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Chapter 18

Psychoanalytic Animal

Maud Ellmann

Four-year-old Harry (not his real name) grew up with all the privileges one might expect from doting, dual-income parents in Los Angeles: great toys, a spacious apartment, lots of attention. But at a very early age he suffered from separation anxiety. When he was particularly distressed, often in response to loud noises, he would race about, hide in closets and sometimes even jump out the window of the family's ground-floor apartment. His loved ones knew Harry needed therapy and consulted several experts before finally choosing one they liked. Now, after a steady regimen of psychotherapy and antidepressants, Harry no longer alarms his family by leaping out of windows. Even better, he's lost his compulsion to bite strangers.

Harry, as the reader may have gathered, is a German Shepherd. This anecdote comes from an article called "When Fido Gets Phobic," published in *Time* magazine in 1999, which reports that "the latest twist in the \$21 billion pet-care industry is an expanding range of alternative treatments and drugs aimed at Fido's psychological well-being." As a result, "dogs are learning to get along with their fellow schnauzers and pinschers at doggy day-care centers, having their troubles massaged away at spas, getting acupuncture to alleviate behavior problems, and taking herbal medicines like St. John's Wort to

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lift their mood" (Barovick 1999). Evidently this industry treats the dog as the problem rather than the owners, as if it were abnormal, for example, for a dog cooped up alone all day to protest by howling, tearing at the furniture, or shitting on the carpet. Yet regardless of owners' delinquencies, it's the dog who is expected to mend her ways, aided by a growing arsenal of pharmaceuticals.

Inevitably, there are limits to this anthropomorphic regimen. To vary an old proverb, you can lead a dog to the couch, but you can't make her free associate. Yet several of Freud's later patients, including the poet H.D., recall that dogs played a memorable role in psychoanalytic treatment at Berggasse 19, the Freuds' home in Vienna; indeed H.D. complains that "the professor" was sometimes more interested in his chow Jofi than in her story (H.D. 1985, 162).¹ In the following pages I discuss some of these canine interventions. After the Freuds' dogs, I turn to Lacan's boxer bitch, Justine, to open up the question of the psychoanalytic status of the animal. If the unconscious is structured like a language, as Lacan (1998, 15, 21, 48) claims, does this mean that animals have neither language nor unconscious? This chapter examines how several thinkers have responded to this question and its implications, including Derrida and Agamben.

Freud, in contrast to Lacan, tends to emphasize the continuity between the human and the animal by stressing the persistence of animal instincts in the civilized mind. The kinship that small children feel towards animals, Freud argues, corresponds to the phase of totemism in the childhood of humankind. A discussion of Freud's account of the "return of totemism" in animal phobias is followed by a speculative conclusion, which considers some possible consequences of Freud's (Darwinian) view that "man's adoption of an upright posture" is responsible for civilization and its discontents.² In particular I investigate how the metaphors of upright and prone, vertical and horizontal pertain to the question of writing and textuality in psychoanalysis. Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 264–65) have pointed out that psychoanalysis tends to overlook the multiplicity of species that crop up in patients' discourse by identifying every animal with the Oedipal scenario. This suppression of zoological diversity, I suggest, is bound up with an anxiety about the horizontal materiality of writing.

* * *

So far as we know, Freud never tried to analyze his dogs. On the other hand, he did enlist their services in the consulting room, where they collaborated in the treatment by nosing out patients' moods. If the

patient was calm, Jofi the chow would lie down near the couch, but would retreat across the room if the patient was anxious. Jofi also helped to time the sessions, rising to her feet as soon as the analytic hour had expired (Coren and Walker 1997, 78; see also Gay 1988, 540).

However, Jofi's timing could sometimes be perverse, as if she were campaigning in advance of Lacan for varying the length of the analytic session. Roy Grinker, an American doctor who was treated by Freud in 1932, remembered that Jofi would sometimes interrupt the session by scratching at the door. Freud would get up to let her out, explaining that "Jofi doesn't approve of what you're saying." Later, when Jofi scratched at the door to get back in, Freud would comment, "Jofi wanted to give you another chance." These jokes may contain an element of countertransference, with Freud projecting his own ambivalent reactions towards the patient onto Jofi's restlessness. On the transferential side, Grinker admits that he used to scold the dog in lieu of criticizing Freud (Grinker 2001, 39).

Grinker also had to contend with Anna Freud's dog, a giant Alsatian called Wolf, who would bark furiously when the doorbell rang and thrust his jaw into the trembling visitor's genitals. "I entered Freud's office," Grinker said, "with a high degree of castration anxiety." Anna Freud tried to reassure the patient that Wolf, who used to eviscerate sheep, had now matured into a harmless pooch, so that Grinker need only pull his tail to stop him barking. Grinker replied that there was not the faintest chance that he would touch that ferocious hellhound (Grinker 2001, 39). While many psychotherapists today claim that dogs exert a calming influence on troubled patients, the Freuds' dogs seem to have produced the opposite effect, arousing rather than assuaging anxiety. In their analytic capacity, these dogs therefore bear more affinity to Klein, whose methods aim to bring anxiety to the surface, than to today's animal-assisted psychotherapy, which tends to favor reassurance over confrontation with unconscious terrors.

Although dogs can serve as allies of the analyst by arousing and detecting patients' fears, they cannot verbalize their observations. But this is not because dogs can't talk, according to Lacan, who insists that his boxer bitch, named Justine in homage to Sade, possesses "without any doubt the gift of speech." In contrast to many human beings, however, Justine speaks only when she needs to speak, at moments of emotional intensity, communicating in the form of "little guttural whimpers." What distinguishes these whimpers from human speech is not that they fail to convey meaning or elicit the desired response, but that the dog never fails to recognize her interlocutor. Human

communication, by contrast, is founded in misrecognition. "Contrary to what happens in the case of man in so far as he speaks," Lacan insists, Justine "never takes me for another." For the dog, "there is only the small other," whereas the human subject necessarily mistakes the small other for "the Other with [a] big O." By investing his dog with this unfailing power of recognition, Lacan is invoking a tradition that goes back to Homer's *Odyssey*, where the ancient dog Argos has no difficulty seeing through (or rather smelling through) his long-lost master's disguise. It is this unambiguous "relation to identity," Lacan contends, that differentiates the canine from the human speaker (Lacan 1961). Incidentally Gertrude Stein makes a similar claim in her mischievous reformulation of the cogito: "I am I because my little dog knows me" (1984, 149).

