

ISSN 1994-1250

# JIDL

**Journal of Interactive Drama & Literature**

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of  
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama  
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

**Volume Ten, Issue Two  
May 2017**

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### **Editorial Policy**

The Journal of Interactive Drama and Literature is an international journal dedicated to the publication of critical discussion and scenarios related to Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games and Literature and welcomes contributions in all areas of the study, design, and creation of stand-alone scenario-based LARPS as well as Scenario-Based Learning related to interactive dramas of this type. Review articles of books related to interactive drama and informal book announcements are also welcome. Critical pieces on scenarios or convention events are welcome. Stand-alone scenarios are encouraged for submission with designer notes and running commentary. Submissions are peer-reviewed. Contributions may be submitted from all countries and are accepted all year round. The language of publication is English. There are no restrictions on regular submission; however, manuscripts simultaneously submitted to other publications cannot be accepted without express notice and permissions for simultaneous publication. Submissions by regular mail and electronic mail are both accepted.

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# **CODIFICATION AND SIGNIFICATION IN WOLE SOYINKA'S DEATH AND THE KING'S HORSEMAN**

Besuyi Mekusi

## **INTRODUCTION**

Amidst the several definitions given by scholars to literature, the one shared by some captured by Joan Rockwell (1974:20) to the effect that “literature in some way reflects society,” suffices a description to work with. The relevance of literature in the society gave rise to various discussions until the act of literary criticism initiated tenets for the evaluation, description and interpretation to determine what literature is, what it does, and what it is worth. Gerard Genette holds that most obvious functions of critical activity involves judging and appreciating recent works in an attempt to help the public make up its mind. As Plato is seen as the one who started Western critical tradition, George Watson (1962:10) claims that Dryden was the first to

use the word ‘criticism’ in print, mostly, in formal discussion of literature.

S.H. Steinberg (1973:139), describes literary criticism as “the art of judging literature, that is, of deciding how far and for what reasons a work of literature may be regarded as good or bad. The essential duty of a literary critic is valuation.” As representative as the preceding definition of literary criticism is for others, F.W. Bateson (1953:12) has however submitted that the role of a literary critic requires him to be responsible, transcending the avoidance of “literary mendacity,” but “as the accredited reporter on the contemporary literary scene he is under an unspoken obligation not to mislead his readers.” At this point, we should be reminded of the bifurcation that exists in criticism when a group examines literature as an independent entity as against other schools which evaluate literature based on extraneous factors, severing literature from its historical and biographical contexts.

Sequel to the work of the Russian formalist critics of the 1920s and the linguistic structure done by the Swiss philologist, Ferdinand de Saussure, literary theorists embarked on the questioning of the prevailing importance of the concept of “the author” as the way by which textual meaning could be secured. Structuralist and Post-structuralist critics, such as Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida of France focused, in stead, on how meaning is made by the operating structures of language and culture. Acknowledging the difficulty inherent in tracing the affinity between structural linguistics and literary texts, David Lodge (1988:360), ventures to say that, “Peirce, Saussure, Sapir and Bloomfield were not originally concerned with literature at all but with the scientific foundations of linguistics. But the interest of philologists such as Roland Barthes in semiology reveals the natural attraction of literature to a theory of linguistic signs.” This takes us to the concept of semiotics which forms the bedrock of this article.

The application of semiotics in this article is borne out of its ability to bestride both textual and extra-textual evaluation of a work of art, finding meaning relationally and restoring literature to its many contexts. Semiotics, as a concept, has been discussed extensively by scholars with a great amount of similarities and differences, as the case may be. However, semiotics would be defined for a good comprehension of the effort in this paper. Tom McArthur (1996:835) defines semiotics as, “the study and analysis of signs and symbols as part of communication, as for example in language, gesture, clothing, and behaviour.” This statement represents the activities of the two linguists that occupy the center of present-day semiotics. Charles Sanders Peirce (1834 – 1914) employed semiology as a demonstration of his interest in language as a system of signs. However, semiotics and semiology are now used interchangeably with a preference for semiotics among the English speaking world.

Sign, according to McArthur includes “clothes, hairstyles, type of house or car owned, accent and body language, which can give messages about such things as age, class and politics.” Language represents a rich set of codes, both verbal and non-verbal. Saussure in *The Course in General Linguistics* (1915) sees the word as a verbal sign with two sides, viz acoustic image or sound pattern (signifier) and a concept (signified). Umberto Eco (1976:49) holds that Saussure describes sign as, “the correspondence between a signifier and a signified.” ‘Signifier’ is the materially produced representation, e.g. ‘dog’ while ‘signified’ is the mental concept to which the signifier refers.

Another important aspect of this essay is the recognition of the fact that communities possess codes and conventions which aid their interaction norms. Eco (1976:61) posits that however difficult situating codes in a particular world might be, “its existence is linked to a cultural order, which is the way in which a society thinks, speaks and, while speaking, explains the ‘purport’ of its thought through other thoughts.” In Eco’s opinion, an individual can interpret a code in a culture based on “cultural competence.” *The New Encyclopedia*

*Britannica* (1974:627) quotes Charles Sanders Peirce as defining sign as “something which stands to somebody for something.” This, in away, refers to the idea of signification or codification. P.A. Ogundeji, looking at the works of (Elam 1980:50) and (Eco 1979:28), posits that codes are used based on the collective agreement in a particular society as the laws of culture determine variations in sending and receiving signs from one culture to another, a development that justifies this article.

Having seen codification and signification as two of the major characteristics of semiotics, which in turn have been described as the study of signs and symbols inherent in things like language, gesture, clothing, hair styles, type of house or car owned, accent, body language like facial expression, body movements (non-verbal) and things like giggles, snots (verbal), this paper will look at different levels of various occurrences in Soyinka’s *Death and the King’s Horseman* that amount to manifestations of codes under appropriate sub-headings.

## **INDEXICAL JOURNEY CODES**

A semiotic assessment of the title of the text, *Death and the King’s Horseman*, leaves us with the impression that the bulk of the activities recorded in it is between the king’s horseman, Elesin, and death. This is not too far from it, but with an extension that has to do with the interference of the representatives of the British government. An idea of what the responsibility of Elesin is, is codified in the totemic relic on the front page of the text. Although static, it depicts how Elesin will ride the horse with the dog sacrificed to the latter to meet the late king, because he is the Ona-Olokun-Esin, master of the horse. The horse and the dog are used as functional objects. A.O. Dasyuva (1996:55) claims that *Horseman* is, “the communalization of death through symbolic ritualization in order to ease the gravity of fear of death, and to particularize in the character of Elesin Oba the feeling

of far and primordial hostility of the traditional Oyo society towards dead.”

Literally, death means demise, cease to live, a development that provokes sorrow and sadness, but in Yoruba world view, death signifies birth, transition, a journey to the other side (the land of the ancestors). Elesin's death is a code for purification and fulfillment while his refusal is an index of doom. His intention to sew a seed to the earth is an index of his final loss of will-power, and attachment to material wealth. Similarly, the death of the Oba (king) is an index to the death of Elesin based on the code of the society. This is established in Olunde's words to Jane Pilkings:

OLUNDE:        ...*All it said was, our king is dead. But I knew*

*I had to return home at once so as to bury my  
Father (52).*

Elesin's fate, and that of his son, Olunde, is determined by the indexical blood in them. It is seen as the symbolic blood which must be shed, characteristic of the death of Jesus, vicariously, having appropriated all the perquisites attached to his position in the town. The journey to the ancestral world is a symbolic representation of the Yoruba world view of the 'rite of passage'. The forces that Elesin has to contend with are sexual avidity and British interference. His will-power, unlike that of the icon, Ogun, Soyinka's favourite god, fails him. The indexical blood of Elesin and his society are captured below:

WOMAN:        *You ignorant man. It is not he who calls  
himself Elesin Oba, it is his blood (35).*

IYALLOJA:        ... *You pray to him who is your intercessor  
to the other world...(21).*

## Cultural Codes

The opening of the play is in a market, typical of an African, particularly Oyo, setting. Elements like basket are used to signify the type of market and what activities go on in it. As a reflection of the honourable position Elesin occupies in the society, he has a retinue of drummers and praise-singers. One important fact is that the drummers and praise-singer employ high forms of code in their communication with Elesin, in an esoteric manner. ‘Olohun-iyó’, which literally means one with a sweet voice, is significant of his attributes. His duty is to, in an innocuous way, constantly remind Elesin of his ‘glorious’ but onerous responsibility. Elesin confirms the virtue of ‘Olohun-iyó’:

ELESIN:           ... *let the world sip its honey from your lips*  
(10).

Drums are musical instruments through which coded communication is achieved. Apart from being a musical accomplishment, drum is also an intensive language of transition, making it, therefore, a custodian of Yoruba culture. Ruth Finnegan (1976:431) opines that drums are used for communication which could possibly be in a pre-arranged signals (conventional), or through the direct representation, Yoruba tonal language. This form of communication is culture based, as observed by Eco, but vulnerable to different interpretations as a result of its open ended ness.

In *Horseman*, drums are used to produce different rhythm as occasions demand. This is misconceived by Pilkings:

PILKINGS:       ..., *I am getting rattled. Probably the effect*  
*of those*  
*bloody drums. Do you hear, how they go on*  
*and on? (27).*

The action above has to do with bridal ceremony, but Pilkings misconstrued it to be a prelude to the ritual suicide. B.M. Ibitokun (1993:12) notes the importance of signs and drumming as a particularly based one. In his words, “the Pilkings do not understand what the chronometric, talking drum says, it is because they share with Aristotle the Hellenic heritage that are alien to the culture area over which they preside as colonial administrations.” At this point, it is obvious that Elesin is left to contend with ‘death’ on the one hand and the District Officer, with his government, on the other.

Symbols:

Soyinka uses some symbols which are regular features in Yoruba linguistics for signification. An individual not privileged with the knowledge of this culture will either not be informed or be misinformed. For instance, Elesin says:

ELESIN:            *This market is my roost. When i come  
among  
the women i am a chicken with a hundred  
mothers (10)*

The description given above is quaint in Western brooding, because technology makes it possible for chick to be produced through incubator. The picture Elesin paints here is that of a person who enjoys absolute safety at the instance of the women. The African mother hen keeps its chicks under her body to protect them from the raving hawk. Unfortunately, the same women’s hands that can weary the unwary, according to the praise-singers, are involved in his diminution.

Soyinka uses yet another symbol of great importance in *Horsemen*. The coiled cord, umbilical cord, is seen in Yoruba tradition to determine where one will always desire to be. When a statement of this nature is used, it is an indication of the fact that the character in question will always trace his way back to his base. Elesin hopes that

his cord can always bring him back no matter the level of his deflection. This is equal in magnitude to the importance a Woman in the text gives to the ocean on its ability to bring Olunde back. This could be viewed in two ways: that the same ship that ferried him away from their land will bring him back, or that the god of Okun (Olokun), will ensure his return to fulfill his great duty when required.

## **SYMBOLIC MORAL CODES**

Another semiotic code in *Horseman* is embedded in the symbolic treatment of the virgin knot. In Yorubaland, in the past, young ladies were expected to keep their chastity until they were married. On the day a lady was given out in marriage, the husband would be made to go into her. The opening of the knot signifies the breaking of the lady's virginity which was always done on a piece of white cloth. This type of codification represents one of the euphemistic ways by which Yoruba societies describe what they believe is obscene or anti-social. A stained white piece of cloth signifies decency and moral sanctity. Among the Shangaan in South Africa, the dance of the reed was used to determine the chastity or otherwise of an unmarried lady. The bride presented to Elesin by Iyaloja is morally upright, and a distinguished individual in that society.

Following the inability of Elesin to fulfil tradition, he is stripped of the symbol of the elephant, an attribute that confers on him immovability. Rather, he now occupies the reversed position of a son with Olunde. This is made bare in the words of Iyaloja:

IYALOJA:           ... *is it the present shoot which withers to give  
sap to the younger, does your wisdom see it running  
the other way?*

At another point she says:



IYALOJA: ... *if it is the father of your prisoner you want, Olunde, he who until this night we knew as Elesin's son, ... (72).*

Unlike the kite and araba (name of a tree to mean well rooted or unshaken), Elesin is seen as a eater of left-overs. See what we have in this statement:

IYALOJA: *How boldly the lizard struts before the pigeon when it was the eagle itself he promised us he would confront (67).*

The 'lizard' represents the British police and their superiors, the 'pigeon' symbolizes Elesin while the 'eagle' is death. Although there is no relationship between each of the words matched to each other, a transfer of the attributive functions of each word gives us a form of signification that portends a hierarchical order of superiority. The lizard and pigeon are prone to the attack of the eagle.

Also, in *Horsemen*, new significations are given to 'ritual' and ghost, an instance of language as signs. The ritual used in African context implies the worship of the gods while it is used to signify an act of introduction at the ceremony in the Residency. The code, 'ghost' is a signification of the incomprehensible myths that shroud the origin of the white, whose colour, Elesin alleges, covers their future. (63) The symbolic codifications in 'meat' and 'bones' represent the status the ancestors will accord Olunde and Elesin. The exertion of the will-power by Olunde nullifies the frivolous death of his father, Elesin.

On a large scale, Yoruba culture and British ideologies are used in the portrayal of other significations. For instance, Simon Pilkings is culturally maladjusted in the society so much that he cannot see any sense in the sacrificial death of Elesin, when a single man is expected to save a whole community. In his own tradition, there is pogrom in an extended war where mass 'suicide' is recorded.

