

Stages of Terror

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1. Prelude and *katastrophe*

In 1984, news anchorman Ted Koppel, who, with Ronald Reagan rose to national fame during the terrorism of the Iran hostage incident, expressed a now-familiar (and largely unexplored) sentiment in a *Harper's* magazine interview. "The media," he said, "particularly television, and terrorists need one another, they have what is fundamentally a symbiotic relationship" ("Terrorism" 47). Now this is a very curious thing: in symbiosis, each element functions as a necessary other; thus terrorists would not only create an economy of the media event, but the media event would *create* terrorists. And not merely in the sense of providing would-be revolutionaries with a medium within which to function: the news media, by providing us with what *is* new and seemingly originary, inscribes and informs terrorism. Terrorism appears first *in culture* as a media event. The terrorist, consequently, does not exist before the media image, and only exists subsequently *as* a media image in culture.

This bio-economic association is developed along a slightly different axis later in the same article when journalist Charles Krauthammer calls terrorism since 1968 (apropos 1968), "media terrorism," an essentially new, international form of violence that "needs" and manipulates media as the *raison d'être* for its existence: "Since the outlaws cannot buy television time, they have to earn it through terrorist acts. Like the sponsors of early television who produced shows as vehicles for their commercials, media terrorists [sic] now provide

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drama--murder and kidnapping, live--in return for advertising time" ("Terrorism" 50).

What was the title of this special, provocative issue of *Harper's*? "Lost in the Terrorist Theatre." The issue in fact begins with a whole series of direct associations between terrorism and performance: terrorism's "bloody theatrics" follow closely "the script" of "the terrorist productions." Sprinkled throughout the interviews and essays are numerous quotes from various sources explicating terrorism's theatrical theory and production practice. Taken together, the assumption seems to be that the theatricalization of political violence did not really occur until the great age of video began during the height of the Vietnam action, but nowhere do we see the explication of the other aspect of the symbiosis, the aspect that sees the appearance of terrorism as a natural extension of performative terror, a terror that precedes the mediadrome and gives it birth.

I would then suggest an inversion: that the symbiosis between terrorism and media is an authentic one, but that the emphasis ought to be reversed--the media do not merely "need" and support terrorism, they construct it as a phenomenon, because American culture as a whole needs it, is fascinated by it, desires it, and utilizes it as a central impulse in its foreign and domestic policy. I would further suggest that while terrorism is not theatre, terrorism's affiliation with political coercion as performance is a history whose first impulse is a terror that is theatre's moment, a terror that is so basic to human life that it remains largely invisible *except* as theatre. Theatre's filiation with psychic and political terror is a history which is the perfect twin of terror's own history as politics. That history--the operation and objectification of terror as a first principle of performance, from thought, to *mise en scene*, to terrorist act--is the subject of this paper--a paper which attempts ultimately to provide the basis for a different kind of theatre history.

This performative history of terror was, as I have just suggested, first rehearsed as thought, as *myth*. Hesiod, writing on the far side of the great classical age of theatre, describes the irruption of this terror in a curious union: the marriage of Kytheria and Ares, eros and war. This conjunction bears a malignant fruit, the twins Panic¹ [Phobos] and Terror [Deimos], superstars of the theatre of war, the remembrance of myth, and the enactment of dream; a conjugation raging with the ecstasies of sex and violence erupting from within the riddle of performance, a conjugation embodying the relation between terror, terrorism, and its showings.

Two hundred years later, these sibling Terrors dream another kind of showing, a livid *theatre*, the goatsung tragedy, and the classical stage articulates itself specifically *as* theatre within the omnipresence of catastrophe, catastrophe which is, however, repressed in an injunction to silence and secreted acts of violence (even as Euripides' Medea nominally submits to silence, the hidden and violent crime which holds her mind threatens to rupture the tragic

circumscription of the law, but draws back in the face of what is literally unspeakable and so unthinkable).

In Seneca's *Medea*, appearing some five hundred years later, the breach again threatens amidst the interpenetration of theatre and terror crystallizing in the Imperial Roman spectacles of the Great Circus, which displaced the theatre of the Republic and demanded a state terrorism grounded in real death, blood, and pain extracted from the bodies of its slave-performers. Seneca prophesies through his *Medea* a political counter-terror erupting through the theatricalized violence in the political spectacle of law: "Whatever stood within this royal house has fallen . . . Is there no limit to catastrophe?" (879-86) The warning might have been directed to theatre itself, silenced as it was in the ethical preoccupations of an emerging christianity, and the suspicions of an encroaching barbarism.

On the other side of the great Medieval theatrical silence, the tradition of terror re-emerges (or so we have been told) with the appearance of the *Quem Quaeritis* trope in the tenth century: "Whom do you seek," asks the angel at the tomb. "Jesus of Nazareth," the women reply, "who was crucified." Theatrical scholarship in the west thus locates its origins in the reappearance of a disappeared victim of State terror, an identification which defines hope as the repressed terror of torture and death repositioned in the Church's censorship of the drama.

The laminations and permutations of mythic and theatrical terror continue in the Renaissance tragedies. In the works of Kyd, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Webster, terror's image now takes center stage in plays such as *Edward II* or *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Ultimately, in the productions of the Jacobean period, terror seems literally to spill over into the pit, bleeding, finally, into yet another abysmal fissure, the repression of the Interregnum.

On the Restoration stage, terror's deployments indeed reappear, and are now carefully regulated and applied with surgical precision in the maintenance of social appearances in the cruel and witty "comedies" of Congreve, Etherege, Wycherley and others, molding in a way that Puritanism could not the later attitudes and beliefs of middle class culture.

Into the nineteenth century, theatrical terror seemingly exhausts the physical, and is redirected "inward" where it redefines and gives literary substance to the forces of the psyche in the terror-stricken dramatic works of the Romantic poets. Plays such as Byron's *Manfred*, Shelley's *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*, and Coleridge's *Remorse*, eventually inform the space of a modern psyche, and give place to a psychology whose darker side ultimately emerges in the practice of social engineering as psychosurgery, electroconvulsive therapy, and mental incarceration, "another reign of terror" (Foucault, *Madness* 202).

Inexorably, in the Modern period, the inheritance of the Enlightenment seems to collapse under the impact of techno-industrialization, world wars, and Holocausts. From Ibsen on, humanism begins to dissolve into the very

information systems that gave it birth, and the shards and fragments reappear in the drama in the images of yet another, solipsistic terror which is ironically terrified of its own disappearance: Beckett's bums, aliens in a blasted landscape, cannot seem to leave terror's site.

In theatre's recent history--as Genet marks out the terrorizing topography and psychosexual gamings of love's suspicious history, and Beckett exposes the self-destructive violence of culture and consciousness in performances which often rely on the actual implementation of the bondage, physical pain, and psychic torture which he nominally abhors--the problematic is compounded by the appearance of real violence in the body art of Bruce Naumann, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Gina Pain, and others. Meanwhile, in the womb of the mediadrome, the Red Brigades kidnap and execute Aldo Moro in a terrorist "morality play" while Baader-Meinhof is silenced, both literally and theatrically, "off-stage" in the dark and hidden cells of Stammheim prison.

More recently, as bombs explode in Frankfurt airport and terrorists hijack luxury cruise ships and throw the handicapped into the Adriatic, the "terrorist" Start community in Philadelphia is literally snuffed out in a self-fulfilling, prophetic scenario of gratuitous, mediated "anti-terrorist" violence almost unsurpassed in the carefully scripted performance documentations of broadcast news.

Eventually, as "real" terrorism develops its own audiences and theatricalizes its presentations, and the "real" theatre begins staging plays *about* terrorism in an attempt to "understand" the phenomenon which has seemingly appropriated its name and its form, form and concept begin to blur. Terrorism is now called "theatre" while we try to convince ourselves that what happens onstage can have anything to do with the real terrorisms of ruptured bodies and wounded minds. Finally, as the actual practice of terrorism is dissolved into the numbing repetitions of terror's mediated images, violence and terror *seem* to be everywhere, and theatre and terrorism become, ironically, *emptied* of terror. Both theatre and terrorism become evenly distributed in the agonizing search for substance beneath the "mere appearance" of culture and its hidden violence. Meanwhile, real terrorisms remain, seemingly autonomous, working their way outside in: from the threat of global holocaust or "natural" disaster, to the viral infections of failed immune response, the terror is still with us, shadowing our thought.

