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之性別化進程

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Demanding the Photographic Real:  
Sexuation in Sophie Calle's *Suite vénitienne*

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On February 11, 1980, Sophie Calle sets out on a trip to Venice to stalk a man without his knowledge. For months, she has been tailing strangers on the streets of Paris photographing them, but this time she will be in a mazy city she has never visited, dogging this man she barely knows. It is carnival time in Venice; trailing a stranger in a huge masquerade shall involve more love than pain. Her father sees her away at Gare de Lyon, as if to fulfill a certain Oedipal ritual by sending his daughter off to an unknown man. This man, as the ritual goes, is kept from the secret that a token of love has been handed along to him. "In my suitcase:" the daughter writes, there are "a make-up kit so I can disguise myself; a blond, bobbed wig; hats; veils; gloves; sunglasses." In addition to all this are a Leica and a special lens attachment for her to "take photos without aiming at the subject."<sup>1</sup> The target of her apparatus, as well as her masquerade, is this man, who is also a photographer, called Henri B.<sup>2</sup>

"Please follow me," says Jean Baudrillard in his afterword to Sophie Calle's *Suite vénitienne*, "to a senseless enterprise that requires more patience, servitude, boredom, and energy than any amorous passion" (81). "[O]ne must never come into contact," he adds, "one must follow, one must never love, one must be closer to the other than his own shadow. And one must vanish into the background before the other turns around" (85). To erase the other as a shadow, or myself as his shadow, all the same. We smell the

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<sup>1</sup> Calle, *Suite vénitienne* 4. The book will hereafter be abbreviated as *SV*.

<sup>2</sup> Henri B.'s last name is never disclosed, nor is his face shown. To parallel his semi-fictional character, Sophie Calle will be referred to by her first name hereafter, equally maintaining her status as a subject, a signifier.

urge of death drive, but whether this is love remains sternly ambiguous. Sophie reminds herself, “I must not forget that I don’t have any amorous feelings toward Henri B.” (SV 20). Still she murmurs Proust to herself in pain: “‘To think that I’ve wasted years of my life, that I wanted to die and that I had my greatest love, for a woman whom I did not care for, who was not my type ’” (SV 20). Days later, she is to be shaken by a confrontation with Henry B.’s wife in her nightmare (SV 42). The moment has arrived for her to define the sort of passion she has for Henri B., when stuck outside of an antique shop on a cold evening after tracking him there. She tells a curious passerby who offers help: “I’m in love with a man--*only love seems admissible*--and this man has been in Luigi’s antique shop since 6:15 in the company of a woman” (SV 38). If “only love seems admissible,” as she says it to herself, all the more so as an unrequited one, it is because it sounds so banal and therefore sensible as a pretext which she never believes, but which she hopes would allow her to trail and photograph this man without giving any further pretext. Her intention, after all, is to stay near, when it is too dark to photograph. Soon she is to whisper elatedly to herself on the vaporetto she furtively boards along with Henry B.: *So close to him*, she murmurs, *as if sharing an island* (SV 40).

Moments of confusion sneak into Baudrillard’s otherwise brilliant essay when he cannot determine what it is precisely by Sophie’s “blind passion.” At one point he has no doubt that Sophie “follows the other with eyes closed and doesn’t want him to recognize her” (84). At another point, however, he sees her passion heading for an “amorous intercession of the other” (82), to be consummated by her photographic venture. To sum up in his characteristic Baudrillardian parlance, Sophie’s project is an instance of seduction (76), yet devoid of any “sexual adventure” (77). There is, as he sees it, only the “sensuality” of her seductive manipulation of the other, but not quite sensuality itself (76). A philosophical distance soon keeps Baudrillard from coming down to the troubling sensual world Sophie is unknowingly seeking to unearth. To Baudrillard, shadowing a person is rather a matter of coming either too close or too far: if you come

too close, you become a shadow; too far, it is because you are a shadow. There is no other proper distance than this one that allows only the existence in the form of a shadow, as philosophy has dictated that distance. Sophie's self-consciousness in remarking that "only love is admissible" as an *excuse* of her erratic engagement, will readily be taken to justify that distance. Love, if any, is nothing but a pretext, must be part of her shady masquerade. The signifiers-- her words and mask, and they alone, shall, as it were, tell us all we need to know about sexuality.

Perhaps the only justifiable use of this philosophical distance is to hold back one's hasty attempt to interpret Sophie Calle's venture as perverse, which appears to have been inflamed and engulfed by her voyeuristic pleasure. The "artificial pact," Baudrillard steadfastly remarks, between the stalker and the stalked in Sophie's shadowing "is perfectly ritual and ceremonial, not perverse, spares us the obscenity (psychological or aesthetic) of manipulating and appropriating someone else's desire" (81-82).<sup>3</sup> Ringing with psychoanalytic undertone, this perceptive note will soon allow us to explain why pleasure is altogether missing in Sophie's act of pursuit, diminishing the possibility of there being a perverse structure involved. What remains unsettled is rather the state of sexuality in her quest, the state that is gravely toned down, so far as the impression of perversion is also toned down. Now by philosophizing the *distance* of Sophie's object from herself ("the only way not to meet someone in Venice," he says, "is to follow him from a distance and not lose sight of him" [83]), Baudrillard is led to leave the impression that what is at work in Sophie, if any, is some *masculine* kind of phantasy, when her

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<sup>3</sup> Parallel to this is: "Here the photography [of Sophie Calle] does not have the voyeur's or archivist's perverse function" (Baudrillard 78). A comparison, if needed, can be made with the case of a perverse use of camera in Michael Powell's film, *Peeping Tom* (1960). See also Parveen Adams' brilliant account of the film in Lacanian terms in "Father, Can't You See I'm Filming?" (90-107).

“amorous passion” (81)--or non-passion, as he also wants to equivocally suggest--has, in his eye, taken this distance or distancing as its precondition to become possible. If it is love, it must then be “courtly love,” generally structured within the masculine subject, whose love object, as suggested by psychoanalysis, takes on the aura of Madonna to be further sanctified as “a special type of choice of object made by men,” the choice as the aftermath of their “universal tendency to debasement in the sphere of love.”<sup>4</sup> In this light, Baudrillard might have wanted to argue that between Sophie Calle and her stalked object, there in fact may not be love, for the implicit reason that love has been debased and must be so, so far as it is love; or that there may be love, for the precise reason that there is a distance between them in the first place, further reducing, as it were, Sophie Calle's pursuit in Venice to Luchino Visconti's *Death in Venice* (1971). Drawn closer to the classical structure of phantasy, notated as § <a by Jacques Lacan (“Subversion” 313) and defined as this “courtly love” in terms of sexual relation,<sup>5</sup> Sophie and her quest

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<sup>4</sup> This is a reference to Sigmund Freud's first two contributions to the psychology of love, "A Special Type of Choice of Object Made by Men" (1910h) and "On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love" (1912d). All Freud's works cited in this paper are from *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* and will be numbered according to the author-date system laid out there. Whenever two pagination numbers are given, the first refers to the German original in his *Gesammelte Werke*, while the second to the English translation in this *Standard Edition*.

<sup>5</sup> Which is to say, "courtly love," being the only form of love man adopts, amounts to nothing but the absence of love relation. "Courtly love," says Lacan, "is, for man--in relation to whom the lady is entirely, and in the most servile sense of the word, a subject--the only way to elegantly pull off the absence of the sexual relationship" (SXX 69). All subsequent citations from Lacan's seminars will be abbreviated according to their volume numbers. For instance, Book 20 of his seminar will be written as SXX.

cannot but be generalized, intentionally or not, into another paramount example of *man's* existential anguish in Western philosophical tradition. Is this Baudrillardian distance, we may be tempted to ask, all that we have in order to decipher her “amorous passion”? Or, is this all we can say of love, if love can be mentioned at all along with sexuality and sensuality, in Sophie's quest? The enigma of love keeps lingering over this “distancing” talk nevertheless, feeds on it, and is perpetrated by it, so far as Sophie has turned allegedly sexless in the conventional wisdom of Western metaphysics. Which is to say that sexual difference becomes Baudrillard's philosophical leftover and now an issue left to us.

### **The Demand for a Quest**

The ensuing discursive risk, however inevitable, seems to lie in the temptation of putting Sophie Calle's art projects, *Suite vénitienne* in particular, on the analyst's couch. Yet on their part, there also arises a seductive lure that unfailingly presents a tenacious consistency suggestive of an underlying structure at work, beckoning us in turn to become its shadow. It will soon be realized that we are ushered down to the sexual bedrock her photographic projects have rested upon, to see the end of her gender woven into the end of art. This is an extraordinary theoretical claim, and, to borrow Baudrillard's words, it “requires an entire ritual” (76) to back itself up, such as the one undertook by Sophie herself, tortuous as it is like the world of any troubling mind. She has, nevertheless, shed some light on it, externalized it as her Venetian pursuit in the most theatrical manner, yet also camouflaged it with her photographic ritual, leaving us in the shadow with the structural consistency we find there known as her unconscious.

Of all the writings on Sophie Calle, Deborah Irmas's “The Camouflage of Desire”

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Should two pagination numbers be given, the first refers to the French original, while the second to the English translation.

presents us the farthest one has ventured into Sophie's installation of camouflage. The use of this warfare metaphor is not innocent, because Sophie always lurks behind the "controlled situations" she has created (Irmas 7), while composing herself in a "detached and formalized behavior" (Irmas 9) in the face of those who step unknowingly into her mined/mind field. "The complex disguise," Irmas notes, "that Calle fashions in order not to be recognized is an integral component of her strategy" (7), resulting in the "photographs and words [ . . . ] as a kind of documentation of situations she masterminds involving other people" (6). "All of Calle's orchestrated situations," Irmas further explains, "are charged by the calculated orderly activity of documentation" (7), indicating Sophie Calle's heavy-handed manipulation in writing to write before, after, and over the events she brings into existence. Her works are therefore not simply products but productions, textual as well as visual, situated between the stage, cinema, and real life. In more precise terms, each of her works or ventures, driven by her meticulous *mise-en-scène* as in a film or stage play, can only happen once as a real-life or documentary event, but unlike a stage production, can only be viewed later in print or on exhibit as *the-script-after-the-fact*. Even so, she is never "concerned with perfecting images and texts on their own terms" (Irmas 6). Only a still camera is used in all her film-like productions, where there is very likely no retake, no logistics, no soundtrack, but only her voice-over constantly furnished and refurnished after the fact in her "language of cool distance" (Irmas 7). Editing, when used at all, falls strictly into the textual but not filmic convention.<sup>6</sup> A photographer in her own right, Sophie Calle is also the director of

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<sup>6</sup> The use of film editing technique can take place in the media other than film to convey a narrative, such as what we see in many of the Japanese comic strips (*manga*) that run in book-length series. Elements such as the eyeline match, consistent screen direction, pans and tilts, to name a few, are carefully observed, willfully molded, and at times violated, making the best of Japanese *mangas* function more than just a good story

her imaginary movie, the camerawoman, the script girl, the crew itself, the documentarian, the auteur in the strongest sense of the word, but also the author as producer, a performer, an actor, an impersonator, a character, a narrator, the voice, the gaze, the vision in her dreams, a somnambulist, a hollow persona, a signifier who represents herself to another signifier, and therefore, perhaps also most important of all, an analyst resigning herself to her analyst's couch.<sup>7</sup>

Amidst the replicas of either "a vulnerable psycho/emotional persona" (Irmas 6) or

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board. Nothing of the like happens--or reaches this level--in Calle's works.

