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How is one to calculate the age of psychoanalysis? Not everything in it comes down to the manifestation of its name; but under this name, it remains a rather young venture. One can ask oneself about its chances—those of yesterday or tomorrow.

You are perhaps wondering why I chose this theme, chance, luck [la chance], when, according to the terms of our program or contract, I am supposed to speak to you about what relates psychoanalysis to literature—that other thing of an incalculable, immemorial age and yet altogether recent. Did I choose this theme randomly or by chance, or, as is more likely, was this choice imposed on me, did it let itself be chosen as if I had fallen upon it while letting me keep the illusion of free will? All of this going back to a very old story that I shall not endeavor to recount here.

For the moment let us treat “Psychoanalysis” and “Literature” as if they were presumed proper names. They point to events or series of events concerning which we can rightfully suppose the singularity of an irreversible process and of a historical existence. On the basis, already, of this singularity, their dealings with chance give us something to think about.

Playing now with the apostrophe, I prefer to tell you right away: I do not know to whom I am speaking. To whom is this discourse or lecture addressed here and now? It is indeed to you that I am delivering it, but that doesn’t change the situation much. You understand quite well why I say this. And since you find this intelligible, it becomes at least possible to demonstrate that, beginning with the first purely and simply missed its destination.

Yes, you understand very well why I am speaking here of destination or aim? What are addresses if, on the one hand, I calculate and (and I underscore the word) or if, on the other, French, to fall upon them by accident?

I do not know, so to speak, those to whom you yourselves who are hearing me, I do not know if, by reasons of your declared interest in the majority among you belong to the “world” of this school might suggest, to the “world” and that one, this one or that one—to the arts, or the humanities. It is not certain that frontiers are those of “contexts” and proceed undergoing rapid transformation. Even if I subject, it would be vague and too general; calculations and spread the net of a loosely to count on luck, not unlike when one indeed could I adjust my argument to some or another among you, for example, whose

Moreover, to know a proper name, is that

There, I have just enumerated the themes all presented in what I have just said, in which has been added just now to the end that I would like to talk to you, but I mu certain indetermination. I deliver my words luck with you and a few others, even if which chance has more chance of reaching you to chance without speaking about it. Wh effects of chance appear to be at once pro

by language.

Language, however, is but one among which have as a proper feature this curious tends the reserves of random indetermination encoding, in other words, of control and sel between randomness and code disturbs the tem, even though it regulates that system’s

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Some chances: with Some Sophonies

...chance: not everything in its name; but under this name, it can ask oneself about its chances—

I chose this theme, chance, luck (la chance) that relates psychoanalysis to literature—
in an immemorial age and yet altogether randomly or by chance, or, as is more likely, it let itself be chosen as it had fallen:

illusion of free will? All of this going...

I do not know, so to speak, those to whom I am speaking at present. You yourselves who are hearing me, I do not know you. I do not even know if, by reasons of your declared interests or professional affiliations, the majority among you belong to the "world" of psychiatry, as the title of this school might suggest, to the "world" of psychoanalysis—this one and that one, this one or that one—to the "world" of science, literature, the arts, or the humanities. It is not certain that such "worlds" exist. Their frontiers are those of "contexts" and procedures of legitimation currently undergoing rapid transformation. Even if I had some knowledge on this subject, it would be vague and too general; I would have to make rough calculations and spread the net of a loosely woven discourse; I would have to count on luck, not unlike when one goes fishing or hunting. How indeed could I adjust my argument to some singular destination, to one or another among you, for example, whose proper name I might know?

Moreover, to know a proper name, is that to know someone?

There, I have just enumerated the themes of my lecture. They were all presented in what I have just said, including the theme of numbers, which has been added just now to the enumeration. It's about all this that I would like to talk to you, but I must do so in the dim light of a certain indetermination. I deliver my words a bit at random; I try my luck with you and a few others, even if what I say at this moment about chance has more chance of reaching you than if I had delivered it over to chance without speaking about it. Why? Well, at least because these effects of chance appear to be at once produced, multiplied, and limited by language.

Language, however, is but one among those systems of marks that all have as a proper feature this curious tendency: to increase simultaneously the reserves of random indetermination and the powers of coding or over-coding, in other words, of control and self-regulation. This competition between randomness and code disturbs the very systematicity of the system, even though it regulates that system's play in its instability. Whatever
its singularity in this respect, the linguistic system of these traces or marks are, it seems to me, just one example of this law of destabilization.

Right here, among us, the effects of destabilization are at once multiplied and limited (relatively cushioned or neutralized) by the multiplicity of languages and codes that are intersecting with each other at every instant in an intense activity of translation. This activity transforms not only words, a lexicon, or a syntax (for example, between French and English) but also nonlinguistic marks. It mobilizes the quasi-totality of the present context and even what already exceeds it. It was in fact required that the text I am now reading be publishable; I was aware of this when writing it this summer. It is destined in advance to addressees [destinataires] who are not easily determinable or who in any case, as far as any possible calculation is concerned, command a great reserve of indetermination. And this arises, as I shall try to show later, from the most general structure of the mark. To try my chances over your heads, I therefore address myself to addressees unknown to you or me. But while waiting and in passing, it falls, as the French saying goes, upon you.

What do I and what can I mean to say by declaring these “addressees” unknown to you and me? To which criteria can one refer in order to decide this? They are not necessarily the criteria of knowledge conscious of itself. For I could be addressing myself to an unconscious and absolutely determined addressee, one rigorously localized in “my” unconscious, in yours, or in the machinery programming the partition of this event. And, moreover, everything that comes to mind under the headings “consciousness” and “unconscious” already supposes the possibility of these marks and all those possible disturbances to dispatches to be sent [environ à destiner]. In any case, the fact that we are ignorant of the proper name or the idiom of the other does not mean that we know nothing about her or him. Although I do not know you or can barely see you while I am addressing myself to you, and although you know me very little, regardless of the trajectories and translations of signs that we address to each other in this twilight, what I have been saying, as of a moment ago, arrives at you. It comes to meet you and reaches you. Up to a certain point it becomes intelligible to you. The “things” I throw, project, or cast in your direction, toward your encounter, fall often and well enough upon you, at least upon certain of those among you. The things with which I am bombarding you are linguistic or nonlinguistic signs: words, sentences, auditory and visual images, gestures, intonations, and hand signals. In our calculation, we can count on certain probabilities. On the basis of numerous indices, we form, you and I, a certain of where to reach the other. Above all, we calculate capacity of language, of its code and its play and plays with its rules. We take in random chance [destine au hasard] and at the In French, destiner au hasard can even have two meanings. It is thus both sufficiently determined to prohibit all random manner of Epicurus or Lucretius, there is at least some parenklisis or some clinamen. Destiner abandon, or deliver over to chance itself. But something unwittingly, in a haphazard manner, the text. In the first case, one destines to chance, in the second, one does not destine to chance but something above all, believe in chance, since one looks for it there at all cost.

For a while now, I have been speaking to you but I do not speak at random [au hasard] reaching you with my speech, I have above I thought that speaking to you about chance me the greatest chances of being pertinent, subject by touching you. This supposes that contracts and conventions, what Lucretius w “federations.” For example, it is prescribed here be English and that everything I say is true, between psychoanalysis and literature works—among others, my own. And I must runing there all an hour.

From within these designated limits, I throw of two dice [d’un seul coup deux dés]. [après coup], once they have fallen, we will still remains to be seen), what sum they fe
linguistic system of these traces or marks of this law of destabilization.

Acts of destabilization are at once multiple (or neutralized) by the multiplicity intersecting with each other at every insta-

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numerous indices, we form, you and I, a certain schematic idea of each

other and of where to reach the other. Above all, we take account of the
calculating capacity of language, of its code and its play, of whatever rules its
play and plays with its rules. We take into account what destines to
random chance [destine au hasard] and at the same time reduces chance.

In French, destiner au hasard can even have two syntaxes and therefore

two meanings. It is thus both sufficiently determined and indetermined to
leave room for the chances of which it speaks in its trajectory, in its very
"jectory." This depends, as one says, on the context, but a context is never
sufficiently determined to prohibit all random deviation. To speak in the
manner of Epicurus or Lucretius, there is always a chance open there for
some parenklisis or some clinamen. Destiner au hasard means to devote,
abandon, or deliver over to chance itself. But it can also mean to destine
something unwittingly, in a haphazard manner, *at random* [in English in
the text]. In the first case, one destines to chance not by chance, whereas
in the second, one does not destine to chance but chance intervenes and
diverts the destination. The same can be said of the expression croire au
hasard [to believe in chance or to believe randomly], which can mean that
one believes in the existence of chance, but just as well that one does not,
above all, believe in chance, since one looks for and finds a hidden mean-
ing there at all cost.

For a while now, I have been speaking to you about chance [du hasard],
but I do not speak at random [au hasard]. Estimating my chances of
reaching you with my speech, I have above all spoken to you of speech.
I thought that speaking to you about chance and language would give
me the greatest chances of being pertinent, that is, of touching on my
subject by touching you. This supposes that between us there are many
contracts and conventions, what Lucretius would call explicit or implicit
"federations." For example, it is prescribed that the dominant language
here be English and that everything I say must relate to something like
chance, between psychoanalysis and literature, taking into account earlier
works—among others, my own. And I must speak for not much longer
than an hour.

From within these designated limits, I will throw out two questions.
These questions having been cast, imagine that, in one blow, it is a single
throw of two dice *d'un seul coup deux dés*. After the fact, after the blow
*après coup*, once they have fallen, we will try to see (if indeed something
still remains to be seen), what sum they form between them: in other
words, what their constellation signifies. And whether one can read in them my chances, or yours.

I. To usher in the fall

The first and preliminary question, as if thrown down on the threshold: why this downward movement? When one speaks of chance or luck, why do the words and concepts impose in the first place this signification, this direction, this sense, this downward movement regardless of whether we are dealing with a throw or a fall? Why does this sense and this direction have a privileged relation to the non-sense or insignificance that we frequently associate with chance? What does the movement of descent have to do with luck or chance?

As one says in French, qu'est-ce qu'il aurait à voir, what does it have to see with them? (And we will see how precisely, in this place, vision goes missing). Is it a matter of the ground or the abyss? As you know, the words "chance" and "case" descend, as it were, according to the same Latin filiation, from cadere, which can still be heard indicating the sense of the fall in "cadence," "choir" (to fall), échéance (expiry date), as well as in "accident" and "incident."

