

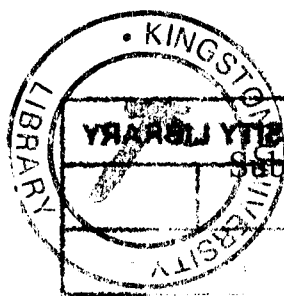
JOHN FOWLES AND THE GOTHIC TRADITION

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Abstract

This thesis examines the elements of the Gothic tradition in John Fowles's fiction and traces the transformation of the male protagonist throughout the entire range of Fowles's novels. The work also investigates the relationship between the discourses of the literary Gothic and Jungian psychoanalysis and argues in favour of a strong conceptual link between them. Taking advantage of the fact that John Fowles was interested in Carl Jung's ideas, the thesis argues that Jungian psychology throws light on the evolution of Fowles's texts and reveals that each hero performs a phase in a distinct pattern of development and maturation as conceptualised by Jung (Fowles, 1998: 371). In addition, Jungian discourse interacts with the Gothic tradition and complements the presence of elements of the Gothic discourse in Fowles's novels. The thesis inscribes Fowles's dialectical approach to writing into the history of the literary Gothic tradition as well as into the scope of postmodern texts.

Central to the thesis theoretically is the Jungian concept of individuation. Apart from the separate quests in individual novels, Fowles's fiction can be defined as displaying one continuous individuation process. The Fowlesian male character takes part in one long meta-quest which begins with his being too hedonistic and immature (Clegg, Nicholas), then becoming rational and conscious (Charles, David), and finally reaching a state of 'synthesis' in which the two parts of the psyche are reconciled (Daniel Martin). In the first two stages, the forces which become repressed as a result of the over-development of one of the sides of the psyche, tend to produce a Gothic effect in relation to the male character as they fight for the right to be accepted and recognised. In the last phase of his writing career, Fowles shifts his focus to the process of female individuation. In *A Maggot* the writer's attention finally switches from the masculine experiences and pains of development to interest in female versions of the quest for knowledge.

Introduction

Fowles, Jung and the Gothic

Once the sin against God was the greatest sin; but God died, and these sinners died with him. To sin against the earth is now the most dreadful thing, and to esteem the entrails of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth.

(Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 1972: 125)

John Fowles is a writer who successfully employs the Gothic mode in his novels. Moreover, the popularity of many of his texts is partly due to the mysterious Gothic atmosphere he manages to evoke in them. Although the Gothic tradition plays a major part in John Fowles's novels, his use of it is very subtle. It seems to emerge naturally as a by-product of the central conflict within the novel and as a result of the hero's self-analysis and new experiences. The Gothic in Fowles's writing is, then, concentrated in the centre of the psychological struggle within the male character although it also has a parallel in the 'physical world' of the plot. Indeed, frequently it works in conjunction with the tension and conflict of the plot and is usually expressed through Fowles's manipulation of the negative aspects of Jungian double-sided archetypes – most often those of the old wise man and the anima. In accordance with the writer's habit of leaving the dialectical impulse within his novels unresolved, the Gothic effect remains a textual presence, even after the novel's climax and this contributes to the reader's feelings of anxiety and perplexity. The Gothic mode thus plays its part in the formation of the general atmosphere of the novels, affecting and 'colouring' both the 'physical' and the psychological plane of the narrative. Moreover, 'negative' Gothic moments are of special importance for Fowles as a novelist, whose main characters, often stubborn and sexist males, are being educated and spiritually changed as they are dragged through various physical and psychological tortures which have been set up within a Gothic scenario. The Gothic thus plays a vital part in the

maturation of Fowles's main character; it defines and signifies his development, actually showing all the difficulties, pain and dilemmas of individuation. It is created by a 'vital tension' of opposites, by a psychological conflict which is signified by the central character's neurosis (interestingly, it is possible to analyse this conflict through either Jungian or Freudian theory since Fowles himself inserted both of them into his texts). The two discourses, the psychoanalytic and the Gothic, do not contradict each other and neither of them dominates in Fowles's postmodern set of discourses. This is clearly seen in the writer's refusal to explain logically the 'magical' moments in his novels, and in the notorious and contradictory double endings. The balance and tension between the products of human consciousness and creations of the unconscious, between psychoanalysis and the Gothic in Fowles's texts are features of his tendency to write and think dialectically.

* * *

The Gothic Tradition

Despite the fact that Gothic studies are very popular in academic circles today, 'the Gothic tradition in literature', like 'Gothic architecture' is quite an obscure term. There is no single definition of its style, and the term has never been a precise descriptive word, since it can define a group of novels written at a certain period of time, a number of stylistic devices and some narrative conventions. Technically, the term has lost its more precise currency (it once denoted the Gothic Revival of the 1790s) and is now used to describe a far broader range of contexts, at the same time retaining its central meaning of a non-realistic form of writing (Punter, 1996, vol. 2: 119).

Thus, in a literary context, 'Gothic' can be applied to a group of novels created between the 1760s and the 1820s (Punter, 1996, vol. 1: 1). Within this group the first Gothic novels and the novels of the so-called Gothic revival of the 1790s differ from those

written at the beginning of the 19th century and stand out for their excessive use of medieval locations and characters. Gothic fiction of the 1820s and American Gothic employ more indirect references to the European past and are characterised by being more 'psychological' than their predecessors in general, offering a close study of the psyche of the protagonist in particular. Characters and conventional settings, partly inherited from the medieval romance, such as the castle with its enclosed spaces, the cemetery, a Catholic church, the villain/evil father, the witch/terrible mother, the fair maiden, and their archetypal variations that became popular in 19th century Gothic (the old house, the laboratory, the mad professor, the male/female vampire), as well as traditional plots (for example, imprisonment of a maiden by the villain) and the general gloomy atmosphere of terror/horror, have all survived throughout the 19th century and into the 20th century in horror fiction and film. Even when the period of the classic Gothic novel ended, elements of the tradition persisted in European and American literature, and continued to emphasise and frame the most notable material, social, political, scientific and psychological changes in western society up to the present day. As Chris Baldick notes, 'dislodged from the specific association with the Middle Ages which gave it its name, the Gothic has become in such ways a mobile form, and so has generated significant traditions where there are no medieval castles at all, the Americas' (Baldick, 1992: xv-xvi). Reading some of the postmodern Gothic cyber punk and science fiction about the powerful matrix and alien abductions, it is difficult to imagine that more than 200 years ago the Gothic tradition launched its images of power with Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, its host Manfred and a nostalgic eighteenth-century vision of twelfth-century feudalism.

Strange as it may sound, Gothic literature has nothing to do with real historical Goths, who were one of the many Germanic tribes inhabiting the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era. Neither does it have anything to do with its 'precursor' Gothic art, namely pre-Renaissance architecture, sculpture and painting. The

Encyclopaedia Britannica states that ‘the term “Gothic” was coined by classicising Italian writers who attributed the invention ... of medieval architecture to the barbarian Gothic tribes that destroyed the Roman Empire and its classical culture in the 5th century AD’ (*The Encyclopedia Britannica* CD, 1999, Multimedia Edition). In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when this name was first applied to art, it certainly carried negative connotations, meaning ‘barbarian’ and even ‘ugly’ as opposed to ‘classical’ and ‘beautiful’. The term was doomed to be fairly imprecise from the start because those who introduced it were not much interested in giving it any concrete meaning apart from ‘uncivilised’. As a result of this lack of definite characteristics and limitations, ‘Gothic style’ appeared as a derogatory phrase denoting all art of pre-Renaissance and non-Italianate appearance, then transformed in the eighteenth century into an umbrella term descriptive of all medieval art up to the time of the Italian Renaissance, and finally in the nineteenth century came to mean art which was produced between the Romanesque and Renaissance periods (Martindale, 1996: 7).

Society had psychologically, technologically and economically grown out of the Middle Ages, and the general tendency of Romantic revision of these remote times also affected the sphere of literature, and very noticeably. The only problem was that, unlike with Gothic architecture, there was no precedence of medieval ‘Gothic’ literature as a distinctive genre, and therefore early Gothic fiction could not use it as a stylistic base. Instead, Gothic fiction in Britain¹ turned for inspiration to medieval romances, borrowing some of their most famous conventions, characters and settings and to the atmosphere of cruelty and barbarity retrospectively surrounding the Middle Ages themselves. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think that the Gothic simply copied medieval

¹ Since geographical dimensions of the Gothic are difficult to embrace in a short chapter, the main attention will focus on British Gothic fiction and its origins, omitting where possible parallels to European and American history of the tradition.

romance without adding any new stylistic tendencies characteristic of 18th century literature. This century was marked by the fast rise of the novel as we know it now, namely the novel that concentrates on the private life of an individual shown in the context of society, that involves psychologically developed characters² and has a complicated plot with several parallel story lines. Gothic fiction also could not ignore the new social topics that interested many contemporary novel writers and remain on the simplified level of the ancient romance with its fairy tale qualities, unnatural black-and white characters and strong orientation towards heroic deeds. In fact, the old conventions in the Gothic tradition acquired a new social and psychological value, as the genre met the problems of the new age. Gothic protagonists, male and female, reflected and uncovered a whole set of issues concerning the individual's place within the recently re-stratified society and the new economic system, his/her feelings towards Catholicism and Protestantism, and relations between the genders.

Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) was the first representative of the new kind of novel. It carried the subtitle 'A Gothic Story', thus naming the whole genre. It also contained features which later became the hallmark characteristics of the genre: the melodramatic atmosphere of profane horror, the nightmare castle plot, the feeble heroine, the hero and the terrible father figure.

The decade between 1780 and 1790, the years of major political and social changes in Europe, is traditionally considered to be the peak of classic Gothic fiction. The so-called 'Gothic Revival' of the 1790s brought such writers as Ann Radcliffe (*The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), *The Italian* (1797)), Matthew Gregory Lewis (*The Monk* (1796)),

² This quality was not particularly popular in the so-called 'classic' period of Gothic fiction in Britain in the 1790s, but substantially enriched as early as the beginning of the 19th century as the genre progressed and changed, learning from the bold psychological experiments and social themes of contemporary novels by Fielding, Defoe, Smollett, Richardson and Stern.

William Godwin (*Caleb Williams* (1794)) and William Beckford (*Vathek* (1786)). The Revival was also notable for the rise in the number of female writers: in addition to Mrs. Radcliffe, whose books became the trademark of the classic Gothic fiction, there were Clara Reeve (*The Old English Baron* (1777)), Sophia Lee (*The Recess* (1783-5)), Charlotte Smith (*The Old Manor House* (1793)), Charlotte Dacre (*Zofloya or the Moor* (1906)) and many others. These women novelists started the female Gothic tradition, which, unlike the male Gothic, has been more concerned with female psychological problems and questions concerning women's role in society. Their texts involve archetypal images and situations that are more relevant for women than for men, at the same time underlining the issues of gender and social inequality. In the female Gothic we often meet the theme of the heroine's encounter with the ghostly lover or of her suffering from a cruel mother figure (*The Italian*). Often the authoritative male transgressor such as patriarch or abbot seeks to entrap the heroine and kill or rape her (*The Mysteries of Udolpho*) (Milbank in Mulvey-Roberts, 1998: 54). Male Gothic is considered to be more preoccupied with the Oedipal struggle and the angel/whore anima problem (*The Monk*). Nevertheless, the division into 'male' and 'female' Gothic according to a writer's gender is not very consistent. As Alison Milbank notes, Reeve, Dacre and Mary Shelley wrote in the male tradition while Charles Maturin employed the female one.

The 1790s were also responsible for the introduction of new terms in Gothic fiction, which quickly gained recognition and became the defining points of the genre, such as the sublime and the difference between terror and horror. In classical aesthetics the sublime designated a high-flown or exalted style of discourse, but in the Gothic it was applied to the idea of awe, astonishment, horror and joy mixed together in the soul of man. Edmund Burke was the first to establish the new concept of the sublime although some attempts to introduce it had been made by his forerunners John Dennis, John Baillie and even Joseph Addison. Burke's treatise *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the*

Sublime and Beautiful (1757) was extremely influential. According to Burke, the source of the sublime can be 'whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operated in the manner analogous to terror ...' (Clery and Miles, 2000: 113). Probably anticipating the safe pleasures of reading fiction about things awesome, Burke writes that when danger and pain become real ('press too nearly'), they are simply terrible and therefore incapable of giving any delight; but 'at certain distances and with certain modifications ... they are delightful' (Clery and Miles, 2000: 113). Ann Radcliffe, who knew best how to exploit the awe and astonishment machinery without 'pressing too nearly', reacted most creatively to the sublime theory (Milbank in Mulvey-Roberts, 1998: 228). In an essay entitled 'On the Supernatural in Poetry' (1826) published after her death, she devises her own concept of the difference and confusion between terror and horror, 'terror' being the fear of spiritual phenomena and 'horror' the fear of things and beings physical and material. Radcliffe also notes that in relation to this, 'horror' had been treated as a 'low', and its opposite as a 'high' feeling associated with the notion of the sublime:

Terror and horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them. I apprehend, that neither Shakespeare nor Milton by their fictions, nor Mr. Burke by his reasoning, anywhere looked to positive horror as a source of the sublime, though they all agree that terror is a very high one ...

(Clery and Miles, 2000: 168)

The Romantic years of the 19th century produced a number of very talented British novelists whose works can be described as Gothic: Mary Shelley (*Frankenstein* (1818)), Charles Maturin (*Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820)), James Hogg (*The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824)). By the 1840s-50s the American line of late Romantic Gothic tradition was emerging. Often it echoed European anxieties and used similar Gothic archetypal images, its best representatives being Washington Irving ('The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' (1819-20) and 'Rip Van Winkle' (1819-20)), Edgar Allan Poe

(*Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1839-40), poems including *The Raven* and *Lenore*)), and Nathaniel Hawthorne (*Twice-Told Tales* (1837), *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)). Gothic fiction of the first half of the 19th century worked within Romanticism's stylistic and thematic circle and displayed all the signs of the Romantic mentality. Thus, as part of the revolutionary counter-movement, it followed the cult of sensibility, rejected bourgeois reality and escaped into the realm of the fantastic. The Gothic was also interested in the enigma of Creation and entwined Romantic irony into its texts.

Because of rapid technical progress and the social and psychological changes related to it, archetypal images used in Gothic novels and poetry moved on too. In eighteenth-century Gothic we encounter claustrophobic places, castles, ruins, convents, labyrinths, torture chambers, corpses and spectres, evil monks, wicked aristocrats, monsters, feeble but virtuous heroines and chivalrous heroes. This list of the Gothic's dominant characteristics, in Fred Botting's words, grew in the 19th century 'with the addition of scientists, ... husbands, madmen, criminals and the monstrous double signifying duplicity and evil nature' (Botting, 1996: 3). Some archetypes became more popular than others, such as the shadow/double (*Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, *Frankenstein*, Poe's *William Wilson* or the figure of the seeker of forbidden knowledge/the keeper of the forbidden knowledge (the old wise man), often in the guise of a mad scientist (*Frankenstein*, Hawthorne's *Rappachini's Daughter*). The Gothic present had taken the place of the medieval past as more Gothic writers discovered that there is more hidden barbarity in the reality around them than in castles, convents and ruins.

At the end of the 19th century European literature encountered another Gothic boom. This time it was 'decadent' in accordance with the new demands and standards of art. The new Gothic, having inherited many stylistic features and archetypes from the Gothic Revival and Romanticism, used them to frame the contradictions of the *fin de siècle* cultural situation. As Kelly Hurley writes, the *fin de siècle* Gothic suddenly found

itself in a new role as a genre mostly concerned (and this time more than previously) with the horrific re-making of the human subject (Hurley, 1999: 5). It is against this body-examining, law-obsessed background that we must observe the Victorian Gothic. It did not support the euphoria surrounding the optimistic new discoveries about the work of the human body and psyche; quite the contrary, it based many of its new horrors on the distrust of science, and condemned the new ambitious creators who chose to follow in the steps of Victor Frankenstein.

Meeting the cultural conditions of modernity, the genre expressed its anxieties about the state of society through the use of scientific and medical discourses, most Gothic novels displaying the motifs of changing the flesh by artificial methods in the process of converting man into animal/animal into man. The themes of devolution, degeneration and entropy filled the pages of the new Gothic texts as the genre moved from the fear of the traditional past/traditionless present on to dreading the unknown future. Decadent Gothic texts had to prove that although science was arrogant, controlling, used rough methods, and generally did blasphemous things, it was still powerless in the face of nature and could not but leave much unexplained. In Hurley's words, the scientist dismissed what he could not explain, but these phenomena persisted nonetheless (Hurley, 1999: 19). In the field of uncovering and setting free these mysteries the Gothic was still unrivalled, as even a science as controlling as early psychoanalysis was not able to offer plausible explanations for various manifestations of the unconscious.

The map of archetypal images in the Gothic novel changed together with the reality. This was inevitable because, as a character of *The Beetle* (1897) by Richard Marsh notes, 'from the astrologer came the astronomer, from the alchemist the chemist, from the mesmerist the experimental psychologist ... Even such subtle and elusive things as dreams will in time be reduced to system and order ...' (Hurley, 1999: 17). Apart from various instances of the old wise man/scientist (the vivisectioning doctor from H.G. Wells' *The*

Island of Dr. Moreau (1896), Martin Hesselius from Sheridan Le Fanu's *In a Glass Darkly* (1872)), there was a whole string of new literary doubles. Sensing the artificiality of forced civilisation and the inevitability of its failure, the Gothic presented readers with the pictures of the untamed, dirty or sexually voracious beast inside. For instance, the dreaded beast was embodied in the poor tortured animals in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Dorian Gray's misbehaving *Doppelgänger* in Oscar Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), another super-type and the last Gothic aristocrat Count Dracula in *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker, the terrible Hyde in Robert Lewis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) and 'the race of the hills' in *The Three Impostors* (1895) by Arthur Machen. The reasons for such a considerable rise in the use of the shadow archetype might be also explained from the Jungian perspective. The Shadow, who inhabits the personal unconscious and grows together with the individual, is the bigger, the more 'civilised' and rational the person is. The Shadow embodies the primal sin; he/she is the picture of how the conscious mind views the innocence of instincts. The *fin de siècle* Gothic literature was trapped in the present and even foresaw the future, which did not seem very optimistic, such as depicted in the predictions of the father of modern science-fiction H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898).

In these conditions of constant psychological turbulence with humanity on the verge of an open war between the rational and the instinctual, Gothic literature retained its power and relevance throughout the 19th and into the 20th centuries. Next time the Gothic noticeably appeared on the literary scene was within the framework of postmodernist culture, of which heterogeneous, intertextual and multi-layered structure the genre became an integral part. Despite having claimed a literary corner of its own (the 'pure' horror story epitomised by Stephen King), generally the Gothic tradition has dissolved in the postmodern melting pot of genres and styles. Its elements have been often used in contemporary fiction and film both in Europe and the United States, by novelists such as

John Fowles, Angela Carter (*The Passion of New Eve* (1977), *The Bloody Chamber* (1979)), Thomas Pynchon (*Gravity's Rainbow* (1973)), John Hawkes (*The Cannibal* (1962)) and Joyce Carol Oates (*Expensive People* (1968)).

The Gothic as a genre deals with the realm of the fantastic and mysterious. Its flexibility and vitality are maintained through the use of archetypes as a fabula base of the text. Archetypes as collective patterns are abstract notions and capable of changing form (not meaning) according to time and place as they become concrete archetypal images, mythological or personal. According to Jung, they have dual nature and possess a 'negative' aspect alongside a 'positive' one (Jung, 2002: 226). Archetypes, which Gothic literature often employs, work in the neurotic mode since in Gothic novels they represent the repressed sides of the psyche. Thus Gothic literature has been working with what will henceforth be called Gothic archetypes (archetypal images), or the 'dark' sides of dual images. In the Gothic they usually appear as perverted, transformed and aggressive figures as they represent neglected contents of the psyche, which struggle for the right to exist and possess the same amount of energy as the over-developed ones.³ In the Gothic, the old wise man might be depicted as a wizard or as an evil or insane scientist, and the anima might be a witch or a female water spirit, who sings beautiful songs to lure men into water and drown them.

The choice of particular archetypal images depends on both the writer's personal situation and the historical moment. As Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik write, a 'serious Gothic writer exploits the fear of the 'other' encroaching upon the apparent safety of ... the post-Enlightenment subject' whose 'internal fears are frequently embodied in external threats, ... the form such threats take being influenced by historical moment' (Punter,

³ This argument is based on Jung's theory of the dynamics of the psychic system and the regulative function of opposites. The explanation of this theory can be found in Jolande Jacobi's book *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press (1973).

2000: 243). This means that Gothic narrative develops and progresses together with society, as both internal fears and external circumstances change with time.

Despite the fact that the Gothic is an example of non-realistic fiction that works with gloomy images and situations from the sphere of the fantastic, this does not mean that it is a 'negative' literature, a fiction of degradation and disintegration. The Gothic is not just escapist and easy paperback fiction, offering empty pleasurable reading. It is important to understand the educational, therapeutic and developmental functions of the Gothic: it does not present the reader with either integration or disintegration but is a dialectical process that offers an opportunity to look into the depths of the unconscious. It also allows people to view current anxieties such as social and scientific change in a different way. Serving as an outlet for repressed images and always turning the civilised surface of the cultural situation inside out in order to show its disadvantages and excesses, Gothic fiction has survived into the twentieth century. Even Gothic novels that are far from having the depth and sophistication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (such as *The Castle of Otranto*), register contemporary anxieties as they bring up the general problem of the undervalued opposite and therefore of the psychic health of society. The rapid scientific, technical and ethical growth of Europe in the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment years could only happen at the expense of the instinctual. Romanticism, Sentimentalism, the Gothic and other modes of the 'cult of sensibility', worked to neutralise this tendency and served as outlets for all the repressed contents of the human psyche, the unrestrained flood of the unconscious. At the same time, this does not mean that it is only instincts and feelings that can be repressed. As the late twentieth-century Gothic demonstrates, metaphors representing rationality may appear as neglected dream figures in literature and the arts. Whatever the psychological and cultural dominant in society, the Gothic tradition will always work to counterbalance it, revealing all the unpleasant aspects of the self that its readers would prefer to forget.

One of the main objectives of this thesis is to show the complicated and intricate relations between the author's literary vision, postmodern Gothic and psychoanalytic theory, upon which John Fowles has confessed to rely often while composing his books. Academic study of Gothic literature during the last twenty years has been conducted mainly through the prism of psychoanalysis. The choice of psychoanalysis as a methodology has not been accidental. Gothic fiction is to some extent the literature of neurosis as it uses repressed, purely unconscious material as its main creative source. Gothic psychoanalytic criticism has been traditionally dominated by Freudian theories, which have proved to be very effective and innovative when applied to this kind of fiction and which have provided many interesting readings of classic Gothic texts such as Anne Radcliffe's romances, Edgar A. Poe's short stories and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Many of the key concepts of psychoanalysis developed by Sigmund Freud, or introduced into psychoanalytic practice by him, such as the *Oedipus complex*, *early traumas*, *infantile sexuality*, *incest*, *neuroses*, the *uncanny*, as well as the post-Freudian notion of *the Other*, have been successfully used by critics to show and investigate the principal techniques of Gothic literature and understand the reasons for its mysterious and long-lasting popularity.

Apart from the classical psychoanalytic approach, Gothic criticism has employed various post-Freudian conceptions. Freud's ideas concerning literature, creativity and their relation to neuroses have been seriously reformulated by post-Freudian psychoanalysts such as Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva. As a result, all the hallmark Gothic concepts have been translated into psychoanalytic language and organised around the post-modern task of unbinding the Other and shaking Structure and Order off their triumphant pedestals. From this perspective, the haunted Gothic castle symbolises the Law of the Father (*le Nom du Père*), the female is the M(other) and the conflict is constructed around the struggle of binary oppositions inside the vicious circle of patriarchy. At the same time,

both female and male fear of the terrible 'Other' can exist: of the oppressive Father (for example, Manfred in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* [1764] or Bluebeard of folk-tale fame), or the Mother who is horror-inspiring because she dares to pursue her desires and show her real power (for example, the female protagonist in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya; or the Moor* [1806]). Sometimes the female is oedipally constructed by the male as having something unpleasant and fearsome about her and is perceived by the male gaze as such – because she has been 'castrated' and mutilated (for example, Nathanael's attitude to the doll Olympia who is deprived of her eyes by Spalanzani in Hoffmann's 'The Sandman' [1817]).

Freud's much-discussed views upon literature and art as well as his own attempts to apply his ideas to concrete texts have been transformed, revised and are widely used by literary critics today. In his essay 'The Uncanny' ('Das Unheimliche', [1919]) Freud meticulously examines E. T. A. Hoffmann's Gothic story 'The Sandman' and invents a literary name for the psychoanalytic repressed: the *uncanny*. Freud explains that this term means familiar and friendly (*heimlich*) but at the same time it evokes dread and horror in the mind (*unheimlich*). It is linked, Avril Horner writes, 'with both the infantile and the neurotic in so far as it is connected with what Freud calls "the over-accentuation of psychical reality in comparison with physical reality"' (Mulvey-Roberts, 1998: 288). Whatever is strange and frightening is, according to Freud, related to repressed sexual desires and memories and it is useless to look for any other reasons for the presence of the uncanny in the text. Nathaniel is in awe of the hateful Sandman not only because he is terrified at the thought of losing his sight, but also because he is afraid of parting with his precious sexual organ – he is afraid of castration by his father. The term has become very popular in Gothic criticism as it rationally explains the psychological causes of many Gothic terrors: the fear of the other (and the other's gaze); the Gothic double and

confrontation with one's self (Poe); 'haunted' family romances (when the place people live in is homely and alien at the same time); and so forth.

As will be shown in Chapter 1, John Fowles both unconsciously and consciously uses Freudian and Jungian theories in his texts and considers Freud's ideas very helpful in the analysis of (his) personal experience. In many interviews the novelist expresses the idea that if he knew himself to be deeply disturbed he would rather go to a Freudian analyst but that Jung is infinitely more valuable for an artist (Fowles, 1998: 371). Thus, in discussing both the novelist's postmodern worlds and the Gothic, my chosen methodology is the analytical psychology of Freud's first disciple, Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), who later became an independent investigator and gifted psychologist.

In what sense, then, is Jung's work more helpful than Freud's in terms of a central methodology? The fact is that all branches of psychoanalysis share the same basic method of working with repressed material – that is, taking it out of the unconscious, with (optimally) the patient realising the problem on the conscious level and releasing the repressed information which cause disturbances in the first place (all with the help of an analyst, of course). Whatever branch of psychoanalysis is used, the result is roughly the same, and that is the reason why Jungian and Freudian approaches and their numerous variations (post-Jungians, post-Freudians such as Melanie Klein and Donald W. Winnicott) have had significant clinical success. This kind of success is very important for clinical practice but is of less importance for literary criticism. What really matters for criticism is *how you interpret* the cause(s) of neuroses – that is, the theory, or even the ideology underpinning the practice of psychoanalysis. Further deviations from the basic method and 'higher layers' of the base depend on the theory or hermeneutics supported by the therapist. The question of adopting the appropriate methodology for examining the Gothic is a question of psychoanalytic theory. The theory is therefore the point at which one approach has to be chosen in preference to another, depending on what the aims and

objectives are. In this light my choice of Jung – whose work Gothic critics have only recently started noticing – for exploring the field of Gothic fiction is not accidental. Susan Rowland (*C.G. Jung and Literary Theory* [1999], *Jung: a Feminist Revision* [2002]) and Valdine Clemens (*The Return of the Repressed. Gothic Horror from 'The Castle of Otranto' to 'Alien'* [1999]) have both successfully explored connections between the Gothic and Jungian ideas.

As a post-Jungian analyst, Christopher Hauke manages to show in his groundbreaking study *Jung and the Postmodern: The Interpretation of Realities* (2000), that Jung's approach to both the unconscious and active imagination is more positive than that of Freud. In his work, Hauke argues that Jung's concept of the psyche and the methodologies he uses to deal with it, are far less reductionist and much more synthetic than Freud's: the concepts of 'treatment', 'interpretation', 'uncovering' and 'symptoms' are replaced by 'relationship', 'amplification', 'linking' and 'signposts' (Hauke, 2000: 65). Despite his sometimes too obvious 'modernist' roots and occasional phallocentrism, as far as the tendency to place one discourse higher than another is concerned, Jung's synthetic approach makes the 'original' Jung look far more postmodern than the 'original' Freud. Moreover, Jung is more than postmodern; he is post-postmodern, because his writings are future-orientated and still presuppose some synthesis after deconstruction, whether it is deconstruction of the masculine principle (as we observe it now) or of the feminine one.

The fact that John Fowles called Jung 'valuable for an artist' supports the use of Jungian ideas in discussing the novelist's own philosophy and shows the degree to which Fowles the creator was influenced by Jung's vision of the creative unconscious. In this phrase the writer was presumably referring to the infinite possibilities of combining various archetypal images and situations which allow the novelist to create intricate plots with erased borderlines between the 'physical' and the 'dream' planes of the narrative. As will be shown, in Jungian theories these borderlines, which divide the inner and the outer

worlds, are erased. Jung highly estimates subjective experience as opposed to pseudo-objective, evaluative statements. As every perception is subjective, nobody can tell exactly what the 'real' reality is, or impose his/her view of this reality on other people. Therefore, the psyche exists in the world and Gothic images, which might come out of the unconscious, are not confined to the sphere of mental illness or madness.

Gothic is a non-realist mode of literature which operates mainly in the realm of the supernatural and it is therefore important to respect its creative images without confining them to the area of the forbidden instincts which are to be tamed with the help of analysis. In this light, Gothic fantasies should not be interpreted word-for-word via a rather crude and restrictive sexual theory. However, Freud tended to see the text as a dream (indeed, as a personal daydream), as is illustrated by this much-criticised statement: 'An artist is once more in rudiments an introvert, not far removed from neurosis. He is oppressed by excessively powerful instinctual needs. He desires to win honour, power, love, wealth, fame and the love of women; but he lacks the means of achieving this satisfaction' (Wright, 1989: 27). The idea of reducing works of art to the egoistic daydreams of the artist and his sexual pleasure became an all-pervasive theme in Freudian criticism. Indeed, psychobiography, as a mode of criticism, was aimed to find and decode the wish-fulfilments of the author in the work of art. Freud's sexualisation of all psychic activity, as well as the creative process, was referred to by Jung in his unusual autobiography *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1961) as 'monotony of interpretation' that expressed 'a flight from himself, or from that other side of him which might perhaps be called mystical' (Jung, 1995: 175). In his article 'Sigmund Freud in his Historical Setting', Jung interprets Freud's sexual theories as locked into the immediate problems of their time and therefore not to be accepted as a semi-religious dogma. In Jung's view, Freud's historical role had been that of the great iconoclast, the destroyer of false truths who smashed the sentimental virtues of the nineteenth century by his scandalous theories. This loud

impertinence was the only way to get rid of Victorian hypocrisy, but, unfortunately, it developed into a totalising scheme designed to 'explain' the spiritual side of human life as well:

The sexual theory, to be properly understood, should be taken as a negative critique of our contemporary psychology. ... Once we know how the nineteenth century twisted perfectly natural facts into sentimental, moralistic virtues in order not to have its picture of the world upset, we can understand what Freud means by asserting that the infant already experiences sexuality at its mother's breast – an assertion which has aroused the greatest commotion. This interpretation casts suspicion on the proverbial innocence of the child at the breast, that is, on the mother-child relationship. That is the whole point of the assertion – it is a shot aimed at the heart of 'holy motherhood'.

(Jung, 2003: 43)

Apart from his critique of Sigmund Freud's sexualisation of the active imagination, Jung also attached more importance to creativity in general and its role in psychoanalytic therapy. His attitude towards the creative process was supportive and understanding of the artist which, again, makes his approach more postmodern and therefore more progressive than that of his former mentor. In his essay 'Psychology and Literature' (1930) Jung drew a clear distinction between dreams and works of art. He attached special importance to the fact that creative production – in contradistinction to 'pure' unconscious entities (such as dreams) – is consciously shaped and involves human will in the process of its manufacture. The role of the conscious mind in dreams is minimal:

In the case of a work of art we have to deal with a product of complicated psychic activities – but a product that is apparently intentional and consciously shaped. In the case of the artist we must deal with the psychic apparatus itself. In the first instance the object of analysis and interpretation is a concrete artistic achievement, while in the second it is the creative human being as a unique personality. Although these two objects are intimately related and even interdependent, neither of them can explain the other.

(Jung, 2003: 101)

This statement also shows the importance Jung ascribed to the collective unconscious – the deeper, objective part of the unconscious – alongside its personal level, in the creative

process, as compared to Freud and the post-Freudians, who have been traditionally interested in the helpless and lonely subjectivity of individuals detached from the rest of society.

Jung regarded creative thinking as involving not only the personal unconscious, but also the collective unconscious (with archetypes as collective images), making the whole process only indirectly connected to the personal urges of an artist. Thus, according to Jung, a work of art cannot be deciphered to its full extent by the analytic cure:

It is of course possible to draw inferences about the artist from the work of art, and *vice versa*, but these inferences are never conclusive. At best they are probable surmises or lucky guesses. A knowledge of Goethe's particular relation to his mother throws some light on Faust's exclamation: "The mothers, the mothers, how eerily it sounds!" But it does not enable us to see how the attachment to his mother could produce the *Faust* drama itself, however deeply the importance of this relationship for Goethe the man from the many telltale traces it has left behind in his work.

(Jung, 2003: 101)

A post-Jungian, James Baird, writes:

Jung is not the critic. He wishes to be the expositor of the basic experience. By this act he becomes a presence in criticism rather amorphous than distinct. He did not found a school of criticism. He created an attribute of the climate in which criticism of the last fifty years has flourished.

(Sugg, 1992: 42)

'The basic experience' that Jung wishes to expound is different from that posited by Freud. Not only did Jung attribute more value and importance to the role of myths and images in art than Freud, but he also believed in the spiritual significance of art. James Baird writes that 'the reason why Jung's psychology remains attractive is because it honours that unnameable but felt vision which underlies humankind's enduring spiritual impulses' (Sugg, 1992: 43). The symbol in Jungian psychology retains its spiritual value and because of this Jung is often called a mystic rather than an empiricist. But the fact is that Jung was both. To establish his theories he used his empirical material together with intuition, proving that many a phenomenon of psychic origin cannot be explained rationally. The myths and images carrying the meaning of spiritual rebirth are central to

analytical psychology. The therapeutic and prospective potential of the Gothic can be revealed with the help of Jungian archetypes, whereas Freudian methods have as their final result what Freud himself summed up as the transformation of neurotic misery into common unhappiness (Hauke, 2000: 57). In this case, unconscious images are perceived as poignant and wretched evil spirits, associated with only psychic illness and having no value of their own; they must be stripped of their guise and laid bare on the couch of the psychiatrist. Freud's authoritative position comes from the sacred belief in the power of his intellect: 'I only wonder what neurotics will do in the future when all their symbols have been unmasked. It will then be impossible to have a neurosis' – he once said (Jung, 2003: 67).

At the same time, it is essential to note that the sadness and deep pessimism of Freud's psychology, also inherited by his followers, can be explained by reference to Freud's cultural background. Doing justice to the Master in the essay called 'In Memory of Sigmund Freud', which was published in 1939 shortly after his teacher's death, Jung defends Freud's bitterness and pessimistic worldview. He explains Freud's role as that of an iconoclast who wished to challenge the Enlightenment project and show deluded humanity its own ugly face in the mirror:

All that glittered in the nineteenth century was very far from being gold, religion included. Freud was a great destroyer, but the turn of the century offered so many opportunities for debunking that even Nietzsche was not enough. Freud completed the task, very thoroughly indeed. He aroused a wholesome mistrust in people and thereby sharpened their sense of real values. All that gush about man's innate goodness, which had addled so many brains after the dogma of the original sin was no longer understood, was blown to the winds by Freud, and the little that remains will, let us hope, be driven out for good and all by the barbarism of the twentieth century. Freud was no prophet, but he is a prophetic figure.

(Jung, 2003: 55-56)

Unfortunately, post-Freudian theorists have done little to re-direct Freudian thought to a less biological line of theorising. They remain locked within the problems of the body and the effects of its development on the psyche, continuing, albeit slightly modifying, the

same story of pleasure as the main reason for humankind's existence, change and growth. In Christopher Hauke's words, most post-Freudian thinkers today, having been influenced by Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion and Winnicott, 'tend to pay more attention to the earliest months of development and to place emphasis on the inner object relations of the individual' (Hauke, 2000: 55). Another post-Jungian, Andrew Samuels, argues: 'The numinosity of sex has become replaced by the numinosity of feeding. This leads directly to the tendency, which becomes unavoidable, to treat society and its institutions as if they were babies' (Hauke, 2000: 64).

It seems logical that John Fowles, who has always been a writer torn between the irrational and the rational, the creative and the analytical, divided his sympathies between Jung and Freud on the issue of what produces the artistically creative mind. The story of Fowles's relation with psychoanalytic theories is, in fact, the tale of his veering between authoritative, all-embracing ideas and creativity free of all restrictions; between consciousness and the unconscious. For the writer, Freud and Jung and their myths serve as metaphors for analysis and synthesis; they are thus an important part of Fowles's dialectics and his literary task, which is to show the tension inside the binary opposition. And here we come to a very important point: Fowles's perception of the relationship between the two parts of this opposition is what determines the character of his writing. 'The numinosity of feeding', deriving from post-Freudian thought, attracts Fowles very much. As much as he respects Jung for the freedom the theorist gives to the images of the unconscious, he sometimes wants these images to be explained in the light of object relations theories, like those of the post-Freudian, Gilbert Rose. In his essay 'Hardy and the Hag' (1977), reprinted in *Wormholes* (1998), Fowles advocates Rose's ideas which, in the writer's own words, 'clarified intuitive conclusions of my own'. Rose's adaptation of 'baby-feeding' theory appeals to Fowles because it recuperates the theme of lost infant pleasure, which represents a kind of a bliss 'in the fluid, polymorphic nature of the

sensuous impressions, visual, tactile, auditory' and which 'stamps itself indelibly' on the infant psyche (Fowles, 1998: 139). Later in life this 'intensely auto-erotic' experience' reappears in its adult versions, for instance, in the desire to create. Any artist's desire is to return to that unconscious feeling of warmth and safety. He thus re-experiences this pleasure in the products of his creativity and, since every child goes through variations of the same experience, the work of art unites the writer and the audience in almost forgotten 'infant bliss':

He was once a magician with a wand; and given the right other predisposing and environmental factors, he will one day devote his life to trying to regain the unity and the power by re-creating adult versions of the experience: he will be an artist. Moreover, since every child goes through some variation of the same experience, this also explains one major attraction of art for the audience. The artist is simply someone who does the journey back on behalf of the less conditioned and less technically endowed.

(Fowles, 1998: 139-140)

But however seductive and convenient such theories are for the critic and the author, they nevertheless fail to account for all the complexity of images in the work of art and for the problems these images are set up to resolve. Even though Fowles's main characters are often very much concerned with sex and Fowles himself has repeatedly admitted attributing his own psychological problems and the relationship with his parents (particularly with the mother) to his heroes,⁴ such theories do not sufficiently account for the dialectical nature of his art. John Fowles's fiction, which comprises subliminal abysses, religious heights and spiritual journeys alongside sexual adventures and primary sensory experiences, is rather self-contradictory and contains the capacity for constant renewal. It seems to work as a set of oppositions rather than as an embodiment of a rigid system of thought dealing with sexuality only and omitting the spiritual side of man. At

⁴ For instance, in a recent interview he referred to *Daniel Martin* as 'me in America' (*The Observer Review*, 12 October 2003). It is also clear from his recently published journals (*The Journals: Volume 1*, 2003) that he heavily relies on his personal experience while writing his novels.

the same time, sexually-based psychoanalytic theory can still be applied to Fowles's writing, partly because he personally supported it and partly because at least one of his novels (*Mantissa*) is written with Freud in mind.

Fowles's dialectical imagery is often dark and Gothic. One cannot plausibly explain the reasons for the occurrence of Gothic images only in terms of narcissism/object relations even though narcissism 'appears to bridge several behavioural elements found both in the modern psyche and in modern society' (Hauke, 2000: 60). Culturally, Gothic images seem to intensify during key moments of history (the end of the Enlightenment epoch, the end of the nineteenth century, the second half of the twentieth century), at the critical points of the war between consciousness and the unconscious. As Christopher Hauke argues:

the psychoanalytic-Kleinian-object relations perspective, for all its attractions, fails to include the vital step in its trajectory between the individual and society – a vital step that we have already noted to be present in the Jungian version of events. *The vital step is the consciousness of humankind; it is not the vicissitude of the dynamics of early mother-infant relationships ... which offers an explanation of the modern experience, but the very fact that the highly differentiated consciousness, rather split off from the rest of the psyche, now dominates both individual and social functioning and behaviour.*

(Hauke, 2000: 61)

Humanity's development inevitably results in tension between tradition and progress and the modern person may not yet have come to terms with the fact that becoming and being conscious is a complex and painful experience as well as a great responsibility. Jung's metaphor for humanity becoming conscious was the banishment of Adam and Eve from Paradise as a punishment for obtaining forbidden knowledge. As Jung argues:

The Book of Genesis represents the act of becoming conscious as the breaking of a taboo, as though the gaining of knowledge meant that a sacred barrier had been impiously overstepped. Genesis is surely right, inasmuch as each step to a greater consciousness is a kind of Promethean guilt. Through the realisation, the gods are in a certain sense robbed of their fire. That is to say, something belonging to the unconscious powers has been torn out from its natural connections and has been subordinated to conscious choice. He has certainly raised himself above the human level of his time [...], but in doing so he has also alienated himself from the humanity. [...] He is, as the myth says, chained to the lonely cliffs of Caucasus, forsaken of God and man.

(Jacobi, 1953: 28)

As Jung wrote, 'it must appear as a sin to the naive mind to break the law of the sacred primordial oneness of all-consciousness' (Jacobi, 1953: 34). And yet 'the gaining of consciousness was the most precious fruit on the tree of life, the magic weapon which gave man mastery over the earth, and which we hope will enable him to win the even greater victory of mastery over himself' (Jacobi, 1953:34). Many Gothic novels are preoccupied with the problem of tension between tradition and progress and the development of consciousness. In Jung's view, the Enlightenment did little to 'civilise' people' by banishing all the unwanted instinctual forces that 'hindered' mankind's progress, to the unconscious:

Only in the age of enlightenment did people discover that the gods did not really exist, but were simply projections. Thus, the gods were disposed of. But the corresponding psychological function was by no means disposed of; it lapsed into the unconscious, and men were thereupon poisoned by the surplus of libido that had once been laid up in the cult of divine images.

(Jacobi, 1973: 93)

For instance, *Frankenstein* (1818) is an extremely complicated Gothic book illustrating all angles of the post-Enlightenment anxiety about the progress of mankind. It might be called the first science fiction novel, as it is responsible for the creation of two important characters recycled in twentieth-century science fiction and the horror film: Victor Frankenstein and his unnamed monster. It warns readers against becoming too conscious, 'knowing too much', losing Adam's naivety and thus rivalling the God(s) in the sphere of creativity: Victor Frankenstein turns out to be an irresponsible creator unable to foresee the consequences of his bold experiment. But despite its seriousness, Shelley's text also contains an ironic element: distrust of the very act of creation. The making of male and female monsters by an ambitious scientist might be regarded as a parody of the birth of Adam and Eve: after all, man as the final result of God's act of creation, has since become quite an ugly monster, suffering from being unable to reconcile within himself the

disgusting animal and the educated, rational creature. Thus the invention by Victor Frankenstein of a suffering brute might be seen as Gothic representation of the archetypal situation of God giving life to man.

In its turn, the burden of carrying a monster within was echoed in the first half of the nineteenth century in the new *Doppelgänger* theme. Both the mad scientist (who had obviously evolved from the wizard archetypal image, Goethe's variant of Dr. Faustus being an in-between variant) and the shadow reflected the post-Enlightenment state of society: the over-emphasis on the development of consciousness and the subsequent repression of instincts. The barbaric past of mankind began to be perceived by a civilised and civilising community as sinful, and all the unwanted traits of character and traces of 'animalistic' behaviour were relegated to the individual's personal unconscious, where they formed the figure of the 'dark brother' – the double. The shadow/double archetype appeared in European as well as in American literature. Terrible strangers following the main character everywhere and threatening his life, cropped up in Chamisso's *Peter Schlemihl*, Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and Poe's *William Wilson*. The double is perceived by the protagonist as extremely dangerous, because often this unwanted character is not easy to eliminate (and if the double is killed, the protagonist dies together with him) and usually the more one represses him the more often he re-emerges. James Hogg, like Matthew Lewis, made his character a chaste and self-suppressing religious person, who eventually falls into the hands of a demon and carries out all the evil tasks the demon suggests. An extreme Calvinist, Robert Wringhim persecutes his brother George and is in his turn persecuted by a Gil-Martin, who poses as his benefactor and heavenly friend, but in the end is revealed to be an evil spirit. This double hunt divides the book into two parts, each written from the point of view of the victim (either George or Robert). Both the doubles possess the main feature of the shadow as the archetype that constitutes the horror of the situation: they are impossible to get rid of. Like their

descendants in late nineteenth-century Gothic texts, George and Robert do not manage to come to grips with their shadows and are destroyed by them.

The late nineteenth-century Gothic inherited the early and Romantic Gothic fiction's anxiety about civilisation and consciousness. Apart from various instances of the old wise man/scientist (the vivisectioning doctor from H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau* [1896], Martin Hesselius from Sheridan Le Fanu's *In a Glass Darkly* [1872]), there emerged a whole string of new literary doubles. Sensing the artificiality of advanced civilisation and the inevitability of its failure, the Gothic presented readers with pictures of the untamed, dirty or sexually voracious beast inside. For instance, the dreaded beast was embodied in the poor tortured animals in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Dorian Gray's mischievous *Doppelgänger* in Oscar Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), the last Gothic aristocrat, Count Dracula, in *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker, the terrible Hyde in Robert Lewis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) and 'the race of the hills' in *The Three Impostors* (1895) by Arthur Machen. The reasons for such a considerable rise in the use of the shadow archetype might also be explained from the Jungian perspective. The shadow, who inhabits the personal unconscious and grows together with the individual, becomes a more oppressive presence the more 'civilised' and rational the person is. The shadow embodies the primal sin; he/she is the picture of how the conscious mind views the innocence of instincts. *Fin de siècle* Gothic literature prophesied an apocalyptic future resulting from the excesses of modern science, as depicted in H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). The Gothic in this sense embodies repressed contents discovering alternative means of expression. Indeed, William Veeder goes so far as to claim that 'the nature of the Gothic is to nurture. This belief derives from what I take to be a basic fact of communal life: that societies inflict terrible wounds upon themselves *and at the same time* develop mechanisms to help heal these wounds' (Veeder, 1999: 47). In Hauke's words, modern

human consciousness ‘constitutes both the illness and the cure’ as it has the capacity to realise and resolve the problems that appear as a result of its own evolution (Hauke, 2000: 62). In this sense, infant development/pleasure theories should be regarded as yet another very local and concretised metaphor for growing out of the unconscious state, trading safety and innocence for the dangerous world of becoming a conscious personality.

Neither the psychoanalytic ‘lost childhood’ metaphor which stands for the development of a single individual, nor its colleague, the story of the lost Paradise symbolising the psychological development of society, should be understood literally. In the first case, just as happens with Freudian psychoanalysis, the great god Pleasure is proclaimed the cure for any social or individual problem, which leads to what Andrew Samuels calls treating society and its institutions as babies. In the second case, the pleasure is, on the contrary, repressed. This second case is very ancient and patriarchal in its origin, as it represents Christian morality, which prescribes suffering for original sin and the breaking of taboo, as instigated by woman. Woman is thus tainted and has to suffer most, morally as well as physically, for what she has done to the human race. Nietzsche’s rebellion against the literalisation of this myth, which he expressed in *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887), was summed up in the French word *ressentiment*, or a bitter, hateful response to humiliation and oppression, to which the slave of religion is subjected. Both these metaphors, the modern and the ancient, despite suggesting antagonistic views as far as the treatment of the unconscious is concerned (either permissive or restrictive), are surprisingly similar in the way they deal with consciousness. Even though they are its products and use it to control or repress the unconscious, the psychoanalytic and the religious stories of creation still blame consciousness for breaking the primal unity, destroying pleasure/peace/innocence and by its mere existence introducing anguish and misery into human life. And both of them – paradoxically – base themselves on the conscious approach to life phenomena, leaving the unconscious as oxymoronic avatar (the

‘good devil’) which is simultaneously to be ‘saved’ and ‘kept away’. In either case, it is above all to be controlled.

Jungian psychology prefers a completely different approach to images. There is no necessity to literalise and then project actual archetypal images onto the outside world in order to resolve one’s psychological problems. What is important is to understand what these images mean as abstract archetypes, as well as to realise their significance at a certain period of one’s life and their meaning in the course of one’s development. Gothic images that appear at various stages in the progress of consciousness might indicate changes in the life of the individual or turning points in the existence of society; they should be freed and taken into account, but never deciphered by means of an existing code system, such as object relations. No philosophical or ideological code system is able to interpret credibly the dialectical dialogue of the Gothic with the evolution of consciousness.

