

# **Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies**

**THREE ESSAYS**

**listening for the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday**

**narrative and performance**

**the body caught between history and nature: anaesthesia and anatomia**

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### Introduction

I am bringing these three essays together as background to the short paper on “Collingwood, Jung and the Timing of History”, which I shall be reading at the Oxford conference on “R.G.Collingwood at the Millennium”, in July 2001.

The first, *Listening for the Beat of History in the Rhythms of Everyday*, is the talk on Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure* referred to in that paper. It was originally given at Hawkwood College, Stroud, in 1985, at the annual weekend of enactment and drama held under the general title of “Jung and Hermeneutics”.

The second, *Narrative and Performance*, comes from the same venue, a year later, when we were working on *The Merchant of Venice*. It examines in more detail how those weekends of enactment worked. I include it as relevant to what I say in the Collingwood paper about the terms deixis and ostension, why actions speaking louder than words, why demonstration is effective in ways that description is not.

The third, *Caught between History and Nature: Anaesthesia and Anatomia*, was written ten years later for the Oxford Psychotherapy Society *Bulletin*. I include it for the description of Jonathan Sawday’s book *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture*, and what it has to say about dissection, pain, display, text, in relation to Jacobean bodies.

June, 2001

## 1985 - Listening for the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday

For me, the value of working on a text like *Measure for Measure*, as I have been for the last six months or more, is as an exercise in the history of psyche. We have been working with a text that is 380 years old. I want to try to use the excitement and energy it has evoked in us to say something about history: our need to remember history, our need to cultivate an historical consciousness, and our need to listen for the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday.

I believe that in the sort of work I do, and in which many of us here are involved, we need a sharper sense of history. We need it because history joins individual and society, and by and large I don't think we're as good on that "join" as we should be. And we need it if we are to make progress with the conflict of interpretations between us.

I'm not saying we ignore history. We don't. But it would be good if it moved more into the centre of our field of attention. If we are interested in Jung, history jumps out on us and catches us, often unawares, as we move between personal and archetypal levels of experience. If we are interested in Winnicott, history tends to be spatial rather than temporal: it is where we locate ourselves as we try to do justice to the claims both of tradition and originality. If we are interested in Freud, history jostles us up and down the stairs and corridors that lead between sex and death, as D. M. Thomas has reminded us so vividly in his novel *The White Hotel*. Quite generally, history is the gearing between what lasts and what passes. If being ourselves is to last as well as pass by, we have to be historical.

What have we made of history this weekend?

I urged us yesterday to project ourselves into the text, to make it our own, in order to listen for what only it can say. Between the projection and the listening, across the 380 years that separate us from our text in its first originality, is the beat of history. To bring that beat into the rhythms of my everyday over the last six months, I have found myself drawn to a book and to a dream.

### The Book

The book is this short one by Francis Barker, lecturer in literature at the University of Essex (published Methuen University Paperbacks 1984). It is called *The Tremulous Private Body: essays on subjection*. On its cover is reproduced in black and white a painting by Rembrandt of an anatomy demonstration done in Amsterdam about thirty years after the date of our play. I came across this book by chance while doing my research on the Jacobean context of Shakespeare's middle and last plays. I have realised during the last two months that it has meshed in an extraordinary way with a dream I had twenty-eight years ago, and I came to suspect that that dream was influencing, if not actually governing, my projections into *Measure for Measure*.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Francis Barker's book introduces us to hermeneutic traditions other than Jung's. We can learn a lot from them, as they could from Jung. He draws on the work of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan, and on the Marxism of Louis Althusser, to analyse the profound change that took place in the 17th century in the way the human body was represented and experienced. The body, like the persona, has a history. In the 17th century, the demarcation lines between what is private and what is public about the body were redrawn. There was much changing of places between what was felt to be subjective and what was felt to be objective. Indeed, the words subject and object themselves changed in meaning, in something of the same way, though in a different direction, as they seem to be changing nowadays in the psychoanalytic study of "object relations".

The texts with which Barker is concerned are later than *Measure for Measure*. But they are recognisably about the same world of changing places, transposed as well as painted heads, and sexual diversionary tactics, as in the play we have been working on. I hope I can use his analysis to strike some historical chords with whatever identification we may have experienced with figures such as Angelo, Isabella, Abhorson and the Duke.

Here are the various texts which Barker looks at in this historical fable, as he calls it, of the century in which our bodies began to be subjected to a new kind of objectivity.

He starts with a page out of the diary of Samuel Pepys, in which that respectable citizen, not altogether unlike Angelo or the Duke, describes a day which began and ended in the secret reading of a lewd book. He then looks at the "glorious cruelties of the Jacobean theatre", leading to some pages on *Hamlet* (which Shakespeare wrote shortly after *Measure for Measure*). Then he turns to the question of censorship, literary, political, psychological, as studied in Milton's *Areopagitica*. Then, the emergence of something like our modern ego, the sense of "I" we are inclined to take for granted, in the philosophy of Descartes. Here Barker looks forward to Freud and Lacan, and to what they have tried to do with the "subjection" of the ego bequeathed to us by Descartes. (These are difficult pages. But they are worth struggling with. They provide the kind of historical hermeneutics we must use if psychoanalytic object relations theory is to be related to the forgotten worlds Jung rediscovered in his work on alchemy.)

Barker then moves from literature to painting. Eleven pages are given to an analysis of Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaas Tulp*. From Rembrandt he returns to literature, to Andrew Marvell's poem *To His Coy Mistress*, which I shall read to you later for echoes of the seduction scene between Angelo and Isabella. He ends by weaving together the various threads of his fable into an intense, poetic vision of this 17th century transition: the transition from a world and culture centred on "the word made flesh", to a new world and a new culture in which the "flesh is made word".

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

This transition is a main theme of my talk. I want to argue that in *Measure for Measure* we have evidence for that same transition or shift of attention between flesh and word. And I hope to suggest that in projecting our contemporary interests into the play we may have stumbled on evidence of some similar shifting between word and flesh in our own day. Because that is what it is like to hear the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday: we "stumble on evidence", which is perhaps why both Jung and Freud were interested in archaeology.

So I'm going to look at three of the texts Barker considers. I want to use them to introduce you to a kind of hermeneutic reflection and amplification which will be both strange and familiar to those who know the work of Jung. I am trying to contribute to more exchange, in both directions, between Jung and other circles of hermeneutic endeavour.

The three texts I am going to look at are the page from Pepys' diary, Marvell's poem, and the Rembrandt painting.

### **Pepys, February 9th 1668**

Samuel Pepys kept a diary. He wrote it in code so that it should be unread. What does an "I" do when it keeps a diary? Who is it written for? Especially when the diary is written in a code, so that the presence of the censor is saluted and welcomed even as I reach for my pen to record what it is in my power to ignore. And if I ignored it, it would remain unwitnessed, unspoken of, unknown.

A secret diary is an extreme example of a characteristic shared by all texts, in differing degrees. It proclaims an incompatibility between its reading and its author's intention. The author wishes to publish, but knows that in publishing his intention will be wrongly understood. In the world of texts, the secret diary occupies a medial position between dreams and symptoms, and those occasions when we really and truly want to make sense *to others*. In a secret diary, the constant negotiation between I and other, subject and object, which characterises all texts, is more apparent than in most. It makes a good beginning for any psychoanalyst who wants to embark on a wider study of hermeneutics.

I am going to read to you the passage from Pepys' diary which Barker uses as the recurring theme for his book. He returns to it again and again, for melody and for orchestration. How he develops it depends on his use of Derrida and Foucault, and is not easy to translate into the language of Jung or Freud. But with the help of our enactment, I shall try.

Let us think therefore of the surface of a text, what it appears at first reading to be about, as like the face. It is revealing, and it is concealing. It is open, and it is closed. It is a showing forth, and it is a hiding away. That is what it's like. It is publicly stamped with the insignia of privacy.

And then think more specifically about the text of *Measure for Measure*, and what we made of it last night. Think of Angelo and the Duke, two apparently estimable gentlemen, and of Lucio, described in the list of dramatis personae as "a fantastic". Some of us have felt that those three characters fit together as if they could be three faces of one person. If there were such a composite figure, what would he write in his diary?

So to 1668, the ninth of February (my birthday: which might not be worth noticing if this book hadn't meshed so strangely with my dream of long ago).

February 9th (Lord's day). Up, and at my chamber all the morning and the office doing business, and also reading a little of *L'escholle des filles*, which is a might lewd book, but yet not amiss for a sober man once to read over to inform himself in the villainy of the world. At noon home to dinner, where by appointment Mr Pelling come and with him three friends, Wallington, that sings the good base, and one Rogers, and a gentleman, a young man, his name Tempest, who sings very well indeed, and understands anything in the world at first sight. After dinner we went into our diningroom, and there to singing all the afternoon. (By the way, I must remember that Pegg Pen was brought to bed yesterday of a girl: and among other things, if I have not already set it down, that hardly ever was remembered such a season for the smallpox as these last two months have been, people being seen all up and down the streets, newly come out after the smallpox.) But though they sang fine things, yet I must confess that I did take no pleasure in it, or very little, because I understood not the words, and with the rests that the words are set, there is no sense nor understanding in them though they be English, which makes me weary of singing in that manner, it being but a worse sort of instrumental musick. We sang until almost night, and drank a mighty good store of wine, and then they parted, and I to my chamber, where I did read through *L'escholle des filles*, a lewd book, but what do no wrong once to read for information sake. After I had done it I burned it, that it might not be among my books to my shame, and so at night to supper and to bed.

I hope that carries some resonance of what we experienced yesterday through the Dramatis Personae of Duke, Angelo and Lucio. Think of Empson's discussion of the word "sense" in our play, which I read out to you. How do persons of sensibility make sense of sensuality?

Barker's thesis is that in the first half of the 17th century this question was as it were carried along by, and immersed in, a deep sea change in the condition and representation of the human body. Questions of sensuality were posing themselves differently, because the body itself was changing as between subject and object. The body as subject was becoming subjected to a new kind of objectivity. Hence his subtitle: essays on subjection. This sea change was impersonal, yet persons were inevitably caught up in it.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

But it wasn't impersonal in the sense of vague or ill-defined. It has specific historical characteristics. Texts like Pepys' diary, or *Measure for Measure*, tell us about those specific historical characteristics. And conversely, to read between and behind the lines of a text like this we need to be aware of that history.

There is no neat summary of how Barker gradually and circuitously evokes in his reader an awareness of this deep sea change. I have to trust in the resonances with our own experience with another text yesterday. I am going to read you one paragraph from his commentary, in the hope that it will speak into the obscurities and illuminations we shared in making Shakespeare's text our own.

The text employs massive means - not of repression, for everything is said, eventually, even if it is not acknowledged as having been said - but of diversion: we are asked to look 'by the way' at 'other things'. But just as no amount of raucous singing by Pepys and his friends will ever drown out the loquaciousness of the half-silence in which the forbidden book is enjoyed, so, the more the text denies interest, diverts attention, only the more clearly does it identify its unacknowledged drives. No doubt, as the empiricist would have it, the parenthesis of smallpox and childbirth at the centre of the passage is simply part of the 'day's residue', faithfully noted by the honest recorder. But why these sentences, just here, deployed in quite this relation to the others? Can it be with total fortuitousness that Pepys speaks 'by the way' of a young woman 'brought to bed' in an idiom not only of childbirth but of sexuality . . . ? And to speak in the same breath of disease, dis-ease, an affliction punishing the body so loathed by Pepys, as by any sober man on the Lord's day, and moreover, a privatised affliction after which people are 'newly come out' to be 'seen all up and down the streets'. The connotative relations established here are clear: from the bedroom to the public scene; from sickness to health; from private, sick sexuality to sexless public health.

If they were one person, might not Duke-Angelo-Lucio have spoken or written thus about the transition from private to public sexuality?

