The wish alone can be self-fulfilling. Consider one of the examples Freud gives of the lasting impression made by a fortuneteller on his patient in the past, even though in the meantime it’s plain that the prophecy didn’t come true. In the forecast, the details of her mother’s marriage and childbirth were repeated: “The prophecy promised her the fulfillment of the identification with her mother which had been the secret of her childhood.” The fortuneteller thus touched on the fantasy his client had unconsciously wished upon. That the fortuneteller, perhaps telepathically, came as close as the client’s ego would allow to fulfilling her wish for real left the lasting impression. Daydreaming can be its own reward by the proximity it keeps, but without realization, to an unconscious death wish that remains off limits.

While the wish itself isn’t repressed, its fantasy elaboration, its fleeting, throwaway fixation, is hard to remember and only bears repeating. Only in the series in which it is an episode does the daydream begin to show staying power. When fantasying begins to organize itself like advertising or a so-called haunting melody in the mode of “to be continued,” then we enter upon a private

theater. The production value of the show is low. Even when a night dream borrows the ready-made formulation of a daydream, Freud observes in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the part on loan is “more fleeting than other parts of the same dream.” In *The Psychology of Daydreaming* (1921), J. Varendonck sought to develop waking fantasy as reality testing’s parallel universal and secure for daydreaming the mode of hypothesis (specifically, a creative process of hypothesis and rejoinder). But, example after example, we discern chains of thought pulling up short before memory. Daydreaming in its dependence on and incompatibility with memory is largely a fitful process of stops, restarts, and oblivion.

In *They Live* (1988), aliens manipulate the psycho-economy of human servitude through fantasy. There isn’t a pov. You see manipulated reality in the film or, if the protagonists flip on the special shades, you see the truth or, more likely, the ultimate fantasy. At the start of *They Live*, there is a momentary glimpse of a name, a word, a message, loaded in a film bent on revealing all subliminals, but which, as Jonathan Lethem points out, is accidental or documentary rather than staged. We recognize that the logo on the train spells out Shock Control. The train bisects the path of the protagonist like Scapinelli’s carriage at the start of *The Student of Prague*, foreclosing background and context. In Stellan Rye’s 1913 film, the vehicle’s arrival serves to mark all that follows in the close quarters of doubling as illusion, even delusion. A train’s passage on screen is an internal simulacrum of the history of cinema. On the double tracks of train wreck and roller-coaster rides, Benjamin discerned in media, with film at the front of the line, a defense mechanism containing the shocks within shots of inoculation.


In the prehistory of mediatization, Benjamin argues in “The Storyteller,” the novel already supplied a form of immunizing containment. The novelty of the novel was the import of the protagonist’s happy ending in death. The protagonist becomes in the end a figure who died then and thus, whereby his entire life is held up in necrospect as meaningful – and, most importantly, contained, like an inoculum. These parting shots rendered uncanny and literally unhoused the prospect of death. No longer would there be rooms in the home still bearing the residue of an ancestor’s passing. Instead, the dying were to be kept out of sight in peripheral institutions.

_They Live_ introduces into our obsession with surveillance, which is largely a Christian comfort, the bogie of our alien manipulation by ten or so subliminal commandments. The caste from Outer Space reflects back the majority’s projection that members of the alien minority seduce by inducing the illusion that they are beautiful. The agon seems rather specific to the Hollywood “industry.” Not all the rich (producers) are from Outer Space, but soon the threat is conveyed that the rich who are in control are all alien.

The subliminal veiling of perception in _They Live_ closes a loop with the parting-shot inoculations administered by the novel (according to Benjamin). When the protagonist puts on the decoder sunglasses, he not only recognizes the commandments, but also sees that the aliens are the decayed, skeletal dead. Either they have or he has already died (once). He then kills as many aliens as he can on a guilt-free spree reminiscent of the thrill-a-kill consumerism of zombie movies. In horror films, as already, for example, in _Phantom of the Opera_, the mask of the psycho covers and resembles the skull-face, and the camera _POV_ that assumes the mask (in John Carpenter’s _Halloween_) looks like it’s looking out of one.

Before the shooting begins, the new heroes in _They Live_ put on the glasses of detection to see through the cover-up and get

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to the truth (and the ultimate fantasy). Time to remember that, as Benjamin jotted down in *The Arcades Project*, the arrival of the detection genre coincided with the advent of modern spiritualism. Before Conan Doyle took the genre and ran with it on the one-way street leading to his celebrated championship of modern ghost-seeing, the origin of the genre was shared by Edgar Allan Poe on the cusp of communication with the other side and E.T.A. Hoffmann at the tail end of the episode of animal magnetism (and the vampire epidemic).

In *Whose Body?* (1923) by Dorothy Sayers, a detection novel that Freud was reading while waiting for the move to London, a psy-fi conceit develops out of the unidentified body that opens the case: “Assigning a motive for the murder of a person without relations or antecedents or even clothes is like trying to visualize the fourth dimension – admirable exercise for the imagination, but arduous and inconclusive.” Sir Reuben Levy went missing at the time. But his resemblance to the body is a near miss. Could it be a test corpse from the nearby teaching hospital? At the inquest, Dr. Julian Freke, an expert surgeon in charge of educational dissection at the facility, rules out that any of his stiffs are missing.

Dr. Julian Freke studies the brain as the body of the mind. When the police detective asks him whether he indeed considers the neuroses as physical he replies: “Undoubtedly. I am not ignorant of the rise of another school of thought, [...] but its exponents are mostly charlatans or self-deceivers. ‘Sie haben sich so weit darin eingeheimnisst’ that, like Sludge the Medium, they are beginning to believe their own nonsense. I should like to have the exploring of some of their brains” (75). The prep work for such exploration is the wish his research denies.