Thus, in studying the use of the Gothic tradition in John Fowles’s novels, one can either apply the world of images (which, he thinks, is more ‘fruitful’) or the world of desire (which, in Fowles’s view, is very exact in explaining the writer’s personal circumstances as a vital element in his urge to create). The Jungian version allows the critic to pay attention not only to the role of the personal unconscious in the work of art, but also to what Jung conceptualised as the collective layer of the psyche. This way the images produced are not locked in the personality of the writer or regarded as indicating pathology; they are not even restricted by the important current cultural situation. For instance, one can speak of the peculiarities of Fowles’s personal circumstances, his own process of individuation and the historical events/postmodern condition that have accompanied it, all of which are clearly reflected in the way his male characters are constructed and change from novel to novel. But it is also possible to speak about the non-personalised, collective part of the myths the writer chooses to shape his individual and

collective experience, the part that works within the artist independently of his/her childhood memories or any other private experiences. The abstract contents of this layer of the psyche are yet to be expressed in clearer forms – that is, in discernible images. In the foreword to the second edition of *The Magus* Fowles speaks of ‘the non-existent’ that he was struggling to evoke in his early days as a novelist, and of the myth he was trying, clumsily and laboriously, to bring into the world. He was constantly abandoning drafts because of an inability to describe what he wanted (Fowles, 1997: 5). Some of the images the writer was working so hard to realise, such as the old wise man, became really persistent in his novels. The best examples of this figure are Conchis from *The Magus* (1966; revised edition 1977) and Henry Breasley from ‘The Ebony Tower’ (1974).

Strange as it may sound, Jung himself also figured as an old wise man in one of Fowles’s texts, namely ‘The Ebony Tower’. He is given the status of an almost Gothic figure by the artist Henry Breasley, who proclaims Jung as an ‘old Swiss bamboozler’ when attempting, in his own clumsy way, to explain the meaning of various symbols for creativity to the representative of ‘empty’, rational Op Art, David Williams (Fowles, 1996: 58). At the same time, Breasley uses Jung to defend the masculine myth of legitimately needing several different women for various sexual and inspirational purposes, using the medieval tale *Eliduc* by Marie de France as illustration:

The old man explained in his offhand way the sudden twelfth-and thirteenth-century mania for romantic legends, ... the sudden preoccupation with love and adventure and the magical, ... the breaking-out of the closed formal garden of other medieval art, the extraordinary yearning symbolized in these wandering horsemen and lost damsels and dragons and wizards, Tristan and Merlin and Lancelot...

‘All damn nonsense,’ said Breasley. ‘Just here and there, don’t you know, David. What one needs. Suggestive. Stimulating, that’s the word.’ Then he went off on Marie de France and *Eliduc*. ‘Damn’ good tale. Read it several times. What’s that old bamboozler’s name. Jung, yes? His sort of stuff. Archetypal and all that.’

(Fowles, 1996: 58)

Although the way Jung is interpreted (or misinterpreted) by the old artist clearly underlines Jung's personal biases and patriarchal tendencies and characterises him as a modernist thinker, it also reveals the postmodern, 'pro-other' orientation of Jung's writings. He is perceived by Breasley as the very person who freed myths and dealt with the unconscious, as a mysterious magician who gave names to the unnameable and proved that rationality is often powerless in the face of the irrational. Jung's own memoirs *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* are also full of stories that reveal him as a person who sought to free various phenomena that were presented as Gothic in modernist fiction. In that sense Sigmund Freud's teachings can also be referred to as modernist Gothic writing because of the manner in which Freud developed his sexual 'religion' to ward off the uncanny experience. His uncanny occurs, according to Jung, either 'when infantile complexes which have been repressed are once more revived by some impression' or 'when primitive beliefs which have been surmounted seem once more to be confirmed.' Be it real or fictional (which is 'a more fertile province than the uncanny in real life'), the uncanny remains for Freud a set of repressed wishes, this explanation having been introduced by him to disguise his own fear in the face of the unknown, in fear of the 'black tide of mud', which he summarised as 'occultism' (Jung, 1995: 173).

In this light it does not seem strange that critics such as Anne Williams have found in Freud a clear repressed counter-tendency to his Enlightenment attitude to all that is uncanny and mysterious: the Gothic character of Freud's fiction. Freud is, in Williams's words, 'a Gothic novelist' whose 'entire theory of mind, developed through the multitudinous pages of his collected works, conceives of the self as a structure, a "house" haunted by history, by past deeds – both one's own and those of one's ancestors'. Anne Williams asserts that Freud's *Mysteries of Enlightenment* belongs to the tradition of Male (patriarchal) Gothic – and that this is detectable through his attitude to the other/female/the unconscious, that is, his battle with the fearsome 'defective' (Williams, 1995: 244). Real-

life stories such as the episode in the Italian red district ('The Uncanny') and Freud's neurotic dreams as documented in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1895), only confirm Freud's fear of the subject of his own study.

But Gothic Freud is different from Gothic Jung. One of the best examples to prove this is the widely cited story of Jung's visit to Herr Professor in Vienna in 1909, as described in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. The two men had had an argument over the actuality of parapsychological phenomena as Freud refused to acknowledge its existence (it was some years before he recognised the seriousness of parapsychology). The bodily effect Jung had on Freud's 'materialistic prejudice' was very curious:

While Freud was going on this way, I had a curious sensation. It was as if my diaphragm were made of iron and were becoming red-hot – a glowing vault. And at that moment there was such a loud report in the bookcase, which stood right next to us, that we both started up in alarm, fearing the thing was going to topple over us. I said to Freud: 'There, that is an example of a so-called catalytic exteriorization phenomenon.'

'Oh come,' he exclaimed. 'That is a sheer bosh.'

'It is not,' I replied. 'You are mistaken, Herr Professor. And to prove my point I now predict that in a moment there will be another loud report!' Sure enough, no sooner had I said the words than the same detonation went off in the bookcase.

To this day I do not know what gave me this certainty. But I knew beyond all doubt that the report would come again. Freud only stared aghast at me. I do not know what was in his mind, or what his look meant.

(Jung, 1995: 178-179)

The event is oddly amusing in the sense that during it Jung behaves like a circus magician complete with the traditional abracadabra – 'a so-called catalytic exteriorization phenomenon' – performing for a sceptical public some impressive though suspicious looking tricks. Furthermore, the fact that the mystery of the moving bookcase evaporates after Jung leaves Freud's home certainly adds to Jung's image as a mysterious, Gothic personality as perceived by his contemporaries.

In Freud's letter dated the same year, which recorded Freud's reaction to the incident, there is further proof that the two men dealt differently with the unconscious,

either trusting or mistrusting the images connected with it. Freud, who in this letter confesses to having neurotic thoughts related to the numbers 61 and 62 (for he thought that he would die between the ages of 61 and 62), strives to explain the weird figures that seem to follow him everywhere, and prefers to ascribe his state of mind to ‘Jewish mysticism’:

My conviction began in 1899. Two events coincided at that time. The first was my writing of *The Interpretation of Dreams* ..., the second, my being assigned a new telephone number, which I have to this day: 14362. It is easy to establish a link between these two facts: in the year 1899, when I wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams*, I was 43 years old. What should be more obvious than that the other figures in my telephone number were intended to signify the end of my life, hence, 61 or 62? Suddenly there appears a method in this madness. The superstition that I would die between 61 and 62 turns out to be equivalent to the conviction that with the book on dreams I had completed my life's work, needed to say no more, and could die in peace.

(Jung, 1995: 398)

The story of Jung's confrontation and dialogue with the unconscious and its persistent images, as revealed by him in his autobiography, lacks Sigmund Freud's precision of analysis and is very different from the extract just cited. Being haunted by fantasy characters and dream figures such as Philemon, Ka and the image of the inner feminine in the aftermath of his break-up with Sigmund Freud, Jung, however strange it may sound, patiently observed them and let them speak through his mind. The figure of the guru Philemon, who represented ‘superior insight’, sometimes even seemed to Jung quite real, ‘as if he were a living personality’ (Jung, 1995: 208). He made Jung realise that not all psychic phenomena can be controlled by the conscious mind and led him to the discovery of the objective layer of the psyche:

Philemon and other figures of my fantasies brought home to me the crucial insight that there are things in the psyche which I do not produce, but which produce themselves and have their own life. Philemon represented a force which was not myself. In my fantasies I held conversations with him, and he said things which I had not consciously thought. ... He said I treated thoughts as if I generated them myself, but in his view thoughts were like animals in the forest, or people in a room, or birds in the air, and added, “If you should see people in a room, you would not think that you had made those people, or that you were responsible for them.” It was he who taught me psychic objectivity, the reality of the psyche.

At the time of his most serious nervous breakdown when he felt surrounded by ghosts and inner images,⁵ Jung came to a decision to withdraw from the university where he lectured as a *Privatdozent*. This decision was based on the insight that his experiments and experience with the unconscious had brought his intellectual life to a standstill. He even found himself incapable of reading a scientific book, since dealing with the unconscious required strengths and abilities in conflict with those required for analysis (Jung, 1995: 218). Yet, Jung decided to continue to personify the contents of the unconscious in order to differentiate himself from them and bring them into contact with consciousness; he gradually began to emerge from the darkness towards the end of the First World War. His incredible story is a record of his relationship with the Gothic, which Jung was fearless enough to meet face to face, without suppressing it or trying to explain it away rationally. In spite of all the sufferings he went through in the years following his break-up with Freud when trying to find a different approach to the unconscious, Jung remained sane and developed his own theories and discoveries. The rational played only a secondary role in the formation of Jung's psychology; the primary role was given to the unconscious. Out of the depths of the unconscious, creative images were generated which, apart from teaching Jung tolerance towards various unconscious entities, directed him to his basic ideas and most important findings.

Trusting the Gothic and mistrusting the Gothic – these are Jung's and Freud's respective positions towards the unknown and the irrational. If Freud's prose belongs to

⁵ At one point Jung felt that his whole house was haunted and filled with ghostly entities. His eldest daughter saw a white figure passing through the room. One Saturday his second daughter related that twice in the night her blanket was snatched away and that same night his nine-year old son had an anxiety dream. The next day the front-door bell began ringing frantically and Jung even saw the bell moving through the open square outside the front door, but there was no one in sight (Jung, 1995: 215).

Male Gothic, Jung is closer to the Female Gothic tradition and his writings are the story of the unconscious gaining its freedom and an equality with consciousness. Jung's respect for the Gothic helps reveal its inner capacities and powers. Great as Sigmund Freud is, with regard to the images produced by the unconscious and in dealing with non-sexualised creativity, his ideas are less flexible and certainly more restrictive and controlling. Even though his theories have resulted in a profound critique of modernity, Freud remained more rooted in his time than his more 'postmodern' disciple. Compared to Jung, Freud is undoubtedly 'safer', as is all post-Freudian theorising (for example, that by Melanie Klein and Jacques Lacan), which assures one that all the repressed material can be easily controlled and deciphered. John Fowles, a dialectical artist, appreciates the safety of Freudian theory (he would go to a Freudian analyst if he had psychological problems) but thinks that Jung gives more freedom to the imagination and the unconscious, elements which play the most important part in the creative process. In fact, Fowles's novels resist any coherent theoretical explanation and their plots and psychological structures always contain elements of instability, inexplicability and even debasement in them. As a result, they do not lend themselves easily to the predictable outcome of Freudian analysis.

Freudian and post-Freudian theories are convenient in that they allow the individual to escape the pressure of developing consciousness and enable a return to the evasive, fluid pleasure of early childhood. They are flexible disguises of the same old rationality which, in its new variant, already knows its own limits. Though having discovered the unconscious and admitting the right of the instinctive to exist, this new postmodern consciousness already lacks the audacity of Victor Frankenstein and prefers defensive methods of dealing with the irrational. Confining it to the world of the body and the 'numinosity of feeding' scheme is just a safe way of exorcising ghosts. However, the body has its limits too; it is but a dull piece of flesh, the poor unnamed Frankenstein's monster,

without spiritual content. As a result, instead of resolution of the problem, we have the notorious ‘transformation of neurotic misery into common unhappiness’.

The Gothic is thus better read with the assistance of a progressive rather than regressive philosophy, as its signposts always indicate the present condition of society and the possible direction of its development. In the essay ‘In Memory of Sigmund Freud’, Jung writes of Freud being metaphorically perceived by his contemporaries as a dentist, drilling out the carious tissue in the most painful manner. But destroying the whole order can only be justified if the destroyer is able to suggest something instead of the phenomena he seeks to eliminate. In the long run, his theories do not offer any comfort or support and are themselves deeply rooted in nineteenth century rationality:

So far the comparison holds true, but not when it comes to the gold-filling. Freudian psychology does not fill the gap. If our critical reason tells us that in certain respects we are irrational and infantile, or that our religious beliefs are illusions, what are we to do about our irrationality, what are we to put in place of our exploded illusions? Our naive childishness has in it the seeds of creativity and illusion is a natural component of life, and neither of them can ever be suppressed or replaced by the rationalities and practicalities of convention.

(Jung, 2003: 56)

Jungian psychology seeks to repair the psyche rather than diminish it, recognising the ‘evil forces’ instead of exorcising them. His whole attitude is prospective, not retrospective. In Christopher Hauke’s words, the Jungian position emphasises the understanding of phenomena – including social conditions – by asking ‘Where is this heading? What are these conditions – or ‘symptoms’ – leading us *towards*?’ (Hauke, 2000: 57).

John Fowles, who in his writings seeks to discover the origins of the conflict between man and the outer world on the one hand and between the two sides of the hero’s psyche on the other, is clearly interested in what the ‘symptoms’ of the male character’s ‘illness’ signify. The writer never resolves the central conflict of the novel to the advantage of either party, providing instead a hallmark dialectical antagonism that is left

unresolved at the end of each novel and that is capable of renewing itself and developing in the next work.

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Chapter 1

John Fowles: a Postmodern Dialectician

John Fowles remains popular with the common reader, as is indicated by the fact that all his novels are still in print. However, he is not a populist writer. The success of his fiction cannot be reduced to entertaining plots and the sexual elements found in his novels, although both these make his work attractive to many readers. Fowles's texts are thought-provoking, dialectical and difficult to categorise; every critic who has ever attempted to examine them knows the feeling of being lost in the middle of the writer's controversial ideas – just when it seemed to be clear how the book as a system worked. The irrationality of the way the world of his novels is organised, complete with hopelessly elusive plots, obscure characters, and a whole range of typical postmodern devices, such as the notorious 'chinese-box structures', multiple endings and stylistic games, is simply breathtaking. The fact that there is a meaning to all these things somewhere – and John Fowles makes sure his reader understands this from the very beginning of each work – turns the act of reading into exploring a deep forest in which taking a path may lead to wrong conclusions. In an attempt to elucidate his work, this chapter is dedicated to examining the theoretical bases of his fiction and the major influences on his views as a thinker and – strange as it may sound in a discussion of a postmodernist – his position as a moralist.

As a postmodernist novelist, he uses conflicting discourses to raise important issues concerning the human condition: his fiction is an ontologically charged postmodern play of oppositions: the masculine and the feminine; existentialism and deconstruction; realism and Gothic romance; Freud and Jung, to name but a few. Seeking resolutions to the moral dilemmas within himself, the novelist passes on the need to think about them to his

readers, leaving them trapped between the riddles of postmodern society in general and the questions of individual existence in particular.

Fowles is also an intellectual who has been provoked into using sophisticated fictional ploys by his interest in so many areas. He has many occupations outside prose fiction: essay writing, poetry and history have all interested him. But despite having ambitions as a philosopher and a poet as well as a novelist and having published a number of non-fiction books,¹ John Fowles is mostly known as a writer of interesting and thought-provoking novels. At first glance this seems due to his unique talent – the ability to unite in his texts the notorious self-reflectiveness of metafiction with metaphysics, ontology and the consideration of moral values.

Postmodernist fiction as a literature reflecting the unstable, constantly changing post-war world, is seen by some critics as a complicated but meaningless play of words, worlds, literary genres and topoi. In discussion of this contentious issue, theorists of culture have divided into two groups, one arguing that postmodernism is a depthless and decentred art, and the other perceiving a certain degree of meaningfulness and even order in this style of thought. Moreover, people belonging to the first ‘cluster’ may be further divided into two subgroups. Some regard postmodernism’s denial of metaphysics as positive and even parade it as a specific virtue which results from its striving for freedom from the so-called ‘grand narratives’ (for example, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Richard Rorty). Others are critical of the movement’s emptiness and self-delusion (these include left-wing theorists like Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton). Defining the peculiarities of the postmodern parody, Fredric Jameson insists that it no longer contains a proper, ‘pejorative’ ironic statement but

¹ Including *The Aristos: A Self-Portrait in Ideas* (1964; revised edition 1968), the autobiographical essay *The Tree* (1979), a book of poetry called simply *Poems* (1973), screenplays, and many other essays, including historiographic ones such as *The Enigma of Stonehenge* (1980) and *A Brief History of Lyme* (1985).

has become pastiche, worn-out and useless parody – a true reflection of the ever-changing images of consumerist society. True parody is no longer possible, because, according to Fredric Jameson, the ‘normative’ position from which the ironic ‘judgement’ was usually proclaimed, no longer exists (Malpas, 2001: 25-26).

Brian McHale presents us with the third option: that postmodernism is actually ontologically challenging and not at all empty and groundless. To express his thoughts concerning postmodernism’s meaningfulness and philosophical value, in his book *Constructing Postmodernism* McHale uses terminology invented by Dick Higgins, poet, composer and performance artist. Instead of the words ‘modernism’ and ‘postmodernism’, Higgins employs new terms, ‘cognitivism’ and ‘postcognitivism’. The cognitive questions asked by most artists of the twentieth century till about 1958² are: ‘How can I interpret this world of which I am part? And what am I in it?’ The postcognitive *questions* which have interested most artists since then are: ‘Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?’ (McHale, 1992: 33). Thus Brian McHale draws his readers’ attention to the neglected parts of postmodernism’s dialectical nature – namely those in contrast with its much-advertised deconstructing, destructive and analytical roles. Postmodernism is openly ontological in its orientation, that is, it is a self-consciously world-building fiction, the original feature of its poetics being to expose the process of the fictional world making itself (McHale, 1992: 12). McHale uses Annie Dillard’s definition, ‘unlicensed metaphysics in a teacup’, to define the theoretical nature of postmodernism. And as the present consists of the multiplicity of conflicting worlds, postmodernism reflects and overplays this feature, staging clashes between various ‘real’ and psychological, generic and stylistic, cultural and ideological landscapes. Such

² Different theorists have proclaimed different dates as the borderline dividing modernism and postmodernism. Dick Higgins chose 1958 as the year of the beginning of what he terms as ‘postcognitivism’.

confrontations, in Brian McHale's view, serve to 'raise and explore ontological issues' (McHale, 1992: 155); and indeed, discourse clashes tend to generate an atmosphere of intellectual vivacity, not only in fictional worlds but also in real life, with equal frequency.

John Fowles's literary experiments are not good examples of 'pure' postmodernism; that is, they are not formal and stylistic ventures. They are closer to Brian MacHale's definition of postmodernist fiction as foregrounding its ontological status. His fiction demonstrates genuine interest and anxiety about the state of contemporary culture and politics. This anxiety is always reflected and inscribed into the lives and personal problems of his characters. At the same time, his narrative and stylistic techniques are often those of challenging and questioning conventional morality rather than accepting or defending it. Fowles's irony is a typical postmodern irony, or 'sabotage' as I suggest we call it, because the kind of critique it offers is more to do with *dissatisfaction* rather than confrontation. Both its strength and vulnerability lie in the absence of the ground, the position upon which it is based. On the one hand, Fowles's irony can overthrow something but cannot prove it was the right thing to do. On the other hand, criticism and other styles and narratives cannot seriously damage this irony, since it has no base or strategic centre which can be attacked and destroyed. Balancing between a certain position and no position is quite dangerous and can be equally misunderstood by theorists and critics with either 'left' or 'right' sympathies. For example, John Fowles has been described as being a patriarch and a sexist, but also as an evil debaser blowing humanism, hope, and common sense to smithereens with a single move of his pen.³ Sabotage is painfully desperate since, seeking some kind of structure in the ontological emptiness of endless signifiers, it nevertheless realises the impossibility of epistemological certainty: it operates on the ruins of grand

³ See, for example, Frank Novak's article 'The Dialectics of Debasement in *The Magus*' in *Modern Fiction Studies*, 1985, Spring issue.

narratives and has to deal with the catastrophic consequences of the politics of Enlightenment. Sabotage agonises at the impossibility of reconciling structure and closure with the element of play, which is characterised by endless poststructuralist signification. An adjacent cause of agony and source of ontology involves confrontations among different self-legitimizing worlds, which, as Brian McHale has noted, postmodernism deliberately stages. This problem is very closely related to the structure-closure debate, since the clash of interests between the two self-justifying sides invariably raises the question of a single structure that could save the situation from anarchy. Using parodic sabotage, Fowles's fiction reveals a subtle desire for a new agreement (in contrast to the old ones that do not work any more); for a ground on which the fragments of the world can be reunited. This desire is marked by a specific sense of doom that comes from a feeling that such an agreement might be a utopian notion. Fowles's 'unlicensed metaphysics', also used by many other postmodern writers, is often about smuggling God into a world which has for some time proclaimed itself as godless. As great as the stress is on the 'mother' in his novels, the 'father' is always there and effectively working, even if 'undercover' and 'unofficially'. Using Patricia Waugh's expression, 'although postmodern apocalypticism is primary thought of as expressing absolute fragmentariness, [...] it is, if covertly, as much concerned with reconciliation and reintegration as it is with their impossibility' (Waugh, 1992: 14). This feature is present in Fowles's novels and it makes him a true postmodern dialectician, since he engages both the oppositions on *equal* terms in a dialogue about the nature and reality of the world and fiction.

In order to inscribe the hero's self-analysis and maturation into a postmodern world 'without God', John Fowles adopts the legacy of the Gothic. The popularity of the Gothic tradition in postmodern fiction can be explained using Waugh's definition of postmodernism as a successor to Romanticism. In her book *Practicing Postmodernism*,

Reading Modernism (1992) she traces the roots of postmodernism back to Romanticism and modernism, observing that the apocalyptic nature of the postmodern condition is not something new, since the same apocalyptic tendencies were already present in the Romantic Movement (Waugh, 1992: 10). The two movements can be said to be both anti-Enlightenment in the sense that they share the same interest in the desire, the bodily and the material and proclaim the primacy of the unconscious (Waugh, 1992: 17). Postmodernism seems to be the logical extension of the Romantic and modernist reaction to industrial modernity; the final result of this reaction (the great male God is finally 'dead'). Even romantic irony, famous for its self-consciousness, seems to have transformed itself into hyper self-reflexive postmodern irony. However, this new type of irony became dispersed among numerous competing discourses and, despite its criticism of grand narratives, is covertly concerned with the male principle and reconciliation between the binary opposites.

The elements of the Gothic literary tradition have been often used in contemporary fiction and film both in Europe and the United States by such novelists as John Hawkes (*The Cannibal* [1962]), Iris Murdoch (*The Unicorn* [1963], *The Time of the Angels* [1966]), Joyce Carol Oates (*Expensive People* [1968]), Thomas Pynchon (*Gravity's Rainbow* [1973]) and Angela Carter (*The Passion of New Eve* [1977], *The Bloody Chamber* [1979]). In the twentieth century, social changes determining the face of the genre have included typical features of the postmodern world, such as the urban and consumerist constituents of culture, the power of the media, the fast pace of life, the nuclear threat, globalisation and impressive technical innovations. Thus, there are noticeable Gothic elements in some post-Second World War science fictions. In this case the Gothic, which has always emphasised the vulnerability of the subject in an environment that seems strange or unfriendly, is used to show the hero/ine's total disorientation in the inhuman world of cold objects and of

individuals who are separated from each other by computers. Examples of such Gothic are Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), which became the film *Blade Runner* (1982), and the first cyberpunk creation, *Neuromancer* (1984) by William Gibson. The growth of Gothic science fiction with its trademark 'technological nightmare' theme points to the fact that the main direction of the Gothic is now more prospective than retrospective.

If one takes a look at the psychological character of the tradition and its transformations after the Second World War, considerable changes in the 'behaviour' of the Gothic text can be noticed. It certainly feels itself more 'free' and 'independent' in the post-structuralist world, with the figure of the oppressive great father recently deconstructed. The father/God figure, metaphorically representing the powers of the civilised consciousness, is gone, or 'dead' (to use Nietzsche's phrase) and the repressed – the instinctual and the bodily – are made conscious and therefore brought back into the world to exist officially. Angela Carter's bold experiments with sex and gender, aiming to show the ultimate power of the liberated feminine principle, demonstrate the anti-Enlightenment Gothic in its unrestrained mode (*The Passion of New Eve*).

At the same time, the God image that had been disposed of by a post-war, postmodern culture, has since remained in the shade and caused the appearance of a new important Gothic motif: fear and fascination in the face of an unknown, often invisible and absolutely invincible power. In other words, society has created a set of new repressed, unconscious images, which struggle to emerge from the darkness and oblivion. This motif of the lost governing principle is related to the sense of bewilderment and disorientation experienced by members of a postmodern society, and has strong subliminal undertones. It has taken various archetypal forms both in fiction and film, one of the most popular being a mysterious power/technical force taking over the world or disturbing the protagonist; as

in, for instance, Gibson's *Neuromancer* and Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris* (1961). This governing principle manifests itself in either the positive or the negative aspect: the technical force can be depicted as destructive and threatening the human race with elimination, or positive and helping the protagonist to save civilisation. Concerns about the safety of the future of mankind and the fear of chaos and anarchy are the core elements of films and novels containing this motif. As will be shown later in this thesis, Fowlesian Gothic is also very much preoccupied with this motif. Novels such as *The Magus* (1966; 1977) and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969) directly confront the problem of the existence of God in postmodern society.

The sudden switch of interest of the Gothic in the late twentieth-century from the liberation of the 'feminine' principle to the liberation of the 'masculine' illustrates not only the genre's incredible flexibility, but shows it to be a force always working in opposition, on the side of the neglected psychic contents. Throughout its more than two hundred years of history, the Gothic has been a literary mode (and later a cinematic one as well) rather than a definable genre with rigid characteristics. Another popular Gothic archetypal situation in postmodern culture related to the repression of the 'governing principle' in culture is the alien abduction/meeting the aliens motif. Like the previously discussed instance of the neglected God figure, the UFO is a relatively recent phenomenon,⁴ but it has already become a collective dream image. It has even appeared outside works of art in 'real life', with people reporting cases of seeing flying saucers, being abducted by aliens, or aliens sharing wisdom with them. The UFO boom started shortly after the Second World War, in the 1950s. Reacting to this curious collective phenomenon Jung, in his monograph *The Flying Saucers* (1958), supposed that, after the devaluation of the

⁴ Although it arguably dates back to H. G. Wells's horror novel *The War of the Worlds* (1898) about the Martians who came to conquer the Earth.

traditional western image of the self⁵ – the Christ figure, which inevitably happened with the general decline of Christian religion after the War ('God is dead'), the UFO became a new archetypal variant of the self (Jung, 2002: 23). These days, working as a substitution for the collectively shared religious symbols, both 'bad' and 'good' aliens are popular guests in cinema and fiction. They have appeared in science fiction texts such as Robert A. Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961) and in films such as *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial* (1982, director Steven Spielberg), about a good alien, and a more recent *X Files* (1993-2002, directed by Chris Carter) and *Signs* (2002, director M. Night Shyamalan). Surprisingly, John Fowles also touched upon the subject of the UFO in his novel *A Maggot* (1995), having made the 'maggot' which brought Rebecca to June Eternal look like a spaceship.

How John Fowles himself saw the subjects, the aims and the status of his fiction, transformed as he grew older. In an interview with Dianne Vipond recorded in 1995, he expressed discontent with the pessimistic air of contemporary fiction, seeing it as something that he had embraced in his 'French existentialist' days and that had been expressed in the 'negative' endings of some of his earlier novels. The writer related optimism to realism, saying that the 'black', negative view of the world is not necessarily proof that the artist is able to understand the world (Fowles, 1998: 366). For John Fowles, who grew up in the fifties and who published his first novel at the beginning of the sixties, existentialism seemed at one stage to be an important part of the novel's ethical structure.

⁵ The self, as *The Cambridge Companion to Jung* defines it, is '(1) an archetypal image of "wholeness", experienced as a transpersonal power which invests life with meaning: e.g. Christ, Buddha, mandala-figures. (2) The hypothetical centre and totality of the psyche, experienced as that which governs the individual and

As a student of French at Oxford, he used to read philosophers such as Camus and Sartre in French, absorbing their then very relevant and therefore fashionable ideas. The endless amount of talk in Oxford about “the existentialists”, “authenticity”, being *engagé* and the rest, all the implicit condemnations of the bourgeois view of life’ affected young Fowles (Vipond, 1999: 185). Existentialism for him, as for many young people of the fifties, was about authenticity, free will and the new humanism, all of which seemed crucial values for people lost in the morally, politically and economically ruined post-war world that had just witnessed the worst ever crisis of mankind. Having faced the self-betrayal of human nature at the daybreak of the ‘postmodern condition’, paralysed Europe found its first answers to questions about the meaning of life and the moral and ethical future of man, in the existential struggle for being, the fight against darkness and falsity. Since the world was a mess, the only way people could withstand it was to remain themselves, and in 1963 Fowles thought it was also his duty to help them do this:

I think the existentialist trend will increase. We are going to get more extreme-situation novels. We'll have more of the key existentialist notion of authenticity of life. [...] We'll have, I hope, more penetrating analyses of characters under pressure from society. I would like to see more of this serious and didactic approach. We've had enough escapism and satire.

(Vipond, 1999: 7)

Extreme situations are best tests of free will – and many of Fowles’s characters are put into circumstances in which their views on life are tested and changed. His early heroes struggle for elusive freedom in an unjust world. They are forced into situations in which they juxtapose themselves to God and strive to apprehend whether God is still ‘alive’ or whether he ‘died’ a long time ago. They ‘inherit’ God’s rights and duties and are given precious freedom to create and make choice. Fowles’s characters are endowed with the

toward which the individual is unconsciously striving. The principle of coherence, structure, organisation that governs balance and integration of psychic contents’ (Young-Eisendrath and Dawson, 1997: 318-319).

privilege to judge others and often have to decide between the absurdity of existentialist freedom and the (existentialist) categorical imperative. They have the choice either to accept the world as it is, become a part of it, lose their authenticity and subscribe to the values of the present society, or to rebel against it and gain true freedom. Miranda in *The Collector* (1963), Nicholas in *The Magus* (1965) and Charles and Sarah in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1968) all have to make choices for or against what existentialist vision held as true values. At the time when his first novel was published, the writer was really very serious when talking about the instructive significance of the philosophy of existence. Existentialism is a 'philosophical force', as his interviewer Roy Newquist puts it, and it is the principal source of the modern novel's ontology. For the young Fowles (and not only for him) there was no alternative philosophy to apply while creating a 'didactically charged' text: 'To me, any novel which doesn't have something to say on the subject of whether and why the characters are authentic or inauthentic is difficult to take seriously. It is merely an entertainment' (Vipond, 1999: 7). Even the decision to become a writer was influenced by Sartre and Camus: writing for the budding novelist was 'a part of his existentialist life' and 'an attempt to make himself wholly authentic' (Vipond, 1999: 3). Also, in existentialist thought, literature is a commitment and the writer feels he must use it as a method to propagate his view of life (Vipond, 1999: 5). Fowles somewhat naively believed that French existentialism was here to stay and would gradually take the place of religion and political ideologies. According to him, only this philosophy would remove the pressure of the existing politico-economical systems, the meaninglessness of the cold war together with the nuclear bomb threat; it would also teach people to act creatively in terms of their own powers and their own situation (Vipond, 1999: 8). In his idealistic-pessimistic view of society, John Fowles enthusiastically copied his favourite teachers, Camus and Sartre:

Life is a battle to keep balance on a tightrope. To live authentically is not giving in to the anxieties ... but solving them in some way. This giving of a solution is the wonderful thing about existentialism, and why I believe it will take the place of the old, dogmatic religions. [...] It's the great individualist philosophy, the twentieth century individual's answer to the evil pressures of both capitalism and communism.

(Vipond, 1999: 8)

Finally, with the help of the philosophy of existence, the long-lasting conflict of the Few and the Many will be resolved – the basic confrontation that had interested Fowles for quite a while. The Few will be saved from the tyrannical power of the Many, and will create freely, without restrictions. They will teach the Many real authenticity and art – exactly what Miranda tries to do with Fredric Clegg but does not succeed because of his lack of talent and problematic relationship with women. Nevertheless, the Many still have a chance to be converted, and in this sense *The Collector* is ‘a sort of putting of the question’, whereas Fowles’s first book of aphorisms, *The Aristos*, is supposed to be ‘a direct existentialist answer’:

The girl in *The Collector* is an existentialist heroine although she doesn't know it. She's groping for her own authenticity. Her tragedy is that she will never live to achieve it. Her triumph is that one day she would have done so. What I tried to say in the book was this: we must create a society in which the Many will allow the Few to live authentically, *and* to teach and help the Many themselves to begin to do so as well.

(Vipond, 1999: 8)

The Aristos – an early non-fiction book and attempt to summarise the author's views and philosophical ambitions – registers a similar mood,⁶ existential humanism on a large scale.

⁶ It would be fair to note that *Aristos* is not merely an existentialist manifesto. Although in chapter six of the book existentialism is proclaimed the wisest philosophy of all times, *Aristos* also maps out all the themes and ontological problems that will interest Fowles even after his love of Sartre and Camus has withered, such as the fate of the artist within society and the polar nature of reality.

It is full of Fowles's reflections considering the present situation, human dissatisfaction with it and the inability of various religions and philosophical systems (excluding existentialism) to deal with it. Fowles therefore proposes a new being, called Aristos, who is fundamentally an ideal existentialist man. He exists in the War between the Law and Chaos, the organising and the disintegrating principles. This War is *being*. Humanity lives in a 'survived and uncertainly surviving' world, and this world 'is and will always be a Noah's ark' (Fowles, 1964: 9-12). This is Fowles's bitter version of the world without God ('if there is an active god he has, since 1914, paid very poor wages' [Fowles, 1964: 12]); it expresses his existentialist belief in the last chance to see Him – in the suffering but still 'enlightened' and 'authentic' man.

In more recent conversations recorded in the eighties and nineties, Fowles is no longer so excited by his former favourite philosophy. Existentialism for him became more 'a kind of literary metaphor, a wish fulfilment' than a movement leading to an ethical revolution (Vipond, 1999: 73). The existentialist wish was never fulfilled and in 1979, when the interview with Bigsby took place, the 'godless' state of the world had long been accepted and even approved and paraded. Living without the 'father' was no longer a tragedy. Answering a question about the evolution of his existentialist heroes, in an interview with Susana Onega that took place in 1988, Fowles says:

Yes, I was [interested in existentialism] when I was younger, when I was well below half of my present age, we all were in England at that time...we were on our knees before Camus and Sartre [...] It was not because we truly understood it but we had a kind of notion, a dream of what it was about. Most of us were victims of it. I quite like that philosophy as a structure in a novel and in a sense I still use it. I would not say now that I am any longer an existentialist in the social sense, the cultural sense. I am really much more interested, in terms of the modern novel, in what fiction is about.

(Vipond, 1999: 174)

The movement is now perceived by the writer as 'rather limiting' because, when it is applied to creative writing, he feels compelled to behave as he did in previous similar circumstances (Vipond, 1999: 119). This different position shows that John Fowles has grown out of the philosophy of existence.

Fowles's turbulent relationship with Existentialism was also influenced by another system of thought which he has always favoured – by Marxism. In the 1950s, serious re-designation of the cultural scene took place in Europe, Britain being a significant part of this process. It was quite obvious that the Modernist movement had exhausted itself, both ideologically and aesthetically. The social and the cultural foundations that supported Modernism had become fragile and the Modernist movement itself was observed as belonging to the upper classes. Ironically enough, so too was the much-praised Marxism of the Thirties. The writers of the new generation, on the other hand, were often from lower-middle-class and working-class backgrounds and had graduated from red-brick universities. This soon found its reflection in a Leavisite direction in the cultural situation. Unlike Modernist authors, the new writers abandoned romantic experimentalism and stood instead for directness and realism, displaying a greater concern about class and the politics of liberalism. Writers like Philip Larkin, C.P. Snow, Allan Sillitoe, Angus Wilson, Kingsley Amis, David Storey and John Wain were introducing different social characters into literature: people from unprivileged backgrounds struggling to improve their social position, factory workers, librarians, clerks and students (Bradbury, 2001: 317-322). At the time of the cold war, the nuclear threat, the Suez crisis and a complicated economic situation, this anti-establishment writing was directly related to the growth of social and political 'Anger' among the younger generation of British people, and its representatives were dubbed the 'Angry Young Men'.

Existentialist philosophy, with its ideas about human freedom, was partially responsible for the growth of interest in Marxism in Europe and the appearance of various New Left variations of it. Both as an existentialist and as a writer of the new generation who grew up in this changing political atmosphere, John Fowles could not but have been infected by this 'working class' air of the fifties, and this effect can be traced throughout his career as a novelist and philosopher. Fred 'Podge' Porter, a confirmed Marxist and an Oxford friend of Fowles, was an important influence in shaping his friend's socialist views (Fowles, 2003: 7n). Characteristically, Fowles's relationship with Marxism was quite ambivalent. On the one hand, in the interviews and in his very first published novel he expressed his dissatisfaction with the revival of social fiction in its current form. On the other hand, the writer proclaimed his sympathy with Marxism, socialism and related to them the realistic tradition in literature.

Fowles is against the serious politicisation of literature because politics in any literary work might subdue the qualities of art. In his opinion, it is impossible to write a decent socialist novel – this can be done only through the use of parable and moral fable of the George Orwell kind. In other words, there is no such thing as socialist realism – it simply will not be 'realistic' enough to be believed. Fowles holds similar grudges against socialism and Karl Marx's teaching in that they: a) overestimate 'the energy and intelligence of the working classes' and b) 'never understood the vital importance of art' (Vipond, 1999: 30). Marxism is anti-individualist, hence its poor relations with creativity which is traditionally based on the uniqueness of every artist. As late as 1997, Marxist philosophy was still criticised by Fowles for levelling everybody's abilities for the sake of equality: 'We are all two things, one social, the other unique. Marx says most of what needs saying to the first. The needs and desires of the second still go begging, and perhaps always will' (Vipond, 1999: 222).

In a conversation with Rowland Molony in 1973, Fowles explains his position concerning the working class and its main occupations: 'I have a great distrust of work, of labour. I think this is always glossed over in the Marxist canon. I doubt if most work could ever become glorious and beneficial to the individual' (Vipond, 1999: 30). The theme of the working-class novel is closely related to the problem of the Few and the Many (*hoi polloi*), which John Fowles investigated in his early novels – in *The Collector* the conflict between them is described in the greatest detail. Realism is not the only problem of this kind of literature. The working class novel is a novel about the Many, and its characters and situations are, in Fowles's opinion, intrinsically limited. 'Once you've done one good novel about the working class, it becomes a very difficult field to go on because culturally – this is not being snobbish – but culturally it is limited, the situations are limited' – he asserted in 1974. For Fowles, middle class people are far more complex than working class representatives and choosing them as objects of one's fiction is 'just giving yourself more room' (Vipond, 1999: 30). When Susana Onega reminds him that he once placed the protagonist of *The Collector* at the end of the line of 'Angry Young Men' and asks if he had ever thought of himself as a part of 'The Movement', Fowles says that he does not think he could be put into that category but is nevertheless 'grateful that it did happen' (Vipond, 1999: 168). In one of his early conversations, Fowles makes radical remarks about the then current obsession with characters who symbolise the lower classes. Explaining why he did not make Fredric Clegg an attractive character as was then relevant and fashionable, he says:

I also wanted to attack ... the contemporary idea that there is something noble about the inarticulate hero. [...] ... like Salinger's Holden Caulfield, and Sillitoe's Arthur Seaton ... I don't admire beats, bums, junkies, psychopaths, and inarticulates. I feel sorry for them. [...] I'm against the glamorisation of the Many. [...] And he [the common man] needs education, not adulation.

(Vipond, 1999: 1)

But regardless of his negative views on the artistic value of the working class, John Fowles – especially in the second part of his literary career – often indicates his sympathies with socialist ideas, and this is also reflected in his writing. Thus, in 1995 he revealed to Dianne Vipond that the truth about the human condition every writer is striving to find and report, ‘seldom lies too far from socialism and Marxism’ (Fowles, 1998: 374). He also told James Campbell that although he has ‘no faith in socialist realism’, he sincerely hopes ‘the Marxist element in this country will grow’ (Vipond, 1999: 45). In another interview, Fowles indicates the ‘mythological’ and autobiographical roots of his variant of socialism, confessing that the Robin Hood myth has always deeply influenced him:

I myself grew up – he continues – as poor as a church mouse, ethically speaking. My parents didn’t raise me religiously in any except a stock suburban sense [...] I was saved by this book and its great gust of practical – or socialist – common sense, with its two stark commandments: suspect the rich, protect the poor.

(Vipond, 1999: 221)

His interest in Marxism even led to John Fowles being repeatedly interviewed by representatives of various socialist magazines, who saw in his novels some echoes of socialist ideas. Fowles does not exclude the opportunity for a young writer who ‘knows his own environment best, and this environment happens to be working class’ to ‘write a good novel about it’ (Vipond, 1999: 39).

Another link between Fowles’s fiction and Marx is dialectics. It appears that Marxism counts as another specimen in Fowles’s collection of dialectical philosophical approaches alongside Jungian thought and the ideas of Heraclites. Projecting dialectical logic onto his fiction, the writer employs a political (Marxist), a psychoanalytical (Jungian) and a philosophical (Heraclitean) version of dialectics and seems to develop a

paradoxical/dialectical relationship with each of them. For instance, although he sympathises with Marxism, he nevertheless criticises the Many. However, even in *The Collector* Fowles does not actually manage to devalue the working-class Many – as he wanted to – or valorise the existentialist Few. He never tells the Many his final devastating verdict – even though it is easy to accuse him of elitism in connection with *The Collector* and *The Aristos*. Miranda's elitist discourse undermines her pitiful position as a victim, and even the horrible ending does not help the writer to devalue morally the Many. The public simply did not believe Fowles, and not only because this kind of hero was relevant and warmly accepted at that time. The writer does not portray Frederick Clegg in black only – if that were the case, the novel would be merely a kind of inverted socialist realism. Instead, Clegg is qualified as a character who deserves sympathy. Thanks to this dialectical approach, Fowles's political position in his first published novel was largely 'misunderstood', something he complains about in his interview with Rowland Molony: 'The curious history of *The Collector* is that all the sympathy it has evoked has really been for Clegg. Only a tiny minority have had any sympathy for the girl, or for the artist, and this has always slightly puzzled me' (Vipond, 1999: 28). In 'Poor Coco' (1974) the burglar and the educated middle-class occupier of the burgled house recreate the situation of *The Collector*, taking one important step forward: they make an attempt to understand each other. The working-class man from 'Poor Coco' – like all Fowles's characters – is not presented to the reader as either totally negative or totally positive.

Nevertheless, there is an important issue arising out of Fowles's radical disagreement with Karl Marx concerning the third stage of dialectical process, synthesis. In his *Journals* he criticises the Marxist version of dialectics and describes the dialectical process as an infinite deferral of synthesis: 'The dialectic – a dialectic is like an infinity. To suggest that

there is a perfect state, an end, to which the dialectic points, is logical suicide' (Fowles, 2003: 585). He also writes in *The Aristos*:

The most common situation is one where pole and counterpole exert a rhythmic attraction. We are pulled one way, then the other. This characteristic rack situation is what I term tension. [...] Each mind is the field of countless tensions; this being a field for tensions is existing.
To balance is nothing.

(Fowles, 1964: 81)

Once the 'tension and conflict' of the binary parts is shown and their equality is presented, Fowles 'freezes' the situation – like he almost literally does in certain scenes of *The Magus*. In a conversation published in *Socialist Challenge* in 1977, Fowles emphasised his anti-synthesis theoretical position:

I have absolutely no belief in a time when the two sexes will live in unending harmony. What concerns me as a novelist is achieving the point of recognition both of the difference and of the mutual need. What happens beyond that point is not in my view a right subject for ordinary novels until this recognition is publicly established. Till then, alas, it stays in the domain of science fiction.

(Vipond, 1999: 60)

Fowles perhaps finds the 'positive outcome' advertised by Marx too optimistic – and prefers to deny the final synthesis, as he leaves his readers with no definite answer as to what are the 'real' outcomes of his novels. However, the very fact that his male heroes are changed by the end of their adventures points to the presence of some synthesis, some progress which can serve as the thesis for a new dialectical movement – and it often does as Clegg, Nicholas, Charles, David and Daniel grow and develop, forming one continuous individuating male character. The first novel by Fowles to break this rule and introduce synthesis as the final point in a movement is the much criticised, optimistic, Marxist-influenced *Daniel Martin* (1977). This gave Susana Onega an opportunity to ask Fowles if this novel embodies his jump beyond existentialism, and the novelist's answer was

positive. Existentialism represents a black vision of life and it is to a great extent destructive:

When I was writing that book [*Daniel Martin*] I had got very fed up, very displeased with the whole black, absurdist strain in European literature. [...] I suddenly felt "This novel I am going to end happily", and believe me, in our age it is a difficult thing to force yourself to do because the whole drift of modern intellectual European life is that life is hell, it is absurd, it is tragic, there are no happy endings.

(Vipond, 1999: 174)

By making the finale of *Daniel Martin* optimistic, Fowles definitively ended the lasting 'marriage' of existentialism and different versions of dialectics in his fiction (Marxist, Heraclitean, Jungian) – the union which had determined Fowles's literary style as the dialectical engagement mostly preoccupied with tension and the energy it generates, and therefore defying any definite resolution (Frank Novak angrily termed this style 'the dialectics of debasement' [Novak, 1985: 71]). Existentialism and the dialectically-oriented thought was a surprising union, given the knowledge that originally 'existentialism' was a reaction, led by Kierkegaard, against Hegel's conception of 'absolute consciousnesses within which all oppositions are reconciled (Honderich, 1995: 257). Kierkegaard rejected the claim that there will be a time when the different interests of people can be satisfied thorough their comprehension within an objective understanding of the universe. In his view, no such synthesis can do justice to an individual's concern for his/her own life (Honderich, 1995: 258). Fowles's notorious combination of the two warring philosophical systems (for instance, in *Aristos* he simultaneously proclaims himself an existentialist and a follower of Heraclitus) allowed him to employ the dialectical process in his novels but reject the synthesis which would round off a certain part of the hero's individuation process. In this sense, Daniel Martin's appearance on the scene was the turning point, which, as will be shown in chapter 5, also coincided with the final stage of individuation of

the 'standard' Fowlesian hero and his re-birth and transformation into something relatively new for Fowles.

The 1960s saw the beginning of a theoretical close-up on those 'representatives of disgraced rationality', paternal figures, while the last hope of humanism – the existential idea of restoration of faith and meaning 'in times of disrupted existence' – had gradually become obsolete (Fowles, 2003: 37). Sartre and Camus were replaced by the next generation of French thinkers; as Malcolm Bradbury notes, Sartre's artificial empire of signs had been in danger as early as 1953, when Roland Barthes published *Writing Degree Zero*. The book appeared in English only in 1967, so its challenge to orthodox ideas obviously took more time to work in countries outside France. *The Death of the Author* (1968) was Barthes's key text, an influential essay that presented the beginning of the 'science of writing', later developed by deconstructionists (Bradbury, 2001: 373). Barthes denied the author control over words and ideas, something previously taken for granted; fiction could not be an outlet for any kind of serious (let alone universal) truth or instructive humanist utterance. During the sixties and the seventies the fragmentation of the self, alienation and the loss of control over the world and one's own writing gradually transformed from the issues that existentialists saw in their worst nightmares to become the welcomed fresh accessories of postmodernism.

Always sensing acutely the changes in the cultural and political air around him, John Fowles reacted to the reforms as soon as he could, especially as he was able to read Barthes in French. Whereas *The Collector* and *The Magus* are postmodern in the stylistic devices they employ and explore the border between fiction and reality, they are not very 'self-reflective' in the 'classic' sense of this literary term. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1968) was exactly this; it was extremely self-reflective and seemed an outrageous

experiment which created a lot of fuss in literary circles. It was even called by Malcolm Bradbury '*the* first postmodern novel' coming 'at the end of the Sixties, at a time when literature was very down' (Vipond, 1999: 223). With several possible endings, the presence of a limited/omniscient writer/narrator and numerous interludes concerning the problem of authorial power and the characters' freedom, the book echoed popular talk about the death of the author and the end of the novel. Fowles writes in the novel's famous chapter 13:

This story I am telling is all imagination. These characters I create never existed outside my mind. I have pretended until now to know my characters' minds and innermost thoughts, it is because I am writing in ... a convention universally accepted at the time of my story: that the novelist stands next to God. He may not know all, yet he tries to pretend he does. But I live in the age of Roland Barthes; if this is a novel, it cannot be a novel in the modern sense of the word.

(Fowles, 1996: 97)

However, regardless of all his postmodern paraphernalia and the creation of a whole line of characters (like Sarah) doing 'deconstructive' work in the novels, Fowles has never officially backed post-structuralism or deconstruction. Fowles dislikes obscurity of style as well as the ideology of obscurity embraced by such theoreticians as Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes, who actually introduced this form of writing into academic circles. In the conversation with Susana Onega, Fowles rejects the influence of Barthes's *Le Plaisir du Texte* on Mantissa (1982) and expresses his general opinion of the movement he represents:

Dr. Federman yesterday was giving his views on Derrida, Lacan, Barthes... I am exactly like him. I have read quite a lot of them on deconstruction and post-structuralism and all the rest of it. I really do not understand what it is all about. I speak French and I read French quite well but I'm afraid most of it is absolutely over my head. A much more scholarly English novelist than myself is Iris Murdoch. I heard her saying only the other day that she regarded it as philosophical nonsense, very largely. Of course, it can be elegantly expressed; especially Roland Barthes I think is a good writer, but I'm really very doubtful whether all of that has had much influence on me.

