TRIPTYCH OF THE SELF: ENCOUNTERING ELYSIUM, LISBON AND THE UNHEIMLICH

by

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(Under the direction of Dr. Katarzyna Jerzak)

ABSTRACT

Following the logic of Fernando Pessoa's semiheteronym, Bernardo Soares, the artist renders in a visual image the sensations of his emotional state. "I compose landscapes out of what I feel", he declares, while simultaneously conveying the reader into his own physical landscape of the streets of Lisbon. The state of the self is reflected in the spaces that are inhabited, sought, created and reflected by the various personae represented in works by Rousseau, Pessoa and Lispector.

INDEX KEYWORDS: Identity, Space, Rousseau, Pessoa, Lispector

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DEDICATION

To the memories of

Gail Isaly Athey

&

Dr. Mario Llaneras

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CHAPTER 1

PROLOGUE

In a watercolor dated 1953 a door, shrouded in shadows of blues and purples, stands ajar, revealing a golden glow of light. Thus Walter Inglis Anderson portrays the threshold to the room of his cottage that serves as the framework for a densely enigmatic mural. The mysterious depiction of the door in the painting intimates that entry into the room results in an experience of revelation. The sense of concealment underscored by the painting reflects the actual circumstances of the room and the mural that it contains. The revelation of opening the door is accentuated by the work's uncharacteristic lack of mention among Anderson's voluminous manuscripts. Furthermore, the portal to the "Little Room", which the artist figuratively obscures in the painting, was kept padlocked by Anderson during his lifetime. Indeed, the existence of the "Little Room" mural was not discovered until after his death in 1965.

Yet the watercolor announces the mural's existence. The painting consequently provides a touchstone not only for situating the mural chronologically within Anderson's oeuvre. In addition, embedded in the watercolor's chiaroscuro in complementary colors is a key that unlocks the mural's thematic position in Anderson's oeuvre and philosophy. The painting's dramatic allusion to the mural foregrounds the tension between concealment and revelation which is at play in both the watercolor and the "Little Room".

The pictorial image of the door evinces dimensions which parallel those ascribed to the poetic image of the door by Gaston Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space*. "For the door is an entire cosmos of the Half-open" he declares, and therefore intimates the dual possibilities of inviolability and exposure. In the presence of such an image, one senses that "there are two 'beings' in a door" (224). The twofold resonance of the image of the door is multiplied when the watercolor is considered as a visual gateway to a concrete room. The painting extends the dualities of concealment and revelation from the visual representation of the door into the context of the actual door that it references.

What happens when the door opens? A vision is revealed. One glimpses the cosmic conception created by Anderson according to the progression of the sun and its light through the landscape surrounding his cottage. The mural that engulfs the walls and ceiling of the "Little Room" organizes the space of the room into sunrise, noon, sunset, and night in correspondence to the direction that each wall faces. Three of the four landscapes use the room's fenestrations to present the materialization of the external natural environment within the painting, and concomitantly, within the room. Anderson's mural employs the architectural elements of the windows as pictorial elements by not only adorning each one with symbolic designs but by featuring them as components in the scenes. A cock above the east window heralds the dawn, while below the west window a cat ventures out at sunset in pursuit of the evening's prey. Each of the wall landscapes incorporates the local flora and fauna into a fascinating tableau that establishes the "Little Room" into a site in which the inorganic structure divulges the organic realm beyond its windows.

The mural in the "Little Room" thus resembles the mythic door in the watercolor as a visual image that is "doubly symbolical" of the potential for two "beings" to be present in one icon. The 15' by 30' dimensions of the "Little Room" serve as a compass

for those who enter its space, for it designates the cardinal points as well as the direction of Anderson's aesthetic and ontological ideas.* While the mural announces the significance of Anderson's environment to his complex personal system of beliefs and practices, it also suggests something universal about the relationship between an artist and his milieu.

In *The Fate of Place,* Edward Casey claims:

> Archytas of Tarentum maintained that 'to be (at all) is to be in (some) place.' Modifying this Archytian axiom only slightly, we may say that if the things of the world are already in existence, they must already possess places. The world is, minimally and forever, a place-world. Indeed, insofar as being or existence is not bestowed by creation or creator, place can be said to take over roles otherwise attributed to a creator-god or to the act of creation: roles of preserving and sustaining things in existence. (4)

The association of states of being with physical states, Casey suggests, is an ancient one and a natural extension of our understanding of the universe as a site not only of inhabitance but of generation. Anderson's linked images of the door and the room suggest this binary relationship between perceptions of *loci* and the significance attached to them. Foucault makes a similar statement about space as the realm of "our primary perception", by which he means the space "of our dreams and our passions," that "holds within itself almost intrinsic qualities: it is light, ethereal, transparent, or dark, uneven, cluttered."(31) This "primary" space he identifies as "inner space" which he distinguishes from the "external space" in which relationships are formed. We inhabit both spaces, Foucault suggests, with varying success.

A perplexing contribution to the discussion of the associative power of space is Bernardo Soares' claim in *The Book of Disquiet* (*Livro do desassossego*) that "I compose landscapes out of what I feel". His ability to transpose emotional experience into a prose portrait is uniquely problematic. Certainly his declaration inverts the givens of

experience and perception by suggesting that his imaginative and creative abilities can present emotional experience as a reality perceptible to the eye. In addition, the tradition that he invokes is one of pictorial mimesis, rather than the epigrammatic journal to which his text belongs. Further complicating the issue is the relationship between Soares and the "I" which brackets his statement. Soares' existence, like the landscapes he proposes to portray, is virtual. He belongs to a compendium of fictional selves compiled by the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa. As one of Pessoa's *heterónimos* Soares shares his identity with Pessoa's own. In fact, Pessoa wrote of Soares that: "He's a semiheteronym because while he doesn't actually have my personality, his personality is not different from mine, rather a simple mutilation of it" (*The Book of Disquiet, xiii*). So the "I" that Soares refers to as capable of transforming his experience is already pre-fabricated. The portrait of interiority that he projects requires a *trompe l'oeil* technique to convey this network of reflected and refracted images.

Although his case is particular to the Pessoa phenomenon, the implications of his provocative statement are not. Indeed, to a certain extent neither is the heteronymic component of Pessoa himself, for when has the split between the "I" who feels and the "I" who writes not been vocalized? Certainly since Descartes this split has been further fragmented and augmented into distinctions between perception, rationalization and identification. This schism has been documented both by those writers who propose to reconcile it, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and those for whom this divide is a realm for free play, among whom Pessoa is an extreme example. What is intriguing is the proclivity of these writers to use the same trope as Soares in order to express this condition. The metaphor of the landscape as the means of emotional expression and the realm of imaginative identification continues and corresponds in the seemingly disparate works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Fernando Pessoa and Clarice Lispector. For each of these writers the individual's existence in space becomes an articulation of identity itself. The state of the self is reflected in the spaces that are inhabited, sought, created and

reflected by the various personae represented in these authors'works. The landscape that each writer "composes", projects and constructs becomes a medium of expression as vital as that of language. Physical space becomes literary space, the means by which the identities entangled in the concepts of *fictio, cogito,* and *ego* intersect. In their texts, each author embraces the potent associations available in the encounter between space and the self.

CHAPTER 2

HORTUS CONCLUSUS

> The traditional garden of the Persians was a sacred space that was supposed to unite four separate parts within its rectangle, representing the four parts of the world, as well as one space still more sacred than the others, a space that was like the navel, the centre of the world brought into the garden...The garden is the smallest fragment of the world and, at the same time, represents its totality, forming right from the remotest times a sort of felicitous and universal heterotopia (from which are derived our own zoological gardens).
> (Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias")

> Such is the state in which I often found myself during my solitary reveries on St. Peter's Island, either lying in my boat as I let it drift with the water or seated on the banks of the tossing lake; or elsewhere, at the edge of a beautiful river or a brook murmuring over pebbles.
> What do we enjoy in such a situation? Nothing external to ourselves, nothing if not ourselves and our own existence. As long as this state lasts, we are sufficient unto ourselves, like God.
> (Rousseau, Fifth Walk, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*)

To the delight of the reader, murmuring water and the hum of the self are sounds that resonate and alternate within the fifth of the Solitary Walker's reveries. To Jean-Jacques Rousseau the happenstance of drifting provides a sufficiency of the self unparalleled in human experience. The Fifth Walk records a reverie profoundly different from those which precede it. Unlike his previous entries, the Fifth Walk relates neither a

method to the stroll, nor an attempt to organize and "collect" the perceptions into the notebook of the botanist. It is this state of complete passivity that distinguishes the passage as remarkable. The absence of an objective allows the walker to experience his environs rather than to intrude upon them. This relinquishment of the self to the external space of the island, paradoxically, results in an experience in which the self is preeminent. The space of the island therefore becomes the perfect vehicle for the self, because it is "naturally closed off and separated from the rest of the world" and consequently provides a "sweet refuge".

The seclusion and centrality of the isle resemble the microcosmic image of the garden to which Foucault alludes in his discussion of "other spaces". Indeed, the Solitary Walker's rapturous immersion into the terrain of the island suggests that identification with its space acquires the unifying quality that Foucault attributes to the space "still more sacred than the others". For Rousseau, this sacred site of unity is invariably the *locus* of the self.

The seclusion of the island supports the seclusion of the self from the external requirements of occupation and society. Furthermore, although its terrain is necessarily bordered, in its space Rousseau experiences the sensation of the expansiveness of the self, rather than the rigidity of its borders. The self and its companion, the imagination, perceive the territory of the island as the vessel of the self. Each object of the environ, which should serve as a reminder of the opposition between the external and internal terrains of which Rousseau is so conscious, is transformed into an emblem of the complete self. This demarcates a radical transformation in the tone of the Rousseau persona. The absorption of the external dimension of the island into the imaginative realm of the speaker's mind signifies an evolution from his initial stance.

In the First Walk he relates his disdain for society and the subsequent rejection of all emblems of alterity that provoked him to the voluntary exile offered by the island. Rather than a vision of sufficiency, the island initially embodies all of the hostility that he

perceives to surround his writing. The isolation of the island suggests his own fragmentation within the society at large. In describing his assimilation into this symbolic terrain, he adopts the language of exploration, declaring: "I am on earth as though on a foreign planet onto which I have fallen from the one I inhabited."(5) In this state of alienation, his senses perceive only the dichotomy between self and other. Although the source of his distress is his displacement from the culture that he addresses in his texts, even the environs have become signifiers of alterity, for: "Everything external is henceforth foreign to me." The first entry in the *Reveries* thus delineates the oppositions that define his experience.

Once he reaches the description that makes up the Fifth Walk, however, the polarity of the self and its environment has undergone a transformation. The formerly hostile plane of the external has become a neutral state. When "emerging from a long and sweet reverie," Rousseau sees himself "surrounded by greenery, flowers, and birds," and lets his eyes "wander in the distance on the romantic shores which bordered a vast stretch of crystal-clear water" and ultimately, he relates, "I assimilated all these lovely objects to my fictions; and finally finding myself brought back by degrees to myself and to what surrounded me, I could not mark out the point separating the fictions from the realities" (70). The entry recounts the convergence of the identity of the *promeneur solitaire*-protagonist and that "beloved island" and the degree to which so "thorough [a] conjunction of everything ... made the absorbed and solitary life I led during this beautiful sojourn so dear to me" (70). The arrangement of the account of the Fifth Walk in the middle of the *Reveries* suggests that it is the pinnacle of the period of crisis that is introduced by the speaker in the First Walk, and the work certainly assimilates the structure of crisis and denouement that typifies conversion narratives. However the work, which remained incomplete at the time of Rousseau's death, encapsulates more than a progression of perspective. The attempt to reconcile the self with the environment that appears adverse manifests in varying degrees throughout Rousseau's career.

Particularly noteworthy is the recurring image of "closed off" and "separated" spaces as the media for this reconciliation. Enclosures emerge from the natural world as shelters for those who experience exclusion or desire transformation within the parameters of the societal world. The enclosures themselves are alternate worlds, realms in which the external self confronts the internal self and the capacity of the imagination meets the abundance of Nature. They function in equal parts as sanctuaries and as crossroads, leaving the voyager who crosses their threshold transfigured by the experience. St. Peter's Island is the culmination of Rousseau's attempts to create these spaces within his works. One need only examine its extraordinary antecedent, Elysium, the garden which appears in *Julie*, to comprehend the significance of the endeavor.

The utopia of Julie's *hortus conclusus* offers a provocative inversion of the momentary utopia of the self on St. Peter's Island. The garden is presented as a fictive ideal. In the "pompous name" that Julie gives it, it is an idyll of virtue, whose existence is interdependent with her own. Simultaneously its caretaker and treasure, Julie also determines access to the garden. It is a site in nature that preserves a state of seclusion for the heroine. Similarly, the account of the garden is both a supplement and a digression in the discourse of the novel. It is precisely through its marginal status in the text that it declares its significance. The garden becomes the topos of the shelters continually constructed around Julie as the paragon of virtue. In order to maintain this idealized state, Julie requires the solitary stage of Elysium. She is both the director and pivotal player in the productions performed for both St.Preux and the reader. It is the space in which she can enact the drama of the perfected self. As such, the garden theatre presents an image of revelation. The "veiling" that enshrouds Julie for the other characters accordingly suffuses her ideal landscape. Its placement on the property ensures that it remains a site of sequestration and yet its presence is revealed to St. Preux. In fact he presents the account of his entry into the garden as a moment of discovery. Yet the revelation is not a process through which he gains proximity to sacred origins. Rather

than an indoctrination into the ritual space of the virgin, St. Preux receives an introduction into the process of mystification. What Julie reveals to St. Preux is the fiction behind the real semblance of the garden. His account to Milord Edward records the gamut of his perceptions from innocence to experience. He enters the space of the garden and marvels that it is the "wildest, most solitary place in nature". He learns, however, that the primitive state that he perceives is actually contrived.

Furthermore, the originary state (or state of oblivion) that St. Preux attempts to project onto the garden is punctured by the replication of the fall. His comment about the other side of the house re-introduces the crime of the lovers, and provokes the "just reprimand" of the Monsieur. The three are returned to the state of experience and leave the illusory space of originary return. The letter about the garden thus provides a comment about the acts of reading and writing fiction.

The supplemental discussion of the utopian space of Elysium in *Julie* is suggestive of a greater argument about spatial constructions of the self within Rousseau's writing. Between his elaborate construction of Elysium and his fortunate fall into Saint-Pierre lies not only an intellectual development but a spectrum of thought on the relation of the self within the topos of seclusion. In each of the spaces that Rousseau chronicles he ultimately navigates the terrain of the self.

Both the garden and the island serve Rousseau as simulacra of an originary state in which the self is concurrently preeminent and absent. Jean-Jacques on the isle and St.Preux in the garden encounter spaces that present the self in an originary state. Their respective texts mediate the experience of entry into these natural cloisters for the reader and recount the resultant dismissal of distinctions that allow the self and the other to permeate their boundaries.