If you can accept the resonance, there is a more general hermeneutic lesson to be learned, not tied either to Pepys nor to *Measure for Measure*. Notice the words diversion, divert, in what Barker writes. "The text employs massive means-not of repression. . . but of diversion . . .", and "The more the text denies interest, diverts attention . . . We speak of diversion in two senses: as entertainment, and as the way round a closure. Put the two meanings alongside psychoanalytic ideas of repression, displacement, overdetermination, and start the question turning in your mind: is there something entertaining about finding the way round a closure? It may help to make connections between your own experience of analysis and the wider study of hermeneutics.



**Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress"**

We pass now to Marvell's poem. Many of you will know it well. But let me read it in full. It has a lovely face, which may be why some of us once learned it by heart, in the olden days when teachers did not go on strike, and children were made to learn texts by heart.

Had we but World enough, and Time,  
This coyness Lady were no crime.  
We would sit down, and think which way  
To walk, and pass our long Loves Day.  
Thou by the Indian Ganges side  
Should'st Rubies find: I by the Tide  
Of Humber would complain. I would  
Love you ten years before the Flood:  
And you should if you please refuse  
Till the Conversion of the Jews.  
My vegetable Love should grow  
Vaster than Empires, and more slow.  
An hundred years should go to praise  
Thine Eyes, and on thy Forehead Gaze.  
Two hundred to adore each Breast:  
But thirty thousand to the rest. An Age at least to every part,  
And the last Age should show your Heart.  
For Lady you deserve this State:  
Now would I love at lower rate.  
But at my back I alwaies hear  
Times winged Charriot hurrying near:  
And yonder all before us lye  
Desarts of vast Eternity.  
Thy Beauty shall no more be found,  
Nor, in thy marble Vault, shall sound  
My echoing Song: then Worms shall try  
That long preserv'd Virginity:  
And your quaint Honour turn to dust;  
And into ashes all my Lust.  
The Grave's a fine and private place.  
But none I think do there embrace.  
Now therefore, while the youthful hew  
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,  
And while thy willing Soul transpires  
At every pore with instant Fires,  
Now let us sport while we may;  
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Rather at once our Time devour,  
Than languish in his slow-chapt pow'r.  
Let us roll all our Strength, and all  
Our sweetness, up into one Ball:  
And tear our Pleasures with rough strife,  
Thorough the Iron gates of Life. Thus, though we cannot make our Sun  
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

That was written about 50 years after *Measure for Measure*. It can be read as the light and conventional lyric of a Renaissance libertine. But it is much more than that. If we can get at that "much more" it will help us with Isabella's

Th'impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies  
And strip myself ... as to a bed  
That longing have been sick for

which I picked out for emphasis yesterday when talking about the sado-masochistic theme in our play. As Barker says: "Against the idyll and its affect, the poem is uncompromising in its sexual objectives, not to say its 'sexual politics': this is a poetry with operative purposes, designed to seduce".

To convey to you something of how Barker interprets this poem I want to use the phrase "the Two Bodies". I take this from a famous chapter heading in Mary Douglas' *Natural Symbols*, in which she criticises the hermeneutic enclosure of psychoanalysis from the point of view of social anthropology. I found myself thinking of this chapter yesterday while listening to Janet Spencer's talk on the value of the persona.

If we are interested in Passion and Society we have to take account of two bodies, the body of the individual, and the social body; my body, your body, the body politic. What have the brothels to do with "the properties of government"? What business is it of the state's how we fuck? One of the virtues of Barker's interpretation of Marvell's poem is that it reminds us how lyricism informs the relationship between our two bodies. Between passion and the compulsions of politics and economics there can be a melody - of a kind.

Here again is one paragraph from what he says about the poem. Watch for the word "goods", and remember Mariana and her lost dowry. Think as I read of Isabella and Angelo, and what I said yesterday about the sado-masochistic potential between them. In Shakespeare's play they weren't able to do anything with their pleasure in pain. Perhaps in our performance we did. If so, what connections were we drawing on in our own experience between sexuality, politics, economics?

He is speaking of the "surface" of the poem, and of what may be hidden "between the lines".

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

There might have been some comfort for the averted eye, or even for the kind of temperament which resists critical effects in literature, to read in the poem's transition from the gentle courtship of Love's fantasy empire to this new command of "my Lust", with its vision of "desarts" and "ashes", a lament for a cultured and cultural fashion of loving. But there is no regret in the text. The poem cites a poetic ideology of courtship aestheticised and distantiates it, identifying on this side of the old kingdom a sexual urgency from which there is no respite, least of all a subliminary one. Here, on this side of the nostalgic fantasy, the poem says, love is not sacramental, it does not offer to redeem the lovers from the world, nor is it - for them or in itself - transcendent. On the contrary the poem twists away in another affective direction altogether, seeking in a reality principle, not the old empire but the new republic. The text ends neither in a sentiment of languishing indolence nor in one of satiated lust (either of which the libertine is frequently said to enjoy) but on an emphasis which is decidedly more rigorous. Goods are to be got, ultimately, by effort, and pleasures (if they are to be had at all, which the poem's final gesture does not guarantee) must be torn from inhospitable circumstances by struggle and amid conflict. The internal *milieu* of the poem is eventually one of "rough strife", which, if it is a sexual metaphor is also in the historical context a political one. As the poem tends towards the future it reaches after objectives which will have to be wrested from life and from time, from history itself. This is, as Christopher Hill argued some time ago, an anti-epicurean ethic, and one which could be well described as militant and "puritan", in its combativeness and its commitment to labour, if not actually in its emphasis on urgent sex.

Can we apply this sort of textual analysis to *Measure for Measure* and what we made of it yesterday with our contemporary projections?

In introducing it to you yesterday morning, I spoke of the passionate feelings, of the violence and indeed virulence, in the debate between the "right to life" movement and the believers in "reproductive freedom" round the abortion question. Also, with reference to Isabella's choice of a life without men, of this powerful essay by Adrienne Rich, on *Compulsory Heterosexuality as compared to Lesbian Experience*, an essay which I want to say that as a man I find both frightening, really frightening, and also, in a way that I find difficult to share within the social body, erotically exciting. (This essay is to be found in a volume edited by Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson, published by Virago in 1984, title: *Desire - the Politics of Sexuality*.) The politics of sex is all about us, seeking expression in every relationship, stretching and straining our marriages and friendships to breaking point. I am sure that we need, and are going to get, more of it. What I hope a weekend like this can contribute is the reminder that politics can be playful and lyrical as well as bloody.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

How can we engage both passionately and playfully with the politics of sex? My answer is: through a sense of history. Here if anywhere we need to be able to hear the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday.

There is a sentence in that passage of Barker's I would like to repeat: "As the poem tends towards the future it reaches after objectives which will have to be wrested from life and from time, from history itself". This says something important about the application of all kinds of hermeneutic. All texts tend towards the future. This is what Ricoeur is talking about when he insists on "the issue of the text". The meaning is reaching out through us to beyond where we are. This is true of a text like *Measure for Measure*. It is also true of the unwritten texts that underwrite our lives and our relationships.

Hermeneutics pays a lot of attention to this "tending towards the future". It sees it as a kind of open wound in the text which is frustrating, teasing, unsatisfying, yet also the source of originality. The hurt of its incompleteness invites interpretation. It is experienced as tragic, as dooming us to misunderstanding. It is experienced as comic, rich in the laughter that trembles between the expected and the unexpected. Or, to judge by what happened in our group yesterday, as melodrama, which is perhaps a mode of interpretation to which we should all give more thought.

In this "tending towards the future" we have another link between psychoanalysis and hermeneutics. The body can be understood as text. Taken as text, the individual body's "tending towards the future" is located between sexuality and death. If we lack a sense of history, this can feel like a prison, both futile and cruel. But if the two bodies can share a common sense of history then it is more like a theatre than a prison. For sexuality and death are what make history possible. When we forget that, they fall in on each other and run together into a sameness which is indeed both futile and cruel. When we remember it, then there is room to play-and work to be done.

I think that comparing ourselves with *Measure for Measure* brings home to us how little our social body today researches or celebrates the fact that sex and death between them make history possible. For me, the play brings sociological reflection on marriage and sexual fidelity into contact with our personal sense of history as wounding. Marriage is surely being asked to carry too much. The ideal of sexual fidelity between persons is being asked to carry commitment of a different kind altogether, commitment which belongs within the body of society. It is being asked to carry our social failure to research into and celebrate how it is that sex and death between them make history possible.

### Rembrandt's The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaas Tulp

Abhorson claimed his hangman's occupation as a mystery. He justified his claim with reference to the hangman's taking of the dead man's clothes for himself. But it wasn't only clothes that the convicted criminal had to yield to others. His body too became the property of others, subject to their purposes.

The practice of public dissection of the cadaver of a criminal had been spreading throughout the 16th century. All that gruesome play with Ragozine's dismembered head was everyday stuff to Shakespeare's audience compared to us. Shakespeare is supposed to have had one such public anatomist in mind when he created the figure of Shylock, a Jew Dr Roderigo Lopez who presided at the annual public anatomy at St Bartholomew's in 1569 and subsequently.

These public dissections were held in places called theatres. Tickets were sold for them. One historian has suggested that the practice of selling tickets to attend the anatomy theatre may pre-date their sale for the playgoers theatre. They were ritual occasions, part sacrificial, part a continuation of the verdict of the law court. They often took place in January, a time associated with fertility rites.

Rembrandt's picture has been studied by art historians in this context. Over 150 years or so there was a continuing exchange of information between surgery and painting about the human body. W. S. Heckscher, who wrote a detailed monograph on this picture, goes back as far as 1470 to make the connection.

Even if we turn . . . to a clumsy broadsheet, an Italian engraving of the late 1470's recording the ritual murder of the hapless little St Simon of Trent, whose adroit dismemberment by his Jewish tormentors is shown in careful detail, we understand how much the representation of cruelty could, and in fact did, learn from surgery and vice versa. In short, the artist's careful study of cruelties inflicted and received, his explicit desire to make the beholder shudder, whether through a saint's martyrdom or through a ritual murder, must be considered an important factor in the advance of scientific investigation of the human body. Anatomists could turn, as we know they actually did, to works of art to study muscles and sinews. The adjustment from one to the other was comparatively easy: all that had to be provided to turn a martyrdom into an anatomy was a change in emotional climate.

It is this change in emotional climate which interests Barker in Rembrandt's picture. I think it also helps explain one of the more slippery aspects of *Measure for Measure*, an aspect which makes it difficult if not impossible for some people to take the play seriously as good theatre: I mean that gratuitously voyeuristic element in the play, with the Duke as both effective and ineffective, as "looker on" at suffering which is of his own doing.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Barker sees the change in emotional climate by which martyrdom turns into an anatomy lesson as part of a profound historical shift between "flesh" and "word". A world and culture centred on belief in the word made flesh is turning into a world and culture in which flesh is made word, or, as he sometimes prefers to express it, flesh is textualised, flesh is made into a text.

The eleven pages in which he analyses the picture are among the most dense in the book. I select just one point, and the conclusions which he draws from it.

No eye within the painting sees the body laid out before them. The lines of sight can be traced. They look out at us, or across each other, or, three pairs - the third, fourth and fifth from the right, identified portraits of well known surgeons in Amsterdam - are focused not on the body itself but on the text of the anatomy book open at the feet of the corpse. As Barker puts it: "This body on display has become in an important sense invisible". The scientific gaze, the perspective of the new natural philosophy, may be organised *round* the corpse, but it is directed not at the flesh itself, but at the textual representation of it.

The body has become an abstraction. Has the human body ever been subjected to an objectification like this before?, Barker asks. Those lines of sight glance off the surface of the body in search for meaning in the text where the body has been transmuted by representation into an abstraction. Text is substituted for flesh.

To appreciate the point Barker is making needs a real effort of historical imagination. *Measure for Measure* can help, with its theme of substitution: Angelo as substitute for the Duke, Mariana for Isabella, and Ragozine's head for Claudio's, while Isabella refuses to substitute her body for her brother's. The interest of the play, as tragedy or comedy or melodrama, relies on the theme of substitution.