Thomas A. Mappes and Jane S. Zembaty (1997:59) examine the morality of suicide where they recognize religious and philosophical arguments against suicide. They cite Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) to have condemned suicide because it violates our duty to God and natural law with an injury to the community. This is set against a more contemporary view which draws support from classical literature, as they claim that, “suicide is morally acceptable to the extent that it does no substantial damage to the interests of other individuals.” As if attempting an indexical analysis, they identify three overlapping perspectives in suicide, viz; metaphysical, moral, and medical.

According to them, a metaphysical perspective emphasizes that the external world is distinct from the self and has its own casual dynamism, while moral perspective looks at the difference between “physical causality and moral culpability.” These two categorization are imperative in the understanding of the indexical suicide that characterize the two societies in *Horseman*. That the machineries of one state interfere in the running process of another is an indication of a rape of both physical and metaphysical gains. Viewed against this background, it is implied that the death of Elesin is metaphysically determined and therefore morally justifiable.

In the play, the hand bell is used euphemistically and symbolically to signify the male genital organ. The hand bell, as used in this case, will give another meaning to somebody from a different cultural environment with different form of codification. Similarly, a woman imposes another meaning on the word ‘weapon’, which Amusa uses to designate ‘instrument of fight’. ‘Weapon’, in the woman’s viewpoint is that one that a man uses on a woman – male genital.

## CULTURAL CODE IN COSTUMES

So far, this essay has attempted a semiotic evaluation of *Horseman* using symbolism. At this point, the idea of signification shall be seen in names, costume, make-up, props and setting. The use of masks as icons in Africa is not unusual. Yoruba ritual festivals parade different masks that stand for one ancestor or the other. Masks are carved in individual society to capture the image or attributes of the concept the carver or designer has in mind, including the human being, it depicts. Onuora Eneke (1981 :57) discusses masks with a pointed nose to satirize white men. He believes that “the masker seems to be transmogrified into the figure he is representing.”

In *Horseman*, masks are used for the ‘egungun festival. The ‘egungun’ (masquerade) in Yoruba cosmology represents the ancestors from beyond. Representative of the three worlds in Yoruba worldview, Elesin enlivens the constant interaction between the spirit world and the material world. Onuora Eneke (1987 :56) is of the opinion that; “this interaction is possible because the dead can travel freely between their abode and the earth, since they are homologous.” The traditional signification of the attributes of ancestors, gods, or supernatural beings, is inconsequential to Pilkings as he divests transmogrified maskers of their paraphernalia, an exercise that produces the outing wears for him and his wife.

Amusa has good background for decoding the codifications in masks. He, as against the flagrant impunity of Pilkings, exudes a psychological effect of awe. In a bewildered and demented state, he declares:

AMUSA: *I cannot against death to dead cult.  
This dress get power of dead (49).*

One thing is clear, this has to do with the fact that one needs a socio-cultural understanding of a people to decode meaning from their

codes. This presupposes the ideas of “cultural order” and possession of a “cultural competence,” Eco (1976:61 & 64), discusses.

Elesin’s modes of dressing in *Horseman* signify honour, success, comfort and riches, reflective of his social status. His use of ‘alari’ and ‘sanyan’ (special Yoruba fabrics) and ‘agbada’ (the most expansive of Yoruba male clothes), place on him special treatment over others. Olunde’s manner of dressing, wearing of a jacket, signifies that he is a ‘being-to’. The idea of the ‘being-to’ in colonial Nigeria was a code to describe people who displayed predilection for European values. The Aide-de-camp captures this:

AIDE-DE-CAMP: ...*these natives put a suit on and  
they get high  
opinions of themselves (56)*

The police uniform signifies government and authority. The cultural jaundiced view held by Pilkings of Yoruba culture leads him to improve on an ancestral mask and give it an unusual, out of place, relevance.

The description of the police uniform in *Horseman* signifies the type that was used in that period. For such costume to reflect contemporary Nigerian reality would be anomalous. The use of shroud is congenial to Yoruba tradition as found in the text. It is a great tragedy for a son, for instance, not to get a new white cloth for his dead father’s burial. The idea of whiteness shows the type of purity the spirit world prides itself on, while the dead will not appear nude in the new world. The extension of the present world is captured by Enekwe (1987:56) thus: “the dead live as they had done when they were alive-the same social structures, family relationships and communions.”

## CHARACTERIZATION CODES

Another area of signification is in the names used in this text. Naming in Yoruba tradition is very fundamental. The belief is that ‘ile la n wo, kato somo loruko’, this simply means that the situation in a family determines how a baby is named. For instance, my surname, ‘Mekusi’, is a dialectal variation of the Yoruba form, “Miikusi, which means, ‘I did not die in it’. This, however, is the shortened form of ‘Mekusotayo’ (Miikufotayo). Most Yoruba names make statements about a fundamental fact indicative of the prevailing condition and mood during naming. D.S. Izevbaye (1981) believes that the formation of character in a text is influenced by the sociocultural and literary values of the writer.

In an article titled: “Naming and Character of African Fiction,” Izevbaye (1981:164) identifies four nonrole names in Soyinka’s *Horseman*: a tag name, Pilkings, an adopted Christian name, Joseph; an adopted Moslem name, Amusa; and Olunde whom Izevbaye reluctantly accepts as a role name. Izevbaye has interpreted the name to be a contraction of Oludande, (one who liberates; saviour), or Oludande, (He who rises by himself). He stresses further that the contracted form of the second alternative would then mean “honour restored”, “honour arisen”, in which case it would be pronounced Olunde, rather than Olude.

As a compliment to Prof. Izevbaye’s Herculean task, my semiotic preoccupation engenders the classification of Jane and Simon Pilkings, the Prince and their passive collaborators, as signifying the British institution, on a general level. Joseph and Amusa are indexes that refer to the cultural miscegenation colonialism brought with it. Amusa is divided inwardly, even as Joseph’s gullibility earns him the sarcasm of the ‘holy water’ from Pilkings. An extended signification to Amusa’s position, his knowledge about the mask, is the retention of some traditional values early Islamic preachers granted the natives.

I make bold to agree with Prof. Izevbaye on his identification of role performers or title holders as Elesin, Iyaloja, and Olohun-iyo, but his interpretation of Olunde stands contestable. To extend the role nature given to him, Olunde in my own explication could be a contracted form of Olohunde, which means “the owner has come.” This position is made plausible by the fact that Olunde has come to the world to perform the role of the heir-apparel of Elesin, and at another level, his return from England to bury his father (uphold tradition), a role which he embraces tenaciously, culminating in his death to save his family from reproach and his society from calamity. Olunde swerves position with his father at the end of the play. The praise-singer confirms this:

PRAISE-SINGER:                    ...*But this young  
shoot has poured its sap  
into the parent stalk, and  
we know this is not the  
way of life. (75)*

Semiotically speaking, the king in *Horseman* is Soyinka’s replica of Alaafin Ladigbolu, Elesin as Jinadu, Olunde as Muraina Abioye and Pilkings as a double replica of Captain H.L. Ward-Price, respectively. Samuel Johnson (1921:57) describes the Olokun-esin as privileged with unrestricted liberty, because of his traditionally established vulnerability to death. The concept of death in Yoruba belief does not always call for sorrow. Often time, it is preferred to ignominy or reproach.

Iyaloja (market mother) signifies the embodiment of socio-political influence and responsibility of that office. Olohun-iyo, meaning one with a salted voice, is a metaphoric signification that indicates his using the “salted mouth” to make any remark about Elesin, good or bad, characteristic of the court praise singer in oral tradition, and provide the needed encouragement to sustain his will-power through the abyss of transition, Soyinka (1976:149), calls, “the fourth stage”.

Izevbaye (1981:165) believes that Olohun-iyo has, “the voice of flavours.”

## **PHYSICAL SPATIAL CODES**

The settings in the play, the market place and the Residency, are codes used to physically represent the two worlds in contact. Each group strives to prevent the encroachment of its territory by the other. The women, for instance, prevent sergeant Amusa and the constable from gate crashing into the abode of Elesin while Pilkings draws a line of demarcation that Iyaloja dares not overstep. The Residency signifies frustration, enslavement, and the base where an individual is sent to eternal doom. The same room that housed slaves in the past equally holds Elesin incommunicado in the text.

Different accoutrements are used to depict settings which amount to signs. We have the hand-cranked gramophone on Simon Pilkings’ verandah, against traditional African drums, flower-pot, against rich velvets and woven cloth, and a well fortified building with iron-barred gate as against a converted cloth stall. These functional objects of signification portent the level of sophistication at different societies, mostly Western and African. The batons are a codification of the British authority. The clock in the play and its charming is a signifier of the concept of reading time by the British as against the African (Yoruba) idea of studying the movement of the moon, sun and shadows.

The next effort is directed at the trappings of drama, mostly acting. It has severally been said that drama is meant to be performed. Elizabeth U. Osisioma, reviewing the different definitions of acting, gives one representative of practical stage experience. According to Osisioma (1993:14), “true acting is no more and no less a synthesis of the non verbal communication cues of a character, masterfully and effectively projected convincingly to an audience.” It is imperative

to examine communication via non verbal means. This will be done within the matrixes of (dance) kinesics and proxemics.

## **NON-VERBAL SEMIOTIC SYSTEM**

B.M. Ibitokun (1993:11) holds that Africans have consistently used non verbal method of communication which was, according to him, enliven belatedly by de Saussure and Peirce. Umberto Eco (1976:114) equally confers semiotic representation on non-verbal signs. At another level, (Eco 1976:247) reiterates the position of Barthes and other theorists to the effect that, “non-verbal semiotic system rely on the verbal one.” Eco (1976:268) further confirms that some, “suprasegmental features and free variant that escape the treatment of linguistics were done by paralinguistics”, giving other semiotic codes, such as, “whistling, drumming languages or gestures, mimicry and facial expressions.”

Noting music, dance and spectacle as the essence of drama, B.M. Ibitokun (1993:11) claims that Jacques Derrida has theorized on dance as a medium of communication, that, “the signifier (the dancer in presence) and the signified (the dancing in process) and stimulus regulator (the participants and / or the observers and the time-locus) work simultaneously to convey a meaning.”

The above statement implies that it is possible for a particular idea to be represented in dance. This is often found in work songs where we normally have a dramatic representation of how a particular work is done. In *Horseman*, the dance of Elesin is meant to ensure a smooth transition from one world to another. Establishing the effect of music on a performer (like Elesin), Onuora Enekwe (1987:79) declares that it, “intoxicates the performer and drives him to heights of physical efforts that he could not attempt in ordinary life”. This is akin to the opinion of Ibitokun (1993:11) on Elesin ritual passage that, “dance goads him on, throws him into ecstasy or possession which is



prolegomenary to such a spiritual odyssey.” The dancing of Elesin in page 9, for instance, must have been synchronized with his singing pattern on the required “kinesic – format” of his culture.

## **THE IDEA OF KINESICS AND PROXEMICS**

Discussions on kinesics and proxemics shall be done basically on the information provided by the stage directions in this text. Pierre Guiraud (1975:49-50), in what he considers as the auxiliaries of language, talks about what he calls codes of prosody, the kinesic code and the proxemic code. Prosody is considered to utilize variations of pitch, quality and intensity of articulated speech, while kinesic code employs gestures and mimicry. The proxemic code has to do with the space between emitter and receiver. Elizabeth Osisoma (1993:16) considers kinesics to include, “movement of the body, limbs feet and legs.” The list is elongated by Osisoma, using the view of (Wohun:85), to include “facial expression, eye, behaviour, posture and walk.” Furthermore, the importance of physical distance and physical appearance, according to her, can be used to, “recognise the cultural and racial differences that are displayed in non-verbal communication.”

## **KINESICS**

The kinesic and proxemic codes in *Horseman* will help us make out meaning as used in each socio-cultural group and the way one particular code can be used differently in two different societies. For instance, snapping of fingers round one’s head, as done in *Horseman*, is a way of rejecting evil. This is done based on the belief in ‘Ori’. Yoruba tradition holds that one’s ‘Ori’ (the inner head as represented by the physical), is what makes way for one. In Yoruba cosmology, it is recommended that one should make sacrifice to the head and not

gods. A diviner could ask his client to snap his fingers – the thumb and the middle finger – round his head three times to dispel an evil revealed during divination.

Elesin's sudden emotional change in page fifteen is an indication of repulsion. His countenance sends a message that Iyaloja and the women understand immediately, resulting in the pacification done by kneeling down. Kneeling (female) and prostrating (male) are kinesic ways to greet or beg for mercy before an elder in Yoruba culture. This will be meaningless to somebody from another culture. Western tradition, on its own, permits 'good day', 'good morning', with an outstretched hand and 'Please forgive me', as forms of greeting and solicitation for forgiveness, respectively. Yoruba and Igbo culture also exemplify variation in the use of kneeling.

The flicking of agbada (an expansive male flowing dress) by Elesin signifies his social worth and presumptuous nature. 'Agbada' is the best form of male traditional design in Yoruba culture. Other kinesic codes include the action of open-mouthed Amusa and Jane to show surprise on pages (49) and (52), respectively. Amusa's surprise, which makes him dead, is caused by the 'masks of death' that Pilkings wears while the unexpected presence of Olunde provokes that of Jane. Another kinesic code is shrugging. This is used to show indifference, and is mostly done by women and children. Jane does this on pages (30) and (51) while Pilkings' frustration or fatigue must have provoked his on page (60).