Lord Peter, the master sleuth, sees through Dr. Julian based on another of his PTSD flashbacks to the trauma of war service, the outbreak of his war neurosis, and the physical-only type on the military medical staff confounding his predicament. He recognizes in Dr. Julian the criminal mastermind, who killed his Jewish victim out of lingering, malingering jealousy, so hard to

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reconcile with his view of the mind as surface symptom of the brain’s physical irritation. By making the switch with a body donated to the teaching facility, he diverted the investigation so that there would be enough time for the hated corpse to vanish in the course of studious dissection. By way of his own talking detection, Lord Peter wins one for the exponents of the other school of thought, whose brains Dr. Julian fantasied carving up: “Most people don’t associate anythin’ – their ideas just roll about like so many dry peas on a tray, makin’ a lot of noise and goin’ nowhere, but once you begin lettin’ ‘em string their peas into a necklace, it’s going to be strong enough to hang you, what?” (82).

In 1925, Siegfried Kracauer wrote a philosophical study of the detective novel at the same time that Benjamin was concluding his allegory book: Der Detektiv-Roman. Ein philosophischer Traktat (The Detective Novel: A Philosophical Treatise, a.k.a. Detective Novel). Theodor Adorno, who was the prize pupil that Benjamin and Kracauer each claimed as his own, suggested that Kracauer use the Errettung (rescue) of external reality in the subtitle of his Theory of Film. Whenever I read another piece on Benjamin by someone else, I’m struck by the waffling on the synonyms: salvation, saving, rescue, redemption. That Benjamin preferred to use Rettung (rescue) for the operations of modern allegory goes back to G.E. Lessing’s Enlightenment project of essays composed to rescue authors from misprision and oblivion: Rettungen (1754). Yes, dead religion is our destiny and must be read. But that doesn’t mean that Messianism can eclipse the apotheosis of the intrigue that, in Benjamin’s argument, rescues modern allegory from re-Christianization through the Devil’s return. What rhymes with the intrigue is the work of detection in its reach beyond the rigid priest caste of police work and the seduction of doubling that the evil mastermind proposes. When Kracauer addresses G.K. Chesterton, who replaced the independent detective with the priest, he gave by cautionary contrast with the Christian cop-out reinforcement to his view of the work of detection’s overall allegiance to a law of infinite interpretation, not to the contractual book by which the police are the law.

The “writing medium” from the hypothetical milieu of modern spiritualism provided William James with the model of “automatic writing” for study in his psychology laboratory. By
the import of communication with the subconscious or with a secondary personality (or with a ghost), automatic writing staggered the “stream of consciousness” in proximity to fantasizing. The test subject taking dictation would assume a trance state modeled on the “absence” into which a hysteric withdrew when continuing a fantasy. No longer committed to transmuting and covering its sources, A-culture followed suit and folded daydreaming inside the night dream of its Dichtung.

Gertrude Stein took her writing lesson directly from James. Through repetition punctuated by rhyming Blood on the Dining Room Floor begins with an absence or the end – and the so-called interior monologue sinks in by circling around the drain of its streaming. Although Stein only tried this one time to write a detection novel, she followed throughout her writing the lead of its conceit: the detective story gets rid of human nature and the event, which belong to the era before the story begins. What follows from seeing what can happen when an unidentified (with) murder victim is all you have to start from results, for Stein, in the quintessentially modern novel form. Her attempt at composing a detective story of her own, Stein writes in “Why I Like Detective Stories,” faltered because she was making reference to events that had occurred in her neighborhood: “after all a novel even if it is a detective story ought not to mix up what happened with what has happened, anything that has happened is exciting enough without any writing, tell it as often as you like but do not write it as a story.” What really happened, as Stein puts it, which kept her detection fiction from happening, intruded like a memory damming/damning the stream of daydream. What also really happened was that the attempt was enough. Writing down murder like a jab in her lyrical vein allowed her to break through the writer’s block, the wreckage brought on by the success of The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas.

While James studied in the writing medium the flow of consciousness, his colleague at Harvard, Hugo Münsterberg, introduced a cinematic model for the psychology of our second

nature. In the theater, as Münsterberg argues in *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study* (1918), we supply on our own the association between the overstimulation of adventure holding center stage and the earlier scene of a quieter time back home. This momentum of memory (as well as of the imagination) is projected into the motion pictures themselves:

We see the jungle, we see the hero at the height of his danger; and suddenly there flashes upon the screen a picture of the past. [...] When one deep breath is over we are stirred again by the event of the present. That home scene of the past flitted by just as a hasty thought of bygone days darts through the mind. [...] We have really an objectivation of our memory function. The case of the cut-back is there quite parallel to that of the close-up. In the one we recognize the mental act of attending, in the other we must recognize the mental act of remembering. (37–38)

Imagination, which Münsterberg identifies as expectation controlled by our feelings, is staggered in theater until the last act. That too is intercepted by film: “our imagination is projected on the screen” (38). What he calls photoplay observes the standard of theater. But what interests him is how the original peep shows and photographic playthings that shared the era of the advent of telegraphy could be extended to provide the shaky foundation of this public theater of wish-fulfillment fantasy. The faculties that he sees potentiated from stage to screen are skewered upon Freud’s arc of daydreaming. “It is as if reality has lost its own continuous connection and become shaped by the demands of our soul” (38). Münsterberg, thinking in German, uses the soul-word for psyche, like Freud.