How do we experience it in the theatre? Take the moment the Provost produces the head of Ragozine. There can be a gasp, a moment of shock. But the gasp comes close to something more like a giggle. The surface of the scene presented to us, and what it is about, aren't comfortable with each other. They don't fit. There is a horror we can't feel. And it's not just that we can't feel it. We know that we can't really be expected to feel it. Remembering what Empson does with the various meanings of the word "sense" in the play, we could say: there's a horror we can't sense, because sensibility and sensation are too far apart.

Now take that apartness of sensibility and sensation as it shows itself crudely in the substitution of Ragozine's head for Claudio's, and play it across the other substitutions: Angelo for Duke, Mariana for Isabella, Isabella's refusal to stand in, or rather lie in, for Claudio. What do we hear? I think there is resonance of a more general apartness of body from itself.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

This is what Barker is trying to describe as he meditates on Rembrandt's picture. He speaks of a fissure, not between body and soul, but within the Jacobean experience of body itself.

Between the greenish, extinct corpse that is universally ignored and the diagram of the hand is a fissure into which a domination more fundamental than that of the old order has delved, dividing not only the soul from the flesh, but separating within the flesh itself the body as dead residue and the body as the object of a science which in knowing it will master it, and in healing it will accommodate it to labour and docility. On the one hand the dumb flesh, and on the other the mechanism, which can be understood, repaired and made to work.

Between the dumb flesh, and the flesh made word. Looking at those eyes whose gaze deflects away from the flesh in front of them to the text beyond, the whole within another framed text presented to us for our contemplation, can we understand better the world of *Measure for Measure*? Those keen eyes would not have noticed who else was in bed with them. Was that terrible argument between Claudio and Isabella about something more than sexual chastity? We first meet Isabella on the threshold of the St Clare nunnery. The ethos of the place is conveyed only through the quoting of a single rule, but it is a curious either-or prescription whose terms sound more resonant after reading Barker on Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson*.

When you have vowed, you must not speak with men  
But in the presence of the prioress;  
Then, if you speak, you must not show your face;  
Or if you show your face, you must not speak.

Why this either-or of face and word? In the final Act, when the heavily veiled Mariana enters, the Duke's command both echoes and overrides the nunnery's rule:

First, let her show her face, and after, speak.

Perhaps there is more at stake between face and word than we had thought. Perhaps this either-or of face and word can help us realise that the issue between Isabella and Claudio is not only the relation between sex and death but also the proper order of precedence between the showing of the word and the showing of the flesh.

### The Dream

I am trying to catch the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday. I have been using a book for that purpose. I want to conclude with the dream of which I spoke, the dream which probably goes some way to explain why Francis Barker's book has excited me in the way it has.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

I had this dream in January, 1957, that is, when I was about to be 31. It was about a horrible and loathsome play which had to be enacted, which was hardly redeemed by the fact that it was "only" a play.

I am asked to join with three others in putting on this play. I accept. It is long, and there are many sweatings, dreads, tortures, horrors, to be gone through. One of our number is a huge guzzling beast. He is blind, yet it is he who leads us because much here depends on an intimate sense of touch and on a blind man's unerring sense of hearing. (Kleinians among you will perhaps be interested to know that when I recently typed out this dream, I found I had typed breast for beast in the passage above.)

We are returning to a centre, which is the house of the power which has wronged us intolerably. It is also the home in which we have suffered all these ills. We know that He is now virtually alone, but we fear death by His hand. But when we enter the house, He is finished. I see my blind and so sane companion guzzling a great meal, while in the hall I see, in a huge fire that spreads up to the rafters, the roasting End of Him and his lackeys—they are being consumed in flames and He Himself is turning like a huge spit of meat in agony. I call out to Him to ask what it all really is, and He explains Himself as "Jacobean", and points to a roasting human trunk beside Him and says: "That is a Jacobean trolley". I turn away in exhaustion and horror, and say to one of our foursome, as explanation, description and summing up of the whole affair: "It is all a Question of Taste".

Who wrote the play, I ask? They explain that it is a recent English adaptation of a bitter French play written some 150 years ago, violently attacking the whole standard and categories of Jacobean taste, in art, furniture, clothes, architecture etc.

That was my dream. Over the years the dream has affected me in many ways. At the time, there were a host of personal associations starting in a recent Christmas gathering at my parents' home (the Jacobean "trolley"). Later, the word Jacobean came to mean something more when I was analysing with Jolande Jacobi. It has given the word Taste an at times almost daemonic energy for me.

But, throughout, the dream has carried a strong sense of history. This has impinged powerfully on my work with *Measure for Measure*. It was the recurrence of the word "Jacobean" in Francis Barker's book which made me aware of the impingement. I realised that the dream was lurking like a great power house of body-image in the background of my interest in Shakespeare's play. It was influencing, if not actually governing, my projections onto the text. All the scholarly details in the notes about the accession of King James I, as the occasion for which the play was written, began to reverberate with my historical amplification of the word



## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Jacobean 28 years ago. The nastiness with Ragozine's head reached back to the cannibalism of *Titus Andronicus* and forward to the melodramatic, Jacobean, cruelties of Tourneur and Webster. While Claudio's terrified cry in Act III, Scene I sounded almost like an echo of something I had heard myself.

... to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and incertain thought  
Imagine howling, - 'tis too horrible.

So when I read in Francis Barker's book of the changes in taste between a world and culture centred on the word made flesh, and a world and culture in which flesh is made word, something happens in the glands that control my saliva. Could I have been dreaming about anything like that back in 1957? And if so, what conceivable relevance could it have for life today?

Questions like that remind me of what Jung has written about the timelessness of dreams. But the idea of timelessness doesn't fit my dream or its present impingement. It is too full of times, different times, to be called timeless. There is the overall question of how the Jacobean period in history relates to now. But within that, there is tell of a play written about 1800 as mediating between now and the 17th century. So we have three "times" related to each other: the Jacobean time, the time round 1800, and my time. How does one go about interpreting time in a dream like that? That is the kind of hermeneutic problem which has led me to speak of "the beat of history in the rhythms of everyday", rather than timelessness.

But I presume most of us have not had a Jacobean dream lurking behind us like an "old fantastical duke of dark corners" while working on our text. So let me close by trying to translate this personal experience of mine into a form that may link up with the experience of those of us who came to the Jacobean world of taste for the first time this weekend. This is something of a jump in the dark, written as it is before the weekend, and involving a real conflict of interpretations between two hermeneutic systems.

It seems to me that there are resemblances between *Measure for Measure* and the Kleinian psychoanalytic description of the depressive, and of the paranoid-schizoid, "positions". For those of you who are not familiar with the terms, I risk a summary.

The paranoid-schizoid position is associated with the earliest months of our lives, but can recur later in childhood and in adult life. The depressive position follows after the paranoid-schizoid in infancy, and can also recur in later life. When the two positions do recur in later life, they can be thought of as alternative positions within an ongoing, life long experience of oscillation.

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

The paranoid-schizoid position is chaotic, with opposites in violent alternation to one another. There is a lot of panic anxiety about, with images of flesh being torn, chewed, regurgitated, spattered. The depressive position is calmer, but at a cost - a cost that may be more terrible than we can imagine. There is sadness like when one knows one has settled for a second best. This sadness is made bearable by a sense of having arrived at a manageable equilibrium. But it remains only second best.

How Jung's vision of personality compares with Klein's is for many of us a very practical hermeneutic problem. It is a good case of what Paul Ricoeur calls "the conflict of interpretations". I wonder if working on our play will have taken us inside that conflict.

In our play, the world of the Duke's authority, which he renounces at the start as having failed in its own purpose, can be seen as resembling the depressive position. The world that emerges in his absence, with its evidence of madness breaking through, as the paranoid-schizoid position.

I would expect that in projecting ourselves into this text we have all experienced something of the alternation between these two positions. On the one hand, our personality as reasonably civilized, manageable, though depressingly saturated in compromise: so much so, that at times we fear we are drowning in the compromises we have settled for. On the other hand, the possibility of excitement and anxiety of a wholly unmanageable kind. Excitement that is wholly wild, absolutely untamed, so wild, so untamed, that we have really no idea what to do with it. Anxiety that is more than life size, huge, metaphysical, cosmic, threatening to pull down the universe round our ears. Such an anxious excitement, such an exciting anxiety, is against all sense. We call it mad, and imagine the howling of thoughts that are both lawless and uncertain.

I am interested to know whether, in our diversions, we have stumbled on evidence of alternation between depression and madness of this kind.

But the real test for my approach will be to see if the alternation between different 'positions' in ourselves has struck chords from history. Jung and Klein differ from each other profoundly in their understanding of time. That dream of mine, with its "It is all a Question of Taste" began my clinical interest in Klein's work. But the history in it has proved uninterpretable within her hermeneutic range.

I've come closer to an interpretation in working on *Measure for Measure*.

## 1986 - Narrative and Performance

### 1

In this talk I want to try and summarise what I have learned from these weekends over the last few years. I have recently celebrated my sixtieth birthday, and the time seems right for drawing conclusions as well as planning for the future.

I am thinking not so much of the ideas we have aired, as of the acting we have done. There is that moment in the groups when we stop talking and stand up to see what happens when we move it. There is the process in rehearsal which enables us to get something together in time for the performance. There is the difference between performance and rehearsal, the things that go better than we dared hope, the improvisations that surprise, the missed cues, the effect of an audience. And there is the reflection afterwards: what we share here on the Sunday, and the longer term thoughts and muscular twitchings and stretchings and contractions that come for weeks and months afterwards.

It is this *acting*, and what we have learned from it, that I want to reflect on.

And in doing so I have an ulterior motive. I wrote in the programme notes that "I will suggest that these weekends could contribute to better cooperation between behavioural and analytic/interpretive approaches to psychotherapy". I will do that, but I want us also to bear in mind the differences between individual and group psychotherapy, and the systems approach to family therapy. I believe that our work here on what I have come to think of as "the theatre of behaviour" could contribute to useful experiment and innovation between these various disciplines.

### 2

What happens when we put a story on the stage? What happens when, instead of telling a story, we perform it?

It is the difference between telling my story and living my story. How do the telling and the living relate? Think of the sentence: "My life and what I have made of it". How about the word "and" in that sentence? My life is a story. It is also a performance. How are the two related? I believe that in exploring that relationship we can contribute to more cooperation between different kinds of psychotherapy and counselling.

I begin by introducing two technical terms from the study of narrative. They are taken from a book called *Reading for the Plot*, by an American literary critic called Peter Brooks. In this book Brooks argues that *plot* is so basic to all our attempts to make sense of our experience, that we often ignore it as too obvious to be worth looking at. Working both from the

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

psychoanalytic writings of Freud, with particular reference to the transference, and also from novels by Stendhal, Dickens, Balzac, Flaubert, Conrad and Faulkner, he brings the plottedness of story, and the plottedness of life, together in a book which has helped me a lot with that *and* in the sentence "My life and what I make of it".

Brooks distinguishes two kinds of organisation operating within narrative. One is interested in happenings, in events that follow on one after the other, in the flow of the story line. The other is interested in the questions thrown up by a story, the answering of which can then influence how the story goes on to be told. He calls the first kind of organisation "proairetic", from a Greek word meaning to choose one thing before another. He calls the second kind of narrative organisation "hermeneutic", to emphasise its interest in suspense, in partial unveiling, in temporary blockage, in intentional secrecy. The proairetic wants to get on with the story. Its primary concern is with what comes next, with moving the action along. The hermeneutic wants to know what the story means. It is prepared to stop the telling, to pause in the study, to turn the pages back to what happened before in order to find answers to questions that have come up since. A picaresque novel like *Don Quixote*, or a straight forward wartime adventure story would be examples of the proairetic at its most pure. The detective story is the clearest example of the hermeneutic ordering of narrative.