In *Mantissa*, Fowles asserts, he had created a good parody of modern French thought instead of confirming it as many critics unfoundedly claimed: 'In *Mantissa* I was making fun of it, rather crude in places. But I was really expressing the old English view that most of French intellectual theory since the war has been elegant nonsense ... attractive nonsense' (Vipond, 1999: 177). A joke in a conversation with Carlin Romano would probably best characterise John Fowles's attitude to theories such as deconstruction. Romano said that although he honestly tried to read Derrida, the only full moment of communication that ever took place was when he ran into Derrida at the door of a pizzeria in New Haven. The latter 'was sort of forced to say, "Excuse me"'. 'That was a very meaningful statement by his standards' – Fowles replied (Vipond, 1999: 138-139). On the one hand, the novelist despised clouded French theories for being inconsistent, meaningless and illogical. On the other, it was not so easy for him to dismiss them completely. For instance, he had to agree with Onega that *Mantissa* in one sense is that all-enveloping text that is prior to the writer himself, as post-structuralist theories insist. He also noted once that the true moment of creation is 'a state of uncertainty', indeterminacy, when a writer's consciousness is flooded by the persistent unconscious images – that is, 'when ideas flow in on you with such force that very often you cannot write them down...' (Vipond, 1999: 172). These are not rational moments; they are much more 'shamanistic' as it is not the author who contains the ideas but the creative ideas which come to him from the unconscious.

Although he does not accept deconstructivist 'official propaganda', Fowles's belief in the emancipation of repressed material conforms to the main theoretical points of deconstruction. The curious fact is that, as can be observed in his novels, Fowles's opinion often coincides with the anti-order, anti-masculinist concepts of deconstruction – and it is

these coincidences that provided many critics with a good opportunity to examine Fowles's novels using theories the writer himself would never subscribe to. In many of his essays and interviews he called himself an advocate of the feminine principle, whose voice unfortunately has not been heard during the years of the repression by the Law of the Father. This had been destroyed by women themselves as well as by men; in the worst times of exploitation, such as the Victorian period, 'women have largely worn male faces and gone in just as stupidly for social status, kowtowing to authority and all the rest' (Vipond, 1999: 76-77). And even the battle inside the binary opposition is less destructive 'when the female principle dominates or has at least some part of parity, as during the escape from the Dark Ages, the Renaissance and our own time' (Vipond, 1999: 60).

Nevertheless, masculinity and its wars with the female principle are an important part of the writer's fiction. Deconstruction is non-dialectical, it celebrates only one half of the binary opposition, whereas Fowles in his fiction is looking for the fruitful 'tension and conflict' approaching synthesis (but not achieving it), inside the opposition. His fictional worlds are based on what critics call 'Fowlesian' dialectics, not disintegration. As a writer, he cannot defend only male or only female principles as they have 'essential and mutually indispensable natures' (Vipond, 1999: 77). He refuses to be completely anti-masculine, and it is quite clear why he is irritated by the language deconstruction uses – this language lacks 'masculine' properties.

In fact, it is Fowles's views on the relations between the male and the female that have caused the greatest controversy among literary critics. The novelist more than once claimed himself either to be a feminist or to have a feminine mind. In interviews, when asked about his attitude towards the feminist movement, Fowles usually expressed his respect for women's right to moral and physical independence from men. He attributed his great sympathy for the opposite sex to his intellectual 'bisexuality': 'I consider myself a

sort of chameleon gender-wise. I am a novelist because I am partly a woman, a little lost in mid-air between the genders, neither one nor t'other. I certainly think that most novelists are a result of not being clearly typed sexually' (Fowles, 1998: 367). This interesting idea aims to explain the art of novel-writing as some 'marriage' of rationality and creativity. Femininity, in the writer's opinion, is associated with progress and innovation:

The petty, cruel and still prevalent antifeminism of Adam-dominated mankind ... is the long afterglow of the male's once important physical superiority and greater utility in the battle for survival. To the Adam in man, woman is no more than a rapable receptacle. This male association of femininity with rapability extends far beyond the female body. Progress and innovation are rapable; anything not based on brute power is rapable. All progressive philosophies are feminist.

(Woodcock, 1984: 13)

This view is particularly interesting because here he links the 'unconscious' and 'irrational' feminine principle with the progress that is traditionally associated with rationality and, speaking in Jungian terms, with the psychological function of thinking. In an early (1974) interview conducted by James Campbell there is confirmation of Fowles's thoughts on the basic equality of the masculine and the feminine principles: 'I think—he said—one of the things that is lacking in our society is equality of male and female ways of looking at life' (Vipond, 1999: 42). Regarding Jungian psychology as important for an artist, Fowles owes Jung the concept of the anima archetype which is very important for him as a male writer (Fowles, 1998: 371). Animas are muses for his heroes; in his novels they are indeed associated with freedom and progress, whereas male characters are often criticised for their egoistic and sometimes sexist behaviour towards them. Clegg from *The Collector*, Nicholas of *The Magus*, David in 'The Ebony Tower' and Charles from *The French Lieutenant's Woman* are either implicitly criticised by the author or punished for their views and have to undergo the complicated and long process of transformation into self-awareness.

But although many critics have celebrated his sympathy for women, still there are debates as to John Fowles's relation with the feminine: the way the novelist uses the anima concept can be looked at from a different perspective and then the whole picture does not seem quite so coherent. One sometimes feels that John Fowles follows Jung in his relation with the unconscious/feminine and that is the primary reason why he values Jungian psychology as substantial for a creative male. Indeed, Fowles has perhaps sensed the weakest 'male' moment in the overall Jungian theory – what Christopher Hauke summarises as the confusion of the unconscious with the feminine, the unwilling projection, the realisation of the metaphor, that is, treating all women as 'animas' inhibiting one's unconscious. Fowles's heroine always retains her mystery throughout the novel and often serves as a mysterious inspiratrice for the male character. Another source of the writer's masculinism is Freudian and post-Freudian ideas, particularly variations of the 'male loss' theory which is mainly preoccupied with the importance of masculine experience of coming into the world and relegating 'mothers' to the area of male pleasure and lust. It is not surprising that Fowles is not coherent in defending the feminine principle. His self-contradictory approach to the art of novel-writing has allowed him to switch between different narratives and intellectual positions (including Freudian and Jungian) that suit him at the moment. Because part of Fowles the writer 'remains male', as he expresses it, it is not possible for him to be completely objective as regards relationships between the sexes. That is why the heroines of his novels can simultaneously be presented as women who refuse to be part of male fantasies and as the ultimate male dream figures – lustful 'whores' and pure 'angels'.

Fowles has certainly never been a feminist in the political sense of the word. As he explains in the interview with Susana Onega, his relationship with the feminine is based on a respect for the primordial and intrinsically 'irrational' features of woman: 'I am not a

“feminist” in the fiercely active political sense it is usually used in England and America nowadays, but I have sympathy for the general “anima”, the feminine spirit, the feminine intelligence, and I think that all male judgements of the way women go about life are so biased that they are virtually worthless (Vipond, 1999: 180). The real power of women, according to Fowles, lies in their ability to feel intuitively:

The real feminists in England do not like this sentimental talk of female intuition. I am afraid I still have faith in that. Women cannot, I think, sometimes think as logically and rationally as men can, but thinking logically or rationally often leads you into error. It is by no means certain that the result is any worse in a woman, if you like, muddling her way through to a decision, or feeling her emotional way to a decision, than that of a highly rational man.

(Vipond, 1999: 180-181)

Critics who insist there is a strong line of sexism not only in the attitude of the male characters to the female ones in Fowles’s work but also in the treatment of women by the writer himself, are emphasising a sort of gender exploitation of which Fowles seems to approve from time to time. Fowles’s female characters are, in Peter Conradi’s words, ‘tutors, muses, sirens, nannies and gnomish trustees of the mysteriousness of existence’ (Conradi, 1982: 91) – anything but independent personalities. Bruce Woodcock in his book *Male Mythologies: John Fowles and Masculinity* explores the contradiction in Fowles ‘between a progressive recognition that men must change, and a nostalgic desire that women should do their job for them’. That is, Woodcock implies that some of John Fowles’s views can be subjected to his own pro-feminist criticism (Woodcock, 1984: 15). Female characters are represented as beautiful but silent muses, are seen mainly in relation to the male’ and serve the purpose of redemption and education of the male character (Woodcock, 1984: 15). This means that if women are associated with progress and innovation in Fowles’s novels, it is not because they are allowed to ‘create’ progress; it is because their task is to inspire men to ‘create’ progress. They are used mainly to civilise

and educate male characters, to either inspire them or challenge their egoistic complacency – again, in order to trigger the heroes’ instinct to change and move on with their lives.

It is interesting to watch how the writer fights back and discards such accusations. In the conversation with Jan Relf, John Fowles gives his reaction to Bruce Woodcock’s criticism. Jan Relf asks him what he thinks of the assertion that his ‘stance as a feminist writer is a posture’ and that what Fowles is really doing can be called the promotion, and not the exposure (as Fowles claims it is), of the very myths of masculinity. Fowles’s answer is that Woodcock’s requirements are too difficult for him as a male novelist to fulfil: ‘I don’t feel that I’m doing that [promoting male myths]. His viewpoint was fairly extreme in feminist terms, wasn’t it. I daresay by that standard I do fail’ (Vipond, 1999: 123). At the same time, to his credit, Fowles has always been aware of any cultural biases he might have as a male novelist: ‘I have a very good academic friend, Dr. Jan Relf of Exeter University, and she is constantly pulling me up for the careless way I talk of women. Masculinity is like the old pea-soup fog, a weather condition I remember from youth. It takes you a long time to realise not only where you are but where you ought to be. True humanism must be feminist’ (Fowles, 1998: 381).

Whereas philosophical influences such as Existentialism, Deconstruction and Marxism form the political and historical framework of Fowles’s novels, the hero’s personal life is often mapped by Fowles (consciously or unintentionally) with the help of various psychoanalytic theories. It is common for the writer to include direct references to Freud and Jung in his novels. This introduces a very special postmodern ‘flavour’ into the texts and also lets one trace Fowles’s own views and preferences. Thus, Henry Breasley mentions Jung in ‘The Ebony Tower’, Daniel Martin regularly remembers Freud and there are numerous references to Freud in *Mantissa*. Apart from directly writing psychoanalysts

into narrative, the novelist in addition employs Jungian and Freudian theories to construct the plot and the characters (for example, Jungian archetypes and archetypal situations, Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex, the lost mother and constant masculine desire to reunite with her). Also, in many interviews at different stages of his literary career, as well as in the preface to the revised version of *The Magus*, Fowles admits his debt to Jung and Freud. In his famous preface to *The Magus*, he describes the Jungian influence on the novel as 'obvious' and confesses that the psychoanalyst's theories interested him greatly at the time when *The Magus* was being created.

In his characteristic manner, Fowles uses Freud and Jung as two opposites to create tension and conflict in his fiction. Their theories help organise the text and guarantee its effect on the reader; because, in Fowles's view, Freud and Jung were both myth creators, they provide useful 'scales or maps' (Vipond, 1999: 109-110). Freud is certainly trusted and used as the analysing, challenging force whereas Jung's role is different. He and his theories provide the creative inspiration. Fowles himself confirms this in the interview with Dianne Vipond: 'Fragments of Freud and Jung have long helped me make my chrysalis case, especially the latter. I've always said that if I knew myself to be deeply disturbed, I'd rather go to a Freudian psychoanalyst, but that Jung is infinitely more valuable for an artist'. In another interview he says that he likes 'the mechanical structure' of Freudian theory, it is 'a satisfying kind of symbolism', whereas for a writer 'Jung is the best person to read' because he is fertile and fruitful (Vipond, 1999: 165). Psychoanalytic myths organise and concentrate the power of imagination. It is tempting to apply these maps of the mysterious human psyche to the text; the process of deciphering, disclosing the hidden meaning is very attractive – John Fowles, in his own words, 'has often found psychoanalytic and psychiatric investigations of books a great deal more fertile than purely literary (or classifying) ones' (Vipond, 1999: 109-110). It is interesting that Fowles himself

has never drawn any definite line between the way in which Jungian and Freudian ideas are used either deliberately or unconsciously in his novels. What Fowles uses is a mixture of both theories, which are arranged inside the texts in such a way that they do not contradict each other. They are the two angles from which the same problem is shown. All the famous female muses in Fowles's novels can be studied both from the 'male loss' theory as analysed by Gilbert Rose (the desirable incestuous unity with the lost mother), and from the point of view of Jungian archetypal discoveries as the more optimistic, transformation quest. The history of Fowles's relation with psychoanalytic theories is, in fact, the story of his being torn between authoritative, all-explaining ideas and a creativity free of all restrictions, between consciousness and the unconscious. Freud and Jung and their myths represent disintegration and reconstruction; they are an important part of Fowles's dialectics and his literary task is to show the equality inside the binary opposition.

Apparently, Jungian Analytical Psychology drew Fowles's attention and gained its deserved place in his books thanks to its theory of oppositions. Like Jung, Fowles borrowed the word *enantiodromia* from the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, in order to describe his dialectical view of the world. By *enantiodromia* Heraclitus meant 'unity-in-opposites' (Honderich, 1995: 352), a pre-existing polarity which regulates itself (Jacobi, 1973: 54). Describing such highly abstract things as the tension inside binary opposites, Heraclitus believed that what he had to deliver went beyond the limits of ordinary language. Despite the consequent difficulty of his work, after being rediscovered at the end of the eighteenth century, Heraclitus' popularity has grown. (Honderich, 1995: 352). Hegel, whose dialectical logic then influenced Marx, openly acknowledged his indebtedness to Heraclitus.

Fowles writes in *The Aristos*: ‘...polarly and tensionally is how we normally think, conceive and function. Man is an enantiodrome, an existence between two ice-twinned caps’ (Fowles, 1964: 77). Jung applied the notion of *enantiodromia* to the psyche as it helped him to describe the psychic system as dynamic and capable of renewing itself. In Jung’s view, psychic energy depends on a pre-existing polarity and fluctuates between opposites; it is usually accumulated in the ‘repressed’ psychic contents and stored in the neglected side of the psyche. The tension inside such binary oppositions results in a revaluation of the earlier values and the birth of ‘the third’:

Everything human is relative, because everything rests on the inner polarity; for everything is a phenomenon of energy. Energy necessarily depends on a pre-existing polarity, without which there could be no energy. There must always be high and low, hot and cold, etc., so that the equilibrating process—which is energy—can take place. ... The point is not conversion into the opposite but conservation of precious values together with recognition of their opposites.

(Jacobi, 1973: 54)

The Jungian individuation process is based on the revaluation of former values and in its classic version consists of the ‘hero myth’, the development of consciousness, which takes place up to a certain age, followed by ‘the quest for the mother’, or the recognition of the values of the unconscious which leads, finally, to the transcendence of both the binary opposites. The second stage is the reversal of the first stage and is principally an attempt to restore the balance within the psychic system. By the time the person is approximately thirty, his or her hero myth slows down; instead of intensively developing one’s intellectual properties, one has to find the time for inner contemplation and liberation of the undervalued emotional values. Quoting Jung, Jolande Jacobi explains this using the physical law of the conservation of energy as much of the total amount of psychic energy now flows into the unconscious rather than the other ‘communicating vessel’ (Jacobi,

1973: 55). The person learns to respect both the opposites and to value their unique and indispensable contributions.⁷

It seems that John Fowles finds the quest for individuation a convenient formula through which to structure his heroes' psychic development. Apart from the separate quests in individual novels, Fowles's fiction can be defined as displaying one continuous individuation process characterised by the 'classic' order of stages. The Fowlesian male character takes part in one long meta-quest which begins with his being too hedonistic and immature (Clegg, Nicholas), then becoming rational and conscious (Charles, David), and finally reaching a state of 'synthesis' in which the two parts of the psyche are reconciled (Daniel Martin). The hero thus remains 'in the realm of the unconscious' till a certain age and is criticised by the writer for his irresponsibility and egoism. He is forced into the hero myth in order to develop qualities appropriate for a mature person. After becoming 'civilised', the hero is disliked by Fowles as a far too rational and morally strict man, and is punished by the writer in that he is haunted by 'forbidden' desires and emotions. In the first two stages, the forces which become repressed as a result of the over-development of one of the sides of the psyche, tend to produce a Gothic effect in relation to the male character as they fight for the right to be accepted and recognised. In Fowles's long fictional individuation, Clegg and Nicholas constitute two parts of the hero myth and are closer to each other than those characters which represent the second part of the Fowlesian question – Charles and David. Together, they form one hero who struggles to grow out of the unconscious and beyond the persistent image of the mother. Therefore, in order to show the dynamics of evolution of the hero myth in Fowles's writing, it is more

⁷ In reality, the order, number and timing of these stages can be varied as they depend on the unique layout of each individual's psyche. As Christopher Hauke told me in a private conversation, although exaggerating, these days even a baby may have a mid-life crisis.

appropriate to discuss *The Collector* and *The Magus* in one chapter than to deal with them in two separate pieces.

The release of tension within the pair of binary opposites is usually delayed by Fowles and only used in *Daniel Martin* as the final stage of his long fictional quest; *A Maggot* sums up the whole individuation process as Susana Onega convincingly demonstrates (1989). In fact, the quest which formerly took Fowles ages to draw and ‘live through’, finally is squeezed into one book. This resulted in *A Maggot* being too long, too complex and explains the cause of its lack of popularity with the reading public. In *Daniel Martin* the result of the dialectical tension is famously called a ‘whole sight’, which sounds similar to Jung’s concept of ‘wholeness’ (Fowles, 1998: 7). According to Jungian thought, ‘wholeness’ is achieved ‘when the main pairs of opposites are relatively differentiated, that is, when both parts of the total psyche, consciousness and the unconscious, are linked together in a living relation’ (Jacobi, 1973: 105). In *A Maggot*, the result of Mr. B’s quest is the birth of the self which is shown as the appearance of Jesus Christ and ‘redemption’ of the dark figures of the anima and the shadow (Rebecca and Dick).

The elimination of tension inside the binary opposition seems totally disadvantageous to Fowles as a writer, as he holds Freud’s and Gilbert Rose’s view that a real artist creates only if he has a sense of loss, ‘an unconscious drive towards the unattainable’ (Fowles, 1998: 140). A novelist, then, does not need to be cured – the cure, according to this view, puts an end to creativity. ‘If I needed psychiatry, I would rather go to a Freudian’ is a proof of the writer’s trust in the great theoretician of psychoanalysis. Fowles himself once revealed that creative moments often come to him when he feels ill or depressed (Vipond, 1999: 172). Freudian ideas, which place special emphasis on the basic incurability of psychological problems, seem to Fowles more appropriate as regards the precious ability of writing. Tension is energy – the energy of writing, and his own way of

keeping working is to stay in between 'the lost mother' of the past and 'an unattainable goal', which is to return into her. Even though *Daniel Martin*, in which the writer gets rid of the agonizing 'loss', is the most 'positive' book of all his works, it is also the least Gothic as a result of the elimination of tension between the binary opposites. *Daniel Martin* will therefore be discussed in the thesis in so far as its role in the transformation of the individuation process in Fowles's works is concerned, and will not be considered in detail.

In his 'loss-driven fiction', John Fowles uses conflicting discourses and challenges values probably more than any other contemporary writer. Thus, his work does not lend itself easily to logical explanations and critical analysis. He often uses opposites to construct a more faithful picture of the postmodern world as well as using them to reveal the individuation process of his postmodern hero. His ability to use simultaneously the confrontation of different systems of thought, notions and styles – existentialism vs. deconstruction, Marxism vs. existentialism, Freud vs. Jung, (Gothic) romance vs. realism – in order to denote the dialectical spiritual development of his male character and display his struggle towards the transcendence of the paternal and the maternal, characterises John Fowles as a true postmodern dialectician.

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Chapter 2

The Gothic in *The Collector* and *The Magus*

Even *The Collector* (1964), John Fowles's first published novel, employs Gothic archetypes. On the level of plot, their use in this book is based on the founding motifs of the tradition: the 'classic' Gothic cellar in the 'castle' where Clegg keeps Miranda; the fair maiden as the victim of the corrupting forces of evil; the sinister atmosphere of the novel which, though realistically depicted, on the symbolic level can be traced back to the origins of the Gothic novel in the 18th century. The castle, the cellar, and the maiden are, of course, conventional and closer to reality than in any romantic Gothic novel, but the skeleton is the same. As Fowles records in his recently published journals, this erotically charged Gothic theme in *The Collector* had at least three sources of inspiration. One was his own lifelong fantasy of imprisoning a girl underground, always a famous person such as Princess Margaret or various film stars (Fowles, 2003: 543). Another source of inspiration for the novel was the real-life story of a boy who captured a girl and locked her up in an air-raid shelter at the end of his garden (Vipond, 1999: 2). In addition, *The Collector* was influenced by Bela Bartok's opera *Bluebeard's Castle*, which Fowles mentioned in many interviews as well as in his journals: 'I've always been interested in the Bluebeard syndrome, and really, that book was simply embodying it in one particular case. It's really a casebook for me' (Vipond, 1999: 34). The dangerously intoxicating archetypal male fantasy in the *Collector* is, in fact, a postmodernist variant of the original Gothic plot.

Postmodernism brought to *The Collector* a de-romanticisation of all the characters. The bold postmodernist tradition of putting together completely different literary genres allowed John Fowles to use 'subjective' romantic Gothic in 'objective' realistic circumstances. Ronald Binns expresses a similar view, saying that 'Fowles takes this romance situation and updates it, infusing it with psychological, metaphysical and moral

dimensions' (Binns, 1986: 24). The time of great Gothic villains has passed. Clegg is not like any classic evil-doer, he is not some powerful Bluebeard or a mysterious sorcerer, but merely a pitiful and irritating young man in his twenties. Neither does Miranda resemble an innocent maiden; instead, she is clever, educated, active and sexually more experienced than her persecutor. In fact, it is he, not she, who listens and obeys and she, not he, who gives abuse and issues commands.

In the eyes of Miranda, a representative of the middle-class, Clegg, who aspires to belong to the lower middle-class, is a humble, uneducated working class animal. The class discourse is one of the important levels of the narrative determining the plotline and, as Peter Conradi notes, gaps and disjunctions between Clegg's and Miranda's narratives conditioned by the differences in their upbringing turn the book into 'a sad comedy of two opposed kinds of social inadequacy' (Conradi, 1982: 35). In foregrounding the problem of irreconcilable social differences, Fowles displays the sad truth that a unified, universal, ideal discourse of communication is impossible. Miranda's tone is often humiliating: 'Don't you ever read proper books – real books? (Silence.) Books about important things by people who really feel about life. Not just paperbacks to kill time on a train journey. You know, books?' (*TC*, 148).¹ She ensures that Clegg feels every swing of her mood: 'Another bad day. I made sure it was bad for Caliban too. Sometimes he irritates me so much that I could scream at him' (*TC*, 161). Clegg, regardless of all the physical power he has, is adoring and subservient, just as the original slave Caliban from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Up to the very end of his diary (that is, while she was still important to him) he does not dare to abuse his position of power and control, unlike Caliban who, if we are to believe Prospero, tried to rape Miranda. The scene in the garden at night, when Miranda is

¹ All references to *The Collector* are to the Vintage edition, 1998, London: Vintage, hereafter referred to in the text as *TC*.

allowed to breathe fresh air, is probably the best example of 'Caliban's' humble and adoring behaviour:

When we came out she spent a few moments just taking deep breaths. Then I took her arm respectfully and led her up the path between the wall that ran up one side and the lawn. [...] As I said, I never had any nasty desire to take advantage of the situation, I was always perfectly respectful towards her (until she did what she did) but perhaps it was the darkness, us walking there and feeling her arm through her sleeve, I really would have liked to take her in my arms and kiss her, as a matter of fact, I was trembling.

You wouldn't believe me if I told you I was very happy, would you, I said. [...]

All I'm asking, I said, is that you understand how much I love you, how much I need you, how deep it is.

(TC, 62)

Being in such an advantageous position with such an unusually 'respectful' kidnapper, Miranda nevertheless plays the wrong card and does not try to play up to Clegg and pretend to be what she does not want to be. Instead, Miranda struggles to preserve her independent self, the right to be herself. To prove to us that this is absolutely necessary (and was not just an artificial excuse for the writer to kill the heroine) and that Miranda's independence is really more important to her than even her life, John Fowles utilises the whole arsenal of his famous psychological realist techniques. For *The Collector*, he even chose one of the most interesting and ambiguous genres – the diary – as the ultimate means of expression for his characters, because the diary has the capacity to reflect all the smallest movements of its writer's soul.

The Gothic plot is artfully inscribed by Fowles into the two diaries, but is presented in them from completely different points of view. The presence in the novel of two antagonistic focalising points allows the writer to create a 'three-dimensional' text, giving the reader an opportunity to gain a more objective view of the events. This is the first time that Fowles employs his characteristic 'equalising positions' within a novel, defying any black-and white resolution of the conflict. The principle of contrasting positions neutralising (or complementing) one another has since become an integral part of Fowlesian dialectics.

The Gothic effect, created by the main character's personal psychological problems, evolves and changes with the unfolding of the plot and must be studied separately in Clegg's and Miranda's diaries. In the male narrative we can see the anima archetype in action, its Gothic impulses and its evolution in relation to Miranda. In Miranda's text only the results of this action can be seen. Susana Onega writes that 'Clegg's narration can be described as a narrative with internal focalisation where the narrator and the focaliser are the same: Clegg speaks in the first person and restricts his observations to his own perception of events...' (Onega, 1989: 13). It is obviously the main, dominating discourse. Miranda's diary, locked within the master's discourse is thus disadvantaged and, again in Onega's words, 'functions as an enormous anachrony' (Onega, 1989: 13). It lacks the power and even attraction of Clegg's text, but is nevertheless very important because it represents Miranda's actual, independent voice and aims to 'modify the meaning of the first narrative by offering a divergent interpretation of the story' (Onega, 1989: 13). As far as the Gothic and its effect in the novel are concerned, the master's narration is more important than his victim's, mainly because it is not only about *the result* of the working projection (like Miranda's diary), but the exact recording of the projection itself.

Fowles employs one of the basic fabulas of the genre without retaining its typical content – that is to say, non-realistic characters and romantic settings. Miranda is a modern girl and lacks the fragility of a romantic heroine, openly despising Clegg instead of being terrified by him, which strips the postmodern version of the Gothic plot of the maiden's horror of the patriarch. Instead, Miranda's terror is her moral suffering and loneliness, her hatred of Clegg-Caliban. The heroine's Gothic situation is very postmodern and to a great extent existential: she suddenly realises that 'God is dead'; there is no big paternal figure to help her and that she has been abandoned in the irrational, uncontrollable emptiness of a cruel and unfamiliar world. In addition, what in classic Gothic texts used to be the negative side of the old wise man archetype (that is, the Gothic villain or an evil magician) which significantly contributed to the Gothic atmosphere, becomes Clegg in the novel and loses

its archetypal value. Pitiful and stupid, Clegg is a parodic, postmodern version of the patriarch – the version that belongs to the times of the global reversal of values when masculinity started to be officially ‘deconstructed’. *The Collector* is, in fact, Fowles’s criticism and deconstruction of masculinity with Frederick Clegg symbolising the end of male domination both on the social and the ideological level: as the domestic god and the prevailing binary opposition.

In contrast, Miranda as a Gothic heroine preserves her archetypal significance for Frederick Clegg who perceives her as the obscure erotic ideal of his romantic dreams. For her kidnapper she reflects what Jung calls the anima archetype, the muse, all that is feminine in man, and she opens Fowles’s famous gallery of muses in his novels. She is the victim of Clegg’s unconscious projection of his own anima. The first character in the long line of Fowles’s egoistic males is drawn by the writer as an unsophisticated, uneducated man who is unable to distinguish his vision of Miranda from the real girl. He has yet to learn how to separate his unconscious projections from real people – the difficult skill that none of Fowles’s male characters up to *Daniel Martin* is able to demonstrate. Not only does Clegg project his fantasies onto women he meets; he is childish and completely unaware of the projections and therefore does not possess even the smallest degree of control over his desires that most adults are already able to perform by his age. It is as if his psyche is still partly dissolved in the outside world, and is not yet divided from it by consciousness and self-realisation. Although Clegg is definitely no longer a pre-linguistic infant, his psychic development is lagging behind and, using Lacan’s terminology, his ‘I’ can metaphorically be said to be ‘precipitated in the primordial form’ ‘before it is objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other...’ (Rivkin and Ryan, 2001: 179). In other words, the memories of his pre-linguistic existence still haunt his behaviour as an adult male. He longs to return to ‘the mother’.

At the same time, poor Clegg struggles to obtain this 'I' as he re-invents taboos in an attempt to separate himself from the world of instincts. His psyche undergoes the reverse process – the painful task of emerging from the depths of the unconscious. Clegg feels that his task is to avoid dangerous subjects and, as a result, 'the rhetorical figure that characterises Clegg's language is euphemism' (Conradi, 1982: 35). Indeed, euphemisms such as 'disgusting words' and 'art photographs' permeate the structure of Clegg's narrative, which Susana Onega describes as an alternation of summary and reported dialogue (Onega, 1989: 14). He therefore foregrounds his 'I' in his narrative which consists mostly of recording of events (in monologues as well as in commentaries to the dialogues) and includes a small percent of self-reflection, which, if present at all, is highly prejudiced and egoistically subjective. Some parts of his text demonstrate more ability to analyse the situation than others and some even contain tangled self-reflective impressions and thoughts about the present situation. Thus, when Clegg decides he should be more careful about letting Miranda out of the house, he tries to justify his own behaviour to the virtual reader of his diary: 'Perhaps I was overstrict, I erred on the strict side. But you had to be careful. For instance, at week-ends there was a lot more traffic about' (*TC*, 57). The budding self-criticism (or any other sign of the psyche's independence and ability to detach oneself from one's projections) of this phrase is compensated for by the complete simple-mindedness of the next piece of the diary:

She was just like a woman. Unpredictable. Smiling one minute and spiteful the next.
 She said, 'You are loathsome and you make me loathsome.'...
 Then she said something I've never heard a woman say before. It really shocked me.
 I said, I don't like words like that. It's disgusting.
 Then she said it again, really screamed it at me.
 I couldn't follow all her moods sometimes.

(*TC*, 56)

Thus, Frederick Clegg stands at the bottom of John Fowles's version of male individuation. He begins the evolution of the novelist's heroes from a state of naivety and extends it to the refusal to admit the reality of the woman he likes. In the beginning of the

novel Clegg's dreams seem to be quite innocuous – until the reader learns that the dreamer is seriously going to realise them:

She drew pictures and I looked after my collection (in my dreams). It was always she loving me and my collection, drawing and colouring them; working together in a beautiful modern house in a big room with one of those huge glass windows; meetings there of the Bug Section, where instead of saying almost nothing in case I made mistakes we were the popular host and hostess. She all pretty with her pale blonde hair and grey eyes and of course the other men all green round the gills.

(TC, 10)

Clegg's moody anima projected onto Miranda plays a crucial part in the novel. He unconsciously follows the anima archetype which, like any other archetype, has a dark and a light side. Following her negative part, he behaves like a kidnapper and an animal. Acting according to her positive one, Clegg becomes a glorious knight and a rescuer, and Miranda is his guest and his muse:

That was the day I first gave myself the dream that came true. It began where she was being attacked by a man and I ran up and rescued her. Then somehow I was the man that attacked her, only I didn't hurt her; I captured her and drove her off in the van to a remote house and there I kept her captive in a nice way. Gradually she came to know me and like me and the dream grew into the one about our living in a nice modern house, married, with kids and everything.

(TC, 19)

The 'double' character of Frederick Clegg's anima also shows itself on another level: unconsciously, he possesses two female ideals: the promiscuous and sexually attractive and the domestic and 'pure'. Miranda is neither of these, and Clegg wants her to be both. The most serious problem of Miranda's position arises from the fact that the male character's 'whore' anima is more repressed and less realised than the 'angel' image. The 'bad' anima figure only shows itself occasionally in certain scenes – when, for example, Clegg takes pictures of Miranda lying unconscious in her underwear, projecting his sexual voracity on her and still telling himself that there is nothing wrong in what he does. The 'dark' version of the anima reminds Clegg of the existence of instincts in him – the instincts that he is barely able to control, even with the help of his own numerous taboos.

The *real* Gothic effect of the novel is based on the dark side of Frederick's female ideal on which he is psychologically dependent. His inability to control both the process of projection and the dark traits of the anima is an absolute nightmare not only for Miranda, but also for him. As Binns observes, in *The Collector* 'Fowles deploys the machinery of gothic suspense in a manner equally as breathless and titillating as that of Radcliffe or Lewis' (Pifer, 1986: 24). Clegg is tortured by dreams and visions that he does not even attempt to interpret because of his backwardness and the symptomatic lack of self-reflection. Gothic visions descend on Clegg, drowning his weak consciousness in an uncontrollable tide of dark desires and anxieties: 'I had a horrible dream one night when they [the police] came and I had to kill her before they came in to the room. It seemed like a duty and I had only a cushion to kill her with. [...] I woke up in a sweat, that was the first time I ever dreamed of killing anyone' (*TC*, 77). Because of psychological projection – 'expulsion of a subjective content into an object' (Jacobi, 1973: 93), Clegg's religious, sacred feelings towards the girl, are projected onto poor Miranda who understands him no better than he understands her (*TC*, 13). Embracing the hero-myth, indeed, he denies that he possesses any instincts: 'It's the crude animal thing I was born without. (And I'm glad I was, if more people were like me, in my opinion, the world would be better' (*TC*, 13). 'The projection ceases the moment it becomes conscious, that is to say when it is seen as belonging to the subject' – Jung wrote (Jung, 2002: 60). Clegg never becomes aware of his mistake and he continues persistently to project onto an object. In Clegg's eyes, Miranda, in both love and hate, is not an independent human being, but an essential part of his psyche: she *must* reflect qualities of his soul-image, she *must* behave according to his male fantasies because she *is* the ideal. She must live up to this ideal. The fact that Miranda – whom Clegg wants to see representing the angel part of the anima – pronounces 'disgusting words', makes her seem alien, someone from 'outside' who does not conform to his picture of the ideal woman.

To express his feeling of unity and closeness with Miranda, Clegg writes in his diary: 'What she felt I felt' (*TC*, 222). In fact, he is mistaken about the real direction of the projection: it is not Miranda who is imposing her emotions on Frederick, but rather the other way around. Clegg's sense of closeness is false as it is based on his mistaken conclusion that the girl reflects his female ideal. For Fowles, *The Collector* is a casebook study. Bruce Woodcock's suggestion in *Male Mythologies* is that it is a casebook of male aggressive behaviour in general and that Clegg is 'symptomatic of the male idealisation of women and of the way male power both feeds on and enforces itself through such idealisation' (Woodcock, 1994: 27). Moreover, Woodcock insists that the novel is a casebook of Fowles's personal relations with women and of his 'own contradictions about the whole subject', especially concerning the Bluebeard syndrome and 'his declared fascination for it' (Woodcock, 1994: 27). What, in fact, the critic accuses the writer of is making Jungian archetypes, the anima in particular, serve his personal cultural biases. Unfortunately, sometimes Fowles betrays himself, almost proving Woodcock's theory. In one interview he describes the feminine inside him in such a way that Jungian feminists would attack him on the grounds of 'treating all women as mysterious animas' incapable of independent thinking: 'Anima... it's very difficult for me to say where it came from originally... But it's the idea of the female ghost inside one that's always been very attractive to me. Perhaps it's bound up with my general liking for mystery – the idea that there is a ghost like that inside one' (Vipond, 1999: 165). This phrase might also partially explain the novelist's choice of Jungian philosophy as a way of showing his understanding of the feminine as, despite being a very liberal thinker who supported the complete equality of binary oppositions, Jung occasionally lapsed into a traditional vision of women as more passive and domestic than men.²

² For example, Jung expresses this view in his essay 'Woman in Europe' (1927), in C.G.Jung *Aspects of the Feminine*, Princeton: Princeton University Press (1982).

Woodcock relates Clegg's sexual anxiety, feeling of possession and the 'noble' consummation of the female to the author's latent desires and the contradictions he has always refused to acknowledge. This approach would suggest that the author feels some psychological closeness to the character. Nevertheless, as regards Fowles's attitude towards his relations with Clegg, they are much more complicated and perfectly match his own standard of intricate dialectics. Clegg belongs to the Many who, as the writer implies, are very far from Fowles's ideal (that is, from the Few): they are a non-creative, non-authentic, anti-progressive and profane group of people. Fowles's conscious attitude clearly differs from the possible latent sympathetic feelings towards Clegg and the situation in which he finds himself. The novelist's struggle to present opposites as equal has also affected the way he depicts his characters. Clegg is neither a completely negative nor positive hero; and neither is Miranda. If we do not take into consideration John Fowles's personal dislike of the Many, Clegg and Miranda are almost equal in their tragic fight with each other.

In *The Collector* the result of Miranda's enlightening anima role is very Gothic. She is definitely the most realistically depicted and also the most suffering and independent of all his animas, even more so than Sarah. Miranda is too open to survive in the situation she is put into by her creator. This unnatural openness mixed with elitism secures Clegg's 'victory' even better than his own behaviour. Her protest is more unconscious than conscious and shaped. On the one hand it is based on Miranda's notion of freedom, on the other – on her feeling superior to Clegg in everything, her belonging to the artistic establishment and to his having no taste and being an ugly middle-class aspirant: 'He is absolutely inferior to me in all ways. His one superiority is an ability to keep me here. That's the only power he has' (*TC*, 222). 'The only power he has' forces Miranda to act against her will and moral values and causes the event that constitutes the climax of Clegg's frame narration – the seduction scene. In a moment of desperation Miranda decides to imitate his anima-figure and betray her own voice to reduce the hostility of

Clegg's internal muse. Her promiscuity is not some kind of prostitution, as Clegg perceives it, but a difficult decision taken in the faint hope of making a better person of 'the beast':

Something's gone wrong in his plans. I'm not acting like the girl of his dreams I was. I'm a pig in a poke. [...] Perhaps, I should be his dream-girl. Put my arms round him and kiss him. [...] Perhaps, I really should kiss him. More than kiss him. Love him. Make Prince Charming step out.

(TC, 236)

Miranda makes one very dangerous mistake: she misunderstands Clegg's anima archetype and does what she should never have done. Having noticed his shyness, she decides to free his instinctual side, thinking that this will help him bring all his dark desires onto the conscious level. Miranda realises that she does not correspond to her prisoner's female ideal but somehow comes to the conclusion that it is better to conform to Clegg's unconsciously repressed 'whore' than to the beautiful domestic angel that the newly-made middle class Gothic tyrant now wants to have in his castle. The 'patriarch' Clegg has just grown out of the Middle Ages into consumer capitalism and considers himself free of barbarity and 'immorality'. In fact, in *The Collector* Fowles ironically re-enacts the social conditions of the end of the eighteenth century when Gothic fiction was born and when it first started to remind 'civilised' people of the dangers of repressing the unrealised brutish animal of the Middle Ages. This is Fowles's Gothic revival, or the transition from barbarism to capitalism and middle-class morality with the 'domestication', 'refinement' and 'civilisation' of 'the patriarch'. Clegg, too, considers himself a civilised male free of shameful instincts but, like Manfred from *The Castle of Otranto*, he possesses a castle and a cellar in which to imprison maidens who must be helpless and virginal – true exemplars of 'classic' femininity.

When Miranda suddenly undresses and tries to have sex with him, Clegg is disgusted and terrified: his pure, sacred muse, his ideal, the platonic dream has sunk so low, has become so dirty. He is not dirty when he takes photographs of her in her underwear, but in

his eyes Miranda is definitely a whore, an ordinary woman with a 'one-track mind'. She presents Clegg with a real sexual nightmare:

I was like mad when I got out. I can't explain. I didn't sleep the whole night. It kept on coming back, me standing and lying there with no clothes on, the way I acted and what she must think. [...] Every time I thought about it, it was like my whole body went red. I didn't want the night to end. I wanted it to stay dark for ever.

(TC, 102)

Frederick says this, not realising that he is already in darkness forever. He feels guilty and dirty, as if he had been asked to commit incest. In one sense, this is not far from the truth. To his hero's misery, stupidity, humiliation, self-repression and self-deception, Fowles adds the theme of incest. In Jungian psychology, the first bearer of the soul-image is always the mother; later, as Jung writes, it is 'those women who arose the man's feelings, whether in a positive or negative sense' (Jacobi, 1973: 116-117). The release from the mother and taking on some other anima-figure is thus very important for every male. As he grows up, the mother image becomes dangerously incestuous. To get rid of this persistent figure, pre-industrial societies use special rituals and ceremonies such as the initiation into manhood and the rite of rebirth. Fowles made Clegg a male closely attached to his mother, whom he does not even remember, for she left him when he was about two. Fowles plays with the theme of incest: Clegg's anima is still the image of his mother, for he has never undergone the rite of initiation. Frederick's 'respectful' and chivalrous behaviour only underlines how sacred the mother figure is for him; it is the idealised, 'good' mother-anima that had taken the place of Clegg's real parent: a figure, as he himself describes it, much more controversial than the one living in his unconscious as well as much closer to the fearful 'whore' anima. Fowles's only remark about the character's real mother in the novel appears on the third page of *The Collector*: she 'drove Clegg's father to drink' and left her son with Aunt Annie because 'she only wanted an easy time' (TC, 11).

Miranda, who mistakenly recreates the incestuous and dangerously attractive whore-mother in the notorious sex-scene, leaves her 'disciple' overwhelmed by the feeling that Julia Kristeva calls 'phobia as abortive metaphor of want' (Kristeva, 1982: 35). Despite the fact that the girl fails to handle Clegg's attraction for her from the very beginning and present him with a perfect 'angel', at least she feels that it can somehow be related to his love for his lost mother:

I don't know why she suddenly changed the subject and said, 'Are you a queer?'
Certainly not, I said. I blushed, of course.
'It's nothing to be ashamed of. Lots of good men are'. Then she said, 'You want to lean on me. I can feel it. I expect it's your mother. You are looking for your mother'.
(TC, 51)

Although he is disgusted by the direct 'incest' (physical pleasure from Miranda), Clegg cannot refrain from guilty voyeur pleasure – taking 'interesting' pictures of the sedated victim. Kristeva calls this phenomenon 'voyeuristic side-effects of phobia', that is, of Clegg's hysterical fear of 'the other' Miranda. In Kristeva's view, 'voyeurism is a structural necessity in the constitution of object relation, showing up every time the object shifts towards the abject' (Kristeva, 1982: 46). In other words, this is a 'safe', passive way for disguised, rejected, guilty pleasure to express itself. Its relative safety always leaves room for the object to retreat, invent an excuse for itself and remain 'a normal person' in his/her own eyes.

Voyeurism is less culpable because, being a 'virtual' sin, it helps the projection stay put in the subject. That is exactly what Clegg the voyeur is doing in the novel – projecting and explaining to himself that his own traits and problems belong to somebody in the outer world. After using chloroform to restrain the girl, Frederick suddenly feels a sexual excitement that he is unable to control (but 'nothing nasty'): 'She was still out, on the bed. She looked a sight, the dress all off one shoulder. I don't know what it was, it got me excited, it gave me ideas, seeing her lying there right out. It was like I'd showed who was

really the master' (*TC*, 87). At the same time, Clegg the master feels guilty and seeks an excuse for himself. This excuse he seals in his narration:

I never slept that night, I got such a state. There were times I thought I would go down and give her the pad again and take other photos, it was as bad as that. I am not really that sort and I was only like it that night because of all that happened and the strain I was under. [...] About what I did, undressing her, when I thought after, I saw it wasn't so bad; not many would keep control of themselves, just taken photos, it was almost a point in my favour.

(*TC*, 42)

The respect Clegg still shows here towards Miranda as a woman and as a human being is a temporary phenomenon. As soon as he discovers that she is not his mother-anima as he imagines this figure, he also loses the sense of guilt he had when he felt physical excitement in her presence; this can also be read as the partial success of Miranda's project of 'liberating' Clegg from his instincts. Clegg believes he is a stronger and better personality after Miranda's unusual 'psychoanalytic treatment' as the notorious sex scene allowed him to get rid of the state of constant moral and physical dependence on her: 'I felt happy, I can't explain – I saw I was weak before, now I was paying her back for all the things she said and thought about me. [...] I had real reasons to teach her what was what' (*TC*, 107).

From the seduction scene onwards, Miranda, in her kidnapper's opinion, no longer deserves his respect and honour. She is exposed as being 'like any other woman' whereas Clegg's dream girl is clearly different and unique. Now he can take obscene photographs of her without feeling guilty, and he orders her to pose for pornographic pictures, which he calls 'art-photographs'. He blames and punishes her for defiling the muse inside him. In his opinion, she has shown her 'real nature': 'You took your clothes off, you asked for it. Now you got it' (*TC*, 107). This attitude is a far cry from Frederick's treatment of Miranda as a fragile icon at the beginning of his diary. Then it was he who decided when she should switch from 'angel' to 'whore' to suit his psychological needs. Needless to say, he wanted

neither the 'real' Miranda nor her troubled initiative in the role-play that he had started, but only his own visions of what their relations should be like:

No one will understand, they will think I was just after her for the obvious. [...] There was something so nice about her you had to be nice too, you could see she sort of expected it. I mean having her real made other things seem nasty. She was not like some woman you don't respect so you don't care what you do, you respected her and you had to be very careful.

(TC, 38)

He was mistaken. Miranda is not his mother-anima, not his 'decease', as G.P., her former lover, calls this phenomenon, but an independent person with a free will. Once Clegg discovers this, he disposes of her.

In the part of Clegg's diary before the climax (that is, before the scene of failed seduction) the 'behaviour' of Clegg's anima archetype is both positive (his 'respectful' attitude towards Miranda as if she were a fragile icon) and negative (his guilty interest in voyeurism, the dream of smothering Miranda), whereas in the second part (the actual dénouement) it acts only negatively, thus creating a more substantial Gothic atmosphere. Frederick is not the person who controls the unfolding events, but *is* controlled by his own unconscious. He is overwhelmed by terror, manifested in persecution mania (fear of the police) and in his fear of Miranda, the person Clegg does not understand because she is not what he imagined her to be. Miranda is an unpredictable, irrational creature for Frederick. His descriptions of her manifest all the alienation between them: 'Another day, it was downstairs, she just screamed. For no reason at all, I was fixing up a painting she'd done and wanted to see up on the wall and suddenly sitting on the bed she screamed, bloodcurdling it was and I jumped round and dropped the tape and she just laughed' (TC, 67).

Miranda's uncanny laugh is for Clegg the manifestation of her independence and signals her intention to resist any oppression, physical or moral. It is not at all strange that in his most Gothic dream Clegg is defeated by both the main sources of his horror:

persecution mania and Miranda's laughter. It is her laughter that he wants to destroy in the dream: 'I hit and hit and she laughed and then I jumped on her and smothered her and she lay still, and then when I took the cushion away she was lying there laughing, she'd only pretended to die. I woke up in a sweat...'. 'It seemed like a duty', he confesses (*TC*, 85). Miranda laughs and his anima does not.

Even when Miranda as a rival to Clegg's anima does not exist, having been killed by him, she continues to haunt his imagination in the most typical Gothic-Romantic way. He is afraid she will resurrect herself or haunt him as a ghost, become one of the undead:

It came to two o'clock. I don't know why, I began to think her being dead was all a mistake, perhaps she was just asleep. So I had to go down and make sure. It was horrible. Soon as I went down in the outer cellar I started imagining things. Like she might step out of a corner with a hatchet. Or she would not be there – even though the door was bolted she would have vanished. Like in a horror film.
(*TC*, 267)

He cannot believe that he has at last managed to get rid of that alien 'other'; but something is torturing him. At such a critical moment as this, he starts to show the first signs of his usually dormant self-reflection, a budding ability to self-criticise. He continues to project his inner fears and thoughts onto external objects but this time the externalisation of an internal figure takes an unusual twist. Miranda as an anima is dead and there is no object to receive the inner feminine figure. However, in Clegg's supernatural fear there is already another image working, which is the sign of an awakening consciousness: the shadow/conscience. His unrealised guilt takes the shape of the ghost of Miranda and, though already dead, she has to accommodate yet another of Clegg's projections:

She was there. Lying there all in the silence. I touched her. She was so cold it gave me a shock. [...] Then something moved at the other end of the cellar, back by the door. It must have been a draught. Something broke in me, I lost my head, I rushed out and fell up the stair in the outer cellar and out. I locked the door down double quick and got into the house and locked that door and all the bolts at home.

(*TC*, 267)

The arrival of the shadow makes Clegg feel so uneasy that he even decides to kill himself so that he and Miranda can be buried together 'like Romeo and Juliet'. This would make people think it was 'a suicide pact' and everybody would see that the couple were deeply in love (*TC*, 267). But even this only partially recognised feeling of guilt is temporary: having had these highly pathetic thoughts, Clegg forgets his suicidal aspirations and calms down, looking for a new victim.

In *The Collector*, which involves a classic Gothic plot of abduction of the maiden, John Fowles manages to create a very strong atmosphere of suspense and tension. The complicated Gothic atmosphere is based upon many factors and is built with the help of a wide variety of psychological and literary techniques (all of which he insists he employs unconsciously). Terror is reflected in both Miranda's and her torturer's diaries as both of them are involved in the agony of wrestling with power and destiny, the only difference being that the male character's sufferings are caused by his own psyche. Clegg is haunted by the evil, unpredictable anima and the shadow that makes its appearance on the final pages of his diary – he is 'the victim of the paradoxes of male power', as Woodcock notes (Woodcock, 1994: 19). The male character of *The Collector* finds himself in a dialectical situation when he is torn between two powerful and contradicting unconscious desires: he wants both to revive and exorcise his (physically lost) mother, and this unfortunate situation shapes Miranda's bitter destiny as his anima. Trying to recreate 'the girl of his dreams', Miranda chooses the wrong tactics, and only widens the gap between Caliban and herself. As a result, no Prince Charming steps out; the beast remains what he is, and even plans a new kidnap.