If consciousness loops through the movies, then is the wrap double or nothing? The first failure of film is in the art department according to the same standard of mimesis that drama realizes more perfectly. It’s the difference between the wax museum

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and the collection of ancient Greek sculpture. “Our own attention and memory and imagination have shifted and remodeled the events until they look as nature could never show them. What we really see can hardly be called any longer an imitation of the world, such as the theater gives us” (53). What we see, as through the Traumorgan, is freed from direct dependency upon “the physical forms of space, time, and causality” (70). This risk that film takes is its bid for the status of a new art form.

Experimental filmmaker Klaus Wyborny transposed the interior monologue in the first chapter of his (unpublished) novel to the voice-over of fantasying in his 2002 film Sulla. He transplanted the buffering of daydreaming to a medium that is a wrap with its throwaway satisfaction. Wearing his other hat as author of philosophies of film that draw on physics and psychoanalysis, Wyborny shows that when you watch a film what you see is what you forget. Using the projector as model, he singles out the gate as the present tense of projection, the take-up reel as the past, and the feed reel as the future. To illustrate the process between and within each tense he adds the metaphors: “picture particle,” “pool of impressions,” and “raft.”

Whenever a new shot gets into the gate, a “picture particle” is ejected from there. Reaching the brain it hits the pool of impressions with a big splash. Doing this it hits the raft floating on top first. The raft (presenting our memory of the preceding shot) gets destroyed or it at least loses its distinctness, so that most of its structures disappear within a fraction of a second, while some remnants start sinking down. Meanwhile the present particle already works havoc in the memory-liquid, where it modifies and destroys a considerable amount of the impressions deposited there. [...] Having finished its destructive job [...] the picture particle drifts up to the pool’s surface, forming a new raft there, which now floats on a “sea of changed impressions,” getting more and more structure within its remaining projection time – till the next picture particle will be in the gate, by which the present raft will also be destroyed and the pool modified anew. [...] Somehow a pool of those impressions vaguely remains and when the film is over, the remaining pool plus the impressions of the last
shot […] is what you think you have seen, when you leave the cinema.8

_Sulla_ allegorizes the film medium’s fleeting oblivion and fixation on the now (you see it now you don’t) in terms of one man’s afternoon spent daydreaming. Whereas the literary stream of consciousness tends to be subsumed by poetic prose and epiphany (the Lacanian sinthome), in _Sulla_ we overhear the private reserve and plain text of wish fantasy. A tension is upheld between constant wishing at the speed of thought and the historical accomplishments of Sulla. The idiom of making thought concrete goes into this tension span. What we consider Roman architecture was distinguished by its early use of concrete, which the Roman general and consul Sulla introduced. The film covers one afternoon suffused with the audio tracking of daydream. Among his fantasying forecasts is a building in which he would commemorate his daydreams of sexual relations with a woman he recently met, which he fulfilled by masturbation three times that afternoon. But not all is spent since the allegory of the concrete promotes the film’s self-reflexivity, which is the last stand or understanding of remembered film.

Out of introspection, his own film experiences, and media philosophy, Victor Burgin assembled a composite picture of the remembered film buoyed up by forgetting. He gives the rundown of his reviewing of a scene he was stuck on from the movie _Fire Down Below_ (1957):

The fragment I saw was all that was required to retrieve this narrative from the archive of the ‘already seen.’ But already, in memory, the obvious meaning of the film is giving way to obtuse meanings. The ‘already seen’ of the story hovers like an aura around the sequence of the farewell at the jetty, but already the narrative is fading. The jetty scene is itself decomposing into its component images. […] What was once a film in a movie theatre […] is now a kernel of psychical representa-

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tions, a fleeting association of discreet elements. ... The more the film is distanced in memory, the more the binding effect of the narrative is loosened. The sequence breaks apart. The fragments go adrift and enter into new combinations, more or less transitory, in the eddies of memory: memories of other films, and memories of real events. 9

Burgin allows that our eidetic memories often emerge out of the flux of forgetting and disremembering the movies. Film about film lays the concrete for a relationship to the screening between fantasizing and the interruption of memory.

Unmournanimal

Freud wrapped the mortal limit of his corpus in the period leading up to the onset of World War Two by revisiting in Moses and Monotheism the fantasy saga of the primal father. At the time, the followers he had kept closest, Otto Rank and Hanns Sachs, were each pursuing the line and lineage of fantasy research that they spun out of Freud’s own 1907 reflections on the role of daydream wish fulfillment in cultural production. Coincident with the diagnosis of Freud’s cancer, Rank, however, struck out on his own. Rank’s earlier work on the myth of the hero’s birth looped the Oedipus complex through the storylines of mythology and legend by way of the typical daydream fantasy Freud named the family romance.

In 1924, Das Trauma der Geburt (The Trauma of Birth) was Rank’s ticket out of the Oedipus complex of application. A year following its publication, Rank confided to Marie Bonaparte that his trauma theory had been hoisted by an unconscious wish to be born like Athena from his father’s head. The shock of hearing that his scientific father was suffering from an incurable disease delivered the theory in one swell swoop. Was he riding out the swings and sorrows of manic depression, as Ernest Jones claimed? 10 We might take down the history inscribed within the

10 Ernest Jones, The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud, vol. III (New
word the adolescent Otto chose as replacement for his father’s name Rosenfeld. The name that stands tall like timber, or in formation like a military unit, also swings round the bend as copious and course growth.

In his memoir, *Freud: Meister und Freund* (*Freud: Mentor and Friend*, 1945), Sachs described the stage left by Rank at the time of Freud’s closing act. Marie Bonaparte entered this stage in Rank’s place with a work that was a transference gift.

