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## STRANGERS' GAMES

Julia Kristeva in a Utopian  
Perspective

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### DER SPIELTRIEB

**A**part from exploring different aspects of the problem of the "maternal" presence in language, Julia Kristeva also treats the problem of the "father." Not so much as a symbolic father, however, but rather as a formation of the imaginary: an "imaginary father". The imaginary father is the phantasm of a father who can love like a mother. It is precisely the lack of (an idea of) a loving father that can explain, according to Kristeva, the crisis of the modern soul, and not the lack of a stern and relentless patriarch as it is sometimes claimed. Intellectually derived from Hegel, Freud and Lacan but imaginatively drawn from the (nostalgic) transplantation of the maternal aura of the Eastern Orthodox Trinity under the empty skies of the modern soul,<sup>1</sup> the concept of the imaginary father focuses some persistent utopian traits of Kristeva's writing into the solicitation for us to revisit the watery settings of Narcissus in order to gaze at the *image*. Free of Narcissus's illusions, however, and with a lucid awareness of the irreality of the image - and of the reality of our love for the fake, for the phantom loveliness of our own creations which once produced the space of the Western psyche and today, according to Kristeva, could become the wager for a new humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> For an analogy between the imaginary father and the Eastern Orthodox Trinity, see the chapter on Dostoevsky in *Black Sun*. This problematic can be traced back to the contrast that Kristeva draws between Bellini and Leonardo - between the subdued "jouissant" culture of the East and the victorious technocratic West - in "Motherhood According to Giovanni Bellini." See my "The Lost Territory."

The imaginary – maternal – father thus re-verberates Schiller's defense of "mere appearance." He is the guarantee of a ludic entry into the Oedipal triangle and provides a theatrical setting for the becoming of the subject: of the subject as a game of I-s (*jeu de jes*), as a gambling of the I-s, or as an I-dice as I shall presently call it. The imaginary father, to put it short, promises aesthetic salvation through the virtues of the seeming and thus allows a crucial transformation of the drives into what might be defined, in the light of Schiller's *Spieltrieb*, as "playdrives" or, indeed, as gambling drives. Through this utopian echo that retains Freud's emphasis on the drives but that, ever since Kristeva's conceptualization of the chora, insists on the perilous creativity of an "unreal" theatrical and protean "I" in the grips of a permanent crisis, Kristeva's theory evokes the ludic vistas of Schiller's pedagogic and aesthetic utopianism.

These vistas are constructed as a subterfuge against emptiness and madness rather than against the repressiveness of a weakened superego. By referring to the transmutation of the drives into playdrives and of the symbolic father into an imaginary *pater ludi*, they resist both the poststructuralist fatalism of a language that writes us without residue and the Frankfurtian "eschatological-sensualist"

visions of reconciliation<sup>2</sup> – of a mindfulness to nature that gives us back to ourselves. Foreign to the austere and ascetic tendencies which stoic thought handed down to Western culture (and to which Foucault was finally attracted) and, as we shall presently see, open and interactive rather than enclosed in the enlightened autarky of the soul, Kristeva's utopia perpetuates its tensions and its undecidable spaces through its aspect of a ludic pedagogical technique: of a self-building method, demanding the rigour of the game. This is a utopia of self-formation understood as a discipline for playing. As a problematized rescuing of aesthetics, in a word.

#### THE OEUVRE

What the *Spieltriebe* produce is not an "oeuvre" but an "I" – an "I" situated in front of, rather than behind the "oeuvre." Kristeva's interest in the subject, rather than the work, as the product of the *Spieltrieb* and as the focus of utopian promise, is in line with Schiller's aesthetic pedagogy, although, of course, her solutions are far from his (sentimental or naive?) ideal of the "whole man." Schiller himself seems to regard the work of art as only a partial intimation and a "high approximation" (*Aesthetic Education* 153) to his ideal of aesthetic wholeness. As both

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<sup>2</sup> Albrecht Wellmer describes Adorno's aesthetics as coming close to "an eschatological and sensualistic modulation of Schopenhauer" (Wellmer II).

"Nought" and a state of "Supreme reality" – a paradox to be echoed by Adorno<sup>3</sup> – the "aesthetic mode of the psyche" (*Aesthetic Education* 151) is what really matters and it is this treatment of the work of art as the medium prefiguring and releasing a utopian perspective on the subject that Kristeva's theory endorses.

