FROM CLINICAL TO CREATIVE IMAGINATION

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What is the relationship, if any, between creativity and psychopathology? One approaches this challenging terrain knowing in advance that there will be no easy trails, let alone broad vistas. Given the near-ubiquity of psychopathology, it should not be surprising that it often coexists with creativity, yet without necessarily being connected to it. On the other hand, if psychopathology and creativity appear to be related perhaps it is because they seem to share a somewhat easier access to the unconscious than that available to so-called normal and uncreative individuals.

Earlier phases of development contribute to whatever a person is-both as to creative potential, if any, as well as to a susceptibility to psychopathology. To put it the other way around, given a creative potential, it will draw upon that individual's full resources: the most differentiated skills as well as his or her least resolved conflicts. Dostoevsky's traumatic history provided the raw material for both creative transformation into literature and personal neurosis; Shaver's similar traumatic history provided the material for neurotic symptoms and psychotic reenactment.

Whether psychopathology or creativity, the determining factors lie not in id contents-which are probably universal-nor even in personal histories, but more likely in innate givens and the ways in which the ego operates defensively, integratively, and adaptively. With this in mind, a

comparison of the imaginary companions of multiple personality disorder and the fictional characters of a creative writer offers us a vantage point, and the uses of the mechanism of splitting present us with a conceptual tool for entry into this area. The subject of splitting will lead us to consider the phenomenon of partnerships in the creative process and this in turn will lead us to the theme of losing and refinding as an expression of an inner split as well as an attempt to heal it.

SPLITTING AND PARTNERSHIPS

While it would seem at first to be a far reach from the bizarre world of multiple personality disorder to the special world of art or the mundane one of everyday life, the truth is less simple. Pirandello wrote that his *Six Characters* expressed "the multiple personality of everyone corresponding to the possibilities of being to be found in each of us" (Bentley 1952, 367). Likewise, Milan Kundera (1984) writes: "the characters in my novels are my own unrealized possibilities. That is why I am equally fond of them and equally horrified by them."

Residues of early phases of development exist in all of us, and may be thought of as analogous to mini-forms of multiple personalities. They lend color and variety to the various facets of even the most integrated personality. Whether these are normal or pathological depends on how flexibly and appropriately one is able to switch-for example, between more or less adult or childhood modes of feeling and expression (Lampl-De-Groot 1981). It should be stressed that this, in turn, depends on the extent to which these residues or facets of the personality are either conscious or unconscious.

The same might be said for the differences and correspondences between Pirandello's play, *Six Characters*, and Diana's actual multiple personality disorder. Each of the Pirandello characters, like Diana's alternates, represent latent aspects of the self, split off and transfixed at a time of traumatic intensity of affects and conflicts-the organism's attempt to master the danger of

being flooded with overstimulation. In the case of Diana, they were split off from consciousness and, as her case illustrates, she was able time and again to remobilize, maintain, or regain mastery-at a cost of splitting consciousness and much reducing her level of awareness.

Pirandello's *Six Characters*, on the other hand, are not repressed in his own unconscious or sidetracked into the peripheral, preconscious part of his mind. In addition to being a shared rather than a private experience, Pirandello's dramatic art by its force compels the audience at large to broaden the scope of its everyday awareness and confront paradox. His art makes the audience "really conscious of the fact that [everyday] reality is a mere transitory and fleeting illusion, taking this form today and that tomorrow,'' while the unconscious is timeless-"it can't be other than what it is, because it is already fixed forever" (Bentley 1952, 266). It leaves an almost tangible question in the air, unasked: "Which then is the more real-the immutable unconscious or the transitoriness of everyday appearances?" And by virtue of the silent question, the audience gropes for its own answer and, searching, is left with a fuller and more meaningful awareness of the mysterious nature of reality itself. As the painter Max Beckmann said, "It may sound paradoxical, but it is, in fact, reality which forms the mystery of our existence" (quoted in Chipp 1968, p. 188).

Thus, in addition to the difference between the novelist and Diana being one of whether the splitting is conscious or unconscious, there is the use to which it is put-whether creative, meaning consciousness-expanding, or defensive, meaning consciousness-constricting. Diana's life was run to a large degree by the imaginary characters who, disowned by her, inhabited her unconscious mind. Her consciousness was split and constricted in order to defend against being flooded with overstimulation. Thus, Emma wrote defensively-that is, in order to relieve Diana of the burden of her obsessive thoughts.

The creative writer, on the other hand, consciously practices an active craft that expands awareness for himself and others. He invents characters as vehicles for his art in the shared

world of literature. In contrast to Emma's need to get rid of thoughts, Keats treasured the superabundance of thought and imagery that overbrimmed his mind like rich, ripe grain:

When I have fears that I may cease to be

Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain.

Before high-piled books in charactery,

Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain.

For Diana, the possibility of any stimulation, whether pleasurable or painful, posed the danger of being overwhelmed and had to be defended against accordingly. For example, when she attended a showing of Van Gogh paintings, she was stunned. Never consciously perceiving the color as color, she bleached it all out: the paintings came to her in black and white, and the outlines were blurred. This, incidentally, helped her to experience the brushwork more vividly. Only after she viewed the whole show was she ready to go back again and take a chance at seeing it in full color. (It was too late; the museum was closing.)

Further distinctions are in order. Diana's defensive splitting was of two types. She split consciousness "vertically:" like the two Goly-adkins, the various alternates coexisted and knew one another. She also experienced a "horizontal" split from consciousness: like the murderous aspect of passive, masochistic Shaver, she was unaware of the world her alternates inhabited. Creative splitting, on the other hand, has to do with Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief." The reality sense is voluntarily held in temporary abeyance in order to disclose and explore imaginative possibilities. (More of this later.)

Putting aside that the creative writer and Diana make use of different types of splitting and for different purposes, there is an underlying point of similarity that makes possible their

“choice” of splitting in the first place. They both treat the stuff of time and character as flexible material suitable for being shaped and molded-according to their conscious and creative or unconscious and defensive designs, respectively-and capable of undergoing endless transformations. Diana "created” unconscious alternates out of the affective and motivational material at hand; she "dropped” periods of time and patched together the remainder to provide herself with the illusion of continuity. The author fashions fictional characters and manipulates the flow of time with flashbacks and fast-forwards according to artistic requirements. In other words, character and time are treated by both author and patient as having the quality of plasticity usually associated with *aesthetic* media.

Are there other bridges which can be delineated between the imaginary world of a case of multiple personality disorder and the writer’s creative imagination? They both combine splitting with integration and do so in order to regulate actual or anticipated overstimulation (approaching it from the point of view of the external world) or heightened sensitivity (viewing it from the subjective aspect). Again, this is subject to the same crucial qualification we have been stressing: the splitting and reintegration of psychopathology is automatic and unconscious; the use of these mechanisms by the creative artist may often be conscious-in *addition* to taking place unconsciously.