But it is also the case, outside this linguistic family, of the Zufall or the Zufälligkeit, which in German means "chance," of zufallen (to fall due), of zufällig, the accidental, fortuitous, contingent, occasional—and the word "occasion" belongs to the same Latin descent. Fall is the case; Einfäll, an idea that suddenly comes to mind in an apparently unforeseeable manner. Now, I would say that the unforeseeable is precisely the case: what falls is not seen in advance. Is not what befalls us or descends upon us—coming from above, like destiny or lightning, taking our faces and hands by surprise—exactly what thwarts or undoes our anticipation? Anticipation (anticipare, ante-capere) apprehends and comprehends in advance, does not let itself be taken by surprise; there is no chance for it. It sees coming the ob-ject in front of it, the object or the Gegenstand that, in philosophical German, was preceded by the Gegenwurf in which one recognizes once again the movement of the throw (werfen). The ob-ject is kept in view or in hand, within sight or intuitus, giving purchase to the hand or the conceptus, to the Begreifen or to the Begriff.

And when something does not befall us "by accident" [par hasard], as the saying or belief goes, then one can also fall oneself. One can fall well or badly, have a lucky or unlucky break, but always by dint of not having foreseen, of not having seen in advance and ahead of oneself. In that case, when it is man or the subject who is the upright stance. It imprints on the vert clinamen, whose effects are sometimes irreparable.

For the moment, let us do no more than acknowledge that in an odd way associates chance with movement, the finite throw (which must come down), the fall, the incident, the accident. To attempt to think chance would be in the experience (I emphasize this word) of falling. And there are those who would be inclined to say that an event in the experience would be inclined to say that an event would be inclined to say that an event was an absolute encounter, is that an event in the nature that it would be inclined to say that an event was in advance. One must not say what is coming, which is then outlined is no pure event. So, one might say: no matter what happens, only the foreseeable and on a higher level. In this singular experience, then, puts us or ill (ce qui tombe bien ou mal, as one constitutes a chance, a piece of luck. In many cases, this chance is a lucky chance. In other cases, the unfortunate chance. What are the chances that I'll lose the bomb will be used? Malchance is when no luck, quand on n'a pas de chance, but or chance—an "infelicity" as is said something in the Austinian theory of speech acts, statistical deviations in the production of oaths—and, precisely, contracts.

Malchance, bad luck, is méciance. On a nasty person, le méchant, plays on malchance, a word that associates spite and meanness.
For the moment, let us do no more than take note of this law or coincidence that in an odd way associates chance and luck with the downward movement, the finite throw (which must therefore end up by falling back down), the fall, the incident, the accident, or precisely the coincidence. To attempt to think chance would be in the first place to interest oneself in the experience (I emphasize this word) of what happens unforeseeably. And there are those who would be inclined to think that unforeseeability conditions the very structure of the event. An event that can be anticipated and therefore apprehended or comprehended, an event without absolute encounter, is that an event in the full sense of the word? Some would be inclined to say that an event worthy of this name does not announce itself in advance. One must not see it coming. If one anticipates what is coming, which is then outlined horizontally on a horizon, there is no pure event. So, one might say: no horizon for the event or the encounter, only the unforeseeable and on a vertical axis. The alterity of the other—which does not reduce itself to the economy of our horizon—always comes to us from on high; it is indeed the very high [le très haut].

This singular experience, then, puts us in relation with what falls well or ill ([ce qui] tombe bien ou mal, as one says in French), and therefore constitutes a chance, a piece of luck. Depending on the context and in many cases, this chance is a lucky chance. This amounts to a pleonastic expression: avoir de la chance, to have luck, is to have good luck, bonne chance. In other cases, the unfortunate ones, luck is bad luck [une malchance]. What are the chances that I'll lose at a game or that the neutron bomb will be used? Malchance is when one is out of luck, when one has no luck, quand on n'a pas de chance, but it is also a phenomenon of luck or chance—an “infelicity” as is said sometimes, in a very significant way, in the Austinian theory of speech acts, to designate accidental or parasitical deviations in the production of performatives, promises, orders, or oaths—and, precisely, contracts.

Malchance, bad luck, is méchance. One might say that the spiteful or nasty person, le méchant, plays on malchance, on méchanceté, an old French word that associates spite and meanness, méchanceté, with what falls out badly. The mean, spiteful person falls badly, le méchant méchoit, which is another way of saying that he is demeaned, brought low, il déchoit, first in
the sense of accidental misfortune and then, if we shift the sense a bit and allow it in turn to deviate, in the sense of what leads him to do wrong.

If I stress the multiplicity of languages and if I play on it, do not take this for a mere exercise or a gratuitous and fortuitous display. I intend to show thereby, in a practical fashion and along the way, from digression to deviation, a certain interlacing of necessity and chance, of significant and insignificant chance: the marriage, as one would say in Greek, of Anankē, Tukhē, and Automattia.

In any case, one may remark in the system the incidence of a coincidence, the very thing that falls, well or badly, with something else, at the same time or in the same place as something else. This is also the sense that the Greek gives to symptoma, a word that means, first of all, a sinking or depression, collapse, secondly, coincidence, fortuitous event, encounter, next, unfortunate event, and finally, the symptom as sign, for example a clinical sign. The clinic, let it be said in passing, names the whole space of the lying-down or bedridden position, the position of illness par excellence.

To the same semantic register belongs the idea of whatever has fallen to someone's lot, the share, the lottery, of what is said to be attributed, distributed, dispensed, and sent (geschickt) by the gods or destiny (moira, nemein, nomos, Schicksal), the fatal or fabulating word, the chance of heredity, the play of chromosomes, as if this gift and these givens obeyed, for better or worse, the order of a throw coming down from above. We are still dealing with a logic and a tapas of the dispatch ([envol)] destiny, destination: dispatches whose descending projection or trajectory can be disturbed, which in this case means interrupted or deviated. Within the same register we find (but can we speak in this case of a lucky find or a chance encounter?) the unforeseeable and inexplicable fall into original sin or, according to a certain reported mythology of Plato's Phaedrus, the disseminating fall of the soul into a body, as well as the lapsus (which, as you know, means fall) that produces a symptom for psychoanalytic interpretation when it reveals its unconscious destination and thus manifests its truth.

Here we fall back necessarily upon Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius. In the course of their fall in the void, atoms are pulled along by a supplementary deviation, by the parenklisis or clinamen that exacerbates an initial gap and produces the concentration of material (systrophe) that gives birth to the worlds and the things they contain. The clinamen di-
Mes chances

...and then, if we shift the sense a bit and think of what leads him to do wrong.

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beyond the idea of whatever has fallen
cery, of what is said to be attributed, (moira, of a fabulating word, the chance of having
self this gift and these givens obeyed, row coming down from above. We pos
s of Lucretius, "at times quite uncertain" and in "uncertain places."2

Without this declension, "nature would have never produced anything" (113). Only this deviation can change the course of an imperturbable des-
tination and an inflexible order. Such erring (I have called it elsewhere "destinerring") can contravene the laws of destiny, conventions or con-
tracts, agreements of fatum (fati foedera [2.254]). I emphasize the word "contract" for reasons that will become clear later. Allow me here a brief
digression toward a classical philological problem concerning the indeterminate reading of the word voluptas or voluntas (2.257). The mere
difference of a letter introduces a clinamen precisely at the point where Lucretius is explaining why the clinamen is the condition of freedom,
of the will (voluntas) or the voluptuous pleasure (voluptas) wrested away
from destiny (fatis avolsa). But in any case, the context leaves no doubt as to the link between clinamen, freedom, and pleasure. The clinamen of the
elementary principle—that is, the atom, the law of the atom—would be the pleasure principle. The clinamen introduces the play of necessity and chance into what might anachronistically be called the determinism of the universe. Nonetheless, it does not imply a conscious will, even if this principle of indeterminism makes conceivable for some the conscious
freedom of man.

When I bring up the names of Epicurus and Lucretius here, a kind of systrophe takes place in my discourse. For Epicurus, condensation or density, the systrophic relief, is first of all the twisted entanglement and concentrated turn of atoms (mass, swarm, turbulence, downpour, herd) that produces the seed of things, the spermata, the seminal multiplicity (insenmal or disseminal). A number of elements come to be gathered in a
turbulent whirl in the systrophe I am bringing to you. They do so in their
turn and according to several turns. Which ones? What are the various and intersecting reasons for which I have provoked this Epicurean down-
pour? I do so for at least three reasons:

1. The atomic elements, the bodies that fall in the void, are often defined, notably by Lucretius, as letters (littera). And within their systrophe they are seeds (spermata, semina). The indivisible element, the atomos of this literal dissemination produced by the supplement of deviation, is the stoikheion, a word designating the graphic thing as well as the mark, the letter, the trait, or the point. This theory of literal dissemination is also
a discourse on incidents and accidents as symptoms and even, among others, as "symptoms of the soul." It is possible to speak of these psychic symptoms (peri tên psuchên ta sumptômaia), and it is in order to account for this possibility that Epicurus rejects the theories of the "incorpooreal" soul (Letter to Herodotus).

2. Within the principal movement of the literal seeds, should one interpret verticality as a fall, as the downward displacement with regard to man or a finite being, with regard, precisely, to his regard or gaze and within his horizon? Epicurus seems to answer no, according to Diogenes Laertius: "In the infinite," he says, "one should not speak of up and down: we know that if what is above our heads were resituated in the infinite, it would never appear to us in the same way"; "Now, the universe is infinite from two points of view; first, through the number of bodies it contains and then through the immensity of the void that it encompasses." Let us retain from this at least the following: the sense of the fall in general (symptom, lapsus, incident, accidentality, cadence, coincidence, expiration date, luck, good luck, bad luck or méchance) is thinkable solely in the situation, the places, or space of finitude, within the multiple relation to the multiplicity of elements, letters, or seeds.

