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SPENSER AND KEATS: THE PERSISTENCE OF ELEGY

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Spenser and Keats: the Persistence of Elegy
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Though odes such as Keats's and elegies both address themselves to an idealized figure, we are not used to speaking of them together. Probably this is because of a fundamental difference, that the figure in the ode is present, it is right there in the immediate vicinity of the speaker, whereas the figure in an elegy is absent. This distinction also influences our understanding of the motives of idealization in each case: the speaker in an ode encounters a figure of "imagination" or "vision," which he finds appealing partly because of its unreality or even anti-reality. He knows, as we do, that it receives its exalted status from the light he bestows upon it, and that in the end he will leave it and return to the world. The elegiac speaker, on the other hand, is involved in the work of mourning; he or she seeks the consoling discovery that allows life to continue, and this seeking usually results in an idealization of life after death. What I would like to discuss with you this afternoon is the possibility that these differences do not exist and that a central element of Keats's poetry is deeply, though not obviously, elegiac.

The most useful study of the origins of the Romantic ode is still a marvelously comprehensive essay by M. H. Abrams called "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric." In it, Professor Abrams traces the descriptive-meditative odes of Wordsworth and Coleridge to the "two thousand or so" examples of the eighteenth-century "local" or "loco-descriptive" poem, primarily through the influence on Coleridge of Bowles's sonnets.¹ Professor Abrams emphasizes the meditative component

of the Romantic lyric, and though this is invariably secular, he finds its probable origin in the religious meditations of the seventeenth-century metaphysical poems of Vaughan and Herbert. The Wordsworthian ode then emerges as a meditative consciousness perusing a recollected landscape.

In no way does it diminish the achievement of Abrams' essay if we find that the conclusions generally do not apply to Keats's odes. Though the odes of spring, 1819, do follow the "out-in-out" form that Abrams discovers, their subject matter does not seem to be derived from landscape poems, nor is their meditative nature reminiscent of devotional practice. That is what frustrates the search for origins in Keats: though by the time he came to compose the odes his poetic concerns clearly show the influences of Milton and Wordsworth, Keats's treatment of his subject matter seems unique. His central concerns do not involve a return-to-place or scene revisited, but an encounter with a numinous figure or object that is strongly associated with the past. The encounter begins in surprised or even shocked greeting, progresses to an identification or very close association, and ends at a moment of discovery that returns the speaker to his world. This is neither Coleridgean nor Wordsworthian.

Is the particular form of encounter in the Keats ode, then, an original moment in whatever passes among us these days as literary history? That indeed would constitute the highest passing of what Keats was fond of calling the test of "invention" in poetry. But tradition remains recognizable even here, I believe. Spenser, Keats's first love among the earlier poets, delineates an encounter much like those that appear in Keats's odes. Spenser's

poetry, we recall, transported the young surgeon's apprentice. In a justly famous reminiscence, Charles Cowden Clarke recalls that Keats went through The Faerie Queene "as a young horse would through a spring meadow -- ramping!"² Charles Brown remembers hearing from Keats's brothers that The Faerie Queene "awakened his genius."³ Keats's first poem is an imitation of Spenser, and for the first volume of poems Keats chose a motto from Spenser. In fact, Keats's love for The Faerie Queene has so impressed his later readers that we have scanted the place of the minor poems in Keats's reading -- for it is certain he read and remembered them. Bate, for example, quotes the Spenserian motto to Keats's first volume, but fails to mention that the lines come from Muiopotmos, not The Faerie Queene. Clarke read the Epithalamion to Keats before lending him The Faerie Queene. Unfortunately, we lack external evidence of this kind for Keats's reading of Spenser's Astrophel, the elegy on the death of Sidney, and specifically the last section, The Lay of Clorinda; and it is on the relation of this poem to Keats's work that I would like to focus. Though external evidence appears lacking, there is some compelling internal evidence that we shall meet as we progress.

