

ABSTRACTS AND BOOK REVIEWS

Richard Feldstein and Henry Sussman (eds.), *Psychoanalysis and . . .* New York: Routledge, 1990. 224pp.

Psychoanalysis and . . . brings together thirteen essays that enact, if not thematize, as the book's title suggests, the infusion of psychoanalysis and, more importantly, psychoanalytic theory with various forms of contemporary criticism, divided somewhat arbitrarily by the editors, Feldstein and Sussman, into seven classifications: theoretical criticism, feminism, Lacanian theory, semiotics, Marxism, deconstruction, and literary criticism. I say that these classifications are somewhat arbitrary first because it becomes strikingly clear almost immediately that any one of these essays could be placed under at least three of these formal divisions, and some could just as easily be placed under all seven. Second, I want to raise the issue of the arbitrariness of these formal divisions because it points to what strikes me as something more crucial, an issue that the editors, though few of the essayists, raise (the exceptions being Cary Nelson in "Psychoanalysis as an Intervention in Contemporary Theory," and Ruth Salvaggio in "Psychoanalysis and Deconstruction and Woman"). The issue I have in mind is that of the elusive "and. . ." and an ellipsis to be filled in by any one of seven signifiers in a chain determined by the signifier literary criticism. Let me quote the editors, who reflect at length on this conjunction and the terms it conjoins: "the title of this volume reflects how contemporary psychoanalytic theory could engender psychoanalysis as critique as well as critiques of psychoanalysis, crosspurposed responses which replicate an interesting ambiguity: the title of the volume retains for psychoanalysis the position of the first

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term while the second vanishes in an indefinite ellipsis even as commentators critique such binary juxtapositions by introducing a third term against which the positioning of the first or second term is reestablished" (4). The editors hope that a chiasmatic relationship between psychoanalysis and whichever of the seven formal distinctions that comes to replace the ellipsis will engender a third term presumably the ground from which the various essayists write - a third term that will arise to unlock a previously binary, chiasmatic relationship. What the editors do not see, what they fail to recognize in outlining the project of this collection of essays, is that the third term is already there - the conjunction "and," conjoining for a fourth term, literary criticism. As Cary Nelson points out, refusing to recognize this "and" engenders not a third term that reorganizes disciplinary boundaries, but a "Faustian bargain" that compromises the most radical insights of any theory as it submits to the pervasive institutional pressures of literary criticism. The editors pose "and" as an interdisciplinary boundary that also names its own effacement because it names a certain reciprocity between the term that comes before and the one that follows, and we know - not only, but certain quite powerfully from Lacanian psychoanalytic theory - that this dream of reciprocity, of "and," elides the symbolic relations that it simultaneously enacts. Ruth Salvaggio, for example, is correct to write that "and" is the third space "between self and other" (160), and she is also correct to see that third term as the most important to consider; however, to see this third term as liberatory because it shuffles between "self" and "other" is to ignore the fourth term for which this triangulated dance is enacted - the Lacanian Other - and to ignore that fourth term is to remain in the disciplinary space defined by it. It may appear that I am overstating the conjunction in the title *Psychoanalysis and . . .*; however, if it is the case that the editors of this book wish to question psychoanalysis in relation to the literary critical institution (for undoubtedly that is the institution that these ellipses cover up), to analyze the literary critical institution's simultaneous use of psychoanalytic theory and resistance to psychoanalytic clinical practice - a use and a resistance that may point, as the editors suggest, alluding to Lacan, to a desire not to know - that is, if it is the case that the editors wish to bring together these essays to analyze and to change contemporary literary critical practices, then they would do well to begin their analysis, and more generally, their project, not with a conjunction, whose operation will always be imaginary, but with a preposition,

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whose operation seems to be more descriptive of change within the symbolic order, either *Psychoanalysis in . . .* (the risk of engulfment), or perhaps *Psychoanalysis with . . .* (which points toward a more radical change in the symbolic order).

