SUSPICIOUS MINDS: THE DRAMATISATION OF PARANOIA IN VICTORIAN POETRY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contains readings of a number of Victorian poems by Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning and Dante Gabriel Rossetti which dramatise paranoia and jealousy. A range of twentieth-century theories of paranoia (including clinical, Freudian and Lacanian) have been used as explanatory tools for interpreting the representations of paranoia in the poems. The reading of Tennyson's Maud is based on Freud's theory of homoerotic motives. The reading of Browning's " 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came' " is based on the Lacanian concepts of foreclosure and the Name-of-the-Father. The readings of the jealousy poems are based on both theories, and this section includes a discussion of the limitations of the theories as explanatory tools. The general approach has been to apply clinical and psychoanalytical constructs and explanations to each poem separately, although there is some discussion involving the comparison of paranoid behaviours and motives across all the poems. Areas for further research are suggested in the concluding chapter.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THEORIES OF PARANOIA AND LITERARY ANALYSIS

This thesis will apply different models of paranoia to several Victorian poems that dramatise paranoia, with the aim of providing new readings of these poems. This chapter contains an overview of the various models of paranoia used in the thesis as well as a discussion of the relevance of these models to literary criticism, and in particular to Victorian poetry. The following two chapters each contain a reading of a well-known Victorian monologue in the light of the various models of paranoia. The penultimate chapter focuses on a particular manifestation of paranoia, jealousy, and contains an examination of five poems that dramatise jealousy. Throughout, the emphasis is on exploring the ways in which paranoia theory adds to a reading of the poems, although its limitations are also noted. The final chapter continues this discussion and indicates some areas for further research.

The two major models of paranoia which will be applied in this thesis are the clinical and the psychoanalytic. The clinical picture of paranoia, which has taken shape throughout the twentieth century, began in 1919 when Emil Kraepelin formulated a description of paranoia that remains basically unchanged today. Kraepelin limited paranoia to disorders with systematized delusional systems, that is, delusions that are structured, coherent, interconnected and elaborate (299). He also emphasised the thoughtful construction of the delusions (for instance, the rationalisation of contradictions) and the tenacity with which they are held. A number of features have since been added to the clinical picture. Max Hutt and Robert Gibby (1957) describe ten characteristics of the paranoid individual: a long history of instability, a history of undue suspicion, the inability to accept authority figures, a tendency to meditate about imagined slights, a rigid personality structure, inflexibility, pulls away from groups, misinterprets things that happen to him, perceives threats and

attacks in others' behaviour, has ideas of reference (274). Norman Cameron developed the notion of a pseudocommunity, an imaginary organisation of real or imagined persons who are united in a plot against the patient (cited in Page 296). James Page (1975) describes paranoid personality traits as unwarranted suspicion, jealousy, envy, distrust of others, exaggerated feelings of importance, hypersensitivity to slights, independence, self-reliance, isolation, and delusions of grandeur. He also distinguishes between paranoid schizophrenia, paranoia and paranoid state (292-296). Steven Starker (1986) finds the hallmarks of a stable paranoid personality to be suspiciousness, externalisation, grandiosity, rigidity, misinterpretation, aloofness, and aggressiveness (26-27). Peter Chadwick (1992) proposes that paranoid individuals hold onto ideas tenaciously, resist argument, select and distort input to confirm paranoid ideation and creatively elaborate delusional constructs (2). He defines paranoid mentation as comprising three basic premises: I do deserve it, I am that important, and people would go to all that trouble on my account (15). Paul Chadwick, Max Birchwood and Peter Trower (1996) distinguish between two types of paranoid patients: 'poor paranoids' blame others and see themselves as victims, while 'punishment paranoids' blame themselves and view others as justifiably punishing them (138). The most current clinical definition of paranoia is that used in the American Psychiatric Association's 1987 *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Third Edition-Revised).*[1] The revised edition of this manual changed the name of the disorder from Paranoid Disorder to Delusional (Paranoid) Disorder, as delusions are the primary symptom. The *DSM-III-R* further specifies five types of delusional disorder determined by the dominant delusional theme: erotomanic, grandiose, jealous, persecutory and somatic (199). It also distinguishes between delusional disorder and paranoid personality disorder which may include "paranoid ideation or pathologic jealousy but without delusions" (202).

One of our first observations must be that the clinical analysis of paranoia is a twentieth-century phenomenon and this may lead us to wonder about its relevance to the study of Victorian poetry. Certainly the term paranoia was not commonly used in

[1] Henceforth cited as *DSM-III-R*

the period during which the poems in this study were published, 1836-1876. Although the *Oxford English Dictionary* offers examples of usage dated from early in the 1890s, William James' *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) does not use the term. It seems likely that the term emerged from and to some extent replaced various other categories of mental illness that had been current up to that point, such as delusional insanity, moral insanity, melancholia, mania and dementia. It was also about this period that dementia praecox (now known as schizophrenia) was afforded status as a discrete mental disorder.[2] Mental disorders such as paranoia and schizophrenia only came into existence as a result of a reconceptualisation of mental disorders from tightly defined entities to systemic complexes. For example, in the nineteenth century, melancholia and mania were reclassified as parts of a single disorder complex, the manic-depressive disease complex (now called Bipolar Disorder). The main points I wish to make here, though, are that delusion, suspicion, obsession and grandiosity were behaviours and attitudes which belonged to the Victorian ages, and indeed all other ages, as much as to the twentieth century. However, in the twentieth century, we now see something in the confluence of such behaviours that we call paranoia and note that this way of conceptualising these behaviours was taking shape in the Victorian period. We should, therefore, have no trouble saying that a certain attitude in a Victorian poem expresses paranoia, even if this was not a category the Victorians themselves would have applied to it - - firstly because we have paranoia only as a result of Victorian reconceptualisation of madness, and secondly, because our modern conceptualisation of paranoia was being produced in Victorian England, and was dramatised in the literature and poetry of that period, even if it had not yet gained the quality of a given at the time the poems under study were produced.

While there are clinical definitions of paranoia and its various subcategories (for example, mild paranoia, paranoid personality, paranoid state, paranoid schizophrenia) they all exist in relation to a sane/insane opposition. Paranoia and paranoid states are all clinically perceived as either abnormal behaviour or abnormal states of mind. Thus,

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[2] The main distinctions, then and now, between schizophrenia and paranoia are the degree of personality disintegration (higher in schizophrenia) and the coherence of the delusional system (more coherent in paranoia).

an individual is said to be paranoid when he exhibits behaviours or attitudes which in themselves are not necessarily considered pathological, but which are clustered in a particular pattern or deemed to be of a pervasive and extreme degree. There is a 'normal' suspiciousness, and an 'abnormal' suspiciousness; one is indicative of a 'healthy' individual, the other indicates a mentally disordered individual. Similarly a person's perception of reality may be deemed to be accurate and thus normal, or delusional and thus pathological. The basis of the distinctions between normal and pathological varies. The *DSM-III-R* defines a delusion as "a false personal belief based on incorrect inference about external reality and firmly sustained in spite of what almost everyone else believes and in spite of what constitutes incontrovertible and obvious proof or evidence to the contrary" (395). Whether or not an individual is diagnosed with a paranoid disorder may depend on his claims being deemed objectively true or false/delusional. Page notes that in paranoia "[a]n obvious requirement is that the persecutory theme is a delusion with no factual basis or that it represents a gross and uncorrectable misinterpretation of some actual event or series of events" (293). For instance, an individual may claim that his colleagues hate him, and are trying to have him fired. He may have good evidence in support of his suspicions, and they may turn out to be correct. This man is called sane. On the other hand, he may claim that his colleagues have installed listening devices in his dental work to eavesdrop on him. As this claim is unlikely to be objectively true, he may be deemed delusional and/or insane. Similarly, in the case of a man who complains people are staring at him and whispering about him in the street, his claims may be deemed to be objectively false, and thus pathological. However, his claims may be objectively true (that is, people *are* staring at and talking about him), but as it happens, the man is a well-known media personality who is understandably the object of public interest. In this case the factual basis of his claim is correct, but his interpretation of it (that it is persecutory) is a 'gross misinterpretation of actual events' and thus pathological. However, the objective truthfulness of the account is a problematic basis on which to define sanity. Take for example the case of a jealous man with delusions that his wife is unfaithful. Aside from the objective truth or falseness of his claims, the man's behaviour and attitude may nevertheless be pathological (obsessive, interrogatory,

even violent). Furthermore, Chadwick notes that paranoid individuals often manifest behaviours and attitudes which attract the attention of others, instituting a feedback loop in which the paranoid individual's suspicions that others are staring at him are confirmed because others are in fact staring at him, although not for the reason he thinks (18).

The usefulness of the clinical model to the study of paranoia is largely diagnostic. It has little to say about the direct causes of paranoia other than to indicate some statistically derived data concerning predisposing factors, prevalence and outcome. The main analysis of causality in paranoia comes from the second of the two investigative models that will be used in this thesis, the psychoanalytic model. Sigmund Freud was one of the earliest writers on the causes of paranoia, and has also been one of the most influential. Freud's case study on paranoia was conducted not through analysis of a patient *per se*, but through a close reading of an autobiography, *Memoirs of a Neurotic* (1903, cited in Freud 1911), written by a paranoid individual, Judge Daniel Paul Schreber. Freud's seminal text is "Psychoanalytic notes upon an autobiographical account of a case of paranoia (dementia paranoides)" (1911/1957, Volume III 387-470) but he has written several other articles on paranoia which will also be used in this thesis. [3] Freud develops his model of paranoia along the lines of his model of hysteria; that is, he proposes that a crisis or intervention has occurred at some point in the patient's psychosexual history. This crisis has been repressed, but in times of stress the repression and sublimations are undone, resulting in the return of the repressed via symptom formation. However, where hysteria relates to a breach between the subject's ego and his id, psychosis is the result of a disturbance between the ego and the external world, and the delusion is an attempt "to substitute a reality more in accord with its desires for the unsatisfactory real one" (1924 281).

The mechanisms by which paranoid symptoms are formed are transference and projection. Transference pertains to the detachment of emotional value from an

[3] All citations to Freud refer to the translations of his work in *Collected Papers* (The Hogarth Press, 1957), although the date of the original publication is cited in each case to distinguish between the various works.

original source and its transposition onto another figure. Projection pertains to the attribution of hostile emotions to external or environmental sources rather than the self. Freud describes how these mechanisms operate in paranoia:

> The relation between the patient and his persecutor can be reduced to quite a simple formula. It appears that the person to whom the delusion ascribes so much power and influence, in whose hands all the threads of conspiracy converge, is either, if he is definitely named, identical with someone who played an equally important part in the patient's emotional life before his illness, or else is easily recognizable as a substitute for him. The intensity of the emotion is projected outwards in the shape of external power, while its quality is changed into the opposite. The person who is now hated and feared as a persecutor was at one time loved and honoured. The main purpose of the persecution constructed by the patient's delusion is to serve as a justification for the change in his emotional attitude. (1911 424)

The original pattern for the persecutor is, of course, Daddy, and the emotions attached to this figure are ambivalent: love and hatred. When the Oedipal drama is overlaid on the case of paranoia, Freud finds that "the familiar principle forms of paranoia can all be represented as contradictions of the single proposition: '*I* (a man) *love him* (a man)'" (1911 448). In the paranoid individual this proposition is contradicted by delusions of persecution (in which the subject asserts, "I hate him"); erotomania ("she loves me"); delusions of jealousy ("she loves him"); and finally, megalomania ("I do not love anyone but myself"). We can observe the similarity of these delusional themes to the four sub-types of Delusional Paranoid Disorder in the *DSM-III-R*, namely persecution, erotomanic, jealous, and grandiose.

Freud has been criticised on several issues. For instance Peter van Sommers has pointed out (137) that a delusion of persecution does not actually represent a satisfactory emotional outcome for a patient if the whole point of symptom formation is to provide a mechanism for dealing with the anxiety resulting from pressing yet forbidden wishes. However, as Freud points out, the development of a delusion of persecution actually offers powerful ego rewards in the form of self-aggrandizement. Furthermore, Freud finds that "[t]he delusion-formation, which we take to be a pathological product, is in reality an attempt at recovery, a process of reconstruction

. . . [thus] the man has recaptured a relation, and often a very intense one, to the people and things in the world, although the relation may be a hostile one now" (1911 457).

One of the weaker yet more frequent criticisms that has been made of Freud concerns his statement on homosexual wishes. Freud proposes that "the strikingly prominent features in the causation of paranoia, especially among males, are social humiliations and slights. But if we go into the matter only a little more deeply, we shall be able to see that the really operative factor in these social injuries lies in the part played in them by the homosexual components of affective life" (1911 445). Since Freud, almost without exception, researchers on paranoia have referred to the role of repressed homosexuality in paranoia, either 'agreeing' with Freud that paranoia results from repressed homosexual wishes or 'disagreeing' with Freud and finding that the number of paranoid patients who are either professed or latent homosexuals is consistent with the occurrence of homosexuality across the population at large. Either way, these researchers miss the point: for Freud homosexuality is a developmental phase experienced by all people: "Generally speaking, every human being oscillates all through his life between heterosexual and homosexual feelings" (1911 429-30). Fixation in this developmental stage, or the undoing of sublimations which entails a return to this stage, does not 'make' an individual a homosexual, 'latent' or otherwise; rather it results in emotion and ideation associated with this stage of psychosexual development. Consider when the homosexual stage occurs: prior to Oedipus and the castration complex and the resultant creation of the superego or internalised social strictures. The strong sexualized and narcissistic motives of the homosexual phase are not done away with as the individual passes through this developmental phase, as Freud points out, but are deflected onto other aims, specifically the social instincts. In the case of the paranoid, it is exactly the social instincts which are affected, in the loss of affect and attachment to the social world which is effected by the withholding of love. This loss of attachment clearly signals a return to pre-Oedipal or narcissistic ideation. However, given that Freud never actually said that all paranoiacs are homosexuals, it is important to remember that for Freud and most of the psychological community up to the late twentieth century, homosexuality was essentially

pathological in nature, constituting an illness to be fixed, and this is a view we may certainly feel free to disagree with.

While Freud's is no doubt the most influential of the psychoanalytic theories of paranoia, Jacque Lacan's contribution is also important. Lacan's reading of Freud, "On a Question Preliminary to any Possible Treatment of Psychosis" (1955/1977, *Ecrits* 179-225), acerbically addresses the misreading of Freud's homosexual thesis ("Homosexuality, supposedly a determinant of paranoiac psychosis, is really a symptom articulated in its process" [190]), and offers his own reading in terms of post-Saussurean linguistics.[4] In the Lacanian analysis of paranoia, the Oedipus complex and the threat of castration describe the processes whereby the subject is inducted into the Symbolic Order, the order of the signifier. In Lacan's theory, it is the failure of the paternal metaphor (a function and a law) rather than the failings of a specific father which results in psychosis. According to Lacan, the subject is constituted in a floating mass of signifiers which assume the shape of an Order insofar as certain basic signifiers anchor it. Psychosis is caused by a gap in the chain of signifiers, in particular the failure of the paternal metaphor, the Name-of-the-Father. Lacan's term for this failure is foreclosure. In a clear reference to the Freudian analogy of a patch (in "The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis", 1924) the difference between repression and foreclosure has been described with the metaphor of a tissue, which is made up of crisscrossing threads in which "repression would figure as a rent or tear which none the less could be repaired; while foreclosure would figure in it as a gap due to the weaving itself, a primal hole...which never would have been anything other than the substance of a hole and could only be filled by a patch" (Leclaire, cited in Sarup 109). In the Freudian model, the paranoid subject fails to progress from the narcissistic stage to the stage of ideal identification. In the Lacanian model 'ideal identification' is read as the assumption of the place within the Symbolic Order through acquisition of the Name-of-the-Father (a mental representation of a structure), a position from which one observes oneself as a man, with all the cultural baggage that

[4] Unless otherwise specified, all citations to Jacques Lacan refer to *Ecrits: A Selection*, 1977, translated by Alan Sheridan.

entails. Thus Lacan asserts, "the lack of the Name-of-the-Father in that place which, by the hole that it opens up in the signified, sets off the cascade of reshapings of the signifier from which the increasing disaster of the imaginary proceeds, to the point at which the level is reached at which signifier and signified are stabilized in the delusional metaphor" (217).

