

Collected and Presented by
Nicholas T. Rand and Maria Totok
Translated by
Benjamin Thigpen and Nicholas T. Rand

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RHYTHMS

*On the Work, Translation,
and Psychoanalysis*

Nicolas Abraham

*Rhythmizing Consciousness:
An Essay on the Temporality of Rhythm*

§ A Rhythmizing Intentionality

A.1. The Rhythm Object

The “rhythm” that is the object of so many judicious studies and of so much diligent research and that rhythm, which, like poetry and language, opposes conceptual thought with an unrelenting mystery—the recorded, defined, measured rhythm, and the living, experienced, ungraspable rhythm—could these two rhythms have the same essence? We possess innumerable definitions of rhythm; they always include the terms *form*, *structure*, *periodicity*. Now, who does not know that the ticking of a clock, the coming and going of the waves, the beating of the heart *are not* rhythms, but that they can become rhythms, at any moment and without the slightest objective modification? Yet nothing is more widespread than the error of seeking the origin of rhythm within the object. It is the object that hides the mystery of rhythm, and it is the object that must be properly examined in order to dispel this mystery. Now, how to approach the object if not by the objective method? And what form of objectivity is more certain than numbers? Rhythm has been examined, measured, judged. Yet it has re-

mained silent. Our minute knowledge of rhythm has only increased our confusion. For it has become clear that the qualities naively attributed to the enrapturing object, such as the regularity of intervals, the identity of strong beats, and many others, are only gross approximations. Who would dream of denying the interest of the facts discovered in this way? But who would claim for all that to know more about the nature of rhythm?

A. 2. "Perceived Rhythm"

Certain authors, setting aside laboratory research on the rhythm-object, have returned to the three-thousand-year-old concern with another entity: *perceived rhythm*. It is not important to know whether the intervals are in fact regular; the essential thing is that they are *perceived* as such. The fixed, anonymous object must be replaced by the living object of perception. Once this is done, mensuration gives way to numeration, quantity to quality. Metronomic periodicity thereby becomes number, configuration, *Gestalt*; and rhythm correspondingly comes to be counted among the laws of the mind and of the physical world.

And yet traditional rhythemics and its gestaltist corrective, like laboratory research, remain silent on one fundamental issue: perceived structural periodicity is not necessarily and by its nature rhythm. For in this research, "rhythm" or "rhythmic structure" continues to play the role of the object—although in a different mode. "Perceived rhythm" remains essentially in the mode of the past, as *having been perceived*. Its study, therefore, remains tied to that of objects in general, except that the role of the instrument of measurement is taken by a differently qualified mechanism: the human ear. Unlike the necessarily

reifying instrumental approach, this procedure at least entails the appreciable advantage of grasping the object in its immediacy.

A. 3. Aesthetic Objectivism

Now, as it happens, aesthetic rhythmic objectivism is necessarily founded on the postulate that the object (the work of art, the poem, etc.) constitutes the *cause*, and the corresponding experience the *effect*. From there, it is only a single step to the identification of causality's two terms and to the claim that the effect is contained virtually in the cause. Distinguished minds, paradoxically delighting in the objectivist attitude, have been unable to avoid this pitfall. There is nonetheless an authentic evidence here:¹ the work of art *does not act* like a physical force or an electric charge. We can even say that it does not act at all. It is up to us to interrogate it. Even then, it *does not act* on us: it only *responds* to us according to our capacities.

There is yet another form of objectivism—one that conceives of an "aesthetic universe" governed by the laws of its elements' reciprocal affinities. Its goal is to represent its subject with the help of the appropriate concept of "values." But once again, these "values" are conceived as properties of the object, and the aesthetic problem still consists in identifying the *objective* characteristic that generates the "values." Thus, formal features are discovered—variety, "striking" accidents. Through *perceived rhythm's* attachment to the past, its temporal unfolding is projected into space, and the arabesque thereby obtained is distinguished from laboratory graphics by its *aesthetic* quality. In this ingenious way, the arabesque, an eminently aesthetic object, is supposed to reconstitute art to us, even as it offers us a convenient object of research. Once again, however, our

initial problem is left unsolved: the same temporal arabesque appears to us at times as a lived experience of a rhythm and at other times as an anonymous regularity.

A.4. Rhythmizing Consciousness

A.4.1. *It Is an Act*

Compared to the points of view we have just outlined, the phenomenological approach postulates a radical change of perspective. It proposes to consider rhythm in the very place of its original apprehension: within lived experience. For in fact, setting aside all conceptual transposition, we know rhythm only by our experience of it. What is the nature of that experience?

In the compartment of a train, distractedly contemplating the receding landscape, I feel myself surrounded by a whole world of presences: my fellow passengers, the windowpane, the rumbling of the wheels, the continually changing panorama. But for a little while now I have been nodding my head and tapping my foot, my whole body animated by movements and tensions. What has happened? A radical change of attitude must have taken place within me. A moment ago, too, I was perceiving the monotonous sound of the wheels, and my body was receiving the same periodic jolts; but in the interval between the sounds, I was taken hold of by a tension, an expectation, which the next shock would either fulfill or disappoint. And so the jolts, which were merely endured before, are now expected; my whole body prepares to receive them. My passivity of a moment ago has changed into an active spontaneity: I am no longer at the mercy of external forces; on the contrary, it is now they who obey me. At just the right time, I tap my foot—and instantly I trigger the event. My expectations have

no other meaning: in reality, they are desires, demands, incantations. When the event occurs, I experience the satisfaction of my efficacy. Thus, rhythmizing consciousness is apprehended as activity, as spontaneity.²

A.4.2. *It Is Creation*

Expectation and prediction alone, however, do not make up rhythmizing consciousness. Through intellectual attention, I may simply understand the regularity of a periodic event and be able to predict its occurrences, like a physicist observing the movement of a pendulum, or a doctor attentively following the beating of a heart. Each of them perceives a periodicity. But can it be called a rhythm? Similarly when, given the length of the rails, I time the interval between the jolts in order to calculate my train's velocity, I do not produce a rhythmizing consciousness. This point is of fundamental importance. It corresponds with what we said earlier concerning the decisive role of the mode of apprehension: *a single object, grasped by different consciousnesses, one cognitive, the other rhythmizing, gives rise to two distinct phenomena: periodicity on the one hand, and rhythm on the other.* Each of these consciousnesses is, in its own way, tension, expectation, activity. But what radically distinguishes them is the very structure of this activity, the nature of this tension, the intentionality of this expectation.³ Cognitive consciousness, having *observed* the phenomenon, turns toward the future in order to *establish* the coincidence of the expected and the real events. Thus knowledge, stemming from an experience of the past, is grasped as something distinct from the future experience, by which it may be either refuted or confirmed. There is nothing like this in rhythmizing consciousness. For it, the future is not defined by the categories of the known and the unknown. It neither observes nor predicts.

What *happens* happens by virtue of rhythmizing consciousness itself. Its future results from its own decisive act of will. Rhythmizing consciousness creates itself in creating the world. Yet, if ever its demiurgic activity is hindered by the world's refusal to obey its commands, it rapidly modifies these arrangements. Integrating the accident into the whole, rhythmizing consciousness becomes the expectation of what has just been constituted. And the appearance of the now-expected recurrence becomes a brilliant confirmation of its initially endangered power. Thus, as long as it is active, rhythmizing consciousness always has the last word. But when it is faced with obstacles that are too numerous, too capricious, too difficult, it purely and simply abdicates: No longer creative, it abolishes itself; the spell is broken.

A.4.3. *It Is De-realization*

This awakening, however, helps us to grasp more fully what it has deprived us of. Should my train happen to pass over a switch, the brakes squeal, the clanking increases, and for a moment the noise becomes chaotic. But in order to make these observations, I must already have been awakened. Just a moment ago, in fact, the surrounding objects were still bathed in an atmosphere of unreality, as if they were the setting for a dream. Now I find myself again in the pragmatic world of reality. For rhythmizing consciousness excludes observation. It is unable to observe what it creates. At most, it can pretend to verify whether or not its magical injunctions have been followed. But this quasi-observation, which in fact sights only the observer's creative power, is a clear testimony of rhythmizing de-realization.⁴ Although rhythmic unreality can be distinguished from the imaginary in certain respects, it nonetheless displays the latter's essential characteristics: spontaneity and

quasi-observation. In this sense, it is completely erroneous to speak of a perception of rhythm or of a "perceived rhythm." What occurs, in fact, is the rhythmization of perception, a creation within a consciousness of unreality.

A.4.4. *It Surpasses the Object*

There is yet another factor that demonstrates the unreality of rhythm: its incantatory nature. The rhythmic event happens because we have willed it. We have only to reject a rhythm and it will not occur. I may execute a "rhythmic formula" literally, scan a Latin verse according to the rules—in other words, produce the *rhythm-objectivity*—without, for all that, constituting it as a rhythm. For the *rhythm-object* of my scholastic scansion will have been sighted purely cognitively, as a past cultural phenomenon, which I have set out to reconstruct from the rules of quantitative prosody. To verify this reconstruction, I might consult the information available to me concerning the rules that governed the poetic genre in question. To be sure, I may successfully scan the verse with all the necessary precision, raising my voice on the *arsis*, lowering it on the *thesis*.⁵ I might even observe a rigorous periodicity. In the absence of rhythmizing consciousness, however, the sound object so produced will be as far from a rhythm as solfège is from melody. It is clear that rhythmization, just like the apprehension of a melody, includes an act radically different from a simple encounter with the rhythm-object—an essentially creative act that, synthesizing the successive emergences, sights a phenomenon irreducible to either the mere perception of these emergences or their mechanical production: it is precisely this phenomenon that we call *rhythm*.⁶

Thus, rhythm appears to us as the intentional correlate of a specific effort of unification, of a truly creative act. This argu-

ment becomes more convincing when we consider that *a single perceived object can provide the opportunity for different, varied rhythmizing operations*; so, for example, Greek tragic verse can be sighted as hexapody or as iambic trimeter (C.2), and in general, any difference between "rising" and "falling" rhythm stems not from the underlying perceived object, but from a deciding act. To be sure, this rhythmic polyvalence of the perceived object is not indetermination: On the contrary, the perceived object serves as a constant guide for rhythmizing consciousness; and yet in itself it is nothing. It receives its meaning as a rhythm only from the consciousness that transcends it toward a superior unity.