Whenever Freud was unable to work with his analysands during this turbulent period, he dedicated his complete attention to another task. He was translating a small book by Princess Marie titled *Töpsy: The Golden-Haired Chow*. In it she describes her change in attitude, her empathy and her growing tenderness for one of her chows, who was afflicted by cancer of the mouth and through a successful treatment could be saved.11

In her 1980 preface to a new edition of Bonaparte’s book, Anna Freud recalled that what her father prized in dogs was their grace, devotion, and, above all, the absence of ambivalence in their psychic disposition.12 Addressing Töpsy inside her narrative, Bonaparte also turns up the contrast with the mix or mess of human emotional contact: “And then, above all, you do not know these all-too human conditions of mixed feelings, that one can love and at the same time be so hostile. You either hate [...] deeply and without limit. Or you love, as you love me, waiting sadly in front of the door when I’ve gone away, and jumping for joy when I return.”13

Healed through the radiation therapy that by her influence Bonaparte was able to secure for a “mere” dog, Topsy’s recovery redresses the earlier death of Bonaparte’s father, whose treatments by the rays did not save him, and, following the arc of wish fulfillment, transmitted to Freud, her scientific father, fantastic get well wishes. The brief text chronicles the princess’s working through the fantasy thicket of wishes to arrive in the clearing at a wishing well. Preemptive ruminations on Topsy’s death alternate with declarations of love that gather together all her love objects. “Because I was in danger of losing her, because I felt [...] that her life, Life itself, was threatened in her, I started to love her fiercely, with an abandon incomprehensible to me.” By anticipating Topsy’s death, which isn’t due in the text, Bonaparte engages open-endedly in premature mourning. There remained an opening for burial in the corpus of her dog story, which Freud’s playful question to Bonaparte touches upon: “Does Topsy realize she is being translated?”

Bonaparte doesn’t hold back her own ambivalence, and one gets the sense that what Topsy protects her against is being struck down in the muddle of her wishes and thoughts by vengeful ghosts. She keeps trying out fantasy scenarios of mixed mood as though in clarity training for big feelings she can stand by. She daydreams her own grieving over Topsy and how she is reproached for it: “People will probably say: that’s too much grieving over a poor dog. But I loved little Topsy as one can only love what is part of oneself, to which one daily and hourly feels close.” But even more than the loyalty to an internal object the transference gift to Freud is Bonaparte’s fantasy of how, in the event she went first, she would return in Topsy’s dreams. We shall overcome the transitive sentencing of loss and the ambivalence of survival: both parties to the loss are lost to each other. “My

shadow will visit you in your sleep [...]. You will let me come back and your stretched paws will twitch in your sleep when, dreaming, you jump up on me.”

Cats and Dogs

When once again invited to visit a USC film studies class, this time in 2002, Pat Hitchcock related that her father had been enamored of *Benji* (1974), which turns on a pov that is the topsy-turvy version of the dead-end given in *Psycho*. The camera repeatedly adopts the pov of the canine protagonist, both as objective perspective and, in flashback, as subjective camera. What’s more, the movie as a whole is largely filmed on a level with the dog’s eye view of events. *Benji* is one dog movie that ends happily, and without the idealization that packs away the raging problem of animal mortality. The death of the animal in film and TV can never be fictional.

Hilda Doolittle, her nickname was Cat, entered Freud’s closing act in 1932 by Sachs’s referral. Her first transference dream was a refiguration of Gustave Doré’s illustration of baby Moses discovered by the princess among the bulrushes. Freud recommended that she read Rank’s 1912 study *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*. The Princess in the dream is Marie Bonaparte. The stage was set.

On one of our canyon walks in the first decade of the new millennium, because my good little girl Elli was lagging, I turned around and clapped my hands to speed things up. But she made that into a repeatable command and henceforth, when I turned to face her and clapped for her to follow she answered by a rush forward, the show of high spirits she delivered on cue. If dogs communicate through their trainability, cats redirect lines of communication through play. When the canine protagonist of *Benji* is kept from taking his routine stroll through the neighborhood one morning, the local cat he usually chases is put out. It

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17 Ibid., 98.
18 Hilda Doolittle, *Tribute to Freud* (New York: New Directions, 1984), 120. Subsequent page references are given in the text.
turns out that Benji filled out a role by his trainability, his line of response to the cat’s playacting.

The dog waits and watches; the cat looks and looks, which, when it’s your turn to be looked at, can be therapeutic or unnerving. The raw nerves bring back the mother of disappointment, whose interest has to be wooed over and again. In her analysis of Poe’s “The Black Cat,” Bonaparte argues that the cat is a totem of the witch mother.19 But if your early mother was a dog, you can meet the cat’s stare and playful nonlinearity halfway and find the cat mother charming.

Hilda reports that the Professor “always seems interested when I tell him of my animal findings and fairy-tale associations” (136). In puzzling out the meaning of her dream, they play, she writes, “puss-in-a-corner, find one angle and another or see things from different corners or sides of a room” (119). Hilda wanted her gift to be unique and ended up being the only analysand not to give Freud a birthday present for several years running.

The capacity for play comes in good stead when a cat can’t think the way back down from the top of a tree or the roof. Cats get caught in tight spots from which the only way back down is a straight line. But often upon being helped to return to the start position, they disown their plight by the ploy of play. Freudchen, my cat in the 1990s, would greet me upon my return from campus standing on the roof over the entrance to our home. Each time it appeared that he was stuck up there. I would walk around the house, which was built into an incline, to the point in the roofline where he could readily jump down (and had probably climbed up). He would high-paw me like the joke was on me, too. Then he would tell me extensively about his day in language that remained enigmatic to me but which followed all the modulations, in emphasis and affect, befitting a narrative between plaint and entertainment.

