

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

TO DESIRE IS TO IMAGINE: JOHN HAWKES'S TRILOGY

by

SMARO KAMBOURELI

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTERS OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

1980

TO DESIRE IS TO IMAGINE: JOHN HAWKES'S TRILOGY

BY

SMARO KAMBOURELI

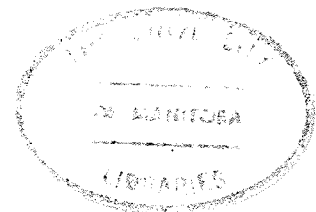
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

©1980

Permission has been granted to the LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA to lend or sell copies of this thesis, to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS to publish an abstract of this thesis.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to those whose encouragement sustained me in the writing of this thesis.

My thanks are due first to my advisor, Professor B. A. Sokoloff, for his illimitable patience, understanding and helpful criticism. I wish also to thank Professor Dennis Cooley, for his enthusiasm and his critical comments. And I am grateful to Professor Alexandre Amprimoz, for his appreciation and understanding, particularly of my critical method.

Jackie Flanagan and Leila Sujir were unfailing sources of emotional support whenever needed.

I am particularly thankful to Robert Kroetsch who not only introduced me to John Hawkes but who actualized for me Hawkes's "design and debris."

to my parents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Introduction	1
Chapter One	
The Phenomenology of Reading Hawkes	5
Chapter Two	
<u>The Blood Oranges</u> : The Impotent Lover as Artist	24
Chapter Three	
<u>Death, Sleep and the Traveler</u> : The Wanderer as Artist ...	54
Chapter Four	
<u>Travesty</u> : Imagine, The Self Real	71
Chapter Five	
The Narrators as Archaeologists	84
Chapter Six	
The Desire for Death and its Limits	95
Conclusion	108
Notes	109
Bibliography	119

Abstract

This thesis is a study of the protagonists of John Hawkes's trilogy, The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty. I explore Cyril's, Allert's and Papa's common belief in sexual freedom and the process that their vision of erotic life follows; a process that goes through the stages of pleasure, physical and emotional destruction, detachment and aesthetic creation. Cyril is transformed during this process from an active sensualist into an impotent lover who presents his past life as a work of art. Allert, a passionate dreamer of sex and death, imagines rather than lives his life; he eventually reconciles his dreamworld with his reality by killing his mistress Ariane. Papa wants to crash his car and kill himself, his daughter and his poet friend in order to explore the process of his imagination during his drive toward death. He wants to prove that every man contains within himself the "seed of the poet."

Besides studying Cyril's, Allert's and Papa's quest for pleasure and aesthetic form, which is the central part of the thesis, I also explore their common narrative method, which I compare with the method an archaeologist uses, and their affinities with death. My critical approach is phenomenological: I take into account the phenomena of the three texts--their direct ontology--and talk about my reading process as it is shaped by the driving force of the three narratives, which is desire.

Introduction

John Hawkes is an important contemporary American novelist. Since his first novel Charivari (1949), reviewers and critics have recognized the originality of his voice and the audacity in his treatment of themes such as sex, violence and art. His inventive power does not result in what one might call experimental fiction--the breaking down of literary conventions. What distinguishes Hawkes from other traditional writers is his intention to create rather than represent reality. The situations he creates and his use of language and narrative structure unsettle the expectations which a reader normally has from traditional fiction. The reader, after his initial shock at Hawkes's terrifying insights, accepts Hawkes's invitation to become involved with his fiction: "A writer wants the reader to speak it, to hear it, to see it, to react to the various aspects of its reality as art."¹

His statement that "As a writer, I am not interested in 'life'. Fiction that insists on created actuality is its own reality"², is the point of departure for my thesis. My thesis is a study of the protagonists in his trilogy, The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty. Cyril, Allert and Papa, the protagonists in each of these novels, are lovers who believe in sexual freedom. They lead the lovers they seduce to a world of pleasure, but one which is closely affiliated with death. When their vision of intense erotic life collapses, or is at the edge of collapsing, the three protagonists enter a state of detachment.

They emerge from it by creating art out of their destroyed fictional lives: they become storytellers. They narrate their past lives of sexual multiplicity from their present, detached point of view.

My approach to the trilogy is phenomenological. How do I use this term? Perhaps only etymologically--to the extent that one can lay out or say something about the phenomenon of the text. In reading The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty I keep in mind Gaston Bachelard's and Paul Ricoeur's notions of phenomenology. The former says that the phenomenological method uncovers the original quality of the text, its direct ontology; I take this as expressing in critical terms Hawkes's statement that the imagination creates everything and anything out of nothing, that fiction does not imitate reality but possesses an actuality of its own. The latter says that intentionality is the theme of phenomenology. This, I think, accounts for the control that Hawkes maintains over his writing, for the tight structures he creates.

As a phenomenological reader, I have intentionally chosen to approach the texts as self-contained worlds. Without ignoring their richness, I avoid taking into consideration their mythical and biblical allusions, their implicit references to other fictions such as Albert Camus's The Fall, or their similarities with literary conventions such as pastoralism. Hawkes, I must say, is partly responsible for my resolution. In one of his interviews concerning the trilogy at hand, he disclaims any familiarity with standard books of mythology and myth criticism. This professed innocence, I think, is a deliberate stance toward tradition. With-

out rejecting it, he makes it clear that The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty can stand on their own.

My thesis is divided in six chapters. The first chapter begins with a presentation of the emotional and physical aspects of my reading process. It then goes on to explore the common element that characterizes the ways in which the three narrators deal with their realities: Cyril's preoccupation with lovemaking, Allert's oscillation between his dreamworld and his external reality and Papa's suicidal drive emphasize the kinetics of their lives. Finally, it deals with how this motion, both physical and mental, is projected to their narratives and how it affects my reading process.

The second chapter examines erotic desire as the force that shapes the lives and the narratives of the three protagonists. It deals specifically with The Blood Oranges: how Cyril's blind faith in love affects the lives of his wife Fiona, his mistress Catherine and Catherine's husband Hugh. Hugh, as the only character of the novel who does not approve of Cyril's theory of "sexual extension," reaches the ultimate point of destruction: he dies a grotesque death. The main emphasis of this chapter is given to Cyril's transformation from an active lover to an impotent man, his sexual detachment turning him into an artist.

The third chapter deals with Death, Sleep and the Traveler. It explores Allert's regression into his dreamworld and his obsession with pornography and death; how he releases himself from his detachment from external reality through his powerful sexual relationship with Ariane which reaches its climax with Ariane's

death, and how his sexual life and his fascination with death reflect his artistic nature.

The fourth chapter is about Travesty. It explores Papa's intention to crash his car and thus kill himself, his daughter Chantal and his poet friend Henri. Papa criticizes Henri's poetic theory and claims that his drive is not an attempt for murder. He argues instead that by means of his fatal drive he becomes an artist exploring the process of his imagination within reality.

In the fifth chapter, I explore the narrative method that Cyril, Allert and Papa use and I compare it with the method an archaeologist uses when he unearths the past. The three narrators begin their narratives in the present and then delve into their past trying to reconstruct those situations from which they are now detached.

The sixth chapter deals with the narrators' crucial experiences with death. Cyril unintentionally causes Hugh's death; Allert kills Ariane; Papa wants to kill himself and murder Chantal and Henri. The narrators' fear of death, their sense of guilt or absence of it, and death's both creative and destructive influence on their lives are the main ideas that this chapter deals with.

The thesis ends with a conclusion in which I recapitulate briefly the central themes of the three novels. Cyril, Allert and Papa through their sexual desire and their desire for death become from mere lovers artists who use their sexual desire as the driving force for their creativity.

CHAPTER ONE

The Phenomenology of Reading Hawkes

I

I record myself reading John Hawkes's trilogy: The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty. Initially, out of curiosity, but very soon, out of fascination. At last, I find myself having to write a thesis on these novels. Gradually, my fascination withdraws, to be replaced by restlessness.

Reading out of fascination means moving the eye on the page with pleasure. Writing (as assignment) means putting words on the page as critical discourse.

I drift through Hawkes's trilogy with excitement. I feel strangely familiar with the three novels. I have established with them an intimacy which still allows surprises every time I read them.

Writing (a thesis) on these novels would be what Roland Barthes calls a "movement of abolition."¹ My critical discourse abolishes the intimate relationship that has developed between me and the novels. I unsettle (distrust?) the flow of the words; I see through them (shadows);² I write (draw on them) other words, possibly mirror-images of the words of the texts.

My critical discourse becomes a heterology that violates my intimacy with the texts. I seal my ears against the repercussion of Hawkes's voice. My pleasure yields to the gestures of my

hand that overshadows not the texts but blank pages. Restlessness. I defer the writing of this thesis on Hawkes. For personal reasons.

How do you write a thesis? Thesis means placing, putting.³ How do you locate yourself as a reader on or within the text you read?

How do I locate myself in "Love's pink panorama"?⁴ How do I get on board Allert's cruise ship? How do I persuade Papa to halt and get me (the reader) into his car? But do I really want to convert myself from the person who reads into the content of this reading? This possible interchange breaks down my identity as a reader; I become a converse which means that I lose my personality in order to assume the fictionality of a character. But, in this case, who is going to be my author? How am I going to deal with my fragmentation?

Fearing the disappearance of my self, I resolve not to "search for an author."⁵ I have my own voice. Like Pirandello's Six Characters in Search of an Author, I do not know whose "fantasy"⁶ my voice echoes; unlike them, I am afraid I cannot act my drama; I can only hear it, and I really doubt that Hawkes could create something out of me, me being so real. I could be part of his cast only if I were determined to re-enact my fantasies. But fantasies lose their charm when re-enacted.

Since I cannot place myself within The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty, my thesis has to follow another route. A parallel route. It has to be a reading. The problem that rises now concerns the nature of my reading.

Hawkes himself through his comments and his style helps me eliminate certain kinds of readings and employ other ones. He says in an interview with John Enck: "I want to try to create a world, not represent it."⁷ This statement of his drives me away from a pure hermeneutic approach: an attempt to modify the meaning of the text according to the meaning of the perceived world.

Hermeneutics, therefore, denies me my reading of Hawkes. It is a translation of the meaning of the text conditioned by the system of values that I, as an interpreter, might have. Susan Sontag, in Against Interpretation, says about it: "To interpret is to impoverish, to deplete the world--in order to set up a shadow world of 'meanings.' It is to turn the world into this world. ('This world'! As if there were any other.)"⁸ This "other world" presupposes an intentional erasure of the meaning of the text by imposing on it an external meaning. Interpretation, that is, denies the text its life.

As E. D. Hirsch says in his essay "Objective Interpretation," "Textual meaning is not a naked given like a physical object."⁹ What is it then? The flexibility of "textual meaning" as such makes it necessary for the reader to look for some givens. Hirsch attempts to create the ground for some; he says:

My problem will be to show that although textual meaning is determined by the psychic acts of an author, and realized by those of a reader, textual meaning itself must not be identified with the author's or reader's psychic acts as such.¹⁰

It is obvious that he rushes to confine these givens within the

boundaries of objectivity which his interpretation of phenomenology defines. Hirsch rejects the "protean"¹¹ nature of the text and imposes on it an objective character. He sees the text as an unchangeable reality.

The reader, Hirsch suggests, can interpret the phenomenology of the text by means first of his "understanding" and secondly of his "memory."¹² But what determines the objectivity of the reader's two main properties, he does not take the risk to define. He is only concerned with a static text that equates with the reader's "awareness"¹³ of the world. When Hawkes says that he wants "to create a world, not represent it," he, automatically, puts the reader's "awareness" of the world aside and asserts the autonomous life of his texts.

Hawkes even seems to reply directly to Hirsch when he denies the discursive function of memory. Trying to explain the genesis of his images, he says that they are "a series of pictures that literally and actually do come to mind, but I've never seen them before. It is perfectly true that I don't know what they mean, but I feel and know that they have meaning."¹⁴ These "pictures," with the "feeling" of meaning that accompanies them, are independent from Hawkes's remembered life. They do not transmit action and people from one medium into another (in this case, from the field of his action to the field of his books). Their phenomenology is contrary to the phenomenology that Hirsch proposes.

Hawkes does not recognize in them the re-enactment of his past and present experience. His images are the product of the

"phenomenology of the imagination" that Gaston Bachelard talks about: "a study of the phenomenon of the poetic image when it emerges into the consciousness as a direct product of the heart, soul and being of man, apprehended in his actuality."¹⁵ Bachelard says that "Because of its novelty and its action, the poetic image has an entity and a dynamism of its own; it is referable to a direct ontology" (p. XIII). In other words, Hawkes intuitively responds to the ontology of his images. When he says "I do not know what they mean" he implies that his images do not derive from his "awareness" of the world. Since he cannot place them within the tangible reality, the images are opposite to causality.

The non-causal character of the images is something that Bachelard himself thinks of as something indispensable for their phenomenology: "the poetic image will have a sonority of being" (p. XII), he says, clarifying, at the same time, that the images reverberate not the past but their "specific reality" (p. XV). The reader's "understanding" and his "awareness" of the real objects that the poetic images may represent do not always illuminate the text. Trying to trace the accuracy of their representation, the reader can only distort their poetic reality.

Hawkes's fiction seems to work on this line as he recapitulates the process of his creative act in the phrase: "The ultimate power of the imagination is to create anything and everything--out of nothing. . . ."¹⁶ This statement does not postulate a negation of the resources of life: it is an assertion of the dynamic world of the imagination, an affirmation that Hawkes as an artist and Hawkes as a non writer do not live in the same world.

In the same way the characters of this trilogy are surrounded by an environment which is not at all typical of external reality. Cyril, in The Blood Oranges, in an imaginary landscape whose inhabitants' main speech pattern is "'croak peonie'" (BO, p. 23), builds up an erotic sanctuary of extreme lyricism and horror. The paradoxes inherent in the nature of the world he creates and directs are identifiable only with the world of fantasy. Allert is for much of Death, Sleep and the Traveler on an ocean liner which is totally secluded from the known world. As a result, the ship follows its own imaginary route in a world of ambiguities. Similarly, Papa, in Travesty, spends the entire novel in his car trying to fascinate the passengers he leads toward death with his frantic monologue. All three settings of the trilogy reflect the psyches of the main characters; they create their own worlds, worlds that have the dynamism to attract into them the rest of the characters as well as the reader. They live, that is, in the world of the imagined self, not in the world of other people.

Hawkes's fiction is self-generated as he dismisses the imitative way of writing. On the other hand, he also makes it clear that he is "pleased that life does imitate fiction."¹⁷ According to Hawkes, art sits quite apart from life, neither influencing nor being influenced by it. The point of departure of his fiction is the "phenomenology of the imagination"; its reference, nothing but the reality of the artist.

Hawkes's revelatory comments release me as a reader from the impossible responsibilities that the hermeneutic approach assigns me. A hermeneutic reader of Hawkes works with the assump-

tion that he understands the world and its values; then, he tries to apply these values to the fiction he reads which he takes as representing Hawkes's own world. He appropriates fiction to life since he uses life as the paradigm. I consider this interpretation as an attitude which displays a great responsibility toward life, but also as an attitude which ignores the dynamics of artistic creation. Hawkes, as an artist, works with imagination. I, as a reader, must work with fantasia, with the domain of the imaginary happenings that his fictions make me recognize. Thus, Hawkes makes me aware of the phenomenology of my reading.

II

What is the phenomenology of my reading? Wolfgang Iser, in his book The Implied Reader, remarks that "The phenomenological theory of art lays full stress on the idea, that, in considering a literary work, one must take into account not only the actual text but also, and in equal measure, the actions involved in responding to that text."¹⁸ In order to be aware of these "actions" one must decenter the locus of the literary meaning from the text and relocate it on the plane that is put into action by the reading process. What makes this plane present-at-hand is the kinetics of the reading process, both physiological and mental, attributed to the text itself as well as to the reader.

With regard to the awareness of the kinetics involved in reading the world (the world of the text too) and in writing about it (writing also about reading the text) Charles Olson writes:

Physiology: the surface (senses--the 'skin':

of 'Human Universe') the body
 itself--proper--one's own 'corpus':
 PROPRIOCEPTION the cavity of the
 body, in which the organs are slung:
 the viscera, or interoceptive, the
 old 'psychology' of feeling, the
 heart; of desire, the liver; . . .

To which

PROPRIOCEPTION: the data of depth sensibility/the
 'body' of us as object which spon-
 taneously or of its own order
 produces experience of, 'depth' Viz
 SENSIBILITY WITHIN THE ORGANISM BY
 MOVEMENT OF ITS OWN TISSUES.¹⁹

The inclosure of the reader's body within the process of reading
 presupposes, evidently, a "depth sensibility" of the "body" of the
 text as such.

In the case of The Blood Oranges, the body of the text is
 the body of language as it is shaped by Cyril's narrative
 machinations. Cyril as a first-person narrator uses and abuses
 language with the sole desire to "complete the picture" (BO, p. 2).
 of "the silken weave of Love's pink Panorama" (BO, p. 1). He
 allows himself to speak only "tones of joy and desire" (BO, p. 3)--
 a language that can be merely "sonorous" and expressive of "erotic
 declarations" (BO, p. 2). His proprioception, therefore, is con-
 fined to those organs that can respond only to sexual stimuli.

Since he claims that for the completion of love's tapestry
 it is enough to "join loin to loin often and easily" (BO, p. 2),
 the "interoceptive" aspect of his kinetics is one-dimensional; it
 is in tune with the rhythmic movements of intercourse and with the
 mental excitement that accompanies the foreplay that precedes it.
 Cyril, by not synchronizing the rest of the body (head/heart) with
 the sexual motion, lacks "depth sensibility."

The result is that the body of language he uses is partial,

a provocation in itself for me, the reader, who has no other alternative but to flow together with Cyril's language. In other words, I respond to Cyril's physical projections in a wholly proprioceptive manner. I allow my body to collaborate with the body of Cyril's text, making full use, at the same time, as Olson would say, of "the data of, depth" that "one's life is informed from."²⁰ The source of the depth information Olson calls: "the SOUL, the intermediary, the intervening thing, the interruptor, the resistor[sic]. The self."²¹ My "self" surfaces on the same phenomenological plane where the kinetics of the reading process and the text itself coalesce.

Being a phenomenological interpreter, I do not have to fear the disappearance of my self. As William V. Spanos remarks in his essay "Breaking the Circle: Hermeneutics as Disclosure":

the phenomenological interpreter loses his privileged status as "objective" observer of a sealed off and familiar or "domesticated" world, a world as formalized icon . . . to become a Careful Dasein "inquiring into the extra-ordinary." He becomes, that is, Homo Viator, man on the way.²²

From being subjected to the observation of the familiar, I become actively engaged in the process of my reading, the subject who sets the text "on the way" toward its proprioceptive recognition.

For this reason, I do not become exasperated when I read an example of Cyril's existentialism:

AM I EMBRACING AIR? COULD THAT BE ALL? IS THAT
WHAT it feels like to discover with absolute cer-

tainty that you yourself have simply disappeared
from the filmy field? (BO, p. 34)

Neither do I despair when he states, seriously enough: "Even the dialogue of the frogs is rapturous" (BO, p. 1), or "But it is hardly a fault to have lived my life, and still to live it, without knowing pain" (BO, p. 35). Instead, I try to read these parts of the body of the text that the tone of his statements denies direct exposition; I start "on the way" toward the disclosure of the latent phenomena in the text. Spanos, continuing his discussion of phenomenological interpretation, says:

To put it positively, this process "locates" the truth of being in the interpreter's continuous ecstatic awareness of the ontologically alternating rhythm of concealment and disclosure, appearing and disappearing, truth and error, continuity and change. . . .²³

My oscillation between what Cyril presents and what is present by means of its (conspicuous for me) absence establishes the way that my reading of The Blood Oranges follows.