A very violent condensation could precipitate this Epicurean interpretation of the disseminating dispersion toward the Heideggerian analytic of Dasein. This apparently fortuitous connection, this systrophic precipitation would, however, be that much more necessary given that Dasein, as such, is not reducible to the common and metaphysical characters of human existence or experience (that of man as subject, soul or body, ego, consciousness or unconscious). In the case of Dasein, Heidegger analyzes the finitude of being-thrown (Geworfenheit, thrownness into existence, into the "there," into a world, into uncanniness, into the possibility of death, into the "nothing," the thrown being-with-one-another). This Geworfenheit or being-thrown is not an empirical character among others, and it has an essential relation to dispersion and dissemination (Zerstreuung) as structure of Dasein. Originally thrown (geworfene), Dasein is not only a finite being (Kant's intuitus derivatius) that, as subject, would be passively subjected to the objects that it does not create and that are as if thrown before it and come to meet it. Neither subjectum nor objectum, Dasein is itself thrown, originally abandoned to fall and decline or, we could say, to chance (Verfallen). Dasein's chances are first of all and also its falls. And they are always mine, mes chances, each time brought back to a self-rela-

3. Despite the difference or the displacemibility of letters plays a decisive role in the determination, necessity or chance, writing, the simulacrum, fiction or literature. Here I must of Truth and to what I called there, but in the "atomystique of the letter": this atomystic interpretation of "The Purloined Letter," and o
It is no doubt not a matter of some "corruption of human nature." But one is therefore all the more struck by certain analogies with this discourse. All the more so in that Heidegger remains altogether silent regarding Democritus: he makes only a brief allusion to the Galileo/Democritus relation in Die Frage nach dem Ding (1935/1962, pp. 61–62), and another, which is more interesting for us, to "Democritus and Plato" (p. 162) and to rhumhos in "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Physis" (Wegmarken, 338). To my knowledge, he cites Epicurus only once, his lathé biōs, "life in hiding," which Heidegger interprets in "Aletheia" (1943). We will limit ourselves here to this reference. Even if these affinities are purely lexical and apparently fortuitous, should they be considered insignificant, accidental, or, for that very reason, symptoms? Is it insignificant that, when discussing the decline into inauthenticity (Uneigentlichkeit), Heidegger isolates three structures or three types of movement? These are: the suspension in the void ("den Modus eines bodenlosen Schwebens"), the fall as a catastrophe (Absturz: "Wir nennen diese ‘Bewegtheit’ des Daseins in seinem eigenen Sein den Absturz"); translated in English as "downward plunge"), and the whirlpool or vortex ("die Bewegtheit des Verfallens als Wirbel," translated as "turbulence"§ 38, "Falling and Thrownness").

That was one reason for situating here, to be sure in a far too schematic fashion, Heidegger’s analytic. The other reason concerns the place that one must recognize for Heidegger in Lacanian theory. This point was also important to me in my interpretation of Lacan’s Seminar on Poe’s "Purloined Letter." All this belongs to the account and contract of our encounter; the deviation of another systrophē will no doubt lead us back here again.

3. Despite the difference or the displacement of the context, the indivisibility of letters plays a decisive role in the debate in which are gathered, it seems to me, the most serious stakes for a psychoanalytic problematic of determinism, necessity or chance, writing, the signifier and the letter, the simulacrum, fiction or literature. Here I must refer you to "The Purveyor of Truth" and to what I called there, but in order to call it into question, the "atomystique of the letter": this atomystique supports Lacan’s entire interpretation of "The Purloined Letter," and of its circular, ineluctable, and
predetermined return to the point of departure, despite all the apparently random incidents. The letter, Lacan claims, does not tolerate partition. I tried to demonstrate that this axiom was dogmatic and inseparable from a whole philosophy of psychoanalysis. It is what finally makes possible all analytical interpretation but also what assures it of its hermeneutic power over so-called literary writing. Now, this power is also an un-power [impouvoir] and a miscognition [méconnaissance]. Without going back over a published debate, I will quickly say in which direction my present remarks are inclined: it is not to the indivisibility but the divisibility or internal difference of the so-called ultimate element (stoikheion, trait, letter, seminal mark) that we are led by the phenomenon of chance, as well as by that of literary fiction, to say nothing of what I call writing or the trace in general. For reasons that I have explained elsewhere, and to which I will return again, I prefer to call this element—which is precisely no longer elementary and indivisible—mark.

It is a matter, then, of a diversion of atomism, if not one of an anti-atomism. Why would the Epicurean doctrine not be subject to the clinamen? To this clinamen whose—properly Epicurean—doctrine would have caused, according to Marx, a detour in the tradition of Democritus? Why would one not subject the name of Epicurus to the clinamen, in his name itself?

If I have titled this lecture Mes chances, it is in order to talk to you about them. My chances are well known; they sum up the experience of "my" work, "my" teaching and "my" texts. To have (good) luck [avoir de la chance] is, according to the French idiom, often to fall upon what is needed or as needed, to "fall well," to find something by chance, to chance upon the right encounter, according to the responsibility of the good find [la trouvaille]. "The Purveyor of Truth," for instance, begins by repeating the expression "si ça se trouve," if it is found, at least three times. In common French, this means, "if by chance . . ." Well, the moment has come to present to you, with my chances, as it happens, what I have just fallen or lucked upon.

First chance: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," which can also be read as a preface to "The Purloined Letter." When Dupin is being presented by the narrator, it doesn't take long before the reference to the name of Epicurus and his theories comes up. Is this pure chance? Is it insignificant? Dupin reminds the narrator how he had been thrust, the word is his, upon a pile of street stones ("a fruiterer . . . thrust you"), and how he had stepped upon one of the loose fragments, ankle.” Dupin then adds:

You kept your eyes upon the ground—glance at the holes and ruts in the pavement (so that the stones), until we reached the little alley . . . of experiment, with the overlapping and relevance brightened up, and, perceiving your lips, you murmured the word "stereotomy," a term species of pavement. I knew that you could without being brought to think of atoms, and ruts; and since, when we discussed this subject to you how singularly yet with how little noble Greek had met with confirmation . . .

I cut here in order to suggest that the late old science gives rise could well be, besides and the physical sciences to which Dupin refer the thinking of writing or literature. With a reading of Poe's text here, I stress an element important for me. The reference to atomism is itself only a minuscule atom, a detail of trait in the series that it nevertheless gives is inscribed there in a most significant man counts how Dupin, creator and analyst, "a pin—the creative and the resolute," divine And how, although the narrator believes in truth merely analyzing symptoms and septimata, to quote once again Epicurus's of divining—by luck, intuition, or chance accidents in a story of a fall, and he turns You will remember that Dupin and the narrating randomly. Then, all of a sudden, links up with the narrator's inner and silent transmission or telepathy had taken place. Dupin explains that instead of divining he he calculated based on apparently random minuscule, quasi-atomic particles and that relation to the movement of throwing and t
of departure, despite all the apparently
unanimous claims, does not tolerate partition. I
was dogmatic and inseparable from
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No, this power is also an un-power

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My Chances / Mes chances

"stepped upon one of the loose fragments, slipped, slightly strained [his]
ankle." Dupin then adds:

You kept your eyes upon the ground—glancing, with a petulant expression,
at the holes and ruts in the pavement (so that I saw you were still thinking of
the stones), until we reached the little alley... which has been paved, by way
of experiment, with the overlapping and riveted blocks. Here your counte-
nance brightened up, and, perceiving your lips move, I could not doubt that
you murmured the word "stereotomy," a term very affectedly applied to this
species of pavement. I knew that you could not say to yourself "stereotomy"
without being brought to think of atomies, and thus of the theories of Epicu-
rus; and since, when we discussed this subject not very long ago, I mentioned
to you how singularly yet with how little notice, the vague guesses of that
noble Greek had met with confirmation... 3

I cut here in order to suggest that the latest confirmations to which the
old science gives rise could well be, besides "the late nebular cosmogony"
and the physical sciences to which Dupin refers, genetics, psychoanalysis,
the thinking of writing or literature. Without being able to undertake
a reading of Poe's text here, I stress an element of structure that is im-
portant for me. The reference to atomism and to the name of Epicurus
is itself only a minuscule atom, a detail of the text, an incident, a literal
trait in the series that it nevertheless gives to be read. But this incident
is inscribed there in a most significant manner. The narrator himself
re-
counts how Dupin, creator and analyst, "a Bi-Part Soul," "a double Du-
pin—the creative and the resolvent," divines the narrator's own thoughts.
And how, although the narrator believes Dupin divines his soul, he is
in truth merely analyzing symptoms and saying peri tén psuchén ta sum-
piōnata, to quote once again Epicurus's letter to Herodotus. Instead
of divining—by luck, intuition, or chance—he calculates based on the
accidents in a story of a fall, and he turns contingency into symptom.
You will remember that Dupin and the narrator are wandering aimlessly,
strolling randomly. Then, all of a sudden, Dupin makes a remark that
links up with the narrator's inner and silent reverie, as if some thought
transmission or telepathy had taken place. In the manner of an analyst,
Dupin explains that instead of divining he had calculated. To be sure, but
he calculated based on apparently random incidents that are very small,
minute, quasi-atomic particles and that, curiously, have an essential
relation to the movement of throwing and the trajectory of the fall. These
are cases that Dupin interprets as symptoms. The narrator asks: "How was it possible you should know I was thinking of——?" Here I paused, to ascertain beyond a doubt whether he really knew of whom I thought." Baudelaire translates "to know" each time, rightly and wrongly, as deviner, to divine, to guess. A little later, the narrator asks: "Tell me, for Heaven's sake,' I exclaimed, 'the method—if method there is—by which you have been enabled to fathom my soul in this matter," (which Baudelaire translates as "dans le cas actuel," in the present case) (180). If we had time to reconstitute the most minuscule grains of the systrophic and analytic calculation that Dupin then lays out in response, we would find once again the "little," the "throw," the "fall." It's a matter of a boy's "diminutive figure" that made him "unfitted for tragedy," and of a man who had thrown himself against the narrator ("the man who ran up against you"), and who in turn throws him on that pile of paving stones that bring stereotomy to mind. "The larger links of the chain run thus—Chan­tilly, Orion, Dr. Nichols, Epicurus, Stereotomy, the street stones, the fruitier" (181). The name of Epicurus forms just one link in the chain, even as his theory seems secretly to command in its entirety the deployment of the symptomatic analysis. I say "analysis" deliberately: the solution or resolution that, by following a regressive path toward the elementary particles, unties the isolated details or incidents. Dupin is presented not only as a "resolvent" analyst but as that type of analyst for whom, according to Baudelaire's slightly deviant yet faithful translation, "tout est symptôme, diagnostic," all is symptom, diagnostics. That is how Baudelaire translates "all afford, to his apparently intuitive perception, indications of the true state of affairs" (178). The analyst exercises his "analytical power" and "calculating power" par excellence in gamelike situations, for "it is in matters beyond the limits of mere rule that the skill of the analyst is evinced." In such cases, his lucidity is not simply of a mathematical kind, but shows itself capable of unmasking the thoughts of the other. The narrator notes as much when his focus shifts to a visibly transferential situation (unless it is countertransferential): the analyst "examines the countenance of his partner . . . counting trump by trump, and honor by honor, through the glances bestowed by their holders upon each. He notes every variation of face as the play progresses, gathering a fund of thought from the differences in the expression . . . . He recognizes what is played through feint, by the manner with which it is thrown upon the table" (my emphases—JD). He is, then, an expert in the very game that consists in throwing or falling: "A casual or inadvertent word; the acci­dental or inadvertent word; the accompanying anxiety or concealment, the counting of the tricks, with the apparently intuitive perception, indications of the true state of affairs." "Tout est pour lui sym­ptôme, diagnostic," all is symptom, diagnostics. For Baudelaire, the narrator prevents the narrator from saying of Dupin the particle of charlatanism about Dupin, "which was it possible you should know I was thinking of—? Here I paused, to ascertain beyond a doubt whether he really knew of whom I thought." There exist fatal destinies; there are in the countenance of his partner . . . counting trump by trump, and honor by honor, through the glances bestowed by their holders upon each. He notes every variation of face as the play progresses, gathering a fund of thought from the differences in the expression . . . . He recognizes what is played through feint, by the manner with which it is thrown upon the table" (my emphases—JD). He is, then, an expert in the very game that consists in throwing or
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The narrator asks: "Tell me, for Heaven's method there is—by which you have his matter," (which Baudelaire trans­

present case) (180). If we had time grains of the systrophic and analytic but in response, we would find once all. It's a matter of a boy's "diminu­

tragedy," and of a man who had "the man who ran up against you"), that pile of paving stones that bring <S>