Pilkings' gritted teeth signifies the insincerity of his forced intention to apologise for what he says to Joseph about the holy water. Joseph's earlier signifier for dissatisfaction is his sulky appearance. The striking of palms by the women shows surprise and disgust. Practicing steps is an index of happiness which signifies excitement while a sudden snap to attention by Amusa signifies his reverie. Bowing is used to show respect and humility when introduced or to acknowledge cheers.

Other kinesic codes in *Horseman* include smiling, an action that shows amusement, but not of the same magnitude with laughter and giggling, which can express mockery or derision or better still a reaction to a laughable issue in an appropriate context or occasion. The holding out of the hand by Jane to Olunde on page (57), is an extension of love, a fellowship which the receiver can either take or reject. Olunde takes the hand to indicate reciprocity. Pilkings uses his eyes to send a message or dictate. The pointing of Iyaloja's finger to Elesin on page 71 is not just the case of a signifier and the signified, but an index to accuse him of irresponsibility.

## **PROXEMICS**

Discussing proxemics, the space between Amusa and the constables, on the one hand and the women on the other, indicates, or better still, signifies an impending strife, crisis or disagreement. The type of dance at the Residency, which requires closeness, shows Western tradition and its tolerance for communicative tactile acts as against the vigorous dance of Elesin where more physical muscular exertion is needed. This is the mood in which he can be possessed and propelled to accomplish his duty. Turning of back to somebody indicates disagreement or friction. Pilkings turns his back at Iyaloja to show his disapproval for the intrusion she makes into his territory. The physical position of Olunde and Elesin when they meet at the Residency signals love, intimacy and depression. Love and intimacy on first meeting after Olunde returns from England and depression for Elesin's inability to perform tradition.

## **PROSODY**

Codes of prosody, like roaring, screaming and interjection are used to respond to certain situations. These happen in *Horseman* when an

individual responds to an action that is considered unnecessary or an act of bereavement or breach. For instance, Jane screams to restrain the guards from rough-handling Olunde, and to accuse Olunde of callousness. Iyaloja's scream is meant to dissuade Pilkings from performing the traditional act of closing Elesin's eyes. Pilkings' roar at Amusa is a signified of a signifier found in the latter's unusual behaviour. Apart from these instances, there are other areas where exclamation marks are used. These, when rendered, would give us a code of prosody.

Finally on prosody, there are copious use of ellipse. In most cases, they are linguistic signs that when verbalized would cause the voice to drag, quake, or be cacophonous. The bellow of the animal on page (60) naturally belongs to zoo semiotics. The important point here is that the bellow passes for a signifier, that possibly reminds Elesin of his responsibility. Since the horse is capable of bellowing, establishing a connection between them will lead to no contradiction. The animal bellows at a period when Elesin is presented to us as a bellicose.

## **CODES FROM ORAL TRADITION**

It is necessary to remind us that this play is set in a period when oral tradition was 'healthy' in Oyo. This is necessary for the understanding of the codification of 'fear' in the anthropomorphic depiction of a raconteur achieved by Elesin. The Not-I-bird is the iconic culmination of Elesin's fear against his avowed courage. Elesin and his praise-singer dwell substantially on the use of riddles, proverbs and incantatory statements, which require a special knowledge to be decoded for communication to take place. This is what Eco (1976:64 & 99), as stated earlier, calls "cultural competence" in assigning meaning to a property, and the emphasis on meaning based on social beliefs shared by the people as against the "competence of an ideal speaker."

The greatest intention of Elesin in deploying his messages in this manner is the concealment of the truth. The premeditated and complex nature of such statements is given by the praise-singer:

PRAISE-SINGER:            *Elesin's riddles are not merely the  
nut in the kernel that breaks human  
teeth; he also burries the kernel in hot  
embers and dares a man's fingers to draw  
it out (11)*

A.O. Dasylva (1996:23) chooses to ally himself with Matthew Umukoro (1990) in considering the character of the Not-I-bird as an attempt to dissemble in the face of death. He goes ahead by maintaining that no bird is named "Not-I". However, "Not-I" might be a sobriquet carved out of the chirping of a particular bird in a given environment. "Not-I" bird, according to Dasylva, can be seen in this way: "it is introduced here as a symbolic or metaphoric projection of Elesin's mental attitude and natural response to the ritual suicide which his sacred office imposes on him as the Elesin Oba." The fact that the praise-singer understands Elesin in spite of the thematic and semantic obscurity that characterize the latter's statements implies that he has the necessary cultural background to decode all the signifiers.

## **CONCLUSION**

So far, we have seen how things such as objects, words, and behavioural pattern, can be used to mean or represent more than what the face value dictates. Words normally have a deeper level of signification; as attires, body movements, facial expression, mean different things in different occasions, places and to different people(s). Illustrative is the touching of the head which can be a signifier of headache or loss of sanity by the receiver.

Semiotics is an ubiquitous phenomenon whose relevance we cannot disdain, as it has made bare so many coded messages in *Death and the king's Horseman*. The use of code, and subsequent decoding, normally lead to serious problems. Semiotics, therefore, has both positive and negative implications as it promotes and blurs communication. On a large scale, *Horseman* symbolizes the contact of two different cultures and the attendant rupture.

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# SHIFTING PLACE

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As a theatrical designer, in fact, with most things I undertake, I tend to begin with an image. After reading a dramatic text and developing first impressions, I begin collecting images that resonate with those initial thoughts. So, it made sense to find an image that resonated with my perspective as I developed this paper. The image that kept coming back to me was an image, taken by the Hubble Space Telescope, of a twin nebula.<sup>1</sup> The twin nebula has three discrete parts: the two flares opposing each other and the region where they join. In my mind, and for the benefit of my argument, I labelled the three parts in spatial terms: ‘here’ — or our present space, ‘the interface’ and somewhere else or ‘elsewhere.’

One of the classes I teach at Texas Lutheran University is Introduction to Theatre. Several times throughout the semester, I ask my class to answer the following question: “What is Theatre?” (In this instance, I mean live theatrical production.) I always get the typical responses one would expect but I also get answers that are rather insightful. Over time we have developed what I think is a rather sophisticated definition of theatre, which concludes that: “Theatre is the act of storytelling by manipulating and defining space in time.”

Another exercise we do in the Introduction to Theatre class is to examine emerging trends and new technologies that may affect how we interact in our new world. For example, the introduction of the Video Cassette Recorder in the late 1970s permanently changed television and the way we use television as an entertainment device. With the VCR came the concept of ‘the time shift.’ Time shifting freed television viewers from a predetermined schedule and allowed them to create their own viewing schedule. Viewers were no longer tethered to the broadcaster’s schedule. This loss of control, of course, gave rise to a great deal of fear among the broadcasters. While this was free- ing, viewers still needed to be at their television to watch the programs they recorded — they needed to be in the same place as their television and their VCR.

Today, a new technology is emerging that will allow even greater free- dom. This new technology allows ‘place shifting.’ I quote here from Corcoran:

[...] in San Mateo, California, Blake Krikorian performs an Internet magic trick. He fires up an iPAQ handheld and, with a few clicks on a menu, pulls up live television. ... Krikorian switches to his laptop, and moments later Clifford the Big Red Dog is nosing around at a birthday party [...].

The article continues with this quote from Krikorian: “...I’m already paying for my cable at home, why can’t I watch it somewhere else? [...] The VCR lets you ‘time-shift,’ taping now to watch later. I wanted to ‘place-shift.’” It is from here that I derived the title for my paper. As I read the article, it oc- curred to me that ‘place-shifting’ happens in other ways as well.



Computer technologies allow us to ‘place-shift.’ There is a sitcom on American TV called *2 ½ Men*. In a recent episode, Alan (who is separated from his wife and living with his brother) bought web cams for himself and his son so they could communicate with each other when his son was with his mother. His brother, Charlie, a typical womanizer, immediately thought of a different use — he says “well, this elevates phone sex to a whole new level” (*2 ½ Men*). In his own way Charlie understood the concept of ‘place-shifting.’

There was an example of ‘place shifting’ in the news recently (Eyewitness News at 6:00, 2005). In Texas, USA, hunting – or, as they say it: ‘huntin’ – is a very popular sport. (Drinking while ‘huntin’ is also popular, a dangerous combination one would think, but probably more favorable for the animals being hunted.) In fact, hunting is so popular that there are ranches, complete with exotic animals specifically created for hunters. One ranch owner took the concept one step further and created an interesting service. He developed a control mechanism for a gun that could be remotely controlled using the Internet. The system included a gun with a camera that could be aimed remotely by a person located anywhere. The remote hunter, using his or her Internet connection, could see the target area, aim the gun and pull the trigger. The example cited in the news was of a paraplegic living in Ohio, roughly 1000 miles away, who went hunting on the ranch in Texas. The Ohio hunter was able to shift place.

New gaming technologies use storytelling extensively. The games invite the players to be totally immersed in an alternative world, leaving the here, passing through the interface and entering the elsewhere. Game developers work very hard at eliminating BIPs or Breaks-in-Presence. They do not want the here to interfere with the gaming experience. Online gaming extends and challenges the concept of space and place even more.

Computer technologies allow us to control basic functions related to our homes. From our offices — or anywhere for that matter — we can adjust the temperature, turn on lights and water the lawn. From the perspective of the casual observer walking their dog in front of our house, it appears we are home. We have extended the concept of place and extended our reach, maybe even our personal space.

Each of these technologies is challenging our definition of ‘here’ and ‘place.’ We can be any place at any time and, it appears, we can be in two places at the same time. There was a song in the 70s that stated: “If I could be in two places at one time I would be with you tomorrow and today” (“If”, music and lyrics by David Ashworth Gates, March 1971). Brilliant lyrics, however, a closer examination reveals that what they are saying was indeed possible. In reality, they were not asking to be in two places at the same time, they were asking to be in one place in two times and we can do that now.

We can be transported anywhere with a web cam or with voice and video conferencing. Cell phones allow, and sometimes force, us to be in contact with anyone anywhere on the globe. We can effect an action or perform tasks from remote locations. We can enter virtual worlds in play. These technologies have changed what we consider our ‘close environment’ or ‘our extended personal space.’ The new technologies allow us to be alone in public places and sometimes force us to be public in private places. And, they bring into question the essential meaning of now, here and place.

Other disciplines are exploring and examining the concept of space as well. Physicists are slicing our physical world into smaller and smaller pieces. This has led to new theories in physics that are challenging what we know about time and dimension.

Lee Smolin is one of the leading theorists regarding the origin of the uni-verse. In his book *The Life of the Cosmos*, Smolin connects the

concept of time with the forming of the cosmos, he says about time: “there is no longer a simple linear progression. Instead, time branches like a tree, so that each black hole is a bud that leads to a new universe of moments [...]” (Introduction, n. pag.)

Brian Greene is a leading theorist regarding the structure of the smallest, indivisible elements that make up our physical world. He is a leader in the development of Superstring Theory. Now I would never presume to understand Superstring Theory in anything more than a superficial way. Nevertheless, if I understand correctly, Superstring Theory describes a world that is much different from what we have traditionally assumed to be true. In his book *The Elegant Universe*, Greene posits that there are “extra dimensions curled up inside the three dimensions we recognize” which are “capable of giving us an answer to the question of how the universe began and why there are such things as space and time [...]” (186).

Physicists are also testing the speed limit of light. In just the past few years, scientists have apparently been able to alter the speed of light. The July 20, 2000 edition of *Nature Magazine* reports the following findings resulting from experimentations with the speed of light: “This means that a light pulse propagating through the atomic vapor cell appears at the exit side so much earlier than [when] in a vacuum that the peak of the pulse appears to leave the cell before entering it.” (277) In other words, the light pulse arrived before it left — the scientists were able to increase the speed of the light pulse.

At the other extreme, scientists have reduced the speed of light to seven-teen meters per second. In the February 18, 1999 issue of the journal *Nature*, they report:

One such example is electromagnetically induced transparency, a quantum effect that permits the propagation of light pulses through an otherwise opaque medium. Here we report an experimental

demonstration of electromagnetically induced transparency in an ultracold gas of sodium atoms, in which the optical pulses propagate at twenty million times slower than the speed of light in a vacuum. (594)

While I do not understand most of the language, I do understand “twenty million times slower.” They were able to reduce the speed of a pulse of light to 55.77 feet per second or 38 miles per hour. Bicyclist Lance Armstrong rode his bike faster than that in the recent Tour de France.

Ultimately, this means that the physical laws that were once considered fixed and unchangeable are now being challenged in very significant ways. For example, Einstein’s theories of relativity depend on the speed of light remaining a constant 186,000 miles per second and on time being a constant.

What are the implications when the speed of light is not assumed to be fixed?

These discoveries will inevitably change, or at the least have an affect on, or view of the physical world, our view of place.

We can find challenges to the concept of space in literature well. In his novel *House of Leaves*, Mark Danielewski explores as his subject a world in which the relative sizes of things seem to be inverted. The story involves a house that measures larger on the inside than on the outside. (This brings to mind a story attributed to Andy Warhol who observed that over time refrigerator designers have increased the interior space of refrigerators without increasing their overall size to such a degree that very soon they will be larger on the inside than they are on the outside.) Danielewski also used literary structure to reinforce his challenge to space. Also notable is the way the text is arranged on the page. The arrangement reinforces the distorted and confused space.

But, how does this relate to theatre and theatrical production?

Because one of the roles of the artist is to help us understand the world we live in and the world we are creating, it makes sense for artists, in this case theatre artists, to explore challenges to space and place as well. Theatre creators are exploring human existence using the same technologies that are altering our ways of life.

While space may typically be considered the place where designers work, everyone involved in presenting a production — actor, designers, director, etc. — in their own way changes and defines space. In the best cases, their manipulations reflect the playwright's intentions and effectively communicate those intentions to the audience. Here, I want to take a look at one particular style of production design in light of some recent technological and scientific developments.