<sup>7</sup> One may be tempted to relate Calle to Cindy Sherman, especially to Sherman's projects of the untitled (film) stills, most notably, in "Black & White" (1975-80), "Rear-screen Projections" (1980), and "Centerfolds" (1981), so far as the filmic convention is concerned (Sherman 10-97). Yet the difference between the two photographers is equally immense in the sense that, among other things, "Sherman is manipulating stereotypes and that though these are being relayed through a generalized matrix of filmic portrayals and projections, there is no real film, no 'original,' to which any one of them is actually referring" (Krauss 36). To Calle, however, her production "notes" are equally important and are part of her "real films" or "filming" events on display. Equally conscious of the feminine subjectivity being at work in her projects, Calle avoids stereotypes not by manipulating them (at least this is not her major intent) but by erasing herself or tracing her own disappearance under the camera lens. There emanates a kind of narcissism which is vital to her being, while in Sherman, narcissism is a piece of rhetoric, a glossy surface where tensions always lie. That said, however, my note here does not seek to exhaust all possible readings of the difference between Calle and Sherman, but calls for a study which should also include an inquiry of why contemporary feminist criticism--two recent examples being Amelia Jones (33-53) and Kaja Silverman (195-227)--has been heatedly devoted to the latter, less to the former.



“the secret woman” (7) she assumes, is the Sophie Calle who is nearly unable to deal with men. “Almost always,” Irmas remarks, “they involve men she has never met or barely knows. They are the impulse that drives her imagination” (6). Approaching them through some “erotic non-liaisons,” Sophie knows by heart that “her subject matter is the unspoken desires” (Irmas 6) deep within herself, burdened with a surreal “erotic realness” (Irmas 7). Her little mind game soon spirals into a ruthless war game, recklessly simulating a host of unexplained psychological mishaps to hurt herself, now as a “manufactured feeling,” now as some “fabricated emotions” (Irmas 7). In *Suite vénitienne*, for instance, what she intends to do is “to simulate the obsessive longing for a stranger that one usually associates with unrequited love” (Irmas 7). With the usual “transgressive nature” embedded in her work, she pushes her “curious impoliteness” to the limit, infringing, among other things, upon the capitalist propriety of “privacy” and “private property” (Irmas 10). The “voyeuristic pleasure” we derive from her works (Irmas 7) is also perverse in the civil terms, when common bourgeois protocol is violated in her play-acting. Perhaps, Sophie thinks, there is, among other things, something secret beneath the bonding of men and she therefore shares the infantile phantasy that the adult world--bourgeois, Victorian, or otherwise--has certain things to hide. In order to steal the secret of this conspiracy beyond any imaginary scale, be it “society,” “community,” “nation,” “family,” “sexual difference,” or simply “the Other,” she has to play hide and seek with it; she has to take risks.

This is the moment we bump into the Oedipal structure she has been locked into, the secret of which, vital and precious as it is to her, has somehow been kept away from her. Hence the pain she keeps resurrecting through her art projects one after another, which in whole or parts intend to recuperate her lost, primordial universe of three: Mom, Dad, and herself as a little girl who keeps asking lots of why's, like a “chatterbox.”<sup>8</sup> As if in the

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<sup>8</sup> The word is Safouan's, veering towards *demand*, not *desire* (132). We will

process of sinking into some gruesome after-effect, this universe has become to her the one of violently incestuous *ménage à trois*, when incest turns out to be Sophie's desperate means to overcome the pain of loss, to revive an affect of great magnitude long gone. It is precisely because she can no longer choose both mother and father as her incestuous object that her pain arises; with the Oedipal scenario in place, she is forced to choose only one, painfully losing the other, Mother, who now remains impervious, silent, and detached. Paradoxically as it may seem, Sophie's bitterness has to be addressed to her, in a way to be ascribed to her. The daughter soon seeks her revenge on all conceivable sides, in order to steal from Mother whatever she knows, who has since kept her mouth shut. In other words, Sophie becomes the daughter who bears a grudge, grumbles, and groans for the reason that is beyond her grasp. Soon the realness of this pain shall send her to some unheard-of, faraway destination, mazy as well as desolate, such as Venice.

### **The Demand to the Mother**

The long trip begins from her homelessness back home, from one of her gruesome household exhibition items called "The Bed." Her harrowing sentiment towards Mother cannot be more telling in this exhibit where the parts of a partially scorched bed scatter, with a caption running as follows:

**The bed.** It was my bed. The one in which I slept until I was seventeen. Then my mother put it in a room she rented out. On the 7th of October, 1979, the tenant lay down on it and set himself on fire. He died. The firemen threw the bed out of the window. It was there, in the courtyard of the building, for nine days. (*La Visite guidée* n. pag.)<sup>9</sup>

The tragedy is, as it were, triggered off by Mother, who has given Sophie's bed away in a

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come back to this.

<sup>9</sup> Hereafter, *La Visite guidée* will be abbreviated as *VG*.

transaction with a stranger, a trade-off of her love that should not have happened in the first place. As a result of Mother's heedlessness, the bed that is dear to Sophie as a part of herself is now burned alive, with death spread all over it. Worse still, after this precious part of hers is dead, it is thrown out of the window, treated worse than a corpse, unburied and unmourned. If, Sophie seems to think, it were not for Mother to have given *me* away, I would have been better loved. Now Mother is engaged in a transaction with an unknown third party (she always owns this scandalous third party!), while Sophie is relegated to a trade object; later Mother continues her transaction with death, with this man as a trade-off. There can be no other mother harder to please than this one, who is a born exploiter, taking away from Sophie all that she can imagine.

A series of inevitable questions must rise in Sophie. If she is to ask why Mother wants to take so much away from her, she is also asking Mother implicitly: Why are you, being my Mother, so insatiable? Why are you so empty (*A*) but not full (*A*)? What on earth do you want? *Che vuoi?*<sup>10</sup> Getting no response, the daughter decides to seek out one. The result is her project entitled "The Shadow" (1981), to which she writes this interesting introduction:

At my request my mother, Rachel S., went to the "Duluc" detective agency. She hired them to follow me, to report my daily activities, and to provide photographic evidence of my existence. (Calle, *A Survey* 25)

The project comprises the photographs of Sophie taken by a "Duluc" detective and accompanied by her own account of herself being aware of (!) how she has been stalked and photographed (Calle, *A Survey* 26-27). Her existence, as she seems to suggest, is at stake and she wants it to be taken care of. She has to, namely, be followed, overseen,

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<sup>10</sup> Italian for "What do you want?" (Lacan, "Subversion" 312). It is used by Lacan to mark the trajectory of desire in Graph III of his "Graph of Desire" ("Subversion" 313). We will elaborate on this question in the context of the graph later.

looked after, desired, and she entreats Mother to fulfill such a caretaking job, though by proxy. If the daughter is well taken care of, regaining the attentiveness Mother has allegedly deprived her of, and if Mother has agreed to seek an unknown third party to divert its attention to the daughter from herself, what Sophie also intends to do is to want Mother to give up being her rival to compete for the attention from this third party. The latter, as has been known by the daughter for some time, is where Mother's attention lies and is the party to whom the daughter's bed has been willfully given away. It happens that, as it also dawns on the daughter, this third party has to be man, who alone shall give her what Mother cannot offer but also wants, including that which guarantees the daughter's existence. Mother has been, so it seems, inadequate in offering what the daughter wants, for Mother, by not granting her attention to her daughter, has turned this attention elsewhere--to what Mother herself wants. The daughter, in turn, may ask: if Mother does not want me, what does she want? *Was will das Weib?*<sup>11</sup> If the daughter can hark back far enough in her memory, she will remember a time when Mother would not trade her away, hurt her by burning her, hurl her out of the window, and have her exposed under the sun. Instead, she was Mother's sole object of happiness, which she still wants to be and which alone shall define her existence--more precisely, the *mode* of her existence. *To be* this object, that is. Which cannot therefore be an ordinary object, but an object so unique that Mother's attention, as the daughter has painfully come to realize, is always directed to, lacking it and wanting it, which the daughter is not. If the daughter cannot live up to it, is this object not also what she wants in order to exist, to stay happy, to be *fulfilled*--sexually as well as ontologically? The problem of her existence hinges on this piece of unknown object of happiness that has taken Mother's

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<sup>11</sup> German for "What does a woman want?" According to Ernest Jones, this is the question Freud asked of Marie Bonaparte to express his theoretical bafflement he had with femininity (Jones, *Sigmund Freud* 2: 468)

attention away from her. Who can this person be, if not Mother, who owns the third party that possesses this object of fulfillment the daughter also craves for? Because the daughter does not have it but wants it, she has to keep any attention upon herself from the third party afloat and alive.

Now a “revenge” of sort where Mother becomes less *my* mother than someone in the third person's name: Rachel S., who is more a stranger than a mother, being demanded to hire people to pay the daughter attention--and this is all the more so a “revenge” when these people are men. As ritualistic as it is, the photographic session conducted by the Other works as the one to allow Mother to relinquish her men, to pass along to the daughter what she holds precious, that little something whose lack has, as it were, held the daughter hostage by endangering her existence. With the revenge in place, it does not mean, on the other hand, that her demand for love and attention has been replaced by her alleged aversion to Mother. The daughter's demand, so far as it has been the pure Demand, *must survive its own loss* after being effectively spoken as a series of demands, that is, after being formulated into the signifiers--into such questions as “What do I want?”, or “What do you, being my insatiable Mother (A), want?” With the intervention of language--the Other that is full (A)--the daughter, as nicely phrased by Moustafa Safouan, “finds herself barred in the face of Demand. To be *Barred* means to have no possibility of saying which demand. The result is that she can only constitute herself as not-knowing” (132). That is, the pure Demand persists in her without herself being conscious of it, and in psychoanalytic terms, persists even after castration *qua* the symbolic intervention has taken place. We will come back to the theoretical weight of this pure Demand, which drives femininity to a different route from masculinity. For the moment, we need to deal with what happens presently to the daughter's existence--her *mode* of existence, more precisely, of *being* the precious and unique object we mentioned just now, which her Mother also wants. A convenient but inadequate answer, though not incorrect, is that the daughter has now obtained her status of subjectivity by being

barred (§ ), or if you will, by becoming a signifier. Yet this answer has only managed to explain her non-existence *qua* her existence through language, with her demands having been effectively spoken there as desire (Safouan 130-31). Our formulation of the daughter's existence must include other terms as well: the destiny of her demand for love, her desire for what Mother desires, and the presence of the third party as man. All these terms revolve around one pivotal object, however--or perhaps the Object, which is the phallus.

Lacan himself has conceptualized what happens here with tour de force in the passage below quoted from “The Signification of the Phallus” (1960), a passage which is otherwise extremely obscure even with our notes inserted into the text:

I am saying that it is in order to be the phallus, that is to say, the signifier of the Other, that a woman will reject an essential part of femininity, namely, all her attributes in the masquerade [i.e., the masking of the “fact” that she owns a phallus]. It is for that which she is not [i.e., the phallus] that she wishes to be desired as well as loved. But she finds the signifier of her own desire in the body of him to whom she addresses her demand for love. Perhaps it should not be forgotten that the organ [i.e., the penis] that assumes this signifying function [i.e., as the phallus] takes on the value of a fetish [i.e., she desires the phallus, not the penis, but ends up enjoying the penis]. But the result for the woman remains that *an experience of love*, which, as such (cf. above), deprives her ideally of that which the object gives [i.e., her love for man compels her to concede that she is not the phallus; her existence is at stake], and *a desire* which finds its signifier in this object, converge on the same object. (289-90; emphasis added)

What the last sentence also means is: the phallus has allowed *her demand for love addressed to the man, the penis bearer, and her desire to be the phallus* to converge.