Yet each space is distinctly situated upon a spectrum of fictive loci. Indeed, the descriptions with which Rousseau transcribes the experience of entry for the reader manipulate the topoi of the idyll into oppositional states. The garden, as the showcase

for the idealized figure of Julie, suggests an Arcadia of constructions while the isle becomes a vehicle for the self to find sanctuary untainted by artifice. Although the two stand as alternative pathways to a privileged state of the self, they are ultimately points on the same continuum of thought. Undoubtedly this evolution from the conceptual to the autobiographical experience of the neutrality of the self belongs first and foremost to Rousseau. Indeed, Frederick Garber identifies Elysium as the original motif for the Romantic articulation of the self. "From the time of Julie's Elysium," Garber declares, "the enclosure had implied a complex grouping of qualities, involving the shape and organization of the enclosure, the conditions of selfhood, and the wholeness and energy of nature." (*Autonomy of the Self*, 275) Elysium, as the site in which Julie reveals the self, contributes a model for the iconography of the self.

If one surveys the perplexing topography of the writings of Rousseau, few sites beguile the reader like Elysium. Certainly St.Preux's letter to Milord Edward conveys the sense of mystification that surrounds the product of Julie's labor. The letter carefully constructs the experience in accord with the trajectory of awareness and submission encapsulated in the Fifth Walk. St. Preux's introductory statements identify the terrain of the idealized figure of Julie as the product of the "innocent and simple amusement that nurtures the taste for retreat" that "preserves in the person who indulges them a healthy soul" (387). The garden is not simply the result of an aesthetic pursuit but a noble one, for it maintains the solitude instrumental to the fitness of the soul.

Such a concept of health as that which St.Preux associates with Julie's creation of Elysium relies upon the ability of the heart to be "free from the confusion of passions." The activity of transforming the natural environs of the orchard releases the soul from the complications of the natural energy of the body. St. Preux's theory of health depends greatly upon the distinctions between reason and passion which invariably torment the novel's pivotal characters. Certainly Rousseau has imbued his portraits of Julie and her

circle with a moral dimension that implores the reader to consider the tension between the spheres of decorum and liberty just as the characters do themselves.

Yet Rousseau's literary contribution rests in the novel's development of the conflict beyond the treatment it had received in the legend of Abelard and Heloise to which he loosely alludes in the title and in Richardson's *Clarissa*, *Julie*'s apparent progenitor. On the relationship between the two novels Garber remarks that many "of Rousseau's contemporaries felt that *La Nouvelle Héloïse* was little more than a transmigration of Richardson to Clarens" (17). Rousseau's appropriation of Richardson's model alters more than its setting, however. His novel particularizes the generic conflict by adding a third term to the conventional duality. Into the framework of divisions between the impulses of sentiment and the ordering faculty of reason, Rousseau inserts the active element of the imagination which mediates between the two terms. The imagination allows the self to reach out to society and to resist its subjugation by carving out a space for the unmitigated experience of the self. For Julie that space is the Arcadian grove of Elysium that joins the organizing energies of the house with the chaos of nature. It is this function of the imagination which readers responded to when engrossed in the saga of Julie and St. Preux. According to Maurice Cranston, the positive reception of the novel depended on the fact that the

> message of the novel was seen as a liberating one: that the imagination need no longer be the slave of reason, that feelings should not be suppressed, denied in the name of decorum; that if one could only strip away the falseness and pretence by which modern society was dominated, there was goodness to be discovered in the human heart. (*The Solitary Self*, 195)

Viewed through the lens of this literary tradition the garden comes to emblematize Julie's transcendence of the chaos that characterized the sexual relationship between Julie and St.Preux and the order that her marriage to Wolmar ensures. Julie's drama transgressed

the boundaries of propriety without straying into the realm of scandal (and Rousseau's work into melodrama) by virtue of the artificial enclosure of Elysium. Julie created an alternative domain that exists beyond the strictures of duty and decorum but in proximity to a new concept of virtue.

The method that Rousseau employs for describing this new morality is one of synthesis and elaboration. The novel retains the conventional esteem for purity and chastity but provides a new context from which they could be determined. The issue becomes one of integrity with the natural world rather than with the social one. Yet Rousseau does not reject the mores of society. Instead he projects a utopian image in which the natural man is integrated into society. In order to portray this vision he embroiders over the existing societal fabric. This technique is apparent in the allusive quality of the description of the garden. His concept of Julie's *locus amoenus* draws equally from the pastoral and paradisal models as emblems of the conditions of his newly forged paragon. Julie's enclosed garden is an amalgamation of the tranquility of the Arcadian grotto, the occlusive frame of Milton's Eden "itself an invention from classical tropes and forebears,...an 'enclosed green' to which 'access [is] denied,' a sort of fortress-paradise that has 'in narrow room Nature's whole wealth' (IV, 133, 137,207)"...and the acknowledgement of a naturalist perspective in contemporary landscape design. Into this mélange he introduces his own interpretation of "the paradise within thee, happier far" promised to Adam.

Julie's pastime engages the mind in harmonious accord with its natural environs which results in a state of equilibrium that distances the physical impulses of the body. In the activity of arranging and organizing the garden, Julie displays the authority of the soul that befits her new role as paragon. Elysium, therefore, appears to the reader, via St.Preux, as a privileged site in which the triumph of Julie as an ideal figure can be observed.

St.Preux's narrative necessarily performs two functions: the primary one of delineating the experience of transformation that he undergoes and the implicit one of tracing the arc of Julie's transition. Upon entering the space of the garden, St.Preux invokes metaphors of alienation by claiming that "I found myself there as if I had dropped from the sky." The terms of evaluation by which he makes this assessment determine that his is the foreign body that the enclosure accepts, for Julie herself determines access to this site. It is not readily perceived by the naked eye. Indeed, its placement behind the "shaded avenue" and "heavy foliage" are orchestrated so that "it does not allow the eye to penetrate, and it is always carefully locked (387)." The garden's dependence upon such an obstruction of the perceptive powers of sight implies its function in relation to Julie, and those who attempt to understand her.

Elysium and its mistress require a similar state of seclusion that results in an appearance of concealment to those who approach. The aloofness that Julie attains depends upon the detachment from the house and its obligations that the boundaries of Elysium make available. Indeed, the perimeters are fundamental to its purpose. By shrouding the landmarks of external existence from view, the structure of the garden maintains the sequestration vital to the self. Garber comments on the significance of this feature in his description of Elysium as "a sanctuary within a shelter and therefore a kind of cynosure" that equates the harmony of the garden with her own inner state. Furthermore, such a prominent state can only exist at a distance.

Once St.Preux is guided into the garden by Julie, he realizes that he has stepped beyond the regulated pathways of the house in which everything is organized according to the principles of the "agreeable and the useful" (386). Of all the places to which St. Preux has wandered, Elysium is the one which remains the pinnacle of mystery. His experience prompts him to exclaim: "O, Tinian! O Juan Fernandez! Julie, the ends of the earth are at your gate!"(387). The sense of alienation that characterizes his initiation into the space of Elysium is coupled with the sense of discovery with which he invokes the

names of islands in the Southern Sea. He feels himself to be not only mystified but "transported by a spectacle so unexpected" as the vision of Julie's garden. The key element at play in this sensation of rapture is also its primary receptor, upon which the magnitude of the garden is "impressed...at least as much as my senses"; that is, "my imagination." (387)

The greenery, flowers, birds, and bubbling water stimulate St.Preux's imaginative being because they are extensions of Julie's own vitality. She reveals this to him when she reminds him that this "wildest, most solitary place in nature" was once the same orchard where a younger St. Preux used to play with her cousin. Rather than a pristine site in nature, the garden is actually the product of collusion between Julie's creative abilities and nature. With the tools of her fancy, Julie has manipulated the terrain of the garden into a display of her authority. The impression of wildness that St.Preux receives is heightened by his growing awareness that it does not emanate solely from nature but from Julie's mind. Garber's encapsulation of this distinction states: "In Elysium natural energy is brought together with the human impulse for order, and this is done in such a way that those energies are subordinated to the desires of mind."(22) With the assistance of her husband, Julie has constructed a semblance of nature that accommodates the desires of the imagination. The incorporation of the natural terrain into the visage of the residence calls to mind Svetlana Boym's commentary on the emergence of the baroque in landscape architecture:

> Artificial nature begins to play an important part in the European imagination since the epoch of baroque--the word itself signifies a rare shell. In the middle of the nineteenth century a fondness for herbariums, greenhouses and aquariums became a distinctive feature of the bourgeois home; it was a piece of nature transported into the urban home, framed and domesticated (*Future of Nostalgia*, 16).

Nature yields its materials to what Wolmar calls Julie's "*fripponerie*" in order for her to render a satisfying effect upon the senses of its human visitors.

When St. Preux protests that the garden can only be the product of nature, that "the gardener's hand is not to be seen" amidst the "verdant, fresh, vigorous" environment Julie corrects him and states that while nature did indeed provide the materials,it is her own vision imprinted upon the contents of the garden. She asserts that she was the orchard's *primum mobile*, since "nature did it all, but under my direction, and there is nothing here that I have not designed" (388). St. Preux's further exploration of Elysium confirms not only that there was a human component in the development of the garden, but that the two elements accommodated one another. For St. Preux this concordance yields an intensification of the enjoyable qualities of the natural world. Although a closer inspection under Julie's guidance reveals the domesticity of the terrain and its contents, the arrangement of the plants makes them appear "cheerier and pleasanter" than a truly pristine environ could sustain. Every item that had previously exceeded his frame of reference now refers back to Julie. The sense of enchantment that had stirred his imagination owes its existence to the collaboration of the natural world with Julie's aesthetic will. Her presence pervades the domain of Elysium. Within the bounds of the enclosure, the inclination of the natural world yields to the free play of Julie's imagination.

A similar interdependence appears in the letters that St. Preux sent to Julie from Valais. Ostensibly a depiction of his rambles in the region, his correspondence actually records the process that transforms the components of the environment into images of his emotional state. In Part One, Letter XXIII, St. Preux provides a narrative that fulfills his intention to "limit myself to telling you about the state of my soul" (63). He describes a journey that encompasses a varied range of natural elements including cliffs, waterfalls, woods and meadows, each of which acquires an emotional valence in relation to his

longing for Julie. Ultimately his letter is less a description than a transcription in the best allegorical mode.

The most striking example of the manner in which he correlates his experience of the environs of Valais with his subjective experience is the narrative he provides of his ascent in the mountains. He relates that he regards his newly acquired "inner peace" as the result of the "pure and subtle" air of the mountains, where "one breathes more freely, one feels lighter in the body, more serene of mind; pleasures there are less intense, passions more moderate"(64). From his vantage point upon the mountain, St. Preux has ascended spiritually to a state that he describes as more pristine than that which he had enjoyed when he began his journey. At this apex, he is able to survey the totality of the landscape, and simultaneously, reflect upon his thoughts. Just as his visual powers of observation have been expanded and heightened by his ascent, so too has his mental perception. It is this increased awareness that has allowed him to cast off the imperfect corporeal senses. "Meditations there take on an indescribably grand and sublime character," he relates to Julie, "in proportion with the objects that strike us, an indescribably tranquil delight that has nothing acrid or sensual about it" (64). The sublimity that has been opened in his mind by the pure peaks of the mountains nourishes a vision that presages his experience in Elysium. It is a vision that he tries imploringly to share with Julie:

> Imagine the variety, the grandeur, the beauty of a thousand stunning vistas; the pleasure of seeing all around one nothing but entirely new objects, strange birds, bizarre and unknown plants, of observing in a new way an altogether different nature, and finding oneself in a new world. (65)

As he recounts the impression that this "spectacle" makes upon the eye, St. Preux depicts a transformative experience, one that "ravishes the spirit and the senses" so that "you forget everything, even yourself, and do not even know where you are"(65). Following the allegorical model, St. Preux's transcendent moment occurs at a point of physical elevation which enables the faculty of his mind (which he repeatedly aligns with the

metaphor of vision) to supercede his emotional sensations. That he characterizes this event in terms of dislocation simply accentuates the primacy of place to the experience.

The account of his ascent establishes a motif for the landscape of his devotion. Ascension for St. Preux neutralizes the grip that his passion for Julie holds on his consciousness. However ravaged his perception might be upon the mountain, the letter ultimately testifies to the limits that are placed upon this experience, for there remains one thing that he cannot forget. Even in his solitude, his mind returns to its ardent preoccupation with Julie, or more precisely, her absence. The clarity of the view from the summit only intensifies the image of the beloved that permeates his sense of space. Despite the magnificence of the peak, the effect that it has upon St. Preux is muted by his assertion that everything that he encountered "called me back to you in this peaceful site; the stirring attractions of nature, the unalloyed purity of the air,...everything that agreeably struck my sight and my heart, painted a picture of her whom they are seeking"(68). The material world in which he has sojourned thus resonates with his internal passage. After the trauma of separation from Julie, St.Preux's environment becomes the conduit for varying states of subjectivity and objectivity. His strolls in the countryside of Valais encompass a diversity of emotional perspectives that accompanies the range of viewpoints offered in each of the region's environs. St. Preux attributes this intricacy to the dual contributions of man and nature. His response cannily reverberates with his description of Elysium. He first declares that a "surprising mixture of wild and cultivated nature revealed throughout the hand of men" but eventually acknowledges that "nature also seemed to take pleasure in striking an opposition to herself, so different did one find her in the same place at various angles" (63). St. Preux certainly takes in these "various angles" by attributing to each a role in his depiction of the terrain as the portrait of his soul.

Although the concurrence of these two states seems to perplex him, he ultimately reconciles them in his sketch of Elysium. In that letter collusion takes place not only

between Julie's facilities and the natural world, but also between Rousseau, St. Preux, and the reader. Within the epistolary matrix of the text, there are a myriad of ideals constructed. In his address to Milord Edward, St. Preux crafts a narrative calculated for a specific range of responses from his primary reader. It is also a method for ordering the experience of his encounter with the newly transcendent Julie. The account is meticulously nested between the anecdotes of St. Preux's reveries in two other sites that are symbolically loaded with his desire for Julie.

The first appears in the I, XXIII record of his sojourn in the Valais while he awaits word from Julie and the second in IV, XVII with his report from Meillerie that appears to be fueled by nostalgia and his reading of Petrarch. The locale of this last account bears the weight of remembered experience. Indeed, St. Preux's post-Elysium pilgrimage to Meillerie signifies a journey into a pre-Elysium past. Accompanied by Julie, St. Preux is propelled along a double voyage through both time and place. Every memory-laden step on the excursion leads St. Preux back to his original state of desiring "the object" that his heart "held most dear on earth" (424). Rather than an exploration of an unfamiliar realm, St. Preux is engaged in the pursuit of an ideal return. He reveals this "secret motive" for bringing Julie to this place in his letter to Milord Edward. He declares that he "had always desired to revisit the isolated retreat that served as my shelter amidst the ice, and where my heart took pleasure in conversing inwardly" with the image of his beloved.

Once they begin their walk he adopts the role of tour guide for Julie, pointing out the landmarks of the area and the emotions that infused them. Here and there he remarks upon the "monuments of such a constant and unhappy passion" that had given him "pleasure to think of showing her". So great is his association of the landscape with his emotional memory that it is as though he were stepping into the very site of his ardor. Awash in the sentiments that flood back upon his return, he assumes that they have similarly impressed themselves upon Julie. He asks her "do you not feel some secret

emotion at the sight of a place so full of you?" Julie does not have time to respond to his entreaty, for he is at once occupied by providing her with the proof that this location serves as the repository of his devotion. It still bears the imprint of his veneration, as the "thousand places" in which her initials had been carved evidence. This return trip to a landscape in nature that has been transformed into an altar of adoration appears as the realization or culmination of his utopian project.