Throughout history, theatre has both anticipated and reflected technological and social advances. It is not surprising then that contemporary production has begun extending the definition of space and place as well.

Several exciting new production forms are emerging showing apparent parallels between 'place-shifting' technology and contemporary theatre productions. For example, prerecorded video playback and live, interactive video show scenes and characters in locations beyond or outside the traditional confines of the theatre space.

Another new production form is Performance Conferencing or Multi-space performance. These productions are performed in more than one venue. The various locations are connected together using video link-up.

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Audience members in one location can see into the other performance venue, in other words into the other dimensions, the other space. They are able to ‘place-shift’ to a different, real location.

Virtual Reality Theatre creates virtual environments in which the performer and performance exist, blending the real with the virtual. Virtual Reality performances use virtual environments that the performers interact with, opening a window to other dimensions. In this case the audience member ‘place-shifts’ to an entirely fictive world.

These production forms open a window to additional dimensions and parallel times allowing us to observe them. Given some basic information, we could even calculate specific, detailed characteristics of the spaces. It appears we know everything there is to know about these virtual spaces, yet we cannot enter them. The edge of our three-dimensional world interferes with our interacting with the projected world. The interface does not yet allow us to move from ‘here’ to ‘elsewhere.’

Mark Reaney at the University of Kansas, School of Theatre and Film was an early leader in the use of Virtual Reality. Professor Reaney used Virtual Environments extensively in production. He has mounted several productions that relied heavily on computer and video generated virtual environments. One production, *Wings* by Kopit incorporated a video technology called i-glasses!, which enabled the audience to see the virtual environment. i-glasses! feature two LCD displays, which create the illusion of a large projection screen in front of the observer. Mr. Reaney described the experience this way:

Using i-glasses!, audiences were still able to see live actors on stage and computer graphics projected onto rear projection screens. [...] The ‘see-through’ technology of i-glasses! made it possible for the user to see through and around the built-in video screens. [...] The

audience still maintained a strong connection with the live actors. [...] The communal nature was not lessened. i-glasses! allowed us to present virtual- worlds, computer generated objects and video images directly before the eyes of an audience. Symbolic devices, realistic locals, expressionist images, or even close-ups of the actors were superimposed over the view of the actors.

In this case the audience ‘place-shifted’ to virtual worlds. They were moved closer to the actor or they were given clues regarding the emotional state of the characters — they were shifted to the emotional world of the character.

We also experiment with virtual reality in the Department of Dramatic Media at TLU. Several of our productions have incorporated projected video and still images that allow us to extend the limits of the theatre space. In our production of *The Laramie Project*, some characters were recorded onto video and the onstage characters interacted with the projected images. The barriers between the various places were challenged.

Of course, this is not new. Josef Svoboda, the Czech scenographer, incorporated still and motion images into performance as early as the 1960s. In the production *The Wonderful Circus*, the performers continually and beautifully break through the dimensional barrier and move freely between the projected images and on-stage — blending ‘here’ and ‘elsewhere.’

In plays incorporating projected images, the audience observes the normal dimensions and other spaces simultaneously. In these applications, virtual environment implies, and indeed is, an extension of the space we recognize as here.

Referring back to the image of the nebula: if ‘here’ is the place where the audience and the play exists and the projected places are

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‘elsewhere,’ then the screen itself serves as the ‘interface’ between the two spaces. These productions allow us to ‘place-shift.’

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# WORKING HARD TO GET MY FILL

## Videogames, Psychoanalytic Theory, and the Performance of Desire

Derek A. Burrill

Psychoanalytic theory is a bit like a videogame. One could even say, that in regards to Jacques Lacan's work, psychoanalysis **functions as** videogame, with the constant and terminal push/pull between the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real, each operating on multiple levels, in real and virtual spaces, through subjects and avatars, by way of the tactile, the visual, and the imagined. This is a constant struggle between self-satisfaction and the rules (of course, without ever gaining pure pleasure, which is too much for anybody). Games do not function without rules; the rules serve to define not only play, but also the players' progress, and thus space and duration. Breaking the rules, cheating, is this not the same thing as lying to your therapist? Committing a type of self-reflexive plagiarism? Just so, videogames sit at the center of a media matrix that paradoxically energizes the populace while it functionally satiates them, so that choice and desire become the same, where the couch in front of the videogame can replace the couch in the therapist's office. And, historically,

psychoanalysis, like the videogame industry, has undergone several major shifts, has experienced troughs, peaks and tremors, set amidst a swirling backdrop of deeply embedded and ideologically momentous global traumas that themselves play out like a series of levels in a massive, multiplayer online game. This game is played out (on the most substantial level) in the subject on the level of desire. It then distends to the level of the network, over the Internet, through the labyrinths of capital, crossing geographic boundaries and borders so that The Game is at once local and global, bound and unfettered, enclosed and amorphous. The machines themselves<sup>i</sup>, videogame consoles -- Playstations, xBoxes, Gameboys -- that have virulently spread to the consumer household, are nodes in the network, buzzing feedback loops enmeshing the player in the dance of desire. Desiring Machines. Machines of Desire. Both the player and the console, enabled by the software and the uplink, conjoin with the greater network to construct a fractal, scalar network system, a smaller meshwork taking orders from the CPU of the Self and the Hard Drive of the external (capital, stuff to buy, games to play). In other words, the Other.

How to synthesize these two worlds, the Real and Virtual? Where to start? What will this mutually imbricated analysis provide for the reader? This piece, firstly, will provide a short primer on psychoanalytic theory and its extension through the work of Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Zizek. Second, we will shift to an introduction to current analysis and theory in videogames research. (The connection here between media, visuality and psychoanalytic theory is well-documented and theorized in film studies, particularly in the work of Laura Mulvey, Christian Metz, Kaja Silverman and David Savran, so this type of application of psychoanalytic theory may be familiar to some readers.<sup>ii</sup>) And, finally, this paper will synthesize these two areas into an analysis of a specific videogame, *Karaoke Revolution Party*. Thus the paper ends with a performance, a literalization of the pent up desires traced out in this piece.

## **TELL ME ABOUT THE MOTHER YOU WISH YOU HAD**

Probably the most fundamental function of psychoanalytic theory, as deployed in the humanities, is to allow the theorist to deal with a text's multiple meanings on several levels, simultaneously. Much like the complex inner-workings of the Self, a text often contains complicated, contradictory and often misleading information, such that the theorist must account for her/his own position in relation to the object of study in order to account for slippage, excess and bias. Additionally, psychoanalytic theory also allows the theorist to engage with multiple areas of signification such as gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, nationality, etc., while performing a 'close' reading of the text. Still largely based on the work of Freud, contemporary psychoanalytic theory has shifted its focus from the topic of sexual evolution and its relationship to the unconscious to larger, more culturally situated issues. The work of Jacques Lacan is particularly important in its attendance to language as the structuring logic of the unconscious. Lacan found, by using structural linguistics, that the unconscious is indeed "structured like a language" and that Freud's pre-Oedipal (the Imaginary, in Lacanian terms) and Oedipal phases are in fact marked by linguistic evolution. For instance, instead of moving out of the pre-Oedipal (where the child associates with the mother) because of the threat of castration, the child progresses by acquiring language skills through a process known as the Mirror Phase. Previous to the Mirror Phase, the child basically functions as a disconnected series of movements, so that the child does not understand herself as 'embodied.' When the child looks in a mirror (or similar 'reflective' surface/subject) the child identifies with this other thing and, through this momentary but pleasurable unification, forms an idealized relationship, or "ideal ego." And so this is the beginning of a kind of cycle of imaginary identifications where a person is in the constant process of trying to walk in another's shoes, if only for a moment. This is the basis of all communication. If we are to accept this process, we must also acknowledge just how visual

and performative (or at least mimetic) the identificatory process is.

Lacan names this Oedipal replacement the Symbolic Order, or sometimes, the Symbolic Register. Regulating this Order is the symbolic father, known in Lacanian terms as the Law. The Law essentially serves as the Law of society, or the cultural (and linguistic) context that the child must join in order to become a fully formed human adult, or the ever elusive “I.” Eschewing the Imaginary safety of ‘me/you’ (child/mother), the subject becomes (supposedly) stationary and unified when accepting the title of “I.” However, as poststructuralism and postmodernism has beat into dust, stable, centered identity is highly questionable. Just so with Lacan’s Symbolic. “I” can certainly write this paper, and in the moment that I do, I appear to be fairly stable, even authoritative (the greatest trick of them all), but the “I” behind the guy is always an endlessly eliding entity. How then is this split subject reconciled (or, at least, negotiated)? The answer would most likely be found in the daily, lived tension between the Real and what Slavoj Zizek poses as attached to both the sublime and ideology.

A starting point (at least, in dealing with Zizek’s work on Lacan) might be to pose the question, implied by the title of one of his numerous books, what is the Sublime Object of Ideology?<sup>iii</sup> The sublime object of ideology is an idea or object that the subject imagines will fulfill their every desire. This idea/object is sublimated (turned from solid to gas, from the concrete to the ephemeral) because the fantasy itself is the source of enjoyment. Yet, actually attaining the idea/object is not as satisfying as the constant, overwhelming sense of possibility; the ‘having’ would not be as satisfying as the ‘not-having.’ The Real exists only because of the idealistic fantasy sustaining it, and would dissolve if the fantasy became real. (In a sense, the Real isn’t going anywhere. It can’t. This would be similar to staring one’s unconscious in the face -- or eyes [the window to the soul!] -- unleashing an apocalypse of the self.) The sublime object of ideology is the unattainable fantasy-state that this thing **could** be real. The realization of the fantasy exposes an empty space that the subject cannot

bear to address (trauma). Thus, the tightrope between the Real and the unattainable idea/object exposes desire for what it truly is, the Law, a process of fantastical self-regulation embedded into the unconscious in the form of complex systems of signification. As Žižek writes;

We have here the opposition between the simple external obstacles which thwart our desires and the internal, inherent obstacle constitutive of desire as such, or, in Lacanese, between the law qua external regulation of our needs and the Law which is the inherent obverse, the constituent of, and thus ultimately identical to desire itself. (Žižek, On Belief, 76)

Ideologically speaking then, all external goods and services pose a threat to the self in the form of a break with the law, and so must be regulated. But, in the same instant, they serve as fuel for the fire, so to speak. Such is the commodity phantasmagoria of late capitalism. So, then, what to do with videogames? They are a consumable commodity, but are consumed in different ways than even, say, film. The interactive and visual nature of the games poses several interesting questions for the theorist of visual culture. What becomes of the Real in the face of the virtual? Can the gamer pursue the sublime object in digital space? How do these machines incorporate, embody, perform and manufacture desire? Is desire possible in a simulated world, or is it truncated by the absence of the Real, replaced by fractured moments of pleasure that stem from no-where, no-thing? How do the games work to produce the bases of desire – familiarity, otherness, pleasure, pain? But what does say about desire? How do choice and option function here? It is my argument that the virtual, especially the virtual world of videogaming, functions as an idealized fantasy space for the precarious performance of the self and the attainment of desire. ‘Pretend play,’ the enactment of desire in a fantasy realm, is a means of negotiating a false attainment, so that desires can be momentarily fulfilled without the risk of ego-shattering. Push, play, die, reset.

## GAME ON

Current research in videogames usually falls into one of two categories: narratology and ludology. Narratology, essentially the progeny of literary studies, tends to focus on the game as a stable, and therefore readable, text, while ludology is more concerned with how the player plays and the specific interactive qualities of the games. Therefore a central problem in games studies is the simplistic differentiation between the two approaches and the attendant debates between each focus. The historical development of video games has always included both formats, from arguably the first videogame, *Tennis for Two* (1958), a game similar to *Pong* that features no traditional “text,” to games such as *Adventure* (circa 1972), a purely text-based game based on the popular pencil-and-paper role playing game *Dungeons and Dragons*.<sup>iv</sup> However, because of multiple factors -- from the rise of the industry’s economic power, to the increasingly complex graphics engines and processors and the resulting ‘realism’ they can produce, to the growing legitimacy of the field academically -- other approaches are gaining momentum. For instance, in the first issue of “Games and Culture: A Journal of Interactive Media,” renowned media theorist Toby Miller advocates for a mixed approach as a means of analysis;

I think we need a combination of political economy, textual analysis and ethnography if we are to make gaming studies into a major player in the public sphere of popular criticism, state and private policy creation, social movement critique, and labor organization. That will allow us to consider who makes the games, who profits for them, how they target audiences, what the games look like, what they are like to play, and how they in with social life. (Miller, “Gaming for Beginners,” 8)

While I wholeheartedly agree with Miller’s analysis, I also want to make two points here. Certain discursive categories, usually under the aegis of Critical Theory, should also be pursued, particularly gender,

sexuality and ethnicity. Additionally, I have found in my work that two particular methodologies – performance and movement studies and psychoanalytic theory -- are especially well-suited to games studies because of their particular status as inter-**active** media, as well as because of their depth as cultural objects designed/produced/manufactured for people, yet re-**produced** as experiences, by another set of people, the players. So, in this piece, while I focus on psychoanalytic theory, performance theory will lurk (in the unconscious?) in my game analysis, particularly since the object of study here, *Karaoke Revolution Party*, requires that the player, literally, perform.