By the same token, I become a traveler "on the way" in order to follow Allert. Allert, in Death, Sleep and the Traveler, oscillates between the world of his dreams, internal motion, and the world of "reality," external motion. He lives in a continuous ecstasy: ecstasy as displacement (for he displaces and misplaces himself in reality as a result of conditioning it according to his dreamworld); and ecstasy as ek-stasis (being outside and in constant motion). His kinetics, however, is diametrically different

from Cyril's. Because Allert distrusts external reality, he perceives his dreams ontologically. He inhabits their phenomenological place--"place is where you find it," says Phyllis Webb²⁴--and projects to the outside world his "interoceptive" perception of them.

Here is an example that illustrates perfectly Allert's preoccupation with the motion of what is conventionally real:

In the darkness the ship was rolling like a bottle lying on its side in a sea of oil. Sweating in the night's heat, feeling in the flesh of my forearms the warmth of the ship's rail, and puffing on my small Dutch cigar and staring down at the phosphorescent messages breeding and rippling on the black waves, suddenly I knew the ship was making no forward progress whatsoever. The knowledge was startling. One moment I was sweating and smoking at the ship's rail, the most reluctant voyager ever to depart on a cruise for pleasure, and the next I was leaning at the polished rail in sudden possession of the sure knowledge that the ship, though rolling, was otherwise standing still, or at best imperceptibly drifting. How could it be?²⁵

I find such a lengthy quote necessary because it illustrates clearly Allert's ek-stasis. Forced to be on this cruise by his wife who abandons him, Allert sees the ship as a "bottle," a confined place, and himself sealed into it. Thus his startling knowledge that the ship does not drift. His only way out of this imposed stasis is by means of his dreams: mesmerized by "the phosphorescent messages breeding and rippling on the black waves," he soothingly finds his way back to the ecstasy of his dreamworld. His pleasure, unlike that of the other voyagers, relies primarily on his internal motion, not on the drifting of the ship.

Since Allert's phenomenology is defined from within (his

introverted self), I cannot follow the rhythm of his text in a completely proprioceptive manner: I cannot dream his dreams. The "depth sensibility" required here is not that of the "SOUL . . . the intervening thing, . . . The self"; it is that of the unconscious which Olson places inside us but which does not feel "literally identical with our own physical or mortal self."²⁶ I lose here the perspective of the common ground of the phenomenology of my reading which is the body--body of the text/bodies of the characters and the reader--and I have to replace it with what precedes it: Allert's dreamworld.

Unlike Cyril's story that attracts me into its setting, I have to wait for Allert to reveal his unconscious. Once his dreamworld attains an ontological status, apprehended by the third eye/ the reader's eye, it is reduced to a world: it is shared. Then I am ready to oscillate, back and forth in the text, together with Allert. The necessary basis for my oscillation is the synchronization of my reading with Allert's dreams as they come to a phenomenal existence.

I never see Allert dreaming. What I see instead is Allert describing and talking about his dreams. His narrative presents his dreams as text. This text is metalinguistic, for it is generated by the transformation of the dreams from images into language. The activities involved in this transformation correspond to the frequency of the dreams, to their preceding conditions, to the degree of Allert's absorption in them, to the way he manifests his absorption and finally to the manner of his return to reality. The study of these activities provides me with the depth

information I need for the understanding of the text. In other words, they present the transformational process as the "objective correlative"²⁷ of Allert's oscillation between his dreams and reality.

While Cyril and Allert, each one of them with his own understandable way as a character, allow me to read them and their texts, the main character of Travesty resists me as a reader. An ordinary resistance, since he is, supposedly, involved in a simultaneous suicide and murder. Unlike Cyril and Allert who name themselves, this character chooses anonymity. He replaces his name with his title: he is a father; therefore, he is called Papa. Papa is also a first-person narrator, but not like the other two narrators of the trilogy. Cyril and Allert are both aware of being storytellers, of having an audience outside the text. Their stories, although they do not comply with the Aristotelian model that demands a beginning, a middle and an end, are paradigmatic of a postmodern sensibility which defies the notion that the end of a narrative must necessarily coincide with the resolution of the story.

The Blood Oranges and Death, Sleep and the Traveler are both characterized by successive climaxes and anticlimaxes which, although they create a sense of a coming ending, do not negate the possibility of an ongoing process beyond the last words in the books. These climaxes and anticlimaxes correspond to the time and place of the stories. Cyril's narrative is a collage of different memories imposed on his present reality: he remembers hiking up the hills in Illyria in pursuit of peasant girls and erotic

adventures, but when his flashback is over he finds himself between Catherine's sanatorium and the empty black beach.

Similarly, Allert's narrative is a series of leaps from his present quiet life to his past: he remembers his marriage being a menage a trois, recalls Peter's death and his trip to the exotic islands. Yet, although he and Cyril put an end to the flowing of their memories, this does not necessarily resolve their present situations. They both end up speculating about their present problems and their future. Their narratives are open-ended. The reader is also invited to speculate, to continue imagining their lives, beyond the end of the novels.

This relationship between the modes and the locales of the narratives becomes more dramatic in Travesty. The reason for this is that Papa does not tell a story at some point of removal. Instead, as he drives his car containing two passengers, his daughter, Chantal, and his poet friend, Henri, he intends to crash into a wall "in order to explore the imagination in the process."²⁸ Papa does not remember; he imagines. He talks about a story in motion; his fascination with it: his search for the "dark mouth of cessation":

listening to the music is exactly like hurtling through the night in a warm car: the musical experience, like the automobile, guarantees timelessness, or so it appears. The song and the road are endless, or so we think. And yet, they are not. The beauty of motion, musical or otherwise, is precisely this: that the so-called guarantee of

timelessness is in fact the living tongue in the dark mouth of cessation. And cessation is what we seek, if only because it alone is utterly unbelievable.²⁹

Papa, unlike Allert who fantasizes an absence of motion, is aware of the aesthetics of motion. Motion frees him from time and place. The conventional resolution of a narrative becomes in Papa's case "cessation." Travesty ends because Papa eventually leaves the book: he dies.

The orchestration of his suicidal drive reveals the polarities of his search for the "unbelievable" "cessation": cessation as stasis which, for Papa, equates with inert life and death; and cessation as the formative end of a narrative. But the fact that the "road" is "endless" means that Papa is not merely interested in murdering Chantal and Henri. He is interested in the happenings that take place while covering this "road": the killing of time as the car plunges into the darkness of the highway; the "song" of his exhilarating knowledge that he challenges what "appears" to be challenged; the suspense of his horrified victims for the impending end.

Papa's narrative, therefore, is process, a process parallel to the acceleration of his car on the highway. As a result, the kinetics of his narrative enhances the kinetics that characterize Cyril's and Allert's stories though Papa's embodies willing motion. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty says:

Each voluntary movement takes place in a setting,

against a background which is determined by the movement itself. We perform our movement in a space which is not "empty" or unrelated to them, but which on the contrary, bears a highly determinate relation to them.³⁰

By moving against cessation, Papa animates his "background": his imagination, that plots the murder and enacts it, and his body that sets the car in gear, which in its turn moves his body and ultimately the narrative.

Papa, obviously, is a practitioner of Olson's extreme notion of kinetics:

movement at any cost. Kinesthesia: beat(nik) the sense whose organs lie in the muscles, tendons, joints, and are stimulated by bodily tensions (—or relaxations of same). Violence: knives/ anything, to get the body in.³¹

Papa does not place only his "body in" the car. By pretending to offer Chantal and Henri a ride to his house, he makes sure they get in his car. Papa with the license of his imagination violates both the bodies of others and what is considered to be the body of the story: a beginning, a middle and an end.

The absence of a clearly cut story-line in Travesty is replaced by Papa's monologue, a monologue that lasts as long as his drive, a monologue that contains traces of the story that Papa is in the process of creating. Travesty, therefore, is not a text written about an event after it has already happened. It is a text

in which the imagining of the story and its articulation are simultaneous; they follow in exact correspondence.

Having already established a "body" relationship between my self as a reader and the first two texts of the trilogy, I start groping here for the "body" of Travesty, for Papa's body. Papa's body cannot be perceived with phenomenological accuracy because it cannot be captured. To capture it would mean to immobilize it, either by taking it out of its context, the car, or by framing it on an assumption of understanding it. But neither of these attempts is feasible.

Papa's body is in the car; it moves the car; it is moving.

Papa himself says:

I am always moving. I am forever transporting myself somewhere else. I am never exactly where I am. Tonight, for instance, we are traveling one road but also many, as if we cannot take a single step without discovering five of our own footprints already ahead of us. (T, p. 75)

My only vehicle being my reader-ship, I cannot help but be always behind Papa. My proprioception, in this case, distances me from him. So I am left only with the language that his body utters. Papa is the only character speaking in the novel; in fact, he speaks the novel as he drives the car. The mobility of the car is translated, in terms of the text, as language process, and since this language is the body of Papa's narrative, it becomes my only access to Travesty.

The language of Travesty, as I implied earlier, is Papa's voice. My proprioception, therefore, is accomplished by means of the ear. I hear Papa's voice as I turn over the pages of Travesty. Hearing its cadences, its tones, I recapture the "depth sensibility" that Papa's mobility has deprived me of. The mental power of language makes me see what is not visible at first sight. Merleau-Ponty explains this transference from the opaque to the concrete as follows:

Its [language's] opaqueness, its obstinate reference to itself, and its turning and folding back upon itself are precisely what make it a mental power; for it in turn becomes something like a universe, and it is capable of lodging things themselves in this universe--after it has transformed them into their meaning.³²

Therefore I start seeing Papa and his car phenomenologically. His voice is contained and container at the same time. It contains Papa's actions and the other characters, who in the first place are perceived only by allusion, and it is contained itself within the book of Travesty, an affirmation of its own concreteness.

From what I have tried to explain, it is obvious that the kinetics of the three narratives set in motion not only their texts; they also activate my reading. The phenomenology of my reading Hawkes's trilogy relies exactly on this point: the three texts by their very nature invite me to enter them. Since they "do not correspond to any objective reality outside themselves,"³³ they

activate my fantasia, asking me to recreate the world they present. Iser calls the product of this creative activity "the virtual dimension of the text . . . [which] is not the text itself, nor is it the imagination of the reader: it is the coming together of text and imagination."³⁴

What envelops Hawkes's three texts and my own creative activity is continuation and repetition. By means of my fantasia, I transgress the boundaries that the three novels as things, as books, set in front of me. My readership embraces the narratives and proceeds within them. As Thomas W. Armstrong says, in his essay "Reader, Critic, and the Form in John Hawkes's The Cannibal," "that readership does not end when the work does."³⁵ This statement recapitulates my reading experience. I reanimate Cyril's lyric vision of love; I keep voicing Allert's declaration of his innocence; I recreate the "geometrics of joy" (T, p. 12) that Papa seeks. My reading (voice) reiterates the voices of the texts; as I murmur the texts, I amplify the possibilities lurking there. In this way, I become a participant in the process of repetition that has been initiated by the narratives of the main characters. Cyril and Allert try to continue what is already over; Papa tries to defer the death he wants to cause. My reading reenacts their narratives which defer closure, the prolonging of language against silence. It becomes a continuation of the narrators' intention to talk about stories in motion.

CHAPTER TWO

The Blood Oranges: The Impotent
Lover as Artist

I

The trilogy as a moving image. The spectacle of Hawkes's trilogy consists of three stories-in-motion: The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty. These three books present the trilogy as a single (reading) image of a three-dimensional structure. The unity I perceive in it as a reader I will call "architectonic unity," what Michel Foucault says of a system (in this case, three texts/one trilogy) that is "concerned not with the description of cultural influences, traditions, and continuities [though undoubtedly, inevitably, are there], but with internal coherences, axioms, deductive compatibilities."¹ What makes Hawkes's novels compatible is sex sublimated in aesthetic creation.

II

To desire is to imagine. Stories last longer than men, sex than love, detachment than seduction: this is the locus of Cyril's, Allert's and Papa's stories-in-motion. They are travelers in pursuit of pleasure. Their desires make their bodies primary in their existences. Their language embodies exhausted loves, gone bodies. As storytellers, they "'eroticize' knowledge."² The

artist as lover. Or rather, the lover as artist. And the frustrated lover/artist as murderer.

III

The erotics of reading Hawkes. How do I relate to the desire of those characters? What do I do with the phenomenology of my body while I read? Hawkes's novels stimulate me. My body responds to the desire they contain. My hand caresses the pages, turns them over, starts writing. Its pleasure coincides with the pleasure the narrators are after. My reading gives me the authority to intrude in the novels. I see them as two-color texts: the lettered text, white and black, and the marginal text, white. My reading leaves traces on both of them.

Yet the white text (virginal?) I find more inviting. I write notes; I put question or exclamation marks to notate my wonder or surprise: I become a marginal author. On the lettered text, I underline what I think is significant; I make incisions in the words to point out ambiguities; I draw arrows to mark correlations: the lettered text and I touch each other. All the written signs I leave behind me signify the pleasure I get from reading Hawkes's trilogy. His novels, as two-color texts, become the map of my reading. They reflect my proprioception as a reader.

B. R. McGraw, discussing Roland Barthes's The Pleasure of the Text, says that Barthes seeks "to bring about an understanding of texts which would not be based strictly on the rationality of the predicative sentence or on criticism modelled after it."³ On

the contrary, Barthes always, according to McGraw, seeks "to affirm the pleasure one should take in reading."⁴ What McGraw argues in departing from Barthes's book, is that any worthwhile reading must include the manifestation of the reader's personality with all its emotional and intellectual responses.

My thesis, however, as a form of academic writing, must refer only to the personalities of Hawkes's characters. It forbids me to express myself in pleasure. The reader's pleasure cannot be re-enacted in this writing. It must comply with the sense of decorum that academic conventions prescribe. It must be concealed. But this concealment makes my pleasure illegitimate, and as a result makes it, at least for me, doubly erotic. Thus from now on, I am going to conceal the phenomenology of my pleasure. My I will linger only behind a screen. Let my body speak between parentheses, through the body of language.

IV

Entering "The Blood Oranges"/the trilogy:

Love weaves its own tapestry, spins its own
golden thread, with its own sweet breath breathes
into being its mysteries--bucolic, lusty, gentle
as the eyes of daisies or thick with pain. And
out of its own music creates the flesh of our
lives. If the birds sing, the nudes are not far
off. Even the dialogue of the frogs is rapturous.

(BO, p. 1)

Here is an axiom about love. Love is presented through a complex

of metonymies, that is in a contiguous association with the literal subjects that the verbs "weaves," "spins," "breathes," and "creates" normally require. As such it furnishes the above image with a number of connotations. Before I proceed to their analysis, it is important to mention that these connotations, as far as the total image is concerned, constitute only scattered traits of love.

Unfolding the metonymy. "Love weaves its own tapestry, spins its own golden thread," I read, and substitute for Love Clotho the spinner, one of the three Fates. When Love "breathes into being its own mysteries--bucolic, lusty, gentle as the eyes of daisies or thick with pain," her spindle becomes phallic; her weaving the destinies of people is replaced with the interweaving of bodies; the tapestry portrays procreation. Fate becomes sex and the emotional or physical pain of life becomes orgasmic pleasure. Clotho's much-feared spindle is then longed for. And "when [Love] out of its own music creates the flesh of our lives," she becomes a musician, and a muse, who awakens the flesh. The birds, the nudes and the frogs simply surrender to the power of the love metonymy.

(I have just erred. Not a misreading, but a psychological mistake. Although the writer (Hawkes/the narrator) talks about love as neuter, I read it as feminine. Obviously, I was not reading the image; I was imagining it. The image, narrated in present tense, was in front of me, so close, that it became a mirror-image: I saw my own sex reflected in it. I was identifying myself with the "flesh" of "life."

Yet my fusion with the image does not end here. It affects

me proprioceptively. It changes my sexual sensibility as a female reader. During the process of my reading I enter the text. I penetrate its language; language soft as "skin."⁵ This kinetics changes my sexual (female) role into the role I play as a reader/penetrator.

But my mistake is not only a self-projection. It has also to do with the disruption of the grammar of my expectations. I have paid more attention to love's activities than to its gender. Weaving, spinning, and more significantly breathing present love to me as something more than a related concept which it is for the narrator: they animate it.

In addition, I was caught between the signifiers of love. Fate suggests femininity. The three Fates in Classical Greece were considered to be women. Even in contemporary Greece, where I come from, the words related to fate are feminine: moira, tyche, eimarmene. The next substitution is that of muse which strengthens my mistake. The muse figure is traditionally female. Thus by referring to love as she, I am diminishing the distance between me and Hawkes's fiction, and by invoking my own historicity.)

"Difference /is/ proper to every beginning."⁶ The narrator, by presenting love as neuter, tries to be neutral. The paragraph is written in an impersonal language. There are no personal pronouns that voice the voice of the narrator. Only a collective "our lives" makes this paragraph homological. (We share something.) Yet this sense of familiarity & inclusion is dispersed by the sense of difference that the plot also conveys. The subjects contained in "our lives" are, on the one hand, different, kept at a dis-

tance, like the two words which signify their presences; on the other hand, they are the same, as they coalesce in the same words.

In order to understand the extent to which the functions of love differ from each other and the degree of kinship between the narrator and love and the narrator and myself as a reader, I find it necessary to quote from Jacques Derrida, who explores the meaning of difference:

The verb "to differ" [*differer*] seems to differ from itself. On the one hand, it indicates difference as distinction, inequality, or discernibility; on the other, it expresses the interposition of delay, the interval of a spacing and temporalizing that puts off until "later" what is presently denied, the possible that is presently impossible. . . . In the one case "to differ" signifies nonidentity; in the other case it signifies the order of the same.⁷

Accordingly, the difference that "our lives" signify is what makes the novels cohere into an "architectonic unity." The multiple content of "our lives" stretches the image of love beyond the text of The Blood Oranges. The narrator, for spatio-textual reasons, cannot refer to Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty; it is "presently impossible." They become present, however, through the "spacing and temporalizing" that my phenomenological perception of "our lives" generates. Without the three novels being identical, they are the "same" as they are grounded in the same nexus: love as fate as sex.

The difference that exists between the novels manifests itself every time that love, as the subject of the metonymy, is replaced by Clotho, sex and the musician/muse. While I try to establish the differences and the contiguities among these subjects, I "delay" the revelation of the narrator's identity. This suspense of the flow of the narrative transforms the narrator into a neutral character. As a result, the narrator of The Blood Oranges embodies the narrators of Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty. They are all present in a uniform anonymity. The beginning of The Blood Oranges becomes, apparently, the threshold where the three novels coexist before the image of love emits them so that they depart in order to become individual texts with their own shape and texture. The difference, ultimately, is con-textual.

An absent portrait. The release of the image of love beyond the text of The Blood Oranges does not offer me any traces for a proprioceptive understanding of the narrator. S/he hides her/his fleshy self behind the discourse of the image. The voice that speaks the image is what Derrida would call a "middle voice [which] precedes and sets up the opposition between passivity and activity."⁸ The grammar of the "middle voice" presents the self (subject) in reciprocity with its action (object). The self, in other words, operates both as giver and taker. Although this voice displays its ability to create the image of love, it seems to germinate from no/body. (The written language erases the orality of the voice. I hear no breath, no muscle movements of a throat, no tongue wetting the lips.)

This "vacancy of the 'person',"⁹ as Barthes says, is one of

the figures of neutrality. It signifies:

displacement--the refusal to "keep oneself in countenance" (the refusal of any countenance whatever) the principle of delicacy--drifting--pleasure in its ecstatic aspect: whatever avoids or thwarts or ridicules ostentation, mastery, intimidation.¹⁰

The narrator's identity is displaced for the sake of keeping open the possibilities of the beginning, for the sake of pleasure that suspension ("delay") creates. It suggests a libertine attitude to love: the "middle voice" multiplies the self as the self articulates its desire. (I, too, participate in the multiplication. I try to imagine the narrator's portrait. With my fantasia, I draw the mouth/s that this voice might come from. Spellbound by the differences that I see in the discourse of the beginning, I "put off" the continuation of my reading. My own sense of difference is that my voice is not "middle." My reading activity does not return to me. It affects this text that I am reading.) This neutral, "drifting" stance to love invites me to juxtapose the narrator again with the beginning image.