Derrida would probably object that Lacan, by denying the big Other to the dog, perpetuates the longstanding "carnophallogocentric" chauvinism that defines the animal by what it lacks. "Speech, reason, experience of death, mourning, culture, institution, politics, technique, clothing, lying, feigned faint, effacement of the trace, gift, laughter, tears, respect, etc. – the list is necessarily indefinite, and the most powerful philosophical tradition in which we live has refused *all of that* to the 'animal'" (Derrida 2009, 130). To my knowledge, Derrida never addresses Lacan's remarks about Justine; instead, he focuses his critique on Lacan's paper "Position of the Unconscious," especially on a cryptic passage suggesting – in Derrida's words – that "the animal cannot have its own unconscious" (Derrida 2009, 114). What Lacan actually proposes, a propos of analytic training, is characteristically elusive:

In the introductory phase, one can illustrate the effect of enunciation by asking a student if he can imagine the unconscious existing in animals, unless they have some degree of language – human language. If he indeed agrees that this is the condition that would allow him to at least consider the possibility, you have verified that he distinguishes between "unconscious" and "instinct."

(Lacan 2006, 707)

Derrida homes in on the first sentence, which he takes to mean that "the animal has neither the unconscious nor language, it does not have the other, it has no relation to the other as such, except by an effect of the human order, by contagion, appropriation, domestication" (Derrida 2009, 114). It is true that Lacan's argument relies on the arguably anthropocentric doctrine that the unconscious is structured like a

language, but the point of this passage is to differentiate the unconscious from instinct. Besides, Lacan leaves a tantalizing loophole for speculating that an animal with access to “some degree of language – human language” might thereby be possessed of – or possessed by – an unconscious. If language can be passed on to animals through interspecies cross-contamination, does this imply that the unconscious is equally contagious?

Science has shown that animals – at least some animals – can dream, which attests to their unconscious mental processes. Whether these processes amount to “an unconscious,” in the psychoanalytic sense, is another question. Experiments have proved that laboratory rats dream about the mazes that they navigate during their waking hours, replaying every twist and turn of their trajectories (MIT News 2001). In some cases the correlation is so close that researchers claim to be able to reconstruct the sleeping rat’s exact position in the maze, and to determine whether the animal is dreaming about running or hesitating at a junction. These findings imply that the rat’s dream consists of a mimetic reproduction of its waking experiences. If so, the dream-life of the rat lacks (or does away with) the symbolic dimension of the Freudian dream, a dimension that arises from the struggle between wish-fulfillment and censorship. Free of superego, the rat has no need to disguise its dream-wish – the same wish that motivates its hungry journey through the maze – and therefore no reason to resort to oneiric subterfuge.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud admits:

I do not myself know what animals dream of. But a proverb, to which my attention was drawn by one of my students, does claim to know. “What,” asks the proverb, “do geese dream of?” And it replies: “Of maize.” The whole theory that dreams are wish-fulfillments is contained in these two phrases.

(Freud 1953–74, 4:131–32)

If this proverb were true, lab rats would dream about their food-reward, rather than reliving their labyrinthine journeys to this prize. But lab rats dream of mazes, not of maize. In this sense their dreams bear more resemblance to the nightmares of trauma victims than to the supposedly straightforward wish-fulfillment dreams of children. It seems that sleeping rats are gripped by the compulsion to repeat, like the shell-shocked veterans of World War I whose recurrent nightmares persuaded Freud to hypothesize the death drive (see Freud 1953–74, 18:32). Like lab rats’ dreams, these combatants’ nightmares consisted

of literal re-enactments of traumatic events, undisguised by symbolic substitution. If the human is distinguished from the rat by the capacity to dream in tropes, does this mean the traumatized are less than human?

Although this question borders on absurdity, it follows from the premise that human dreams are governed by the logic of symbolic substitution. What’s at issue here is not whether animals can talk, dream, or symbolize, but whether these powers are “proper” or integral to the human. Since all these powers can be lost, diminished, or disrupted, they cannot be guaranteed as inalienable properties of human minds. For this reason, Derrida argues that “what is attributed as proper to man does not belong to him in all purity and all rigor; and ... one must therefore restructure the whole problematic” (Derrida 2009, 56). Language, for example, is usually regarded as unique to human beings, although it is evident that other animals, such as Lacan’s dog, both understand and participate in human speech. Yet however eloquent her whimpers, or effective in procuring human care, Justine would make a poor analyst: she could not be treated by the talking cure.

Even so, the same could be said of many (or perhaps the majority of) human beings, especially infants, autistics, or the so-called Muslims (*Muselmänner*) of Auschwitz – those “drowned” human beings, as Primo Levi described them, for whom the ethical principles of dignity, respect, and mutual recognition no longer hold (Levi 1989; see also Agamben 1999, 41–86). If *Homo sapiens* is a talking animal, this does not mean that every human being talks, let alone communicates with others. On the contrary, Giorgio Agamben contends that infancy, meaning the inability to speak, should be seen as the distinctive experience of human life.