Kristeva's interest in the process that produces the psyche and the subject thus leads her, via the study of the work of art, to the problem of the *je de jeu* – the ludic I. As in the transferential situation in which the analyst and the analysand get involved in a discourse that amounts to the production of "literature" and "love" but whose goal is outside of that artistic and amorous endeavour, the work of art – always a "work in progress" for that matter – is not questioned as the frozen assortment of symptoms for the abnormality of the creative subject toiling behind it but as the perilous transsubjective laboratory that sets this subject up in the first place.

This shift in precedence blurs the boundary between "art" and "life" through a double movement in which the *oeuvre* is analytically destabilized into artistic practice and the subject's coming into being is delivered as an aesthetic occurrence. Kristeva's privileging of art and the artist is thus effected through a

gesture that equates art to the process of subject-formation. The result is not a disappearance of the subject but an insistence on the subject's capacity for rebirth. Neither is it a disappearance of the aesthetic but rather an attempt at its, perhaps allegorical, redemption. Hence one might speak of a ludic substratum to the appearance of the "I," manifesting that there is a purposiveness without a purpose to the formation of the subject and that, with the fading of the moral rigour of a stern superego claiming us inexorably to be or to be one thing rather than another, the subject itself partakes of the nature of the artifice: the I-game, the *jeu de je*. Such an "I" is itself a work in progress, a figurative series of transformations, a potential infinity of masks. The *oeuvre* is the artist.

#### THE AZ-ZAHR

Or, to put it differently, the "I" is a hazard, *un hasard*, a risk, that is, and a game, a game of chance and the risk of gambling. *Der Spieltrieb*, a term for which Schiller was sometimes reproached, signified in its common use the passion for gambling. In Mallarmé's poem *Un coup de dés*, on which the thesis of Kristeva's *Revolution in Poetic Language* relies heavily and to which Kristeva repeatedly refers in her later work, we are told that "*Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard.*" A throw of the dice never

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3 In his discussion of Beckett's *Endgame* Adorno notes that "the repose of nothingness and that of reconciliation cannot be distinguished from each other" (Adorno 150).

will abolish chance (*hasard*). Or, perhaps, a throw of the dice never will abolish hazard. It deserves notice that the French *hasard* (chance), as well as the English hazard (risk, danger) and the Bulgarian *hazart* (хазарт, gambling), come from the Arabic word for "dice" or "dice-game" – *az-zahr*. Chance – risk – gambling. Hence "a throw of the dice (*az-zahr*) never will abolish the dice (*az-zahr*)."  
 To throw dice is not to throw them, it is to use them as dice, to confirm them as *az-zahr*: to gamble, in short. Consequently, "a throw of the dice never will abolish gambling (*hazart*)."  
 An act of gambling does not abolish gambling; playing with chance does not eliminate chance. It acts it. The French pronunciation of *hasard* evokes the Bulgarian *az-zar* which means literally "I-dice." *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le az-zar*. A throw of the dice never will abolish the I-dice: *le je-dés (des jes)*. *Der Spieltrieb* acts the I-dice, taking a chance does not abolish the I-s. The I dies but as the I-dice (of polytopical I-s) it gambles its paranoid numerical infinity through the deaths of *coups de dés* between the hazards of shipwrecks and the eternal circumstances of probable constellations.

#### A NECESSARY CAUTION

This gambling of the I is not necessarily a matter for jubilation but rather an effort to draw a promise (a constellation) out of wreckage. *Nothing will have taken place but the place*, to quote Mallarmé's poem once again, *except*

*perhaps a constellation*. The celebrated fragmentation of the Cartesian subject (into "subject positions" and "author-subjects" "currently mobilized" by "predominant disciplinary mechanisms" [Butler xiii]) that apparently puts an end to the violence establishing the unitary self begins, after all, as the violence of a new technological order demanding the partition of the subject into incommunicable functions. Schiller saw a problem here which is perhaps worth remembering again: for if the unitary subject is a historical phenomenon (and, in this sense, a "fiction"), so is its contemporary decentering. The destruction of the Cartesian I, in and for itself, is thus hardly a lucky strike at the "truth" of the subject or a guarantee for the preclusion of a brave new world. Hence a certain ambiguity in Kristeva's position: on the one hand, there is the positive potential in the unsettling of the subject which resists closure; on the other hand, however, there is the collapse of Occidental psychic space with its disturbing consequences. Kristeva's aesthetization of the subject comes from the summoning of the fragmented self into the prospect of a ludic freedom, a freedom with rules, that is, one that resists both the unquestioning mode of technological utility and the allures of final answers.