The kinetics of the image. The image of love is a moving image because it is what begins the text, while at the same time it is what shifts me from one level of the metonymy to the other. Weaving, spinning, breathing, all suggest motion. A motion that develops into a dance when music starts sounding within the image. "The music one plays," as Barthes says, "comes from an activity

that is very little auditory, being above all manual (and thus in a way much more sensual)."¹¹ Because there is no indication in the love image that love's music is played by heart, because it stirs the flesh into motion, the dance engages only the body. It is sensual.

The metonymy makes love. The sensuality of love's music transforms the metonymy into a metaphor. It makes the metonymy function finally as a substitute for one of the signifiers of love: sex. And the singer who sings as the flesh resounds love's music is the writer writing through the body. Lovemaking becomes sex-singing, the lover an artist. Thus the writer "spins its own golden thread, with its own sweet breath breathes into being its mysteries." The metonymy as a metaphor emphasizes and, at the same time, erases the narrator's neutrality: it corrects the grammar of the sentence.

In rereading this opening sentence metaphorically, the kinetics of the image manifests itself as a one-figure dance, as sexual motion, that engages only one body. Spinning becomes proprioceptive motion culminating in the projection of the "golden thread" which I see as semen: the lover/singer becomes a choreographer who writes through his body the song of his endurance for the absence of his lover. It is a longing song about the projection of semen, not about its reception. The narrator's voice emerges now from its "middle" ground: the speaking voice is male. And soon he names himself: Cyril.

Love frames. Cyril soon surpasses his neutral self-presentation. He uses the image of love, from which he had

excluded himself, as a frame within which he draws his own image as a lover. To achieve his inclusion within the frames of love's tapestry, he withdraws from the present where he has located love. He plunges into the past: he remembers:

I always allowed myself to assume whatever shape was destined to be my own in the silken weave of Love's pink panorama. I always went where the thread wound. No awkward hesitation, no prideful ravaging. At an early age I came to know that the gods fashion us to spread the legs of woman, or throw us together for no reason except that we complete the picture, so to speak. . . . Through-
out my life I have simply appeared at Love's will.¹²

(BO, pp. 1-2)

He subordinates himself to all the aspects of love as initially seen, plus one more: Love's capital L. The upper case L puts Love into the category of proper names. It makes Love not a noun any more but a name, causing, as a result, the structural effacement of the metonymy of the love image. Already destiny and now capitalized, Love becomes perennial, even, I would say, deified. Presented as a deity, it exists beyond the human spatial and temporal dimensions while, at the same time, it causes space and time to happen for Cyril and Fiona, Hugh and Catherine.

At the same time, because Love maintains its neuter pronoun, the capital L creates the antinomy of animate/inanimate. This mixed nature of Love--the difference between the proper name and

the pronoun which replaces, and erases, it--inherent in language, emphasizes Cyril's limits, as a man in general and as a lover in particular. The interaction between the impersonal pronoun and the proper name creates a playground: a "darkened arbor" for Cyril's "grape-tasting game" (BO, p. 183); an erotic landscape that engulfs the lovers devoted to Love (Cyril and Fiona) and consumes those resistant to it (Hugh and Catherine).¹³

Vacuum frames. Cyril, willingly surrendered to love as life-shaper, becomes entangled in its thread. Its weaving designs, and frames, the "field" of his action. He himself as an "undesigning lover" (BO, p. 11) can only function if allowed to exist within the "sex-tableau" (BO, p. 43). With "aching candor" (BO, pp. 5-6), however, he confesses that he is presently "Eliminated . . . from the joyous field" (BO, p. 3) of love. He is left all alone in Illyria, a Mediterranean idyllic town, with no sexual partners. The love tapestry, to which he maintains he still belongs, hangs now "in shreds" (BO, p. 3). His wife, Fiona, is gone away to take care of Meredith and her twin sisters Dolores and Eveline, and Love has "purged" Hugh with death for his "sick innocence" (BO, p. 3). The love frame collapses once it is inhabited by a lonely lover and his memories. (Yet the love frame still functions for me. As a reader/penetrator, I cohabit with Cyril. We fill the blanks with our discourses.)

"Middle" images. This sense of elimination and destruction does not result in sadness. Sadness is in its turn eliminated by Cyril's indulgence in nostalgia, his sexual longing to "re-enter into the pink field" (BO, p. 53), the receptive love frame.

According to his claim that "most of us enjoy the occasional sound of pain, though it approaches agony" (BO, p. 55), his longing is temporarily satisfied in the "middle" frames with which he is surrounded, those recurring images that constitute his present: his maid Rosella who "cannot understand a word of my lengthy erotic declarations" (BO, p. 2) and to whom he is related following strictly his "rules: no touching, nothing overt" (BO, p. 3); the image of the "two enormous game birds locked in love" (BO, p. 14); and his last mistress Catherine who, after her mental breakdown, remains the "inert supine center of my life, the sun that neither sets nor rises" (BO, p. 13).

Cyril interprets these images as "good omen[s]" (BO, p. 15), a "sign" (BO, p. 15) for his "own future in the electrified field of Love's art" (BO, p. 15). Rosella's presence, juxtaposed with Catherine's, eases his anxiety that he has long been deprived of the "multiplicity of love" (BO, p. 58). The birds, "true to nature" (BO, p. 15), excite him as they keep the world "in motion" (BO, p. 15) with their exulting lovemaking. He becomes a voyeur "infus[ing]" (BO, p. 15) with them "the erotic dreams of the most discriminating sex-aestheticians" (BO, p. 14). Catherine offers him the pleasure of being his passive listener: "she was listening, waiting, watching me behind those closed eye-lids, in her mind was clutching at the gentle sounds of my voice and once again was slipping, rolling over the edge and falling among the shadows of her past life and mine" (BO, p. 6). Her passive response, however, signifies her own elimination and accentuates Cyril's torn tapestry of love.

But if Cyril who inhabits the text of The Blood Oranges can foresee his future as positive, I, who can only project myself on the text, do not see the images as positive. The phenomenology of my reading presents them only as key signifiers of his present state, that is of his impotence. They are all, like the birds' image, "frozen in one feeling" (BO, p. 14). It is his desire to be sexually potent again that makes him imagine them as good omens. As Frederick Busch says, "That which is desired and that which is dead--they are simultaneous in the Hawkes . . . images."¹⁴

The body/a temple. Cyril derives his strength to defy his impotence from his faith in Love. His past accounts for this. He has always lived according to "Love's will," and even though he feels now abandoned by it he still has faith. "But I am patient," he says, "I am faithful, perhaps one day I will reach out and close my fingers on Rosella's thigh, . . . We shall wait and see" (BO, p. 3). "Love's beckon[ing]" (BO, p. 172), not necessarily its consummation, is Cyril's religion, which Fiona shares too. A profane religion which, as Lois A. Cuddy says, relieves him "of guilt, of concern for consequences, and of responsibility."¹⁵ Cyril's faith in it abides in his body, not in his soul. His soul discharged, Cyril has only body consciousness.

As a result, he knows no restrictions. His passion is only a token of his faith in Love. It frees him from pain, from love pain. As critic Donald J. Greiner says, "The closest he [Cyril] has come to suffering is his discovery that 'most people detest a lover, no matter how modest' (BO, p. 57)."¹⁶ But Cyril's boundless faith in Love makes him emotionally immune: his pleasure never goes

beyond his body, it never becomes ecstasis; by the same token, he is unqualified to understand the pain he causes, not seldom, to others.

The other/roped. Although he senses from the beginning Hugh's moral strain, he does not hesitate to lure him into his own, and Fiona's, erotic games. Of Hugh's agonies he is a mere observer:

The nausea, the red eyes, the lips white in blind grief and silent hate, these may have been the externals of a pain that belonged to Hugh but never once to me. Hugh's pain perhaps. Not mine. It is simply not in my character, my receptive spirit, to suffer sexual possessiveness, the shock of aesthetic greed, the bile that greases most matrimonial bonds, the rage and fear that shrivels your ordinary man at the first hint of the obvious multiplicity of love. . . . But this pain, at least, is a pain I have never known [A]nything that lies in the palm of love is good. (BO, pp. 57-58)

Cyril is, obviously, very perceptive in observing the phenomenology of pain, but, pain being alien to him as a feeling, he perceives it only as an "external" image: pain pictured on the body.

Cyril's phenomenology lacks depth. It is a phenomenology of the skin. This is also clear when he talks about Catherine's pain "clouding" (BO, p. 10) her face: "I could see it like schools of microscopic black fish drifting beneath the skin" (BO, p. 10). Cyril's eyes can see through Catherine's skin the physiology of her pain, but he sees it only metaphorically. He actually imagines what he thinks he sees. By foregrounding the "black fish," he distracts the reader's attention from Catherine herself. He does not realize that somebody in pain is physiologically as well as emotionally afflicted.

(Cyril's discourse against pain is a sermon that unnerves me. Nothing could molest the body more than seeing, like Cyril, the mark of lovepain on it as sin. Cyril's interest in the phenomenon of pain is superficial: he is repelled by its ugliness. On the contrary, I have always seen "The nausea, the red eyes, the lips white in blind grief and silent hate" as the natural, normal even, symptoms of a real, jealous lover. Cyril, instead, looks at them as utter abomination. He denies the body the fire of its desire when this desire is threatened. For jealousy, in spite of its "banality" and the "shame"¹⁷ it inspires, is nothing else but an affirmation of the lover's longing to continue to be forever desired: to be in demand. A lover in pain, I think, is jealous of the desire drifting away from her/him; not of the intrusion of the other.

But for Cyril the flow of desire directed to one lover only is completely unacceptable. Possessiveness for him has a temporary nature, excludes jealousy. It manifests itself only during the moment of intercourse: intercourse as the throughway toward another body. But isn't Cyril's need for more than one lover possessiveness in its maximum degree?

I am tempted to say that Cyril should direct his sermon to the trespasser, to the other. But at this point I become the impostor as I am caught between the reality of Hawkes's fiction and my own version of the desirable reality. For a moment, I betrayed myself as a reader: I became an anxious lover.)

Cyril's response to Hugh's death reflects, similarly, the externals of his perception. He is keen in describing Fiona's

efforts to free Hugh from his hanging rope, and sees "Hugh's nude body hanging amidst all his photographs" as an "unavoidable sight," another object among the "labyrinthine pieces of equipment" in his studio (BO, p. 266). Cyril seems to be totally untouched by Hugh's grotesque death, even though he is partly to blame. He gratuitously dismisses Fiona's attempts¹⁸ to "blow life" (BO, p. 267) into Hugh's mouth:

But here? Now? This confined space? These thick walls? This cell so bleak and at the same time so lurid? This broken light? This wreckage? This white body stretching as if from one end of the room to the other and welted with thin tendons that would never relax again? Was it possible? . . . Could even Hugh have ever made this miscalculation and closed all our doors? Fiona was not a woman to be wasted herself. . . . (BO, p. 267)

Cyril hardly thinks of the dead. He thinks instead of the lifeless body. It is its immobility that moves him. He knows that with one body less in Illyria, a lover is going to be lonesome. His concern, in other words, is that Hugh's death has "almost destroyed" (BO, p. 43) the "picture" he has "completed" (BO, p. 2). It has disrupted the "explosive field" (BO, p. 2) of Love. A sacrilegious act, as far as Cyril's "private"¹⁹ ethics is concerned.

Hierodoulos. Cyril's nonchalance toward pain and death for the sake of "sexual extension" (BO, p. 147) emphasizes more than anything else his subjugation to Love. Although a "self-

proclaimed god" according to Greiner,²⁰ he acts as a hierodoulos, a slave dwelling in a temple and dedicated to the service of the god of love, a religious prostitute. He makes love whenever he is called on: "I was always there. I completed the picture. I took my wife, took her friends, took the wives of my friends and a fair roster of other girls and women, from young to old and old to young, whenever the light was right or the music sounded" (BO, p. 2). Cyril's hunt for women not only knows no limits but it is also indispensable. Lovemaking, for him, becomes central to life not because of its fertility but solely because it fulfills Love, satisfies sexual desire.

Illyria is the latest field of Cyril's sexual service. It is the frame within which he has to operate. Fiona is his blessed steady mate; Hugh and Catherine are to be proselytized, seduced; Rosella must be wooed; the goat girl, kissed. Their seduction and wooing are signs of Cyril's love for Love. Cyril has "no [other] choice" (BO, p. 11) but to be a lover within this given terrain. He simultaneously enacts and celebrates his duty: he is a sex-singer.

His sex-singing always follows a prelude of ceremonies. As a hierodoulos, he does his best to show that he knows well the craft of love. The setting where he tries with Fiona to initiate Catherine and Hugh into their sex-tableau is ceremonial and naturally erotic:

In the darkness I groped for another bottle, pulled the cork and filled our two small invisible glasses. The stone bench we sat on was chalky and warm, overhead the grape arbor was a sagging foot-thick blanket of hanging grapes and climbing roses. I dipped,

listened to the breathing of the large woman seated within easy reach of my hip, my knee, the toe of my bone-white tennis shoe. I cleared my throat and smiled to think that it was like Fiona, exactly like Fiona, to set the first stage of her impending adventure in nothing less than a small lemon grove, where she could run at will, and exactly like myself to settle for an unobtrusive niche in a grape arbor. . . . I, of course, preferred to muse on approaching possibilities and to wait, to listen, to sit out the preliminaries in quiet thought.²¹ (BO, pp. 99-100)

Cyril attributes erotic significance to the most minute details. Even the toe of his tennis-shoe contributes to the erotic ambiance of the lemon grove. Fully aware of this, he becomes, as his name suggests, the lord of the grove, the reincarnation of Cinyras, the ancestor of "religious prostitution,"²² who, as J. G. Fraser says in The Golden Bough, was "the duplicate of his handsome son Adonis."²³ Cyril does not have the slightest doubt that the dynamics of the setting will push eroticism a step further, to sexuality.

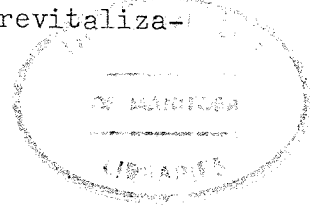
The center of his sexuality is naturally the body. His phenomenology of it is solely physiological. This is really evident when Cyril kisses the mimosa tree. His description of this kiss displays more fascination with the physical than do his descriptions of his kisses with Fiona and Catherine:

I stood there thinking of the delicate structure of so much airy growth and admiring this particular depth of yellow. . . . Into my hands I gathered with all possible tenderness one of the hivelike masses of yellow balls. And keeping my eyes open, deliberately I lowered my face into that cupped resiliency, and felt the little fat yellow balls working their way behind my spectacles and yielding somehow against my lips. I stopped breathing. I waited, slowly I opened my mouth and arched my tongue, pushed forward my open mouth and rounded expectant

tongue until my mouth was filled and against all the most sensitive membranes of tongue and oral cavity I felt the yellow fuzzy pressure of the flowering tree. (BO, p. 54, emphasis mine)

Cyril is totally taken by the delicate frame of the flower, by the organs it contains. He is completely absorbed by its natural sensuality. As he feels with his tongue the "little fat yellow balls," the flower comes into his mouth and Cyril tastes the "yellow fuzzy pressure of the flowering tree." Cyril is obviously transformed here from a male lover into a female one. I see this transformation as an application of his theory of "sexual extension." Cyril can either advocate here homosexuality as a natural sexual attitude or he simply, by switching sexual roles, actualizes his longing for his absent female lovers. Yet, if he experiences any emotions while kissing the mimosa flower, these emotions are purely "visceral" (BO, p. 134).

After sex, Cyril's ceremonies have a "cool[ing]" (BO, p. 230) effect. They guarantee his and his lover's smooth return to the world outside their bodies. The immediate "visceral experience" is over. His perception rests again on the skin. After he makes love with Catherine, he says: "We extricate ourselves. . . . Hand in hand we walk back to the clear swallows for a rinse" (BO, p. 230). This rinsing, however, their washing away their coming marks, must not be seen as catharsis. It is an act that points out the large scale of Cyril's profanity. He and Catherine join Hugh and Fiona in the seaside chapel so that there are now "four naked figures instead of two . . . [all] four tall bodies congregating, so to speak, in reunion" (BO, p. 231). So their rinsing is a revitaliza-



tion of their instincts. From the erotic to the sexual, from the sexual back to the erotic: profanity integrated by symmetry.

Hide-and-seek. The symmetry of Cyril's sex-singing is not, at first sight, threatened by the constitution of marriage. He has found perfect understanding in Fiona, the "priestess of marriage" (BO, p. 102). On their wedding night, she tells him: "Don't bother being a husband, baby. Just a sex-singer. OK?" (BO, p. 97). Cyril interprets his wife's "suppleness" (BO, p. 97) as "magic" (BO, p. 97). Its powers encourage and justify his theory of "multiplicity of love." Yet when Hugh and Catherine arrive, a conventional married couple, Cyril's sex-tableau starts losing its balance.

For all their traditional notions, Hugh and Catherine are strangely susceptible to Cyril's and Fiona's erotic intrigues. But while Catherine allows herself to be driven by Cyril "into a distant corner of the vast [love] tapestry" (BO, p. 117), Hugh plays only hide-and-seek with Fiona in the lemon grove. He resists her sexuality. As Fiona, with "girlish grief" (BO, p. 114), confesses, she and Hugh are only going to "watch the sunrise" (BO, p. 114), while Cyril and Catherine make love. Hugh resists his desire for Fiona and substitutes for it his photographic collection of "'Peasant Nudes'" (BO, p. 63) and his masturbation (BO, pp. 84-85). His resistance is a sign of his fidelity. A fidelity, however, diametrically opposed to Cyril's: Cyril is faithful to sexual extension; Hugh is faithful to marriage.

The poetics of intrusion. As critic Enid Veron observes, "Hugh's obsessive chastity, a form of psychological enslavement,

is a perversion in the bright world of Illyria."²⁴ When Hugh discovers that Catherine has long ago joined Cyril's sex-singing, he subjects her to another version of bondage. He forces on her the chastity belt he has found in the ruined fortress. Cyril has sensed from the beginning that this "artful relic of fear and jealousy" (BO, p. 207) is a "memento" (BO, p. 203) of Hugh's subterranean design" (BO, p. 201). And Hugh does not belie Cyril's expectations. The horror of his act is a concrete manifestation of his suffering (BO, pp. 240-252). Despite its irony, his statement "'I'm crafty, boy, crafty. And that damn belt's a work of art. . . .'" (BO, p. 245) displays both his suffering as a betrayed husband and his frustration as a lover, which are both integral parts of his art.

Yet Hugh has managed only to defeat himself. Cyril, being the true lord of Illyria, takes the belt off Catherine and sends Hugh to Fiona's bed, reestablishing the symmetry that Hugh destroyed. But as Hugh's rules of chastity do not last long, he does not last long either. He dies an ambiguous death: naked and with Rosella's nude photograph in his good hand, he is found hanged by Fiona and Cyril. It is his death, ultimately, that destroys Cyril's vision of sexual extension. The one-armed follower of matrimonial fidelity becomes a worthy opponent of Cyril only when he dies.

Hugh's death carries in its darkness the other three lovers: Catherine collapses at his funeral; Fiona abandons the field of Love to become instead of a free lover a surrogate mother; and Cyril finds he has no partners to sing with. Once a failed

sex-singer, Cyril becomes aware not of the destruction that his sexual theory and Hugh's death have caused, but of a strong absence around him. He is left only to deal with the "loss of form on the violet tennis court" (BO, p. 56, emphasis mine). His displacement from the "map of Love" (BO, p. 167) has deprived him of his sexual activities. Unable to feel even the presence of Love in Illyria, he decides to re-create it. This brings him to the threshold of art. From a sex-singer he becomes a sex-aesthetician.