"Approaching and recognizing my old markers, I was nearly in a swoon", he confides to the reader as he leads Julie into "a wild and forsaken nook" that both recalls and refutes the garden of Elysium. St. Preux calls it "a cheerful and rural site" that lies amidst a brook that "trickles", a bower of "wild fruit trees" and grass and flowers that carpet "the damp and cool earth". In addition to these verdant characteristics, the location shares with Elysium the primary condition of isolation. Yet this natural space defies the domestication that the occlusive borders of Julie's Elysium conceal. Instead, icy Alpine crags jut upwards around the horizon. There is no screen protecting them from the sight of nature's grandeur. The sheer power of nature which commands their gaze infiltrates the imagination and ignites the passion that Julie's careful pathways and screens attempted to douse. This site reverses the roles of circumscription of the natural world by the fictive impulse as they are engaged in Elysium.

In the terrain to which St. Preux conveys Julie, the works of art simply litter the environment. Along with Julie's initials, St.Preux found passages from Petrarch and Tasso suitable graffiti to record the occasion of his first visit. Upon viewing these textual remnants, he declares that he "experienced how powerfully the presence of objects can revive the violent sentiments with which one was formerly seized in their presence" (425). The land increasingly appears as a dog-eared text to which St.Preux returns, looking up familiar lines in the manner of one accustomed to the role of tutor. Which of course he is, and in the account he is once again instructing his favorite student in the art of reading even while he attempts to edit the passage. With Julie as his companion on the

return journey to this once solitary site, the possibility of resuscitating his passion presents itself. Indeed, their trek constitutes an insertion into the literary landscape of his desire of the very "object" that had eluded him during his previous visit.

The significance of his revison appears immediately upon the introduction of Julie into the *locus*. The formidable frost and ice yield to a pleasant arrangement of flora and fauna. Where once "festoons of snow were these trees' only ornament," now emanate emblems of nature's vitality. Her impact upon the landscape suggests the brilliance with which the sun showers the earth. In truth, the radiance that the terrain receives is a reflection of St. Preux's ardor. The infusion of vitality which St. Preux initially attributes to Julie's presence actually appears to derive from an alternate source. The activation of otherwise inanimate objects characterized his previous visit too, as his interaction with the normally silent stones attests. Those fragments of the earth's endurance, the stones, connect St.Preux in time to his initial visit and its resultant text, the letter that he sent to Julie. "Over there", he indicates to Julie, "is the stone where I sat to watch from afar your blessed abode; on this one was written the Letter that struck your heart; these sharp stones served as my burin to carve your initials" (425). The earthen materials are invigorated in St. Preux's textual analysis. His technique of glossing betrays an aptitude that a cleric would simultaneously admire and admonish. Under his tutelage the terrain yields citations that befit his ultimate purpose.

The locale of the passage adapts to his invocation of differing literary traditions. His comment upon entering the "nook" attests to the preeminence of his reading of the pastoral poets. Renato Poggioli's commentary elucidates Rousseau's dependence upon the Italian pastoral tradition as source material:

> Rousseau reestablished and reinforced the broken tie between the pastoral of love and the pastoral of the self. This explains his youthful admiration for such an old-fashioned pastoral romance as *L'Astrée*, of which he speaks at length at the beginning of the *Confessions*. This also explains his love for Italian poetry, testified by the frequent quotations from

> Petrarch, Tasso, and Metastasio in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*...It was by turning back to Italians that Rousseau reintroduced into the pastoral the concern with sex, which he fused with the concern with the self. (180)

St. Preux's invocation of the ardent genre emerges in the letter when he remarks: "Comparing so pleasant a retreat with the surrounding objects, it seemed that this deserted place was meant to be a sanctuary of two lovers who alone had escaped nature's cataclysm" (425). His image of the refuge notably subverts the paradigm of the Garden of Eden since it depends upon a "post" rather than "pre"-lapsarian union. Perhaps his true referent is not a Christian image but a pagan one.

The sanctuary that he envisions is a site of resistance in a harsh, apocalyptic environment. The account of the journey to the peak echoes the chronicle of the fated trek of Dido and Aeneas, which is itself a reverberation of the interlude Odysseus enjoyed on Calypso's island. In Virgil's legendary scenario, through the intervention of the conspiring goddesses, "primal earth herself" surrenders to their destined union. Nature offers up a grotto for the protection of Dido and Aeneas from the storm and a concomitant asylum from the scrutiny of their public roles. Certainly, St. Preux's description of his cherished "nook" channels a similar course, one that moves away from societal obligations and towards a singularly benevolent site in an otherwise tempestuous natural world. In his recasting of the epic romance, St. Preux forges an idyllic space whose function appears to bear the imprint of destiny. However, his collusive attempts to drive Julie back into his arms, or more accurately, his fantasy, are resisted. Julie remains the very image of virtue by detaching herself from the entanglements of the scenario that he has created.

All appeals to the tradition of what Poggioli refers to as the "pastoral of love" revert to the mode of the "pastoral of self". His textual seduction thwarted, St. Preux's depiction of Meillerie offers a portrait of solitude sifted through the testaments of his longing. Despite Julie's presence, St. Preux remains alone with his imagination. Even in the depths of his despair, St. Preux recognizes the singular quality of his loss. As Julie

leads him away, he bemoans that he "would have borne her death or absence more patiently," since he believes that "I had suffered less during all the time I had spent far from her" (423). He records an attachment to this site in space that curiously displaces a desire for the beloved. The fiction-infused location of Meillerie supplants Julie as the object. In the solitude that he had enjoyed in his previous journey to Meillerie, Julie was more present in absence than in her current proximity to her admirer. Meillerie, it would seem, is so full of Julie's iconic presence that there is little room left for her body. *

The tension between St. Preux's excited and dejected states apparent in this passage crystallizes the greater conflict of the novel between virtue and the imagination as dramatized in the relationship of the two young lovers. These oppositions filter into the dimensions of the terrain into which St. Preux herds Julie, regardless of the literary maneuvers with which he intends to fuse his desire into reality. Indeed, his endeavor to redraft the story of their liaison into the annals of romance aligns him with the passionate impulse of fiction. Further widening the gap between prudence and emotion is Julie's retreat from St. Preux's trap which "convinces" her devoted paramour "more than all the arguments, of the freedom of man and the merit of virtue" (428). In this regard, St. Preux's chronicle of his travel to Meillerie appears to conform to the allegorical trajectory of conversion as outlined by Petrarch in his ascent of Mt. Ventoux.

Ultimately, however, the story resists this generic categorization, instead positing its own hybrid pastoral of "self-love", to return to the terms of Poggioli's analysis, in which the individual's desire to unify his fictive impulse with that of the natural world transcends the desire for union with another soul. The letter demonstrates the extent to which St. Preux's compulsion to embellish the space of the narrative as delineated by the peaks of Meillerie overrides his physical desire. Fuelled by poetic* visions, St. Preux's interaction with the natural realm transmutes the sexual impulse by aestheticizing his relationship with Julie. Into this interstice between his fantasy and its object, Julie inserts the "veil" of her morality. *

Yet in the framework of spaces through which St. Preux traverses, Meillerie's rejection of the traditional Edenic model of the sanctuary for that of the secular pastoral is exceptional. The nature that inspires his fancy is decidedly less tame and therefore more accomodating to his torrid designs than the most luxurious garden. Furthermore, the natural world responds in kind to his literary impulse. If the letter from Valais charts the topography of his sentiments, the episode in Meillerie maps the terrain of his fantasy. In the turbulent terrain of Meillerie, the sublime promise of the imagination transcends the possibility of an idyllic interlude with Julie. It is this aspect of his proto-romantic self to which St. Preux wishes to cling upon his departure from his beloved "nook". Significantly, this recess is surrounded by each of the physical elements encountered during his first episode of physical ascendance. Unlike the mountain peak in Valais, the nook does not provide a sense of dominion over the mountain stream, gloomy forests, inaccessible cliffs, and large oak wood (and therefore over his emotional state). Instead, he exchanges the clarity of vision that marked his prior experience for an harmonious integration of his existence with the otherwise adverse elements. In essence the simple subject-object relationship established in the Valais scenario becomes complicated in the letter from Meillerie. The landscape of Valais corresponds to St. Preux's emotional state because he sees it as an extension of his situation. * The episode in Meillerie demonstrates another sort of reciprocity.

While the pursuit of the unassailable self propels him to the peak in Valais, his Meillerie journey is made in pursuit of the Beloved-other. Yet in each of these idealized spaces, St. Preux discovers the limits of his quest. Despite the liberation that is posited in each of their excursions into nature neither place can sustain the intensity of his volition. Both treks follow the physical pattern of ascent and descent, yet the symbolic valence of their physical situations implies a chiasmic inversion of terms. The melancholy monuments of Meillerie interfere with any notions of transcendence that St. Preux might have hoped to achieve. The dual demons of memory and imagination thwart

any claim to clarity akin to that which he received upon a peak in Valais. Buoyed to a celestial serenity in the Valais, St. Preux encounters a murkier natural realm in Meillerie. Yet he is captivated by the region's thorny display. It is, he declares, "filled with those sorts of beauties that are pleasing only to sensible souls and appear horrible to others" (424). It is indeed a sentimental site, suffocatingly so.

The voyage into the forboding nook signals an attempt to return to an origin beyond the distinctions of reason and passion, a point in time and place removed from the world to which St. Preux and his paramour actually belong. However, rather than carving out a space in which the impeding momentum of time is frozen, St. Preux deposits Julie into a site demarcated not only by temporal landmarks but by remnants of an overwhelming passion. Her flight from the romantic enclosure illustrates just how narrow its bounds become under the imposition of his contrivance. Just as he approaches the "brink" of appropriate behavior, she pleads, "let us go from here, my friend...the air in this place is not good for me" in a ploy to remind him of propriety. Once again, Julie manages to interrupt his spatially-determined reverie. In her absence, she retrieved him from his solitary summit in the Valais, and in her presence draws him from the past to the present in Meillerie. As her statement manifests, their situation is dangerous, not simply in terms of behavior but also because it cannot bear the burden of his expectations. He has so festooned the location with the adornments of a past relationship that it, like Des Esseintes' bejewelled tortoise, will cease to maintain the present. *

Neither location can sustain the intensity of his volition. In *Julie*, there is only one site that fulfills that function: Elysium. The restored *hortus conclusus* within whose verdant enclosure Julie resurrects a pristine virtue provides sustenance in myriad forms. She engages the imagination to neutralize the oppositions of order and passion which flank her garden. Although the reins that Julie's Elysium cast upon natural instinct resemble to some extent Blake's "mind-forg'd manacles", they don't fully belong to the category of reason. Doubtless Blake would have looked askance upon Julie's insistence

upon decorum. In the context of the novel, however, and more precisely, in relation to Julie, the garden declares itself as a site of resistance.

From the ordered walkways of the domicile in Clarens, St. Preux reports, he passes onto "tortuous and irregular alleys". Julie's careful arrangement has allowed the dissembling chaos of the surrounding terrain to infiltrate her Elysium. Yet this composition maintains the disparity between the domestic and the wild environs that frame its very existence. Furthermore, St. Preux's communiqués from Valais and Meillerie provide an overlay that seals this recognition of the garden as the midpoint between the novel's thematic poles. Elysium belongs to neither realm, but appears; as Julie's meticulous design ensures, to belong to both. In fact, in its very inception it was an extension of Julie's impulse for detachment, as Wolmar points out when he informs St. Preux that "Julie began this long before her marriage almost immediately after her mother's death, when she came here with her father in quest of solitude"(388).

St. Preux's tour of the garden suggests that in the establishment of Elysium she fulfilled her quest. Furthermore, the requisite aloofness and screening of the garden dispel any initial notion that Julie's creation is solely an exhibition of her abilities. Elysium was created to be inhabited. It is a location in which its creator and the very imagination that had facilitated the genesis of the garden could flourish alongside the streams, trees and birds. In a compromise between the forces of nature and reason that impose their will beyond the borders of the enclosure, Julie has forged a space in which the self achieves an interlude of autonomy.

St. Preux assembles the postcards from his emotional journeys to the Valais, Elysium, and Meillerie into a triptych of *loci* that feature some facet of the perfected self. The depictions of Valais and Meillerie frame the vision of Julie's ideal integration of imagination, virtue and nature into an icon. An Edenic edifice, Elysium is poised as the apex of his encounters with these places replete with memory. What establishes the garden within this nexus is its resistance to the projections of St. Preux's longing. St.

Preux's record of the sensations of mystery and revelation that he experiences impresses the image of the garden as a restored *hortus conclusus* upon the reader. Its description emphatically identifies Elysium as the locus of her restoration, the very meaning of which implies etymologically "a return to the original stasis,to the prelapsarian moment" (Boym,42). And this is exactly what he achieves when he passes through the gates of the garden, although it is not the return that he had envisioned.

Instead of a reunion with his beloved, St.Preux realizes a reverie of the self through his proximity to her intellectual endeavor. Enchanted by the "pleasure one has in finding in this artificial wilderness excellent and ripe fruits" as well as the cultivation of the stream that allows the soil to be "constantly refreshed and moistened" he remarks significantly that he "was more eager to see objects than to examine their impressions, and I was happy to abandon myself to that enchanting sight without taking the trouble to think" (390). His experience in this site, which is suffused with Julie's being, is a radical transformation from one he had earlier identified as her "abode". In the throes of his early passion for Julie, he had entered into her wardrobe in Part I and in a fit of ecstasy exclaims: "I see you, I feel you everywhere, I breathe you with the air you have breathed; you permeate my whole substance; how your abode is burning and painful for me" (120). Although the wardrobe does belong to Julie alone, its contents are simply the superficial detritus of her physical being. In the presence of the product of her innermost being St. Preux achieves a level of intimacy that supercedes any possible in his wardrobe encounter.

So completely is he indoctrinated into the ritual space of the garden that his imagination is simultaneously stimulated and chastened. Even when he proposes to co-opt the solitude offered in the space for himself, he is rebuffed. After his initial excursion into the garden under the auspices of Julie and her husband, he rises the next morning to return to the site to feed the birds and "to lock myself into the desert Island" (399). As he approaches, he contemplates with pleasure the possibility of returning to the place where

he "shall see nothing that her hand has not touched" and "shall kiss flowers on which her feet have trod", until he enters. Even as he projects his return as the pilgrimage of a lover, another, physical reenactment takes place. He crosses the point where the day before, Monsieur de Wolmar had chastised his inappropriate reminiscence of the bowers in which he and Julie had once expressed their love. He recalls the interaction and observes that the "memory of that single word [virtue] changed at once the whole state of my soul" (399). So thoroughly has the memory transformed his experience that the "very name Elysium called to order the aberrations of my imagination" (400).

Although this conclusion alters St. Preux's interpretation of Elysium, it conveys for the reader the impact that the image of the garden has upon the characters of the novel. The depiction of Elysium belongs to the tradition of the miniature landscape that presents an encapsulation of the world as well as a space that presents a retreat from the world. It is the aesthetic representation of that space which Foucault refers to as the "oldest example" of the "heterotopia". This term is a combination of the Greek *hetero* and *topos* which would seem to suggest a notion of alternate space but for Foucault also builds on the implications of the word *utopia*.