Spenser's Astrophel was published with Colin Clouts Come Home Again in 1595. The Lay of Clorinda, which continues the elegy in Spenser's "rehearsal" of the voice of Astrophel's "sister," Clorinda -- identified by readers with the Countess of Pembroke -- contains an extraordinary meditation upon the departed spirit of Astrophel. In a line that Shelley recalled in Adonais, Clorinda reasons that the "immortal spirit" of Astrophel cannot have ceased to exist altogether

-- "Ah no: it is not dead, ne can it die" -- but instead "lives for aie, in blisfull Paradise" (11, 67-68). Clorinda's portrait of this Paradise is remarkable, because in one of those awesome gestures of assimilation Keats will make explicit in his own poetry what is only hinted at in Spenser's: the heaven of the departed spirits is the poet's heaven. Here is Clorinda's Paradise:

There thousand birds all of celestiall brood
 To him do sweetly caroll day and night;
 And with straunge notes, of him well understood,
 Lull him a sleep in Angelick delight;
 Whilest in sweet dreame to him presented bee
 Immortal beauties, which no eye may see.
(11. 73-78)

Before continuing with Astrophel's new mode of seeing, we should note two elements in this description. First, the contrast between earth and heaven is reflected in the celestial birds' "straunge" notes, which Astrophel nevertheless "well understood." And second, the immortal beauties presented to him in dream are such that no mortal eye "may see" them. Astrophel is nevertheless able to hear these unheard melodies and see these forbidden beauties, for he now sees very much the way a god sees:

But he them sees and takes exceeding pleasure
 Of their divine aspects, appearing plaine,
 And kindling love in him above all measure,
 Sweet love still joyous, never feeling paine.
(11. 79-82)

Death is not a sleep but it makes sleep possible, for the bird's song

persuades Astrophel to accept sleep, as his new "understanding" bridges the gap between wakefulness and the dream. And since Clorinda's description makes the joyous, painless love that Astrophel feels the high point of his paradisaical existence, we conclude that paradise and sleep are closely related.

If we turn now to Keats's first volume of poetry we find that the major poems treat the young poet's sense of the nature of the imagination. In a poem that has not received sufficient attention, the verse epistle "To My Brother George," Keats points out that the authority for his extravagant claims on behalf of the poetic imagination comes from Spenser, through Leigh Hunt: "knightly Spenser to Libertas told it" (l. 24). The passage that follows contrasts naturalistic sight with imaginative vision, in terms whose verbal source is Clorinda's lament:

When a poet is in such a trance

In air he sees white coursers paw and prance . . .

And what we, ignorantly, sheet-lightning call,

Is the swift opening of their wide portal

* * * * *

The poet's eye can reach those golden halls

And view the glory of their festivals

* * * * *

Yet further off are dimly seen their bowers,

Of which no mortal eye can reach the flowers.

The "glory" of these "festivals" is Wordsworthian -- "My heart is at your festival" the speaker of the "Intimations" Ode cries -- but both the capability of reaching those halls and the corresponding insufficiency of the mortal eye that cannot reach the flowers originates with the

"immortal beauties" of Spenser's Paradise, "which no eye may see." Keats's poetic "trance," then bestows the gift that death brings in the elegy.

The metaphor of sight is hardly new, and there needs no Tiresias come from the grave to point to its use by writers earlier than Spenser. Moreover, those of Keats's readers familiar with his deep regard for Milton might proffer another source, Adam's words to Michael:

How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
Measur'd this transient World, the Race of time,
Till time stand fixt: beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.

[PL. XII. 553-556]

These lines certainly elicited a response from Wordsworth, who refers to the child as a "Seer blest" ("Intimations" Ode, l. 115), but I think it is clear from the contexts that Keats is recalling Spenser. Nor is the vision Keats writes of a variation of the Wordsworthian "eye" which, "made quiet by the power/ Of harmony" can "see into the life of things" ("Tintern Abbey," ll. 47-49). Like Spenser, Keats wants to portray a fundamental opposition between two places and two modes of perception. Keats's poem, in fact, goes on to say that not even the poet's eye can reach those immortal flowers, "for well Apollo knows/ 'Twould make the poet quarrel with the rose" (ll. 45-46). There is a danger in stepping over this line, though from the perspective of the later poems we can suggest that Keats has not fully specified this.

The Apollo who "knows" of the boundaries between men and gods and of liminal differences in the poem reappears in different guises throughout Keats's work. His most striking and important appearance in

the early poems is as the charioteer in "Sleep and Poetry," a poem that establishes a link between the restorative powers of sleep and those of the poetic imagination. The charioteer descends and

with wondrous gesture talks

To the trees and mountains, and there soon appear
Shapes of delight . . . as they would chase
Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.