In *Infancy and History*, Agamben proposes that infancy is not merely “something which chronologically precedes language, and which, at a certain point, ceases to exist in order to spill into speech.” Infancy is not a paradise lost, which we leave forever when we learn to speak, but coexists in its origins with language. Indeed infancy is constituted by language, which constantly expels infancy in order “to produce the individual as subject” (Agamben 1993 [1978], 48). Animals, by contrast, “do not enter language, they are already inside it” (1993 [1978], 52). Nor can animals lose language, as befell the *Muselmänner*, whose state of infancy or speechlessness, brought on by hunger, cold, exhaustion, and despair, caused them to be shunned by fellow prisoners. These ruined beings, whose bare life brings to a crisis the

distinction between human and non-human, were expelled by the living through the same reflex that expels infancy from speech.

This expulsion underlies what Agamben (2004, 33–38) elsewhere calls the “anthropological machine,” by which the category of the human is created in contradistinction to the animal. In earlier phases of western societies, Agamben argues, this machine has operated by humanizing animals, so that slaves, barbarians, and savages were seen as animals in human form; more recently it has operated by animalizing human beings, so that detested populations are classified as less than human, such as the victims of the Nazi Holocaust. In either case the anthropological machine establishes the human by driving out the beast within, whether in the form of human beasts or bestial humans. To overcome this lethal mechanism, Agamben contends, it is necessary to recognize that “human beings are human insofar as they are not human,” or more precisely that “human beings are human insofar as they bear witness to the inhuman” (1999, 121).

Agamben’s theories have provoked much controversy, whose stakes are too complex to scrutinize in this short chapter.³ Yet it could be argued that psychoanalysis anticipates Agamben’s challenge to witness the inhuman in the human by emphasizing the persistence of animal instincts in civilization. It’s this emphasis, according to Freud, that accounts for the widespread resistance to psychoanalysis, causing its theories to be perceived as an “assault on the dignity of the human race” (1953–74, 19:218).

Jean Laplanche, however, has argued that Freud’s appeals to animal instinct, which escalate in the course of his career, serve as a defense against the more unsettling insights of psychoanalysis.⁴ Freud (1953–74, 17:140–41) boasted that psychoanalysis had administered the third and final blow to human narcissism, following those of Copernicus and Darwin. Yet Laplanche contends that Darwin’s theory of evolution exercised a dangerous magnetism for Freud, deflecting the founder of psychoanalysis from his “Copernican” decentering of human consciousness. According to Laplanche, whenever the otherness of the unconscious becomes too spooky, as in the repetition compulsion investigated in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud retreats into biologism, reducing what is alien within the psyche to the resurgence of animal instincts. The effect of this animalization is to dispel the strangeness of both the human and the animal, since the animal is thereby domesticated and installed at the core of the human psyche. Rather than a foreign body invading the psyche from without, “instinct” represents the animal within, a

secret self, and therefore serves to re-center the psyche in its putative biological inheritance. For this reason the progressive instinctualization of the drives, which takes place in the course of Freud’s development, entails a growing insistence on the kinship of the human and the animal. This doctrine of kinship disavows the alien in both the human being and the animal, transforming all species into fellows and familiars.

One of Freud’s most famous assertions of this kinship occurs in *Totem and Taboo*, where he argues that children, like “savages,” show “no trace of the arrogance which urges civilized men to draw a hard-and-fast line between their own nature and that of all other animals”:

Children have no scruples over allowing animals to rank as their full equals. Uninhibited as they are in the avowal of their bodily needs, they no doubt feel themselves more akin to animals than to their elders, who may well be a puzzle to them.

(Freud 1953–74, 13:126–27)

This passage implies that the adult is more enigmatic to the child than the animal. Laplanche has taken up this implication to argue that the otherness of psychic life derives from the “enigmatic signifier” of the adult, as opposed to the irruption of animal instincts.⁵ Freud himself, however, doesn’t linger on the strangeness of the adult. His point, instead, is that children treat animals as siblings, much as “savages” worship them as forefathers.

As Freud points out, this belief in animal descent has worried anthropologists, who have developed several rationalizations to account for it. “Nominalist theories,” for example, argue that the totem originates in a system of nomenclature in which the names of animals were chosen to distinguish clans from one another. Julius Pikler, in a passage quoted by Freud, proposes that “once savages bore the name of an animal, they went on to form the idea of kinship with it.” According to this theory, the animal ancestor is retroactively invented to justify the name, the origin of which has been forgotten, thus implying that totemism is a “misunderstood form of ancestor worship” (quoted in Freud 1953–74, 13:110–11). Freud, by contrast, proposes that the kinship children feel towards animals signals a “return of totemism.” To account for this return, Freud constructs what one reviewer called a “just so” story to explain the origins of the totemic animal (Marrett 1920, 205–6).

This famous narrative construction, as James DiCenso has pointed out, "is created mainly by linking Darwin's primal horde with Robertson Smith's account of the totem meal" (1999, 71). In the primal horde, Freud speculates, the brothers banded together to rebel against the ruling patriarch, whom they murdered and devoured in order to appropriate his women. Yet this "tumultuous mob of brothers were filled with the same contradictory feelings which we can see at work in the ambivalent father-complexes of our children and of our neurotic patients" (Freud 1953-74, 17:143). The brothers loved their father, even though they also hated him, but they could not eat their father and have him too. Once they had devoured him, satisfying their hatred and their desire for identification with him, they were stricken with guilt. In penitence they imposed prohibitions against incest and parricide, laws that bear witness to the prehistoric crimes that they forbid. Subsequently both the guilt and the hostility associated with the primal murder were displaced from the father to the totem animal. This displacement implies that the animal serves as the first symbol, established in its metaphoric afterlife by means of the murder of its referent. According to Freud, a taboo was imposed against killing or eating this totem, except on certain ceremonial occasions when the forgotten violence against the father was re-enacted on his animal substitute.