The inherent problem of her shaky existence is momentarily resolved in her genital love. We say “momentarily” because it will perhaps have no hope to be resolved, as we will soon see, in particular, in the case of Dora, Freud's foremost hysteric patient (1905e). We have *momentarily* established only why the daughter's ambivalent relation with Mother (love coupled with hate) has compelled the daughter to seek out men, in a way to compete with Mother in a revenge. That is, the daughter has now completed her identification with Mother by desiring like her, in genital love. Yet this emulation is a revenge in the sense that the daughter intends to make Mother desire what the daughter desires--to make her feel the daughter's pain--by making her hire the “Duluc” detective, who, in the eye of the daughter, is also a “better” Other than Mother herself. At least this male detective as the third party now offers Sophie a nearly unconditional love, for which Mother also supposedly longs. Here, as we can clearly see, the “loss of love” turns out to be Sophie's, and Everywoman's, greatest anxiety of all (Freud, 1924d 178). Summing up what we have laid out above is this succinct remark by Catherine Millot:

The identity of the object of satisfaction and the object of love for the woman, as Lacan puts it, makes her more dependent on the love of that Other from whom she expects the satisfaction of her demand for the phallus. To this extent the source of anxiety for her is the loss of this love, which would count for her at the same time as a refusal of her phallic demand. (299)

We are soon brought to face the difficult issue concerning why the father-daughter relation is, on the other hand, easily prone to incest.<sup>12</sup> We are still arguing along the

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<sup>12</sup> "A number of questions remain," Lacan notes in his "Guiding Remarks for a Congress on Feminine Sexuality" (1964), "concerning the social incidences of feminine sexuality," and raises this as the first among those questions: "Why is the analytic myth found wanting on the prohibition of incest between the father and daughter?" (97) The

orthodox line of psychoanalysis by making reference to the concept of the primordial dead father, who used to own all the women in the horde as in Freud's *Totem and Taboo*. Yet something else is at stake, when our emphasis is rather the *irresolution* of Sophie's Oedipus complex. That is, the desire to compete with Mother also originates from this irresolution, owing to which the daughter must compete for the love of the third party within the Oedipal triangle. The inception of Oedipus complex in the daughter, paradoxical as it may sound, is caused by castration complex,<sup>13</sup> in the sense that she is prohibited by Father to own Mother, particularly by becoming the phallus Mother desires. Or rather, the third party, who owns Mother and says "no" to the daughter, is this prohibitive Father. Once the castration threat is imposed, the daughter is barred, her demands get spoken out as desire, while her pure Demand persists unconsciously, and her demand for love and attention gets transferred to what Mother desires *qua* what the daughter has now learned to desire, the Father. Does the Duluc detective not then in this case assume such a role of the father figure, so far as he is the third party, who supposedly "owns" Mother but is forced to "relinquish" her in her hiring act, to allow the daughter to "consummate" her own demand as an incestuous one? Again, a paradox is at work: precisely because the daughter's demand for love addressed to Mother is incestuous that it is now, in the wake of Father's prohibition, directed to him, with the result which is nothing other than incest. When the daughter has learned to desire what Mother desires,

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flip side of this question suggests, on the other hand, that, according to the discovery of psychoanalysis, by far "there is only one basic form of incest--that which takes the mother as its object" (Safouan 125).

<sup>13</sup> Freud: "Whereas in boys the Oedipus Complex is destroyed by the castration complex, in girls it is made possible and led up to by the castration complex" (1925j, 256). In addition to this, Freud suggests, the "renunciation of the penis is not tolerated by the girl without some attempt at compensation" (1924d, 178).



that is, the phallus, the Father in the Oedipal triangle cannot but become in this scenario the next penis bearer at hand to the daughter, or the first penis bearer she happens to come across. She must love him for his penis in the wake of incest prohibition.

### **The Demand to the Father**

It is in this classical scenario as the irresolution of Oedipus complex that we see Sophie, or the Sophie persona, the daughter par excellence, being tirelessly obsessed with the penis, the father figure, and most importantly, the penis of this father figure--an obsession of hers that borders on fetishism. All these become our theoretical leverage to string together below the captions of her art pieces entitled in bold typeface, and to read out the structural consistency that relates them:

**The bucket.** In my fantasies, I am a man. Greg was quick to notice this. Perhaps that's why he invited me one day to piss for him. It became a ritual: I would come up behind him, blindly undo his pants, take out his penis, and do my best to aim well. Then, after the customary shake, I would nonchalantly put it back and close his fly. Shortly after our separation, I asked Greg for a photo souvenir of this ritual. [ . . . ] (Calle, *VG* n. pag.)

**Letter (1).**<sup>14</sup> I was nine years old. While rummaging through my mother[']s letters I found one, addressed to her, which begun [sic.] like this: 'Darling, I trust you are seriously thinking about a boarding school for *our* Sophie . . .' The letter was signed by a friend of my mother's. I assumed

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<sup>14</sup> The "Letter" series comprises incidents evolving the love letters written or received on various accidental or contrived occasions. Four other such letters as art pieces are collected in Calle's *La Visite guidée* (n. pag.).

from this that he was *my real father* [emphasis added]. Whenever he came to visit us, I would sit on his knee and, with my eyes deep in his, I would wait for a confession. But his total lack of response caused me at times to have doubts. Then I would reread the stolen letter. [ . . . ] (Calle, VG n. pag.)

**The bathrobe.** I was eighteen years old. I rang the bell. He opened the door. He was wearing *the same bathrobe as my father*. A long white terry cloth robe. He became *my first love*. For an entire year, he obeyed my request, and *never let me see him naked from the front* [ . . . ], gently hiding inside the white bathrobe. When it was all over *he left the bathrobe behind with me*. (Calle, VG n. pag.; A Survey 54, emphasis added)

**The wedding dress.** I always admired him. Silently, since I was a child. One November 8th--I was thirty years old--he allowed me to pay him a visit. [ . . . ] I had brought a wedding dress in my bag, white silk with a short train. I wore it on our first night together. (Calle, VG n. pag.; A Survey 55)

Two elements stand out among these quotes: Sophie's demand for love and her obsession with the penis. For the moment, though, what we find is some rather accessible occurrences: Sophie's Oedipal triangulation in which Mother seems to have a vital secret to hide, foreclosing the daughter's right to approach her alleged real father, or rather her first man, after the paternal intervention as incest prohibition has taken effect. Very much to the daughter's despair, his *letter*, his vindication, or his token of love, can never reach the daughter but Mother, whose desire is embodied in this Father. The quest for the first penis bearer in her life to whom the daughter addresses her demand for love must

be resolved, in a way to resolve her Oedipus complex, which she nevertheless brings along until she can consummate this love by re-encountering this father figure since her childhood in her *wedding dress*. The institution of marriage embodied in the dress now has as its function to reserve the virginity right for this father figure to enjoy. The wedding dress is therefore the phallus, into which the taboo of virginity,<sup>15</sup> the marriage institution, and most importantly, paternal function have embodied. Sophie presents herself as such a phallus, consummating also her *will to be* in the face of Demand, from which she has been sternly barred.

What does Sophie want to enjoy through the penis bearer in this simulated marriage, if not again the phallus? This is precisely what the *bathrobe*, on the other hand, means to function, all the more so when it is, as in Sophie's words above, "the same bathrobe as my father." The Lacanian insight is this: all sexual relations, straight or gay, must rest upon this piece of non-sense called the father's bathrobe. Its significance, as we have suggested, goes beyond just that, as the garment also stakes out two fundamental modes of sexual identity as *to have* and *to be* (Lacan, "Signification" 289). The real lack of the penis does make a difference in determining which mode a subject will fall into, yet under one condition: it is "some *psychical consequences* of the anatomical distinction between the sexes,"<sup>16</sup> but not any kind of anatomical teleology or determinism, that psychoanalysis wants to assert. Namely, what counts is the *psychical* phenomena involved, among which phantasy is the most significant one. Gravely overdetermining the phantasy is the kernel called *phallogentrism*--the word is used by Lacan ("Possible Treatment" 198)--that also, if one digs far enough, forms the bedrock of all cultural phenomena.

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<sup>15</sup> "The Taboo of Virginity" is the title of Freud's third contribution to the psychology of love (1918a[1917]).

<sup>16</sup> This is the title of an essay by Freud on sexual difference (1925j).

Now the bathrobe of Sophie's father figure: apparently, she has met her Superman there, but is also unconsciously aware that her love must not be physically consummated. Sophie must try every means to maintain his status as such, and for this reason, his penis must not be exposed, so to allow her to enjoy his bathrobe as hoisted and turgid, like “the same bathrobe as my father.” The penis, then, as Lacan pointed out earlier, “takes on the value of a fetish” and has to be “veiled” by the bathrobe in order to remain tumescent and function there symbolically. Is Sophie not, in her sartorial love, also playing her *fort-da* game with the bathrobe and the penis, the latter of which she does not have? Apparently castration threat has taken a toll on her, whereas her belated rediscovery of this bathrobe, especially her present capability to sexually enjoy it, is her triumphant return to this happiness formerly forbidden and unattainable in the wake of, paradoxically, incest prohibition. Even more paradoxical is that this bathrobe, so far as it is the phallus, incest taboo, law and the logos, becomes her sexual object par excellence. She submits herself to it as any subject would, and realizes there her unconscious wish of incest by her *Aufhebung* of the castration threat, that is, by realizing herself, her being, as the phallus. “The phallus,” Lacan therefore writes, “is the signifier of this *Aufhebung* itself” (“Signification” 288).

In other words, there is one thing Sophie cannot quite get over with, which is her phantasies to become a man. Hence her attempt to pee into the bucket is generated. This is in fact a comic moment, also a very Apollonian<sup>17</sup> and appeasing one, in which

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<sup>17</sup> Lacan has used the word "Apollonian" to define the effect of painting that disarms the return gaze of the spectator: "The function of the picture [ . . . ] has a relation with the gaze [of the spectator. . . . The painter] gives something for the eye [of the spectator] to feed on, but he invites the person to whom this picture is presented to lay down his gaze there as one lays down one's weapons. This is the pacifying, Apollonian effect of painting" (SXI 101). In this light, the "Apollonian effect" would then refer

she can finally enjoy this piece of flesh not simply sensually but also in sublimation. *Penisneid* may not at all be negative, even less so as a pejorative judgment, but as a sign that castration threat has been properly, and gently, “sublated” (*aufgehoben*) in her comic relief. What remains is only an innocuous dissatisfaction with this lack, which she nevertheless needs to elevate to the level of comedy once in a while. Failing to sense this comical moment will also be a failure for us to see sexual relation as essentially comic. However, her contempt there for him does not, on the other hand, spare her her own phantasy in the form of *Penisneid*.

Perhaps the conceptual “use” of *Penisneid* can be better formulated as thus: there is a fundamental restlessness in Sophie's mindset, prompting her to question her own sexual identity. Constantly falling in love with each other, both man and woman share a similar stake in phallogentrism,<sup>18</sup> but that alone does not tell her what the female sex is, all the more so when in her phantasies, as is acknowledged by herself, she has been a man. If she is not a man, what then is a woman, if she is a woman at all? The enigma of woman, even to her, lies in the fact that there is no signifier for the female sex; the lack of penis, that is, is a negative term and cannot affirm what the female sex is. Man, on the other hand, does have the phallus to symbolize his sex, for better or worse, though he may not always live up to that symbol. Yet man does enjoy the advantage of identifying with the prohibitive father to form his sexual identity; prohibited and barred in the like manner, the daughter, however, lacks an imaginary object, which is the penis, for her to acquire such an identification, and so to resolve her Oedipus complex. Again, we are dealing

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more or less to the function for a subject to remove any psychological menace through artwork.