But this appearance of terror in theatre's history is not a new observation, nor is there anything particularly novel in the recognition that theatre has always been the vehicle for social ideology and control, but neither is it the point of this essay: for I am proposing that theatre is not merely a means by which social behavior is engineered; it is the *site* of violence, the locus of terror's emergence as myth, law, religion, economy, gender, class, race, either *in* the theatre, or in culture *as* a theatricality which precedes culture. Theatre is, then, the proleptic site of terror's transformation *into* culture and its

terrorisms, staging the very birth of that which seemingly gives it birth--a birth of tragedy.

2. Terror and *katharsis*

With the publication of *The Origins of German Tragic Drama* in 1928, Walter Benjamin reframed what is perhaps the most critical perception in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*--that the Greek tragic theatre, and perhaps theatre generically, is the product of the psycho-cultural passage from myth/religion into law, and that the appearance of theatre in the West represents the forensic, representational space of this passage. What Nietzsche describes problematically as the "mere appearance of mere appearance" in the theatre articulates the entrance of an earlier, "sacred" terror on a new stage --a theatre of *jurisdiction*: "The bright projections of the Sophoclean hero--in short, the Apollonian aspect of the mask--are necessary effects of a glance into the inside and terrors of nature; as it were, luminous spots to cure eyes damaged by gruesome night" (*Birth* 45, 66). The induction of this "gruesome night" into the theatre, where it might be *tragically* "cured," was and is asymptotic with the emergence of a "luminescent," recuperative law.

But the simultaneous emergence of tragedy and law also suggests a more fundamental relationship than a mere tactical support by theatre in the establishment of legal codes. It represents a necessary conjunction of law and theatre in history. Although this relationship is often described in terms of the formation of a culture/law that *allows* theatre to appear--that theatre in some sense always "looks back" to its origins in the law--what is usually forgotten is the sense in which theatre enunciates the very instant of perception that exists before culture and its laws *can* appear. This instant, as Nietzsche tells us, is deeply ambivalent: in the expanding field of thought and perception that is culture, thought itself holds the violence of chaos at bay. Yet this instant is also the moment of another terror--the moment of the many against the one, but also, and perhaps more profoundly, the instant of alienation, fragmentation, and death which is the dark and violent aspect of perception itself--the terror that what is perceived is always Other, always suspect, always a lie: "Men should be what they seem," says Iago, even as he teaches us that perception itself is "always already" infected by desire, a desire which Freud tells us, is, at mind's end, the desire for the "true illusion" of death.

Perception is absolutely infused by terror--a confrontation with the imminence of a non-being which defines life--with pain and death and madness "feelingly perceived" in the terrorizing play of human thought itself, the play that is theatre, the "*initiatory breach* which remembers the primal violence" in the meeting between "life and death, art and life, the thing itself and its double" (Blau, "Universals" 150).

In the institutional theatre, within the reverberations of theatre's seminal relation to the Law in tragedy, the terror of non-being is ultimately crystallized

as the threat of terrorism--an objectification of terror in the ideology of the violent image.² This objectification of terror is subsequently used as a disciplining force applied to the body and mind, and takes different forms in different theatrical periods. The forms of terror and its *-isms* are, then, historically unique to each age of the theatre. The history of performance becomes, in this sense, a history of the ways in which terror is objectified as ideology/law and deployed as a means of sociopolitical conditioning which can be traced along several axes: the creation and use of gender, race, or class as means of terrorizing control, for example, or in the ideological coercion couched in the representational systems (Cartesianism, Hegelianism, etc.) that theatre generates in any given age.³ These ideological coercions, moreover, suggest real practices on real bodies in the political order, a political order that in turn deploys its own terrorisms theatrically.

In either case, the theatre that is consciousness--the source of performative questions of subject/object, watcher and watched, actor and spectator, reality and "mere appearance"--materializes before the institutional/political theatre both synchronically and diachronically; not only does the *mise en scene* of thought and perception precede the theatrical *production* in all cases, but, as I've already suggested, the terror of theatre's thought precedes classical performance by some two hundred years in the writings of Hesiod.

Hesiod's vision--unlike the theories which seek the origins of Greek theatre (and theatre in general) in Dionysian festivals or other "carnivalized" or para-theatrical rituals of culture, in those cultural and religious performances which in some sense celebrate the cohesion of a society already born into the law--elucidates through its anti-mythic mythos a theory of terror's theatre which is grounded in the chiaroscuro of perception itself. The Hesiodic description of terror's appearance illuminates the later development of theatre and performance in ways which have been largely ignored by other historic or anthropological approaches to theatre's history.

Hesiod, we are told, is "the first Greek who names himself," a mythographer who looks both with bitter skepticism and nostalgia on the dogma he records. His mythic narratives, "vast and heavy, dark and shadow veiled," mark the "cross over into history and reality" from the radiant and brutal world of Homeric retribution.⁴ Indeed, the genesis of the sibling *Terrors* in Hesiod's work reveals the concerns of a proletarian and tragic man who nursed an intense distrust of judicious appearances, a hatred of violence, and a deep dread of social harmony's secret affiliation with terror and war (Burke, *Attitudes* 80-83). Phobos first appears in Hesiod's *Theogony* in this familial context:

Now Kytheria

to Ares, stabber of shields bore Panic [Phobos]
and Terror [Deimos], dreaded
gods, who batter the dense battalions

of men embattled
 in horrible war, they with Ares,
 sacker of cities. She also
 bore him Harmonia (934-938).

The Hesiodic Phobos appears again, figuratively and literally, in *The Shield of Herakles*, adorning that hero's circular shield:

And there were folds
 of cobalt driven upon it
 In the middle was a
 face of Panic,
 not to be spoken of,
 glaring on the beholder
 with eyes full of fire glinting
 and the mouth of it was full of teeth,
 terrible, repugnant
 and glittering white (142-149).

This passage describes the Heraklean Shield in images of grotesque and nightmarish violence, images that evoke the blood maddened mind of Herakles himself. The face of Phobos occupies the central space of the shield, at the graven nightmare's navel where the articulation of meanings is lost in terror's repugnant and speechless mouth. The figured silence of the screaming image echoes back to the concealed and Unnamed Deimos, that other terror "not to be spoken of."

In the figuration on the "gold-glowing," mirror-like shield, Phobos appears as the manifestation or reflection of his brother, as the mask of Deimos that, like a mask, proclaims in its form and conceals in its function the split between reality and appearance, inside and outside, disappearance and return, repression and exclusion, thought⁵ and representation. Deimos disappears behind the image of Phobos, while Phobos generates the "seeming substance" of terror in mere appearance.⁶ At the same time, the dream-like circumscriptions on the Heraklean shield represent the inevitable displacement⁷ of dream/performance by artifact or document, a displacement indicated by the appearance of a dream text on the inscribed shield--the usurpation of dreamed-desire, of thought, by representation and production, but a production which is, in this case, still closely linked to its ontologic bloodlines, to "Terror, dream-diviner of this house."⁸

In Hesiod the terrible brothers appear in a theatre of war, indicating their filiation with the violence of the father, Ares. Although Hesiod does not specifically mention any interaction between Phobos and Deimos and their mother Aphrodite (Kytheria), terror appears as the child of Desire and Violence frequently enough in the later history of drama, often as an indication

of an epiphanic chaos that subverts the seeming harmony of law and order. "If I be Venus, thou must needs be Mars" says Bel-Imperia while seducing her lover Horatio, in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, "And where Mars reigneth, there must needs be wars" (2.2.34-35). A few lines later, immediately after sexual consummation, Horatio is horribly and gratuitously murdered in an act of passion and political intrigue that sets into motion a series of assassinations and retaliations that strike at the foundation of the political order, revealing *avant la lettre* the phobias of a somewhat later Jacobean age--terrors that are conceived and violently exteriorized through Horatio/Mars' seduction by Bel-Imperia/Venus.