The two best examples in this collection of *Psychoanalysis with . . .* are, to my mind, Ellie Ragland-Sullivan's "Lacan's Seminars on Joyce," an essay that quite lucidly explains and analyzes Lacan's work on Joyce, which demands a critical rethinking of both Joyce and the psychoanalytic symptom, and Joel Fineman's "The sound of _O in Othello," an essay that brilliantly reads Shakespeare's play with Lacan's dictum of the real, "the sexual relation does not exist." Fineman's essay sets an intellectual standard for literary psychoanalysis. There is also Samuel Weber's essay, "Psychoanalysis, Literary Criticism, and the Problem of Authority," in which Weber attempts a theoretical analysis of transference by way of a close reading of Jacques-Alain Miller's legal battles to attain the publishing rights to Lacan's teaching, and in the process Weber seeks to recuperate the critical role of the author. The other essays in this collection dealing specifically with literary texts tend to read psychoanalysis either in relation to or emerging out of a modernist or post-modernist project: Henry Sussman's "Psychoanalysis Modern or Post-modern," which outlines a literary history of highly language-conscious authors and texts of the twentieth century, from Kafka, Joyce, and Proust to DeMan and Derrida, and then reads psychoanalysis - Lacanian and Freudian - in terms of the literary effects of this literary history; Claire Kahane's "The *Bostonians* and the Figure of the Speaking Woman," which places James's novel with Freud's theories of hysteria to theorize the sexualized rhetoric used to encode feminism as a political threat; Richard Feldstein's "Faulkner's Dispossession of Personae Non Gratae," a psychoanalytic reading of Faulkner's style and shifting authorial identification with his literary characters; Charles Bernheim's "A Shattered Globe," an analysis of the trauma behind Virginia Woolf's narcissistic and masochistic scene of writing. These essays, while provocative readings of the literary texts they treat, tend not to have much new or insightful to add to the psychoanalytic theories they use. Slavoj Zizek's essay, "The Limits of the Semiotic Approach to Psychoanalysis," which deserves to be read alongside the above essays, uses psychoanalysis to analyze modernism and postmodernism, showing how Lacanian theory because of its descriptive power resists both modern and postmodern literary effects.

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Psychoanalysis and . . . is a useful collection of essays for anyone interested in thinking psychoanalysis with literary criticism, not only for some quite brilliant enactments of this thinking, enactments that deserve to be studied carefully, but also for the issues that these essays raise, either implicitly or explicitly, issues about psychoanalysis, about literary studies, and about the challenges that the first brings to the second.

Feminism and Psychoanalysis. Richard Feldstein and Judith Roof (eds.). Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1989. ix, 359 pp. Price \$12.95

The studies in this collection are papers read at a conference on feminism and psychoanalysis at Normal, Illinois in May 1986. Though they are by a range of writers from a variety of psychoanalytic approaches, they share an attempt to articulate a number of the links between psychoanalysis, feminism, and literature through such issues as absence and lack, the third term, phallogentrism, patriarchal culture, and the different positions that women can occupy in history, literature and psychoanalysis.

These studies will, in different ways, stimulate those who are concerned with feminist practice, with issues of the family and society, and not merely with literature, theatre and cinema. Judith Roof has an excellent article on the theatrical strategies of Marguerite Duras's drama *Vera Baxter*; Richard Feldstein analyses Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-Paper"; Barbara Johnson brings together literary and psychoanalytic texts that have in common the story of a failed cure; Claire Kahane discusses the representation of hysteria in Henry James's *The Bostonians*.

Madelon Sprengnether reads contemporary women writers' treatment of the Biblical theme of the Fall, reconfiguring the myth to emphasize the daughter's separation from the mother and its implications. According to Sprengnether it is a shift from the Oedipus master plot to a female-centered pattern that subverts the dominance of the law of the father. Mary Poovey analyses *Jane Eyre* and the figure of the governess; Carol Thomas Neely proposes a feminist critique of representations of subjectivity, class and sexuality; and Jerry Aline Fliieger discusses psychoanalysis, feminism and literature. Other theoretical texts include pieces by Jane Gallop and Jacqueline Rose.