Although rhythm itself is unreal, rhythmizing consciousness is a directly present reality. It is—as we were saying—activity, spontaneity, creation. How does it function? It is always based on a perception,⁷ but this perception must be anticipated—or at least seen retrospectively as something that could have been anticipated and that still motivates new anticipation. So far there is nothing to set it apart from perception. When I extend my hand to grasp the ashtray, I clearly anticipate its metallic feel, its resistance, its weight. A multiplicity of knowledge comes into play here, knowledge of the body itself, with the help of which and in relation to which *I sketch out my behavior in relation to the object*. Now, although *within* perception, the knowledge of the body itself is directed entirely toward the pragmatic apprehension of the object, in the rhythmizing act, the perceived object is given *with a view to* another entity that surpasses it and which we grasp precisely as rhythm. It is precisely this transcendence of rhythm with respect to the rhythm-object that will reveal the specific nature of rhythmizing anticipation (A.6).

A.5. Kinesthesia

A further explanation is necessary at this point, for we are at the source of numerous misunderstandings. A superficial analogy can be drawn between the perceptive anticipation of a rhythm-object and rhythmizing anticipation proper. In both cases, in fact, the body itself produces movements that parallel the successive emergences, movements through which it tends to appropriate them, as it were, by imitating their temporal configuration. So the expected emergence must coincide with the anticipated movement; or rather, to reformulate this more precisely, the expectation of the emergence is itself nothing other than the outline of a future movement, which draws its motivation⁸ from past movements. In appearance, therefore, everything happens as if the perceived rhythm-object and the intended rhythm-phenomenon were one and the same entity, merging together in the identity of the appropriating kinesthesias.

A.6. Rhythmizing Intentionality

Of course, through this conversion of natural laws into the laws of one's own bodily experience, the perception of a rhythm-object is already, in a sense, possession. But to possess an object means to turn toward it. The possessed object is possession's intentional pole. How is it that I come to possess the rhythm-object? By making myself a rhythmic object. And so I *have* it because I *am* it. Perceptive appropriation of the rhythm-object as such becomes possession in the double sense of having and of being. Hence the widespread error of attributing to the rhythm itself the magic power of enchantment. In reality, the experiences cited in this connection, from hyp-

notic, stimulating, and ecstatic effects to the "effect" of art—all of which are attributed to rhythm—cover a variety of phenomena that have nothing in common but the experiencing of a kinesthetic periodicity. The assembly line worker, such as he is depicted in Charlie Chaplin's famous film, seems to be truly bewitched by the machine. His effort to adhere to the object makes him a stranger to himself, an "alien."⁹ Yet, this occurs precisely because he does not have a rhythmic experience of periodicity. Nonetheless, there is one condition that may sometimes enable the mechanized laborer to overcome this "alienation" and to affirm himself in the face of the machine: if he sings while working. Transported into the imaginary, he makes his gestures the incantatory rite of his demiurgic power. We are presented here with two distinct and irreducible phenomena: first, the execution of movements made in time with a perceived periodicity, and second, the rhythmization of this kinesthesia.

What does the rhythmizing act consist of? Objectively, nothing has changed: the same movements are executed with the same efficacy. The difference is that for the singer, the movements have received a new signification: no longer a means of adapting to the machine or of executing a task, they are now sighted with a view to something unreal and transcendent, whose imaginary presence they must represent. This something, which is nothing other than rhythm, is not itself the totality of these movements, but what, by means of these movements, we are able to intend beyond them: expectations, surprises, fulfillments—in short, a specific structure of temporality.

Clearly, this does not refer to an objective, measurable time, but rather to a lived time, experienced in all its inner richness. Through the mediation of the movements, rhythm's unreal

time is *realized*, as it were. Isn't my satisfaction real when the emergence fulfills my expectation, as is my surprise or disappointment when it fails to occur? And yet, what I truly sight are not the affective fluctuations of this genuinely lived time. This affectivity, like the movements, has but a role of mediation. *In* these movements and *through* this affectivity, I grasp something that surpasses them, *that is not there*. For my surprises, my satisfactions are not simply experienced in a naive mode as surprises and satisfactions. They are grasped reflexively: "now I am satisfied," "now I am disappointed." In fact, I have produced them with a specific intention: *through them I contemplate modes of recurrence as corresponding within me to essential structures of temporality*.

In the affective and motor acts that I perform, I *recognize* the demands of my temporal essence, and this recognition gives me an awareness of myself as *coessential* with the various modes of recurrence that I apprehend. What I contemplate is neither the recurrent emergences themselves nor the acts through which those emergences are grasped. *The true object of my contemplation is this coessentiality itself*. It is *in order* to recognize it that I apprehend these recurrences, and my whole course of action is marked by this specific intention. The original law for all my anticipations, therefore, is this demand for coessentiality. Rhythmizing consciousness is rhythmizing from the outset. From the outset, it prefigures the future emergences in accordance with this intrinsic criterion. Hence, there is no point in wondering what would be the smallest element "perceived" as rhythm. *For rhythm begins at the precise moment when I anticipate a recurrence in the essential mode, that is, at the very moment when consciousness becomes rhythmizing*. The demand for coessentiality also governs the other fundamental course of action: *retrospective synthesis*. This synthesis, pro-

voked by the sudden appearance of an unforeseen event, has in fact no other purpose than to discover valid conditions for a new coessentiality. Its expectation disappointed, rhythmizing consciousness will remain within this disappointment in order to set it up immediately as a law for its future expectations. For the coessentiality of the modes of recurrence with my temporal being is *postulated* by rhythmizing consciousness as the very *criterion* of rhythm. When this criterion is lacking for any reason, rhythmizing consciousness purely and simply vanishes. We understand thereby the vanity of seeking this criterion in the *objective* qualities of rhythmic emergences. In reality, *this criterion is in us, within the very structure of our temporal being.*

It is in this same way that we will grasp the essentially recurrent nature of rhythmic emergences.¹⁰ Each present moment of human time results from the synthesis of a “retention” of the past and a “protention” of the future.¹¹ Now, in the universe of pure rhythm, limited hypothetically to emergences with no possibility of gradation (tonal, dynamic, or agogic), the “retained” past cannot *motivate* anything but recurrential projects.¹² The object of each expectation is therefore something that has already been—which is to say, an identity. Yet, this identity is not necessarily tied to an intervallic identity. The object of our expectation will make itself known through its own particular structural qualities. And it will remain distinguishable among the other emergences that might come to suspend its fulfillment. Similarly, it will retain its identity even if it arises prematurely. *It is always possible to identify the object of our expectation, and this alone is what permits the inexhaustible temporal play of rhythmizing consciousness.*

§ B Outline of a Phenomenological Rhythmics

B.1. The Concept of the Term

The method we advocate dismisses the concept of rhythm-objects, in order to situate us resolutely within the lived experience of rhythm. Rhythmizing consciousness, as we know, is rhythmizing from the start. From the first emergence, it is the expectation of a return. To be sure, I do not yet know when and how it will return, but *the first emergence already entails the project of its reproduction.* This project is still indefinite, as are the duration and the content of the interval separating us from the expected recurrence. We may even be uncertain about the attributes—volume, duration, timbre, and the like—of the emergence whose reproduction we are expecting. But as soon as an emergence with a discernible characteristic of sequential duality presents itself, it can provide a pretext for rhythmizing consciousness. An emergence, whether continuous or discontinuous, that is articulated successively, and whose recurrence is projected by rhythmizing consciousness, is called a *term* [*terme*]. We shall now consider the essential differences between the “objective” concept of the foot and the phenomeno-

logical concept of the term. Let us note immediately that, unlike the foot of quantitative prosody, which is spatial and static, the term is a dynamic, vectorial unit, characterized by increasing tension, and oriented toward completion. Within the term, then, we distinguish the *teleutē*, as the pole and place of the intra-terminary tension's resolution, and the *prosteleutē*, which is the set of emergences preceding and leading up to the teleutē.¹ The denomination *term*, therefore, is suited to any temporal structure containing the prosteleutē-teleutē duality. For this reason, the feet of ancient prosody, particularly the simple feet, often coincide with the term. Iambs (—), dactyls (—), and anapests (—) clearly exhibit this duality, which is the criterion of the term. Nonetheless, considered within their various contexts, these figures may be found to lack all "terminary" significance, as will be shown in our discussion of aeolian meters [these sections are missing from the original text—Eds.]. For the notion of the foot stems from an analysis of the rhythm-object. The schemas it gives rise to have no other merit than to serve as models permitting the faithful reproduction of rhythm-objects. Now, we know already that rhythm-objects and rhythms (the correlates of rhythmizing consciousness) are essentially different and incommensurable. Thus, the first four dactylic feet of a hexameter do not have the same *value* as the fifth obligatory dactyl, nor the same function; on the plane of the rhythm-phenomenon, they cannot be confused. In short, the foot, spatialized time, and the term, lived time, are connected only occasionally and by chance.

B.2. The Term's Degree

By definition, a rhythm's first term already presents the prosteleutē-teleutē duality. The first term is also the *primary term*.

It constitutes essentially a unique synthesis whose reproduction I expect. Now, such an expectation may be either satisfied or disappointed. Let it be the former: a primary term $A = \text{—}$ ($\text{—} = \text{prosteleutē}$; $\text{—} = \text{teleutē}$) is reproduced exactly: $A + A = 2A$. Let there now intervene a *pause*, and this new element will be enough to modify radically the structure of the terms that have been juxtaposed so far: The pause unites with the last term, making it a secondary teleutē, and the previous term is retrospectively valorized in relation to it as its prosteleutē. Consequently, the terms are no longer added; rather, they are organized as a whole into an autonomous temporal structure: $(A_1 A_2) = A^2$. The parentheses indicate the unification of the two terms through the expectation and the completion of the secondary teleutē. This new structure—which also presents the characteristic prosteleutē-teleutē duality, and which provokes the expectation of its own complete reproduction—plays the role of a new, superior term, a term that is *secondary*, or of the second degree.