In Hesiod, as in Kyd, Phobos masks a showing. In Lacanian terms, he represents within the text the abolished presence (*forclusion*: the denial of experience's access into the Symbolic, experience's *a priori* expulsion back into the Real) of Deimos projected outward into the scene of violence--a theatre of pure cruelty. This is a manifestation of a terror that is both specular and performative. The apparitions and concealments that describe the relationship between Phobos and Deimos mark both the dislocations and disappearances that are central to theatre and performance--the essential unlocatability of the vanishing Deimos, for example, or the secretions of meaning in the appearance of Phobos, who plays out war and performs acts of violence that are later inscribed on the "magic writing pad" of the Heraklean shield, much as a modern performance artist might document his work.⁹

Phobos reveals himself in these performative spaces--the theatres of war, the circular shield of remembrance, the *mise en scene* of thought/desire and representation. He paradoxically embodies in carefully inscribed images of disarray, chaos, and dislocation the violent resistances that define the difference between thought and its representations: Phobos, as the image of Deimos, locates displacement and repression in his very appearance. Deimos, on the other hand, describes a critical absence or lack, a "hole" in the fabric of consciousness that indicates a pathology of deficiency:

a *béance* of some sort, resulting from the way in which the original tissue [of consciousness] itself was woven; *forclusion* would be sort of an "original hole," never capable of finding its own substance again since it had never been anything other than "hole-substance."¹⁰

This pathology is also congenital to theatre, a pathology in which we can trace either the repression or the *forclusion* of terror by theatrical representation. And this distinction is critical, for when political terror is *repressed* through theatre--or more precisely, when the *relation* between terror and its implementation in the images of terrorism is repressed--when it is dislocated into the image systems of spectacle, it displaces cultural terror and terror's pain into the strategies of information until terror and its *-isms* become formalized,

objectified and gradually neutralized into concealed ideologies or mere habits of thought.

When terror is displaced by *forclusion* in the theatre, however, and then re-presented, it appears not as representation (because it cannot *be* represented), but as hallucination, as some Unnameable Thing that Returns in the Real like a Jacobean apparition.¹¹ This *forclusion* seems more potentially subversive in its relation to actual terror because it does not seek to conceal terror *per se* (although it must to some degree), but seeks to reject the repressive signifying order itself--the order of law--in its entirety. Artaud perceived this when he wrote:

The theatre will never find itself again--i.e. constitute a means of true illusion--except by furnishing the spectator with the truthful precipitate of dreams, in which his taste for crime, his erotic obsessions, his savagery, his chimeras, his utopian sense of life and matter, even his cannibalism, pour out, on a level not counterfeit and illusory, but internal. (Artaud, *Theatre* 92)

"True illusion"--the hallucinatory return, in other words, of what has been excluded in the Real--rediscovers its connection to terror in the immediacy of thought, in the perception of the terror that *is* thought.

We can see this distinction between repression and *forclusion* by comparing, for example, the Euripidean Medea's response to terror--in which the relation between terror and its implementation in terrorism is repressed in the Law of language, in the very inscription of the word "silence" itself--to the final act of Marlowe's *Edward II*, in which the assassin Lightborne comes to the jailers who are holding Edward in the cloacal dungeon "To which the channels of the castle run." Lightborne carries a letter:

Enter Lightborne

Light: My Lord Protector greets you [Gives letter.]

Gur: What's here? I know not how to conster it.

Mat: Gurney, it was left unpointed for the nonce;
'Edwardum occidere nolite timere,'
That's his meaning.

Light: Know you this token? I must have the
king. (5.5.5-11)

'Edwardum occidere nolite timere bonum est' is from Holinshed's *Chronicles of England* in which the story of Edward's grisly death is recounted:

Withal the Bishop of Hereford under a sophistical forme of words signified to them by his letters, that they should dispatch him out of the way, as thus: Edwardum occidere nolite timere bonum est: To

kill Edward will not to fear it is good. Whiche riddle or doubtful kind of speech . . . might be taken in two contraire senses, onley by placing the poynt called comma, they interpreted it in the worse sense.¹²

The two senses of the phrase, "Fear not to kill the king. . . Kill not the king, 'tis good to fear the worst." (5.4.9-12), depend upon the placement of a comma, but the text within Marlowe's text is left unpunctuated. Edward's fate is determined by the "missing poynte" that leads to his disappearance.¹³ The unpunctuated text, or rather the point that is missing in the text, marks a hole or rend in the textual tissue, corresponding to a *béance* in the tissue of consciousness. Furthermore, the *forclusion* comes again in a horrifying form; the missing comma returns in the Real as the hollow horn pushed into Edward's anus to guide the red-hot poker that kills him: "They kept him down, and withall put into his fundament an horne" (*Charleton* 194). The guiding horn "appears as a punctuation without a text," and thus the "castrated" or disembodied phallus/comma comes from without as a real object of violence in the hand of the Luciferian Lightborne, who embodies the disappeared lover Gaveston:

K. Edw: Who's there? What light is that?
Wherefore comes thou?

Light: To comfort you, and bring you joyous
news. (5.5.44-45)

In the performative site of *Edward II*, Lightborne/Phobos functions as *gestus*, glyph or cipher, Gaveston/Deimos as the exclusion of that inscription. The affiliation or interval between them is a space of theatrical *possibility* in which relations of power become thought at thought's extremity. Thus while it is obvious that Marlowe's play--or any play, for that matter--must always repress terror as performance or text, this repression operates *within* Marlowe's play as an exclusion, as a rejection of the signifying order which reverberates beyond the play and calls into question the very hierarchies of power which depend upon that signifying order for entrenchment and stability.

These last comments on *Edward II* will suggest several questions: although all performance is to some extent repressive, to what degree does any given performance reveal its repressive mechanisms? To what degree does a performance, in its rejection of the signifying order through *forclusion*, show its own relation to violence and terror? To what degree does any performance represent the hallucinatory expulsions from the "political unconscious"? Although there can certainly be no play that is purely a repression or a *forclusion*, certainly, determining the degree to which a given performance is operating in one or the other mode can reveal the critical movements of terror and terrorism in history.

The Phobos/Deimos relation represents, in this context, several different types and levels of meaning in performance: the relation between neurosis and schizophrenia; the breach between thought and its "theft" by language; the difference between theatre and its double; the reference between the Symbolic/Imaginary (representation--Phobos) and the Real (what cannot be represented--Deimos); the collusion between terror (which cannot enter systems of information or representation), and the terrorism that ends in the ceaseless cycles of mediations as the information system of the absent terror. In each case Phobos (the unpunctuated text) displaces Deimos (punctuation without a text), and Deimos is either repressed or cast into the Real through the discharges of performance.

By the same token, these performative ideas in Hesiod, while quite evocative and perhaps in some ways perfunctorily theatrical, must at the same time be differentiated from performance itself. When we speak of theatre or performance, we are speaking of a place where what *is* is what is shown "out there" in real bodies living and dying in real time. What we in fact see in the tragic theatre (differentiated from "tragedy" as a literary type or genre) is the appearance of what had remained unarticulated. This showing is in fact the primary business of the theatre; language, words, letters, signs must be embodied, voiced, shown, made present. What we see in Hesiod is theatre *as forclusion*, performativity as disavowal exemplified in the terror that is, in a single line, both revealed and repudiated, "In the middle was a / face of Panic, / not to be spoken of."

Here we are faced with a paradox, however, because in performance what cannot be articulated must be shown, and when it is shown, it ceases to be what it was. Thus when terror enters the information systems of performance, it ceases, in a sense, to be terror--which is unspeakable, and unrepresentable--and becomes a mask of itself. Terror is then transformed into the imaging system of terrorism.