The final section of this thesis will examine several poems that dramatise jealousy. There are clinical, behavioural and theoretical reasons for considering jealousy as a particular instance of paranoia. In the case of Alfred Tennyson's *Maud*, examined in Chapter Two, jealousy is analysed as one of the distinct delusional themes of the speaker. The basis of that analysis is the definition of Delusional (Paranoid) Disorder in the *DSM-III-R*, which differentiates between four sub-types of the disorder, one of which is jealousy. One study found that 14% of patients admitted over a three-year period with paranoid schizophrenia, paranoia and paranoid illness had jealousy as a prominent clinical feature (Gregory White and Paul Mullen 209). White and Mullen also observe the correlation between general features of delusion and jealousy, finding that delusions (including delusions of jealousy) are held with absolute conviction, are experienced as self-evident, are not amenable to reason, are not modified by experience, are experienced as of great personal significance, consist of highly personal and idiosyncratic convictions, emerge in a non-understandable way, and maintain connections between elements that are not comprehensible to others. They also observe that the beliefs implicated in the delusion can become the central organising factor of the individual's existence (188-189). Another reason for considering jealousy as an aspect of Paranoid Delusional Disorders is behavioural, insofar as jealous behaviour comprises many of the same behaviours as paranoid behaviour. These include, for example, suspiciousness, mistrust and hypersensitivity to environmental and interpersonal cues. A further reason for linking jealousy to paranoia is that Freud did so, in both his article on Judge Schreber (1911) and his article "Certain Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality" (1922/1957, II 232-243). Freud's papers on paranoia and jealousy propose that there is a shared aetiology and structure for the two, and, in another linkage between the

clinical and the psychoanalytic, this assumption has more or less attained the status of a given in modern clinical practice.

The two strands of research on paranoia (clinical and psychoanalytic) are implicated in jealousy research, but a third strand, the sociological/anthropological, has also evolved. In the psychological strand, various clinical and anecdotal accounts of jealousy exist. An overview of these is provided by White and Mullen. White and Mullen's book summarises various research findings on the relationship of jealousy to paranoia, delusion, self-esteem, self-image, sexual practices, sexual politics, shame, obsessive behaviour, various personality traits, aggression and violence. In the psychoanalytic strand, again, Freud's account has been extremely influential. He proposed a taxonomy of jealousy comprising three layers: normal, neurotic and pathological. Normal jealousy is present to varying degrees in everyone, neurotic jealousy is based on guilt and projection, and pathological jealousy is delusional. The word delusional returns us to the structure of paranoia Freud elaborated in his 1911 analysis of Judge Schreber; thus his account of pathological jealousy returns to the homoerotic proposition. However, as White and Mullen point out (83), most recent psychoanalytic theory has tended to downplay the role of homosexuality in jealousy while retaining the role of intra- and interpersonal conflicts and the role of the ego in resolving these – a case of keeping the bath water while throwing out the baby!

In the third strand of research on jealousy, the sociological/anthropological, jealousy has been situated in the context of other cultural practices (such as institutional practices of marriage and the regulation of property distribution and exchange) and within a network of relationships and their management. These studies conclude, to provide one early example from Kingsley Davis (1936), that jealousy is a by-product of "the fixed, traditional constellations of rights, obligations and neutralities that may be called sexual property" (130) and that jealousy "tends to preserve the fundamental institutions of property" (130). A later study by Jessie Bernard (1977) argues that jealousy is not an emotion as such but a culturally sanctioned and produced behaviour. For example, she finds that if men, in a given

society, are forgiven for killing to defend their 'honor', this practice can inhibit jealousy-provoking behaviour (by both men and women), but that that inhibitory influence will flourish only if jealousy is regarded by the society as a "legitimate response". Presumably, although she does not say so, she means when jealousy is a legitimate response to certain behaviours seen by that culture as jealousy-provoking. As with all structuralist accounts, individual, intrapsychic responses are foreclosed in the explanatory formula of cultural cause and effect.

Late twentieth-century literary analysis has been an eclectic and multi-disciplinary affair, drawing on research and discovery in psychology, philosophy, feminist and post-colonial studies. While it appears as though the sociological/anthropological approach to jealousy could offer a means of understanding paranoia as it is dramatised in literature in a material context or as part of a cultural critique, it does not clearly do so, at least in terms of the research available on jealousy (although White and Mullen's text is an excellent overview). While the sociological/anthropological approach is good at contextualising and thus explaining what might be called 'normal' jealousy, it is not very good at explaining individual differences in jealousy, particularly at the extreme end of the spectrum, at what is called pathological or delusional jealousy. For instance, Davis concludes that "[t]he stimulus to jealousy is not so much a physical situation as a meaningful one" (133), and this assertion is borne out by the dramatised jealousy analysed in Chapter Four. In these poems certain physical situations are perceived as meaningful to the jealous husband or lover in ways that differ from the way these situations are perceived by the general population. The sociological/anthropological understanding of jealousy cannot account for the aberrant individual response, nor does it attempt to do so.

While, no doubt, jealousy does have something to do with what Bernard calls "the channeling and differential emphasis on emotions by the surrounding culture [which] specifies when and how they should be experienced" (144), we should not overlook the role of individual practices and accounts in shaping that 'surrounding culture' itself, and this includes literary accounts. This is the point Michel Foucault makes

when he concludes that the eighteenth-century revision of mental disorders "did not proceed from observation to the construction of explanatory categories; that on the contrary, the images [and] their organising force made possible a structure of perception, in which at last the symptoms could attain their significant value and be organised as the visible presence of truth" (135). Victorian poetry is one such fulcrum point, located temporally between the medico-literary images of humors, blood and bile and the twentieth-century medico-literary images of madness as an alternative and sometimes privileged mode of being.[5] Although the clinical and psychoanalytic models of paranoia were some way off temporally, in this period an early model of paranoia was being developed: the literary model, in the form of the dramatic monologue. Without precluding any of the analyses that follow, it is safe to say that the two literary forms which took shape in the Victorian period, the realist novel and the dramatic monologue, developed strategies and images for representing human subjectivity. As paranoia is a particular mode of subjectivity, in both its clinical form and as it is dramatised in literature, it is appropriate to consider what "structures of perception" were and are implicated in paranoia as it is represented in Victorian poetry. For example, Robert Lougy has suggested that "[m]adness in nineteenth-century British literature is often isolated within the troubled psychic spaces of the afflicted, defined by an outside world whose moral and rational categories are brought forward in order to keep the worlds of madness and reason at a distance from each other" (407). However, the poems in this study, and particularly the poems which dramatise jealousy, break down the borders between madness and reason, and the rigid separation of the two, and begin the process of articulating madness as an alternative perspective which is somehow understandable from and in terms of the normal perspective. For example, in Robert Browning's "Porphyria's Lover" the speaker says:

> Be sure I looked up at her eyes
> Happy and proud; at last I knew
> Porphyria worshipped me; surprise

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[5] See for example, R. D. Laing's *The Divided Self*, 1959; Janet Frame's *Faces In the Water*, 1961; Ken Kesey's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, 1962; and Sylvia Plath's *Bell Jar*, 1963.

Made my heart swell, and still it grew
While I debated what to do.
That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow string I wound
Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. (31-41)

This passage marries cool logic with pathological and murderous jealousy, reason with madness, and there is no discrete border between the two. Perhaps, as Lougy suggests, madness in this poem is represented as contained within the troubled interior spaces of an individual psyche, but this apparent containment does not help Porphyria in the end, as madness insists on expression. Thus this poem dramatises madness as faulty reasoning, an inch closer along the continuum towards the twentieth-century positive valorisation of madness as 'other reasoning'.

However, paranoia theory, brought to bear on Victorian poetry, does not necessarily concern itself with delineating a border between madness and reason; it is more concerned with explicating the meaning and meaningfulness of certain situations to the person experiencing them. As such, theories of paranoia are also "structures of perception" and, although I do not claim that my readings here are the "visible presence of truth", I do believe that they make possible new readings of these poems. In these readings the theory of paranoia is used as a frame and filter for the poems and this requires them to be attended to in specific ways. For instance, some analyses of Victorian poetry make biographical links between the sentiments expressed in the poem and the life history of the author. Notable among these is Anne Colley's 1983 text, *Tennyson and Madness*, in which she makes connections between Tennyson's personal and familial experiences of mental illness and specific literary works which are thus read as essentially autobiographical. In the use of paranoia theories, authorial biographical data is irrelevant, as is historical data concerning reception. Paranoia theory itself dictates the areas of emphasis in interpretation, and it does not claim to

account for everything in the poem. Other literary critics use different frames and filters: Ekbert Faas (1988) makes connections between the rise of psychiatry and Victorian poetry, E. Warwick Slinn (1991) relates the poems to post-structural conceptions of subjectivity and Harold Bloom (1976) reads Victorian poetry as a response to Romantic forms and ideology. With the possible exception of Colley's, all these approaches have merit insofar as they enrich or 'thicken' the interpretative description of the poem. The use of paranoia theories does not preclude these other readings, nor is it intended to offer a univocal or restricted truth. It simply offers an alternative reading, in much the way an alternative reading of madness, but by no means the final one, was produced in Victorian poetry.

In Chapter Two I put forward a reading of Tennyson's *Maud* perceived through the filter of Freud's theory of paranoia. The conflation of these two texts results in an emphasis on parts of the poem which are not often analysed: the persona of Maud's brother, the rival, and the links between Parts One and Three of the poem. In terms of uncovering more and different elements of the poem, then, the use of paranoia theory is well justified. Nevertheless, paranoia theory does not account for everything in the poem. It brings little to a discussion of the beauty of the love lyrics, and has nothing to say about the dynamics of gendered power or industrial capitalism; at the same time it does not preclude discussion of these matters. It is rather the case that these elements are outside the parameters of the Freudian analysis of paranoia except insofar as they represent the environmental context of the speaker and are liable to be meaningful to him. Paranoia theory elaborates the construction and purpose of the paranoid meaning in a literary analysis and is therefore certainly relevant to the general critical discussion of Victorian poetry which is much concerned with the production of both meaning and selves in Victorian poetry.[6]

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[6] See, for instance, Loy D. Martin, *Browning's Dramatic Monologues and the Post-Romantic Subject*, 1985; E. Warwick Slinn, *The Discourse of Self in Victorian Poetry*, 1991; M. Rowlinson, *Tennyson's Fixations: Psychoanalysis and the topics of the early poetry*, 1994; Herbert Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities: Manhood and Masculine Poetics in Early Victorian Literature and Art*, 1995.

There are certain difficulties associated with applying diagnostic categories to poetry. For instance, a key diagnostic component of paranoia is delusion. One may wonder whether it is appropriate to speak of delusions in poetry. The clinical definition of a delusion, as I have observed above (2) is "an incorrect inference about external reality held in spite of evidence to the contrary" (*DSM-III-R* 395). How is it possible to define or examine 'external reality' in the case of a dramatic monologue in which the only external reality, in terms of the fictional content of the poem, is that produced by the speaker? The whole speech is a kind of inference about reality and if the speaker's words in one instance are taken to be mistaken the only evidence we have for judging them so is that provided by the speaker himself. One way through this impasse is not to read the dramatic monologue as a narrative of external reality, but to shift the emphasis "from what is perceived to the process of perception, from the structure of an external world to the structuring power of individual minds" (Slinn, 1982 1). In this approach there is no need to access historical or biographical data or to scan the text for 'proof' of anything the speaker says: the text is simply a map of subjectivity. This approach finds its fullest expression in the Lacanian conception of the paranoid subject, as will be seen in Chapter Three, which offers a reading of Robert Browning's " 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came' " in which the perceived is an externalised representation of the perceiving self.

Apart from these possible objections to applying paranoia theory to Victorian poetry, there is one other important question: the validity of the paranoia theory *per se*. As Ekbert Faas has shown, various psychologists and 'alienists', who were much inclined to read the poems as case histories, applied clinical understandings of madness to these poems at the time of publication. If we have lost faith in the clinical paradigms of the Victorian age (ideas such as moral insanity and monomania), on what grounds can we assume that modern clinical analyses are any more sound? Certainly, a range of objections to Freudian and Lacanian theory have been raised over the years. The most significant of these objections is the charge that Freudian and Lacanian paranoia theory cannot escape the 'frame' of Oedipal relations. Freud's reading of Judge Schreber's autobiography and Lacan's reading of Freud's reading are

based on a normative Oedipal structure or, as it is known in Lacanian theory, phallocentrism. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatarri take issue with what they describe as the reductiveness of this reading in which "everything is reduced to the father" (89) and in which the manifest content of the Judge's delusion is depoliticised and dehistoricised. Although I do not offer a sustained critique of paranoia theories in this thesis, the analysis of "Childe Roland" in Chapter Three links paranoia to phallocentrism in a way that partially deconstructs Lacanian theory, and the analyses of Chapter Four do point out some of the shortcomings in paranoia theory, particularly in Freud's version of it, as well as suggesting some possible alternatives. Throughout, my intention is not to test and give priority to either the psychoanalytic or literary portrait of paranoia: they developed at different times, under different conditions and for different purposes. Rather, my purpose here is to see what the different models of paranoia, when directed back from hindsight onto literary dramatisations from the age which gave rise to conceptions of paranoia, enable us to see anew or differently in these poems.

CHAPTER TWO

FREUD'S HOMOEROTIC PROPOSITION AND TENNYSON'S *MAUD*

This chapter will set out a Freudian reading of the paranoid delusions in Tennyson's *Maud.* Freudian theory on sexuality and paranoia as elaborated in the next few pages provides the critical tools for interpreting the four delusional themes of erotomania, jealousy, persecution and megalomania. Each delusional theme is dealt with in turn and encompasses different aspects of the poem. Each analysis evolves from the Freudian hypothesis that paranoia is a response to a homoerotic proposition, "I love him", and that each delusion represents a different defense against this single proposition. The significance of this approach is that it opens up some of the relationships in the poem that have not until this time been much discussed, in particular that between the speaker and the brother, and also allows us to perceive the speaker's attitude towards war in Part Three of the poem as continuous with rather than a reversal of previous attitudes.

For Freud, heterosexual masculinity is not achieved until the Oedipal conflict and the rest of 'real life' is approached with the attitudes and identity gained from the successful resolution of that conflict. In the case of a boy, he will have identified with his father and transferred his libido onto an appropriate female object through the mechanisms of repression and sublimation. Before this point the subject's libido has tracked through various stages, any and all of which offer the opportunity for fixation to occur. Fixation occurs when the subject fails for some reason to work through the socio-sexual demands of that stage. When this occurs the subject will revert to the emotional and libidinal impulses of that stage whenever his half-successful sublimations collapse. According to Freud, paranoia is a response to some such fixation and irruption of the repressed. He particularly locates paranoia as a return to the narcissistic, homosexual stage of development. The narcissistic phase occurs between the primarily autoerotic oral and anal stages and true heterosexual object-choice. The subject in this stage begins to direct his libidinal impulses outward, initially towards an object with the same genitalia, in the case of a boy

towards his father or some other man. The boy moves towards the Oedipal crisis as he changes from wanting to have a man to wanting to be a man. When he lights upon his mother as object choice his regard for or fear of his father (castration anxiety) may push him back towards homosexual object choice, as renouncing women ends all rivalry with the father. Similarly, the son's failure to identify with his father, and thereby achieve a stable heterosexual masculine identity leaves the son with sexual identity unresolved, either homosexual or intent on a mother-object. According to Freud, one reason why some fail to achieve a successful resolution of the Oedipal conflict, is because of the insufficiency of the father and his failure to provide a model of masculinity, through either action or absence.

Freud proposes that paranoia is the response of the subject to some outbreak of homoerotic feeling, and that the pathological products of paranoia (delusions) are his attempts at repressing this impulse. A Freudian reading of *Maud* must therefore attempt to explain the speaker's paranoia in light of this theory of homoerotic wishes. A psychoanalytic interpretation of the expression of paranoia in *Maud* must view the narrative as an attempted reconciliation between the demands expressed in the speaker's unconscious phantasy and the exigencies of his real life. As Slinn says, the poem is a narrative of subjectivity and "reference to objects [is] more a matter of internalised symbolic action than a gesture towards narrative realism" (1991 82). The speaker of *Maud* narrates both the enactment of a paranoid position in 'real life' and the aetiology of that paranoia in his unconscious life. The events the speaker describes are a kind of compulsive repetition of his infantile homoerotic crisis through cathexis and projection, and always mediated by his fixated libido, his ambivalence towards his father, his insecure masculine identity and the materials available to him in his environment.

Just as the speaker narrates his experience of the four Freudian paranoid states, he also dramatises the psychic processes that underlie them. Using the speaker's perceptions of and relations to each of the three main characters who inhabit his 'real life' we can see that they always respond in some way to his psychic dis-ease. Each paranoid delusion represents an attempt at repressing his homoerotic fantasies and resolving them; each reveals and repeats his failure. The wish at the heart of each

delusion is the homoerotic proposition, "I love him", and every relationship he forms or believes he has formed is a defense against this proposition. According to Freud there are four possible defenses against this wish, corresponding to the four paranoid states of erotomania, jealousy, persecution and megalomania, and each one finds a place in *Maud*, at least in the psychic economy of the speaker. His erotomanic delusion is centred on Maud; his jealous delusion is centred on the rival and Maud; his persecution delusion involves Maud's brother; and his megalomania is a thread which runs through all these relationships and finally finds expression in his attitude to war and death. In fact, these other people constitute a kind of pseudocommunity for the speaker. A pseudocommunity is "an organisation of hypothetical relationships between the paranoid and other persons" (Hutt and Gibby 278). The paranoiac bases these imaginary relationships on fragments of other people's behaviour, and in fact other people exist for the paranoiac as little more than externalised representations of his own motives and intentions. The pseudocommunity in *Maud* consists of the figures of Maud, her brother and the rival. They play double roles in the poem, so to speak, first as actors relevant to his present social and paranoid position and second as embodied projections of the speaker's own infantile libidinal impulses.