He describes heterotopias as:

> real and effective spaces which are outlined in the very institution of society, but which constitute a sort of counter-arrangement, of effectively realized utopia, in which all the real arrangements, all the other real arrangements that can be found within the society, are at one and the same time represented, challenged and overturned: a sort of place that lies outside all spaces and yet is actually localizable. (Foucault, 352)

The garden acquires a similar characterization. Fusing *physis* and *poiesis*, Elysium presents the impossible ideals of the self as actualities. The imagination provides its own sustenance, even within the reach of societal obligation. Furthermore, it has accomodated the impulses of the environment into its conception. In this ability to

interpret rather than impose upon the natural realm Julie truly displays her eminence. In explanation of her arrangement of the garden, Julie declares:

> Everything you see is wild and robust plants; it's enough to put in the ground, and they grow on their own. Moreover, nature seems to want to veil from men's eyes her true attractions, to which they are too insensible, and which they disfigure when they can get their hands on them: she flees much-frequented places; it is on the tops of mountains deep in the forests, on desert Islands that she deploys her most stirring charms. Those who love her and cannot go so far to find her are reduced to doing her violence, forcing her in a way to come and live with them, and all this cannot be done without a modicum of illusion. (394)

The statement acknowledges the necessity of artifice in her approximation of nature. The discourse could be extended, as well, to her own compulsion for retreating from the "eyes" of men. The levels of fiction that she employs in the garden are an adaptation to the demands made upon her by society. Elysium represents an ideal that St. Preux repeatedly pursues in his various sojourns to the Valais, Meillerie, and even the Indies. It is an enclosure that links the medieval image of the *hortus conclusus* as the ultimate sanctuary of the female paragon to the Romantic quest for the self. Julie achieves a state that the romantic or pre-romantic figures of St. Preux and the Solitary Walker continue to strive for, that is, self-sufficiency, a stable union of nature and order achieved with the allegiance of the imagination.

CHAPTER 3

METROPOLIS

> I enter with a secret horror into this vast desert of the world. This chaos presents me with nothing but horrible solitude, wherein reigns a dull silence. My beleaguered soul seeks for expansion, and everywhere finds itself hemmed in. I am never less alone than when I am alone, said an Ancient, I on the other hand am alone only in the crowd, where I can be neither with you nor with the others. (II, Letter XIV)

So St. Preux describes Paris, the city to which he is brought by Milord Edward. No doubt St. Preux's repulsion from the claustrophobic environ of the city is prompted by the experience of rupture which precipitated his journey to Paris. His perception of himself as an exile necessarily mediates the impression that his immersion into the cityscape makes upon him. In his forlorn state the city that will one day be popularly represented as the prototypical shelter for artists and sentimentals alike materializes as the "desert of the world." Significantly, this misanthropic rant recurs like a motif in Rousseau's writing. In Book IV of his *Confessions*, he declares:

> How greatly did the entrance into Paris belie the idea that I had formed of it! The external decorations of Turin, the beauty of its streets, the symmetry and regularity of the houses, had made me look for something quite different in Paris. I had imagined to myself a city of most imposing aspect, as beautiful as it was large, where nothing was to be seen but splendid streets and palaces of gold and marble. Entering by the suburb of St. Marceau, I saw nothing but dirty and stinking little streets, ugly black houses, a general air of slovenliness and poverty, beggars, carters, menders of old clothes, criers of decoctions and old hats. All this,

> from the outset, struck me so forcibly, that all the real magnificence I have since seen in Paris has been unable to destroy this first impression, and I have always retained a secret dislike against residence in this capital. I may say that the whole time, during which I afterwards lived there, was employed solely in trying to find means to enable me to live away from it.

In light of these statements, it is easy to associate St. Preux's rejection of Paris with Rousseau's own disparaging impression of the city. Yet their judgments are made upon discrete bases. For St. Preux, the city represents the hostile *other* space that infringes upon the self and interferes with the soul's desire for "expansion". Instead of the accord offered in the Alpine landscape Rousseau's protagonist finds in Paris a sense of displacement. His criticism of the city depends upon its role as the instrument through which society imposes itself upon the "sensible soul". The soul disintegrates within the discordant "desert" of the city into its societal component and its inherent component. The most fearful aspect of Paris, particularly, is the proclivity of Parisians to exchange the one for the other. "The main objection to large cities" St. Preux explains to Julie "is that there men become other than what they are, and society imparts to them, as it were, a being other than their own" (223). For the Rousseau persona of the *Confessions*, however, the city is viewed not as a threat to the integrity of the self but as a filthy disillusionment. His depiction emanates from an aesthetic, rather than moral, argument. Rousseau the confessor complains that the city does not live up to the expectations that had been generated by other people's reports and nurtured by his own imagination. Ultimately he interprets his disappointment as the natural outcome of the contest between his hyperreal imagination and the reality of Paris. He explains it thus:

> Such is the fruit of a too lively imagination, which exaggerates beyond human exaggeration, and is always ready to see more than it has been told to expect. ...the same thing will always happen to me, when I see anything which has been too loudly announced; for it is impossible for men, and difficult for Nature herself, to surpass the exuberance of my imagination. (98)

It is a curious evaluation, as he ascribes to his imagination powers that "surpass" not only the reality of the city, but the province of "Nature herself". This distinction signifies a compelling divergence from the stance of his novel's protagonist, St. Preux.

For St. Preux, the city is the site of an unnatural theater of semblance in which the natural and essential are subverted by the demands of society. While he had embraced the artifice that Julie had employed in Elysium, he mocks the pretensions of behavior in Paris. He recognizes that the accomodation of nature in Elysium is necessary. It is an implicit agreement with what Garber articulates as the primacy of "a full and various content" so essential to "Julie's idea of a private enclosure" (23). Julie simply had to import and create those elements that the orchard had not already provided. Paris, however, maneuvers outside of the demands of the natural, and the behavior of its inhabitants attests to the consequent sacrifice. St. Preux finds the premium placed on artifice distasteful, for "all the efforts expended there in pleasing distort true beauty" (224). Paris lies at an extreme for St. Preux, farther even from the site of his emotional residence than the exotic lands he encounters in his voyages. Indeed, he approaches its inhabitants and traits with the same objectifying zeal that characterizes the habit of the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard who "compared his urban tours to rural botanizing" in which the people he encountered in Copenhagen were the "specimens he gathered" (Solnit, 23). Such scrutiny of the social environment of Paris in his letters

resembles the account of the *promeneur's* rambles in the countryside. His narrative follows a similar exilic mode in which the naive spirit is challenged by the impositions of an unsympathetic community. The negativity with which St. Preux imbues the experience of estrangement affixes his perspective firmly in the eighteenth-century. Rousseau's two autobiographical personae in *Confessions* and *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, however, intimate that there might be an alternative interpretation of the sensation of alienation. Furthermore, Rousseau the confessor suggests that it might ultimately be the reign of familiarity that requires rejection. It is reality's intrusion upon his illusion that frustrates his experience in Paris.

Between this implicit dialogue of St. Preux and the Rousseau narrator, one can trace the emergent nineteenth-century response to the peculiar phenomenon of the metropolis. For the artists and writers who reside in Paris some years later, the power of the imagination celebrated by Rousseau and the "being other" that St. Preux denigrates will be coupled into a resilient hybrid. These artists demonstrate that the city from which Rousseau recoils is, as Boym states, a space that is a site of power. In her interpretation of Richard Sennett she explains that it is also a space in which "'master images have cracked apart...These aspects of urban experience--difference, complexity, strangeness--afford resistance to domination. This craggy and difficult urban geography makes a particular moral promise. It can serve as a home for those who have accepted themselves as exiles from the Garden'" (76).

Once the Garden proves itself to be enclosed, either by Cherubim or the encroaching claims of modernity, the city asserts its sovereignty over the imagination. Although it does not remove the artist from the intrusive glare of society, Paris does

provide a screen by virtue of its discordant elements. The frenetic pace of the metropolis, its crowds and cramped quarters convey the writer beyond the boundaries of the self. The preeminent exponent of this virtue of the cityscape, Charles Baudelaire, renders an image of the metropolis that rivals the evocation of the imaginary in Rousseau's pastoral settings. Baudelaire's writing venerates the "capital of the nineteenth century", Paris, as an agent of the creative impulse. In the boulevards and throngs of the city, Baudelaire discovers a font of poetic inspiration. His *flaneur* persona revels in the "incomparable privilege" of immersion in the Parisian crowd, as his prose poem "Crowds" suggests. He experiences the disorientation of the "multitudes" as a liberation from the self, rather than as a threat to its primacy. Indeed, he inverts Rousseau's equation of solitude with a location in nature and declares: "Multitude, solitude: identical terms, and interchangeable by the active and fertile poet" (*The Parisian Prowler,* 21). Baudelaire embraces the "multitude" of the streets as the conduit that propels the soul along a voyage of the imagination. The Parisian pedestrian of Baudelaire's writing is transfixed by the idea of transport and movement. Although his urban dweller is motivated by discovery, the land that he sets out to reveal, define, and explore requires only a stroll to reach. He compares the exhiliration that such expeditions generate to "mysterious intoxications" unknown to the rest of the crowd but in all likelihood familiar to those "[f]ounders of colonies, shepherds of peoples, missionary priests exiled to the ends of the earth" for whom the destination was as important as the journey. For Baudelaire, however, the moment created by his cobblestone journey is the ultimate destination.

Amidst the dissembling chaos of a myriad "tyranny of the human face" Baudelaire's "solitary and thoughtful stroller" finds a state that is as replete with the

satisfaction of the self as the Isle de St. Pierre is for the *Promeneur Solitaire*. They each arrive at this state by "drifting" and "strolling", having relinquished conscious thought to the rhythm of their environment. The *promeneur* of the fifth walk describes his reverie as the suspension of the grip of the subject-object dichotomy upon his thoughts, so that he experiences "nothing external" (70). For the *flaneur* of "Crowds", the bustling avenues equally blur the distinctions so that he for whom "enjoying the crowd is an art" delves into a similar reverie which he characterizes as "universal communion".

This is not a translation of his immersion into the anonymous space of the street as an episode of *fraternité.* Instead, he derives this equivalence vampirically, for "he enters, when he wants, into everyone's character" (21). A second generation *promeneur* in an urban wilderness, Baudelaire's protagonist mimics and distorts Rousseau's declaration that he had "assimilated" the isle and its contents to his "fictions", so completely that he had difficulty "separating the fictions from the realities"(70). In the presence of the crowds that were, in Benjamin's consummate estimation, "the agitated veil" through which Baudelaire saw Paris the *flaneur* similarly asserts a poetic identity that is "able, at will, to be himself and an other" (21).

Baudelaire topples more than one Romantic paradigm with this declaration. Discarded is the Wordsworthean equation of sublimity with a moment in tranquil nature as well as the symbolic detachment from society as either a recluse or a rebellious "legislator of the world". Baudelaire's poetry does not operate in the rarified air of Swiss mountaintops but in the muddy streets of his Faubourg. Instead, he is engaged in the art of the encounter: with the foreign, the urbane, and the self. It is in this sense that

all of his writing records a journey, either external or internal but never on the vertical trajectory with which St. Preux is so enamored.

Significantly, he also rejects the notion of the much sought-after coherent self. In "Crowds" the *flaneur* detaches momentarily from the subjective husk and acquires a simultaneity of being that suggests a fissure of the self but is actually an opening outward of the "mollusk" in which the spiritually timid are "confined". Although the integrity of the self appears irrelevant to the speaker in "Crowds", he pronounces in "At one o'clock in the morning" his desire that "this turn of the key will increase my solitude and fortify the barricades" which keep the world at a distance.

These works provide a perplexingly paradoxical comment on the poet's stance toward the concept of the self. Possibly, his retreat into a walled and uninhabited space is an assertion in an ongoing dialogue between the poetic persona and his environment. Or, more precisely, it is indicative of the dialectic engagement of the *flaneur* with the full variety of the capital. " ' Now a landscape, now a room, ' Walter Benjamin wrote," Solnit reports of the essayist's impression of Paris in her work *Wanderlust*. The writer's encapsulation of the pedestrian's viewpoint of the city leads to a resolution of the poet's contradictory responses to his metropolitan milieu. Furthermore, as Solnit's reference to Arendt attests, Paris provides characteristics of a dwelling even in its streets.

> In Paris a stranger feels at home because he can inhabit the city the way he lives in his own four walls. And just as one inhabits an apartment, and makes it comfortable, by living in it instead of just using it for sleeping, eating, and working, stay secured by the countless cafés which line the streets and past which the life of the city, the flow of pedestrians moves along. (211)

Baudelaire embraces the twin sanctuaries of isolation in the city: the street and the apartment.

The two distinct sites are equally essential to the citydweller's poetic identity. Baudelaire manages to integrate the public and the private into the equivocal identity of the poetic explorer. He ventures out into a world that challenges the authenticity of the interior experience and then returns to the walls of his room to synthesize his perceptions. The street is a generative site fuelled by the dynamic elements of a cityscape brimming with vitality such as in Robert Musil's opening scene in *The Man Without Qualities* as:

> made up of irregularity, change, forward spurts, failures to keep step, collisions of objects and interests punctuated by unfathomable silences; made up of pathways and untrodden ways, of one great rhythmic beat as well as the chronic discord and mutual displacement of all its contending rhythms. (4)

Electrified by the unrelenting motion, Baudelaire's *flaneur* looks outward as often as he looks inward.

Perhaps it is the twilight terrain that the city poet traverses between the street and the apartment that is his true abode. Certainly, the netherworld of twilight supplants the celestial plane in the Parisian's poetry. The meeting ground of the day and the night, twilight is the liminal territory of the urbane poet who "contains multitudes"*. Once it arrives, he embraces its twofold nature as the agitator of two species of madmen as he relates in "Twilight". The first is incapable of recognition; the second still suffers from a compulsion "for imaginary distinctions" and to this day "carries within himself the anxiety of a perpetual disquiet" (51). This strain of twilight "madness" resurfaces in the daydream manifesto of the assistant bookkeeper of the city of Lisbon, Bernardo Soares. Soares' work actually belongs to the canon of Fernando Pessoa, the poet who spliced his

creative ingenuity into multiple fictional personae which he called *heterónimos*. As the only distinctly prose writer in the Portuguese poet's repertoire, Soares' work limns the terrain between the real and the imaginary, the lived experience and the created one. Soares emerges, Pessoa explains, "whenever I'm tired or sleepy when my powers of ratiocination and my inhibitions are slightly suspended; that prose is a constant daydreaming." Pessoa's somnolent narrator seems to offer his only text in response to Baudelaire's question in "Anywhere Out of This World":

> It seems that I would always be content where I am not, and I constantly discuss that question of relocation with my soul.
> Tell me, my soul, my poor benumbed soul, what would you think about residing in Lisbon? … Now there's a landscape to your liking; a landscape made of light and mineral, and of liquid to reflect them! (25)

For the "semiheteronym" of *The Book of Disquiet*, the landscape of Lisbon was indeed accommodating to the poetic soul. Not only do the landmarks of the city present innumerable scenes to be transcribed in the writer's imagination, but also its panorama ravishes the poet of any identity other than that of its scribe. The impulse to surrender the soul to a greater experience which the Romantics characterized in terms of an Absolute, is performed on a more modest scale by the bookkeeper tormented by the equivalence of his boss Vasques with"[l]ife, monotonous and necessary, commanding and unknown" (¶123, 111) and his consciousness of the contrast between "the heights of majesty of all dreams" and an "assistant bookkeeper in the city of Lisbon" (¶ 29, 26). In his mundane urban existence, he reinterprets the role of the artist. As an addendum to Baudelaire's concept of the poet-seeker, unsatisfied until engaged in a confrontation with alterity, Pessoa posits Soares' contemplation of the self as other. In contrast to the Parisian

flaneur, the bookkeeper does not seek external objects in order to project images of his internal reality. Instead, in every object before him he sees the evidence of his own externality. The landscape of Lisbon is as instrumental in this endeavor as Paris is to Baudelaire. The journal of the fictional Soares delves into the relationship between the multiple identities that the artist encompasses. In each epigrammatic fragment, he chronicles his increasing awareness that:

> I have cultivated several personalities within myself. I constantly cultivate personalities. Each of my dreams, immediately after I dream it, is incarnated into another person, who then goes on to dream it, and I stop.
> To create, I destroyed myself; I made myself external to such a degree within myself that within myself I do not exist except in an external fashion. (¶ 23, 22)

Soares, unlike Baudelaire, does not counterbalance the dual elements of existence in the city, represented by the spaces of the street and the apartment, via his imagination. Instead, his acknowledgment of an essential self is made surreptitiously in terms of its absence. Yet he is not bound in a cycle of lack and desire. Rather, he repeatedly traces the outline of his externality as proof of his existence.