Brooks sees plot as constituted by the interplay between the proairetic and hermeneutic codes present in every narrative. To oversimplify the rich texture of his analysis, we can think of two urgencies. One urgency is to get on with what comes next. The other urgency is to dwell on what's been left out, to make an issue of questions like: why is this included and not that?

I find Brooks' book suggestive in thinking about the reasons that bring us into therapy, and about the different kinds of therapy on offer.

In our lives there can be an "overcoding" of the proairetic function by the hermeneutic, so that we can't get on with our story because too much is being left out. Such an overcoding shows itself in symptoms of knottedness, entanglement, stuckness, what Freud called "overdeterminedness", and Jung "complexes". We go for help to get the proairetic mode functioning again, and when we feel better we say things like "I seem to be going more with the stream of my life now". Or there can be an excess of the proairetic at the expense of the hermeneutic. We say that life has lost all its meaning. It is just one damn thing after another.

The help offered can also be seen in terms of the interplay between proairetic and hermeneutic coding. All therapy that uses story telling as its vehicle has to decide how it is going to match its proairetic and hermeneutic coding across each other. Five times a week analysis, with holidays that have to be taken to coincide with those of the therapist, is heavily coded toward the hermeneutic. The systems approach to family therapy uses the hermeneutic code differently, in order to disturb and realign the proairetic. Those of us who think of our work as as much

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

counselling as analysis are more interested in how the proairetic functions. We are alert to how the need to get on with the story can digest blockages. Work in marriage guidance, pastoral counselling, short term psychotherapy, has to be able to draw effectively on the proairetic urgency of story. How this relates to the labyrinthine meanderings of long term analysis needs to be better understood.

So there is much scope for applying a proairetic/hermeneutic analysis of narrative to the sort of work many of us do. I shall be giving some seminars in London next year on Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*, when I hope to take this further. What I want to do here is to apply this distinction to our question: what happens when we put a story on the stage? Because this is where I believe the comparison of narrative and drama can suggest new possibilities of cooperation and innovation between behaviourism and psychotherapy, between group and individual work, between analysis of systems and the analysis of intrapsychic states, or, quite simply, between talking and doing.

### 3

So: what does happen when we put a story on the stage, when, instead of telling a story, we perform it?

To answer, I want to enlarge on our existing experience of theatrical *presentation*, of what happens when we *present* action on stage. And here I want to introduce my other two technical terms, *deixis* and *ostension*.

When I step onto a stage I draw attention to myself. I do so in a way that includes the stage. Appearing before an audience on a stage I point to myself as being on stage. A stage appearance points at itself as being presented, shown, put forward.

This applies not only to persons but also to things. If, before the play begins, a stage hand walks on with a chair and sets the chair down on the empty stage, the chair points at itself. It stands out as significant. Not only the chair itself; the angle at which it is set, its whereabouts on the stage, they all point. A stage appearance points at itself as being presented.

Theorists of the theatre talk about this pointing as "*deixis*", from a Greek word meaning to bring to light, to point out. They relate it to "*ostension*", the showing, displaying, which is essential to theatre. They emphasise that together *deixis* and *ostension* have quite a crucial and fundamental function in drama. They are what distinguishes dramatic performance from narrative. The stage displays what is on it, what is within its space. Persons and objects on stage point at themselves. Together, *ostension* and *deixis* energise theatrical presentation. They create an energy field that is both a showing forth and a drawing of attention towards, through, beyond and behind, what is being shown.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Here is what one student of theatre says about ostension. (I have altered the language slightly, to avoid the unfamiliarity of certain words.)

Theatre is able to draw upon the most "primitive" form of signifying, known in philosophy as ostension. In order to refer to, indicate or define a given object, one simply picks it up and shows it . . . Thus, in response to a child's question "What's a pebble?", instead of replying with a gloss ("It's a small stone worn into shape by water") one seizes the nearest example on the beach or ground and demonstrates it to the child; or, similarly, in order to indicate the drink one desires, one holds up a glass of beer to whoever is doing the ordering.

Familiar ways of behaving. But perhaps not so familiar are the conclusions that can be drawn from such a "showing" when we allow an interest in theatre and an interest in behaviour to cross-fertilise each other. For what is happening in such cases is not that we are showing that particular pebble or glass of beer in itself, for its own sake. We aren't saying "Look at this pebble, isn't it interesting?". We are showing it as an example, as a representative. It is being used to point to, to refer to, the whole class of objects to which it belongs. My upheld glass is not referring to itself. It means "another of the same, please". It no longer stands for itself. It stands for something else. It is no longer fully and simply itself.

This idea is at the heart of what I want to say this morning. Let's dwell on it a moment. The chair that is there, yet no longer stands for itself. It is not itself, yet not not itself. It is de-realised in order to become de-monstrative.

This de-realising in order to become de-monstrative, is what theatrical performance adds to narrative. It moves telling into being through showing. This "showing" has been called (by Umberto Eco, the author of the best-selling novel *The Name of the Rose*, and one of the leading contemporary theorists of narrative) "the most basic instance of performance". Performance as exemplary, demonstrative, representative, performance as *moving telling into being through showing*: that is what I am trying to focus our attention on.

So let me now illustrate it with reference to our experience this weekend. I am going to say something about masks and faces, something about movement, gesture and words, and something about taking turns, in order to enlarge on this central idea of performance moving telling into being through showing. Because it is here, so I believe, that the theatre can provide us with the link we so badly need between the literal matter of factness of the behavioural tradition and the world of symbol and imagination.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

### 4

#### (a) *Charades, or On Keeping a Straight Face*

It is quite possible to feel rather silly doing the things we do during these weekends. A neighbour to whom I was describing these enactments two or three years ago spoke rather condescendingly of playing charades. I think he had a point, but he misconstrued it.

One of our more absurd performances here was when we enacted certain pictures from an alchemical text. Absurd, and, as it turned out, disturbing in a way that I have never been able to forget or to understand. I remember when we had divided up into our groups and went to our rehearsal rooms one man in my group turned to me and said "Are we really going to do this?" The look on his face combined disbelief with expectancy. That look stays with me in reply to the condescending reference to charades. For me, it is what these weekends are about. That mixture of disbelief and expectancy: what are we making of it?

Well, one answer is - melodrama. This word was used in my group last year, at a crucial moment in our rehearsal for *Measure for Measure*. We were at that stage when it seems as if nothing is going to happen, as if we are never going to be able to get it together. We were unsure of each other, weren't at all clear what we were supposed to be doing. Possibly what we were doing was really very silly indeed. Then someone said something like: "Come on, this is just good old Victorian melodrama". The group eased. It was as if we had been given permission to behave in a way we knew how. Words and movements began to interact. We had more confidence with each other, putting each other into roles and positions which weren't silly any more, because somehow we were now sharing in traditional human exaggeration.

I thought much about the exaggeration of melodrama after the weekend. It sent me back to read one of my favourite books on the theatre, Styan's *Drama, Stage and Audience*. He has a chapter on Genre and Style, which should be required reading for any psychologist interested in how mood and behaviour relate. He discusses tragedy, melodrama, farce, naturalism, comedy, burlesque. He has helped me realise how much there is that we could be doing, both here and in our lives and practices elsewhere, with that kind of exaggerated awkwardness we feel when we are caught between disbelief and expectancy.

Styan sees melodrama as one way of moving between tragedy and farce. He has this to say about the exchange between them (and as I read, think of how you felt yesterday if there were moments when you simultaneously wanted to surrender yourself to the intensity of the drama and yet were afraid - perhaps even terrified - of making yourself ridiculous).

The farther drama leans towards farce and tragedy, the more the actor assumes the mask. It lends impersonality to the experience, frees the spectator from the need to sympathise, frees him to laugh, all without the tiresome restrictions of everyday life. A play needs only a germ of probability to begin, but once begun it can soar with the

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

He argues that the first way, typical of the early days of evolution theory, is wrong. Society is not man-made. We are social from long before we emerged as a species, let alone as personalised individuals. The social belongs at that stage in evolution when the inorganic and organic are giving rise to the animal.

I have found that simple contrast between two ways of placing the social within evolutionary development extraordinarily suggestive. It helps me with what Jung has to say about archetypes and the collective unconscious. For someone who takes Jung's work on alchemy seriously, it helps make credible the idea that dreams of incest and kinship may reach directly into biochemical levels of our being.

But the point I want to make here is about our shyness and embarrassment on these weekends. Could it be that when we are feeling at our most clumsy, our most ape like, our most petrified, like some ridiculous wobbly television triffid, we are regressing to here (blackboard), to that level of evolution in which social forms of being are emerging out of an inorganic-organic substrate in preparation of animal species?

For those of us who shared in the 1980 work here on those alchemical pictures from Michael Maier's *Atalanta Fugiens* the idea is not so far fetched. It corresponds also to historical and anthropological research into the origins of theatre in social rituals associated with hunting and the cycles of vegetation. And it is echoed by modern voices. Here is Antonin Artaud describing the impact of the Balinese theatre brought to Paris in the 1930's:

All of this is steeped in deep intoxication, restoring the very elements of rapture, and in this rapture we rediscover the dry seething and mineral friction of plants, remains and ruined trees . . . All bestiality and animalism are brought down to that dry gesture, striking sounds as the earth splits open, frozen trees, lowing animals.

"The dry seething and mineral friction of plants". What I am suggesting is that when we represent rocks and trees and rivers with our bodies, we are pointing to a likeness between ourselves and the inanimate world which cannot be fully expressed in terms of personal experience. It is essentially sociable. I am sure this is what some of our shyness and nervousness is about. It's not just personal. We are shy for others. There is a "likeness" to be expressed which requires a group willing and able to regress together. But how do *I* know that *we* are able? I am thinking of those years when we have enacted here the stories of Amor and Psyche, Narcissus, and Medusa. There is a level of what we've been calling ostension and deixis which belongs with *species* rather than with individuals or even with groups. A species is pointing itself out in the face of nature. We are closer to the cave painting of Lascaux than to the play of children.



## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

This is important for what we make of our experience of mask, of the drama of the straight face. At this "species level" of ostension, of showing forth, "we", not "I", re-member ourselves here (on the blackboard - the social structure of higher organisms). It may not be too far fetched to say that we are re-membering how species may have originated. Certainly to say it like that helps us to be aware of the regression that can catch us. Some people were left deeply uneasy after our enactment of the alchemical pictures. I was dissociated after our enactment of the Narcissus story in a way that seemed more vegetable than human. Regression of this kind can be grotesque. Rediscovery of our bestiality in the dry seething and mineral friction of plants is no charade. It is deadly earnest. What we are presenting pre-dates us, but it also lies in wait for us. Decomposition is there, waiting to be remembered, whenever we allow an interest in the origin of species really to catch us.

On the face of it, acting Shakespeare may not appear to call for regression of this kind. But bear it in mind if you find yourself drawn uncomfortably, even dangerously, close to what may seem like an impossible choice between tragedy and farce. There are moments in our play when bestiality is not so far off. There are likenesses which do not lend themselves easily to human expression, when we can act only if we accept the formal limits, the de-realisation, of the deictic mask.

### *(c) Movement, Gesture, Words*

I want us to think now of the first half hour or so which we spend in rehearsal.

The group is trying to get to know each other. It is also trying to get to know the text and scene it is to work on. Out of that emerges the need to assign characters, and to create a scene or setting. This scene or setting is not simply an empty or neutral space in which the enactment will happen. It is an inherent part of the self-presenting of the characters. It is *where* we are going to be called on to *take our place*. This is what we emphasis in using words like deixis and ostension.

What happens when we stand up and start to move, instead of sitting and talking? This, for me, is the recurring interest of these weekends. I want to amplify our experience of that moment when we say: "let's stand up and move it".

To do so, I am going to draw on ideas developed by the phenomenological psychologists. This phenomenological approach can, I believe, be helpful in linking the behavioural and psychoanalytic study of human being.