Let us continue: A^2 has concluded, and is beginning to repeat. Its first term (its prosteleutē) just completed, we find ourselves extended toward the second: $A_1 \text{—} A_2$. At this moment, surprise: once underway, A_2 stops short, and instead of the expected weak beat, there is a pause. Thus, the term A^2 is not reproduced in accordance with expectation; rather, the supervening accident provokes a new synthesis, giving rise to a *new secondary* term: $(A x) = A^2$ (x designating the prosteleutē of the primary term A). The autonomous structure of the first secondary term A^2 is expressed as follows: the secondary prosteleutē or $x^2 = A$; the secondary teleutē or $y^2 = A$. The structure of A^2 , on the other hand, is: $x^2 = A$; $y^2 = x$. Thus both A^2 and A^2 are secondary terms. But can we therefore say that A^2 is an *autonomous* term—in other words, that we expect its immedi-

ate and entire reproduction? In fact, what I expect after $A^2 A^2$ is the return not of A^2 but of the synthesis ($A^2 A^2$), which consequently plays the role of a new, tertiary term: A^3 , whose members are respectively $x^3 = A^2$ and $y^3 = A^2$. To sum up: to the simple trochaic rhythm-object (----//----) corresponds a rhythmic term of the third degree, entailing considerable temporal complexity—expressed, on the one hand, by the prosteleutēs x, x^2, x^2, x^3 , and on the other, by the teleutēs, y, y^2, y^2, y^3 . We may observe here that *a superior teleutē always entails an element that is new with respect to the inferior and anterior terms*. This element may be an *accident* that is either *intra-terminary* (suspension, anticipation, catalexis of an inferior teleutē), or *extra-terminary* (hypercatalexis, doubling, etc., of a teleutē; a pause).

The expanded formula of A^3 (see Pl. I, Fig. 1)² shows clearly that we are not dealing with a simple succession of troches, but with a complex structuring of temporality, a structuring within which the elements, although analogous on the objective plane, are not interchangeable. Thus, in A^3 , if we invert the secondary terms A^2 and A^2 , we obtain a completely different rhythm, whose prosteleutē x^3 is equal to A^2 , and whose teleutē $y^3 = y$ (Fig. 2). Although the rhythm-object has undergone only a minimal modification, the rhythm-phenomenon has a meaning that is entirely different from that of its antecedent. Once again, we observe the incommensurability of the spatialized object and the lived phenomenon: the former is a uniform, linear succession, presenting a largely unconvincing and ultimately uninteresting regularity; the latter is a complex architecture of superimposed processes, by means of which rhythmizing consciousness undertakes the appropriation of objective time. It is in order to render accessible to description

this superimposition of multiple processes that we have called upon the concept of degree.

The first conclusion made possible by the introduction of this concept can be formulated as follows: *each superior degree—secondary, tertiary, quaternary, and so on—results from the appearance of a teleutē that is new with respect to an anterior and inferior teleutē*. The passage from one degree to another is localizable: it takes place at the precise moment when the intervention of a new element happens to disappoint my expectation. Retrospectively, then, the unforeseen emergence is incorporated into what precedes it. In this way, a new term is created, with a new teleutē, capable of integrating the new emergence. This new teleutē is posterior and superior with respect to the previous one. The progressive ascent from degree to degree is a characteristic process of unification, a process through which rhythmizing consciousness hurls itself into the conquest of time.

B.3. Non-terminary "Rhythms"

A second conclusion, resulting directly from the first, is the observation that *without this process of unification, the rhythmic phenomenon cannot take place*. An indefinite succession of identical primary terms is not an event of rhythmizing consciousness. The tick-tock of my watch *is not* necessarily, or in itself, a rhythm. In apprehending it as such, I have already conferred on it dynamics, timbres, and silences it does not have objectively; in short, I have enriched it with superior degrees.³ It will perhaps be objected, and rightly so, that in most African tribes there exists a monotonous rhythm that is essentially primary and unquestionably experienced as such.

But here again, we must distinguish two different practices, both of which are quite far from terminary rhythm as we understand it. The first, an absolutely monotonous *drumming*, is a succession that *does not advance*: the same cycle is constantly repeated, and duration—the very environment of conscious acts—marches in place. Clearly, this is not free and creative rhythmizing consciousness, but a *fascinated* consciousness, subjected to an inevitable, horizonless future. A gradual increase of volume accompanied by a progressive shortening of the intervals can carry this fascination as far as the total abdication of freedom, to the point of the abolition of consciousness itself, to catalepsy or ecstasy. The other practice we wished to distinguish is the purely toneless music of these same tribes. Here again, in the absence of all terminary structuring, uniform primary terms alone make up the invariable canvas of this impressive temporal art. But we are no longer witnessing the collective possession characteristic of the effects of *drumming*. The various combinations of agogics and dynamics, their unforeseen variations, their interplay and interferences, express and realize *in the essential mode* a temporal experience of passivity. Although this essentializing retreat evinces, in fact, a certain freedom, the absence of a revalorization of the past as a constitutive process clearly reflects the total axiological passivity of the individual before the imperatives of the group. Entirely in the present, extended toward a future that is imposed on us, we no longer have to face the past. This radical absence of the retrospective gaze marks the difference between *dynamic-agogic* rhythm [*rythme intensif-agogique*] and *terminary* rhythm, the sole object of this study.

B.4. Reproduction of the Teleutē at the Expected Moment

For terminary rhythm, *all rhythmizing expectation is expectation of the teleutē*. Clearly, this expectation sights a teleutē of a superior degree. Hence, each inferior-degree teleutē is a stage to be passed through on the way to the reiteration of the superior teleutē. The latter thereby acquires a certain *autonomy* with respect to its prosteleutē, and, in the rhythmic flux, it becomes the dimly seen haven where the tension will be resolved. Naturally, this resolution can come about at just the right moment, after I have passed through the normal stages of expectation. Thus, to return to the previous example, y^3 may reemerge at the end of the second iteration of x^3 . The result will be a *regular* tertiary rhythm, which is reproduced term by term. Its formula is $2A^3$. This rhythm may stop there: first the teleutē is expected, and then it is accomplished, bringing the hoped-for release. Or it may continue, reiterating its effects indefinitely. Its general formula is: nA^3 (Fig. 1).

B.5. Deferred Teleutēs

Now, this is only one particular situation. In fact, it is quite possible that the tertiary teleutē announced during the first term will not be fulfilled at the expected moment. Let us take the first tertiary term of our example, $A^3 = (A^2A^2)$: this may be followed not, as before, by the simple return of A^3 , but by $3A^2$, and then simply A^2 . Here is the objective formula of this configuration:

— — — // — — — // — — — // — — — // — — — // — — —

Twice in succession, the teleutē y^3 fails to return when expected. There is a continual increase of tension. Thus the twice-deferred resolution endows the last term—objectively identical to the first—with a special value. In this regard, let us recall that the essence of the successive emergences lies in the temporal configurations they bring about. The double repetition of A^2 is intended in the essential mode as the double “not yet” of the hoped-for teleutē. Likewise, the deferred fulfillment of y^3 , when it takes place, is sighted as an essential “at last.” After this satisfaction, there is nothing left to expect: *the rhythmic phrase is complete*. Now, what is the exact temporal structure of such a phrase? An initial tertiary term A^3 asks to be repeated. At first, this repetition seems to be taking place: for an instant, the progression is $A_1^3 A_2^3$. But at the precise moment when A_2^3 should be ending with a pause, a new element intervenes: a weak beat replaces the teleutē y^3 's characteristic pause, thereby disintegrating A_2^3 into two secondary terms of the type A^2 . As a result, A^3 , in turn, is retrospectively dismantled into $A^2 + A^2$. Nonetheless, in this revelation of its elements, the initial tertiary synthesis has been only virtually dissolved, as a half-seen possibility; I have not, in fact, stopped hoping for the return of y^3 . The first tertiary term A^3 has merely lost a bit of its cohesion. As for the incomplete terms, in spite of their objective identity with A^2 , they have acquired a new meaning: originally prosteleutēs, they have been transformed by their ordinal position into terms of a specific genre—*suspending* terms. It goes without saying that the three suspending terms have neither the same value nor the same function. Likewise, the signification of the deferred teleutē varies with the number and the nature of the suspending terms preceding it: whether they are many or few, even or odd, with identical or different structures. Thus the deferred terms may be characterized by

the adjectives *homeo-nomic*, *hetero-nomic*, and adverbs such as doubly or triply. The rhythm we have just examined is a *doubly-deferred, homeo-nomic* term.

B.6. Anticipated Teleutēs

Let us now take a rhythm with the following objective formula: $---//-- --//---///---//---$ (Pl. II, Fig. 1). As soon as it is completed—in accordance with the retrospective constitution of $---//---$ as prosteleutē and $---$ as teleutē—the first tertiary term (up to the triple bar), tends to be reproduced in full. Yet before our expectation has a chance to reach its height, the teleutē bursts in. This abrupt transformation of the prosteleutē's second member while it is in the process of unfolding thus represents a modality of surprise. It is precisely the surprise of *this* teleutē's arising at a certain moment of *this* expectation; and *this* teleutē, objectively identical to the previous one, thereby becomes a teleutē of *surprise*. It is clear that what endows this teleutē with its special value is its relative place: its *moment*. Generally speaking, teleutēs belong, according to their moment, to one of the three following categories: deferred teleutēs, anticipated teleutēs, and those that emerge at the expected moment.

B.7. The Structure of Teleutēs

We have shown (A.6, last paragraph) the essentially recurrent nature of terminary rhythm, as well as the resulting need to be able to *identify* the recurrent elements and to recognize them as having already been. For simple primary terms, this identification is made on the basis of their constitutive qualitative duality. Since one of the two qualities must characterize

the teleutē, the teleutēs's return will be the same as that of the quality. Superior teleutēs, on the other hand, are more difficult to identify in full. For while all rhythmizing expectation is the expectation of a superior teleutē, it must be acknowledged that, along the way, *this expectation is reinforced by inferior fulfillments.*

Hence it is often rather difficult to mark the exact boundary separating the prosteleutē from the teleutē. Take, for instance, the tertiary term $-\sim-\sim//-\sim-$: is its teleutē $-$, $\sim-$, or $-\sim-$? The difficulty results from our tendency to confuse the various levels of expectation. Thus, for example, if we ignore the central pause, the secondary teleutē will be $-$. Likewise, if we shift the pause so that it follows the previous strong beat, the teleutē becomes equivocal (C.2, end): it will be both $-$ and $\sim-$, depending on whether or not we pay attention to the pause. In fact, these two secondary teleutēs are *covered* by a third, tertiary teleutē, whose various elements and phrases affect *at the same time* our inferior expectations.