We have seen in some detail how Diana ingeniously, if unconsciously, combined splitting and integration to create a number of imaginary companions and wove together the fractured surface of time into an illusion of continuity (confirming Morton Prince’s [1919] observation of the conjoint operation of the two mechanisms in multiple personalities). The fact that splitting is the more dramatic of the two mechanisms does not imply that the power of integration is necessarily impaired. On the contrary, the extensive use of splitting might well require special exercise and development of the capacity for integration, both within the area that has been fragmented from consciousness and in the intact areas of personality.[9]

Splitting and integration are normally available to the ego for either defensive or creative purposes. It would be a mistake to think of splitting only as a defense mechanism in relation to repression and denial, constricting awareness of internal and external events, respectively, in order to avoid anxiety (Giovacchini 1986). Confining the use of splitting to psychopathology implies that eruptions of conflict-laden unconscious materials are ever in the offing whenever splitting is used. This overlooks the clinical observation that splitting may be used in the service of *abstraction*-a preconscious withdrawal of attention from more obvious aspects of reality in order to focus greater attention on other latent aspects that may then manifest themselves. In contrast to repression and denial, splitting in the service of abstraction is nondefensive and conflict-free. At a cultural level, such a use of splitting or abstraction is analogous to the way each of the great symbolic forms-art, language, science-pass over certain parts of immediate factuality and constitute reality from several unique directions (Cassirer [1923] 1953).

Having said this, it is necessary to note that while splitting and integration are normally available to the ego, they appear to be a predominant feature in the lives and work of creative individuals. It is as though they are embraced as a preferred pattern of repeated dissolution and reorganization, proceeding in parallel with unconscious splitting and reintegration. This may ultimately help transform ordinary work into creative work, but it may also keep disturbing the peace of conventional personal patterns with the fallout from creative ^organization. As a result, the life style of the artist often takes on a quality of restlessness, almost to the point of agitation.

By contrast, in the ordinary individual's history, personal revolutions may take place during the radical developmental changes of adolescence, marriage, career choice, and the like, and this may set free constructive energies (Eissler 1967); but in the overall life cycle they do not seem to occur repeatedly. In work, likewise, dissolution of established structure does not typically take place; rather, conscious reintegration produces established, useful solutions.

In the creative process, temporarily suspending traditional solutions and the established

sense of reality and conscience permits the emergence of fresh imagery and fantasies from the unconscious. “The creative person [is then able to] focus his most developed mental capacities upon his world of unreality as he indifferently acknowledges his world of reality” (Weissman 1969, 117) and selects certain aspects from each world to be reintegrated and shaped into original solutions.

As a case in point, take the new field of fractal geometry. It was created singlehandedly by Benoit Mandelbrot, who trained himself *not* to reject automatically the kinds of shapes his imagination set forth when he asked himself the sorts of questions children ask: What shape is a mountain? Why is a cloud the way it is? The usual tools of classical mathematics-hand, pencil, and ruler-had initially rejected certain shapes as absurd. Yet, interestingly and perhaps not coincidentally, Mandelbrot almost depended on their aesthetic quality. He trained his imagination to accept them as obvious and found that “these shapes provide a handle to representing nature.” Moreover, "intuition [imagination] can be changed and refined and modified to include them” (as quoted by Gleick, J. in *The New York Times Magazine,* December 8, 1985, 114).

When splitting and integration operate together on both conscious and unconscious levels, many layers of the personality reverberate. An overflow of raw material presses forward to be dealt with from both within and without. The artist immerses himself in sentient life, welcoming the excitation in order to master it through aesthetic form. He attends, selects, and integrates it into the forms most likely to lead to a successful aesthetic solution (Eissler 1971). His state of excitation arises from heightened perceptiveness and leads him to search and explore “the dim tangled roots of things [in order to] rise again . . . in colours” (Cezanne, as quoted by Milner 1957, 24-25). Picasso spoke of going for a walk in the forest and getting “green” indigestion. “I must get rid of this sensation into a picture. Green rules it. A painter paints to unload himself of feelings and visions” (quoted in Chipp 1968, 27 1). On the basis of subjective accounts of the creative process (Ghiselin 1955), such a burgeoning of thought and imagery is

now generally accepted as characteristic of creative talent and due to an inborn greater sensitivity to sensory stimulation.

Greenacre (1957, 1958) has elaborated on the implications of this thesis for the childhood development and life of the artist. For one thing, she reasons, the intensity of all experience for the child of potentially great talent means that all the early libidinal phases tend to remain more lively, to overlap and communicate with each other more readily. Also, they are less decisively settled with age. When residuals of these early phases are revived in later life, they may be disconcerting in their vividness. More germane to the present discussion, they may predispose to episodes of splitting (in the sense of dissociated consciousness). Greenacre sees this as having less ominous prognostic significance than for the less gifted person. One infers that the unconscious mechanism of splitting (in the sense of suspending the reality sense) has in part become developed as a conscious ego device. The gifted person, while knowing the conventional sense of reality, is thus also able to hold it in abeyance in order to explore and concentrate full powers of integration on imaginative possibilities.

Second, the special sensitivity to inner bodily sensations and rhythms, as well as to the outer world, leads to a state of mutual permeability and oceanic feeling. It carries with it a hunger and need for completion by searching for balance between the inner and outer worlds. The force of intense body feelings, with their need for completion, responds to and brings about a sense of fusion with an increased range of outer objects (collective alternates) which come to replace parental images.

Third, the urgency of these pressures emanating from the creative self competes for attention and commitment with the person's ordinary world of social stereotype. This struggle between the conventional or social self and the creative self often causes yet another kind of split: a split in the sense of identity. It is one which may well continue into the adult life of the future artist. Depending on changing circumstances, the balance may swing now toward the

urgency of creative needs, now toward the demands of ordinary life.

This final point again means that the artist's selfhood, like Diana's, is not unitary: there are two or more selves. To repeat: the artist differs from Diana, however, in that there is a lively if often adversarial *two-way conscious* communication between the self-organizations-both between the conventional and creative identity, as well as within the private world where the reality sense is held in temporary abeyance until it is reinstated.

The idea that others may sense that the artist's self is divided between everydailiness and creativity is well captured in *The Private Life* by Henry James (1893), a story centering on Clare Vawdrey, the greatest writer of his time, whose introspective and subtle works are much admired by thoughtful readers. His public self is just the opposite. So disappointing to his friends! His manner is unvaryingly even and bland, his opinions second-rate and obvious, his conversation utterly without nuance, full of sound and banalities.

Vawdrey said he would write a play for an actress friend, Blanche Adney. At first he said he had written a passage for it before dinner; later, that he did not know whether or when he had written it; then, that he would recite it-but as it turned out he could not remember any of the lines; finally, that he had not written anything. When Vawdrey did read his work to Blanche it was as if he was reading the work of another man. It made her want to meet the *author*.

At one point during this confusing and contradictory situation, while Vawdrey is talking to the actress, a friend goes to Vawdrey's room to fetch the alleged manuscript. There in the darkness, to his astonishment, he sees Vawdrey sitting at his desk writing in the dark. It is unmistakably he, but he neither looks up nor responds. This Vawdrey looked infinitely more like the author of Vawdrey's admirable works than the Vawdrey his friends knew. It was as though there were two of them: the private one who stayed home and wrote was the remarkable one, the genius; the public one was a shallow mask.