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deliberately: the solution or resolu­

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\(\text{upon the table}"\) (my emphasis—

\(\text{ly game that consists in throwing or falling: "A casual or inadvertent word; the accidental dropping or turning}

\(\text{of a card, with the accompanying anxiety or carelessness in regard to its concealment, the counting of the tricks, with the order of their arrange­}

\(\text{ment . . . all afford, to his apparently intuitive perception, indications of the true state of affairs." "Tout est pour lui symptomé, diagnostique," all is symptom, diagnostics for him, Baudelaire translates. And this does not prevent the narrator from saying of Dupin-the-atomist: "There was not a particle of charlatanism about Dupin," which Baudelaire translates: "Il n'y avait pas un atome de charlatanerie dans mon ami Dupin," there was not an atom of charlatanism in my friend Dupin. A moment later, this atom­

\(\text{evoid of the smallest atom of charlatanism will say to the narrator}

\(\text{subject: "I knew that you could not say to yourself 'stereotomy' without being brought to think of atomies, and thus of the theories of Epicurus."

Second chance: I will not have the time to display all my chances. No such luck [pas de chance], but it is also the calculation of a certain pas de chance [no chance, no luck, and the step of chance] that makes me fall upon the providentially necessary passages of Poe or Baudelaire. Mè­

\(\text{chance, that is, no luck, out of luck, pas de chance. All Baudelaire's notes}

\(\text{on Poe's life and works open with a meditation on the writing of the pas de chance, the being-out-of-luck, the step of chance:}

\(\text{There exist fatal destinies; there are in the literature of each country men who carry the words rotten luck [or jinxed: guignon] written in mysterious characters in the sinuous folds of their foreheads. Some time ago, an unfor­}

\(\text{tunate man was brought before the court. On his forehead he had a singular tattoo: pas de chance, bad luck. In this way, everywhere he went he carried with him his life's label, as does a book its title, and his interrogation proved that his existence had been in conformity with this sign. In literary history, there are analogous fortunes . . . Is there then a diabolical Providence that}

\(\text{prepares misfortune from the cradle? A man, whose somber and desolate tal­}

\(\text{ent frightens us, was thrown with premeditation into a milieu that was hostile}

\(\text{to him (my emphasis—JD).}^{4}

\(\text{Four years later, Baudelaire writes another introduction to Poe. Here we find the same tattoo—"Pas de chance!"—and Providence that "throws}

\(\text{angelic natures downward. They try in vain to protect themselves, for instance, by closing all the exits, by "padding the windows against the}

\(\text{projectiles of chance"! But "the Devil will enter through a keyhole."}^{5} \text{ Projectiles of chance: it is not only the projection, the throw, and the launch,}
My Chances

I

but the missive or dispatch \[\text{l'envoi}\] as well, all the missives in the world. And with the \text{envoi}, the \text{renvoi} [sending back or away, also reference] and the \text{relance} [revival, boost, relaunch]. In poker, \text{relancer} means to raise the stakes, to make a higher bid. One raises, \text{relance}, when one knows how to play with what falls so as to make it take off again upward, to defer its fall, and, in the course of its ups and downs, to meet up with the incidence of other bodies: art of the coincidence and simulacra of atoms, art of the juggler. Poe's art, according to Baudelaire. Poe would go even beyond juggling, but Baudelaire also uses the term in order "to apply it," he says, "to the noble poet almost as a word of praise." His "almost" is very subtle, but necessary: juggling by itself would imply too much mastery in the art of coincidence, which must remain \text{unheimlich}, uncanny. About this noble poet who \text{lance} and \text{relance}, Baudelaire frequently says that he "throws himself" (for example, into the grotesque or the horrible), that he "hurls a challenge at difficulties," or, above all, that "as a young child he is thrown to the chances [\text{hasards}] of a free life."

I have just quoted my chances with regard to Poe's \text{pas de chance} because what we have here is a preface or postface to "The Purveyor of Truth," to the randomness of missives and to the sendings of chance. Perhaps you will think that I am juggling. When chances multiply in a regular fashion, if too many throws of the dice turn out well, fall well, doesn't that abolish chance? It would be possible to demonstrate that there is nothing random in the links formed by my lucky finds. An implacable program is imposed by the contextual necessity that requires one to isolate \text{découper} solid sequences (stereotomy), cross and adjust subsets, mingle voices and proper names, and accelerate a rhythm, which merely gives the feeling of randomness to whoever does not know the prescription, and that is my case as well.

II. On "literary" ascendance

If, along with Democritus, \text{qui genuit} Epicurus (via his disciple Nausiphanes) \text{qui genuit} Lucretius, literature is also at the place of rendezvous, is that by chance? This is the \text{second question} that, as I said a moment ago, I wanted to throw out. It leads us back to Freud, assuming we ever left him. His texts, when they pose the question of chance, always revolve around the proper name, the number, and the letter. And almost inevi-
Mes chances

I Mes chances

die Vois as well, all the missives in the world, sending back or away, also reference} and [Vor]. In poker, relancer means to raise the one raises, relance, when one knows how to make it take off again upward, to defer its fall, and downs, to meet up with the incidence and simulacra of atoms, art of the Audaile. Poe would go even beyond jug

stake in order "to apply it," he says, "to praise." His "almost" is very subtle, but would imply too much mastery in the art of the unheimlich, uncanny. About this noble Audaile frequently says that he "throws grotesque or the horrible), that he "hurls a life." When chances multiply in a regular fashion, dice turn out well, fall well, doesn't that allow us to demonstrate that there is nothing lucky finds. An implacable program is necessity that requires one to isolate [découper] loss and adjust subsets, mingle voices and rhythm, which merely gives the feeling of not know the prescription, and that is my

SYNTHESIS

Epicurus (via his disciple Naussi
ture is also at the place of rendezvous, and question that, as I said a moment ago, us back to Freud, assuming we ever left the question of chance, always revolve number, and the letter. And almost inevi-

tably they encounter literature, a certain type of literature that each time raises their stakes and marks their limit. Why?

One could initially ask oneself what there is in common among these elements, these stoikheia that are the letter or the trait, the number, and the proper name such that they find themselves associated like this in a same series and such that they would have an analogous relation to chance. I will say that what they have in common is their marking insig

nificance [insignificance marquante]. It marks, it is the insignificance of the mark; it is marked but above all remarkable. This remarkable insignificance destines them, makes them enter into the play of destination, and imprints them with the possible deviation of a clinamen. What I am calling here insignificance is this structure whereby a mark by itself is not necessarily linked, not even in the form of the reference [renvoi], to a meaning or a thing. This is the case, for example, of the proper name. It has no meaning by itself, at least as a proper name. It does not refer to anyone; it designates someone only in a given context, for example (and for example only), by reason of an arbitrary convention. The French name "Pierre" has no meaning by itself. It is untranslatable, and if in my language it is the homonym of a common noun, which has not only a possible referent but also a stable signification (the pierre or stone that one can cut to make paving stones), this can give rise to confusion, contamination, lapsus, or symptom; this can cause a fall even as it leaves the two "normal" functions of the mark without any contact between them. The proper name "Pierre" is insignificant because it does not name by means of a concept. It is valid each time for only one person, and the multiplicity of Pierres in the world bears no relation to the multiplicity of pierres that form a class and possess enough common traits to give rise to a conceptual significance or a semantic generality. This is just as obvious for the relation between a numeral and a number but also for that between a number and a numbered thing. Between the meaning of the number 7 and the numerals 7 (Arabic or Roman numerals, the words sept, seven, sieben), there is no natural, necessary, or intrinsic affiliation. No natural bond, to use Saussurian terminology, between the signified and the signifier. Nor is there any between the signified (the general meaning of 7, the number 7) and all things (stones, horses, apples, stars or souls, men or women, for instance) that can find themselves linked together in groups of 7. One can say as much, mutatis mutandis, of all graphic marks, of all traits in general, phonic or not, linguistic or not. Now, here is the paradox, which
I must state in its broadest generality: in order to be a mark and to mark its marking effect, a mark must be able to be identified, recognized as the same, be precisely remarkable from one context to another. It must be able to be repeated, remarked in its essential trait as the same: hence the apparent solidity of its structure, of its type, of its stereotypy. This is what leads us here to speak of the atom, since one associates indestructibility with indivisibility. But precisely, it is not simple since the identity of a mark is also its difference and its relation, each time differential and according to context, to the network of other marks. The ideal iterability that forms the structure of every mark is doubtless what allows it to withdraw from a context, to free itself from any determined bond to its origin, its meaning, or its referent, to emigrate in order to play elsewhere, in whole or in part, another role. I say “in whole or in part” because by reason of this essential insignificance, the ideality or ideal identity of each mark (which is only a differential function without an ontological basis) can continue to divide itself and give rise to a proliferation of other ideal identities. This iterability is thus what causes a mark to be valid more than once. It is more than one. It multiplies and divides itself internally. This imprints a power of diversion on its very movement. It is, in the destination, a principle of indetermination, chance, randomness, or destining. No destination is assured precisely because there is mark and proper name, in other words, insignificance.

If I say mark or trace rather than signifier, letter, or word, and if I refer these to the Democritian or Epicurian stoikheion in its greatest generality, it is for two reasons. First of all, this generality extends the mark beyond the verbal sign and even beyond human language. That is why I hesitate to speak of the “arbitrariness of the sign” in the manner of Hegel and Saussure. Next, I wanted to distance myself in turn, within this very frame of reference, from strict atomism and the atomistic interpretation of the stoikheion. My clinamen, my luck, or my chances incline me to think the clinamen beginning with the divisibility of the mark.