According to Freud (1911 449), erotomania contradicts the proposition "I love him" with the assertion "I love her", which is then projected outward to become "she loves me". As in other delusional schemes there is a chain of conscious and unconscious ideation: I love him (unconscious), I love her (repression, unconscious), she loves me (unconscious projection and displacement), I notice that she loves me (conscious), I love her (conscious). Thus, while erotomania presents itself behaviourally as a pattern of obsessive pursuit, this pursuit is in fact a response to the belief that the pursuer is himself the love object of the pursued. Erotomania should not be mistaken for the single-minded pursuit of a romantic other; its key feature is the imagined reciprocity of love and desire. If Freud's analysis applies to the speaker of *Maud,* we should expect that the speaker's words (the monologue) describe the conscious processes of erotomania but also obliquely reveal the unconscious motivations. The first conscious behaviour of the erotomaniac is, according to Freud, to notice that the woman concerned loves him. He is thus charged with

providing evidence and explanations which support his contention that he is loved by the other, particularly in the face of the other's apparent indifference, and his interpretive strategies should be understood in terms of this need. He may read the other's behaviour as signs of love, he may misconstrue the intent behind the other's actions and he may ignore evidence that disproves his assertion that he is loved. Once the speaker has 'proved' that he is loved, he can then reply, "I love her".

Can the speaker's relationship to Maud rightly be called erotomania? The *DSM-III-R* states:

> The delusion usually concerns idealized romantic love and spiritual union rather than sexual attraction. The person about whom this conviction is held is usually of a higher status . . . Efforts to contact the object of the delusion, through telephone calls, letters, gifts, visits, and even surveillance and stalking are common . . . Some people with this disorder, particularly males, come into conflict with the law in their efforts to pursue the object of their delusion, or in a misguided effort to 'rescue' him or her from some imagined danger. (199)

The speaker certainly idealises Maud ("And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet" [I.475]). Maud is of a higher status ("Your father has wealth well-gotten and I am nameless and poor" [I.119]). He manages to find numerous occasions to meet or observe her ("Whom but Maud should I meet?" [I.200]). He wants to defend her honour ("and would die/ To save from some slight shame one simple girl" [I.642-3]) and he certainly finds himself in conflict with the law after he has killed Maud's brother.

Behaviourally the speaker fits the *DSM-III-R* criteria of erotomania, but then so would many lovers. Is the relationship between Maud and the speaker a narrative of a romance or a narrative of a delusion? Certainly many earlier critics read the poem as a narrative of a romantic plot of thwarted love, star-crossed lovers and, in some cases, redemption (for example, see Patricia Ball and Lynn O'Brien). However, later critics have problematised this interpretation, pointing out the speaker's propensity to exaggerate and distort the actuality and frequency of encounters between himself and Maud, and thereby calling into question the whole nature of their relationship. For instance, the speaker refers to the time when he "kissed her slender hand,/ She took the kiss sedately" (I.424-5), then later "that long loving kiss" (I. 656), but in

Part Two he recalls a time when "We stood tranced in long embraces/ mixt with kisses" (II.148-9). Which of the speaker's memories is correct, or are they all simply "a juggle born of the brain" (II.90)? No other critic goes as far as Marilyn Kurata does in asserting that the relationship is entirely a construct of the speaker's mind. Without actually calling it erotomania, Kurata reads the lover's plot as purely that:

> A close reading that distinguishes between actual events and their emotional reverberations in the mind of the speaker forces one to question the reality of the romance, as well as the character of the beloved, as presented by a neurotic, egoistic, and desperate lover. This reevaluation of the central romantic relationship in the poem significantly affects a reading of the poem as a whole and of the ending in particular. (369-370)

According to Kurata, the speaker misinterprets the significance and meaning of all his encounters with Maud, which in fact amount to no more than minor social encounters in which Maud behaves strictly as propriety would dictate and with a fair deal of restraint and formal politeness. The speaker embellishes these encounters, and dwells on them, using them as the basis for imaginary encounters which he later has trouble distinguishing from reality ("My dream? do I dream of bliss?" [I.686]). The speaker's behaviour is consonant with what Freud describes as "the task of creating perceptions of a kind corresponding with the new reality" (1924 280).

However, while Kurata deals with the question of whether Maud loves the speaker, she does not take up the question of whether he loves *her*, a question crucial to psychoanalytic interpretation of paranoia. The speaker's first response to Maud is not love but rather "I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch of spleen" (I.87), finding her to have "neither savour nor salt" (I.77). Indeed it is not until he notices that she 'loves' him that he responds in kind. This occurs when she touches his hand in greeting and then "a delicate spark" (I.204) begins to grow in him. These lines however only describe the conscious processes of erotomania. Underlying these are unconscious motives signaled in the speaker's dream of Maud (I.88-96) in which she comes to him.

For an interpretation of Maud's unconscious meaning for the speaker we may turn to the critics who treat Maud as sign. These critics argue that Maud represents

something in the psychic economy of the speaker, and that he pursues her in order to attain it. Such analyses focus on the value Maud represents to the speaker: as cultural capital for Herbert Tucker (1993 183), as a personification of Woman for Lougy (412) and as signifier of the absent other for Slinn (1991 83). For instance, Tucker points out that Maud is "a poise, a prize, a place" dramatised by the "metonymic displacement, from Maud's proper self to her properties" (183). Another interpretation is closer to home, so to speak, and is elaborated in Freud's essay "Contributions to the Psychology of Love: A Special Type of Choice of Object Made by Men" (1910 192-202) in which Freud suggests that in some particular cases the love objects chosen by men "are above everything mother-surrogates" (1910 197). The 'real life' figure of Maud is presented in the image of the boy's first heterosexual object choice after the homosexual phase. I don't love him, I love her. Who? Mother. Consider the similarities between the speaker's mother and Maud. The speaker's mother is dead, and, in the speaker's mind, Maud, "Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike" (I.95) occupies a realm of dreams and death too. The speaker is constantly confronted by and has to account for the disparity between Maud herself in "the morning of life" (I.167) and "in the light of the sun she loves" (I.860) and his own tendency to imagine her in "the sleep of death" (I.526). When the brother is brought into the relationship, at least as it signifies to the speaker, there is a double projection, Maud as good object (mother) and her brother as bad object (father), supported by a rhetorical splitting of the two. This is achieved imaginatively by making Maud "only the child of her mother" (I.483) and to her brother "nothing akin" (I.481), right up to the point when he can declare "There is none like her, none" (I.600). In fact, just as a sister and a brother exist in a special relationship, so does a mother exist in a similar special relationship to the child: there is literally no other like her. As Freud points out, the search for some replacement for the irreplaceable is never to be found in any surrogate (1910 197).

The choice of mother for heterosexual object, while it may be an obvious choice for the boy, is fraught with difficulties which are repeated in the speaker's relationship with Maud. For a start, the mother owes loyalty to the father. Secondly, one of the psychic consequences of desire for the mother is castration anxiety. The primal infidelity which is an aspect of the speaker's relationship with Maud is

mirrored in the speaker's knowledge that Maud loves her brother ("I see she cannot but love him" [I.752]). He also suspects that Maud is acting as her brother's agent in some plot against him ("A face of tenderness might be feigned" etc.[I.241]). Castration anxiety is manifest in troubled musings about Maud. The speaker is throughout the poem aware of the danger of pursuing Maud: "she may bring me a curse" (I.73), "would I flee from the cruel madness of love" (I.156), "What if . . . /She meant to weave me a snare" (I.212-14). In fact the split the speaker desires between Maud and her brother is never entirely complete despite all the speaker's protestations. One sign of the failure to split the two is the speaker's un-selfconconscious representation of Maud and her brother as essentially similar. For instance, the brother is frequently referred to as the Sultan; Maud has a "delicate Arab arch of her feet"(I.551); he has "barbarous opulence, jewel-thick" (I.455), she "an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full" (I.85); he plots against the speaker, she sleeps in a "little oak-room" (I.497) behind a gate on which a lion "ramps" (swindles) (I.495). It is arguable that the brother looms as a more significant presence in the speaker's mind than Maud herself. While the speaker imagines Maud as physically dead and ethereal as his mother, the brother has a disturbing physical presence, "a broad-blown comeliness, red and white/ And six feet two, as I think, he stands" (I.452-3). The speaker longs to be recognised by him, to be his equal and it is the brother's refusal to treat him as such that particularly incenses the speaker. In fact the brother "gorgonises" (I.464) the speaker, turns him to stone and leaves him frozen in his subordinate pose, unable to act on his desire for Maud/mother in the brother's presence just as the Oedipal son is prevented from acting on his desire by castration anxiety. When the speaker finally does act it is with terrible consequences, as the sound of Maud's "passionate cry,/ A cry for a brother's blood" (II.33-4) rings in his ears like an uncanny echo of his mother's "shrill-edged shriek" (I.16) for his father.

The speaker asks, "Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread?" (I.330). There are two ways of viewing the young lord who is the speaker's rival for Maud's hand. Of course, Maud's brother is in one sense already a rival for Maud's affections ("I see she cannot but love him"), so it is in a somewhat over-determined fashion that a young lord is introduced to play this role. Freud suggests of some men that "[n]ot

until they have some occasion for jealousy does their passion reach its height and the woman acquire her full value to them" (1910 194). According to Freud this necessity of there being a rival stems from the structure of reality in which masculine heterosexuality is achieved, the family drama. In this structure, the injured third party is the father, and the rival the son who incestuously desires his mother. The rival figure manufactured in Oedipal masturbation fantasies is an "idealised image he forms of himself as brought to equality with his father by growing to manhood" (1910 199). We can therefore read the relationship between Maud, her brother and the rival as replication of mother, father and self, in which the rival is a projection of the speaker's own idealised self-construct, come into manhood proper through the prescribed rituals of Victorian society. The second way is to read him is following Freud's papers on jealousy in which he proposes that the perceived attraction of the woman to the rival is a projection of the jealous male's attraction to the rival. That is a refutation of the proposition "*I* love him" with the assertion "*she* loves him". I think both readings of the rival/speaker relationship in *Maud* are possible.

What evidence is there in the poem for seeing the rival as an idealised projection of and by the speaker? Of his characteristics, the speaker finds the rival is "Rich in the grace all women desire,/ Strong in the power that all men adore" (I.342-3). Is it any wonder that the speaker worries that Maud is attracted to the rival ("Maud could be gracious too, no doubt/ To a Lord, a captain, a padded shape" [I.357-8]); he too is attracted to him, not in any particular sense but as an epitome of Victorian man. As the speaker sees it, his 'rightful' claim to Maud is being usurped by an interloper who seems on the face of it to fulfill all the requisite qualities of masculine desirability and marital expectation, qualities he too would have possessed if not for the failures of his father. The young lord's history successfully fulfils the intergenerational transmission of wealth that the speaker missed out on. He is heir to a mining fortune bequeathed by his grandfather ("his coal all turned into gold" [I.340]). The specific details of inheritance ("he crept from a gutted mine" [I.338]) replicate in reverse the speaker's father's path of no return into the "ghastly pit" (I.5). Because he is possessed of wealth and position the young lord has the approbation of Maud's brother ("Blithe would her brother's acceptance be" [I.356]) and unlimited access to Maud. For instance, he is a welcome guest at the grand

dinner "to the men of many acres" (I.818), where "every eye but mine will glance/ At Maud in all her glory" (I.822-3). This phrase indicates that the rival has both the authority of social position and the authority of the gaze, a metaphor for masculine authority over women. The speaker has neither and is reduced to lingering in the garden. Furthermore, the rival's social capital is commensurate with moral capital. His claim to Maud is through an alliance contrived by Maud's brother which, in essence, does not differ from the speaker's own claims through half-remembered contracts sealed over a drink between Maud's and his own father, and later sanctified by her mother's deathbed wishes. The speaker also seeks the brother's approbation, and indeed requires it in order to meet the terms of the social contract which formalises and legitimises male-female relationships.

The "babe-faced" (II.13) rival is also "a little lazy lover" (I.796) and a "languid fool" (II.19). If the rival is a projection of the speaker's own self, the feminisation of the rival also makes sense because the rival is not just an idealised self-image, but also a composite of the speaker's own insecurities which dominate at the homosexual stage. The rival's effeminised subordination to the brother ("And the bird of prey will hover,/ And the titmouse hope to win her/ With his chirrup at her ear" [I.814-6]) reflects the Oedipal son's relation to the father, an attitude of homoerotic fixation prior to the adoption of a true masculine heterosexual position achieved through identification with his father. This position is homoerotic because, while desiring the mother, the son also desires to be the father, and places a premium on the male sexual organ (hence his fear of losing his own). However, in the case of the speaker and his father the models have been inadequate to the successful outcome of the drama: the father has not been a good father and the son has not attained a masculine sense of identity from him and remains fixated in the homosexual stage. Thus he characterises himself too as "languid and base" (I.179). Rather than acting in a positive manner to vanquish his rival he too is passive, weak and filled with doubt. The speaker's own inadequacies are manifest in his portrayal of his rival, firstly because the situation as it appears to him is simply a compulsive replaying of his own psychic drama in which he has been inadequate, and secondly because he has no psychic blueprint of masculinity with which to fashion an ideal self. The languor of the rival mirrors the lassitude of the narcissistic subject who

chooses a object which "lies in every way nearer and is easier to put into effect than the move towards the other sex" (Freud, 1922 241).

The third figure in the speaker's pseudocommunity I have barely mentioned so far is that of the brother/father. Few critics attend to the figure of the brother in *Maud*, and when they do it is usually as an aside. For instance, Alison Pease refers to the murder of the brother as settling "a private vengeance" (113). However, the brother is the key figure in the speaker's persecution delusion, that particular type of delusion which is most associated with the paranoid state. The *DSM-III-R* definition of persecutory type delusion is:

> This is the most common type. The persecutory delusion may be simple or elaborate, and usually involves a single theme or series of connected themes, such as being conspired against, cheated, spied upon, followed, poisoned or drugged, maliciously maligned, harassed, or obstructed in the pursuit of long-term goals. Small slights may be exaggerated and become the focus of the delusional system. In certain cases the focus of the delusion is some injustice that must be remedied . . .People with persecutory delusions are often resentful and angry, and may resort to violence against those they believe are hurting them. (200)

By these criteria the speaker of *Maud* certainly displays a paranoid personality, the focus of which is ultimately Maud's brother. However, this speaker represents a world where almost everyone is a potential cheat or persecutor - "we are villains all" (I.17). Examples of villainy include speculators, tradesmen, companies, ruffians, merchants, doctors, Maud herself, lawyers, his own servants ("ever ready to slander and steal" [I.119]), scientists, poets, politicians, women generally, preachers, and statesmen.[1] An inordinately long list! It is also in the persecution delusion that some of the most well-known clinical symptoms are seen. For example, Starker's characteristics of paranoia (suspiciousness, externalisation, grandiosity, rigidity, misinterpretation, aloofness and aggressiveness [26-27]) are all characteristics displayed by the speaker in *Maud*. In his relationship with Maud's brother, the

[1] As an aside I would note this manifests another aspect of paranoia that Freud has pointed out, to wit "a process of decomposition of this kind is very characteristic of paranoia" (1911 434). By this he means that it is a common tendency in paranoid delusions for persecutory figures to multiply in number. However he explains that these figures are "all duplications of one and the same important relationship" (434).

speaker is by turns suspicious ("I know/ He has plotted against me in this,/That he plots against me still" [I.762-4]), grandiose ("Scorned, to be scorned by one that I scorn" [I.444]) and aloof ("her brother, from whom I keep aloof" [I.235]).

It seems that we should have no difficulty at all in stating that the speaker suffers from a persecution delusion, and again I will turn to Freud for an analysis of the delusion. I have already explained the Freudian schema that preceding the object choice of mother in the Oedipal drama is a stage of narcissism, in which the boy's erotic choice falls upon his own genitals. This narcissistic stage evolves into the homosexual stage when the boy seeks an object that has the same genitals as he has. The choice here may be the father, or a brother. Normally the libidinal fantasy moves from wanting to have the father to wanting to be the father, that is, to wanting the mother. The Oedipal stage is thus structured between homosexual narcissism and heterosexual masculine identification. The homoeroticism of the speaker is projected onto the rival, who, with Maud's brother, " lingers late/With a roystering company" (I. 502-3). It is the company of men the speaker most lacks, as he puts it "Living alone in an empty house" (I.257). As Freud notes, "when a wish-phantasy makes its appearance, our business is to bring it into connection with some frustration, some privation in real life" (1911 442). The absence of social outlet and sense of fellowship with men may constitute such a privation. The speaker's withdrawal from the world is evidenced in his determination to "make [his] heart as a millstone, set [his] face as a flint" (I.31) and later he refers to himself as having "a heart half-turned to stone" (I.267). This withdrawal also indicates the undoing of homosexual sublimations: homoerotic impulses are normatively sublimated to social relations, and the undoing of social relations returns the libido to its original course. It may be that the prolonged absence of homosocial contact has acted as a dam to his feelings, one that breaks on the appearance of Maud and her brother. Tucker notes the significance of homosocial bonds to masculine identity when he claims the hero often "dwell[s] on the other men in her life, who are always described in greater detail than Maud herself, for the simple reason that their opinions, doings and prospects are of greater account" (1993 183).