Our bodies experience many different kinds of movement. We impoverish ourselves if we try and reduce them to a common denominator. A falling body, a gesture of greeting, a grasping movement, jumping over a ditch, the contraction of the pupil to light, the peristaltic movements of intestinal muscles, automatic movements that maintain our equilibrium, these cannot all be

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

described and understood by one set of principles. The movements of our bodies call on us to be constantly varying the ways in which we imagine the space in which we find ourselves.

But it is not only our bodies which call on us in this way. The call comes also from the objects which we come up against as we explore the space we inhabit. Inhabited space is constituted of the encounter between self and object. Movement and object adjust to each other. When I set my foot down, I do it differently on the pavement or on muddy ground, in a field or on a mountain, in the light or dark. I don't hold a pen as I grip an umbrella in a strong wind. How firmly I grasp something depends on its resistance, on its tendency to get away from me.

This is all very familiar. The trouble is that it is so familiar that we tend to overlook it. What the phenomenologists are urging on us is the need to recover a sense of *place* as more important, more original, than *space* if we are going to do justice to the variety of movement experienced by our bodies. In moving, our bodies are constantly in touch with place. This "touchingness" between movement and place is very precious to us. I want to emphasise it by talking rather grandly of "the enfolded openings of the interleaved enclosures of place". That's the sort of setting in which we can recognise the touch between movement and place. It is a setting incomparably richer than empty space. Its richness is emphasised when we say of an action that it "takes place". Lived movement doesn't happen in a vacuum. It takes place.

"It takes place". To appreciate the importance of deixis and ostension in the theatre we must think about this familiar phrase, think about it in relation to gesture and words.

Gesture is how the body ostends itself. Gesture is how the body places itself within the field of deictic energy which constitutes its stage setting. Gesture is constant evidence of how theatrical the world is. Gesture gives body to space, and space to body. It energises the scene, creating the place in which action can "take".

Working in silence, as we usually have done in the past, we have learned a lot about the power of gesture. But gesture can move easily into words, and I believe the time has come when we should experiment more with the use of language in our enactment.

But do let us keep it related to gesture, to the energies of lived movement. Without gesture, words are always in danger of becoming dis-embodied. We want to experiment with words that can carry body with them. This is where this technical concept of deixis can be helpful.

If words are to register within the physical context of the stage, and to come into contact with bodies and objects on the stage, they must participate in the taking place of action. Watch for how they relate to gesture. Gesture is a prime vehicle of deixis, and to really be part of what takes place words must be deictic.

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

Here is an example from our play. Words which are especially deictic are personal pronouns like "I" and "you", adverbs like "here" and "now", and demonstratives like "this" and "that", parts of speech that behave differently on stage to how they do in narrative. In our play observe the force of the words "that" "thine" "you" "this" "his" in Portia's mouth as the court scene builds to its climax.

A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine, The court awards it, and the court doth give it.

And you must cut this flesh from off his breast, The court allows it, and the court awards it.

The personal pronouns and the demonstratives aren't merely indicating the persons on the stage. They *are* demonstrative. They *are* gestural. They draw attention to presence in such a way as to refer beyond what is immediately there. They point at the particular figures on the stage, and at the same time point beyond and behind them, making them examples of something more general: other merchants, other human flesh. It is this which enables us to observe them from without while also putting ourselves in their place. (Analysts may like to compare what is being said here with their experience of "projective identification".)

So if we do wish to experiment more with using words, watch for the deictic potential of little words like *I* and *you* and *here* and *now* and *this* and *that*. They can tell us a lot about how words participate in the taking place of action, in moving telling into being through showing.

But there is more to be said about the taking place of action. If we do use words more, we'll discover more obviously what we already know from our silent enactment: that if action is to take place, the players must take their turn. It's no good all talking at once.

### *(d) Taking Turns*

In rehearsal we aren't only exploring the potential of lived movement. We are also having to find a place for each other in relation to the action. We volunteer for roles, putting ourselves forward to play a particular part. We also allocate roles. Within the group, there is often an uneasy, perhaps even tricky, process of negotiation between volunteering and being assigned, before we are variously lodged in our particular part.

I believe more is involved here than we realise in the confusion of rehearsal. My particular "place" in the action is being decided. I am in on that deciding, but I am also having to leave it to others. To begin with, I am one of many looking for a part, or trying to avoid a part. When the decision is taken, then I am made responsible for a particular character. From then on, I speak for him or her in talking about how we are to realise our scene. In being given my place I am also given a piece of the action. It is up to me to activate that piece.

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

This connection between "place" and "piece of action" is further worked on as we rehearse our performance. There are times when I am at rest, watching others move. I learn the difference between being *on* and *off*. I am part of the background. Then suddenly there is no foreground. Is it I who should be putting myself forward so as to carry some part of the performance which is going by default? Whose turn is it to make a move?

I want to propose to you that what is happening here in our rehearsals is very important indeed for the study of behaviour and of human being in the world. If we are to get our act together, we have to learn to take our turn.

Now it seems to me that group psychotherapy and the systems approach to family therapy study turn-taking seriously, and have a lot to teach us about its importance in everyday living. In one-to-one therapy, with its emphasis on individual insight, turn taking is not of immediate concern, except in the analysis of transference. There is more emphasis on a solitary and heroic quest. I think experience in theatre and drama could help us make better connections between "going it alone" and turn taking.

The particular connection I want to suggest this morning relates to what I've said about lived movement. In insight therapy we talk a lot about insides and outsides. I think the study of turn taking could help us bring this kind of talk, and the work associated with it, more into the behavioural field.

As an example, I want to draw on the work of a social behaviourist, someone who has read widely in psychotherapeutic and psychoanalytic literature, but whose own discipline is firmly grounded in social events.

John Shotter describes turn taking as an "ontological skill". Speaking of what happens in complex social activity, he describes "long, interlaced sequences of exchange", as constituting the stuff of social intercourse. It is in that stuff that selfhood is made real. He argues that growing up in society, and the political processes which constitute society, depend on these long, interlaced sequences of exchange becoming established as activities people can themselves *do* rather than simply have happen to them.

What establishes them as activities we can do is turn taking. We have to learn to take our turn, that is, to submit ourselves to the influence of others while also initiating appropriate action ourselves. This learning involves the ability to change one's own mode of being oneself, from being a recipient of an action to being an actor, from being a looker on to a doer, from being a listener to being a speaker. It is this ability that Shotter refers to as an "ontological skill".

This applies to children growing up in a more or less facilitating environment. It also applies to what goes on in the theatre. If turn taking is an ontological skill, this skill is one that we learn in

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

the theatre. But there is a further comment John Shotter makes which caught my attention in thinking about our rehearsing in groups.

He is talking about the need for every society to have certain operational procedures or devices to maintain reciprocity between the personal and the social. He speaks of this in terms of a kind of social ecology. "To the extent that a society remains in existence, these procedures must exist somewhere in its ecology, spread out in its constituent interrelations". And then he goes on with two sentences which have become for me a kind of promise for future bridges between behavioural and analytic approaches to psychotherapy:- "Thus, irrespective of what goes on in people's heads, it seems both an important and a feasible endeavour to discover what these procedures are. Thus: ask not what goes on inside people, but what people go on inside of".

"Ask not what goes on inside people, but what people go on inside of". When I first heard family systems work described I felt both excited and threatened. I knew at once that it was going to interest me. It appealed directly to my sense of theatre, of drama. But I also felt threatened. As an analyst of interior states and conditions of soul I realised that here was an approach with a confidence in exterior interplay that I lacked. The energy generated between that excitement and that threat has driven me to take my interest in theatre into the study of social behaviour.

Asking what people go on inside of does seem to me to fit well with what happens in our rehearsal groups, as lived movement begins to turn into acting. We do have an inside which we have to take into account. We want to express ourselves, some more than others. Yet we are constrained by the scene in which we are set. Expressing what's inside us means finding how we can fit into an inside. But what I am inside of is busy with other people expressing themselves. To fit into it I must be able to take my turn. Taking turns generates action between insides and outsides.

It seems to me that we have here an important connection with what I said earlier about action taking place. Remember my phrase about "the enfolded openings and interleaved enclosures of space", and my talk of the "touchingness" between movement and place. As we rehearse, we are composing a scene by being in touch with other people's lived movement. This is how we make room for each other. But we aren't only making room. We are also generating action. Scene and action are a joint composition. Our performance is beginning to take place. This is what we mean by "getting our act together".

I think this helps us realise how much energy is represented by these technical terms *deixis* and *ostension*. Theatre puts us *into* parts in order to *ostend* the action in which character can be realised. Turn taking is how character and action are generated together out of lived movement. Turn taking both generates and releases energy, like music does. It is like finding the rhythm between pressures that are from the outside and initiatives that are from inside. Each character

points to its own *piece* of the action, and does its own *bit* in composing the scene in which action takes place. What holds the pieces together is a kind of field of energy whose rhythm is spelt out as we take our turn.

5

*Jigsaws and Threads*

So: once again, I ask: what does happen when we put a story on the stage, when we *present* the *and* in "my life and what I have made of it"?

I started us off with these (blackboard) two technical terms, proairetic and hermeneutic, to describe two contrasting urgencies within story. One urgency, the proairetic, is to get on to what comes next. The other urgency, the hermeneutic, is to make an issue of what's been left out. I wonder if we can now think of these two different kinds of narrative urgency in more homely terms of thread and jigsaw.

Thread is a familiar image in thinking and talking of story. We get the thread of a story. Or we lose the thread. The thread is what the one-thing-after-another aspect of story is arranged on. Talk of thread goes with talk of spinning. If the story is in danger of ending too soon we spin it out. The problem of where to begin is like that first teasing out of the wool that gives us the start of our thread.

Thread gives us the proairetic mode of narrative.

Jigsaw, emptying out, collecting, piecing together, the bits of a jigsaw puzzle, gives us the hermeneutic mode of narrative. Here we have all the bits potentially in front of us, even if some of them may be missing. The primary question is not: what comes next?, but: which fits where? The way we proceed is in matching like with like. We choose one piece rather than another not according to an order of temporal priority, but according to various orders of likeness. "Fit" comes before "sequence".

How do thread and jigsaw relate?

Those of us who work in psychological counselling are familiar with the constant choice between the two. We speak of the need "to unpack", "to see what we've got", "to get it together". That's the jigsaw approach. We ask questions like "how did it start?", "what happened then?", or we say "well, we'll just have to wait and see". That's the thread approach. How do they play across each other? How do we conjugate one with the other, so that story goes on in a way that gathers all its bits together in the right fit?

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Those are the questions with which the modern study of narrative is concerned. The theatre has, from of old, addressed itself to the same questions in a different way. In staging story, theatre turns narrative into action. Theatrical performance allows us to study action as it moves and hesitates and turns and twists between the pull of the thread and the broken up bittiness of the jigsaw. Can we try and picture this together?

Start in our rehearsal yesterday. We are like the pieces of a jigsaw. Each piece is a character, a person or an object. Each piece wants to be part of the telling. It wants to make sense. It wants to find a place in the story, a share in the action. Or perhaps not. Perhaps some of us want to be left out. Perhaps we feel that we don't belong in this box, in this jigsaw.

Let's try and generalise from that, drawing on what I've said about lived movement and turn taking. I imagine something like a ball game, a place filled with throwing and catching between the various pieces or characters. If I am to be in the story, I have to join up. I throw, I throw out from myself. I pro-ject. I am alert to catch the pro-jections of others.

As the balls are thrown, they draw lines or threads from one piece to another. It is easy to picture what would happen. The threads would criss cross, double back, become hopelessly tangled, if the pieces were trying to join up any old how. They'd get thoroughly knotted, as many of us know from our experience. The story line can get hopelessly crossed.