In accordance with the principle that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, Freud argues that the present-day child re-enacts this archaic struggle with the father in the form of phobias towards animals. The common fear of being bitten, for example, represents the terror of castration at the hands of the vindictive father. Yet because the father is both loved and hated, phobias are usually attached to "animals in which the child has hitherto shown a specially lively interest." For children living in towns, the choice of animal tends to be restricted to "horses, dogs, cats, less often birds, and with striking frequency very small creatures such as beetles and butterflies." Yet these fears may also extend to animals encountered by the child in "picture books and fairy tales," such as those that terrified the juvenile Wolf Man (Freud 1953-74, 13:127). These phobias result in an embargo on touching the creature in question, comparable to the taboos associated with the totem animal.

Animal phobias figure prominently in Freud's clinical works; in fact his most famous patients, the Wolf Man and the Rat Man, have come to be known by the names of their respective phobia-inducing animals. Other theriophobes include little Hans, who is entitled to be

called the Horse Boy, or Leonardo to be known as the Vulture Man. Similarly Little Árpád, a child discussed by Ferenczi who features in *Totem and Taboo*, might have been renamed the Chicken Boy. And Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, which Freud used as the basis for his case study of the author's florid psychosis, abounds with persecuting animals. These include familiar fauna of the cityscape, such as horses, dogs, cats, and spiders, in addition to exotic creatures such as scorpions and lungworms. Among the animals "miracled" into existence to torment him, Schreber writes, "the commonest are insects of all sorts, particularly flies, gnats, wasps, bees, bumble-bees, ants, earwigs, butterflies, night-moths, moths, etc., etc." (2000, 218).⁶ As these multiplying etceteras imply, it is the riotous proliferation of these miraculous births, as opposed to any particular species, that fuels Schreber's paranoia.

Freud, however, pays little heed to Schreber's menagerie. Instead he focuses on Schreber's fantasy of becoming-woman in order to pursue an unconvincing link between paranoia and latent homosexuality. This blindness to animals persists among Freud's followers, despite the "vertiginous array of fauna" (Marder 2010, 121) to be found in psychoanalytic writing. In Klein's *Narrative of a Child Analysis* (1998), for instance, her account of her four-month treatment of a 10-year-old boy called Richard during World War II, animals crop up in almost every session. Bobby, the family spaniel, with whom Richard seems to have engaged in sexual play, takes a starring role, in addition to a bestiary that includes aquatic creatures such as lobsters, goldfish, starfish, trout, salmon, and whales; birds such as swans and cygnets, hens, cocks, chicks, canaries, budgerigars, and robins; insects such as bees, beetles, bluebottles, butterflies, and moths; mammals such as monkeys, horses, hedgehogs, mice, pigs, rabbits, rats, cows, and sheep, along with creepy-crawlies such as worms and spiders. (This catalogue is facilitated by Klein's remarkably exhaustive index, which includes such memorable entries as "'Job, big' (see also *Faeces*).")

Klein, however, pays no attention to this zoological diversity, but interprets all these species as parents, siblings, or part-objects – particularly penises. Nor are animals distinguished from the military imagery that features so prominently in this wartime analysis; if starfish are penises, so are submarines, while all the warring nations of the world are identified with Mummy, Daddy, or their rivalrous sons. What is striking is that such a cornucopia of imagery – animal, vegetable, and mineral – is so remorselessly reduced to the stark geometry of the Oedipal triangle. For example, whenever Richard shows an interest in

the dog-pictures decorating the playroom where the analysis takes place, these animals are instantly conscripted into the family plot. In one of these pictures featuring two dogs, Klein identifies the animals with Mummy and Daddy, as well as with Mrs. Klein and Mr. Klein, the absent father in the analytic triangle. Richard's interest in another picture, of two dogs flanking a puppy, is imputed to his supposed wish to be the baby that comes between the parents. Bobby the spaniel, meanwhile, is identified at times with Richard, at other times with his father and his brother, shuffling among the various positions in the family as in a game of musical chairs. In fact this dog literally ousts the father from his chair: Richard tells Klein that "when Daddy got out of his chair by the fire Bobby would jump into it and take up so much room that there was only a tiny bit left for Daddy" (1998, 32–34). Predictably, Klein interprets this anecdote in terms of Richard's desire to take his father's place, but this dog seems to have Oedipal ambitions of his own, not only symbolizing Richard's desire to unseat the father but performing this insurrection on his own behalf.

While Klein's *Narrative of a Child Analysis* abounds with animals, Kelly Oliver (2009, 247) claims to have spotted more than eighty species in Freud's *Gesammelte Werke*, including apes, wolves, beetles, caterpillars, crayfish, donkeys, emus, foxes, frogs, giraffes, gnats, herring, jaguars, kangaroos, lizards, moths, opossum, oysters, porcupines, ravens, snails, starfish, tigers, toads, wasps, and whales. Similarly, Elizabeth Marder has pointed out that the Wolf Man, who has come to be associated with a single species, offers his analysts "a veritable bestiary," containing in addition to the famous wolves such animals as "sheep, sheep dogs, flies and beetles, caterpillars, snakes, horses, a wasp, goats, a fledgling bird, a giant caterpillar, a snail, and finally a swallowtail butterfly that, we discover, is the second animal incarnation of the same [castration] anxiety that produced the famous wolf dream" (2010, 121). Yet the extensive psychoanalytic commentary on this case follows Freud's lead in disregarding the bestiary in favor of the wolf, and the wolf in favor of the father. This tendency to overlook the diversity of animals coincides with a tendency to masculinize them.

It is striking that most of the animal phobias discussed by Freud occur in males, including the Wolf Man, the Rat Man, little Hans, and even Leonardo, whose childhood memory of being assaulted by a vulture forms the kernel of Freud's psychobiographical study. Furthermore the animals themselves are masculinized by Freud, who interprets them as stand-ins for the father. Even Leonardo's vulture, which Freud at first connects to the artist's unmarried mother, citing an ancient

tradition that all vultures are female, undergoes a sex-change in the course of Freud's analysis. "While I was in my cradle," Leonardo reported, "a vulture came down to me, and opened my mouth with its tail, and struck me many times with its tail against my lips" (quoted in Freud 1953–74, 11:82). Freud acknowledges that this memory evokes breast-feeding – in Kleinian terms, this monstrous bird would represent the worst of all bad breasts – but Freud goes on to phallicize the vulture, insisting that its tail represents the penis that the mother does not possess. Consequently the vulture attack is understood as a fellatio fantasy, symptomatic of Leonardo's passive homosexual desires. Through this interpretation, the vulture is turned into a human being, the female turned into a male, while the vulture – qua vulture – recedes from view, exorcised by these symbolic metamorphoses – as if psychoanalysis were a hermeneutic form of pest control.