* * * * *

Most awfully intent,

The driver of those steeds is forward bent
And seems to listen. Oh, that I might know
All that he writes with such a hurrying glow.

The sources that have been suggested for this driver are various. Poussin's painting "L'Empire de Flore" represents Apollo in a chariot, and may have contributed to this image in the poem. And Keats's contemporary, Richard Woodhouse, characterized the charioteer as the "Personification of the Epic poet," which to some extent he is.⁴ But these allegorical readings do not help us to identify Keats's original, who of course I am suggesting is to be found in the Lay of Clorinda. The charioteer "listens" and then writes; presumably he also understands and interprets the sounds made by the "Shapes" he sees, who "murmur, laugh, and smile, and weep." Revelations similar to this can be found in the eighteenth century -- the charioteer is somewhat like Gray's Shakespeare, to whom Nature reveals herself, or Collins's Milton, who in the "Ode on the Poetical Character" hears the strains of Heaven -- but the sense is much closer to the way in which the spirit of Astrophel listens to those "strange notes, of him well understood." Oddly enough, despite his claim, we

can easily show that Keats does not want to "know" what the charioteer writes, for what the tablet records is the memorial character of poetry, the testamentary statement of evanescence that the charioteer sees and that we find in the later poems. Keats is writing more than he will let himself "know"; and it is interesting to note that as in The Lay of Clorinda, in which death's own sleep makes the crossing to knowledge possible, Keats here associates the two as well, though the relationship is not yet apparent to him. The anagnorsis or recognition in Spenser thus consumes as it consummates; but the Astrophel/Apollo figure in Keats allows the poet to retain his own mortal eye. Nevertheless, the words the charioteer writes are in a language that Astrophel would understand, and so an element of elegy has found its way into Keats's poem. It may not be overstating the case to say that as the charioteer watches the shapes chasing their "ever-fleeting music" he writes an elegiac poem.

As we move toward the odes of 1819 you can see that I am also suggesting a transvaluation of the elegy that Keats is effecting. The elegiac character of the figure in a Keats ode suggests that that figure does not simply appear, it returns; it had an earlier relation to the poet, as it were, and he restores it to the landscape, a procedure which temporarily renews the possibility of discourse. The way in which Spenser depicts the dead Astrophel, the figure loved and lost, becomes for Keats a kind of shorthand for immutable objects and immortal beings. Thus Clorinda, having recognized Astrophel's entrance into paradise, finds in his happiness the strength to give him up:

But live thou there still happie, happie spirit,

And give us leave thee here thus to lament:

Not thee that doest thy heavens joy inherit,

But our owne selves that here in dole are drent.

(ll. 91-94)

We have, in this address, the basic structure of the Keats ode -- you are exalted there, we suffer here -- and I do not think we can come closer to Keats's literary source. I say this not only because of the structural similarity, but because Keats borrows the precise terms of Clorinda's description: I am referring to that remarkable repetition that she employs in referring to Astrophel as a "happie, happie" spirit. In the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" that phrase is used with such great frequency that various readers have had difficulty justifying Keats's poetic "ear." But Psyche also is a "happy, happy dove," and the speaker in the "Nightingale" ode is too happy in the bird's happiness; and in fact the phrase actually appears earlier in Keats -- in a poem written shortly after the completion of Endymion. Clorinda concludes that *Astrophel's spirit is happy because it has at last left behind the dolefulness of earth: it must be happy, or our understanding of heaven is threatened and the elegy cannot close.* Keats, in the poem "In Drear-Nighted December," finds a similar happiness in those objects in the landscape that are incapable of remembering the joys of summer:

In drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy tree,
 Thy branches ne'er remember
 Their green felicity.

And,

In drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy brook,
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember
 Apollo's summer look.

It is not so with boys and girls on earth, the poet concludes. They suffer the consciousness of "passèd joy," and it is this memorializing awareness that is the proper subject of poetry.