For dramatic contrast James gives us another member of the circle of friends, Lord Mellifont. He and Vawdrey had known each other all their lives. If Vawdrey was all private and only a stereotyped shell in public, Mellifont came alive only in public. He was always "on," full of anecdotes for every occasion. What became of him when he was not on stage? Was anyone there? His wife suspected that he hardly existed in private, and she was afraid to find out. (His sexual life was hinted to be either nonexistent or "glacial.") When he was alone nothing got done, until someone showed up. It seemed as though he was there only from the moment he knew somebody else was. Otherwise, he vanished-between the acts.

James gives us the sense that the doubleness of the writer, Vawdrey, arises from the bountifulness of his inner life-the creative person's greater sensitivity to sensory stimulation. This inner richness is highlighted by placing it next to the apparent absence of a private life of the social personage, Mellifont. Thus, if there was more than one Vawdrey, there was less than one Mellifont.

This is still a view from the outside; we do not get a glimpse of the inner picture except perhaps for a single hint about bisexuality-Vawdrey's male proper name, Clare, is a homonym of the feminine Claire. Is this an indication of still another split-in gender identity-or, as Greenacre might say, another instance of a lack of decisive closure of a developmental issue?

We know from other creative individuals that they often need to form twin-like partnerships with individuals with whom they can unconsciously feel merged. Is there a dynamic relationship between this need to form partnerships and the existence of various inner splits? If so, do the partnerships represent externalizations of the inner splits? In other words, are they the external counterparts of intrapsychic splitting and reintegration-attempts to heal *inner* splits by reenacting them interpersonally?

The lives of Joseph Conrad and Pablo Picasso may be relevant here. Conrad wrote about

doubles and in his personal life formed and lost one intense creative partnership. Picasso created a new art form in which the visual field was systematically split apart and reintegrated; both his personal and creative life depended on a series of creative partnerships, without which he fell apart and experienced creative paralysis.

Meyer's (1967) study of Joseph Conrad was perhaps the earliest discussion in the psychoanalytic literature of the artist's need for a double. This is said to have characterized Conrad throughout his life, from his early years as a motherless child dependent on a depressed father to the ultimate depression of his later years after his elder son abandoned him by eloping. Except for a close bond with fellow-author Ford Madox Hueffer, Conrad was unable to establish a deep relationship, presumably because he did not dare to relive the early relationship with his depressed father. Immediately after forming this tie to Hueffer, Conrad wrote *Heart of Darkness* (1898-99) and *Lord Jim* (1900). In the former, Marlowe recognizes himself on meeting the regressive Kurtz; in the latter, the protagonist recognizes himself when confronted by a band of criminal marauders.

The Secret Sharer (1910) was written during his intimate friendship with Hueffer, and here Conrad explicitly expressed the theme of the double already developed in his earlier novels (he had considered titling it "The Second Self' and "The Secret Self'). The story dramatizes his own intense preoccupation with mirrors and reflections, a search for the complementary role of an "other" to round out his own sense of an incomplete self (Meyer 1967).

While *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim* reflect back to their protagonists aspects of themselves which are alien-regressive and criminal, respectively-*The Secret Sharer* has to do with the mysterious and immediate affinity that springs up between the young captain of a ship and the stranger, Leggatt, whom he rescues from the sea. Having always been somewhat of a stranger to himself, it seemed to the captain that when he gazed at Leggatt he saw himself reflected in the depths of an immense mirror. When he was away from Leggatt it felt as though

part of himself were absent. The story ends with the captain's lowering Leggatt back down into the sea and questioning his own identity, even his own sanity.

Did Conrad need to have the young, untested captain find Leggatt in order not to feel utterly alone before his crushing responsibility? But if retaining him raised a threat from another quarter-namely, homosexual panic-did he also need to get rid of Leggatt in order to preserve the captain's sanity? And which was the greater danger in Conrad's own life-abandonment, or the possible homosexual implications of attachment? Or, from a formal point of view, whatever the content of the inner conflict, did the tenuous balance between intense engagement and necessity for disengagement from the fictional relationship reflect the delicate inner balance between splitting and integration? Meyer (1967) emphasizes that Conrad broke with Hueffer immediately after writing *The Secret Sharer and* that this estrangement was an important factor in precipitating Conrad's disintegration into psychosis.

In contrast to Conrad's sole relationship with Hueffer, Picasso was able to set up a whole string of such relationships with both sexes (M. Gedo 1980). As long as he did not feel alone-more specifically, as long as he found himself supported in a dependent relationship--he was able to continue to transform threatening inner stresses into artistic reintegrations; on the other hand, whenever a crucial relationship was interrupted or disintegrated, he reacted with the agitated paralysis of his early years.

Chief among his friends when he moved to Paris was Apollinaire, who duplicated the role Picasso's father had played during childhood and adolescence. He was Picasso's good mirror and understander. He publicly supported Picasso, defended him against hostile criticism, and interpreted the iconography of his work to the world.

When he broke with Apollinaire, Picasso formed a significant new relationship with Braque; together, they became a single superartist in a psychological twinship Braque compared

to "being roped together on a mountain." Picasso, for his part, playfully called Braque "my wife" and "Madame Picasso." To signify their unity of spirit both men refused to sign their work, which was difficult to tell apart. Together they invented cubism, a radical new art style in which the subject was methodically disassembled and the illusion of fragmentation was created. While creating it, Picasso required live models, photographs, and other props to reassure himself of the continued integrity of the object in reality. He also required the presence of Braque. As long as Braque and Picasso worked together, vacationed together, the flow of work continued. When they were apart, Picasso produced a load of unfinished work which he completed quickly after reuniting with Braque.

In other words, when Picasso's partnerships fell apart, both his art and his life did also. He became obsessed with fluid, changing indentities, felt in danger of dissolution, and had to be coaxed every morning to get out of bed. At such times he suffered creative paralysis and, would try to bolster himself by turning to sculpture and indulging in passing promiscuities, all the while keeping old discarded loves installed separately nearby.

LOSS AND REDRESS: THE FRENCH LIEUTENANTS WOMAN

When it comes to facing the blank page, the novelist may well share the feeling expressed in Keats's lines: "then on the shore of the wide world I stand alone."

Such, in fact, was the image-except it was that of a woman-that struck John Fowles, and with such force that it swept other considerations aside and led to his writing *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969). While he was in a half-waking state, the author "found" the future heroine of his novel; he became curious about her, explored and developed her character, and gave her up three times in alternative endings to the book before finally bringing it to a close by having her leave the protagonist forever after he lost and refound her. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* offers us the opportunity to explore the theme of loss in the creative process and

speculate about its possible relationship to inner splitting and reintegration.