There is a chasm, then, between the ontologic theatre, the theatre that *is* thought, and the "ontic" theatre, the theatre that *represents* the theatre that is thought.¹⁴ This is further complicated by the difference I've already suggested between theatres that repress terror by displacing it into the reforming sign system of terrorism, and theatres that direct thought back to the unrepresentability of terror--the difference between theatre, once again, and its double. The issue, finally, is not merely to determine a given theatrical performance's relation to signification, but to determine the ways in which that relation mystifies the *linkages between* signification, theatre, and political violence. These linkages are the traces, as it were, of the mind's terror upon itself.

The breach between the genotypes of terror (Phobos and Deimos) is born of the cleft in solipsistic consciousness that constitutes primary identity --what Jacques Lacan calls the mirror stage, in which the child perceives the (w)holeness of body/self only in the image of an other. This perception is at

once a perception of integration and a recognition that integration (identity) can only be had in an other.

The mirror stage is thus the simultaneous apprehension of an essential wholeness and self-alienation in which the self can only be composed and apprehended apart from and outside of the self. The other in this case becomes a *specular* principle of discord/harmony through which the individual is realized. This is what Anthony Wilden identifies as the "*Imaginary Other*," a kind of proto-Symbolic Other who represents the locus of a law which is *necessarily* violent because it is based not on difference and correspondence (communication), but on opposition and identity (conflict).

This rhetorical silence--what comes to be called in the postmodern period "theoretical terrorism"--is represented in the theatre by the relation between those figures who function as an absence, as an empty screen for the terror-stricken projections of terrorists, and the terrorists who carry out the bloody deeds: I've already mentioned the relationship between these two figurations in the characters Gaveston and Lightborne, but we also see it in the recessive, seated figure in Beckett's *Catastrophe* who is manipulated by the ideologue director, for example, or in the projection of terror onto the image of the female/other in the drama--the other who serves as the empty space through which desire and its terror(isms) formulates itself. I am thinking here of Desdemona and Othello, or the Duchess of Malfi and her brother, or any number of plays in which characters formulate their own terror against an other-as-absence.

This relationship between a terror that is (or seems) a withholding, or recessiveness, and a terrorism which is an acting out,¹⁵ is yet one more relation between the Deimic and the Phobic, a relation which, in these kinds of plays, enters the theatre as a self-reflexive discourse in which the Imaginary relation between Phobos and the (now shown) unrepresentable Deimos, is represented in an Imaginary other.

The appearance of the Imaginary Other is, according to Lacan, a necessary stage in the realization of the Symbolic Other, a realization crucial to the final development of the individual in society. Thus while the Symbolic Other comes, finally, to represent the locus of language and Law, this law is not *necessarily* exploitative or violent, according to Wilden.¹⁶

Theatre, however, is not really of the Symbolic order. It is specular and as such is the site of the seduction and "capture" by the Imaginary Other. In its guise as a political-cultural institution theatre is the specular/spectacle of the Imaginary and violent law that is "always already" part of the Symbolic order. This is different from the *drama*, from the theatre that exists as text/criticism and not as spectacle. The drama exists more specifically as a part of the Symbolic order *per se*--the order of difference and correspondence--and not, as does performance, in the Imaginary order of opposition and identity.

This affinity between theatre and the Imaginary order explains, in part, the reason that *forclusion* becomes the means by which the connection between violence and law is most clearly revealed in performance. Even though it is obvious that theatre must exist to some degree within the Symbolic, the seeming immediacy of theatrical perception wants in every instance, to exclude or repress the symbolic in favor of the Imaginary. Consequently the only means by which the repression of the Imaginary is revealed is through the complete rejection of the Symbolic *and* Imaginary orders through *forclusion*, through the recuperation of symbol and imagination as hallucination.

In any case, whether we identify the theatre's Other as Imaginary or Symbolic, the alienation of the self in the locus of the Other eventually causes what Lacan calls *aphanisis*, or disappearance, as "I" am displaced outside the locus of "my" self, and seem to vanish into the Other. This is the essential performative circumstance of theatre and generated, for instance, the particular agony of Artaud, that patron saint of the modern theatre, who felt himself continuously bereft of a language adequate to his agony.¹⁷ Artaud's tormented disavowal of *aphanisis* eventually led to his descent into a hell of pain, terror, madness, and finally death. There are few better examples than Artaud's madness of *aphanisis in extremis*. This is the terrorizing and lethal aspect of the Other as it becomes what Herbert Blau calls the Enemy, "all that survives of the Beloved, what makes your hair stand on end" (*Bodies* 133). The threat of disappearance in/by the presence of the Other generates this kind of terror out of the differentiating space, the rupture in consciousness that displaces the self into the power of an other.

Moreover, the simultaneous perception and denial that this wound exists initiates the obsessive and blinded insight that develops into one of the major theoretical principles of tragedy in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and beyond, leading us by increments to the seemingly endless, self-silencing ratiocinations of Kyd's proto-Hamletic Hieronimo, and finally into the exhaustion of thought in Beckett, ending with the flat recitatives and silences of postmodern performance.

As I suggested at the outset, this burgeoning intuition in Greek culture of the essentially infracted nature of consciousness, the "gruesome night" emblematic in *Oedipus Rex*, to name but the most obvious example, emerges concurrently with the growth of a complex and exteriorized legal and economic system.¹⁸ This helps to explain why Greek tragedy's preoccupation with crime seems, paradoxically, to anticipate legal systems after the historical fact. Crime in tragedy appears both as an individual lack, and as a fault line or stress fracture¹⁹ in the social structure in which the individual (the hero) lives. Crime is ultimately the origin both of the hero, and of civilization and culture. In the *Oresteia*, for example, the concealed Orestes (who describes himself in Richmond Lattimore's translation as a "Daulian stranger out of Phocis") is eventually resolved and defined through the

remembrance of a murder generating murder, recounted mythically and mimetically over and again back through time, ending (beginning?) with the tribunal of Athena that judges and abolishes the threat of an infinite, recursive vengeance, and establishes order and identity as the result of the remembered crime.

Nietzsche sees a similar situation in *Oedipus Rex* when he identifies the Oedipal myth not as the cause and explanation of individual and collective neuroses, but rather as the result of some more primal, unspeakable crime which is eventually adjudicated through the displacement of the "divine" king by the law, and then the collective will of the *demos* (*Birth* 68). This recalls the displacement that occurs in (Lacanian) psychoanalysis, when the specular power of the king, the "Imaginary Father," is (at least partially) deposed by the subject through the symbolic exchanges (laws) of language and analysis (Wilden, *Lacan* 98). The crime which resolves the individual and creates society is brought to justice (language) in an act of (Symbolic) exchange in which the primal infraction--the desire for incest or the incest that is desire --is adjudged and punished by the very system of signs it generates: the heroic silence of the Classical stage is, in other words, the appearance of the Lacanian unconscious, the space of articulation in the Other.

Thus the institution of law, grounded in the expiatory concept of *lex talionis* ("an eye for an eye"--the economization of violence in systems of exchange) defines culture and the individual, as Hegel suggests, in negative terms through the breaks, dislocations, disappearances and *forclusions* that appear in the individual and collective psyche. The individual and culture come to being, in other words, through infractions, real or imagined, judged and disposed in the locus of the Other. The recurrence of absence, *forclusion*, *aphanisis*--the returning, painful expulsions which mark the irruption of culture and identity--is the substance of theatre's crime, and is theatre history.

René Girard discusses this performance of expulsion at the cultural-political level in terms of *mimesis*. In *Violence and the Sacred*,²⁰ for instance, he delineates the ways in which *desire* is produced through competition with an other for the possession of some object that comes, in the desiring struggle, to emblemize desire itself.²¹ Here Girard seems to be describing something like an Imaginary Other, an *imago* that haunts the Symbolic order and reduces difference and correspondence to opposition and identity. This reduction is the essential operation of repression that I described earlier, and is the seeming image of power and force that Girard sees as the generator of culture, the seeming image that I would call *theatre*.