<sup>18</sup> Miller: "Instead of the sexual relation, there is a relation to the phallus" between man and woman ("Drive" 18). In other words, there is no sexual relation, unless it is *ménage à trois* involving the phallus.

with, in Freud's words, the imaginary or “psychical consequences” a subject has upon his or her anatomy, which on the level of the real, is always full, having nothing to be added to and taken away from.<sup>19</sup> Namely, sexual identity hinges upon the dialectic of the imaginary and the symbolic, which unfortunately takes “an extra detour” to occur in woman.<sup>20</sup>

This detour is all the more apparent in Dora's case (Freud, 1905e), on which Lacan has this comment:

When Dora finds herself wondering, *What is a woman?*, she is attempting to symbolize the female organ as such. Her [imaginary] identification with the man [i.e., ego as an object], bearer of the penis, is for her on this occasion a means of approaching this definition that escapes her. She literally uses the penis as an imaginary instrument for apprehending what

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<sup>19</sup> This touches upon Lacan's concept of "privation." According to Dylan Evans, Privation is Lacan's attempt to theorise more rigorously Freud's concept of female castration and penis envy. [ . . . ] Privation, then, refers to the female's lack of a penis, which is clearly a lack in the real. However, by definition, 'the real is full'; the real is never lacking in itself [ . . . ]. In other words, when the child perceives the penis (a real organ) as *absent*, it is only because he has a notion that it somehow should be there, which is to introduce the symbolic into the real. Thus what is lacking is not the real organ, for, biologically speaking, the vagina is not incomplete without one; what is lacking is a symbolic object, the symbolic phallus. (151)

<sup>20</sup> Lacan: "For a woman, the realization of her sex is not accomplished in Oedipus Complex in a way symmetrical to that of the man's, not by identification with the mother, but on the contrary by identification with the paternal object, which assigns her an extra detour" (SIII 172).

she hasn't succeeded in symbolizing. (SIII 178)

Now the onset of her hysterical symptoms has allowed Dora to identify with her father, an act she could not have accomplished otherwise (SIII 178). By desiring what the Other--in this case, her father--desires (Frau K.), Dora turns into a homosexual (Lacan, SXI 38).<sup>21</sup> Without actually falling into a neurosis, Sophie finds her own solution in a much more sublimating manner: she stalks a man, simulates his acts, visits the places he loves to visit, including the morbid graveyards, as if she were to meet his gaze there (Fig. 1), uses her

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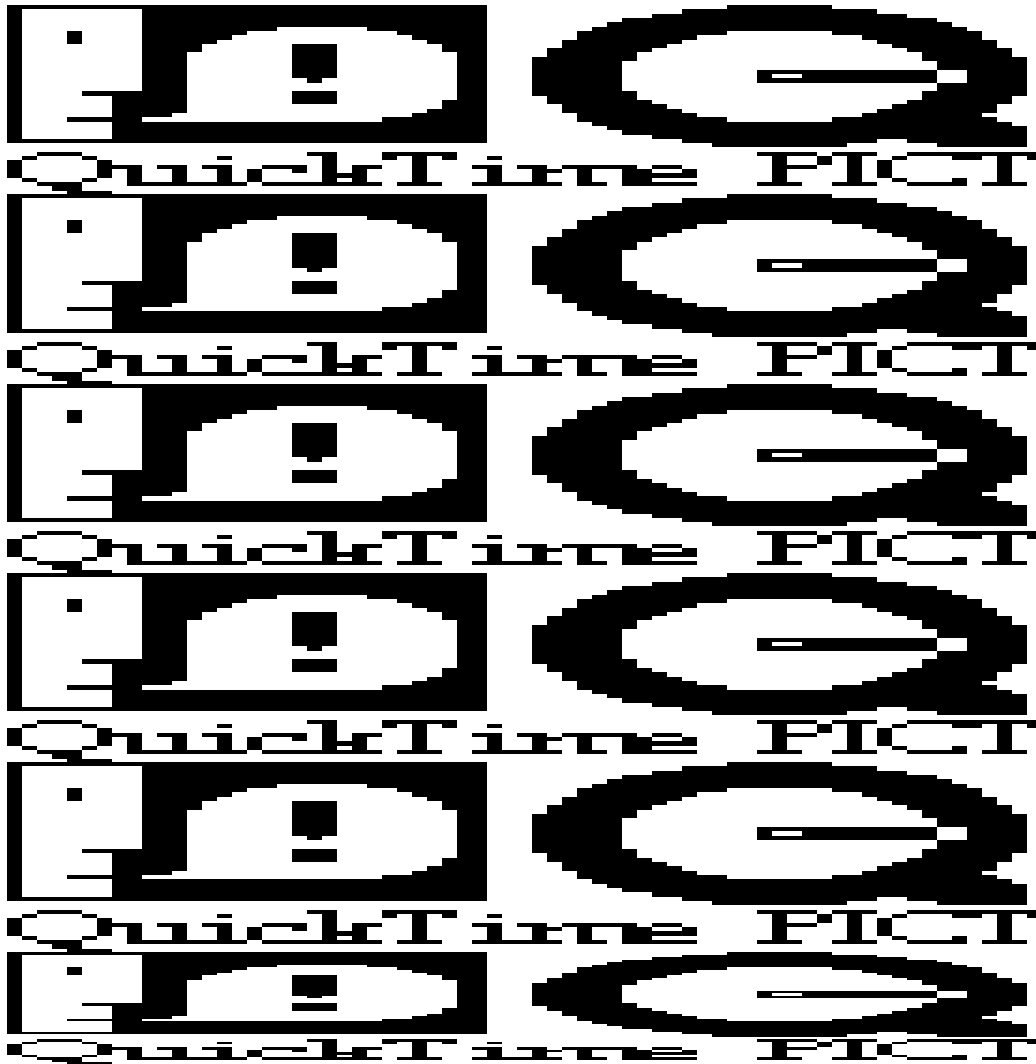
<sup>21</sup> This statement should not be interpreted reversely to mean that a homosexual is neurotic, like Dora.

Fig. 1.<sup>22</sup>


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<sup>22</sup> All photographs in *Suite vénitienne* are not titled or captioned. In most cases, they do not form a narrative among themselves; instead, it is Calle's text that is the master code to give them a coherent story. Another element that contributes to this narrative is the maps of Venice showing the itinerary Sophie has followed to shadow Henri B. (SV 31, 36, 49). As regards the cemeteries, Sophie reports that the only thing she has learned about Henri B. is his love of visiting them (SV 30).



Fig. 2.<sup>23</sup>


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<sup>23</sup> This series of pictures form a film-like sequence to show how Henri B. is shadowed by Sophie from her own point of view. In the top row of the pictures, we see him surmising the scene and later taking photographs over the bridge. The picture on the left in the middle row, taken by Sophie from the same bridge a while later, is the canal, whose scene has just been shot by Henri B. This is the picture through which Sophie tries to see what he has seen. This picture aside, we see Henri B.'s back in all other pictures, some in extreme long shot. Sophie, in her disguise, has in fact moved very close to him; at one point, she says to herself: "I could touch him" (SV 44).

own camera in the way he does (Fig. 2), sees in the way he sees, desires what he desires, and, in other words, identifies with him as an alter-ego, but keeps her own demand for love from a penis bearer alive, even simulates it, so that, it is hoped, she can disperse the enigma of woman with the enigma of man. She, too, is wondering, *What is a woman?*, but to answer it she has to first resolve the enigma of man by trying to feel what it is like to share the stripper phantasy. She has to proceed carefully: she has to, that is, move in her masquerade, so that she can also try out that phantasy underneath.

### **The Demand to the Other**

At first glance, Sophie, by stalking her alter-ego, is functioning merely within the classical structure of phantasy, notated as  $\$ \diamond a$ . This is the structure in which the subject as alienated in and "barred" by language is going after her object cause of desire (object small *a*). The similar object is known variably at the mirror stage as the *a* in *i(a)* to designate the ego-ideal behind the mirror image (Lacan, "Subversion" 316), and known more specifically in the scopic field as the "gaze [*le regard*] imagined by me [i.e., the subject] in the field of the Other" (Lacan, *SXI* 84). So imagined because a phantasy has been formulated through the subject's relation with this object to know what the Other wants. In Sophie's case, this phantasy even finds its support in her persistent question as *Che vuoi?* ("What do you want?"), with the result which is her "detour" to Venice. The dialectic of desire in the famous Lacanian photo-session, in which the gaze as the object small *a* emerges, will have to form a new dialectical relation with this question.

However, the Lacanian photo-session, so long as the dialectic of desire dominates the scene, cannot but present, first of all, an impasse of desire. By

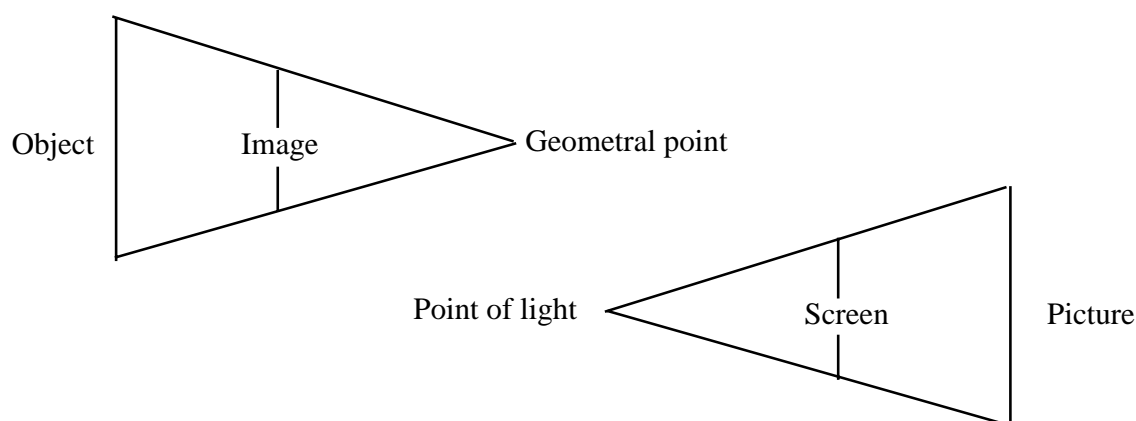


Fig. 3. The Visual Field (Lacan, SXI 85/91)

invoking two reverse triangles above (Fig. 3) and later overlapping them (SXI 106), Lacan proceeds to explain why, in the first triangle, perspectivism as upheld by the Cartesian seeing paradigm is never visuality at all (SXI 94), which can only be realized by the function of the scopic drive in the second triangle (SXI 102). The point of light is where the gaze of recognition is situated, as is the gaze of the dead child's in Freud's "burning child dream," who recognizes, as it were, in the father's dream the guilt of the father by painfully pressing him with the question, "Father, don't you see I'm burning?" (1900a 509). Too painful to see the glaring scene, the father wakes up and continues to dream in his consciousness, whose function is to shield him from his child's soliciting gaze (Lacan, SXI 70; Žižek 45). One major "philosopheme" Lacan has derived for this "gaze" is the Kantian category of transcendental idea,<sup>24</sup> which by definition lies beyond the realm of experience but nevertheless upholds that experience, including the visual one (Kant 533; Zupančič 54). Whereas this transcendental dialectic works to form our identity as in the "burning child dream," any possible "hijacking" of the gaze<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Lacan himself acknowledges the reference to Kant's "transcendental categories" in the concept of the "gaze," but also disputes them on account of the fact that he (Lacan) is here dwelling on "the splitting of the being," of the subject (SXI 106).

<sup>25</sup> Jacques-Alain Miller speaks of such a possible "hijacking" of the gaze by

by Fascism, for instance, will railroad us to the gas chamber, conforming to Theodor Adorno's otherwise obscure dictum in *Negative Dialectics* that "Auschwitz confirmed the philosopheme of *pure identity as death*" (362; emphasis added).<sup>26</sup> Should his paternal identity be realized by the gaze, the father of the burning child would also have been dead. Yet he is already as good as dead even by dodging this gaze in his consciousness, since it is there that he turns into a signifier, a stain in the picture of the second triangle, "in the form of the screen" (SXI 97). There the subject is *written* by the light, is *photo-graphed* (SXI 106): *Wo Es war, so Ich werden*<sup>27</sup>--where the light was, there I, as a signifier, shall

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Jeremy Bentham's panoptic device in his essay ("Jeremy" 4), which is more Althusserian than Lacanian.