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Ellie Ragland-Sullivan's article on desire, the phallus and the materiality of language comments on gender-oppressive dualisms, Derridean deconstruction and the prevalence of desire for Lacan; Mary Anne Doane writes of the veiling of desire in cinema; Andrew Ross discusses the role of video art in political practice; Shirley Nelson Garner discusses the normative, heterosexual function of psychoanalysis and its implications for lesbianism.

Cynthia Chase's "Desire and Identification in Lacan and Kristeva" is representative of many - though by no means all - of the attempts in this collection to think through the implications of Lacan's teaching for these issues. Chase returns to Lacan's much discussed account of *la belle bouchere* Freud's patient who questions him about a dream that apparently runs counter to his claim that all dreams are the fulfillment of a wish. In her dream she had wanted to give a supper party but was prevented from doing so as all she had was a little smoked salmon; all the shops were closed it was Sunday afternoon - and, unable to call a caterer, she had to abandon her wish to give a supper-party. We learn from Freud that smoked salmon was the favorite dish of her friend who grudged herself salmon no less than his patient grudged herself caviar. Freud regards this as a form of hysterical identification with her friend; his patient, aware that her friend was taking her own place vis-a-vis her husband, had put herself in her friend's place in the dream.

Lacan's discussion of this dream in "The Direction of the Treatment", which focuses on the issue of desire for a desire, occurs in the context of a discussion of the desire of the hysteric. Here, the hysteric's desire to have an unsatisfied desire is signified by her desire for caviar. Chase pursues the question of the centrality given to the phallus in Lacan's analysis and asks, "Yet what do we make of Lacan's assertion that *la belle bouchere's* identification with her friend and with the desire of her friend means, finally, an identification with the signifier of signifiers, with the phallus?" (p. 74) The pertinence of the question to feminism is followed up via a criticism of a structuralist conception of language. As she later writes, "A notion of the role of identification with the phallus might form part of a feminist understanding of desire and meaning, could it undercut the structuralist conceptions as ultimately determined," whereas "to identify with the phallus is to invest in a system of meaning ruled by value, in language as a system of abstract values, signs with a determined difference between signifier and signified guaranteeing the presence of meaning. Language so conceived is a

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system of pre-existent positions in which gendered subjects find their assigned place" (p. 77).

It is important to remember here that if there is any determination in psychoanalysis, as surely there is, it is the highly idiosyncratic determination of the unconscious and its formations. Gendered subjects do not find their assigned places according to *pre-existent* positions; as Chase herself writes, one should beware of the traps of taxonomy.

Moreover, the interest of Lacan's analysis of this dream in particular and in hysteria in general would seem to lie in a more precise view than is given here concerning identification with the male position. After all, an identification with the phallus may lie at the heart of any number of subjective strategies, both masculine and feminine. As Lacan says, "Man has the phallus and falls sick because he isn't it, while the woman may imaginarily try to be it, but hasn't got it." In the particular case of Freud's patient, her identification with the phallus interests Lacan as an attempt to solve the enigma of femininity and the question of what it is to be the object of male desire.

Chase moves to a criticism of structuralist thought, supporting her argument by appealing to Julia Kristeva's work and her theory of the abject. According to Kristeva, "The possibility of a love without libidinal investment . . . is ensured . . . by 'an archaic modality of the paternal function' associated with primary narcissism - a modality entirely distinct from the agency of prohibition, the superego, heir of the Oedipus complex" (p. 77). If, as Judith Roof claims, Carol Thomas Neely's refusal to name the phallus in her essay mentioned above, is "a recognition of the persistent difficulty its nomenclature poses for feminists" (p. 342), we can detect here a situation very familiar to psychoanalysts - something is repressed to which the subject nevertheless remains fixated in its return. We may then wonder which discourse is ultimately more masculine, one that exploits the discourse of masculinity or one that turns away from its signifiers altogether. This is also pertinent to Kristeva, since, as Paul Smith, one of

three male contributors, wittily points out, for Kristeva "the abject is a concept that is intended to displace the theoretical term to which it might be coupled, namely the psychoanalytically invested term *object*. In other words, the abject is a notion by which Kristeva can take up cudgels against what she sees as the overreliance of psychoanalysis on the role of the object in the construction of subjectivity" (p. 90). He continues, "My complaint is not of course that Kristeva has