By contrast, Freud's case history of his female patient Dora features no tormenting beasts, except for those in human form. To track down theriophobes among Freud's female patients, it is necessary to go back to the pre-psychoanalytic *Studies in Hysteria*. Here Josef Breuer's patient Anna O refuses water after seeing a dog drink from a glass, despite suffering "tormenting thirst" (Freud 1953–74, 2:34–35). Furthermore Freud's hysteric patient Frau Emmy von N suffers from a veritable *Tiergarten* of animal hallucinations.⁷ Animals attack her in her dreams: "The legs and arms of the chairs were all turned into snakes; a monster with a vulture's beak was tearing and eating at her all over her body; other wild animals leapt upon her, etc." (Freud 1953–74, 2:62). This telltale "etcetera" suggests that Emmy's "attacks of zoöpsia [animal hallucinations]" have something in common with Schreber's miracled animals, those swarming persecutors whose multiplicity bespeaks the disintegration of the self (1953–74, 2:63). Yet Emmy's animals come both in single spies and in battalions; she remembers one occasion on a walk when a single toad jumped out at her; on a subsequent walk, the entire path was writhing with toads (1953–74, 2:62, 74). At another time an "enormous mouse" whisked across her hand – a hand that she was often loath to extend to other people lest it should turn into a dreadful animal, "as had so often happened" (1953–74, 2:72, 74).⁸ On a further occasion she encountered a mischief of mice (to enlist a mouse-dedicated collective noun) sitting on the branches of a tree (1953–74, 2:72): a vision that looks forward to the Wolf Man's famous dream about the wolf-infested walnut tree.⁹ Evidently Emmy is afraid of vermin, but her fears are not fixated on a single species; it is the animal's capacity for sudden ambush and intrusion that alarms her, along

with its propensity to pullulate. One morning, for instance, while taking her prescribed bran bath, Emmy begins to scream, having mistaken the bran for wriggling worms (1953–74, 2:72–73).

At this early stage of his career, Freud attempts to relieve Emmy's symptoms with hypnosis, the technique pioneered by Charcot and Breuer in the treatment of hysteria. During her hypnotic trances, Freud asks Emmy to tell him "more animal stories," attempting to dissipate her fears by tracing them back to their traumatic origins (1953–74, 2:74). As in a demonic exorcism, each of these animals has to be invoked in order to be fumigated from the psyche. In the course of the treatment, Freud is obliged to "wipe out" a colorful assortment of species, including bulls, rats, dogs, lizards, horses, bats, leeches, and American Indians dressed up as animals (see, for example, 2:59, 74n2, 78).¹⁰ What he finds is that these pests come back unless the patient makes a full confession of every memory associated with the animal in question. These recovered memories, however, often sound as delusional as Emmy's hallucinations. For instance, the patient associates her horrifying vision in the bath with a pretty pincushion, stuffed with bran, which had been given to her as a present, but turned out to be crawling with worms. "(A hallucination? Perhaps a fact)" – Freud parenthetically interpolates (1953–74, 2:74). In another implausible memory, Emmy explains "why the small animals she saw grew so enormous" by recalling a theatrical performance where a gigantic lizard had appeared on stage (1953–74, 2:63). Asked by Freud why she is so easily frightened, Emmy confesses that when she was 5 years old her siblings used to pummel her with dead animals (1953–74, 2:52).

It is likely that an older, more suspicious Freud would have treated these associations as fantasies or screen memories, designed to cover up unconscious conflicts. In this pre-psychoanalytic case history, however, Freud attributes Emmy's fears to "the primary phobias of human beings," those aroused by the "vermin of which Mephistopheles boasted himself master" in Goethe's *Faust*:

The lord of rats and eke of mice,
Of flies and bedbugs, frogs and lice.

Although Freud goes on to argue that these primal phobias have been reinforced by "traumatic events" in Emmy's life, he rarely questions the accuracy of her memory (1953–74, 2:87). Nor has he yet developed a theory of the transference that might account for the extravagance of Emma's "animal stories." Today such a patient might be sectioned, or

at least prescribed a regimen of antipsychotics. But Freud's view that her delusions were relatively mild may have been closer to the mark, since it is likely that Emmy was trying to captivate her handsome young hypnotist: "She entertained me, in an apparently quite normal state, with gruesome stories about animals," Freud reports (1953–74, 2:51). In Emmy's case, the enticements to transference – not to mention countertransference – must have been intense, given that Freud's treatment involved both mesmerism and massage.¹¹

Freud's footnotes to this case history, written at later dates, indicate dissatisfaction with his early methods, particularly his failure to uncover the symbolic import of his patient's fantasia (see, for example, 2:62n2). In contrast to later psychoanalytic cases, such as the Rat Man and the Wolf Man, none of Emmy's animals is phallicized by Freud – not even the small animals that grow enormous. Nor are these creatures "Oedipalized" or identified with members of the patient's family, partly because Freud has not yet developed the theories that would authorize such imputations. But it's also possible that Emmy's animals resist symbolic exegesis. Their sheer proliferation makes it difficult to see them as one-to-one equivalents for something else. One toad may represent the father but a swarm of toads exceeds this correspondence; similarly one worm may represent the penis but this equation fails to account for the seething vermicelli of Emmy's bath. To counter this objection, Freud would probably invoke "the technical rule according to which a multiplication of penis symbols signifies castration," which he elsewhere adduces to explain the nest of snakes on the Medusa's head (1953–74, 18:273). In Emmy's case history, however, Freud draws no such inferences, and although castration terror may have fueled this patient's animal delusions, their zoological fecundity challenges Freud's "technical rule." Emmy's animals are too prolific, various, and startling to be reduced to the castration complex; their tendency to pounce suggests a traumatic violation, while their capacity to multiply resembles Schreber's talking birds and swarming insects, redolent of psychic fragmentation.