Yet this summoning is problematic, as Kristeva's work has demonstrated with increasing acuteness. The effort to bestow utopian aesthetic life on fragmentation

evokes Benjamin's reflections on the baroque as the expectation of a miracle out of the piling up of fragments and on allegory as the life of irresistible decay and the form that finds its perfection in ruin (Benjamin 178). Such life is like the life of a corpse with its nails, i.e. its deadness, growing (Benjamin 218). And yet Benjamin's allegory, this grim version of Schiller's sentimentality, is not entirely devoid of hope for, Benjamin asserts, "on the second part of its wide arc [allegorical reflection] returns, to redeem" (232). The baroque redemption through the ruin-as-form thus implies that "a worldview can only be a worldview if it attempts to redeem a prior worldview .... This means that the being of the new worldview unfolds as a form of living through the death of the former worldview" (Angelova).

The aesthetization of the subject as an answer to irresistible fragmentation might be regarded, consequently, as an attempt at rescuing the moribund worldview of the artist. In its polytopia, Kristeva's subject lives the ruin of the Cartesian ego; in its aesthetic playfulness, it inhabits the destruction of the artist and, beyond it, of the aristocratic ideal that refused to separate profession from life, work from play, and the private from the public.<sup>4</sup> In this sense,

Kristeva's ludic subject traces Benjamin's paradoxical arc of redemption and, like the ruin-as-form, "is bound to a twofold function of dying-as-living" (Angelova). To put it briefly, it is allegorical.

So is transference love, the "new love story" that becomes part of Kristeva's agenda as the equivocal saviour of courtly and romantic loves. Kristeva's treatment of transference love is emblematic of the efforts of utopia to conjure "a regulative principle of hope" (Benhabib 229) from the life of ruins (the growing nails of the corpse). Love, one remembers, is Schiller's perfect example of the deployment of aesthetic playfulness as opposed to the one-sided gravity of instinct and respect. Yet the whole of Kristeva's project involves a paradox in so far as it relies on a furthering of seriousness that has turned love (as distinct from sex) into a profession. For analytic love, from which transference love takes its model, is paid love which offers conversation and understanding as the new commodity. Hence it is hardly surprising that "unlike Freud's patients, the [modern] borderline speaks of Eros and dreams of Agape." (*TL* 50) The analysand pays in order to be listened to – and "loved." To be loved "fairly" and "lucidly". "I love you, neither do I." The utopian perspective that runs

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4 Domna Stanton's excellent study *The Aristocrat as Art* explores the historical parameters of this phenomenon. Kristeva refers to Stanton's work and to the link between the ludic subject and its artistic and aristocratic predecessors in *TL* 194.

through Kristeva's theory thus invariably has to be thought as precariously "unglued" from its questionable reverse, the way the polytopic subject is detached as the playfully liberated double of *homo faber*, or the way transference love is detached from analytic reality as the "new love story." What makes utopia thinkable in these circumstances is the excess that Schiller evokes as the source and hope of all playfulness – an excess, however, that is yoked to its "dying." Utopia, as Kristeva inconclusively concludes, is a means, not an end. (*Strangers* 117) It makes sense only in conjunction with the world of its decay.

#### L'ETRANGÈRE ABOLIE

The confident *n'abolira* – will not abolish – which follows in Mallarmé's poem immediately after *folie* inscribes, according to our translinguistic reading of Kristeva's *Revolution in Poetic Language*, the paranoid certainty of a polyhedral dice-I that cannot be abolished but only confirmed through gambling: the certainty that the mother will always be with us, singing and rejoicing in language (as an imaginary father). This certainty – a negation of loss – accompanies our consent to a constitutive exile and to a homeless life of meanings. "žI have lost an essential object that happens to be, in the final analysis, my mother,' is what the speaking being seems to

be saying. žBut no, I have found her again in signs, or rather since I consent to lose her I have not lost her (that is the negation), I can recover her in language" (*BS* 43). Melancholy begins with the disavowal of this negation: "I have not not (*sic!*) lost her, she cannot be recovered, words are of no avail." On the far side of the melancholy collapse of meaning, however, a certain perplexity occurs. We might describe it as the gambling away of negation. "Have I lost something? I do not recall."<sup>5</sup>

The word *abolie* used by Mallarmé appears once again in similar circumstances in Kristeva's writing. As in the case with *Un coup de dés*, the word occurs in a poem quoted by Kristeva in its entirety in a pivotal section of her book: the poem is Nerval's "*El Desdichado*" and the book *The Black Sun*, i.e. the situation involved is, as I describe it elsewhere (*Wager, Lost Territory*), a situation of mirroring and redoubling between the theoretician and her brother-poet. Nerval's use of the word, however, is different from Mallarmé's.