> It started four or five months ago as a visual image. A woman stands at the end of a deserted quay and stares out to sea. That was all. This image rose in my mind one morning when I was still in bed half asleep. ... I ignored this image; but it recurred. . . . The woman obstinately refused to stare out of the window of an airport lounge; it had to be this ancient quay. . . . An outcast. I didn't know her crime, but I wished to protect her. That is, I began to fall in love with her. . . . This-not literally-pregnant female image came at a time . . . when I was already halfway through another novel. ... It was an interference, but of such power that it soon came to make the previously planned work seem the intrusive element of my life. . . . Once the seed germinates, reason and knowledge, culture and the rest have to start to grow it (Fowles 1968).

This section is based on Gilbert J. Rose, *'The French Lieutenant's Woman:* The Unconscious Significance of a Novel to Its Author," *American Imago,* 29:165-76, 1972.

The first sentence of the book sets the time and place: late March 1867, on a pier jutting out into Lyme Bay, "that largest bite from the underside of England's outstretched southwestern leg" (Fowles 1969, 9). It also sets the angle and object of our interest: "a local spy" might focus his telescope on a couple strolling toward a black figure of a woman who is leaning against an upended cannon barrel at the end of an ancient quay, facing the sea. She is the woman some called "whore," who had been abandoned by her lover, the French lieutenant. "There is a child?" "No. I think no child" (p. 14).

The author's imagination has taken the image and projected it a century back in time, staring out to sea, having been abandoned by her foreign lover. She, the upended cannon, and the sea form a trilogy on the ancient quay, counterbalanced by another threesome, the strolling couple and the eye of the observing spy, our narrator.

The couple are Charles and his fiancee. Charles, the protagonist, will became as obsessed with Sarah, the woman in black, as did the author, and his struggles with himself about gaining, losing, refinding, and relosing her are the substance of the novel. Charles, thirty-two, was brought up by his bachelor uncle and his widower father, his mother having died giving birth to a stillborn girl when Charles was one year of age. To block his early interest in the church he had been sent off to Paris.

When the story opens, he is a serious amateur paleontologist and collector of echinoderms. In his "lust" for finding them he explores Undercliff, a Garden of Eden on the shore where deep crevices in the lush foliage can bring disaster to the unwary. He enters and climbs a seldom used path which forks downward and then back toward the sea, up a steep small slope crowned with grass which then opens on a little green plateau; "he was about to withdraw; but then his curiosity drew him forward again . . . round the curving lip of the plateau . . . where he saw a figure," not as he thought "for one terrible moment ... a corpse . . . but ... a woman asleep" (p. 61)-the mysterious Sarah.

On another occasion, inevitably drawn back to the same site, he encounters her again "at the end of a tunnel of ivy. . . . She led the way into yet another tunnel . . . [from where] they came on a green slope" (p. 113). Observed emerging together it must have been assumed, wrongly the narrator tells us, that they had been in flagrante delicto.

This rather explicit body-image and the primal scene symbolism, projected onto the shore of the English motherland of long ago, is as yet only symbolism. At this point in the story, their love has not been consummated. Nor does Charles achieve a sexual connection with the prostitute he picks up at a later point in the story. It turns out that this girl has been a prostitute for two years, since she was abandoned by a soldier-lover at eighteen.

Assuming that Charles's mother had given birth to him one year after her marriage and

had thus been married for two years before dying in childbirth with Charles's sister, the period of her marriage coincides with the duration of this girl's prostitution. Like Charles's mother, the prostitute also had a child, this one a girl who lay sleeping in the next room. When Charles discovers that the prostitute's name is also Sarah, he vomits up the food she has fetched him, and sex becomes out of the question; the baby awakens crying and is taken on Charles's knee and pacified by his dangling his watch before her.

When Charles and the other Sarah ultimately get together, it is in a passionate encounter of not more than ninety seconds. He is stunned to find that he has taken a virgin. He leaves, breaks off his engagement to his fiancee, but when he returns Sarah has vanished without a trace. He travels the earth searching for her without success until one day, in the French Quarter of New Orleans, he receives a telegram: "She is found" (p. 342). He sails immediately for England and arrives on the last day of May. The two years that have elapsed since he last was with her again coincide with the two years of the other Sarah's prostitution and of his mother's marriage before dying.

When he confronts Sarah, she refuses to return to him. He accuses her of giving him the coup de grace: "You have not only planted the dagger in my breast, you have delighted in twisting it." "She stood now . . . the defiant criminal awaiting sentence. He pronounced it. 'A day will come when you shall be called to account for what you have done to me. And if there is justice in heaven-your punishment shall outlast eternity' " (p. 355). Sarah answered: "There is a lady. . . . She will explain . . . my real nature far better than I can myself. She will explain that my conduct towards you is less blameworthy than you suppose.' . . . He loved her still; . . . this was the one being whose loss he could never forget" (p. 356).

The lady who can explain Sarah's adamant refusal to return to Charles turns out to be the little girl born to Sarah by Charles, unknowing. (The ninety seconds of their sexual union may be taken as prefiguring the ensuing nine-months' gestation, according to the well-known tendency

of the unconscious to play with numbers; cf. Freud 1923). He picks the child up and dangles his watch for her "as he had once before in a similar predicament" (p. 358). "Sarah bowed her head. . . . Charles stared at her, his masts crashing, the cries of the drowning in his mind's ears. He would never forgive her" (p. 359). "It had to be so" (p. 360) she quietly insisted.

Why could he never forgive her? Why could the couple not be reunited, together with their child? And why had Charles to leave the house in torment? This can only be because Sarah and daughter are really ghosts-revivified images of the dead mother and sister. Charles has re-created them as he had done before in the form of Sarah the prostitute and her daughter, from whom he also fled. Mother is the one being whose loss he could never forget of forgive, and her return, except in dreams, is indeed impossible.

It is in keeping with this theme of coping with loss that the author concludes the novel with a choice of endings. The ingenious device of offering such a choice itself suggests that no ending need be considered final-that endings are negotiable and not, in fact, irremediable. Thus, the novel ends first with Charles resigning himself to marry his fiancée and forget Sarah. But Fowles himself criticizes this as "too sweet. '' Sixteen chapters later the novel ends a second time with Sarah agreeing to marry Charles; there is a reunion of the happy couple plus baby daughter. Finally, there is a stark ending of Sarah rejecting Charles. She has been transformed into a liberated woman; he is alone, facing the awesome and radical freedom of Existential Man.

He leaves the house in torment, "a man behind the invisible gun carriage on which rests his own corpse" (p. 366). It was "as if he found himself reborn, though with all his adult faculties and memories. But with the baby's helplessness-all to be recommenced, all to be learned again! . . . He stared down at the gray river, now close, at high tide. ... It meant (many, many things) both prospective and retrospective" (p. 365). The river of life. His own life does not course as a single riddle or symbol toward the answer of imminent death but is to be endured in its uniqueness. "And out again, upon the unplumb'd salt, estranging sea" (p. 366).

The novel ends, as it began, with the image of the sea, that arch-symbol of birth, which first captured the author's imagination as he emerged from half-sleep. It ends with Charles facing the impossibility of regaining from inexorable Fate the woman who had been his mother, yet knowing that he can never let her go from his mind and heart, and that it must be so while he endures the separateness and becomes whatever he is to be.