When Hilda entered the office for her first session, Freud was taken aback that his brand-new analysand took in the setting

19 Marie Bonaparte, Edgar Poe, étude psychanalytique (Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1933). The second volume of the German translation, Edgar Poe. Eine psychanalytische Studie (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), closes with the section on “The Black Cat.”
from its various angles and corners before facing him: “You are the only person who has ever come into this room and looked at the things in the room before looking at me” (62). When Freud’s chow comes around the bend of the couch, Hilda, although not a dog person, bends down to greet the so-called lioness. Freud warns her that the dog is difficult with strangers and might snap. But they embrace. Freud barks: “I am an old man – you do not think it worth your while to love me” (ibid.). But she’s wrong, he says; the analyst doesn’t die of old age. “In analysis,” he instructs her, “the person is dead after the analysis is over – as dead as your father” (141).

In Topsy: The Golden-Haired Chow, Bonaparte’s summary of the prehistory of the relationship between man and dog can be read as interlinear gloss between two stories, its allegory and translation.

When [...] man, still savage, hunted wild beasts and pursued his prey, sometimes the ancestors of the dogs must have come, once night had fallen, to look for the leavings of this prey. [...] Man, jealous of his prey, if he still caught sight of them at dawn, chased them away. Sometimes he pursued them; but, some day or other, he must have killed a mother by the side of her puppies and have taken them. Then, as they grew up, they learned to hunt with him, to share his cave and his meals. Since then, oh Topsy, how many dogs have arisen, have run in the woods and the steppes, then have laid themselves down forever to mingle their bones with our bones, in this same earth on which you are now stretched! And in how many places! For everywhere on this soil that bears us, where the sole of human feet has left its imprint, the imprint of dogs’ paws has followed. [...] In the bargain concluded in those times between man and dog, the dog sometimes had to pay dearly. For the easier prey, for the daily meal, how many blows? And the death of the dog which did not matter, when the master was tired of it?20

20 Bonaparte, Topsy. Der goldhaarige Chow, 76, 79. Subsequent page references are given in the text.
Bonaparte recounts that Topsy’s ancestors in China pulled sleds and hunted wolves and that on occasion her living kin are still what’s for dinner: “in Canton the flesh of the yellow and black chows is eaten, probably also for ulterior purposes related to magic” (36).

The animal medium, as big as lifetime, never drops close contact with finitude, as Bonaparte writes: “Since a dog’s life is so much shorter than our own, to have one, to love one, is [...] gratuitously to invite Death into one’s house” (48). The animal that in coming close to us lays bare the lifetime we spare also comes back to us out of the transference. Bonaparte ruminates continuously on the end of Topsy, while all the deaths that fit her transferences are brought home. The animal kept close, like a medium at the séance, is an open invitational for all one’s ghosts. But Topsy is also the safeguard against the backfire of wishing upon the other’s itinerary or destiny. “In the nightly darkness of the large garden uncanny forces reside; under the black trees I see the ghosts of my departed waiting for me, my dead mother, who wants her child back, my deceased father, who calls me to his side. When you are gone, Topsy, who will protect me against these ghosts?” (39).

Topsy’s recovery spares them both the haunting prospect of Chow Down. Bonaparte is jubilant: “Topsy, when I watch you run now after your cure, the thought that I was able, through magic powers, as it were, to prolong your little dog life, makes me as proud as if I had written the Iliad” (71). Her breakthrough affirmation coincides with a break Freud takes from the materials of his Moses genealogy to consider what the heroic sagas of Greek Antiquity drew on and covered up.

During the period at which, among the Jews, the return of the religion of Moses was in preparation, the Greek people found themselves in possession of an exceedingly rich store of tribal legends and hero-myths. [...] With our present psychological insight we could, long before Schliemann and Evans, have raised the question of where it was that the Greeks obtained all the legendary material which was worked over by Homer and the great Attic dramatists in their masterpieces. The answer would have had to be that this people had probably
experienced in their prehistory a period of external brilliance and cultural efflorescence which had perished in a historical catastrophe and of which an obscure tradition survived in these legends. The archaeological researches of our days [...] have uncovered the evidences of the impressive Minoan-Mycenaean civilization, which had probably already come to an end on the mainland of Greece before 1250 B.C. There is scarcely a hint at it to be found in the Greek historians of a later age: at most a remark that there was a time when the Cretans exercised command of the sea, and the name of King Minos and of his palace, the Labyrinth.21

Of all the factors that Freud identifies building the momentum for the ultimate ascendancy of the Mosaic god, including unidentified persistence of a kind of memory or the encysted survival of isolated traces, the most compelling, perhaps the catchall, is that of a darkly distorted tradition that continued to be effective in the background: it was the tradition of a great past, a great cause, which had been lost. The poets of Ancient Greece drew on such a tradition involving the loss of Minoan civilization. Later on, historiography took tradition’s place, while the artist filled the gaps in transmission with fantasy.

In Kunst und Künstler (Art and the Artist, 1932), Rank belabor his sense of the advance of Greek antiquity, which, as he already underscored in The Trauma of Birth, was the first culture to separate the human from the animal and advance thus from religion to art. The Greeks were the “only culture really to live on the earth and in the light of the sun, which is why a strict border was drawn between the world above and the underworld, in which the dead led a bloodless and soulless existence.”22


22 Otto Rank, Kunst und Künstler. Studien zur Genese und Entwicklung des Schaffensdranges (Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 2000), 149. Subsequent page references are given in the text.
In the fabled Minoan labyrinth, Rank looked for the metabolic change going into the ascent of Greek antiquity. Since the experts of the day claimed that Cretan prehistory was not verifiable, Rank turned to the evidence of medieval labyrinths in northern Europe. “Certain labyrinthine constructions characterized in the Icelandic saga as animal traps, are identified in England and Scandinavia as Troytowns or walls of Troy” (151). Walls of Troy trapped evil spirits encircled by the steps and turns of a dance.