This use has its own literary history involving both Nerval and Mallarmé. According to a study of Nerval's *El Desdichado*, the hypnotic alliterative combination in which he employs the word made the word fashionable, which explains why Mallarmé turned to it six times in his poetry. (*BS* 150) Mallarmé is evoked in

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5 This phenomenon is discussed in Andre Green. *Le Travail du negatif*, Paris: Minuit, 1993.

Kristeva's discussion as the inheritor of *El Desdichado's* (the disinherited one) rare and musically compelling word. Within Kristeva's writing, however, it is Nerval's use of the word that, interpreted as part of an anagram of his nostalgic longing for the lost territory, is superinscribed over Mallarmé's.

In a further echo of Mallarmé's text, the *folie* (translated as "madness" in the English text) of Nerval's poem – although *folie* is a word employed by Mallarmé, not by Nerval – is brought forth by Kristeva. (BS 155) This time the folly, however, inflicted with the pain of an imaginary memory, has a different scope that tells on the form and circumstances of *abolir*: in Mallarmé the word is negative, in Nerval it is positive, in Mallarmé the word is a verb in the future, in Nerval it is a past participle, in Mallarmé the word is preceded by *folie*, in Nerval it is rhymed with *mélancolie*. *N'abolira* has become *abolie*; will not abolish has become abolished; what is negated in the future has turned into an accomplished fact of the past; the constellations of chance have crumbled into the ruined towers of loss; the daring and incestuously blissful *hasard* (*az-zahr*, *az-zahr*, I-dice, gambling) of the subject-in-process has metamorphosed into the suicide-bound theatre of *El Desdichado* (the dead, "unbreathing" one - *bezdichanen* in Bulgarian); and folly is exposed as melancholy.

As pain, in a word. *Abolie* – *a-boli* – а боли – but it hurts. In Bulgarian the mellifluous French past participle coincides acoustically

with the very present and verbal meaning of pain without specified origin, without subject or object. This double-tongued string of sounds with its convoluted gambling history, speaking simultaneously the abolished past and the unabolishable pain that accompanies it, is a little parable, all too neat perhaps, of the ways in which the mother tongue inscribes its transversal messages. Yet in the simple simultaneity of its doubleness, which deletes the hidden language through the very word for abolition, there is also the warning that the mother tongue, the pain of loss and, with all this, the strange, hidden face of Narcissus from where the tears come, can disappear, too, after all; that à *ffrîHè* may be ... *aboli*. At the far end of the inverted search for the mother, of the movement that loses her through the very effort to retrieve her, at the far end, that is, of the march towards other languages and metalanguages, which has to compensate us for the constitutive matricide, at the very edge of these strategies, the successful matricide emerges, the unbreathing wielder of a dead mastery over languages. The machine, in a word. Or, as Kristeva has chosen to designate it, the polyglot.

TOTAL LANGUAGES,  
INCOMMENSURATE LANGUAGES

The book of Babel, according to Jorge Borges's "Library of Babel", can be read according to *n* number of different codes and yield each time a totally different but always

meaningful message. An extreme illustration of Saussure's arbitrariness of the sign, opening its pages in monadic worlds that are impervious to each other but nevertheless converge in their mysteriously identical scripts, the Babylonian book projects its inalterable material substratum into the universes of different languages, signifying different things without a hint at its invisible potentialities. A librarian's parable of how we share a language, the Babylonian book exposes the spectral craft of interpretation and embodies the mathematician's trust in isomorphism and anticipated meanings. "You who read me, are you sure you understand my language?" (Borges 79)<sup>6</sup>, asks the librarian. For even if we share a game, who can confirm that it is one and the same game we are playing?