I come back to literature, to the work of art, l’œuvre d’art, to the oeuvre in general, to what is so named in the tradition of our culture. No oeuvre without mark, of course. Ye: each oeuvre, each work being absolutely singular in some way, it can bear and contain porter et comporter only proper names. And this in its very iterability. Whence, perhaps, the general form of the privilege that it retains for us, in our experience, as the place of chance and luck. The work provokes us to think the event.
Mes chances

In order to be a mark and to mark, one must be identified, recognized as the context to another. It must be able to be trait as the same; hence the appearance of its stereotypy. This is what leads one to associates indestructibility with time differential and according to traits. The ideal iterability that forms what allows it to withdraw from a chained bond to its origin, its meaning, and play elsewhere, in whole or in part, because by reason of this essential identity of each mark (which is only a logical basis) can continue to divide of other ideal identities. This iterability is valid more than once. It is more internal. This imprints a power, in the destination (Bestimmung), randomness, or destinerring. No there is mark and proper name, in identifier, letter, or word, and if I refer stoikheion in its greatest generality, generality extends the mark beyond language. That is why I hesitate to sign in the manner of Hegel and myself in turn, within this very frame of the atomistic interpretation of the any chances [mes chances] incline me to the divisibility of the mark.

Work of art, l'oeuvre d'art, to the oeuvre in the tradition of our culture. No each oeuvre, each work being abso­

porter et comporter

l'oeuvre

ity iterability. Whence, perhaps, the determines for us, in our experience, as work provokes us to think the event.

It challenges us to understand chance and luck, to take sight of them or take them in hand, to inscribe them within a horizon of anticipation. It is at least in this way that they are works, oeuvres, and, in defiance of any program of reception, they make for an event. Works befall us; they say or unveil what befalls us by befalling us. They overpower us inasmuch as they sort things out with what falls from above. The work is vertical and slightly leaning. Freud often said about poets and artists—even as he attempted to include their lives and works within the horizon of psychoanalytic knowledge and make them lie down in the clinically horizontal position—that they had always anticipated and exceeded the discourse of psychoanalysis. In terms of filiation as well as of authority, there would be something like an ascendency of literature, a literary ancestor [un ascendant de la littérature]. Somewhat as in a household, family, or lineage. What exactly is at issue in this play of titles?

I am now going to take my chances in Freud's text. As you rightly sus­pect, I am going to proceed somewhat randomly, without horizon, as if with my eyes closed.

Third chance: Randomly, I fall first of all upon an example. By definition, there are only examples in this domain. Freud tries to understand the forgetting of a proper name. He wants, therefore, by understanding, to erase the appearance of chance in the relation between a certain proper name and its forgetting. Which proper name? As if by chance, that of a disciple of Epicurus. It's a passage in the third chapter of The Psychopathology of Everyday Life, "The Forgetting of Names and Sets of Words," which begins: "Here is an example of name-forgetting with yet another and a very subtle motivation." The preceding example, by the way, concerned the substitution of the name Nietzsche and Wilde, among others, for that of Jung, which a lady kept forgetting, associating Wilde and Nietzsche with the idea of "mental illness": "You Freudians will go on looking for the causes of insanity till you're insane (geisteskrank) yourselves." Then: "I cannot bear Wilde and Nietzsche; I don't understand them. I hear that they were both homosexuals." Nietzsche is also a name that Freud would have liked to forget. Sometimes he managed to do so and confessed it. As regards chance and chaos, there would be much to say in Nietzsche's name. To continue, however, with Freud's next example of name-forgetting, one "with yet another and a very subtle motivation, which the subject of it has explained himself:
"When I was examined in philosophy as a subsidiary subject I was questioned by the examiner about the teachings of Epicurus, and after that I was asked if I knew who had taken up his theories in later centuries. I answered with the name of Pierre Gassendi, whom I had heard described as a disciple of Epicurus while I was sitting in a cafe only a couple of days before. To the surprised question how I knew that, I boldly answered that I had long been interested in Gassendi. The result of this was a certificate magna cum laude, but also unfortunately a subsequent obstinate tendency to forget the name Gassendi. My guilty conscience is, I think, to blame for my inability to remember the name in spite of all my efforts; for I really ought not to have known it on that occasion either."

Now, Freud continues, to understand this, one should know that this subject attached great value to the title of doctor (Freud does not add: just as I do to the title of professor) "and for how many other things it has to serve as a substitute."  

The person who has forgotten the proper name of the disciple of Epicurus is someone who casts his mind back to the time when he himself was a disciple, a student appearing before his masters at the moment of an examination. Without taking the slightest initiative in interpretation, Freud has only to cite, to reproduce the interpretation of this disciple forgetting the name of a disciple, by identifying himself purely and simply with this disciple who explains why he does not by chance forget the name of a disciple of Epicurus. By exaggerating only slightly, one could say that Freud simultaneously identifies and transfers a symptom that could be called: the disciple of Epicurus and the forgetting of his name. I leave it to you to pursue this further. But never forget this: the Democritian tradition, in which the names of Epicurus and his disciples are inscribed, has been subjected since its origin, and first of all under the violent authority of Plato, to a powerful repression throughout the history of Western culture. One can now follow its symptomatology, which begins with the erasure of the name of Democritus in the writings of Plato, even though Plato was familiar with his doctrine. He probably feared that one might draw some conclusion as to the proximity, or even the filiation, of some of his philosophemes. I leave it to you to pursue this path as well.  

I have just named Democritus, after speaking of only his disciples and of the disciples of his disciples: Epicurus, Lucretius, Gassendi. Now, fourth chance, here is the master in person in Freud's text, Democritus the father, Democritus as analyst and decipherer of symptoms. This is not the only reason that I will cite the passage at the end of my text ("Symptomatic and Chance Actions"). In this chance, Freud also recalls the privilege of the poet, who has already said everything that it is like to say. The latter therefore can only repeat a filiation; he does so, in particular, on the suffers of seemingly insignificant accidents. Here, the grandfather here is the author of Tristram Shandy, who quotes someone else quoting Laurence Sterne: "(I will make an apostate turn his Amanuensis out of doors, because of which bent backwards and forwards like a flat man, I conceive Protagoras to be a scholar, from seeing the desire which bent backwards and forwards like a flat man..."

In this linked chain of quotations going back to the speeches of a scholar, from seeing the desire which bent backwards and forwards like a flat man, Freud also recalls the privilege of the poet, who has already said everything that it is like to say. The latter therefore can only repeat a filiation; he does so, in particular, on the suffering of seemingly insignificant accidents. Here, the grandfather here is the author of Tristram Shandy, who quotes someone else quoting Laurence Sterne: "... And I am not Nazianzum, upon observing the hasty and unforetell he would one day become an apostate turn his Amanuensis out of doors, because of which bent backwards and forwards like a flat man, I conceive Protagoras to be a scholar, from seeing the desire which bent backwards and forwards like a flat man into a man's soul; and I maintain it, added he, by the mouth of his father, which let a penetrating light into a man's soul)."

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Here, I boldly answered that I had long before had the certificate magna cum laude, which I had obtained only a couple of days before. To that, I think, pray for my inability to pursue my efforts; for I really ought not to have forgotten it: the Democritic tradition, which is also a filiation. This filiation is exemplary: it commits Freud with respect to Sterne quoted by Stross who in turn quotes, from Tristram Shandy, the speech of a father. It is a father who speaks and whom he makes speak, via the mouth of his son, about the thousand unnoticed openings or orifices ("a thousand unnoticed openings, continued my father, which let a penetrating eye at once into a man's soul"). By the mouth of his son, and by that of the poet, this father will have cited in turn the ancestor of ancestors in this matter, namely, Democritus, the prototype of the analyst who knew how to diagnose science itself, that is, "scholarship," the Gelehrtheit of Protagoras.

In the field of symptomatic acts, too, psycho-analytic observation must concede priority to imaginative writers [Dichter]. It can only repeat what they have said long ago. Wilhelm Stross has drawn my attention to the following passage in Laurence Sterne's celebrated humorous novel, Tristram Shandy (Volume VI, Chapter V): "... And I am not at all surprised that Gregory of Nazianzum, upon observing the hasty and untoward gestures Julian, should foretell he would one day become an apostate;—or that St. Ambrose should turn his Amnuenius out of doors, because of an indecent motion of his head, which bent backwards and forwards like a flail;—or that Democritus should conceive Protagoras to be a scholar, from seeing him bind up a faggot, and thrusting, as he did it, the small twigs inwards.—There are a thousand unnoticed openings, continued my father, which let a penetrating eye at once into a man's soul; and I maintain it, added he, that a man of sense does not lay down his hat in coming into a room,—or take it up in going out of it, but something escapes, which discovers him." (213)

In this linked chain of quotations going back to Democritus, the descendance will not have escaped you. Freud acknowledges the debt of the psychoanalyst, which is also a filiation. This filiation is exemplary: it commits Freud with respect to Sterne quoted by Stross who in turn quotes, from Tristram Shandy, the speech of a father. It is a father who speaks and whom he makes speak, via the mouth of his son, about the thousand unnoticed openings or orifices ("a thousand unnoticed openings, continued my father, which let a penetrating eye [ein scharfes Auge] at once into a man's soul"). By the mouth of his son, and by that of the poet, this father will have cited in turn the ancestor of ancestors in this matter, namely, Democritus, the prototype of the analyst who knew how to diagnose science itself, that is, "scholarship," the Gelehrtheit of Protagoras.
beginning with nothing, with mere twigs. Democritus did not identify just any symptom. In interpreting an operation that consisted of binding up in a certain way insignificant things, elementary twigs, of binding them in a regular and not a haphazard fashion, by turning them inward, Democritus deciphers a symptom that is quite simply the symptom of knowledge, of the desire for knowledge, the *libido sciendi*, scholarship, the *skhole*: both what tends toward laborious study and what suspends ordinary activity, the everyday relation to praxis, for this end. Protagoras is a kind of analyst: a man of linking and unlinking, of the re-solution (*analuein*). There you have the diagnosis that the analyst Dupin-Democritus pronounces on this subject upon looking at the symptom. In this textual abyss, there are thus only analysts, that is, analysands, all of them more engendered, generated, indebted, affiliated, subjected, than the others, all descended or fallen from a series of proto-analysts in an eminently divisible chain of proper names and singularities: Freud, Stross, Sterne, the son and the father in *Tristram Shandy*, Protagoras, Democritus, and so on. Each of them has interpreted and reduced, with the same blow, a random series. Each of them has given it to be read by the other—before the other. This chain is heterogeneous: there are only proper names, the texts and situations being different each time, yet all the subjects are inscribed and implicated in the scene that they claim to interpret. And the general mise-en-scène certainly seems to be literary more than anything else. In Freud’s own words, it is *Tristram Shandy*. The great rendezvous would be the performative of the work. One should moreover follow the theme of the rendezvous (*Zusammentreffen, Zusammenkunft*) in the *Psychopathology* notably in the last chapter.