Let us return to Fowles's notes (1968) on writing *The French Lieutenant's Woman.*

> Once the seed germinates, reason and knowledge, culture and all the rest have to start to grow it. . . .
>
> September 2, 1967. Now I am about two-thirds of the way through. Always a bad stage, when one begins to doubt . . . the whole bloody enterprise; in the beginning one tends to get dazzled by each page, by one's fertility. . . . Some years ago I came across a sentence in an obscure French novel: "Ideas are the only mother land." Ever since, I have kept it as the most succinct summary I know of what I believe. . . . I loathe the day a manuscript is sent to the publisher, because on that day the people one has loved die. . . .
>
> Oct. 27, 1967. I finished the first draft, which was begun on January 25. ... I haven't the energy.

The imagery of a seed germinating in the motherland of ideas can be viewed with fresh clarity if we realize that the gestation period of this first draft has been exactly nine months and two days.

Charles has become more himself, reborn, in regaining and relosing the mother of his childhood dream. He has reconstituted her in both idealized and devalued forms, in the two Sarahs. Her daughter is his stillborn sister, as well, perhaps, as standing for himself identified with her and reunited with mother in death.

Pregnancy, birth, death, and rebirth. The theme reverberates through the psychology of creativity like a leitmotif (Rank 1932)-as insistently, in fact, as its equivalent on another level, the theme of losing, finding, and relosing. Van Gogh's annunciation of his identity as an artist might be taken as an instance of the motif in the symbolic mode of death and rebirth. Between October 1879 and July 1880 he was in silent misery and did not write a single letter. He concluded this gestating silence of nine months by informing brother Theo that he was emerging renewed like a bird after molting time, reborn as an artist who would "re-create" rather than imitate. He dissociated himself from the Van Gogh name, thereafter becoming simply "Vincent" (Lubin 1972). Similarly, Picasso dropped his father's name, Ruiz, in favor of his mother's, Picasso.

Preoccupied with the oedipal constellation and problems of sexual identification, the older analytic literatue emphasized that creative work was the route by which the male artist was able to sublimate his feminine wish to be reproductive like mother (Jacobson 1950). While it is true that on an oedipal level of development such feminine identification raises the suspicion of an unconscious flight from heterosexuality toward a homosexual position, on an earlier, pre-oedipal level it is at the same time consistent with the theme of loss and restitution.

To spell this out further, the urge to restore the lost unity with the primal mother and be able to do everything she can do, including having babies, is a source of power and activity-not merely a passive, receptive wish in respect to the father of the later, oedipal stage. From this earlier point of view some of the unconscious roots of an author's giving birth to a novel lie deeper than latent homosexuality based on identification with the female reproductive ability. Author and novel together are mother and child, rejoined in bodily completeness, perfection, and immortality. He is intensely attached to his work as to a part of himself, but not wholly his to control. It is not a relationship to the mother that the author is seeking but rather that oneness out of which his own newness was born. He is identified both with the creature that emerges and with the superabundant fullness that brought it forth. The author's sense of conviction, rightness, and certainty, on the one hand, and of frailty, exposure, and tenuousness, on the other, expresses

this double identification with mother and child.

Another way of conceptualizing the early relationship with the mother is through Winnicott's (1953, 1966) intermediate area. Intrapsychically, an early stage of psychic organization which precedes the separation of ego from id, and the distinction between self and other, the intermediate area refers to the original space between infant and mother, at the point of the initiation of their separateness. Later, it refers to the potential or metaphorical space, between reality and fantasy, person and world (Grolnick et al. 1978). It is the site of transitional objects and phenomena-neither me nor not/me, between internal and external, animate and inanimate. Providing rich opportunity for the play of illusions and ambiguities, it is the place where play begins and where cultural experience later develops.

In addition to teddy bears and comfort blankets, Winnicott's (195 3) original description of transitional phenomena included musical sounds, tunes, and words. For example, as language develops the child seems to carry words with him like objects he owns; they can be repeated in mother's absence to reassure himself and create a bridge between the familiar and the strange-between symbiosis and solitude. Thus, the child can use transitional objects and phenomena to loosen or tighten up his relationship to the mother according to need (Greenacre 1969).

The rapprochement subphase of childhood (Mahler, Pine, and Bergman 1975) is another way of conceptualizing the early relationship to the mother. The space between them is analogous to the intermediate area of Winnicott where the interplay between separateness and union, originality and tradition gives rise to the first steps in the construction of reality and the emergence of creative imagination. In this stage (15-24 months or beyond) there is a deliberate search for, and avoidance of, intimate bodily contact, an alternation between pushing mother away and clinging to her, an incessant watching of mother's every move and ducking out from her hugs. The child both exercises individuality to the limit and demands mother's constant involvement, wishing for reunion and also fearing reengulfment. The invention of play, peekaboo

games, and games of imitation, social interaction and symbolic play make it possible to function at a greater distance from mother. For example, having stories read while mother is absent is of particular interest. Only toward the end of the rapprochement subphase does each child develop an unmistakable individuality and his own characteristic ways of coping.

These several perspectives on an intermediate area of fluid boundaries between the all-powerful primal mother and her infant-a potential, metaphorical space where the imagination can play with separateness and union, originality and convention-helps to bring a number of early phenomena into focus: peekaboo and mirroring; imaginary companions and doubles. They all come to focus on the common theme of loss and the various attempts to deal with it.

Is it possible that the intrapsychic mechanisms of splitting and integration are internalized forms of the rapprochement-subphase child's darting away from and rejoining mother? Just as, later, making and breaking creative partnerships may represent externalizations of these mechanisms?

In normal development, coping with loss helps set the stage for the shapes of reality to emerge, blur, reform, coalesce, and re-emerge. The shapes and shadows of oneself-attributed to others or reflected in nature at large-interact, join, support, and recede. Illusions and disillusionments help provide the raw data with which to define and redefine the self, explore the world and expand the boundaries of reality. At the same time, they help prepare the ground for retreat into psychopathology.

Loss at any time of life may be expected to reverberate with later and antecedent disappointments. This is still more likely to hold true for the experience of early loss before the person has become capable of the work of mourning with the gradual, painful disinvestment of intense feeling that this entails. Systematic studies of children who lost a parent before adolescence, for example, conclude that, as a result of the inability to mourn and gradually work

through and “metabolize" the loss, the child is left with a dual and contradictory attitude: the death is intellectually accepted but emotionally denied (Wolfenstein 1966, 1969; Freud 1927, 156) conceptualized this as being due to a split within the ego itself: one current of mental life recognizes that death has occurred and takes full account of that fact; another current, however, denies it. “Wish and . . . reality exist . . . side by side.”