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taken the side of the abject over the phantasms of an object-ruled psychoanalysis Rather, I mean simply to bemoan the way in which the semiotic/symbolic doublet has been recast so that what had indicated a simultaneous inscription of struggle and mutual regulation now appears as something akin to a dualism" (p 91).

It is sometimes implied in this collection - incorrectly in my view - that man is privileged over woman in psychoanalysis. I would argue that if in Freud's doctrine of the Oedipus complex man and woman turn around the same symbol, the phallus, this does not privilege man at the expense of woman, anymore than it privileges the unconscious work by which either men or women solve the accidents of their own histories. For Freud, both man and woman are obliged to pass through the defiles of the signifier in accomplishing both their sexual aims and their object choice. The human being invests itself and identifies with signs (man and woman) that hide and betray its placement as masculine or feminine subject within the Oedipal triangle.

If, as Freud claims, anatomy is destiny, destiny is not an empirical given. We should therefore distinguish the phallus - which is neither a form nor an image but rather a signifier covered over by castration, a lack that is brought into being - from the real penis, an organ, an empirical or "part" object.

These papers are proof of a new sophistication in approaching these important issues for feminism. Moreover, in "situating" psychoanalysis, integrating it into a net of significations within the sociological field, broadly construed, as many papers in this collection do, there is a recognition that psychoanalysis is a practice that only exists immersed in history, within games of power and knowledge, within the field, indeed the battleground, of ideas. These essays serve as a reminder to psychoanalysts that psychoanalysis is not an isolated activity, somehow suspended from the world we live in. A truism that can easily fall into oblivion.

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Compromise Formations: Current Directions in Psychoanalytic Criticism. Edited by Vera J. Camden, Kent: Kent State University Press. 243 pages. Price \$16

This is a volume of selected papers from the Fourth International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis, August 1987, at Kent

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State University, Ohio. Norman Holland remarks in an afterword that psychoanalytic literary criticism was initiated by Freud, and certainly the assumption still holds that psychoanalysis and literature have an affinity for one another due to their shared moorings in the unconscious. It must be admitted, however, that this view has been subscribed to with more enthusiasm from the psychoanalytic side; writers on the whole have tended to dismiss Freudian understandings of their work, and as a standpoint for literary criticism, psychoanalytic theory has a reputation for being repetitive and reductive. It is certainly true that in the grosser forms of psychoanalytic interpretation, each text turns out to be another version of *Oedipus Rex* (Even Ernest Jones' renowned study of Hamlet does not escape this accusation) but Lacan's 'Desire and the Interpretation of Desire' attests to the power of his reconceptualization of Freudian theory to shed new light upon classical texts.

In practice, psychoanalytic literary criticism takes as its object either the author, the content of the work, its structure or the reader. The first two of these methods allow the critic to interpret the behaviour of an author, or of fictional characters, without access to either of the sources of information upon which analysis depends - namely the patient's associations and the transference. The two latter approaches which have been employed by Terry Eagleton and Norman Holland among others, share the advantage of treating literature as such, rather than as life, and are thus able to contribute to an understanding of the relations between art and reality, or between the reader and the text.

In the introduction to this volume, the editor, Vera Camden, provides a content summary of all the papers included in it. Rather than duplicate this exercise, I shall confine my comments to a few of them.