Science and chance: this is the question that has just been raised for us. It is also the question of determinism and randomness (the title of the last chapter of *Psychopathology* is "Determinism, Belief in Chance and Superstition"). What happens to an interpretive science when its object is psychological and implicates there in some way the subject itself of that science? In this form, the question is rather classical. What happens when the scientist acknowledges his debt or dependence with regard to apparently nonscientific statements such as, for example, poetic or literary ones? And when an analytic attitude becomes a symptom? When a tendency to interpret what falls—well or ill—that is, incidents or accidents, in a manner that reintroduces there determinism, necessity, or signification, signifies in turn an abnormal or pathological relation to the real? For example, what is the difference between superstition or personal science on the other, if they all mark a compulsion to make random signs so as to restore to them a meaning?

Freud asks himself this question in the same way, in a quasi-autobiographical manner. Impelled by his own desire to interpret, why this desire is so strong, why I have a very good relation to chance and luck. That, Freud is going to tell us, is what makes his chances? He has to tell us a story, a story of his life. Remember that in 1897 he could no longer distinguish between a symptom and a sign of reality. It is impossible to distinguish between true and false, for which I have much patience to follow on more patiently the reflection on the relation between psychoanalysis, literature, and the other. The coachman who knows the neighborhood always comes to affect the dispatch with his own limit between, if you like, a symptom and a sign of reality. Here is the exemplary story. It is not a story of *fortuna* with the mother; time upon returning from vacation, between the patient and the mother, he is going to see again and, to begin with, the woman about whom he has already spoken in *Tristram Shandy*. The great rendezvous is the beginning of a project of a dispatch ([*projet d’un envoi*]). He always comes to affect the dispatch with some other real. This is why I permit myself here to discuss the relation between psychoanalysis, literature, and the other. The coachman who knows the neighborhood always comes to affect the dispatch with some other real.
Mes chances

...twigs. Democritus did not identify an operation that consisted of binding things, elementary twigs, of binding in a second fashion, by turning them inward, that is quite simply the symptom of libido sciendi, scholarship, laborious study and what suspends to praxis, for this end. Protagoras linking and unlinking, of the re-solution diagnosis that the analyst Dupin-Dempon looking at the symptom. In this dysst, that is, analysands, all of them affiliated, subjected, than the others of proto-analysts in an eminently singularities: Freud, Stross, Sterne, Prtgy, Protagoras, Democritus, and so I reduced, with the same blow, a range to be read by the other—before there are only proper names, the texts, yet all the subjects are inscribed by claim to interpret. And the general literary more than anything else. In Indy. The great rendezvous would be avoid moreover follow the theme of the Psychopathon that has just been raised for us. and randomness (the title of the last...
(always this question of number) on a parallel street. Freud reproaches the man for this, who excuses himself. Is this error concerning the address an accident or else does it mean something? Freud's answer is clear and firm, at least in appearance: “Certainly not to me, but if I were superstitious [abergläubisch], I should see an omen [Vorzeichen] in the incident, the finger of fate [Fingerzeig des Schicksals] announcing that this year would be the old lady's last” (257).

Along the way, two values of destination superimpose themselves upon each other: that of the address or place of destination and that of destiny (Schicksal), the dimension and direction of that which is dispatched, sent, geschickt. (One of the meanings of adresse in French—skillfulness [habileté]—also translates the word Geschick.)

One wonders, then, if the false address (and the coachman's apparent maladresse or blunder) do not in advance point toward the true and correct destination—namely, the coming death of the old woman. Did not the coachman finally go to the right address, the one that falls as needed [celle où ça tombe bien] to speak of the accident that will not be long in coming? The sign of bad luck [malchance ou méchance] would be inverted; it would be the chance for truth to reveal itself. A lapsus is revealing in the sense that it gives another truth its chance. The limit between consciousness and the unconscious, or even between the unconscious “I” and the other of consciousness, is perhaps this possibility for my fortune [mes chances] to be misfortune [malchance] and for my méchance to be in truth a chance.

Freud declares that he does not stop, in this case, at the revelation of Schicksal by the “Address” since he knows that he is not superstitious. He considers the incident (Vorfall) to be an accident or a contingency without further meaning (eine Zufälligkeit ohne weiteren Sinn). It would have been different, he continues, if he himself had been the origin—of the error and if, by distraction and on foot, he had stopped at the wrong address. In that case, there would have been Vergessen—misconduct and mistaken path—unconscious intention calling for interpretation (Deutung). All of this without the least chance (Zufall). But that is not the case. It’s the coachman who made the mistake and Freud, as he insists, is not superstitious. Otherwise, he would have stopped at this interpretation. But he did not stop there. Or at least not for very long, since it was necessary for the question to arise for him and for the hypothesis to have crossed his mind. He distinguishes himself from a superstitious person only when concluding, at the instant of judgment, interpretation. But Freud does not recognize this paragraph, while explaining to us even from a superstitious person. He will merely interpret in common with a superstitious person (Zwang) to interpret: “not to let chance be it.” The hermeneutic compulsion: that is, the psychoanalysis have in common, and Freud, which means that they both believe means that one believes that all chance that there is no chance. Hence the identity of mé-chance and chance, of bad luck and good.

Before examining the criterion proposed between these two hermeneutic compulsion, the vicinity of all these chances, concerning whether they are méchance, my chances [have reread as if for the first time the story] or chance, and means that there is no chance. Hence the identity me-chance and chance, of bad luck and good.

Said to myself: "and what if the old woman was afraid of dying before her—a double which become obvious upon reading, the fear of his mother. She could nevertheless represent place. Now here is my chance, the fourth spoken of this old woman in a passage that he injection, as in the case of Irma, but the real injection that he should have injected. Freud is no real danger. A few drops of 2 percent sac can cause no great harm. But in analy
concluding, at the instant of judgment, and not at all during the interpretation. But Freud does not recognize this at any point in the following paragraph, while explaining to us everything that distinguishes him from a superstitious person. He will merely end up admitting that he has in common with a superstitious person the tendency, the "compulsion" (Zwang) to interpret: "not to let chance count as chance but to interpret it." The hermeneutic compulsion: that is what superstition and "normal" psychoanalysis have in common, and Freud says so very plainly [en toutes lettres]. He does not believe in chance, any more than a superstitious man does, which means that they both believe in chance, if to believe in chance means that one believes that all chance means something—and therefore that there is no chance. Hence the identity of non-chance and chance, of mé-chance and chance, of bad luck and good.

Before examining the criterion proposed by Freud to distinguish between these two hermeneutic compulsions, we'll make a brief detour in the vicinity of all these chances, concerning which I am less and less sure whether they are mé-chance, my chances [mes chances], or those of Freud. I have reread as if for the first time the story of the address and the coachman. Notice that the latter seems to have had neither of the two compulsions and appears not to have asked himself any questions; and Freud seems to exclude very quickly all communication between his driver's unconscious and his own. Following my own compulsion, then, I suddenly said to myself: "and what if the old woman were Freud's mother?" You know how much he feared the death of his mother, to be sure, but he was also afraid of dying before her—a double bind. For all kinds of reasons, which become obvious upon reading, this patient could not simply be his mother. She could nevertheless represent his mother and occupy her place. Now here is my chance, the fourth, I believe: Freud had already spoken of this old woman in a passage that I find again right away, and in his phantasm, as he exhibits and interprets it himself, it is indeed his mother. It is a matter, he tells us, of the sole case of medical error in his experience as a doctor. Instead of administering two drops of eye lotion in the woman's eyes and giving her an injection of morphine, as usual, Freud does the opposite: the morphine in her eyes. It is not a dream of injection, as in the case of Irma, but the reality of an instillation and of a liquid that he should have injected. Freud gets frightened although there is no real danger. A few drops of 2 percent morphine in the conjunctival sac can cause no great harm. But in analyzing this disproportionate fear,
which is a symptom, he falls upon the common expression "sich an der Alten vergreifen" (to do violence to the old woman), vergreifen meaning both "to make a blunder" and "to commit an assault" (cf. Strachey). This puts him on the trail of Oedipus and Jocasta. He devotes a long development to all this in a passage to which I refer you ("Bungled Actions," ch. 8 in the Standard Edition; "Meprises et maladresses" in the French translation; "Das Vergreifen" in German). Most of the symptoms in this chapter happen to be falls.

Let us return to the insurmountable frontiers that Freud wants to justify at any cost between a superstitious person and himself. He does not propose a general distinction. Speaking in the first person, he deploys all his eloquence to convince us of the fact that he is above all not superstitious: "I am therefore different from a superstitious person in the following ..." [Ich unterscheide mich also von einem Aberglaubischen in folgendem ...]. All of his declarations are in the explicit mode of the: "I believe," "I do not believe," "I am not superstitious because," "Ich glaube dass" or "Ich glaube nicht dass." What does he not believe? That an event that takes place without his psychic life having any part in it (the coachman's error, for example) could teach him anything about a reality to come. But he believes that an apparently nonintentional manifestation of his psychic life unveils something hidden that belongs only to his psychic life. He summarizes this as follows: "I believe in external (real) chance, it is true, but not in internal (psychical) accidental events. With the superstitious person it is the other way round." A rather abrupt way of gathering things up and marking limits. Freud forgets to formalize what he has just stated: the relation to the future. I must leave this point aside. It communicates with the laborious distinction that Freud attempts elsewhere between telepathy and thought-transference. Permit me to refer here once again to the fragment detached from La carte postale that I titled "Telepathy" (191 above).

"I believe [Ich glaube] in external (real) chance, it is true, but not in internal (psychical) accidental events. With the superstitious person, it is the other way round [Der Aberglaubische umgekehrt]." One must read this vocabulary of belief very carefully. Even as he uses the word "belief," Freud seems in effect to oppose a normal attitude, that of scientific objectivity, to superstitious belief, that of the Aberglaubische, which he claims not to be. He opposes one belief to another, a belief to a credulity. He believes in determinism in the internal and psychical domain. This does not mean—and it is here that one must not believe there is determinism in the world that is hoped one day to see the science of the to the biophysical sciences. And in the right now, he is interested only in the type experience appropriate for founding a sci...
the common expression "sich an der alten Frau" (cf. Strachey). This he does not mean—and it is here that one must be careful, I believe—that he does not believe there is determinism in the external world, or that he would accept to think that the world is doomed to chance or to chaos. One could find a thousand declarations by Freud attesting to a thorough determinist conviction in the style of the positivism of his day. He even hoped one day to see the science of the psyche welded in a certain way to the biophysical sciences. And in the precise context we are analyzing right now, he is interested only in the type of belief, attitude, or subjective experience appropriate for founding a scientific objectivity in a delimited domain, that of psychical events. One must not confuse the domains, that is what he tells us, or the causalities proper to each of the domains. For example, one must not confuse what refers to the biophysical and organic in the drive with what is represented of it in the world of the psyche. These are the limits that the superstitious person does not recognize in his or her disbelief in psychical determinism. Freud does believe in it: and he affirms here his project of founding psychoanalysis as a positive science. This tradition has continued. For example, Lacan follows Freud to the letter on this point, when he says that a letter always arrives at its destination. There is no random chance in the unconscious. The apparent effects of randomness must be placed in the service of an ineluctable necessity that in truth they never contradict.