Clegg believes that his victim 'could never understand him' and he supposes that 'she would say I never could understand her' too (*TC*, 87). A tale of misunderstanding and disillusionment, *The Collector* is also a reflection of the post-war/postmodern feeling of being abandoned by God. Miranda's tragic experience of being in a strange and

uncontrollable situation reproduces this kind of disappointment with the world and is the local variant of the 'Gothic of the lost power', or the Gothic of living 'without God'. When seriously ill, she begins confronting the God figure in her diary, writing that 'if there is a God he's a great loathsome spider in the darkness' (TC, 255) and ends up thinking that there is not even anyone to confront: '(Night.) No pity. No God' (TC, 258).

Although there is no greater power in *The Collector* to punish the male character for his misdeeds, ironically, God makes his appearance and is one of the main characters in Fowles's next published novel. In *The Magus* Fowles goes one step further: this time the hero has to be responsible for what he does and ends up facing a conscious choice instead of remaining the slave of his own sexist and egoistic fantasies.

* * *

The Magus

The Magus, a project of Fowles's youth, was finished in 1966 (the year of its first publication) and revised in 1976. Although it was published as his second work, the writer himself considers it his first novel. As Fowles explains in a conversation with Rowland Molony, he wrote the first draft of *The Magus* when he was 28 years old ('much too young to be able to tackle such a project'), then left it for ten years (Vipond, 1999: 42). The book was meant to be a kind of reworking of Alain-Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes*, which Fowles liked in his late teens.

In fact, it was too complicated and risqué to appear as the first publication of a young novelist. Fowles was caught between the (unconscious) desire to realise the unrealisable, abstract myth (the quest) and the impossibility of doing it properly as he did not even know what he was trying to shape: 'A subjective [side of me] couldn't abandon the myth it was

trying, clumsily and laboriously, to bring into the world; and my strongest memory is of constantly having to abandon drafts because of an inability to describe what I wanted (*TM*, 5).³ Fowles's efforts at transforming abstract archetypes into concrete and understandable archetypal images, as it seemed to him, were only partly successful as he found it very difficult to force unconscious images into language, to describe 'the already existent': 'Both technique and that bizarre face of the imagination that seems to be more like a failure to remember the already existent than what it really is – a failure to evoke the non-existent – kept me miserably aground' (*TM*, 5). William Stephenson argues that 'in the 1950s and early 1960s Fowles was an inexperienced writer attempting a novel with an enormously complex rhizomatic architecture' (Stephenson, 2003: 17). Despite the obvious popularity of the first version, the book did not completely satisfy Fowles. In the author's opinion, expressed in the foreword to the revised version of the novel, the old *Magus* was 'a notebook of an exploration' which even in its final published form was 'a far more haphazard and naively instinctive work than the more intellectual reader can easily imagine' (*TM*, 6). In a recent interview, Fowles repeated that after the first publication of the book he still thought of it as 'half done': 'There were many things I hadn't really said, that needed to be said again. It's partly a confusion over what one is creating' (Reynolds and Noakes, 2003: 12).

The new *Magus* was a bestseller for ten weeks in England. Fowles called it 'more than a stylistic revision' although it was not 'in any major thematic or narrative sense ... a fresh version of *The Magus*' (*TM*, 5). Apart from some stylistic corrections, Fowles made a number of changes related to the book's general structure. The erotic element was significantly intensified by the writer as 'the correction of a past failure of nerve' (*TM*, 7).

³ All references to *The Magus* are to the Vintage edition, 1997, London: Vintage. Further quotations from the book are from this edition, referred to hereafter as *TM*.

The other important change was in the ending, prompted by the fact that a great number of readers was not happy about the obscure ending of *The Magus* and demanded a definite answer. Although the final version was less ambiguous, they did not receive an answer this time either, because the hero's quest could not but be left unresolved at this stage on account of his psychological state.

Readers' demands for a clearer resolution of the novel's plot are understandable because Nicholas Urfe, as Fowles's second male protagonist, evoked much more sympathy than his predecessor Frederick Clegg. *The Magus*, Fowles's second book, was started earlier than *The Collector* and thus logically should have been his first; however, the fact that Urfe is the psychological extension of Clegg explains why it was not. Before presenting the reader with a complicated hero with certain moral flaws and serious psychological problems relevant to today's society, it was necessary to show the first stage of development of this type of male, at the same time deconstructing him and revealing the falseness of his myths. Fowles reacted to the end of male mythology in the post-war world in his typical dialectical manner: trying both to reject traditional masculinity and to find ways of changing it for good, at the same time supporting it by retaining its 'politically' privileged position.

The kind of individuation process the writer explores – and this is probably the one that personally interests him most – is the individuation process comprising the 'classic' sequence of stages. This classic sequence roughly consists of three stages which are capable of re-asserting themselves at every phase of the individual's development: the Trickster phase ('unconsciousness') – the rise of the hero ('consciousness') – death and resurrection of the hero ('re-acquaintance with the mother/the unconscious'). This formula, which represents three parts of the so-called hero-myth, has probably been accepted by Jungian psychology as a key version of the individuation process because it is widely represented in world mythology and folklore. For instance, we can observe this formula in its various instances in Greek myths (Prometheus, Theseus, Achilles), the Christian legend

of Jesus Christ, in the tales of North American Indian tribes such as the Winnebago and the Navaho and even in 'new mythology' such as J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-1955). Even though hero myths vary enormously in detail, a typical example would consist of the hero's childhood, his struggle with evil powers, and, finally, his death with consequent (often metaphorical) resurrection. A Jungian Joseph L. Henderson describes it as follows:

Over and over again one hears a tale describing a hero's miraculous but humble birth, his early proof of supernatural strength, his rapid rise to prominence of powers, his triumphant struggle with the forces of evil, his fallibility to the sin of pride (*hybris*), and his fall through betrayal or a 'heroic' sacrifice that ends in his death.

(Jung and M.-L. von Franz, 1978: 101)

Henderson also notes that in many of these stories the early weakness of the hero is balanced by the appearance of godlike figures – or guardians – who help him to perform the superhuman tasks (Jung and M.-L. von Franz, 1978: 101). Usually Fowlesian male heroes, too, have a father figure to guard them in their difficult quest for maturity.

The trickster is the first rudimentary stage in the development of the hero myth, in which 'the hero is instinctual, uninhibited, and often childish' (Jung and M.-L. von Franz, 1978: 104). He is yet to be acquainted with the *logos* principle and therefore does not have a male guardian figure. He does not fight with monsters of the unconscious because he himself can be said to live metaphorically in the unconscious. Clegg is implicitly criticised by Fowles for being too uncivilised and uninhibited, for his lack of self-realisation and responsibility. To use the classic individuation formula, he is still in his trickster phase. He is physically dangerous because although his psychic development stopped somewhere in his childhood, he has already lost the innocence of an animal. He is neither a human being nor a beast; his double is no more the playful trickster, but the shadow – the later variant of the trickster, whose psychological existence is already realised by a figure symbolising the

appearance of consciousness and the loss of innocence (reflected in the Bible as the loss of Paradise). Psychologically, Clegg is a child, a creature who cannot be responsible for what he does because he is almost unconscious of his actions. Anthropologically, he designates the dawn of civilisation and the origins of human consciousness. Clegg's unconsciousness is still bestial but cruelty is, unfortunately, human. Nevertheless, Fowles decides not to punish him, probably because Clegg, a Caliban figure, has already been damned by being such an inferior, undeveloped creature. He gets away with what he has done, as he is still an animal who supposedly is not responsible for his deeds, although he has already committed murder in the most cruel, cold-blooded fashion. His inventor leaves him in this in-between position to 'enjoy' the advantages of being a conscious animal and the disadvantages of being an ugly, unconscious human.

Fowles forces Nicholas Urfe to grow out of his childish 'unconsciousness' and go on to the second stage of the hero myth. The connection between Clegg and Urfe is also emphasised by both texts' allusions to *The Tempest* and, consequently, the allusions to *The Collector* in *The Magus*. Fowles himself argues that he did not introduce these allusions consciously into the novel – unlike, obviously, the case with *The Collector*. Thus, he wrote in October 1956: 'After all these months of working on *The Magus*, I suddenly realised today the parallels with *The Tempest*; Prospero, Miranda, Antonio, Caliban' (Fowles, 2003: 379). Having realised that, the writer added a few more obvious references to Shakespeare's play. For instance, in chapter 33 Julie appears in a fiendish Gothic mask with red glowing eyes and recites from *The Tempest*. She jokes that Nicholas 'makes a rotten Caliban' and Urfe playfully replies that he 'was rather hoping for Ferdinand' (*TM*, 204). If Frederick Clegg lives on the imagined island of his childhood fantasies, in *The Magus* the next Caliban, Urfe, gets locked up on a real island under the watchful eye of a Prospero, Maurice Conchis.

Urfe begins his quest at the point where Frederick left his – at the moment when he would like to commit suicide as a way of correcting his mistakes, but then changes his

mind. With no Prospero to guide him, Clegg remains unchanged and after some pangs of conscience over the dead Miranda returns to his starting position: 'noble exploitation' of females, projection of his inner fantasies onto real people and use of physical force. Urfe, the next in line in Fowles's fictional individuation process, unlike Clegg, is an educated person with a certain degree of responsibility and developed self-reflection. Nicholas Urfe is the advanced variant of Frederick Clegg, but the very fact that he is *advanced* and therefore should be able to be responsible for his actions, leaves him with the double-faced Magus and his band of educators who finally, after much effort, manage to make a human out of the ugly slave of the island. Urfe is destined to be a hero and win the battle with his own unconscious. And his quest *is* heroic as far as the amount of suffering and nervous energy spent on taming the instinctual being in him is concerned.

The Magus contains the clearest quest structure of all Fowles's texts, and this allowed many critics to study the novel from the point of view of Jungian psychology. As Fowles himself admits in the foreword to the revised version of the text, at the time when *The Magus* was being written, its author was 'deeply interested' in Jung and influenced by his theories. As he records in one of the entries in the first volume of his *Journals*, Jungian psychology is 'vitally important knowledge' (Fowles, 2003: 313). Written at the peak of the author's interest in Jungian ideas, the novel's archetypal structure is very transparent. The archetypal images themselves are vivid and powerful. Here, for the first time, Fowles introduces a God figure and the archetypal motif of the struggle with God, which in different variations has survived in his writing up to his most recent novel, *A Maggot*. This is also the first novel with a clearly expressed division into 'physical' and psychological/mythological layers – a feature that has since become Fowles's trademark. In *The Collector*, only the consequences of working of the psychological level of the narrative are seen. The text's psychological dynamic, complete with its aggressive animas and Clegg's uncanny doubleness, remains in the shade. *The Magus* foregrounds its archetypal world, often to such an extent that the reader cannot see the line between

fantasy and ‘reality’ in the text. As Susana Onega explains, ‘the physical journey moves forward and echoes the traditional mythological hero’s quest, whereas the mental journey follows its own psychological logic and is best described as a fictionalisation of the process of individuation of the self, in Jungian terms’ (Onega, 1989: 35). In the physical domain, Conchis is an old eccentric living in some remote villa on a Greek island. In the mental one, he is the old wise man helping Nicholas Urfe to change his life. On this level the novel has a fairytale structure. In 1973 Fowles confessed to Rowland Molony that ‘the battle between reality and illusion’ in *The Magus* was one of his favourite tricks: ‘I wanted to see if I could do magic in narrative and descriptive terms’ (Vipond, 1999: 28).

Nevertheless, even if *The Magus* is a fairytale, it is a very multi-layered and complex one, containing many Gothic archetypes working on different levels. This chapter will therefore concentrate on the principal Gothic figure, the creator of the mystical atmosphere in *The Magus* – the host of villa Bourani, Maurice Conchis.⁴ Since his roles in his own psychological meta-theatre are also numerous, only those which have the most profound and ‘educational’ effect on the hero will be discussed.

The portentous atmosphere of the novel is transferred to the psychological plane of the narrative more than in *The Collector*, as Nicholas’s physical journey does not contain elements of horror or terror although his experience of living close to Conchis does. It is not the ‘reality’ but the romance/mythological level that is responsible for turning the novel into what Binns calls ‘an exotic Gothic thriller’ (Pifer, 1986: 28). The Gothic situations are triggered by the actions of the old wise man/God Conchis when he acts *negatively*, that is, when he shows his dark side and becomes a kind of evil magician. All the other Gothic images, including the double-sided anima Lily-Julie, depend on him and their roles and appearance in the events are also timed and regulated by the old man. The

⁴ In *Form and Meaning in the Novels of John Fowles* Susana Onega presents a very detailed analysis of Urfe’s anima figures Lily/Julie and Alyson and how they relate to each other (Onega, 1989: 59-62).

trial scene, in which his dark side is obviously visible, is the Gothic culmination of the book. Maurice Conchis, with his esoteric aura and unpredictable behaviour, 'constructs' his 'castle' as a world of demons and ghosts. Richard Kane sums up the magus's Gothic entourage:

Old devils, satanic goats, enchanted spirits, death-skulls, Tarot cards and sorcerers – all help to create the demonic atmosphere of the novel. Reinforced by the many underground cells and tunnels, the pervasive metaphor of the labyrinth also contributes to the sense of esoteric mystery.

(Kane, 1988: 130)

Nicholas perceives his experience of living close to Conchis in terms of the hero-myth: he is Theseus and somewhere in the darkness there are Ariadne and the Minotaur (*TM*, 313). Roberta Rubinstein remarks that, when Nicholas saves a thread from Lily's dress to remind him of her reality, it 'does not lead him out of the labyrinth but deeper into it' (Rubinstein, 1975: 330). The labyrinth, in its turn, is the metaphor for the dark and unknown world of the unconscious, and as the boundary between fantasy and reality is gradually erased with the appearance of Conchis, his guest very soon finds himself in the sombre and endless maze of his own psyche. More sorcery from the magus – and Nicholas is completely lost there.

At the same time, the positive side of Conchis as archetypal image is of great importance in the text. It ensures that Nicholas changes in the right way throughout the novel. According to Jungian psychology, in this respect, Conchis performs the main function of the old wise man archetype which is to educate. As Jung writes, this image signifies mostly 'masculine' qualities: it personifies such abstract notions as thought and spirit and is identified with the sun in some fairytales (Jung, 2002: 217-224). It always shows itself to the hero when he is in a desperate situation and needs advice. In fairytales, the old wise man often asks questions 'for the purpose of inducing self-reflection and mobilising the moral forces' (Jung, 2002: 220). This unconscious image appears when the conscious will by itself is unable to resolve the situation and unite the personality. The

archetype often takes the shape of a magician as ‘the resultant enlightenment and untying of the fatal tangle often has something positively magical about it...’ (Jung, 2002: 220). By the time Nicholas meets the Bourani magician, he certainly is in a complicated psychological situation, trapped by his own sexist and exploitative attitude to women and life in general. He feels useless and despises himself for being cruel to Alison, but he cannot help it:

I did not post the letter [to Alison], but again and again, night after night, I thought of suicide. [...] I was worse off than Alison was: she hated life, I hated myself. I had created nothing, I belonged to nothingness, to the *néant*, and it seemed to me that my own death was the only thing left that I could create; and still, even then, I thought it might accuse everyone who had ever known me. It would validate all my cynicism, it would prove all my solitary selfishness; it would stand, and be remembered, as a final dark victory.

(*TM*, 60)

At this moment Nicholas resembles Clegg, trying to prove to himself in his diary that he is really sorry for his behaviour towards Miranda, and will commit suicide out of shame and a sense of futility. Urfe indulges in self-pity and, in Susana Onega’s words, ‘the reasons for his suicide are wholly romantic and aesthetic, a way of creating something at last’ (Onega, 1989: 43). And he does indeed try to commit suicide in the pine forest, but is distracted by a shepherd girl’s song.

Even though it is Conchis who drags Nicholas out of ‘nothingness’, futility and darkness, thus playing a positive role in his life, the eccentric old man is shown in dialectical fashion: he is not only good and beneficial but his teaching is also a painful psychological experience. In his essay ‘The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales’, Jung writes about the role of the negative aspect of the old wise man, using an Estonian fairytale as an example. An ill-treated orphan boy had lost a cow and was afraid to return home for fear of punishment. Tired, he fell into a deep sleep. When he awoke, he saw a little old man with a long beard standing before him. The old man advised him to go wandering, always to the east, and never turn back. In seven years the boy would reach the mountain that betokened his good fortune. Jung deduces:

There is a suspicion that the helpful old man who happened to be on the spot so opportunely had surreptitiously made away with the cow beforehand in order to give his protégé an excellent reason for fleeing. This may very well be, for everyday experience shows that it is quite possible for a superior, though subliminal, foreknowledge of fate to contrive some annoying incident for the sole purpose of bullying our Simple Simon of an ego-consciousness into the way he should go, which for sheer stupidity he would never have found himself.

(Jung, 2002: 227)

The primitive medicine-man, Jung reminds us, is a healer and also the dreaded maker of poisons. The Greek word *φάρμακον* means 'poison' as well as 'antidote', and poison can in fact be both (Jung, 2002: 227). The two contrasting images of Conchis the dangerous wizard and Conchis the helpful old man merge into each other, creating the complex and ambiguous image of the Bourani magician, brilliantly realised by Fowles stylistically.

On the level of plot, Conchis and his lifestyle also evoke many a classic Gothic situation. He plays the authoritative, patriarchal figure who lives in a castle (the villa Bourani), keeps young women prisoners for very obscure purposes and also entices occasional guests into his mysterious home in order to torture them (like Manfred from *Otranto* and Count Dracula, for example). Another archetypal image he adopts is the figure of the mad scientist/doctor, with Nicholas being the 'patient' or the material for his inhuman experiments (similar to, for example, Victor Frankenstein, Hawthorne's Rappachini and Wells's Doctor Moreau). One of the modern versions of the 'mad doctor' figure is the analyst/psychologist, who also is accounted for in the complicated character that is Maurice Conchis. In fact, he accumulates all kinds of paternal/authoritative patterns of behaviour, either positive or negative, but always limiting and controlling. Once the guest is in the castle, he can only see what he is shown, and however hard Nicholas tries to build the rest of the 'castle' with his own imagination as well as capture the core of Conchis's nature, he is very far from an 'objective' view of the situation:

Before anything else, I knew I was expected. He saw me without surprise, with a small smile, almost a grimace, on his face.

He was nearly completely bald, brown as old leather, short and spare, a man whose age was impossible to tell: perhaps sixty, perhaps seventy; [...] The most striking thing about him was the intensity of his eyes; very dark brown, staring, with a simian penetration emphasised by the remarkably clear whites; eyes that seemed not quite human.

(*TM*, 79)

From the moment he sees the old man, Nicholas feels that he is being controlled and blindly led towards something unknown, which inevitably makes Conchis in his eyes look like a Gothic patriarch in several guises. For instance, he tells Urfe that he is 'psychic' and asks him if he feels 'elect'. In his room, the guest finds a collection of ghost stories, together with the Bible. Images of a quasi-Gothic castle, which is 'as quiet as death', the apparition-like 'lady of the glove', the dark and mysterious theatrical tricks and references to 'seance-holders', all scare and confuse Nicholas. Sometimes Conchis, who is constantly changing his psychological image, becomes like a terrible ghost to Nick:

His eyes on mine, Conchis grimaced, as if he found death a joker. His skin clung very close to his skull. Only the eyes lived. I had the strange impression that he wanted me to believe he was death; that at any moment the leathery old skin and the eyes would fall, and I should find myself the guest of a skeleton.

(*TM*, 99)

Even though at first Urfe attempts to resist Conchis's authority by being disparaging ('he was slightly mad, no doubt harmlessly so'), he cannot but admit that the psychological and even physical pressure coming from Conchis is difficult to ignore. At their first meeting Conchis silences Urfe who attempts to introduce himself, takes his arm and leads him to the edge of the colonnade. Conchis's re-appropriation of control embarrasses Nicholas as he notes to himself that the old man's authority and 'abrupt decisiveness' catches him off balance (*TM*, 79).

In some places Conchis's switching between the different images representing the male power principle leads to Urfe's attitude towards the mysterious old man transforming into a subliminal feeling. It becomes a religious affection incorporating both adoration and fear of the unknown but omnipotent and all-knowing entity. Nicholas demonstrates the irrational fear of the victim of a power, or even the fear of being sacrificed, mistreated or

changed without his consent. A classic example of maleness, Nicholas meets a much stronger male – God – and is not yet sure whether his new archetypal position as a dominated/receptive, and not a dominating person, is pleasurable or uncomfortable:

I was increasingly baffled by Conchis. At times he was so dogmatic that I wanted to laugh, to behave in the traditionally xenophobic, continentals-despising way of my race; at times, rather against my will, he impressed me – not only as a rich man with some enviable works of art in his house. And now he frightened me. It was the kind of illogical fear of the supernatural that in others made me sneer; but all along I had felt that I was invited not out of hospitality, but for some other reason. He wanted to use me in some way.

(*TM*, 102)

Because the binary pair ‘victim – master’ in certain archetypal variations might also carry certain sexual undertones, and Nicholas feels that he is being dominated, the theme of homosexuality is inevitable. When Conchis asks his guest whether he would like to swim, Urfe rejects the idea suspecting that the man is ‘simply an old queer’ (*TM*, 85). In fact, Urfe’s sexism and male self-centredness are turned upside down as he plays the role of the ‘female’ in Conchis’s house and is treated as the ‘receptive’, as a carrier of the feminine principle. Nicholas is made the fair maiden in the castle of the Gothic patriarch, and, stripped of his male authority, he has to re-establish himself within this new state of things. He is also made to experience all the disadvantages of the ‘feminine’ position, having been denied the right to decide his fate for himself and even publicly humiliated and ‘analysed’.

Conchis, who evokes mixed feelings in Nicholas – dread, respect, faith, trust, is the main force behind the young man’s existential quest. This is Conchis not in his positive guise, but in his negative guise: the cruel master who demolishes Urfe’s self-confidence by whatever means necessary. In his very controversial essay ‘Answer to Job’ (1952), Jung places the concept of evil in God directly, without splitting it off into the opposing figure of the devil who tempts sinful people. At the same time, Jung often talks about God-images as inseparable from images of the Self – seeing God as a factor in the psyche (as is in the case with Nicholas Urfe) alongside his existence as the Almighty from outer space or any other transcendent figure. As Margaret Clark writes, Jung sees the traditional

Christian story as no solution to the problem of evil as it 'represents an idealised view of the self based on denial of our shadow and our bodies' (Alister and Hauke, 1998: 171):

Jung consistently attacks the view which implies that good is the norm and evil only a lack of good, and which thus minimises the power of evil. ... He reinterprets the story that God created Satan, to emphasise that Satan stays part of God.

(Alister and Hauke, 1998: 171)

From this point of view it is logical for an 'enlightening' 'God' such as God Maurice Conchis to possess a 'devilish', carnal mask as well. Paradoxically, he prefers to 'enlighten' Nicholas using his instincts and contriving sexual situations for him. His teaching is 'by contradiction': through negative, Gothic and not positive examples and situations; and the cruelty of his instruction is actually what substantially changes Nicholas more efficiently than any benign attitude could have done.

Conchis's most impressive Gothic appearance is as the experimenting psychoanalyst in the final scene at Bourani. This climactic scene is a curious compilation of Jungian and Freudian theories; in fact, Fowles put into it 'every piece of psychological jargon he could find' (Vipond, 1999: 35). The connection of the old wise man archetype with psychoanalysis/psychiatry is not accidental. In Jung's opinion, the psychoanalyst is often perceived as the modern old wise man; he represents the new realisation of the spirit archetype because his role in his patients' life is to help them out of a difficult psychological, social or family situation. The result of the analyst's work 'is the untying of the fatal tangle' which, in Jung's own words, 'has something positively magical about it' (Jung, 2002: 220). At the same time, if we see the same paternal figure of the analyst in the light of the manipulating rationalised discourse that it is capable of producing, the 'light', kind and helpful doctor becomes the 'dark' cold and cruel experimentalist, the dictator who has the right to gamble with his vulnerable patient's life, re-interpret his past and form his present and future. As a result of a similar dialectical switch, the trial scene in *The Magus*,

which is focalised through the main character's eyes and belongs to the psychological level of the narration, represents psychoanalysis as a Gothic phenomenon.

In order to portray the Bourani host in his psychoanalytic mask, Fowles uses strong metaphors and dark associations. At the moment of Urfe's arrest, Conchis tries to humiliate his victim and appears to him as a person from hell, the black divinity – the Devil: 'Another figure appeared [in the door]: it was Conchis. He was dressed like the others, in black. Flame, devils, hell. He came and stood over me, looked down at my outraged eyes absolutely without expression' (TM, 489). Urfe's rage increases when, dressed as a clown, he is taken to the 'psychoanalytic' courtroom containing a large throne and cabbalistic emblems on the walls. This scene of psychoanalytic treatment carries many other Gothic archetypal undertones confirming Urfe's passive, 'feminine' position: sacrificial rite, inquisitorial procedures, cruel medical experiment/mutilation and sexual subordination. Being a traditional male, Urfe is disgusted when he finds himself in such an aggressively controlled situation even though he has tolerated Conchis's milder attempts at subordination previously when he was confident that Conchis's role of a tyrant was a game and that he was still in control of his own fate. Now, being exposed to the attention of the authoritative medical panel, Urfe's helplessness evokes in him genuine abjection together with the classic metaphorical vision of loss of the dominant position – castration: 'I hurled all the hate I had in me at him [...]. My mind flashed back to that incident in the war: a room at the end of a corridor, a man lying on his back, castrated. My eyes began to fill with tears of frustrated rage and humiliation' (TM, 489).

While the medical theme of the scene might remind us of *Frankenstein*, the inquisition element evokes many classic Gothic works such as Edgar Allan Poe's short story 'The Pit and the Pendulum' and Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*. Just as the Inquisition used to deal with those betraying the traditional religious order, Conchis plans to punish Urfe for being self-indulgent, for refusing to grow up and evolve into a civilised human being. The Gothic band of doctors emerges, wearing masks and strange costumes: a

traditional English witch, a Neolithic god of darkness, an African horror-doll, a macabre pierrot-skeleton, Anubis the jackal-head, a vampire, and a man in a black cloak with astrological and alchemical symbols painted on it. Following Jungian ideas (this time consciously), Fowles presents them as typical negative archetypes, representing the power of the unconscious. The bizarre costumes taken from totally different cultures, alchemical symbols, cabbalistic signs, mixed with the strong air of medical professionalism ('I am Doctor Friedrich Kretschmer, formerly of Stuttgart...On my right you have Doctor Maurice Conchis of the Sorbonne, whom you know...' [TM, 505]) are all direct allusions to Jungian psychology and probably the Eranos Meetings.⁵ At the same time, Fowles remains faithful to himself, representing Freudian ideas alongside Jungian thought. The medical band imitates Freudian authoritative and condescending language and uses his terminology. The passages from Nicholas's case history very much resemble in style the famous Wolf-man and Rat-man cases:

The subject of our 1953 experiment belongs to a familiar category of semi-intellectual introversion. [...] The motives for [Urfe's being unsuitable for living in society] spring from an only partly resolved Oedipal complex. [...] Time has not allowed us to investigate the subject's specific womb and breast separation traumas, but the compensatory mechanisms he had evolved are so frequent among so-called intellectuals...

(TM, 508-509)

Here, the 'Jungian' part of the courtroom episode is linked to the mysterious, synthetic and creative unconscious, and the 'Freudian' one symbolises the purely conscious analysis. Their perfect effect and the obvious success of the episode is due to the fact that the two approaches are used together and complement each other. Together they present us with a dark and sadistic picture – the picture of the Truth, as Nicholas perceives it. Psychoanalytic investigation as the moment of the Truth is what frightens Urfe. The 'enlightenment' and

⁵ *Eranos* (Gk.= 'shared feast') was the name for annual meetings of Jungian circle. Their original purpose was to explore links between Western and Eastern thinking (Young-Eisendrath and Dawson, 1997: xxvii). Fowles admitted the importance of one of the Eranos yearbooks for *The Magus* (Fowles, 1998: 371).

Jungian relief offered by the old wise man to the mythological hero, turn in Nick's mind into the moral law that is forced on him. And as the whole scene is a projection (which becomes clear when Conchis and his helpers abandon their disciple), the law is constructed as an *inner*, psychological and not an *outer* force. The process of individuation and the need to grow up and revise his actions and their inevitability are shocking for Urfe. The trial-scene ends with the whole medical squad disappearing, leaving their victim staring at a ruined wall. From this moment on, there is not much Gothic and there is not much determinism, as it is supposed that the main character knows how to manage his free will. In the final episode with Alison, Nick still does not believe that he has got rid of these persistent images and accuses her of 'playing to their script' (*TM*, 654).

Peter Conradi compares the self-contradictory *Magus* to black-and-white drawings by M. C. Escher; and indeed, the boundaries between all binary opposites ('good-bad', 'fantasy-reality') in the novel are so fluid that it is impossible to squeeze any definite moral truth out of its dialectical ontological structure (Conradi, 1982: 42). Conchis's dialectical figure is the axis of all the other controversial situations of the book and the very fact that his methods of changing Nicholas for good are rather contentious, and sometimes even scandalous and cruel, provoked negative reactions in some readers and critics. In his article 'The Dialectics of Debasement in *The Magus*' Frank Novak states that the book 'profoundly disturbs many college students' and affects young readers 'in unexpected and unsettling ways' (Novak, 1985: 71). Conchis's actions are perceived by the critic as lacking any moral purpose and civilising or educational value, aiming only at demeaning and confusing the hero. Urfe in his turn takes 'masochistic pleasure in his role as a victim'; it is the response of 'impotent, insignificant man' as he attempts to protect his ego against adopting a 'self-absorbed and self-directed narcissism'. As a result, the novel develops 'a dialectics of debasement whose final synthesis asserts a view of life which is both empty and terrifying' (Novak, 1985: 72-73). In fact, what Novak criticises is the postmodern

quality of *The Magus*, the very concept of 'constructing' omnipotent God in his many guises and personae, and then deconstructing him so that in the end the male character is left without any answer, either positive or negative. Both the modernist presence and the postmodernist absence of God are perceived as equally Gothic by Novak. Neither of these situations satisfies Urfe's infantile selfishness which gradually transforms into the existentialist 'free will' as he wants two incompatible things at the same time: he still expects a paternal figure to tell him what to do – he is lost without 'the father' – but is too much afraid of the pressure which any paternal figure inevitably generates. Nicholas is the Freudian grown-up baby ('womb and breast separation traumas') who wants to enjoy the benefits of adult life without the element of responsibility brought about by the process of growing out of the unconscious, becoming acquainted with consciousness/the 'father' and consequently becoming a rational personality. William Stephenson observes that the would-be existentialist individual may be defined 'by the power relations he or she seeks to resist, in particular his or her relationship with dominant others such as the magus figure' (Stephenson, 2003: 27). But freedom also means responsibility and thus makes immature Nicholas suffer. Malcolm Bradbury even calls him 'an initiate into the cruelty of freedom' (Bradbury, 1987: 286).

This time Fowles does not allow his male character to get away with immaturity: instead of 'naive' Clegg, whose sense of responsibility is sleeping and who cannot suffer morally because he does not realise that what he is doing is actually *wrong*, here is a more mature male who proves capable of self-criticism and therefore has to undergo some serious moral torment and hours of grim embarrassment. There is no God in *The Collector* because its infantile main character is not yet able to grasp the concept of God. Since Nicholas is a conscious person, it is his destiny to meet with the Father. Fowles even provides a mythological parallel to Urfe's sufferings: Nicholas calls himself Theseus; he is forced to participate in a hero-myth, which, according to Jungian psychology, suggests the triumph of ego consciousness over regressive trends (the unconscious) (Henderson, 1978:

112). In other words, his experience on the island signifies the pains and difficulties of growing up. Another element of Fowles's theatrical paraphernalia emphasising the 'first half of the quest' (the quest for consciousness) theme in *The Magus* is the Tarot. Ellen McDaniel argues that Nicholas is the Tarot Fool and cites a specialist in the Tarot, Alfred Douglas, who, describing how the Tarot work, actually presents a very accurate version of the Jungian individuation process:

The individual first adjusts himself to the world outside himself, and then he examines and develops his inner consciousness. The first half of life, Douglas writes, 'can be thought of as solar in nature, as it is outward-turning, active, positive, expansive. In the second half of the life journey, 'lunar consciousness', or inner self-awareness, is acquired through introspection and meditation.

(McDaniel, 1986: 109)

After the self-abnegation of the controlling God, Conchis, whose task was to lead him to 'solar consciousness', 'the Sun',⁶ the more mature Nicholas is supposedly ready to descend into the world of the 'lunar' 'mother'.

The switch of stages of maturation in Nicholas's personal life has a curious but quite logical parallel in the cultural and historical outline of the novel. In the first part of the book, the reader observes an immature, female-exploiting Caliban and an omnipotent, typically modernist male God, a very Gothic patriarchal character in all its variations from Walpole's Manfred to doctor Moreau and Doctor Freud, who 'enlightens' the hero, variously torturing and deceiving him, all for the sake of moral change. In the second part of the novel, just after the climax of this modernist horror, God is 'deconstructed' and all that can be seen is either his complete absence ('the theatre was empty' [TM, 654]) or his now female appearance (Mrs de Seitas). The latter is already the postmodern version of God as she signifies the end of male domination and the shift of attention from male

⁶ In many ethnic cultures such as the Pueblo Indians, the Sun is 'the Father', the symbol of masculinity and consciousness (Jung, 2002: 22). Christianity has retained certain elements of this symbolism, for instance, occasional identification of Christ with the Sun.

dominated discourses to 'the other' – the female and other underprivileged points of view associated with the unconscious, instincts and irrationality. In *The Magus*, Fowles demonstrated an incredible awareness of the contemporary cultural situation not only by describing a personal masculinity crisis, which reflects the general decline of male values in western society, but also by introducing the deconstructed God in the form of Mrs de Seitas at the end of the novel. In fact, Fowles even thought of foregrounding the feminine rather than the masculine as he long 'toyed with the notion of making Conchis a woman – an idea whose faint ghost, Miss Havisham's, remains in the figure of Mrs de Seitas' (*TM*, 7). Fowles's typically postmodern longing for the lost governing principle while realising that the old God no longer exists, is what Frank Novak labels 'the dialectics of debasement'. His passion for *Le Grand Meaulnes*, a novel about youth, and his persistent interest in a philosophy which 'hates' but acknowledges the necessity for leaving the symbolic father – existentialism – are rightly said to have had an enormous impact on *The Magus*. Conchis prepares Nicholas for God's 'vanishing act', as his lessons include stories about the two World Wars – events which finally made it impossible for 'God' to 'stay' in the world. The Fowlesian Hero's own individuation process is thus inscribed into contemporary politics, history and culture.

The Gothic old man/omnipotent God who represents the civilising rational principle is, contra censored Christian dogma, not only good and merciful but also incorporates the devil. The very God who finally helps Nicholas to become less childish than Frederick Clegg, must disappear in order to officially give way to 'the other' again – both with references to the male character's personal problems and the cultural changes at the moment when *The Magus* was written. Now Nicholas is grown up, he can be left face to face with the instinctual forces which he obeyed at the beginning of the novel and can revise his behaviour towards the unconscious.

Frank Novak's valuation of *The Magus* as 'distressing' and 'haunting' (Novak, 1985: 72) comes from the same source as Urfe's despair – from the fear of both the rational God

and his absence. Dwight Eddins suggests that with the disappearance of the psychoanalytic gang, 'Nicholas himself should become the existentialist author, the freedom-affirming player of the Godgame' (Pifer, 1986: 47). At the end of the novel, Nicholas finds himself in the existentialist situation of being left without God and, typically, cannot come to terms with the fact that the Father figure is 'dead', or that he 'disappeared' or even (a later version) 'deconstructed himself'. Nicholas is forced into an existentialist situation of becoming his own authority, issuing his own laws and accepting responsibility for his life; becoming 'his own author'. The difficult task of continuing the spiritual quest is inherited by Nicholas's successor, Charles Smithson, who will start the second half of Fowles's meta-individuation process and who will have to do that from which Nicholas was saved: the descent to the unconscious with the father/author of the godgame already 'deconstructed'. Charles will be the first Fowlesian hero to undertake the quest for 'the mother'.

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Chapter 3

The Gothic in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

The French Lieutenant's Woman (1969) is probably the most successful of all John Fowles's novels. It is a true and masterly realisation of several postmodern techniques, one of them being the notorious multiple ending popular with critics and traditionally hated by readers. Malcolm Bradbury even calls it 'the first postmodern novel' which 'came at the end of the Sixties, at a time when literature was very down' (Vipond, 1999: 223). Innovative, extraordinarily skilfully written and at the same time compact, the book made Fowles famous and remains a perfect example of the clever, elusive and self-reflective 'double coded' postmodern novel. Bradbury writes: 'We'd had Kingsley Amis and the Angries, we'd had Fifties realism, and then nothing much. The extraordinary skill with which John reconstructed the Victorian novel and then set it up in dialogue with the 20th century has had a very powerful effect' (Vipond, 1999: 223). At the same time, Fowles's 'double coding' of the novel presupposes clear boundaries between the codes he employs. One of them – the Victorianism in the novel – is deconstructed and criticised from the temporal perspective of the other – the present situation (that is, the time when the book was written). The writer's use of 'historicity' within the novel is definitely not reproductive; rather, it aims to disclose the unstable, transitional character of political and social discourses, which are always closely related to the latest cultural fashion, as well as to show the pointlessness of the suffering to which their victims are subjected. A perfect example of what Linda Hutcheon calls 'historiographic metafiction', *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is a popular novel which is 'both intensely self-reflective and yet paradoxically also lays claim to historical events and personages'. Its 'theoretical self-

awareness of history and fiction as human constructs' is the grounds for 'its rethinking and reworking of the forms and contents of the past' (Hutcheon, 1988: 5).

As a true historiographic novel, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* loosens the structure of the past and re-shapes historical events according to the standards of the present. Thus, in this novel it is clearly visible how discourses replace discourses and new political fashions arrive while people destroy their own lives trying to conform to the rules accepted in their society. As Tamás Bényei notes, 'through the anachronistic recreation and the transgression of Victorian discourse, the text interrogates the conditional and conditioned nature of the narrative act, its role in the maintenance and subversion of authority' (Bényei, 1999: 77). At the same time, the two codes in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* do not exclude or deny each other. Even stylistically, they include each other and merge to the extent that the perplexed reader is not able to tell what comes from what: is it the postmodern that has the Victorian as its counterpart, or vice versa? Both the codes are alternately defamiliarised, offering the reader a fresh and unusual perspective both on the Victorian cultural situation and life in postmodern society.¹ In Peter Conradi's words, in the novel 'our experience of the local temporal flow is defamiliarised and experienced as disjunction and conjunction' (Conradi, 1982: 72). Defamiliarisation and the translation of Victorian lifestyle into the language of postmodern realities are experienced as intense and ground-breaking particularly because the novel is full of totally different discourses, clashing points of view, philosophical concepts and psychoanalytic ideas. Its background is epically broad. Malcolm Bradbury writes about the scale of Fowles's historiographic ambitions in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*:

¹ This idea was taken further in the 1981 film *The French Lieutenant's Woman* directed by Karel Reisz. The film has two temporal layers: one is set in 1981, when two actors, playing Sarah and Charles, fall in love with each other on set of the film *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and the other recreates the 1860s and demonstrates the final result of the actors' work.

... perhaps it is fortunate that the writing appears ... to pass into more reliable hands, the hands of a novelist who has been seriously concerned about the Victorian problems of faith versus scientific scepticism, about being caught between two worlds, one dead and the other powerless to be born, about the statistics of prostitution, the impact of Charles Darwin, the implication of Karl Marx, the relation between the present, which in this book is past, and the future, which in this book is the present, and the relation between a much admired Victorian novel tradition and a twentieth-century situation which made it virtually impossible to write within it.

(Bradbury, 1987: 280)

The organising centre of the book is a pseudo-Victorian narrator, whose lengthy and competent comments on the events in the novel show that he is also omniscient. But having begun as an omniscient Victorian, by the end of the novel he turns into a pathologically unreliable postmodern narrator who, in true postmodernist manner, casts doubts upon every intention, every movement of the main characters, merging, blurring and clashing interests and fates alongside the possible outcomes of the situations created.

The success of the 'Victorian code', one of the two major codes of the novel, is twofold. Firstly, this success is due to Fowles's brilliant gift of literary parody, such that the pages of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* revive in the reader's mind both the narrative traditions and the personal styles of Dickens, Hardy and Thackeray. Fowles told Aaron Latham in 1977 that the main lesson the novel taught him was learning to write in the necessary historical style; the book was 'really an exercise in technique'. He had to 'twist language to try to make it sound Victorian' (Vipond, 1999: 48). Secondly, the writer's attention to historical detail contributes significantly to the success of the Victorian pastiche, a term which Fowles himself did not like when it was attributed to the novel, though he 'realised that that must be the category in which this book is put' (Vipond, 1999: 17). As the novelist himself revealed to James Campbell in an interview in 1974, the book was not planned to be and did not start out as historical. It began with the famous obsessive image of a woman near the sea – a vision which reportedly haunted Fowles until he 'poured' it onto paper. (Vipond, 1999: 41). However polished it might look, the pastiche

had not been pre-calculated by Fowles. Rather, it is the result of an unfolding, uncontrollable and to a large extent unconscious creative idea:

It's very difficult to be rational and analytical about why you start writing a novel. It is largely a fortuitous, instinctive process: the way the first idea comes into your mind, and gradually begins to take shape as a novel. Personally I am against analysing it too closely. Certain ideas and feelings and moods especially, begin to haunt you, and it so happens that in this case they had to be expressed in Victorian pastiche style.

(Vipond, 1999: 17)

Although he has 'a poor academic knowledge of the age', John Fowles knows a good deal about 'the byways of Victorian life' thanks to one of his hobbies – the collecting of Victorian books (Vipond, 1999: 41). So, as the novelist himself says, there was little need for research and reading historical sources except for *Punch* and the book by E. Royston Pike, *Human Documents of the Victorian Golden Age*. *Punch* helped Fowles with the details of food and clothes as well as the dialogue – he had to archaïse as he found the language of the 1860s 'a little too modern'. The writer stretched 'the more formal elements to get it to sound right' (Vipond, 1999:41). At the same time, Fowles feared that his version of Victorian literary style would be condemned by critics. Sentences from 'vitriolic reviews' floated through his mind: 'a clumsy pastiche of Hardy', 'a pretentious imitation of an inimitable genre', 'a pointless exploration of an already overexplored age...' (Fowles, 1998: 25).

Fowles's disapproval of the word 'pastiche' is quite understandable – he did not like 'the pejorative quality of the word' (Vipond, 1999: 17). Indeed, the novel's ironic content is far from what Frederick Jameson defines as postmodern pastiche – 'blank parody, parody that has lost its sense of humour' (Malpas, 2001: 24-25). On the contrary, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* exposes its own corrective attitude and critical implication which is expressed in its postmodern view of history. The novel's parodic nature is defined by the clash between the ordered Victorian world and a postmodern democracy of

discourses. The novel becomes an act of sabotage as it explores the tension between the metaphorical binary opposites and the role and place of the 'ruling' binary opposite at a certain period of history.

The title 'the first postmodern novel' given to the book by Malcolm Bradbury is truly deserved as far as its main argument is concerned. Unlike Fowles's previous texts which investigate the individuation problems more typical of postmodernity, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is about the modernist search for the metaphorical lost/repressed mother and offers a critique of the rationalised society which made it possible to repress her. Written in 1968, it reflected the fundamental cultural changes in society also expressed in contemporary western philosophy and academic writing at that time. With Jacques Derrida's 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' (1966) and *Of Grammatology* (1967), and Roland Barthes's *Elements of Semiology* (1967) and *The Death of the Author* (1968), the 'revaluation of values' became an open debate. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* reflected this debate at its 'purest', presenting the most conspicuous example of the metaphorical masculinity/order to be deconstructed – that produced by Victorian culture. Bruce Woodcock notes that '... it is the male anxiety of the late 1960s at a newly-emergent female autonomy that the novel charts. It allows Fowles to explore male dilemmas which have a highly topical relevance "to the writer's now" as he has put it' (Woodcock, 1984: 82).

So, the Fowlesian hero was forced to change. The postmodernist Gothic of *The Collector* and first half of *The Magus* reflected in the abandoned God/consciousness theme is replaced in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* by the typically modernist repressed mother/unconscious motif. The novel clearly demonstrates one of Fowles's most complicated dilemmas that often gave rise to accusations of sexism: the existential bitterness of having lost the precious male principle (inherited from *The Magus*) versus the writer's realisation that it is time to replace him with something more 'constructive', or,

even better, deconstructive. At the same time, the narrator plays the part of the postmodern invisible God working 'undercover' and claiming to have lost most of his power over his subjects (a 'limited-omniscient' author). Fowles makes his subversive position clear in the famous Chapter 13 of the book which states that 'in the age of Alain Robbe-Grillet and Roland Barthes' the novelist cannot any longer pretend he is absolutely controlling his characters:

So if you think all these unlucky (but this is Chapter Thirteen) digressions have nothing to do with your Time, Progress, Society, Evolution and all those other capitalized ghosts in the night that are rattling their chains behind the scenes of this book ... I will not argue. But I shall suspect you.

(TFLW, 99)²

The deconstruction of the 'order' has imminently found its cerebation in the type of male character Fowles creates in his novel. Charles Smithson is shown at a different individuation stage from that experienced by Clegg and Urfe. Whereas they are depicted by the writer as irresponsible, self-indulgent and infantile males unfit for living in a civilised society, Charles is asked to turn his back on this same society, civilisation and other products of the development of consciousness, and pay more attention to his neglected emotional side. The important turn in the meta-individuation of Fowles's males, symbolising in Jungian thought the imminent revaluation of values which happens at a certain period of one's life, radically changes the Fowlesian hero. Nevertheless, the main egoistic, exploitative trait of his nature is retained. The psychological extension of Clegg and Urfe, their 'evolutionary' sequel, Charles, continues to use women to suit his sexual and psychological needs but unlike them, does it consciously rather than unconsciously. His exploitation of women is not just infantile or naive; on the contrary, it is absolutely legal and official and is inscribed in the society to which he belongs. It is exploitation by the rational, adult male who still fears the unconscious, which he projects onto the

² All references to *The French Lieutenant's Woman* are to the Vintage edition, 1996, London: Vintage, hereafter referred to in this text as TFLW.

feminine (like Clegg and Urfe), but who has arrived at the conclusion that, if the irrational is so menacing and harmful, it is better to keep it under control. Moreover, he has now invented institutions and methods to make this dangerous phenomenon look as innocuous and safe as possible.

The themes of repression, anxiety and control in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* inevitably introduce elements of the European Gothic tradition into it. Critics such as Susana Onega and Peter Conradi have pointed out the novel's parallels with Gothic romance, which are visible both in the novel's formal elements and its psychological moments. Peter Conradi argues that the book contains eminent formal indicators of the Gothic genre such as sensationalism, intricacies of plot and unresolved mysteries:

The French Lieutenant's Woman arrives at the gothic in two senses. Like the sensation novel of the 1860s, its plot is highly melodramatic and manipulates tension to brilliant effect, as it approaches its due violation of culturally sanctioned areas of secrecy in the form of the sexual act between Charles and Sarah.

(Conradi, 1982: 62)

The psychological structure of the novel, too, contains references to the Gothic tradition, which are reflected in Charles's fear of and attraction to Sarah – the ambivalent feeling that determines the complexity of their relationship. The Gothic of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is therefore concerned with both the male fear of the repressed feminine and the struggle of the repressed female for her place in society; it is both 'male' and 'female' Gothic. Sarah Woodruff is thus an undoubtedly Gothic heroine who is brave enough to challenge a prudish and hypocritical society (which idealises its women as domestic 'angels'); at the same time, she is 'the stereotyped persecuted maiden of the Gothic romance' (Onega, 1989: 83). The roots of all the Gothic secrets in the novel lie in the dangerous and fragile Sarah.

Sarah is the anima, the mysterious female the man struggles with in his unconscious. In the novel she is involved in both types of Gothic behaviour: she simultaneously

persecutes and is persecuted. Sarah is persecuted by the order embodied by Mrs Poulteney, supported by most characters of the book (including Charles), and avenges herself, bringing to this order even more destruction than her original 'sinful deeds' embodied. In his usual manner, John Fowles constructs his heroine as neither positive nor negative, but dialectical, which means that the character has its own internal logic, according to which it reacts to the fictional outside world, and this logic cannot be judged from the position of any established moral values. Instead, it is based on the relativity and reversibility of moral values. Seen by the male, the anima is either passive and gentle, or stormy, independent and unpredictable. The woman *as the anima* either uncritically accepts all the qualities projected onto her by the man, or rejects her subordinate and dependent status and becomes what she feels herself to be – which is regarded by the opposition as threatening. The boundaries between the anima inhibiting the unconscious, this set of mythological archetypal figures, and those women who happen to be by the man's side, become blurred due to the ceaseless chain of projections and introjections. Fowles many times stated that the incentive for *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was the vision of a mysterious female standing near the sea. In 1969 he wrote in *Notes on an Unfinished Novel*:

It started four or five months ago, as a visual image. A woman stands at the end of a deserted quay and stares at the sea. That was all. This image rose in my mind one morning when I was still in bed half asleep. [...] I ignored this image; but it recurred. Imperceptibly, it stopped coming to me. I began deliberately to recall it and to try to analyse and hypothesise why it held some sort of immanent power. It was obviously mysterious. It was vaguely romantic. [...] The woman had no face, no particular degree of sexuality. But she was Victorian; and since I always saw her in the same static long shot, with her back turned, she represented a reproach on the Victorian age. An outcast. I didn't know her crime, but I wished to protect her. That is, I began to fall in love with her. Or with her stance. I didn't know which.