"Embracing air." Cyril uses Hugh as his muse without realizing it. This is highly ironic, mainly for two reasons: it brings Hugh to the foreground, not as a crippled and impotent lover, but as an artist and a muse, and it undermines Cyril's macho sexuality, as he depends on a male muse. Hugh's photography and death make Cyril for the first time²⁵ conscious of what Paul Ricoeur calls the "economics of desire . . . [:/] the relation between the pleasurable effect and the technique employed in producing the work of art."²⁶ Ricoeur's exploration, in his brilliant study of Freud, of "the dynamism of artistic creation"²⁷ illuminates Cyril's metamorphosis from a sex-singer to a sex-aesthetician. Ricoeur claims that:

assuming pleasure is connected with a reduction of tension, the pleasure arising from technique is minimal and is connected with the economy in physical expenditure realized by condensation, displacement, etc. . . . But although this pleasure is slight, as is the economy in expenditure to which it gives expression, it has the noteworthy power of contributing, in the form of a bonus,²⁸ to erotic, aggressive, and cynical tendencies.

Hugh's death ("physical expenditure") urges Cyril to account ("condensation") with his aesthetics for his own sexual loss ("displacement"). The "expression" of his aesthetics is, obviously, storytelling.

Cyril tells the story of The Blood Oranges. True to what he admits to Catherine, "I guess I like endings" (BO, p. 12), he finds himself engaged in a narrative following the "invisible aftermath of our long adventure" (BO, p. 6). His fascination with endings gives life (and form) to The Blood Oranges: the beginning of the novel coincides with the catastrophic end of the four characters. Cyril's storytelling is about their process toward it. Moreover, he hopes to replace himself as an active agent in "Love's tapestry" with his re-enactment of the events. His plunge into the past is now explained by "the economics of [his] desire." Cyril condenses into his "aesthetic memory" (BO, p. 4) the failure of his and Fiona's idyls with Catherine and Hugh and his wish to become again "the white bull brightly fired in Love's kiln" (BO, p. 4). The source of his wish and his wish itself become one story.

Musing/the body. As Veron says, "The story of The Blood Oranges, in fact, is the story Cyril tells to win Catherine back to life."²⁹ Catherine is elected for this role because she is the only one still living in Illyria. The way Cyril relates his narrative to her reveals the nature of his aesthetics, which is the polar opposite to the nature of his singing. It is the sight of Catherine's body, not his touching of it, that unlocks Cyril's memory or rather the fact that it is hidden:

The body itself was hidden. Yet no blanket was thick enough, rough enough, dense enough, or so wildly colored . . . as to prevent that large female torso and the arms, legs, hips from taking solid and in a way maximum shape under my first glance.

I knew what lay beneath the blanket. I knew quite perfectly the hips and calves and thighs somewhat fallen and still minutely falling, spreading from classical lines, knew well indeed the navel oddly sculpted, as if her belly had been sealed with a final flare of some hot iron . . . body of someone who had never been aware of the statuesque design the ancient artist had in mind for it, a body so plain and big, so close and yet so far from the target of beauty that to me it was the richest beauty of all. I knew Catherine's body, saw it, loved it for its totally unconscious grandeur. (BO, p. 9)

Obviously, this is not the sex-singer speaking here but the sex-aesthetician. Cyril's "deciphering the signs of sex" (BO, p. 203) is not a sexual process any more. His relationship with Catherine is aesthetic and as such it shares very little with his phenomenology of her as a sex-singer. He admires--he does not possess--the beauty of her body. What he "deciphers," on the contrary, is their common text: their failed idyl, their past life. Now that "The lovers have become companions" (BO, p. 167), Cyril's "visceral experience" becomes projective. While his sex-singing used to culminate in orgasm, his sex-aesthetics reaches its climax in projection.

Thus Cyril's projective aesthetics marks the transformation of the way he expresses his desire. In other words, as long as he used to be an active lover, his desire was fulfilled through intercourse. Now, being impotent, he reveals it through discourse. What remains still intact is his course. Cyril is a "viator,"

a man in constant motion. It is important at this point to look at the difference between Cyril's two movements, those of a lover and those of an artist. As Foucault says, "differences arise when representation can only partially present what was previously present, when the text of recognition is stymied."³⁰ Accordingly, the content of Cyril's desire, on the one hand, is the "same." That is, he still is a hierodoulos since his storytelling aims to serve Love; on the other hand, the "economics of [his] desire," the loss he has experienced, prevents him from serving Love in the same way. In other words, it is the "sameness" of his aim that creates the difference; what makes the difference functional is his impotence, his detachment from Catherine.

The aloof artist. Hawkes, trying to talk about the constant element that characterizes avant-garde writing, says: "This constant is a quality of coldness, detachment, ruthless determination to face up to the enormities of ugliness and potential failure within ourselves and in the world around us, and to bring to this exposure a savage or saving comic spirit and the saving beauties of language."³¹ In the light of this statement and regarding the trilogy in hand, detachment is the lover's key to the artistic imagination. And it is the paradoxical nature of the detached lover that shapes the imagination. Cyril, as a Hawkesian creation, follows on the same line. Although an impotent lover, he still advocates "sexual extension;" only his approach, aesthetic now, changes, and this he borrows from Hugh.

The lover's eye. Unlike Veron's statement that it is Cyril who is able to "work life and art into a fruitful whole,"³² it is

Hugh who manages to harmonize his art with his life. Hugh is both a lover and an artist when he arrives in Illyria. Being in favor of monogamy, however, he finds that his eroticism is opposed to Cyril's. Cyril's hunt for potential new lovers becomes for Hugh the photographer a search for models for his collection of "Peasant Nudes" (BO, p. 63). Cyril, in spite of the fact that he sees Hugh's eroticism as belonging to "the old world of sex" (BO, p. 60), acknowledges the "artfulness" (BO, p. 60) of Hugh's search:

he was talking, though he could no more speak
croak peonie than I could, was demonstrating his
 cameras and displaying the contents of his alpine
 sack, which by now he had unslung from the enormous
 bony construction of his shoulders. Already the
 mattock lay abandoned in the deep brown furrow,
 already the tall man and short girl were standing
 face to face, obviously Hugh was trying to use his
 pinned-up flipper to fence the way through the dark-
 ness and sullenⁿness of her suspicion. (BO, pp. 60-61)

His not speaking the natives' language and his being physically deformed do not undermine the result of Hugh's search. He succeeds in seducing Rosella, but he seduces her as a photographic model, not as a lover. Cyril is obviously impressed with Hugh's "poetic use of sign language" (BO, p. 61).

Hugh's erotic excitement is apparent in the way he labors to photograph Rosella. He is "amused" (BO, p. 66), he "sweats"

(BO, p. 64), he "sucks tongue to teeth" (BO, p. 66). He is not a sex-singer but a writer of images. He is interested in possessing the image of her body, and the kinetics of this image includes his own bodily motion as well:

So he held up the camera, turned it slowly in front of her face, in front of her narrow eyes, displaying and silently extolling its value, its delicacy, its enormous power, suggesting for all I knew that this one small instrument was more important than a simple illiterate young woman or even an entire farm. (BO, p. 66)

Hugh's camera becomes his own sexual "instrument." Being a photographer of erotic pictures, Hugh is not only a lover and an artist at the same time, but he also keeps intact his worldview about monogamy. The necessary (aesthetic) distance between him and Rosella eases the conflict that exists between his erotic photographic collection and his marriage. Thus as photography does not involve touching, Hugh maintains his innocence and Rosella does not lose her virginity. Yet Hugh through the sensitivity of his camera becomes intimate with Rosella's body. The expression of his art being projective, his eroticism is satisfied solely through the voyeur's eye.

The silent voice. If Hugh's sexual confidence and excitement are threatened by his missing arm and his monogamous marriage, his erotic collection releases him from all these restraints. It also releases him from "Love's design" that traps Cyril within its

frames. Hugh is his own designer and executor: he decides that Rosella is going to pose in the barn, where the sunbeam must touch her nude body. His appreciation of, and pleasure in, the female body is different from Cyril's "visceral experience." While his camera captures the image, Hugh attains a "depth sensibility" of his model. As Cyril observes, Hugh "seemed to be listening to the girl's silent life rather than staring at the visible shape of it" (BO, p. 66). Hugh's "listening" takes him beyond the body, beyond his voyeuristic pleasure. It is a sign that he is an artist. He listens for the silent voice that speaks his desires and frustrations. His photographs, thus, are charged with something more than mere erotic pleasure: emotional depth.

Screening pleasure. Besides his freedom of composition, Hugh is also able to achieve duration of pleasure, something that Cyril cannot because as a hierodoulos he can experience pleasure only through the momentary repetition of his sex service. Hugh's camera arrests desire. The images he captures, frozen in their frames but emotionally charged, can offer him both aesthetic and sensual pleasure any time he reviews them. With Rosella's nude photograph in his good hand, he dies as he tries to have an orgasm while he suspends his body from a rope. On another, yet similar, level, when he masturbates he apparently has Fiona's image in his mind. Hugh, in other words, filters the real objects of his desire through his photographic sensibility and aesthetic design. His camera signifies his own detachment.

From the body to the image. Ironically, blinded by his faith in Love, Cyril accuses Hugh's art of what patterns his own

life: "single-minded desire" (BO, p. 65). By a yet greater irony, when he is "eliminated" from the "map of Love," he employs, as I mentioned earlier, Hugh's artistic techniques in order to relocate himself. Hugh, whom Cyril sees as an iconoclast, becomes now his inspiring model of an artist, his muse.³³ Cyril borrows from him his medium of expression, the eye, as well as his lifestyle. He sleeps on a "narrow iron bed . . . [in a] small vaulted room" (BO, p. 94). The analogy between this setting and Hugh's ascetic studio is striking. Moreover, Cyril starts presenting his discourse not in terms of words but in terms of images: "At first glance the wordless story is simply barren, undecipherable, says nothing. And yet to the patient viewer the colors begin to speak, the plaster glows" (BO, p. 270, emphasis mine). Cyril has become a voyeur. As Hugh's photographs evoke Rosella's presence in its fullness, Cyril's images "speak" the absence that surrounds him.

Cyril seems to function as an imitative artist, but it is only his techniques which are imitative of Hugh's. What differentiates his art from imitation is its content. The reality Cyril imitates has nothing in common with the external world that Hugh depicts. It is a projection of his wishful thinking. His speculations about "the adolescence of the Virgin" (BO, p. 269) is an example of this. Ultimately, Cyril stimulates the fantastic.

Evoking the impossible. Cyril's story is self-contained. From this perspective, The Blood Oranges, the story of Cyril's story, follows the motion of his pursuit of pleasure. During this pursuit Cyril becomes more and more aware of his inability to relive the past. Phrases like "I hope," "I suppose," "Who can tell?"

keep recurring in his storytelling, while his present consists of "relics" (BO, p. 271). As an impotent lover, he still "embraces air." Only as a sex-aesthetician does he thrive and go beyond the frames that Hugh has set up for him. It is his discourse, the process of his narrative, that fulfills his pursuit of pleasure. His imagination, unlike his silenced sex-song, keeps echoing. "I listen for footsteps" (BO, p. 271), he says, announcing Death, Sleep and the Traveler.

(Coming to the end of the text of The Blood Oranges, I become aware of the difference between the phenomenology of my perception and the phenomenology of my imagination. The former imposes on me the unpleasant feeling that I have to finish reading. Cyril's narrative is over. The erotic games fade away. No more touching: no more pages to unfold but the back cover impatiently leaning over the preceding pages; no more fiction in my hands but a concrete object, a book. My perception of this reality makes the words lose their kinetics. They become immobile as I close the book. But all this lasts for a moment. Cyril's last words "Everything coheres, moves forward" (BO, p. 271) verify that the process of the narrative has not ceased. They shift me from the real to the imaginary. They set into motion the phenomenology of my imagination. Hawkes, although he silences Cyril, continues the eroticization of knowledge. I try to imagine the footsteps that Cyril expects to hear. And Hawkes puts me "on the way" again.)

CHAPTER THREE

Death, Sleep and the Traveler:
The Wanderer as Artist

Leaving/living. I am entering the fictional world of Death, Sleep and the Traveler while a character is departing: "Ursula is leaving" (DST, p. 1). Her departure provokes action. It returns me to the praxis of my reading (I no longer dwell in the world of my imagination but within the written words of Hawkes's text in front of me) and it creates the ground for Allert's narrative. As in The Blood Oranges, here too, detachment accentuates the process of living through discourse. When, for instance, Ursula complains to Allert that he imagines rather than has sex, she says: "I wish you'd stop poeticizing my crotch. It's only anatomy after all" (DST, p. 79). Allert's response, contrary to his occasional sexual insecurity, comes full of certainty: "The imagination cannot be denied" (DST, p. 80). Unlike Cyril, however, who becomes an artist after he experiences detachment, Allert is already an artist when he frustrates Ursula. Cyril's narrative is a service to Love; Allert's, an exercise of the imagination. With his discourse he tries to arrest Ursula's leaving in time, while at the same time he reveals the reasons for her leaving: it is his intentional detachment and the process of its actualization that cause his impending separation from Ursula.

The loner/artist. Allert's intentional detachment can be really illuminated by what Ricoeur has to say about intentionality:

"Intentionality," as he observes, "concerns our meditation on the unconscious inasmuch as consciousness is first of all an intending of the other, and not a self-presence or self-possession."¹

Allert's "meditation on the unconscious" is of course his obsession with his dreams. His self-absorption eliminates his interest in "the other." Being an artist he is selfish in the sense of seeking his "loneliness" (DST, p. 11). Ursula interprets his introspection as a sign of his being "emotionally annihilated" (DST, p. 46). The intentionality of Allert's detachment manifests itself to her as prolonged silences and dream accounts and it is what drives her away from him. But as far as I am concerned as a reader, it deprives me of perceiving phenomenologically his process of becoming an artist. This has been my perception of Cyril who seems to fulfill Allert's theory about art according to which "the ordinary man becomes an artist in sex" (DST, p. 153). Allert does not appear as an "ordinary man" who is gradually transformed into an artist. He is already an artist, an artist, however, who still gropes for his form.

At the starting point of his narrative, he has already experienced different forms of detachment and displacement. He has been on a cruise after Ursula urged him to go: Ariane, his mistress during the cruise, is killed, supposedly by him; his psychiatrist friend and Ursula's lover, Peter, is dead too; Ursula, as mentioned before, is getting ready to leave him. But Allert reaches the utmost point of his detachment with regression into his dreamworld. The measure of his regression is the extent to which he superimposes that dreaming on his surrounding (fictionally real)

world. Without quite rejecting his immediate environment, he perceives it as being either projected from his dreams or filtered through them. This stance toward reality is not shared by the others; on the contrary, it alienates him from them. As Ursula says about herself and Peter, "You and I do not filter life through fantasy" (DST, p. 150).

An example of Allert's projection of his dreams is what happens when he wakes up lying in Ariane's bed. He thinks that "The ship is not moving" (DST, p. 6) and feels its "stasis" (DST, p. 7) in his "large body" (DST, p. 7). But then Ariane whispers something to him and:

Suddenly, marvelously, I understood what she said and felt through all my weight and cold musculature the heavy slow rumble of the engines and the unmistakable revolutions of the great brass propeller blades in the depths below us. The distant vibrations were all around us, were inside me, as if my own intestinal centre was pulsating with pure oceanic motion and the absolute certainty of the navigational mind doing its dependable work. (DST, p. 8)

His detachment from the motion of the ship is ultimately a displacement of the real. Allert shifts the real from the outside world and relocates it in his "intestinal centre," identifying his perception of the external with his proprioceptive perception of his body. The state of being he assigns to the ship is a state caught up within his body. Thus he thinks that the ship is in

stasis because his own body, while he dreams, is inert.

The body/a bridge. The deeper Allert regresses into his self (his dreams/his body), the further he progresses as an artist. As Veron says, "he subsumes the processes of life to the processes of art."² In both processes, however, there is a common denominator: the body. Allert's process of perceiving the world through his body seems to correspond to what Ricoeur calls "the body as incarnate meaning" which accounts for "the human meaning of sexuality--at least sexuality in act."³ This leads directly to the core of Allert's intentionality: "my interest in the entire range of depicted sexuality is genuine, quite genuine" (DST, pp. 150-151). Allert's preoccupation with ". . . the actual practices of sexuality" (DST, p. 5) is realized in the domain of his life; his interest in "depicted sexuality" is the generative process of his art.

On stage, failing. Although as a lover he seems to be related to Cyril, his "preoccupation" must not be confused with Cyril's obsession with the "multiplicity of love." His talk with Ursula about it explains the difference:

"Allert," Ursula was saying, "the trouble with you is that you are a psychic invalid. You have no feeling. I wish that just once you might become truly obsessional. If you were obsessed I might at least find you interesting." But Ursula was wrong. I am not some kind of psychic casualty. It is simply that I want to please, want to exist, want others to exist with me, but find it difficult to believe in the set and characters on the stage. Then too I am extremely interested in failure. (DST, pp. 8-9)

Allert, detached from life because of his regression into his imagination, disputes the pleasure one can get from reality. He

believes that people and the situations they create are all poor reflections of the imagination. Life, for him, is a theatre whose measure is mediocrity. As such, it "fails" to arouse obsession. Being interested more in the artistic process than in the artistic product, he "fails" himself when he performs in life.

The porno text. As I never see Cyril as an active lover (it is his discourse that enacts his sexual drive), Allert, too, offers me a vague picture of his sexual adventures. He refers only to one woman, Simone, and it is actually Ursula who makes his promiscuity known to me. (DST, pp. 59-60). Juxtaposed to this vagueness is his interest in pornography, a form of vicarious or imaginary sexuality. He methodically collects pornographic pictures but his interest in them is limited only to an "unemotional scrutiny" (DST, p. 39). This attitude makes his collection not a diversion but a reflection of his attitude to life: he is "incapable of emotional response" (DST, p. 2). "Pornography," as Ursula explains Allert's theory, "is the true field of the ordinary man's imagination" (DST, p. 153). As Allert collects pornographic photographs, his collection collects him as well as it becomes the locus where the processes of his life and art merge.

Allert's "genuine" interest in pornography reveals "the economics of desire" that gives shape to his imagination. The desire for flesh that a genuine lover feels becomes for Allert a desire for the image. The primal organ of his pleasure, as in Hugh's case, is the eye. As the eye connects Allert with "sexual representations of any kind" (DST, p. 149), his detachment from actual intercourse is transformed into ecstasis. Thus he escapes

from the boundaries that a photograph as an art form establishes. This escape is nothing else but the way his phenomenology prescribes to him. As he observes, he is "aware only of the perception of the event rather than of the event itself" (DST, p. 112).

(I find Allert's coolness toward his pornographic collection bizarre. His only emotion is his satisfaction with the quality of the collection. But what is the measure of a pornographic collection? I can imagine scenes but I lack the standards of a collector. Is pornography for Allert another stage, a stage where the lovers are professionals?

I imagine his eyes cool, his body indifferent, and I wonder what is the measure for perversity.)

What probably fascinates Allert about pornography is the difference he sees in it between the photograph and the image emerging from it. The porno photograph can arouse him sexually. The erection and the orgasm he may experience from looking at the "depicted sexuality" of the photographs fill him, as Donald Greiner argues, "not [with] heterosexual but autoerotic"⁴ satisfaction: the leap of his sperm bounces not on a lover's but on his own body. The absence of "the other" does not deprive Allert from sex. The porno image, on the other hand, gives rise to his imagination. The force of his imagination (intentionality) detaches him from the photograph as thing ("the event itself") and introduces him to reveries ("the perception of the event"). Thus the pleasure he gets from the porno image derives from a world of his own making: his reveries.