Since we are speaking of chance, we could try to calculate the probabilities of the appearance, at a given historico-theoretical juncture, of an event named "psychoanalysis" as a project of positive science. This is not my subject, however.

I do not believe, then, that Freud believes in real chance in external things. For him, the believing experience that finite beings have of this external world, once the two series, worlds, or contexts are dissociated (inside/outside), is, normally and legitimately, the one that accepts chance, a margin of random probability that it would not be normal or serious to want to reduce or exclude. One would say thus, as in a classical determinist conception, that effects of randomness (empirically observed) arise in the interference of relatively independent series, of "little worlds" that are not closed. The implicit question to which Freud responds is not, then, the larger one of random chance in the unconscious. The apparent effects of randomness must be placed in the service of an ineluctable necessity that in truth they never contradict.

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nal/external. Of course these two series or two contextual worlds are only distinguishable from within a culture (or a "world") that forms their most general context. It is for us, Westerners, the culture of common sense, marked by a powerful scientifco-philosophic tradition, metaphysics, technics, the opposition of subject/object, and precisely a certain organization of the throw [jet]. Through many differentiated relays, this culture goes back at least to Plato, and the repression of Democritus perhaps leaves the trace there of a large symptom. Without being able to follow this path today, I merely situate what I have called above a mark: in the construction of their concept, none of the limits or oppositions I have just invoked is considered, from the point of view of the mark, absolutely pertinent or decisive, but rather as a presupposition to be deconstructed.

We also know that in other passages, in other problematic contexts, Freud carefully avoids ontologizing or substantializing the limit between outside and inside, between the biophysical and the psychical. But in Psychopathology and elsewhere, he needs this limit: not only in order to protect the fragile, enigmatic, threatened, defensive state called "normality" but also in order to isolate a solid context (once again stereotomy), the unity of a field of coherent and determinist interpretation, what we so blithely call, in the singular, psychoanalysis [la psychanalyse]. But he already had great difficulties with this, as he did in those other places where he broaches such formidable problems as those of the drive ("a concept . . . on the frontier between the mental and the physical"), telepathy, or thought-transference. At least to the extent that he isolates psychoanalysis, the science of the psychical, and that he means to cut it off from the other sciences, Freud provisionally suspends all epistemological relations to the sciences or to the modern problems concerning chance. He wants, in short, to constitute a science of experience (conscious or unconscious) as the relation of a finite being thrown into the world. And this thrown-being projects [Cet être-jeté projeté].

Right here, it is all the more difficult for Freud to maintain this limit, the one that separates him from the superstitious person, inasmuch as they have in common the hermeneutic compulsion. If the superstitious person projects (projiziert), if he casts outward and before himself the "motivations" that Freud, for his part, says he seeks on the inside, if he interprets chance from the standpoint of an external "event" where Freud reduces it or brings it back to a "thought," it is because at bottom the superstitious person does not believe, any more than Freud does, in the solidity of the spaces isolated by our Western frame of reference. He believes in the contextualizing and framing, both physical and the psychical, inside and outside. But that is precisely what Freud does not do in his eyes, the superstitious person, no more than the metaphysician, is not someone who, maintaining these limits, proposes to isolate the field of psychoanalysis as a science of the psychical and psychology of the unconscious. But Freud's eyes, the superstitious person, is inside and what he lives in himself the schema of the jet or the throw furnishes an external world" (257). (The structure of fiction. And, as in the unconscious, between reality and "emotionally charged" analogies, and Freud gets at the case when he is forced to cross over to reference" that are at once convenient and time for a more extensive development, I quoted that pinpoint the difficulty:

The obscure recognition (the endopsycho- logical factors and relations in the unconscious is it in other terms [spiegelt sich—es ist schwer, analogy with paranoia must come to our aid—a natural reality, which is destined to be charted into the psychology of the unconscious. One way the myths of paradise and the fall of m
My Chances / Mes chances

series or two contextual worlds are only (or a "world") that forms their most corners, the culture of common sense, philosophic tradition, metaphysics, technic, and precisely a certain organization differentiated relays, this culture goesession of Democritus perhaps leaves thethought being able to follow this path toalled above a mark: in the constructionss or oppositions I have just invoked isrow of the mark, absolutely pertinent ortion to be deconstructed.
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difficult for Freud to maintain this limit, the superstitious person, inasmuch asneutic compulsion. If the superstitiouscasts outward and before himself the part, says he seeks on the inside, if heoint of an external "event" where Freud"thought," it is because at bottom theieve, any more than Freud does, in thesolidity of the spaces isolated by our Western stereotomy. He does not believe in thecontextualizing and framing, but not real, limits between thepsychical and the physical, inside and outside, not to mention all of theother adjoining oppositions. More so than Freud, more so than this Freudhere, the superstitious person is sensitive to the precariousness of the con-textual isolations, of the epistemological frames, the constructa and theartifacta that allow us, for the convenience of life and in order to master thelimited networks of knowledge and technics, to separate the psychicalfrom the physical or inside from outside. The superstitious person simplyhas a different experience of this same finitude.

But let us not make the superstitious person into a thinker capable of deconstructing the limits that Freud, for his part, would maintain here dogmatically in order to isolate the field of a scientific psychoanalysis. Inversely, if I may be permitted to suggest this, some sensitivity to superstition is perhaps not a useless goad for deconstructive desire. But in fact, in Freud's eyes, the superstitious person, no more than the man of religion, no more than the metaphysician, is not the one who questions limits in the name of science or of Enlightenment, or even of deconstruction. It is someone who, maintaining these limits, projects toward the outside what is inside and what he lives in himself. Through this concept of projection, the schema of the jet or the throw furnishes once more the essential medi-aion. In the next paragraph, Freud again describes superstition, modernreligion, metaphysics itself as "nothing but psychology projected [proji-zierte] into the external world" (257). (These projections evidently have astructure of fiction. And, as in the unconscious, one does not distinguishhere between reality and "emotionally charged fiction.") This paragraphmultiplies the analogies, and Freud gets tangled up in them. Such is al-ways the case when he is forced to cross over the limits or the "frames of reference" that are at once convenient and without solidity. Lacking the time for a more extensive development, I quote and emphasize the terms that pinpoint the difficulty:

The obscure recognition (the endopsychic perception, as it were) of psychi-cal factors and relations in the unconscious is mirrored—it is difficult to expressit in other terms [spiegelt sich—es ist schwer, es anders zu sagen], and here theanalogy with paranoia must come to our aid—in the construction of a superna-tural reality, which is destined to be changed back once more by scienceinto the psychology of the unconscious. One could venture to explain in thisway the myths of paradise and the fall of man, of God, of good and evil, of
immortality and so on, and to transform metaphysics into metapsychology. The gap between the paranoiac's displacement and that of the superstitious person is less wide than it appears at first sight. . . . They [primitive human beings] behaved, therefore, just like paranoiacs, who draw conclusions from insignificant signs given them by other people, and just like all normal people, who quite rightly base their estimate of their neighbours' characters on their chance and unintentional actions. (258–59)

This discourse is constructed on an impressive series of approximations and declared analogies. It does not only interpret the motif of the fall or the decline [déchéance], of man's méchance as a superstitious or even paranoid projection, in any case, a psychological one. It does not only suggest, as in Totem and Taboo, that there is a certain analogy between paranoid mania and a (deformed) philosophical system. It also projects the reconversion into science or into metapsychology of the metaphysical discourse from which it nonetheless obtains the very concepts for this project and this operation, notably the oppositional limits between the psychical and the physical, inside and outside, not to mention all the oppositions that depend on them. Playing fiction against fiction, projection against projection, this gesture could appear, depending on the case, naive or audacious, dogmatic or hypercritical. I will not choose between them, and I wonder if there really is a choice.

Freud works by playing with the topologies and the conceptual limits of inherited discourses, be they philosophical or scientific. The provisional isolation of an explanatory context—one could say of a field of knowledge—supposes each time something like the performative of a convention and a fiction, as well as the contract that guarantees new performatives. Freud acknowledges that he does not believe in the substantial value of these limits or in the definitive character of these isolations. Given a certain state of the discourse, of discourses and of several sciences at the same time, given the necessity of constituting a theory and a practice, the assignment of these limits imposes itself. But it imposes itself on someone—on him, for example—at a particular moment in a particular situation. There is nothing relativist or empiricist in this remark. Elsewhere, I have tried to show how the inscription of the proper name, of a certain autobiography, and of a fictional projection had to be constitutive for psychoanalytic discourse, in the very structure of its event. This event thus poses within itself the questions of chance and literature. Not that all fiction and all inscriptions of proper names have a literary dimension or a relation to the work of art as such, but between the movement of science—no structures—that of philosophy, that of thought cannot be real and immobile, cannot be contextual isolation. Neither linear nor rather to another thinking of the dispatch [énoncé], at the intersection of a pragmatic to another thinking of the dispatch [énoncé], the advent of psychoanalysis is not just a matter of history. It is the advent of the attempt at each instant to model reality—on a scientific and artistic treatment, to renounce specifying, but that I wish to remain true. If I conclude with the conclusion of a Memory of His Childhood," it is by the randomness of the moment far too long, la chute (in French one says of a speech) leads me to fall on this text: my last chance. It is the moment when, in standstill and then one counts up the rest of non-causal or the innumerable.