(Fowles, 1998: 13-14)

Sarah's situation is unique because, for John Fowles, Sarah is the anima figure arising out of the unconscious depths, stubbornly insisting on its own (even if subjective) existence and demanding the writer's attention. At the same time, within the novel's structure she is

a 'real' woman *and* an anima for Charles Smithson; in fact, she represents the realised anima-'whore'/'hetera', the sexually attractive, active female figure who is capable of controlling men. As Sarah is never the focaliser in the book and is always shown through the eyes of the male character and the narrator, she is perfect anima material. The fact that she is still presented through the male gaze even though the narrator/writer insists in Chapter 13 that he gives her freedom, obviously impairs the subversive value of her role. Nevertheless, one victory in the novel is definitely hers – the right not to be a Victorian anima-'angel', which she achieves by pretending to be the other, prohibited anima image – the 'whore'.

Fowles's parodic analysis of the way Victorians turned their women into asexual 'angels' to protect themselves from what they saw as a threat to rationality, is comprehensive and impressive. In Chapter 35 he gives a historical note on the state of sexual health in Victorian society showing that Victorian men preferred to 'construct' their daughters and wives as innocent and sensitive creatures, while seeking forbidden pleasure in brothels with women representing the more scandalous side of their female ideal. The Victorian age was one 'where woman was sacred; and where you could buy a thirteen-year girl for a few pounds' and 'where more churches were built than in the whole previous history of the country; and where one in sixty houses in London was a brothel' (*TFLW*, 258). One of the most eminent 'angels' in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is an old 'angel', Mrs Poulteney, whose excessive chastity has led her to extreme religiousness and whose repressed other side of her psyche shows itself in controlling and aggressive behaviour. In other words, Mrs Poulteney is not at all submissive as a perfect domestic woman should be but, on the contrary, is a masculine-like tyrant; neurotically, her nature is more that of the 'whore' than of the 'angel'. A potential parody of Queen Victoria, she literally reckons herself to be an angel and a saint as she 'helps' 'poor Tragedy' to do away with her sins. The other interesting angel figure is Ernestina Freeman, the only daughter of

a rich merchant, and an ideal possible wife for a perfect rational gentleman, an adherent of Darwin and a 'scientist of sorts', namely Charles Smithson. Ernestina is 'one of the prim little moppets' with pale skin and grey eyes, who at first meetings 'could cast down her eyes very prettily, as if she might faint should any gentleman address her' (*TFLW*, 31). She also has the right attitude to sex – this means, no attitude at all. Sex is for men to enjoy; woman's fate is to remain ignorant of this matter:

Thus she had evolved a kind of private commandment – those inaudible words were simply 'I must not' [think of such things] – whenever the physical female implications of her body, sexual, menstrual, parturitional, tried to force an entry into her consciousness. But though one may keep the wolves from one's door, they still howl out there in the darkness. Ernestina wanted a husband, wanted Charles to be that husband, wanted children; but the payment she vaguely divined she would have to make for them seemed excessive. She sometimes wondered why God had permitted such a bestial version of Duty to spoil such an innocent longing.

(*TFLW*, 34)

The live embodiment of the instinctual, the 'whore' anima Sarah, is seen as a madwoman who has to be cured of her obscure illness and accept her position as a lower-class Victorian woman. Meanwhile, her 'illness' as well as her 'whore' behaviour is fake: to his great surprise, Charles discovers that she is actually a virgin. Her lies, fantasies and the deliberate ruining of her reputation are an act of defence against the ideology of biological Darwinism and the masculine culture representing it. In her book *The Female Malady* (1985) Elaine Showalter uncovers the arguments Victorian psychiatrists used to 'prove' female vulnerability to insanity:

In contrast to the rather vague and uncertain concepts of insanity in general which Victorian psychiatry produced, theories of female insanity were specifically and confidentially linked to the biological crises of the female life-cycle – puberty, pregnancy, childbirth, menopause – during which the mind would be weakened and the symptoms of insanity would emerge. This connection between the female reproductive and nervous system led to the condition nineteenth-century physicians called 'reflex insanity in women'. The 'special law' that made women 'victims of periodicity' led to a distinct set of mental illnesses that had 'neither homologue nor analogue in man'.

(Showalter, 1985: 55)

In Christopher Hauke's words, 'insanity' looks as if it 'has something to offer the revaluation of values...' (Hauke, 2000: 280). Sarah plays the part of a Gothic madwoman, challenges the existing situation, both 'proving' the idea of 'reflex insanity' and refuting it by the very idea of protest against the passivity that Victorian women were expected to demonstrate. Sarah's imitation of abnormal behaviour is a rebellion which seems horribly pointless to the discouraged Charles who even seeks professional advice from his friend, Doctor Grogan. As Showalter notes, until hysteria as a mode of female protest was recognised by early psychoanalysis, rebellion was treated as mental pathology rather than that pathology being identified as suppressed rebellion.

The Gothic heroine Sarah is alien to the world she is living in and appears only to challenge it or disturb its inhabitants. Her dark, Gothic features provide the destructive line, the deconstructive element in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. To emphasise this, the writer introduces Sarah into the novel as a ghostly figure in black, standing silently on the sombre mole. At the end of the first chapter Fowles uses a film trick, swiftly switching the reader's attention from the fashionably and expensively dressed young pair going for a walk on a pleasant day to the unknown lonely figure near the water:

It stood right at the seawardmost end, apparently leaning against an old cannon-barrel up-ended as a bollard. Its clothes were black. The wind moved them, but the figure stood motionless, staring, staring out to the sea, more like a living memorial to the drowned, a figure from myth, than any proper fragment of the petty provincial day.

(*TFLW*, 11)

Showalter points out that Sarah acts out 'the traditional role of the Ophelia-like madwoman, abandoned by her lover, haunting the farthest point of the sea wall 'like a living memorial to the drowned' whilst her 'madness' in reality is 'the accumulated projection of male fantasy and male guilt' (Showalter, 1985: 97). Sarah's 'insane' behaviour, such as staring out to the sea and walking in areas traditionally deemed beyond

the pale by Mrs. Poulteney, suggests metaphorically a desire to go beyond the boundaries.

David Punter regards such a desire as essentially transgressive:

Time and time again, those writers who are referred to as Gothic turn out to be those who bring us up against the boundaries of the civilised, who demonstrate to us the relative nature of ethical and behavioural codes, and who place, over against the conventional world, a different sphere in which the codes operate at best in distorted forms.

(Punter, 1996, vol. 2, 183-184)

As a ghost embodying the Victorians' worst fears, Sarah's image inevitably starts working within the head of the bored Darwinist Charles as it engages the unconscious forces of which he is yet unaware. A female predator, Sarah begins to gradually conquer the heart of Charles with the kind of behaviour that mocks two types of male sexual fantasies. She seems both defenceless and sexually active, at once lonely standing by the sea, yet also insisting that the scared Charles listen to her. In the second chapter, having heard from Ernestina the story of 'poor Tragedy's' unhappy love affair with some French lieutenant, Charles approaches the lonely figure just to tease, 'to say boo to a goose' but she does not answer (*TFLW*, 16). Her reaction is a tragic silence made all the more appalling when one definitely sees how defenceless the woman is. The attractive defencelessness in the look that she gives to Charles disturbs him. Later he cannot forget her face and the look seems to him 'a lance' which 'pierced and deservedly diminished him' (*TFLW*, 16). Charles likes this helpless 'angelic' behaviour and imagines himself a benefactor, a male who controls the situation and is humane to the deranged woman. Chapter 16 shows Charles seeking Sarah's company in order to offer a sympathetic ear, and in Chapter 18 he is already caught in the net of a predatory female who takes off the mask of an angel and reveals herself to be quite the opposite. As Susana Onega notes, the novel refers to a traditional Gothic plot, as Charles 'sees Sarah's tremendous fascination as that of a demon lover who hides her real nature behind a pathetic and weak appearance in order to draw the hero's

sympathy, eventually to put him in her power' (Onega, 1989: 86). In other words, this woman is a living nightmare, the realised neurosis of an authoritarian male.

When Sarah transgresses the line between 'the angel' and 'the whore', Charles is no longer the master of the situation. As she asks him for one more meeting, he feels trapped and is genuinely scared, both for his good name and by the sight of a woman who takes the lead and the initiative:

'But this is unforgivable. Unless I mistake, you now threaten me with a scandal.' [...]

Charles's one thought now was to escape from the appalling predicament he had been landed in; from the remorselessly sincere, those naked eyes.

(*TFLW*, 142)

Such a desire to control the situation is 'abnormal' and 'mad' enough by itself because female biology, in the view of Victorian scientists, predisposed all women to endurance and nurturing. By the time he is able to reflect on his situation, Charles is already deeply involved in the fake story of Sarah's moral degradation. While from Charles's male Gothic point of view, Sarah's fake love for the French Lieutenant and her equally false madness look repulsive, from her female Gothic position they seem a successful 'defensive strategy' against the order. Not surprisingly, they never come to understand each other because they are unable to arrive at a mutual decision as to what it is that they consider terrible: the law or the body.

At first, Sarah's transgression does not seem to exist because the narrator, however omniscient he wants to look, refuses to explain to the reader what it actually consists of. Her transgression is vague, difficult to believe, and its most terrible manifestation is standing at the bay staring at the sea. Fowles makes physical manifestations of Sarah's 'sinful nature' delete each other, the French lieutenant's affair being cancelled by the sexual scene when Charles suddenly discovers that Sarah is a virgin; but this sexual scene in its turn is blurred by her refusal to explain the mystery of her virginity and her illogical

throwing out of Charles from the hotel room. Sarah's actions in this situation are clear only to her; the narrator, who loses his omniscience as the novel's multiple endings approach, leaves the heroine the right to conceal her implications. The transgressive story she invented begins nowhere and ends nowhere; it is an endless maze of mysteries. Having started as a rational male who adopts patronising behaviour towards the weaker sex, Charles discovers to his astonishment that his wood-wandering and sea-watching romantic angel has changed. He ends up losing his mind over a domineering and extremely proud woman who refuses to be drawn into an unequal match – contra Dr. Grogan's speculations that she looks melancholy in order to attract 'the young god' who can help her 'escape from her unhappy lot' (*TFLW*, 216):

'Yes. I have deceived you. But I shall not trouble you again.'
'But what have I ... what should you ...' [...]
'... I am far stronger than any man may easily imagine.' [...]
'Today I have thought of my own happiness. If we were to meet again I could think only of yours. There can be no happiness for you with me. You cannot marry me, Mr. Smithson.'
(*TFLW*, 342)

Sarah's inexplicable behaviour after the sex scene arouse suspicions in Charles, whose mind is full of 'apocalyptic horror', that she has lied to him in order 'to put him totally in her power' (*TFLW*, 341) and in the 'negative' ending he decides that 'she had manipulated him. She would do so to the end' (*TFLW*, 444). This is the point where it is clearly seen how Sarah's desire for transgression, in whatever shape, is closely related to her anima features. In her actions she replays the fear, fantasy and admiration enacted by the male in domination of the female. Shown through the narrator's and Charles's (and probably the writer's) eyes (and there are moments when one is not able to distinguish them from each other, either textually or psychologically), Sarah is the dark anima. She is the Rusalka, the water spirit who bewitches and kills passing men. In this light, the image of Sarah symbolises the reversal of domination, the re-distribution of gender roles which ends in

sado-masochistic suffering. As if to prove this point, in the second version of the ending, Charles blames Sarah for finding 'a new victim' and coldly discarding him as a spent force: 'I may slake your insatiable and unwomanly hatred of my sex one last time ... and now I may be dismissed' (*TFLW*, 433). To use Jean Baudrillard's expression, Charles 'falls back into the feminine' in a moment of distraction:

... the masculine has always been but a residual, secondary and fragile formation, one that must be defended by retrenchments, institutions, and artifices. The phallic fortress offers all the signs of a fortress, that is to say, of weakness. It can defend itself only from the ramparts of a manifest sexuality, of a finality of sex that exhausts itself in reproduction, or in the orgasm. One can hypothesize that the feminine is the only sex, and that the masculine only exists by a superhuman effort to leave it.

(Baudrillard, 1990: 16)

When Charles realises that his 'fortress' of masculinity is breached, he makes 'superhuman efforts' to break the spell of the perilous nymph and even consults Doctor Grogan, who is playing the role of the wise man, on this issue. Caught in the middle of the fabrication of the sin, destruction for the sake of destruction, Charles strives to explain to himself the kind of sado-masochistic relationship he is having with Sarah. Doctor Grogan gives him a volume of medical cases with descriptions of young women variously torturing themselves, ruining their reputations and bodies, taking themselves destructively back into the unconscious depths, to matter. These women ask for their limbs and other parts of the body to be removed, introduce stones into the bladder, plunge hundreds of needles into the skin, faint and refuse to eat. Reading the pages of the book borrowed from Grogan, Charles Smithson is shocked by the pervertedly sexual implications of the medical cases presented. He 'had no idea that such perversions existed – and in the pure and sacred sex' (*TFLW*, 229). The symptoms of 'insanity' are now completely clear to him and he identifies himself with the unhappy hero of one of the stories, Emile de La Ronciere, whose life was nearly ruined by another 'female water spirit' – in real life 'a charming young girl of a distinguished family' (*TFLW*, 227). Charles is horrified and offended by transgression

becoming regression, both moral and physical; the point at which abjection takes place. Behind the protests of insane women he sees repressed female sexuality, aggression and leadership. The magical volume temporarily restores missing signs of phallic domination in Charles's defence. In the narrator's words, 'he had never felt less free' after he had read about the terrible psychic disorders (*TFLW*, 229).

Charles's 'whore' part of the anima, like some mad Ariadne, leads him not out of, but even deeper into, the maze of his unconscious. Ironically, Fowles makes Charles imitate a typical female Gothic pattern of the heroine wandering in an unknown and uncanny place (palace), suddenly finding there something horrible and abject. The picture he presents to us very much resembles the famous scene from Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) in which Emily, wandering in the castle at night, unexpectedly comes across something resembling a corpse, 'a human figure of ghastly paleness, stretched at its length, and dressed in the habiliments of the grave' (Radcliffe, 1998: 249). This encounter shakes the heroine so much that naturally she faints:

Emily passed on with faltering steps, and having paused a moment at the door, before she attempted to open it, she then hastily entered the chamber, and went towards the picture, which appeared to be enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, that hung in a dark part of the room. She paused again, and then, with a timid hand, lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall – perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture, and, before she could leave the chamber, she dropped senseless on the floor.

(Radcliffe, 1998: 249)

Only at the end of the book does she discover that the horrible object was not a real corpse, but a falsification, a wax forgery made by monks to frighten and punish her. Instead of the Gothic magnificence of Udolpho or any other dark *château*, John Fowles uses a different metaphor to represent the unconscious. It is no castle or labyrinth; and in the role of the unconscious depths it definitely looks more plain than the classic Gothic variants enumerated above – it is a barn, the barn he is enticed to by Sarah who left him a note in French asking for yet another meeting. The place appears to be suspiciously uninhabited,

which adds certain Gothic undertones to the description of the barn and Charles's wanderings: 'Charles saw the thatched roof of the barn. The thatch was mossy and derelict, which added to the already forlorn appearance of the little stone building, nearer a hut than its name would suggest' (*TFLW*, 235). Fowles gradually intensifies the effect and makes the atmosphere more sinister as the main character feels more and more nervous investigating the barn from the outside in an attempt to find traces of Sarah's presence:

Charles stood and stared down at it [the hut]. He had expected to see the figure of a woman there, and it made him even more nervous that the place seemed so deserted. He walked down towards it, but rather like a man going through a jungle renowned for its tigers. He expected to be pounced on; and he was far from sure of his skill with his gun.

(*TFLW*, 235)

Lost in his unconscious, caught by the dangerous, unpredictable anima, a man cannot feel more insecure. Just as in Radcliffe's female Gothic texts men are mostly dangerous sources of horror, in Fowles's novel it is the woman who represents what Onega calls 'forbidden and dangerous territory', a territory which Charles dares to symbolically enter when in reality he enters a deserted barn (Onega, 1989: 85). Charles's fear, fascination with and sexualisation of female empowerment are suddenly projected onto Sarah in the form of a female vampire. When, finally, Charles opens the door of the strange barn, what his imagination presents him with is enough to make him 'drop senseless on the floor':

Charles advanced the slanting bar of light; and then stopped with a sudden dread. Beyond the light he could make out something hanging from a nail in an old stallpost: a black bonnet. Perhaps because of his reading the previous night [of Grogan's psychiatric books] he had an icy premonition that some ghastly sight lay below the partition of worm-eaten planks beyond the bonnet, which hung like an ominously slaked vampire over what he could not see. I do not know what he expected: some atrocious mutilation, a corpse... he nearly turned and ran out of the barn and back to Lyme. But the ghost of a sound drew him forward. He craned fearfully over the partition.

(*TFLW*, 235)

At this point (the very end of chapter 29) Fowles leaves us for over a chapter to guess what else the main character saw in the horrible hut. Chapter 30 is mainly preoccupied with the description of Mrs. Poulteneys's rage with Sarah over her visiting a place where she was strictly prohibited to walk – Ware Commons. The rage results in Sarah being fired. This kind of non-linear narrative which overuses delay and intercutting is very typical of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and the style in which the episode concerning the barn and the bonnet is narrated, in particular, introduces the spirit of the sensational novel into *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Clearly, the Gothic romance element of the novel benefits from the deliberate crudeness of these techniques as they create the necessary stylisation, even though Fowles's efforts at faking a Victorian Gothic story to explore what Conradi calls 'a neo-Gothic collision between a ghostly imagined fictive past and a phantom present' were totally misunderstood by some critics (Conradi, 1982: 72). Thus, Simon Loveday in his book *The Romances of John Fowles* accuses the writer of using 'quite crude techniques for heightening suspense' (Loveday, 1985: 54). The same techniques made Alan Brien from *The Sunday Times* call the novel 'a middle-brow yarn with egghead knobs on' (*The Sunday Times*, 18 October 1981, quoted in Loveday, 1985: 56). In *Mysteries of Udolpho* Ann Radcliffe uses a similar technique to create the necessary suspense throughout the novel. Emily does not know till the end of the novel that the corpse she saw was a forgery. Besides, what the heroine actually observes when the veil falls, is not described. The reader does not learn till later what horrible sight made her faint. Fowles does not use this kind of double intensification to trick his readers and the situation becomes clear sooner than for those of Radcliffe, who have to wait for over four hundred pages. In chapter 31 it is already clear that what frightened the main character was neither mutilation nor a corpse, but Sarah's sleeping body. Instead of a bloodcurdling vision of corporeal deterioration, he sees a peaceful and harmonious picture of the woman sleeping:

She lay curled up like a small girl under her old coat, ... her head turned from him and resting on a dark-green Paisley scarf; as if to preserve her one great jewel, her loosened hair, from the hayseed beneath. In that stillness her light, even breathing was both visible and audible...

(*TFLW*, 239)

Charles's inner stability and Victorian complacency are challenged when the anima he did not ask to come and whom he thought to be peacefully sleeping, appears to be dangerous, threatening to destroy his values and devour him. Charles's distorted vision of Sarah in the barn springs from the fear of his anima who pushes him out of his 'normal' existence towards change and movement and whom he thus considers to be a dangerous creature.

Sarah is perceived and shown in the novel from the male point of view, which can be called the 'multiple male point of view'. This comprises the perceptions of the several personae of the narrator, the main male character and finally John Fowles himself (his 'personal relations' with the stubborn mysterious woman at the bay must not be forgotten). These male perceptions are not equal but hierarchically organised inside the text. All three of them treat Sarah as an irrational and mysterious creature, but each perspective contains its own degree of the Gothic. The narrator and the novelist are sometimes difficult to distinguish from each other; both of them are quite neutral in their attitude towards the woman. Charles, despite being an important focaliser of the 'male gaze', suffers from Sarah's unpredictability and his ensuing lack of convenient social, psychological and even financial stability – he misses his chance to marry Ernestina and inherit her father's business. His attitude is that of the Gothic victim (as a victim of his own unconscious) in a love-hate relationship. Watched by the narrator and the reader, led by the anima, Charles adopts the same gloomy 'object of the experiment' position as Nicholas Urfe.

The narrator in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is also a kind of a Gothic figure and a version of the magus, the two-sided modern/postmodern and authoritarian/deconstructed God. Thanks to the appearance of post-structuralist thought, which 'shaped' Fowles's

understanding of the epoch, the narrator creates and ‘erases’ his narrative more literally and obviously than in *The Magus*, boldly introducing different cultural perspectives and various degrees of detachment from them into the novel. Fowles consciously reproduces Victorian neuroses but uses *ostrannenie*/defamiliarisation to establish a dialogue between the two historical epochs. Thus, the narrator explains Dr. Grogan’s amateurish term ‘obscure melancholia’ (*TFLW*, 151) accurately and scientifically as ‘the mental illness we today call hysteria ...: a neurosis or psychosis almost invariably caused, as we now know, by sexual repression’ (*TFLW*, 226). The narrator also performs a reverse operation – instead of ‘going back in time’, into the nineteenth-century world of his fictional characters, he sometimes allows these characters to ‘have a look into the future’. For instance, in chapter 25, the deranged Charles sees ‘in a vivid insight’ that ‘all those painted screens erected by man to shut out reality – history, religion, duty, social position, all were illusions, mere opium fantasies’ (*TFLW*, 200). As a result of Fowles’s direct references to recent philosophical ideas, the novel easily lends itself to ‘deconstructive criticism’ as it lays open its own binary ‘the body against the law’ structure.

Informed by academic thought, the book might even seem a somewhat laboured and self-conscious experiment in fictional writing. Thus, the narrator says in Chapter 13:

I do not know. This story I am telling is all imagination. These characters I create never existed outside my own mind. [...] So perhaps I am writing a transposed autobiography; perhaps I now live in one of the houses I have brought into the fiction; perhaps Charles is myself disguised. Perhaps it is only a game.

(*TFLW*, 97)

Meanwhile, just when his narration begins to create the impression that the novel is a Thackeray-esque puppet theatre, he announces that he is simply an observer who reports ‘only the outward facts’ (*TFLW*, 99). The postmodern game in/of the author reaches its climax when the novelist detaches himself from the narrator to appear in the complacent

Gothic role of the magus. In chapter 55 Charles meets 'a man of forty or so' wearing a beard in a train compartment. To Charles, who immediately notices him, the newcomer seems 'a decidedly unpleasant man' (*TFLW*, 378-388). By the end of the chapter, when he opens his eyes after dozing off on the train and sees 'the prophet-bearded man' staring at him, Charles comes to the conclusion that the person is 'either a gambler or mentally deranged' (*TFLW*, 390). At the end of chapter 55 the stranger gets off the train at Paddington station and disappears into the throng. Like Nicholas after the trial scene, deranged Charles is left alone with no magus to decide for him what he should do to find his way out of the darkness. At least in *The Magus* God has some power over the main character, even if only for a certain period of time; following Conchis's 'disappearing act' in the second half of *The Magus*, the postmodern God/god of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is already a stranger in his own kingdom. Because, as Fowles explains in chapter 13, God is 'the freedom that allows other freedoms to exist' (*TFLW*, 99).

Charles Smithson's painful stage of individuation as shown in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is a continuation of the process of meta-development that we see in all John Fowles's male characters. As usual, the critique of his lifestyle and his way of thinking is provided by an anima-like female, presented here as a Gothic madwoman and belonging to the favourite anima type of Fowlesian characters – the 'whore', and she is guided by God as a writer/writer as God. With her turbulent discourse, the 'madwoman' Sarah erases Charles's masculine roles of patronising male and Darwinist and reverses the scenario so that Charles, like Nicholas Urfe, becomes dominated and victimised. The over-civilised Victorian scientist, Charles, is to be taught to feel and love, and the teaching is shown in progress, but the result of it is, as usual, unknown, as not one but three possible outcomes of Charles's misery are given. The first is a scenario of a halt in development – life with the 'angel' Ernestina who, with her readiness to accommodate all his projections,

will not challenge him enough to make him individuate. As there is no way that the fictional meta-development of Fowles's characters can be stopped, the narrator dismisses this ending as false. The positive second ending – that of Charles finally finding happiness with Sarah – is deliberately made artificial, and in Charles Scruggs's words, 'appears to be Fowles's joke on Victorian endings ... for example, the second ending of *Great Expectations* (Scruggs, 1985: 96). The third, called by the narrator 'a less plausible ending of their story', is an open finale typical of Fowles with characters left in the 'frozen present' while 'the river of life, of mysterious laws and mysterious choice, flows past a deserted embankment' (*TFLW*, 445). Whereas the second version of the finale, just as the prospect of life with Ernestina, would mean some kind of closure and halt in the individuation process, this third finale restores the possibility of continuation of dialectical development. Again, Fowles uses the symbolic 'loss' in order to preserve the valuable incentive to change and develop. Even though the hero has gained a certain amount of experience at this period of life, he has not achieved the final dialectical synthesis, and therefore can be recycled in yet another fictional world.

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Chapter 4

The Gothic in *The Ebony Tower*

The Ebony Tower (1974) is a collection of five novellas which at first sight seem totally disconnected from each other. Fowles arranged them in the following order: 'The Ebony Tower', 'Eliduc', 'Poor Coco', 'The Enigma', 'The Cloud'. In this chapter a detailed analysis will be given of only those two which contain the most obvious allusions to the Gothic : 'Eliduc' and 'The Ebony Tower'.

'Eliduc' is actually an adaptation of the medieval Celtic romance by Marie de France; 'Poor Coco' is the story of an elderly writer whose house is broken into by a young burglar; 'The Enigma' is a postmodernist detective-romance and 'The Cloud' is a psychological novella about a woman who tries to escape from her depressive state and loneliness. As for the main story, 'The Ebony Tower' itself, on the one hand Fowles himself called it 'the realistic version of *The Magus*' (Loveday, 1985: 102), and on the other it is presented as a kind of parody of 'Eliduc' by Simon Loveday (Loveday, 1985: 88-89). Indeed, 'The Ebony Tower' is really like *The Magus* but on a smaller, less epic and more realistic scale. These two contrasting definitions complement each other as they emphasise one of Fowles's favourite motifs: a man in a relationship with two women and the ensuing complicated moral implications of the situation.

Originally the collection of short stories was entitled *Variations* by the novelist. In *A Personal Note* to the novel Fowles writes that he had to discard this title and opt for *The Ebony Tower* instead because 'the first professional readers [for instance, Fowles's publisher] ... could see no justifications for *Variations* whatever ... beyond a very private

mirage in the writer's mind' (*TET*, 117).¹ But as Susana Onega notes, despite the publisher's dislike of the name *Variations*, both the short stories and the novels 'may be said to complement each other both thematically and formally, as would the musical variations in a symphony, forming an artistic whole' (Onega, 1989: 8). Simon Loveday uses structural analysis to show similar points in the plots of the stories. In his opinion, the most important novella for the understanding of the whole collection is 'Eliduc'. Fowles himself confesses in *A Personal Note* that what influenced the collection was the medieval spirit and 'the Celtic mood':

... *The Ebony Tower* is a variation of a more straightforward kind [rather than a mere variation of the themes from his previous books], and the source of its mood, as also partly of its theme and setting is ... the Celtic romance.

(*TET*, 117)

The very fact that Fowles includes his translation of a tale by Marie de France in his collection of short stories is a tribute to the actual Gothic tradition whereby Gothic and romantic writers translate, or more often, make fake translations of some foreign, medieval or beginning of the era authors, many of which cannot be checked or verified. This was done to create the impression of an 'unearthing' of the past, most obviously in James Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (1760), which he claimed to be translations of epics by a third-century Gaelic bard Ossian. *The Castle of Otranto* is another good example of false authorship. Citing Jerrold Hogle, Fred Botting notes how Walpole's novel involves counterfeiting on several levels: 'a fake translation by a fake translator of a fake medieval story by a fake author' (Punter, 2000: 4). In addition, the main feature of the story, namely Otranto, is also a fake Gothic castle, the

¹ All references to *The Ebony Tower* are to the Vintage edition, 1996, London: Vintage. Further quotations from the book are from this edition, referred to hereafter to as *TET*.

image of which was inspired by Strawberry Hill, Walpole's home designed as a Gothic edifice.

Fakery was a significant part of the myth of Gothic origins. In the 17th and the 18th centuries British historians (such as Richard Hurd, 'Letters on Chivalry and Romance') and writers (e.g. Henry Brooke, the poet James Thomson) took a hand in this myth. The Goths were represented by these and other authors as developed, chivalrous and noble people who venerated women and valued liberty and justice highly; the authors claimed that those whom people of classical taste used to call barbarians were endowed with good moral qualities and deserved more attention. Thus, Richard Hurd wrote: 'Shall we then condemn them unheard, or will it not be fair to let them have the telling of their own story?' (Clery and Miles, 2000: 48-49). It appeared that, as David Punter writes, '...the fruits of primitivism and barbarism possessed a fire, a vigour, a sense of grandeur which was sorely needed in English culture' (Punter, 1996, vol.1: 7). In literature it soon resulted in an interest in (and fakery of) 'ancient' works such as old ballads and folk songs – the art of the forefathers. Later, interest in 'lyrics of the past' was shared by almost all the great British Romantic poets: Byron, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley and Blake. The shift in value was probably complete by the 1780s.

Thus, when translating the work of Marie de France, Fowles fakes this traditional faking of the past. He writes in the preface to 'Eliduc' that *lais* are not the exclusive creations of Marie de France; she based them on older Celtic romance as one of her aims was 'to save Celtic tales from oblivion' (*TET*, 120). Fowles confesses that nothing is certain about Marie de France herself, except that she lived in the twelfth century, had a very romantic and mysterious life (related in some ambiguous way to Henry II) and wrote the work called *lais*, a collection of twelve love-stories in rhyming octosyllabic couplets to be performed 'probably to a loose melody or a variety of them, and perhaps in places spoken almost conversationally against chords and arpeggios' (*TET*, 121). Even her name

is ‘only a deduction, made long after her death, from a line in one of her fables – *Marie ai nun, si suis de France*’ (*TET*, 119). Formally it really looks like a ‘fake of the fake of the fake...’ the only difference being that it is *not* fake. In other words, Fowles’s fake authorship is fake since Marie de France was a real person. In *A Personal Note* Fowles writes that he tried to convey ‘at least a trace of living, oral quality’ in his translation (*TET*, 121).² To dispel any doubts on the authenticity of Marie de France’s *lais*, the novelist directs his readers to the original manuscript stored in the British Museum (‘my translation ... is based on the British Museum H text (Harley 978), in Alfred Ewert’s edition’ [*TET*, 121]).

The connection with the Middle Ages and barbarity is what makes the collection the most indebted of Fowles’s creations to the Gothic tradition. It is the second time (after *The Collector*) that the novelist has consciously attempted to use classic Gothic settings or themes. In *The Magus* and *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* the use of the Gothic is less direct as it is often traced only on the psychological level. The reference to the medieval romance, characteristic of early Gothic texts, helps create a very special atmosphere in *The Ebony Tower*. Using the romance elements in the collection, Fowles was probably driven by the same motifs as those writing before him, the discoverers of the Gothic and the Romantic: an impatience with reason and rationality, a nostalgia for chivalry and mystery, a longing to explore and understand one’s past. At the same time, apart from the positive ‘anti-civilising’, ‘ecological’ meanings, the medieval theme has many negative connotations as it reminds one of the old patriarchy, the barbaric side of chivalry and knighthood, and the idolatrous nature of knightly courtship. ‘The Ebony Tower’ is full of moments demonstrating the negative side of the chivalrous treatment of women, which

² Critics do not agree on whether Fowles’s translation of the story about Eliduc is accurate. In Simon Loveday’s view, this is indeed an accurate translation whereas Constance Hieatt and Ruth Morse notice that it is to a certain extent partial as it contains occasional omissions, a colloquial tone and a shift of emphasis.

make it a target for accusations of male chauvinism.³ For instance, Henry Breasley admits that the Mouse is his muse and he therefore behaves as a knight towards her. He proposes to her and, as the Freak attests, throws at her ‘bundles of money. “A hundred pounds. Two’ (*TET*, 67). But behind this adoration lies the fact that Diana is just one of the ‘gels’ who give Breasley sexual gratification; she is, however, lucky enough to become his source of inspiration. With his Brittany castle, rough language and two ‘gels’ in his service, he is a parody of a medieval patriarch, a petty old tyrant. Peter Conradi calls the difference between idealisation of women and disrespectful treatment of them ‘the feudalisation of love’ and considers it to be a permanent feature of Fowles’s fiction (Conradi, 1982: 91).

Fowles speaks of his desire to revive in his new set of short stories the lost and forgotten atmosphere of the remote past (at the same time being aware that it is not as innocuous as it may seem):

The mania for chivalry, courtly love, mystic and crusading Christianity, the Camelot syndrome, all these we are aware of – a good deal too aware, perhaps, in the case of some recent travesties of that last centre of the lore. But I believe that we also owe – emotionally and imaginatively, at least – the very essence of what we have meant ever since by the fictional, the novel and all its children, to this strange northern invasion of the early medieval mind.

(*TET*, 118)

Writing about the history of the Gothic, Fred Botting states that, used derogatively, the early Gothic ‘signified the lack of reason, morality and beauty of feudal beliefs, customs and works’ (Punter, 2000: 3). To reproduce this ‘beauty’, Fowles even adopted the famous simplistic techniques of early Gothic stories, such as *The Castle Of Otranto*, leaving out psychological moments and letting the simple structure of the story speak for itself. Fowles foresaw that critics might doubt his choice of material for translation and wrote of the

³ A variation of ‘Eliduc’, ‘The Ebony Tower’ inherits its theme of preoccupation with the moral and love problems of married men. Arguing that Fowles’s translation of ‘Eliduc’ is biased on the male side, Constance Heatt notes: ‘Fowles is almost exclusively concerned with problems of men, even when he devotes a major part of the narrative looking at a woman’s point of view’ (Heatt, 1978: 352).

structure of 'Eliduc' in a 'Personal Note': 'One may smile condescendingly at the naiveties and primitive techniques of stories such as 'Eliduc'; but I do not think any writer of fiction can do so with decency – and for a very simple reason. He is watching his own birth' (*TET*, 119). The novella is very simple in form, and the writer does not use any special devices to convey the darkness and gloom of the general atmosphere. Gone is the writer's usually complicated language. There is no need to stylistically overload the narrative: his force is in emotionally coloured adjectives and comparisons, keeping syntactic structures simple and sentimental or emotionally charged dialogues and monologues. Thus he here chooses not to use his postmodern stylistic tricks: plot games, double-coding of the narrative, the so-called 'chinese-box structures', change of the narrator's angle of view, over-complication of the plot and the blurred border between fantasy and reality.⁴ In this romantic frame Fowles makes an attempt to realise a plot dynamic he has never been able to justify previously in any of his novels: a man living with two women. Fowles has chosen the Celtic romance to legitimise his favourite triangle; he refers to the medieval past as a time when, as Simon Loveday argues, 'crises are overcome, opposites reconciled, and contradictions transcended' (Loveday, 1985: 83). This is a time when the 'feudalisation of love' is natural and appropriate.

Fred Botting writes that apart from its escapist function, the Gothic served 'as the inverted, mirror-image of the present' whose darkness allowed 'the reason and virtue of the present a brighter reflection' (Punter, 2000: 5). It made more prominent the progress of civilisation and showed how masculinity has changed with time. As masculinity became civilised, it switched from the hegemony of physical force prevailing in feudalism, to the rule of the brain and a bourgeois calculation of everything, including things religious and spiritual. Fowles's use of the Gothic has a different aim: it is born out of his longing for a

⁴ This is true only if we are not talking about all the novellas; on *this* level *Eliduc* is a foreign element in the rest of the stories and *is* a postmodern experiment.

world free from bourgeois morality and the times when instincts and feelings were not as devalued as they are now. In fact, the writer compares two 'variations' of masculinity – feudal and twentieth-century bourgeois – and concludes that Eliduc's 'natural', spontaneous behaviour, which is determined by his emotions, is better than David's practicality, sense of responsibility, and desire for social and family safety and stability. The problem is that it does not make much difference to the heroines of the stories whether they are treated 'courteously' or 'rationally' because in both cases they are exploited so as to help define and resolve psychological problems of masculinity at a certain stage of its formation.

The 'Gothic'/medieval version of maleness, as has already been mentioned, is wild and emotional, restrained only by medieval notions of duty and loyalty: Eliduc is devoted to his king and is supposed to be loyal to his wife. These artificial restraints are supposed to make the brutish knight Eliduc an acceptable part of medieval society. Ruth Morse writes in an essay entitled 'John Fowles, Marie de France, and the Man with Two Wives': 'Where in medieval society loyalty, truth to one's word, was a central value, modern society has long since accommodated itself to reasons of state, broken contracts and divorce' (Morse, 1984: 18). Eliduc's middle-class contemporary 'descendant', David, does not have to be told what he should do: he is a responsible man who lives in a democratic society and who is civilised enough to be given the right to choose whether to keep or break his promises. Ironically, David remains true to his wife although his society does not consider loyalty a sacred duty, whereas the Breton knight Eliduc decides that he has the right to choose what to do and breaks the rules of duty which, in his world, are not to be disputed.

Like other male characters in the writer's novels, Eliduc is torn by the fateful impossibility of reconciling his personal desires with taking responsibility for them. Unfortunately, he happens to live at a time when people's personal desires are wild and

strong (as they have been presented by later writers and artists) and punishment for succumbing to them is immediate and inevitable. Being pursued by his lord's rather assertive daughter, the knight suffers from painful love as he yearns to take possession of the lady. But alas, 'fate had dealt him a cruel hand – that promise to his wife when he left home, that he'd never look at another woman' (*TET*, 131). Fowles convinces the reader that Eliduc honestly 'wanted to stay faithful' but 'nothing could hide the fact that he had hopelessly fallen for Guilliadun and her prettiness' (*TET*, 131). Stylistic and narrative simplicity does not mean failure to impress the reader, as early Gothic writers have already proven. In 'Eliduc', medieval emotions and passions are as turbulent and unstoppable as the stormy sea that causes the knight and his lover so much trouble – and the image of the sea is actually an 'externalised' version of Eliduc's feelings which he fails to keep under control in accordance with the moral code of his society. The atmosphere in the story becomes intense in the climax, which is the scene of a storm on the way to Brittany. One of the sailors on board the ship, in panic and despair at the raging storm, shouts that Eliduc must throw his lover into the sea. He has a wife at home: 'It's against God and the law. Against all decency and religion. So let's throw her in the sea, and save our skins' (*TET*, 136). The price the knight has to pay for breaking the law is the death of Guilliadun who hears the sailor's cries. The terror of punishment descends on him in the form of physical death; his lover 'fainted and fell to the deck, deathly pale; and stayed like that, without breath or sign of consciousness' (*TET*, 136). Fowles describes Eliduc's rage using primitive stylistic means but powerful images. In agony, the knight kills the sailor in a most cruel way: he rushed at him, 'struck him down with an oar' and then 'kicked the body over the side, where the waves took it away' (*TET*, 137). Guilliadun is to be buried in a chapel in a nearby forest where 'a saintly hermit had lived for forty years' (*TET*, 137). After opening the door of the chapel, the knight and his warriors are 'dismayed' when they see a sad and gloomy picture: a 'fresh tomb' because 'the pure and saintly hermit had died the previous week'. In this mixed situation of horror and terror, Eliduc can do nothing but

leave the body of the maiden unburied before the altar until he can ‘glorify this place with an abbey or a convent’ (*TET*, 137). Yet, the girl remains ‘as fresh as a first rose’ (*TET*, 139) and her skin ‘pink and white, only very faintly pale’ (*TET*, 138). Relief is brought by Eliduc’s wife, Guildelüec who, using a magic red flower, brings to life ‘the miraculous corpse’ (*TET*, 139). All the markers of the genre (the chapel [abbey, monastery, church or any other house of Christianity] in some remote forest, the storm [or any other weather disaster] as a punishment for the sin committed, a pure girl who dies as the victim of a man’s behaviour, a knight who is simultaneously courtly and chivalrous, barbarous and cruel, together with the use of simple narrative techniques) create the new shape in which Fowles’s favourite themes are realised. Here, Modern Gothic is brought closer to the original 1790s version of the genre.

Thus the formal simplicity and schematisation of ‘Eliduc’ is compensated for by the depth of emotional perception and the power of passion the story conveys. It is not the knight’s conscience that punishes him in this ‘surface’ case, but uncontrollable Nature. ‘Eliduc’’s principal mythological task is the representation of inner processes through outer images. The raging storm, the weather in the novella, are depicted as awesome and ambiguous phenomena very close to Petrūska Clarkson’s description of sublimated Nature:

Sublime. Some say she is even older than the Father of gods (Kroll, 1894, pp.29-31). She heals sick limbs and raging souls, and guides the weary to the heaven of piety with her winds. She trashes cemeteries and eats the dead. She also rules chaos.

(Clarkson, 1997: 11)

Anthropologically, myth is a metaphor for inner psychic processes, their visual demonstration. It helps one to experience these processes collectively as well as individually, to differentiate them, to perceive their cause or see their meaning. Thanks to the story’s mythological structure, Eliduc’s (non-existent) inner fight becomes a natural disaster and, killing the sailor, he himself behaves like the storm. The knight’s behaviour is

neither moral nor amoral, it is simply not something to be discussed. As Loveday notes, the tale is full of moral contradictions within the principal characters such as Guidelüec's act of self-abnegation (Loveday, 1985: 84). A Gothic myth (not even a Gothic story which usually pays more attention to psychological issues), 'Eliduc' is to be accepted as it is, which, to some extent, allows its creator to indulge his masculinist mythological fantasies.

A much more refined view of the same moral situation is presented in 'Eliduc's' fabula twin, 'The Ebony Tower'. Unlike a folk tale, 'The Ebony Tower's' psychological plane is highly developed; indeed, it acts as compensation for the psychological emptiness of 'Eliduc'. Simon Loveday draws a table proving the similarity of fabula and ideology in 'Eliduc' and 'The Ebony Tower':

'Eliduc'	'The Ebony Tower'
(a) married man	married man
(b) leaves home and goes abroad	leaves home and goes abroad
(c) visits isolated building	visits isolated building
(d) where he finds an old man	where he finds an old man
(e) and a young girl	and a young girl
(f) man and girl fall in love	man and girl fall in love
(g) couple give in to their feelings	X couple resist their feelings
(h) man preserves his self-respect	X man loses his self-respect
(i) girl is rescued	X girl is not rescued
(j) wife discovers	X wife (presumably) does not discover
(X = point of difference between stories)	

(Loveday, 1985: 89)

Gothic motifs in 'The Ebony Tower' are organised mostly on the formal level in the guise of small elements connecting the story with the Celtic tale. Fowles emphasises the medieval tradition, adopting a quotation from *Yvain* by Chrétien de Troyes as an epigraph to the story. It reads:

... Et par forez longues et lees
 Par leus estranges et sauvages
 Et passa mainz felons passages
 Et maint peril et maint destroit
 Tant qu'il vint au santier tot droit...

...through the forests long and wide,
 through strange and wild country,
 passing through many gruesome spots,
 many a danger and many a strait,
 when he came directly to the path,
 which was full of brambles and wide enough...
 (<http://www.gutenberg.org/03/11/03/>)

Settings are Gothic too. The story takes place in Brittany, as a reference to the Celtic tradition. An even more local setting, the 'treacherous' forest in which Breasley's 'castle' is situated, emphasises the metaphorical, conventional 'medievality' of the place of David's symbolic downfall. As Janet E. Lewis and Barry N. Olshen note, 'Fowles always pays special attention to natural settings, but in "The Ebony Tower" his use of the garden and the forest is most clearly reminiscent of his medieval models' (Lewis and Olshen, 1985: 23). The main characters are directly interested in various aspects of the Gothic. Breasley is fond of everything Celtic; he is an admirer of the *lais* by Marie de France and of Chrétien de Troyes's romances. His favourite *lais* is 'Eliduc'. In addition, Fowles makes the old artist draw his inspiration from medieval Gothic art. Psychologically, in 'The Ebony Tower' one can trace the same Gothic line met in many of Fowles's novels: a male character on a difficult and painful quest led by a sorcerer and an anima. Moreover, the enchanted atmosphere of Breasley's estate with the two girls playing ambiguous roles seems to offer a modernisation of the Gothic tradition.

The return to the Middle Ages literally, metaphorically and psychologically is what awaits Fowles's character in his quest this time. A twentieth-century version of Charles, David Williams is destined to meet people who will shake up all his views on art and philosophy, tarnish his respectable family life as well as his spotless career as a lecturer and painter, and undermine his clean-cut image. David is to continue Charles's task of detaching from the hyper-conscious, extra-rational perspective on life and switching to one of flexibility and even permissiveness – resulting in the freedom of the unconscious. In his quest, the respectable university teacher, David, is shown the wilderness of medieval passions and the meaningfulness and value of experience; he is reminded of the depth and vibrancy of feelings in life and art. Unlike the magus Conchis, David's old wise man no longer teaches him ethics, morality and responsibility; Henry Breasley's idea of wisdom is

completely different – freedom of expression, sexuality and creativity. Like Conchis, he teaches by his own example, but this example is of a life free of any conventions and to be judged by one system of evaluation only, namely the logic of art. David Williams, who arrives in Coëtminais especially to work on the article ‘The Art of Henry Breasley’, learns step by step that the old artist’s whole life is a part of his Gothicised creativity.

References to the medieval Celtic tales, the so-called International Gothic Art of the Renaissance, and the use of classic Gothic psychological situations all create a complicated stylistic mixture which complements the plot well and is managed skilfully by Fowles. The novelist uses different formal elements which may nevertheless be called ‘Gothic’, despite the fact that they are related to different historical phenomena. References to *Yvain* and the Breton tradition are associated with the Gothic through the connotations of the ‘medieval’ and ‘barbaric’ and allusions to pre-Renaissance art are related to the Gothic mostly through religious mysticism. David’s psychological Gothic situation is additionally complicated by the choice of battlefield on which the fight between himself and the old man is to take place: visual art. The fact that his mysterious quest is deeply entwined with the discussion of art and its representational forms, places David the knight in a situation in which all his views on art become the metaphor for his life values and are dangerously challenged by an old ‘libertine’ who is free both in his painting and his personal life. In ‘The Ebony Tower’ the Gothic is used by Fowles as a symbol of freedom, freedom of feelings, instincts, sensitivity and talent. Breasley *lives* in the Gothic, and not only because his home is in Brittany. Parallel to this, his own art is Gothic, partly technically and wholly psychologically, and it derives from the unconscious, as Fowles explains to the reader on the first pages of ‘The Ebony Tower’. Breasley’s art contains ‘a hint of Nolan, though the subject matter [is] far less explicit, more mysterious and archetypal’ and the artist himself once termed the paintings ‘dreams’ (*TET*, 18). To describe his art, “‘Celtic’ had been a word frequently used, with the recurrence of the forest motif, the enigmatic figures and

confrontations' (*TET*, 18). The central source of his inspiration are the works of Antonio Pisanello and Diaz de La Peña. Fowles makes the figure of Pisanello (1395-1455) serve as a bridge between the Celtic and International Gothic in 'The Ebony Tower', blending both phenomena and actually showing why the term 'Gothic' is used to denote so many seemingly non-related things within the system of arts. Pisanello and his early fourteenth-century patrons (adherents of the same International Gothic and the so-called movement of 'court naturalism') 'had been besotted by the Arthurian cycle' (*TET*, 19). Pressed by critics, Henry Breasley admits the influence of Pisanello and confesses that 'The Vision of St. Eustace' by the painter has haunted him all his life. Needless to say, it is no accident that Fowles makes Pisanello and painters like him the principal artistic influence on Henry Breasley. International Gothic preceded the Renaissance as a stage in the emancipation of the fine arts. The strange old painter lives in the Gothic, having inherited this emancipation, both artistic and personal, which David does not possess. Moreover, David refuses to accept emancipation when he is given it in the form of Diana. Breasley's archetypal art is his true freedom whereas David sits in his Ebony Tower of Op-art (contrasted by Fowles with Flaubert's Ivory Tower).

It is interesting that as an advocate of Optical Art, David becomes interested in Henry Breasley's work only after noticing the similarities between his paintings and International Gothic. It attracts 'the scholarly side of him' (*TET*, 19). The Gothic is what makes David start analysing Breasley's methods and what subsequently leads him to the 'sorcerer's castle'. Here Fowles releases the psychological moments that are implicit but not realised in 'Eliduc'. Everything outer becomes inner and no mysterious natural disasters, ghost appearances or cases of undead existence occur. Instead, we observe the disaster of David's personal life, the failure of his art, ideology and middle-class morality. Like Eliduc, he is stuck in the Gothic and its ambiguities, unable to interpret freedom in the right way. He is torn between opposites in postmodern mid-air, unable to determine 'right'

and 'wrong'. His stable world is shaken by the magus. Using 'the magus and his castle' once more, Fowles makes the psychological Gothic in 'The Ebony Tower' work as a shadow of Breasley's and David's fight around the form and meaning of art. The Gothic as a style, a form of art, is also ironically the subject of this fight.

The ideological contrast between the artists has been well defined by Simon Loveday: David paints what he sees, while Henry Breasley paints what he feels (Loveday, 1985: 91). The old painter's relationship with the International Gothic movement only confirms this analysis. The ideology of this art movement was based on the desire to emotionally involve the viewer in the scene represented, making him/her introject the emotional pattern and atmosphere of the work of art. It produced a devotional type of picture, designed for meditation and lyrical contemplation. For this reason, religious themes and subjects were very popular with representatives of International Gothic. 'The Vision of St. Eustace' by Pisanello, so adored by Breasley, is a good example of a devotional, atmospheric work of art, pregnant with mystery, symbolism and deep meaning. It depicts the legend of St. Eustace's encounter with a miraculous stag with a crucifix between his horns claiming to be Jesus himself. Breasley's own paintings seem to be of the same dreamy-introjective symbolic kind. His paintings are the golden mean of representation: they are neither examples of photographic realism nor imageless abstractions. His *Moon-hunt* is, in Loveday's words, 'abstract inasmuch as it moves away from external reality, but representational in so far as it records and represents an internal experience' (Loveday, 1985: 91). In other words, Breasley prefers to paint his own mythology, the important and meaningful fairytale world inhabiting his imagination.