Here, Bachelard's study The Poetics of Reverie illuminates

Allert's attachment to the porno image. Bachelard differentiates between "concept" and "image" in terms of their genders; concept is masculine, image is feminine.⁵ This distinction enables Bachelard to establish the same opposition between their analogous constructs: dream and reverie. "Reverie," as Bachelard says, "is under the sign of the anima."⁶ By this token, Allert's interest in the porno image transgresses his solitary pleasure. He is in (inter-est-ed in) a female presence (anima). Allert's imagination, in other words, turns the obscenity that characterizes pornography into mere profanity. His pornographic collection keeps him "immobilized" but his phenomenology keeps him "alert" (DST, p. 111),⁷ that is animated.

(Writing this thesis is hard work. I am constantly tempted to limit myself to dreaming it. My dreaming is my own sense of difference. It distances me from the text of Death, Sleep and the Traveler, from my body. My impulse is solely my desire to avoid words, to delve into images.

Does my phenomenology make me an implied character of Allert's reveries?)

The dream Text. Allert's reveries are in a binary relation with his dreams. But although the transference from the porno image to reverie is the result of my own phenomenological intrusion--Allert hides carefully the signs of his fantastic emissions--his dreams are transferred to me by means of language. Their transformation from nocturnal images into linguistic images (words) is exclusively Allert's work. As Ricoeur observes,

if dreams are drawn toward discourse because of

their narrative aspect, their relation to wishes or desires throws them back on the side of energy, conatus, appetite, will to power, libido, or whatever one wishes to call it. Thus dreams, inasmuch as they are the expression of wishes, lie at the intersection of meaning and force.⁸

The "force" of Allert's dreams is his strong intention to indulge in them, which causes his dreaming not to cease when he is awake. As Ursula tells him, "you dream rather than live your life" (DST, p. 75). Their "meaning," on the other hand, is that Allert searches in them for his identity. To cite Bachelard again, "dreams are masculine."⁹ By this token, when Allert dreams he encounters his self in its fullness, that is his animus. His regression, ultimately, is self-reflexive. It is a "sleep of reason" (DST, p. 107), of "reason" because it is intentional.

But what do Allert's dreams as a narrative reveal about him? At this point, it is important to pay attention to what characterizes them as well as their dreamer. According to Ricoeur, what unifies all dreams is that they are "the paradigm of all the strategems of desire."¹⁰ Allert's dream narrative, indeed, reads as the articulation of all his latent desires. He relates eight dreams and refers to one more which, however, he fails to remember. But his first dream account seems to illustrate the narrative of his "sleep."

He dreams of "wet blood-purple grapes" which are "massed in a curious faint motion" as they contain "tiny reddish fetus/es/"

(DST, pp. 14-15). The fetuses as a prenatal image indicate metaphorically that Allert is not yet released from his mother's womb, that his concept of himself is still developing. As Ursula says, he has the "face of a fetus" (DST, p. 75). As a narrator of his dream, Allert transforms the fetuses from an internal image to an external presence. In doing so, he also transforms himself from a mere dreamer to an "alerted sleeper" (DST, p. 7). His feeling of revulsion toward the grape-fetuses indicates his awareness of his regression and its problematics. I cannot resist here pointing to the correlation between Cyril's grape-tasting game and Allert's dream. Cyril's game is purely erotic, even offering erotic release to others, when, for instance, he lures Catherine to it. In contrast, the grapes for Allert imply his detachment from real life. His intention here is to keep his desire mystified.

In his following dreams, Allert narrates his emergence from a state of detachment toward an imaginary level of existence. The last dream he relates is about his initiation into a world where the expression and fulfillment of desire lead to an awareness of one's identity. In this dream, he is a child who seeks entrance to his mother's room: "I am precisely aware of why I have risked entry into this large and seductive and, yes, even precious room" (DST, p. 137, emphasis mine). His intention in this case is that "it must be so, that I will not be denied, that once and for all I must know with certainly what a woman looks like without her clothes, or without most of her clothes" (DST, p. 137, emphasis mine). Allert, in his dream, yearns for his anima. But when I read the dream as discourse, his explicit desire for the female is

doubled. Desiring to dis-cover the woman he also dis-covers himself.¹¹ He is not any longer the "innocent fleshly" (DST, p. 137) child, but a child on the threshold of becoming a man.

His initiation (initiation as beginning and entrance) follows a transforming process. Knowing that "I myself am my only access to what I want to know" (DST, p. 138), and that the "actuality" is quite impossible" (DST, p. 138), he transforms his mother's bedroom (the real) into a "secret stage" (the imaginary). He himself becomes in the process an "impresario" (DST, p. 137). After this staging, he takes off his clothes and puts on a "delicate lilac-colored undergarment" (DST, p. 138) he finds on the bed. In other words, he erases himself as a male and re-creates himself as female.¹² Then after elaborate rearrangements of the furniture, he stares at the mirror ("magic glass") where he can see the "belly and hips and thighs and calves of a smallish tight-skinned woman wearing only a pair of lilac-colored panties in the afternoon. She is alive. She is moving" (DST, p. 139).

During the process of his initiation Allert has become an androgynous figure who is an artist. The female figure he sees in the mirror is a real character: an image fleshed with his imagination. Yet his discovery is not without a loss. As I mentioned before, he has erased his maleness. But Allert, aware of his identity now, knows that. He is "entrapped" but at the same time as an artist he is "free to assume a quite different life" (DST, p. 139). His desire is now demystified. "Gasping" (DST, p. 140) from this realization he "pull[s] aside the crotch of the underpants and resting my limp back against the chair, watch as a long thin

phosphorescent string shoots from the tip of my small red panicky penis" (DST, p. 140). Allert's first ejaculation (in his dream-life) restores his maleness and marks the end of his "performance" (DST, p. 140). This dream not only reveals Allert's artistic identity but also brings forward the second important aspect of Hawkes's vision of the artist: man becomes an artist through sex.

Drifting toward death. The third aspect of Hawkes's vision, that of the death impulse, is also to be found in Allert's dreams and in the way he shapes his life according to them. As I suggested earlier, Cyril's sex-singing is related to death too. But death defuses his vision of the "multiplicity of love," while in Allert's case it fuses with his sexuality.¹³ Allert relates two dreams whose main content is death. In the first one, which he thinks of as being "one of my more important dreams" (DST, p. 48), he dreams of following a funeral procession while he slowly discovers that "it is my own body that lies dressed for death inside" the coffin (DST, pp. 47-48). Yet he is not "surprised" (DST, p. 47), and later he decides to abandon the funeral of his body. Allert seems to have no fear of death but to accept its presence indifferently. In his second dream about death, he is also "unemotional" (DST, p. 109). He leans over a window and knows that what he sees he "must never forget" (DST, p. 109). As one might expect, Allert overlooks a coffin floating in dark water. He is disturbed, but not by fear of death. He is anxious to know what he is supposed to do with it. Ursula provides him with one clue: the dead person is a woman.

The traveler/artist. This dream finds its interpretation,

or rather its reference, where the imaginary and the real collide: on board the cruise ship. Allert's anxiety about the meaning of death is resolved when he gets involved with Ariane. She is the woman who releases him from the inert state of his regression. (His detachment now takes the form of distance.) For the first time Allert admits that he knows "emotionally" (DST, p. 36) a person. He delights in her presence, washes her underclothes, is irritated by her affair with Olaf. Yet he is still far from being a passionate lover.

Ariane seems to embody all his yearnings. But although Allert is a special "favorite" (DST, p. 41) of hers, she is promiscuous. Her promiscuity has a double impact on Allert: it both fascinates him and makes him resentful. The glimpse he has of her cabin when she is visited by the ship's officers have the same appeal to him as his pornographic collection. At the same time, though, his "young friend's generosity" (DST, p. 72) inspires in him an urge to dive "to the bottom" of the pool, to "compete for breath, for time, for anguish, for peace" (DST, p. 72). Ariane leads him to a state where pleasure and destructiveness fuse. Obviously, they are not engaged in a love relationship. What makes the two emotional is their realization that they share the same intention: to sublimate desire.

On the edge, loving. Allert and Ariane are attracted but not attached to one another. The difference between the two levels of fascination deconstructs the concept of love. To be in love signifies, traditionally, the at-one-ment of two person's identities. This notion, however, borders on the body. Once the lover is

reduced to an image, to the viewing of her/his being, s/he is perceived merely as a corporeal presence. What the lover loves in the other is the certainty of this familiar presence. But Allert and Ariane see this kind of adherence to the body as a closure of the lover's presence. Their desire for each other has its source in the emotional distance that exists between them. Distance signifies edges. Allert and Ariane wander around their edges. They are travelers.

Some manifestations of edging on the ship: Allert's appropriation of his dreams and reveries to the real life of the ship; his perception of Ariane as "ordinary but unfamiliar" (DST, p. 11); his participation in some excursions that undo him, like the visits to the zoo and to the nudist beach. Ariane's promiscuity; her particular attraction to Allert; her domestication (pressing the ship's officers' trousers); her leaning out of the porthole. What is mostly striking about their edges is the fact that they involve errors. Their relationship is both erotic and erratic. Erratic because they wander away from the fixed, into the unfamiliar, challenging errors. The possibility of committing an error is the measure of the profundity of their relationship. This reflects Allert's interest "in failure," and is what he meditates on when he repeatedly asks himself: "Who is safe?" (DST, pp. 164, 165, 166).

Musing/death. Allert has found in Ariane both a fellow artist and the figure of the muse. As Veron says, "like Cyril, Ariane is a sex-singer, at once the sensitive artist and the active sensualist."¹⁴ She plays the flute for Allert, but she plays it

"in the nude" (DST, p. 67). Allert is genuinely impressed with her talent:

The first several notes moved me and surprised me even more than her nudity; since the notes were deep prolonged contralto notes, sustained with a throaty power and intention that suggested some mournful Pan rather than a small and ordinary woman on a pleasure cruise. (DST, pp. 67-68, emphasis mine)

The meaning of the music is movement. Ariane, "mournful" and musical, sounds like a siren in the process of accompanying a dead person on the voyage to the lower world. Her nudity, on the other hand, gives her another dimension, that of the muse seducing the prospective lover/artist. Allert, by surrendering to the occasion of Ariane's performance, enters the process of interpreting his being. Ariane evokes his dream in which art and sex merge.

Allert is fully aware that there is some design behind Ariane's amateurish performance. Indeed, he says:

I was sexually aroused in the depths of my damp swimming trunks as I had not been since long before the disappearance of the ship's home port, and yet at the same time I was thoroughly absorbed in the shocking contralto sounds and the body bare as if for the music itself. (DST, p. 68)

That is what Ariane has intended: "'I'd like to relieve you now quickly,' she said. 'And will you spend the night here in my

cabin?" (DST, p. 69). Allert's dreams and reveries become now ontological. Ariane conquers him with her "sonority of being." Her body unravels for him "the data of depth sensibility," necessary for a phenomenological understanding of his identity. But desire inflicts upon this understanding an invisible obscurity. They both share it: "'So you too have those feelings,' she whispered. 'I thought you did.'" (DST, p. 86). Allert, for answer, "bruise[s] her in the agony of my desperate embrace" (DST, p. 86).¹⁵ In embracing Ariane, he embraces his dream about death.

The skull/the rose. Now that art and life coalesce, Allert's proximity to the sublimation of (his) desire erases temporarily his regression. Ariane affirms his expectations by invoking death. Her invocation occurs during the masquerade on the ship. Her intention to participate in it, to disguise the real, sets into play the semantics of desire. The manifestation of her intention to Allert takes again the form of a performance: the artist at work:

Ariane sat before me girdled only in what appeared to be the split skull and horns of a smallish and long-dead goat. It was as if some ancient artisan had taken an axe and neatly cleaved off the topmost portion of the skull of a small goat What was left of the forehead and nose, which was triangular and polished and ended in a few slivers of white bone, lay tightly wedged in my small friend's bare loins. The goat's skull was a shield that could not have afforded her greater sexual protection, while at the same time the length of bone that once comprised the goat's nose and hence part of its mouth gave silent urgent voice to the living orifice it now concealed. The horns were curled around her hips. On her right hip and held in place between the curve of the slender horn and curve of her body Ariane was wearing a dark red rose. (DST, pp. 174-175)

Allert watches with "disbelief and breathless respect" (DST, p. 174). Life is no longer a theatre whose measure is mediocrity. He exclaims with admiration: "You are Schubert's child. Who but my Ariane would fuse her own delicacy with the skull of the animal Eros?" (DST, p. 175). Ariane does not only re-enact Allert's interest in "depicted sexuality," but she also offers him an experience of completeness. Dreams, reveries and the displaced real fuse into an organic whole: a phenomenological performance. Her performance is a deliberate deepening of the consciousness which takes the form of distance coming to immediacy.

All of Allert's intentions are now tangible:

I removed the rose Gently I tugged on the horns until they came away from her I could not believe what the goat's cranial cavity now revealed. The goat's partial skull fell to the floor but did not break. I smothered my small friend in my flesh, a huge old lover grateful for girl, generosity, desire and the axe that long ago had split the skull. (DST, p. 176)

Ariane's body is "the body as incarnate meaning." Having not only displaced the real but actually killed it, she embodies Allert's phenomenology of the imagination. But now that Ariane's imagination, through the semantics of desire, operates on a real stage, Allert's own imagination takes the form of fear. He asks Ariane not to attend the ball because he is afraid of the edges that his imagination might yearn for. His fear is what Steiner, in discussing

Allert's narrative, calls: "a humanizing of the values of imagination by virtue of an ultimate distinction between fantasy, dream and actuality."¹⁶ But Ariane insists. She is promiscuous, once more following her own intentions. At the end of the ball, Allert "holding her horizontally" (DST, p. 165) in his arms takes her on the deck.

On the deck, at the edge of the ship's rail and the darkness of the ocean, Allert "could not feel her weight." "I heard a shout," he continues. "I turned. I heard a splash. I could not feel her weight. And then along the entire length of that bitter ship I saw the lights sliding and blurring beneath the waves" (DST, pp. 165-166). Ariane is gone. ("Who is safe?") Her body disappears over the edge of the ship's "safe" ground during the interval of two sounds: "a shout" and "a splash."

Allert is only aware of his perception of the deck and of her absence. Her disappearance (death) is an error but an error intended by his imagination. When Allert terminates his discourse by saying "I am not guilty" (DST, p. 179) he means that. Ariane's death sublimates his desire. His journey is over but his wandering is not. Grateful to Ariane for the awareness she has provided him, he will continue to live on the edge of the real and the imaginary. As he says, "I shall simply think and dream, think and dream" (DST, p. 179).

CHAPTER FOUR

Travesty: Imagine, The Self Real

The cover / a signifier. As I move from Death, Sleep and the Traveler to Travesty, the first thing I encounter is an image: the cover of Travesty. Overall, it is white. I see two discourses interspersed with it, a linguistic one and a photographic one. The former denotes the writer's name and the title; the latter connotes what this frontal image of the novel covers: an accident. Reading (seeing) these two discourses together, I assume that John Hawkes's Travesty is about a car smashed against the whiteness of the cover. The absurdity of my conclusion reenacts for a moment the title and implies that my reading of the cover depends solely on the eye.

Can my eye penetrate the cover and provide me with depth information before I enter the text? Is it appropriate to the process of my reading to see the cover as a body of meaning? Roland Barthes says that "the image is in a certain manner the limit of meaning, it permits the consideration of a veritable ontology of the process of signification."¹ Looking again at the cover, noticing the absence of bodies in the crashed car, I become aware of its limits. It is not a body of meaning; it is a face, the face that unfolds naturally from Allert's narrative, the face that speaks Travesty.

Its whiteness evokes Allert's descriptions of white walls, white tiles, white ship, white cabin, white crotch, white shoe, and so forth. Transparent images, yet opaque since they are

filtered through the darkness of his consciousness. Although there is a shift from Allert's error to an accident, the same opacity emanates from Travesty's cover. The accident is present but kept at a distance. The white stripes of the cover restrict one's own full view of the destroyed car. The cover as a signifier depicts an accident which seems to be "the formative event" (T, p. 125) of the narrative to follow. Under the cover, the narrative appropriately takes place in a car on a French highway.

The body / a play of events. Papa is the driver of the car, the narrator of the novel. Yet the "formative event" of the narrative is not his suicide and the murders of Henri and Chantal. It is an event of his early manhood that has convinced him "of the validity of the fiction of living" (T, p. 125). Papa was driving quickly despite approaching an old man and a little girl jostled by the crowd in the street. (His driving force was his desire for Honorine, then his wife-to-be.) He is not sure whether he struck the "astounding" (T, p. 126) girl but he treasures his uncertainty. With the same fervor he also treasures his resentment for the old man, "bewhiskered and wearing a bright silk cravat and carrying a furled umbrella, though the sun was such that it could not possibly have rained that day" (T, p. 125), whom he thinks is "unmistakably" (T, p. 125) one of Henri's kind, "which is to say an old poet" (T, p. 125). Papa's description and memory of this event rely on the flux of his perception: his doubt as to whether he is a criminal or not, and his arbitrary decision that the outfit of the old man signifies the cliché appearance of an old poet.

Papa's resolution not to decide about the grammar of the

event turns the event into a signifier of "the fiction of living."
 This response is illuminated by what Foucault has to say about
 events:

The event--a wound, a victory-defeat, death--is always an effect produced entirely by bodies colliding, mingling, or separating, but this effect is never of a corporeal nature; it is the intangible, inaccessible battle that turns and repeats itself a thousand times around Fabricius, above the wounded Prince Andrew." The weapons that tear into bodies form an endless incorporeal battle. Physics concerns causes, but events,² which arise as its effects, no longer belong to it.

What Papa finds valid in "the fiction of living" is, in Foucault's terms, the incorporeality of the event. The bodies constituting the event are not physically present. It is Papa's perception of them that actualizes the event, makes it "formative" in his life. Thus the physical absence of bodies transforms the event into a body of meaning. During his process of perceiving the event, Papa's life, as he admits, is enriched with "creativity" (T, p. 47). He translates the "intangible nature" of this experience as "a travesty, involving a car, an old poet, and a little girl" (T, p. 47, emphasis mine). The possible criminal creatively, and playfully, renames the possibly fatal event. But even the name here is intangible. His creativity, as opposed to the old poet's, has provided him with "'cruel detachment'" (T, p. 47).

(For a moment, Papa's account of this event shocks me. I am quite certain that he does not "glance in the rear-view mirror" (T, p. 126) because he already knows what he is going to see: the stricken girl. I find his indifference intolerable. Yet when I

reread his narration I realize how sentimental and absurd my response is. What I see (the girl struck down) is not on the page. No matter whether Papa's account is true to the event or not, his language falsifies it. His indifference is what Derrida calls difference with an a. "Differance . . . /is/ the origin or production of differences and the differences between differences, the play /jeu/ of differences."³ Papa sees in this event the difference between death and being dead. What enthralls him, and influences him irrevocably, is his instantaneous encounter with death which his discourse turns into a play of possibilities: "I saw the tassel flying I felt nothing, not so much as a hair against the fender, exactly as if the child had been one of tonight's rabbits" (T, p. 126). It is this play (the possibility of the girl's death married to the certainty of the dead rabbits) that prevents Papa from being emotional.)

To voice what turns mute. Although Papa's involvement in the "formative event" was totally coincidental, the crash he is looking forward to is all his intention.

What I have in mind is an "accident" so perfectly contrived that it will be unique, spectacular, instantaneous, a physical counterpart to that vision in which it was in fact conceived. A clear "accident," so to speak, in which invention quite defies interpretation. (T, p. 23, emphasis mine)

The use of the word "accident" is not euphemistic as Henri wants to

think of it (T, p. 46). At the core of Papa's scheme is his intent to present the event of the crash as an "accident." The choice of the word "accident" reflects the phenomenology of his perception. As Allert dreams his life and lives his dreams, so does Papa conceptualize the impending event by setting into gear his intentionality. His drive verifies the ontological status of his imagination.