Though the rhetorical similarity between Keats's poem and Clorinda's address is clear, Keats has shifted the relationship between Clorinda and the spirit to his own use. The tree and brook are "Too" happy, a word that seems to suggest a vulnerability on their part. "Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd/ Long to continue," as Satan says of Adam and Eve (PL. IV. 370-371). There is now a line between earth and sky, between those who depart and those who remember. We have moved one step closer to elegy. And in fact the tree is not merely leafless, the brook not merely frozen: both are sleeping or dead, at least at this moment of address, and again, the poet's hymn to them is not only odal it is elegiac: though they presumably will return in summer, they actually have departed from him, having left the desolate, human landscape to the children, the many boys and girls who cannot forget. (I think it is interesting that Keats makes those who remain, children.)

It often has been remarked that the encountered figure in a Keats lyric leads the poet to thoughts of death. But it is remarkable too that a great many of these figures represent the dead, and like Eurydice, are almost reunited with the poet. Nearly all of the major female figures in the poems can be described in this way, and it is therefore necessary for the poet to close his eyes, in one way or another, in order to join them. The sonnet "As Hermes once took," written just weeks before the great odes, and presageful of Lamia as well, depends for its encounter upon the poet having "bereft/ The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes," as Hermes once put Argus to sleep. Though

these many eyes are externalized, they exist to watch the poet, to keep him from sleeping, a function usually internalized as part of a divided consciousness. Thus Endymion wishes Cynthia could "foster me beyond the brink/ Of recollection, make my watchful care/ Close up its bloodshot eyes" (IV. 306-308) so that he can join her without the attendant feelings of escape, flight, unconsciousness. This is a crucial moment in Keats's long poem because it indicates that at the moment of encounter there is a failure of the means of accession to the figure. Endymion will not close his eyes, and without this gesture of sleep there is no poetic joining. In the later sonnet there is a union, but it is troubled by the deathliness of the figure, a deathliness hinted at in the earlier tree and brook --

Pale were the sweet lips I saw,
 Pale were the lips I kissed, and fair the form
 I floated with, about that melancholy storm.

Most of Keats's female figures loiter thus palely. One is perhaps reminded of the artist Edvard Munch, whose portraits of women were recognizably deathly until he underwent analysis. In Munch's case analysis effected a recognition and ended a pattern of repeated memorials that we find in Keats as well. Freud writes that "a thing which has not been understood inevitably reappears; like an unlaidd ghost, it cannot rest until the mystery has been solved and the spell broken."⁵ Munch in adolescence suffered the traumatic loss of his mother, and so perhaps you are waiting for me to identify the various equivalent absent figures in Keats with Frances Jennings Keats, later Frances Rawlings, whose death in March, 1810, so profoundly distressed her eldest son, then fourteen.

Personally I have little doubt that such an event does lie behind the poems, as Aileen Ward has compellingly written; but since we have recently learned to put origins under erasure, let us remain with the signifiers, the images in the poetry. Besides, even if we were to speculate, any original figure would need to be a composite. And here in the poems we find, to begin with, that the absent figure at this point in Keats's career is represented in the elegiac terms set forth by Spenser in The Lay of Clorinda. The numinousness, the special powers of the figure and its odd happiness, all point to the elegy, until in The Fall of Hyperion, a poem in which the veils are lifted, happiness finds its proper object -- it is now "happy death."

I should note at this point that, though I am more interested in the text of The Lay of Clorinda than its authorship, I have been assuming that Spenser is indeed its author. De Selincourt notes that if the Countess of Pembroke wrote the poem, as tradition has it, her ear was acutely Spenserian. Moreover, we can find in the complaint entitled The Ruins of Time a similar statement of the happiness of heaven -- though without Astrophel's sleep and dream. And I am assuming also that at least in the particular case of Keats and Spenser, the later poet calls upon the words of the earlier in somewhat the same way that Freud's dreamer uses the day's events to clothe deeper wishes, and that these wishes, in Keats, may involve the restoration of an earlier relationship -- the elegiac elements in the odes point us beyond the images (urn, nightingale) themselves, or put another way, these are mnemonic images.