As the other becomes Double becomes Other becomes Enemy through the struggle of opposition and identity in Girard's thought, he is spectacularly and ritualistically expelled, either through exile or sacrificial execution in the guise of the Double. This expulsion of the Other is not, however, an expulsion of the law, *per se*, but an expulsion of the *relation* between law and

violence which is repressed in the image of the Double. As this relation seemingly disappears beyond the frontiers of culture and thought, the community experiences its *apparent* cohesion through the exercise of its *unanimous violence*. This, according to Girard, is the meaning of tragic theatre in general, and the meaning of *Oedipus Rex* in particular.

What is crucial in this process of identification and expulsion is that the link between the unanimous law and violence remain hidden. It is of utmost importance that the connection between *mimetic desire*, or desire in general, and the reality of cultural violence remain concealed (unconscious) as well. Mimetic desire finds its means of concealment in various kinds of mimetic institutions or systems of representation. The systems of signs that are chosen are therefore historically selected to conceal the relation between law and desiring-violence, between tragedy and its generative terror. Thus tragic mimesis, or the particular form and language that tragedy takes on in order to imitate and so possess desire, conceals within its lineaments the particular mode of repression that identifies the connections between the tragic form and the cultural powers it upholds. We seek, then, a kind of Brechtian antitoxin, the traces of a para-tragic theatre within the tragic tradition that disarticulates its mimetic mechanisms beneath its own terrorized gaze, that discovers the Imaginary Other and sees in that delusion, and in the hallucinations of terror's violent *forclusion*, something like Artaud's "truthful precipitate of dreams" in the dream of the political unconscious.

Aristotle, writing this dream on the far side of the passage from mythic society to law, named the various mechanisms of violent *forclusion* and dislocation--the "laws of expiation" grown from the substrate of purification rite and religious dictum--*katharsis*.²² The dislocative phenomenon of *katharsis* was, according to Aristotle, effected mimetically through the now famous invocation of pity and terror.²³

But although no other theory of performance has had the impact or generated the volume of discussion that Aristotle's theory has, the disturbing and problematical nature of the meaning of *katharsis* which resides at the heart of Aristotle's theory remains. What seems at first to be a rather simple homology of effects in the Aristotelian formula--manic music expelling mania, mimetic terror expelling actual terror--becomes more problematic as we search for a clearer understanding of the term as it is employed. The precise meaning of *katharsis* becomes fraught with questions and difficulties: what, precisely, is *being expelled*? some morbid terror lying hidden in the mind of the subject? and who or what is that--the audience, the actor, the "character"? and of what is this terror terrified? what object? what situation?

Although I can make no pretence to classical scholarship, and so cannot support or refute the specifics of the various philological analyses of the terms, I would suggest that the "problem" of the meaning of *katharsis* delineates a condition of dislocation that is the precise reflex of *katharsis* (and *phobos*, its attendant term) itself.²⁴

The fundamental sense of the word *katharsis*, seems to be grounded in the history of medicine, or even earlier, in rites of purification and proto-legal expiation where the word indicated not a condition or state of mind, but a kind of expurgation, a casting away or removal of some impurity, sickness, or crime through "ceremonies that wash clean and cast out the Furies" (Aeschylus, *Libation* 968). *Katharsis* indicated not the final circumstance of purification, but the process of disgorgement itself.

As a philosophical term, *katharsis* retained this sense of dis-location. At one point in the *Rhetoric*, for example, terror (*phobos*), the precondition of *katharsis*, is described as a "species of pain or disturbance arising from an impression of *impending* evil which is painful or destructive in its nature" (ii.5.1382 a 21. Emphasis added). Terror, then, and in a different sense, *katharsis*, are neither objective nor subjective phenomena, but are instead the manifestation of a fundamental and violent expulsion or disappearance of the subject and his pain into an-other locus--either the repressive Other or the Real. The intensity of this disappearance produces a loss of identity: the collapse of the subject/object into a Third Term, an Unnameable.

Katharsis then, is an expulsion inaugurated within the field of terror. Generated by the terror born of fragmented consciousness, *katharsis* is what it produces--a perpetual unlocatability, a continuous *aphanisis*, an infinite series of displacements, disgorgements, emeses that serve in the end to eradicate all sense of a vulnerable, locatable self. The presumed "healing" effect of *katharsis* comes about because these expurgations and dislocations eventually seem to engender terror's Imaginary opposite in the returning sense of a sublime following the expulsion of non-being. In terms of terrorism, this sublime is perceived as a sense of harmony and stasis in a world "restored" by the violence of unanimous law,²⁵ or as the end-of-repressive-history engendered by the individual violent act. In either case, the difficulty in finally locating meaning behind *katharsis* is the root meaning of *katharsis*--and *phobos*--itself: a word that conceals a lack of significance within its inscription.

The conflation of the medical and political senses of *katharsis* is clear in the Greek drama: "We must use medicine, / or burn, or amputate, with kind intention," says Agamemnon in the *Oresteia*, "take / all means at hand that might beat down corruption's pain" (848-50). *Katharsis*, terror, and *pity* (*eleos*) intersect in this desire to eradicate a metaphorical dis-ease from the *polis* through the amputation with "kind intention" of the gangrenous member.

The modern dismissal of pity as a noble virtue ("the *worthlessness* of pity," writes Nietzsche, that "pernicious, modern effeminacy") stems in part from its dissociation from the blooded brutality of *katharsis* and terror. When Artaud dismisses pity in favor of a cruelty by which the body and psyche is scourged and purified--the Plague--he is invoking the older sense of pity that sees its violent, *reforming* aspect. But this reformation can move in

two different directions. While Artaud saw in cruelty/pity the possibility of a complete reconstruction of consciousness, Nietzsche, and Foucault following him, saw in the union of cruelty and pity the means by which pain and punishment have been objectified, reified and economized as crucial elements in the irruption of a "merciful" and just Law.²⁶ Pity is, in these views, the other side of terror, its perversion, the "bright projection of the Sophoclean hero" which covers over the dark violence concealed in a "gruesome night."

Although pity normally evokes the seemingly benign aspect of desire--pity is empathic, contiguous, the corrective to *demand* in the sentiment that pretends to proclaim "I want what is good for you"--there is much that is suspect in pity as it appears in theatre, especially in tragedy, where the warpings of desire become so complete that it is often impossible to ascertain an *object* of desire at all. Indeed, one of the most powerful ideas to surface again and again in the drama is the recognition that desire does not desire any object, but desires only itself. Theatre is what Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari would call a desiring machine.

Desire is the engine that subverts pity, that regenerates the terror within it, a painful recognition that the union implied by pity might be a lie spoken by the Other to cover up an emphatic and absolute alienation or absence of being in desire. The desire for what the Other desires (the objectified desire of the Other) which is implied by pity is transformed into terror when desire cannot capture the Other, or the Other's desire, as object. When desire is frustrated in this way, the threat of non-being appears, and either an object is substituted for the desire of the Other, or the Other is absolutely denied. When a replacement object is substituted for the Enemy-Other, desire becomes phobic. When the Other is categorically denied or expelled, a "hole" or lack opens in consciousness, and desire/terror is displaced into the Real.

Freud characterized a phobia as a fixation on an object of dread which functions as a mask that conceals the space of an other, repressed, desire. He gives the example of a young man who wishes to murder his father, but cannot admit his desire to himself because it is too fearful. It is so fearful in fact that he cannot even admit its existence as an object of fear, and so he substitutes another fearful desire in its place, and fears that; he becomes phobic and will not go out in public because he is afraid he will murder people indiscriminately. This is a particularly provocative example because both phobia and the particular example of phobia given are instances of dislocation (Freud, *Interpretation* 293-4).

The object of a phobia in Freud is not the true terror, but a terror dislocated. The Phobic object--the graven shield, the mask, the image of terror--both represents and hides the feared and desired Deimos. We might seek, then, a repudiated desire in the tragic experience of terror, the concealed wish that draws us to the theatre in the first place: perhaps a hunger for obliteration and death in the Other suggested in different ways by

both Freud and Lacan, or the craving for some primal bloodlust already noted by Nietzsche and Foucault, or the longing for a totality in which all correspondence and difference is obliterated by a desire "firmly wedded to the law in the pure detachment and elevation of the death instinct"--a desire for death in an object that will replace the dispersive tedium of history, the boredom of hearing the "hypocritical doctors explain what it all means" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 213).