<sup>26</sup> It is also in this manner that we come to understand this remark on race and gender by Mary Ann Doane:

When Fanon claims that the black represents to the white the body, the biological, or corporeality in all its specificity, when he speaks of the hypersexualization of the black or of *a kind of paranoia of the visible attending an identity chained to appearance*, it is difficult not to recognize these categories as playing an important role within feminist analysis (particularly feminist film theory) where they have been applied to the situation of the woman and her representation/self-representation. *Both the woman and the black would be, in a sense, overvisible.* ("Dark Continents" 231; emphasis added)

<sup>27</sup> "Where id [It] was, there ego [I] shall be" (Freud, 1933a[1932], 86/80). This much quoted remark, though intending to explain the relation of the ego and the id, is in fact more ambiguous and abstruse in German. See Lacan's various reinterpretations through his word play on this remark (SXI 44-45). My quote here, however, does not attempt a new definition of the ego and the id.

be, for my ontological being is, under the decree of language, declared dead. Otherwise, this being will be an unbearable one to experience *jouissance* in the form of anamorphosis within the visual field, when the scopic drive surges, as it were, into death drive by encountering its object *a* as the gaze (as that of the burning child's). So long as this gaze is not met, the subject is happy under the sway of symbolic order, accepting ultimate enjoyment (*jouissance*) as an impossibility. Since desire is founded on such a prohibition, it is an impasse (Miller, "Commentary" 425-26; Fink, "Desire" 38), and is particularly so in the scopic field.

Sexual identity, so far as it does not remain just an "identity" but is also rooted in the structure of "sexuation," must extend beyond the scope of this scopic experience of transcendental dialectic and be constructed elsewhere.<sup>28</sup> However, given that the process of identification has been involved, gender identity is also subjected, in part, to this experience, to the gaze of recognition that is equally ferocious as shielded behind the mirror image called Henri B., the "image" in the first triangle.<sup>29</sup> It is in this sense that

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<sup>28</sup> As attested by Mary Ann Doane, it is "difficult [ . . . ] to see how Lacan's gaze can shed light on the analysis of sexual difference" ("Remembering Women" 279n14).

<sup>29</sup> Rosalind Krauss, while referring to Joan Copjec's essay, "The Orthopsychic Subject," admits that there is a "distinction between film theory's 'male gaze' and Lacan's 'gaze as *object à [sic.]*' (Krauss 109n46). Amelia Jones soon dismisses Krauss of "devaluing feminism" in such an understanding of the "gaze" concept (Jones, "Tracing the Subject" 52n19). To resolve the matter, however schematically, we must bear these facts in mind: that in the theory of "male gaze" the borrowing from Lacan is readily apparent, despite some intellectualization involved; that so far as it is also a transcendental--Kantian--"gaze of recognition," the function of "male gaze" follows the logic of Lacanian conceptualization; but also that it has not exhausted the critical edge of the latter by taking into account the concept of the unconscious. If, instead, this concept

Sophie's masquerade takes on, among other things, the function of mimicry to become part of the picture effected by the impending light in the second triangle. There is, in masquerade, a sexual finality in its own right (SXI 100), but it being so, the subject is also mortified by being "photo-graphed" in the Lacanian sense. The most a subject can do in this scenario is, ironically, to be "sutured": to experience the "moment of seeing," of looking back, as "a conjunction of the imaginary and the symbolic" or "pseudo-identification," in which the real (the gaze) is, so to speak, warded off (SXI 117-18). Again, we are brought back to the Lacanian algorithm of phantasy as  $\$ \langle a$ , the impasse of desire. If, on the other hand, mirror identification has indeed taken place in this scenario, in the imaginary order, what arises as a problem is precisely Sophie's too successful an identification with Henri B. in which masculinity, and gender in general, cannot but become an enigma. Enigma because she does not understand why, after her successful identification, she is still not a man. Apparently, we cannot limit ourselves to visuality, and thereby sutured identity or identification, to account for Sophie's subsequent "detour" to Venice, let alone her "masquerade" there.

A way out--literally, from the imaginary order--is to look into the nature of this scopophilic drive more attentively. At this point an important theoretical shift in Lacan's account of the drive, taking place in Seminar XI (1964) where he also conceptualizes the gaze, deserves a closer look. According to Bruce Fink, the shift has been the one

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can be used as its major theoretical reference, the theory of "male gaze" will be unlikely, in particular, to take "ego," "identification," or "consciousness" as its counter-measure to the impending gaze, with the result which can only be phantasy ( $\$ \langle a$ ); nor will it believe that, as we stated a while ago, sexual identity is to be constructed predominantly on this (visual) level. In other words, if there is a theoretical distinction as Krauss has described it, it must be the epistemological one between the Cartesian paradigm and the Freudian one, not between the feminist and anti-feminist.

moving *from* the drive correlating to the Other's demands *to* the drive encircling the object *a*. He adds,

This might be understood as a change in Lacan's theorization of the drive itself--that is, one might think that by 1964 he believes that the drive is never related to the Other's demand, neither before nor after analysis--but I think it is better understood as the transformation the drive undergoes in the course of analysis. Subjugated first by the Other's demands and then by the Other's desire, the drive is finally freed to pursue object *a*.

("Desire" 39)

This shift, despite Fink's defense in analytic terms, soon creates, I think, a difficulty in Lacan in that he has to define scopical drive as a special kind of drive that has nothing to do with demand (SXI 104).<sup>30</sup> What Fink means to reconcile is the definition of the drive before 1964 as  $\$ \leftrightarrow D$ , where D stands for demand (Lacan, "Subversion" 314), and after. When the emphasis now is teleology, this *a* as jouissance, what is established is then a

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<sup>30</sup> A major reason for Lacan to consider the scopical level, along with the invocatory one, as the level of *desire* is that the drives functioning there do not arise out of the *need*, such as nutritional consumption, but out of castration ( $-\phi$ ), bypassing the pregenital *demand* ("Introduction to the Names-of-the-Father Seminar" 87). The parallel here to Hegel's *Aesthetics* is striking: "the sensuous aspect of art is related only to the two theoretical senses of sight and hearing, while smell, taste, and touch remain excluded from the enjoyment of art. For smell, taste, and touch have to do with matter as such and its immediately sensible qualities [ . . . ]. What is agreeable for these senses is not the beauty of art" (38-39). In turn, Lacan never fails to relate scopical drive to the perception of artwork as in Seminar XI, and he even seriously considers at one point in Seminar VII what "the end of art" would be in terms of this drive (141). We will come back to this issue at the end of this paper.

non-relation to the Other, and for this reason "the solitary status of *jouissance*" as phallic is also established (Miller, "Drive" 20). This understanding in turn goes perfectly well with Lacan's formulation of the scopic drive, kernel to the castration (notated as  $-\phi$ ) on the scopic level (SXI 89, 104-5), with the only kind of *jouissance*, anamorphosis, being possible there as essentially phallic (SXI 88-89). Jacques-Alain Miller, by tracing the genealogy of the drive backwards from *jouissance* to demand, finds that what remains kernel to the drive after Lacan's conceptual shift is still "the signifying cut," which, Miller adds, is what "one finds present in the Freudian concept of the erogenous zone as in the concept of the partial drive" ("Drive" 23). It is from here Miller deduces that "the drive is speech," "a signifying chain," and that Lacan subsequently "leaves this concept of the drive to the side, and extracts *jouissance* from it." It is in this manner that the Freudian concept of the drive breaks conceptually, as it were, into halves as language and *jouissance* in Lacan's formulation (Miller, "Drive" 24).

Such a "total assimilation of the drive to a signifying chain," though allowing Lacan to tackle the relation of drive and *jouissance* in a more direct manner (that is, to "extract *jouissance* from it"), is not without a problem, despite Lacan's cautious treatment in this particular obscure zone (Miller, "Drive" 25-26). For example, precisely what Lacan means by the "driven signifiers" (*signifiants pulsionels*) or "the driven signifying chain" (*la chaîne signifiante pulsionelle*) is not fully developed (Miller, "Drive" 25). Yet again, as Miller points out above, this thesis of the drive as speech in fact comes closer to the Freudian conceptualization when the *signifying* cut as castration, responsible for the advent of "erogenous zone," is highlighted.<sup>31</sup> There demand must have a place, even the demand of love, which alone has a relation with the Other. After the conceptual shift, the stress has slid rather to the *destiny* of the drive, despite the "signifying cut" being the major cause of this drive. Still, what links together the concept of the drive before and

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<sup>31</sup> See also Lacan's own account in this regard ("Subversion" 314).



after the Lacanian shift is castration. The aim of analysis, then, as inferred from Fink's words just quoted, would be to put castration back in the proper place, in where it should be, and to (only) allow the drive be directed to the object *a*. What is foregrounded is then the relation with the other ( $\$ \diamond a$ ), not with the Other ( $\$ \diamond D$ ). As a consequence of this shift, though conforming to the logic of analysis, one is forced to choose either desire or phallic jouissance, and on the scopic level, suture or anamorphosis. This forced choice alone becomes presumably a criterion to judge whether an analysis has been well carried out.

Still we find that the thesis of the drive as speech cannot be overlooked, for this is where the "communication" with the Other can again be linked up, a "communication" even in the sense of analysis. Along with this thesis, the *modus operandi* of the scopic drive also has to be speech, not *visuality*; or rather, it is *visuality* defined in terms of speech.<sup>32</sup> So long as the relation to the Other is maintained and, in fact, persists, demand can (at least in the logical sense) be transformed into the scopic drive that, on the other hand, also maintains a relation with the Other as the "treasury of signifiers," namely, with  $S(A)$  (Miller, "Drive" 25).<sup>33</sup> From here we can link the scopic drive to the context in which Safouan has conceptualized the pure Demand of the daughter. "At the

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<sup>32</sup> "Semiotics, not optics," thus goes Copjec's comment on the Lacanian "photo-session" in Seminar XI, "is the science that enlightens for us the structure of the visual domain. Because it alone is capable of lending things sense, the signifier alone makes vision possible" ("Orthopsychic Subject" 34).

<sup>33</sup>  $S(A)$  is taken here by Miller, following Lacan, to be a "quilting point" where "the total assimilation of the drive to a signifying chain" takes place in Lacan's "Graph of Desire" (Miller, "Drive" 25). Probably the most complicated Lacanian matheme of all,  $S(A)$ , literally "the signifier of the lack of the Other," takes on different meanings when Lacan's thinking evolves (Fink, *Lacanian Subject* 195n36). See also footnote 36 below.

moment," he says, referring to the graph below, "when the subject articulates the first demands [in language after castration], the field of pure want has already been transformed by these objects [the most notable of which is the phallus, the master signifier] into the field of the drives:  $\$ \langle \rangle D$ " (134). That is, demand must become the drive and can only be "communicated" by it and as such, as indicated by the upper and final portion of the big question mark in *Che vuoi?*, which ends in  $S(A)$ :

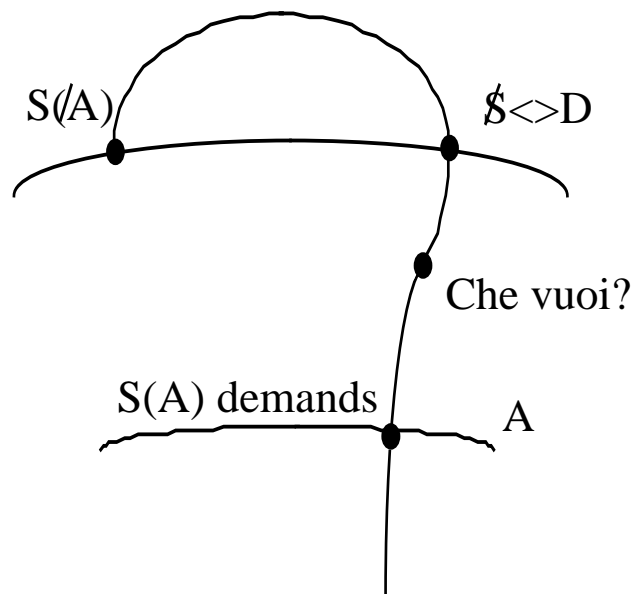


Fig. 4. The Graph of Desire (partial) (Safouan 132)<sup>34</sup>

By reaching this point, the scopic drive, so far as it has a relation with the Other, must have a stake in the lack of the Other ( $A$ ), or Mother, and that, to say the least, this drive is the logical outcome, as well as the eventual stage, of the daughter's Demand leading and responding to what the Other wants. So far as it is the drive, it may not be necessarily scopic, but we have stuck to the scopic level mainly because Sophie's quest,

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<sup>34</sup> This is Safouan's simplified version of Lacan's completed "Graph of Desire" ("Subversion" 315), where Lacan also comments on the "question-mark" (312). Minor corrections of Safouan's graph have been made by myself.

aided and facilitated by her still camera (we will come back to this), also takes place in the scopic field, which we have been led to consider as simply imaginary. We may therefore overlook the fact that it is her urging demand, or rather Demand, that has turned to phantasy (§  $\langle a \rangle$ ) in the scopic field for an ad hoc solution to her quest as substantiated in her "detour" to Venice. She has, as a result, discovered nothing, not even with her good eyesight; facing this wall called the phantasy, her scopic drive is instead gravely pacified, encircling the object *a* without ever meeting it. This makes her demand even more an unsettling matter, subsisting nevertheless in her phantasy.