Since the experience of loss is inevitable, why does the theme appear to be so insistent in the psychology of creativity ? There are a number of factors that might account for the likelihood that a creatively endowed child could well experience early loss more intensely than an average child: (1) The more intense, sensuous engagement with the world might make for both deeper and wider rootedness of attachments. (2) Because of the lack of decisive closure of developmental stages, loss or threat of loss would reverberate and stimulate a wide range of emotional and fantasy ramifications; (3) For a creatively gifted child, the very process of individuation might be experienced as a loss-a narcissistic loss to the child’s idealized sense of his own bodily and mental perfection or omnippotence. (4) Related to this, for a finely tuned child, any average mother might well be the equivalent of an insensitive one; mismatching in nonverbal responses might be inevitable and deeply wounding, leaving the child, and perhaps the caretaker, too, mutually alienated from each other (Miller 1981). (5) If, in addition, there were actual blows to such a child’s narcissism, such as bodily deformations or injuries (Niederland 1967), the wound would be all the deeper and the need to build bridges to repair the gap all the greater. (6) Finally, the actual experience of childhood loss is a not infrequent finding in the lives of creative individuals.

Wolfenstein (1973) has traced the theme of loss in the work of the poet A. E. Housman and the painter Rene Magritte-both artists experienced the death of their mothers in boyhood. She shows in detail how opposites are fused in their poetic and painterly images: near and far, past and present, loss and denial of loss all coexist. It is as though the early loss gave rise to the splitting of the ego that Freud (1927) postulated. Moreover, in the cases of Housman and

Magritte, one of the consequences of such a split appears to have been the development of a kind of mental dualism: raw, purely wishful imagination (primary process) becomes joined to highly disciplined and organized craft (secondary process) in an organically unified work of art.

The kind of dualism described by Wolfenstein as a result of loss before adolescence and consequent splitting of the ego is conducive to a particular mode of consciousness, one that is sensitized to ambiguity and the coexistence of opposites. This by itself, however, might lead merely to defensiveness. Aside from innate givens, other conditions are necessary for the ego split to be put to an adaptive and creative, as well as a defensive, use, namely, some of the elements we have already discussed: the capacity to hold the reality sense in temporary suspension, and the combined use of such splitting along with an ongoing reintegration.

If a creative piece of work were to result, one might expect that it simultaneously accorded with many functions of the mind: its form balancing the tension of strangeness with the release of familiarity; its latent content offering the wishful illusion that contradictory aims can be accommodated; and form and content together meeting high superego standards and increasing the apprehension of reality.

In summary, one might say that the unconscious reminiscence of lost unity before the birth of self and otherness is probably universal, but the creative artist is loss-sensitive and separation-prone. Therefore, his wound may be deeper; the split in the ego is such that it is set on an endless course of repeating the loss in order to repair it.

Sensitized as a child, he learns to use his talent to create imagery to defend against loss. As an adult, he uses it both defensively to cope, and nondefensively as part of his identity as an artist. The novelist, then, would be one who refinds his lost world by creating one of his own, peopled with products of self. His novel is a shadow that falls upon the present from the past and bears the shape of a former self: a self just emerging from psychic unity with the mother, he as

her extension or she as his, as the novel is his; a self just unfolding into the awareness of time and separateness, mitigated somewhat by the knowledge that the temporal present, if not one's bodily self, is forever attached to the past.

Like the daughter of the French lieutenant's woman, or the daughter of that other Sarah, the novelist is the child of one parent only. Aroused from sleep or taken from his nurse's arms, with fear and curiosity, wishing both to return and to explore, he comes to sit upon the knee of the stranger who dangles a watch.

RESPONSE FROM JOHN FOWLES

Dear Dr. Rose,

Your paper interested me very much, since it confirmed my own tentative conclusions about the disease of novel-writing that I suffer from.

I think my main quarrel with your theory as applied to The FLW is the assumption that I am ignorant of Freudian ideas and therefore that the book represents clinically "true" evidence. This isn't of course to deny that images and ideas with Freudian undertones may be revealing despite conscious choice on my part, but it is false to represent them as completely unconscious elements in my writing. Two cases: one concerns Charles's younger sister who died in childbirth. Though I cannot pretend I analyzed her value as fully as you do, she was not, so to speak, inserted innocently into the story. You also mention the tunnel of foliage in the Undercliff-in that case I can quite clearly recollect altering the passage in a late draft to make the womb-vagina symbolism stronger.

I am a little dubious too of the play you make of some concidences in elapses of time. There are good plausible technical reasons for the rash of two-year gaps you pick out. Nor can I take the nine-month

gestation-period of the first draft very seriously, since the only reason it was not seven months was the very banal business of my having to spend two months during the period on other work-with considerable reluctance, but I was under contract.

The general theory of the novelist that you outline in the second half of the paper smells very probable to me, speaking out of my own experience. . . . Almost all literary accounts of novel-writing omit, or grossly under-rate, the acute pleasures of the writing of "pre-natal" or pre-separation stage, with the published book equalling full awareness of separate identity. I write far more than I publish simply because my being centres in the processus (increasingly, as I grow older) and its delights and has only a very peripheral attachment to the "born" (also "dead") book. Of course being published and moderately successful ... is gratifying to a part of oneself. But even the greatest pleasures of that public stage cannot hold a candle to some of those one knows during the creation. Though I am sure you are right to trace the source of this back to an infant stage, it seems (at least to this conscious writer) less of a recessive. . . . experience than a kind of sideways one. I think very much of novels in process as parallel and contemporaneous worlds, as very present escapes from the real daily world; and even when story and narrative method require a "capturing" of the past, the dominant time sense is actually of a kind of futureness. This has perhaps to do with the impermanence of drafts, the knowing one will rarely get a passage right first time-or even the hundredth, alas-and the absolute need to believe in a future time when all will come good. I am trying to say that seeing one's book as a backward thing, a failure to capture an unconscious past, as a remote and now irremediable conspiracy of infantile biography, is a phenomenon of the finished, published book. The experiences of the fluid, incomplete stage are a great deal more mysterious, and I'm not convinced your account fully explains them; another very bizarre part of the writing (as opposed to written) experience is the relationship between author and characters.

“Dear Dr. Rose,

"I recently applied your theory to Thomas Hardy in an anthology on his work. ...”

The following is an abstract of the relevant parts of the paper ‘‘Hardy and the Hag" (1977) referred to by Mr. Fowles:

The reason why most English novelists “are fanatically shy of talking of the realities of their private imaginative lives ... is that novel-writing is an onanistic and taboo-laden pursuit” (p. 28). Like the child’s creating of a "real” world, it is also heavy with the loss of illusions and desires required by adulthood and artistic good form. "The artist who does not keep a profound part of himself not just open to his past, but *of* his past, is like an electrical system without a current. ... A seriously attempted novel is also deeply exhausting of the writer’s psyche, since the new world created must be torn from the world in his head” (p. 29).

Mr. Fowles then summarizes the general theory of what produces the artistically creative mind as being the experience of the passage of the baby from merger with the mother to the awareness of separate identity and beginnings of the sense of reality:

> What seemingly stamps itself indelibly on this kind of infant psyche is a pleasure in the fluid, polymorphic nature of the sensuous impressions, visual, tactile, auditory, and the rest, that he receives; and so profoundly that he cannot, even when the detail of this intensely auto-erotic experience has retreated into the unconscious, refrain from tampering with reality-from trying to recover, in other words, the early oneness with the mother that granted this ability to make the world mysteriously and deliciously change meaning and appearance. . . . He will one day devote his life to trying to regain the unity and the power by recreating adult versions of the experience . . . he will be an artist. Moreover, since every child goes through some variation of the same experience, this also explains one major attraction of art for the audience. The artist is simply someone who

> does the journey back for the less conditioned and less technically endowed (p. 31).