In contrast, Fowles makes David an adherent of Optical Art, the style which uses colours and simple forms and structures to create a pulsating effect. Being lucky enough to come from an artistic family, he was 'a star student in his third year, already producing a saleable work' (*TET*, 19). Apart from being a gifted student, he 'was highly articulate' and

‘could both talk and write well’ and later became quite popular as a teacher, lecturer and critic (*TET*, 20). His own art was very much influenced by Bridget Riley, one of the most important figures in Op Art; David even became ‘one of the passable young substitutes’ (*TET*, 20). Op Art emphasises the physical pleasure of looking, re-combining and re-imagining the effects of shape, size, movement, space and colour. It implies projection rather than introjection as it depends on one’s imagination more than the imagination depends on the picture. The approach is unequivocally criticised in ‘The Ebony Tower’ by the triumvirate of the novelist/narrator/Breasley who constantly stress the symbol-less futility of abstract art, its spiritual and informational vacuum. Despite having moved ‘from beneath the Op Art umbrella’, David is still ‘a fully abstract painter whose works ‘[go] well on walls that [have] to be lived with’ (*TET*, 20-21). In other words, they are decorative. For Breasley, David’s attraction to abstractionism symbolises everything which is at war with ‘true art’: middle-class morality, bourgeois utilitarianism (paintings that go well with furniture), the rational, mathematical, heartless nature of David’s art. David himself is the living representative of a bourgeois lifestyle: having a wife, two children and a proper job, he finds himself at a loss not only with Breasley’s Gothic creations but also with his Gothic, half-medieval way of life away from cities and civilisation. Geometric abstraction and fractal painting are cold and devoid of any feeling and deep meaning. They are the products of consciousness, whereas what Breasley is doing is directly related to the unconscious and its eternal images. Fowles’s statement here is that the old painter possesses the muse (the ‘angel’ Mouse/Diana plus her ‘whore’ counterpart the Freak/Anne) but his guest does not. Breasley teases David, hoping to make him openly admit his attachment to abstraction, while the younger painter is very much afraid of losing both his identity and Breasley’s friendship:

‘Footsteps of Pythagoras, that right?’

The old man stayed intent on his soup. David glanced for help at the girl opposite.

‘Henry’s asking if you paint abstracts.’

Eyes on his laden spoon, the old man muttered quickly, ‘Obstructs.’

‘Well yes. I’m afraid ... I do.’

He knew it was a mistake even before the Mouse's quick glance. The old man smiled up.
'And why are you afraid dear boy?'
David said lightly, 'Just a figure of speech.'
'Very brainy stuff, I hear. Much admired, Mouse says.'

(*TET*, 41)

'Brainy stuff' is opposed to paintings evoked by deep feelings. Fowles deliberately makes Breasley the complete opposite of David, even in background and character. Breasley lacks David's intelligence and education; he cannot even speak without swearing and using elliptical constructions typical of popular speech. His linguistic abilities betray him, but his images do not. Jung insists on the pre-eminence of image before language; Fowles takes this argument further and suggests that image not only comes first, but is also superior to language, image standing for the unconscious and language for consciousness. This semiotic peculiarity of the old painter's life comes as a surprise to David when, listening to Breasley's drunken talk, he notes that 'the old man's problem [is] an almost total inadequacy with words' (*TET*, 58). Breasley does not *return* to the Gothic; he has never grown out of it. On the level of the plot we see Henry Breasley as a helpless child, desperately needing the company and care of two young girls, one of them starting out as a painter herself. On the symbolical level we encounter Fowles's favourites – the Magus with his double-faced anima-muse. David too has an opportunity to have his muse – and loses it. He chooses his conscious, cold art and the comfortable life associated in the story with family values and his wife Beth.

Breasley's paintings embody the Jungian emancipation of the image, stored in the unconscious, via painting, the release of creative energy. In James Hillman's words, working with archetypal images 'aims at healing the psyche by re-establishing it in the metaxy from which it had fallen into the disease of literalism' (and commercial abstractionism in David's case) (Sugg, 1992: 133). 'Healing the psyche' is always a quest, and painting the image is a part of it, the way to escape the narrowness of attitude.

Breasley paints his dreams and in so doing liberates archetypes.⁵ Being an abstract painter, David fails to release the image. In refusing to take the opportunity to complete this task, he fails in his part of Fowlesian meta-individuation.

In his favourite manner, Fowles relates 'The Ebony Tower' to his other works, creating a network of intertextual self-references and cross-references. Reference to *The Collector* appears in *The Magus*, and Freak in 'The Ebony Tower' reads *The Magus* during their *déjeuner sur l'herbe* (Fowles's flirtation with Manet's scandalous *sujet*). The novelist is being self-ironic here: when David sees Freak reading *The Magus*, he 'guessed at astrology, she would be into all that nonsense' (*TET*, 64). Textual references to 'Eliduc' are even more evident and directly connected with 'archetypal' and Jungian moments. 'Inarticulate' Breasley (image) vs. intelligent David (language) and Fowles's outrageous suggestion of the revaluation of values apparently stem from his interest in Jung and his resulting belief in the positive power of the unconscious. Before the strange *déjeuner*, Breasley and David discuss what has inspired and influenced Henry Breasley. David manages to make him admit the symbolism of Breton medieval literature in his paintings (the so-called 'Coëtminais series'). Marie de France and Chrétien de Troyes are mentioned as it becomes evident that the old painter lives in his mysterious, limitless dream world of Celts and Middle Ages chivalry:

The old man explained in his offhand way the sudden twelfth- and thirteenth-century mania for romantic legends, the mystery of island Britain ... filtering all over Europe *via* its French namesake; the sudden preoccupation with love and adventure and the magical, the importance of the once endless forest – of which the actual one they were walking in, Paimpont now, but the Broceliande of the *lais* of Chrétien de Troyes, was an example – as the matrix for all these goings-on; the breaking-out of the closed formal garden of other medieval art, the extraordinary yearning symbolized in these wandering horsemen and lost damsels and dragons and wizards, Tristan and Merlin and Lancelot ...

(*TET*, 57)

⁵ That Breasley calls his paintings 'dreams' is probably a reference to Jungian therapeutic and interpretive methods. Jung asked his patients to draw their dreams so that they could better understand the symbolic language of the unconscious.

Breasley cannot properly explain *why* he likes the Gothic, but nevertheless tries to express his ideas through the scarce linguistic means he possesses. He speaks up for devalued subjectivity and the world of feelings in his strange manner with many ellipses and parcellations as if resisting the very restrictiveness of the product of consciousness which is human language: 'All damn nonsense ... Just here and there, don't you know, David. What one needs. Stimulating, that's the word' (*TET*, 57-58). And here he praises the tale 'Eliduc' as an example of one of those 'stimulating' 'what he needs': 'Damn good tale. Read it several times. What's that old Swiss bamboozler's name. Jung, yes? His sort of stuff. Archetypal and all that' (*TET*, 58). This is the first time in his novels that Fowles puts Jung directly into the text, and thus the whole picture looks postmodern enough: here we have the 'Chinese-box structure' of 'the old bamboozler' Fowles writing about 'the old bamboozler' Breasley speaking about 'the old Swiss bamboozler' Jung.

Again, we must bear in mind that the Gothic line in 'The Ebony Tower' is an example of male Gothic with its process of male individuation, fears, problems and objects of abjection and attraction. The binary war, 'image vs. language', is represented from Fowles's usual 'multiple male' point of view, with the inarticulate Breasley standing for the unconscious and educated David embodying bourgeois morality; unfortunately, both of them perceive Diana, Anne and Beth as interchangeable, disposable potential inspirational figures or, conversely, as women who failed to inspire. Antagonistic as they are, Breasley and his younger colleague represent the masculine principle at different stages of development; medieval or enlightened, it is only interested in its own wellbeing and self-realisation. It is not accidental that Breasley prefers to call his 'angel' and 'whore' by nicknames the Mouse and the Freak as if they do not have their own names; he designs the world around him and the two 'gels' are but a part of this picture – just as Eliduc's ladies are nobody outside his world of passions and desires. Breasley is even so kind as to

‘concede’ his muses to David for a while so that David too could improve his creativity and produce better art. He says to Williams during their *déjeuner sur l’herbe*: ‘Pity you’re married ... they need a good fuck’ (*TET*, 61). Even the fact that the girls receive from the old man rare knowledge and skills as well as a quiet, comfortable lifestyle in return for the youth of their bodies, does not make the situation look less sexist.

The motif of the magus coaching the uninitiated in irresponsibility and freedom of the flesh in contrast to Fowles’s previous version of God who taught the fool to behave as a grown-up male, is very unusual and at the same time very postmodern. Breasley does not have to ‘deconstruct’ himself at the end of the novel as is the case with Conchis; he is the deconstructing force himself, he speaks for the previously devalued unconscious. The only problem is that this new image of the old wise man leading the male character in his individuation ‘back to the mother’, fails to condition the hero to treat women as personalities and not as erotic useful muses. Conversely, the ‘standard’ rational male God Conchis, even though he exerts his will by physical and psychological cruelty and pressure, manages to at least make Nicholas think about treating Alison as a human being. Breasley is symbolically the deconstructed postmodern God relegated to the unconscious and speaking out of its depths. But, as his controversial behaviour towards women shows, even as a ‘deconstructive’ and ‘deconstructed’ force, Breasley nevertheless remains a ‘male God’. This provides a curious parallel with Jung: as democratic and open minded as Jung is about the ‘neglected’ binary opposition, some of his statements about women remain controversial and even offensive.

Unlike Charles Smithson in a similar psychological situation, David manages to survive the charms of the anima and remain faithful to his wife. ‘I survived’ – he tells her of his Coëtminais impressions even though his consciousness is not yet fully awake after the experience of visiting the Magus (*TET*, 113). The secret of this Fowlesian hero’s loyalty to his wife lies in the fact that he likes the wrong kind of anima – he is attracted to

an 'angel' instead of a 'whore'. The 'bad' Ann 'repels something in him', and he chooses a 'safer' girl – Diana (*TET*, 62). This saves him as, compared to the sexy, vulgar and self-confident Freak, the Mouse '...does not talk with strangers. Has to be something fantastic to break that block' (*TET*, 103). The Mouse is not bold enough to chase David and, unlike Charles Smithson, whose life is turned upside down after a meeting with the anima, David manages to preserve his lifestyle even though his bourgeois rational philosophy is in serious need of a repair.

Breasley and David successfully continue the chain of collectors and magi in Fowles's works. The relationship between his collectors and magi is always Gothic, the magus having some kind of numinous and destructive influence on the collector, changing his attitudes and values overnight and in quite a radical way. The only but very important and ironic difference in the novelist's presentation of the Gothic revaluating capacity is that at a certain stage in the individuation process the magi teach the male character to think, and sometimes to feel. The Gothic, which offers painful neurotic experiences as a mode of transition, is used as a force which pushes one away from a one-sided false stability towards wholeness of the psyche. David is punished for *not doing* things for which Nicholas has previously been punished. Nicholas is seduced by the girls and in so doing betrays Alison; David is strong enough not to be seduced by the girls and remain faithful to Beth. When Carol Barnum asked the novelist whether he tries to put David in a double bind in 'The Ebony Tower', 'damned if he does, damned if he doesn't', he answered:

A double bind of a kind. I meant to suggest that if he ran off with Diana he would be a better artist – not necessarily a better person. One central truth the story was meant to air was that good moral behaviour and good art have no relation at all.

(Vipond, 1999: 111)

In yet another interview he admits:

I've always found what one might call the algebraic side of ethics – 'All actions of type *y* are bad' – distinctly scholastic. Particular cases are always very different. I'm not denying that inductively achieved moral principles are usually unjustifiable, and so on. *The Magus* was of course a deliberately artificial, model-proposing novel, and a good deal more about fiction than any 'real' situation, and I shouldn't go to the stake for Lily's morality (or her master's). Sarah in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was always intended to be a sort of borderline case. I've long reached the conclusion that that one principal function of the novel, or at least of my own novels, is to present such borderline cases.

(Vipond, 1999: 76)

Fowles stated that 'Charles's defect in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was that he failed to recognise the power of passion and the imagination' (Vipond, 1999: 76); David's problem in 'The Ebony Tower' is very much the same. But Nicholas's sins spring from an opposite source: too much passion and a lack of responsibility. Breasley says to David, 'Freedom house, dear boy' (*TET*, 33) meaning that his guest should feel free to do anything in Coëtminais. Conchis would have said 'It is not a freedom house, dear boy' and he actually proves this to David in the Trial scene. Simon Loveday finds this ambiguous approach of Fowles's inconsistent and incoherent and 'The Ebony Tower' failing on realistic terms (Loveday, 1985: 102). But Fowles does not wish to be just right or wrong; the ideologies of his narratives are as complicated as their forms. Henry Breasley may seem sexist, treating Diana and Anne as the two sides of his anima, but he stands by the image and the unconscious; he is struggling *against* the rational. On the contrary, David, who in his personal life and painting prefers order, is an almost perfect personality. Developing his sensibility and *giving* freedom to his unconscious, David becomes a 'bad' husband and a 'bad' father; additionally, he starts perceiving women as muses, dreaming of using them as inspirations for his paintings. Developing his responsibility and consciousness, that is, pushing the bodily and sensual aside, Urfe learns to respect women and *not* turn them into animas and angels/whores. Nothing is positive or negative; everything is relative. As a mirror reflection of *The Magus*, 'The Ebony Tower' underlines the dialecticism of Fowles's fiction in general and the interpenetration of the main images

in his novels. Exploiting a phenomenon, the writer always emphasises that it cannot be defined in a single way; he tends to present characters as part of a dialectical dynamic as well as in dialectical unity with other phenomena.

The Gothic is used by Fowles to shake the complacent and false stability of his male characters. They are challenged – and even if not completely changed (usually he leaves the transformation to be completed; leaves them at *a loss*), then at least inwardly disturbed. David Williams is not an exception: he is a mere link in the fictional chain of meta-individuation and, like all his predecessors, he is left torn between his feelings and his duties and he misses the opportunity to produce the much-desired (or dreaded) synthesis out of the dialectics of his situation. Surprisingly, the synthesis is finally achieved by the next participator in the Fowlesian individuation process – by Daniel Martin. Since, however, *Daniel Martin* (1977) is the least Gothic of Fowles's novels, it will be considered here only as a transitional point in the development of Fowles's fiction.

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Chapter 5

The Gothic in *Mantissa*

Mantissa stands out from all Fowles's previous fiction by virtue of being a 'purely' postmodern book, a text full of formal experiments which dissect the narrative into small and almost unconnected pieces. After *Daniel Martin* (1977), which 'concluded'¹ the meta-individuation process launched by Fowles at the very beginning of his career as a novelist in *The Collector*, *Mantissa* (1982) was probably destined to be an exploratory book, having as its main theme the problem of finding a source of inspiration for creative writing.

Daniel Martin is unique in the sense that it is Fowles's only novel with an explicitly positive ending. In the chapter named 'The Orchard of the Blessed', Daniel makes what seems to him 'the most important decision of his life': 'To hell with cultural fashion; to hell with élitist guilt; to hell with existentialist nausea; and above all, to hell with the imagined that does not say, not only in, but behind the images, the real' (*DM*, 454).² The 'Existentialist nausea' that added to the novel a negative undertone irritated not only Daniel Martin. By the end of the seventies the fashion for existentialist thought had worn off. In an interview with Vipond, Daniel's creator expresses the same opinion as far as positive endings and optimism in literature are concerned:

I don't like the way pessimism – the black, absurdist view – has so often been fashionable during this century, a supposed proof that the artist really understands the world. This isn't to dismiss its only too

¹ I have put *concluded* in inverted commas because in Jungian psychology the individuation process can never be finished; it is endless and circular. Fowles proves this idea, repeating the individuation circle again in *Mantissa* and *A Maggot*.

² All references to *Daniel Martin* are to the Vintage edition, 1996, London: Vintage. Further quotations from the book are from this edition, referred to hereafter as *DM*.

real and manifold cruelties and horrors, just to question whether the black view isn't being exploited because it's so much easier to maintain and defend than the opposite. Optimism, however slight, always relies on an element of the rational, of realism. I don't believe we shall ever achieve valid art through formlessness and unthinking hazard. We need less would-be all-comprehending vision, and more honest craftsmanship.

(Fowles, 1998: 366)

Thus, the book's notorious positive ending is related to optimism and further to realism. In an age of existential philosophy, optimism was not fashionable and thus happy endings looked banal and in bad taste. Abandoning existentialist philosophy, John Fowles made the ending of *Daniel Martin* positive. In doing so, he also abandoned the sense of loss, the main incentive to write. In 1977 Fowles commented to Mel Gussow:

In some ways the unhappy ending pleases the novelist. He has set out on a voyage and announced, I have failed and must set out again. If you create a happy ending, there is a somewhat false sense of having solved life's problems.

(*The New York Times*, 1977, 13 November)

A happy ending, or 'loss of the loss', does not come easily to Daniel Martin (or to John Fowles, if we take into consideration all the nesting-doll authorships in the novel). The young actress, Jenny Mcneil, who is hurt by the fact that Dan does not belong wholly to her, is jealous of her lover's obsession with loss. In her inner monologue, which is concurrent with Gilbert Rose's ideas about the nature of creativity, she says:

I have to imagine a secret Dan who actually likes *loss* – both all he's lost in the past and all he has to lose. In some way to him loss is a beautiful, fertile thing. I don't mean he wallows in it or moans about it ... but he's discovered that he's much happier as a self-appointed loser than a winner.

(*DM*, 264)

John Fowles's motivation by and interest in loss looks pretty much the same. An artist wants to 'return again and again on the same impossible journey' (Fowles, 1998: 140):

One must posit here an unconscious drive towards an unattainable. The theory [Rose's] also accounts for the sense of irrecoverable loss (or predestined defeat [Dan's desire to be a loser instead of a winner]) that is so characteristic of many major novelists ... Associated with this is a permanent – and symptomatically childlike – dissatisfaction with reality as it is, with the 'adult' world that is the case.

The final parting with existentialism and the fascination with loss meant transcending the fear of losing the masculine principle and was directly related to the disappearance of dread before the unconscious, 'the lost mother' that raises in the Fowlesian hero the mixed emotion of fear and adoration. This reconciliation with 'the mother' also signified 'the end' of the long fictional individuation process in which all his heroes had been involved. Daniel's parting with creative loss, which resulted from his creator's refusal to continue with 'existentialist nausea', leads him to a reunion with the love of his student days, Jane, whom he had given up to his friend. Speaking of *Daniel Martin*, Susana Onega calls the same process the 'fight between the compulsion to undertake his journey of individuation and the temptation to lag behind, in the comfortable anonymity of the maternal womb' (Onega, 1989: 97). Whereas Clegg and Nicholas struggle to become conscious and responsible people and Charles and David lose their opportunity to overcome the fear of/desire for the unconscious, the wiser and older Daniel Martin becomes the point of meeting for the controversial aspirations of all his predecessors. Daniel Martin, as a mature version of the Fowlesian hero, is far more responsible than the self-indulgent Frederick and Nicholas but nevertheless manages to overcome the love/hate feeling for the unconscious, characteristic of the inhibited Charles and David. He breaks with the bitter existentialist idea of conscious choice in the cruel and destructive world because he is no longer afraid of the unconscious – the metaphorical mother of destruction and chaos. He is reconciled to her.

The long-awaited 'synthesis' replaces the endless dynamic of oppositions so typical of Fowles's texts, as Daniel becomes the first hero whose sufferings are ended. From this moment on, John Fowles is left without the main thematic line of his fiction. Although Daniel Martin manages to get rid of his loss, for his author it meant the loss of the very

important male character who had, for over fifteen years, been the organising centre of his literary world. In this light, *Mantissa* may be seen as an attempt to compensate for the absence of this line of masculine protagonist as well as an attempt to find a new motif. As if echoing the problem of the thematic void which was ushered in by the happy ending of *Daniel Martin*, *Mantissa* is actually about waiting for an inspiration in the emptiness of amnesia. Its main character begins from zero, and with the help of his muses, tries to regain the power of creativity which had had left him after an obscure accident on the street. The novelist himself confessed to Carol Barnum that the book was written as a break in between *Daniel Martin* and *A Maggot* (Vipond, 1999: 115). Whether or not *Mantissa* was written to fill the gap left after the exhaustion of Fowles's favourite male character,³ there is no doubt that it is a text produced in a transitional period.

Mantissa was received by the public mostly negatively – as a failure. The critics, as Jan Relf put it, were 'shy of it' (Vipond, 1999: 130). In Robert Campbell's words, the novel was an unsuccessful departure from anything Fowles had written before:

One wonders how happy Fowles was at the publication of his latest novel. [...] Unfortunately one of the many ways in which it differs from his other books is that it is not very good. It is sad to find a writer of talent has given up what he is good at and sadder still to have to pay money to find that out.
(Onega, 1989: 124)

Mantissa is so unexpectedly intricate and experimental that it called into question all previous opinions of the novelist's work. Critics did not know whether to read this exploration of the creative process of a writer as a serious debate about postmodern writing and deconstruction, or as a parody of fashionable 'deconstructive' ideas, or as an honest attempt to understand one's own process of creation. Actually, the book is

³ Is Fowles being cunning in saying to Barnum that 'it certainly wasn't written because the muse had gone away, as you imply'? (Vipond, 1999: 115).

constructed as a Gothic fantasy and capitalises on female empowerment and aggressive female sexuality shown as the ultimate male sexual fantasies.

As far as the layer of 'reality' is concerned, here the case is even more complicated than in *The Magus*. Unlike *The Magus*, in which the reader at least could glimpse the 'external' (as opposed to psychological) life of Nicholas Urfe, the only piece of 'reality' we have in *Mantissa* consists of a white room, a female doctor (Dr. Delfie), an amnesiac patient (Miles Green), and his wife, whom he does not recognise. Even *this* reality is doubtful, as we are not given any personal information about the main character, and besides, again unlike *The Magus*, not many events take place in the novel. Most of the time the reader has to deal with the descriptions of Miles Green's unconscious and half-conscious visions, erotic fantasies and inconsistent ideas and meditations on creativity, the role of women in a creative man's life, female independence and the nature of contemporary fiction.

Apart from those who took these meditations seriously, there were critics who thought they were badly written and out of place. Thus, Benjamin DeMott wrote in 1982 in a review of *Mantissa*:

There is a minority view of John Fowles (one that I confess I share) according to which, despite the quantity of intellectual rumination in his pages, the man is essentially a yarnsmith who is at his best when producing page-turners such as 'The Collector' ... [...] Admirable and immensely successful as a suspense-engineer ... Mr. Fowles has gifts that are essentially for romance and glamour, not for the penetration of the heart and not really for subtle intellection either.

(*The New York Times*, 29 August 1982)

This is quite a harsh criticism of John Fowles's long-cherished ambition to be a profound philosopher as well as a good writer. Evaluating the literary quality of the book, DeMott also notes that there is a chance it would 'contribute to a sensible downward revision of Mr. Fowles's reputation' (*The New York Times*, 29 August 1982). John Fowles had

probably had a premonition that the book would provoke such a controversy because he had not been planning to publish it for a wide audience in the first place. It seems that he wanted *Mantissa* to be a book for a limited circle of people, for family and friends. In 1995 he told Jan Relf: ‘...the idea of that book really came from a commission for a private press in America, and it was going to be one of those little things one “did on the side”. Unfortunately, my two main publishers insisted on doing it—but no one has really tackled it’ (Vipond, 1999: 130). Another of his arguments in his own defence was that a novelist should not seek to produce serious, philosophically and psychologically charged fiction. Sometimes he needs a break from his duties as an ‘important’ writer:

I confess I despise the American notion that ‘important’ writers must eternally mount to greater lengths, greater depth, greater seriousness; I think this very often produces huge and over-inflated balloons. The writer is burst because he has swallowed the public myth of himself. I regard the public image of myself as an enemy, a stranger called “John Fowles”, who bears little relation to reality, and I try to escape him or at least not to encourage him too much.

(Vipond, 1999: 116)

Nevertheless, as will be shown later, despite critical accusations of groundless experimentalism and lack of depth, *Mantissa* contains the same individuation motif as any other novel by the writer. In Susana Onega’s view, this seemingly unrelated book ‘stands in a complementary relation to John Fowles’s previous fiction’ (Onega, 1989: 125). The reason that the individuation motif is difficult to recognise in the novel is that the emphasis is shifted from the adult part of the individuation process to the subliminal world of the mother-child relationship and its influence on an adult creative male.

According to Fowles, *Mantissa* was fun to write and was meant to be humorous, despite the Gothic undertones of the events happening on the ‘fantasy’ level of the novel: the rape of the patient by the dark and constantly changing anima Dr. Delfie, and the obviously sado-masochistic nature of other images from Miles Green’s unconscious. As is often the case with parodies, the book both proves and denies the main moments of post-

structural thought. *Mantissa* may be called, using Roland Barthes's words, 'a tissue of quotations, drawn from the innumerable centres of culture' in which the author himself is but another 'centre of culture' (Barthes, 1977: 146):

'Third, and most important. At the creative level there is in any case no connection whatever between author and text. They are two entirely separate things. Nothing, but nothing, is to be inferred or deduced from one to the other, and in either direction. The deconstructivists have proved that beyond a shadow of doubt. The author's role is purely fortuitous and agential.' [...]

'Why do writers still put their names on the title-page, Miles?' She looks timidly up. 'I'm only asking.'

'Because most of them are like you. Quite incredibly behind the times. And hair-raisingly vain. Most of them are still under the positively medieval illusion that they write their own books.'

(*M*, 118)⁴

As Fowles himself said, the structure of the book was not planned to include any coherent narrative (Vipond, 1999: 115). Style replaces style, appearance replaces appearance, and the reader loses count of scenes and conversations absolutely unrelated to each other thematically. The female character 'leading' this progression of scenes and prompting their change, variously recreates herself as doctor, muse(s), whore and rock star. *Mantissa* is thus a typical post-modernist novel, which brings to the absurd the idea of Bakhtin's heteroglossia. Instead of co-existing to create a unified, artistically *organised* text, as Bakhtin theorised, discourses join to *disorganise* it. The reader is offered a number of discourses, disguises and parodies, from Dr. Delfie's pseudo-medical nonsense in the linguistic style of Nicholas Urfe's trial scene ('cases of genuine and persistent erotic recalcitrance', 'coenonumphic or pseudotergunuminal stimulation' [*M*, 30]), to the 'telegramme style', representing a self-aware, self-referential text in the process of printing, where all the punctuation marks participate in the creative process and count as stylistic devices:

⁴ All references to *Mantissa* are to the Picador edition, 1993, London: Picador. Further quotations from the book are from this edition, referred to hereafter as '*M*'.

(Dot dot dot) to resume (dash) but I must insist that it is on the understanding that although I could go on like this forever (comma) until you would have to lie on the bed anyway out of sheer exhaustion (comma) we agree that the formal basis for our discussion must be your recognition ...

(M, 65)

Apart from these very typical post-modern devices, *Mantissa* includes many dialogues of varying degrees of futility, often quite 'visionary' in their representational quality, which copy or mock different film, novel and real life expressions, clichés and dialogical styles. In *Mantissa* all the conversations between Miles Green and his constantly transforming muse are of the low, 'popular' quality. They tend to be full of self-referential ('double-coding') lines typical of fiction that is aware of its own nature and existence. Some of the dialogues may well irritate the reader because they go round in circles and do not lead to any conclusion:

She keeps her eyes lowered. 'What I really want to say is that I think I would be prepared to accept some compromise about the nature of our relationship in the eventual future, if you insisted. When we knew each other better.'

'You mean the one where you're the highbrow lady poet and I'm the crass businessman?'

She gives him a quick anxious look, full of aghast sincerity.

'Please, I didn't say that at all, Miles. Not crass. If you were, that, obviously I ... my character wouldn't look at you. A perfectly nice man in this way. Just a little ... limited and deformed by his milieu and profession.'

'I'm not absolutely clear what compromise you had in mind.'

'If you prefer them to ... well, to put it quite, quite badly, have a rather more overtly physical relationship in the end.'

'To make it?'

'If you want to put it in this way.'

(M, 104)

One of the numerous discourses in the novel is that of medicine. It is through medical language and the people who use it that Fowles introduces Gothic motifs into *Mantissa*, with Doctor Delfie being the centre of the dark erotic fantasies of the amnesiac patient. According to Miles Green's Gothic sensual dreams, the doctor and her assistant, Nurse Cory, have to rape him in order to restore his mental powers. During this procedure the patient is absolutely helpless, physically as well as morally and mentally, and he

therefore cannot control the process. The responsibility for his instincts and his eroticism is removed from his conscience as the unusual sex-shock therapy takes place:

‘Give me your right hand, Mr. Green.’

Frozen, he did nothing, but the doctor took the hand from beneath his head and led it upwards. It touched a bare breast. Once more shocked and horrified, he opened his eyes. Dr. Delfie was leaning over him, with the white tunic open, staring at the wall above his head, as if she were doing no more than take his pulse. His hand was led to the other breast.

‘What are you doing?’

She did not look down. ‘Please don’t talk, Mr. Green. I want to concentrate on tactile sensation.’

(M, 23)

The whole rape scene contains the very recognisable motif of incest, as the almost unconscious main character is given guilt-free ‘tactile sensations’ by a caring woman (the doctor as a recreation of ‘the mother’). In ‘Hardy and the Hag’, John Fowles explores very similar ideas based on Gilbert Rose’s post-Freudian theories. Writing, in Fowles’s opinion, means regaining the powers of the unconscious manifested in the early sensations of the baby. The artist’s desire is to return to the unconscious feeling of warmth and safety, to the ‘fluid, polymorphous’ visual, tactile and auditory sensuous impressions which stamp themselves indelibly on the infant psyche (Fowles, 1998: 139). Miles Green, too, has to repeat the experience of ‘the first dawn of what will become the adult sense of reality’ and ‘the first awareness of separate identity’ (Fowles, 1998: 139).

What we might call Fowles’s fictional ‘descent to the mother’ in *Mantissa* is logical if the ending of *Daniel Martin* is taken into consideration. Bruce Woodcock notes of *Daniel Martin*: ‘Perhaps the exorcism involved in writing this book helps explain the relapse, not to say drastic regression, which characterises ... *Mantissa*’ (Woodcock, 1984: 145). Firstly, after exorcising ‘the mother’ and getting rid of the ‘loss’ in *Daniel Martin*, the writer had to re-establish in his fiction the situation in which the main character has yet to attain the union of opposites within his psyche. Secondly, as the book presents a new

modification of Fowles's fictional individuation process, the main character needs to be re-born (the old variant of the main character has no room to develop; he achieved his goal). *Mantissa* arrives as a celebration of the Fowlesian hero's restoration of the bond with 'the mother' and in this sense, Miles Green is an ideal new character: he is reborn and returned to the state of unity her; a blissful state, memories of which trigger the sense of loss in an adult (man). And because in the Fowlesian world, loss means creativity, or is the main stimulus to create, Miles Green is, of course, a writer. Green thus relapses into the unconscious in a circle of ritual death and re-birth, seeking inspiration in his childhood experiences. He is bold enough to meet with the mother face to face even though this time she is Gothic as never before: she is the lustful, mighty Great Goddess.

Despite the fact that the whole rape scene refers to Freud's ideas of Oedipus theory via Gilbert Rose's rendition of it, the same moment of the development of individual consciousness can be observed from the Jungian point of view, with no loss of the incest theme. Freud and his disciples regarded the infant as the centre of the polymorphous experience of an erotically coloured pleasure, the father as a dangerous element destroying the precious mother-child bond and the mother as a naturally nurturing creature. The mother figure was thus given a passive role and the emphasis put on the (male) child. In contrast, Jungians have seen incest as a more metaphorical and less literal phenomenon and assigned to the maternal figure a more active and less decorative-angelic role, metaphorically regarding her as having an unlimited power with which one must reckon. In his book *The Origins and Development of Consciousness* Jung's disciple, Erich Neumann, explaining the first stages of the existence of consciousness, both at its phylogenetic and ontogenetic levels, gives examples of various ancient *magna mater* myths in order to show how the figure of the great mother/goddess has influenced human

culture over the ages in general and the lives of particular individuals.⁵ He argues that the world that opens itself to a newborn baby is the world of matriarchy with its ambiguous images of the evil and devouring/kind and loving mother (Neumann, 1970: 39-42). Having just emerged from the primordial oneness (which Neumann metaphorically calls *uroboros*, or the snake that bites its own tail – the symbol of the cyclic character of all processes in nature), the child wholly depends on its mother and is therefore absolutely helpless, both in the face of the unknown outside world and the dark regions of the unconscious. The mother is therefore perceived by the child as the person who cares for it and defends it from the outside world; at the same time, she represents the link which connects the newly emerged ego with nothingness, the *uroboros*, with the chthonic world of the unconscious. Because the infantile ego is disorientated, the sensations of pain and pleasure are mixed and intertwined. External objects, the most important of which is the mother, are seen as blurred and evoke contradictory emotions of fear and love (Neumann, 1970: 41). The worlds of the unconscious and consciousness are engaged in a complicated dialectical relationship which proves that nothing can be absolutely good or absolutely bad:

Detachment from the *uroboros* means being born and descending into the lower world of reality, full of dangers and discomforts. The nascent ego becomes aware of the pleasure-pain qualities, and from them it experiences its own pleasure and pain. Consequently, the world becomes ambivalent. [...] The same applies to the unity of life within the *uroboros*, which, like the swamp, begets, gives birth, and slays again in an endless cycle. [...] The wicked, devouring mother and the good mother lavishing affection are two sides of the great *uroboric* Mother Goddess who reigns over this psychic stage.

(Neumann, 1970: 39)

⁵ Using mythology, Neumann argues that the idea of the patriarchal family being the primary social structure is wrong and is probably a psychological inheritance originating from too heavy a reliance on myths from the Bible. This means that there was no such thing as rivalry between the son and the father because the father was not the head of the family. Consequently, the anthropological evidence in support of the Oedipus complex theory that Freud demonstrated in *Totem and Taboo* is wrong too (Neumann, 1998: 205-206).

Thus, the mother figure may appear to the child as either angelic or dangerous; she is both a positive and threatening image. Clearly, in *Mantissa* Miles Green is more fascinated by her devouring sexuality than by her nurturing and caring qualities.

In ancient and tribal mythology, the primordial darkness which threatens to swallow up the weak ego often appears in the guise of a terrible goddess of death covered in blood or as a goddess bringing with her plague or hunger. She is the mother of instincts who can use pleasure to kill and destroy, such as Neith in Egyptian mythology, the Roman Magna Mater or Baba Yaga in Slavonic fairytales (Neumann, 1970: 51-55). She is sexually voracious and her son is her lover. She plays with him, then kills or castrates him, only to resurrect him at another stage and then repeat the whole process.⁶ Her wild sexuality is symbolically related to death and castration through the relationship between blood and fertility: 'She has the blood magic that makes life grow. Hence the same goddess is very often the mistress of fertility, of war, and of hunting' (Neumann, 1970: 55).

The element of death and resurrection of the son/young god is reflected in many early cultures in various spring fertility rites, many of which have incorporated the sacrifice of young men and animals as well as acts of castration. For instance, followers of the Roman cult of the Magna Mater, whose image had descended from the Phrygian fertility goddess Cybele, practised ecstatic ravings and self-castration (Cotterell, 1999: 70). Neumann also mentions that certain versions of the great mother goddess, like those in Crete and Carthage, were hermaphrodites with beards and phalluses (which they supposedly obtained from the castrated son) (Neumann, 1970: 46). The great goddess wants to possess the male reproductive organ because it brings fertility and symbolises the power of creation. Once she has obtained it, she becomes self-sufficient and does not need her young god any more, so her young son/lover can be killed.

Writing about the negative aspects of the figure of the great goddess, Neumann mentions that apart from her violence, lust for young men and thirst for blood, they also include her powers as a sorceress and a witch (Neumann, 1970: 54). An evil woman can bewitch and 'bespeak', that is, influence people in a bad way without their even knowing it, whereas her good counterpart heals people with herbal remedies, spells or simply by giving good advice. The mythological and folklore link between the great goddess and the witch figure provides a deep insight into the Gothic erotic fantasy of Miles Green. The perception of the present-day doctor by the patient has in many aspects descended from the perception of the medicine man/woman, just as today's 'official' medicine evolved from traditional herbalism and 'irrational' methods of healing.⁷ To regain his creative power, Green has to unite with his feminine side, his anima. However, he starts (and ends) with quite an aggressive, masculine kind of anima clearly possessing the metaphoric phallus with which she 'impregnates' the writer and he gives birth to a 'baby'. During the 'procedure' Miles Green struggles to explain that he cannot produce a baby because he 'is a man, for God's sake' at which nurse Cory, who assists the doctor, winks and retorts: 'So enjoy it':

'Please stop verbalising, Mr. Green. She was beginning to breathe deeply, and had to pause between each sentence. 'Now. One last effort. I can feel it coming. Good. Good. Splendid. With the hips. Hard as you can.' [...] 'There we are ... there we are ... perfect. Perfect. Safe as houses. Keep going, don't stop. Right to the very last syllable. Nurse!'

(M, 45)

Miles is treated by the two women as 'just another patient'; he does not even remember his name when he first opens his eyes in the ward. He symbolically ceases to be a personality as he returns to the anonymity of the unconscious. The doctor makes it clear to him that

⁶ Of course, the 'good' version of the great mother cares for the child and defends him, for instance, Mary hides little Jesus from the wrath of Irod.

⁷ On the evolution of the medical profession see Eliot Freidson's book *Profession of Medicine. A Study of the Sociology of Applied Knowledge*, 1970, New York: Harper and Row Publishers.

‘there is nothing personal’ in the sex that he is having with her: ‘Nurse and I are simply carrying out standard practice’ (M, 25).

The rape-and-birth feature is probably the boldest of Fowles’s role play games: it is the double gender change game in which a man unites with a woman in order to participate in her femininity and thus revive his creativity by bringing together the two sides of his psyche – the feminine and the masculine – but then becomes a woman himself. His aggressive anima rapes him, confining him to the ‘feminine’ position of the victim in the same way that Nicholas was victimised by Conchis. The castration in this version of the Gothic archetypal nightmare means the reduction of Miles Green to the role of the victim in a ‘fertility rite’ by the sexualised ‘mother’ Delfie. Like Evelyn in Angela Carter’s *The Passion of New Eve* (1977), who is transformed into a woman by the Black Goddess, Miles Green accepts the feminine position and loses the control/consciousness/rationality also associated with masculinity/the phallus. *Mantissa* seriously questions and relativises gender roles ideologically just like *The Passion of New Eve* as it replaces order and structure with chaos and then mixes binary oppositions until they are indivisible. Just as Tristessa from *The Passion* is revealed to be a hermaphrodite, ‘mother Delfie’, who stands for darkness and chaos, adopts restrictive medical discourse and aggressive behaviour. She explains to the patient that what she does is logical and ordered and then rapes him – even though for him all these experiences still remain chaotic and absurd.

In the first pages of the novel, Miles Green surrenders his masculinity and returns to the stage of pre-initiation (the rite of initiation meaning the final breaking of the bond with the mother). In this special ceremony, he symbolically crosses the border of ‘light’ only to re-experience the darkness and anonymity of the great goddess’s womb. Speaking about obsessional neurosis in relation to the ceremonial nature of the Gothic, David Punter supposes that ceremonial is the ‘other’ of transgression:

What would ... have been transgression is now allowed; ceremony supersedes the law, permits a breach through which things may flow. We see here again a motif of stabilisation: a threatened irruption can be stabilised by surrounding it with, embedding it in, a sequence of actions.

(Byron and Punter, 1999: 41)

Both as a great mother and as a witch, Dr. Delfie helps Green achieve 'self-healing through terror', as William Veeder calls it (Byron and Punter, 1999: 66). She arranges the circumstances for contact with 'the puissant desires through the meditation of the terrifying Other' while Miles is 'sacrificed' and then 'resurrected' as a writer and a personality (Byron and Punter, 1999: 66). His giving birth to a 'baby manuscript', the restoration of his creative abilities, is another sign of the positive value of the transformation that he experiences.

Concerning the 'doctor' guise of the great mother archetype, it is important to recognise the main points of its attraction, as well as to disclose what it adds to the rich psychological nature of the original archetypal image. Victor Frankenstein – a combination of a doctor and a scientist – is probably the best known example; another often cited model is the mad scientist from Nathaniel Hawthorne's famous Gothic story, *Rappaccini's Daughter* (1846).⁸ E.T.A. Hoffmann is also renowned for his ability to create portraits of the 'alchemist' type of scientist, that is the scientist-sorcerer type, and even the extreme variant of him, the horrible torturer. If Archivarius Lindhorst from the *Golden Pot* (1814) is an example of a 'good' sorcerer, Coppelius from *The Sandman* (1814), who visits

⁸ Whereas the figures of the 'mad doctor' and the 'mad scientist' belong to the same archetype (negative old wise man/woman), Gothic doctors may seem more uncanny and 'abject' because they deal with (and often mutilate) the human body and supposedly know all its mysteries. However, as these two figures have a common origin, in nineteenth-century Romantic-Gothic fiction they are often merged into one wizard-mad doctor-mad scientist image (Victor Frankenstein, Coppelius/Spalanzani). Gothic decadence gets rid of the 'wizard' part as 'alchemy' becomes 'chemistry' and the scientific view of the world continues to develop, but the figures of the doctor and the scientist remain parallel (Dr. Moreau, Dr. Jekyll).

Nathanael's father to undertake some mysterious alchemical work with him, takes on a much more fearful guise in Nathanael's deranged imagination. The scientist Spalanzani, the successor of Coppelius in the poor student's psyche, and the optician Coppola are equally horrible, since they continue to represent the theme of blindness (equalled by Freud to castration) – something that the student dreads. The origins of the 'mad doctor' figure in Gothic fiction are clear. Because of rapid technical progress and the social and psychological changes related to it, archetypal images used in early Gothic novels and poetry moved on too. In eighteenth-century Gothic we encounter claustrophobic places, castles, ruins, convents, labyrinths, torture chambers, corpses and spectres, evil monks, wicked aristocrats, monsters, feeble but virtuous heroines and chivalrous heroes. This list of the Gothic's dominant characteristics, in Fred Botting's words, grew in the 19th century 'with the addition of scientists, ... husbands, madmen, criminals and the monstrous double signifying duplicity and evil nature' (Botting, 1996: 3). Some archetypes became more popular than others, such as the shadow/double (*Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, *Frankenstein*, Poe's *William Wilson* or the figure of the seeker of forbidden knowledge/the keeper of the forbidden knowledge (the old wise man), often in the guise of a mad scientist. The Gothic present had taken the place of the medieval past as more Gothic writers discovered that there is more hidden barbarity in the reality around them than in castles, convents and ruins. While 'mad doctors' have been popular figures in Gothic fiction for more than two hundred years and have incorporated many modern versions of the old wise man, from the alchemist to the present-day surgeon, female doctors (and female 'mad doctors') have only recently become subject-matter in literature and film.

Gothic female doctors can be no less dreadful, indeed sometimes even more so, than their male counterparts, mainly because there is such a striking difference between their 'fertile' nurturing and 'sterile' destructive aspects as perceived by (male) patients. The

reaction to her oppressive behaviour that Dr. Delfie receives from the patients is very close to the reaction of the patients of the psychiatric ward to Nurse Ratched in Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.⁹ Language reflects the order and Miles Green is presented with the order he must live in without the right to express, or even to have, his own opinion. The desire of the great goddess to possess the phallus is metaphorically realised in *Mantissa* in Dr. Delfie's 'phallic' rational medicine and the quasi-scientific, oppressive discourse she uses to restrain her patient. Her language makes sure he does not understand what is happening around him and is therefore excluded from the group of people who can control or change the situation. Even her erotic behaviour as a seducer is cold and calculated: while leaning on the patient during sexual intercourse, she explains to him that 'the memory-centre in the brain is closely associated with the one controlling gonadic activity' and mentions that they will probably have 'to do a PB' ('a plexicaulic booster') (*M*, 22-29). Delfie also explains to her victim, in a peremptory tone, that he must remember the names of his relatives:

You must try to understand it's a shock for them as well. People don't realize how much they rely on recognition as a proof they exist. When things like this happen, they feel scared. Insecure. Right?

(*M*, 15)

After the first chapter in which Dr. Delfie is presented as the main female protagonist, Fowles introduces a whole line of other anima images, but she nevertheless remains a recurrent figure, holding the line together and sustaining the Gothic atmosphere. The next muse to visit the male character is another dominatrix in the guise of a rock star. She is 'straight out of a punk rock festival ... black boots, black jeans, black leather jacket' (*M*,

⁹ In *The Female Malady* Elaine Showalter suggests that the horrifying, 'sterile' figure of Nurse Ratched may be a bitter reaction to women gaining more power in the twentieth century (Showalter, 1985: 219). In her view, the gloomy nurse's behaviour seems to be the reversed version of an abuse of master position by patriarchal figures in previous times.

51). Soon she soon disappears, and a vulnerable muse-angel with 'pinkish-cream rosebuds', 'myrtle leaves' and a lyre takes her place near Miles Green (*M*, 58). A number of more or less submissive animas follow. Insofar as the females depicted are good, obedient and kind to him and present no danger to his masculine psyche and consciousness, they are not at all Gothic. There is, however, an important difference in the kind of narrative used in the book from that of the previous novels of Fowles in which animas also serve the male. Being a transparent compilation of postmodern techniques, it is to a greater extent self-reflective and, most importantly, openly self-critical. Both the male who writes the novel, and the male about whom the novel is being written, acknowledge and parody cultural chauvinism and sexism. For instance, demonstrating a knowledge of female psychology, Fowles presents his reader with the following double-coded scene: the muse riots against the writer and simultaneously a woman protests against being used by a man. On the borderline where the two codes overlap, we see a female who asks for understanding and 'differentiation' of her image, a woman who does not want to be turned into the anima. As well as being a parody of sexism, the dialogue mocks the female, expressing standard complaints about her 'poor lot':

She stares at him. 'I suppose it's never occurred to you what a horror it would be, if it existed, to have to occupy a role and function that escapes all normal biological laws. All on her own. No outside help, never a day off. Constantly having to dress up as this, to dress up as that. The impossible boredom of it. The monotony. The schizophrenia. Day after day of being mauled about in people's minds, misunderstood, travestied, degraded. And never a word of thanks for it. Never –'

'Wait a minute. What about –'

Her voice raises. 'Never a thought for her as a person, only for what can be got out of her. Never a moment's consideration for her emotions. Never enough imagination to realize that she may be secretly dying for a little tenderness and sympathy, that she's also a woman and can't help it if a certain combination of circumstances and mood do make her need the services of a male body in an entirely *natural* female way – which has nothing to do with humiliation, by the way, and ...' she takes her breath. 'But what's the matter if his lordship, whoever he is, wants something else. If he wants to play *his* games, leaving her –'

'I did not start this.'

'Screaming with frustration.' She looks away at the wall. 'If she existed, of course.'

(*M*, 93)

However, even this diversity of elaborate muses is no substitute for the first anima figure (either first in the book or in the life of a male) – namely the mother. Dr. Delfie reappears, all the time as if reminding her patient of the primary ‘loss’, the bitterness of losing the unity with the mother and the bitterness of returning to the metaphorical mother at the end of one’s life. The first pages of *Mantissa* show Green floating in a pre-conscious, ever-changing sea of images and the ‘new-born’ writer trying to separate himself from the rest of the strange, unknown phenomena:

As in some obscure foreign film, nothing was familiar; not language, not location, not cast. Images and labels began to swim, here momentarily to coalesce, here to divide, like so many pond amoebae; obviously busy, but purposeless. These collocations of shapes and feelings, of associated morphs and phonemes, returned like the algebraic formulae of schooldays, lodged by the mind of ancient rote, though what the formulae now applied to, why they existed, was entirely forgotten.

(M, 9)

Ironically, the end of the novel pictures Green returning to the ‘sea of vapour’ and this moment is emphasised by the final re-appearance of Dr. Delfie (M, 192). The bond with the mother is ‘restored’ as he is thrown back into the ‘polymorphic nature of sensuous impressions’, ‘staring blindly at the ceiling; conscious only of a luminous and infinite gaze’ (M, 192). Thus, *Mantissa* starts with the ‘birth’ and ends with the ‘death’ of Miles Green, with his completing one of the endless circles of uroboros and returning to the womb of cruel and kind Mother Nature, in which everything is obscure and purposeless but at the same time ordered and full of profound sacred meaning. At the same time, *Mantissa*’s open finale and its mythological parallels presuppose that Miles Green has every opportunity of being reborn out of the cold darkness of the female deity into the warmth of the kind and caring mother.

John Fowles admitted that *Mantissa* was a parody of contemporary cultural thought such as post-structuralism and deconstruction: he made fun of them because they had been

‘granted altogether too powerful a position on the intellectual side’ (Vipond, 1999: 113). Indeed, as if ridiculing Barthes’s point that ‘the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text’, Fowles’s hero wakes up and begins the process of creation, which seems to be rather chaotic and uncontrollable (Barthes, 1977: 145). Raymond J Wilson expresses the view that in *Mantissa* ‘Fowles ... transcends parody by re-crafting the post-structuralist sexual theory of the creative process’ (Wilson, 1990: 70). But parody or not, the book, as an allegory of re-union with ‘the mother’, is harmonious with contemporary theories used to shape this allegory since deconstruction and post-structuralism are ideologically essentially about the same thing – embracing the irrational.