The images thus derive from memory but cannot be remembered. Instead, they depart only to return in another poem in a different form. This is one more element that implies a deeper content to the images,

for what we have described is precisely Freud's notion of repetition, which becomes pronounced when memory is incomplete. Here the objection might be made that we can hardly consider it repetition when such different images appear -- how can an urn "repeat" a nightingale? Freud notes in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, and Lacan reminds us, that the child will want the adult to repeat the same story each night, but will not accept the re-telling as being as meaningful as the first telling. Something of the original cannot be contained by the repetition, much as Derrida claims that presence "has always already been contaminated."⁶ Lacan suggests that the image or signifier can never "succeed in designating the primacy of the signification as such," for all repetition is alienation of meaning, a glissement or sliding of signification.⁷ I think Keats's own version of this can be found in the "Ode to Psyche":

With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign

Who breeding flowers will never breed the same.

These flowers, different yet still flowers, are meant to invoke the union of the psyche and love, and perhaps suggest that the flowers that cannot be seen by the mortal eye (in the verse letter to George) may be reached by internalization. It may be too that the Fancy's "feigning" hints ever so slightly at the partial signification of the image, that the flowers stand in for an absent figure, and it is not only Psyche who is being courted.

In any case, repetition for Freud, as is widely known, suggests the compulsive behavior of drive or psychic instinct (Trieb), and obeys the principle of constancy by seeking a reduction of tension, a movement toward the zero of death or, in the Keatsean metaphor we have been tracing, the stillness of sleep. The return of the image, then, renews

the dialectic of sleep and wakefulness, as Keats sensed as early as 1816 in "Sleep and Poetry." The problem is to keep poetry from ending in sleep, not in the meaning of ignorance but of lulling, as Astrophel was lulled. So the image or figure poses a threat to the poet and fosters antithetical feelings. We immediately perceive the apprehensiveness at the beginning of the "Nightingale" Ode: "My heart aches," Keats says. But there is anxiety too in "Thou still unravished bride of quietness," in which "still" suggests "yet": as if the poet were complaining, You are still here, still not taken, still a trouble to my mind. What lies behind the nervousness at the beginning of the odes is illuminated by the explanation that Freud provides for the behavior of two younger friends. While walking with them in a summer countryside Freud observed that one, a poet, felt no joy in the scene: he could not love and admire it because he knew it was fated for extinction. Freud, who believed that transience increases the value of beauty, could not understand the poet's judgment until he discovered that "What spoilt their enjoyment of beauty must have been a revolt in their minds against mourning."⁸ I think it is a similar resistance to the work of mourning that pervades the opening of the odes, and that motivates even the ironies that begin the "Ode on Melancholy." The desire not to mourn is in this case a desire to remain awake, to retain "the wakeful anguish of the soul," and forms one of the opposing movements of the poems.

The three-part, out-in-out structure that M. H. Abrams finds in Keats's odes I would describe then, in this way: the first part portrays a revolt against mourning that is precipitated by a reminder of absence -- the song of a nightingale in a tree overhead, the image of an urn. The second part, in which the poet seems to join the figure,

represents the conflict between desire and a rising ambivalence that signals the work of mourning; and the third depicts an uncertain resolution of this work.⁹ The second part, the body of the poem, might be described as a repeated or ritualized drama, in which the poet moves toward the discovery that the returned figure is not eternal, as he asserts, but a mask of death, and that the more or less instinctual desire for reunion must be displaced by the renunciation to which mourning leads. You can see the sleep-waking opposition here: desire would culminate in sleep, mourning in waking. It is of course as the richly sensual scene of desire that the reunion achieves much of its effect -- in the catalog of flowers in the "nightingale" Ode or in the plenitude of love on the urn. But at the climax of the description the poet encounters as if by chance an aspect of the figure that suggests its association with death: the nightingale is "forlorn," the urn includes sacrifice and desolation. At this point the emphasis shifts, as we well know, and the ode takes on the vocabulary of the elegy. A renunciation follows, in which the figure is bid farewell or complained of, and this part of the poem comes to an end.