I would be remiss to ignore another, more obvious, central issue in games studies that is also clearly attached to a certain type of psychology, popular discourse surrounding violence and its effects on the public. While a great deal of research was conducted in the 1980's concerning the relationship between play and learned and/or enacted violence, no clear linkage was established. Of course, these studies operated under a basic assumption – that videogames **are** dangerous, particularly to our children – while also following more general trends in the sciences and social sciences that, as fields, are largely formulated by the distribution of research funding. This, in turn is controlled by who and what considers who and what dangerous (in this case, the ‘importance and relevance’ of illustrating that new media are a threat because, well, they’re new!). Point being is that while the gaming industry has shown massive growth (just above \$7 billion in sales in 2004, up from under \$4 billion in 1996) and has spread in popularity to many different markets and demographics, violent crime offences have declined steadily since 1996.<sup>v</sup> In fact, more than ever, games are being used for educational, medical and business purposes. All of this points to a central concern that the games (because of their increased growth, application and differentiation) have an increasing effect on culture, for better or for worse. Additionally, laboratory effects studies and psychological empirical research may not be equipped as of yet to effectively tackle the myriad genres, modes and styles and their rapid evolution, as well as questions regarding how players have evolved

themselves as ‘manufacturers’ of play itself. It is here that psychoanalytic theory (as well as other methodologies) can be of certain use.

## I SING THE BODY ELECTRIC

In the videogame, *Karaoke Revolution Party* (Konami, 2005), the player is sold an engaging and hyper-articulated sense of control in the form of a home karaoke system that works through (currently) the xBox console system. During typical active game play, the GUI (Graphic User Interface) features an avatar that moves and dances in time with a pre-selected song chosen by the player, so that the player is performing much like one would in a traditional karaoke scenario. However, there are significant differences. First, the game is, of course, set up as a game, so typically the player will either compete against the software’s judging level, or if they choose, other singers. Second, the GUI is significantly more complex visually than that of a normal bar/nightclub karaoke screen, featuring a player-avatar, a non-player avatar backup band, elaborate scenography and locations. Additionally, the game screen functions as a tutorial (the Phrase Meter, Music Staff, Now Bar, Now Tubes and Pitch Arrow), a live performance simulation (through the Crowd Meter and intermittent shots of the crowd) and a competition (Score box). See the following screen shots for reference (note the tutorial graphics at the bottom, Crowd Meter at the right edge and the Score box to the left.





**Fig. 1 and 2: Screenshots from *Karaoke Revolution Party***

As we can see from these screenshots, the visual field is hyper-articulated, with a postmodern-visual-vortex aesthetic. These two shots also illustrate the complex series of cinematic points of view that the camera is constantly switching between, mimicking the fast action and jump cuts endemic to music videos as well as ‘live’ music competition shows such as American Idol. The overall effect of the GUI is to enliven the karaoke experience while creating a strong sense of identification between player and avatar, so that the player can simultaneously watch and inhabit, spectate and perform their character/avatar. And that’s just on-screen. But, strangely enough (or

not strangely at all), what I have witnessed when actual game play is in progress, is that roughly 90% of the focus is on the screen, not on the live body in the room in front of the screen. This, of course, has much to do with the nature of our visually mediated selves, the screened consciousness we all seem to eschew and enjoy, as well as with the conventions of karaoke (where the audience is so often just looking at the lyrics on the screen), as well as with the normative rules of the televisual, domestic space – the TV as hub of social relations wherever it is placed in the home.

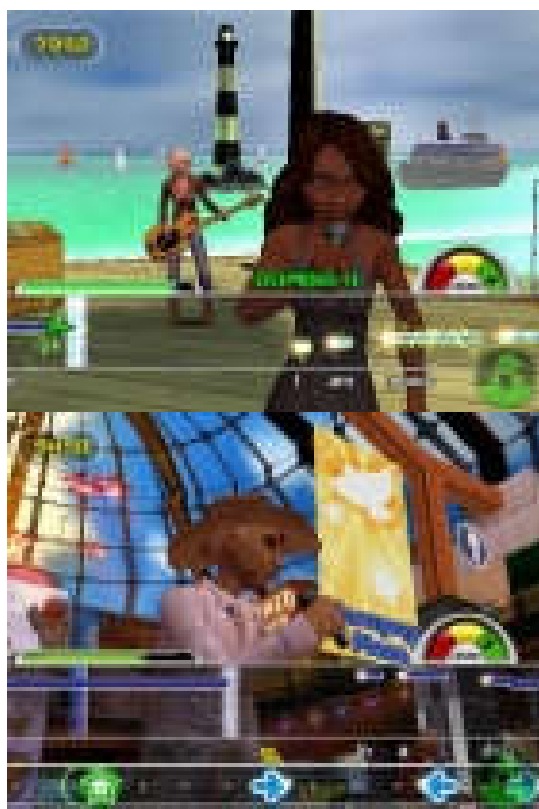
So, clearly, the game has a performative dimension, perhaps more so than many games. This is most likely why Konami, in a wonderfully illustrative feat of internal convergence, has made *Karaoke Revolution Party* compatible with *Dance Dance Revolution* games, so that the player can actually dance (on the home version mat of the popular arcade game) and sing (with the wireless headset – sold separately) simultaneously. As one can imagine, this makes things considerably more complicated, or for some, impossible. But it does point to an important aspect of these games, that much like many other video games, a sense of option in the form of greater interactivity, higher levels of stimulation, and customization and choice have become the internalized vocabulary of the videogamer, both casual and hardcore. Of course, this is witnessed in many other levels of consumer electronics: the iPod, cellphones, PDAs, interactive menus on DVDs, etc. The question is then, what exactly is this a symptom of (ignoring the oversimplified and naïve argument produced by industry-types regarding the total democratization of culture through digital devices and access to networks)? Let us turn to the avatars in the game as symbolic of this symptom, and how they function as the CPU of the Desiring Machine.

Before the player sings/plays/performs, a series of ‘set-up’ screens appear. In these the player chooses a song, a game mode (Quickplay, Arcade, Sing and Dance, Two Mic Party, etc.), the audio makeup, and a character that performs as their avatar in game mode. Now, I should probably differentiate between character and avatar here; ‘character’ is

the word the game designers use in order to make the game seem more user-friendly, increase player-character identification, etc., while an avatar (taken from the Sumerian for the human form a god takes on earth) is the digital representation of the player's 'subjectivity' and activity during game play. So, to be clear, these 'characters' in the game have absolutely no 'character' traits other than exterior signifiers and the way that they dance/move. To a large degree, the *Tomb Raider* series enjoyed its popularity because Lara Croft **did** have a developed character (and, of course, a hyper-sexualized avatar). But this is true even for very simple games such as *Crash Bandicoot* – the player becomes enmeshed in play through gameplay **and** identification with the avatar/character. So, in *Karaoke Revolution Party*, while in the 'character creator' mode, it would seem that what the player does is akin to a child dressing a doll before playtime. However, when I have played this game with groups of other people, players formed clear bonds with their characters and begin to instill them with character traits that oscillated between talking 'as' and talking 'to' (once again, very similar to the way a child plays with a doll, sometimes 'with,' sometimes 'through'). This variable point of view/identification is our first 'flickering symptom'<sup>vi</sup> emerging out of the Desiring Machine – it reveals the binary nature of the digital universe, the scene of the screen, the avatar and meat (to borrow from William Gibson), and the endless agôn between desire and repression. What the player desires is precisely this elision, the constant instability of multiple subjectivities in order to allay responsibility while still maintaining agency. In short, getting what you want without paying for it. Here the Real is actualized, if only momentarily, but it is only 'seen' or, more accurately, 'witnessed.' Thus visuality enacts a type of embrace and brace, a salve wiped over the eyes so that one may see (and be seen), but where the details remain indistinguishable.

Additionally, in 'character creator mode,' the player can choose from a profusion of physical traits and fashion accessories in order to customize their karaoke competitor. Below are two screenshots of possible character make-ups. (Note the skin color, hairstyle, hair color, facial hair, body shape, clothing and accessories, all of which are

adjustable.)



**Figs. 3 and 4:** Screenshots from *Karaoke Revolution Party*

In the character creator GUI, the player moves through a series of screens (Character, Edit, Head, Body, Clothing, Accessories) individuating their avatar until it reaches the desired state. Included in the Character choices are hyper-cool names and an attendant ‘base’ character identity complete with clothing and body pre-sets so that the player can skip the Edit process if they wish. But arguably, the Edit phase is one of the most fun (and interesting) aspects of the game. Base characters, out of 15, include Rico (semi-macho Latino), Sasha (white, Gwen Steffani clone), Marshall (black, Usher-like), and Amir

(vaguely South Asian). As I have mentioned, these can be edited, but arguably function as cues for player/character editing, as well as intertextual identities borrowed from other media and worlds. In the Edit mode, when in Body, a pentagon appears with 'Muscular,' 'Skinny,' 'Heavy,' 'Husky,' and 'Belly,' at each of the five corners. In the center of the pentagon sits a small white dot with lines emanating to each of the four corners, so that we see a geometric wagon-wheel. By manipulating the left joystick on the controller, the player can move the dot anywhere within the perimeter of the pentagon in order to find an 'ideal' body type. Again, what I have noticed during play with others, is a type of negotiation between the person's ideal body/fashion vision and their (often skewed, sometimes purposefully skewed) sense of their own 'look,' so that the avatar usually ends up looking a bit like an American Idol contestant spit out of Conan O'Brian's famous "What Would They Look Like" computer morphing skit. The edit process, of course, demands a type of hybridization not typically offered in other character edit modes in other games, and represents our next 'flickering symptom' – that of 'in-between-ness.' Here, the person must collaborate with desire itself and the attainment of that which is desired in order to operate, at least nominally, within the Symbolic (and under the Law). And, the player (within the Symbolic Law of the programmer's choices) collaborates with the (partially false, partially agreed-upon-falsity of) themselves and the ideal other in the production of a momentary avoidance/attainment of that which they can never have (because then we would not want anything, would wither away and die). Clothing and Accessories function in a similar sense, but work to satisfy the unsatisfied shopper through a symbiosis of Body and Fashion. Fashion becomes an appendage, a prosthesis of the self that enables an even more sublimated ego-ideal, so that one can watch with pleasure from the outside and inside. Again, this is 'in-between-ness,' another mode of negotiation, but in this case, one that allows the subject to operate in the spaces between the poles of avoidance/repression and attainment/pleasure (and inevitably, regret).

The final 'flickering symptom' is the massively complicated triad

of avatar, character and real-space player. Traditional karaoke alone is an odd type of cultural practice; a usually very passive audience in an ostensibly active space (bar, nightclub), a performer or performers who seem to be equally passive (as most karaoke-ers are there to **sing**, not to dance or ‘perform.’)<sup>vii</sup> Additionally, not a great deal can be read from the karaoke performer, most information comes from the person’s song choice. Clearly, the domestic space sets up a different stage, mimicking the karaoke club private room mixed with the comfort and convenience always-already written into the home and the home videogame system. So, then, what to do with the relationship between the flesh and the fiction? It is my contention that the third ‘flickering symptom’ is a cultural symptom, a network of desires produced by the digital, the physical, the cultural and the psychological ramifications of commodity capitalism and its attendant pleasures, cancers and ‘cures.’ For is not the Desiring Machine that which produces itself? That which produces its own desires, over and over again, without signs of stopping or slowing? If, as Baudrillard claims, we live in a hyperreality populated with copies of copies, devoid of referents, lacking authenticity and aura, then digital code and its replicative process is precisely the material immateriality of our desires. It is the (Lacanian) Real, the Imaginary, the Symbolic. But, what happens when these three implode? Is the process of desire, the quality of desiring forever altered? If one system of signification swallows all others, then what becomes of difference? Of ‘otherness?’ This is not a warning of our impending doom, of the coming of ‘The Desert of the Real.’<sup>viii</sup> It is, instead, a statement about the changing shape of our desires, and about those things that do the changing.

## Endnotes

\* Which of course, could also mean that many humans, networks of tissue and flesh **and** machinery, are cyborgs already.

\* It is important to note that much of this mode of film theory relies on the particularity of the cinematic apparatus. While playing a videogame in an arcade may, in some ways, replicate the darkened theatre and its attendant visual pleasures (scopophilia, voyeurism, etc.) most game play occurs in front of a television or PC

monitor, which of course have very different viewing modes, as well as attachments to other discourses such as, in the case of the PC, work and labor.

\* Slavoj Zizek, The Sublime Object of Ideology, Verso. . .

\* See Espen J. Aarseth's book, Cybertext (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins Press, 1997) for an in-depth study of narratology, literary applications to videogames and discussions of IF (Interactive Fiction). Also, Barry Atkins More Than a Game (Manchester: Manchester U. Press, 2003) offers useful, textually based readings of several important games from different genres.

Zizek, Slavoj. On Belief. London: Routledge, 2001.

\* "Chasing the Dream," *The Economist*, Aug. 6, 2005, 53-55. Note the title of the article; what are dreams if not enactments of our repressed desires? Also a note on the cover of the magazine (who's readers are most likely not game players, but probably also consider the games a trivial children's activity): the cover features a small boy wearing a black t-shirt, hair not-so-subtly crafted so that two devil horns protrude from either side of his head. The demon-red background and his downward-tilted head lead the eyes toward the black game controller, and a cord leading to what is presumably the videogame screen. A [3+] icon rests to the right of the boy, featuring an almost unnoticeable background reading, "mind warp" (or "warp mind"), mocking the ESRB (Electronic Software Ratings Board) age ratings system. What is most odd about this picture is that the reader/viewer of the picture is situated **as** the game screen, so that, in essence, we (*The Economist* reader) are, as the title of the issue reads, "Breeding Evil." Additionally, the general point of the articles in the issue that deal with videogames find that they are in fact not breeding evil and might be doing the opposite. Is this not a type of reflexive interpolation? Strangely, the cover sells itself to the reader's (most likely) already formed opinions while positioning **them** as the problem, the breeders of the evil discourse around videogames. Again, this is an argument for a psychoanalytic approach, textually and visually, but also as an 'illustration' of the constant battle between anxiety and desire.