Now what is the picture like if we imagine the thread as having a certain pull or hold of its own. Suppose the thread is not just thrown passively from point to point, but tugs and pulls and draws. The tug can be *in the thread* as it reaches our fingers, as when we fish. Or it can be *in our fingers* as we pull on the thread, as when we spin, or unravel our way into a labyrinth with its help. The play of a fishing line, spinning, the maze of labyrinth, are all familiar images for lived story. The thread has direction, although it is neither straight nor steady, and although we do not know what is causing the tug at the other end.

How can we picture threadedness of this kind working on a jigsaw? How can we imagine the pull of the thread as able to exercise some kind of influence on the joining together of the pieces? Or the disjointedness of the pieces affecting the spinning of the thread?

### 6

This brings us to my last point: *presentation and time*.

How does presentation, all that I've been saying about deixis and ostension, relate to the passing of time? To put it in the kind of word play I enjoy perhaps too much: how is the *verb* "to present" related to the *noun* "the present"? To understand how the disjointedness of the jigsaw pieces and the spinning of the thread can influence each other we must consider the timing of theatrical presentation.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Now you may be surprised to know that when we go to the theatre we get involved in five different kinds of timing. Yes, five.

The first is obvious. It is performance time, the time given in the programme when it says "the performance will last approximately three hours and a quarter including one interval of twenty minutes".

The next two are easily confused, but if we are to see how stage performance brings jigsaw and thread together it is vital that we distinguish them. They are plot time, and chronological time.

Plot time is the order in which events are shown or reported on the stage, the order in which one scene follows another. Chronological time is the order of events which the spectator reconstructs from what he hears and sees. Plot time and chronological time need not be in the same order. For instance, in our play the scenes in Venice and Belmont follow each other one after the other in plot time. But the order of events to which they refer, as we reconstruct it in our minds, is not the same. They can overlap, synchronise, be reversed. When did Tubal's visit to Genoa, when he heard of Jessica in flight from her father and of Antonio's losses, happen in relation to Bassanio's wooing of Portia? Was it before, or at the same time as, or after? We aren't told by the play. We have to work it out for ourselves.

Fourthly, there is what we can call historical time. This too can easily be confused with chronological time. But if we are to apply our experience in the theatre to how we live outside it, the distinction is essential.

Dramatic events refer in some way, if only by omission, to a "real world" outside the theatre. How does the timing of the story they tell compare to the timing of the real world that is going on outside in history? In Shakespeare's plays we are aware of this question most urgently in the historical plays. In *The Merchant* the point can be best made with reference to the theme of "usury". As we read or watch the play, we are aware of ourselves questioning how the different attitudes to usury and commercial credit or "thrift" compare with our own. What we make of the theme in the play depends on a sort of matching and comparing that goes on between our own attitudes today and what we know about Elizabethan England. The important general point to notice is that as we reconstruct the chronological order of events from the plot as it unfolds before us, there is also this matching and comparing going on in our minds with what we know of the history of the world outside the theatre.

That gives us four kinds of timing. We have the "frame" given by performance time. Within that frame we have plot time, the order of events as they are presented to us on the stage, scene by scene. Behind that, or in front of it, we have our reconstruction of the chronological order of events to which the plot order refers. And influencing and interfering with both, is our matching and comparing with the time of the real world going on outside.



## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

What gets them together? What gets them "in time" with one another? This is our fifth kind of timing, the most immediate of all. It is the dramatic present, the dramatic *now* carried by the action being presented.

The immediacy of this dramatic now is what gets all the other times ticking together. Throughout the performance this "now" remains a constant. On the stage it is always now. The action takes place in a perpetual present. But though perpetual, it is dynamic. It is not static. Dramatic action generates a "now" which moves the plot along, and in doing so coordinates the other timings to its own rhythm.

The dramatic present as integrating into one rhythm plot time, chronological time and historical time, within the frame of performance time: that's what we were exercising ourselves in yesterday. Can we relate it to what I have said about presentation, about the theatrical energy of pointing and showing forth?

Remember your experience as audience as well as of player. Remember what I said on Friday evening about the audience "hosting" the performance. And remember the shyness, the embarrassment.

When we dramatise our jigsaw we put the pieces on show. They are demonstrative. The parts of our plot display themselves as exemplary, as referring beyond themselves. The turn and turn about throwing and catching that passes the thread from cue to cue and from character to character is sustained and directed by the energy of that display between audience and stage. Performance draws the expectation of the audience into the action being presented. The story is threaded together by the energy of the display which draws into itself our expectancy.

But the process is also working the other way round. The display is being energised by the threading of the story. Think of one of those ball games in which it is essential to know when to pass the ball. Turn taking requires that we know when to pass. This need to pass is how timing gets into dramatic space. It fills the gaps between the pieces of our jigsaw, like a living, vibrant cement. The energy of the proairetic need to get on to what comes next pervades and informs the space into which the pieces are gathered.

We need to be imaginative. Think of an empty stage in the moment before or after the players are "on". It is empty, yet it radiates presence. It is occupied, audibly occupied, by our still expectancy of what comes next, like the stretched invitation of an horizon gathered together into one place. That's what space is like when the dynamism of the dramatic present gets into it.

Then picture the need to pass. Imagine a dance that you can hear. Or a rhythm that you can see. That is the energy we go to the theatre to enjoy, the energy we evoke when we put a story on the stage.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

I spoke earlier of performance as moving "telling" into "being" through showing. We are now in a position to enlarge on that definition. When we put a story on stage we frame lived time, and within that frame we present action as it twists and turns and hesitates between the proairetic and hermeneutic urgencies of story. This "presenting" is both spatial and temporal, both noun and verb. Dramatic performance gets our act together in both time and space in a way that narrative does not.

I think these Hawkwood weekends have been leading us, perhaps unwittingly, into study of how this is done. What I'd like to do now is twofold.

1. I'd like to focus our "theatre of behaviour" on the differences between the various kinds of psychotherapy which we have experience of, to include if possible the behavioural. This will depend on being able to find others to join with us.

2. And I'd like it if some of us could work in a more sustained way on how theatre might help us bridge the gap between everyday living and the strange performances that go on in our various consulting rooms. As a colleague said to me recently: what interests me more and more is how all those people manage who seem to get on alright without ever coming near therapy or counselling.

I think the theatre could help us move more flexibly and imaginatively between professional consultancy of many kinds and the job of getting on with living the story.

## REFERENCES

PETER BROOKS, *Reading for the Plot*, Oxford 1984. (The Notes give many further references into the theory of narrative, and its connections with psychoanalysis.)

**Deixis and Ostension.** Here I draw on KEIR ELAM, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (Methuen 1980) also the same author's *Shakespeare's Universe of Discourse* (Cambridge 1984); J. L. STYAN, *Drama, Stage and Audience* (Cambridge 1975); RAY BIRDWHISTELL, *Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body-Motion communication* (Penguin 1971); ANTONIN ARTAUD, *The Theatre and its Double* (1938) (Eng. trans. Grove Press, New York 1958).

In writing of regression and the origin of species in the way I have, I am aware of drawing both courage and inspiration from the confluence of three very different books.

WILLIAM GOLDING'S novel *The Inheritors*, with its famous description of the abortive dawning of "likeness" in the mind of our proto-human ancestors.

SUZANNE LANGER's magisterial study: *Mind, an Essay on Human Feeling*, (John Hopkins 1972) which spells out in great detail the evolution of "act" through the inorganic-organic-animal species continuum. (For my argument, see in particular Vol II, pages 288-355). And in a more specialised field

BRUNO SNELL'S, *The Discovery of the Mind* (Blackwell 1953), in which Chapter 9 examines the role of comparison (Golding's "likeness") in the development of consciousness in classical Greece.

In this context, see also a book that has just come to my notice RICHARD SCHECHNER, *Between Theatre and Anthropology*, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press 1985; this book draws together very interesting work done in America in the last ten years by theatre people who have been drawn to the study of anthropology and by anthropologists who have turned to the study of theatre to help them in their field work. The idea of theatre as "the restoration of behaviour" is particularly relevant to my argument in this paper.

**Movement and Gesture.** I am drawing on ERWIN STRAUS, *Phenomenological Psychology*, New York 1966, (translation of work originally published in French in 1935-6) and DAVID MICHAEL LEVIN, *The Body's Recollection of Being* (Routledge 1985) subtitled "Phenomenological Psychology and the Deconstruction of Nihilism", which looks at the psychotherapies of Jung and Freud and Carl Rogers in the context of the work of Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger. The result is analysis of a kind that we are weak on in Britain. Gesture, motility and dance restore to body a qualitative dimension that is essentially and originally both social and transformative.

JOHN SHOTTER, *Social Accountability and Selfhood* (Blackwell 1984). There is much more to his argument than my reference to "turn taking" suggests. His central theme of "accountability" could be very helpful in making connections between behavioural and psychoanalytic attitudes.

**Presentation and Time.** On the five times of theatrical performance: ELAM, *Semiotics etc* (above).

On "presence" as both verb and noun: I like in particular what John Berger has to say about time, with its mixture of poetry, philosophy and common sense. For instance, his book *And Our Faces, my Heart, Brief as Photos*: Writers and Readers Press, 1984.

On audience: the first part of ANNE RICHTER: *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play* (Penguin 1967) gives the English historical experience of development from ritual to theatre, with the gradual separation of audience and stage. Styan's book quoted above, and, of course, first and last and always: PETER BROOK, *The Empty Space* (1968, and subsequent Penguin).

## **1997 - The Body Caught between History and Nature:**

### **Anaesthesia and Anatomia**

"Caught between History and Nature". As I get older this sentence is establishing itself in my mind as a responsible description of bodily experience.

Here are some thoughts to illustrate what I mean. They are arranged firstly round some dreams, secondly round a book, and thirdly, as an attempt to bring the dreams and the book together in imagining how our experience of the body may be changing.

### **Anaesthesia**

I have been doing some work on about a hundred dreams of mine, dreamed between 1991 and 1994, that is from the age of 65 to 68. One theme that recurs is that of anaesthesia. I have long believed that there must be a whole net work of connections between the medical application of anaesthetics, and the rise and dissemination of psychoanalysis. Surely the therapeutic idea that it makes sense to get in touch with psychic pain, that pain ought to be accessible because it may be fertile of understanding, must be related to the fact that physical pain is now controllable, making possible experimental investigation of a kind that was previously inconceivable, intolerable, impractical.

But I know of no books on the subject. So I have started sending copies of my dreams about anaesthesia to the author of any book I do come across which seems to touch on the theme. Which gets me some interesting replies.

Yet the dreams remain obscure. They seem to be saying something important, even urgent, about anaesthesia and how it affects our understanding of the body. So here are three of them, together with my associations. I offer them to the Bulletin in the hope of response from sociable colleagues here in Oxford. Whatever else the body may be, it is a condition we share. Understanding the body is a sociable activity.

#### **May 17, 1991**

A woman is to have major surgery to her brain, also confused with hysterectomy and caesarean. It is the repeat of an earlier experience.

I have intense feeling of participation with her, having to go through it with her.

When they open her/it up, they will surely want to look at the results of the last op, the area/bit they were working on last time, to see what it looks like now, how it is lasting.

As he prepares her for it, the surgeon speaks with great feeling of her fate - is he so effective/clever/powerful (almost magic) that he can do something now about that, something retrospective as it were? She is taken off to the theatre.

The participation continues, very strong. Oh, she won't feel anything, I know about that, but her body must feel it, the incredible violence of what is happening, being done, to her. Will she be any 'better' for it?

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

**October 17, 1992**

I/we have a huge snake, which we are taking to some exhibition, show, to 'show' (like some garden, animal, farm, 'show').

We arrive early, at house of woman organiser.

She asks if our snake has arthritis.

No, it is still young, sinuous, beautiful.

She says that when they get arthritis, and they come or are brought (as to vet) for an injection, to ease the pain, you can seem them 'longing for the needle'.

This image of a creature like a snake 'aware' of the pain easing effect of anaesthesia injection, I find extraordinarily powerful, comforting, revealing, as well as almost overwhelmingly sexual.