At the level of State terrorism, the public performance of the desire for death in objectification transforms it into a socio-political ideology: the enactment of a tyranny which absolutely denies its dispersion into history and language and theatre. Tyranny's resistance to dispersion is enforced by terror's embodiment in the words and images of State violence and terrorism. In order for tyranny to operate, in other words, its terror must be deployed as a sign within the systems of exchange. It must, in fact, become the sign system of its own terrorism. Yet paradoxically, the terror that is the result of this terrorism--the real pain inflicted on the body--can never become a sign, can never enter a system of information and exchange. It remains unsignifiable, unrepresentable. This distinction between terror and terrorism, the difference between real pain and the techniques of its production, represents the reification and commodification of terror into terrorism.

Terrorism is an extreme, theatricalized violence operating, in Roland Barthes' terms, "in the service of the regime of the signifier." But when terror's roots and causes are repressed in the formation of performance/media/theatre events, and the connections between the socializing, disciplining power of terroristic violence are cut-off from the ontologic terror which generates them--when terror loses itself in the Imaginary--we lose sight of terrorism's mechanisms and are denied the possibilities of resistance. Violence then seems to return, individually and collectively, in the real in new and abominable hallucinatory forms. This is the terror of socio-political madness--that the reality we think we know may only be the hallucinated remains of a denied enormity, cast back into the world, returned in an other monstrous form in the real. Thus at the level of the "political unconscious" the repressed [for most of us] connections between the mediated State terrorism of the Vietnam "theatre," and the psychotic terror of national non-being that supported it, eventually caused that war to re-erupt in American movie theatres in the figure of various sorts of reflagged Rambos. Meanwhile, the psychotic footsoldiers of the *mediated* campaign suddenly began to carry Vietnam era automatic weapons into fast-food restaurants, shopping malls, and playgrounds, falsely proclaiming themselves battle-crazed vets before opening fire. All of this while performance artists and experimental theatres initiated their explorations into the ethos of violence and self-mutilation in ways that sometimes did more to confuse the issues of violence and theatre than to clarify their relations.

This confusion arises because whenever acts of terrorism of any sort are mediated, and through mediation lose sight of the critical, terrorizing impulses which gave them birth, violence re-emerges as a mystifying, disconnected system of signs whose causes and reasons become permanently lost to us. The ultimate danger for us in this is that the fear of national non-being that led us into the theatre of Vietnam, aggravated by the sense of theatricalized irrationality surrounding domestic and foreign anti-state terrorist acts, becomes transformed into a kind of proto-fascism, a terror of formlessness and fragmentation which is eventually displaced by the law as a formal object of fear, fascination, and desire. The law becomes a phobic object which hides this terror of non-being, the terror of the Chaos beneath the Harmony of Law, the deep and resolute void beyond the imagery of violence. This finally echoes Lacan's understanding of phobia, which is quite distinct from Freud's:

Not the fear of an object, but the confrontation of the subject with an absence of an object, with a lack of being in which he is stuck or caught, in which he loses himself and to which anything is preferable, even the forgoing of that most strange and alien of objects: a phobia. (Wilden, *Lacan* 150-51)

The Lacanian concept of phobia suggests a repudiation, not a displacement, the traces of schizo-psychosis and not a "mere" neurotic repression. This is tyranny's phobia, a phobia that is perhaps best exposed or "deconstructed" in performance, and through performance in culture itself; forms of theatre which conceal the filiation between terrorism and ontologic terror by substituting a phobic object to cover a "lack of being" must be discovered and properly situated so that we can gain an understanding of their ideological alignment and the effects of that alignment on memory, on history.

3. Terror and history

History, as Nietzsche points out in the *Genealogy*, is linked spectacularly to the creation of a memory in man. This memory is created by inflicting pain on the individual, and history becomes the residual pain of the collective scar tissue.²⁷ The creation and recreation of this collective memory of pain was, moreover, a critical point in humankind's passage from "protohistoric" myth-religion into history and law.

Clearly, the collective repetition of the trauma, of that "which never ceases to hurt" suggests the necessity of a "being-witness" to the hurt--the necessity of an audience in a *theatre* of pain. History thus appears as theatre --an endless re-enactment of the perception of pain, and the pain of perception. The present, brief analysis of terror, then, is only a preliminary suggestion of history's painful effects displayed as theatre before the subject of

culture, effects which are generated out of the split within/without the self that is the moment of perception.

Any exhaustive analysis of terror's threat in performance would, in this context, concern itself in part with terror's visible effects on the body as well as its demonstrable effects on the mind. But these effects would also operate as a "double inscription," emanating at once from the alienation that is thought, reinforced and redeployed as perceptible social threat in the political arena that we call theatre, and then reformulated and reinjected as alien thought once again--these effects would operate, in other words, dialectically.

And yet I am not, to be sure, suggesting that this process is *essentially* dialectical, only that it has been made to operate as such. Indeed, some current theorists see a partial remedy to this pain-production in the abolition of dialecticism itself (See for instance the work of Deleuze and Guattari in this context), a dialecticism which comes to represent the static world of concept-ideology which must be subverted by the dynamic world of "becoming."

Yet this "solution" to theatre's tyranny is finally quite naive, for it is in the dizzying whirl of becoming that we first glimpse terror's moment, the moment of perception dissolving itself. And in the half-life of terror, seemingly outside time and outside history, a mere instant suffices for that terror to find its objective case and become an ideologic weapon once again: in other words, when the "remedy" of "becoming" is viewed *as* a remedy, when the becoming becomes *being*, the anti-dialecticism of the "in-between" becomes objectified once again as ideology. Attempts to glorify "slippages," or "nomadism," or "becomings," or indeterminacies of gender, class, or race still miss the point because it is the (Phobic) theatre's function to neutralize and institutionalize such anti-categories, and this institutionalization is inevitable as long as thought thinks itself, as long, in other words, as there is theatre.

On the other hand, in the ruptured eye of perception, in the context of the "becoming" and disappearance which *is also* the (Deimic) theatre, the history of terror in theater would not be an attempt to see things "as they really might have been." Nor would such a history appear as an effort to reconstruct the political-economic forces of past periods. Rather, we might look at terror's history in a provisional way as the truth of some present, historical distress traced by that history on the contemporary body and mind. These traces might be recognized by their particular sensitivity to pain, a sensitivity which is related in various ways to its methods of production, but a pain-terror which is, finally, locatable only in the *aphanisis* of perception disarticulating itself "in the locus of the Other." This is the preoccupation with the terror of *aphanisis* that has been formulated and reformulated throughout theatre's history, culminating in its final foregrounding in contemporary performance and theatre.

And thus the painful irony: while it may be true that the original impulse to liberation or knowledge which underlies the contemporary terrorist act or violent performance--the impulse that provides the critical connection between

terror and its terrorism--is in certain cases courageous and deeply committed, those deeply committed impulses are ultimately transformed into a denial of the reality of pain. Pain, in other words, loses its impact when, through history, it *becomes* foregrounded--or "repressively desublimated"--in contemporary performance. This "repressive desublimation" of pain suppresses the real pain of history within the development of an increasingly historicist (linear, positivist) postmodernism. This suppression is then *displayed* in "real" acts of violence as performance, but the terroristic nuances of these *signs* of violence finally obscure the coercive, historical necessity of actual violence and terror as it is produced within politico-economic systems in the Real, the Real that Frederic Jameson says *is* History.²⁸

In contemporary performance, this level of mystification assigns the work of artists like Chris Burden or Vito Acconci to the tradition of tragic theatre; literal violence in performance eventually upholds, as does tragedy, the spectacle of the Law in the endless permutations of terror's images, images which ultimately, I would argue, always represent the Same Thing--an *ontological confrontation with the non-being* that generates theatre, the terror of nothing, Deimos, the missing presence in the shield of Herakles. Any particular historical tracing of terror's threat in the theatre would perhaps do no better than to observe the places where each play unfolds itself into this disappearance, this "original hole," the empty mouth of Phobos.