If Freud is correct in his theory of paranoia, then some outburst of homosexual libido ("I love him") has occasioned a struggle against it, which has produced in turn the pathological phenomena (delusions). The proposition "I love him" is, in the case of a persecution delusion, countered with the assertion "I hate him", which is then projected and received as an external perception ("he hates me"). As I noted in Chapter One, according to Freud:

> The relation between the patient and his persecutor can be reduced to a simple formula. It appears that the person to whom the delusion ascribes so much power and influence, in whose hands all the threads of the conspiracy converge, is either, if he is definitely named, identical with some one who played an equally important part in the patient's emotional life before his illness, or else is easily recognisable as a substitute for him. The intensity of the emotion is projected outwards in the shape of external power, while its quality is changed into the opposite. The person who is now hated and feared as a persecutor was at one time loved and honoured. The main purpose of the persecution constructed by the patient's delusion is to serve as a justification for the change in his emotional attitude. (1911 424)

It is not clear in *Maud* that the brother was once 'loved and honoured', except insofar as the speaker remembers an affectionate childhood relationship with Maud and a friendly relationship between their fathers, and one might expect that this amity would extend to Maud's brother. However nothing in the poem precludes us from deciding that the brother is a "substitute" for some other person who played an important part in the speaker's emotional life.

In his analysis of the case of Judge Schreber, Freud explains the Judge's fixation on his doctor, Fleschig, as follows:

> The patient having been reminded by the physician of his brother or of his father, having rediscovered them in him, there will be nothing to wonder at if, in certain circumstances, a longing for the surrogate figure reappears in him and operates with a violence that is only to be explained in the light of its origin and primary significance. (1911 431)

A process of transference occurs, in which a new object is invested with the emotional cathexis properly attached to another figure, and the new object, in reality indifferent to the patient, plays the role of psychic surrogate. Who does Maud's brother remind the speaker of? Obviously Maud's father is one answer. Maud's

brother not only "sits . . . here in his father's chair" (I. 466), but he also to some extent fulfills a paternal role towards Maud. When the speaker claims Maud's brother had "Chid her, and forbid her to speak" (I.746), he forgets that this is not only the brother's right but his obligation to a sister whose "mother is mute in her grave" (I.159) and whose "father is ever in London" (I.160). Maud also recalls how he nursed her through illness. From the first encounter between them, the speaker associates the brother with his father and treats him accordingly: "When have I bowed to her father . . . but not to her brother I bowed" (I.114-6). The speaker metaphorically continues associating the brother with his father. For example, the speaker recalls "Viziers nodding together/ In some Arabian night" (I.295-6): his and Maud's fathers. Thereafter the brother is referred to as the Sultan twice. The brother thus metaphorically fills the position of father, particularly when the paternal implications of Sultanship are taken into account.

The speaker's perception "he hates me" is in fact an externalisation and projection of the unconscious thought "I hate him". When the poem opens, the speaker is in a frozen position towards society. He has neither "hope nor trust" (I.30), he has buried himself in himself (I.75), and "a morbid hate and horror have grown/ Of a world in which [he has] hardly mixt,/And a morbid eating lichen fixt/ On a heart half turned to stone (I.264-7). As Freud says, "The patient has withdrawn from the persons in his environment and from the external world generally the libidinal cathexis which he has hitherto directed on to them. Thus all things have become indifferent and irrelevant to him" (1911 456). This "dead body of hate" (I.780) is a "dead weight" (I.782) on the speaker's hopes for happiness. The paranoiac's solution is to rebuild the world by the work of his delusions in which he recaptures a relation to people and things in the world. The hatred the speaker attributes to the brother is an externalisation of the hatred and hostility he himself feels towards the world. Only by attributing this hatred to another in an act of psychic cleansing can he begin a process of recovering a relation to the world. For instance in the encounter between the speaker and the brother, the speaker insists that he longed to "give him the grasp of fellowship" (I.459), that he manifested a loving attitude, but the brother's "essences turned the live air sick" (I.454). All hostility is located in the brother here and "the bitter springs of anger and fear" (I.378) are

removed from the speaker and displaced onto the brother. Ironically this hostility can rebound on the speaker as his actions in the face of the perceived persecution produce real hostility in his persecutor ("he may live to hate me yet" [I.447]). He begins with imaginary enemies and ends up with real ones as his actions create real conflict, culminating in the duel.

After he perceives that the brother hates him, the speaker then proceeds to "miracle up" (Freud, 1911 456) a credible motive for the brother's hatred, that is, he seeks an explanation for this hatred he perceives and which can justify the speaker's own hatred ("scorned, to be scorned by one that I scorn" [I.444]). The motive he lights upon is that the brother hates him because Maud loves him. The brother's function in the speaker's paranoid delusion is to obstruct the relationship between him and Maud. To the speaker, Maud's brother is a "blight/On [his] fresh hope" (I.785-6). Thus along with the association of Maud's brother with Maud's father in their de-facto relationship, he also assumes the archetypal Oedipal role of the father in the family drama. The Oedipal father is the main impediment to the son's desire for the mother, and provokes a mixture of rivalry and fear, exactly the attitude the speaker displays towards Maud's brother. I therefore think it safe to say that the brother, through some resemblance either in person or in circumstance to his own father, becomes the focus of the speaker's compulsive replay of the Oedipal drama, and *in the speaker's mind* performs the same function as the generic father. The brother is thus characterised as having all the qualities of the 'bad parent' (not the real father but the Oedipal father) – near omnipotent power and degraded moral character. In the poem the former quality is represented by the brother's gorgonising stare and the latter by the speaker's claim the brother is away in town where "fulsome Pleasure clog[s] him, and drown[s] / His heart in the gross mud-honey" (I.540-1).[2] The Oedipal relation between the two is further expressed by the images of the speaker trespassing on the brother's property - "I was crossing his lands" (I.449).

[2] The phrase "mud-honey" contrasts with the idealistic portrayal of Maud and is part of a general ambivalence towards female sexuality that is also apparent in the jealousy poems in Chapter Four.

However, according to Freud, this feeling of hate is a repression proper of the unconscious impulse "I love him". Admittedly it is hard to reconcile the speaker's vitriolic outpourings with an attitude of love. Moving away from Freud a little, I would suggest that the speaker's longing is a longing for a masculine identity on a par with the brother's. The speaker loves the brother for what he has and his position. It is not finally the rival, who also manifests all the weaknesses of the speaker himself, but the brother who is the idealised masculine model in the poem. I have already mentioned his physical appearance and his paternal authority. He also has social position, wealth, ambition, Maud's love and affection and a father. All these are attributes the speaker would have had were it not for his father's failure, albeit due to "a swindler's lie" (I.56).[3] All these attributes give the brother moral authority quite distinct from any of his actions. He may smell "of musk and insolence" (I.234) and spend his time carousing, but he is still a man of influence and significance in the eyes of "the men of many acres" (I.818). Of course this version of masculine identity is only desired with a profound ambivalence by the speaker because it is in a sense a betrayal of his father, and this may be what provokes the psychic defense ("I do not love him", etc.) of the persecution delusion.

There is a thread of megalomania running throughout the poem and within each delusion. This is not surprising according to Freud, because the paranoiac is fixated in the narcissistic stage of over-self-estimation. Thus Freud finds that "megalomania is essentially of an infantile nature and that, as development proceeds, it is sacrificed to social considerations" (1911 451). Freud explains that in megalomania the libido is detached from the world and attached to the subject's ego, resulting in self-aggrandizement. In the case of megalomania, the paranoiac rejects the proposition "I love him" with the psychologically equivalent assertions, "I do not love at all" and "I love only myself". These assertions are equivalent, because the libidinal cathexis detached from the world must go somewhere, so it rebounds onto the ego. Thus megalomania has a purpose in defending the subject's ego in the context of his other delusions too as, for instance, it allows the subject to account for the other's hatred of him in a persecutory delusion or love for him in an erotomanic delusion by

[3] Even this claim is problematic. For instance the speaker also says, "Your father has wealth well-gotten" (I.119) which suggests that Maud's father is not a swindler.

supporting the ideation that he is important enough to justify the other's attention. At the same time, a megalomaniac delusion can also 'stand alone' so to speak and, in order to illustrate this, I will concentrate my analysis on the speaker's attitude to war in Part Three since it is distinct from the other relationships and delusions already discussed.

Much critical debate has surrounded the speaker's attitude to war in Part Three. For instance, Lougy feels that war represents the real face of insanity (426); Tucker notes "the hero's defection into lobotomised jingoism" (1993 192) and Lynn O'Brien sees war as "a metaphor for male growth" (180) in which the speaker's willingness to sacrifice his life for his nation establishes his link to the real world. The defense of war in Part Three seems to represent a change in the speaker's attitude towards war. In Part One he is certainly militaristic. "Is it peace or war? better war! loud war by land and by sea,/ War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones." (I.47-8). War here is envisaged as retributive and revolutionary, its goal to annihilate the corrupt society he blames for his ills. It is of no personal consequence to him ("Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?" [I.147]), simply a means of obliterating his enemies, who are legion. His wish for "a man to rise in me,/That the man I am may cease to be" (I.396-7) is a wish for a vengeful and retributive God to destroy the world in which he is of no consequence. However, his attitude to the world in Part Three seems so different that many critics have found it to be unbelievable. In Part Three he seems to take on a sacrificial role in a fantasy of a redemptive war when he embraces "the doom assigned" (III.59). Now war is constructive rather than simply destructive, because, in the speaker's mind at least, "It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill (III.57).

Has the speaker re-sublimated his libidinal impulse towards narcissism and homosexuality in social bonds or has he finally collapsed into absolute egoism and solipsism? O'Brien reads it as the former: "His decision is a manifestation of his nascent concern for others and his willingness to sacrifice his life for his nation establishes his link to the real world. When contrasted with the self-centredness which earlier imprisoned him, his new attitude seems a positive development" (181). However, Lougy sees his attitude in Part Three as revealing "nothing less than a

voice that believes itself to be the voice of God speaking to Himself" (426). I believe an analysis based on megalomania and the speaker's past pattern of behaviour will show Lougy's analysis to be closer to the mark than O'Brien's.

At the start of the poem the speaker seems to be in the grip of a megalomaniac delusion in the sense that he asserts he loves no one. He has made a pact with himself to withdraw from the world (to "bury myself in myself" [I.75]). He also credits himself with extraordinary insight into the despicable world he perceives around him (perhaps because the world he perceives is an externalisation of his own despicable nature). He feels himself not subject to the laws of the world but only to "the law that I made" (I.55). One consequence of this withdrawal is to wonder whether there will be love for him. As he surrenders to his obsession with Maud he begins to recapture a sense of participation in the world ("But if *I* be dear to someone else,/ Then I should be to my self more dear" [I.531-2]) and his bitterness towards a world which does not esteem him begins to abate. This attitude is consonant with Freud's observation that megalomania is at its weakest in the grip of obsessive love, in which the subject is prepared to lose himself in the other. However, the fragile relation with the world that the speaker manages to achieve through his delusions collapses in Part Two when he kills Maud's brother and flees in guilty horror. Upon the death of Maud's brother the speaker's pseudocommunity disappears and the delusions he has constructed around them are no longer viable. The speaker is "left for ever alone" (II.135). He withdraws into himself, reenacting the attitude he held towards others at the start of the poem. This withdrawal of affect leaves him feeling dead ("Dead, long dead" [II.239]), a feeling he projects onto others just as he projected hostility onto them in Part One ("Ever about me the dead men go" [II.256]). He does not love and the world does not love him. He no longer has a use for Maud ("He may take her now" [II.305]). He also revises his guilt over the death of Maud's brother ("if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,/ Would he have that hole in his side?" [II.319-20). By attributing blame externally in this way he repeats the psychic defenses of Part One, and also dissociates love of Mammon from himself. In a sense this is another purification ritual.

Then, as in Part One, the speaker begins again to try to construct some relation to the world using what is available to him in his present environment. This is no longer Maud and her family but dreams ("She seemed to divide in a dream from a band of the blest" [III.10]) and rumour ("rumour of battle grew" [III.29]). Again he selectively picks the evidence of his senses to support a new attitude and interpretation of events. His newly constructed guilt-free self is the basis of his idealisation of the world in Part Three. Just as he has put aside his covetous longing for Maud's brother he is able to perceive the world in the same way, "a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold" (III.39). The world is still little more than a metaphor for and projection of his own motives and compulsive replaying of his psychic drama. Having formulated a justification for his actions (the good world needs me), the speaker can then embrace his role, which is ironically described as "the purpose of God" (III.59). An added bonus is that lawful and moral war offers an opportunity for self-aggrandizement in the "sudden making of splendid names" (III.47). He is finally able to become the hero in his own psychic drama, to enact the "Death and . . . Honour that cannot die" (I.177) of Maud's martial song. However, in finally insisting "I do not love him, I love only myself", the speaker of *Maud* simply reprises the megalomanic delusion with which he began his monologue.

As this analysis has shown, a reading of *Maud* ordered by the Freudian explanation of paranoia produces an interpretation of the poem that is both coherent and novel, and that does not necessarily preclude other, different interpretations. The particular advantage of using paranoia theory as a filter for the poem is that it explains certain aspects of the poem which have not been widely considered by other critics. Furthermore, the two texts complement each other well; nothing in the poem contradicts Freud's theory of paranoia, and nothing in Freud's theory of paranoia contradicts what is in the poem. However, as the next chapter will illustrate, there is not always such an easy relationship between psychoanalytic models and literary representations of paranoia.

CHAPTER THREE

FORECLOSURE OF THE PHALLUS IN BROWNING'S " 'CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME'"

This chapter explores the dramatisation of paranoia in Robert Browning's "'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came'". It undertakes this investigation with reference to clinical definitions of paranoia and the Lacanian analysis of paranoia. It uses the former to identify the paranoia and the latter to interpret it. The key Lacanian concepts, defined and used in the chapter, are 'foreclosure' and 'Name-of-the-Father'. The chapter argues the thesis that the speaker of "Childe Roland" manifests a paranoid subject position throughout the poem, but that the resolution of the poem problematises the conditioning of the subject under phallocentrism, leaving open the question of the speaker's continuing paranoia.

"Childe Roland" is a different representation of paranoid processes from *Maud*. For a start, the speaker has no pseudocommunity around which to structure and elaborate his delusions, unless one counts the personae he apparently encounters on his quest (a cripple, a nag, a few faces in a sheet of flames) and those who inhabit his memories (the band of knights). There is even some doubt as to whether these creatures exist at all or are simply projections from the speaker's mind. Furthermore, there is no clear-cut pattern of specific type delusions such as erotomania or jealousy and only a general sense of persecution and megalomania, neither centred on specific figures. On what clinical basis can the speaker of "Childe Roland" be considered paranoid then? "Childe Roland" seems to dramatise paranoia as attitude rather than as delusion. The *DSM-III-R* actually distinguishes between two types of paranoia, Delusional (Paranoid) Disorder and Paranoid Personality Disorder, while noting that the two may be overlaid on one another. Delusional Paranoid Disorder describes paranoia as psychotic delusion (as in *Maud*); Paranoid Personality Disorder describes paranoia as an internal characteristic mode of perception and behaviour, which is what we see in "Childe Roland".

The *DSM-III-R* describes the features of paranoid personality disorder as:

> A pervasive and unwarranted tendency . . . to interpret the actions of people as deliberately demeaning or threatening. Almost invariably there is a general expectation of being exploited or harmed by others in some way. Frequently, [the] person will question, without justification, the loyalty or trustworthiness of friends or associates . . ..Confronted with a new situation, the person may read hidden demeaning or threatening meanings into benign remarks or events . . ..Often these people are easily slighted and quick to react with anger or counterattack . . ..People with this disorder are typically hypervigilant and take precautions against any perceived threat. They tend to avoid blame even when it is warranted . . ..When people with this disorder find themselves in a new situation, they intensely and narrowly search for confirmation of their expectations, with no appreciation of the total context. Their final conclusion is usually precisely what they expected in the first place. (337)

An associated feature of this disorder is "an inordinate fear of losing their independence or the power to shape events according to their own wishes [and] display[ing] an excessive need to be self-sufficient, to the point of egocentricity and exaggerated self-importance" (338).