The ‘awakening’ of Miles Green, his following life on the pages of the novel and his revisiting the pleasurable warmth of the unconscious, is John Fowles’s re-invention and resurrection of the individuation process which had seemingly ended with the happy finale of *Daniel Martin*. Fowles recycles many of different female images who emerge out of the male character’s dim fantasies and who are summoned to inspire him and restore his power as a writer. However, the real muse and the prototype for all the other animas seem to be the mother figure, Dr. Delfie, whose character is dialectic and double-sided on an innumerable number of narrative layers. Like her mythological predecessor, the great goddess, the doctor in *Mantissa* exercises her power over the helpless male, adding distinct incestual undertones to the masculine erotic fantasies which flood the novel’s pages. Her medical profession explains the anxiety, fascination and veneration that she evokes in her male patient since she is simultaneously caring and nurturing and cold-blooded and cruel. The eroticised Gothic mother, she owns the master discourse which is barely comprehensible to her patients and which she uses mainly for oppression. She also performs mysterious ceremonies and rituals on people in her power. At the same time, the main result of the uncanny rites which she performs on Miles Green in particular, strange

as it may seem, is more positive than negative. Dr. Delfie achieves the effect usually assumed to be the province of tribal medicine men: she manages to recover her patient's inner energy, which in his case serves to restore his potency of creation.

As such, at first sight, Dr. Delfie produces an impression of absolute female empowerment which turns *Mantissa* into a literary celebration of matriarchy and may look like the final victory of a Fowlesian female over a Fowlesian male character. However, the situation is not as pro-female as it may seem. Dr. Delfie and the rest of the animas in the novel have remained nothing but Green's outrageous erotic fantasies who must serve his numerous psychological needs. They have still been seen as his 'other' even though there are some attempts to expose 'the female side' in the novel's endless postmodern dialogues between Miles Green and a variety of his fantasy women. *Mantissa*'s successor, *A Maggot*, published in 1985, provides a much more honest vision of the female heroine, her inner world, her possible psychological problems and even her choice of faith and the problems that a woman faces as a religious leader.

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Chapter 6

The Gothic in *A Maggot*

A Maggot (1985) is John Fowles's most recent novel. Set in 1736, it is automatically thought by most readers to be a historical novel. However, *A Maggot* shares more features with the genre of fantasy than with a proper historical novel. It is known for its Gothic mysticism and obsession with black magic, 'false' autobiographies of real people (Ann Lee and her 'parents'), blatant anachronisms and even inclusion of the science-fiction motif of an UFO invasion. Defining the difference between historical fiction and historiographic metafiction, Linda Hutcheon writes that historical novels are expected to assimilate historical data in order to lend a feeling of verifiability to the fictional world whereas postmodernist texts incorporate but rarely assimilate such data (Hutcheon, 1988: 114). Producing a true example of the historiographic novel, in *A Maggot* Fowles has no intention of assimilating facts or becoming a slave to real events or biographies. Instead, he uses them as tools, inserting elusive and deceptive islands of 'truth' into his characteristic self-contradictory fictional world.

To ward off the question of 'historicity' and the novel's faithfulness to the facts from the very beginning, Fowles writes both in the prologue and the epilogue that the book is not actually about history but is his personal vision of history. The text was born out of a vision, as was *The French Lieutenant's Woman*: he dreamt of 'a small group of travellers, faceless, without apparent motive'. The travellers 'rode horses, and in a deserted landscape' (*AM*, 5).¹ The writer had acquired a watercolour drawing of an unknown young

¹ All references to *A Maggot* are to the Vintage edition, 1996, London: Vintage. Further quotations from the book are from this edition, referred to hereafter as '*AM*'.

woman dated 1683 and the 'inexplicable presentness' of the girl haunted him so much that he decided to link her with another woman from rather later in history whom he already venerated (namely the founder and leader of the extreme religious sect of Shakers, Ann Lee). Nevertheless, 'the fiction is in no way biographically about that second woman, though it does end with her birth in about the real year and quite certainly the real place where she was born. I have given the child her real historical name; but I would not have seen it as a historical novel. It is a maggot' (AM, 5-6).

It is a 'maggot' or a 'whim' with prologue and epilogue instead of foreword and afterword, an old-fashioned device that adds to the novel's evocation of 'history' and makes it look an even less contemporary book than *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. In addition, this time the dream picture, the 'vision', is definitely more blurred than in the previous writer's 'historical whim'. Instead of one mysterious character with unclear intentions and a 'dark' biography (Sarah), here are several: not only Rebecca, but both 'his lordship' and his mute servant, Dick, remain in the shade. This means that, unlike Urfe in *The Magus*, the main male character is not the one who speaks and through whom events are focalised; it is not he who records and sorts out the events. His intentions and feelings are also not clearly shown by the narrator the way they are in the *French Lieutenant's Woman*. Moreover, it is not just the ending of *A Maggot* that is open and obscure; the book is obscure from the very beginning and remains so, the culmination of this mysteriousness being the events that happen in Dolling's cave. Again, at least in *The Magus*, we have a male character who at the same time is a focaliser and knows the story from the inside; Nicholas's truths and beliefs become the reader's, however mistaken the hero is in evaluating things and judging events. Subjective as he is, he presents a believable view and readers do not feel so lost and unduly teased as they do during *A Maggot*. All the focalisers in this novel are very limited in their perspectives, including the narrator and the judge Henry Ayscough.

The silence of the male character and the lack of clarity of his views were probably the last straw in breaking the back of Fowles's realism and they turned *A Maggot* into a set of excessive games which some critics and readers find difficult to digest and accept. For example, Walter Miller Jr. in his essay 'Chariots of Goddess, or What?' writes negatively about the aggressive experimentalism of the novel:

A maggot in this sense is a whim, or a work based on a whim, and Mr. Fowles's whim is often to tease. Such a maggot may metamorphose in an experiment. Novels succeed or fail, experiments confirm or refute the hypothesis being tested. In "A Maggot" the hypothesis seems to be that readers will tolerate more teasing, and more indeterminacy as to plot and character than is usually expected of them.

(*The New York Times*, 8 September 1985)

In his opinion, the young lord seems 'made less of flesh than of myth' and is 'almost a disembodied spirit' (*The New York Times*, 8 September 1985). In other words, mythological characters such as this one erase the writer's attempts at presenting us with his usual injection of realism (*The Gentleman's Magazine* chronicles serve the purpose of making the story more historiographic), and leave the reader instead with a psychological Gothic story of individuation. Reviewing the novel, Julian Moynahan stated that there are too many far-fetched hypotheses and assorted possibilities in *A Maggot* and concluded that 'Fowles has failed to write a serious book' (Moynahan, 1985: 47). Yet another critic annoyingly describes the novel as 'wandering off into religious fanaticism and black magic' and dismisses it as 'foggy nonsense' (Adams, 1985: 108). It seems the author was by this time bored with the concrete realisations of individuation and so presented the reader with the generalised and more mysterious version of the process: with the myth.

Indeed, the text is very myth-like, dual in its nature and meaning. On the fabula and character level, in complete accordance with the best rules of myth, the text is full of supra-natural beings accomplishing mysterious things on a cosmic scale and built around one of the most interesting and popular mythemes: the quest. However, this time, Fowles's

favourite way of structuring a narrative – setting the main character on a quest – is completely unmasked. Fowles thus made himself more vulnerable to the accusations of those critics who would prefer to see him as a writer of realism. The mythological structure of *A Maggot* has been taken by some of them for narrative and stylistic clumsiness and the weakening of his ‘plot gift’, his ability to hold the reader’s attention throughout the whole book. The novel turned out to be even less prone to interpretation than Fowles’s previous versions of the quest for sacred knowledge; partly because it is not supposed to be interpreted and judged with reference to the morality and ethics of the male character’s behaviour. In *A Maggot* there is no longer the writer’s own ambiguous relationship with opposites, the conflict is presented *neutrally*. The dreamy idealistic Mr. B. cannot be judged for his actions, and even Ayscough does not manage to draw conclusions about him. Also, the hero is not left in the book’s finale with an unresolved moral dilemma, as was the case with the rest of Fowles’s male characters. Mr. B. is not presented as a victim of the magus’s dark experiments, jokes and puppet plays. However, certain habits and patterns of behaviour that will be discussed later in the chapter reveal his critical closeness to the magus figure. He knows exactly where *geographically* and *mathematically*, he must search for the Truth. This time the hero is respected by his creator because he has resolved his psychological problems, which remain hidden from the reader, a number of different versions being given as regards what they are.

As far as the role of the feminine is concerned, *A Maggot* enjoys an unusual position among all the Gothic quests fictionalised by John Fowles. In his previous novels the Gothic atmosphere was created mainly through the use of female heroine-muses and wise edifying magi, the male character consuming the muses, and painfully trying to analyse the situation generated by them in co-operation with the magi, simultaneously in his head and in real life. The women and the old wise men were presented as Gothic in so far as they were pushing the hero’s quest ahead, disturbing his egoistic peace and developing the

neglected side of his psyche, regardless of his loud objections and the discomfort associated with the process. Peter Conradi uncovers a certain aggressiveness and an 'old-fashioned flavour' in this positioning of the quest theme as a masculine path to individuation while not decentering the male subject. He argues that, despite all Fowles's attempts to look at things from a woman's point of view, the focaliser remains male and this prevents Fowles's fiction from being *other-centred* instead of *male-centred*:

Fowles's desire to liberate the heroic primacy of the self, by constructing an action that will educate his protagonist but not decentre him, could, on the other hand, be said to be radical in the sense that it involves a return to roots. And this in turn has lent his avant-gardism a curiously old-fashioned flavour. His emphasis on the destiny of the (male) consciousness, with its awe at anything that encloses the agent and threatens his supremacy as a centre of significance, has consequences for the sexual politics of his work – and also for its phenomenology.

(Conradi, 1982: 30-31)

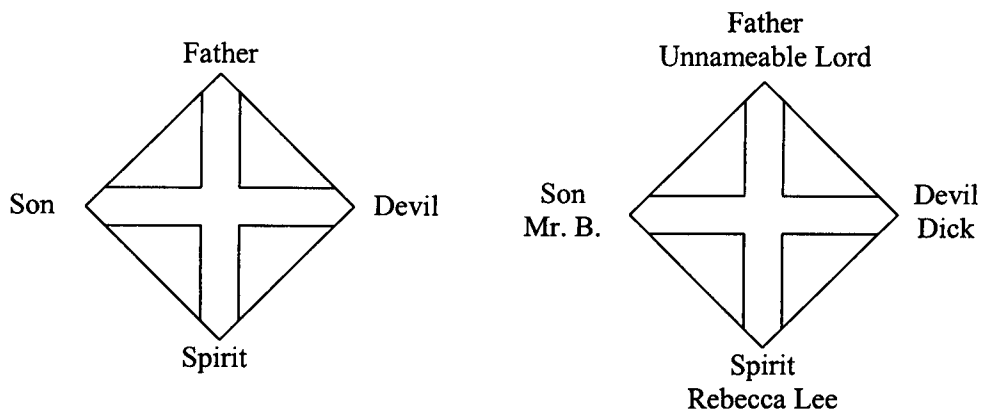
Curiously, this is less the case with *A Maggot* than with Fowles's previous novels. In this book we have a main character who does not just make other people Gothic (in his head) but who is a Gothic character himself – meaning, he is a part of the other. Moreover, being the initiator of the quest, he is the centre of the Gothic activity going on in the novel and thus the main creator of the atmosphere of gloom and mystery. What is really important is that in *A Maggot* the writer's attention finally switches from the masculine experiences and pains of development to interest in female individuation and female versions of the quest for knowledge. Even though she remains mysterious and her views obscure, at least Rebecca is granted the right to exist outside the main character's fantasies and to have her own intellectual and spiritual world. This general transition is even reflected at the level of plot: the heroine starts as a prostitute, an unthinking female who fulfils man's erotic fantasies, but ends up as a self-conscious individual.

The Gothic nature of the events unfolds before our eyes and gradually the mythological plane of the narrative with its strong air of mystery and faith slides out. In the

Epilogue John Fowles calls himself ‘a convinced atheist’ who nonetheless dedicated the novel to a form of Christianity ‘out of a very considerable affection and sympathy for the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing, better known as the Shakers’ (AM, 445). But the novel’s mythology is not only Christian. May Day, which plays a central role in the book, was one of four Celtic holy days, and the references to pantheism, pre-Christian symbols (the raven, the cat) and the young lord’s interest in the ‘mathematiks’ of Pythagoras, Platonism and the ideas of Gnostics on the quaternity clearly show that, even in a novel portraying one of the narrowest sects in Christianity, John Fowles remained true to himself, depicting his viewpoints through the use of universal symbolism. And the universality of the images stresses the Jungian orientation of Fowles’s thought. In Walter Miller’s words, ‘the affectionate adoption of a religious theme by a declared atheist should astonish no one familiar with Jung’ (*The New York Times*, 8 September 1985). As some critics have pointed out (Onega [1989], Walter Miller Jr. [1985], John Neary [1992]), the myths *A Maggot* displays are directly related to the Jungian ideas of the psychological quaternity as consisting of three plus one and the dynamics of the hero’s relations with the paternal and maternal. In her book, *Form and Meaning in the Novels of John Fowles*, Susana Onega gives a brilliant analysis of the Jungian sub-structure of *A Maggot* and unfolds the archetypes of the Trinity and Quaternity on which the mystical quest is based. She regards the spiritual journey of Mr. Bartholomew (as the young lord calls himself in order to conceal his real identity) as metaphysically conforming to the search for deliverance from the paternal and maternal in order to achieve a new state: the totality of the self. In Jungian thought, the individuation myth means first the struggle with the father inside and outside, since this figure embodies the conscious and the spiritual side of the psyche and thus represses the instinctual, and secondly with the mother, whose womb the hero must enter again and then leave in order to be reborn as an independent self. Aware of the perils of both meetings, the hero should

not stop or show any sign of weakness for 'the victory of the son is expressed as the concession by the father of his own divine nature' (Onega, 1989: 147). Mr. B. dares to revolt against his father, the anonymous but very powerful old lord, and abandons him in search of sacred knowledge. His computations lead him to Dolling's cave, which plays the role of the symbolic womb, and from (or in) which he then disappears. This is how it looks on the mythological level. On the level of plot, Fowles does not even give a definite reason for the son suddenly leaving his father, and 'three plus one' different versions of the aim of the quest are presented to the reader. The young man tells the actor Lacy that he is fleeing from his parent because he does not want to marry the rich woman who has been chosen for him but is going to secretly unite with the young lady he loves and of whom the father does not approve. According to sergeant Farthing, the reason for the young gentleman's and his uncle's travelling was to visit the old lady, respectively their aunt and sister, who owns 'property fit for a duchess', so as to get some money from her. Rebecca's part of the story includes Mr. B's alleged impotence and his attempts to revive his sexual drive by watching the prostitute and Dick coupling; thus reviving his virility appears to be the reason for his journey. The fourth interpretation stands apart from the first three and plays the role of 'the other', the shadowy undifferentiated variant. It belongs to the mythological layer of the narrative rather than the 'reality' plane, and as a result, dominates the text since the mythological plane in *A Maggot*, as we have already noted, is much greater than the 'real' one. John Fowles makes us aware that Mr. B is after some secret knowledge, which he then receives in the Derbyshire cavern either from the devil (Farthing's version) or the Lord Jesus Christ (Rebecca's story). As such, the symbolic and mysterious figure of Mr. B sums up all the motifs and themes of Fowles's fiction. Fowles replays the individuation process, which was stretched over all his previous texts and therefore explored by the writer in detail, in one single novel using generalised – archetypal and metaphorical – images and situations.

The structure of the young lord's journey can be metaphorically represented in terms of the quaternity and its constituents, or as the 'three plus one' scheme, in which Mr. B., the old lord and Rebecca form the Triad (Father, Son and Spirit, or the Holy Ghost) and Dick is the undifferentiated fourth, the material and instinctual force. Jung writes about the fourth part of the quaternity symbol: 'The fourth function is the undifferentiated or inferior function which characterises the shadow side of the personality. When this is missing in the totality symbol there is too much emphasis on the conscious side' (Jung, 2002: 116). The parts of Mr. B's personality are visualised by Susana Onega as follows:



(Onega, 1989: 153-154)

It is easy to see that both the young lord's and Rebecca's spiritual quests are built around Christian symbolism, but the general subliminal atmosphere is created using the dark, devilish, undifferentiated side of it, its hellish counterpart. Whereas Rebecca, Bartholomew and his companions embody various instances of 'the other', the judge Ayscough, with his orthodox religious views and rational background, is the main focaliser of the Gothic in the novel. He is portrayed by Fowles as an unpleasant authoritarian, voyeuristic figure whose task is to expose the intentions of the young lord and Rebecca and unmask the Devil's evil machinations in their actions. The many-layered 'other' which he projects onto them and which he finally fails to identify, revolves around Ayscough's belonging to the 'stronger sex' as well as his Christian Protestant background and his occupation as an agent of the

law. As a pious Protestant, the judge finds the work of Satan not only in paganism and its rites but also in Christian symbolism (which flourishes in Catholicism as the pernicious survival of paganism) and in extreme Protestant sects like the Quakers and Shakers, whose religious rituals are far from being logical. As an 'enlightened' man he finds it difficult to deal with mysticism, spirituality and things subliminal. He represents the official law, which is not always much use with respect to enigmatic and obscure things. These tend to be inexplicable and thus impossible to control, which is something the judge comes to understand soon after he starts the enterprise on the request of the anonymous lord. As a judge, he has to handle direct transgressions of the law (such as the murder of a servant) and deal with poor, homeless and other socially disadvantaged strata of society (prostitutes, gypsies). Finally, as a religious man, he is put in the difficult position of interrogating a very attractive former prostitute who has transformed into an unpredictable sectary. Metaphorically, it is the unconscious he has to meet in her face, and he does so, meanwhile protecting himself from the woman with a wall of forensic language, 'official' behaviour, disbelief and rudeness.

The fact that Rebecca is rumoured to be a witch hanging out with the Devil himself, when in reality she is a self-restricting religious fanatic, evokes some difficult moments in the relations between different religious doctrines. Different faiths have always applied varying combinations of conscious and unconscious attitudes both to the physical world and things spiritual, and the resulting views have caused misunderstanding among competing religious ideologies. Religious rivalry has often led people holding opposing systems of beliefs to proclaim each other the worshippers of Satan. Such accusations of satanic worship have allowed different kinds of faith to single themselves out from their predecessors and rivals either as more progressive and beneficial for the development of humankind or as more authentic and traditional. In some cases sect leaders have even confused the intentions, causes and effects of their religious doctrine and missionary

activity. For instance, early Protestantism claimed that, abolishing symbols, it primarily sought to return religion to the fundamentals of Christianity, to the literal interpretation of Scripture ('tradition'). In reality, the end of worship of the mediating archetypal images marked the beginning of the Enlightenment tradition and even further loss of communication with the unconscious, all in the name of 'progress'. 'The Devil' figure in this case appears to be the same metaphorical 'other' to be fought with in the complex conflict of humanity, whatever binary opposition it represents in a particular religious system. As Keith Thomas points out, men saw the Devil in manifestations of social wickedness and religious rebellion. The concept of Satan often operated as a sanction for Christian unorthodoxy: the early Christian Church viewed pagan gods as demons and 'imperial' Christianity announced the same about the beliefs of primitive peoples such as Red Indians (Thomas, 1973: 568). The competing sects of the 16th and the 17th centuries thought their opponents were the Devil's servants. Reformation Protestants angrily pointed at Catholic 'pagan' and 'magical' symbolism and the broad use of ritual, assuming it all came from Hell, whereas Martin Luther in his turn was accused of being converted to Protestantism by Satan himself (Thomas, 1973: 569). The Counter-Reformation Church openly associated witches and sorcery with the rise of Protestantism and the same was said of the Anglican Church by the Puritans (Thomas, 1973: 325, 597).²

In *A Maggot*, Fowles stages a similar war between Rebecca's Quakerism-Shakerism and Ayscough's Protestantism and shows the purely religious part of their conflict as well as the philosophical, gender, sexual and social motifs that also underpin it. Rebecca dismisses the judge's religiosity as false, announcing in a hysterical self-defensive outburst that Hell is now waiting for him:

² For example, Keith Thomas quotes the example of an eminent Puritan, Matthew Hopkins, who remarked once that when the Devil married witches he used the order of service commanded by the Anglican Prayer Book (Thomas, 1973: 597).

How dost honour Heaven? By turning this present world to Hell. Can thee not see we who live by Christ are thy only hope? Flee thy ways, yea, live Jesus Christ's ways now forgotten. Thy sinning world doth mock and persecute, yea, it would bury them; thee and thine are certain damned, and each day more. [...] ... we of faith will be justified; and thee and thy legion accursed in Antichrist damned for thy blindness, thy wicked ways. [...] His light shall shine through every deed and word ... and none of the damned like thee withstand it.

(AM, 431)

'Jesus Christ's ways now forgotten' is presumably a reference to the Protestant practices of dispensing with most accepted religious symbols and treating the remaining ones as metaphors. Ayscough's position regarding the Shakers is even more complex. He is torn between rationalism and its repressed reactions, between treating the woman, with her unpredictable fits, bizarre visions and alchemical signs as being possessed by Satan, and realising that her symbols are mere metaphors and she did nothing to be punished for. A woman here symbolises the uncontrollable unconscious which lies in wait for a pious enlightened man. His dislike of the Shakers as a Protestant sect holding extreme variations of official Protestant views, lies in the fact that they are the mirror of Protestantism, showing Ayscough the long and short term perils of rationalising the symbols of the unconscious and repressing the instincts. In other words, the religion of Henry Ayscough finds in the sect its own neurosis, and it is clearly not pleased to see it.

Hysteria and eccentricity in faith have always been looked upon in two contradicting ways: they have been considered either divine or satanic, depending on the politics of a particular confession or sect (Thomas, 1973: 581). Despite being known for chasing the Devil and witches especially zealously and even abolishing the priesthood as too ritualistic, the Quakers were linked by their rivals with sorcery. As restriction of the flesh often develops into extreme religiousness accompanied by all kinds of visions and spirit visitations (Jung, 1982: 5-24) and leads to a bodily and sensual search for alternative ways of expression (hysteria), the sectaries were doomed to be seen as groups of uncanny people

with very suspicious patterns of behaviour. They unconsciously returned to rituals and exorcisms against which they and the Church of England fought, only instead of miracle-working and devil exorcism being incorporated into the official doctrine as in the Catholic Church, the Quakers and other extreme sects developed them as side-effects of their rigid lifestyle. As the product of rationality, these extreme Protestants nevertheless unconsciously revived pagan rites and primitive magic in order to manage uncontrollable and unexplainable forces, one of which was their own instincts. Keith Thomas suggests that there was no sect to match the Quakers for the performance of spectacular miracles: they attempted to raise the dead and heal the living by spiritual means (Thomas, 1973: 149-150). Their leader, George Fox, was said to have performed alone over 150 cures. Often rejecting medicines as a 'carnal' and spiritually inappropriate form of healing, Fox carried out his cures in a state of religious excitement. And because he claimed to have telepathic abilities, his enemies believed him to be a witch who was even capable of bringing the rain (Thomas, 1973: 150).

Ayscough's treatment of Rebecca is unavoidably tainted by the fear and contempt that most good Protestants had for the dissenting sects in 1636, as he dismisses her explanations of the events as 'unchaste parables' and grows impatient with her ambiguous language and uncontrollable behaviour during the interrogation sessions. The judge also warns Lacy of the danger of heresy as he refers to Mr B's unusual vision of Christianity as 'a most dangerous doctrine' (Fowles, 1996: 152) with which the actor has to agree. Fowles writes that, regardless of the apparent unimportance of the subject, he created a 'maggot' about a woman dissenter surviving the dogmatic prison of the Church of England and anything orthodox. Ann Lee's mother also appears in the novel as a female revolutionary upsetting the existing religious and social orders, parallel to freeing herself from the chains of the flesh. He notes in the *Epilogue*:

Orthodox theologians have always despised [the Shakers'] doctrinal naivety; orthodox priests, its fanaticism; orthodox capitalists, its communism; orthodox communists, its superstition; orthodox sensualists, its abhorrence of the carnal; and orthodox males, its striking feminism. I find it one of the most fascinating – and proleptic – episodes in the long history of Protestant Dissent.

(AM, 456)

Despite (and because) of the dawn of Enlightenment, the 16th and 17th centuries are known for a fresh wave of the Witch Craze throughout Christendom (in both Protestant and Catholic countries) which resulted in many deaths of so-called 'witches' and sorcerers who often were simply eccentric innocent people. Both 'black' and 'white' witches fell under suspicion. Christians became divided, and as Karen Armstrong writes, 'the emergence of reason as the sole criterion of truth in the West coincided with an eruption of religious irrationality' (Armstrong, 2001: 75). The Catholic Church had created a system of demonology and launched the witch-hunt, thinking of folk magic as a rival that worked with practically the same material but on the 'enemy's' side. Protestantism got rid of ecclesiastical magic altogether, nevertheless retaining the concepts of the Devil and sin, leaving people helpless in the face of 'Satan' and unable to 'control' the inexplicable world. This prompted them to use the services of cunning men and 'witches', who often appropriated Catholic rites and prayers for their magic purposes. The community also needed magic for social and medical reasons due to the virtual uselessness and often unavailability of official medical services and the weaknesses of the judicial system. Both good sorcerers and maleficent witches were accused of using herbal preparations (for either curing or poisoning); using prayers, rites and incantations for suspect purposes such as finding lost property or catching thieves; punishing people by sending 'illness' or misfortune.

The new religion was trying hard to drag the general public out of what Jungian psychoanalysis calls *participation mystique*,³ or the original state of unconsciousness and non-differentiation. But regardless of its efforts, the withdrawal of extensive archetypal projections in the 16th and the 17th centuries was not yet possible and ‘demons’ were still regarded as a self-evident reality (Jung, quoted in Jacobi, 1973: 93). Witches continued to be prosecuted since they were still supposed to be seeking help from the ‘prince of darkness’, thought to be a real presence.

In the Reformation period Satan was a terrifying figure not only for country folk, but also for their spiritual leaders. Martin Luther, the pioneer of the movement that rationalised Christianity, saw him everywhere and projected this image onto the people and institutions he was fighting: the Pope, Catholicism and idolatry, the Jews, women, and German peasants who understood his teachings as a call for destruction on the eve of a new era. As Enlightenment thought developed and disseminated, religion was more and more influenced by the progress of modern science (Newton) and the writings of secular philosophers like Thomas Hobbs and Francis Bacon. The latter regarded magic remedies as a symptom of human laziness since they ‘propound those noble effects which God hath set forth unto man to be bought at the price of labour, to be attained by a few easy and slothful observances’ (Thomas, 1973: 331). Even before the repeal of the Witchcraft Act in England in 1736 (the year of Rebecca’s trial), it had become difficult to sustain a successful prosecution for sorcery in the courts. Keith Thomas’s argument is that the roots of this change lay in the attitude of the educated classes ‘who provided the judges, lawyers, Grand Jurymen, whose collective resistance effectively brought the trials to an end’ (Thomas, 1973: 681). Catholic prayer was supposed to work even if it was not understood, whereas Protestants insisted on it being totally conscious – but even a conscious prayer

³ This term, describing the primary unity of one’s psyche with the object, was coined by the French anthropologist and philosopher Lucien Levy-Bruhl (1857-1939).

might not work. Magic and the last remains of the religious supernatural were disappearing, giving up their place to a belief in naturalism, knowledge and faith in human progress through labour. In Thomas's words, it was this creed of labour that 'was to encourage men to seek a technological solution to their problems rather than a magical one' (Thomas, 1973: 332). Judge Ayscough is created by Fowles as a very good 'borderline' example of an educated person in power who seeks a 'natural solution' to the murder case and who is reluctant to consider the occult/divine one, despite not being totally sure that the supernatural does not exist. His 'enlightened' rationality is at war with projections he tries to hide from himself. This is how the writer conveys Ayscough's psychological state after yet another interrogation of Rebecca:

Ayscough is left, after this exchange, in a dilemma, though he conceals it. [...] Gods, except for an occasional Virgin Mary to illiterate Mediterranean peasants, no longer appear; even in Ayscough's time such visions were strongly associated with Catholic trickery, something good Protestants expected and despised. Yet his England, even his class of it, was still very far from our certainties. Ayscough, for instance, believed in ghosts; he has never seen one himself, yet has heard many accounts...

(AM, 414-415)

Ayscough's state is also evidence of the fact that archetypal images are not so easy to forget. Even after its formal victory over symbols, the Age of Reason did not free people's minds; it strengthened their projections by relegating them to the regions of the unconscious where they brooded and blossomed, taking the shapes of various Gothic monsters. Jung explained this in psychoanalytic terms:

Only in the age of enlightenment did people discover that the gods did not really exist, but were simply projections. Thus, the gods were disposed of. But the corresponding psychological function was by no means disposed of; it lapsed into the unconscious, and men were thereupon poisoned by the surplus of libido that had once been laid up in the cult of divine images.

(Jacobi, 1973: 93)

This means that witches continued to exist in people's minds without their realising this. Taking into account the date of the events described in the book, Fowles sought to depict Ayscough as an educated judge and not a 'witch hunter'. As a typical product of his age, he has all his witches inside, imagining that he controls them (in Jungian terms, he has found that the gods do not exist). Clearly Henry Ayscough is pictured by Fowles as defenceless against the darkness of the unconscious and the emotion he is faced with. At the same time, as I have already argued, he was planned by Fowles as a character devoted to the principles of enlightened scepticism who does not really believe in witches. Rather, his suppressed 'witch trials' are psychological, reflecting his fear of the unconscious and the inexplicable. His ideological views are not medieval or in any sense outdated:

Ayscough has certainly supported the repeal of the Witchcraft Act (though not for Scotland) in this very year. But this is largely because he now associates the witchcraft cases he heard of, even attended as a young man, like the occasional uses of the ducking-stool, with defective law and always disputable evidence. *He does not say to himself there has never been witchcraft*; rather that its worst aspects have lapsed. That some malign and wicked coven in a remote part of Devonshire still follows ancient practices remains very far from the bounds of possibility [my italics].

(AM, 415)

Whereas the young lord remains a silent mystery, in the figure of Rebecca, John Fowles offers to the reader what John Neary calls 'radical deconstruction' in the form of 'deconstructive tales' – in spite of the novelist's apparent dislike of post-modern thought (Neary, 1992: 192-193). The judge is the focaliser in most of the key Gothic scenes in the book as he governs and directs the conversations in which they appear. He is as confused by the double-sidedness and obscurity of the Gothic stories (the cave, the Stonehenge moments) as the reader; he does not know more than the reader does. The supporting cast of the quest group may be his victims, but he himself is the victim of the Gothic in the novel: he fails to conquer it, to explain the adventure away. All of his versions melt one by one, including the two concerning Mr. B's sexuality: the myth about his homosexuality

(based on the suspicion that Dick was Mr. B's partner) and also the story about his lust for women (hiring a prostitute 'for personal use' during the journey). When these two most scandalous 'explanations' (that would have made the young gentleman's behaviour transparent for the judge) fail, Ayscough does not know what to think. The third 'sensitive' variant appears in an interrogation of Rebecca – that the lord sought to cure his impotence by voyeurism and thus hired a whore to couple with his servant – but Ayscough is already too perplexed to take this version seriously. Besides, unconsciously he would probably resist this version since it mirrors his own voyeurish habits, clearly observable in his style of conducting the interrogation. It is even possible that Rebecca who, as a prostitute, knows only too well the peculiarities of 'male nature', invents voyeuristic stories such as the Stonehenge coupling with the 'blackamoor', especially to tease Farthing and the judge. Ayscough dresses up his interest in the woman's remarkable sex life as a means of finding out the necessary details for the murder case:

Q. And that day, did you satisfy Dick's state of lust again, as you rode?

A. No.

Q. Did he not attempt it?

A. I would not have it.

Q. Did he not force you to it?

A. No.

Q. And bade his time until that night?

(AM, 332)

Ayscough's way of interpreting things is thrown out of line; he has the power of authority but is helpless against one riddle and several contradicting subjectivities from which he attempts to squeeze the truth. He is surrounded by doubts, and the light of his knowledge does not aid his investigation of the events. By chance, Henry Ayscough happens to be the hero of a quest too, of his own Gothic quest. Only he resists it and does not extract any positive experience from it. Like Frederick Clegg, who fails in the quest for consciousness thrust on him by Miranda, the judge refuses to undertake the other part of the quest: the journey to retrieve the unconscious. He finds his 'father', does not revolt against him and

thus loses 'the cave', or the unconscious, and the opportunity to resolve the problems related to it. Losing (or refusing) 'the mother' this way, Ayscough is not able to move on and achieve the self, or the qualitatively new state, in which he can unite with his metaphorical 'father' (and the 'Holy Mother Wisdom', Fowles's tribute to the female counterpart⁴) on different grounds, as Mr. B. does in *June Eternal*. All these nuances in *A Maggot* create a very complicated polysemantic 'cover' metaphor with strong religious undertones which refer to the main points of Christian mythology.

In the quest undertaken by Mr. Bartholomew and the supporting group Ayscough intuitively a great challenge for himself. Rebecca Lee alone presents him with serious dialectical riddles and reflects his inner problems. She comes as the angel/whore anima, switching between the two images at different levels of the narration: at first she is the prostitute playing all kinds of 'virgin' figures: 'the Quaker maid', 'prude, modest sister, Miss-Fresh-from-the-country, Miss-Timid-Don't-tempt-me, Miss Simple' (*AM*, 158). Then Rebecca almost literally turns into an 'angel', refusing to have sex to the end of her life, even with her present husband – whom she announces to be a Prophet – as she has already had too many encounters with pleasures of the flesh. But even in this, her second phase, the woman remains independent in her views; she resists the judge's moral oppression and 'in nine parts' hides her 'holier vision' while the irreducible 'one part, of possible truth' teases the lawyer (*AM*, 415). In the first image, that of the whore pretending to be a virgin to 'whet the appetite of the debauched' (*AM*, 141), Rebecca Hocknell echoes another Gothic heroine, Matilda from Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), who seduces an almost 'holy' monk and popular orator, Ambrosio, by skilfully switching between the virgin/hetera parts of the anima. She manages to catch Ambrosio's inner fight between the two, reflected in

⁴ The 'Holy Mother Wisdom' who meets Mr. B. in *June Eternal* alongside the Old Man is very important here, as in the novel Fowles follows Jung's historical and psychoanalytical observations on the androgyny of the Godhead, that is, his conclusion that the Godhead has both masculine and feminine counterparts.

the monk's famous monologue in his cell where he worships a portrait of the Madonna: 'What charms me, when ideal and considered as a superior being, would disgust me, become Woman and tainted with all the failings of Mortality' (Lewis, 1980: 41). Fowles's reference to de Sade in the description of the young Lord's personality (he represented 'sadism before Sade') even more closely relates 'Fanny' (Rebecca's bagnio nickname) to Matilda and de Sade's heroines. As Angela Wright notes, both Matthew Lewis and the Marquis de Sade 'used fairly brutal methods' to destabilise the connections between the collation of the venerated Madonna and women in their texts (Horner, 2002: 52). Apart from the heroines' obviously double nature, what speaks in favour of their mutual psychological likeness is the fact that *The Monk* was written under the influence of *Justine* (Horner, 2002: 40), and de Sade in his turn praised Lewis's book (Horner, 2002: 50). In his essay 'The Worship of Woman and the Worship of the Soul' (1921) Jung provides an invaluable psychoanalytic insight into the nature of veneration of female image. Cases of worship, like Dante's of Beatrice, occur when an erotic desire is repressed and remains buried in the unconscious. In other words, when sexual feelings towards some concrete real-life woman are by some reason perceived by a man as shameful or the woman is unattainable, then for the sake of an individual's self-preservation and sanity, these feelings are detached from the object and converted into religious experiences. Jung writes of Dante, demonstrating the gradual transformation of a real person into a large-scale religious image:

Dante is the spiritual knight of his lady; for her sake he embarks on the adventure of the lower and upper worlds. In this heroic endeavour her image is exalted into the heavenly, mystical figure of the Mother of God – a figure that has detached itself from the object and become the personification of a purely psychological factor, or rather, of those unconscious contents whose personification I have termed the *anima*.

(Jung, 1982: 5)

To make his argument clear, Jung also cites an early Christian document, *The Shepherd* by Hermas, who lived about AD 140. The document, written in Greek, tells the story of a slave who has erotic feelings towards his mistress, Rhoda, but, as he is ashamed of them, he tries to convince himself it is just brotherly love that he experiences. After obtaining his freedom, Hermas starts having visions: an old lady visits him on a regular basis explaining that 'a sin arose in his heart', and that the sin somehow concerns her. Gradually, this new sovereign mistress turns in Hermas's dreams into the image of the Church and the man realises that the only way to redeem his mysterious guilt in relation to the lady in his dreams, whom he calls 'his sister', is to join the Christian sect. 'The sin' remains unconscious for Hermas throughout the whole story, as even the ghostly goddess refuses to explain it to him (Jung, 1982: 8-15).

In the same essay, Jung also argues that, although symbols are important to the individual's psyche because they serve to restrain certain forms of libido, their collective worship is of no use for the resolution of psychic problems either:

Official Christianity, therefore, absorbed certain Gnostic elements that manifested themselves in the worship of woman and found a place for them in an intensified worship of Mary. [...] The assimilation of these elements to the Christian symbol nipped in the bud the psychic culture of the man; for his soul,⁵ previously reflected in the image of the chosen mistress, lost its individual form of expression through this absorption. Consequently, any possibility of an individual differentiation of the soul⁶ was lost when it became repressed in the collective worship.

(Jung, 1982: 19-20)

Thus, Ambrosio idolises the Madonna not realising that his idolatry is a recycled sexual desire; nor does he realise that the portrait of Christ's Mother he possesses contains the image of an existing beautiful woman, Matilda, and has been skilfully made so as to attract him. Eventually the process reverse to idolisation happens and the monk's repressed attitude to the feminine emerges, as he is possessed by the need to have sex with a

⁵ In this essay Jung mainly studies cases of 'male' idolatry.

⁶ That is, *anima*.

whore/witch and an angel (his Madonna split into two, both physically attractive and virginal). Probably due to his temperament and youth he is not able to eliminate the erotic side of his Mariolatry since, unlike Hermas, he is unable to imagine the Madonna as a very old lady stripped of obvious physical attraction. He projects his unconscious vision of the female onto the two women, Matilda and Antonia. It is not surprising that Lewis makes the woman from the portrait unveil herself as a demon in the novel's finale because the powers of the unconscious, as Jung argues, are capable of appearing to an individual as supernatural forces (Jung, 1982: 20).

Being an Anglican Protestant, Ayscough is not blinded by the sensual image of the Virgin Mary and does not, like Ambrosio, devour her with greedy eyes full of desire. It follows from the reduced pathos in his relation with the archetype, minus image-worship, that the gap between the two sides of the anima figure is not so strikingly wide. Nevertheless, although 'Gods no longer appeared' (*AM*, 414), as Jung argues, the psychological functions corresponding to them did not disappear (Jacobi, 1973: 93). The two roles Rebecca displays disturb and irritate the judge. He is dissatisfied with both of them although both of them are ascribed to women by men. The 'holy', changed Rebecca who 'mended her ways' is an even more serious psychological challenge to the judge. As an 'angel' (in the judge's, not in Bartholomew's, view and definitely not in Fowles's opinion) she happens to represent a strange, irrational religion with completely incoherent dogmas and rules. As a result, she is perceived as a witch; the witch theme is what unites the two Gothic images of 'the Quaker maid': she is a witch as well as a whore; she is also a witch as well as a most pious Christian. Whenever she deals with any (and contradicting!) reminders of the unconscious – sex, sensuality, deep religious feelings – she is associated with forbidden supernatural forces.

The 'whore' he has to deal with officially breaks the law by trading her body in Hannah Claiborne's bagnio. As such, Rebecca automatically evokes disgust in the

representative of power. He addresses her very sternly at their first meeting: 'Thou hast no rights to be stolen, thou art a most notorious whore. I am not thy new modesty's fool. I see thy whorish insolence still proud in thy eyes' (*AM*, 301). To the harlot the judge tries to humiliate, Fowles applies a feminist discourse. The girl says to Ayscough in her defence: 'I know men will say it is Eve who tempts them into the stews. But 'tis Adam who keeps them there' (*AM*, 309). She even boldly talks about women trading their freedom for dutiful obedience to the other sex:

A. [...] As I was used when a whore, so I may be used still. And all women beside.

Q. How, all women are whores?

A. Whores in this. We may not say what we believe, nor say what we think, for fear we be mocked because we are women. If men think a thing to be so, so must it be, we must obey. I speak not of thee alone, it is so with all men, and everywhere.

(*AM*, 421)

The kind of feminist critique Fowles offers us here is directly related to the way woman was perceived in the time when the novel takes place. As witchcraft has always been attributed to marginalised groups, women came to be automatically perceived as involved in sorcery. Keith Thomas writes about 'witches' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often being old and poor or crippled women, who depended on their neighbours, that is, people whom the main body of society tried to forget about, hence the Gothic flavour in society's treatment of them (Thomas, 1973: 673-677). The gypsies, who from time to time happen to live in Dolling's cave, and Rebecca's poverty and 'dirty profession' (following from it), are important determinants in relating them to the 'Devil' of the cave. In Thomas's words, 'witches were women who had fallen out with the rest of the community' (Thomas, 1973: 643). For simple countrymen in the Reformation period, marginalised women were creatures capable of doing physical harm to them and their property. For their educated priests, these females were beings who transgressed official religion and thus fell directly into Satan's hands. And 'indeed, the Devil conventionally made his first

appearance when he heard the woman cursing. He stepped in to resolve her frustrations and make her empty words take effect' (Thomas, 1973: 625). Besides, becoming either a witch ('whore') or a prophet ('angel') was the only way for a woman to claim attention and be heard. As women, even those belonging to the upper classes could not say what they think, the only way left to express their views was to dress them up as thoughts they cannot be held responsible for – that is, those that come out of the unconscious. This was at least partly acceptable because women who uttered them were still in their 'unconscious'/intuitive domain and thus they did not rival men in the field of private opinions. Giving various examples of female predictions at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Keith Thomas calls such prophetesses 'eccentric blue stockings' who developed a bizarre exterior as a form of self defence, in order to break into male preserves (Thomas, 1973: 163). Rebecca uses very similar tactics to make people (especially men) notice her and pay attention to her as she is the only witness of Mr. B's inexplicable disappearance and the materialisation of Jesus Christ in June Eternal. Ayscough has no choice but to listen to her myths, feminist ideas and religious propaganda, as he needs vital information for his investigation and hopes to see it shining through the uneducated and obsessed woman's obscure language.

Like Lucy Irigaray's female language, Rebecca's 'discourse', as we would say today, is absolutely foreign to the judge although he is comparatively patient with it. Responding to Ayscough's refusal to believe her claim that his Lordship became transferred into the Redeemer in June Eternal, she firmly stands for her subjectivity:

Q. [...] Is it this, thy crowning piece? His Lordship grows the Lord of all, the Redeemer?

A. 'Twill not fit thy alphabet, so be it. Yet so was it not to me. I knew such joy I must sleep on it; and did.

(AM, 383)

As John Neary ironically notes, Rebecca sometimes ‘sounds like a merging of Derrida with St. Paul’ (Neary, 1992: 193). Rebecca, who is symbolically and psychoanalytically associated with the cave in the novel (and on another level the cave is a general representation of the unconscious and ‘mother’ qualities), speaking in deconstructivist language, threatens to disrupt the power structure embodied by the lawyer. Readers do not get any insight into Henry Ayscough’s soul (although they do understand his reasoning from the letters to the old Lord). Rather, the judge’s disappointment is expressed by Fowles in the surface descriptions of his behaviour in rare third-person narrative commentaries – like ‘the growing ill-temper’ he started to feel during one of the final conversations with Rebecca (*AM*, 429). The rage shown by the lawyer during some of the trials (especially in the first interrogation of Francis Lacy) functions as a tool of oppression; and as an aspect of his power. Ayscough protects his law from being ‘re-coloured by precisely those forces which it seeks to repress’ (Punter, 1998: 44). Not only is he confused by her unruly description of the June Eternal, a strange maggot and the disappearance of the young gentleman, but also by the physical and hysterical realisations of her faith. When she was a prostitute, Miss Hocknell lived the life of flesh, and the neglected spiritual aspect mockingly found itself in the ironic images of ‘the Quaker maid’ and the delicate ‘Miss-Timid-don’t-tempt-me’ who lose their ‘virginity’ every day to London libertines. As a leader of a new religious movement, Rebecca’s instinctual side is now repressed and her new spirituality comes to the foreground. Being repressed, the instinctual, sensual part of her psyche has to express itself out of Rebecca’s extreme virtuousness, and it does. It is manifested in the fits during Ayscough’s interrogations after the judge has tried on all possible masks in order to obtain information. His own rationality even starts to wear off; affected by the woman’s madness he grows uncontrollable himself. In his thoughts he returns to Gothic times – the medieval trial practices: ‘Once or twice his mind slipped back to the days of the real question; interrogation aided by rack and

thumbscrew' (*AM*, 429). Fowles constantly emphasises the level of control this authority maintains over his barbaric past and the patterns of behaviour related to it: the Bill of Rights had ended such procedures in England and as a good Protestant, Ayscough remembers that 'they survived only in wicked and degenerate Catholic countries like France' (*AM*, 429).

The quest Rebecca participates in is not only the young Lord's private search for the self, but hers too; and this is the first time John Fowles grants a female character a substantial change in personality in a spiritual enterprise. Her quest is undoubtedly Gothic, since from her side it involves a mystery Rebecca cannot explain but *feels* and an 'educating' moral suffering accompanying the change, of the kind Nicholas had to undergo in order to become a different person. The writer actually began his career with a move of this kind: Miranda existed as an individual but she was refused a 'proper' quest by her inventor and was confined to the role of Clegg's anima. Her attempts to find herself ended in pessimistic existentialism. This time the heroine receives an 'upgrade' from 'most notorious whore' to the most notorious religious fanatic. From being owned and possessed by men and her actual owner, Claibourne, she comes to be possessed by her sacred experiences, although Ayscough perceives her as possessed by Satan. Rebecca distinguishes herself from all John Fowles's previous heroines by not being a muse, or for turning from being an owned muse, a fantasy figure associated with men's inner desires, to the kind of person who is able to defend her views, even if sometimes by having a fit. From playing an angel who satisfies those who venerate Madonna, she is transformed into an 'angel', satisfying nobody (and even irritating a fair number of people, including the judge who is unable to obtain the information he wants and 'mother Claiborne' who is left without her regular income from Fanny's clients). In one of the versions of the journey's aim presented to the lawyer, Rebecca is shown as a muse – she has to cure his Lordship of impotence, serve as an inspiration to his power. At the mythological level of the narrative,

it is a cover version, which looks like one of Fowles's postmodern games hiding the real purpose of his quest. Rebecca is not his lordship's teaching anima in the style of Lily/Julie and Miranda (or if she *has ever been* his anima, Mr. B. manages to resolve his projections upon her); rather, the young lord is her animus, one of her male ideals, leading her on the Gothic spiritual journey. The matter of gender equalising in the novel raises further questions about Mr. B's and Rebecca's process of individuation. On the one hand, Fowles lets the man resolve his problems first and even teach Rebecca what to do with her life – but perhaps this merely reflects the novel's historical moment because, being a male aristocrat, he has more civil rights, a better education and wider access to 'spiritual' books. In other words, he has more opportunities to develop his consciousness, which results in a clash between it and the forgotten unconscious – this is a major problem he has to resolve and it makes a strong case for individuation. Rebecca, with the young lord's help, is yet to approach this stage. On the other hand, the detailed insight into her psychological problems (much more detailed than into Mr. B's situation) speaks in favour of the equality of their discourses. It looks as if, in Rebecca, Fowles compensates for all the years of his muses' silence while the male characters spoke. In *A Maggot*, the lord has the same chance of happening to be Rebecca's vision and the invention of her unconscious, as she has to be his anima. Or, if he 'exists', his image is heavily projected upon and shaped by her imagination in accordance with her psychological situation and its immediate necessities. In addition, Rebecca is not free of her particular kind of idolatry: as she represses her sexual desires, she lapses into religious fervour and its hysterical manifestations. On yet another narrative level, she might have erotic feelings towards the young lord (she has sex with his carnal counterpart) but, as in the case of Hermas, these have transmuted into visions and religious experiences: Mr. B becomes Lord Jesus Christ who leads her to a new world of freedom and equality and whom she can love 'with brotherly love', without experiencing remorse and guilt.

Mr. Bartholomew is another confusing figure of whom Ayscough disapproves. To the judge he should seem an even greater mystery than the Quaker maid's figure, as he has never met the young man personally and knows him mainly as a *myth*. The 'real' plane of the narrative becomes a detective text with several versions of what happened, which comes to a halt because of the specific characteristics of the mythological one. Thus, it is not at all strange that *A Maggot* has actually been examined as a detective story possessing all the necessary characteristics of the genre. Bo H. T. Eriksson labels the novel 'a postmodern detective story' which, despite having all the formal indications of its genre (crime, detective, investigation and solution), defies resolution by changing or distorting the classic ending and 'admits an ambiguous, open or multiple ending' (Eriksson, 1995: 197). That is the technique the writer used in *The Enigma* to preserve the puzzle: the disappearance of a politician remains an almost mythological case. In Eriksson's opinion, *A Maggot* combines the thriller and the formal detective novel (Eriksson, 1995: 197). The thriller element of the book emphasises its Gothic structure – the structure of a novel obsessed with the law and possible ways of escape from it. In *Epilogue* John Fowles admits the influence of Defoe on *A Maggot* (AM, 455). Although noted for his 'realism', Defoe can be seen as a Gothic writer. As David Punter notes in *Gothic Pathologies*, '... the universes of Defoe, Fielding, Godwin are limited by various manifestations of human law. Legal characters and legal processes are 'key' figures in the fiction, and we can use an exploration of these figures as a beginning for the search for the elusive "beginning-in-continuity" of Gothic' (Punter, 1998: 19). The quest group is perceived by the 'key' figure of the legal process, Henry Ayscough, as a band of transgressors violating all the possible rules including common sense. Their alleged misdeeds include: criminal offences such as prostitution, homosexuality, murder and fake identities; filial and daughterly disobedience (manifested in the young Lord refusing to marry the lady offered to him and leaving his father and Rebecca abandoning her parents and eventually entering prostitution); denial of

accepted religious beliefs, reflected in Mr B's metaphysical speculations and the ideas he shared with Lacy (his views on God, the cosmos, his strange mathematical calculations, etc.) as well as in Rebecca's new religion found in the Dolling's cave – a religion that has its own archetypal images and differs even from her parents' rebellious beliefs. Rebecca and Mr. B. are also 'found guilty' of denying common sense because they offend rationality by transgressing the limits of reality and participating in supernatural events.