It is these swarms and multiplicities, according to Deleuze and Guattari, that the theory of the Oedipus complex is designed to stifle. Through Oedipalization, the many-headed monsters of Schreber's deliria are condensed into a single father-figure, an impoverishment similar to that which Freud describes in *Moses and Monotheism*, whereby the multitudinous spirits of the pagan world were swallowed up into a single patriarchal godhead. To resist this impoverishment, Deleuze and Guattari adopt Schreber's phantasmagoria as the basis of their

anti-Oedipal philosophy. Most of their key terms, such as “becoming-woman” and “the body-without-organs,” along with “multiplicities” and “intensities” (comparable to Schreber’s “rays”), come from the pages of *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*.

In a much-cited passage of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari claim that psychoanalysis understands only “individuated animals, family pets, sentimental, Oedipal animals each with its own petty history, ‘my’ cat, ‘my’ dog.” Against this view, the authors insist that “every animal is fundamentally a pack, a band” (2004, 264–65). The lone wolf is a contradiction in terms; wolves always form a “rhizomatic multiplicity” (2004, 37), comparable to the “jeunes filles en fleurs” that Proust’s narrator encounters at the Balbec seaside, the “little band” of girls that condenses into Albertine, only to break apart in the kaleidoscope of Albertines invented by her lies (Proust 2005). According to Deleuze and Guattari, Freud constantly brushes up against such bands and prides and drifts and shoals and plumps and murmurations (the English language is curiously rich in collective nouns for animals), such as the “five or six” wolves in the Wolf Man’s dream, or the Rat Man’s teeming rat-currency. To these well-known examples might be added Anna O, who mistakes her fingers for writhing snakes, together with Emmy von N’s verminous hallucinations, or the miracled insects of Schreber’s deliria. Deleuze and Guattari object that psychoanalysis ignores the plurality of these assemblages, reducing the wolf pack, for example, to “the Oedipalized wolf or dog, the castrated-castrating daddy-wolf, the dog in the kennel, the analyst’s bow-wow” (2004, 32; see also Genosko 1993, 605, 613–17).

Although there’s much to be said for Deleuze and Guattari’s spirited critique of Freud, I would argue that they overlook the rhizomes of *intertextuality* out of which the phobic animal arises like a mushroom out of its mycelium. As Freud observes in the case history of the Wolf Man, “the anxiety-animal was not an object easily accessible to observation . . . but was known to [the patient] only from stories and picture-books” (1953–74, 17:32). Thus the multiplicity that Deleuze and Guattari neglect is the spotty surface of the written page, a surface comparable to their own description of the Wolf Man’s pimpled nose, its skin “prickling with bumps and pustules, and . . . dwarfish black heads emerging from pores grimacing and abominable,” a “field of tiny rhinoceros horns” where “little scars in the pores, little ruts in the scar tissue, ceaselessly dance, grow, and diminish”; a “field of anuses” or “flying vaginas” (2004, 33, 30, 34, 36).

I’ll return to the pockmarked page at the end of this chapter, but first I want to focus on the nose, an organ that plays a crucial role in Freud’s theory of the rise of man, and the concomitant expulsion of the inhuman. Recently I wrote a paper called “Noses and Monotheism” that focuses on two notorious footnotes to *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Ellmann 2010).¹² In these footnotes Freud, adopting Darwin’s view that the cultural dominance of vision stems from “man’s adoption of an upright posture,” argues that the erect male forfeited the sexual stimulus of scent, which is best appreciated on all fours, in favor of the vertical stimulus of vision. Standing upright exposed the genitals to view, requiring them to be protected and concealed. As a result of this verticality, the periodic sexual stimulus of smell was subordinated to the perpetual stimulus of sight (Darwin 1871, 17–18; Freud 1953–74, 21:99n1). According to Freud, “the deepest root of the sexual repression that advances along with civilization is the organic defence of the new form of life achieved with man’s erect gait against his earlier animal existence” (1953–74, 21:106n3). In Tennyson’s words, “Move upward, working out the beast, / And let the ape and tiger die” (*In Memoriam* CXVIII).

One consequence of this “move upward” is the taboo against menstruation; another is a general depreciation of the sense of smell, extending to an embargo against all bodily odors. Although Freud doesn’t say so in these footnotes, it could be argued that this evolutionary process is recapitulated in childhood when the infant learns to walk, rising from a crawling to an upright posture. In the same period of infancy, toilet training reinforces the denigration of the world of odors by association with the taboo smell of excrement.

Freud also proposes that this process of repression and defense “is repeated on another level when the gods of a superseded period of civilization turn into demons” (1953–74, 21:99n1). The example he probably has in mind is the Furies, relics of a prior matriarchal order suppressed by the cult of Apollo. This suppression laid the foundations of monotheism, a development attributed by Freud in *Moses and Monotheism* to the rise of imperialism in the ancient world, which established the hierarchy of oneness over multiplicity by banishing the plural spirits of the pagan universe. This argument implies a chain of equivalences whereby the human=standing upright = vision = patriarchy = monotheism = oneness = separation=homogeneity, as opposed to the subordinate chain in which the animal = horizontality = smell = matriarchy = polytheism = multiplicity=merger=heterogeneity.