It is not our task here to consider teleutēs in their full extension. For while they are still cohesive, long endings become rather loosely bound, and as soon as they lose their own proper temporal organization, they disintegrate into inferior structures. This *disintegration* constitutes a general phenomenon, which affects all terms exceeding a certain length. Therefore, we will restrict ourselves to a structural contemplation of only the teleutēs's endings.

The end of a teleutē is at the same time the end of a term. Although its identification is made possible by its structure alone—particularly the intervention of an element, like a pause, that is new with respect to the prosteleutē—what truly defines the end of a teleutē are not its intrinsic structural qualities (strong or masculine teleutēs, weak or feminine teleutēs,

phonetic teleutēs, timbral teleutēs, and so on), but a certain number of relationships with the terms preceding it.

1. A first relationship constitutes what we call the *ratio* or proportion of the terms. Terms acting as superior teleutēs present the following ratios with respect to the previous terms: a. *equality*, b. *equivalence*, c. *catalexis*, d. *amplification*. We shall see (B.9) that teleutēs have a limited range of equivalences.

2. We are already familiar with the second relation, which is the teleutēs' *moment* (B.6).

3. Teleutēs have essentially two kinds of *functions*: *suspension* and *resolution*. A teleutē is *suspending* when it announces the coming of another teleutē. It is *resolving* when its coming puts an end to tension and announces the possibility of a definitive rest.

B.8. The Term's Number

4. There is a fourth type of relationship that must be brought up in the characterization of any term whatsoever, and particularly in that of a teleutē: it is what we will call *the term's number*. So that we may more fully grasp the scope of this concept, utterly fundamental in rhythmics, let us recall once more the necessarily recurrent character of rhythmizing expectations (cf. A.6). One result of this characteristic, as we have already pointed out, is that any *first* term entails the project of its reproduction. The fulfillment of the expected return endows the *second* term with a resolving quality that differentiates it from the first. An odd teleutē is always suspending; an even teleutē is always resolving.

A term that *arises* and a term that *returns* together form a tertiary *pair*. Now, whatever its degree, a pair constitutes a tertiary unity whose first member is the prosteleutē and

whose second is the teleutē. As a result, in a series of identical terms, the even terms play a different role than the odd terms; and the even pairs in turn differ from the odd pairs, particularly in their teleutēs. If the end of the first pair demarcates *one* unit, the end of the second pair demarcates two superimposed units. (Ex.: $\overset{\cdot}{-}\overset{\cdot}{-}\overset{\cdot}{-}/\overset{\cdot}{-}\overset{\cdot}{-}\overset{\cdot}{-}//$, etc.)

1. 2. 3. 4.

In accordance with its number, the second troche is a *singly-even* term; the fourth troche, *doubly-even*; the eighth, *triply-even*. This *parity* structure [*structure paritaire*] is clearly inherent in the recurrential nature of rhythm. It shows us that in accordance with the recurrential demands themselves, when the most uniform rhythm-object becomes a rhythm, it takes on an organization such that it passes beyond itself into the unreal. If an equal, even term functions necessarily as a conclusion, an odd teleutē, by its very nature, represents incompleteness. Thus, we can see that there is a considerable difference between the values of even and odd rhythms. The former, with their multiply-even teleutēs, offering perfectly harmonious rhythmic phrases, realize temporal structures of equilibrium, tranquility, serenity. The latter, on the other hand, leaving us continually unsatisfied, represent modalities of impassioned life.

Given its various terminary degrees, a single emergence may belong simultaneously to both even and odd terms. Thus, the teleutē of an iambic trimeter is even as the final member of a hexapody and odd as the third member of the trimeter. In this case, we observe a *parity disagreement between degrees*, a disagreement that endows such rhythms with a shimmering, shifting ambivalence.

Generally speaking, in accordance with their number, rhythms are either even or odd, with either agreement or dis-

agreement of parity. Yet, there are also rhythms with no parity structure at all.

B.9. The Equivalence of Terms

Let us return now to our example of the deferred teleutē. If, for the prosteleutē troches, we substitute dactyls ($- \sim -$), or even first paeons ($- \sim \sim -$), we will obtain satisfying, analogously structured rhythmic phrases. But we will get nothing of the sort if, instead, we substitute anapests ($\sim \sim -$), second paeons ($\sim - \sim -$), third paeons ($\sim - - -$) or fourth paeons ($\sim - - - -$). Certain primary structures, therefore, behave as the *equivalents* of primary structures that are different from them, certain others as their *alter-valents*.⁴ We pose *the condition of equivalence* as follows: *a term is equivalent to another term when it can take its place without modifying the temporal structure of the immediately superior term*. Now, equivalence is not identity: The appearance of a different term where an equal term is expected necessarily contravenes the recurrential demand. And so rhythmizing consciousness is faced with an alternative: it may either purely and simply abdicate; or it may discover the persistence of a concealed equality in the midst of this diversity. If it opts for the latter, it will have to perform complex procedures in order to discover the principle of this equality, or, in other words, the equivalence's *reasons*.⁵ These procedures themselves can be grouped under the denomination *analysis of reasons*. Now, both the elimination of certain hitherto implicitly accepted reasons and the discovery of possible new reasons involve a modification of the recurrential project. Let us note, however, that this modification can only affect terms of the same degree and does not apply to the structure of the immediately superior term. Thus, if we consider the various

substitutions that can be made in the first five terms of an iambic trimeter (C.2), we will find that it is only with respect to its primary terms that they reduce this line's triple reason (quantity, tonicity, pause) to tonicity alone; they allow quantity and pause to remain in effect for the superior term's necessarily "pure" iambic teleutē. Generally speaking, *a superior teleutē will not admit the equivalence substitutions accepted by its inferior terms*; it always retains its full reasons.

Until now, we have been speaking of *reasons*, in the plural. In fact, rhythms with only a single reason are also possible. Prosodic rhythms, however, are rarely satisfied with a single reason. It is by combining multiple reasons—tonic, arithmetic, quantitative, and so on—that they successfully realize the complex temporal interplay that is the vehicle of true poetry. Rhythms with multiple reasons will be called *polychordal rhythms* [*rhythmes polycordes*]. The equivalence substitutions that come to enhance polychordal rhythms necessarily entail a "rational" reduction. The reduced, eliminated reason momentarily ceases to function, and as a result of this reduction, the rhythm follows a freer course. The temporary reduction of reasons can give rise to complex phenomena, related to modulation. Rhythmic modulation takes place when, through the interplay of equivalences, a new reason is introduced into the rhythm. The *modulating term* summarizes all the reasons, and the *modulated term*, which follows, retains the new one.

This leads to one of the most debated problems in prosodic rhythmic: the *convertibility of reasons*. In other words, if we replace a rhythm's reasons with different reasons, will we obtain an analogously structured rhythm? For example, can we convert quantity into volume, tonicity into timbre? It is clearly possible for such a systematic conversion to leave a rhythm's terminary structure unmodified. However, polychor-

dal rhythms rely not only on purely terminary syntheses, but also on a particular synthesis that takes place between reasons themselves and remains tied to their material characteristics. A tone-quantity synthesis has an entirely different *meaning* than a tone-volume synthesis. The translator, however, while relinquishing the idea of producing a material identity, should nonetheless be able to obtain analogous temporal structures—thanks to a skillful total or partial conversion of reasons.

B.10. The Principle of the Universality of Terminary Functions

Let us now consider the phenomenological formulae of the rhythms we have been examining. By taking into account only the terms' prosteleutē-teleutē bipartition, we have given our formulas and graphs a universal scope. We have thereby arrived at rhythmic structures that are independent both of degree and of intra-terminary configurations. Consequently, it should now be possible to replace each term with an altogether different terminary configuration, as long as the same functional relations exist between the new terms as between their predecessors.

In this connection, we propose a few experiments, not in order to confirm a hypothesis but rather to illustrate an evidence. Let us take as our example the tertiary rhythm with a deferred teleutē, which we have already examined (B.5). For all the terms of this rhythm, we will substitute another given term, producing thereby a new rhythm, with a homeo-nomic structure.⁶ We will conduct this experiment with the help of a series of feet taken from quantitative prosody, considered as terminary functions presenting a prosteleutē-teleutē duality.

1. The iamb: $\sim\sim$ (prosteleutē: \sim ; teleutē: \sim) yields:
 $X^3 Y^3 = \sim\sim$; $3 X^3 = \sim\sim\sim$; $Y^3 = \sim\sim$;
 which is to say, $\sim\sim\sim\sim\sim\sim$.
 We will follow the same procedure for the other feet.
2. The trochee: $\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim / \sim\sim / \sim\sim$
3. The anapest: $\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim$
4. The dactyl: $\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim$
5. The choriamb: $\sim\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$
6. The paeon first: $\sim\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$ or
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$
7. The paeon second: $\sim\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$
8. The paeon third: $\sim\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$ or
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$
9. The paeon fourth: $\sim\sim\sim\sim$ yields:
 $\sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim / \sim\sim\sim\sim$

The reader may be assured that the configurations obtained are readily embraced by rhythmizing intentionality.

Examples could be multiplied indefinitely: the structure offered by the phenomenological formula is valid for all possible terms presenting a prosteleutē-teleutē duality. What we

have uncovered here is an authentic principle governing all of rhythmics: *the principle of the universality of terminary functions*, or more simply, *the rhythmological principle*. It is expressed as follows: *a rhythm's functional intra-terminary relations constitute a universal rhythmic form, valid for any intra-terminary configuration.*

In other words, (1) if we replace the terms of a given rhythm with the terms of any other configuration, while maintaining the same functional relations, we will necessarily obtain a rhythmic structure; and (2) the phenomenological formula duly established for a given rhythm can become the law and criterion for an indefinite number of possible similar rhythmic structures.