Freud concludes, as you will see, with the innumerable, which is the first is a question, precisely, of the incalculable or causes (ragioni, cause, Ursachen) that enter experience." Second reason: this all less causes that never enter experience" artist. Once again indebtedness and fili Vinci, concerning whom he has just acknowledged, puts him out of reach of analytic foreshadowing Shakespeare, or rather the
form metaphysics into metapsychology. The movement and that of the superstitious person light... They [primitive human beings] draw conclusions from insignificance and just like all normal people, judge of their neighbours' characters on their

...an impressive series of approximations. Not only interpret the motif of the fall's méchanie as a superstitious or even a psychological one. It does not only suggest that there is a certain analogy between philosophical system. It also projects to metapsychology of the metaphysical obtains the very concepts for this project positional limits between the psychical system, not to mention all the oppositions on against fiction, projection against parenthesis, depending on the case, naïve or authorial. I will not choose between them, and I will not set the topologies and the conceptual limits philosophical or scientific. The proper context—one could say of a field of something like the performative of a contract that guarantees new perspectives that he does not believe in the substantial or definitive character of these isolations. Not of discourses and of several sciences but only of constituting a theory and a practice imposes itself. But it imposes itself on me at a particular moment in a particular context or empiricist in this remark. Elsewhere, the inscription of the proper name, of a conceptual projection had to be constitutive of the very structure of its event. This event of chance and literature. Not that proper names have a literary dimension or a relation to the work of art as such. But they arise in that place where, between the movement of science—notably when it concerns random structures—that of philosophy, that of the arts—literary or not—the limits cannot be real and immobile, cannot be solid, but only the effects of contextual isolation. Neither linear nor indivisible, they would pertain rather to an analysis that I will call (with some circumspection) pragmatological, at the intersection of a pragmatics and a grammatology. Open to another thinking of the dispatch [envoi], of dispatches, this pragmatology must each time take into account the situation of the marks, in particular of the utterances, the place of senders and addressees, the framing, the sociohistorical outline [dépouillage], and so forth. It should therefore take account of the problematic of randomness in all fields where it evolves: physics, biology, game theory, and so forth. In this respect, the advent of psychoanalysis is not just a complex event in terms of its historical probability. It is the advent of a discourse that is still open and that attempts at each instant to model itself—while affirming its originality—on a scientific and artistic treatment of randomness, which has not ceased transforming itself throughout the century. One finds here overdetermined comings and goings, a play of advances and delays that I have to renounce specifying, but that I wish to illustrate, in conclusion, with a quotation. If I conclude with the conclusion of "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood," it is for three reasons. These do not exclude the randomness of the moment in which, as my exposé appears far too long, la chute (in French one says la chute or the envoi for the end of a speech) leads me to fall on this text rather than another. This will be my last chance. It is the moment when, in one blow, two dice come to a standstill and then one counts up the results. One then touches upon the incalculable or the innumerable.

Freud concludes, as you will see, with an allusion to the incalculable and the innumerable, which is the first reason to cite this text. But it is a question, precisely, of the incalculable and the innumerable reasons or causes (ragioni, causes, Ursachen) that are in nature and that “never enter experience.” Second reason: this allusion to nature as “full of countless causes that never enter experience” is a quasi-citation and from an artist. Once again indebtedness and filiation. Freud cites Leonardo da Vinci, concerning whom he has just acknowledged that a certain random enigma puts him out of reach of analytical science. But he cites da Vinci foreshadowing Shakespeare, or rather the son, Hamlet: “La natura è piena...
d'infinito ragioni che non furono mai in insperienza,” instead of “There are more things in heaven and earth Horatio/Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” Through numerous mediators, the debt is once again acknowledged with respect to the poet or even to a dramatic character that so many have wanted to lay down [incliner] on the couch. Perhaps literature need not resist this clinic. To stay with our present subject, let us say that art, in particular the art of discourse and literature, represents only a certain power of indeterminacy that stems from the capacity of isolating performatively its own context for its own event, that of the “oeuvre.” It is perhaps a certain freedom, a large margin in the play of this isolation. This stereotomic margin is very large and perhaps even the largest of all at a certain period in history, but it is not infinite. The appearance of arbitrariness or chance (literature as the place of proper names, if you will) has to do with this margin. But it is also the place of the greatest symptomatology. Giving the greatest chance to chance, it reappropriates chance as necessity or inevitableness. This margin plays nature for fortune—and art: “Nature's above art in that respect” (Lear). The third reason, then, for this quotation: it appeases the sense of remorse or misfortune (“How malicious is my fortune,” says the bastard Edmund in King Lear), my regret at not having attempted with you, as I initially projected, an analysis of King Lear, going beyond what Freud says of it in The Theme of the Three Caskets (1913). I would have followed the play of Nature and Fortune there, of the words “Nature” and “Fortune,” and also of the very numerous letters (for example, “a thrown letter”), of the “wisdom of nature,” of prediction (“there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature”), of “planetary influence” for “a sectary astronomical,” of “epicurism,” of “posts,” letters and lips to unseal, of the “gentle wax” and of the “reason in madness” of Lear (“I am even /The natural fool of fortune”). And at another tempo, but this will be for another time, I would have tried to read together, between Shakespeare's lines, what both Freud and Heidegger say about Moira (in The Theme of the Three Caskets and in Moira). As in a compromise solution between what I retain and what I renounce here, I take my chances with this quotation of a quotation of a quotation. I quote Freud quoting da Vinci announcing Shakespeare. Notice the admirable play of limits and self-limitations, which I underscore in passing. These are the throws [coupes] and the chances of psychoanalysis. I will do no more than propose a title in English for this quotation:

III. Subliming dissemination

Instincts and their transformations [Die Tendenz zur Repression und die Kapazität zur Inversion of character on which the mental structure, since artistic talent and capacity are intimate] we must admit that the nature of artistic fu along psychoanalytic lines. The tendency of explain the chief features in a person's organic of the blending of male and female dispositions. Leonardo's physical beauty and his left support of this view. We will not, however, literary research. (my emphasis—JD)

Once again deliberate self-limitation gets chance as a science. It isolates a context into no longer penetrates. Biogenetics is not devot is the psyche, but the orders or the random gicate or cross over within the same set, at that between orders of calculable necessity. Then hybridization, no accidental grafts between or genealogies. But, one might ask the auth to eliminate the dice throws of bastardy? Is sion, like that of the drive, precisely the con

Our aim remains that of demonstrating the instinctual activity between a person's extern. Even if psycho-analysis does not throw light on power, it at least renders its manifestations at us. It seems at any rate as if only a man who experiences could have painted the Mona Lisa so melancholy a fate for his works, and have a career as a natural scientist, as if the key to a tunes lay hidden in the childhood phantasy of

But may one not take objection to the describes to accidental circumstances [Zufälligkeit] so decisive an influence on a person's fate? It makes Leonardo's fate dependent on his illegitim of his first stepmother Donna Albiera? I thin one considers chance [Zufall] to be unworthy
I retain and what I renounce here, a quotation of a quotation. I underscore in passing: Notice the adjectives, which I underscore in passing.

III. SUBLIMING DISSEMINATION

Instincts and their transformations [Die Triebe und ihre Umwandlungen] are at the limit of what is discernible by psycho-analysis. From that point it gives place to biological research. We are obliged to look for the source of the tendency to repression and the capacity for sublimation in the organic foundations of character on which the mental structure is only afterwards erected. Since artistic talent and capacity are intimately connected with sublimation we must admit that the nature of artistic function is also inaccessible to us along psychoanalytic lines. The tendency of biological research to-day is to explain the chief features in a person's organic constitution as being the result of the blending of male and female dispositions, based on [chemical] substances. Leonardo's physical beauty and his lefthandedness might be quoted in support of this view. We will not, however, leave the ground of purely psychological research. (my emphasis—JD)

Once again deliberate self-limitation gives psychoanalysis its only chance as a science. It isolates a context into which external randomness no longer penetrates. Biogenetics is not devoid of randomness and neither is the psyche, but the orders or the random sequences must not communicate or cross over within the same set, at least if one wants to distinguish between orders of calculable necessity. There must be no bastardizing or hybridization, no accidental grafts between these two generalities, genres, or genealogies. But, one might ask the author of "Leonardo," how is one to eliminate the dice throws of bastardy? Is not the concept of sublimation, like that of the drive, precisely the concept of bastardy?

Our aim remains that of demonstrating the connection along the path of instinctual activity between a person's external experiences and his reactions. Even if psycho-analysis does not throw light on the fact of Leonardo's artistic power, it at least renders its manifestations and its limitations intelligible to us. It seems at any rate as if only a man who had had Leonardo's childhood experiences could have painted the Mona Lisa and the St. Anne, have secured so melancholy a fate for his works, and have embarked on such an astonishing career as a natural scientist, as if the key to all his achievements and misfortunes lay hidden in the childhood phantasy of the vulture.

But may one not take objection to the findings of an inquiry which ascribes to accidental circumstances [Zufälligkeiten] of his parental constellation so decisive an influence on a person's fate [Schicksal]—which, for example, makes Leonardo's fate depend on his illegitimate birth and on the barrenness of his first stepmother Donna Albiera? I think one has no right to do so. If one considers chance [Zufall] to be unworthy of determining our fate, it is
simply a relapse into the pious view of the Universe which Leonardo himself was on the way of overcoming when he wrote that the sun does not move. We naturally feel hurt that a just God and a kindly providence do not protect us better from such influences during the most defenseless period of our lives. At the same time we are all too ready to forget that in fact everything to do with our life is chance [Zufall], from our origin out of the meeting of spermatozoon and ovum onwards [this is also what I call, in my language, dissemination]—chance which nevertheless has a share in the law and necessity of nature, and which merely lacks any connection with our wishes and illusions. The apportioning of the determining factors of our life between the “necessities” of our constitution and the “chances” [Zufälligkeiten] of our childhood may still be uncertain in detail; but in general it is no longer possible to doubt the importance precisely of the first years of our childhood. We all still show too little respect for Nature, which (in the obscure words of Leonardo which recall Hamlet’s lines) “is full of countless causes [ragioni] that never enter experience.”

Every one of us human beings corresponds to one of the countless experiments in which these “ragioni” of nature force their way into experience.10

Freud loves nature and takes good care of it. Among the paths through which Nature erupts into our experience, a mistake is always possible, a Vergreifen or bastardy. On his way to take care of Nature, Freud can still be mistaken about the address or the pharmakon, he can replace the eye drops with morphine, the old woman could be his mother or his mother-in-law, and the “I” of the coachman is perhaps not an other. He is perhaps not good. Perhaps he is a bastard, perhaps it is I rereading, under the influence of some drug, the myth of the harnessing and fall of souls in the Phaedrus. But Plato too, already, explains there that coachmen are always “good” and composed of “good elements” (ex agathón [274a]), whereas for other beings there is a mixture. It is true that Plato makes Socrates speak, who cites Stesichorus, and that prior to the myth, he reminds us that “there is no true language if . . .” (ouk est etumos logos os an . . . [244a]). I leave you to pick things up from here.

—Translated by Irene Harvey and Avital Ronell

§ 15 Racism’s Last Word

APARTHEID—may that remain the name pellation for the ultimate racism in the world remain, but may a day come when it will be no more? A memory in advance: that, perhaps, is still urgent and untimely, it exposes what it was that, at any present moment, it offers only a foreboding, and the rearview vision of a future thing. Perhaps the name of something finally abolished. Perhaps this silence of memory, the name will remain, but may a day come when it will be no more?

But hasn’t APARTHEID always been the able?

The exhibition, therefore, is not a present here in the present, nothing that would be row’s rearview mirror, the late, ultimate rac

Text published in 1983 at the opening of an art museum against Apartheid. It brought together artists and philosophers to constitute a traveling exhibition. The Against Apartheid, made up of painters, sculptors, and this museum “to the first free and democratic S

by universal suffrage.”