The turning of the dance guided by the structures themselves turns on the labyrinth in which the Minotaur, half human, half animal, could be kept, but only through the proffered intake of human sacrifice. So-called palaces of the intestines in Ancient Babylon turn labyrinthine construction back upon the insides of animals, the prospect that vouchsafed prophecy, but also served to mediate the rebirth of the deceased into the afterlife. A privileged form of early burial, therefore, was the deceased’s insertion inside an emptied-out animal skin: the animal used was also reborn within the animal parts of the human organism while the reclaimed human soul, like the treasure the hero brings back from his quest, enriched all the members of the clan (164).

The alternative to burial inside an animal skin was to be eaten by animals or swallowed whole by a very large animal. Rank seizes the possibility that the Minotaur legend was overcome in the Trojan horse.

Instead of the inner intestinal spirals, which in ornaments still dominate the civilization of Ancient Crete, there appears not only the stylized animal body (the horse), but also the human, who frees himself from his animal basis, and ultimately in the idealized human forms of the Olympian Gods, triumphs over the chthonic-animal principle. (158)

Rank’s wishful thinking cannot escape the datemark, the race toward, away from, and against Freud’s mortality.

It was not the close reading of the metabolic ins and outs of the primal fantasy in *Art and the Artist* that marked his abandonment of Freud’s science. Rather it was the conclusion Rank appended to the passages of endopsychic reading like a
refrain. Self-creation, the end-all of psychic processes, is realized in its perfectibility across an arc of wish fulfillment linking Greek antiquity and Christianity. If one brackets out this refraining order *Art and the Artist* remains at the bulk rate continuous with Rank’s earlier work as well as compatible with Géza Róheim’s folklore studies or Herbert Silberer’s analyses of the occult. At the same time, there was another refrain, which, if missing, signaled abandonment of Freud’s science: the recurring strain of the sexual etiology of neurosis. Freud required the knee jerk of sexuality as bulwark against the mudslide of the occult, as he put it. Is Freud’s outspoken rejection of the occult in this instance, given his interest in telepathy and haunting, the defective cornerstone of his science? No. Like Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer before him, he was rejecting the so-called spiritualist view of occult phenomena, which disowned our animal relation.

The day before receiving from him the lethal injection of mor- phine, Freud confided to his physician Max Schur that his final reading selection, Honoré de Balzac’s *The Wild Ass’s Skin*,23 had turned out to be a perfect fit, since the story turned on shrinking and starvation. Freud wrote of his father as he lay dying that he was “steadily shrinking towards […] a fateful date.”24 The span of skin tightens its hold over someone starving in its vanishing act. Rank, who had written long and hard on the overcoming of primal forms of burial, in particular those signaling rebirth, like interment inside an animal skin, died suddenly of an obscure infection within one month of Freud’s departure. It was a wrap.

They Eat Horses, Don’t They?

Released within eight years of her father’s jump out the window, Emilie Deleuze’s movie *Mister V* (2003) tracks changes in rela- tionality that commence when Mister V, otherwise an untrain-

23 If you flash on my reading of Balzac’s story centered on the philosophy of wishing in volume one of *Critique of Fantasy*, you’ll see that a circle is closing.
able or psycho horse, flexes immense potential by clearing the wall of his pen in one impossible jump. At this point the film identifies with its own medium nature, its own trainability, and gives us a couple of staggered replays of the jump.

Lemoigne, a Belgian gangster, contracted Luigi to buy Mister V. The scheme is to cash in on the insurance value by arranging for the animal’s fatal accident. Following the spectacular jump, however, Luigi becomes determined instead to train the talented horse to be a prize winner. But then Luigi is found dead in Mister V’s stall. His brother Lucas and widow Cécile decide not to treat the horse’s violence against Luigi as intentional. Mister V carries forward Luigi’s loss but also exceeds it. The anxieties that accrue to the disposability of this horse crowd out any room at all for Luigi’s absence. When they spared Mister V, Cécile and Lucas reclaimed unmournability and raised it to totemic power.

Following a stint of his everyday life in town suspended between lab research and tap dancing, Lucas is called back to the country by messages on the answering machine left in earshot of his responsibility. Lemoigne’s messages remind him of his dead brother’s debt to the underworld; Cécile’s messages ask him to mind that he promised not to leave her alone. When Lucas is back, his niece Clara announces that mummy is expecting him and directs him to the site of Cécile’s partially towel-wrapped nude sunbathing. When she signals to him to sit down, the camera takes over, as earlier with Mister V’s jump, and replays the gesture, which hovers in the medium.

Lucas’s clumsiness and carelessness while trying to bind Mister V make it easy for the horse to corner him in the stall. But this time the horse doesn’t kill his human. He bites him instead, whereupon Lucas passes out. It is a scene of identification with the departed, over which Mister V watches. When Cécile points out that the horse could have killed him, Lucas counters: “But he didn’t. I saw him.” Lucas urges Cécile to stick to her resolve not to kill Mister V: “If we kill him we’ll never know.” Know? “If Luigi was right.” Lucas declares that to help out he will take a longer leave from work, not a vacation but a sabbatical. They embrace, kiss, and the rest is substitution. But it is an interlude of success (and succession) that wrecks Lucas, who must start over.
When Lucas rebukes his brother following the high-rolling purchase of high-strung Mister V, Luigi promises that this insurance scam is just one last turn in the underworld that will free him of a residual indebtedness. Lucas next asks about Cécile, who is in recovery from a bout of depression. “Et Cécile?” Lucas asked his brother, thus placing the short hand over the heart of his longstanding love affair with his brother’s family. Luigi promptly reports to Lucas that daughter Clara is excelling at school. That his brother’s family is a readymade only one murderous substitution away from his understanding and grasp is what the film and horse must circumvent unto the prospect of survival in mourning.