§ C The Description of Several Prosodic Rhythms

C.1. Rhythmic Topography

All of rhythmizing consciousness's protentional-retentional modifications are motivated in the present. It is from the privileged position of the present that the phenomenon of rhythm is apprehended in the full richness of its motivations. Thus, our topography focuses on the successive presents in which rhythmic events are located. Each present emergence enters into synthesis with the past emergences. It is necessary, first of all, to characterize this *retrospective synthesis*. We know that it results from the relation between the expectation and the event. The expectation is itself doubly motivated—by the recurrent demand and by the anterior terminary organization. Each present event motivates the expectation of a new future. Thus, it is equally necessary to describe the nature, the object, and the overall character of this expectation, arising from the present event. Each present, in short, requires a bipolar description of *its* past and *its* future. The descriptive categories proposed in the preceding chapter were derived precisely in order to respond to this demand for bipolarity: the *term*, a

constituted past, asking to be reproduced; the *prosteleutē*, announcing the teleutē; the *teleutē*, in turn, completing the term; the term's *degree*, leading to retrospective syntheses; its *ratio* and its *number*, defining the recurrent situation—all these categories tend to locate the retentional-protentional double pole in the present.

The object of topography is to describe the successive presents and to determine the phenomenological formula of any given rhythm. Thanks to the phenomenological concepts derived above, we are now able to describe a rhythmic *place*, not as it might be characterized objectively, but as it is experienced in its concrete temporal structuring. We have already provided a few examples of the topography of some very simple rhythms (B.2, B.4, B.6). Here we would like to review several more complex rhythmic structures, common to ancient and modern poetries.

C.2. Iambic Trimeter

So-called quantitative rhythm has in fact three reasons: (1) quantity, (2) tonicity (*arsis*, *thesis*), and (3) articulation (articulatory distribution of durations). Moreover, as we shall soon see, it admits non-quantitative equivalences.

Iambic trimeter is the preeminent verse in the dialogues of the classic Greek tragedies and comedies. Its objective formula

— — — — / — — — — // — — — —

clearly reveals its homeo-nomic terminary structure: it is a succession of six iambs. Now, in accordance with the requirements of number (B.8), each pair of iambs is constituted as a unique secondary term:

$$A_1 A_2 A_3 A_4 A_5 A_6 = A_1^2 A_2^2 A_3^2 = A^3$$

As a result, the strong beat of A_6 , a *singly-even* primary teleutē, coincides with the final iamb of A_3^2 , an *odd* secondary teleutē: hence there is a parity disagreement between the two degrees. This disagreement, arising after an agreement in A_4 , calls on a future A_8 for a new agreement. But the pause punctuating A_6 forces us to accept the secondary oddness, leaving us with the half-satisfaction of the primary evenness alone. It is unquestionably within this parity ambivalence that the essence of iambic trimeter is to be sought.

Our position is confirmed by the complex play of substitutions found in the literature. For the first five primary terms, the play of equivalences permits spondees, dactyls, anapests and proceleusmatics, thereby eliminating both quantity and articulation, and retaining only tonicity.¹ In fact, the interference of primary and secondary numbers can be produced by the alternation of strong and weak beats alone. This observation, by the way, is not without real consequences for the homeo-rhythmic translation of this meter, particularly into languages incompatible with quantitative prosody. The *condition of equivalence* (B.9) mandates the retention of the quantitative iamb only for the teleutē A_3^2 . Yet quantity may even be disregarded altogether, for within a tonic homeo-rhythm, this iamb in turn may be replaced by a tonic-reasoned iamb, without appreciably modifying the rhythm's structure.

There is still a word to be said about the *caesura* that bisects A_4 , the doubly-even teleutē of A_2^2 . In Greco-Latin prosody, the caesura is an equivocal pause, or, we might even say, a *feigned* pause.² What happens at the exact moment of the caesura: $- - - / - - - //$? The doubly-even teleutē A_4 tends to conclude, bringing all the expected satisfaction of its double even-

ness. But the caesura's pause, eliminating the strong beat, makes A_2^2 an even more definitive ending. Then, after this feigned conclusion, the strong beat of A_4 arrives all the same, even though the caesura has already taken away its effect of double satisfaction. The strong beat's sudden appearance instantly cancels the pause, which retrospectively loses its reason for being. Nonetheless, the pause did in fact occur, and its momentary hesitation gives a touch of precariousness to ulterior, far too regular, fulfillments. Moreover, its retrospective cancellation is not absolute. The second half of the line, while continuing the first, also presents a certain rhythmic autonomy: $- - - / - - -$, which is to say, $B_1 B_2 B_3$ (the slash indicates that the term is catalectic). Hence, the second hemistich has a certain *equivocality*. Along with the parity ambivalence, this equivocality endows iambic trimeter with a richness of virtualities, which the various substitutions realize with great diversity from line to line. Thus iambic trimeter has a rather complex global phenomenological formula. And if we consider the wide range of possible substitutions, it will become clear to us why this apparently regular line became the marvelous instrument of a poetry without equal.

c.3. Dactylic Hexameter

Dactylic hexameter is the verse proper to the heroic epic. Its objective formula:

$$- - - / - - - / - // - - - / - - - / - - - / - - -$$

reveals six triple-reasoned, primary terms—the three reasons being quantitative (fixed equality of durations), tonic (arsisthesis), and articulatory (dactylic distribution of durations)—hence: $A_1 A_2 A_3 A_4 A_5 A_6$. The entire line constitutes a single

secondary term, A^2 , whose teleutē is $A_5 A_6$. Given the condition of equivalence (B.9), it is clear that substitutions are necessarily limited to the prosteleutē alone. Unlike those of the trimeter, these substitutions have two reasons: tonic and quantitative. As for the teleutē, it necessarily retains its full reasons—tonic, quantitative, and articulatory.³ In accordance with its number, the last member of the teleutē, A_6 , is singly-even (the second member of an odd pair), but—again unlike the trimeter—it is catalectic and feminine. As a result, there is a more pronounced cadence than at the end of the dramatic verse, and we cease to expect a triply-even term A_8 . The parity fluctuation is retrospectively canceled, and the six tonics seem to have had the same value. In reality, this is not altogether accurate, as is shown by the place of the caesura. For *in Greco-Latin prosody, the feigned pause of the caesura arrives when expectation is at its height, that is, in either the prosteleutē (odd member) or the teleutē (even member) of the second pair*. It is obviously the parity structure that assigns these places to the caesura. And in fact, this structure governs the first two pairs, abating only later on, through the effect of the third pair's catalectic member. However, it should be noted that because of the equivalence substitutions, the primary teleutēs of the first four members may be either $\sim\sim$ or $-$, and thus the parity structure is not always clearly perceived. Out of the first four members' sixteen possible equivalence variations, there are exactly eight in which number functions at various degrees: These are the variations in which the even primary teleutēs have retained their identity. In the other variations, the parity structure functions only as the *expectation* of a second pair—and it is necessarily dissolved by this pair's inequality at A_4 . The essential difference between hexameter and iambic trimeter is now clear: it consists in the different natures of their

respective primary teleutēs. In the former, these teleutēs' reason is their *tonic force*; in the latter, their *duration*. In the first, parity fluctuation is maintained; in the second, it is not: for duration *alone* does not afford the possibility of recurrence; it is only one aspect of the substratum and not the substratum itself. For what *returns*, in fact, is not an identical duration but an identifiable substratum. Now it is possible to identify the strong beat, whatever the articulatory structure may be, but when the weak beat takes on a variety of structures, its identification becomes difficult. The substitutions' parity effect, therefore, varies according to whether the teleutēs are strong beats (as in iambic trimeter) or weak beats (as in dactylic hexameter). To sum up, we may observe that—as a result, in part, of the final catalectic teleutē, A_6 , and, in part, of the frequent inequality of the even teleutēs—*parity structure is not truly constitutive of hexameter*.

What, then, is the essence of this rhythm? One is particularly struck in heroic verse by the fact that, despite the relative length of the lines, they seldom exceed the secondary degree. The result is a full and tranquil flow, accentuating the length and pronounced structuring of the teleutēs. If such terminary impoverishment has been able to lend itself to works on the scale of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, it is only because this impoverishment is compensated for by other qualities. In this connection, let us consider the prosteleutē's sixteen modalities of equivalence, which endow the teleutē—objectively always the same—with as many particular meanings. For the fact of the matter is that the secondary degree constitutes only a framework through which pass a great variety of *equivalent rhythms*, presenting the most diverse structurings. These equivalent rhythms, which are perceived only during the scansion of isolated lines, attain the quaternary degree. The lines' common reason is the numera-

tion of the primary terms, a numeration facilitated by the caesura and by the length of the teleutē. It is this common reason that gives rise to the secondary degree's generic rhythm, which has just been described. But within this framework, a great richness of subtle differences develops—representing, as if in miniature, a multiplicity of universal functional structures. In order to give the reader an idea of these structures, we shall review, from the point of view of the teleutēs alone, hexameter's sixteen common equivalence variations.

1. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Singly-even teleutē (= A₅ A₆)
2. --/---/---/---/---/---
Singly-even metathetic [*métathétique*] teleutē (A₅ A₆)⁴
3. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Doubly-deferred teleutē (= A₆) (cf. B.5)
4. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Copulary [*copulaire*] teleutē, or teleutē arising at the expected moment⁵
5. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Anticipated teleutē (cf. B.6)
6. --/---/---/---/---/---
Synthetic turned [*tournant*] teleutē⁶
7. --/---/---/---/---/---
Turned teleutē, partial parity structure
8. --/---/---/---/---/---
Turned tertiary teleutē (= A₃ A₄), anticipated quaternary teleutē (A₅ A₆)

9. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Turned tertiary teleutē (= A₃ A₄), metathetic quaternary teleutē (= A₅ A₆)
10. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Singly-even teleutē. Marked parity structure, analogous to that of iambic trimeter
11. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Synthetic teleutē (cf. A.4.3)
12. --/---/---/---/---/---
Turned teleutē
13. --/---/---/---/---/---
Tertiary teleutē (= A₃ A₄), anticipated quaternary teleutē (A₅ A₆)
14. --/---/---/---/---/---
Singly-deferred tertiary teleutē (= A₅), equivocating quaternary teleutē (A₅ A₆) (at once metathetic and copulary)⁷
15. ---/---/---/---/---/---
Singly-even metathetic teleutē, marked parity structure
16. --/---/---/---/---/---
Singly-even teleutē⁸

—TRANSLATED BY BENJAMIN THIGPEN

*Psychoanalytic Aesthetics:
Time, Rhythm, and the Unconscious*

Psychoanalytic Aesthetics: Time, Rhythm, and the Unconscious

A Specific Problem: Can the Laws of Rhythm be Psychoanalyzed?