The first is an excellent essay by Robert Silhol which presents with refreshing clarity an account of the formation of the subject through the function of language. Silhol demonstrates that separation is the condition under which the pronouns You and I are acquired by reference to a section of dialogue from the film "Tarzan, the Ape Man."

Peter Rudnytsky provides a thoughtful discussion of Guntrip's analyses with Fairbairn and Winnicott, although his purpose in presenting the material, beyond the impulse to offer elegaic praise of Winnicott, is not altogether clear. Frederick Wyatt's paper on the use of literary references in analysis is a rationalization, in terms of benefits to the patient, of the analyst's indulgence in displays of

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literary erudition. Ellie Ragland-Sullivan provides a sophisticated exposition of Lacan's seminars on Joyce from the 1970's - a valuable guide to readers who are cumulatively daunted by Lacan and *Finnegan's Wake*.

Virginia Blum's study of *The Go-Between* provides a fine example of how a psychoanalytic perspective can be employed constructively to add depth to a reading of the novel and substance to the theory. The same cannot be said for Nancy Blake's discussion of the poetry of Wallace Stevens. As a passionate admirer of Stevens' work I could not fail to be interested in it as a topic, but Blake's argument that Stevens' writing demonstrates certain relations between truth, anxiety and psychotic states seemed to me to be insufficiently developed in the paper, or just fundamentally unsound.

Jeffrey Berman applies a thin psychoanalytic overlay to *Jude the Obscure*, a patchwork overlay in fact, since various sections of the novel are interpreted in terms of different theories and theorists. It is a bewildering technique and no useful conclusions can be drawn from it except perhaps that if one is determined to serve a psychoanalytic/literary sandwich it can be done, but not necessarily digested. However, this paper does unintentionally make the point that different accounts are available for the same phenomena, even within the field of psychoanalysis.

There are several other articles of interest, including a critique by Terence Holt of Fredric Jameson's critique of structuralism - or at least the latter's insistence on a political and historical understanding of the literary text, rather than a purely formal one. All in all it is a stimulating collection of essays with the scope and limitations of any interdisciplinary approach. There is something in it for everyone, and few would wish to read all of it.

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Zizek, Slavoj, *Le plus sublime des hystériques: Hegel passe*. Paris: Point Hors Ligne, 1988. 310 pages. Price 97 Francs

In this mine - in all senses, but especially in the Hegelian sense of "mine" of philosophico-psychoanalytic argumentation, Slavoj Zizek - a Yugoslavian, teutono-franco-anglo-phone psychoanalyst as articulate on American pop-culture as on Schelling, as familiar with Kripke as with Stalin begins by reversing the conventional (if

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perversely structured, yet holy) judgment: "I know that Hegel is the thinker of difference, but still in the end he forces difference into the identity of systematic closure." In contrast, Zizek's position is, in effect: "I know that Hegel closes off the system, but still he remains the thinker of difference, for his closure is not what it seems and his dialectics is always already a negative dialectics." Zizek launches this confutation of the reception of Hegel as panlogocist by displacing the common interpretation of the Hegelian passage from understanding to reason. For Zizek, the move from understanding to reason does not require or entail an absorption into thought of the contingent concreteness that finite forms of thought exclude, but the recognition that the forms of thought lack nothing except the knowledge that they lack nothing, that there is nothing beyond these forms themselves, that the thing-itself is ever and again only the thing-itself for us. The loss of the concrete that this recognition entails is also, however, not to be recovered at the far end of any dialectical progression. The object and the concept, the in-itself and the for-itself *never* coincide: the truth of the object is incessantly the truth of its loss. Hegelian thought claims to grasp the totality, then, only in the form of the rift between the form and its content as the no-longer or not-yet of this form. Zizek's view of Hegel, which is partly the result of reading Hegel in Lacanian terms, allows Zizek to demonstrate secondly that Lacan, who followed Kojève and Hyppolite in his conscious reading of Hegel, was - unbeknownst to himself - closest to Hegel in the work from the late Fifties on, where the earlier, apparent Hegelianism of the dialectics of recognition gave way to the apparent radical anti-Hegelianism of the logic of not-all and the emphasis on the Real, the Other as penetrated by a lack. Third, Zizek tries to show that the Lacanian theory of the *Real* and of the pass (or the experience of the lack in the Other as [Hegelian] absolute knowing) allows of elaboration as a theory of the political-ideological field that corrects the Althusserian misapplication of Lacan by placing emphasis not on the imaginary, as Althusser had done, **but** on the phantasm. Zizek's book is extraordinarily ambitious, rigorously argued, and gewitzt. It merits repeated reading.

