams were added in subsequent editions.

volatile dimensions of the self as something that must be controlled, or else underscored the archaic sexual proclivities and rituals upon which the process of civilization must be imposed.³⁸ The complicity of psychoanalysis with these discursive currents can be seen as one circumstantial outcome of Freud's initial insights, but, to be sure, it is not the only one. There are numerous examples of alternate uptakes of Freud's initial insights regarding the self, as well as the techniques he developed in his early works.

Indeed, that Freud's initial insights—and the ethic of self-reflection implicated by the technical dimensions of his dream book—*still* retain currency within contemporary psychoanalytic thought is evidenced by, for example, the writings of Christopher Bollas. In *Being a Character* (1992) Bollas sets out to define an 'idiom of self-expression' that he describes as a 'personal means not only of representing unconscious phantasies but of conjuring dense psychic textures that constitute a form of thinking by experiencing' (Bollas, 1992, 30). The practice of developing this personal idiom, and its dense psychic textures, may be viewed as a return to Freud's initial insights, which are developed, in Bollas' own idiom, by renegotiating the relation between the various parts of oneself in what he terms 'the dialectics of self-experiencing': '*I use the object [...] I am played by the object [...] I am lost in self-experiencing [...] I observe the self as an object*' (Ibid., 31). Further, Bollas suggests the variability of such 'self-experience' with reference to the particularity of the individual, their predilections, habits, personal quirks etc. 'We can

³⁸ When Freud concluded his analysis of Daniel Paul Schreber's *Memoires*, for example, he wrote: 'In dreams and in neuroses', so our thesis has run, 'we come once more upon the *child* and the peculiarities which characterize his modes of thought and his emotional life.' 'And we come upon the *savage* too,' we may now add, 'upon the *primitive* man, as he stands revealed to us in the light of the researches of archaeology and ethnology' (Freud, 1911, 82).

learn much about a person's self experiencing' writes Bollas, 'by observing his selection of objects, not only because object choice is lexical and therefore features in the speech of character syntax, but also because it may suggest a variation in the intensity of psychic experience that each person chooses' (Ibid., 32). Perhaps most significantly, Bollas restores the fundamental significance of the dream as a microcosm of the self, and our experience of it, that I have attempted to draw out in my own reading of Freud's dream book. In Bollas, the dream becomes 'a model of the articulation of a person's character, and in doing so, suggests a different fate—or at least a more complex fate—for the human subject than is suggested by the ego-psychological ideal of a progressive adaptation to reality' (Ibid., 50).

There are, of course, more immediate examples of the alternate outcomes of Freud's early writings. One might, for example, look to the personal and intellectual uptake of Freud outside the psychoanalytic movement as John Forrester and Laura Cameron have done. Their research has drawn attention to figures like Arthur Tansley and W.H.R. Rivers, both of whom took up *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a tool and found that it enabled them to critically rethink their own self-relation, against the backdrop of sexual mores, their social position and their professional trajectories. Rivers, for example, claimed that he could make 'no great progress in dream-analysis or in the clinical utilization of dreams until I had a dream myself which went far to convince me of the truth of the main lines of the Freudian position' (Forrester and Cameron, 2017, 64). One finds yet another circumstantial outcome of Freud's dream book in the recently published *Dreams of Santiago Ramon y Cajal* (2017). Cajal began documenting and interpreting his dreams with the express aim of disproving Freud; though it would seem

there was little hope of this given his rather naïve reading of Freud's *Interpretation*, which entirely neglects the importance of the manifest and latent content of dreams.

Nonetheless, Cajal's dream diary evidences that in his attempts to refute Freud's theory he began to rethink the relation between certain parts of his own inner life:

that which we take for a mirror, consciousness, only shows us the product of the [----] selection thought to be the object but what is thought to be the object is not what we think, but another part of our images about which one thinks. The self is an energy, an invisible pull like a god...' (Cajal, 2017, 94).

One can begin to glimpse in these scattered reflections upon his own dream-life—recorded with the express purpose of disproving Freud—that Cajal had started to think about himself in a new way in the process of testing out, and working through, the dream problem that Freud intended to tempt his readers with.

Additionally, there are still other, more explicit examples of the uptake of Freud's dream book outside the clinical domain. One could view the Surrealist movement as a particularly compelling outcome of this trajectory. From the outset, the production of Surrealist works relied on the use of certain techniques that allowed one to disturb the 'normal', or indeed the 'real', as it was given to consciousness, or reflected in representation. In 1920 Philippe Soupault, and André Breton wrote *The Magnetic Fields* (one of the first Surrealist literary experiments) using what Breton described as Freud's technique of speaking 'as rapidly as possible without any intervention on the part of the critical faculties' (Breton, 1972, 23). Breton's later semi-autobiographical *Nadja* (1928) reframes Freud's insistence that 'what has claimed our attention by day also governs the thoughts of our dream' (Freud, 1999 [1900], 133) by attempting to collapse the distinction between dreaming and waking life, particularly as these two fields of