If the Babylonian book were opened, however, by the savage from Knecht's poem "Alphabets" (in Herman Hesse's novel *The Glass Bead Game*, to quote an ambitious modernist monster as against the sly postmodern manoeuvring) what happens is not this or that meaning but, in fact, A and B jump from the pages "as man and beast, /as moving tongues or arms or legs or eyes" and display such a profusion of dangerous vitality, that the terrified savage – quite ignorant of the reader's or the mathematician's games

and it is precisely this ludic ineptitude that defines him as a "savage" here – sets the book on fire.

The burning reunites the dispersal of meanings, fuses the  $n$  number of codes in the flames. On the far end is the gathering of this dispersal in the vision of a total language. In Herman Hesse's *The Glass Bead Game*, the life of Knecht offered by his anonymous biographer is followed by three lives written by Knecht. These three lives function as alternative autobiographies of Knecht whose life *a fortiori* becomes, for his biographer, the way the novel as a whole becomes, for its author, an exercise of the same order as the writing of the lives ascribed to Knecht: i.e., an exercise at inhabiting other places, times, and I-s. The Glass Bead Game players are, from this point of view, I-dice players: they regard the cultural field in its entirety as a reservoir for the assumption of multiple biographies.

Not without a price, however. The Glass Bead Game players' bookish reincarnations are carried out in the spirit of reverential disappearance into an authoritative figure. The Game, situated beyond the memory of loss, demands the relinquishing of all artistic productivity. No creativity – no "nature" – no bodies – no women, to be sure – have

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<sup>6</sup> The fact that the words in the Borgesian book have different "values" points towards Saussure, of course, but also towards their mathematical nature.



place in this Game. What is ludic about it – other than its sparkling uselessness – is the very preservation of a stern, stiffly hierarchical, ascetic authority that can no longer find its legitimacy in a beyond but has to rely on the players' self-sufficient drive for playing, *der Spieltrieb*. The players are hence playing at being motherless and at having only a father who subjects them to his unmitigated and relentless rules: they are playing, in a word, although not without difficulty, at not being creative.

This extreme sternness is dictated by Hesse's solution to the problems of polyglottism through the realization of Humboldt's ideal of a total language that can bring all language games into a single Game. A transparent tower of Babel, the *hybris* of the Game requires utter submission. In order to reverse the proliferation of languages and reassemble them in a unitary code without, however, slipping into the paradox of Borges's book, which falls apart at the precise moment when it seems to have been totally unified, the Game demands the austerities of monasticism from the phratry of its humble players. This inflexible strictness ensures the totalizing movement of the Game: anything corporeal, creative and rebellious, anything "semiotic" would unsettle its shared unified meaning.

The disembodiedness of Hesse's players demonstrates that the total language is opposed not only to the "recognition of the

heteromorphous nature of language games" (Lyotard 66), to the realms of local narratives. It is opposed also to the savage's dangerously jumping A and B or, to put it more precisely, it leaves behind the enigma of

#### THE BODY OF THE POLYGLOT

A forgetful, anaesthetized *El Desdichado*, the polyglot exemplifies the autonomy of the mask: its artificiality frozen beyond any playful recall. If the destiny of the speaking being is to be motherless – if matricide is the necessary condition for the advent of the subject – the polyglot offers the futility of perfection. The polyglot is, consequently, the one who has effectively lost the mother, the one who testifies to the very possibility of a loss without residue.

Being quite motherless, the polyglot has no body. He is like Borges's Babylonian book: he stands as the cipher of a disparate multiplicity of languages, demonstrating Saussure's dictum of the arbitrariness of the sign. The polyglot, one might say, is the very sign of this arbitrariness. Kristeva doubts Jakobson's famous statement that he speaks Russian in fifteen languages: this presence of the "mother tongue" as the entelechy behind the polyglottic versatility is, according to Kristeva, always problematic. If I am who *je suis*, my body will be dispersed across the multiple phonetic scales: the "narrative unity" which Seyla Benhabib evokes as establishing the identity of the self (Benhabib 5) is not sufficient to embody the subject: the

question is what makes a narrative unity (or a narrative fragmentation, for that matter) mine? Vis-à-vis the narrative, the body is precisely in the untranslatable connections that challenge the arbitrariness of the sign: I have a body if the language in which I say "I" has a body for me. The body, in so far as it exists for me, is hence either a language-as-negation-of-loss (a phallic mother, an imaginary father) – a redoubling, from the very start, in which another body grows from within mine to embrace it and confirm its being – or void, a startled blankness ("Have I lost something?").