Now phantasy is not a peaceful event, on the other hand. It is equally unsettling, as in these words by Fink:

Fantasy is the attempt to bring the two elements of choice--the subject of language and *jouissance*--together [ . . . ]. Fantasy thus attempts to overcome the either/or, the choice responsible for the advent of the subject and for a loss of satisfaction; it stages the attempt to reverse that loss.

("Desire" 50n26)

So far as the subject is barred by language (§ ), this loss (of *jouissance*) is filled up by words, words, words. Yet we must also take this scenario as arising from the "signifying cut"--as being related to Demand. Precisely because Demand has no place in this phantasy scenario that we must throw the nature of scopic drive into question by asking whether another important aspect of the drive has been forgotten, which is its nature as speech. It is in this sense that, as we have said earlier, the drive provides us a way out of the imaginary scenario, particularly of phantasy, in the scopic field.

If we should at this point shove aside Miller's radical deduction of the drive as speech, then the notion of the drive that is left to us--the one that is not "communicative" but has object *a* as its sole destiny--would fall short of unfolding to us the whole story about *jouissance*. Referring again to the graph above, it is clearly defined that the drive in the final trajectory of the question mark succeeds, and in fact originates from, demand.

If there is pure Demand at all in Safouan's sense, it must then survive castration by becoming the drive, yet not the kind of drive as we know it that encircles the object *a*, with phallic *jouissance* as its one and only destiny. This soon lays, I think, the logical ground for feminine *jouissance* as the *jouissance* of the Other, notated as  $S(\mathbb{A})$ , to arise, which has its root in pure Demand.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, since "surviving" castration does not mean, in psychoanalysis, that castration is "overcome" or "abolished," but first and foremost that castration is reaffirmed as a necessity, pure Demand would not then become the drive without this castration. It is in this light that Miller approaches this obscure remark of Lacan's on the very last page of "Subversion of the Subject":

"Castration means that it is necessary that *jouissance* be refused so that it can attain the opposite side of the law of desire" (qtd. in Miller, "Drive" 28).<sup>36</sup> Miller's gloss is: "It is necessary that phallic *jouissance* be refused, it is castration--so that the *jouissance* of the Other, her, can be attained" ("Drive" 28). I would add: phallic *jouissance* has to be refused through castration, so that the drive can "communicate" with the Other and retain there its status as pure Demand. Otherwise, without this "communicative" drive, the feminine *jouissance qua* the *jouissance* of the Other would be unimaginable.

However, there can be several "different modes of renunciation of phallic

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<sup>35</sup> That is to say,  $S(\mathbb{A})$  will have to mean here the signifier of the primordial loss in a subject. Fink: "Symbols' meanings often evolve very significantly over time in Lacan's texts, and I would suggest that  $S(\mathbb{A})$  shifts between Seminars VI and XX from designating the signifier of the Other's lack or desire to designating the signifier of the 'first' loss" (*Lacanian Subject* 114).

<sup>36</sup> The modified translation quoted here is by Kirsten Stolte, the translator of Miller's text, while Alan Sheridan's translation runs as follows: "Castration means that *jouissance* must be refused, so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder (*l'échelle renversée*) of the Law of desire" (Lacan, "Subversion" 190/324).

jouissance" for the Other's jouissance to exist (Miller, "Drive" 30), and some of them can be wayward in the clinical sense. Miller raises two of them, the perverse and the neurotic. In the first case, as is well known in voyeurism and exhibitionism, the subject makes himself "an instrument of *jouissance* for the Other" ("Drive" 29), from which the algorithm  $a \leftrightarrow \$$ , the reverse of phantasy, can be derived (Evans 139).<sup>37</sup> The neurotic mode, on the other hand, takes the form of the Other demanding the subject's castration (Lacan, "Subversion" 323). The "end of analysis" would be in this situation the successful "refusal, by the neurotic subject, to sacrifice his castration to the *jouissance* of the Other," so that, eventually, "only phallic jouissance matters fully" (Miller, "Drive" 29) and the drive, as says Fink earlier, can be "freed to pursue object *a*" ("Desire" 39). Yet since castration, as noted earlier, also means that this phallic jouissance should be refused in order for pure Demand to arise, the issue now hinges on which mode a subject must adopt to properly renounce the phallic jouissance.

This is apparently the predicament Sophie is facing in her "detour" to Venice. To begin with, she is not without jouissance with herself, only that it might be some very wrong kind. The presence of the peaceful and pacifying phantasy, in which she discovers nothing with her keen eyesight, is all the more disturbing when what may have been smoothed over is this troubling jouissance currently overpowering her. Again, the issue of demand is at stake, because it has also been smoothed over. Everything seems to fall apart and fall into an enigma; what hangs over her quest is nothing but a big question mark. So far as her "detour" to Venice is a quest, it is a question, especially the one lingering over her sexual identity, given that her identification with a man, Henri B.,

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<sup>37</sup> This is Lacan's "formulation of phantasy [turned inversely] to reveal that the subject here makes himself the instrument of the Other's *jouissance*" in perversion ("Subversion" 320), conforming to what Freud has noted very early on that "neuroses are the negative of the perversions" (1905d, 165).

is the most salient part of this quest. Nothing, however, has come of it, for what Henri B. is, remains obscure. At least, her masquerade to hide her "real" identity as a man is still devoid of the castration anxiety she needs in order to feel like him.<sup>38</sup> The question, "What is a woman?", must eventually return to Sophie for an answer, further fueling her

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<sup>38</sup> To Freud, it is the loss of love, but not castration anxiety, that exerts its effects on a feminine subject (1924d 178), while the theory of "masquerade," proposed by Joan Riviere in 1929, means to counter this view (303-13). Explains Millot, "for girls, fear of a loss of love takes the place of castration anxiety among men. Freud's central thesis is to link the formation of the superego to the dissolution of the Oedipus complex for the girl, in so far as castration anxiety does not affect her. Which implies that she retains her bond with father, that is, her demand on her father survives" (295), the demand which we have termed "incestuous." Yet Freud would rather insist that this demand eventually evaporates through the girl's renunciation of it, due to her "constitutional masculinity" in herself (Millot 303). "It may be asked," however, Millot writes, moving now along the line of Riviere's argument, "whether the renunciation of this demand [ . . . ] might not proceed from love for the father. The girl renounces her demand insofar as she feels that it constitutes a castration threat for the father. Having constituted this paternal ego ideal, she is henceforth endowed with the phallus at the phantasy level," and feels the need to *masquerade* as not having this phallus, as exemplified in the clinical cases published by Riviere and others (Millot 303-4). The case of Sophie Calle's pursuit in Venice, on the other hand, seems to leave the question of masquerade open for two reasons. First is that, as attested by Millot, *not all* ( $\overline{\forall x} . \Phi x$ ) women have this castration anxiety (304); that is, this proposition, which we will come back to later, suggests a non-inclusiveness of the phallic function on the feminine side. Secondly, the enigma of masculinity remains as it is to Sophie, which may indicate that this castration anxiety has caused little or no practical impact on her.

urge to "detour" and becoming the very question Dora has persistently asked. Implicating Henri B. in her quest, as her other as well as Other, Sophie plays her stalking game like a Dora.

As has been clear to us, the question "What is a woman?" is linked to the difficulty to *symbolize* the female sex, indicating that gender hinges on the function of the signifier. Referring to Dora, Lacan has this follow-up statement:

Becoming a woman and wondering what a woman is are two essentially different things. I would go even further--it's because one doesn't become one that one wonders and, up to a point, to wonder is the contrary of becoming one. (SIII 178)

Hence, the question "What is a woman?" turns out to mean that woman has been an enigma, and secondly that the current state of womanhood is unacceptable, so the question must be posed. Why does she still despise his man, in spite of the fact that she cannot help identifying with him, even adoring him? Paradoxical as it may seem, to answer these questions that can boil down to the one as "What is a woman?", any subject in the feminine position would need an organ to symbolize the female sex. That in turn would usher her to the royal road of identification, especially of the one with a masculine prototype, which is the father figure, who has such an organ (Lacan, SIII 178).

In Dora's case (Freud, 1905e), this process of identification has been very intricate and, according to Lacan, has undergone several "dialectical reversals" ("Intervention" 64). To simplify the matter, we will deal only with his conclusion, where we find an inherent paradox in Dora's identification:

Thus it is the case, as Freud thinks, that the return to a passionate outburst against the father [i.e., jealousy] represents a regression as regards the relationship started up with Herr K [who is Dora's ego].<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Herr K. has functioned as Dora's ego (SIII 91, 175). Referring to this

But this homage [i.e., in the form of identification], whose beneficial value for Dora is sensed by Freud, could be received by her as a manifestation of desire [i.e., as the desire of man whom she identifies with; one's desire is the desire of the Other] only if she herself could [on the other hand] accept herself as such an object of desire [i.e., as a woman, like Frau K], that is to say, only once she had worked out the meaning of what she was searching for in Frau K [i.e., who, or rather whose femininity, is still a mystery to her].

As is true of all women, and for reasons which are at the very basis of the most elementary forms of social exchange (the very reasons which Dora gives as the ground of her revolt), the problem of her condition is fundamentally that of accepting herself as an object of desire for man, and this is for Dora the mystery which motivates her idolatry for Frau K. ("Intervention" 68)

That is, if she is a woman at all, Dora will be unable to accept herself as an *object* of desire, otherwise a woman will be an enigma to her. Having identified with man, however, she cannot but take woman (represented by Frau K.) as such an object, and must thereby "revolt" in the face of such an enigma. To be sure, what Lacan means by the object of desire (object *a*) here is more precisely the object of *jouissance*; Dora has refused to be the cause of Other's *jouissance* (Soler 269), especially in the sense of social exchange, which is precisely the exchange of women among men.

As if in a vicious circle, Dora soon sticks to her identification as long as the realization of her identity remains a moot point; the more she does so, the more she is unable to realize herself. There is another reason for this: she has gone so far as to

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"imaginary identification" in Dora, Lacan points out that "it is in so far as she is identified with Herr K. that she complains" (SIII 175).



identify with the desire of the Other--in this case, of her father, the first penis bearer in her life--to realize her sexual identity; the more she wishes to do so, the more she identifies with the father, his impotence, and his subsequent unrealized desire for Frau K. as an object. Now the status of this object must be sustained, in order to keep father desiring; in that case, Dora, in turn, has to keep Herr K. desiring herself as such an object. If Frau K. has been an object of exchange in this scenario, so must Dora. Yet this is unbearable, for she has to share the same sex with Frau K., whose function as an object of desire she cannot understand, nor can she accept herself to be. In any case, Frau K., being turned into a mystery in this manner, is born and destined to be loved and desired in this scenario, even by Dora. Striving to understand "What is a woman?" through Frau K., Dora must keep the "exchange" game alive, so that some are desiring in there, some other are loved. To keep it alive also means that she has to secretly monitor it and pilot it. Lacan has called it Dora's "Viennese operetta" (SIII 91), "the game by which she must sustain the man's [i.e., her father's] desire," "which in any case was unsatisfied, subsisting--both the desire of the father whom she favored *qua* impotent and her desire of being unable to realize herself *qua* the desire of the Other [i.e., of her father]" (SXI 38).