This distinction can be seen in each of the metropolitan writers' use of the image of the window as a vessel for the imagination. In Baudelaire's prose poem “Windows”, he conveys the creative quality that imbues the act of gazing out of a window. Although intended as a light source, for Baudelaire it is an innovative device for connecting with and framing the external world. In the view across “the billowing rooftops” he finds a sight more interesting than what “you can see in sunlight.” Ultimately, the compelling nature of the vision lays less in the object itself than in the gaze that transforms it. The woman, “already wrinkled” becomes the subject of an imaginary narrative that he has

"refashioned" so adeptly that "sometimes I tell it to myself weeping" (93). The effect upon his emotions proclaims the magnitude of his abilities. Indeed, he goes to sleep "proud of having lived and suffered in others than myself." He thus equates his internally created story with an act of empathy. Whether or not the source of the story is "true", he argues, is less relevant than the truth of his emotional response. "Does it matter what the reality located outside of me might be," he inquires of the reader, "if it has helped me to live, to feel that I am and *what* I am?" Baudelaire extrapolates from the image in the window of the old woman a reflection of himself. Even with his gaze extended beyond his walls, he connects only with his own creativity.

For Soares, however, each window suggests a new realm in which the self-consciousness of the ego can be suspended. In *Trecho* 37 he reports an impression that reverses the arc of Baudelaire's gaze. Amidst the crowds on the Rua Nova do Almada, his eyes narrow in on the man walking in front of him. They absorb the minutiae of his appearance, despite the fact that they are "commonplace". Once he has inventoried the man's attire, including the portfolio under his left arm and the umbrella in his right, he recounts that he "suddenly felt something like tenderness for that man" (32). What prompts this emotional response is a recognition, not of the writer's own ideas, but of the symbolic valence of this man as a representative of "common human vulgarity, for the quotidian banality of the paterfamilias on his way to work" and most significantly "for his innocence in living without analyzing things". Once he has begun to feel sympathy towards the unconscious man of the masses, his gaze opens up a "window through which I saw these thoughts". Thus his immersion in the crowd of the street leads first to his singularization of this one man whose very resistance to particularization inspires a

sympathy from which an entirely distinct vision of the whole of humanity emerges. The thoughts which appear through the back of the common man fluctuate between reflections on consciousness and his description of an emotional state that he characterizes as feeling "compassion with the generosity of an infinite thing"(33).

Soares' focus on a single pedestrian amidst the throngs on Rua Nova do Almada creates a conduit through which his thoughts can traverse beyond his own somnolent state and into an altogether different consciousness. His imagination thus propelled, the assistant bookkeeper begins to philosophize on the divergent states of consciousness that he himself has experienced and that are extant within the crowd. Although he attempts to connect to the reality, rather than the fiction of the world outside himself, he remains isolated enough to view it through the objectivity of his own subjective lens. What is peculiar in the passage and indeed, in the work as a whole, is the absence of identity in the scenario that he depicts. Even as he sets up the binary oppositions of self and other, conscious man and unconscious mass*, he seems to commingle the distinctions of the individual and the general. Although he sees himself as distinct from the crowd, he also generalizes his own consciousness with that of an "infinite thing". The "reality located outside" which Baudelaire considers only in light of its relation to his own experience takes on an altogether different significance for Soares. The external that Baudelaire explores as a foreign territory becomes in *The Book of Disquiet* the comfort and constraint of a well-worn path.

As a heteronymic narrator in Pessoa's canon, albeit a halfling, Soares dwells primarily in the external, but only in a hyper-conscious simulation of a personality. He is acutely aware of a lack of a defined core. In his meditation on Omar Khayyam he

declares: "Omar had a personality; I, for better or worse do not." (¶15, 16) Furthermore, he suggests that his lack of a personality relates to the multitude of perspectives that are contained in his being. "Omar, who he is, lives in only one world, the external world;" whereas, Soares elucidates, "someone like me, who is not who he is, not only lives in the external, objective world, but in successive, diverse, internal worlds that are subjective" (17). His consciousness is divided, not by disease, but by an inability to actively pursue experience through only one lens. Objectivity, subjectivity, fiction and reality continuously lay claim upon his attempts to make distinctions. He is truly a denizen of the twilight, for he repeatedly exchanges one perspective for another.

Such a characterization confounds the notion of the early Romantic "imprisoning self' as described by Lilian Furst in *Contours of European Romanticism*. Her comparison of Goethe's protagonist Werther and Rousseau's Solitary Walker demonstrates the centrality of the self, 'intently and even desperately holding on to' itself, as Bellow's Joseph puts it" until it " becomes the organizing--or possibly disorganizing--center of the universe"(148). In a dramatic instance of counterpoint, the protagonist of *The Book of Disquiet* has deconstructed the self into its components through which he composes his non-linear, disparate fragments. The only center, then, is the universe, or, more precisely in the case of Bernardo Soares, the city that comprises a cosmos.

It is this quality of multiplicity, as well as Soares' language that renders him only "*um semiheterónimo*" in relation to the triumvirate of Pessoa poets: Alberto Caiero, Álvaro de Campos, and Ricardo Reis*. Pessoa acknowledges the source of Soares' angst as an "inadaptation to the reality of life" brought about by an inability to integrate the external and the internal (*A Centenary Pessoa*, 228). The text provides a record of the

burgeoning lacunae between *cogito* and *ego*. The key to adaptation, Pessoa's commentary seems to suggest, and the discussion of Baudelaire's *flaneur* illustrates, is the formulation of an identity as *fictio*. The first fragments of *The Book of Disquiet* appear prior to the date that Pessoa attributes to the manifestation of the line "*Guardador de Rebanhos*", the title of the first poem written in the style of Alberto Caiero. Soares, as the force behind the impressionistic diary, exists as a backdrop for the formation of creativity by filtering the stimuli of the city into miniature narratives. The sensations that he records find themselves transmuted by language, style and perspective into the poems of the *heterónimos*. His primary artistic contribution therefore, is less an act of production than an accumulation of the sensations that he declares to possess despite his own uncertainty that he actually exists.

In the text he undergoes an examination of identity that recalls to some extent St. Preux's own compulsive search for an ideal sanctuary of the self. He acknowledges this compatibility in a remark recorded in *Trecho* 256 that at one time "I thought I felt,…a similarity with Rousseau"(250). The presence of this sensation, however, is momentary, for "it wasn't long before it occurred to me that while I didn't have the privilege of being an aristocrat with a castle I also didn't have the privilege of being a vagabond Swiss"(250). Although denied a peripatetic existence in an Alpine landscape, and funding from a patron, Soares declares "there is also a universe on the Rua dos Douradoras" (250). The street imparts a variation of the sequestered self such as Rousseau seeks in the mountains and on the island. Ostensibly an exchange of the pastoral terrain for a pedestrian one, the bookkeeper's departure from Romantic conventions includes an alteration in mode.

The ultimate sanctuary of the self in Soares' text depends less upon a physical reinforcement of the bounds of self and other than on the emotional detachment provided by sites in which those boundaries are blurred. Amidst the multitude, Soares, like Baudelaire before him, disperses the self into the variety of the landscape before him. Such an accommodation of "multiple" personalities, would surely terrify the Rousseau protagonist who peers into the cityscape with fear. Soares appropriates the multitude as his own identity in an uncanny tactic of self-preservation. Rather than rejecting the crowd that reinforces his sense of isolation, he embraces it as the benefactor of an alterity that gives his ambivalent existence an identity. This positive interpretation of the metropolis and its confrontation of the individual binds Soares to his closest literary relative, Pessoa himself. Among Pessoa's *ellemesmo* poems, one in particular comments on the fullness and variety of his fictional coterie. "I don't know how many souls I have," he informs the reader, because

> Attentive to what I am and see
> I become them and stop being I.
> Each of my dreams and each desire
> Belongs to whoever had it, not me.
> I am my own landscape,
> I watch myself journey—
> Various, mobile, and alone.
> Here where I am I can't find myself. (*Pessoa & Co.*, 113)

Pessoa's polyvocal poet stands in direct opposition to Rousseau's intolerance for any intrusion upon the centrality of the self. Although the manifestation of each of his *heterónimos* is an act of abdication of the ego, Pessoa's literary contribution is truly individual. Of this paradox, Octavio Paz's explanation provides the most satisfying response. "He turns himself into an *oeuvre* of his *oeuvre*," Paz writes in the introduction to *Fernando Pessoa: Antologia (A Centenary Pessoa,x*). The riddle that this presents is

embedded in his name and if we follow the thread of etymology we can maneuver within the labyrinth of his fiction, if not fully chart its terrain. "*Pessoa* means person in Portuguese" Paz realizes, which "derives from *persona*, mask of Roman actors." Even these two meanings attached to the singular being of Fernando Pessoa seem to provide only a glimpse into the multiple meanings intimated in the poems. Paz elaborates: "Mask, character out of fiction, no one: Pessoa" (3).

As a "mutilation" or modulation of Pessoa's own being, Soares approaches the universe of Lisbon with the same attention that Julie gives to the arrangement of the garden. The "paradise within thee" that is promised to Milton's Adam and that Julie adopts and extends into her personal sanctuary finds a peculiar exponent in Pessoa and his literary extensions. An abundant variety of resources do indeed lie "within", but it requires a physical setting in which to be projected. For Soares this paradise remains internal rather than terrestrial, but its magnificence is amplified in relation to the external. It is in this sense that the city of Lisbon performs for the "bookkeeper" a vital role. The city offers itself and its inhabitants as a prism through which the poet can glimpse distilled images of alterity that he rearranges into a panorama of his own subjective experience.

The text of *The Book of Disquiet* is a pre-cinematic version of the early Russian film by Dziga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*. Vertov's lens presents no protagonist but offers instead an accumulation of film images of the ebb and flow of his urban setting. In the text sidewalk cafés, *tabacarias*, trolleys whose "metallic ring" sound human to Soares' ears, are images that zoom in and out of focus for the reader, and are as much the subject of his composition as are the impressions that they make upon him. Or,

more precisely, they are images that are conveyed through him. Rather than the man behind the camera constructing an image or a narrative, such as the pose that Baudelaire adopts in relation to his crowds, clouds, windows and windows, Soares adopts the role of the *camera oscura* through which light passes and an image is produced.

Walter Benjamin famously speculated on the symbiotic emergence of the modern city and the technology of the camera. "Our taverns and our metropolitan streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appeared to have us locked up hopelessly," he writes in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction". Once film was introduced as a medium, however, Benjamin explains, they "burst this prison-world asunder by the dynamite of the tenth of a second, so that now, in the midst of its far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go traveling" (238). Baudelaire described his own technique in terms of ocularity by calling himself a "kaleidoscope" and writing reveries inspired by the act of looking through "Windows" into the mystery of otherness. Soares similarly records the shapes upon which his eyes alight. He portrays the role that his imagination plays in the transmission of these scenes as decidedly more passive than that which Baudelaire projects. He casts himself on the receiving end of a larger vision, rather than as the source of a more elevated perspective.

The prevalence of this relationship emerges in his frequent meditations on the landscape. The image of the landscape and the tradition that surrounds it is fraught with the tensions between subject, object and environment that pervade the Pessoa canon as well as the literature of the metropolis in general. Pictorial landscapes offer portraits of the external that are necessarily bracketed. Whatever the terrain portrayed, the viewer

receives an image mediated by another's perspective. For Soares the landscape is the visual metaphor of his relationship with the external . The lines of perspective that a painter studies in order to affix the relationship between the viewer and the external object are compressed into a dash in Soares' text. In Soares' terminology the landscape, or *paisagem*, is symbolic of the internal frame that the subject places upon the object in its view. Landscape is what stands between "our concept of the world" and "the rest of what there is in the world". It consists of the "frames that bind up our sensations like books, bound copies of what we think" (¶271, 265). It is his "acute self-consciousness" of his isolation from the scene that he depicts that forces him to present this not as a projection onto a distant screen but as an immediate viewpoint. In this way the reader is privy not only to an artist's interpretation of an external scene but also to his awareness of the subjectivity of his own lens.

Despite his inability to relate to the external in any way other than internally, he does continuously turn his gaze outward. Unlike Baudelaire's photographic displacement of the "I" for the "eye", Soares becomes the lens between the two. If Soares could be characterized as seeking anything, it would not be an essential self, but a dispensation from consciousness. Even in his deprecating attitude towards the "vulgar" mass on the street, a note of envy creeps in. There are moments, however, when his consciousness is mediated by its proximity to the public domains of the street, the café, the Baixa and the Tagus. For Soares, these are moments of liberation.

In the accounts of his daily excursions in Lisbon, there are numerous examples of the exultation and release that he experiences as a result of his being jostled by the city into a hypnotic state in which he can properly say "I exist" (¶43, 48). At such moments

he brings the liminality of his own imagination into the same dimension as the external and objective reality that otherwise overwhelms him. He likens this complicity to the sensation of walking along the streets in a state between sleeping and waking. As he arrives at:

> the street with my eyes open but still with the trace and the assurance of those dreams…I cross everyday life without dropping the hand of my astral nanny, and my steps along the road are in accord with and constant with obscure plans made by the imagination at sleep. And in the street I walk along with aplomb; I don't stagger; I answer properly; I exist (48).

In this scenario, Soares manages to mediate his experience on the street through an uninterrupted state of somnambulance. Even more significant than his newly discovered experience of being, is the resultant transformation of the street's otherwise monotonous dimensions into an alternate realm. In much the same way that his view of the "vulgar" man's back had morphed into an image of a window through which he could glimpse a larger series of relationships, he finds that the limitations placed upon his consciousness by sleep have revealed another vision of this familiar realm. Having entered the avenue in his present state, he declares:

> And so in broad daylight it happens that dreams have their big cinemas. I walk down an unreal street in the Baixa, and the reality of the lives that do not exist tenderly ties up my head in a white rag of false reminiscences. I am a sailor in my unknowing of myself. I overcame everything where I never was. And this somnolence with which I can walk along, bent forward in a march over the impossible, is a new breeze. (48)

The street has presented itself to him as a site for an imaginary voyage not unlike the streets of Paris had done for Baudelaire. Yet, his destination is not a fictionalized and

exotic domain, but the very real and mundane domain which he traverses daily. The distinction is simply one of condition. Through the intervention of his sleep pattern, the street becomes a terrain in which the consciousness of the external self is flush with the intensified internal consciousness. In this fragment, as well as in many others of the writer whose existence manifests, in a true *mise-en-abyme*, in the daydreams of another writer, sleep acts as the requisite intermediary between the conscious and the unconscious.