As David Howes (1999) has pointed out, the idea that olfaction is animal whereas vision is human, or that men look whereas women smell, is based on ideology rather than biology. Furthermore Freud's denial of nasality may be traced back to his falling out with Wilhelm Fliess, their friendship having come to grief over a nose. In a book entitled *The Relationship between the Nose and the Female Sexual Organs* (1897), Fliess published his notorious theory that the nose contains genital spots, which swell up with sexual substances that course around the body in periods of twenty-three days for men and twenty-eight days for women. Masturbation, condoms, and coitus interruptus cause these substances to circulate too furiously, producing hysterical disorders. The only permanent cure for hysteria therefore consists of an operation on the turbinate bones on the nose, reinforced by abstention from masturbation.

Freud was sufficiently convinced by Fliess' theory of the naso-genital relationship to become obsessed with his own nose, filling his letters to Fliess with details of its inflammation and discharge. He also embraced Fliess' "laws of periodicity" to the extent that he worried himself sick about the forecast date of his own death, and other "critical periods" predicted by Fliess' numerological calculations. In 1895 Freud arranged for Fliess to perform his trademark nasal operation on Emma Eckstein, a patient suffering from stomach pains and menstrual problems that Freud attributed to excessive masturbation. Some days after the operation the patient suffered a massive nasal hemorrhage, filling two bowls with pus, and her nose began to emit a fetid odor. The wound continued to hemorrhage until another specialist pulled out of her nose a long string of purulent gauze, which Fliess, in an egregious act of medical negligence, had forgotten to remove (Appignanesi and Forrester 2000, 119–20).

This episode lurks behind Freud's famous dream of "Irma's Injection," with its strange scene of Freud and another doctor "Otto" gazing down a female patient's throat in a laryngeal/gynecological examination. The Eckstein debacle compelled Freud to detach himself from Fliess and to reject his collaborator's fanciful theories about periodicity and the nasal etiology of hysteria. The two famous footnotes to *Civilization and Its Discontents*, which connect the rise of man to the suppression of the nasal and the periodic, project onto the evolution of the human species Freud's own rejection of Fliess' naso-genital hypothesis.

It is appropriate that these footnotes, which discuss the suppression of the prone, should be relegated to the lower regions of the page in the

Standard Edition of Freud's works. Their position means that Freud's references to the animal, the horizontal, and the naso-genital origins of sexuality literally underlie the text, much as the renounced four-footedness of humankind supposedly underlies the edifice of civilization. These textual dynamics of the upright and the prone also play a crucial part in the case history of the Wolf Man. It is important that this patient's wolf-phobia was drawn from literature, not from life, specifically from a picture of an upright wolf, rather than a living, horizontal animal. Found in a book of fairy-tales, this illustration showed a wolf standing up on his hind legs, thereby assuming the erect posture attributed by Freud and Darwin to the rise of man from his four-footed origins. The Wolf Man's sister Anna used to flash this illustration at her little brother in order to provoke his screams.

The obvious inference is that the wolf represents the phallus erect. Freud argues that the picture also reactivated memories of the primal scene, in which the upright father penetrated the prostrate mother from behind in animal fashion (*a tergo more ferarum*). Spectacular though it is, this interpretation overlooks the bookish nature of this wolf, whose terror cannot be dissociated from its literary context. What scares the child is not the animal per se, but the drawing where the vertical wolf looms up out of the horizontal page, a page tilted upright by his naughty sister. What I'm suggesting, then, is that the Wolf Man is afraid of literature, of the capacity of drawn or written marks to rise up from the page as monsters. If the uncanny (in Freud's words) is that which should have remained hidden but which has come to light, the phobic wolf stands for everything that should have remained horizontal but which has risen upright – the human animal, the printed word, the illustrated page.

At this point I'd like to compare the dynamics of the upright and the prone in Freud to those explored by Michael Fried in his study of the painter Thomas Eakins and the writer Stephen Crane. In this study, *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration* (1987), Fried argues that painting and writing are associated with the upright and the prone, respectively. In Eakins' painting *The Gross Clinic* (1875), the master-surgeon stands upright, holding a gory scalpel like a paintbrush between his blood-stained fingers, while other surgeons look down at a prostrate body, the principal assistant probing an open wound. Fried proposes that the master-surgeon could be seen as a double of the painter, standing upright, while his assistant, who inscribes the flattened body with his blade, emblemizes the horizontal arts of drawing and writing. For this reason the painting could be seen either as an effort of containment – in which the vertical canvas incorporates drawing and writing, thereby

overcoming the horizontality of both those arts – or as the failure of containment, since images of writing and drawing infiltrate the painting, adulterating the domain of verticality. Fried then compares Eakins' painting to Stephen Crane's writing, arguing that Crane's recurrent images of upturned faces, staring blankly or disfigured, reflect the blank page staring upwards and disfigured by the inky scalpel of the pen (Fried 1987, 13, 81, 93–101).

To retrace Fried's detailed and compelling argument would require more than my allotted space. But it's worth considering how Fried's case for the correspondence between writing and the horizontal bears on Freud's conception of the horizontal origins of humankind. This primordial horizontality is never fully overcome: the riddle of the sphinx reminds us that man is the animal that walks with four feet in the morning, two in the afternoon, and three in the evening, so that his verticality is restricted to the hours between noon and dusk. Furthermore every human infant has to re-enact the struggle of its ancestors by renouncing a crawling for an upright posture, thus foregoing the stability of hands and knees for the tottering state of bipedalism. Even adults, supposedly erect, spend much of their existence lying down in semi- if not fully recumbent postures. In death, as in sleep, the human body is usually laid out in a supine pose (apart from some archaic societies in which warriors were buried upright), which means that the horizontal is associated with mortality. It's also associated, as Freud implies, with the passive position in sexual intercourse, whether *more ferarum* or flat on one's back.

Examples could be multiplied, but it's clear that the human species – like the supposedly vertical phallus – is much more often down than up. As soon as human beings rose up on their hind legs, they also condemned themselves to falling down. Their upright stance is sabotaged by infancy, old age, and constitutional infirmity, much as the transcendence associated with the realm of speech is constantly subverted by the prostrate materiality of writing. We speak with our noses in the air, but we write with our noses pointing downwards to the pitted, pock-marked, spotted page.