It is, I think, the threat of sleep that is intrinsic to the instinctual character of the reunion that makes the poet draw back. Lacan insists that desire is a metonymy, but he describes an exemplary scene in which reunion or accession leads to the sleep of a child. Lacan has seen, he writes, "the child, traumatized by the fact that I was going away despite the appeal" in his voice; and "long after, having picked up the child -- I have seen it let his head fall on my shoulder and drop off to sleep, sleep alone being capable of giving him access to the living signifier that I had become since the date of the trauma" of the original departure.¹⁰ Accession to the signifier, the representation of the gap, brings sleep, death. The watchful care, the waking Argus

is thus a defense against reunion, against completion of access, which make it seem "rich to die." This is why sacrifice intrudes on a scene that is clearly the scene of desire, the landscape of the unconscious, the landscape of the sleep of the child, and of Keats's own wished-for sleep: for the "embalmèd darkness" of the "Nightingale" Ode is not only perfumed but sleeplike, it looks back to the poem "To Sleep," in which sleep appears as the "soft embalmer." The climax of the ode is not a discovery of the grounds for consolation, as in Spenser, but the emergence of ambivalence and a shift from identification to identity.

The gap between desire and memory seems to create the two levels on which the odes may be read. In the first instance we would read them as we usually do, as dramas of desire, flight, imagination. The second level would take us much closer to the elegy: if Keats could see what the charioteer wrote, if he did know the secrets hidden behind Moneta's "hollow brow," if he could answer his own questions in the "Grecian Urn" Ode -- "What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?" -- the consequent recognition would clarify the elegiac element in the odes. Each compelling encounter in the poems represents a partly commemorative repetition of what Lacan calls "an act of homage to a missed reality,"¹¹ where the reality is not everyday reality but a portion of the drama of desire. There is in the poetry as in Lacan this ambiguity of the real, since the many instances of dead lovers awakening, of men and women restored to each other, suggest that at the level of the real that Lacan is discussing, the poet would wish to awake and find that the dream of reunion is the real, and the world where "youth grows pale" is the sleep. I think

this is why the last part of a Keats ode represents the poet as both shocked and uncertain, for he must now reconstitute himself as though he were in the real, as though he had not left desire behind with the fled music, the wild ecstasy and the catalog of flowers that no mortal eye may see.

What moves us in the odes is the fullness of the poet's response, his simultaneous love and fear of the returned figure. From the perspective provided by recent psychoanalytic writing, we can see how important the need to be "awake" is in the poems, for the repeated desires in Keats for what he calls a "fellowship with essence," a reunion with the departed, masks the workings of the death instinct. This concept is being attacked on many fronts, but the representations in Keats are too similar to be coincidental. Here is Serge Leclaire (in Yale French Studies, 1972) on ecstatic drives: "The death-drive is that radical force, usually fixed and fixating, which surfaces in a catastrophic or ecstatic instant, at the point where the organic coherence of the subject in his body appears for what it is, unnamable or inexpressible, swoon or ecstasy." Against this powerful trend Keats pits a form of conscience or "watchful care" which draws him back from ecstasy and that figure that evokes it, and turns the odes toward elegiac remembrance. There is no resolution or reconciliation in a Keats ode, as there is in Wordsworth. Instead we have a compelling encounter followed by a separation that restores the possibility of repetition. Like the rondeau form Keats liked so much, the odes take us back to the place we began.

NOTES

1. Abrams' essay included in From Sensibility to Romanticism, ed. Frederick Hilles and Harold Bloom (New York, 1965); see especially p. 552, and compare Paul de Man's criticism of the essay in "The Rhetoric of Temporality."
2. Recollections of Poets (New York, n.d.), p. 125.
3. Quoted by Walter Jackson Bate in John Keats (New York, 1965), p. 33.
4. See Stuart M. Sperry, Woodhouse, p. 154.
5. The Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. James Strachey (London) X, p. 122 -- hereafter cited as Standard Edition.
6. L'écriture et la difference (Paris, 1967), p. 366. Quoted by Edward Casey, "Imagination and Repetition in Literature: A Reassessment," Yale French Studies LII (1975), p. 267.
7. From Jaques Lacan's discussion of Freudian repetition in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis (N.Y., 1978), p. 61. Lacan, of course, needs to be read in the context he himself provides.

8. Freud's essay "In Transience," written for a collection of essays on the Goethe countryside, is particularly rich and accessible. His discussion of what we would consider Romantic melancholy both illuminates that problem and locates Freud's attitude toward it. Standard Edition (London, 1957), XIV, p. 306.