According to this clinical definition, from the opening stanza of "Childe Roland" the speaker exhibits a paranoid mentality, "My first thought was, he lied in every word" (i; references are to stanza number). The speaker expects the cripple to lie to him, to misdirect him and to laugh at him. He betrays the ideas of reference described in Chadwick's paranoid ideation as "I do deserve it, I am that important, People would go to all that trouble on my account" (15). The cripple has no motive in being there except to "waylay with his lies, ensnare/ All travellers" (ii). The speaker's conception of others is shallow and he takes no account of their own intents or purposes; others exist only insofar as they affect or interfere with him. He, in other words, is *their* reason for being. This grandiosity or narcissism is a familiar component of the Freudian analysis of paranoia. We can also note the particular phrasing which describes the cripple: he is "set" there (ii). This phrase implies that the cripple is an agent of a higher power and suggests a wider conspiracy against the speaker. There is a strong sense of what Chadwick, Birchwood and Trower call "punishment paranoia"

(138) running through the poem. The obvious metaphor for this in the poem is the horse who must "be wicked to deserve such pain" (xiv). By analogy, the speaker who experiences similar pain must also be wicked and deserve the suffering he endures.

The speaker generally anticipates harm, as witnessed by the malevolent intent he imputes to all the objects he encounters. For instance, a machine he spies is "Tophet's tool" (xxiv), a hellish instrument for harrowing not flax but "men's bodies" (xxiv). A stream is not a stream but "a bath/ For the fiend's glowing hoof" (xix). Expecting hostility everywhere he is unsurprised to encounter it, as exemplified by the imagery of snares, traps and frames (for example, "to see the plain catch its estray" [viii], "toads in a poisoned tank/Or wild-cats in a red-hot cage" [xxii]). Nothing in his environment is benign or innocent; all is laden with significance. A bird does not simply fly by, but is "perchance the guide I sought" (xxvii). The speaker spears something as he fords the river. It may have been a water-rat, but to the speaker "it sounded like a baby's shriek" (xxi). The significance of each object is exterior to the object itself; the speaker applies it to the object as part of his search for determinacy and certainty. This behaviour accords with Chadwick's observation that paranoid individuals select and distort input to confirm their paranoid ideation (2). The speaker's descriptive account tells the reader more about his internal perceptive strategies and value system than the landscape it purports to describe.

As a paranoiac, the speaker moves in a world of partial contexts which are dramatised in the poem as sudden shifts in the landscape, so that, to him, each scene appears separate and distinct from the previous scene: "no sooner was I fairly found/Pledged to the plain . . . [Than] the safe road [was] gone" (ix) and "the plain had given place/All round to mountains...How thus they had surprised me" (xxviii). As perceived by the speaker the landscape is a series of discrete vistas: a highway, a plain, a river, a mews, stubbed ground, a marsh, a bog, mountains, the Tower. The speaker notices that there is no apparent connecting or ordering principle, but he attributes this disjunctiveness to external factors, locating the source of the ever-changing landscape outside himself. In fact the landscape's arrhythmia might simply be a consequence of

the speaker's perceptive strategies, which are governed by either the speaker's inability or his unwillingness to perceive continuity in the landscape. If the disjunctions in the landscape are read as a narrative of external reality, then they have the effect of enhancing the speaker's (and the reader's) powerlessness and confusion. If, however, the landscape is a reflection of the speaker's paranoid perceptive strategies, they have an opposite purpose: the speaker perceives space and time as separate scenes in order to enhance his feeling of control. The speaker of "Childe Roland" has an artificially narrow perceptive field, with respect to both time and space. He exists purely in the here and now, devoting his full attention to the present dangers by delimiting perceptions and memories to manageable chunks ("Better this present than a past like that", [xviii]). This strategy is obviously flawed because it also has the effect of leaving him unable to compile a coherent wider context. Nevertheless, it is important to note also that while the landscape appears discontinuous to the speaker, each scene appears qualitatively the same to him. The quality each scene manifests is hostility or antipathy. For example the world and its objects appear to him "malicious" (I), "ominous" (iii), "dreary" (viii), "ignoble' (x), "dismal" (xviii), "spiteful" (xx), "horrid" (xxiii), and "ugly" (xxviii).

For paranoiacs "safety lies in independence and self-reliance. The resulting isolation and limited communication deprives the paranoid [sic] of reality checks that might modify his distorted views. As part of his defensive posture the paranoid [sic] projects blame for mistakes and shortcomings on others" (~~Page~~ 293). Part of the meaning of the poem is the speaker's determination to construct a totalising border between his inner self and the outer environment, which would enable him to resist the experience he feels of not being in control. Any moves the speaker could make towards understanding the wider context are delimited by a strong ego defense in the form of an avowal that he expects to fail in his quest ("just to fail as they, seemed best" [vii]). This kind of declaration is a strategy for avoiding blame, as is his tendency to locate negative characteristics in the enemy. For instance, the speaker tells us the cripple he meets is a liar. However, he prefaces this with the astounding claim "My first thought was" (i). This cannot be the speaker's *first* thought; it is

simply the first thought he tells us. While telling us that the cripple is a liar the speaker also reveals that he too may be a liar.

Having determined that the speaker of "Childe Roland" meets the clinical definition of paranoia, at least in terms of narcissism, the expectation of harm and hostility, his tendency to distort information, his desire for certainty and his inability to perceive a wider context, we can now move on to a psychoanalytic investigation of the poem. In *Maud*, intrapsychic processes were managed and expressed through interactions with others, that is, through interpersonal relations with a pseudocommunity. In "Childe Roland" intrapsychic processes are worked out through interactions with a landscape and through the paradigm of a quest. There is no obvious way at first to insert Freud's explanatory proposition "I love him", because there is no clear 'him' to whom the proposition might be directed, nor are there people with whom psychic defenses may be enacted. Harold Bloom, who has written three critical analyses of "Childe Roland", comes closest to a Freudian reading of the poem with his theory of "anxiety of influence" (1973) in which he claims poems are produced as defensive strategies against certain poetic precursors or "father-poets". Motives of love, hatred, jealousy and fear result in various distortions of the precursor poem designed to establish the later poet's 'priority'. Bloom thus reads "Childe Roland" as "a search for the love...[o]f his precursors" (1971 167): in the case of the speaker, 'precursors' refers to the band of brothers and in the case of Browning, it refers to Shelley. Bloom's theory of literary criticism is thus a revision of Freud's Oedipal politics, in which the 'belated' poet struggles against his dominant father-poet in various ways. When the Freudian analysis of paranoia is inserted into Bloom's theory, the homoerotic proposition and the paranoiac reaction to it are directed at the father-poet. In a later analysis Bloom claims that "Roland teaches us that what psychoanalysis calls 'introjection' and 'projection' are figurations for the spiritual processes of identification and apocalyptic rejection that exist at the outer borders of poetry" (Bloom and Munich 143). In the Freudian analysis of paranoia, projection is one of the fundamental mechanisms, so it would seem that Bloom is asserting that *poetry writing* itself is necessarily a paranoid endeavour. Unfortunately, this

conclusion tells us very little about the dramatisation of a paranoid position within a specific text, and indeed Bloom explicitly rejects "the perjorative [name] of paranoia" for the psychic defense dramatised in "Childe Roland" (Bloom and Munich 143).

For Bloom, the father, though repressed or sublimated, is always present, and all poems can be read (or misread) as defenses to the proposition "I love him". In the Lacanian model of paranoia, however, the situation is, unsurprisingly, more complex. To understand the Lacanian explanation of paranoia it is necessary first to understand the Lacanian notion of the subject. A full description of the Lacanian subject is not possible here, but his essay on paranoia, "On a question preliminary to any possible treatment of psychosis" (1957/1977 179-225), also contains a sketch of subjectivity sufficient for understanding the relation between it and paranoia.[1]

Lacan has devised a diagram in which subjectivity rests on a triangle, the points of which are labeled the Other, the ego and the ego's objects. Any disturbance in any of the Other, the ego or the object produces a transformation of the subject. Thus, the structure of this triad is the basis of the condition of the subject. In the 1955-56 seminar, in which the theory was first presented, Lacan indicates that the Other is the Freudian unconscious (215). He also describes the Other as the locus of a question that has remained open and which conditions certain indestructible desires. The question is the question of existence, 'What am I there?' and includes the question of the subject's sex and "his contingency in being...a man or a woman" (194). For Lacan, subjectivity begins with the polar relation between the ego and the primordial object, the mother. In this relation the child is dependent on the mother's love, or in Lacan's famous phrase, on "the desire for her desire" (198). The relation between mother and child institutes the primordial symbolic relation (presence/absence) which is the origin of the repetition compulsion. The repetition compulsion is very important because it establishes the pattern for the subject's ongoing behaviour. The primordial relation between the ego and its objects (the child-mother relation) also begins the

[1] Lacan has written elsewhere on paranoia, most notably in his doctoral dissertation, and has also conducted his own analysis of Schreber, which has not yet been translated into English.

establishment of a signifying chain which, in normal subjectivity, will be fastened by certain key signifiers or "logical links" (215). The primordial child-mother relation produces the third element in the triangle, the phallus. Insofar as the mother indicates the phallus as the object of her desire, the child identifies himself in that image. Thus the mother's desire, and the child's desire for her desire, produces phallocentrism, the fastening of subjectivity and signification under the phallus. The phallus is neither a penis nor any other bodily organ: Lacan calls it a 'pure signifier'. The phallus is that to which procreation is attributed (199), and is therefore also the first cause of the subject's existence. The phallus is also that which alienates the subject from his desire by intervening in the relation between mother and child. Thus, "male sexuality is both represented and repressed by the phallus" (Silverman 187). As a pure signifier, the phallus has no objective correlate in the world and can only be represented by a metaphor, a phallic image. The metaphor that represents the phallus in the Other is the "Name-of-the-Father" (197).

Lacan asserts that, in paranoid psychosis, "To the point at which the Name-of-the-Father is called...may correspond in the Other, then, a mere hole, which, by the inadequacy of the metaphoric effect will provoke a corresponding hole at the place of phallic signification" (201). Lacan calls this structural absence "foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father" (201). Just as the phallus does not refer to the penis, the Name-of-the-Father is a metaphor that does not necessarily refer to any particular father. Its functions are to intervene in the binary relation between ego and object, to signify sexual difference, and to induct the subject into the Symbolic order, the order of the signifier. Lacan takes the word foreclosure (*verwerfung*) from Freud's analysis of paranoid processes in his 1911 paper on Judge Schreber. Foreclosure refers to the structural absence of an object, its never having been there, rather than mere repression of it. Foreclosure has been described above (8) with the metaphor of a tissue which should be woven from intersecting threads, but which does not have and has never had the threads which go in one of the directions. According to Lacan, foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father is not the absence of the subject's real father, but the "inadequacy of the signifier itself" (200).

In Lacan the field of reality is contained between the points of the ego, its image (from the mirror stage), the primordial object and the ego-ideal (ego identifications), all of which is supported by the triad of ego, object and Other. The failure of the metaphor of the phallus, that is the Name-of-the-Father, to fasten down signification in the Other distorts the field of reality because the phallus is "the pivot of the symbolic process" (198). The foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father has disastrous consequences for the subject. When the phallus is foreclosed "the subject's desires fail to conform to the larger symbolic order" (Silverman 190). The subject suffers from psychosis, hallucinations and unusual use of language as his imaginary creations take the place of reality. Meaning for the subject is only stabilised in the delusion, a distorted form of reality. A delusion is thus a false explanation of existence.

In his seminar, Lacan instructs us to pay particular attention to the speech of the patient and his description of his reality, for it contains a message that comes "from speech beyond the subject" (214), that is, from the Other or unconscious. Because of repetition compulsion, the content of the message will be repeated although its form may vary. Lacan begins his analysis of psychosis with an explanation of hallucination, which can be summed up with the statement that the *perceptum*, or seen thing, is conditioned by the structure of the *percipiens*, or person who sees it. This notion is important for two reasons. Firstly, it allows the discussion of meaning for the subject to proceed without entering a debate about what constitutes an external reality. Secondly, it helps to explain the mechanism of projection, which Freud highlighted in paranoia. In Lacan projection is not a simple matter of externalising threatening libidinal impulses; it is the very process of perception itself. It is the externalisation of the seeing self. Projection is dramatised in "Childe Roland" as the landscape of the poem thus what the speaker sees is only his own self externalised. At one level the landscape is an image of the speaker's emotional state, and hence the hostility, but at another level the landscape is also the very grammar of the subjectivity of the speaker. Its disorder indicates the failure of the phallus to pin down the signifying system; the sameness of its message (hostility) shows that it is conditioned

by repetition compulsion. It appears to me that there is a difference between the Freudian and Lacanian analyses of paranoid delusion. In a Freudian reading a delusion is a process of imposing significance, of perceiving a new reality to meet the paranoiac's needs. In Lacan however, a delusion is not so much a product made by the subject as the very nature of the paranoiac himself. Thus the speaker of "Childe Roland" cannot help but see what he himself is.

For Lacan, the condition of the subject (paranoia) has its genesis in the Other. Hallucinations, as symptoms of paranoia, articulate the structure of the subject (Lacan, 184). Hallucinations inscribe the code and the message of the Other insofar as both paranoid hallucination and the Other foreground the role of the signifier, both are conditioned by repetition compulsion, and both manifest the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father. Thus although Lacan's conception of the subject and paranoia differs in many respects from Freud's, the basic premise underlying my Freudian analysis of the paranoia in *Maud* still holds: the subject's speech, the text of the poem, both enacts or dramatises his paranoia and reveals its aetiology. In a Lacanian analysis of paranoia, then, the key issues or events to consider are: the function and foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father, the effect this foreclosure has on reality as experienced by the subject and also the question of identity insofar as it relates to the ego-ideal or paternal identification. My analysis of "Childe Roland" will focus on them[2].

Bloom feels that in "Childe Roland", "Signification has wandered away, and Roland is questing for lost and forgotten meaning...for a seconding or re-advocacy of his own self" (cited in Bloom and Munich 143). This quotation captures nicely the Lacanian sense of signification, for it is both meaning and subjectivity. Signification

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[2] The Lacanian schema of subjectivity and paranoia can be applied to the speaker of *Maud*. The speaker, lacking the Name-of-the-Father, is trapped in the narcissistic and imaginary relation between his ego and its objects. He cannot find himself in his father, because the structural place where the father should be is simply a gap, symbolised by the "ghastly pit". The speaker's imaginary external reality (his delusions) takes the place of actual reality. Maud's brother is called into symbolic opposition to the speaker via the mechanism of transference. That the brother is unequal to the demands of or lack within the Other is revealed by the disdainful manner in which the speaker treats him. Metaphorically this psychodrama is illustrated in the line "the second corpse in the pit" which shows that the void left by the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father is a pit large enough for two bodies.

(meaning and identity) has 'wandered away' because of the foreclosure of a key signifier, the Name-of-the-Father. To the speaker, and the reader, the landscape seems to be some sort of symbolic system, but it refuses to yield definitive meaning for all the speaker's questions ("What penned them there, with all the plain to choose?" [xxiii]) and challenges ("solve it, you!" [xxviii]). The poem evokes epic quests, but distorts their conventions; it suggests allegory, but vehicle and tenor are dissonant. The logical links between the scenes (the disjunctions in the landscape described earlier) are missing due to the failure of the "law of the signifier [through which] All Nonsense is abolished!" (Lacan 214). It is hardly surprising that the speaker characterises the landscape as made by a fool who "Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood/Changes and off he goes!" (xxv).

What is foreclosed or structurally missing from "Childe Roland"? Why simply, the whole of genesis. The poem opens *in medias res*, at some point in the progress of a quest. However, unlike in a conventional epic the context of the quest is never established. The purpose of the quest is the Dark Tower, but the speaker's motive in seeking it is never explained. The place where the journey occurs has no history; it seems to come into existence only as the speaker traverses it and it disappears as he passes beyond it ("pausing to throw backward a last view/O'er the safe road, 'twas gone", [ix]). It is certainly no place we recognise; that is, the world of the poem is a world with no objective correlate; it exists only as and in discourse. Things seem to happen there which do not obey any natural order that we might expect (for example, "blotches rankling, coloured gay and grim" [xxvi]). The poem does not even tell us the identity of the speaker (although most critics are content to name him Roland after the title and because he too is on a quest for a dark tower). The poem dramatises effect without cause. This essential foreclosure, the foreclosure of cause, undermines determinacy for the speaker and for the reader. As Lacan observes, "there is no need of a signifier to be a father, any more than to be dead, but without a signifier, no one would ever know anything about either state of being" (199). The speaker sees signifiers everywhere, but he cannot say anything about the system they constitute.

In the world of the poem, signifiers do not connect to other signifiers in a closed system which permits meaning, however arbitrary, to be produced. Instead signifiers proliferate to the extent of concealing determinacy. Indeed, the system the speaker perceives is not closed at all, but "grey plain all round:/Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound" (ix) and he is always "just as far as ever from the end!" (xxvii). The disordered mass of signifiers which, because of the repetition compulsion, insist on expression, constitutes the famous Freudian 'patch' over the hole caused by the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father. Thus the landscape is "that ominous tract which, all agree,/*Hides* the Dark Tower" (iii, my italics) just as the patch hides the hole in the Other caused by foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father. Recall that earlier I argued that the speaker could only perceive the landscape as separate scenes and that the landscape was an externalisation of the seeing self. If the landscape is effect without cause, then so is the speaker an effect without cause because he lacks the Name-of-the-Father. Lacking the signifier of the phallus, the speaker doesn't know anything about his own existence. His questions about his environment (the *perceptum*) are also questions about his own origins and existence: "What made those holes?" (xii); "Alive?" (xiv); "What penned them there?" (xxiii). These questions have their source in the Other, which Lacan describes as the locus of the question "What am I there?" (194). The speaker of "Childe Roland" is on a quest for the signifier that will account for his own existence. The speaker's search for the Dark Tower is his attempt to give himself an origin, or as Bloom put it, "a seconding of his own self" (above). In the meantime, all the speaker can perceive is a representation of his own self, and he is doomed to encounter it everywhere until he encounters the Dark Tower.

Foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father has specific effects on the reality experienced by the subject. If the *perceptum* is dependent upon the structure of the subject it is important to remember that Lacan also says that "the condition of the subject...is dependent on what is being unfolded in the Other" (193). The reality perceived and described by the speaker of "Childe Roland" also inscribes the speech of the Other. The world of the poem is created by examples that the speaker perceives

as scenes. These scenes, which are experienced by the speaker as challenges, also constitute and maintain the relationship between him and the creator or chief persecutor he imagines lies behind them. As such they create a pseudo-connection to the world from which he is excluded by not being able to penetrate the signifying protocol. He is excluded but he attempts to become included by understanding the protocol, by finding a first cause. As the poem/quest proceeds, each 'message' merely repeats the prior message in reduced form. Consider the early scenes, which each comprise several stanzas and compare stanza xxv, which contains, both in the sense of holds and in the sense of limits, "within a rood -/Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark black dearth". If the scenes are messages, the code or syntax is conveyed in their juxtaposition and randomness. It is a landscape or grammar in which signifiers are jumbled and chaotic. If there is disorder in the structure of the code, there is an oppressive sameness in the content of the messages. Over and over again the speaker perceives "penury, inertness and grimace" (xi). What the speaker sees is what he is.

Foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father also compromises identity, as "Childe Roland" shows. One example of the failure of identity is the apostrophised title and concluding sentence of the poem, which makes it difficult to know whether the speaker of the poem is indeed Childe Roland. Another obvious instance of the foreclosure of the phallus in "Childe Roland" is the implication that the speaker is the 'childe' of the title. Childe is usually taken to mean 'knight in training' but it also invokes 'child'. Both meanings are reductions of the fully-fledged masculine ideals they invoke, either knight or father. The name of Roland is particularly important, evoking as it does the deeds of Roland at the battle of Roncesvalles recounted in the *Chanson de Roland*. The song describes the ambush of the rearguard of Charlemagne's army, led by the recklessly courageous Roland, who refuses to blow his horn to summon help from Charlemagne. When he finally blows his horn, it is too late to save himself, and Roland is presented as the paragon of the warrior, victorious in defeat. Lacan suggests that there are many public roles which offer the father opportunities for failing to live up to the paternal ideal represented in the Name-of-the-Father. Knighthood, as a preserver of faith and loyalty is one such role, as the speaker

finds when he "shut [his] eyes and turned them on [his] heart" (xv). In this act he mirrors the posture of the horse in the previous stanza which stands with "shut eyes underneath the rusty mane" (xiv) and which presents an image of "grotesqueness" and "woe". The horse provides an external image of the knight's own subjective position as he stands with shut eyes. He too provides an image of grotesqueness and woe, as he gazes transfixedly upon his own penury, searching for the ideal model with which to identify in order to "fitly...play [his] part" (xv), which is ironically "to fail" (vii).

Lacan also says that for psychosis to occur it is not sufficient simply that the Name-of-the-Father be foreclosed, but it must also be "called into symbolic opposition to the subject" (217). That is, a father-figure (Lacan calls it an 'A-Father') is called into the void left by the primordial foreclosure. In the case of Schreber, the A-father was his doctor Flechsig, and the mechanism that enabled this was the transference (as Freud also points out). However, the A-Father is never adequate to the void. In stanza xv the speaker turns his mind to the memory of "earlier, happier sights". He first recalls Cuthbert "till I almost felt him fold/An arm in mine to fix me to the place" (xvi). Cuthbert is thus called to the position of the Name-of-the-Father to perform the function of anchoring the signifying chain. Immediately, however, his inadequacy as ideal is noticed ("one night's disgrace" [xvi]). When the speaker recalls Giles, another "soul of honour" (xvii), the image again turns to disgrace ("what hangman-hands/Pin to his breast a parchment?" [xvii]). Both these knights fail to exemplify, and thereby uphold, the Law of the Father, the paradigmatic Roland perhaps. The speaker has no choice, because of repetition compulsion, but to return to "this present" (xviii).

Thus far it has been a relatively smooth task to analyse the paranoia dramatised in "Childe Roland" in Lacanian terms. However, the underlying phallocentrism of Lacan's theory seems to be a key problem for this analysis. The paranoiac's reality is conditioned primarily by repetition compulsion, the endless replaying of similar scenes and behaviour. In "Childe Roland" the repetition compulsion is expressed in the recurring motifs of the landscape and also in the speaker's attitude to his quest ("I might go on; nought else remained to do", [ix]). However, the speaker desires the

object of his quest ambivalently: "I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring/My heart made, finding failure in its scope" (iv). The extended simile of stanzas v-iv can be read as describing the difficult passage from the primordial relation to the symbolic relation:

> As when a sick man very near to death
> Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and end
> The tears and takes the farewell of each friend,
> And hears one bid the other go, draw breath
> Freelier outside, ('since all is o'er,' he saith,
> 'And the blow fallen no grieving can amend;')
> While some discuss if near the other graves
> Be room enough for this, and when a day
> Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
> With care about the banners, scarves and staves:
> And still the man hears all, and only craves
> He may not shame such tender love and stay.
>
> (v-vi)

The speaker must relinquish the imagined unity and coherence of the Imaginary stage, as the sick man must die in order to allow the disposal of the body. In the simile, and in subjectivity, the subject can only attain the desire of the other through a form of death. In the Lacanian model of subjectivity, full identity is only assumed upon entry into the Symbolic Order ("banners, scarves and staves"). However, entry into the Symbolic Order is also a kind of death in that the subject forever renounces direct access to his desire, which from that point on will be encoded in phallocentric signification. It is little wonder the speaker attempts this transition with a mixture of pride and shame and "quiet as despair" (viii).

Lacan's seminar on paranoia also explores the change in attitude of Judge Schreber towards his persecution by God. At first the Judge is outraged by God's requirement that he be emasculated, but he later comes to see it as simply the order of things, and eventually even welcomes it as self-sacrifice, believing that when it is accomplished

he will give birth to a new spiritual race of humans. The speaker of "Childe Roland" also experiences a change in his attitude towards his situation. The speaker begins with an attitude of resigned acceptance of his plight: "neither pride/Nor hope rekindling at the end descried/So much as gladness that some end might be" (iii). However, this becomes an attitude of embracing his fate: "Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set" (xxxiv). It is as though the speaker of the poem has determined to emulate his namesake and turn defeat into victory. However, in submitting to phallocentrism, he may just as well be turning victory into defeat.

The Lacanian theory of paranoia enables an interpretation of the conclusion of the poem, where the speaker finally comes upon the object of his quest, the Dark Tower. The location of the Dark Tower evokes Lacan's symbolic triad: "two hills on the right...While to the left, a tall scalped mountain" (xxx) and the Dark Tower in the middle. The mountains also contrast with the undifferentiated 'grey plain' the speaker has previously traversed, foregrounding the role of the phallus as the signifier of (sexual) difference. Identification under the sign of the phallus is both "a vision of plenitude and coherence, and a sense of exclusion from that vision" (Silverman 191) and this phrase encapsulates the experience of the speaker at the end of the poem. The plenitude is evidenced in the lines "Names in my ears/Of all the lost adventurers my peers" (xxxiii) and in their images "ranged along the hill-sides" (xxxiv). If these knights are 'named' then they have been inducted into the symbolic order, signification conditioned and anchored by the phallus, and by submitting himself to the law of the Father, the speaker can join their company. Perhaps this means he will no longer be a 'childe', but a full knight. However, the exclusion is also manifested in the funereal tolling of the names and also the repeated assertion that the other knights are "Lost, lost" (xxxiii). The speaker will finally actualise his membership of "The Band" and "fail as they" (vii) because, in actualising his membership of "The Band", he will also actualise the complete alienation which comprises the Lacanian subject, expressed in the poem as "a click/As when a trap shuts – you're inside the den!" (xxix).

If the poem has dramatised paranoia resulting from the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father, then does the conclusion of the poem signify the 'cure' of the speaker, the Name-of-the-Father no longer foreclosed but in its rightful place and performing its rightful function? There are a number of objections to this conclusion. For instance, while Lacan would not do so, one could argue that phallocentrism, rather than paranoia, represents an inherently grandiose subject position for the male subject. As Silverman argues, phallocentrism is "a cultural network which reifies the father by inserting his 'name' into a signifying chain in which it enjoys close proximity to other privileged signifiers: 'law', 'money', 'power', 'knowledge', 'plenitude', 'authoritative vision' etc" (191). The trade off for the sublimation of desire in the transactional economy of the Symbolic Order is manifest for the male subject, because it enables him to assume a culturally privileged subject position.

A second objection to the conclusion that the speaker is no longer paranoid is that the Dark Tower may simply be another A-Father and that the speaker has merely persuaded himself that he has found the phallus in its place and secured identification. This objection is supported by the continued apostrophising of the identity of the speaker at the end of the poem, and the general failure of the poem to offer up a determinate meaning. The objection is in part answered by the description of the Dark Tower as being "without a counterpart/In the whole world" (xxxii). Silverman calls the phallus a "representational representation" (187) because it only has meaning in respect of the system it constitutes, which it nevertheless remains outside of, and it can only be represented within that system by a metaphor. However, even if the Dark Tower is the metaphor for the phallus in respect of the signifying system of the world of the poem and the subjectivity of the speaker, the best the speaker can hope for in attaining the Dark Tower is the rescripting of his desire in terms of alienation and lack as he becomes "a living frame/For one more picture" (xxxiv) – a self constituted by symbolic processes which exceed him.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDIES IN PARANOIA: FIVE POEMS DRAMATISING JEALOUSY

In my analysis of *Maud* (above) I examined four paranoid delusions. Although I analysed the four delusions separately, in the poem the themes were interwoven and no single delusion could be said to be dominant. In the poems I will examine in this chapter, jealousy is the predominant form of paranoia, although, as in *Maud*, other forms of paranoia are apparent. For instance, the various strands of paranoia, including jealousy, are inseparable in "My Last Duchess", which is as much concerned with the Duke's jealousy with respect to his wife as with his own grandiosity and megalomania. My main concern in this chapter is to subject the dramatised jealousy to the theoretical constructs of paranoia already used in the previous chapters in order to produce new or enriched readings of the poems. Whereas my previous chapters each dealt with a single poem, for this chapter I have chosen five poems: "My Last Duchess", "Porphyria's Lover" and "A Forgiveness" by Browning; "A Last Confession" by D.G. Rossetti; and "Aylmer's Field" by Tennyson. "My Last Duchess" dramatises a jealous attitude best summed up as desire for exclusivity and control of the spouse. "Porphyria's Lover" dramatises delusional and murderous jealousy. "A Forgiveness" dramatises the aftermath of an encounter with spousal infidelity. "A Last Confession" dramatises the deathbed confession of a jealous murderer. "Aylmer's Field" describes a father's efforts to disrupt what he feels is an inappropriate relationship between his daughter and another man and also contains a vignette of jealousy between the putative suitor and the daughter. To the extent all five poems deal with or dramatise the inability to tolerate desire (desiring and being desired) which is located in the romantic object, all five poems are 'about' jealousy; however, as the readings will show, the poems also dramatise the problematics of desire for the paranoid subject.

There appear to be flexible borders between jealousy and paranoia in the poems and this is also a feature of the clinical and psychoanalytical understandings of the relationship between jealousy and paranoia. At the clinical level, jealousy is situated within two different categories of paranoia in the *DSM-III-R*. The first is related to Delusional (Paranoid) Disorder, and specifies Jealous Delusion as one of the subtypes of this disorder. The definition of delusional jealousy was used in my analysis of *Maud*. It specifies that:

> [A] person is convinced, without due cause, that his or her spouse or lover is unfaithful. Small bits of 'evidence' . . . may be collected and used to justify the delusion. Almost invariably the person with the delusion confronts his or her spouse or lover and may take extraordinary steps to intervene in the imagined infidelity. (200).

The second category of jealousy is related to Paranoid Personality Disorder, the category used in my analysis of "Childe Roland" (although my analysis of that poem did not refer to jealousy). The *DSM-III-R*'s notes on paranoid personality disorder include the claim that "Often the person is pathologically jealous" (337). These are the two main clinical definitions of pathological jealousy, although the *DSM-III-R* is not really clear how the jealousy differs between them except that in the case of jealousy in paranoid personality disorder, the person's jealous behaviour may have more in common with the pathology of paranoia than with the pathology of delusion. In terms of the psychoanalytic approach to jealousy, according to Freud's article "Certain Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality" (1922 232-243), there are three layers of jealousy: normal jealousy, which is proportionate, under ego control and derived from an actual situation; projected jealousy, which is derived from impulses to infidelity; and delusional jealousy, which also derives from impulses towards infidelity on the part of the jealous person, but in this case with a person of the same sex. Here at least the Freudian thesis on jealousy is somewhat more detailed than the clinical model, although it is not entirely clear whether either of the two former types of jealousy have their origins in homoerotic fixation. All three layers involve projection, cathexis and transference. There is no text by Lacan that deals specifically with jealousy, but it seems reasonable to assume that his text on

paranoid psychosis which "follows Freud" on Judge Schreber could also apply to delusional jealousy, and this assumption implicates the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father again.

If these three conceptions of jealousy and paranoia (clinical, Freudian and Lacanian) were to be applied to each poem in this section individually, readings would emerge that follow the patterns established in the previous chapters. For instance, analysis of "My Last Duchess" could begin by establishing the paranoid/jealous content using the definitions in the *DSM-III-R*. According to this text it would seem that the category of Paranoid Personality Disorder is the more appropriate of the *DSM*'s two clinical models of paranoia:

> a pervasive tendency to interpret the actions of others as deliberately demeaning or threatening ...the person may read hidden threatening or demeaning meanings into benign events or remarks ... never forgive slights, insults or injuries...they may pride themselves on always being objective, rational and unemotional ...they tend to be rigid and unwilling to compromise...ego-centricity and exaggerated self-importance ... keenly aware of rank and power and of who is superior or inferior (337-8).

The definition could almost have been written for the Duke of Ferrara. For instance, he perceives other's behaviour as deliberately demeaning ("but thanked/ Somehow...as if she ranked/My gift...With anybody's gift" [31-34]) and he is superior, self-important and unwilling to compromise ("I choose/Never to stoop" [42-3]). The key features of the Duke's paranoia revealed in the poem are his grandiosity and his jealousy. People speak to him "if they durst" (11), others inspire in him "disgust" (38), he "[gives] commands" (45) and he never "stoop[s]" (43). These factors help explain why the Duke shows no fear, a common emotion associated with persecution paranoia. The Duke reveals his fine sense of his own importance when he declares "I choose/Never to stoop" (42-3). He appears to have no appreciation of the irony of such a claim (snooping inevitably involves some stooping as any husband who has pressed his eyes to the keyhole of his wife's room should know); nor is there any in his statement that his wife appreciates her

"white mule" (28) as much as she appreciates him. He also has little sense of other people as independent actors: he perceives others only insofar as they affect him. For instance he tells the envoy that his master's "fair daughter's self...is my object" (52-3). In conjunction with his concluding comment about the sculpture of Neptune, his propensity for collecting objects as well as evidence is revealed. The propensity for collecting is linked with a propensity for ordering and interpreting in paranoia, and all three are related to the need to understand and thereby control the environment (see Starker 16-7).[1] The Duke exhibits the paranoiac's need for complete mastery over the actions of others and he is uniquely able to assert this control due to his social circumstances: he is in a position to give commands. The Duke's grandiose attitude merges with his jealous attitude towards his wife. This is highlighted, for instance, where the Duke's own definition of appropriate wifely manners comes up against his insistence that he be the pre-eminent receptor of her attentions ("she thanked men, - good! but...." [31]). He demands exclusivity from his wife quite simply as his due and this attitude could be ascribed to both his jealousy and his grandiosity. His attitude could also be attributed to cultural processes insofar as the culture prescribes particular forms of gendered behaviour, but the extent to which cultural practices are implicated in paranoia is not clear.