Dreaming and memory, the dual antagonists of oblivion, transfigure space in ways that are inaccessible in lucid states. Both sustain alterations of environment without the intrusion of reality. André Aciman imparts provocative commentary on the pliability of space once the compulsion of memory takes hold on the consciousness. As he sits by a fountain in Straus Park in Manhattan, his present location begins to dissemble until it is less an urban park "on an island in the middle of Broadway," than a site for restoration "in both its meanings—for retrospection, for finding oneself, for finding the center of things"(41). In his habitual exploration of the park, Aciman appropriates this location as a conduit for return. It becomes the center from which he can view the network of associations that his memory has placed like a "film over the entire city of New York" and in which the places that he has inhabited are enmeshed. Outside of the park, he intimates, his experience of New York continues to be mediated by the places that had penetrated the substrates of his memory. His most successful accommodation to the foreign city requires that he makes "it the mirror—call it the mnemonic correlative—of other cities I've known or imagined" (46). His travels to the park are permutations of

elliptical trajectories. Every time he ventures into its sanctuary, he ultimately ventures out into the perceptive field of remembered places. In this way, he states, that

> New York is my home precisely because it is a place from which I can begin to be elsewhere—an analogue city, a surrogate city, a shadow city that allows me to naturalize and neutralize this terrifying, devastating, unlivable megalopolis by letting me think it is something else, somewhere else, that it is indeed far smaller, quainter than I feared, the way certain cities on the Mediterranean are forever small and quaint, with just about the right number of places where people can go, sit, and, like Narcissus leaning over a pool of water, find themselves at every bend, every store window, every sculptured forefront.(47)

While he consistently characterizes the element of transformation which thrusts him out of consciousness in terms of sleeping and dreaming states, their true origin is in the imagination. Through the mitigation of the imagination's transformative gaze, Soares, like Baudelaire's *flaneur* and J.K. Huysmans' peculiar protagonist, des Esseintes, can venture beyond the streets of Lisbon. They have become so familiar that they appear to have "chartered" perception in the same manner that Blake attributes to early urban England in "London". Soares can "get the same sensation going from Lisbon to Bemfica, and have it more intensely than someone who goes from Lisbon to China" with the imagination as his vessel. In this example it would appear that geography is less important to sensation than the simple activity of movement. Furthermore, authentic experience is generated in the sensation rather than in the external reality of location.

Indeed, Soares dispenses with the external with almost the same rigor as des Esseintes, for whom the idea of travel "struck him as being a waste of time". The protagonist of Huysmans' novel initiates a journey to London from Paris but abandons the notion before he completes the trip. Ultimately he decides that "the imagination

could provide a more-thatn-adequate substitute for the vulgar reality of actual experience."(35) Likewise, Soares considers irrevocable the ability to connect with the "other" and accepts the creative engagement of the imagination as a simulation for such an impossible feat. He is in partial agreement with des Esseintes when he states:

> We never disembark from ourselves. We never reach an "other" except by making ourselves other by means of our sensible imagination of ourselves. Real landscapes are those we ourselves create, because in that way, being gods over them, we see them as they really are, which is how they were created. I am not interested in any of the seven parts of the world, which I can see; the eighth part is the one I explore and it is mine. (¶257, 251)

There is a critical distinction to be made between each of the fictional protagonists' stances towards travel. They are engaged in distinct enterprises. Travel is irrelevant to Soares because he has encounters enough within the Lisbon that he traverses daily. He continuously navigates the "distance between one being and another" that "is never revealed" for some, while "for others it is illuminated in horror or pain from time to time by a limitless lightning flash" (¶144, 148). For des Esseintes, however, the otherness that Soares explores is ultimately anathema to his desire to maintain reality solely by himself. There is little accommodation made for alterity in his home. Indeed, the lightning bolt that electrifies Soares in his encounters with the external is precisely the experience that des Esseintes' "Thebaid" was created to prevent. Des Esseintes harbors his negation of the world while he is safely removed from it in his extravagantly designed home. Soares, however, takes refuge within the porous vessel of his identity. Among the familiar landscape of the city that he inhabits he adopts the mode of marginalization. "A foreigner, I walked among them;" he confides to the reader, carrying within his entity the

traits of both similarity and estrangement. Although the other inhabitants "took me for a relative", he retains his alienation.

> I came from prodigious lands, from landscapes better than life, but I never spoke about the lands except to myself and I never gave them any account of the landscapes I had seen if I dreamed. My footsteps were like those of the others in halls and salons, but my heart was far away, even if it beat close by, false master of an exiled, strange body. (¶158, 143)

He dwells perpetually in the site of the separation between the self and other that opens each time he looks out upon the streets.

In this sense, Lisbon resembles Foucault's other characterization of the image of the heterotopia, which is that it should have "in relation to the rest of space, a function that takes place between two opposite poles."

> On the one hand they perform the task of creating a space of illusion that reveals how all of real space is more illusory, all the locations within which life is fragmented. On the other, they have the function of forming another space, another real space, as perfect, meticulous and well-arranged as ours is disordered, ill-conceived and in a sketchy state.

"This heterotopia," the philosopher suggests, significantly for an appreciation of space in *The Book of Disquiet*, "is not one of illusion but of compensation" (32). The definition faithfully depicts the peculiar circumstance of the text. Oscillating between painful lucidity and aesthetically pleasing hallucinations, Pessoa's semiheteronym conveys the

dual existence of the modern metropolis as an art form. He seems to acknowledge this himself in the *Trecho* he names *Peristilo*: "At the time when the landscape is a halo of life and dream is only dreaming oneself, I erected, my love, in the silence of my disquiet, this strange book with portals open at the end of the avenue" (¶193, 174).

CHAPTER 4

DOMUS

> When I write, I visit myself solemnly. I have special rooms, remembered by someone else in the interstices of my self-representation, where I take pleasure in analyzing what I do not feel, and I examine myself as if I were a painting in the shadows. *The Book of Disquiet* (¶177, 158)

Bernardo Soares' evaluation of the writing process presents a fertile analogy between self-representation and self-perception in terms of the confined spaces of "special rooms". It is an association that belongs to a well-established tradition in letters. In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard declares: "On whatever theoretical horizon we examine it, the house image would appear to have become the topography of our intimate being"(Preface,xxxii). Bachelard's statement is provocative, for its alignment of the "image" of the house with "intimate being" articulates an association of private space with the private life of the self that has been intimated in literature as early as *The Story of the Stone*. Whether it is Bao-yu's bedroom or Edna Pontellier's Esplanade St. atelier, private space has typically been represented in literature as the space in which the artist encounters the self.

In order to further unfold the associations of space and the self that permeate such tropes, one need only read Virginia Woolf's essay "A Room of One's Own". According to Woolf, the artist's physical environment is essential to an artist's development, for it not only provides material shelter, but also offers an "escape...from the common sitting room". While the essay addresses this room as the ingredient missing in the formulation of first-rate women writers, Woolf's evaluation of the necessity of the personal space that

such a room provides transcends issues of gender. What is fundamental about the space of the room is that it is "one's own", and therefore a component in the definition of the artist's identity as vital as existence itself.

For Woolf, the private space of the "room of an artist's own" is a physical necessity. Its dimensions provide a retreat from the arena of the societal and the domestic, and thus allow the self that exists outside of these parameters to emerge. The delineation of identity that is offered within its walls is self-determined, (and therefore internal) rather than the socially determined, (and therefore external) space of the "common sitting room". The essay elucidates the distinction between externally determined identity and internally determined identity that pervades the metaphorical depictions of private space as the realm which privileges the self of the artist.

In Woolf's formulation, the private space of the room that she envisions for the artist exists in direct opposition to public space. In order to understand the writer's preference for the private enclosure one must recognize the possibility present within its space and absent in public space. The material margins of the room provide an alternate realm for the self of the artist in which the societal principles that govern identity are removed and exchanged for the structure's physical standards. Entrance into the "room of one's own" therefore simultaneously represents liberation from the mold of conformity and an opportunity to forge a new, separate identity as an artist within its walls. It is this potential for self-creation that distinguishes the private space of the room as a creative space.

The Passion According to G.H. offers an elaborate treatise on the nature of this created realm. The Brazilian novel resonates with the implications of spatial relationships. Within its bounds, the narrator, declared only by her initials, G.H., encounters a multiplicity of arrangements between the self and the space that it inhabits. She depicts the incrementally accrued awareness of her perceptions of her own identity and the implications that such evaluations have upon her concepts of everything within

her environment. The text depicts her initial domestic sensibility and its transformation into a portrait of the *unheimlich* and eventually into a song of the sublime.

As Anthony Vidler explains in *The Architectural Uncanny*, the philosophy behind the adaptation of the German word for "unhomely" arises in the psychological interpretations developed by Sigmund Freud.

> As articulated theoretically by Freud, the uncanny or *unheimlich* is rooted by etymology and usage in the environment of the domestic, or the *heimlich*, thereby opening up problems of identity around the self, the other, the body and its absence: thence its force in interpreting the relations between the psyche and the dwelling, the body and the house, the individual and the metropolis. (Preface,*x*)

In every sense of the definition that Vidler provides, *The Passion According to G.H.* presents a textual exploration of the "unhomely", or, in common English usage, the "uncanny". The *unheimlich* likewise provides a domain in which "the two beings" that Bachelard declares as belonging to the image of a door are unfurled. The image of the door that begins the discussion of space in this thesis is also an appropriate starting point for an explication of Clarice Lispector's novel. The nominal narrative in the text hinges upon the provocative image of a door being opened and the space beyond its frame that is entered.

While entry into an alternate realm is a fundamental element in the narratives of each of the texts discussed thus far, in *The Passion According to G.H.* it is the pivotal component. The perfectly mundane act of opening the door to the maid's room in her apartment is transfigured into a sublime moment. The novel depends upon a symbolic enactment of the transition prefigured in one of Soares' meditations. The bookkeeper searches the faces of the passerby for his own reflection and sees only his own isolation. The experience prompts him to stop, and "seek something like a sudden new dimension,

a door into the interior of space, into the other side of space, where I can instantly flee from the consciousness of others, from my all-too-objectified intuition of the reality of the living souls of others"(¶ 40, 36). The encounter between subject and object that takes place on the street in *The Book of Disquiet* is brought within the confines of an apartment in Rio and transformed into an encounter between two parallel spaces that emblematize the dichotomies of identity.

While the plot, such as it is, begins with the crossing of a threshold; the account begins ex post facto with the narrator's attempt to transcribe the experience of the abyss for her imaginary reader. Having stepped "into the other side of space" that Soares can only dream about, G.H.'s newly acquired awareness of rupture colors her ability to make relationships, even in language. G.H. recites the story of her "passion " in a voice of halting repetition and a breathless tone that intimates the immensity of "it", the experience beyond the door of the maid's room. Language, she suggests in the chronicle that is equal parts confessional, journal, and conversion narrative, cannot contain the entirety of the experience. The assignment of visual icons and auditory signals to objects, G.H. implies, does little to render their meaning. Instead she must reassemble its fragments into an image of a complex whole.

"But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul, is to be expunged," warns the narrator of Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. And this he does accomplish, "by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, by which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid."(Plate 14) Thus the narrator of Blake's 1793 prose poem proposes to dismantle the binary oppositions of the Enlightenment, in particular the Cartesian split between corporeal and spiritual modes of existence. Such distinctions must undergo the incendiary cure of Hell that will engage the contraries of reason and desire in a dialogue to expose the absolute that lies "between the black and white spiders". The limitations of

the fallen state of human perception require the narrator to adopt the voice of the devil and the language of paradox to tease out the eternal for the reader.

In literature, the pursuit of experience unbounded by such limitations often necessitates the appropriation of a marginal character. Cast out from the acceptable realm, the peripheral persona is freed from societal norms and is able to indulge in liberties that are unavailable to those within the circle of traditional experience. Thus, Blake's devil taunts the angel and Shakespeare's fools mock the king because they are able to recognize truth without the mediation of conventional perception and retain the privilege of expressing that truth. They are paradoxical figures occupying a subversive space between freedom and confinement.

The heroine of Lispector's novel realizes such a space as she moves into the unfamiliar realm of the maid's room. Her response recalls the reaction of St. Preux upon entering Elysium and Binx Bolling awakening "to the possibility of a search" in *The Moviegoer*. Bolling's existential search for meaning occasionally exposes the potential for revelation even in the mundane and repetitive experience of a stockbroker riding the Gentilly bus along Elysian Fields Avenue. At such moments, the protagonist of Walker Percy's novel imagines that "he is like Robinson Crusoe seeing the footprint on the beach" (97). G.H. similarly invokes the concept of discovery, not of an island, but of the frontier of an "empire" (15).

She discovers a pathway that leads her through the looking glass that constructs a purely external definition and into an inverted, interior realm. Like the diabolical tour guide of Blake's hell, the entity that belongs to the two "phonetic fragments" of the initials "G.H." wrestles with the binary oppositions upon which the concept of selfhood is constructed. Each is tormented by the distinctions of self and other, body and soul, which attempt to affix identity in terms of separation or limitation. Alternatively, the breach opened up by the two sets of antitheses requires reconciliation. Into this fissure G.H. inserts her text.

On either extreme of the identity spectrum lay the two spaces within her top floor apartment. In the first, the "more than elegant" abode at an elevation from which "you can command a city", she posits a definition in terms of the space that she initially inhabits. "Just like me," she states, "the apartment has moist lights and shadows" and each room suggests a "prelude" to the next (22). In a similar sense, G.H. exists as a preamble to an identity. She suggests that her personality is simply a sketch that she allows to be filled by what others wish to see. In this state prior to her transformative encounter with alterity, she safely assumes the shape that her social contacts require. She demarcates the bounds of her identity in response to the question " 'among whom am I?'" rather than " 'what am I?'" The apartment's dimensions resemble her own because they perform the same function of providing an external frame modified by the judgments of the society to which she belongs.

The Passion According to G.H. offers an elaborate treatise on the nature of this exterior realm. The apartment is a reflection of her disengaged mode of being. Lispector's protagonist feels no burden of authentic existence, preferring one that is allusive rather than original. G.H. calls it a "witty riposte of a life that has never existed anywhere (22)." Its elegance is a simulacrum of the society of dilettantes with whom she mingles. This pretense, she reveals, is a deliberate effort to dissociate from life. She prefers a passive reproduction to an active conception. The apartment, therefore, resembles a film screen upon which she projects the image of the self as constructed by her community.

As she examines her domicile for the reader, she connects it to a discovery of self, or lack thereof. She does not claim the life that is reflected in the apartment as her own.*

The realization of the detachment that the apartment embodies initiates an explanation of her motivation. She evaluates her choice and determines that "tracing a life probably gave me a sense of security precisely because the life wasn't mine: it wasn't a responsibility that I had to deal with" (22). G.H. has composed in her dwelling the life that she feigns to possess.

G.H. adopts the role that she is given by society in order to subvert it. Thus, the evidence of her external identity, such as the apartment, the photographs, even her initials, is a mark of the discrepancy between the apparent and the actual self. Her true essence has no room in the apartment. The penthouse of privilege ultimately imprisons her into an existence relegated to surfaces unconnected to cores.