Discussing the phenomenological understanding of an event, Foucault says:

Phenomenology . . . reoriented the event with respect to meaning: either it placed the bare event before or to the side of meaning--the rock of facticity, the mute inertia of occurrences--and then submitted it to the active processes of meaning, to its digging and elaboration; or else it assumed a domain of primal significations, which always existed as a disposition of the world around the self, tracing its paths and privileged locations, indicating in advance where the event might occur and its possible form.⁴

By the same token, Papa's intention is to appropriate the meaning of the "formative event" of his life. Being a "privileged person" (T, p. 76), a bourgeois husband and lover who can afford to satisfy his desires, he decides after his encounter with the "old poet" to give voice and meaning to the "mute inertia" of his privileged life.

The "domain of primal significations" toward which he, like Cyril and Allert, directs his privilege is that of art. Its form, he decides "in advance": his car which is going to crash into the "windowless wall of an old and now roofless barn" (T, p. 24). To put it in Steiner's words, "The privilege of the 'privileged man' is

to make a clarity of the absurd logic and to concretize the fundamental contradictions which underlie equilibrium."⁵ Papa, indeed, intends to give concrete form to his privilege. The concrete form is, ironically, the amorphous mass of his car and its passengers. He "traces" the safe "paths" of his privileged class through his imagination. He gives artistic form to the aesthetics of his life.

With/out limits. It becomes clear now why Papa sees the old man as a poet, why Henri the old poet must be involved in the impending "accident." Papa, in order to actualize his "moment of creativity," must clarify (dis-cover) the "mythos of cruel detachment" (T, p. 43) that characterizes Henri's life. He enters the process of dis-covery the instant Chantal and Henri step into his car. The two lovers do not know that by accepting Papa's invitation to a drive they also agree to participate in a travesty.

Papa transgresses the limits of reality as Henri, as any poet, does. Only he transgresses them within reality itself. His "privileged" imagination does not dictate to him a poem. It "drives" him through those paths of reality that Henri's poetic imagination has never transgressed. Transgression is as important for Papa as regression into the dreamworld is for Allert. Papa wants to cross the border of life toward death and he intends to really do this by avoiding the reenactment of "mythos" through poetic discourse. His "theory tells us that ours is the power to invent the very world we are quitting" (T, p. 57). Papa imagines the real while he realizes the imaginary.

His statement that his "accident" "will be unique" does not

imply that his imagination is original but rather that it goes back to its origins, to the "formative event." It is generic and generative at the same time. Its uniqueness lies in his phenomenological perception as it manifests itself within the limits of the real. The "accident" that Papa invents resists Henri's interpretation exactly because it has been "conceived," not as a mental construction, but as the "physical counterpart" of Papa's own vision. This difference between invention and interpretation establishes the ground as well as the limits of Papa's narrative.

Acting / the ape.

Murder, Henri? Well, that's precisely the trouble with you poets. In your pessimism you ape the articulation you achieve in written words, you are able to recite your poems as an actor his lines, you consider yourselves quite exempt from all those rules of behaviour that constrict us lesser-privileged men in feet, hands, loins, mouths. Yet in the last extremity you cry moral wolf. So you accuse me of planning murder. But with the very use of the word you reveal at last that you are only the most banal and predictable of poets. No libertine, no man of vision and hence suffering, but a banal moralist.
(T, p. 14)

Papa voices here his interpretation of Henri. He analyzes Henri's choice of the word "murder" in the same way that I have approached his own alternative, that of "accident." The results, however, are diametrically opposed. While the impending event as "accident" displays the phenomenology of Papa's perception, the same event as "murder" reveals Henri's mimetic perception. Henri cannot see beyond or through the impending annihilation of his body. As Papa says, "the body expresses what the mind refuses to tolerate" (T, p. 61). Henri's mind, paralyzed by fear, prevents him from

imagining death. Thus his perception of the event in process is not incorporeal. When he accuses Papa of "murder" he merely apes the fear of his body.

Seen in such terms, Henri's interpretation is reductive. He divorces life from art. He identifies the signification of his physical fear with the meaning of an event which is still in its process of happening. In Foucault's terms, he does not pose the event "before or to the side of meaning." His perception is end-oriented rather than process-oriented. His shortness of breath (T, p. 60), his cry "Spare me" (T, p. 21), both indicate that, in this crucial situation at least, his instinct for self-preservation is more developed than his imagination. Henri the poet is defeated by Henri the man.

The emergence of Henri's self is the product of Papa's inductive and processual imagination. Papa demythologizes Henri's public image. Henri's "persona" (T, p. 42) of the man/poet who has reached madness (T, p. 41) in his attempt to reach truth is phoney, but nonetheless appealing to his readers. As Papa admits, "people admire you for your desperate courage" (T, p. 43). But this courage is merely a facade. Henri has been "telling those eager or hostile women that a poet is always a betrayer, a murderer, and that the writing of poetry is like a descent into death" (T, p. 80). Thus Henri has managed to provide himself both with affection and notoriety. But this contrived emotional security is Henri's invention. His only invention. He has created his own myth of the poet's life, the "mythos of cruel detachment."

Twice over. Papa, knowing Henri both as a man and as a

poet, perceives this unavoidable suffering and detachment as an "illusion" (T, p. 42). He exposes all of Henri's admired traits as the tricks of a poseur:

Your modesty? Honesty? Humility? Anxiety? I am aware of them all. In you these qualities are made of the same solid silver as that courage of yours. Yet, you are the kind of man who should always be accompanied by a woman who is the wife of a man as privileged as me. Only some such woman could qualify as your Muse and attest to your courage.

(T, p. 43)

Papa is highly ironic here for both his wife Honorine and his daughter Chantal are Henri's lovers. The fact that Henri's muse is a double figure, a mother and a daughter, indicates his impulse to play (safely) against the taboo of incest as well as his interest in the erotic. But his sense of eroticism is affected by his claims of "cruel detachment." Honorine's tatoo of a "cluster of pale purple grapes on yellow stems" (T, p. 51) that adorns the "small area between navel and pubic hair" (T, p. 51) does not seem to excite Henri to the same extent that it does Papa. Papa delights in this sight that "crowns the erogenous contours" (T, p. 51) of Honorine. The tatoo arouses his imagination, makes him see Honorine as "precisely the incarnation of everything" (T, p. 48) that a man expects from a woman.⁶ Henri, on the contrary, acknowledges it only as real. His notion that "'belief in life' . . . is not for a poet" (T, p. 36) prevents him from fully experiencing the erotic

pleasures that Honorine can offer him. His aesthetics of poetry obscures the aesthetics of his life.

The homogeneity of Henri's two lovers also undermines his eroticism. Honorine and Chantal evoke identical ideas and images. They have the same bourgeois consciousness, belong to the same family, even live in the same house. Henri does not see any differences between them that could fulfill different needs he might have. His sexuality seems to point to nothing beyond itself. His two lovers are only signs of the affluence he seeks. Henri, in other words, seems to embody the "brilliant anomaly" that Papa talks about: "the poet as eroticist and pragmatist combined" (T, p. 42).

The critic driving. . . . Papa's analysis of Henri's identities as a lover and as a poet is equivalent to the act of a literary critic. His comments that Henri "is not a very good poet" (T, p. 106) and that his "brooding . . . over a dull line of verse" is only a "pretentious monologue" (T, p. 106) emphasize Papa's critical intentions. As a critic, Papa is a phenomenologist who argues against the ontological status of the present and acknowledges only its "ongoing revisionary process,"⁷ as critic Marie-Rose Logan says of the phenomenological approach. He deconstructs (de-structs) Henri the man, for he is an "emotional parasite" (T, p. 106), and dis-closes Henri the poet for his "lack of knowledge and lack of imagination" (T, p. 21). He intends to persuade Henri that he should let his self-contradictions be. Henri who, as an "eroticist and a pragmatist combined," is concerned with a teleological process of the present must believe in the ontological

status of the imagination: in "the fiction of living."

The critic creating. Papa's interpretation of Henri's life is a deconstruction of the figure of the artist for the sake of "clarity." His invention, on the other hand, is the process he chooses to follow in order to achieve this "clarity," in order to obliterate Henri's "mythos of cruel detachment." Yet Papa, during the practice of his deconstructive poetics, decreates not only the poet but also the creative act. The kind of art he advocates is the binary of "design and debris" (T, p. 17). It is the act of carrying the "familiar" (T, p. 19) to its extremes.

As he explains to Henri, art manifests itself when, for instance, "some courageous driver falls back on good sense and lunges straight across the patch of sand, his tires scattering the sand and revealing the fresh blood behind" (T, p. 19). In other words, the awareness of the coming accident (intention) and the fracturing of the skin (skin of the body, skin of the car) when the accident occurs make man experience creativity: life and art blend. As Papa says, "Total destruction. In its own way it is a form of ecstasy, this utter harmony between design and debris" (T, p. 19).

The amateur. Papa's decision to re-enact his "paradigm" (T, p. 17) of the driver indicates his own awareness of being an artist who knows no limits. His strong declaration that "I am no poet. And I am no murderer" (T, p. 14) deludes only Henri's own aesthetics. Papa himself believes that "every more or less privileged person contains within himself the seed of the poet, so that the wife of each such individual wants nothing more than to be a poet's mistress" (T, p. 76). Papa by means of his deconstructive

poetics is an artist and a sensualist without being a "pragmatist."

I love you, not. The amalgamation of Papa's art and eroticism exists not only in the coming "accident" he narrates but also in his relationship with Monique, his young ex-mistress. What fascinates Papa about Monique is her physical beauty as well as the "vastness" and "fierceness" of her "human will" (T, p. 65). Monique's intentionality compliments Papa's phenomenological stance toward life. This is evident in their constant attempts to deconstruct love. They delight in causing "embarrassing public displays of bad temper" (T, p. 66). "It was as if we shared between us an unspoken agreement to parody the lovers' quarrel, the domestic disagreement, whenever possible" (T, p. 66), he says. The intention behind their disagreements makes the real fictional.

The car. Papa's poetics functions under the premise that more than one persons or objects must be present. As Ricoeur says, "If the living substance goes to death by an inner movement, what fights against death is not something internal to life, but the conjugation of two mortal substances."⁸ This conjugation in Papa's case takes place in the car occupied by three persons. Papa envisions the car in "sheer impact" (T, p. 17), ultimately disappearing "in fire" (T, p. 55). The car is undoubtedly Papa's vehicle for the actualization of his imagination. But vehicle here does not imply medium. The car, as Henri and Chantal, is equally present in Papa's imagination: it actually drives him toward his "private apocalypse" (T, p. 58).

On the other hand. Henri and Chantal are present in the car in order to satisfy Papa's eroticism, his need for the other.

To quote Ricoeur again, "the desire of the other is directly implied in the emergence of Eros; it is always with another that the living substance fights against death, against its own death."⁹ Papa has managed to create inside the car an erotic triangle without explicit sex, one which he balances by means of his imagination. The process of his narrative as well as the process of his drive allow Honorine and Pascal, his dead son, to enter the car.

The bow / the car. Pascal is described as Eros incarnate. He was a "larger-than-lifesize hunter, naked" (T, p. 85), approaching Papa and Honorine every morning "with his pink cheeks and pouting underlip and little penis which Honorine always used to touch with the tip of her finger, as if that tiny sexual organ belonged not to Pascal but to the winged infant cast in bronze" (T, pp. 85, 87). This incarnation of Eros, physically dead now but nonetheless present through memory, accentuates Papa's intention. It sets the frame within which "design and debris" take form.

During the entire drive, Papa practises self-deconstruction. The measure of his practice comes in Henri's statement that "Imagined life is more exhilarating than remembered life" (T, p. 127). Henri seems eventually to have understood what Papa means by the "fiction of living." But Henri's ultimate agreement with Papa's aesthetics cannot detract Papa from the collision. If this is Henri's implicit understanding or secret hope, he is soon to be disappointed. Papa does mean what he practises. He promises "no survivors" (T, p. 128). The event which comes with the end of Papa's narrative is an encounter of the real with the fictional. What sublimates Papa's process of living imaginatively is the actual "accident."

CHAPTER FIVE

The Narrators as Archaeologists

Hawkes has not only created three main characters who desire to imagine, but has also given them the privilege of articulating this desire. Cyril, Allert and Papa are first-person narrators, and Hawkes's trilogy in motion is, in this respect, a narrative which shifts from one I/eye to another. What Papa means by "privileged man" can be extended here to the three narrators who are able to articulate their selves (and others' selves) in the ways they perceive and imagine them. This articulation does not postulate a static self: quite the contrary, it puts forward a self in process.

I: one letter: one word: one world. Cyril's, Allert's and Papa's narratives are not so much three stories about their relationships with other characters: Cyril, Allert and Papa, being first-person narrators, cannot help but posit above all their selves. The positing of the self, as Ricoeur says,

is a truth which posits itself; it can be neither verified nor deduced; it is at once the positing of a being and an act; . . . Since this truth cannot be verified like a fact, nor deduced like a conclusion, it has to posit itself in reflection; its self-positing is reflection . . .¹

This elusive truth that Ricoeur talks about when applied to Hawkes's

trilogy turns out to be dependent upon the narrator's phenomenological stance toward reality. But what are the "being and the "act" that the three narrators reflect?

Cyril prescribes the ways in which he wants to be seen: "See me as small white porcelain bull . . ., see me as great white creature horned and mounted on a trim little golden sheep. . . . See me as bull, or ram, as man, husband, lover, a tall and heavy stranger in white shorts on a violet tennis court" (BO, p. 2). Despite the evasiveness of this self-presentation, there is one constant: the figure of the bull. The bull as a signifier of fecundity and power reflects Cyril's past, while its fragility (it is porcelain) reflects his present.² Similarly, when Allert talks about himself he says that "In the middle of the darkwood I am a golden horse lying dead on its side across the path and rotting" (DST, p. 36). This description reflects Allert's oscillation between his unconscious ("the dark wood") and his consciousness (his longing for death). The "golden horse" is a signifier of his "intense desires and instincts."³ And Papa, lastly, who cannot pinpoint himself since he is "always moving," refers only to his zodiac signs. He is a Leo with some influence of Scorpio. (T, pp. 40-99). As a Leo, he exercises his "will" to adopt Scorpio's "threat of death" as his own power.⁴

The self: a beast who dreams. These self-presentations are far from being self-portraits. The discourses the three narrators use in speaking about themselves are fabulous. The bull, the horned creature, the golden horse, Leo and Scorpio, all reflect the narrators' fantasies rather than their realities. But

fantasies are phenomenologically real too: the narrators' insistence upon living in them does not imply the elimination of their real selves but their temporary withdrawal from them.

Their fabulous discourses are signs of their being artists. They enable Cyril, Allert and Papa to come to terms with, even to justify, the detachment they have caused and experienced. In other words, they allow the narrators to enjoy their fantasies without shame. By analogy, the "act" that reflects their selves must be their works of art. These are of course their narratives which are creations inclusive both of their fantasies and their real selves. Cyril's faith in Love makes him hear Fiona's breasts singing (BO, p. 40); Allert's impression that the "hot aluminum" of the pool "was curled like the horns of some great artificial goat" (DST, p. 34) is realized later in his narrative as the "goat's horned skull masking her [Ariane's] sex" (DST, p. 5); Papa argues with Henri about the naming of the coming "accident" (T, p. 13).

The first-person point of view, as it seems, is a narrative form most appropriate to Cyril, Allert and Papa who as artists must express themselves by creating their own language. As artists/narrators engaged in the process of their narratives, they present themselves as characters. They are contained in their own language. Their preoccupation with process points also to the fact that they never cease to desire, that their artistic creativity has no formative end.

"The Present is Prologue."⁵ Although as artists each one of them has his own individuality, the expositions of their stories bear a lot of similarities. The reason for this is the similar

artistic stance they assume, which I have discussed in the three previous chapters, and the common narrative method they employ. The origin of their method can be traced back to fantasy. Ricoeur says that fantasies "can carry two opposed vectors: a regressive vector which subjects the fantasy to the past, and a progressive vector which makes it an indicator of meaning."⁶ Cyril, Allert and Papa are "regressive" and "progressive" narrators, and this is mostly evident in their use of time.

As I have shown in the previous chapters, Cyril, Allert and Papa locate the beginnings of their narratives in the present. Very soon, however, they deviate from a linear account of present events in order to enter the past. As his account goes on, Cyril talks less about his present solitude and more about Catherine, Fiona and Hugh: in turn, Allert's narrative is focused on his past, his present consisting only of his references to Ursula's departure; finally, Papa's drive, as well, accentuates his past. All of them use the present in its openness as an instant, as the "occasion" (T, p. 57) of their narratives, occasion in the sense of falling down, falling into the past.

Cyril, Allert and Papa view their pasts as the historical grounds they must explore in order to formulate their narratives. They delve into them and seek to encounter their history. Thus they become "regressive" narrators who function as archaeologists. I have in mind here Foucault's concept of archaeology and the analogy he draws between it and history:

There was a time when archaeology, as a discipline devoted to silent monuments, inert traces, objects

without context, and things left by the past, aspired to the condition of history, and attained meaning only through the restitution of a historical discourse; it might be said, to play on words a little, that in our time history aspires to the condition of archaeology, to the intrinsic description of the monument.⁷

Foucault extends his description of the archaeologists's method to all the disciplines which approach events by means of discourse. The application of this concept to Hawkes's trilogy illuminates the narrators' own method.

Exiled from the present / embracing the past. The archaeological sites ("monuments") that Cyril, Allert and Papa explore present their pasts, and their "intrinsic descriptions" of them is the exposition of their memories. Yet unearthing the past through memories is not an easy task. The narrators must project themselves imaginatively outside their bodies into what they are not any longer. Allert thinks of this projection as an "unwanted" condition:

I now think without doubt that I, the old Dutchman dispossessed of the helm, am the living proof of all of Peter's theories. Or almost all. Yes, I tell myself that I am the legacy of my friend, my wife's lover, our psychiatrist. Yes, I am the dead man's only legacy. But unwanted legacy, I suddenly correct myself, unwanted legacy. Of my friend, Peter but also of the women I have known.

In the darkness I am their entire legacy, the filthy sack of their past and mine. And unwanted, every drop of it. (DST, pp. 167-168)

In spite of Allert's resistance, his narrative is the "living proof"

that he accepts this condition of being the container of his own and others' pasts. He knows, as an artist, that he has a double task: to be the "filthy sack of [the] past" and to re-construct it.

Cyril has reservations too, but they last briefly. He wonders whether "memory and clairvoyance [are] mere twin languorous drafts of rose-tinted air" (BO, p. 35). But he willingly surpasses his doubts and with "pompous lyricism" (BO, p. 35) he accepts that "if memory gives me back the grape-tasting game and bursting sun, clairvoyance returns to me in a different way my wife, my last mistress, the little golden sheep who over her shoulder turns small bulging eyes in my direction" (BO, p. 36, emphasis mine). His acceptance of the function of memory indicates that his sensuality is related not only to carnal reality but also to its reconstruction. If Allert's and Cyril's momentary doubts are concerned with whether memory is true to facts, Papa is the one who puts everything into its right place. He says that "The greater the incongruity, the greater the truth" (T, p. 20).

The orifice / speaking. The way that Cyril, Allert and Papa deal with their memories parallels the way that the archaeologist deals with the archives he has at his disposal. As Foucault observes, "The archive cannot be described in its totality; and in its presence it is unavoidable. It emerges in fragments, regions, and levels, more fully, no doubt, and with greater sharpness, the greater the time that separates us from it . . ."⁸ The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty consist of narrative fragments. These fragments are the

pieces that the narrators extract from the body of the past. As narrators/archaeologists they destroy the "region" of the past in order to reconstruct it in the field of the present.