It is in this manner that this "game," as well as the identification with the father, has a stake in answering the question, "What is a woman?" Namely, as long as she is interested in the Other's lack, she is also in the hysteric position, questioning what precisely the Other's object, the woman, is. In other words, "the hysteric," says Colette Soler, wants "to investigate the being of a woman by questioning the Other's object, that is, the man's" (272-73). In this case, Soler adds,

An hysterical subject is a subject who has a special link with the Other's desire [A]. [ . . . ] An hysteric is a subject who wonders what the Other desires or if the Other desires, a subject who questions the Other's desire. Hysterization involves making a subject sensitive to the Other's desire.  
(253)

"Hysterization brings out  $\mathcal{A}$ ," in other words (Soler 275), and in so doing, the hysteric subject also brings the question "What does the Other want?" into the picture, a question which lies beneath the earlier one as "What is a woman?", the link between them being the question: "If the Other wants a woman, what then is a woman?" Yet in order to "bring out  $\mathcal{A}$ ," "the hysteric sustains her own desire as unsatisfied" and "slips away as an object," so that the Other, whom she has identified with, is also not satisfied. By doing so, the question as "What does the Other want?" means also "What do I, a woman, want?" Soler therefore adds, "'What does a woman want?' That is the hysterical question" (273) and the hysteric further "presents herself as a question to the analyst" (264). "By keeping her desire unsatisfied, *the hysterical subject refuses to be the cause of the Other's jouissance*" (Soler 269), namely, to be a sexual object to satisfy the Other, or, as Sophie would have it, to be involved in any "amorous feelings" (Calle, SV 20). Once the hysteric "slips away," she becomes intentionally "an incarnated mystery" to her analyst, and in particular, "tries to constitute herself in the transference as what is lacking in the analyst [ $\mathcal{A}$ ]" (Soler 277), to further "put transference into action in the sense of [positing the analyst as] the subject-supposed-to-know (*sujet-supposé-savoir*)" (275).<sup>40</sup>

What the hysteric would then mean to express is this:

"Please tell me something about myself. Please give me an interpretation." The subject [ $\mathcal{S}$ ], divided by her symptom [ $a$ ], addresses someone else, a supposed master (an  $S_1$ ), a master from whom the subject can demand knowledge [ $S_2$ ]. "What do I have? What am I?" The hysteric has a demanding position [. . .]. (Soler 276)

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<sup>40</sup> Soler: "in French, this expression can mean either: the subject who is supposed to know (verb) or the subject presupposed by knowledge, by unconscious knowledge. In English, subject-supposed-to-know renders only the first meaning" (275).

This position has been notated by Lacan as the *hysteric's discourse* (SXX 16),<sup>41</sup> in which the hysteric, being in "a demanding position," maneuvers,<sup>42</sup> in order to become the master of knowledge by assuming the right to say the last word (Soler 276):

$$\frac{\$}{a} \longrightarrow \frac{\$}{\$}$$

It is in this manner that Freud has been ushered into Dora's "Viennese operetta," and later kicked out of it by her when he does not know when to shut up (Soler 276). Freud, by acting "a little too early, a little too late" (Lacan, SXI 38), has caused Dora to break off from the analysis, an instance of her acting out as a hysterical symptom, a *jouissance*, that can nevertheless be traced back to the question, "What is a woman?"

Sophie's "Venetian operetta," though in a less grandiose scale, also wants to put an end to this question. Soon Henri B., in addition to being her alter-ego to be identified with, is turned more importantly into this subject-supposed-to-know for her to manipulate, and is pressed by her for an answer. She now plays the role of, as in Deborah Irmas' words quoted earlier, a "secret woman" (7), while he a Lacanian analyst par excellence for Sophie to reach what she cannot have reached otherwise, as indicated by the *analyst's discourse* below:

$$\frac{a}{S_2} \longrightarrow \frac{\$}{S_1}$$

The algebra means: "the subject [ \$ ] is in the position of being interrogated by object *a* (the analyst as desire) and must produce something [ S<sub>1</sub> ] herself" (Soler 282n8). In terms

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<sup>41</sup> Evans: "It is not simply 'that which is uttered by a hysteric,' but a certain kind of social bond in which any subject may be inscribed" (46).

<sup>42</sup> Soler: "The hysteric maneuvers. Take Dora, for example. It is clear that Dora manipulated her entire little world" (262).

of the function of the drive, the algebra can also mean that, according to Miller, the analyst's "desire is to lay bare the subject's *jouissance*, whereas the subject's desire is sustained only by the misrecognition of the drive known as fantasy" ("Commentary" 426).<sup>43</sup> If, then, the aim of analysis is to allow a subject to "traverse" her phantasy and reach the drive,<sup>44</sup> and perhaps not only for the drive "to pursue object *a*" freely, as stated by Fink a while ago, but also for it to reach satisfaction in a more profound sense, then we see that Sophie, "strangled" for the moment by her hysterical symptom as this ungracious urge to stalk, is on her way to "communicate" through her scopic drive in the presence of her analyst, Henri B., *qua* the big Other. The problem is that Henri B. is so perfect an analyst as a "dead" one, who never responds, showing no desire on his part. He has become too easy to be controlled to the extent that he is virtually uncontrollable. Always keeping his mouth shut (being the extreme reverse of Freud in Dora's case), Henri B. can no longer sustain Sophie's transference and uphold the game of the hysteric's.

For this reason, Sophie, like Dora, seriously considers breaking off from her "analysis." Dora, too, never again returns to her analytic session, yet for a slightly different reason. In her case, she means to bring out *A* --the unsatisfied Freud, to "overpower" him by frustrating him (Soler 276). This tactic does not seem to work with Henri B., Sophie's unknowing analyst, who, being unmanageable, does not seem to desire, having no *A* to be elicited from. At the height of the enigma of her sexual identity, having identified with him fully, Sophie decides to take a risk, which turns out to be the turning point of her "detour" to Venice: she decides to allow Henri B. to discover her.<sup>45</sup> The result, needless to say, is disastrous, in a way already anticipated by Sophie.

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<sup>43</sup> I.e., the drive is not the phantasy, but misrecognition is.

<sup>44</sup> Lacan (SXI 304/273): "a subject who has traversed his most basic fantasy can live out [*vivre*, literally "experience"] the drive," as translated by Fink ("Desire" 41, 44).

<sup>45</sup> Her reason: "Perhaps I'm weary of playing this out alone" (SV 50).

Disastrous in the sense that she discovers nothing still;<sup>46</sup> it is again another missed encounter, the *encounter*--with the real, the gaze--that is never fulfilled. In Seminar XI, Lacan has once and again referred the nature of this encounter to the burning child dream:

Is not the dream essentially, one might say, an act of homage to missed reality--the reality that can no longer produce itself except by repeating itself endlessly, in some never attained awakening? What encounter can there be [ . . . ] if not the encounter that occurs precisely at the moment when, by accident, as if by chance, the flames [on the child, as the gaze] come to meet him [the father]? (SXI 58)

In Sophie, it is as if she were to meet the gaze, with no gaze to be found. Still the mock analytic session unknowingly offered by Henri B. has persisted for a while because Sophie is cut off from this gaze without meeting her "analyst's" eye. Elsewhere, Lacan has warned against the meeting of this gaze in the analytic session (SXI 77). "It is not," he points out, "for nothing that analysis is not carried out face to face" (SXI 78). The anamorphic image of Henri B. stretching out his hand to keep Sophie from capturing his image (Fig. 5) (Calle, *SV* 53), being out of focus, is only a *representation* of this coveted phallic jouissance in the symbolic order. Even if Roland Barthes' photographic *punctum*, functioning as a "blind field" in an image (59), a probable equivalent to this anamorphic jouissance (Iverson 457), now emerges and gets enlarged there to take over the whole grainy surface, it is still representation. For this reason, it falls safely within the pleasure principle.

Approaching Henri B. as the small other is very much like attempting to cross over to the other side of the mirror at the mirror stage. Such a conscious effort can only end up as a missed encounter, falling back to the structure of phantasy (§ <math>\diamond a</math>). Yet we

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<sup>46</sup> As she says it to herself: "I discovered nothing. A banal ending to this banal story" (*SV* 51).

must not forget that the most important reason for Sophie to allow herself to be discovered is that Henri B. as the big Other is no longer responding. Against the odds of phantasy that imprisons

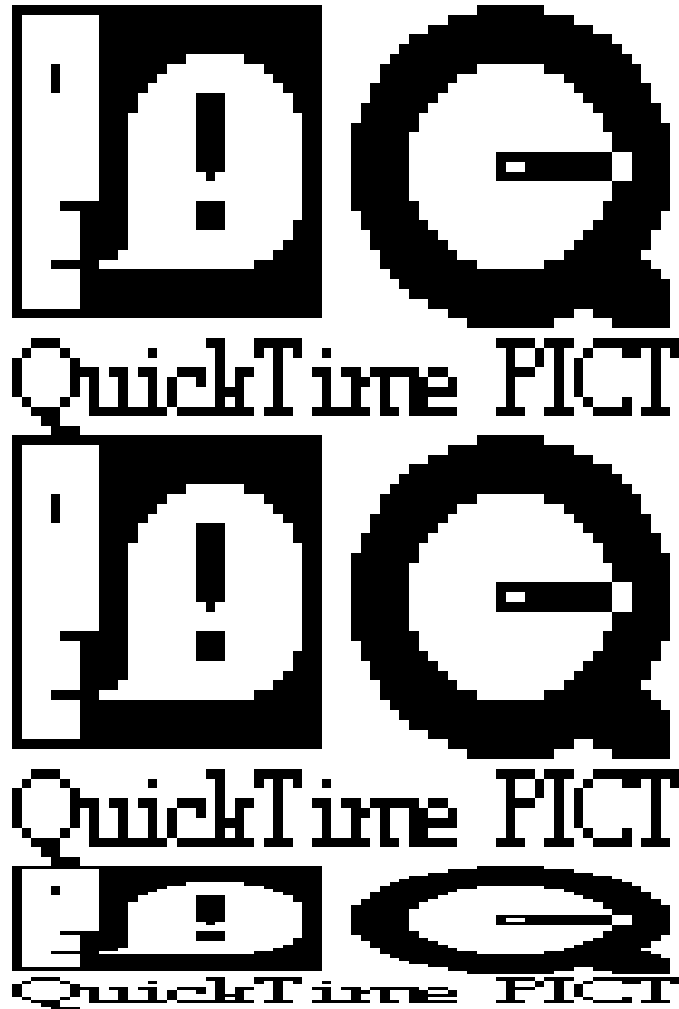


Fig. 5.

her, Sophie's leaning near him is now an effort to make him, as the big Other, a prey again, to keep him alive, and, if possible, to kindle his desire, so as to make him controllable. It is therefore not for no reason that the birth of psychoanalysis was historically induced by the hysterics; while it was still in the womb (*hustera*) of Anna O., Josef Breuer clumsily produced the miscarriage (Jones, *Sigmund Freud* 1: 246-47). For some time, even Freud was to repeat the same blunder, as is seen in Dora's case. Now it

happens again in Sophie's quest, in which Henri B. becomes this prototype of the failed analyst; more importantly, it is Sophie who has made him so and painfully painted this world as the one that has shut its eye to her pure Demand, and in more general terms, shut its ear off to her unconscious. So long as this deafness remains, everything that hinges upon the unconscious will become an enigma, including her being as a woman.