**August 28, 1994**

I have made a simultaneous appointment for the dentist, and for some kind of psychotherapy/shiatzu/acupuncture. I have known about it for a long time, and it has been no problem.

But now the time has come to keep the double appointment. How can I? I can't. I can't be in two places at once.

Terrible, exhausting, pain/anxiety of getting - to which? It feels like all my repeated journeying, travel dreams.

I do get to the dentist, 25 minutes late, out of 30 minute 'slot'. He/she says I'd better come in and he/she'll see what he/she can do. This willingness to see what can be done in the little time left is partly due to E having been a singer. How do they know? Is it because in some sense I am identified with her?

Later sequence, trying to sew up skin round someone's groin, penis, a bit like doing up nappies, but it involves threading string through holes in the flesh. He lies still and patient.

In dream, it is said that this is the explanation of why I 'split'. Because I don't distinguish between the two kinds of appointment. Splitting caused by failure to appreciate the difference between them.

### **Commentary on the dreams**

**May 17, 1991**

Associations were with two cases of brain damage. One resulted from a massive cerebral thrombosis. There was no question of an operation. Damage could be ameliorated, but the stroke was irreversible. The other was caused by a tumour. Four years of apparently untreatable depression culminated in a successful operation, making the patient well again. A malign natural growth was cut out, removed.

Comparing the two raises questions about our ability to act now on what has already happened. The present can change the past. Or it cannot. And there are differing continuities. Is there an objective continuity against which subjective experience can be measured? What has

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

been going on in the brain since the previous operation is not accessible to the continuity of the surgeon without further intervention. But is such intervention justified? Is it called for? If so, by whom, or what? For surgeon and for patient the consistency of time is not the same. The patient's interest in the past is not the same as the surgeon's. The difference between them is marked by pain.

Questions such as these, about what is reversible and what irreversible, about interventions that test the hold of the present on the past, about what is objective and what subjective, are set within the associative field given by the word theatre. Theatre is showing, display, demonstration. Within the dream, there was an association with ordering the book *Chemical Theatre*, by Charles Nicholls, at the Bodleian the day before. Subject and object are played across each other. Theatre sets the passage of time between a beginning and an end of its own making. Process is subordinated to performance. Performance invites both satisfaction and repetition. We show that we can do the same operation again and again even though it is different each time. Note, *each* time. Time is being thought of as intrinsic to an event, not as a medium existing apart from events.

The dream places all this alongside caesarean and hysterectomy. Common to all the personal associations is the question of what our bodies are for. Are they for passing life on, or are they for us? Is their end (which it seems only human to confuse with purpose) life or death? Are they nature or history? Old questions, so long unresolved that we grow lazy about asking them. But note that they include uncertainty about time. Perhaps we are lazy because they remind us of feelings about time which we are afraid might hurt.

The particular body has its own life time. It is also the vehicle for a time that goes on from generation to generation. There is a time that begins and ends with this particular body, and a time which uses this body to keep itself going. Are they the same? Or are they at cross purposes? Is the difference between caesarean and hysterectomy reminding us that in being alive we are responsible for something other than life, that life may be *for* time rather than time *for* life, that history is in some sense prior to nature? Questions like these are given new urgency in the application of genetic research.

So there are three matrices of association in this first dream. (1) Questions about reversal, repetition, intervention. (2) Demonstration and performance as compared to process. (3) The possibility of choice between phylogeny and ontogeny. The dream throws them together in an operation that associates brain with womb. It floods the operation with personal affect, with pity and with doubt, doubt that may give rise to protest.

On waking, the pity and the doubt remain. I cannot find words to comprehend the complexity, the confused mix of sensitivity and cognition, of sympathy and protest, that seems to be at stake behind the veil of anaesthesia. Years have gone by, and I am still left wondering at what is here being spoken of.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

October 17, 1992

The 'show' is important. It picks up the theme of theatre once more. Associations are with childhood country shows, showing ponies, animals returning to the farm with first and second prizes, and later, adult, with the showing of fruit and vegetables, plants and flowers. Breeding, training, growing, are to be judged. A process that has gone on over months, perhaps years, reaches its conclusion. One moment fulfils, or disappoints, the work of time.

The word vet has figurative meaning. The organiser as vet suggests the sense of scrutiny, assessment, as well as treatment. Bringing an animal to be vetted is not the same as bringing an animal to be doctored.

But it is the snake which gives its power to the dream. Forty eight years of dream recall have left me with a seemingly inexhaustible range of association with the snake. Here, in the foreground, I identify connections with the spine, from the pain of osteoporosis to eastern traditions linking sexuality with breath and spirit. There are also, in the word sinuous, sexual associations of tongue with penis and vagina, which overlap with the spinal ("a snake with hips" P.G. Wodehouse). But more important perhaps in opening up the word "longing" are the Genesis-Darwinian associations.

For many years of my childhood the Biblical and Darwinian stories of creation existed side by side, with little sense of a need to choose between them. Then they got caught up into argument about time. Is time to be thought of as natural, or as historical? Psychoanalysis then brought incest to complicate the whole problem. My first recorded snake dream, in June 1948, associated the Garden of Eden story with the idea of time as itself active in separating daughter from father. This sense of the incest taboo as work of time as well as *in* time has marked all my experience of psychoanalysis.

Much later, at the time when I had this dream in 1992, I was beginning to hear and read more about the fresh wave in evolutionary description and thought following the genetic research of the last thirty years. Genes with an agenda of their own irrespective of the individual: the idea was taking me back to the break between Freud and Jung, into all the arguments about what is made and what is learned. The image of an arthritic snake longing for anaesthetic relief is embedded in feeling for what the evolutionists call adaptation, adaptation as "fit" of a kind that makes nonsense of our distinction between the benign and the cruel. But it revises and extends my understanding of that fit. The snake and its "longing for the needle" combines addiction and comfort in a way that "fits" both fucking and dying, but which I cannot get into words. And then it powers that fit with a future tense, so that the "longing for" has a temporal drive.

There is feeling here that I cannot place. In human terms, what pain, what kind of addiction, what sort of comfort, are we speaking of? I am reminded that when I read the new adaptationists I find myself wondering why they aren't more *frightened* by what they write.

## *Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies*

And there is the vet. "You can see them longing for the needle". Where in waking experience can I locate such seeing? The vet as agent of history, of science, of research, of experiment, recognises an inhuman pain, and has in her merciful hands the power to ease it. This is something different to the merciful nursing of Sobell House. She is also the organiser of the "show" when breeding, training, growing, are judged. She has set it up. She is running it. Where can I locate such a figure?

**August 28, 1994**

This dream is about failure. That needs saying first, and last. It is about a failure in making, and therefore in keeping, an appointment. In doubling the appointment, one or other has been "forgotten".

But the lysis, the sense within the dream of where the dream is leading, is open ended. The dentist could have said that it was too late, not now worth coming in. He/she is willing to see what can be done in the time left.

I think the best way into both the failure and the willingness to see what can be done in the time left is to consider the blurredness of the difference between the two appointments. The difference is not about body and mind, though that sort of difference does seem to be in the air. It is more as if the dream is saying: the body-mind distinction is an important clue, but it misses the point. What really matters is to distinguish between two different kinds of appointment with body-mind, so that they can each have their proper time.

Dentistry is about pain. There are associations with the changes in pain expectancy that have occurred in my life time. Dentist dreams over the years have also related the mouth to other aspects of the body, digestive, excretory, genital. The tongue connects speech with the probing and twisting of both sex and story, and also with taste. The teeth themselves associate biting, and beyond biting, killing, with chewing, understanding as assimilation, and a whole complex of sensory/intellectual experience gathered into the German words *Begriff* and *begreifen* (a much stronger version of our English/Latin "cognitive"). Teeth dreams have also often led into work on the difference between the natural and the artificial.

Psychotherapy/shiatzu/acupuncture cover both mind, or psyche, and body. Psychotherapy is surely by definition about psyche rather than body. But how about acting out? Shiatzu on the other hand is surely about body. But then how about that indescribable giggle of abandonment evoked by the hand pressing on the *tan t'ien*? Acupuncture is also about body, but body so understood as to make me realise that what we mean by body varies from country to country, from culture to culture. I can and do dream of the five elements, but I do not expect them to be demonstrable when I am opened up in the operating theatre.



## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Why is this complex grouping being contrasted so sharply with dentistry? After eighteen months I still cannot translate the dream into words that have purchase on waking reality.

Pain seems to enter into it. The acupuncture needles remind me of pain that is bearable, as the dentist's needles remind me of pain that is unbearable. But there is more to the choice between the two appointments than degrees of pain.

What happens if we try "dead" and "living" as the contrast being made? We speak of the mouth or gum being dead under the anaesthetic. But again, there is more to the dream than that. The mouth comes to life again when the anaesthetic wears off, and whether dentistry works or does not work is more obvious, more demonstrable, than is the case with psychotherapy, shiatzu or acupuncture.

I cannot get it into words. I am just left with an insistent sense of forgetfulness, of being unable to make a crucial distinction between kinds of appointment.

But the lysis encourages me to wonder what there may still be time for. The reference to my wife as singer is heavy with association. The scene with circumcision and nappy changing is suggestive of negotiation between pain and pleasure that it is impolite to own. There are anthropological connections between circumcision and the availability of time. Sewing together contrasts with cutting open, threading with hurting. Pricks can hurt in more ways than one. The bisexuality of the penis, with the possibility of incisive and inexplicable pain suppressed, is juxtaposed with the satisfactions both of natural excretion and of cultural making clean. The patient, who is simply patient, has kept the appointment. Perhaps he had no choice.

### **The three dreams together**

To a certain extent I can make some sense of these dreams. They make me think about my body, and the bodies of others, in new ways. They exercise my imagination, create references which were not available before. But by and large I have to recognise that they are beyond me. Messages are arriving which I cannot receive. My understanding of the body is simply inadequate to respond to the density and range of what is being suggested. There is more, much more, in these dreams than I can apply to the world in which I am awake.

So I turn now to my second theme, to review a book: Jonathan Sawday's *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (Routledge, 1995). I read this book shortly after preparing these dreams for a seminar. It opened my thinking about them into a much wider historical perspective.

## Anatomia

Roy Porter, of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, has described this book as “a major event in the cultural history of the modern era”. For me it has been something more personal than that: an encouragement to accept that our understanding of the body is always going to be not only subject to change but itself an agent of change. So that to be at home in the body is to recognise that it doesn’t just exist in history. It is caught up in history making.

To explain what I mean I must persuade readers of the Bulletin to read the book. So let me summarise its argument.

It is about the practice of anatomy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with most attention to the years between about 1550 and 1650. There are eight chapters. The first, *The Autoptic Vision*, is about seeing the inside of one’s own body with one’s own eyes. Is this a sight which is in some ways taboo? Sawday quotes one modern surgeon who compares it to the Medusa’s head: “the hidden geography of the body is a Medusa’s head one glimpse of which will render blind the presumptuous eye”. There is need for a history of interiority, a history of our sense of our own insidedness.

Chapter 2, *The Renaissance Body*, is subtitled “from colonization to invention”. The anatomies of Vesalius are presented as a work of discovery, as compared to those of Harvey which were prepared to be inventive. Are the anatomists discovering an “America”, or inventing a machine? And there is a sub plot: the transformation of punishment into art. Plato, Augustine, John Donne (there’s a lot about Donne throughout the book), Calvinist theology, Burton, Marvell, are all drawn on to describe how the body could be “transformed into a self reflexive instrument of torture”.

Chapter 3, *The Body in the Theatre of Desire*, looks at the development of anatomy as part of larger imaginative exploration of sexuality and pain. There is a combination of fascination and horror. “What they had alighted upon was the possibility of reanimating an object which the anatomists had transformed into a commodity. What would it feel like, they ask, to be dissected?” There are seventeenth century examples from Donne, and also references to today, in Linda Williams’ book on hard core pornography. Reading this chapter I was reminded of the sexual excitement I felt when I first saw, aged eleven, the trial scene from *The Merchant of Venice*. For the first time, I am beginning to understand what happened for me in the theatre that day at Stratford as Antonio bared his chest to Shylock’s knife.