On the morning after, Clara brings Lucas a present from Lemoigne: a needle for injecting the horse. The one-night understanding of substitution and successful mourning cannot get past the relationship to Mister V’s mortality. Lucas moves in with Mister V.

Fantasying follows the beat or measure of fulfillment when Lucas establishes eye-to-eye coordination with Mister V. He stabilizes the horse in the stable, while movement extends the bond unto a fantastic correspondence. Lucas’s modified dance steps are given (or edited) in exchange with Mister V’s matching steps. The dissociation organizing Lucas’s relationship to his own or the mother’s body (which he has projected into the techno science of measuring horses in motion, his profession, and into the art of tap dancing, his hobby or fetish) is re-collected in the relationship to Mister V.

After a visit to his brother’s grave, Lucas informs Lemoigne that the horse will die: “I’ll call when it’s done.” The underworld insurance scam can now be extended to fund new beginnings. The horse farm can go up in smoke, and yield its insurance value, while the senior horse Tiberius can be put to sleep right before the fire and, passing for Mister V, earn the premium insurance coverage.

When Lucas starts to inform Cécile what happened to Mister V, she stops him. “For me he’s dead. I don’t care.” They embrace. We watch, with Lucas, as Cécile, moving away, strokes the back of her neck turned toward us, rubbing the spot we’re in with Mister V. But it is from this spot (or out of it) that Lucas can now
make plans to travel to the location of possible reunions with Cécile and Clara.

Lemoigne says he knew the father of Luigi and Lucas. Batistella, the saving foreign purchaser at the end of the film, who gives shelter to Mister V, recognizes in Lucas his mother’s lookalike. At this point of identification – of a loss in his face – all the parties to the film’s happy end begin to arrive via a reclamation that at the same time exceeds the doubling logic of the insurance scam and the underworld filiation. While the first figure, Lemoigne, belongs to the murderous underworld of substitution with benefits, the second, Batistella, recrosses the path of the film story stitching together its containment. But when he first appears at the opening horse auction he tries to get Lucas’s attention, tries to say “Hi,” but is overlooked and passed by. A stray connection left unidentified, without follow up, Batistella is a continuity error. In the medium of every film story, the continuity error is the inadvertent performance of a loss of connection that appears only to disappear or hide out.

Following Mister V’s jump, Luigi dismissed Lucas’s second thoughts: “For you everything’s a problem.” But Lucas stands up for his job description: “I test, I analyze.” Lucas wants to harness to the art and science of measurement and distinction the stride length of horses and, at a jump, the time between the forelegs coming down and the hind legs pushing off. Lucas’s project recapitulates Eadweard Muybridge’s proto-cinematographic photo documentation of the stride of horsepower. A wrap with his pursuit of tap dancing prowess, his fantasy science project is a simulacrum of one of the film medium’s primal scenes. By thus reinscribing the advent of motion in pictures, Deleuze projects her medium as the emotion picture carrying forward the animal relation unto the undecidability of Freud’s leading question of priority. Does the totem meal dismantle into measurable doses the primal death of the father or does the primal father’s mournable death make it possible for the unmournable animal to be what’s for dinner? The inconceivability of Mr. V’s loss, which admits only the horse’s rescue, gets Lucas past the impasse of unmourning, now the continuity error upholding the happy ending of the film.
Wrecked by Successful Mourning

When in *Moses and Monotheism* Freud reintroduces the backstory of the Darwinian primal horde, the term he uses for the primal leader of the pack, “Männchen,” literally “little man,” is the zoological term used for the male animal. Both meanings come together in the German expression for the command given a dog to sit up and beg: *Männchen machen*. The trajectory of the primal fantasy also extends through the phrase *Männchen Malen*, literally “to paint or draw *Männchen*,” which means: “to doodle.” It names the daydreaming activity of the older child or teen at school, which inscribes the father whose distant or tyrannical cast is thus lightened and lubed for friendly or indeed oedi-pal identification.

The story of the primal *Männchen* must be told, Freud announces, in grand condensation, “in großartiger Verdichtung,” as though what in reality extended over millennia and was countlessly repeated, took place once.25 The aggressive *Männchen* drove away all his sons, who in time formed the fraternity that returned to kill and devour him.26 But as in the practice of *Männchen Malen*, the rebellious consumers of the *Männchen* didn’t purely hate and fear him; they honored him as their avatar and ultimate object of identification.

The terrain of transmission of the primal father fantasy, which Freud demarcates, is scratch and sniff. The traces to follow are not specific to human language. And yet, Freud ascribes the advent of omnipotence of thoughts, the very crux of wish fantasy, to pride taken in the development of language.27 Ensoenced in language lies the primal scene of animation or animism, the identification of the movement of invisible air currents with the breath of life, the first spirit. Man extended the spirit he breathed

26 Ibid., 530.
in and out to all of nature. Modern science, Freud adds, was still working hard to de-animate the results.  

Upon its posthumous publication, Sachs wrote a review of *Moses and Monotheism*, which he subsequently folded into *The Creative Unconscious*. Sachs tracked the transmutation of Freud’s adolescent heroic fantasy set forth in one of the autobiographical passages Freud offered in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which Sachs quotes. “Hannibal had been the favorite hero of my years from eleven to fifteen […]. Like many others at the same age I had given my sympathies during the Punic wars not to the Romans, but to the Carthaginians.” Freud goes on to connect all the dots between his situation at school with anti-Semitic classmates and the ancient exploits of a Semitic hero. Sachs comments: “We learn here of a wish-fantasy in the form appropriate to the ways of thinking and feeling in early adolescence: To become a fighter, a leader in the war against injustice and oppression” (133).