\* This term is, of course, in acknowledgment of the excellent work of N. Katherine Hayles.

\* This obviously has its exceptions, particularly in Japan and Europe where much of karaoke is done in private rooms, with groups of friends singing in a walled-off and private atmosphere, free from the judgmental and jealous eyes of others.

\* Baudrillard's essay "Welcome to the Desert of the Real," was, in fact, co-opted from Morpheus' famous line in *The Matrix*.

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**THE FALL OF LUCIFER  
A JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVE FROM  
BIBLICAL SOURCE TO  
MEDIEVAL MYSTERY DRAMA  
THE ALCHEMICAL TRANSFORMATIVE  
PROCESS AND INTER-TEXTUAL READING**

Brian David Phillips

**INTRODUCTION**

The myth regarding Lucifer's fall from Heaven, while not scriptural, has had an important impact on the Christian psyche. The following short paper will examine this myth as it was presented in the medieval mystery plays (particularly the Chester Cycle) and the Biblical roots for the presentation of the myth in these plays. The baseline for evaluation in this study will be an alchemical transformation process for literary criticism as developed from the psychology of Carl G. Jung. This short study will serve as a demonstration of the inter-textual critical uses of alchemical criticism, particularly the usefulness of the transference as an aid to exploring influence and the use and transformation of source materials by writers.

First, the paper will introduce the Lucifer Myth and its relevance to the transformation of the Judeo-Christian belief systems. The study will then briefly discuss the Jungian approach to alchemy and its usefulness in literary criticism. Next, will follow a brief background on the medieval mystery plays generally and the Chester Cycle inclusion of The Fall of Lucifer specifically. The fourth step will be to discuss the Biblical source materials for specific scenes within The Fall of Lucifer within an alchemical transformation and transference framework. Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations will come from The New International Version Study Bible and the selections from The Fall of Lucifer will be as found in Peter Happe's English Mystery Plays.

## **THE LUCIFER MYTH**

Ask any Christian Sunday-school student who “Lucifer” was and he’ll tell you, “Lucifer was an angel who wanted God’s job and there was a war in Heaven and Lucifer and all the other bad angels lost and they got thrown down to Hell and became the Devil and all his demons.” That, in a nutshell, might very well be a child’s account of a myth which has been within Christianity since its formation but is not quite so explicitly documented in scripture (although most Christians subscribe to its validity).

The earliest version of the Lucifer theme occurs in Isaiah 14:12-15. This is within the context of a prophetic reference to the Babylonian king. The New International Version presents the passage as follows:

How you have fallen from heaven,  
O morning star, son of the dawn!  
You have been cast down to the earth,  
you who once laid low the nations!

You said in your heart,  
“I will ascend to heaven;  
I will raise my throne  
above the stars of God;  
I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly,  
on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.  
I will ascend above the tops of the clouds;  
I will make myself like the Most High.”  
But you are brought down to the grave,  
to the depths of the pit.  
(Isaiah 14:12-15)

The key verse in this passage is Isaiah 14:12. Here it is rendered as “How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn!” The phrase here given as “morning star” has been traditionally given as “Lucifer.” The Hebrew word here is helel. Literally, it means “The Shining One,” and is thought to refer to the planetary body we call Venus (Asimov-a, 538).

When the Greeks thought Venus was two different celestial bodies, they called the evening star “Hesperos” and the morning star “Phosphoros.” Hesperos means “west” and it is always in the west that the evening star appears. Phosphoros means “light- bringer” and it is therefore the essential equivalent of “daystar.” By the Romans, the Greek terms were translated directly into Latin. The evening star became “Vesper” meaning “west” and the morning star became “Lucifer” meaning (“light- bringer” (Asimov-a, 539). Thus the Hebrew helel is commonly translated as Phosphoros in Greek versions of the Bible; and as Lucifer in Latin versions (Asimov-a, 539).

The writer of Isaiah is describing the Babyonian king in an ironic manner through the use of the terms for the morning star. As Isaac Asimov points out in his popular introduction to the Bible, this still is not an uncommon occurrence:

The use of the term “Lucifer” in connection with the overweening pride

of the Babylonian king is an ironic thrust at the habit of applying fulsome metaphors for royalty. Flattering courtiers would think nothing of naming their king the Morning Star, as though to imply that the sight of him was as welcome as that of the morning star heralding the dawn after a long, cold winter's night. This habit of flattery is confined neither to the East nor to ancient times. Louis XIV of France, two and a half centuries ago, was well known as the Sun King [Asimov-a, 539]. It is clear that the writer of the verses concerning Lucifer is ironically describing the Babylonian king's fall from absolute power to captivity and death as the fall of the morning star from the heavens to Hell (Asimov-a, 539-540)].

At the time of Isaiah, Lucifer's fall is not a reference to the fall of Satan. At this time, the Jewish views of God and Satan are profoundly different from those of the later Christians. As Jung points out, the tension of opposites has not yet occurred at this time (Jung-b, 242). In Job, we find Satan (as "the accuser") welcome within God's council: "One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them" (Job 1:6).

As Judaism is a living religion, its beliefs as well as its mythological framework is constantly questioned and changed or accepted by each generation. Christianity has inherited this quality. The verses concerning Lucifer took on new meaning. Over time, the concepts of God and Satan underwent changes possibly due to a heavy Greek influence upon the Jewish community:

With time, however, these verses came to gain a more esoteric meaning. By New Testament times, the Jews had developed, in full detail, the legend that Satan had been the leader of the "fallen angels." These were angels who rebelled against God by refusing to bow down before Adam when that first man was created, using as their argument that they were made of light and man only of clay. Satan, the leader of the rebels,

thought, in his pride, to supplant God. The rebelling angels were, however, hurled out of Heaven and into Hell. By the time this legend was developed the Jews had come under Greek influence and they may have perhaps been swayed by Greek myths concerning the attempts of the Titans, and later the Giants, to defeat Zeus and assume mastery of the universe. Both Titans and Giants were defeated and imprisoned underground (Asimov-a, 540).

Whether Greek-inspired or not, the legend came to be firmly fixed in Jewish consciousness (Asimov-a, 540). Jesus refers to it at one point in Luke: “He replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven’ (Luke 10:18,). With this verse, there is an affirmation of the Christian acceptance of the then developing Lucifer myth.

From Christian times, it became a natural eventuality for believers to re-interpret the Old Testament writings within the New Testament framework. The first occurrence of the term “Lucifer” Isaiah is naturally appropriated into the new belief- system:

It seemed natural to associate the legend with the Isaianic statement; indeed, that statement about Lucifer may even have helped give rise to the legend. In any case, the early Church fathers considered Isaiah’s statement to be a reference to the eviction of the devil from Heaven, and supposed Lucifer to be the angelic name of the creature who, after his fall, came to be known as Satan. It is from this line of argument that our common simile “proud as Lucifer” arose (Asimov-a, 540).

## **JUNGIAN ALCHEMY AND TRANSFERENCE**

At the risk of restating some of the materials and tables

previously considered in my paper “*Alchemy, Apocalypse, and Psychology: An Intra-Textual Approach (Jung’s Appropriation of Revelation as a Model for a Theory of Literary Criticism)*” we may now find it useful to briefly discuss the nature of alchemy and the psychological implications Jung found in it (particularly his application of the transference phenomenon). In his study of alchemy, Jung was able to deduce several stages in the process. Originally four stages were distinguished according to the color changes characteristic of each stage: melanosis (blackening), leukosis (whitening), citritinitas (yellowing), and iosis (reddening). Later, these four stages were reduced to three (usually omitting the yellowing stage) and the Latin names were predominately used: nigredo (blackening), albedo (whitening), and rubedo (reddening). Despite this change, alchemy continued to treat four elements (earth, air, fire, water) and four qualities (hot, cold, dry, moist). According to Jung, this change from four to three stages did not have an experimental basis (for the alchemists never achieved their laboratory goal of creating the philosopher’s stone) but for other reasons involving the trinity and the quaternity (Jung-h, 228-230).

Within each stage, there are several procedures which the alchemist would perform in his quest toward accomplishing the Great Work. **TABLE ONE** outlines the process in more detail, with accompanying explanatory notes.

Unlike Freud, Jung saw the transference phenomenon as being a two-way occurrence simultaneously manifesting in both analyst and patient (although not always). He objected to and rejected both Freud’s sexual explanation of the phenomenon and Adler’s power-drive explanation. His major work on the subject, The Psychology of the Transference, gives a clear alchemical- psychological explanation. Jung likened the transference phenomenon as experienced between analyst and patient to that of the alchemist and his soror mystica. In exploring this phenomenon, he devised the diagram presented as **TABLE TWO** (Jung- k, 59). As I have discussed elsewhere, Anthony Stevens further modifies Jung’s original diagram to that of **TABLE**

**THREE** (Stevens, 242). This is the “marriage quaternity” of the King and Queen in the union of opposites.

Both of these diagrams serve to demonstrate the relationships which occur when the analyst is male and the patient is female (a very common occurrence in Jung’s personal practice). The arrows represent the pull from masculine to feminine and from feminine to masculine:

<b>A</b>	The uncomplicated, direct personal relationship
<b>B</b>	The relationship between the man and his <i>anima</i> and the woman and her <i>animus</i>
<b>C</b>	The unconscious relationship between his <i>anima</i> and her <i>animus</i>
<b>D</b>	The relationship between the woman's <i>animus</i> and the man and between the man's <i>anima</i> and the woman

In real life, these relationships are all mixed together (Jung-k, 60; Stevens, 243). Jung saw this diagram as the key to the work. To succeed, the opus requires relationship and feeling. In this, the analytical relationship resembles the marriage relationship as much as the alchemical relationship (hence the term “marriage quaternity”). In the transference, the patient projects characteristics which she needs (usually archetypal programs) on to the analyst who begins to take on these characteristics in an unconscious response. Healing transformation occurs when these projections are recognized and dealt with within the analysis.

For a much more thorough explanation of Jung’s interpretation of the alchemical process in psychological terms as they could be applied to a specific problem in literary criticism, I refer the reader to my paper “Alchemy, Apocalypse, and Psychology: An Intra-Textual Approach (Jung’s Appropriation of Revelation as a Model for a Theory of Literary Criticism)” and, of course, to Jung’s original treatment of

the subject.

## **THE MEDIEVAL MYSTERY PLAYS AND THE FALL OF LUCIFER**

The mystery cycles begin and end in the heavens, the opening play of The Fall of Lucifer considering a subject never dramatised before and very rarely since (Woolf, 105). The story was reconstructed by the early church writers by collecting various biblical texts which were understood in the light of Luke 10:18 when Jesus says that he has seen Satan fall from heaven. The most important of the Old Testament texts were the apostrophes addressed to the king of Babylon (Isaiah 14:12-15) and the king of Tyre (Ezekiel 28:2-19). To these, the account of the war in heaven (provided in Revelation 12:3-9) was sometimes added (Woolf, 105).

The story of Satan's fall (first fully told in The City of God) is best known to modern critics through Milton's Paradise Lost. Milton's narrative demonstrates the problems one might encounter when treating this material in a literary rather than theological framework. The medieval authors evade these problems through a symbolic treatment of the subject (Woolf, 105).

Although there is some evidence for the existence of liturgical dramas dealing with Lucifer as early as the twelfth century in Germany, The Fall of Lucifer most likely was included in the Chester Cycle fairly late, between 1467 and 1488 (Happe-a, 49).

Within the Chester Cycle, the play was performed by the Tanners, who previously had assisted the Skinners and Shoemakers. The story of Lucifer was most likely then included in The Creation as performed by the Drapers (Happe-a, 49). This seems likely as the Wakefield Cycle begins with The Creation and the Fall of the Angels



(Bevington, 258).

Happe explains the possible reason for the late inclusion of The Fall of Lucifer in the cycle:

The inclusion of the story in the cycles at a relatively late date may be accounted for by the fact that it is not Scriptural. Moreover it does not relate directly to the Church calendar. Its inclusion and development rest rather on its relevance to theological and figurative objectives. The Fall of Lucifer gives a cosmic reference to the Fall of Adam because it takes place before time begins. The one anticipates the other as a kind of double -- a technique apparent in many aspects of medieval art -- and it provides a motive which is superhuman. The possible dramatic weakness which a repetition of the fall plot might contain is offset by making Lucifer, in common with other devils elsewhere in the cycles, a grotesque and unrepentant villain who thoroughly deserves his fate. This impression is intensified by his boastful and witless companion Lightborne. In the long term...[The Fall of Lucifer and The Fall of Adam] became types for tragedy (Happe-a, 49).

The material, while not scriptural, serves a theological and dramatic purpose. This is not only true of the Lucifer material found in the Chester Cycle, but other cycles as well. Rosemary Woolf, in The English Mystery Plays, finds a strong theological and dramatic motive behind the inclusion of what she describes as “the plays of the fall: The Fall of the Angels, The Fall of Man, and Cain and Abel” (Woolf, 105).

## **BIBLICAL SOURCES AND THE FALL OF LUCIFER**

As earlier discussed, the inclusion of the Lucifer material into the mystery cycles has more than scriptural basis. The myth served a theological and dramatic purpose which the writers of the Bible did not have.