Such a tracing, then, would also not be merely qualitative. It would not try to legitimize "correct" plays, or condemn others as examples of some sort of "false consciousness." On the other hand, it would also refuse to invest itself in new historicist studies of the "empirical" conditions of theatrical practice, for those "conditions" describe the very scandal against which the anti-empiricism of theatricality defines itself--the handkerchief as incontrovertible "ocular proof" in *Othello*, for example, or the presumed corporeal presence of an absent body that grounds the Western theatre tradition in the *Quem Quaeritis* trope. Such a study would instead try to describe in each case the degree to which the connections between terror and its *-isms* are discernible *only through the meticulously "perjur'd eye" of theatre itself*, and to see how, in each case, terror's threat appears both as an ontologic condition of perception, a condition of theatre and as the mechanism by which social reformation and discipline is concealed and enforced as theatre's double.

This study could thus never be a primarily empirical or positivist undertaking--it could never be a historiography. Indeed, the model for such a project might be the very transformative and perjured vision of Iago, or the warping eye of Genet through which theatre's lie becomes the limiting condition of knowledge, thought, and perception.

This would be a history of disappearances, a history synchronous and coterminous with a history of terror's effects *in* the theatre, but also a history of terror's fading image in the performative traces of its practice.²⁹ In such a history we could perhaps note the specific changes in the historical movements

of terrorism as it becomes organized, economized, and deployed within and through various modes of performance--from the display of the state-sanctioned terrorisms of the Roman spectacles to the political-aesthetic terrorism of Surrealism³⁰--but we would also insist on terror's existence prior to articulation, a terror that is, in its reality as disappearance, "passed over in silence," to use Wittgenstein's words, only to be appropriated later by the various theatres of signs.

Yet even within these various theatres of signs, no easy distinction can be drawn between a terrorism which is deployed referentially in the theatre, and one that is deployed in culture *as* theatricality; as the above examples show, the two bleed almost imperceptibly into one another: were the Roman spectacles, after all, more theatre or more a "spectacle of the scaffold"? Is Breton suggesting a politicization of art, or is he aestheticizing politics? No easy answer can be given of course, but what is clear is that there is a necessary, *a priori* appeal to a Nietzschean theatre in each case, an appeal which sometimes manifests itself in a terrorism which appears first *in* the theatre, and at other times in a terrorism which formulates itself *as* theatricality in culture, and sometimes, indeterminately as both.

Finally, in such a historical approach, I would caution against privileging pain merely for its spectacular effects. Such an alienation of violence would run precisely counter to the ethos of the present essay. Rather, I would suggest a theatre history which foregrounds pain because theatre itself does so, and because, as Derrida has written in his essay on Freud, "Life is already threatened by the origin of the memory which constitutes it"--a memory of pain, if we are to believe Nietzsche--"and by the breaching which it resists." (Derrida, "Freud" 202)

The critical issue, then, would not be pain itself, but the often hidden *systems* of pain-production in theatre's history, systems whose hidden assumptions and concealed terrors might help us better articulate some of the issues raised in the present article: what are the sources of our individual and collective traumas, our crimes, the enormities that have been torn from the tissue of remembrance in thought and culture? when those memories have been repressed or expelled, how have they reappeared as mechanisms of social engineering and ideological disciplining? how can we come to learn, especially at the political level, what has been dislocated, or excluded? is it possible in *any* proposed investigation to stand somehow outside one's own cultural-historical warp and reveal these mechanisms of repression and exclusion with any kind of clear vision, or does the perversion of seeing that *is* theatre make any such project impossible? should we instead resign ourselves to our historical reality as a play of madness, illusion, hallucination, theatre? This is, after all, the show that has been playing in the grand theatres of State since the beginning, and the beginning was, after all, merely theatre.

Notes

1. The name "Panic," as I will show a bit later, is the name assigned to the sibling terror who represents the "outward show of fear." The name also suggest the later association between Pan, the god of panic and rout, and his absorption into the image of Dionysus, god of wild-spaces, god of theatre, god of terror-as-madness.

2. Although one might take issue with my rather broad use of terrorism—the objectification and implementation of terror's threat for ideological ends—I would, for the present moment, insist on this definition. One point of the present study is to show how terror and its -isms have always been part of the theatrical consciousness and its history, how terrorism has always been a product of theatre, how theatre has always been the space of ideological coercion framed by reference to real terror. So while some have argued that terrorism is really a modern phenomenon (and I would, at one level, agree) there is another sense in which modern or Modernist terrorism is but one more manifestation of theatre's terror in history. I would, as a result of this disagreement, suggest that we think of terrorisms (plural) as different forms of the coercion that has its own, unique modern form. By the same token, I would insist on the differences between the various kinds of terrorisms: between right and left wing terrorisms, between terrorism from above and terrorism from below, between modernist and other kinds of terrorism. If there is a single thread connecting these various terrorisms, it is the continuous deployment of the threat of death and pain, a threat which takes different forms in different ages.

3. While I will touch upon these various axes of terrorism, the point of this study is not to outline in any explicit way a history of gender, race, or class, simply because I don't want to limit the discussion of terror's modes to any one system of coercion. My purpose is, rather, to look at theatre as the focus of history's attempts to create any number ideological coercions (of which gender may, arguably, be the most powerful), and to look at theatre's terror as a model of empiricism which generates the *myth* of empiricism, an empiricism which is the ground for the ideologies of class, race, and gender. It would be contradictory in this sense to provide any kind of empirical (i.e. social, economic, scientific) evidence for my arguments when I am suggesting that it is theatre itself which generates the bias of empiricism and supports it.

4. Hartvig Frisch 86. Although Phobos and Deimos also appear earlier in Homer's *Iliad*, their filiation with Ares is not as clearly stated there as it is in Hesiod. Moreover, the form the brothers take in Homer is uncertain and variable: at one point Phobos and Deimos are described as steeds of Ares, but at another point Phobos is directly referred to as the son of Ares. Most interestingly for the present study, in a passage that closely resembles the quote below from the *Shield of Herakles*, Richmond Lattimore, who has also provided the translations of Hesiod given here, describes Phobos and Deimos as inscriptions. Hesiod, on the other hand, especially in *The Shield of Herakles*, confronts us with an image of the face of Phobos, a mask that represents a terror that is separate but essential to the hidden, "unspoken," or disavowed, Deimos. The Hesiodic relationship strikes me as more metaphoric, spatial, synchronic, in a word, as more theatrical than the relationship described in Homer.

5. I am using the word "thought" throughout in Artaud's sense. This thought is not "thought-image" but is the vital process of perception itself before perception is circumscribed in language.

6. See Liddel and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* for the definition of these terms. *Deimos* is defined as fear or terror, and is close in meaning to the Latin *timor*, fear or dread. *Phobos* is defined as fear, terror or dismay, but is translated in Homer as flight, or "the outward show of fear."

7. I would like, at least for the moment, to bracket the distinction between metaphor and metonymy as they have been developed through Jakobsen and Lacan in relation to psychic pathologies: my own use of these terms will differ markedly at times from their current usage in psychoanalysis and linguistics, particularly in my own conviction that metaphor represents something much more radically indeterminate than metonymy, and my further conviction that synecdoche is conceptually aligned with metonymy and not, as some say, with metaphor. See

Anthony Wilden's *System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange* (London: Tavistock, 1980).

8. For a full discussion of this particular relationship between production and desire, see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, especially section four. The final quote is from *The Libation Bearers* 32.

9. In a recent book, *Nomadology: The War Machine*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari point out the uniqueness of metallurgy among the arts, commenting on the reformable, plastic qualities of metal as it is shaped, melted, and reshaped into weaponry. I am also reminded of that ancient technique of metal casting referred to as "the lost wax technique," in which the wax mold is destroyed as the molten metal is poured into it. The traces of the original mold are visible only as a negative space in the finished object.