I shall sketch in what follows only certain essential moments in the third phase of Zizek's extended dialogical argument. After rereading, in Lacanian terms, the logic of the dialectical process in Hegel and, in Hegelian terms, the Lacan of the lack in the Other, Zizek begins to outline a Hegelian-Lacanian theory of ideology by traversing the phantasms of the post-Hegelian theories against which such

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a theory of ideology must define itself. He develops first (from Lacan's seminar R. S. I.) the analogy between the Freudian theory of dreams and the Marxian analysis of the form of the commodities. Both theories do not merely pierce a manifest content to discover a latent content beneath it, but concentrate in particular on the ways in which, and the reasons for which, this latent content takes on the form of its manifestation. The unconscious of the merchandise form is thus not its latent content, labor-time, but what Alfred Sohn-Rethel has characterized as the "real abstraction" (172 *passim*) of the act of exchange. Zizek pursues the development of the Marxian commodity-analysis in the work of Alfred Sohn-Rethel further in order to show in what sense Marxist critique of ideology implies not merely the interpretation of the dream of social reality but, as Lacan had already said, *symptomatic reading*. Such reading exposes the logic of exception - or as Zizek has not but might have said, the logic of the parergon - which assures that any given universality can only be exemplified by what at once exceeds and is its (impossible) domain or reign. Thus, *for example*, in capitalism, the total fetishization of commodities is accompanied by a total defetishization of human relations, whereas in feudalism the nonfetishistic production of goods is accompanied by total fetishization of human relations. Capitalism represses the master-slave relations between people by letting them appear as master-slave relations between commodities. This symptom, the fetishization of commodities, is the example of universal defetishization that exceeds and undoes the universality of this universal.

But Zizek's Lacanian reading of Marx as inventor of the symptom nonetheless issues, in other respects, in a psychoanalytic critique of the Marxist notion of ideology-critique. In the context of an expansion of Lacan's notion of the *sujet suppose savoir* into the correlative notions of the subjects supposed to believe, to enjoy, and to desire, Zizek argues that the critique of ideology must not seek to deduce ideology from so-called real social relations but rather to articulate the *phantasm* which governs social reality itself (188). More precisely, on the basis of the conception of the social field as a structure articulated around its own *impossibility*, Zizek defines *ideology* as the "symbolic edifice which masks not a hidden social

essence but the void, the impossibility around which the social field is structured" (194). What is problematic about such a symbolic edifice is not that it represents only a partial view of things but rather that it poses as a totality and thus masks the marks of the impossibility of (this) totality. Accordingly, the Marxist historicization of would-be atem-

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poral universalities is in turn to be undone by the Freudian realization of the historical: historical conjunctures, however diverse, will always be haunted not so much by class-contradiction as by the Real. "Surplus enjoyment" (*plus-de-jouir*) is Lacan's more "general" formula for what Marx will have attempted to formulate with the notion of surplus-value: at once the cause and the limit of the desire to capitalize on what the law demands one give up.