If one were to examine how one age reads, understands, and appropriates the writings of another age into its own belief system, one might very well find Jung's transference phenomenon a useful tool for such an examination. In developing a methodology for a literary use for the psychological interpretation of the alchemical process and its explanation for the transference phenomenon, one needs to make some adjustments to the framework of Jung's discussion.

While pursuing inter-textual criticism and the literary influence of one work upon another, one is obviously not speaking about psychologists and patients or alchemists and soror mysticae. Rather one's discussion centers around readers and writers or rewriters and sources.

In the case of the mystery plays, the writers of the medieval dramas serve as analysts or rewriters of the original materials in the scripture, their prima materia. There is a definite projection of their own belief system upon the biblical work which is already within their own psycho-religious makeup. These projected elements are not within the original work.

However, as time passes and the Lucifer myth becomes more ingrained in the Christian belief system, the Bible takes on meanings which reflect more of what has been projected upon it by the readers rather than what was intended by the writers. To reflect this relationship between the Bible source and the writers of the mystery plays, we may modify the diagram of the relationships within Jung's "Marriage Quaternity" to that of **TABLE FOUR**. The arrows

represent the pull from static (unchanging) to dynamic (changing) and from dynamic to static:

<b>A</b>	the uncomplicated, direct relationship of reader to material
<b>B</b>	the relationship between the reader and his <i>static nature</i> and the source and <i>its dynamic nature</i>
<b>C</b>	the unconscious unwritten relationship between the reader's <i>static nature</i> and the source's <i>dynamic nature</i>
<b>D</b>	the relationship between the reader's <i>static nature</i> and the source and between the source's <i>dynamic nature</i> and the reader

Naturally, these relationships are combined together in actuality. However, the “Marriage Quaternity” of the transference gives us a useful visual representation of what may have occurred as the medieval dramatists appropriated their biblical sources in the writing of their drama, The Fall of Lucifer.

With this brief alchemical and transference orientation to the material, it is now appropriate to examine some specific sections of the drama. These selections will be compared to some of their source scriptures (as a comprehensive study is not possible given the limits of this paper). A brief explanation of the original source and its appropriated meaning will also be offered.

The Fall of Lucifer begins with the scene set in Heaven. God (Deus Pater) begins the drama by declaring:

Ego sum alpha et...[Omega],  
Primus et nobilissimus;  
It is my will yt sholde be soe  
Yt is, it was, yt shall be thus. [lines 1-4]

This is an obvious adoption of Christ's declaration, "I am the Alpha and the Omega...who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty," from Revelation 1:8. This is repeated later in Revelation 21:6. This image of God as the beginning and the end, an infinite proto-uroboros so to speak, is a commonly known one and would have been well understood and received by the medieval audience.

God gives his account of the state of heaven and notes the existence of the angelic orders:

Neene orders of angells be ever to one attending.  
Doe your endeavour, and double ye not under my  
domynacion.  
[lines 24-25]

Lucifer now enters and lists and describes the nature and heirarchy of the nine angelic orders:

Lord, throughe thy grace and mighte thou hast  
us wrought:  
Nyne orders of angelles here as you may see,  
Cherubyn and Seraphyn throughe your thoughte,  
Trones and Domynacions in blisse to bee,

With Principatus, that order brighte,  
And Potestates in blissefull heighte,  
Also Virtues throughe your great mighte,  
Angeli, also Archangeli.

Nyne orders here to be full witterlye  
That you have made here full brighte;  
In thie blisse full righte [they] be,  
And I the principall lord here in thie sighte.  
[lines 29-40]

The notion of angelic orders and the specific duties and assignments of the angels comes from a fairly early development in Judaism. Some of the orders are mentioned in the Old Testament, but the specific hierarchy given here though is entirely Christian. The nine orders can be traced as early as the fifth century (Happe-a, 652). A well-known scriptural reference to this can be found in Jude:

And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home -- these he has kept in darkness bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. (Jude 1:6)

As can be understood from this account of the fall of the angels, God had assigned differing areas of responsibility and authority to each of the angels (see Daniel 10:20-21, where the various princes may be angels assigned to various nations). According to various traditions some of these angels refused to maintain their assignments and thus became the devil and his angels as in Matthew 25:41 (NIV, 1920).

Lucifer, as the “bearer of light” [line 80], is accompanied by his subordinate Lightborne. The name Lucifer, while present in some translations of the Bible, is not used as the name of the pre-transformed Satan. This interpretation came later. The most important verses surrounding this myth are Isaiah 14:12 and Revelation 12:7-9 (and in the latter, no explicit name is used but for “the dragon”). Since the original Hebrew word used in the Old Testament verses pertaining to Lucifer meant “shining one” and Lucifer means “light bringer,” it is not difficult to see how the belief in Lucifer as the bearer of light could have evolved by medieval times. The belief was already quite evident by New Testament times, “[F]or Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14-15). This image of a false “angel of light” corresponds to Satan’s duties as “The Deceiver” and the “Prince of Darkness” (NIV, 1775). In Jungian terms, this is not so much a deceit but a manifestation of Lucifer’s Shadow- self, Satan. Within the light, there is darkness -- within the darkness, light. The name Lightborne is not scriptural. It seems to be a medieval invention which may have been another name for Lucifer. However the Chester

dramatist treats them as two characters. Lightborne does not appear in the other mystery cycles (Happe-a, 652).

God sets the stage and orients the audience to the time of the drama by stating:

The worlde that is both voyde and vayne, I forme in this  
formation,

With a dungeon of darkness that never shall have  
endinge.

These workes now well be done by my devyne  
formation.

[lines 50-52]

Here, God informs his audience that the drama, while not strictly biblical, takes place at the beginning of the biblical time frame when “God created the heavens and the earth...[and] the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep...” (Genesis 1:1-2).

The activities of this time are also connected to the traditional Lucifer myth in that from the beginning God is in the process of developing these “dungeons of darkness” which are obviously a reference to the Abyss. This conjunction is between the beginning and the end times. The purpose of the dungeons, as well as their relationship to the fallen angels, is given in 2 Peter: “For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell [Tartarus], putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment...” (2 Peter 2:4). We can see that, in the minds of the medieval dramatists, the coming rebellion of the angels was prepared for prior to its occurrence. The meaning is transformed into a slightly more fatalistic outlook than that which the original scripture might have held.

Interestingly, the sins of the angels in 2 Peter 2:4 may not have been directly related to Lucifer’s fall as the medieval scholars would have read the text. The editors of the New International Version Study Bible comment on this text as follows:

Some believe this sin was the one referred to in Genesis 6:2, where the sons of God are said to have intermarried with the daughters of men, meaning (according to this view) that angels married human women. The offspring of those marriages are said to have been the Nephilim....But since it appears impossible for angels, who are spirits, to have sexual relations with women, the sin referred to in this verse probably occurred before the fall of Adam and Eve. The angels who fell became the devil and the evil angels (probably the demons and evil spirits referred to in the New Testament). (NIV, 1900)

If this view were the correct one, then the nine orders of angels would not have been possible prior to the creation. No matter which is the correct view, it was obviously appropriated in a certain way by the medieval dramatists to fit their theological needs in the writing of The Fall of Lucifer.

While we have seen from Asimov that many traditions hold that Lucifer's fall came from his refusal to bow down to God's new creation, man, the reason given in the Chester Cycle and believed by many is because of the sin of pride and disobedience. Before leaving his heavenly court to take care of the business of the creation, God gives Lucifer the temporary reins of power, with one exception:

Touche not my trone by non assent.  
All your bewty I shall apayre  
And pride fall ought in your intent.  
[lines 7072]

This has very strong echoes to God's commandments to Adam in the Garden of Eden. Then he says, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17). The Chester dramatists are using foreshadowing to the

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disaster to come within The Fall of Lucifer in relationship to the next play in the series of The Fall of Adam.

The throne of God is very likely associated with the great white throne of judgment found in the vision of the Apocalypse: “Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it” (Revelation 20:11). If heaven is the alchemical retort, then the throne of God is the lamp which holds the flame which transforms everything. After all, God commands Lucifer to:

Behod the beames of my bright face,  
Which ever was ans shall endure.  
[lines 95-96]

We know that the actor portraying God would have worn a gilded mask in the performance of the play (Happe-a, 652). This seems quite appropriate for our study, given Joseph Campbell’s work on the various masks of God (Campbell-a, 456-517) and Jung’s dream research regarding alchemy and mandala (Jung-f, 169-297).

Once God vacates the heavenly throneroom to attend to the creation, Lucifer sits himself upon the throne. It is interesting to note that the angels do not try to forcibly remove him from the holy seat (as would have been expected if the “war in heaven” verses of Revelation were being used as direct sources). Rather, they try to convince him to think through what he is doing and to realize what God’s probable action will be. For instance, the Dominationes ask:

Alas! Why make you this great offence?  
Bothe Lucifer and Lightburne, to yow I say:  
Our Sovereigne Lorde will have you hence,  
And he fynd you in this aray.  
[lines 181-184]

If the Revelation source had been used for this scene, then Michael and his angels would have defended the throne from Lucifer and his angels



through military action:

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down -- that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (Revelation 12:7-9)

Although very well known in the popular imagination of the Christians of the day (and the present), these particular verses probably did not serve as the direct model for the conflict in the Chester Cycle's The Fall of Lucifer for several reasons. Two major reasons may very well be that these verses refer to the second casting of Satan from Heaven (NIV, 1939) and, because of this, the Revelation material is incorporated into the final play of the cycle dealing with The Last Judgment.

However, the material that seems to have been used also refers to the Archangel Michael. Here, a dispute between Satan and the archangel is handled through rhetoric and God's judgment and not through violence:

But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (Jude 1:9)

This verse is a reference to the apocryphal The Assumption of Moses (NIV, 1920). Michael has a long history in association with the Lucifer myth. In Daniel 12:1, he is the protector of Israel who will deliver her from tribulation in the last days (NIV, 1939). It is interesting to see that in the drama of The Fall of Lucifer Michael does not appear. Even the popular conception of the story is modified and transformed.

Once God discovers the trespass of Lucifer upon the throne, he is very quick to judge and mete out the punishment:

I made thee Angell and Lucifer,  
And here thou would be lord over all!  
Therefore I charge this order cleare  
Fast from this place loke that ye fall.  
Full sone I shall doe change your cheare,  
For your foule pryde to hell yow shall.  
[lines 195-200]

Compare this to the speed and depth of God's judgment as Christ describes it in Matthew: [Jesus said,] "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels'" (Matthew 25:41). This particular verse corresponds with the length and depth of the punishment according to God's decree as the Chester dramatists have stated it:

I charge yow fall tyll I byd 'Noe!'  
To the pitt of hell, evermore to be!  
[lines 207-208]

It is interesting to note that, like the scriptural passages on this matter, The Fall of Lucifer seems to be inconsistent in regards to the length of the imprisonment in hell. Above, Lucifer is told "evermore to be." However, later in hell, the First Demon bemoans his state to the Second Demon, giving a different account:

Thy wytt it was as well as myne,  
Of that pride that we did showe,  
And now lyeth here in hell pyne,  
Till the day of Dome that beames shall blowe.  
[lines 225-228]

This seems to indicate that the imprisonment would take place for a specific amount of time (that is until the judgment of Revelation). However, later the First Demon describes his imprisonment as being eternal:

Out! Alas! for wo and wickedness!  
I am so fast bound in this cheare,  
And never away hence shall passe,  
But lye in hell all still here!  
[lines 249-252]

This binding in the state of hell, may be related to the binding of the dragon in Revelation:

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.  
(Revelation 20:1-3)

One can see here how the evident confusion regarding the length of Lucifer's imprisonment could have come about. If this passage is indeed a source for the medieval dramatist, and it seems to be so, one can see how the thousand year imprisonment and reinprisonment could have caused some confusion. Thus The Fall of Lucifer seems to contradict itself, yet still follows its traditional and scriptural sources.

Once Lucifer and his angels are thrown to Hell and transformed into demons, there is immediately a resentment toward their state and a desire for petty revenge against God by attacking mankind. The First Demon commands:

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Some of my order shall he be,  
To make mankinde to do amisse;  
Ruffian, my friend fayre and free,  
Loke that thou kepe mankinde from bliss!  
[lines 237-240]

The name Ruffian is here given to a devil. While the stories of the tormenting devils and demons grew out of the development of the Lucifer and Devil myths and are found throughout the New Testament, this passage seems to be related to the casting down of the dragon in Revelation. When the dragon saw that “he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child” (Revelation 12:13). Here, the dragon attacks mankind due to its rage at being defeated in heaven (NIV, 1939). This intense hostility is very much related to that of Lucifer in the drama. As to why some evil angels are imprisoned and others seem to be free to serve Satan as demons on the earth is neither explained in scripture (NIV, 1900) nor in the Chester Cycle’s version of The Fall of Lucifer.

Once the scene returns to Heaven, God puts things back to order and gets back to the business of the creation. It should be noted, that here too, the Chester dramatists follow traditional theological thought in presenting their medieval interpretation of scripture through the drama. For instance, when speaking of the plans toward the creation, God declares:

What I first thought, yet so will I.  
I, and two parsons, are at one assent  
A solemne matter for to trye.  
[lines 264-266]

This is obviously a medieval reading of a verse in Genesis when God says, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...” (Genesis 1:26). This plural pronoun has been traditional re- interpreted by Christians to refer to the Trinity of the pre- existent God, Christ, and Holy Spirit. Obviously, the original writers of this passage had no such notions in

mind. Its meaning has gone through a transference and been rewritten to comply with the dynamic nature of the subsequent readers.