How does she then survive this allegory of psychoanalysis, a narrative which has been hystericized as a Venetian pursuit in Sophie, now relegated to a phantasy? How does she, in short, survive the phantasy surrounding her in this pursuit? If psychoanalysis can provide an answer--if the allegory of psychoanalysis is worth telling, it is because there one follows the drive, which is "communicating." That is, it is there that pure Demand of the daughter has a place. The latter-day Lacan would propose that love, feminine jouissance, or sublimation can be the other name of this Demand. Despite the conceptual difficulty in which these entities are involved, Lacan's later attempt to foreground hysterization as a *different* jouissance is readily apparent,<sup>47</sup> when the drive that is not phallic but is related to the Other, is posited there as the true

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<sup>47</sup> In Lacan's esoteric account, especially in the context where he disputes with the Jean-Martin Charcot's circle, feminine jouissance smacks of hysterization. Lacan thus elevates the hysteric jouissance to a different level than, in particular, that of phallic jouissance--that of "cum" below:

What was attempted at the end of the last century, in Freud's time, what all sorts of decent souls around Charcot and others were trying to do, was to reduce mysticism to questions of cum (*affaires de foutre*). If you look closely, that's not it at all. Doesn't this jouissance one experiences and yet knows nothing about put us on the path of ex-sistence? And why not interpret one face of the Other, the God face, as based on feminine jouissance? (SXX 77)

*Aufhebung* of castration--in the sense that phallic jouissance has been refused in this castration. In other words, if desire is an impasse out of the unmitigated phallic function, upon which masculinity, notated as

$$\begin{array}{c} \exists x. \overline{\Phi x} \\ \forall x. \Phi x \end{array}$$

has been built, such an impasse, however, is not completely in place in femininity, where the drive's relation to the Other is not entirely stymied. I would therefore venture to consider the feminine propositions below as the ones that can be turned around to explain the function of the drive:

$$\begin{array}{c} \overline{\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}} \\ \overline{\forall x. \Phi x} \end{array}$$

Some schematic explanation of these gender "formulas" must be made before we see how this is so. They are brought up by Lacan most notably in Seminar XX (78; "Love Letter" 149), very much along the logical path of Kant's critical philosophy (Copjec, "Sex" 212-13). The first proposition ( $\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}$ ) in the masculine position means: "There is at least one  $x$  that is not submitted to the phallic function," while the second ( $\forall x. \Phi x$ ): "All  $x$ 's are (every  $x$  is) submitted to the phallic function" (Copjec, "Sex" 214). The two combined together, we see an undecidability as "not-all," which suggests that "the inclusion of *all* men within the domain of phallic rule is conditioned by the fact that *at least one* escapes it" (Copjec, "Sex" 216). This *dynamical antinomy* in the Kantian sense (Copjec, "Sex" 227-35) is also a clear reference to Freud's *Totem and Taboo*, where we find the primordial father, who owns all the women and is not therefore subjected to the castration threat, is precisely such a threat to all his sons after his death. In other words, this primordial father has experienced no desire and no impasse ( $\exists x. \overline{\Phi x}$ ), but only his sons do ( $\forall x. \Phi x$ ).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> In other words, the formulas here mean to explain only the psychoanalytic concepts, not the Kantian ones, and must always be understood within the context of



On the feminine side, the first proposition ( $\overline{\exists x} . \overline{\Phi x}$ ), "There is not one  $x$  that is not submitted to the phallic function," and the second ( $\overline{\forall x} . \Phi x$ ), "Not all (not every)  $x$  is submitted to the phallic function" (Copjec, "Sex" 214), form together the *mathematical antinomy* in Kantian sense (Copjec, "Sex" 217-27). Unlike the dynamical antinomies (in the male position) that are *contradictory* to each other and cancel each other out, our antinomies here are a *contrary* opposition "that exists between two propositions of which one does not simply deny the other but makes an assertion in the direction of the other extreme. The negation [ . . . ] does not exhaust all the possibilities but leaves behind something on which it does not pronounce" (Copjec, "Sex" 219). Without attempting to exhaust all that the feminine position might mean here, we want to note that, for our argument's sake, the first feminine and masculine propositions contradict each other, so do the second ones, indicating that both masculine and feminine subjects, though equally revolving around the phallic function, are structured differently. While there presents no "escape" from this function on the masculine side--the escape that is "reserved" exclusively for the primordial father, such an impasse is not readily clear in the feminine position. This may suggest that the drive may under certain circumstances be organized differently--however slightly--in terms of sexuation.

To consolidate this claim, we need to take into account, on the other hand, the symbolic function of Sophie's still camera that has been involved in the "gendering"

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Freudian experience, which is clearly not a *Weltanschauung* (Lacan, SXI 77).

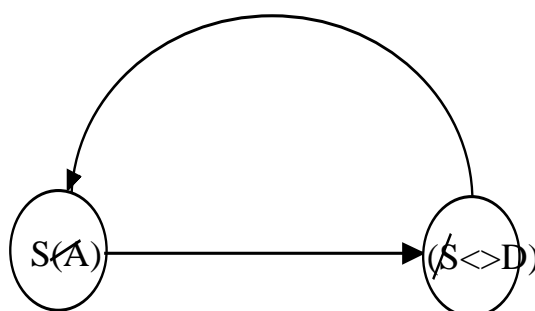
Accordingly, the critique of Copjec and Lacan concerning sexuation as launched respectively by Ewa Plonowska Ziarek ("From Euthanasia to the Other of Reason") and Drucilla Cornell ("Where Love Begins") on the ground of deconstruction, and therefore of philosophy, has unfortunately failed to fulfill this hermeneutical demand. A deconstruction of psychoanalysis, if ever there is one, is not happening there.

process of her "detour." Always a symbolic construct in the Lacanian view,<sup>49</sup> the camera becomes, first of all, the locus of the Other (A, not  $\bar{A}$ ) to sustain her "analytic session," providing it with speech to sort out her "strangled" urge to stalk and allowing the drive to "drive on," hopefully for her to survive her phantasy. Yet we must not forget that it is also her camera that has allowed this quest to happen in the first place, the quest that assumes the structure of hysterical symptom and follows the logic of hysteric's discourse. Inferentially, the camera also gets "hystericized" by facilitating her "Venetian operetta," in which she, as we clearly see, maneuvers her stalked object. Her photography functions then like a "strangled" discourse, with meanings that go beyond recognition, explaining why one sees nothing in her photographs or simply non-sense in her photographic venture. Henri B., on the other hand, could not have learned that he,

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<sup>49</sup> In Seminar I, for example, Lacan contends that there is no difference between the camera and us sighting the rainbow, so far as both entities--the apparatus and our subjectivity--are sustained by the symbolic order. In the final analysis, it is language that does the sighting and ultimately blurs the distinction of the objective and subjective (SI 77). He pushes the similar thesis further in Seminar II by raising the example of a film camera filming the reflected image in the lake in the absence of the human subjects, a camera that "makes for the continuity" of the consciousness which is temporarily absent. What is the difference now, he asks, between this apparatus and the conscious mind, or between the presence and absence of this mind, so far as the camera, a symbolic construct, is always there? Again, what eventually sights the reflected image is this continuity in either the camera or the consciousness, possible only within the symbolic order (SII 46-47). One distinction needs to be made, however: consciousness, so far as it is part of the subjectivity, has its imaginary moment, such as phantasy, while the camera, being a symbolic entity, does not. It is in this sense that, within the logic of psychoanalysis, the camera functions as speech.

being now her subject-supposed-to-know, is called upon to mobilize his own desire to walk her through her phantasy to meet the drive. Nevertheless, a "dead" analyst is better than an ego-psychological one, for eventually the analysand must be in a way "frustrated" by him and led to sense the boredom of her own Venetian operetta, so that she is no longer forced to enjoy (*jouir*) it but can leave her symptom (*jouissance*) behind.<sup>50</sup> Being again a symbolic construct, the camera, whose function is castration as renunciation of the phallic *jouissance*, now resumes its proper place, allowing her to "communicate" with the Other, opening up a new possibility for her scopis drive to function, a possibility which is *not* the downright suture ( $\overline{\forall x}.\Phi x$ ) *nor* the all-out anamorphic *jouissance* ( $\overline{\exists x}.\overline{\Phi x}$ ). If anything, this drive, viewed from the perspective of the feminine position implicated here, must be the one that circulates in the circular manner below,<sup>51</sup> made possible by the camera, a symbolic construct:




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<sup>50</sup> This symptom as her urge to stalk, it seems, is not altogether gone in Sophie, but the point is that boredom begins to emerge after Henri B. has discovered her (SV 51).

<sup>51</sup> The circulation is what Miller wants to point out through this "schema of communication," being the upper chain of Lacan's completed "Graph of Desire," to bring forward the thesis of the drive as speech ("Drive" 25). Put succinctly, this is also where Lacan can rigorously explain the Freudian concept of the drive *and* bring forth the concept of "the drive as the treasure of the signifiers" ("Subversion" 314), the drive that includes also the scopis one (315).

Fig. 6.

Until Sophie, never has a drive relied so much on a symbolic construct, an apparatus, a piece of *techne*<sup>-</sup>, through which the Other is sought out in the scopic field for an analytic session to be carried out visually--a mock session, though, which is not altogether a deadlock. At least, the final words we hear there in the scopic field are: *go and follow the drive*. This is the *speech* that has been effectively spoken by her camera. Perhaps we can push a little further by stating: *her photography, though walled up by the impasse of desire, is nevertheless this scopic drive, that speaks, that maintains a relation with the Other*. In any case, the Lacanian desire, which has defined the famous Lacanian photo-session, cannot exhaust all that is embedded in the essence of photography being revealed here.

In this light, art as in Sophie's practice can no longer end in representation or take it as an end, as teleology. Art practice, in other words, should not leave out the drive. Perhaps what Sophie has meanwhile achieved is to show that art, at its present stage, has not completely fulfilled its potentiality and possibility to recount the allegory of psychoanalysis, from Anna O. onwards, to Dora and beyond.

At this point, a well-known as well as much quoted remark of Walter Benjamin's regarding the camera and the status of the unconscious can finally be invoked. "The camera," he writes, "introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses" ("Work of Art" 237). He has meant to say this as a metaphor.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Which is not to say that it is a simple metaphor. What he wants to highlight is the jostling effect the camera brings about that can add to the "shock experience" of modern urban life of his days. The result would be the "deepening of [our] apperception" by film ("Work of Art" 235) "to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action" beyond "this prison-world" (236). What the camera promotes is then not only "the mutual penetration of art and science" (236), but also equally dialectically the

Sophie Calle, in turn, does not seem to stop there but ventures further as to ask in *Suite vénitienne*: what if the optics is the impulses themselves? Dwelling on the issue of anamorphosis in painting in 1960, Lacan may have shared the similar thought. There he disputes the end of art as representation by asking, "is the end of art imitation or non-imitation? Does art imitate what it represents? If you begin by posing the question in those terms, you are already caught in the trap [ . . . ]." This is because, he continues, "a work of art always involves encircling the Thing," an equivalent to the substance of *jouissance* (SVII 141). He soon refines the thesis and brings it into Seminar XI to conceptualize the gaze. Yet so far as this Thing is concerned, it is the drive that matters in the feminine position. Sophie Calle has come a long way to "translate," in the Benjaminian sense,<sup>53</sup> what Benjamin could not have "extracted" from the unconscious impulses he has nevertheless referred to. As goes her "translation," *it is optics, eventually, that must become the home of the drives*. So far as the world, locked deeply in its own phantasy, is still turning a deaf ear to psychoanalysis, to the "impulses," as it does to Sophie's feminine "detour" to Venice, this optics, along with other entities she has worked so hard to unearth, cannot but remain "untranslated" and buried along with the alleged enigma of her gender.

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mutual penetration of artwork and life, of optics and impulses, both being the entities of the unconscious realm (237).

<sup>53</sup> "In all language and linguistic creations," Benjamin asserts, "there remains in addition to what can be conveyed something that cannot be communicated [ . . . ]." "A real translation," therefore, "is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. [ . . . ] And that which seeks to represent, to produce itself in the evolving of languages, is the very nucleus of pure language" ("Task" 79).

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