10. Anthony Wilden, "Lacan and the Discourse of the Other," in *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis* by Jacques Lacan 98. *Verwerfung* in Freud's text, is translated by Wilden simply as forclusion, a word which describes the individual's refusal to accept the "Name-of-the-Father," or the order of signification and the "law" of language. As a result of this refusal, stimuli which are experienced cannot be "placed" and are subsequently cast out into the Real and reappear as real and terrifying to the individual who has refused them entry into Symbolic or Imaginary thought, but are "not there" to those who might be looking on. They appear to others as hallucinations, in other words.

Although I harbor many reservations about Lacan's work, I have found much that is extremely useful, especially when discussing the theatre at a theoretical level. For that reason, the reader should be aware of the many specifically Lacanian terms being employed—*aphanisis*, the Other, the Imaginary, the Real, the Symbolic and so forth—even though they may sometimes not be employed specifically as Lacan intended. I have relied heavily on Anthony Wilden's translation and explication of Lacan. Finally, I have applied the ideas of Lacan to the political-social in ways that have been strongly influenced by Frederic Jameson's *The Political Unconscious*.

11. Although Marlowe's text serves as a paradigm or metaphor for some of the ideas already presented, the text must not, of course, be confused with "reality": the Real in the play, for instance, must be read as the Real in relation to the play as it is performed, whatever that may be. Needless to say, forclusion is, by nature, unrepresentation.

12. From Holinshed's *Chronicles of England*, as quoted in H.B. Charleton and R.D. Waller's edition of Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II* 194n.

13. See the extremely provocative article by Robin Wagner-Pacific in *Journal Spring* (1987): 20-29, entitled "The Text of Transgression: the City of Philadelphia Versus Move," in which she suggests that part of the decision to murder the Move community is reflected in the dropping of the quotation marks around specific descriptive terms applied to the community, a *forclusion* which transforms a "terrorist" into a terrorist.

14. Similarly, we might make a distinction between the *anontologic* theatre and ontological theatre. Inasmuch as theatre is a space of transformation, it is "anti-ontological"; on the other hand, the investigation of theatre's *anontology* is itself ontological, and thus to avoid confusion I will use the term *ontology* throughout.

15. An interesting example of this affiliation carried into performance appears in the relationship between the characters Verhovenski and Stavrogin in Dusan Jovanovic's production of Dostoyevski's *The Possessed*, performed in 1985/86.

16. While I would take exception to this last observation—even when the law is benevolent and is "doing good" it is violent—I think Wilden makes a valid and valuable point: when we discuss the "violence" of language or authority, especially in literary theory, we must speak in terms of *degrees* of violence in the Symbolic order. In terms of the theory and practice of law, the question always remains: to what degree is the implementation of law, especially criminal law, purely specular, purely Imaginary? The current debates on the inherently theatrical practice of capital punishment, for example, throw an interesting light on this question. At any rate, the relationship between the theory and practice of law is not unlike the relationship between drama and theatre (see below).

17. Antonin Artaud, in "Fragments of a Diary from Hell":

No precise information can ever be given by this soul that is choking; for the torment that is killing it, flaying it fibre by fibre is occurring below the level of thought, below the level that language can reach. (95)

18. See Kenneth Burke, *Attitudes Toward History* 38.

19. This is in fact the phrase that Lacan uses at one point to describe repression.

20. Here I should clarify some points: while I find many of Girard's perceptions on the mechanisms of violence and representation useful and enlightening, I am in no way citing him as a final authority on matters of expulsion and mimesis. I especially disagree with his conclusions, in which he seems to see the threat of anarchic violence as a justification for the necessity not only of law, but of religion as well. I find this deeply disturbing, especially in light of the religious Right's current love-affair with government and law, and its fascination with foreign and domestic violence. I should also point out that Girard does not use the term "Other" to describe the figure of identification and opposition which he calls a Double, and indeed the Double is *not* the same as the Lacanian Other; however I see a great deal of overlap between the two concepts, inasmuch as they both come to represent the locus and mechanism of law and social stasis, and they both represent similar generative mechanisms by which desire is produced within the individual in society. I hope the reader will forgive this rather terse apology for a very complicated relationship.

21. This is, of course, also Alexander Kojève's analysis of Hegel's master/slave relation in *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*.

22. I have chosen this particular spelling in order to distinguish between *katharsis* in the theatre, a sense which I will develop at length below, and the more usual and indistinct uses of the term catharsis.

23. G.M.A. Grube, in a note in his translation of Aristotle's *On Poetry and Style*, says this:

After some hesitation, I have translated *phobos* by "fear" rather than by "terror." It is true that the original Homeric meaning was panic or rout, and that *deos* is the milder word, but by the fourth century *phobos* was by far the most common word to indicate every kind of fear, while our own word "terror" seems to indicate a very violent, rather sudden, and often short-lived emotion (12).

Conversely, I have chosen to follow the Miltonic translation of *phobos*, which is terror, because the precise point I wish to make is that it is terror which generates the Necessity of performance, not merely heightened fear. Beyond this, I wish to show terrorism's correlation with and development from an Aristotelian/Hesiodic *phobos* lying somewhere within the genealogical strata of performance history.

24. For example, in a small book entitled *Inspiration and Katharsis*, the author, Teddy Brunius, outlines the last three points of his seven point "solution" of the definition of *katharsis* in these terms:

5. This study will give a convincing interpretation of where Aristotle's *katharsis* is to be found in the use of a tragedy, and the solution says that if there is a *katharsis* it is to be found in every link of the communication of the tragedy—except in the text. 6. The meaning of *katharsis* will be explained in connection with a source material of Asclepian therapeutical practice. 7. According to the linguistic hypotheses of Richards, Sapir, Whorf, an exact word-to-word translation of *katharsis* cannot possibly be made because of the change in the cultural situation from Aristotle's time to ours.

What is interesting here is the way that the author attempts to de-objectify *katharsis* by precluding it from the text itself.

Gerald Else, another scholar in this arc, had attempted to place *katharsis*, in true New Critical style, "in the text" and nowhere else. However, Brunius sees the difficulty in this, because the drama "is a matter of action, of reading aloud, not of a silent text." Thus, he says, *katharsis* is to be located in the audience. Apart from the theoretical difficulties endemic to

such concepts as "the audience," this "solution" does nothing to solve the problem: the author himself says that Aristotle "did not give any particular location of the particular state of mind" called *katharsis*. Both Else and Brunius seem to insist on identifying *katharsis* as an emotion, or "state of mind," or textual fact, or something that can and must be located somewhere. And yet, by the author's own characterization cited above, Aristotle seems to have conceived of *katharsis* not as a thing to be located, but as an essential lack characterized by dislocation. The author finally tries to dislocate the problem itself by reference to philology (what is the origin of the term?) and finally, rather lamely, by reference to Sapir-Whorf. See also the chapter on *katharsis* in *The Politics of Aristotle*, ed. Gregory Vlastos.

25. This is the sense of the Kantian Sublime, which becomes crucial in the theatre theory/praxis in the 19th century.

26. In addition to Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals*, see especially Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, and *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

27. "If something is to stay in the memory it must be burned in: only that which never ceases to hurt stays in the memory" (Nietzsche, *Genealogy* 61).

28. "History is what hurts," says Jameson. *Phobos* "is a species of pain," says Aristotle in *The Rhetoric*. Completing the syllogism, history becomes terror.

29. This is, in fact, what I mean by terrorism in the theatre or "theatres of terrorism." I would like to distinguish this usage from the more popular idea of terrorism as theatre, which, in the age of mediation, it certainly is not. When I speak of terrorism in the theatre, then, I mean the specular image of a practice which is really occurring somewhere, which has real bodies as the object of its violence, and which represents an actual threat of non-being.

30. See André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism* 125. Breton's suggestion (apparently inspired by his friend Vaché) that "the simplest Surrealist act consists of dashing into the street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd" was meant to awaken the spectator to his own "debasement" and to the exhilarating danger—and beauty—of performance menacing art.

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