Just as, on the level of the "individual" subject, the phantasm bears the burden of preserving the deluded prospect of a sexual relation, and thus of the individual itself as neutrally totalized; so on the level of the "social" subject, the phantasm must hold out the prospect of a social relation, in the sense of a *social body* harmoniously (even if contradictorily) safe from an endless fragmentation, a social body in which desire, pleasure, and *jouissance* are one. This phantasm of the social body is the totalitarian phantasm itself. It is characterized by the loss of distance between the phantasm which situates the *jouissance* of the subject and the formal-universal law of social exchange. Through such a fusion of phantasm and law, the imperative of the form of legality becomes an imperative of *jouissance*, the form of the law and *jouissance* become one. The subject of this imperative is free only to comply with the insane demand that he freely relinquish his freedom, for the enjoyment thereby imposed is the enjoyment of the Other.

Zizek goes on to show how, in the *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, Walter Benjamin marks the limits of any historical schema qua symbolization. Benjamin's synchronous *Jetztzeit* (time of the now) - in which a constructed history emerges precisely cut off from the (symbolic) continuity in which both bourgeois and Leninist-Stalinist historiography would situate it announces the repetition compulsion. Disruptive of all evolutionist or revolutionist progressivism, this *Jetztzeit* is for Zizek that of Lacan's symbolic death, as of Hegel's incessantly renewed beginning through which out of nothing and retroactively the past as signified is suspended. This death puts an end, ever and again, to the sublime body of power conceived as that which subsists continuously between the two deaths, real and symbolic, and which is for modern totalitarianism the power of the people itself as the social body that indestructibly and eternally out-lives itself.

Drawing now on the work of Claude Lefoit, Zizek shows how the democratic project consists in the theory and practice of the nonexistence of the people. That is, precisely through elections, themselves a kind of *Jetztzeit*, the people as pseudo-organic totality is

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ever and again dissolved. In this dissolution of the social body into the fragmentation of atomized voters, the place of power repeatedly reveals itself as the impossible void it is: the symbolic order of the democratic invention prescribes thus its own repeated dissolution with the in-vention and intervention of the Real whenever elections elect the dissemination of the electorate as of the elect. In contrast, totalitarianism collapses the Real and the symbolic precisely by attempting to exclude the Real from the symbolic.

Having arrived at this provisional conclusion of his attempts to demarcate the totalitarian in terms of Lacanian-Hegehan motifs, Zizek concludes his book with two chapters which distinguish a Lacanian notion of ideology (as the phantasmatic attempt to bridge the inevitable gap between the symbolic and the Real) from its corresponding notions in "post-structuralism," on the one hand, and analytic philosophy and speech act theory (Kripke and Searle), on the other. The chapter on "post-structuralism" is to my mind the one weak link in an otherwise prodigiously strong chain. First, it posits the broad entity of "post-structuralism," which may well not exist, and turns out to mean by this only Derrida, ignoring De Man and others who might generally be taken to be "post-structuralists" but whose work is not necessarily simply assimilable to Derrida's critique of Lacan. Second, Zizek accuses Derrida on the one hand of aestheticism and, on the other, of theoreticism, not quite being able to make up his mind whether he objects to the excess or the insufficiency of epistemological seriousness, whereas Derrida (and De Man) have in common precisely the (quasi-immanent) denunciation of theoreticism as an aestheticism. Third, Zizek takes Derrida to task for developing a metalanguage despite the latter's claims that metalanguage is not possible, whereas one could easily show both that the impossibility of metalanguage is equalled for Derrida only by the inevitability of its intermittent self-reinstallation (metonymy metaphorizes itself) and that as Lacan himself obviously knew - Lacanian discourse, regardless of the will-to-rigour of its practitioners, tends quite as much as Derridian discourse toward the solidification of itself into a metalanguage, a fixed conceptuality, etc. The determination of the relation between Derridian and De Manian deconstructions, on the one hand, and Lacanian psychoanalysis, on the other, remains to be articulated.

Despite these hastily indicated criticisms, I would recommend this book with unreserved urgency to all interested in Lacan. In particular, with respect to the current "fall" - the dissolution and reorganization of the phantasmatic popular body - of Eastern

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Europe, one expectantly imagines that Zizek is one of few thinkers, Lacanian or other, who will be in a position to shed some real light (in the sense of some light of the real?) on what is going down.

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