This reconstruction offers not a mimetic representation but the repetition of the facts of the past as incorporeal events by means of discourse, discourse as discursive language, as a detour from the dead past toward its reactivation. The reactivation of the past follows a proprioceptive process. The discourse of Cyril, Allert and Papa passes through their bodies. Papa's concern with Henri's asthmatic seizure and with breathing in general, Allert's diving into the pool in order to gasp "repeatedly and voraciously for breath" (DST, pp. 33-34), Cyril's constant awareness of Catherine's breathing as a sign of her attentive presence, are all indicators that breathing is proper to discourse. Their whole inner mechanism (the viscera of their bodies/their selves) is engaged in the repetition of the past. It is their mouths, eventually, which give release to memory as discourse.

The origins of the narrator's discourses play, apparently, a central role in the creation of their narratives. As Cyril, Allert and Papa breathe, they articulate the fragments of the past. The past becomes a whole again, this time consisting of said things. These said things signify the displacement of the past and its relocation in the field of the present. During the process of relocation, Cyril, Allert and Papa move from being "regressive" narrators to being "progressive" ones. After they have destroyed the past, they reconstitute it, through their particular discourses, as a positive whole.

Hold on. During the interval of the "regressive" and the "progressive" processes the narrators affect the ongoing process of the present. Allert announces that Ursula "is leaving," then "regresses" into his past and ends his narrative in the present again, right after the moment that Ursula "drove off" (DST, p. 179). The immediacy of action that the present continuous tense of the beginning implies is suspended. The duration of its suspension lasts as long as it takes to speak (read) the hundred and seventy-nine pages of Allert's narrative. Cyril, on the other hand, uses more drastic measures as an archaeologist: he imposes a stillness on the present. He begins his narrative with a brief description of his present state of life, and after he delves into his past, he returns to the same present. The "We shall wait and see" (BO, p. 3) of the beginning is translated in the end as "Everything coheres, moves forward" (BO, p. 271). But there is no sign that the present has moved forward. It has remained still while the past has come to the foreground. On the contrary, Papa is the only one who functions as a "regressive" and "progressive" narrator at the same time. He "regresses" into his past but it is one of his priorities to keep his car going. The more said things he utters, the more he accelerates.

See-saw: see. The narrators' oscillation between past and present manifests itself according to the momentum of their "regression" into their bodies, and it is specific, as it has been shown, for each of them. But the specificity of their discourses, which Foucault sees as one of the assignments of archaeology,⁹ raises a question which is supposedly inherent in all first-person

narratives: the reliability of the speaking voice, the accuracy of the past's reactivation. But the archaeology of the narrators automatically erases the question. Archaeology, as Foucault says, "is not an interpretative discipline . . ."¹⁰ Cyril, Allert and Papa do not try to imitate the past. What they narrate is a re-perception of what happened in the past.

Allert, for instance, says in the beginning of his narrative that Ursula wears a "sullen silk dress" and that she carries a "straw suitcase in either hand" (DST, p. 1). In the end of his narrative, when he returns to the same, but frozen, present moment, he says that she wears "white slacks" and a "red-knitted top" (DST, p. 178) and that she carries one "small suitcase apparently made of the softest lambskin" (DST, pp. 177-178). The contradiction in his two descriptions is obvious. But contradictions involved in an archaeological analysis, as Foucault observes, "are objects to be described for themselves, without an attempt being made to discover from what point of view they can be dissipated. . . ."¹¹ Thus to doubt the authenticity of Allert's voice, or the voices of the other two narrators in similar cases, would mean to doubt his, or their, ability to perceive, to reject "the dynamics of operative meaning (meaning in act or in operation) . . ."¹² The idea to consider when discussing the archaeology of first-person narratives is that of distance.

I versus name. The three narrators/archaeologists have to approach the sites of their digging from a distance. They have to leap from their present place and time into the past. Cyril, Allert and Papa do not erase this distance but cover it, for it is what

qualifies their identities as narrators. They allow it to exist as process, as the play of what was and is now re-enacted. This play is nothing else but the discrepancy observed between the narrators speaking now and the emergence of their selves from the past. The Allert, for instance, who says "I am not guilty" (DST, p. 179) is a different person from the Allert who says that "I [was] closer to death than I had ever been" (DST, p. 38). The fact that the subjects of the two statements bear the same names does not disperse their differences. The contextual difference of the two sentences, which is both spacial and temporal, participates in the narrative process.

The third page/the fourth person. The difference between the narrators and their past selves and the differences between the narrators themselves make me aware of the difference between them and Hawkes. Hawkes is the author of the three novels but this does not mean that he is the one who speaks them. As Barthes says, "who speaks (in the narrative) is not who writes (in real life) and who writes is not who is."¹³ Hawkes appears in the texts only as a proper name on the covers and on the two title pages of each one of the novels. Between these title pages and the texts there is a third page which is marked only with the title of the narratives to follow. This third page (the absence of the proper name) establishes the difference between Hawkes and the three narrators.

As Hawkes's imagination "create[s] everything and anything-- out of nothing . . .," his authorial presence precedes the archaeological narratives of his main characters. Thus his authority is generic; his presence (body/being) manifests itself as

a force prior to the texts. His own discourse is langue while the discourses of the narrators are paroles.¹⁴ As Terence Hawkes explains the difference between these two key terms of Ferdinand de Saussure's, "The nature of langue lies beyond, and determines, the nature of each manifestation of parole, yet it has no concrete existence of its own, except in the piecemeal manifestations that speech affords."¹⁵ This external position of Hawkes verifies his difference from the narrators.

Cyril, Allert and Papa talk about themselves, their erotic preferences, their bodies. Hawkes does not. His presence as a proper name in the beginning of the novels takes a different form once we close the three books. His photograph appears on their back covers. But although he faces me as a reader, there is no sign that he opens himself to me. His presence is empirically perceived, but his self remains equally absent. Hawkes's real image as an author is a ruse. He is the authority who designates the trilogy's unity. Authority as logos, as word and unifying principle together.

CHAPTER SIX

The Desire for Death and its Limits

The main characteristic of Cyril's, Allert's and Papa's stories in motion is the repetition of their desire. As archaeologists, they desire to embrace the past again; as lovers, they pursue new companions for their erotic pleasures. In both of their activities, repetition follows impoverishment. Their desire renews itself only when it momentarily disappears. Cyril kisses the goat-girl but "The distance between the goat-girl and singer of sex could not be bridged by a single kiss" (BO, p. 145). After the goat-girl disappears behind the rocks, Cyril kisses Catherine, and "Surely on the hilltop we had just abandoned, Hugh and Fiona were kissing too" (BO, p. 147). The moment the figure of a body dies away, desire discovers another one. When desire is fulfilled death appears as the compulsion to repeat.

Death as the basis of pleasure borders the body and its limits, limits that have to do with the physicality of the body and limits related to the body as an imaginary being (the soul/the self). The trilogy, preoccupied with death, offers an abundance of images which present the body as the carrier of death. Yet when death touches the body, it is always accompanied by desire. Whether it appears because of natural causes or as suicide, accident or murder, it is equally creative and destructive.

Tangible limits. Quite early in The Blood Oranges, Cyril and Fiona are in a "dungeonlike church" (BO, p. 18) where Fiona

discovers the skeleton of a child. Her fascination with this body, which has reached the extreme of its physical limits, overwhelms her. She immediately sees it as belonging to a boy and feels the impulse to "kiss him" (BO, p. 20). As Cyril says observing the scene, "Fiona . . . found the small white skull with her eager mouth, and I could only smile still more broadly at the sight of Fiona lavishing one of her brief floods of compassion on the tiny cold features of a grinning relic" (BO, p. 20). Fiona's attraction toward the skeleton is distinctly sexual. She is seduced by death's image.

(I find Fiona's attraction to the skeleton revealing. Her "act of kissing" (BO, p. 20) the skeleton is far from being perverse. Fiona's kiss reveals her acute perception of the body. The absence of flesh does not make the skeleton less desirable. As it arouses Fiona's desire, she brings it alive with her own warm skin, with her breath touching the hole that used to be the mouth. This skeleton (remnants of dead body) evokes for Fiona the most phallic symbol for a woman: it is all bones, a "whole that works" (BO, p. 19). Moreover, being the skeleton of a child, it brings to the surface her motherly instincts. The sight of death, then, does not kill sex. It only accentuates it.)

Life excreted. The presence of death in the trilogy is not always seductive. It is repulsive as well. When Peter dies in the sauna, Allert and Ursula find the experience quite the opposite of Fiona's encounter with the skeleton: "His body looked like dry fat and cartilage. He looked like a creature that had been skinned. He was flicking with movement. But then that awful

movement ceased. He was dead" (DST, p. 170). Allert and Ursula watch as death possesses Peter's body. It is a process that dehumanizes Peter, as the sight inspires only pity.

As death takes its place within him, his body spends its last sparks of life with a muscular movement that makes Allert and Ursula stare at him "in shock and grief" (DST, p. 170). Peter defecates. The smell and sight of his excrement so strongly embarrass and infuriate Ursula that they annul her desire: she refuses to see her lover's body proprioceptively. In contrast, Allert responds to this incident phenomenologically. He sees it as a sign of the intimacy between life and death. Unoffended, he gathers in his hands "the last evidence of Peter's life" (DST, p. 171) and throws it in the sea, thinking that his hands "would be forever stained with the death of my friend" (DST, p. 171). Allert, who constantly imagines death, accepts the ugliness that accompanies it.

Intangible limits. The presence of death within the body does not necessarily imply that the body reaches the limits of its endurance. Peter's explanation of the "archaic cure" (DST, p. 143), practised on his mental patients, illustrates how the process of dying affects the awakening of that part of the body that is not mortal: the soul/the self.

by subjecting the patient to deeper and deeper states of coma we brought him increasingly close to death's door. The patient descended within himself and, while we, the worried staff, hovered at his side . . . the patient was travelling inside himself and in a kind of sexual agony was sinking into the depth of psychic darkness, drowning in the sea of the self, submerging into the

long slow chaos of the dreamer on the edge of extinction. The closer such a patient came to death, the greater his cure . . . the greater the agony with which he approached oblivion, then the greater and more profound and more joyous his recovery, his rebirth. (DST, p. 143)

Here the body becomes the place where the battle of life and death presents itself as an incorporeal event. The psychiatrists intend to cure the patient by annulling his consciousness, by leading him to his origins in non-existence, that "edge of extinction."

The patient can recover his sanity through his body. As the psychiatrists force the functions of his physical organs to cease, his living process is arrested. He is characterized only by an implicit motion, his diving "into the sea of the self." Thus the patient encounters his inner self while he is at the threshold of obliteration. It is exactly this play with death, diving while taking the risk of drowning, that enables the patient to approach oblivion, as well as rebirth.

The only aspect of the patient that is not threatened by death during this cure process is his sexual instinct. Peter's treatment seems strikingly to verify Ricoeur's claim that "in the face of death, life will present itself as Eros."¹ The patient goes through a "sexual agony." The deeper he goes, the more joyous his recovery. To extend the metaphor, the patient's recovery occurs simultaneously with his orgasm. His self is reborn when his desire and death fuse with each other.

Dis-lodging the self. Peter refers to this cure because he sees an analogy between it and Allert's life. As he says to him, "I cannot help but think that you never entirely emerge from your

flickering cave" (DST, p. 144). Although Allert is not pleased to hear this, Peter seems to have a quite precise understanding of Allert's condition. Allert does indeed live in a "flickering cave," a ground where his dreamworld and his real life merge. His life follows the "actuality" (DST, p. 96) of his dreams, not because of an external imposition as in the case of a mental patient, but because he is thoroughly absorbed in dreams which he intends to apply to his erotic life. His intention, however, is not a sign of alert consciousness. It indicates the projection of his unconscious, the outward motion of his inner self.

Not-at-home. While the surfacing of Allert's unconscious unnerves Ursula, it is he who starts feeling disturbed when he is abandoned by her "to death, sleep and the anguish of lonely travel" (DST, p. 2):

Was I free or lost, exhilarated or merely flushed with grief? I did not know. I did not know what to make of myself or of all these elements, these details, this fresh but oddly traumatic moment of sunset, except to intuit that I was more youthful and yet closer to death than I had ever been. At least my feelings were mixed, to say the least, when I inserted the brass key in the lock of my cabin door. (DST, p. 38)

What Allert experiences here is dread. As Spanos says of Heidegger's distinction between dread and fear, "Dread . . . has no thing or nothing as its object. This 'indefiniteness of what

we dread is not just lack of definition: it represents the essential impossibility of defining. . . ."2 In this light, Allert's dread is the result of his regression into his unconscious. To quote Spanos again, "dread discloses Dasein's (human being's) not-at-homeness in the world."3 Allert feels at odds with the reality that surrounds him because it does not reflect the inner reality into which he is submerged.

(Allert's anxiety is dread only as seen by him. He is unaware (unconscious) of his eye disfiguring the external world, of the "dead ship" (DST, p. 8) which is nevertheless in constant motion. His anxiety, however, when seen through my own eye, the reader's eye, becomes fear: that which has "an object . . . that . . . can be dealt with: eliminated or neutralized or even used."4 The object of Allert's fear is death but he is not conscious of it at this stage. He thinks of himself as a traveler who dreams. I think of him as a dreamer of death who travels.)

Dis-covering the unfamiliar. Allert's dread is transformed into fear when he meets Ariane. Ariane, unlike him, lives intensely every moment in her surrounding reality. The goat island which she claims belongs to her and the goat skull she wears are not projections of her imagination. They are the concrete manifestations of the free play of her consciousness. Ariane lives in a state of pure pleasure. Her sexual life (that which resists death) functions as a "protective shield"5 against what might violate her own sense of reality. It is her play with the actuality of her world that invites Allert's dreams to become real.

Allert's longing for death, which at first exists only as

dread, becomes an actual possibility when he sees the axe with which Ariane has killed the goat whose skull she wears (DST, p. 176). The axe, as a weapon of death, functions as a catalyst for Allert: it arms his desire to kill. It is an image that reconciles his unconscious tendencies with the world of the senses. But once this reconciliation occurs, Allert is possessed by fear. His desire for death is for a moment restricted by his fearful realization that he can make death happen. But his fear is released when he removes the axe and the skull from Ariane's sex and makes love to her.

Sex, in obliterating his fear, strengthens his desire for death. Allert seems to agree with Peter's statement "'that a man remains a virgin until he commits murder . . .'" (DST, p. 145). By having sex with Ariane, Allert breaks the virginal, for him, ground of restricted desires. He acts according to his murderous id. His fear of death, and the sense of guilt it implies, are completely erased by what the unconscious, according to Ricoeur, seems to proclaim: "Nothing can happen to me."⁶ Allert accepts death as a task and kills Ariane.

Ariane's death leaves no traces behind it. There is no axe or any other weapon that might have caused her death. There is not even a corpse. Her body has disappeared in the sea. The only sign of death is an infant octopus, found dead during the search for Ariane's body (DST, p. 171). A sailor hangs it outside Allert's cabin. As Ariane's goat skull evokes for Allert the approach of death, the infant octopus evokes for him "the carcass of a young girl in the sun" (DST, p. 177). It is a repetition of

death, but it does not really provide any clues concerning the disappearance of her body. Death, as it relates to Ariane, is now present only in Allert's desire, now acquiescent. Allert bears no signs of a murderer. He goes through a trial but he is acquitted. He also acquits himself, as he says "I am not guilty" (DST, p. 179).

(Is it the absence of Allert's guilt that eliminates Ariane's corpse? Does the re-enactment of his desire for death help him maintain his innocence? As an observer of her death, I feel invited to be a critic. The text provides me with the following clues: Allert's regression into his dreamworld disturbs the course of his life; his quest for pleasure incorporates death into the process of dying while reality enters into the realm of his latent desires. By these tokens, Ariane, who views her death as the culmination of her living, is the one who intentionally causes the fusion of Allert's dreamworld with waking reality. Thus there is no corpse because there is no victim. Ariane's intentionality erases the possibility that Allert has committed murder. Instead of being an act of destruction, her death is the force that releases Allert from his regression.)

Death enlightened. Papa, like Allert, is also driven toward death. Yet his process toward it does not follow the outward motion of his murderous id but the exact outlines of a carefully conceived plan. He is absolutely determined to kill himself, Chantal and Henri. His determination, the utmost manifestation of intentionality, prevents him from experiencing dread or fear. As he says to Henri, "My clarity is genuine, not false, while my dread, as you in your pathetic hope imagine it, does not

exist. What more can I say? I respect your theory; I respect the fear from which you yourself are suffering (though it oppresses me horribly, horribly)" (T, p. 83, emphasis mine). Papa's clarity disperses death's darkness. His sense of reality establishes the equilibrium between life and death. By not fearing death but weaving it within his life, Papa sees it only as the edge where life reaches its ecstasis.

His intention to end his life signifies his release from the fear he suffered during his youth. He was "plagued" by what he called "the fear of no response" (T, p. 84). "If the world did not respond to me totally . . . then I did not exist" (T, p. 85). Yet his demand to "be loved" (T, p. 85) generated in him another kind of fear: "Let a policeman dip his stick in the wrong direction and I suffered chills in the spine" (T, pp. 84-85). His insecurity created in him a sense of guilt. But since he committed no crime, his guilt was only the projection of his fantasy of being trapped in a world he had not chosen. But now, he seeks "not relief but purity" (T, p. 85).

The scale of sex. Papa's intention to die is, in other words, the "burst of [his] desire" (T, p. 28) to accept the existence of what does not exist" (T, p. 57). His desire erases his guilt which, according to him, is "merely a pain that disappears as soon as we recognize the worst in us all" (T, p. 36). But this explains only his suicide. What accounts for his intention to kill Chantal and Henri is the erotic aspect of his desire. As Ricoeur says "Sexuality is at work wherever death is at work."⁷

The simultaneous deaths of Papa and Chantal function as a symbolic marriage of the father and the daughter. Henri's presence, the lover of both Chantal and her mother, establishes the symmetry between the implicit incest and the absence of the mother/wife/mistress. Thus Papa views death as the combination of "design and debris," as the scale where the impossible and the possible balance.

The death of God. Papa's fatal drive is his attempt to re-create the world in purity by breaking down all the inhibitions that set limits on desire. In other words, he decides to live (and die) without a moral God. His "apocalypse" is "private" not religious. It is a dis-closure of the world as an edifice of "fictions created to enhance the sense of privacy, to feed enjoyment into our isolation" (T, p. 36). Papa sees this "enjoyment" as the result of an arbitrary morality. He believes, instead, that what can enhance his privacy is his willing march toward his finitude.

(Although Papa's intention to challenge his limits finds me in agreement, I see Chantal's and Henri's inclusion in his plan as an advocacy of a new morality. Papa wants them to be among the "select few" (T, p. 36) who will partake in his "private apocalypse." Thus he acts as a God himself and Chantal and Henri become his unvolunteered disciples, victims of a religion that is valid only for him. Papa intends to take their lives with the same authority which he attributes to the God he kills. He is deliberately vague, as a God always is, about his motives. Yet the authority with which he decides the others' fates reveals, at least for me, not so much "cruel detachment" as an inner need to avoid

facing death in isolation. In this respect, Papa emphasizes God's sexuality as opposed to his spirituality. But whether Papa is seen as God or not, Chantal's and Henri's deaths are murders since the two of them transgress their limits against their will.)

Death/coming. In The Blood Oranges there is the same confrontation with limits. Cyril as a hierodoulos advocates "sexual extension," and Hugh in his attempt to relate to a sexual world where he does not really belong reaches and breaks his limits. The consummation of Hugh's relationship with Fiona signifies his surrender to Love. But his resignation means guilt and Hugh can soothe his guilt only by incorporating into his sexual desire the necessity of dying. He tries to have orgasms by coming as close as possible to death until in one of these sexual games he eventually hangs himself.