The recognition of this disparity culminates in her attempts to define the space that limits her being. G.H. has a "calling" for ordering her home. She looks forward to the maid's day off, for it allows her to pursue the activity of cleaning that she is otherwise denied. This practice of systematically putting things in their place is compared to sculpting which allows her to "create and understand at the same time" (25). Such a quest towards the creation and understanding of the objects contained in the apartment implies a desire to find a personal significance within its emptiness. Yet, the adornments lack the associative power that would convey meaning because they are ultimately the props for the part that she enacts for her audience. Like her initials upon her luggage, they suggest imprints upon the things to which she belongs rather than the things that belong to her. G.H. actively engages in this process of ordering her home with the intention of instituting some semblance of personal meaning into the dwelling place. However, the domicile that would ordinarily be the most immediate source of

individuality is a framework upon which the public forms of identification overwhelm individual ones. The space that she inhabits proves to be the ground from which external identities are disseminated.

Thus the *unheimlich* manifests itself within the careful composition of G.H.'s artifice. Lispector inverts the association of "intimate being" with the personal residence. The unnerving quality of this exchange of reflective walls for protective ones becomes an elaborate treatise not only in her novel but in the architectural piece *Ur haus*, or *Todes Haus Ur* of Gregor Schneider which received some attention as the German representative at the 49th *Biennale di Venezia*.

"I enter an in-between space which allows me to see that the coffee room rotates, like a stage, on its own axis," writes Noemi Smolik of her encounter with his work in "Despair Not: One of the Houses is Blessed. Rejoice Not: One of the Houses is Damned." Not only are the rooms not firmly grounded, but attempts to look out through the panes of glass reveal that "the window is an illusion". Instead of offering a view outside, the window is "mounted, like a mirror image, in front of the window to the outside". Schneider creates in his work the experience of discomfort that characterizes notions of the uncanny. The building at No.12 Unterheydener Strasse is a work of art to be entered as well as viewed. Although it resembles an ordinary house from the outside, the artist's careful arrangement of the space within evokes a variety of sensations with every footstep. The hallways between rooms are such narrow passages that they are bound to invoke claustrophobia. Furthermore, the succession of rooms leads to a dark and damp cellar from which only nightmares seem to originate. The artist's

deconstruction of the primary, interior space of the dwelling is ultimately an effort to unfurl those associations between physical and psychic *loci* that mystify G.H.

Above the street and the rabble in Rio, G.H. like the guest of the *Ur haus*, uncovers "secret apertures" which propel her into a state of defamiliarization. The mirrored stage of the penthouse is shattered when she enters the room of the nameless maid who had quit the day before. The maid's absence transforms the entirety of the dwelling by removing from G.H. any external gaze within the walls of her apartment. Definition, within the magnified silence of "this dwelling in which I live in semiluxury," becomes strenuous for the malleable character of G.H. Glancing around at her "home's witty elegance," she acknowledges that "everything here is in quotation marks"(23). She confides in the reader, the "image of myself between quotation marks used to satisfy me" but now, she implies, it does not.

She frames for the reader the dual natures of her existence; the superficial simulacra of "a finished person" for whom the practice of "intermittent sculpting" on inanimate objects is a vocation, and the post-encounter persona. She also suspends the reader in time in a prelude to the story, in an intricate process of delay and repetition. This tension underscores the immanence of the narrative crux: the entry into the room. She thus places the reader in the "antechamber" of the room, in a state of unconscious expectation. G.H. herself enters this transitional state when she engages in the activity of "ordering her home" and chooses to begin in the back, with the maid's quarters. The two spaces of the room and their equivalent meanings are thus distinguished: front and back, self and other, familiar and strange. These oppositions are sustained by her appraisal of her surroundings once she has ventured into the back of the apartment. Looking down

from her privileged perspective, she sees the thirteen floors beneath her and notices that on "the outside, my building was white, with the smoothness of marble and the smoothness of finished surface"(27). This polished exterior stands in stark contrast to the inside that "was a chaotic jumble of square blocks, windows, dark streaks and blotches from the rain"(27). With such a diverse terrain before her she remarks that it resembles in her gaze a "miniature of a vast landscape of passages and canyons" (27). As she surveys this territory, she demarcates the route upon which she will guide the reader.

In her explication of her existence in both spaces of her home, G.H. makes the painful voyage from external self to internal self that she calls her passion, her *paixão.* For her it is the suffering that is concomitant with the experience of being torn from one self-perception and confronted with her own "otherness" that is the subject of her narrative. For the reader, however, it is her passage into the void of identity that reverberates in the mind. In this sense, Lispector's work belongs to the multi-faceted genre of travel narrative, since it records the protagonist's exploration of the frontiers of familiarity. So alien is the terrain that she explores, that she invokes the title of a headline of a newspaper as an analogy to her trek. "Lost in the Fiery Hell of a Canyon" screams the caption, and G.H. cries out to her imagined reader to imagine the ferocity of the isolated, primary realm from which she has just returned. Opening the door to the maid's room, she discovers a more hostile topography than that of a canyon, for she has fallen into the void between self and other.

Instead of asserting an individual identity, G.H. delves into the opening between the binaries, simultaneously filling the blank and eradicating its borders. The void becomes her portal into an absolute beyond limitations of body and soul, self and other.

Yet, she is never fully embraced by this eternal. Instead, she has experienced a revelatory proximity to it, a glimpse that will never fully satiate her desire to be consumed within its power. This desire emerges in an incessant dialogue with the reader that she initiates in order to return, via the act of recitation for an audience, to her originary scene.

This paradoxical realm materializes in another text that conveys the struggle for self-definition and proposes a subversive neither-nor dialectic that recalls the posture of Blake's travel guide in Hell. The spatialization of identity that infuses the text of *The Ravishing of Lol Stein* by Marguerite Duras offers an insightful correlative to the dual spaces of G.H.'s apartment. Space, defined and undefined, reflects the mode in which each protagonist exists. It is both the retainer and the aperture offering a self that is recognizable. This binary opposition within the familiar terrain of the dwelling is a physical transposition of the pedestrian encounters of Baudelaire and Soares. The windows into alterity visible in the countenances of fellow passersby are brought into domestic dimensions. Within the frames of their homes, just as in the *Ur haus,* windows are exchanged for mirrors in which otherness appears in the reflection. Each attempt to look beyond the metaphorical framework inverts its trajectory and returns to its origin. This elliptical pathway of the imagination is a source of liberation, much as the externalization of the self was for Baudelaire and Pessoa, but the pressures upon the self felt by each woman is distinct from those elaborated upon by the two poets.

Both Duras' and Lispector's female protagonists are tormented by the distinctions of self and other, body and soul that attempt to affix identity in terms of separation or limitation. For both women, the breach opened up by the two sets of antitheses requires reconciliation. The alternation between external and internal space emblematizes the

desire to transcend the limitations of identity. "The intersection of spatial thought with psychoanalytical thought, of the nature of containment and the characteristics of the subject, has been a preoccupation of social and aesthetic discourse since the turn of the century," (iv) writes Anthony Vidler in *Warped Space*, yet these two twentieth-century texts provide innovative responses to the perplexing relationship of space and the self.

In the spaces of Lol's home or in G.H.'s apartment, they can create an ordered sense of self, while in the streets of S.Tahla and in the maid's room, their identities journey away from the strict forms of body and society. Thus, all spaces become the void between the contraries that govern the self and the body. The adoption of strategies of order or disorder within those spaces resonates in their approaches to identity.

The two tactics are related to the two kinds of space that they encounter. Although G.H. does not actually leave her home in the course of the text, she, like Lol Stein, enters both internal and external spaces. The external spaces are the ones that they actively shape into molds of themselves while the internal spaces are the planes upon which those molds can be transcended.

Although few places would seem to have a more immediate intimacy than the space that one inhabits, Lol's homes ultimately provide an external space rather than an internal one. Her design for the structuring of her living space is based upon models provided by other people. The arrangements of the rooms and the gardens reveal a "cold, ready-made taste", rather than an individual innovation. Mere replications, the homes deny any signal of personality other than that of detachment.

For example, in the homes that Lol has occupied since she married John Bedford, she displays an "impeccable order", an obsessive attention to detail and control of the

elements within their spaces. Such rigidity which makes others uncomfortable seems "almost natural" when she is present. This order, then, is perceived as an extension of her own personality, one that requires a routine of "obsessive orderliness, both in space and time" (24). This dependence on definition within her domestic domain and the association of that space with her individuality suggests a pervasive emptiness in her personal space, and by extension her personality.

Entrance into this space does not provide a sensation of intimacy, either for Lol, her husband or their guests. Instead, it is the vehicle engaged in maintaining the distance between Lol and her audience, creating an "empty stage upon which was performed the soliloquy of some absolute passion whose meaning remained unrevealed" (24). The representational quality of the rooms indicates that Lol herself is engaged in a performance.

By adopting the role of the housewife and mother through her marriage to John Bedford, she assumes the societal conventions of identification. Yet these distinctions are subverted in the space of her domestic domain. The excessive neatness displayed in her homes accentuates the artificiality of her environment that reveals the disjunction between the persona and the person. Lol is merely posing as someone who is John Bedford's wife. She is actually someone altogether undefined by that societal title.

Thus, the space of her home is a façade invented to deceive the casual observer into the assurance that Lol is comfortably contained within the contours of her role. It provides the stage for her emulation of the behavior that her role demands. The control with which "she presides over her kingdom" mirrors the limitations of the part that she is

playing. Thus, the space that she physically inhabits is designed for the observation of others. Its dimensions are external rather than internal.

In its role of defining the societal notion of individuality the body resembles the external space in the homes of both women. Body and home are each a dwelling place and express similar characteristics of superficiality and constraint. Indeed, the mania for ordering their homes is repeated in their control over physical appearance. For example, Lol is often contrasted to Tatiana not only because of the coloring of their hair, but for their differing hairstyles. The looseness of Tatiana's long black hair is commented upon several times, as is Lol's custom of binding hers "into a tight chignon just above the nape of her neck; for ten years, perhaps, she has worn it in this way" (136). Similarly, her choice of attire on the occasion of the third meeting with Tatiana "is close-fitting and makes her look...slightly stiff" (136).

G.H. likewise composes her appearance in accord with her home. Sitting at the coffee table, "I was framing myself in my white robe, my clean, well-sculpted face, and my simple body" she comments (24). Her body is defined by its blankness and impersonality. The same principles of detached containment that both women employ in the arrangement of their homes emanate in their physical appearance. In a number of ways, the body is the counterpart to the external space that Lol and G.H. inhabit. Like the representative stage offered in the rooms of their homes, the body offers an apparatus of identification that is based on appearance. As a result, it is the crucial component in the emergence of a public persona for it provides a point of reference for the recognition of both self and other.

It is important to acknowledge that each woman has experienced the rupture between self and other on both public and private scales. For both, a split in a personal relationship precedes the opening of a chasm in relation to a collective otherness. The abandonment of Lol Stein by her fiance has haunted her both personally and socially. The event is sealed within the minds of all of the people that attempt to render her story because of the evocative power of experience of separation of self from the desired other. Commonly regarded as the catalyst in her nervous breakdown, the scene at the T.Beach ball provides a crystallization of the moment in which Lol undergoes the disconnection from Michael Richardson. The finality of the instant is represented by the removal of the man and the other woman from her field of vision and her simultaneous physical collapse. That she has not forgotten this moment, even ten years later, is evident in her repeated attempts to recreate the scene for her viewing. Thus, the split remains real for her, even though her life has changed in the duration.

Similarly, G.H. seems unable to reconcile herself to the loss of an unnamed lover. He remains simply "the man now loved" (149) in her contemplations. While the details of their relationship are denied the reader, the facts of G.H.'s emotions are provided. In her reflective addresses to this unidentified person, she invokes sensations of saturation and omission. During the "tedium" of her love for him, she experiences both "the fullness of a body that does not seek and does not need" (148). This notion of a satiated self is ultimately inverted, for she remains in a position of desiring. Despite her statements to the contrary, the completion of self within the relationship is attenuated by the magnitude of "the great divine emptiness that I had with you" (149). Such

disjunction creates a longing for a pain that would mediate this experience of separation. The distances between Lol and her lover are compounded, fabricating an infinite otherness.

This same relationship may or may not be the cause of another instance of the division of self and other: pregnancy and a resultant abortion. Abortion extracts the fetus, the exemplification of the commingling of self and other, from the self of the mother, thereby becoming an object of otherness. Alterity is therefore the by-product of emotional relationships in G.H.'s estimation, for the division between the self and other cannot be bridged, even by childbearing.

The awareness of this barrier is traumatic because not only has the notion of self for each woman been altered, but they have also become aware of the inherent disjunction of human relationships. Absolute unity is impossible between people because they are limited to corporeal existence. Instead of a true fusion of two souls, only a sharing of two individual perceptions is possible within the physical realm. The absence of the beloved catalyzes the process of realization of this separation for each woman.

In the wake of the recognition of the loss of the other, both women appropriate the void as the foundation for self-definition. The loved other is replaced by absence as a source of identity. It is not simply the lack of this one other that they now identify with, but the abyss between themselves and all others that has opened up as a result of the initial separation. The void becomes a refuge, allowing them to remain unattached and therefore not subject to further distinctions of self and other.

The abyss develops into a counterpart for the soul, the entity of self-identification that is not subject to the cognition of others. Yet, this internal source of self is dependent

upon the public derivation of identity, for the body also serves to "house" the soul by supplying a tangible container for the immaterial quality. Therefore, the soul is not entirely free of external definition since it resides in the body.

The soul and the body are inexorably linked in material existence, just as self and other are adjoined in the physical world. In the spiritual world, however, the soul transcends corporeal dimensions. Without the confine of the body, self can no longer be distinguished from other and the separation is dissolved. Both Lol and G.H. attempt to thrust themselves into this intangible expanse via this void between the contraries. Such a gap offers an entrance into a state of fluidity rather than solidity. Once there, self can be exchanged for the infinite.

This endeavor to unmoor their identities from human experience suggests a quest for indeterminacy that is equivalent to Pessoa's dispersal of *ego*. The free play that finds its expression in a multitude of soliloquizing characters in Pessoa's poems would be viewed by Lol and G.H., as an exchange of vessels that confine identity, rather than the consummation of the self that is the object of their desire. Their ultimate identity rests upon a paradoxical definition of self in terms of non-definition. Thus, the emptiness of the abyss is resorted to in the loss of the embrace of the beloved. In an inversion of rational logic Lol and G.H. conclude that the possibility for forging an individuality that is independent of polarity rests in a negation of selfhood.

The two novels delineate distinct sources for this irrational response to identity in each character. *The Ravishing of Lol Stein* presents Lol as a victim of her own psychological inability to process the loss of her beloved. Each of her reactions is rendered through the third person mediation of a narrator who examines her as though

she were a case study. Furthermore the confines of Jack Hold's narration engage the reader in complicity with his narrative perspective while Lol herself remains silent. The characterization of G.H.'s struggle in the wilderness of being is provided solely by the narrator in a confession that depends upon the reader's silence. Although she invokes various psychological and spiritual models to relate the critical encounter of the self, her story is fundamentally a philosophical treatise on the nature of being.