experience impinge upon his self-representation. Breton writes that ‘it will not immediately be supposed that I am merely ready for psychoanalysis, a method I respect and whose present aims I consider nothing less than the expulsion of man from himself’ (Breton, 1999 [1928], 24)—psychoanalysis may have earned Breton’s respect, but it had not gone far enough: ‘we already do this method too much honor’, Breton adjudicates, ‘by conceding that it exhausts the problem of dreams or that it does not simply occasion further inhibitions by its very interpretation of inhibitions. Which leads me,’ he concludes, ‘to my own experience, to what is for me, concerning myself, a virtually continuous subject of meditation and reverie’ (Ibid.). Psychoanalysis may not have satisfied Breton entirely, but it seems to have spurred him to action, and led him to become concerned with his ‘own experience’.

In his remarkable essay ‘Mirrors’ the physician and surrealist Pierre Mabilie attributes to Freud the recognition that ‘the “self” dominates with its spontaneity [when] the representative system is not very well developed, but sometimes, on the contrary, the external social image commands the stage’, and concludes that ‘Civilization, which tends to limit spontaneity, undoubtedly augments the value of the “self” ’ (Mabilie, 2015 [1938], 53). In the early 1940s, the logician and analytical philosopher of language Ludwig Wittgenstein discussed Freud at length with Rush Rhees—another philosopher of language at Cambridge. The conclusion of these talks was to recognize that Freud had demonstrated that what was needed was ‘a very strong and keen and persistent criticism in order to recognise and see through the mythology that is offered or imposed on one’ (1966 [1938], 52). It is difficult to imagine two more diametrically opposed figures in 20th

century thought: the logician who founded a new branch of philosophy with the intention of demystifying the relation between the word and the world, and a group of avant-garde artists working to subvert the common sense of language, which held imagination *apart* from reality. Both, it would seem, found powerful tools in Freud, tools that both elicit the irrational and sublime, and, equally, tools that allow one to distinguish between pleasant fictions and unpleasant truths.

As Matt ffytche has already argued, the ‘dialogue [between Freud and Modernism] was mediated by yet other voices, falling outside the sphere of psychoanalysis, and yet which, from the point of view of the time, may have appeared thoroughly entangled with it’ (ffytche, 2010, 7). The Bloomsbury group provides various points of reference in terms of the alternate directions in which particular individuals began to rethink themselves on the basis of Freud’s ideas. Leonard Woolf’s diaries, as well as his more explicit engagements with Freud’s writings, evidence the extent to which Freud was not merely the arbiter of a new bourgeois therapy designed to normalize, but of a mode of thinking about the self that spoke to those who ‘felt the fascination of speculating upon the mysteries of the memories of childhood’ (L.Woolf, 1993, 190).

Indeed, Virginia Woolf’s letters evidence that her engagement with Freud had gone beyond the level of intellectual commentary, while equally maintaining a function distinct from its clinical uptake; in a letter, she reports that Leonard had interpreted her dream using ‘the Freud system’ and ‘analysed it down to Clytemnestra and the watch fires’ (Woolf, 1976, 141). Freud’s ideas (whether taken on their own or attributed to the broader framework of clinical psychoanalysis) are not only evident in the playful use of

dream interpretation by the Woolfs, but also in the more serious reflection Virginia Woolf supplied after completing *To The Lighthouse* (1927). Woolf frames the process of writing the novel as a quasi-exorcism of her mother's ghost from her consciousness; to be sure, however, she also situates the novel, more conceptually, as an attempt to make up for those other 'Lives' that have only 'superficially analysed' the way in which the 'influence [...] of other groups impinging upon ourselves; public opinion; what other people say and think; all those magnets which attract us this way to be like that, or repel us the other and make us different from that' (Woolf, 1985,80). In the end, Woolf reflects on her own attempt to undertake precisely this kind of 'analysis', writing: 'I suppose I did for myself what psycho-analysts do for their patients. I expressed some very long felt and deeply felt emotion', and thereby 'laid it to rest' (Ibid., 81). In this respect, it would seem that something like the technology I have attempted to outline here aided Woolf in surmounting precisely that which she took to be the fundamental limitation, and deflated outcome, of so many other life-writings which, as she put it, '*leave out the person to whom things happened*' (Ibid., 65).

As these points of reference make clear, the history of psychoanalysis for which I have sought to provide a foundation in this thesis is an elusive one. The examples I have given above come mostly from literature, and in rarer cases from extant notes, diaries, and other ephemera that have by chance been preserved. Perhaps the most confounding issue one faces, in attempting to raise the various outcomes of Freud's self-analytic techniques to historical consciousness, is that their primary function—to enable one to develop a personal idiom of 'the self'—means that they are difficult to locate discursively. Put

differently, the very trace that ‘the self’ leaves historically is translated in psychoanalytic theory into a metapsychology of certain psychic agencies, dynamics and topographies. But in each case, in each self-analysis that we might seek out, these terms, as well as those provided by the broader history of the self are renegotiated on a personal and idiosyncratic level, thereby erasing the discursive trace that might relate these uses of Freud’s techniques to the broader history of the self that I have attempted to draw together in this thesis.