If the thriller element of the plot in the text works to support the Gothic theme in the novel, the main Gothic images undeniably belong to the mythological part. The controversial lord is the originator of these images which, as I have already argued earlier in the chapter, challenge Enlightenment rationality in *A Maggot*. The mystical starts to reveal itself within the plot level even at the beginning of the novel. While the novel's action concerns the visit to a prosperous aunt, the young aristocrat gradually starts revealing aspects of himself that raise suspicion in the reader. Mr B – the name he is presented with in the opening of the novel – appears as a whole set of contradicting personalities and having his own 'living' shadow: Dick Thurlow. Although Mr B is definitely no 'Conchis' type, he displays both the qualities of the magus and his apprentice, the metaphorical 'father' and 'son'. These religious undertones of Bartholomew's role in the novel determine Rebecca's perception of him as an accepted symbol of the self – Jesus Christ. He simultaneously teaches and is being taught, is on the quest and involves other people in spiritual change. He is as powerful and mysterious as the magus and at the same time as uncertain about his journey as Nicholas Urfe. With this character, John Fowles repeats his Conchis trick: offering no psychological insight into his doings, the writer gives him conflicting characteristics, thus emphasising his dialectical nature (the feature that the Stonehenge and the cave scenes will celebrate in full). In the first conversation with Lacy, quite to the reader's surprise, the novelist compares Mr B. with ... a skinhead because he happens to be completely bald under his wig. This is one of the best 'distancing' moments

in *A Maggot*, forever knocking the character out of the year of 1736: ‘... he is shaven-headed to the apparent point of baldness; and indeed looks like nothing so much as a modern skinhead, did not his clothes deny it’ (*AM*, 21). Later in the text, this historical distancing gives place to cultural distancing: Mr B. becomes a Buddhist monk: ‘His expression now is without cynicism or sarcasm, or the former cruelty. If anything it shows a strange patience, or calm; from being an anachronistic skinhead he seems to become something even more improbable: Buddhist monk, praeternaturally equable and contained, drowned in what he is and does’ (*AM*, 55). This reference to an eastern faith seems very odd as it appears after the voyeuristic sex scene, with Bartholomew watching live pornographic acts performed by the people he employs. Just like the magus, he is intermittently beneficial/kind and sadistic/cold and indifferent: at one moment he humiliates Fanny and reproaches her for being ‘a public whore’ with a ‘putrid body’ ‘hired for his use’, and at the next he kisses her hand (*AM*, 48-49). In the role of ‘the man on the quest’, Bartholomew displays no more consistency in his actions and their incentives than he does being the ‘magus’: in different versions he is either depicted by means of the darkest Gothic archetypes Fowles could think of, or presented as related to the most sacred celestial figures. These different versions of his lordship’s intentions are offered to Ayscough who is struggling with the subjectivity of the human perception of Truth. What he gains as a result of his modernised witch-hunt techniques is a number of pieces of information tainted with ‘deliberate tempering as well as ... inadvertent errors’ (Tarbox, 1988: 139). The liar Jones (or Farthing) tells improbable stories at an official interrogation both because he has to defend himself against the law and because he himself has been deceived by Rebecca. Jones is ‘responsible’ for the ‘pure Gothic’ parts of *A Maggot*’s mythology: in his hands the mystery surrounding the young man becomes horribly carnal and devilish as compared to the *subliminal* version of Rebecca’s. If Francis Lacy recollects only Bartholomew’s strange behaviour and his interest in alchemy and ‘the Philosopher’s

Stone', Farthing goes further and, in the mode of 'simple' and superstitious folk, turns the lack of information into the images that he, with his poor background, is at least able to understand. It is thanks to the existence of this secondary character that the quest is granted its dialectical, fluid and ever-changing status. For a start, there is the story he invents to entertain the inhabitants of the inn in the small town C—, where the quest group stops. Jones endows the innocuous mute Dick with some vampire qualities: he tells the bewildered listeners that he saw the servant waking in the middle of the night walking in his sleep and praying 'not as a Christian, to our Lord' but to the moon. This matches well with Dick's status as the young Lord's shadow, the beast driven by instincts with whom, as Farthing told the same group of listeners, Mr. Bartholomew communicates by cipher.

The intelligent young lord, obsessed with things spiritual, tries to detach himself from his carnal counterpart, but is nevertheless compelled to admit an invisible bond with him. Unlike Dr. Jekyll refusing to accept the existence of his immoral shadow, Mr. Hyde, Bartholomew is wise enough to understand that Dick is an irreducible part of himself; they are 'one mind, one will, one appetite' (*AM*, 171). When the embodiment of the instinctual aspect of his psyche performs a bestial sex act with Rebecca, his master watches as if virtually taking part in the act himself. Significantly, he does not refuse to watch. At one point his Lordship says to Lacy: 'I am his animating principle, Lacy, without me he's no more than a root, a stone. If I die, he dies the next instant. He knows this as well as I. [...] It is in his every vein and every bone, as a horse knows its true master from other riders' (*AM*, 171). His lordship controls the double not by repression but by forgiving and redeeming him. As Susana Onega notes, this theme of the double is echoed further in the novel in the cave scene in the images of the young man and his sleeping twin (Onega, 1989: 157). Together they appear to be 'the only one' Jesus Christ (*AM*, 379).

This is the first time in Fowles's career as a writer that he introduces the male character's double into a novel. In Jungian psychology, confrontation with the shadow constitutes an important part of the individuation process and may even happen earlier than confrontation with the anima figure (Jacobi, 1973: 109). It seems that for the Fowlesian hero the anima presents a greater threat than the double that is supposed to be awoken by his conscience. Therefore, as a 'proper' character the double appears only once: in the book that sums up Fowles's meta-fictional individuation process. The most unusual thing about the Fowlesian male character's shadow though is that he is not, in the manner of the 'standard' literary shadow figure, evil and cruel. On the contrary, Dick Thurlow would not harm a fly. His main 'devilish' trait is neither cruelty nor spite but lust; the strong, brutish sex drive that Mr. B has to resist in himself. Perhaps the fact that Fowles made his male characters' contrasexual part, the anima, so strong, designates their shadows as a secondary negative archetype. Fowlesian males have to struggle with their desire to sexually possess, to exploit the feminine without treating her as a human being. The shadow, which had always been invisible in Fowles's previous novels, outshined by the anima, finally materialises in Dick. Mr. B's shadow is the shadow of the man who treats women as dream figures but who comes to realise this. The hero redeems his womanising, lustful double.

In the relationship between Bartholomew and Dick Thurlow, John Fowles presents his readers with a very rare literary case of a character dealing with his shadow. Instead of poisoning himself intentionally so as to poison the double (Dr. Jekyll's case) or killing the portrait and thereby unintentionally killing himself (as in Wilde's *Dorian Gray*), Mr. B. gathers up his will to accept and then redeems the negative counterpart of himself. However, this is perceived by Ayscough, who thinks and exists on the 'reality' level of the narrative only and is not allowed by Fowles onto the mythological one, as manslaughter. The judge does not understand the young lord's myth, and the symbolic redemption of the shadow is perceived by him as the murder of the servant. This 'killing of Dick' element of

the plot emphasises the psychological and literary problem of handling the relationship with the double: there is a fine line between killing the shadow and resolving it, just as it is sometimes difficult to see the almost invisible difference between the darkest Gothic experiences and sublimated religious feelings.

Caught by Henry Ayscough and seeing no way out, Farthing gets a second grateful audience for his Gothic tales in the person of the judge. This time he reports the Stonehenge events told to him by Rebecca who played the central part in it. We see once again the motif of Rebecca coupling with the devil (the first time Dick was such a devil), with Fanny being laid on the flat stone 'in the posture of love' when a 'buzzard blackamoor' appears and, gazing 'most greedily' on the poor woman, springs 'down upon her, as a bird upon his prey' (*AM*, 252). At this most interesting moment she swoons and stops recording the things happening around her. Answering the judge's question about who this dark creature might be, David Jones replies it was 'the King of Hell, the Prince of Darkness' (*AM*, 253).

In the third version of events, the one that takes place in Dolling's cave, Rebecca is 'promoted' to being the devil's bride. Their marriage is celebrated by Mr. B., Dick and three witches who perform various 'abominations among themselves', with Rebecca lying in a swoon (*AM*, 261). This particular setting – just like its subliminal counterpart – is packed with important archetypes. Here the reader meets another quaternity consisting of three hags and the devil, the black wedding theme, Mr. B. merging with Satan, and the little beggar girl portrayed on the wall on which Fanny is longing to see Christ. The girl melts in flames of hell 'as wax will' and, upon seeing this vision, the prostitute regains her faith in God. The stories of coupling with Satan, Rebecca's trick on Farthing (apart from having the social and economical implications already mentioned earlier in the chapter), have their genesis in the gender politics closely related to the social position of women, or the way female sexuality had been perceived up to the eighteenth century, when a new

male myth about the nature of the feminine was created. As women were equated with the unconscious, they were automatically thought to be closer to the 'the devil' than men and therefore 'learned authorities never had any doubt that the weaker sex was more vulnerable to the temptations of Satan' (Thomas, 1973: 620). The mythology of witchcraft, we read in *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, was at its height at the time when women were generally regarded as sexually more voracious than men: the bachelor Robert Burton wrote in 1621 'of women's unnatural, unsatiable lust what country, what village doth not complain' (Thomas, 1973: 679). As the Enlightenment proceeded, this idea was dissolved and 'gradually superseded among the middle classes by the notion, exemplarised in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*,⁷ that women were sexually passive and utterly unascivious' (Thomas, 1973: 679). When the witch trials stopped, oversexed women demons, like Matilda in *The Monk*, were not seen anywhere save in the anti-rationalist counter-mainstream Gothic literature which refused to repress either male or female fears and problems related to the unconscious. Rebecca's transformation from the lustful first-class siren-prostitute Ayscough fears and despises, into a pious creature (whom he also fears and despises) in the year of the symbolic Repeal of the Witchcraft Act, may be a demonstration of the transition of the perception of female sexuality in English society from the 'whore' to the 'angel'. Unfortunately, this supposition diminishes Rebecca's feminist claims, as it adds one extra layer to the question of her role and aims in the novel.

The 'religious' version, reported to the judge by Rebecca herself, contains the same archetypes but with a positive sign: at the entrance to the cave the guests are welcomed by a beautiful lady in silver who divides herself into three women carrying posies of different colours.⁸ Mythical June Eternal takes the place of Hell, there appears the Trinity consisting

⁷ Interestingly, the hero-villain of Richardson's *Pamela* is called Mr. B. too.

⁸ The symbolism of this Trinity image and its archetypal significance in the novel is best explained by Susana Onega (Onega, 1989: 157).

of the Father, the Son and the female Holy Spirit (Holy Mother Wisdom), the Son having a 'sleeping' twin (the double, later resolved), and the young lord turning into the Redeemer and forgiving Rebecca all her sins.

Ayscough rejects everything Rebecca says, but two motifs seem to him especially heretical: the floating maggot, which clearly belongs to non-Christian imagery (he cannot find any trace of it in the heathen symbols either, which is why so much space in the novel is devoted to the unruly description of the object by the heroine), and the presence of the female aspect in the Trinity. As Susana Onega writes, 'Rebecca's passionate description of her vision of Heaven and of a Holy Trinity made up of a Father, a Son and his Dark Emanation, and a female Holy Spirit divisible into three, is received by the orthodox Christian and conservative rationalist, Henry Ayscough, with suspicion and incredulity' (Onega, 1989: 157). Mother Wisdom, as a representative of the Holy Spirit, looks strange unless we read Jung's commentary on the history of the symbol. Referring to Jung, Susana Onega points out that this concept of the Trinity, defended by eighteenth-century Shakers, has its roots in a much older tradition of Christianity:

The mother quality was originally an attribute of the Holy Ghost, and the latter was known as Sophia-Sapientia by certain early Christians. The feminine quality could not be completely eradicated; it still adheres to the symbol of the Holy Ghost, the *columbia spiritus sancti*.

(Jung, cited in Onega, 1989: 157-158)

This return to the presence of the female in the Trinity is very important as it indicates the change in the treatment of the feminine as secondary only because she is *materia*. If Rebecca Hocknell sees Bartholomew as the projection of her animus, the woman *may be* said to be his anima, but the one he has managed to deal with, or set free. For him, as a male, this would mean stopping turning females into animas; and indeed, on the narrative's mythological level she, with her new religiousness, represents the spirit – which has

traditionally been considered a male quality – and not instincts or the body. This is a truly deconstructive, equalising and pro-feminist move by Fowles, aimed against Ayscough's sexist rationality.

As Rebecca is moving from the world of the passions she favoured before she met the young lord to the world of the spirit, she encounters an unusual object that completely converts her into a God-fearing but self-confident person willing to save the world. This magical object is the floating maggot hanging inside the cavern and carrying the travellers to some kind of Paradise called June Eternal. The 'holy' maggot of the 'positive' version of the cave events is sometimes described by Rebecca as a sort of flying saucer. Critics such as Susana Onega and John Neary have agreed that to a certain extent the 'holy maggot' is presented in the book in science-fiction style as some kind of a spaceship. The maggot that reveals itself to Rebecca looks like 'something of artifice, machine or engine' (AM, 364) and is described by her as:

... white, yet not of flesh, as it were wood japanned, or fresh-thinned metal, large as three coaches end to end, or more, its head with the eye larger still; and I did see other eyes along the sides that shone also, tho' less, through a greenish glass. And at its end there was four great funnels black as pitch, so it might vent its belly forth there.

(AM, 359-360)

This strange creature does not have any legs but only 'six black holes or mouths beneath' (AM, 360). This particular sci-fi image seems slightly out of tune with all the grandiose Christian symbolism Fowles uses in the novel. It begins to look less out of place if we use Jung's ideas concerning the psychological nature of the UFO phenomenon which he explored in his work *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Sky* (1958). In this essay Jung relates the UFO-seeing experiences to the quest for the unity of the self. Jung suggests that the spaceship might represent a unity symbol repressed deep in the unconscious (particularly of the modern person who has lost his/her religious symbols –

just like Rebecca) which is projected onto the outside world in the guise of ‘flying saucers’: ‘Thanks to its numinosity, the projection carrier has a highly suggestive effect and grows into a saviour myth whose basic features have been repeated countless times’ (Jung, 2002: 123).

Although the UFO/alien abduction motif is a relatively recent phenomenon,⁹ and UFOs were first publicised only towards the end of the Second World War, by the 1950s they had already become a collective dream image. This dream image first appeared outside works of art and films – in ‘real life’, with people reporting cases of seeing flying saucers, being abducted by aliens, or aliens sharing wisdom with them. In Jung’s view, even after the two World Wars, there was still a belief in the world and human consciousness (‘the power of man’). This belief ‘thrusts itself to the forefront in the form of a symbolic rumour, accompanied and reinforced by the appropriate visions’ and therefore activates an archetype ‘that has always expressed order, deliverance, salvation and wholeness’, that is, the ‘masculine’ qualities (Jung, 2002: 18). Jung wrote in 1958 that in contemporary western society ‘consciously rationalistic enlightenment predominates’ and that ‘belief in this world and in the power of man has, despite assurances to the contrary, become an ... irrefragable truth’. This attitude on the part of the overwhelming majority ‘provides the most favourable basis for a projection’ (Jung, 2002: 18).

Jung might well have intuited the imminent ‘revaluation of values’ in society since his essay was written not long before the emergence of the cultural, literary and philosophical phenomena of postmodernism and deconstruction. It seems that after the decline of the so-called grand narratives and other rationalising ideological and religious systems, unpopular traditional versions of the archetype of the self that failed to warn

⁹ Although in fictional terms it dates back to H. G. Wells’ horror novel *The War of the Worlds* (1898) which is about the Martians who came to conquer Earth.

mankind of possible terrible mistakes (such as the Christian Jesus Christ), were replaced by 'more relevant' versions of unity symbols while the original images themselves sank into unconsciousness. The arrival of the new kind of saviour myth was the sign of the archetype descending underground, its now unpopular role as the symbol of salvation and wholeness disguised under an unconventional 'scientific' appearance. The technological appearance itself fits into the position of a masculine principle representation as it inherits the aura of enlightenment and the rational through its relation to structure and empirical knowledge. The UFOs became a powerful mass dream image also partly because, in Jung's words, 'anything that looks technological goes down without difficulty with modern man' (Jung, 2002: 18). Not surprisingly, it does not suit Rebecca who, even though she describes the floating object as a futuristic machine, finally prefers her own (a maggot) and Christian (Jesus Christ) symbolism in designating the archetypal images of the self. The curious switching between the maggot and the UFO defines the book as a postmodern novel that boldly introduces typical postmodern imagery and problematics into its historical material.

Generally, most contemporary UFO experiences tend to contain similar elements, many of which have already become clichés: invaders are usually dressed in shiny suits and have large eyes, spaceships are glowing round or oval-shaped objects and travel at great speed. However, these new versions of the image of the self have recognisable parallels with pagan, medieval and traditional Christian symbolism related to the same archetype. In *Flying Saucers* Jung gives several examples from previous centuries which are similar in concept to the UFO phenomenon. Thus, a Nuremberg broadsheet dated 1561 tells the story of 'a very frightful experience at sunrise April 14th. Many people saw 'globes' of a blood red, bluish or black colour or numerous 'plates' near the sun. Some bright red crosses were also visible. Moreover, two large tubes were present (three in the picture), in which 'three, four and more globes were to be seen' (Jung, 2002: 106-107). Jung compares the tubes to the 'motherships' from the contemporary UFO reports, which

are said to carry the smaller UFOs for long distances. He also pays special attention to the quaternities in the form of regular crosses or discs in the shape of a cross and notes the 3 + 1 motif in the dilemma of three and four (Jung, 2002: 107). Another picture entitled 'The Quickening of the Child in the Womb' (twelfth century) shows two large figures, one oval containing the mother and the unborn child, and one square which is connected to the oval and the foetus through some kind of an umbilical cord. The quadratic form is divided into three parts (the Trinity), with the middle section containing small round objects and the other two having the eye motif (cf. the large eyes of 'typical' aliens). As the author of the picture and the text states, the round things in the middle depict God's deeds, such as the sending of his son as a saviour, whilst the souls of men are 'fireballs' (Jung, 2002: 110). Jung interprets the number of the objects in the middle section (thirty) as a reference to the moon/crescent and days of the month, and the number of eyes (twenty-four) as suggesting the sun (Jung, 2002: 110-112). The Trinity is inscribed in the Quaternity and the Holy Ghost enters into the child as it unites the Godhead (3) with matter (1).

The theme of the cross as a metaphorical visualisation of the individuation process is also present in the scene in the cave, which at one of the multiple narrative levels can be perceived as 'abduction by aliens' since Rebecca is actually taken away in the maggot against her will. *A Maggot* demonstrates some kind of obsession with alchemical signs, and Rebecca's cavern experience is packed with them. At one moment she observes, painted on the maggot, 'a circle, divided in two halves by a crescent line; its one half is black, the other left white, so the moon in middle wane' (cf. allusions to the crescent in 'The Quickening of the Child in the Womb') (*AM*, 361). The meaning of this extraordinary element becomes clearer if one bears in mind that in alchemy a circle represents trinity, and the cross is one of the quaternity signs, which makes Rebecca's vision a representation of the 'three turns into four' archetype with some kind of yin/yang symbol of 'basic duality' inscribed into it. This also makes understandable Mr. B's Faustian interest in

numbers, schemas and other 'mathematiks' that the young man's former travel companion Lacy struggles to explain to the judge Ayscough when called as a witness.

Seeking 'wholeness' himself and even making peace with his instinctive side in the form of his servant Dick, the young lord passes to Rebecca this desire for an encounter with the other. The 'abduction by aliens' theme actually marks the beginning of the heroine's individuation and the end of her existence as just 'the Holy Ghost' for the young lord. Despite being a part of Mr. B's real and psychological pilgrimage, Rebecca also has a quest of her own, in which the young lord plays a part. For her, Mr. B is one of her subjective versions of the self, Lord Jesus Christ, probably inherited from her religious parents. Mr. B's crucifixion would symbolically mean both the main goal of his individuation (achievement) and the beginning of hers. Although Mr. B. is not literally crucified in *A Maggot*, Fowles uses parallel imagery: the male character simply disappears into the white 'spaceship', having obtained his quaternity (the cross), when the Trinity is joined by the dark fourth (Dick, 'the sleeping twin'). This dark fourth is then redeemed.

Some of the 'real life' encounters with unknown flying objects, reproduced by Jung in his book, look ironically similar to Rebecca's story of her trip in the maggot to June Eternal. In the fifties an American Italian, Orfeo M. Angelucci, became a prophet after a series of meetings with 'aliens'. On his first encounter with them, he saw a red-glowing, oval-shaped object hovering over the horizon. The object released two balls of green fire from which a man's voice issued, telling him 'in perfect English' that he was in direct communication with 'friends from another world' and bidding him to drink from the crystal cup that he was to find in the fender of his car. The drink was very invigorating and was 'the most delicious beverage' Orfeo had ever tasted. He felt refreshed and strengthened. Suddenly the area between the two green fireballs began to glow and turned into a luminous three-dimensional screen in which heads and shoulders of a man and a woman 'being the ultimate of perfection', appeared. The faces and the screen vanished

again and the voice coming from the green balls told him that those whom he heard ‘feel a deep sense of brotherhood towards Earth’s inhabitants’. They also announced that the people of our planet had been under observation for years but had only recently been re-surveyed and that every point of progress of human society has been registered by the mysterious intruders. Some time afterwards Orfeo had a second experience of communicating with ‘Martians’. This time he managed to get through a brightly lit door into the spaceship which looked like a ‘huge, misty soap bubble’ (“a maggot”?). Inside it was like a vaulted room with the walls made of some ‘ethereal mother-of-pearl stuff’. The door shut and his ear caught ‘a humming noise, a rhythmical sound like a vibration’. Through a small window in the ship he at first saw a planet, the earth, and then harmoniously revolving planets and galaxies. As Orfeo cried with emotion, a voice he recognised, declared: ‘Weep, Orfeo ... we weep with you for Earth and her children. For all its apparent beauty earth is a purgatorial world among the planets involving intelligent life. Hate, selfishness and cruelty rise from many parts of it like a dark mist’ (Jung, 2002, pp. 127-130). On the way back to Earth the mysterious voice taught Orfeo the nature of Jesus Christ who, in his view, was not of earthly origin but the ‘Lord of the Flame’ and ‘an infinite entity of the sun’ (Jung, 2002: 131).

Rebecca is unable to describe her object as technocratically as Orfeo does, due to the historical moment she is born in, and she thus describes the machine in the terms known to her – as a living creature. Nevertheless, in spite of this stylistic device that Russian formalists called *ostrannenie*/‘defamiliarisation’, it is not difficult to recognise in her story some of the features of a typical UFO experience. Her story about travelling inside the maggot to June Eternal is also curiously similar in many points to Orfeo’s extraterrestrial experiences. After entering into the white object floating inside the cavern, she is given a drink in a crystal glass by an old lady, which tastes ‘of some fruit, fresh apricocks or jargonelles’ and which soothes her dry throat (*AM*, 370). There are actually three ladies of

different ages and they are dressed exactly like science fiction space travellers – in ‘silver trowse and smock’, and their strange garments are not ‘from mere foolery or the like, but as clothes it pleased them to wear for their plainness and their ease’ (*AM*, 365). The maggot – the main object of Ayscough’s disbelief – makes noises, which in Rebecca’s description sound like ‘a humming, tho’low, as of a closed furnace that flames, as oven before baking. Like also to a cat that purrs’ (*AM*, 361). From the inside the object appears to be a chamber walled with gleaming stones. On board the spaceship she finds a small window from which she can see a beautiful land where everything is built in white and gold and which is called June Eternal. Having landed in a green meadow, Rebecca is greeted by two men (the son and the aged man) and a woman, all in white gowns. This may even match Orfeo’s description of a man and a woman from the fireballs, because, as Rebecca explained to the judge, ‘these two men were one, the only one, the man of men: our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, yet was resurrected’ (*AM*, 379).

The outcome of Orfeo’s unusual experiences also reminds us of Rebecca’s post-maggot life. After the encounters Orfeo had with people from other planets, he felt there was no alternative for him but to become ‘a prophet’. He was exposed to mockery and disbelief (Jung, 2002: 132). His UFO vanished without trace immediately after he disembarked, leaving him with no material evidence to support his visions. Ayscough, who investigates the disappearance of the young lord and the death of Dick Thurlow, sends people to Dolling’s cave to collect material evidence that would testify to ‘natural causes’ and, predictably, they find nothing. In Catherine Tarbox’s words, an attorney Pygge who works with the judge on the case ‘assaults the cave with instruments and measuring devices, but only succeeds in proving that what clearly was in the cave could not have been in the cave’ (Tarbox, 1988: 141). Mocked by the judge, Rebecca behaves like a martyr, scaring the enlightened and rational ‘official’ Protestant Ayscough with her new identity as a religious fanatic and prophet. The writer makes the novel, with its characters striving to

describe the same events, but failing to present the judge with a unified 'stable' picture conforming to the law, into a literary celebration of the relativity of Truth and the subjectivity of human perception. Fowles's 'maggot' is his own fictionalised story of the origins of the Gothic, set twenty eight years before the publication of *The Castle of Otranto*.

A Maggot is probably Fowles's most complicated book as far as plot and imagery are concerned. It is full of intricate Gothic-alchemical symbolism that might be not understood by the ordinary reader and which makes the novel seem over-complicated. For critics the situation is reversed: the cosmopolitan (alchemical, heathen, Christian) symbolism and the politics of the novel provide it with the ontological depth that can be subject to interpretations from many perspectives: historical, psychoanalytical, Jungian, deconstructive, to name but a few. Anthony Burgess called *A Maggot* a book serving the forces of subversion, that is, a deconstructing text (*AM*, back cover). Indeed, this is the author's most 'feminist' novel and one in which the usual male character, removed from the centre of attention, exists as some kind of mythological hero. The female, who previously served as a muse to Fowles's males, is granted the originality of vision, has her own language and images and participates in the quest as a person seeking *her* truth, and not as an anima. The heroine even has the right to be a part of the Trinity; at some level of the narrative's grandiose metaphysical structure she embodies The Holy Mother Wisdom.

On the mere schematic level, Rebecca's initial problems look far more 'postmodern' than those of the young lord. His psychological difficulties are more like those of the representative of Enlightenment rationality, judge Ayscough, who has lost all contact with his unconscious, but, unlike Mr.B, does not seek any communication with it. Rebecca, on the contrary, has led the life of the body and has not been in touch with her 'thinking' function. Her personal situation and the psychological state of postmodern society can be

compared on the grounds of the similarity of the phase of individuation. The God image that has been disposed of by a post-war, postmodern culture, has since remained in the shade and caused the appearance of a new important motif: fear and fascination in the face of an unknown, often invisible and absolutely invincible power. The father/God figure, metaphorically representing the powers of the civilised consciousness, is gone, or 'dead' (to use Nietzsche's phrase) and the repressed – the instinctual and the bodily – are made conscious and therefore brought back into the world to exist officially. As Jung registered in his essay in 1958, society began to confront a set of new neglected, unconscious images, which had struggled to emerge from the darkness and oblivion. This motif of the lost governing principle is strongly related to the sense of bewilderment and disorientation common in a postmodern society, and carries strong subliminal undertones. Rebecca's state of first losing God/spirituality and then having a series of both Gothic and 'positive' visions of the Godhead visiting her in different guises, reflects the devaluation of the traditional western image of the self – the Christ figure, which inevitably happened with the general decline of Christian religion after the Second World War. For her, too, God used to be dead. Having met Mr. B, who becomes the container of her projections, Rebecca shakes off her passive femininity and becomes independent in her views, even opinionated and inflexible. Although she reaches the opposite of her old promiscuous and unreflective self, she becomes trapped in her new-found order-imposing sacredness. By the end of the novel she reaches the point when her now repressed sensuality has to express itself in hysterical fits and delirious speeches that were so typical of extreme Protestant sects like the Quakers and the Shakers. But even though different in her embrace of a strange religion, she is now more compatible with the Enlightenment society into which she was born than when she was a prostitute. This means that, despite its being greatly beneficial for her personal development, the former prostitute's decision to become a religious martyr is not the ideal move. Rebecca's complex and endless individuation in *A*

Maggot presents the reader with yet another example of Fowlesian dialectics – the writer’s ability to equalise intellectually all the discourses in his novels. This can, however, cause his readers to completely lose themselves in the moral grounds of the motivation of the characters and leaves them without any definitive answer.

A Maggot, despite being based on historical material, has an ironic link with problems more typical of the postmodern condition, and this is reflected in the novel by the science-fiction moment. Here the figure of the self emerges in the anachronistic guise of a spaceship with aliens inside dressed in characteristically technocratic silver suits. Since everything in the book takes place in 1736, it was probably John Fowles’s idea of a joke to insert the twentieth-century dilemma of the lost order/‘the father’/God into the picture of growing Enlightenment rationality, whose philogenetic difficulties and pains of development are ontogenetically reflected in the young lord’s and Ayscough’s loss of touch with the unconscious/‘the mother’.

The absence of structure and control in postmodernism are supposed to signify the end of domination of the masculine principle. Nevertheless, despite being traditionally considered nihilistic and rebellious, postmodern texts and films have a tendency to contain a hidden longing for the lost God. This desire to re-consider the abandoned and devalued ‘father’ is burdened by the realisation that the old god of modernity cannot be resurrected and therefore the very idea of looking for a governing principle or ‘purpose’ or ‘order’ in things is inappropriate. Hence the obscure, ‘hidden’ character of the postmodern search for God. *A Maggot* in this sense is a very unusual postmodern novel, as its idea of reassessing the Godhead is openly realised in the image of Rebecca Lee. In a non-historical contemporary novel this would have neutralised all its postmodern qualities. Fortunately, this does not happen in *A Maggot*, which is protected by its historicity, as the hope of reviving the dead God, either in the shape of a maggot or a UFO, is artfully disguised behind the year 1736. This dangerous hope can therefore be attributed to the past.

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Conclusion

The sort of Gothic that John Fowles recreates in his fiction is the Gothic of change and adaptation as it expresses the fear of growing up and becoming a conscious individual, or, conversely, the fear of the unconscious associated with the irrational and the loss of control over oneself. In other words, Gothic phenomena are experienced by Fowles's characters in the process of individuation as Jung defines it, that is, in the process of integration of the unconscious into consciousness and becoming a psychological 'in-dividual' – indivisible unity or 'whole' (Jung, 2002: 40, 275). The complex relationship between the individual and his unconscious desire to become a psychological 'whole' has been the main focus of John Fowles's fiction throughout his long writing career.

John Fowles's work has evolved over more than four decades of different literary fashions, styles and genres as well as new philosophical and ideological movements. It absorbed many influential ideas of its time, and these are reflected in the ever-varying philosophical and stylistic structure of the writer's novels. Apart from 'working-class realism', which saw its heyday in the 1950s English novel, John Fowles's work takes account of several kinds of French philosophical thought: existentialism, the importance of which for his fiction he persistently acknowledged and, to a lesser extent, the ideas of Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes. Ironically, their concepts found their place in Fowles's novels and look absolutely comfortable in self-referential texts such as *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and *Mantissa*. Using his nesting-doll-style of fiction, made of smaller tex-journeys, Fowles inscribes his work into the body of postmodern literature and the contemporary cultural situation. Although they are often self-contradictory and questionable, particularly in relation to the matters of sexuality and morality, Fowles's

texts nevertheless contain a clear deconstructive impulse, realised as an incentive for a change in one's life, a desire to move on from obsolete, worn out values towards the next stage in one's experience of the world. The individuation process acts as the mythological and philosophical layer of the thematic structure of his fiction, but it is often represented on the plot level by more concrete problems, many of which have obviously descended from Fowles's interest in existentialism. These moral riddles are the dilemma of 'the Few' and 'the Many', 'collecting' versus creating, the tell-tale Sartrean problem of personal freedom and the dilemma of the *Aristos* who ought to choose this freedom regardless of the material circumstances in which he or she exists.

New philosophical systems such as existentialism, post-structuralism and deconstruction which emerged during the second half of the last century were determined by the post-war feeling that there is no God and thus no metaphysical ruling principle, and this is reflected in Fowles's literary evolution. We see this sense of nihilism in *The Collector* and find both in *The Collector* and *The Magus* the search for God, for the father of the missing/destroyed/ 'order'. This is duplicated as a painful existentialist belief in the individual as the only source of responsibility and in humanism, as the last resort of human consciousness; the individual is lonely in the hostile cosmos but he can at least control his own mind and the circumstances surrounding him, if even only mentally. Man is a lonely, sad being who has inherited the 'late' God's responsibilities and rights but ends up feeling at a loss and unable to bear the burden of these responsibilities; in addition, his new rights confuse him morally. Although he has precious existential freedom – God's freedom, he nevertheless is not ready for it and does not know how to use it. For instance, Nicholas Urfe is completely bewildered when Conchis and his team abandon him to decide for himself what to do with his life. Having received Sarah's note with her Exeter address, Charles Smithson realises that he will have to make a choice. Even though Charles does not have 'the benefit of existential terminology', he feels that being able to choose and

‘being free is a situation of terror’ (*TFLW*, 328). The problem is that together with God’s rights he gets God’s weaknesses. The existentialist man feels lost – he is the last island of civilisation in the sea of chaos and darkness.

Existential mourning for the *logos* principle coincided with the beginning of the individuation process of the Fowlesian male character. Both Frederick Clegg and Nicholas Urfe are infantile, irresponsible men who are to be civilised and enlightened by being taken out of the ‘sea of darkness’. They are still on their quest for the symbolic properties of the *logos*. Not surprisingly, the Fowlesian hero changed significantly in the second half of the 1960s when the philosophical problem of God’s responsibility versus human freedom began to gradually dissolve, while the words ‘God’ and ‘power’ erased themselves in the light of the new philosophical dominants. It was by this time accepted that the Author is ‘dead’. Moreover, the absence of God came to be seen as normal. In parallel with the cultural situation, Fowles’s male character changed the direction of his explorations towards the group of values symbolically, metaphorically and metonymically related to the conquered ‘unconscious’. Both Charles Smithson and David Williams are ‘asked’ to abandon their convenient lifestyles and prestigious social positions for the sake of passion. Their self-confident bourgeois masculinity is dethroned as they suffer from ‘illegitimate’ love and have to act against their principles/the principles of their social class. Both exceptional people, one of them ‘a gentleman of honour’ and ‘a scientist of sorts’, the other a prominent abstract painter and a well-known art critic, Charles and David are the signs of dethronement of the previously glorified ‘Few’; they also exemplify the critique of masculinity and the masculine principle to be found in general in Fowles’s novels. In *Daniel Martin* Fowles famously (or infamously) reconciles ‘the quest for the mother’ with ‘the quest for the father’, making a mature, responsible and self-confident Daniel leave a young actress and marry his Oxford love and anima Jane. This turning point also manifests the end of the union of existentialism and the dialectically-oriented thought in Fowles’s

fiction. This is the first time Fowles allows such a reconciliation of oppositions to happen in his novel.

Fowles's texts have also metamorphosed stylistically and structurally. As Susana Onega puts it, John Fowles 'with his double training in English realism and French experimentalism, seems as concerned with writing about the real as he is determined to test and undermine the conventions of literary realism' (Onega, 1989: 165). With the writer's constantly varying commitment to realism, the extent to which the clearly non-realistic mode of the Gothic romance manifests itself in his texts is quite unpredictable. It is practically invisible in *Daniel Martin*, which is notorious for its realism but it determines the general atmosphere of *A Maggot*, which is written in the manner of a 'dark' myth or fairytale. *The Collector* integrated the Gothic into the form of a contemporary, 'materialised' version of the classic Gothic motif of abduction of the maiden. Moreover, the psychological sub-structure of the motif is also portrayed in the novel in the darkest Gothic colours as the story of a fatal addiction, dependence on one's unconscious images and the sufferings of the victim of projection. *The Magus*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and 'The Ebony Tower' contain different degrees of psychological Gothic reflected in concrete Gothic situations such as the visit to an enchanted castle belonging to a magician; meeting with a witch/dangerously beautiful woman; abduction and an inquisition trial. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* also inherits the Gothic spirit of the sensational novel of the 1860s. 'The Ebony Tower' and 'Eliduc' even deal with the history of the Gothic itself and its traditional geography, since they contain numerous references to medieval romances and Gothic paintings, while their storylines take place in Brittany and the main characters of both fictions are made to wander in treacherous forests. *Mantissa* is a Gothic fantasy, a psychological game of sadism, masochism and domination, expressing the symbolic return to the chthonic *magna mater*. Fowles uses elements of the literary Gothic tradition in his multi-layered postmodern narrative in order to denote the borders of anxiety in the face of

psychological change of any kind, be it the dread of symbolic 'paternal' values (resistance to and dread of taking responsibility for one's own deeds) – or the threat of the 'maternal' and the sensual to the unstable ego-consciousness.

The individuation process can be seen as the main organising principle of the fiction of John Fowles, who has continuously acknowledged the influence of Jungian psychology on his creative thinking. 'Individuation' constitutes the main theme of each particular novel as well as providing the structure for the whole of the writer's fiction, uniting the texts on the grounds of the prospective psychic equilibrium of the hero. It is also the decisive factor in constructing the main character and his environment, for Fowles's main characters tend to change and mature as regards their predecessors and in accordance with the stage of the individuation process that Fowles wants to represent. His main Gothic characters are usually male and it is their psychological situations and problems of development, together with their attempted resolution, that are presented to the reader. Psychological difficulties of their personal development are often reflected in and emphasised by mythological images and situations borrowed from different sources, religious as well as folkloric. Thus, David Williams finds himself in the centre of medieval tales by Marie de France and Chrétien de Troyes, and clearly fails by the standards of medieval knighthood, even though he remains a respectable person from the point of view of his contemporaries, representatives of his class and social position. Nicholas Urfe is forced to live through various myths until he realises the value of the reality to which he belongs and he desperately yearns for return to this reality when morally tortured in the psychoanalytic courtroom of the climax scene. The mysterious Mr. B. is a 'fairytale' character and simultaneously exists in many guises, all of which are related to myths in the different sense of this word. Apart from participating in the 'myth' of a disobedient son fleeing from his overprotective father, created in order to hide the 'real cause' of his journey, Mr. B. plays a seeker after forbidden knowledge (the Faust myth); allegedly takes

part in pagan rites; becomes an element in a UFO-witness story. He also appears as Jesus Christ, who obviously represents the central, uniting mythological figure of *A Maggot*. Mythological parallels help to inscribe Fowles's fictional meta-individuation into the anthropological story of the origins of human consciousness and its continuous tension with the unconscious. They also show the importance and the global, objective meaning of the characters' moral sufferings as their individual problems happen to coincide with those of mythological heroes, that is, with those of humankind at different stages of its existence. Fowles focuses on masculine fears as a result of male individuation, and this inevitably incorporates the ambiguous relationship with the mother as a figure who connects the male child with the dangers and pleasures of an unconscious existence; the necessity of abandoning the unconscious ('the mother'); the acceptance of responsibility for one's life and decisions; and the subsequent re-valuation and re-establishing of relations with the 'dark' side of the psyche. Fowles is particularly interested in two Gothic archetypes (the 'negative' components of archetypal images) that feature in the process of individuation. These are the anima (who inherits the story of the hero's turbulent affair with the mother) and the old wise man, who metaphorically represents the incentive and the meaning of individuation and who often appears in Fowles's fiction as an authoritative God-like figure (such as Maurice Conchis or Mr. B's father, the anonymous old lord). The hero's evolution is significantly accelerated by the Gothic masks that both the anima and the old wise man assume during the process of moral education of the male character. On his journey for secret knowledge, the hero unavoidably meets a dark and cruel wizard and his 'helper' – a vampyric, dangerous woman who threatens to diminish or even destroy his self-confidence and impugn his status as an authority. The Fowlesian hero is first and foremost the metaphorical son, whose life passes in a painful fight with his parents – the father/consciousness and the mother/the unconscious. The mother, whose double-sided image he projects onto the women he meets, remains the desirable land, the beautiful

domain which is lost due to the necessity of consciously becoming a grown-up man. The urge to individuate meets the desire to return to the pleasurable state of pre-conscious polymorphous, ambiguous experiences of fear and exaltation, the Barthesian *jouissance*. Jung describes the process of early child development as the gradual surfacing of separate islands of ego-consciousness from the 'total darkness of mere instinctuality' (Jung, 2002: 281). To reduce the danger that the unconscious poses to the unstable, budding ego, the hero often relegates the symbolical mother to the realm of the domestic safety, in so doing stripping her of her status of the Great Goddess and trying to forget what he perceives as the chthonic, powerful, inherently Gothic character of the feminine principle. Thus, Frederick Clegg attempts to force the rich, creative, freedom-loving nature of Miranda into the figurine of a crystal fairy and wishes to pin her down as if she were a beautiful butterfly. In his turn, Nicholas Urfe is terrified to see his virginal Lily/July transform into the opposite part of the angel/whore dichotomy during the courtroom scene. The 'bad' mother figure nevertheless remains for Fowles's male character a provider of dark erotic dreams and therefore appears as an essentially Gothic creature. Fowles's heroines in possession of power, demonstrating a will to lead and command or even to learn and know, are often presented as witches or doctors. For instance, Rebecca Hocknell has to endure total misunderstanding of her original religious ideas, and only the repeal of the Witchcraft Act saves her from a shameful trial. Another, more 'progressive' Gothic instance of the *magna mater* archetype, the figure of the female doctor, finds its realisations in the cold-blooded psychiatrist Dr. Vanessa Maxwell (formerly Lily) and in the heavily erotically charged figures of Dr. Delfie and Nurse Cory.

Only two of Fowles's novels, his first (*The Collector*) and the most recent (*A Maggot*), are preoccupied with the pains of female individuation, their heroines being given the right to speak for themselves and defend their views against the males who pose as their masters. Both Miranda and Rebecca are brave enough to express their philosophies

(and religions) and, although Miranda fails in her mission to remain true to herself as well as in her search for spiritual meaning in life, Rebecca manages to find the way out of her intricate political and social situation. Miranda ends up condemning her god when she realises that her war with Clegg is lost, whereas Rebecca is reconciled with the male character and finds the meaning of life in Jesus Christ. The Fowlesian heroine has to go through Gothic experiences of male aggression while existing as a mere 'anima', a dream creature that has no right to live outside masculine fantasies. Her life is gradually transformed through Miranda's death and Alison's and Sarah's fight for the privilege to be treated as human beings, and culminates in Dr. Delfie's 'motherly' tyranny and Rebecca's strange leadership. Therefore it is possible to speak of the evolution of the female character alongside the male hero's transformations, as she changes from being dissatisfied with her life and feeling spiritually disoriented, into a self-conscious individual, a woman who is ready to become a leader.

However, whatever kind of 'mother' she is, the anima is doomed to serve the hero's psychological needs and remain a mere tool at different moments of his symbolic journey into maturity. As an 'angel', she supports his (self-complacent and stagnant) ego-consciousness, making his life comfortable and leaving to him the privilege of leadership. As a 'whore', the anima scandalously awakens the instinctual, sensitive and irrational parts of the male psyche's spectre. Thus, what Clegg wants from Miranda and what he never receives, is support for his child-like masculinity; ideally, this support should consist of absolute obedience, absolute chastity and the ultra-feminine qualities of fragility and defencelessness. This 'tamed' femininity would guarantee that what Sigmund Freud called 'the dark tide of mud' would not disturb civilised man (Jung, 1995: 173). On the other hand, 'the French Lieutenant's whore', Sarah Woodruff, destroys Charles's ordered, scientific view of the world together with his spotless reputation in Victorian society and a prospective career as a merchant, only to revive his abilities to feel and be emotional once

again. Charles finds himself deeply and painfully in love with a woman who 'returns' him to the amorphous state of pleasure and suffering, to the point when his scientific rationalism seems superfluous. In this light, Charles's hasty, unplanned sex with Sarah would mean revisiting 'the mother' in her symbolic meaning as the unconscious, the 'bloody' place of 'death' and '(re-)birth'.

According to Fowlesian dialectics, there is a paradoxical incongruity in the way in which female muses influence the male character's direction of development. It seems that 'positive' muses (such as Lily in the first half of *The Magus*), even though they support all that is masculine and rational in man, in reality arrest his progress for they do not constitute any challenge for the masculine ego-consciousness and are not able to present any incentive for the hero to change and morally grow. On the contrary, the 'bad' anima figure makes him revise his whole life by challenging his opinions (including those deriving from male chauvinism), pushing him onto the next step of his journey, regardless of whether it is his intellect or the irrational part of the psyche which need attention. 'Whores' help to move on and 'angels' fix the progress, or, as Fowlesian dialectics imply, 'angels' fix the male psyche in a state of immobility while 'whores' drag it out of stagnation by using the shock therapy of reminding the hero of the meaning of the journey undertaken by him – the integration of consciousness and the unconscious.¹ The male character finds himself in the midst of a vortex of Gothic archetypes and in a vicious circle of pleasure and desire in which the two are forever tied and remind one that the ambiguous pre-conscious existence is lost forever. This 'loss' is creative because it makes the

¹ The only 'angel' to genuinely attract and even influence a Fowlesian hero is the 'Mouse' from 'The Ebony Tower' but, being an 'angel' she does not represent a major challenge to David's masculine psyche and therefore does not succeed in seriously changing his life. Unlike Charles, who leaves Ernestina when he meets Sarah, David, 'survives' the experience, 'surrenders to what is left'(abstraction), and remains with his wife (*ET*, 113).

conscious mind seek forgotten or repressed desires; it evokes the man's inner femininity making him metaphorically androgynous. Therefore psychological problems act as guarantors of psychic movement and the source of creativity. Reconciling oneself with the cause of the problem would mean the end of pleasure and creativity, and out of all Fowles's male characters only two manage to escape the dangerous circle at one point. The first is Daniel Martin who, having won back the love of his life, ends his moral sufferings and suspends the search for the metaphorical lost experience which can be called 'endless creativity without the final *synthesis*'. *Mantissa* seems to have had as its task the need to restore an imbalance in the hero's psyche and is characterised by a 'substantial' descent to the chthonic 'mother', represented by a female doctor and pictured as an endless flow of erotic dreams mixed with barely describable synesthetic feelings and images of colour, forms and sounds. *A Maggot* replays the whole theme of the journey towards individuation, and, like *Mantissa*, shows the hero revisiting the dark cave of the unconscious rather than depicting him in search of 'paternal' values. Like Daniel Martin, Mr. B. ends the war of the opposites in his psyche and makes up with the 'darker' sides of his personality – his femininity and the carnal, bestial double in the guise of his servant Dick. In *A Maggot*, sex between the servant and Rebecca runs in parallel with the theme of achieving peace within numerous binary oppositions: Rebecca and Dick, Mr. B. and Rebecca, Mr. B and the servant, Rebecca and the devil, Rebecca and Jesus Christ, Mr. B. and the metaphorical 'cave'. Having gained this peace, the hero turns into the classic figure of the self – the Son of God – and dissolves into June Eternal. The obvious biblical motives of *A Maggot* presuppose the return of the rebellious son to his father, providing resolution of the tension within yet another pair of opposites.

The male character's painful experiences of existence in the tough outside world, while there is a war going on inside his psyche, lead to feasible changes in his manner of thinking, his lifestyle and the way he treats other people (especially women). In this

respect, the Gothic can be called a positive force, just as Jung thought of neurosis as an important and beneficial psychic phenomenon that forces people out of psychological and intellectual stagnation (Jacobi, 1973: 102). Fowles's main character has to live with the Gothic and endure its trials for the sake of change, movement and creativity. The Gothic is an indispensable component of Fowlesian postmodern dialectics and the writer often turns to history in order to trace the origins of the hero's discontents – the Second World War in *The Magus*, the Middle Ages in 'Eliduc' and 'The Ebony Tower', the 1730s in *A Maggot*. As well as inscribing the hero's search for the self into the contemporary cultural situation, John Fowles also inserts the postmodern cultural situation itself into the history of human consciousness as an element of the Gothic story of civilisation and its anxieties. More locally, Fowles writes novels as a means of self-exploration, which often results in their containing an auto-biographical element. In his own words, 'I wrote books primarily to discover who I am. Where I am' (Reynolds and Noakes, 2003: 12). Thus Fowles's heroes possess their creator's fantasies, characters traits and individuation moments, or even share his profession (Daniel Martin and Miles Green are writers) and places of study (Oxford in the cases of Nicholas Urfe and Daniel Martin).

Elements of a Jungian approach to psychic tension and conflict are visible in the way in which Fowles builds the ethical structure of his books, refusing to employ standard ethical norms and choosing a 'reverse ethics' instead. In fact, Fowles creates his own, unique 'Fowlesian ethics', based on the instability of moral values and their relativity. The literary method which emerges out of this philosophical approach has allowed the novelist to see and translate for the reader the dialectical value and dialectical movement of each experience.

Fowles introduces the legacy of the Gothic into the paradigm of the postmodern condition in order to express both the bitter irony of the historical moment and the strictly personal problems of development and maturation. This is the archetypal Gothic which

depicts Fowles's male characters as growing up in Post-War Europe and adjusting to new values and cultural changes while at the same time trying to resolve psychological problems related to their parents. Thus, Fowlesian Gothic unites the social and the personal in the dialectics of change and transformation. Fowles's dialectical approach, in its turn, allows him to give Gothic images a freedom without which his characters (and, perhaps, Fowles himself) cannot live and create.

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