However, in their refutation of reason, both Lol and G.H. engage in a seduction of the chasm that will devour all semblances of self. The source of this ravenous power comes from within each woman, from their imagination, which allows their fantastic desire for self-obliteration to be realized. This interior reality is then projected into the space that is "the dwelling place that is truly hers (RLS, 336)," unlike their stage homes, in which they perform an act of illusion. Ironically, this realm offering an authentic existence is entirely fictional. Its only source of substantiation is their occupation within its dimensions.

These emanations of the desire for non-self that emerge in the two characters are distinct from one another in the forms in which they appear. For Lol, the expansive spaces of the streets of S.Tahla and the rye field outside the Forest Hotel present a blankness upon which she can project her vision of an infinite emptiness. G.H.'s route toward the absolute takes her through compressed spaces, first into the maid's room in the back of her home, and from there into the literally internal space of her body. Despite this inverse relationship, the spaces of each woman resemble one another in their shared status as the *locus* in which the obliteration of self is solicited.

Lol's quest for a self that is unconfined propels her from the cloister of her home into the streets of S.Tahla. In an extension of the routine that she adopts in her homes, she takes daily walks through her hometown. Within this physically exterior space, Lol experiences an internal and imaginary world. Although actually walking along the streets of S. Tahla, Lol transports herself internally through time and space into a return to the pivotal event of the T.Beach ball.

The fictional self constructed within the space of her house is cast off when she enters the streets on her habitual walks. Although she places herself in the public space of the town, she experiences only the private environment of the recreated ballroom. The scene that is fixated in her mind is projected into the spaces between "the emptiness of a street" and the "rectilinear bleakness of some boulevard" (30). The material realities of the town's structures form her passageway "into the wondrous, artificial light of the Town Beach ball" (36).

The scene is her true domain, for in the moment of separation from Michael Richardson, she glimpses the eternal realm of self-obliteration. In the exchange of mates that Michael Richardson initiated, the body of Anne-Marie Stretter substitutes Lol's position as his lover. Unable to witness the lovemaking that would conclude "this velvet annihilation of her own person" (40), Lol is trapped in its intimation. This desire for a complete negation of self compels her into the reconstitution of the fateful evening. The space of the town, then, is transformed into the realm of her oblivion.

The description of her walks in the town provides an account of her integration into its space. Although she had been a public figure as a result of the stories about the ball, there is nothing in the town that seems to recognize her. Instead, she maintains an invisibility from the community that permits her to believe "that she had been cast into a mold, the identity of which was extremely vague and to which a variety of names might be given, an identity whose visibility she could control" (32). The walks, which

"absorbed her completely", remove the context within which she might be identified in fixed terms (29).

Her self becomes aqueous within her "circuitous" route through the town. Upon the "meandering streets and unexpected dead ends" (30) of the residential section of the town, she moves without a destination, erasing meaning from her environment. With her presence, she "renders the town pure, unrecognizable" (33) in accord with the identity that she adopts for herself. Her familiarity with place and self are shed so that she can proceed into the abyss of the absolute. Like the thoughts that flood into her mind once she exceeds the thresholds of her home, she can "come to life and breathe, in an accessible, boundless universe" (35), the interior space of the town.

Although structured within the realm of the community, the space of South Tahla becomes a dimension in which Lol can experience a private realization of her desire to eradicate self. External space is therefore the gateway into the void betwixt the polarities of identification. The space of the town undergoes transformation into her "unknown" destination, into which her entrance "would always have meant, for her mind as well as her body, both their greatest pain and their greatest joy, so commingled as to be undefinable, a single entity but unnameable for lack of a word" (38). While technically exterior, the town becomes the zone in which the interior self is no longer enclosed and can now bleed into other forms. As a result, the self as separated from other and as defined within the body is eradicated and replaced by a formless entity that can experience unity with the eternal.

Complete annihilation similarly takes place within the rye field outside the Forest Hotel. The field is emblematic of Lol's identity in two respects. In the first place, it offers a perfect view of the window of the room in which Tatiana Karl and Jack Hold make love. The couple is appropriated by Lol as a correlative to the couple formed by Michael Anderson and Anne-Marie Stretter at Town Beach. In her position in the rye field Lol is able to witness the consummation of her oblivion.

It is appropriate that Lol inhabit the rye field during this experience, for it is evocative of the emptiness that she tries to become through her voyeurism. The narrative detail of the townscape places the hotel at the end of the boulevard and the field behind the hotel. It is therefore at the edge of the urban sprawl and when she arrives there for the first time, it is the only space upon which the last shaft of light from the setting sun falls. The field is further distinguished by the fact that it is "smooth and treeless" (52). It is set apart from the surrounding forms of space by its quality of vacancy. When Lol enters the field, she is swallowed by its enormity and becomes an unidentified shape. Distinctions of self are discarded in its space.

A similar absorption of self occurs in terms of space in *The Passion According to G.H.* G.H. sees her experience within the maid's room as a contest between the will of the self and its environment. Its placement in relation to the apartment amplifies her sensation that she is at a frontier. Within its space the peculiar phenomena of urban existence are condensed. In its "completely clean and shiny" dimensions "were concentrated the reverberations from the roofs, from the cement terraces, from the erect antennae of all the neighboring buildings, from the reflections of a thousand building windows" (30). So distinct is its space, she declares: "My first impression of a minaret began with this room: free-floating above a limitless expense" (30). Although the environment in G.H.'s scenario is the service area of a penthouse in Rio de Janeiro rather than a canyon in the wilderness, the threat to the survival of self remains the same.

The self that she has formed throughout the rest of her apartment encounters confrontation within the space of the maid's room. It is the unfamiliar realm that, although attached to her penthouse, shares none of its qualities. In fact, it is "the opposite of what I had created in my home" (34), for it has no relationship with the detached aestheticism of the apartment's other rooms, nor with the identity fabricated within those walls. This disjunction of otherness contained within the domain of self-identification

invokes not only revulsion but also paralysis, for G.H. is initially unwilling to cross its threshold.

This response is motivated by a desire for a "self-preservation" much like the reaction of her eyes to "the vision of a room that was a quadrangle of white light", that contrasts "the jumbled shadows that I was expecting" (29). Yet, the self that she is prompted to shelter from the "calm, empty order" (30) of the room is equally empty, for it is a mediated "reference to myself" (34). The starkness of the room, however, makes the experience of the self immediate with such a force that it acquires a semblance of hostility for G.H. Thus, in its space, "the sun didn't seem to come from outside to inside: this seemed to be the place where the sun itself was...with a harsh light (34-5)" whose intensity troubles G.H. The room is confrontational from her perspective because it allows being to present itself without a material form that can contain it.

She envisions herself dousing the room with water in order to temper this directness. In formulating this plan she takes the significant step into the space of the room, which is comparable to "falling into a chasm horizontally" (37). Perception is so disoriented within the irregular dimension of the room that it no longer adheres to the regulations of reality. Instead, the space assumes characteristics of an abyss that is "undelimited" by normative parameters.

Accentuating the hostility with which she receives the defamiliarization of space within the room are the charcoal outlines of an "unexpected mural". The discovery of this sketch is as revelatory an experience as the recovery of Walter Anderson's mural in the artist's "Little Room". Rather than a vision of an environment, however, the maid has rendered three figurative images of a man, woman and a dog. They appear to G.H. to be naked, not in the sense of what was "drawn in on the bodies", but "from the absence of all covering: they were the shapes of empty nudity" (31). The images challenge G.H. on a variety of levels. First and foremost, they frustrate her notion of an ordered home in which the surfaces reveal the traces of her own identity. This "hidden mural" also

increases the "initial surprise" of opening the door by presenting another medium than the sculpture that she claims as her own. The two-dimensional "stupid rigidity of the lines" further counters the manner in which she has molded her habitation.

The estrangement initiated by her realization of the room's "calm, empty order" takes on dizzying proportions as a result of her introduction to the mural. Contemplating the clumsiness of the drawing's outlines, G.H. spontaneously recalls the maid's name as well as her appearance. The drawing impels her into an act of recognition of another presence in her apartment and consequently she conjures the image of the maid, Janair. This manifestation from her memory results in a realization of the reciprocity of the limitations of self-other correspondence. She speculates that the flat naked figures are Janair's renditions of G.H.'s portrait. At this moment, she recognizes that "Janair was the first outside person whose gaze I really took notice of" (32). The image on the wall thus reveals itself as an uncanny reflection, not of G.H.'s superficial existence, but of her essential being. The lines of the figures "stood out as though they had gradually oozed forth from the inside of the wall," as if they "had slowly come from the core" rather than the surface. Her own recognition of her "quiet, black" maid Janair, she realizes, was as flat as "a bas-relief frozen on a piece of wood"(33). The parallel abstractions of self and other that were active in each woman's perspective arrest G.H. "Besieged by the presence of herself that Janair had left in a room in my home," G.H. realizes, "I noticed that the three angular zombie figures had in fact kept me from going in, as though the room were still being occupied" (33). Thus the room announces its affront to the self.

Her entrance into the room is not complete, however, until she comes upon another life form in its dry space. Having opened the door of the wardrobe in an attempt to frame the immensity of space, she comes face to face with a cockroach. She engages in a tortured debate on the fate of the creature until, overcome by a surging assertion of self she crucifies its body between the wardrobe doors. Overpowered by this unconscious, instinctual affirmation of self that emerged in the act of killing, she is

released from the externally created self. Instead, she is smitten with the promise of this primal, unconscious, and therefore unindividuated, self. Simultaneously, she asserts that her "entrance into the room had finally become complete" (51). This action seals her indoctrination into the infinite plane of the room, through which she can experience being without mediation.

The revelation of the potential for an existence purified from the tainted self takes G.H. further into the room's domain. Her desire to divorce her experience of life from the containment of self leads her on a quest for a form that will break the bonds of externally developed identity. This path takes a direction that inverts the trajectory that Lol follows in the streets and in the rye field. While Lol seeks to be consumed by the absolute, G.H. ingests her self, internalizing her pursuit. In the confined physicality of the maid's room, she projects the unity that she longs for inward.

The restraint of the body is countered by her identification, through the cockroach, with non-differentiated life. The cockroach serves as a "hieroglyph", a remnant of the originary state of life and therefore "seduces" G.H. with a promise of a return to the primordial. Like the room, she is no longer attached to the societal sphere of the rest of the apartment, for she is in a visionary state in which she can see the "core of life". It is this essential quality of life that she struggles to attain in the "deep breach" of the room. Passage through this chasm requires the agonizing process of disassembling her self from her human form. Although she fears its inevitable pain, she realizes that "she shouldn't be afraid of seeing humanization on the inside" (137). She is transported into the eternal internally, following the genetic link that bonds organisms to this originary world. Oppositions are neutralized so that self "interdepends" with world and "life was itself for me (173)."

Thus, the maid's room supports an internal existence that is the pathway to the transcendence of selfhood. In order to experience the vitality of infinity, G.H. must enter the "Fiery Hell of a Canyon" that is the space of the room. The space emblematizes the

internal that she must voyage into to come in contact with essential existence. It is the chasm that splits and joins form to formlessness.

The journey from Woolf's room of private exploration to Lispector's antechamber of being encompasses a radical reinterpretation of the role of enclosed space in the development of a writer's expressive voice. For Woolf, the space of a room presents the writer with a boundary that is self-determined, in which reflections upon identity are nourished by the fortress walls of a private space. It is an essential component in the artist's generative repertoire. While Woolf's pronouncement declares a new era for the woman writer, Lispector's novel depicts the limitations that still existed in the twentieth-century for writers of all genders. The negotiation of the artist in society requires a passageway between the being for oneself and being for others that the dual spaces of her apartment construct. Her choice to explore the freedom of an existence unencumbered by definitions (or responsibilities) suggests an alternate response to that declared by Woolf. Despite the unique possibility she espouses, in some sense her rendition of G.H.'s movement from external to internal definition is simply an inversion of the trope of the *hortus conclusus* that Rousseau carves out for Julie. Although transplanted to the domain of the Brazilian penthouse, the writer still resides in a space between internal and external design.

CHAPTER 5

EPILOGUE

In order to tease out the paradox of the relationship between the *fictio* of the artist and the *ego* (or non-*ego*) of existence, I have assembled the microscosms created by each writer in their individual works into a panorama of the landscape of the self. When discussing the role of space within the determination of the self one can discern a trajectory from Rousseau's savage and landscaped terrains of the Alps and the Romantic conquest of Mont Blanc, to the early urban thoroughfares of Paris and the trolley-trodden landscapes of Lisbon, until one reaches the cloisters of Woolf in her fictional Oxbridge and the unsettling architectural *apartmento* of G.H. and *haus* of Gregor Schneider. Each writer presents to the reader a vision of a landscape in which the self prevails over the encroaching demands of the external, whether embodied in the guise of Nature, Society or the Other. They respond to the pressure of a hostile environment by creating an alternate environment, whether in a garden, on the street or in an apartment, that is a sanctuary for the creative self. As Baudelaire, Soares, and especially Lispector illustrate, the trope of the sanctuary undergoes incessant revision once it is received and interpreted by the Romantics. The classical *locus amoenus* that Rousseau transports to his familiar terrain of Switzerland is thrust out of the landscape and situated in the cityscape until its semblance erodes into an image of the *unheimlich*. Still, space remains the primary medium in which the self is conveyed from the writer to the reader. The element that Musil characterizes as "this slowly cooling, absurd drop 'I' that refused to give up its fire, its tiny glowing core," vacillates from existence to absence in the spaces of the self.

END NOTES

Chapter 1

1. For more on Walter Anderson's "Little Room" see Redding Sugg's *A Painter's Psalm*.

Chapter 2

2. A similar point could be made about the novel in general, a fact that her fate appears to substantiate.

3. Poetic in the etymological sense of *poiesis*.

4. See "the veil is rent!" p.229

5. There is a 1:1 ratio between physical and emotional loftiness throughout the work.

6. Des Esseintes, the protagonist of J.K. Huysmans' decadent novel *A rebours*, procures a tortoise in order to marvel at its appearance as it walks upon his carpets. Unsatisfied with the muted colors of its carapace, he bedecks it with jewels. The tortoise dies, unable to move under the additional weight.

Chapter 3

7. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

8. Soares' characterization continues by describing "the same unconsciousness diversified on faces and bodies that are different".

9. There are distinct spaces for each of these heteronyms as well. Caiero's pivotal *Guardador de Rebanhos*, or *Keeper of Sheep* invokes the image of the pastoral and a tone of simplicity and clarity that has invited comparisons to Eastern philosophy. Campos, the sailor, adopts the urbane terrain of his hero, Walt Whitman. He makes ample use of the image of the *janela*, or window, as a site of transport, most provocatively in his poem *Tabacaria*. Reis uses a more complex, literary notion of space, for he relies heavily on the classical tradition of the *locus amoenus* but seems to situate it primarily in the text itself.

Chapter 4

10. Her attitude finds a kindred spirit in the account of the photographer Robert Polidori's visit to la Habana, Cuba. He meets Señora Faxas, whose once aristocratic home in the Miramar neighborhood is crumbling before her eyes. In his article on the photographer's visual record of that meeting, William L. Hamilton writes: " 'Rooms are metaphors and catalysts for states of being', he said. 'This room is psychologically naked. Señora Faxas lived in unique circumstances--living in exile from Spain, then living in the memories of what her exile used to be. She was dedicated to this. She actually enjoyed seeing, day by day, the decay of the past she treasured.'" Señora Faxas has relegated her existence to surrounding herself with the detritus of the memories, rather than the objects that she possesses.

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