This is a plausible and valuable model because it helps explain the necessity the artist feels to return again and again on the same impossible journey. It implies “an unconscious drive towards an unattainable. The theory also accounts for the sense of irrecoverable loss (or predestined defeat) so characteristic of many major novelists. . . . Associated with this is a permanent-and symptomatically childlike-dissatisfaction with reality as it is, the 'adult' world that is the case. Here too one must posit a deep memory of ready entry into alternative worlds-a dominant nostalgia.” (pp. 3 1-32).

The novelist longs to be in a state of being possessed, which is difficult to describe but involves a childlike fertility of imagination that takes adultly ordered ideas and sets them in flux. As the text nears completion, this state recedes and disappears. No matter how pleased one may be with the final work, this “sense of loss, or reluctant return to normality, that every novelist-child has to contend with ... is always deeply distressing" (p. 32).

This need to transcend present reality opens many problems in more ordinary life, not the least being the complex relationship of the male writer to his wife (Rank 19.32). "This relationship is ... a far more important consideration in the writing and shaping of a novel than most critics and biographers seem prepared to allow" (Fowles 1977, 33). At the crux of the tension between creative "desire” and social “duty" is the mother-wife polarity. Setting out on a voyage of writing and shaping a novel draws on the pleasures of the primal mother-self unity. On the other side is the presence of real woman, the enemy of the mother, the ally of the conscious, outward self, the protectress against the cruel review columnists. The real woman more generally symbolizes social consensus and artistic common sense. Yet, "the writer’s secret and deepest joy is to search for an irrecoverable experience [and] the ending that announces that the attempt has once again failed may well seem more satisfying . . . the doomed and illicit hunt is

still far more attractive than no hunt at all" (p. 35).

> If this seems paradoxical, I can call only on personal experience. I wrote and printed two *[sic]* endings to *The French Lieutenant's Woman* entirely because from early in the first draft I was torn intolerably between wishing to reward the male protagonist (my surrogate) with the woman he loved and wishing to deprive him of her-that is, I wanted to pander to both the adult and the child in myself. I had experienced a very similar predicament in my two previous novels. Yet I am now very dear that I am happier, where I gave two, with the unhappy ending, and not in any way for objective critical reasons, but simply because it has seemed more fertile and onward to my whole being as a writer (p. 35).

> I realise, in retrospect, that my own book *[The Collector*] was a working-out of the futility, in reality, of expecting well of such metaphors for the irrecoverable relationship. I had the greatest difficulty in killing off my own heroine; and I have only quite recently . . . understood the real meaning of my ending. ... It is a very grave fallacy that novelists understand the personal application of their own novels. I suspect in fact that it is generally the last face of them that they decipher (p. 38).

> If in every human and daily way . . . the actual woman in a novelist's life is of indispensable importance to him, imaginatively it is the lost ones who count, firstly because they stand so perfectly for the original lost woman and secondly . . . because they are a prime source of fantasy and of guidance. . . . Because they were never truly possessed, they remain eternally malleable and acquiescent. . . . The maternal muses . . . grant the power to comprehend and palliate the universal condition of mankind . . . a permanent state of loss (p. 40).

REPRISE

Two themes run through John Fowles's discussion: (1) the private delights of the actual

process of writing as against the public pleasure of the finished product and its aftermath, and (2) the problem of the split and tension between creative "desire" and social "duty." Regarding the first, Mr. Fowles refers to the experiences of the process of writing as being mysterious, fluid, onanistic, and taboo-laden. It involves a bizarre relationship between the author and his characters. "The novelist longs to be in a state of being possessed. . . . [by a] childlike fertility of imagination that takes adultly ordered ideas and sets them in flux. . . . [before] completing], . . . the final work. . . . [with its] sense of loss, or reluctant return to normality."

Perhaps to some extent, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* allows the reader to sample the "fertility and flux" of the writing process, for we are given the impression of being in on a novel in-the-making, or of one that is inventing itself. This is done through the device of an interior plot, which has to do with the author's own reflections on writing the novel. This device is usually referred to as the narrator disclaiming responsibility by speaking directly to the reader, deliberately breaking the spell of the text and warning the reader not to take the story too much to heart or believe in the existence of the characters.

For example, Fowles is explicit in reminding us that this is fiction: "I do not know. This story I am telling is all imagination. These characters I create never existed outside my own mind" (p. 80). Not only does Fowles tell the story, he walks on as author and criticizes and interprets the story. He makes fun of himself, and of Henry James; he launches into treatises on fictional technique, takes the reader on tours through Victorian London, as well as etymology. He scolds himself for using too many exclamation points. He puzzles over what to do with the sleeping face of a character in a railroad coach: "What the devil am I going to do with you?" And we have already alluded to the author's struggle with alternative endings to *The French Lieutenant's Woman*-a predicament which, he informs us, he also experienced in his previous two novels.

However, if this device serves to disclaim responsibility, in Fowles's hands, at least, it does

more. It permits the reader to glimpse some of the pleasures of the act of writing. Fowles glories in the characters' freedom to talk back to him, their author: "A genuinely created world must be independent of its creator; *... It is only when our characters and events begin to disobey us that they begin to live* [my italics]. When Charles left Sarah on her cliff edge, I ordered him to walk straight back to Lyme Regis. But he did not; he gratuitously turned and went down to the Dairy" (p. 81).

In other words, we are now in an intermediate world of transitional phenomena-between reality and fantasy-a world of controlled splitting. We are in dialogue with a dream. The reality-sense can be held temporarily in abeyance, allow the characters trial periods of freedom to feel and behave, in order to discover and explore their potential. They are not permitted to get up and walk off the page and take over one's life like Emma, who, we recall, wrote defensively-that is, in order to relieve Diana of the threat of being flooded by traumatic memories. On the contrary. The visual image of a woman standing at the end of a deserted quay staring out to sea did not oppress Fowles, though it kept recurring and interfered with his life. He became curious about her. He wished to protect her. He fell in love with her. And if writing *The French Lieutenant's Woman* came to dominate him for a time, as a novelist he crafted the story and the characters, making creative choices and transforming the private image into literature. The act of writing was his love affair with her.

Perhaps that is why he refers to it as auto-erotic. And in writing about Hardy (Fowles 1977), he states that it seems clear that his deepest pleasure was in postponing consummation-advancing, retreating, unveiling, re-veiling. In *The Well-Beloved*, "gaining briefly to lose eternally is the chief fuel of the imagination in Hardy himself' (p. 37). Actual sexual consummations are often without erotic quality. Tryst scenes scarcely conceal the underlying primary relationship of the child with the vanished mother. Nor is it a coincidence that incest plays so large a part in the novel.