However the Duke never specifically admits to jealousy and it can only be adduced from the claims and attitudes expressed in his speech. In support of my contention, then, that the Duke is jealous, I would refer to several of the features of jealousy described by Freud in his 1922 article (cited above, 9). Firstly, the very breadth of the Duke's objections to his wife's social activities (and after all, she, like Maud, appears the very model of aristocratic propriety) indicates he is far beyond appreciating the "convention of tolerance" (1922 234) which permits certain social intercourse to act as a safeguard against the " inevitable tendency to unfaithfulness" (1922 234) that Freud finds in both men and women. As we shall see, the inability to tolerate the social intercourse of the loved one is a feature of jealousy that all the poems share. Secondly, the Duke finds nothing innocuous in

[1] These attributes were also dramatised in "Childe Roland".

any of his wife's actions or personality and he devotes an excessive amount of time and effort to examining her unconscious motives, and indeed rationalising his conclusions into a coherent explanation. Drawing on the material of perception, the evidence of his eyes, and his own interpretation of it, he assures himself of his wife's infidelities, whether they be moral or physical. In fact there is no particular rival for his wife other than, as he sees it, more or less everyone and everything: "all and each/Would draw from her alike the approving speech,/Or blush, at least" (30-1). The namelessness of the rival contrasts with the Duke's own "nine-hundred-year-old name" (33), as well as contributing to our skeptical conclusion that there is in fact no rival. This degree of obsession would indicate that the Duke has moved beyond Freud's "normal jealousy" to the morbid, the domain of projected and/or delusional jealousy.

Interestingly the Duke evinces not grief at his conclusions but rather disgust and apparent hatred of his wife. Freud suggests that reversal of affect is evidence of the homosexual aetiology of delusional jealousy. Instead of feeling grief at the loss of his wife and hatred towards his rival, the delusionally jealous man feels hatred towards his wife as his rival for the affection of the male interloper (Freud, 1922 233). The attribution of delusional jealousy to homoerotic fixation or motives helps to explain why the frequent victim of murderous jealousy is the female object: in effect the jealous husband *is* getting rid of his main rival, his wife! Thus when the Duke says he "gave commands" (45) and "all smiles stopped together" (46) he may be referring not only to his wife's prolific smiles, but also the responsive smiles her smiles raised in her 'lover' or admirers. By removing his wife, either through murder or confinement to a convent, the Duke, in terms of this reading, unwittingly reveals his misogyny to be the reverse side of his preference for the company of men. The negotiations he is conducting with the envoy manifest no degree of desire for romantic relations with a woman, but instead exhibit all the characteristics of a business deal, and it seems the Duke is revealing his true attitude towards women, that they are merely a financial adjunct to ducal life.

If we turn to Freud's theory of paranoia again, the megalomaniac proposition ("I love no one", "I love only myself") is as apposite as the jealous proposition ("she loves him"), remembering that both are defenses against the homoerotic motive, "I love him". It is indeed possible to derive a reading of the Duke's homoerotic fixation from "My Last Duchess" simply by speculating that the Duke's general aversion to women (evidenced in his attitude towards his last Duchess and his prospective Duchess) displays the characteristics of homosexual fixation insofar as his inability to derive pleasure from his relations to women indicates his Oedipal relations with his father (and to a certain extent with his mother too). Renouncing desire for the mother, and by extension for heterosexual object choice, removes him from a conflict situation with his father and enables him to idealise the male. One of the consequences of this idealisation is what Freud calls "the high value set upon the male organ and the inability to tolerate its absence in a love-object" (1922 241). In the poem the male organ is symbolised by the high value the Duke puts on his name ("as if she ranked/My gift of a nine-hundred-year-old name/With anybody's gift" [32-4]). Obviously, the gift of a name is a gift which should not un-name the giver, and at the same time it accomplishes the incorporation of the receiver into the catalogue of possessions owned by the Duke, in some ways an extra appendage to him. If one reads the Duke's name as a symbol for his 'male organ' one can readily see that his wife's failure to appreciate it properly is an act of devastating and ego-shattering belittlement.

To turn to the Lacanian analysis of Oedipal relations is to remember that the Name-of-the-Father is the metaphor for the phallus. In the family drama the mother symbolises her desire in terms of the phallus, usually in the person of her husband, which pushes the Oedipal son towards identification with his father. In "My Last Duchess" we witness the failure of the Oedipal drama in respect to the Duke *as father rather than as son*. The Duchess's apparent indifference to her husband forecloses the Duke from identifying with the phallus in an act of psychic

emasculation. As with the reading of "Childe Roland" in the previous chapter, this reading produces a critique of the very theory that produces it. In that case we were forced to consider that phallocentrism itself was the cause of paranoia. In this case, we are forced to consider that paranoia does not have its genesis in infantile experiences, except insofar as the paranoid individual has had an exemplary Oedipal background, and is simply unable to play his role, that of father, in the next generation of the family drama. No doubt psychoanalysis would attribute this failure to childhood events, and indeed it may be correct to do so. However, paranoia is usually an adult-onset illness, and it does not seem unreasonable to search for factors in the present as well as the past that may have brought it on. Thus on the one hand we have a homoerotic fixation or crisis, and on the other we have a particular circumstance in the present which enables paranoiac behaviours and thoughts to dominate the individual. In looking for that 'particular circumstance', we must note again that cultural prescriptions regarding marriage and gender roles within marriage can contribute to the development of a paranoid outlook. It is my conclusion, then, that a psychoanalytically derived reading of the paranoia in "My Last Duchess" is both possible and informative according to the criteria set down above. However, a psychoanalytic reading of paranoia which focuses on individual processes is not broad enough to account for the obvious role of cultural processes in determining and affecting a number of important issues raised by the poem. These issues include the institution of marriage itself, the gendered relations of power and the culturally derived distinctions between sanity and insanity.

Psychoanalytic theories of paranoia can also be applied to "Porphyria's Lover", but in the case of that poem there is a different kind of limitation: the brevity of the poem itself. To continue with the model of reading established so far, "Porphyria's Lover" seems to contain the other kind of clinical paranoia, Delusional Paranoid Disorder. It dramatises the elaboration of a jealous delusion and its 'logical' consequence. The speaker's reasonable tone belies his irrational beliefs and also serves to make the conclusion all the more dramatic. Paranoia

theory has one interesting new contribution to make to a reading of this poem. Because the poem is not broken up into verses, it could easily be read as a single delusion. However, armed with a clinical theory of paranoia it is possible to see that the poem contains two distinct delusions. The first part of the poem (lines 1-32) describes the speaker's jealous attitude towards Porphyria, but about halfway through the poem, with the lines "at last I knew/Porphyria worshipped me" (32-3), the initial jealous delusion seems to change into an erotomanic delusion.

In the Lacanian analysis of paranoia Lacan reminds us that the perceptum is dependent on the structure of the percipiens, so perhaps the change in the speaker's perception is related to the altered condition of the speaker (in the structure of the Other or unconscious) insofar as his condition moves from jealous to erotomanic. The speaker's perception of Porphyria does appear to change along with the change of delusion. For instance, in the jealous delusion the speaker expresses more hostility towards Porphyria, with many images of degradation, such as "soiled gloves" (12) and "damp hair" (13), as well as moral degradation suggested by the phrase "Too weak...from pride, and vainer ties" (22-4). In the erotomanic delusion, however, he finds her "perfectly pure and good" (37) and her eyes are "without a stain" (45). In classical Freudian theory each of these delusional propositions ("she loves him", "she loves me") counters the homoerotic proposition, so we may expect the two conditions to be structurally similar (that is, they are both defenses against a single proposition, "I love him"). Earlier in the chapter I suggested that jealousy was the inability to tolerate desire located in the female object, either her desiring or her being desired. What I would like to suggest here is that jealousy also reveals the jealous actor's inability to tolerate his own desire. This anxiety-producing desire (whether homoerotic as Freud claimed or not) is externalised, just as hostility is externalised in persecution paranoia. The jealous actor sees desire all about him, but not within himself; thus in "Porphyria's Lover" the speaker characterises himself, sitting alone "with heart fit to break" (5), physically "pale/For love of her" (28-9). He, like the other jealous actors in these poems, is tortured by a perception of a world in which others are virtually saturated

with desire: at their gay feasts ("Porphyria's Lover", 27), expressing it in their frequent smiles ("My Last Duchess"), maids and servants are doing it ("A Forgiveness"), landed gentry are doing it (*Maud*), and even priests ("A Forgiveness"). The desire in others is nothing but a bitter reproach to the jealous male because he experiences himself as outside desire. If this were true it would provide an explanation for the murder in "Porphyria's Lover". When he strangles her he claims "No pain felt she;/I am quite sure she felt no pain" (41-2). The speaker's attitude in this part of the poem is usually read as his greater vanity; however, an alternative explanation is that the speaker himself now felt no pain, having once again banished desire, the desire Porphyria has turned back on him, from his swelling heart (34). This thesis would be confirmed by reference to the Freudian megalomanic proposition, "I love no one".

"Aylmer's Field" offers an opportunity to compare two different manifestations of jealousy in a single poem, the jealousy of a father and the jealousy of a lover. It therefore provides an opportunity to compare ~~between~~ two of Freud's different 'layers' or types of jealousy, or even to see whether the two situations dramatise two different types of jealousy. The poem sets up two classical Oedipal triangles, with two men vying for a single woman in each one. Within the larger scheme of father-daughter relations there is a more traditional triangle, between the daughter and two rival suitors, Leolin and the "costly Sahib" (233). This minor relationship serves the function of plot furtherance: it makes Leolin's love for Edith apparent both to her ("A flash of semi-jealousy cleared it to her" [189]) and to her father ("Sir Aylmer past,/And neither loved nor liked the thing he heard" [249-50]). Leolin's behaviour during this episode is not admirable. He is "watchful" (210), "petulant" (235) and even according to himself "ungraciousness itself" (245). Nevertheless, his behaviour falls within the bounds of what Freud calls normal jealousy insofar as it is largely based on a real situation and is largely transient, suggesting it is amenable to reasoned argument and thus under ego control. Ultimately Leolin is able to distinguish between social pleasantry and true attraction, unlike the Duke of Ferrara or Porphyria's lover.

Sir Aylmer's attitude is far less rational and amenable to persuasion, and is consequently presented more critically and negatively in the poem.[2] He evinces a pathological reaction to his daughter and her putative lover, being so enraged by the possibility of a relationship between the two that he chooses to let his daughter die rather than to abate his opposition to the match. The description of the father's behaviour is classically paranoid: "Vext with unworthy madness, and deformed" (335). He rationalises his conclusions to preserve his chosen interpretation of events and his idealised conception of his daughter ("inasmuch you have practised on her,/ Perplext her, made her half forget herself" [302-3]). He watches and spies hypervigilantly ("Sir Aylmer watched them all" [552]). He is narcissistic and superior ("chafing at his own great self defied" [537]). But can the father's attitude rightly be described as jealousy? He is certainly possessive and controlling of his daughter ("I can guard my own" [276]); however much of his behaviour is also explained by the social critique the poem entails. Also absent from Sir Aylmer's attitude is the element of sexuality associated with jealousy, both in the general sense and in the other poems in this section. So while Sir Aylmer certainly meets the Freudian jealousy proposition, the perception that "she loves him" (i.e. Leolin), it may be best to consider his paranoia in terms of megalomania rather than jealousy.

The father's paranoia is organised around the protection of his name, for "he that marries her marries her name" (25). As the poem indicates, Sir Aylmer is not so much concerned that his daughter will marry as that she marry appropriately and fulfill "her duty to herself and us" (304). He is heavily influenced by his sense of responsibility to pass on his family name and wealth through a suitable marriage. Sir Aylmer does not so much consider his daughter a person as a cipher

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[2] Dramatic irony, whereby the speaker inadvertently reveals more about himself than he realises, is the main technique for disclosing a critical attitude towards jealousy in the dramatic monologues that dramatise jealousy. However, in "Aylmer's Field" the critical attitude towards the father is developed more overtly and explicitly through the narrative account and particularly through the critical funeral service performed by Leolin's brother.

for "their wealth, their lands,/ . . .The one transmitter of their ancient name" (294-296). His interest in his daughter's marriage is primarily a class interest which is shared by his wife (481-491) and his neighbours of similar station (261-272), but not by his poorer neighbours ("God bless 'em: marriages are made in heaven" [188]). Sir Aylmer is so blinded by class interests that he does not even consider any need to lay a bar between Edith and Leolin – in fact Sir Aylmer views Leolin as merely the two-legged equivalent to "his old Newfoundland" (125). Sir Aylmer lives in a social world in which one's name communicates all the important things about a man: his class, his wealth, his moral standing. The efforts he dedicates to the protection and furtherance of his 'name' implicate social causes at least as much as intrapsychic ones. However, we are forced to conclude, as the poem is intended to make us conclude, that while there is something wrong with the social order which arranges marriages in these terms, there is also something wrong with a father who would see his daughter obedient or dead, and who treats her to "Never one kindly smile, one kindly word" (564).

As with "My Last Duchess", psychoanalytic theories point to, but fail to account sufficiently for, material processes that affect paranoia (such as the particular organisation of the family and the economic bases of society). While it seems that a Lacanian reading of "Aylmer's Field" should be even more apothegmatic than a Freudian one, considering that Sir Aylmer is obsessed with the Name-of-the-Father, the Lacanian pivot of symbolic processes, there are problems with and limits to such a reading. As with the Duke in "My Last Duchess", neither of the men in these two poems are foreclosed from the symbolic benefits of having the Name-of-the-Father: great material wealth and privilege. The Duke of Ferrara's name is clearly related to his immunity from punishment for whatever ill deed he has committed upon his wife and Sir Aylmer's capacious hall, "Hung with a hundred shields" (15), certainly bestows on him a secure place to confine his daughter. In "Aylmer's Field", however, we might consider that Sir Aylmer himself is foreclosed from *fatherhood*, in the sense of bestowing his name upon his heir, because he has only a daughter. The arrangement of an appropriate

marriage in the "woman-markets of the west" (348) is his sole means of living up to and identifying with his father. If he does not successfully arrange his daughter's marriage he fails to be a man. Having failed to do that, he falls into a "desolate" and "imbecile" state under "those fixt eyes of painted ancestors" (832-836).

Similar social processes are implicated in "A Forgiveness", in which the husband justifies his response to his wife's infidelity with reference to the social contract that prescribes separate spheres for men and women: "since beneath my roof/Housed she who made home heaven, in heaven's behoof/I went forth every day, and all day long/Worked for the world" (13-16). One of the key elements of the definition of pathological jealousy is the requirement that it be based on false or disproportionate accusations of infidelity. This is not the case in "A Forgiveness", in which the speaker comes home and encounters his wife's lover in his garden, and later has the infidelity confirmed by his wife's own words: "The man lay helpless in the toils I cast" (74). On the grounds of factual basis "A Forgiveness" is less obviously a jealousy poem, but, at the same time, the wife's infidelity is clearly associated with the speaker's change in attitude towards his wife, a change that moves from love to "contempt" (346) and "despite" (354) to "hate" (363). I think therefore that "A Forgiveness" can be rightly described as a jealousy poem, insofar as it dramatises the speaker's inability to tolerate his wife's desire for another man, and certainly in terms of his pathological behaviour after the infidelity up to and including the murders of his wife and her lover.

The poem does not, as much as the other poems I have discussed, dramatise paranoia even if it does dramatise jealousy. Nevertheless it is interesting as an example of what paranoia shares with the processes of a dramatic monologue and that is the elaboration of a univocal account. With respect to paranoia we are alert to the paranoiac's account of events, because it always contains his retrospective framing of events woven into the content of the account and the account is therefore much more an interpretive fiction than objective account. Freud is very

clear on this point too. He says, "Since paranoiacs cannot be compelled to overcome their internal resistances, and since in any case *they only say what they choose to say* it follows that this is precisely a disorder in which a written report or a printed case history can take the place of personal acquaintance with the patient" (italics mine, 1911 387-388). The speakers of dramatic monologues also choose what they say, even if they give away more than they intend to. This is the case in "A Forgiveness", where the speaker's desire to situate himself as hero of the drama means he has a vested interest in the account he provides. There are clear structural signs of such self-justification in the way, for instance, that the speaker recaps and reminds his auditor of the important nuances he wants to stress, for instance, "you are to recollect" (69), "work I may dispense/With talk about" (151-2), "how express?' (247), "Trust me" (298), "True as truth the tale" (383). Just as the speaker insists his wife's murder was not "action prompted by surprise" (293), so his speech reveals the marks of thoughtful rehearsal and self-serving emphasis. (The same thing is apparent in "My Last Duchess", where the Duke's ingenuous claim that he does not have "skill/ in speech" [35-6] is belied by his purposive account.)