To begin, let me ask your indulgence in an undertaking whose shortcomings can be excused only by their novelty.¹ What I propose is a concrete psychoanalytic understanding of some simple prosodic rhythms, leaving aside the semantic aspects, the myth or plot, of poetry. Clearly, such an inquiry implies a psychoanalytic theory of temporality that can only be outlined here. Nevertheless, I must tell you from the start what I would like to accomplish. My aim is to find out whether “a priori laws” of rhythm can be articulated through appropriate forms of analysis and, if so, whether we can understand the rules governing temporal configurations without undermining either their individual or their universal characteristics. This question will prove crucial as it implies broader issues whose solutions depend upon it. Some of those issues are: Can psychoanalysis help us understand the mysterious “fabric” of art, unravel the enigma of its inner suitabilities and incompatibilities? Can psychoanalysis give us access to the principle that

imposes unity on an aesthetic universe? In short, can psychoanalysis suggest aesthetic criteria that would permit us to distinguish between the true inspiration and clever contrivances, between accurate imitations and betrayals, between a genuine understanding of art and mere snobbery?

Let us focus on our specific problem, the study of rhythm, and review its rudiments.² At first, rhythm appears to be a series of elements, recurring at more or less regular repeated intervals. The locution "more or less" reflects caveats deriving from phenomenalist ignorance. One thing is certain, however: the regular recurrence of intervals should not be mistaken for rhythm. Indeed, for the clatter of a train to take on rhythmic shape, a creative act is necessary. We must assimilate and, at the same time, transfigure the crude perception of intervals; the vocalic contrast in the words "tick tock" bears witness to this type of assimilative transfiguration. In objective terms, the assimilation is manifested without exception in slightly uneven elements, in the modified intensity of the individual occurrences—that is, in the spontaneous generation of a variety of accidents, omissions, off-beats, syncopations, and the like. Now, the creation of rhythmic configurations through various types of superimposition on intervals is not at all arbitrary. There are recurrent *Gestalten* we would not consider rhythmic. There are "unsuccessful" or "aborted" rhythms just as there are rhythms pregnant with anticipation that "succeed." If I am unable to define rhythm, at least I can recognize it and identify its defects with certainty. I reject as unassimilable the sequence of three (—/—/—) or four iambic feet (—/—/—/—), whereas the reverse succession can be assimilated quite easily. Without a doubt I have a priori criteria for pleasing rhythm [*eurhythmie*], that is, criteria for the suit-

able arrangement of sequence. And it is certainly important to become aware of this fact.

Our theory of rhythm will depend on the aprioristic or genetic perspective we adopt at this juncture. Aesthetic apriorism, whether gestaltist or phenomenological, is doomed to empiricism and sterility. The mere observation of the constraints of rhythm in individual cases, and the explanation of their universal validity in terms of a "reflection or explicit statement of what we are," provide no more than empty phrases. The questions before us are quite different: What justifies, in each and every individual case, the constraints we have discerned? How can I generate them flawlessly? How can I reveal their real and specific sense?

Some examples will be useful. In an earlier work of mine, I traced the laws of rhythm to a phenomenology of temporality (see "Rhythmizing Consciousness," pp. 65–103 above). In that descriptive study I concluded, for example, that the repetition of even numbered elements has a different "value" from the repetition of uneven ones, just as the repetition of a single pair of elements varies from the repetition of a double pair (—_{s.p.}—/—_{d.p.}—...). This is due to the disparity of expectations and fulfillments in each case. Similarly, any incident occurring within elements carrying a particular "value" produces a specifically new "value." Thus the truncation (catalexis) of a fourfold paired element [8] has little to do with the "same" incident occurring to an equally fourfold but unevenly paired element [7]: $\bar{\gamma} - / \bar{2} - / \bar{3} - / \bar{4} - // \bar{5} - / \bar{6} - / \bar{7} - / \bar{8}$ and $\bar{\gamma} - / \bar{2} - / \bar{3} - // \bar{4} - / \bar{5} - / \bar{6} - / \bar{7}$, respectively. (Notice the shift of the caesura in particular.) In addition, every transmutation of a value "rubs off" on all the preceding "values" just as these same values determine whether or not certain transmutations

are possible. In the same way, a specific incident induces the repetition of the whole series preceding it. From that point on, expectations focus on the incident itself, and the repetition of the series carries only a relative "value" on the way to arriving at a terminus [*teleutē*] established by the incident. In other words, the elements on the way do admit of equivalents while the terminus strictly speaking does not. Metricians know the extent to which strict rules in Greco-Roman prosody govern, for example, the observance of the caesura in well-defined places and to what extent even a minute transgression becomes painful to the expert ear. What motivates the attribution of all these "values"? Is it enough to say that they are preordained by "human nature" or by some innate temporal *Gestalten*? Can this "nature" be made explicit through a science of essences [*eidétique*] commensurate with the workings of time—that is, through a kind of geometry of expectations, fulfillments, and disappointments? Elaborating such a geometry would in fact constitute the aims of a phenomenology of essences [*eidōs*]. Yet, my own efforts in the earlier essay have already suggested the inadequacy of a study limited to the mere workings of time. And even if this method did lead to determining some a priori laws of rhythm, all attempts to articulate its sense by means other than literary description have remained unsuccessful. All forms of nongenetic structuralism are by necessity either empirical, phenomenalist, or aprioristic, in fine, unrigorous, superficial, and unfruitful. To overcome these difficulties, a genetics of time seems inevitable, a genetics that is beyond the reach of Husserlian phenomenology. Psychoanalysis, an apparently nonphilosophical discipline, is the only means of studying the problem of function from a genetic point of view. The indisputable place of psychoanalysis in the phenomenological constitution of intersubjectivity makes it

the ideal instrument of exploration. The methodological originality of psychoanalysis is indeed designed to open unforeseen avenues within the field of transcendental phenomenology, first and foremost by putting into question the very foundation of phenomenology, the grounding value of the *ego cogito*.

In trying to answer the issues raised (at the outset of this essay), the following reflections make use of psychoanalytic theory. Because psychoanalysis implies a tacit and rigorous genetics of temporality, it allows us to employ nonartistic language to articulate the intuitively perceived sense of the singular a priori principles of art.

The Genesis of Time in Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysts have always been unconcerned with problems of temporality. For them, this philosophical category brings with it the limitations of formalism and abstraction. Let us talk about time, fine. But whose time will it be and for what? The "primary process" of dreams does not admit this concept while the "secondary process" of the waking I has received it through social channels. For psychoanalysts, time is a power to be acquired, a tool to be used. Time is never dealt with explicitly as an issue or problem; our acquisition of time is parallel to our integration into society. And yet, both clinical and theoretical psychoanalysis constantly make use of concepts referring to aspects of temporality. Certainly, this temporality bears no relation to objective time, nor does it concern the subjective time of "lived experiences." Temporality so understood has a special dimension that in fact defines the field of psychoanalysis. Time is understood in its internal genesis; it is someone's time, of course, but it can only be perceived by someone else. This particular time—which may properly be called trans-

phenomenal—is implied in many psychoanalytic concepts; its special status should not be underestimated.

The Unconscious Wish and the Superego: Their Perennial Complementarity

Two major psychoanalytic concepts appear to be independent of the process of temporality: the (unconscious) wish—whose extratemporal nature was emphasized by Freud—and the (equally unconscious) superego which, like the wish, cannot by itself bring about any sort of change. To say that the wish endures in the unconscious, that it persists outside time, can only mean that it is an eternally active present and that, by nature, it can never be fulfilled. The wish is meant to remain a simple wish. It cannot single-handedly create time. The wish is not even conceivable on its own. And if the wish is necessarily shielded from fulfillment, it must also imply an intrinsic obstacle that keeps it simultaneously active and unfulfilled. Such in fact is the function of the superego as a complement to the wish. Because they arise together, it is correct to say: to every wish, its superego.³ The specific and respective contents of each are utterly inseparable.

“Ego” and Reality

The unconscious wish—in fact, nothing but eternal hope—and its superego, the eternal obstacle, did not come about through a blockage or static opposition. Instead, they are contemporaneous with the activity of an ego that is symbolic as regards the wish. While creating itself, the ego also created the temporal road between want and fulfillment. In relation to its unconscious counterpart, the ego contrives detours, differrals

[*diffèrements*], and displacements.⁴ It possesses a correlate in the outside world, the reality referred to by psychoanalysts: the sum total of the paths and obstacles the ego has acquired as its own knowledge. The temporal structure of reality thus faithfully corresponds to the structure of the ego (see S. Ferenczi, “Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality,” *First Contributions to Psychoanalysis*, London: Hogarth Press, 1952).

The Disappointment of the Unconscious Wish Is the Foundation of the Creation of Time

This brief descriptive overview is still inadequate to clarify the problem at hand: the genesis of time in the psychoanalytic sense. We have not yet considered the truly genetic aspect of the functional linkages within the system, id-superego-ego, and reality, its correlative. What would happen if a disturbance—we shall call it “affection”—for example, an insurmountable prohibition, were to arise within this triangular function? The ego’s own hopes as well as the desire that the prohibition be lifted will undergo repression and will thereby enlarge the realm of the id and the scope of the superego. Due to the principle of “the return of the repressed,” a new form of the ego will take the place of the old one and thereby transform its correlative reality. (The “regressive” return of the repressed, a characteristic of neurotic symptoms, is of no concern to us here.)