9. For a recent discussion of the tendency of mourners to repeat the trauma in an effort to undo or change the ending of the drama, see Martha Wolfenstein, "Loss, Rage, and Repetition in The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child XXIV (1969), pp. 432-460.

10. The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis, p. 63.

11. Fundamental Concepts, p. 58. Lacan is discussing that remarkable dream Freud recounts of a father dreaming that his dead son is burning. The real manifests itself in the dream indirectly, in the dead son's cry that he is burning, i.e., dying of fever. The missed reality thus caused his death and, Lacan suggests, is repeated and commemorated in the dream. The interested reader should also refer to the discussion of the "Fort! Da!" repetition in Lacan's Rome address, "The function and field of speech and language in psycho-analysis," in Ecrits: A Selection (N.Y., 1977), pp. 103-105.

But that immortall spirit, which was deckt
With all the dowries of celestiall grace :
By soueraine choyce from th'heuenly quires
select,

And lineally deriv'd from Angels race,
O what is now of it become, aread.
Ay me, can so diuine a thing be dead ?

Ah no : it is not dead, ne can it die,
But liues for aie, in blisfull Paradise :
Where like a new-borne babe it soft doth lie.
In bed of lillies wrapt in tender wise. 70
And compast all about with roses sweet,
And daintie violets from head to feet.

There thousand birds all of celestiall brood,
To him do sweetly caroll day and night :
And with straunge notes, of him well vnderstood,
Lull him a sleep in Angelick delight ;

Whilest in sweet dreame to him presented bee
Immortall beauties, which no eye may see.

But he them sees and takes exceeding pleasure
Of their diuine aspects, appearing plaine, 80
And kindling loue in him aboue all measure,
Sweet loue still ioyous, neuer feeling paine.

For what so goodly forme he there doth see,
He may enjoy from iealous rañcor free.

There liueth he in euerlasting blis,
Sweet spirit neuer fearing more to die :
Ne dreading harme from any foes of his,
Ne fearing saluage beasts more crueltie.

Whilest we here wretches waile his priuate lask,
And with vaine vowes do often call him back.

But liue thou there still happie, happie spirit,
And giue vs leauē thee here thus to lament :
Not thee that doest thy heauens ioy inherit,
But our owne selues that here in dole are drent.

Thus do we weep and waile, and wear our eies,
Mourning in others, our owne miseries.

Which when she ended had, another swaine
Of gentle wit and daintie sweet deuice :
Whom *Astrophel* full deare did entertaine, 99
Whilest here he liv'd, and held in passing price,
Hight *Thestylis*, began his mournfull tourne,
And made the *Muses* in his song to mourne.

And after him full many other moe,
As euerie one in order lov'd him best,
Can dight themselues t'expresse their inward
woe,

With dolefull layes vnto the time address,
The which I here in order will rehearse,
As fittest flowres to deck his mournfull hearse.

Sleep and Poetry

And can I ever bid these joys farewell?
 Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,
 Where I may find the agonies, the strife
 Of human hearts: for lo! I see afar,
 O'er sailing the blue cragginess, a car
 And steeds with streamy manes — the charioteer
 Looks out upon the winds with glorious fear:
 And now the numerous trappings quiver lightly 130
 Along a huge cloud's ridge; and now with sprightly
 Wheel downward come they into fresher skies,
 Tipt round with silver from the sun's bright eyes.
 Still downward with capacious whirl they glide;
 And now I see them on the green-hill's side
 In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.
 The charioteer with wond'rous gesture talks
 To the trees and mountains; and there soon appear
 Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,
 Passing along before a dusky space 140
 Made by some mighty oaks: as they would chase
 Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.
 Lo! how they murmur, laugh, and smile, and weep:
 Some with upholden hand and mouth severe;
 Some with their faces muffled to the ear
 Between their arms; some, clear in youthful bloom,
 Go glad and smilingly athwart the gloom;
 Some looking back, and some with upward gaze;
 Yes, thousands in a thousand different ways
 Flit onward — now a lovely wreath of girls
 Dancing their sleek hair into tangled curls; 150
 And now broad wings. Most awfully intent
 The driver of those steeds is forward bent,
 And seems to listen: O that I might know
 All that he writes with such a hurrying glow.