‘In search of lost self-analyses’: such would be an apt title and description of a work that attempts to trace the use of Freud’s initial insights. Where to find them, is, of course, the question. Certainly the most obvious and tempting avenue in this regard is the psychoanalytic case study. However, the *clinical* narration of the analyst—which often seeks to explain—threatens to eclipse the personal voice of the patient undergoing analysis, and in doing so it not only overtakes the patient’s speech, but also the tensions that emerge from the relation between this speech and the societal language it is working to define itself against. Alternately, psychoanalysts themselves might provide the most fruitful avenue by which to trace out this history; not in their official capacity as practitioners of psychoanalysis, but as ‘curious readers’ who accepted Freud’s challenge to the wisdom of language, popular opinion, and authority, by endeavoring, like Freud, ‘to stir up the underworld’. In this regard, a history of psychoanalysts as individual persons, rather than as members of a movement, may yet provide the most promising route forward.

Such a history will, of course, have to be written piecemeal—such is the crux of what I have been arguing in this thesis, and indeed what has driven its own method,

which takes the particular and the nominal, rather than attempting to view broader intellectual ‘movements’. To recognize instantiations of Freud’s technology of the self, its uptake and its practice, one must attend not to trends, currents, or movements, but the particularity of the individual who makes use of these techniques, and the particular concerns they seek to address by making use of them. For only in doing so can one recognize the extent to which they stand radically at odds with the very tradition of ‘the self’ from which they emerged.

This is both the problem, and the radical promise of Freud’s initial insights, which become most pronounced in their tendency to elide the historian’s consciousness. It is indicative to point out that Foucault was bound by the same problem in endeavoring to write a history of subjectivity by tracing such technologies of the self; a history which, in the end, amounts to a catalogue of techniques for self-examination and self-observation, and the institutions to which they belong (Stoic, Socratic, Christian etc.), but speaks sparingly, if at all, about what the people were like who made use of these techniques, or else how using them altered these people. The same can be said of Zaretsky’s more recent efforts to write a history of psychoanalysis as the great modern practice of the self, which, in the end, traces out the institutional, cultural, and sociological currents into which psychoanalysis was absorbed.

The ‘books’ as they have been called (‘The Dream Book’, ‘The Joke Book’ and ‘The Mistakes Book’) constitute a technology of the self. There can be no doubt about this. Each of them circumambulates the space that surrounds the self, and in doing so, works to distinguish between it and the social sheath that contains, constrains, and defines actions, speech and dreams. But it is only in *The Interpretation of Dreams* that we

are given such an intimate view of Freud, his concerns, his ambitions, his hopes and his dreams. This text defines the standard that the historian seeks out, mostly in vain, when attempting to draw out this history.

Still, it is evident that the uptake of Freud's writings, and the techniques they conveyed, were not met with either complete acceptance or total disavowal. Ultimately, the point is that the way Freud's technology of the self is deployed shifts according to sociological tendencies. These tendencies triangulate the societal languages that confer recognition upon 'the self' against the personal experience of the individual, and the underlying unconsciousness in which the two—'self' and 'experience'—are entwined. For this reason, Freud's techniques do not *just* become the normative bourgeois therapy that some have accused it of being, but retain their dynamism and critical power so long as this tension—between the social and the personal, the existential and the epistemic, the familiar and the alien, the conscious and the unconscious—is maintained. In this regard, any attempt to reduce Freud's writings, and the tradition to which they belong, to either literature or science seems, to me at least, to obscure its historical significance. Perhaps Zaretsky is right to claim that the 'ethic of self-reflection' that initially marked Freud's impact in the first half of the 20th century—which Zaretsky attributes to Freud's ability to 'integrate scientific and humanistic currents'—began to dissipate as psychoanalysis was divided into a 'quasi-medical' therapy and a set of 'hermeneutic' practices for the study of culture (Zaretsky, 2005, 333-4).

At the same time, Zaretsky's lamentation of the now dissipated tension that, as he argues, marked psychoanalysis as 'the first great theory and practice of personal life', and the 'ethic of self-reflection' it engendered, is predicated upon viewing it purely in terms of

its institutional iterations, whether clinical or academic. Throughout this thesis, I have argued that the full historical significance of Freud's initial insights—particularly as they are expressed in *The Interpretation of Dreams*—will remain obscured so long as historians continue to trace out the implications of Freud's writing *within* the 'psychoanalytic movement'. Alternately, elucidating the ways in which Freud's writings enabled certain individuals to renegotiate their self-relation independent of the contexts provided by the more familiar avenues of the psychoanalytic movement promises to broaden and redefine the ways in which we think about Freud's legacy, and indeed the extent to which his writings might be fruitfully studied in relation to both earlier and subsequent traditions that take the self, its management, its cultivation and its alteration as their primary end.

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