Leaving aside pathogenic and regressive repression, we are concerned here with the construction of the new ego. At first, the passivity of the affection will be assimilated (egoized) in a symbolizing operation—identification: I turn myself symbolically into that which I have undergone. In other words, the affection takes on the quality of being potential through the

subject's ability to anticipate it. Thus develops an autonomous ego, distinct from and always one step ahead of the affection. The result of this identification is then "projected" into the "outside world" or, to put it in more rigorous terms, is intentionally related to future passivities. From now on, I know how to apprehend them, I know how to create "units of meaning" out of them. "I myself" is now a means of apprehending the "Other myself"; affections are either anticipated or recognized as being the outward representatives of the superego. No longer identical to the affection itself, the dialectic of identification now proceeds in relation to consciously intended entities that function henceforth as the acknowledged sources of identifications. And since the affection comes about inevitably in a "wishful setting" (some wish is "always already there"), new representatives of the superego are not understood merely as necessary stages of the ego, but also as obstacles to repressed desires or unconscious wishes. Given that the ego also symbolizes the obstacle from which it emerges, and that every one of its acts is also the negation of an unconscious wish, the fulfillment the ego may provide is necessarily tinged with dissatisfaction. Such is the ego's fundamental ambiguity. This observation is crucial: if the fulfillment of the ego's every desire entails the disappointment of an underlying unconscious wish, if what comes is always "something other" than what is expected in one's heart of hearts, the present cannot solidify into a definitive accomplishment.⁵ It must slide implacably toward another present, itself, of course, tinged with the same inherent ambiguity. The ego, apprised of a world, conquers its own unity through successive repressions and carries within it their imprints. Through the activity of his ego, man implicitly conveys the history of his repressions. This is also true of literary or artistic creations; their unity points to a fictitious ego, itself

authenticated by its unconscious obverse symbolized in the work of art, linguistic or otherwise.

The Creation of Time: An Innate Necessity

These remarks, though incomplete, do make one point clear. The creation of time [*temporalisation*], understood as both the genesis and the operation of the ego, cannot be described without the Freudian concept of the unconscious. All creations of genuine temporality—the result of actual conflicts—entail a repression, just as every temporal operation, functioning by the repetition of this creation, specifies this same repression. Man needs repression to such a degree that a complete lack of repressing affections drives him to fabricate them. We cannot live without repressive affections (whatever they may be); they are nourishment for the superego, a means of keeping desire alive.

What is the basis of this specifically human need to keep desire alive and to dupe it by exclusively symbolic satisfactions? The question concerns the very reasons for the creation of time. Its answer is to be sought in the area where psychoanalysis has from the start located the problem: in the child's sexual immaturity. The child's present is not limited to the history of its genesis and cannot be grasped fully without considering the demands of a future the child is unwittingly preparing. The specificity of childhood resides in its prospective nature. To oversimplify a complex thought, one could say that the true foundation of the creation of time is bound up with the inescapable conflict of immaturity thrusting the subject from one stage of development to another. At each stage, a form of satisfaction is repressed for the sake of another, which is at once new and symbolic of the preceding one. Concomitantly, new obstacle-objects are being internalized through symbolic identifications:

The ego's range is being progressively enlarged. "There is," "they me," "it me":—these diverse pre-intentional forms of affection are not simply received but converted by acts of symbolizing identification into corresponding functions of "I myself," that is, into functions of the ego. In this respect, inserting a past or future affection into the present coincides with the transformation of passivity into reflexivity by way of symbolizing the repressed. Maturation renders archaic desires invalid and establishes, according to its own awakening needs, the obstacle-objects and repressions appropriate for any given stage. If at any time the child is deprived of the relevant representations of the superego, the "I myself" function will suffer a lack. The repercussions will be recorded in the child's subsequent approach to the creation of time. The absence of affection is particularly traumatic to prospectivity. In becoming obsolete, the ego of each stage is repressed, as it were, by maturation itself (this being the source of unconscious wishes) and gives way to symbolic satisfactions in the various forms of [the reflexive] "I myself." (This applies to the sublimatory repression that creates the ego and not to the pathogenic repressions resulting from affections that are inappropriate at a particular moment of maturation.) It is understandable, then, why the accomplishment of an unconscious wish leads to the demise of the corresponding stage of the ego [see the analysis of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*]. Similarly, if an appropriate representative of the superego is not available at the right moment of maturation, the child has to invent it. To conclude this paragraph, we shall posit the following: the necessary dissatisfaction of unconscious wishes and its consequence, the triangular articulation of time, as well as symbolization—the a priori condition of temporal genesis—are founded upon the prospective nature of maturational affections. The domain of static apriorism thus no

longer encompasses temporality itself, only a certain level of its genesis, for example, maturation. The result of this reasoning is the discovery of an infinite variety of qualitative temporal structures that stand for levels of maturation grappling with specific affections.

The Work of Art and Its Unconscious Are the Realm of Genetic Criticism

The foregoing reflections may also be expressed as the symbolic passage from one stage to another, which serves as a paradigm for all subsequent symbolizations and time creations. The symbolizing and temporalizing activity of the adult merely renders explicit the latent temporality of his maturation and follows the concrete a priori patterns elaborated during his early conflicts.

These a priori patterns are not only specific and unique; they also lay claim to universal validity. A temporal structure, conveyed through acts, words, or a work of art, speaks to all by revealing its genetic depth. At the core of this universality lies the fact that every human being uses similar instruments of maturation and that these similarities also reflect a common store of original affections rehearsed in our individual childhoods. This is one reason why *empathy* [*Einfühlung*], in the genetic and psychoanalytic sense, is not mere projection but rather a form of knowledge open to comparison. This is also why there can be criteria, however intuitive they may be, for distinguishing between a genuine work of art and an empty simulacrum. At this point it is also obvious that only a rigorous psychoanalysis of individual works can provide an adequate understanding of the unique nature of art.

The certainty of static essences, still basically naive (in the

etymological sense of *nativus*, innate) becomes the generative certainty of transitions and mutations. This is the only way to gain access to pathological forms of the ego and the only means to adequately articulate the egos recorded in works of art. This in no way implies that in order to understand a work we should reconstruct its author's past. That is, in fact, one of the dead ends of genetic criticism. A work of art is an autonomous being insofar as it conveys a self-sufficient ego. According to what has just been said, the ego includes a bipolar unconscious (the wish and the superego) and, in the case of a work of art, the ego also denotes its own genesis as part of the fictional fabric of the work itself. The work of art is an original and symbolic form of coming to terms with a fictitious conflict between an id and a superego, themselves the timeless products of an equally fictitious genesis. The aim of psychoanalytic criticism is not the reconstruction of the past—what could be meant by the past of the *Jeune Parque* or of a Brandenburg Concerto?—but the genetic unraveling of the unconscious (the id and the superego) belonging to the specific ego that inhabits a work of art.

Sketching the Psychoanalysis of a Simple Rhythm: Goethe's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*

The ideas discussed above seem indispensable if we are to study the aesthetic creation of time with any real hope of success. Applying what has been learned so far to the entire domain of aesthetic creation would be the work of a lifetime. Even by limiting our scope to the problem of rhythm, indeed to prosodic rhythms exclusively, the field of inquiry remains vast. Our only recourse is to suggest a methodology through some examples.

Here is a simple rhythm. Following a first occurrence, there

is a second one, less intense, less long. Something like a subsiding and a restful abatement is produced. When the two rhythms recur unchanged, I control the laws of my anticipation: strong beat—weak beat, strong beat—weak beat (i.e., the double trochee of traditional metrics). The first and second time are not the same, however; the second time means the fulfillment of my expectations and legitimizes them retroactively. For this reason, the second weak beat gives a greater sense of relief than the first. And now? Well, now I am not simply going to anticipate the next trochee but the next pair of trochees; in other words, I am looking forward to the alternation of expectation and fulfillment, for example, to a double pair of trochees. When this comes to pass, the new series, in fulfilling my doubly compounded expectations, is even more pacifying than the sequence it repeats. The new feature will, of course, constitute a new form of affection and, from now on, I will anticipate the compounded repetition of two pairs of trochees. The eighth will mark, therefore, a threefold easing of tension, and the sixteenth beat, by virtue of its value of fourfold confirmation, will bring ultimate serenity⁶ (see Fig. 1).

--/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/---/

Fig. 1

Any effort beyond this to stand back from any further easing of tension proves futile. Nothing could ever take me by surprise, I am quite certain of that. I can slide from wakefulness into sleep, from the anticipation of reality into dreamlike hallucination. My wishes are now free to seek paths of satisfaction in the realm of the imaginary (cf. the concept of "topographical repression"), unimpeded as they are by the threat of unexpected encounters.

Such is the meaning of a sequence of sixteen trochees if considered exemplary. There is another, even deeper meaning. Beyond stating the reality of the symbolic genesis of time, the meaning also specifies what is being overcome in the ego's effort to establish temporal structures in the face of their objective absence. The meaning intended in this fundamental rhythm, the repetition of trochees, is to be found in the most primitive temporal structure man can experience, the connection of tension with the easing of tension, of an appetite with its satisfaction. There is no better illustration of the primordial structure of the creation of time than a cadence divided into strong and weak beats, a figure for sucking the breast, the child's first relational act. The organization of time into parity and into multiples of the same parity is meant to deny symbolically the wish to be as easily satisfied as once upon a time, in a first victory over postnatal reality. It will be apparent, however, that the negation of this wish is only partially successful since, with the elimination of unforeseen accidents, the ego assumes complete mastery over both the wish and reality. Though the ego may thus sink into its dreams, the superego is no less effective in guaranteeing their nonfulfillment. The wish cannot be acted upon; it will continue to be symbolized within a dormant ego.

Let us now see in what way poetry makes use of a similar symbolic dramatization of a conflict among the psychic agencies. The basic rhythm we have studied is used by the first four lines of a poem that expresses quite specifically the affective areas under examination: a reign of magical and hallucinatory omnipotence. The poem is Goethe's well-known *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Here is the first stanza with its meter written out along with an improvised translation.