The final passage of the play places the drama's timeframe firmly within that certain space from beginning through the first day of the creation as God says:

My first day now have I wrought,  
I geve yt fullie my blessing.  
[lines 280-281]

This is obviously an appropriation and reversal of the biblical "God saw that the light was good...the first day" (Genesis 1:4- 5).

## CONCLUSIONS

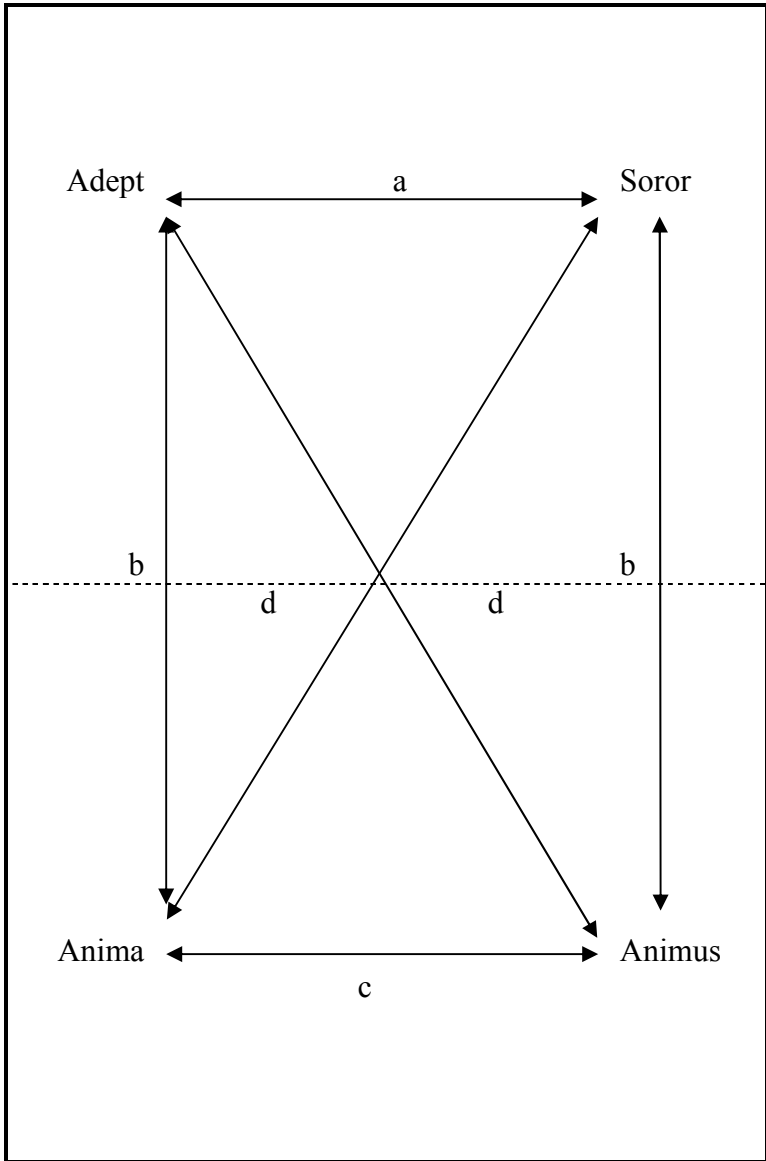
As can be seen from the above brief paper, the use of Jung's approach to alchemical transformation psychology and most notably the interpretation of the transference phenomenon may prove useful to the critic in his interpretation of influence in literature. If the meaning within the first author's work is re-read in terms of the projected meaning of the second author, one might facilitate a new understanding of the influence of one piece of literature upon another. More study and application in this area may prove very fruitful.

## ALCHEMICAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

STAGE	STATE/Process		
	<b>PRIMA MATERIA</b>		Composed material. No distinctions, naive stage.
<b>MELANOSIS</b> [blackening]	<b>Separation/divisio</b>		Reduction to basic elements. Often binary pairs.
	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	
	<b>cuniunctio</b>		Union of opposites.
	<b>PRODUCT OF THE UNION</b>		Omnes colores. Many or white-of-all.
	<b>mortificatio/putrefactio</b>		Death of the product. Re-vitalization.
	<b>NIGREDO</b>		Blackness.
<b>LEUKOSIS</b> [whitening]	<b>ablutio/baptisma</b>		Washing. Transitional.
	<b>ressurrection</b>		Auto-introjection.
	<b>ALBEDO</b>		Whiteness. Silver-moon condition.
<b>CITRINITAS</b> [yellowing] {or}			
	<b>sublimation</b>		Fire.
<b>IOSIS</b> [reddening]	<b>RUBEDO/QUINTESSENCE</b>		Redness. Sun condition. 4 into 5. Male and Female into Androgyny.

TABLE ONE (Refer to Jung-h, 228-241.)

**THE MARRIAGE QUATERNITY:  
*Alchemist and Soror Mystica***



**TABLE TWO** (Jung-k, 59)

## THE MARRIAGE QUATERNITY: *Male Analyst and Female Patient*

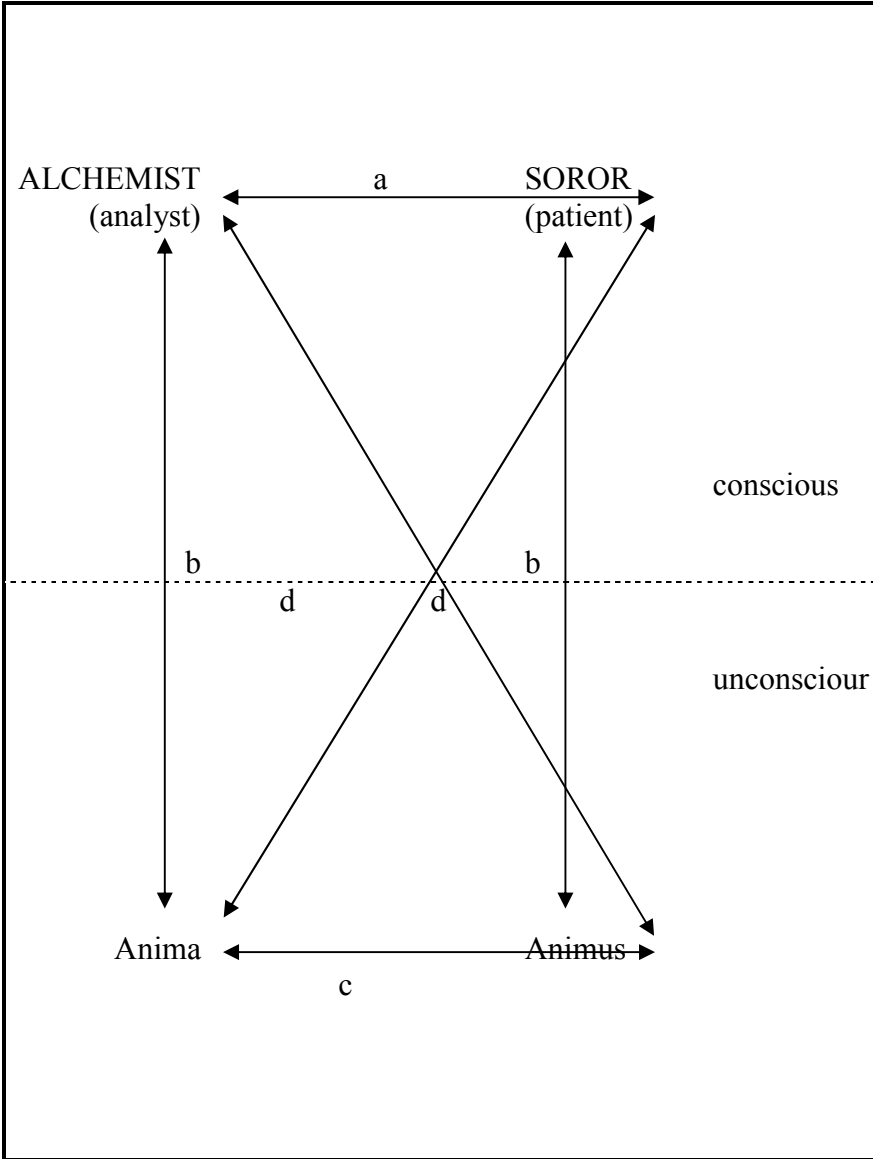
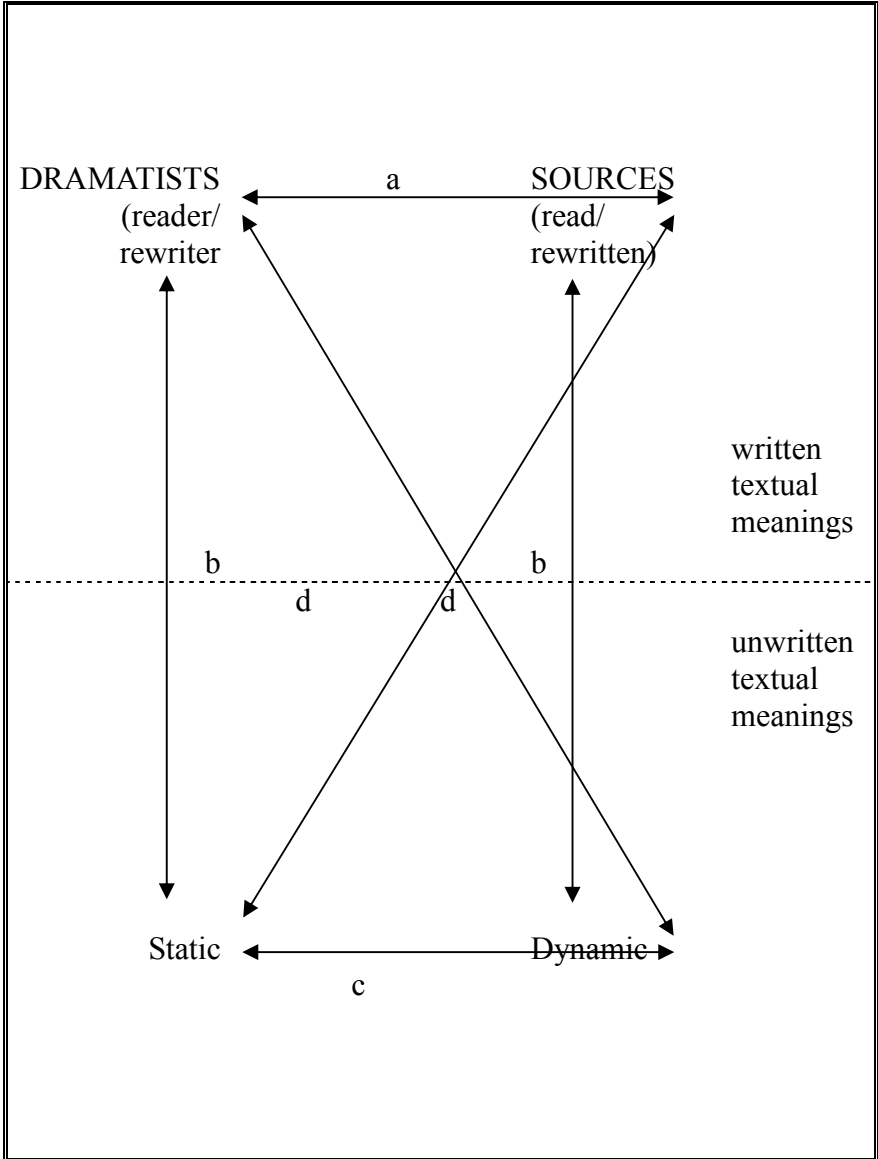


TABLE THREE (Stevens, 242)



**THE MARRIAGE QUATERNITY:  
*Bible Sources and Medieval Dramatists***



**TABLE FOUR**

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# **Journal of Interactive Drama & Literature**

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of  
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform  
Live Action Roleplaying Games**

## **Call for Papers**

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The *Journal of Interactive Drama and Literature* is an online peer-reviewed journal on scenario-based interactive drama freeform live action roleplaying games which provides a forum for serious discussion of live roleplaying game theory, design, and practice. The journal is published regularly. The journal provides a forum for the discussion of any of the various scenario-based theatre-style live action roleplaying games, freeforms, and interactive dramas and invites contributions in all areas of literature, theory, design, and practice for educational, entertainment, and recreational roleplay. Formal and informal essays, articles, papers, and critical reviews are also welcome.

This is a peer-reviewed journal that may include formal papers and informal essays for and by the roleplaying community from a wide variety of disciplines. The focus is general enough so that authors should feel comfortable submitting material of either a formal or informal nature, albeit all submissions are peer-reviewed and should be appropriate to a serious and thoughtful discussion of that type -- we encourage articles, essays, and formal papers on all manner of live roleplaying, freeform, and interactive drama-related topics. Discussions of related ludology, techniques, and good solid critical book and roleplay scenario or event reviews are quite welcome as well. As this is a multi-disciplinary journal, material related to a

wide range of scenario-based learning, social psychology, critical theory, performance studies, popular culture, design, and more as they intersect with the interactive drama are also welcome. Pure design pieces related to scenario construction and review are also encouraged. Each issue will showcase one to three longform or four to six shortform interactive drama freeform live action roleplaying scenarios; creative scenario submissions of this type are very sought after. Scenarios for submission should include a section of self-reflective critical thought and formal designer's notes that discuss issues related to the creation of the piece as well as a formal section which reviews the author's performance experiences with the scenario.

As an international journal, the language of publication is English. Submissions are accepted throughout the year.

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#### **Notes for Contributors**

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