If "A Forgiveness" seems to dramatise jealousy at the commonsense level, it is not clearly about pathological jealousy at the psychoanalytic level, in either Freudian or Lacanian conceptions. This is because, as with the clinical models, jealousy is taken to be present if the infidelity at the centre of it is not objectively true. However, there does seem to be a strong association between delusions of grandeur and jealousy in the poems discussed so far, and this is true also of "A Forgiveness". Nowhere is this emphasis more plain than in the title of the monologue in which murder becomes 'forgiveness", and the tables are turned between the confessor (who hears the confession) and the confessor (who confesses). "A Forgiveness" reverses the proper order of confession which is present in D. G. Rossetti's "A Last Confession". This monologue is a deathbed confession, in which the speaker attempts to gain absolution for the murder of a woman he claims to have loved. In contrast to the previous "A Forgiveness", the

objective fact or otherwise of the infidelity at the centre of this poem is certainly debatable. The main evidence the speaker puts forward for his assumption of infidelity (and it is not clear that the woman concerned owes him fidelity by any means) is the woman's laugh. While there are other factors involved in the delusion, two aspects of the laugh predominate: the first is the qualitative change in the woman's laugh over time, and the second is his association of her final laugh with the "coarse empty laugh" (517) of the "brown-shouldered harlot" (513). Any similarity between the two laughs is perceived and also produced by the speaker, who in fact admits this ("for I thought it like the laugh/Heard at the fair" [522-3]).

The jealousy in "A Last Confession" certainly seems to open itself to a Freudian interpretation on several levels. Firstly, Freud suggests that projected jealousy (which is also in operation in delusional jealousy) is an unconscious mechanism to relieve the pressure caused by the jealous person's own impulses to infidelity. As Freud observes, "[A] jealous husband perceives his wife's unfaithfulness instead of his own; by becoming conscious of hers and magnifying it enormously he succeeds in keeping unconscious his own" (1922 236). This point is particularly salient with regard to "A Last Confession" because the speaker himself clearly has such impulses to infidelity insofar as he sexually desires the female he has raised as his daughter and to whom he owes only paternal love. He argues "the first love/ I had – the father's, brother's love – was changed" (201-2), but despite the claim that this change was like "a holy thought" (203), there is no reason to conclude that any reciprocal change had occurred in the female's love and therefore he had no legitimate reason to expect her fidelity to him as lover. In fact, the speaker's attention to the supposed infidelity in the female prevents him from acknowledging the infidelity implicit in his own altered attitude. Insofar as the father owes sexual fidelity to his wife and a non-sexual love to his daughter, this is what the speaker owes in his paternal role too.

There is certainly something disconcertingly obsessive in the speaker's attitude to the young woman, and the stress that he places on her physicality (for instance

"the breasts half globed" [225] and "The passionate lids" [246]). In fact the speaker fulfills all four conditions specified by Freud in his essay, "Contributions to the Psychology of Love: A Special Type of Choice of Object Made by Men" (1910 192-202) also referred to in my analysis of *Maud*. These are: first, the need for an injured third party; second, that the woman be sexually discredited; third, overestimation of the love object; and fourth, the desire to rescue the beloved. In "A Last Confession" the first condition is met by the speaker himself, in terms of being both father and lover, so at one level he is his own rival! The second condition is achieved in the speaker's association of his beloved with both the "Tinselled and gewgawed" (385) Madonna and the harlot, and also in the symbolic deflowering achieved by cupid's dart (170-179). The third is evidenced in the many passages extolling her beauty and her irreplaceability. The fourth condition is achieved in his final act of murder in which he saves her from "all she might have changed to, or might change to" (524). Freud attributes these conditions to "a fixation of infantile feelings of tenderness for the mother" (1910 196). Of course this occurs during the period of the Oedipal drama and is important to the boy's eventual orientation to heterosexual object choice. In "A Last Confession" the Oedipal schema is emphasised in the passages about Italy, "The weeping desolate mother" (254) to whom his father "had yielded his [life]" (259-60) and bequeathed his son's life ("from her need/Had grown the fashion of my whole poor life" [257-8]). This passage provides another example of the speaker's unconscious or unexamined infidelity, to his 'mother' in this case. Thus his projected jealousy again diverts him from awareness of his own unfaithful impulses.

In fact, in all five poems that dramatise jealousy there is a paradoxical attitude towards the female object which is often expressed in images of looks and looking, seeing and being seen. The jealous actors appear both to loathe and to seek the male gaze for their female object (this is true also in *Maud*). In "My Last Duchess" the Duke speaks repeatedly of his disgust at his wife's looks and glances ("her looks went everywhere" [24]), yet he requires all men to look at the Duchess's portrait ("since none puts by/The curtain I have drawn for you, but I"

[9-10]). The speaker of "Porphyria's Lover" is maddened by the thought of Porphyria at her "gay feast" (27), yet assiduously poses her corpse for the reader's gaze ("I propped her head up as before..." [49]). In "A Forgiveness" the speaker parades his wife before assembled guests but bars her from intimate discourse ("Three whole years, nothing was to see" [134]). In "A Last Confession" the speaker cannot bear the female to be the object of male looks ("as all men's eyes/Turned on her beauty" [401-2]), yet he repeatedly exhorts his confessor to "see" and "look", to achieve a mental picture of her corpse. Finally, the father of "Aylmer's Field" bars his daughter from not only her lover ("when you see her – but you shall not see her" [309]) but all social discourse ("Last from her own home-circle of the poor/They barred her" [504-5]). However, he displays her before "Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth/Might lie within their compass" (484-5). The jealous actor himself is engaged in interminable watching: "Sir Aylmer watched them all" ("Aylmer's Field", 552); "at last, I looked/Into her scornful face" ("A Last Confession" , 29-30); "my household's vigilance" ("A Forgiveness" , 95) etc. In his recounting of the carefully accumulated evidence of his wife's "heart . . . too soon made glad" (22) the Duke inadvertently apprises the reader of his obsessive spying and hypervigilence. How else could he know every detail of where "her looks" went if *his* looks were not everywhere? Similarly, in "A Forgiveness" the speaker describes his wife's face which for three years he has "paid observance to" (218). The suspiciousness and need for certainty of the paranoiac result in a life spent looking, as we also saw in *Maud* and "Childe Roland".

This seeming paradox is certainly explained by reference to Freud's theory of the virgin-harlot mother, and there is every reason to see in the paradoxical behaviour of the jealous man the attitude of defiance and fear associated with castration anxiety. The defiance is exemplified by the jealous man's obsessive watching, which reprises his furtive observation of his mother. His inability to tolerate other men looking at 'his' woman relates to his Oedipal relation with his father, and evokes both his sense of guilt at his covetousness and the hatred he felt

for his father, the rightful looker, at that time. On the one hand the jealous actor, by his violence, eliminates the female as an object of his gaze, thus distancing himself from the threat of castration. On the other hand he seeks the approving gaze of men (and by extension the approval of his father) to bolster the diminished masculinity caused by neither having nor being the desire of a woman. Retaining the woman as aesthetic object rather than physical body is nevertheless a means by which the men in these poems can obscure their unconscious homoerotic desire, from themselves and from other men. In the case of the Duke of Ferrara, it is also a means by which the man can appropriate the gaze of men for himself ("for never read/Strangers like you that pictured countenance...But to myself they turned" [7-9]).

As a group the jealousy poems have a particular way of describing and objectifying woman, replacing her gestalt self with a collection of symbolic parts: repetitive or fetishistic behaviours (for instance the laugh motif in "A Last Confession"), clothes or accessories (Porphyria is little more than gloves, yellow hair, cheeks and shoulders) and certain ambiguous images of degradation (including Porphyria's "soiled gloves" (12), the Duchess's "spot of joy" (14-5) and the wife's words in "A Forgiveness", "Keep at least one soul unspecked/With crime, that's spotless hitherto" (70-1). The ultimate objectification of woman in these poems is her murder. Objectification of the female is an often-analysed trope in poetry, but it takes on a specificity of meaning when analysed as an aspect of jealousy and/or paranoia. In recent criticism, objectification and dehumanisation of the female in poetry has been read as a patriarchal mechanism for enhancing the power of males over females. Jealousy theory provides complementary motives for this strategy: renunciation of women to mollify the father, identification with the father who guards his wife as though she were a valued possession, and/or true homosexual preference. These motives also help explain the somewhat casual manner in which the male actors in these poems are able to dispose of their women, for instance, "I found/A thing to do" (37-8) in "Porphyria's Lover", or even in *Maud*, "He may take her now" (II.305). In fact, these men have little

difficulty giving up the woman who for so long has been the only lover they could ever have (in which sense she strictly resembles the unique mother). As I have mentioned, there is also a sense in which the jealous male's murder of the female is conceived of as a moral 'rescue', an act of saving her from sexual degradation. In this sense, the male enacts his unconscious desire for a virgin mother (see Freud, 1922 237) and also purifies his incestuous fantasy by removing the object at the heart of it.

In some respects the study of jealousy in the five poems analysed in this chapter seems to have moved away from the study of paranoia. Although jealousy has been associated with grandiosity, and in one case erotomania, it is not clearly associated with persecution, the predominant aspect of paranoia as popularly conceived. Several explanations for this can be put forward. Paranoia did not become a clinical category until well after the publications analysed in this study, and arguably only came into existence as a result of the nineteenth-century reconceptualisation of certain mental illnesses as disease complexes. Clearly over time jealousy and persecution paranoia came to be more closely associated, culminating in the theories and definitions we have today (and just as clearly Freud was also implicated in this process). It is just as obvious in the poems studied in this chapter that jealousy exists as a continuum of behaviours and attitudes which interact with and are sometimes obscured by various other behaviours and states. Moreover, the poems take different attitudes towards the acceptability of jealous emotions and jealous behaviour, and the speakers adopt various strategies for framing or representing their jealousy. For instance, the Duke of Ferrara never owns to disposing of his first Duchess on the basis of jealousy, but implies rather that her behaviour was unbefitting her social position and a bad reflection on himself as her husband and by extension master. Sir Aylmer, and the speakers of "A Forgiveness" and "A Last Confession" (and to a lesser extent "Porphyria's Lover") also represent to themselves their violent crimes as altruistic and even moral acts. This aspect of jealousy ties in nicely with analysis of the dramatic monologue as retrospective justification for actions, a speech designed to present

the speaker in the best possible light, which also explains why jealousy, not man's finest instinct, is seldom directly alluded to.

Another reason why we cannot perceive clear connections between jealousy and persecution paranoia may result from the Freudian thesis. There are two superstructural propositions in the Freudian analysis of paranoia: the homoerotic proposition ("I love him"), and the claim that the persecutor in the paranoid fantasy is either the subject's father or a substitute for him. However, in the poems examined in this chapter, the second proposition blinds us to the possibility of a link between jealousy and persecution paranoia that is very much in evidence in the poems - that is, the defensive proposition "*she* hates me" in response to either "I love him" or "I love her". There seems to be no reason why this statement could not also be a conclusion founded in the family drama with respect to the son's mother. This proposition would account for the degree of animosity expressed by the jealous actor towards his ostensible lover, and also explain why the lover is perceived as a persecutor. This proposition succeeds even when the animosity is assumed to be a projection of the subject's own hatred towards the object (that is, "I hate her"). Examples of this construction abound in the poems: "if she let / Herself be lessoned so" ("My Last Duchess" , 39-40); "she/Too weak . . . [to] give herself to me forever" ("Porphyria's Lover" , 21-5); "after this/He seldom crost his child without a sneer" ("Aylmer's Field", 561-2). These expressions of distaste for the female lover rephrase unconscious criticisms of the mother for preferring the father and suggest a desire to punish her. This hostility ("I hate her") is externalised by projection to become "she hates me".

While paranoia is not an altogether admired characteristic, it is viewed with some compassion as an illness, and it explains and to some extent excuses the behaviour of the paranoid person. Jealousy, on the other hand, is viewed more critically, less as an illness than as a moral or character flaw. Victorian conceptions of jealousy were no doubt influenced by its being considered "unquestionably instinctive" (James, 2 439), and Victorian men were supposed to

be evolving such instincts out of themselves, or at least learning to master them, presumably through the exercise of will. These two different evaluations of paranoia and jealousy can be tied into literary analysis with Langbaum's (1957) analysis of the dramatic monologue as engendering both sympathy and judgement. Paranoia, as a legitimate mental illness is usually accorded sympathy, while jealousy is much more likely to be accorded a negative judgment, and this seems to be an unstated principle of the poems under examination. However, while it seems that there are certain circumstances in which we find jealousy abhorrent or disgusting, there are other circumstances in which we expect, accept, understand and even admire jealousy, and this does not always correlate with the objective truth of the espoused infidelity it attaches to. For instance, Leolin's passing jealousy in "Aylmer's Field" is provoked by Edith's obvious enchantment with her wealthy and exotic cousin ("Edith's eager fancy hurried with him" [208]). One obvious difference between this jealousy and pathological jealousy is in degree: Leolin does not, after all, murder Edith in a jealous rage. Contrast this with the description of Sir Aylmer's rage - "Him, glaring, by his own stale devil spurred/And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard" (290-1) – which is clearly a more aberrant mood and both qualitatively and quantitatively different.

As with *Maud* and "Childe Roland", paranoia theory was able to contribute to the readings of all five poems in this chapter. However, the various limitations paranoia theory imposes on these readings have been noted too, and the most significant of these are: first, the need for other, extra-psychic explanations of behaviours; second, the limited content available in shorter poems which restricts the usefulness of psychoanalytic theories; and third, the possible inadequacies of the theories themselves as explanatory devices (for instance, the problem of phallocentrism for "Childe Roland" and the problem of a female persecutor figure for Freudian theory).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As the preceding chapters have shown, paranoia theories can contribute to the interpretation and analysis of Victorian poetry in interesting and novel ways. The clinical theories of paranoia can be used as pseudo-diagnostic tools for identifying and explaining the various attitudes and behaviours that are involved in the dramatisation of paranoia, while the psychoanalytic theories of paranoia suggest a range of causal motives which can account for the behaviours and attitudes dramatised in the poems. By and large the paranoid processes that are dramatised in the various poems can be read and understood in terms of the conceptual frames of the different paranoia theories, although the poems can also be explained in other terms, and, on occasion, the paranoia theories themselves seem to break down. In particular, the paranoia theories have been able to focus attention on aspects of the poems which have, in the past, been ignored (such as the speaker-brother relationship in *Maud*) or are interpretatively problematic (such as the jingoistic attitude in Part Three of *Maud*).

Nevertheless, this study has been of a preliminary nature; certainly, the scope of the analyses of the limited number of poems studied in this thesis could be extended. For example, when applied to *Maud*, the Freudian conceptual frame of paranoia, the homoerotic wish, produces a new reading of the relationships between the men in the poem. This reading could be elaborated with reference to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's analysis of homosocial relations (1985). For instance, Sedgwick treats the erotic triangle as "a sensitive register . . . for delineating relationships of power and meaning" (27), in which the regulated exchange of women through marriage cements male homosocial bonds. The homosocial economy implicates historicised socio-cultural practices, as was seen in *Maud* with respect to the shared "roystering"

of the brother and the rival, and also in the complicated arrangements of exchange pursued by the speaker's and Maud's fathers, and later continued by her brother, in which the female body is used as the site of inter-male transactions. (The father's resistance to Edith and Leolin's marriage in "Aylmer's Field" and the Duke of Ferrara's negotiations for a new wife are further examples of inter-male trade in female property.) An approach such as Sedgwick's, when combined with the various forms of paranoia theory used in this thesis, could go a long way towards analysing what Tucker calls the "interlock of motives, the whole self-reinforcing and self-perpetuating ideological complex, that Tennyson has taken up in *Maud*" (1993 181). Such an analysis would be particularly cogent if it also took into account recent feminist theories of female psychosexual development and desire.

Moreover, this thesis has only touched on a few poems by well-known Victorian male poets, and has included neither poems by female poets nor other literary forms developed during and associated with the period. Although this study has linked paranoia with specific issues of male/masculine identity and desire, this has been a consequence of the limited number of poems under study, all of which dramatise the behaviour and attitudes of men. A wider breadth of literary works would be needed to establish the gender parameters of literary paranoia. Of particular interest would be a study that compares the representations of male paranoia with the representations of female psychology in Victorian literature, especially with reference to the Gothic conventions of the period.

Around the same time that Victorian poets were experimenting with strategies and forms for representing subjectivity, a particular type of subjectivity, paranoia, was also being 'discovered' by the medico-scientific community. An ongoing project must be to map out the lines of continuity

and influence between the two orders of representation, a work already begun by Faas. As he points out:

> To speak of the impact of early mental science on religious, artistic, and general thought, for instance, is both simplistic and somewhat misleading; for this impact was by no means unilateral. Mental science, in its early phase absorbed as much from literature and philosophy as it was to contribute to these disciplines later. (12)

The question remains, to what extent did the literary representation of certain behaviours and attitudes in Victorian poetry contribute to the initial formulation of the nosological category of paranoia and our later understandings of it?

Finally, in addition to these suggestions for further research, there is one further conceptualisation of paranoia which has not been used independently in this thesis: the conceptualisation of the paranoiac himself. In Chapter One I mentioned the anti-psychiatric perspective of Deleuze and Guatarri, who criticise the Oedipal framing of Freud's analysis of Judge Schreber, and offer in its stead "schizoanalysis", an approach which privileges the psychotic's worldview and values. To some extent, merely utilising the term "paranoia" is buying into the dichotomous categories of sane and insane, even though those judgements have not been made overtly in this study. It remains to be seen how the literary representation of paranoia resembles and is different from the autobiographical representation of paranoia (even though it would presumably not be called that), and how they may be understood in relation to each other.

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