*It is not a total language that polyglottism requires but a body:* this is also seen in *The Glassbead Game* where the search for a total language takes us finally to the young naked body of Tito. To Lacan's myth of the leap in the mirror, to Kristeva's myth of the leap of semiotic motility into language, the polyglot adds her parable of the mask demanding embodiment: a reversal of the parable of the mother lost through her being recovered. Now it is the flight from the mother that, successful at last, reveals her on the very horizon of meaning as the hope for a new incarnation.

**UTOPIAN PROCEDURE #1:  
THE TRANSLINGUISTIC REGISTER**

The hope is in a body, the body of the polyglot, piled up from the undefeatable meaning of fragments (Benjamin 208), neglecting the allurements of an absolute language.

Amidst laughter and crying, this body erupts from the translanguistic register – the semiotic of the polyglot. There languages fuse and exchange energies rather than being translated – led elsewhere (*traducere*). They merge and clash in the simultaneous transfigurations of orthography, sound, and rhythm. In the risk, the hazard, *le hasard*, the *az-zahr* of an alchemic transmutation, the transmutation of the word into a mother where

a word most bitter, *marah*,  
a word bitterer still, *mar* ....  
are melted, fuse and join  
and change and alter,  
mer, mere, mère,  
mater, Maia, Mary....

H.D. *Trilogy*

**UTOPIAN PROCEDURE #2:**

**TAT TVAM ASI**

If in Lacan's mirror stage I find "myself" as "other" in the image handed to me by the other, Kristeva repeats the question how, then, I find the other? and adds that I find the other in the stranger that I, consequently, am bound to remain. If I am other, the stranger is myself. Through this *tat tvam asi* detour, I am the other and the other is me only to the extent that we are strangers to ourselves – to the extent that we do not reduce strangeness and our constitutive exile. As Benhabib puts it, "the otherness of the other is that moment of irony, reversal and

inversion with which we must live" (Benhabib 256). Communication – and community – is a recognition of – lucidity about – strangeness. Even if language games are irreducibly heteromorphous, what cannot be spoken delineates our common horizon. Kristeva's inquiry into strangeness as something that we share with others – into strangeness as a universal feature and as the cornerstone of universality in a (utopian) world without boundaries – takes us to asymbolia as that residue of "universal strangeness" whose recognition will make possible the tolerance of "multiple logics, speeches and existences."

#### LANGUAGE AND NAIVETÉ

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It is at the dawn of a new polyglottic and cosmopolitan world that the murderous children of Clytemnestra, absolved by Aeschylus, rendered seamlessly righteous by Sophocles, return, with Euripides, to take another look at the mother's corpse. What they find out is that Apollo, who urged them to commit the murder and who, consequently, sang of dim justice but inflicted upon them an obvious evil (*Electra* 1189-1191), can no longer serve effectively his traditional function of purging the shedding of blood. He himself, with his senseless and uproarious speeches, shares the guilt (*Electra* 1302). Once its senseless brutality is laid bare, purging – bestowing meaning on horror – can no longer be effected through the Apollonian jurisdiction. At the

limits of polyglottism, allegory returns to demand a new meaning on the far side of the mother's death.

With the uncertainty of justice and the clarity of evil at hand, Kristeva's polylogue offers its wager not of absolute but of "a little more truth" (*DL ix*): the speaking being is constituted as an exile in language yet it is from the perspective of strangeness, from an ex-positioning with regard to meaning, that the utopia of a world without boundaries constituted as a polyglottic community of strangers, emerges. Exile from language. In the translinguistic trajectory towards the body. Revisiting Schiller's paradox, could we state that if language has been so much at the centre of this century's discussions, it is because we have lost our naive unity with it? The naive poet – and this is something Schiller realized – is at one with nature but this instantly and immediately means that he is at one with language, that he is the human-being-as-language. With our second separation, the one that makes us avid scholars of language the way Schiller's contemporaries were passionate lovers of nature, Kristeva's polyglot emerges as the epitome of a new species, a mistress of languages that is never in them. Sentimentality becomes a longing for language (not desire "in" as in Kristeva's *Desire in Language* but desire "for" as in her preface to the book [*DL ix*]). It becomes a longing for the naivete that speaks. Catapulted from the father's head into the

open spaces of Urania, is it another Schillerian infinity that we have to draw before a reunion – a reunion with the naivete that speaks rather than speak its longing for speaking – is foreseen? If it has to be foreseen outside of this for ever returning wide arc.

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