Chapter 4, *Execution, Anatomy, and Infamy: inside the Renaissance Anatomy Theatre*, develops the historical connection between law court, punishment, and the practice of anatomy. “The body hovers, as it were, on the brink of science ... the focus of a fear which borders on desire”.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

The theme is taken further in Chapter 5, *Sacred Anatomy and the Order of Representation*. The problem of how to provide a fitting context for the anatomized body is saturated with christian tradition: "so powerful was the set of symbolic meanings invested in the figure of the self-dissecting Christ, that it came to inhabit the visual depiction of anatomization at every level". Sawday's argument here speaks again and again to my interest in anaesthesia and analysis. "Until well into the 18th century, the conventions of anatomical illustration demanded that the figure, even at the very deepest stages of dissection, should be represented as still alive ... The body... would have to speak of its own participation within the process of self-analysis".

Chapter 6, *The Uncanny Body*, relates anatomy to that fateful split between body and mind which we associate with the philosopher Descartes. In the early 1630's, both Rembrandt and Descartes were exploring the gallows and the "butchers' shambles" of Amsterdam. Sawday gives us analyses of Rembrandt's two great Anatomy Lesson paintings, which he compares to Mantegna's "Lamentation over the dead Christ", and relates them to Descartes' search for the anatomical link between body and soul. The chapter continues with Spenser's *Fairie Queene* as an example of the "unheimlichkeit" that so fascinated Freud in his essay on the uncanny. It concludes with a historical disinterment of a forgotten epic of Phineas Fletcher, *The Purple Island*, (1633), a work which James Joyce said was essential to a reading of his *Ulysses*.

If you read just one chapter in the book, choose this one. This is what I mean by the body as caught in history making. The body does not only *have* a history. It *is* history.

With Chapter 7, *The Realm of Anatomia*, the focus changes. Instead of the body, the act of display. Anatomy displays: what, or whom, and to whom? The difference between men and women is involved in this act of display. How?

Every paragraph here is relevant to contemporary argument and research that draws on religious, feminist, psychoanalytic, questioning of the body and its history. Sawday looks first at *Myths of Division and Origin*, to place Anatomia in her proper context. With her attributes of knife and mirror she is both an extension of the law, and also a mistress of erotic reduction. Biblical and Greek images come together in Renaissance fascination with the figure of Marsyas, flayed alive, to express "the contradictory emotions to be uncovered in the realm of Anatomia. Her servants were dedicated to achieving knowledge of the human body in order to alleviate pain and suffering, and yet that knowledge was only gained at the cost of enormous pain...", which speaks directly to my interest in anaesthesia.

He then moves on to a section on *Decayed Appetite: the female body in the Renaissance Courts*, in which he for the first time fully explains the word "emblazoned" in the book's title. In the French and English courts a poetic culture flourished which celebrated,

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

blazoned, the parts of a woman's body (the exchange between Viola and Olivia in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Act I, Scene 5, is an example). Sawday shows it to have been "the way to a closer but homophobically proscribed bonding with another man", in which the blazon, the praise and showing forth of women's bodies, was a means of asserting male potency by turning the female body into a commodity. This was part of the same culture as the practice of anatomy. He demonstrates this by comparing Vesalius' 1536 "construction" of a cadaver with erotic texts of the French court at the same time.

In a section on *Pitiless Rigour: the Reproductive Body*, he examines further instances of cross gendered approaches to the body: the feminisation of the male body, whether that of Christ in Passion or of the cadaver on the dissecting table, the female body of the Church, the dissective dynamism of the Eucharist. He sees them all as examples of how a culture seeks to protect itself from the danger and horror of "the quasi autonomous uterus". And he concludes:

"*Anatomia* - the cultural domain of the Renaissance science of the body - was a hungry goddess, feeding off the bodies of condemned men and women in the cities of early modern Europe. But the anatomy theatre was not, it seems, the only place where she held sway. Appearing in different forms, she could be discovered not only at the scaffold, but in the very centres of political power. Given the absolute centrality of the body to Renaissance culture - whether understood as a source of fearful anxiety or hierarchical patterns of government - then the perverse vitality of *Anatomia* is readily comprehensible. But *Anatomia* operated according to a rigidly gendered set of rules and prohibitions. To those rules and prohibitions, the art, literature, and science of the body were subservient ... a culture of erotic partition and scientific fragmentation which operated through the same network of metaphors and codes of representation".

The last chapter, *Royal Science*, looks at the way the new anatomies were harnessed to restoration politics in England after 1660, to the new awareness of commerce and trade as circulation of the life blood of society. And there are alternative visions, visions of protest which have a very modern ring to them.

Towards the end, Sawday summarises his argument and looks forward to our own century:

"The fantastic culture of the human body which emerged in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries can perhaps best be understood as a kind of birth. What was born was an infant who sought to become an orphan, who would acknowledge no parentage other than its own processes of reason. The autonomy of reason was proclaimed amidst the devices of art, poetry, architecture, ritual, law, and philosophy, which we have uncovered in this account. So complete was this process of self-authoring and authorization that, during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, the idea of a fundamental cultural dualism, a belief in 'two cultures', took root, and then became the paradigm within which human knowledge, in the west, was constituted. For all

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

the many attempts informed by religious and philosophical analysis to build a bridge between these two cultures, any structure which emerged was bound to look fragile...given the historical foundation we have been tracing in this book”.

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So how does Sawday's book help me with my dreams of anaesthesia? It gets me thinking about body, history, experiment, time.

I have quoted the sentences about the contradictory emotions to be uncovered in the realm of Anatomia, where knowledge necessary to alleviate pain is bought at the cost of enormous pain. *The Body Emblazoned* is all about those contradictory emotions, and how they are expressed in art, literature, religion, politics, science, as well as, and because of, the anatomists' dissecting table. How has anaesthesia affected those contradictory emotions? Has it simply done away with "the cost of enormous pain"? Or has the pain perhaps mutated into a different kind of sensation? Given anaesthesia, what does the body today tell us about the world, the world in the making of which we discover ourselves?

I answer these questions in trying to imagine a history of anaesthesia over the last hundred and fifty years comparable to Sawday's history of Renaissance anatomy. We could expect such a history to show connections between anaesthesia and a whole range of cultural experience, including politics, philosophy, religion, philosophy, law. One connecting link would surely be experiment.

Anaesthesia has made possible experiments of a kind that were previously inconceivable, intolerable, impractical. Animals, and human indebtedness to animals, are an important aspect of this new culture of experiment. Also feeling, sensation, as distributed, shared and not shared, between the experimenter and what is being experimented on. Anaesthesia makes it possible for us to do things to others which in the absence of anaesthesia would be impossible, for us as well as for our subject, the object of our experiment. (The play with the words subject and object is deliberate, to remind us how their meanings have changed, almost reversed, in the course of history.)

But with those dreams of mine in mind I wonder also about time. How does our culture of experiment treat time? Are we justified in assuming that laboratory time and the time of the world outside are of the same order, so that there is no problem in applying the results of experiments into a temporal order other than that in which they were performed? I think not.

Here are two examples which our history might consider, linking anaesthesia to education, warfare, politics, of the problems that arise when the results of experiment are transposed from laboratory to the world outside.

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Peter Høeg has written a book called *Borderliners*, about an experiment in the education of maladapted adolescents in Denmark in the 1970's. As with life, it is not clear how much is fiction, how much fact.

It is written from the point of view of one of three youngsters, one girl, two boys, one of whom ends by burning himself to death. Time is the leitmotif of the book. The time of those being experimented on (with the best of intentions) is shown as essentially discordant with the time of the experimenters. For a psychotherapist it makes compulsive reading. And the insistent theme is that it is not possible to think about time without pain.

Our experimental methods can ignore differences in timing because they bracket pain out of their performance. The children in Peter Høeg's book know this because they are hurting. They respond to their hurt by experimenting with time. The grown ups take time for granted. For them the difference between making and keeping an appointment does not compel doubt as to their understanding of time.

My other example is Tony Harrison's extraordinary theatre-piece (he does not call it play) *Square Rounds*, produced at the National Theatre in 1992. This is chemical theatre and chemical history in one: "chemistry as both *unheimlich*, uncanny, and *heimlich*, humdrum and homely, caught into the ordinary processes of living, cooking and consuming, excreting and fertilising. It can become a figure also for living itself, the body a cauldron of chemical activity".

It tells the story of gas. When I went to the dentist to have my teeth pulled out in the early 1930's, I was "given gas". I was frightened of it, but it put me out of action for a time, long enough to get the tooth out. It worked. The tooth pulling was made easier for me, for the dentist, for my mother. Tony Harrison's theatre-piece is about gas used to put people out of action in another context: Ypres, April 22, 1915. It places the military use of gas in the First World War in a wider perspective of economically driven chemical research, and in doing so takes in much of the most terrible European history of this century.

Its central figure is Fritz Haber, the German Jew "who was in 1919 awarded the 1918 Nobel prize for his contribution to the solution of world hunger problems by the development of the synthesis of ammonia. But the same Fritz Haber was at the end of the war labelled as a 'war criminal' by the Allies. He it was who made possible the use of chlorine gas as a weapon in the First World War. Haber believed that gas would quickly end the war. His wife, the chemist Clara Immerwahr (whose surname with extraordinary aptness means 'ever true') resisted his plans. When he persisted, she killed herself". In the theatre, as she fades from sight, Harrison has her sing of her husband

He'll never live to see his fellow Germans use  
his form of killing on his fellow Jews.

Experiment is taken up into warfare, and sensation that can be overlooked in the laboratory becomes the stuff of history.

(The quoted sentences are from Gillian Beer's article *Square Rounds and Other Awkward Fits*, *Ambix* Vol XLI No.1, March 1994.)

## Re-enacting Jacobean Bodies

Our history of anaesthesia would draw on much more. But the work of people like Høeg and Harrison helps us understand pain as experimental, experiment as painful. And it helps us realise that experiment cannot simply ignore the problem of time. Because it makes time fit what it is doing, which is why it can be so effective, for good and for ill. For the sake of that which is being experimented on (in this case growing children), this “making time fit” has to be allowed for. Only so can they be truly included. As Peter Høeg’s “Peter” puts it: “We are not simply left to time. One way or another, it is also something we are constantly involved in creating”. Like it or not, we, our bodies, these cauldrons of chemical activity, are caught in history making.

So what does all this have to say about those dreams of mine?

Let me just home in on the vet and that huge snake. I feel now, after four years, that there is a certain tentative understanding between the three of us. We go for walks together in Wytham woods, and talk to each other about sex and Genesis and evolution.

The snake is not altogether happy with what I have written in this paper about bodies caught in history making. “That’s not how it feels to me”, it says. “I feel not so much caught in history as trapped between history and nature. Trapped like a nerve in pain, or like something wild imprisoned in domesticity. Can’t you write about that?”

So I turn to the vet, to ask her what it is all about. She says:

“I think the snake’s got it about right, you know. We *are* trapped between history and nature. But we’ve set the trap too, and the snake may not know about that.

“You need to take your argument further. Think about trap and experiment together. Between history and nature there is experiment. It’s what works them across each other. But it feels like a trap, because the experimenting is *with* nature and *against* nature. That’s what our bodies are trapped in. If we want to spring the trap, that’s what we have to learn to feel.

“You say it is a question of timing. Which is alright as far as it goes. Questions of timing are constantly arising between history and nature. But talk about time on its own can leave out the feel of perversity. And being caught in a trap of our own setting can feel very perverse. It feels like an addiction.

“Has it ever occurred to you that we may be addicted to pain? Originally, as it were, at the point where history and nature intersect, at the moment when history and nature are jointly embodied? Pain could be our awareness of a trap that might be an experiment. If that were the case, then the relief which anaesthesia affords might be an opportunity to feel more rather than less”.