Shortly before entering the university, Freud dropped his plans for a ministerial position, which would have been the fulfillment of “the daydreams and ambitions of adolescence” (137). He decided instead on a career in medicine and resigned himself to the obscurity of a lifetime of scientific research. Sachs connects two essays by Freud from the year 1914, the one he published anonymously on Michelangelo’s Moses and “On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement,” his public reckoning with the departures of Adler and Jung. The highpoint of Moses’ implied movement, which the sculpture catches, is the restraint he shows in the face of the infuriating rejection of his teaching by his own chosen people. Sachs sees further restraint placed upon the adolescent fantasy when Freud argued in *Moses and Monotheism* that Moses was not even a Semitic object of identification but instead an Egyptian who selected the Jewish people to carry forward the religion of Aton, which had miscarried in Egypt.

Freud linked the crux of his adolescent fantasy to early childhood experiences, which Sachs unpacks. “Freud does not leave us without information about the deeper, early infantile root of his resentment against oppression. His first playmate was a

28 Ibid., 114.
boy, somewhat older than he (the son of his half-brother) who occasionally misused the greater strength which his age gave him. ‘It seems that he treated me very badly at times and that I showed my courage against my tyrant’” (134). The significance of this playmate, John Freud, was charged, animated, Freud discovered in the course of his auto-analytic correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess, by the departure in early childhood of his younger brother Julius.30 The ghostly content of transference had all along been brought home to him in the serial making and breaking up of his same-sex friendships, which recycled the split-level structure of denial of Julius to and through the forget-together with John. When at last in London, Freud was able to conclude Moses and Monotheism and thus put to rest, as he wrote, an unquiet ghost.

The identification with lost causes that moves teenagers and whole nations is a manic defense against the inner reality of the wreckage of success. The poetic historiography of Rome, perhaps the most famous instance of the niche market of the confederation of lost wars, undergoes an update in Macbeth, which Freud’s reading of the Macbeths among “those wrecked by success” underscores.31 While Freud admits that he could not give a satisfying answer to the question why Lady Macbeth collapsed after her success, he announces that with his next exemplary protagonist, Rebecca West of Henrik Ibsen’s Rosmersholm (1886), he will be able to penetrate the enigma of another mood swing. A split second after jubilating over the longed-for success of her plan to become Rosmer’s second wife, Rebecca projects suicide instead, her only alternative to the sudden resolve never to accept the marriage proposal.

By her own background, Rebecca is an ill fit with the conservation of family values in Rosmer’s lineage and estate. She is the only child of an unwed mother, a midwife. When she died her colleague, the freethinker Dr. West, adopted and raised Rebecca.

30 In my first book, Aberrations of Mourning: Writing on German Crypts (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988), I sought to rewrite German Kultur upon a series of crypts, in the first place the one underlying Freud’s Julius Caesar complex.

31 See the chapter “Identification with Lost Causes” in my Germany: A Science Fiction (Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2014).
After Dr. West’s passing Rebecca found employment with Rosmer and his invalid wife Beata. Falling for a new father figure, Rebecca contrived an extensive plan for replacing Beata in the wife position. What’s missing in the home is offspring. Rebecca makes sure that Beata will find a medical manual spelling out that reproduction alone is the rationale for marriage. She insinuates that Rosmer’s change of faith in religion and politics follows her own views. Finally, she lets Beata know that she, Rebecca, will have to go away to conceal and carry to term the outcome of her illicit intercourse with Rosmer.

Motivated by the new rationale that Rebecca has inculcated in her that she must get out of the way of her husband’s happiness, now inseparable from the future of the family line, Beata drowns herself in the stream that bisects the Rosmersholm estate. This is the prehistory. The drama commences one year after the suicide, at the end of a relatively happy period of Rebecca and Rosmer’s cohabitation in ideal friendship. Gossip about their status compromises the friendship at the same time that Rosmer begins to doubt that his wife’s suicide can be dismissed as symptom of her chronic depression. It is to counter the uncertainty that besets them that Rosmer proposes marriage to Rebecca, in other words the wedding night, whereupon she turns out to be another striking example of one wrecked by success.

Rebecca’s diffuse rationalization that in coming under Rosmer’s influence her ruthless will has weakened is not so much wrong as an elaboration on another instability, which Rebecca’s subtraction of one year from her true age reveals. That she is one year younger is her best defense against the claim of Beata’s brother that Dr. West was her biological progenitor before he became her adoptive father. But he knows better that the good doctor was in town for an extended visit the year before he moved in with Rebecca’s mother. The literalness of her incestuous relations with Dr. West, the illicit affair that no one bothered to assume or interrogate, brings home her other primal Oedipal crime, the murderous replacement of her mother.

The prelude to this charged affair was that Rebecca became a free thinker like Dr. West, just as she later became a person of conscience like Rosmer. What turns success into wreckage is not the plain text of incest but what lies between the two stages of
its elaboration: the repeated violence to her mother or, more precisely, to her dead mother and her remembrance.

*Rosmersholm* opens with Rebecca’s denial of the existence of ghosts. She and the maid watch Rosmer on his return home avoiding the bridge that marks the spot of Beata’s suicide. Rebecca: “They certainly cling to their dead at Rosmersholm.” The maid observes instead: “I think it’s the dead that cling to Rosmersholm.” Rebecca looks at her: “How do you mean – the dead?” The ecstatic cling of haunting is incarnated by the white horses meant originally to run in the drama’s title. Their ghostly skittishness conveys the unfinished business of the dead. To deny the ghostly dead means to deny them love.32 Rebecca’s resolve breaks on this declination of denial.

32 This is the gist of Melanie Klein’s reading of ghosts in “Some Reflections on *The Oresteia*,” in *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works*, 275–99.