Agamben emphasizes that the Latin etymology of infancy denotes the inability to speak. Yet infancy also implies the inability to walk or stand upright, an inability enshrined in Oedipus' name, which means swell-foot. If writing, like infancy, is associated with the speechless and the prostrate, this suggests that writing could be understood as the infancy of speech – a provocative suggestion, since we usually think of speech as the infancy of writing. Mute and flat – like the prostrate,

speechless infant – writing could be seen as the horizontal ghost that haunts the vertical domain of speech, just as the prostrate body in Eakins' *The Gross Clinic* haunts the vertical domain of painting.

To pursue this connection between writing and prostration it's instructive to turn Samuel Beckett's writing. For the cripples and geriatrics who populate these works are constantly defeated in their struggle to keep up the proud stance of *Homo erectus*. At best they walk on three legs in the evening, supported by canes or comparable prostheses; at worst they resort to rolling in the muck, like the nameless creatures slithering in primeval slime in *How It Is* (1964 [1961]). These fables of limping and paralysis may also be understood as allegories of writing, in which crutches and walking-sticks double for writing implements: "I shall not say this again, when not mentioned my stick is in my hand, as I go along," says the writer in *From an Abandoned Work* (Beckett 1995, 161). Similarly, *How It Is* may be interpreted as "the crawling slog across the lines of an exercise book," as Phil Baker (1997, 166) has observed. Hunched or prone, Beckett's hobbling, crawling scriptors imply that writing entails the collapse of verticality. Far from upright, these derelicts end up toeless, legless, or floundering on the quaking sod, as if writing had reduced them to the horizontal state of animality. The last words of *The Unnamable* – "I can't go on, I'll go on" – reveal that going on, impossible as it may be, is more conceivable than going *up* (Beckett 2009, 407).

I've already discussed Deleuze and Guattari's view that psychoanalysis Oedipalizes animals by reducing the infinite variety of fauna to the nuclear family. In denying multiplicity to animals, psychoanalysis may also be attempting to repress the horizontality of writing, the swarming letters of the pimpled page, or the footnotes that rise up against the body of the text, subverting the hierarchies of above and below, before and after. This horizontality aligns writing with the debased chain of equivalences suggested by the footnotes to *Civilization and Its Discontents*, in which the animal = horizontality = smell = patriarchy = polytheism = multiplicity = merger = heterogeneity.

This chain in turn suggests that writing is akin to animality. This kinship is not so unlikely as it seems if we consider that writing is a means of making tracks, inscribing prints – an activity we share with many of our prone and horizontal ancestors.¹³ Although writing is usually seen as exclusive to the human species, indeed the very pinnacle of human exceptionalism, it is possible that writing, rather than the instincts, is the place to look for the persistence of the animal in humankind.

Notes

- 1 Other dog encounters occur on pp. 98, 148. Freud offered H.D. one of Jofi's puppies, a gift eventually refused but causing considerable embarrassment for both the poet and her partner Bryher, whose pet name was Dog (H.D.'s was Cat). See Friedman (2002, 200, 230, 235, 235n15, 31) and Sarah Jackson (2010).
- 2 The fourth chapter of Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1913) is entitled "The Return of Totemism in Childhood" (1953-74, 13:100-61). See also Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1871, 17-18) and Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1953-74, 21:99n1).
- 3 See, for example, Bernstein (2004).
- 4 The following discussion of Laplanche is indebted to Nicholas Ray's (2012) skillful analysis.
- 5 While Laplanche's insistence on the intersubjective dimension of the unconscious could be seen as another form of human exceptionalism, Nicholas Ray (2012, 63) makes the convincing argument that the "anthropo-decentrism of Laplanche's work is not simply a reconfigured humanism, since it is oriented toward resisting at the level of formal theory those constitutive myths of the animal-in-man which, beyond their superficial audacity, function primarily to insulate the category of the human."
- 6 See Deuteronomy 14:19: "And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten."
- 7 This patient's real name was Fanny Moser (see Appignanesi and Forrester 2000, 91-103).
- 8 Breuer reports that Anna O, when attending her father's deathbed, suffered from a similar hallucination that her fingers had turned into snakes (Freud 1953-74, 2:38).
- 9 See also Schreber (2000, 80): "At times cats with glowing eyes appeared on the trees of the Asylum's garden."
- 10 Freud admits that he overdid this wiping out, leaving his patient with troublesome amnesias involving "the most important moments of her life" (1953-74, 2:61n1).
- 11 To be precise, the regimen consisted of "warm baths, massage twice a day, and hypnotic suggestion" (Freud 1953-74, 2:51).
- 12 The title was a gift from the late Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick.
- 13 Derrida (2008, 33) makes a similar point.

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Chapter 19

On the Right to Sleep, Perchance to Dream

Ranjana Khanna

Insomnia

In 2005, the UK-based chapter of the Red Cross commissioned an art exhibition entitled *Insomnia* for its Refugee Week. The exhibition took its name from a concept found in the work of philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who was attempting to understand the relationship between the inside and the outside of hospitality, human interactivity, alterity, and what it is that keeps us awake when in principle we desire to sleep. The exhibition provides a starting point to discuss philosophies of hospitality as they relate to asylums, human and state "right," repose or sleep, agitation or risk, and the way in which we understand and experience otherness psychoanalytically and otherwise.

The organizers of the conference presented sound, photography, and sculptural installations, as well as video art and a short film that addressed spatial relations through cinematic space, sculptural occupation of space, and installations. The works in the 2005 Red Cross exhibit did not overtly represent recognizable images of refugees.¹ Anna Sherbany's durational video piece, for example, depicts a bed, and then a woman lying in it, sleeping and not sleeping, restless, and alternately taking up no space and then lots of space. It is unclear in the video if

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