Hugh's death divorces him from what he was unable to divorce himself from while alive: his wife, who has become Cyril's mistress; Fiona, his own mistress; Cyril; and lastly his sense of guilt. Hugh's death restores his power. It destroys Cyril's "tapestry of love" and it assigns different roles to the remaining lovers. Yet, paradoxically, it is not a willed act. Hugh challenges death only because he seeks erotic excitement, not because he wants to kill himself. Cyril wishes many times that Hugh were different, but he too never wishes him dead. In Death, Sleep and the Traveler and Travesty death is the result of intention; in The Blood Oranges death comes unsought. It is a real accident,⁸ a falling against the impenetrable wall of human limits.

Voicing death. Death, whether accidental or intentional, appears in the trilogy as the single thing that the narrators as artists work with and against. By means of their archaeological imagination, they attempt to transgress the only trace that death leaves behind it, that of silence. Thus their narratives serve not merely as their "protective shields" against the muteness that death imposes. As Cyril, Allert and Papa re-construct their past, they de-compose death. They turn what is silent into language. But this aesthetic de-composition generates its own limits. As language rushes against death, it is forced to encounter the possibilities of its own duration. The narrators' stories leave behind them traces which are more powerful than death's trace. These are the texts, visible and audible objects, which outlive silence. But there is a paradox inherent in this survival. The narrators, in killing silence, create death anew. Their language, in this respect, faces its own finitude. As Foucault observes,

death is undoubtedly the most essential of the accident of language (its limits and its center): from the day that men began to speak toward death and against it, in order to grasp it and imprison it, something was born, a murmuring which repeats itself, recounts, and redoubles itself endlessly, which has undergone an uncanny process of amplification and thickening, in which our language is today lodged and hidden.⁹

In this way, language's victory, within the contexts of the three

narratives, is the repetition it creates: a repetition that derives from the dual process that language follows: its desire to keep voicing death in spite of the death it creates, and faces, itself.

Hawkes has presented Cyril, Allert and Papa as lovers who become artists after they experience death. In their pursuits of physical pleasure and in their quests for artistic form, the three narrators all take death as the point of departure. Appropriately, their quests also end in death. In the end of the trilogy, in Travesty, Papa encounters death in a twofold way. He drives his car against the wall of the abandoned barn and thus he dies exactly as he has wished. His physical death, as he promises throughout the novel, brings along with it death as silence, as the end that the process of his narrative reaches. Papa, an agent of death for Henri, Chantal and himself, ceases being a god in the end exactly because he dies. Another god-like authority takes over. It is Hawkes who silences Papa, ending thus the trilogy.

CONCLUSION

Who promises that there will be "no survivors"? Is silence--the end of the trilogy/Travesty--empty of any traces? The phenomenology of this silence says no. Travesty leads Hawkes's trilogy as a moving image to a physical end. But this end is not a fixed point. The active imagination that Cyril, Allert and Papa have been after does not reach its death. In the context of their narratives, the physical end (the third book of the trilogy) marks the difference between life and art, language and silence. The end of the trilogy is a travesty (disguise) of the ongoing process of the imagination. Since, according to the phenomenological understanding of the three main characters, imagination produces self-deconstruction, the end of the trilogy amounts to a sublimation of the desire to live in "negative capability", that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. . . ."¹

NOTES

Introduction

¹ "Hawkes and Barth Talk about Fiction," The New York Times Book Review, April 1, 1979, p. 33.

² Ibid., p. 33.

Chapter One

¹ Roland Barthes, Roland Barthes, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), p. 56.

² Shadows refer here to what the words signify. Obviously an allusion to the Platonic notion that words represent the world of Ideas.

³ "Thesis," The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, third edition. All subsequent definitions of words follow this dictionary.

⁴ John Hawkes, The Blood Oranges (New York: New Directions, 1970), p. 1. All further references to this novel appear in the text under the abbreviation BO.

⁵ Luigi Pirandello, Six Characters in Search of an Author in Naked Masks, Five Plays, ed. Eric Bentley (New York: Dutton, 1952).

⁶ Pirandello, p. 364.

⁷ John Enck, "John Hawkes: An Interview," Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature, 6, No. 2 (Summer 1965), 154.

⁸ Susan Sontag, Against Interpretation, and Other Essays (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966), p. 7.

⁹ E. D. Hirsch, "Objective Interpretation," in Critical Theory Since Plato, ed. Hazard Adams (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971), p. 1177.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 1180.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 1179.

¹² Ibid., pp. 1177 and 1181 respectively.

¹³ Ibid., p. 1181

¹⁴ John Graham, "John Hawkes on his Novels," Massachusetts Review, 7, No. 3 (Summer 1966), 452.

¹⁵ Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, trans. Maria Jolas, introd. Etienne Gilson (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. XIV. All further references to this book will appear in the text.

¹⁶ Paul Emmett and Richard Vine, "A Conversation with John Hawkes," Chicago Review, 28, No. 2 (Fall 1976), 171.

¹⁷ Graham, p. 457.

¹⁸ Wolfgang Iser, The Implied Reader (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 274.

¹⁹ Charles Olson, Additional Prose: A Bibliography on America, Proprioception and Other Notes and Essays, ed. George Butterick (Bolinas: Four Seasons Foundation, 1974), p. 17.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 17.

²¹ Ibid., p. 18.

²² William V. Spanos, "Breaking the Circle: Hermeneutics as Dis-closure," Boundary 2, V, No. 2 (Winter 1977), 446.

²³ Ibid., p. 445.

- ²⁴ Phyllis Webb, reading at the Nichells Arts Museum, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, on March 4, 1980.
- ²⁵ John Hawkes, Death, Sleep and the Traveler (New York: New Directions, 1973), pp. 2-3. Hereafter cited in the text as DST.
- ²⁶ Olson, p. 17.
- ²⁷ T. S. Eliot, "Hamlet and His Problems," in Hazard Adam's Critical Theory Since Plato, p. 789.
- ²⁸ Paul Emmett and Richard Vine, p. 166.
- ²⁹ Hawkes, Travesty (New York: New Directions, 1976), p. 22. Hereafter cited in the text as T.
- ³⁰ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, The Phenomenology of Perception, trans. C. Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962), pp. 137-138.
- ³¹ Olson, p. 17.
- ³² Merleau-Ponty, Signs, p. 42. Emphasis mine.
- ³³ Iser, p. 276.
- ³⁴ Ibid., p. 279.
- ³⁵ Thomas W. Armstrong, "Reader, Critic, and the Form in John Hawkes's The Cannibal," Boundary 2, V, No. 3 (Spring 1977), 830.

Chapter Two

- ¹ Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1976), p. 5.
- ² Robert Steiner, "Form and the Bourgeois Traveler," in John Hawkes Symposium: Design and Debris, ed. Anthony C. Santore and Michael Pocalyko (New York: New Directions, 1977), p. 115. Hereafter cited as JHS-DD.

³ B. R. McGraw, "Barthes' The Pleasure of the Text: An Erotics of Reading," Boundary 2, V, No. 3 (Spring 1977), 945.

⁴ McGraw, p. 943.

⁵ Roland Barthes, A Lover's Discourse: Fragments, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), p. 73. Barthes says characteristically that "Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other."

⁶ Foucault, p. 21.

⁷ Jacques Derrida, Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs, trans. David B. Allison (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 129.

⁸ Derrida, p. 130. Note that the "middle voice" is not Derrida's own term. It is one of the grammatical voices in Greek and French.

⁹ Barthes, Roland Barthes, p. 132.

¹⁰ Barthes, Roland Barthes, p. 132.

¹¹ Barthes, Image-Music-Text, trans. Stephen Heath (Glasgow: Fontana, 1977), p. 149.

¹² Cyril, besides his association with Dionysus, is also associated with Mercury. Mercury has the ability to change faces and is also the inventor of the lyre. Cyril's name, reflecting his lyrical language, emphasizes this mythical allusion.

¹³ Hereafter, the word love will be capitalized when it reflects Cyril's faith in it. In my own discussion, love remains a common name.

¹⁴ Frederick Busch, "Icebergs, Islands, Ships beneath the Sea," in JHS-DD, p. 57.

¹⁵ Lois A. Cuddy, "Functional Pastoralism in The Blood Oranges." Studies in American Fiction, 3, No. 1 (Spring 1975), 17.

¹⁶ Donald J. Greiner, Comic Terror: The Novels of John Hawkes (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1973), p. 227.

¹⁷ Roland Barthes, A Lover's Discourse, p. 146.

¹⁸ It is important to notice here that Fiona's attempt to "blow life" into Hugh's mouth is suggestive of oral sex. Fiona can also be seen in this case as a god blowing life into the human body or as a muse inspiring the artist.

¹⁹ Greiner, p. 230.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 217.

²¹ Enid Veron discusses quite extensively the apparent allusions of this passage, and other similar ones, to Dionysus in her essay "From Festival to Farce: Design and Meaning in John Hawkes's Comic Triad," in JHS-DD.

²² J. G. Fraser, The Golden Bough (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1945), p. 332.

²³ Fraser, p. 332.

²⁴ Veron, p. 66.

²⁵ This is evident in the quote I cited earlier (p. in this thesis.) Cyril thinks of Fiona as being "wasted" when she blows life into Hugh's mouth.

²⁶ Paul Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 167.

²⁷ Ricoeur, p. 166.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 166.

²⁹ Veron, p. 65.

³⁰ Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 183.

³¹ Enck, pp. 143-144.

³² Veron, p. 68.

³³ It would be interesting to explore the fact that Cyril has a male muse together with a number of allusions in The Blood Oranges about autoeroticism and homosexuality.

Chapter Three

¹ Ricoeur, p. 378. Emphasis mine.

² Veron, p. 70.

³ Ricoeur, p. 382.

⁴ Donald J. Greiner, "Death, Sleep and the Traveler: John Hawkes's Return to Terror," Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, 17, No. 3 (April 1976), 33.

⁵ Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Reverie, trans. Daniel Russell (New York: The Orion Press, 1969), p. 51.

⁶ Bachelard, The Poetics of Reverie, p. 62.

⁷ I consider Allert's name in relation with his "alertness."

⁸ Ricoeur, p. 91.

⁹ Bachelard, The Poetics of Reverie, p. 62.

¹⁰ Ricoeur, p. 160.

¹¹ The similarities between Allert dis-covering and Cyril talking about Catherine's body are striking.

¹² Although I do not myself interpret this dream as an overt sign of Allert being a homosexual, I would like to draw the reader's attention to Elizabeth Kraus's essay, "Psychic Sores in Search of Compassion: John Hawkes's Death, Sleep and the Traveler," Critique: Studies in Fiction, 17, No. iii (April 1976), 39-52.

¹³ I have in mind here Ricoeur's statement that "the death instinct can operate either in 'fusion' with Eros or in a state of 'defusion'," p. 228.

¹⁴ Veron, p. 69.

¹⁵ Significantly enough, Allert repeats exactly the same phrase on p. 58.

¹⁶ Steiner, p. 123.

Chapter Four

¹ Barthes, Image-Music-Text, p. 32.

² Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, p. 173. The footnote in Foucault's text is explained by his editor: "Fabricius was a Roman general and statesman (d. 250 B.C.); Prince Andrew is a main character in Tolstoi's War and Peace."

³ Derrida, Speech and Phenomena, p. 130.

⁴ Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, p. 175. Emphasis mine. Although this lengthy quote probably reads as an unnecessary interjection in the main text, I think that it really illuminates my understanding of Papa's, so-called, "accident." The phrases I underline do not only point out some striking similarities between Foucault's text and Papa's diction but also present the

grotesque "accident" as an understandable "event."

⁵ Steiner, p. 131.

⁶ Honorine's tatoo of grapes and Papa's fascination with it are reminders of Cyril's grape-tasting game and Allert's dream. This recurring image signifies the sexual release it brings. It reveals the dionysian qualities of the characters.

⁷ Marie-Rose Logan, "Deconstruction: Beyond and Back, Response to Eugenio Donato, 'Historical Imagination and the Idion of Criticism'," Boundary 2, VIII, No. 1 (Fall 1979), 59.

⁸ Ricoeur, p. 291.

⁹ Ibid., p. 291.

Chapter Five

¹ Ricoeur, p. 43; emphasis mine.

² I use here J. E. Cirlot's A Dictionary of Symbols, trans. Jack Sage, intr. Herbert Read (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1962), pp. 32-33.

³ Cirlot, pp. 144-145.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 173, 268.

⁵ Olson, p. 39.

⁶ Ricoeur, p. 539.

⁷ Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, p. 7.

⁸ Ibid., p. 130.

⁹ Ibid., p. 139.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 139.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 151.

¹² Ricoeur, p. 380.

¹³ Barthes, Image-Music-Text, pp. 32-33.

¹⁴ Ferdinand de Saussure in his Course in General Linguistics trans. by Wade Baskin (New York, 1959) considers as langue the abstract language-system, which in English we would call simply language, and as parole the individual utterances of those people who use that language in concrete forms, which we call speech.

¹⁵ Terence Hawkes, Structuralism and Semiotics (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), p. 21.

Chapter Six

¹ Ricoeur, p. 86.

² Spanos, "The Detective and the Boundary: Some Notes on the Postmodern Literary Imagination," Boundary 2, V. 1, No. 1 (Fall, 1972), 149.

³ Ibid., p. 149.

⁴ Ibid., p. 149.

⁵ Ricoeur, p. 287.

⁶ Ibid., p. 330.

⁷ Ibid., p. 330.

⁸ I would like to emphasize here the etymology of the word accident. It derives from the latin verb cadere which means to fall, to kill.

⁹ Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, p. 55.

¹ John Keats, from "Letter to George and Thomas Keats" in
Hazard Adam's Critical Theory Since Plato, p. 474.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Hawkes, John. The Blood Oranges. New York: New Directions, 1970.

----- . Death, Sleep and the Traveler. New York: New
Directions, 1974.

----- . Travesty. New York: New Directions, 1976.

Secondary Sources

Armstrong, Thomas V. "Reader, Critic and the Form in John Hawkes's
The Cannibal." Boundary 2, V, No. 3 (Spring 1977), 829-44.

Bachelard, Gaston. The Poetics of Reverie. Trans. Daniel Russell.
New York: The Orion Press, 1969.

----- . The Poetics of Space. Trans. Maria Jolas. Intr.
Etienne Gilson. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.

Barthes, Roland. Image-Music-Text. Ed. and trans. Stephen Heath.
Glasgow: Fontana, 1977.

----- . A Lover's Discourse: Fragments. Trans. Richard Howard.
New York: Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and
Giroux, 1978.

----- . The Pleasure of the Text. Trans. Richard Miller.
Intr. Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, a division of
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975.

----- . Roland Barthes. Trans. Richard Howard. New York:
Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975.

- Busch, Frederick. Hawkes: A Guide to His Fictions. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1973.
- Cirlot, J. E. A Dictionary of Symbols. Trans. Jack Sage. Intr. Herbert Read. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1962.
- Cuddy, Lois A. "Functional Pastoralism in The Blood Oranges." Studies in American Fiction, 3, No. 1 (Spring 1975), 15-25.
- Derrida, Jacques. Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays. Trans. David B. Allison. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- Eliot, T. S. "Hamlet and His Problems." In Critical Theory Since Plato. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1971, 788-90.
- Emmett, Paul and Richard Vine. "A Conversation with John Hawkes." Chicago Review, 28, No. 2 (Fall 1976), 163-72.
- Emmett, Paul. "The Reader's Voyage Through Travesty." Chicago Review, 28, No. 2 (Fall 1976), 172-87.
- Enck, John. "John Hawkes: An Interview." Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature, 6, No. 2 (Summer 1965), 141-55.
- Foucault, Michel. The Archaeology of Knowledge. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1976.
- . Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews. Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. Ed. Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977.
- Fraser, J. G. The Golden Bough. 1922; rpt. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1945.

- Garvin, Harry, R. Ed. Phenomenology, Structuralism, Semiology.
London: Bucknell University Press, 1976.
- Graham, John. "John Hawkes on His Novels: An Interview with John
Graham." Massachusetts Review, 7, No. 3 (Summer 1966), 449-61.
- Greiner, Donald, J. Comic Terror: The Novels of John Hawkes.
Memphis: Memphis University Press, 1973.
- . "Death, Sleep and the Traveler: John Hawkes's Return to
Terror." Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, 17, iii (April
1976), 26-38.
- . "The Thematic Use of Color in Second Skin."
Contemporary Literature, 11 (Summer 1970), 389-400.
- Hartman, Geoffrey. The Fate of Reading. Chicago and London:
University of Chicago Press, 1975.
- . "Literary Criticism's Discontents." Critical Inquiry,
3 (Winter 1976), 203-20.
- "Hawkes and Barth Talk About Fiction." The New York Times Book
Review, April 1, 1979, p. 7, ~~and continued to~~ pp. 31-33.
- Hawkes, Terence. Structuralism and Semiotics. Berkley and Los
Angeles: University of California Press, 1977.
- Hillis/ Miller, J. Ed. Aspects of Narrative: Selected Papers from
the English Institute. New York and London: Columbia
University Press, 1971.
- Hirsch, E. D. "Objective Interpretation." In Critical Theory Since
Plato. Ed. Hazard Adams. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.,
1971. 1176-94.
- Iser, Wolfgang. The Implied Reader. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins
University Press, 1974.

- Keats, John. "Letter to George and Thomas Keats." In Critical Theory Since Plato. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971, 474.
- Knapp, John V. "Hawkes's The Blood Oranges: A Sensual Jerusalem." Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, 17, iii (April 1976), 5-25.
- Kraus, Elizabeth. "Psychic Sores in Search of Compassion: Hawkes's Death, Sleep and the Traveler." Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, 17, iii (April 1976), 39-52.
- Kuehl, John. John Hawkes and the Craft of Conflict. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1975.
- . Creative Writing and Rewriting. New York: Meredith Press, 1967.
- Logan, Marie-Rose. "Deconstruction: Beyond and Back, Response to Eugenio Donato, 'Historical Imagination and the Idiom of Criticism'." Boundary 2, VIII, No. 1 (Fall 1979), 57-63.
- McGraw, B. R. "Barthes' The Pleasure of the Text: An Erotics of Reading." Boundary 2, V, No. 3 (Spring 1977), 943-52.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. The Phenomenology of Perception. Trans. C. Smith. New York: Humanities Press, 1962.
- . Signs. Trans. Richard McCleary. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964.
- Moran, Charles. "John Hawkes: Paradise Gaining." Massachusetts Review, XII, No. 4 (Autumn 1971), 840-45.
- Olson, Charles. Additional Prose: A Bibliography on America, Proprioception and Other Notes and Essays. Ed. George Butterick. Bolinas: Four Seasons Foundation, 1974.

- Pirandello, Luigi. "Six Characters in Search of an Author." In Naked Masks: Five Plays. Ed. Eric Bentley. New York: Dutton, 1952.
- Pocalyko, Michael and Anthony C. Santore, eds. A John Hawkes Symposium: Design and Debris. New York: New Directions, 1977.
- Ricoeur, Paul. Freud and Philosophy. Trans. Denis Savage. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970.
- Stacy, R. H. Defamiliarization in Language and Literature. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1977.
- Scholes, Robert. "A Conversation on The Blood Oranges Between John Hawkes and Robert Scholes." Novel, 5, No. 3 (Spring 1972), 197-207.
- . The Fabulators. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Sontag, Susan. Against Interpretation and Other Essays. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966.
- Spanos, William V. "Breaking the Circle: Hermeneutics as Dis-closure." Boundary 2, V, No. 2 (Winter 1977), 421-57.
- . "The Detective and the Boundary: Some Notes on the Postmodern Literary Imagination." Boundary 2, 1, No. 1 (Fall 1972), 147-68.
- Spencer, Sharon. Space, Time and Structure in the Modern Novel. New York: New York University Press, 1971.
- Tanner, Tony. "Necessary Landscapes and Luminous Deteriorations." TriQuarterly Review, 20 (Winter 1971), 145-79.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. The Poetics of Prose. Trans. Richard Howard, Intr. Jonathan Culler. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press 1977.

Webb, Phyllis. Poetry Reading. Nichels Arts Museum, Calgary,
Alberta. 4 March, 1980.