If, as Fowles implies, the delayed and desexualized consummations are due to autoerotic

and incestuous taboos, I would suggest additional factors from earlier levels. Some of the mysteries of the fluid state of the creative process have to do with rapprochement with the primal mother of infancy-of longing to be possessed, as Fowles says-and also of risking reengulfment and darting away. It is a time of intercourse with reflections of oneself in mother, doubles, and imaginary companions, to say nothing of ghosts-only to avoid them (like Freud), break disastrously from them (like Conrad), lest they take over completely (Golyadkin, Shaver) or compartmentalize one's consciousness (Diana). It is a universally experienced time of playing peekaboo with sunbeams and shadows, learning the constraints and freedoms of reality. Except that the creative person seems compelled to do it again and again, relearning as if from the beginning, and sometimes learning something new.

This touches directly on Mr. Fowles second theme, that of the tension between creative "desire" and social "duty." At the crux of this, he suggests, is the mother-wife polarity; the lost woman of infancy remaining the living source of fantasy, "eternally malleable and acquiescent"; the actual woman in the novelist's life being indispensable "in every human and daily way."

The struggle between the conventional self and the creative self and how this may cause an enduring split in the future artist's sense of identity was discussed earlier in this chapter. Henry James's character, Vawdrey, in "The Private Life," was taken as an illustration of the doubleness of the writer. We mentioned that earlier stages seemed less decisively closed and that this, together with the artist's ability to suspend (split oil) the reality sense temporarily while allowing integration to proceed, was perhaps sometimes responsible for disturbing the peace of his personal life. Later we discussed a third split-that of the ego itself; in response to the experience of early loss, a dual mode of consciousness develops whereby an aspect of reality is intellectually acknowledged while emotionally denied, and this leads to repetitive attempts to harmonize and reintegrate these two realms of experience.

This returns us to the question that was raised at the outset, namely, the relationship, if

any, between creativity and psychopathology. As promised, there has been no easy answer. If the creative process, like psychopathology, shares an easier access to the unconscious, the umbrella concept of splitting offers a way to explore and discuss it. In the examples of psychopathology we have chosen, the splits have been "vertical", that is, involving consciousness itself, and "horizontal" splits from consciousness; they take place without awareness, in the interest of defense against overstimulation, and at the cost of constricting awareness. The splits that take place as part of the creative process are more conscious and controlled, temporary-as far as the suspension of the reality sense is concerned-and serve to expand awareness.

To the extent that the creative process involves splitting it would seem to necessitate a delicate balance with the capacity for reintegration. Furthermore, it presupposes that the material at hand is capable of undergoing endless transformations in the furtherance of the creative aim. If this way of dealing with the aesthetic medium is such an integral part of the way the artist is connected to reality, it may not be possible for him to deal with his *personal* life in any other way. Yet, obviously, however essential for performing a creative task, it is incompatible with carrying on healthy, viable personal relationships-live people, in contrast to maternal muses, do not readily lend themselves to being rendered "eternally malleable and acquiescent".

We seem to have completed a circle, but perhaps have gained higher ground. Creative work requires the ability to mold and shape, fragmentize, cut off and reunify material-repeatedly; the same form-producing procedures, when carried over to human relations, are dehumanizing. What is creative in one area is destructive in the other. Some artists seem to be able to confine the creative process to creative work; others-and some of the greatest, Picasso among them-appear to be ruled by it.

M. Gedo (1980) has noted Picasso's psychopathology was reflected in his repetitive destructive relationships with women. The data suggest still more: his disturbed relationships with women reflected his relationships in general and were perhaps even a reflection of the way

he envisioned reality itself.

First let us look at some of Picasso's relationships with other men: (1) When his good friend and defender, Apollinaire, was arrested as a possible accomplice in an art theft from the Louvre, Picasso not only did not corroborate Apollinaire's story, but possibly even denied that he knew him. Years later, when Apollinaire died suddenly, Picasso painted his *own* shocked visage-and there were no further selfportraits for twenty years. (2) When his old friend Max Jacob was taken to a concentration camp in 1944, Picasso dropped him a note but took no steps to help him-for example, by corroborating that Jacob had converted to Catholicism about twenty-five years earlier.

When Matisse's daughter kept phoning Picasso to inform him of the funeral arrangements for her father, he refused to go to the telephone. He neither went to the funeral nor mourned in a conventional manner. Instead he began to paint a la Matisse, emulating that painter's formal elements: lyrical rhythms, bright colors, bold patterns, and careful control.

As for casual acquaintances, he became furious with his then wife, Gilot, when she gave away articles of his clothing to their crippled gardener, accusing her of doing this to turn him into a hideous cripple. And as for his own children, after his eldest child Paulo, Picasso could not integrate his subsequent offspring into his self-image: he would "trade" articles of clothing with son Claude, perhaps out of some magical wish to change places with a younger person.

This material suggests that Picasso's personal world of variable self-images and unstable outer objects was rife with anxiety-anxiety regarding the loss of the sense of self, other people, and the world itself. The very reliability of perceptual recognition, discrimination, and self-object boundaries must have remained uncertain. Mirroring and peekaboo play at losing and refinding self in others and others in self is the earliest patterned form of testing and reconfirming the shifting dimensions of reality.

The role of play in Picasso's life, as well as its relation to his work and love life, was particularly significant. His creative work-play was no child's play. Sensitized by his past, he was able to discern the permeability and inconstancy of boundaries which to everyday conventional vision appear deceptively static and stable. Thus, in his creative work he showed the play of edges "that rhyme with one another ... or with the space that surrounds them" (Gilot and Lake 1964, 114). His art revealed the latent, polymorphous aspects of reality that lurk beneath the conscious, stable appearances at the surface.

While he played profoundly at work that endures, he labored unrewardingly at passing loves, or played around regressively with personal relationships-as though they were objects to be assembled, discarded, hoarded, fractionated, recombined. Was his tendency to treat people as things somehow related to his tendency to do the opposite with items of junk, namely to anthropomorphize them'' This is posed not as a moral question but as something more basic, perhaps connected to his not being able to deal with numbers as abstract symbols but rather as concrete signs. In short, were these but different aspects of his concern with a fluid reality-reflections of that intermediate area of transitional phenomena stemming from the rapprochement subphase of development-where something can be or become other than what it seems?

We are dealing here with fundamental questions, epistemological and psychological, regarding the nature of the arts and perhaps the essence of creative imagination: a sensitivity to the interplay of malleability and integrity-or, in intrapsychic terms, of splitting and reintegration. In Picasso's case we are left with a compelling irony: his imaginative experience of the solid world of reality as being inherently shifting, perilous, and shocking could destructively im-personalize those who shared his private life; when harnessed to his creative power to disassemble and reconstitute the perceptual field, it illuminated his powers of observation-inspiriting the inanimate media of his craft, and transforming the vision of our time.[10]

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Notes

9 In line with this, a recently reported case of multiple personality (Marmer 1980), though disturbed by her disordered component parts, was nonetheless able to execute

paintings that demonstrated a powerful aesthetic unifying form.

10 The foregoing remarks on Picasso appeared first in my review of Picasso: Art as Autobiography, by M. Gedo. Rer/eu of Psychoanalytic Books, 1:411-18, 1982.