Hat der alte Hexenmeister	--/--//--/--	(a ¹)
Sich doch einmal wegbegeben	--/--//--/--	(b ¹)
Und nun sollen seine Geister	--/--//--/--	(a ²)
Auch nach meinem Willen leben.	--/--//--/--	(b ²)
Seine Wort' und Werke	--/--/--	(c)
Merkt' ich und den Brauch,	--/--/--	(d)
Und mit Geistesstärke	--/--/--	(c)
Tu' ich Wunder auch.	--/--/--	(d)
"Walle, Walle,	--/--	(e)
Manche Strecke,	--/--	(f)
Dass zum Zwecke	--/--	(f)
Wasser fliesse	--/--	(g)
Und mit reichem	--/--	(x)
Vollem Schwalle	--/--	(e)
Zu dem Bade	--/--	(x)
Sich ergiesse."	--/--	(g)

[Gone for once the old bewitcher
 Finally the way is open!
 Here and now through will and vigor
 Shall I wake his spirits pliant.
 Every word and wily/Craft I saw it all.
 And with staunchness mighty/Magic works for all.
 Stream and simmer/Reaches widen,
 See the willing/Water flow(ing)
 And its richest/Fullest torrent
 In the bathtub/(Surging racing) Surge and race.]⁷

This rhythm, which could easily be a lullaby, punctuates the monologue of an adolescent who has just been freed from the oppressive presence of an omnipotent master. The content of the poem tells us that in this case the rhythm is not meant to represent the innocent reign of an infant or a dreamer's hallucinations but, instead, the dream-like character of an action actually being carried out: the progressive accomplishment of

an infantile desire for omnipotence. The reader is soon seized with apprehension as he sees a desire, usually destined for unconsciousness and symbolization, being unleashed. We sense a disaster straightaway. The presentiment is intensified by an intuitively perceived discrepancy between the rhythm and the rhyme scheme. This kind of rhythmic structure would require couplets and pairs of couplets, confirming at the right time the fact that satisfactions arrive on schedule. Yet, the first four lines are punctuated by alternate rhymes. They create an incongruous repetition of a^1 in a^2 , at a moment of transition toward a fourfold parity initially confirmed by b^1 . The poem unobtrusively represents the sly maneuvers lurking beneath the spellbinding joy that led to the theft of the magic formula. At the same time, the alternately paired rhymes (occurring regularly between a fourfold double terminus [b^1] and a twice fourfold double terminus [b^2]) indicate that the long plotted design is about to materialize.

The reader may wish to pursue the analysis of the second set of four lines on his own. Let us note simply that the suppression of the termini (this time they are uneven in number and therefore disquieting) represents a transition from the magical world of no surprises in the first quatrain to a world that offers no resistance to being manipulated "at will." The rhyme says "We are dreaming," while the content states "The dream is being acted upon." Our apprehension can only increase.

The poem continues in the same rhythmic pattern for six additional stanzas and brings forth a great variety of semantic manifestations. And yet, no matter how diverse its representations may be, the same affective area continues to be displayed throughout. The multivalence of rhythm coincides with the plurivalence of the affect itself.

The rhythmic pattern of Goethe's first stanza produces in the

reader the fundamental affect of the entire poem. Like a master key, it basically fits all manner of emotional and representative variants that may be evoked by the vicissitudes of the plot.

It should be clear that this affect has no existence whatever outside the poem; it is neither a copy nor an expression of something else apart from itself. The affect is pure fiction, as are its four transcendental poles [id—superego—ego and its correlative reality]. The poem is exemplary of the unique interdependence of these four poles. Without such interdependence there is no poem at all.

The obligatory nature of this interdependence can be tested at any time with the aid of fictitious variations, a method familiar to true translators of poetry. An example: Were we to alter the nature of a single terminus in the aforementioned rhythm, our entire analysis would instantly lose its validity. Thus, in the improvised translation of the magic formula, the fourth and eighth lines have become masculine, that is, in the present context they have become catalectic through the suppression of one syllable each. This incident, occurring to a fourfold double trochee, for example, to the site of a thrice-repeated satisfaction, uses a propitious moment of euphoria to attract to itself the remnants of wakeful attention and to force itself with gentle determination upon the moment of twice fourfold repetition.

The monotonous and hypnotic murmur of the original rhythm, which tended to neutralize the resistance of the "spirits," has now been turned into a distinctly articulated command to entities already brought under control. The variant is perhaps only a minor betrayal. But it does add a slightly different nuance in asserting implicitly that the "spirits" are immediately disarmed. The apprentice's audacity is thereby transformed, admittedly only in the rhythm, into the innocent

play of a child unaware of any danger. This stands in sharp contrast to the sly maneuvers analyzed above. Furthermore, the child acts on his wish by playing and without actually satisfying it. *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* has something else in mind: a concerted action against the superego leading, in the end, to an inherent reproof. In addition to the risks and damages incurred, the apprentice inevitably castrates himself by forgetting the final magic formula. The fictitious variation concerning a single rhythmic element produces a shift that is difficult to reconcile with the poem's overall universe, even though it may at first have seemed suitable.

All of this is meant to demonstrate that, on the one hand, a minute variation in the rhythm leads to implicit incompatibilities with repercussions for the unity of the entire work and that, on the other hand, the most subtle nuances are accessible to psychoanalytic interpretations. Needless to say, far from being limited to the study of rhythm, this type of analysis concerns all the expressive and material aspects of a poem and of a work of art in general.

Rhythm, Ego, and the Unconscious in Poe's *The Raven*

Let us think about a variant of the preceding rhythm in the extraordinarily musical phrasing of Poe's *Raven*. Here is the first stanza along with a quick homeo-rhythmic translation.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door,
Only this and nothing more."

----- (a ¹)	----- (a ²)
----- (x)	----- (b ¹)
----- (c ¹)	----- (c ²)
----- (c ³)	----- (b ²)
----- (x)	----- (b ³)
	----- (b ⁴)

L'heure d'une minuit sourde, lorsque, l'âme lasse et lourde,
J'eus fouillé dans maint bizarre et vieux volume aux morts trésors,
Tandis que je songe, inerte, brusquement se fait un heurt,
On eût dit: quelqu'un qui heurte, heurterait à l'huis dehors.
"C'est quelque hôte qui—soufflé—je—heurte à peine à l'huis
dehors,
Oui, le reste est sans rapport."⁸

We shall unfold this rhythm in the same way as the first four lines of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* with one modification: the unexpected suppression of the final sixteenth weak beat. We already know that this beat would simultaneously satisfy four levels of parallel expectations: the simple repetition of the trochee, then of two trochees, then the repetition of the twofold compound and, finally, the repetition of all of the first four compounded trochees. The complexity of this expectation pushes to the limit our ability to create structure within monotony. Once this level of expectation is fulfilled, it gradually disintegrates. Through an additional phonetic reminder at the crucial moment, the double rhymes (a¹, a²) confirmed and underlined the accuracy of our anticipation. Toward the end of the second line we feel slowly overcome by drowsiness. This is when the incident occurs. Its immediate effect is to jolt us awake. But there is more: in suppressing the expected rhyme [b¹] as well as its retroactive reference to an inductive rhyme (x), the incident suggests that, while I was dozing, something developed behind my back. And yet, after the incident the

rhythm resumes its progression to a fourfold compounded finish [c^2]. Was it just nothing a second ago? We can expect to relax once more. To be quite convinced of it, the rhymes (c^1 , c^2) are reinforced by an additional one at the appropriate moment (c^2). This time, we can be certain that this gentle rocking will land us safe and sound. A dashed hope! After this preparation for sleep the incident occurs again, the same as before and underlined by the identical rhyme (b^2). We do recognize it, of course, but could not have anticipated it at a distance of sixteen feet. Perhaps it is all part of a rule we have not yet grasped. In any case, there is no more sleeping. Let us continue anyhow. This time the incident (b^3) strikes before it is due, at the end of a quadruple trochee that would be expected to mark a point on the way to ultimate appeasement. No question about it, it insists, it is coming closer. And now, what is going to happen? I have not had a moment to breathe, and it comes on to destroy me (b^4).

The rhythm of the first stanza dramatizes in miniature certain aspects of the poem's general affective movement: reiterated attempts to fall asleep, waking with a start and, in the end, the victory of an inexorable reality. This very general meaning of the rhythm is filled with more specific significance through the sense given it by the text. The exquisite skill of the poet is thus revealed. Consider the story in the first stanza. One would have expected a coincidence between the rhythmic incidents and the narrated event: someone is rapping at the door. Yet, something altogether different happens on the level of semantic and rhythmic parallelism. The first rhythmic incident appears arbitrary, whereas the semantic incident (someone is knocking) takes place in a rhythmic sequence free of incidents and representing drowsiness. The rhythmic incidents occurring in quick succession emerge later and are at odds with the

story, which, at that point, speaks of reassurance. Now, the discord between meaning and rhythm is precisely what is so eminently exemplary. Of what? Of the fact that the reality breaking in upon the dream is not an external event but a harrowing wish whose specter reaches consciousness in the form of hallucinatory representations. The exemplary creation here resides in the fact that one and the same rhythm underlies both the abrupt rise of anxiety and the increasingly tense refusal to submit to it. In the story, an attempt is made to reassure oneself; in the rhythm, mounting anxiety. All the rhythm says is: a troubling obstacle is upsetting sleep. The discrepancy between the rhythm and the plot adds: there is anxiety, something like an affect of insomnia along with the projection of anguish-desire kept in check by a return to wakefulness. From the first stanza on, we are plunged into a nightmare.

Up to now, we have moved on a fairly superficial plane of analysis. Certainly, we have discerned the presence of some unconscious wish whose content harrows the ego. Can this content be reached while sticking exclusively to the rhythm? It may be helpful to recall that the origin of the wish resides in maturational transitions—the paradigm of subsequent symbolizations—and that the wish always lags behind its symbolic metamorphoses, in this particular case, behind the structure of rhythm. We can glean useful guidance from the original sense of catalectic incidents if we regard them as the body's device used to "introject" or symbolize an affection. Inasmuch as rhythm is the resolution of a conflict, it cannot be considered as something one passively endures but rather the active product of an already existing bodily function. Thus, the catalectic incident is nothing other than a closing or a close [*clausule*]. This closing occurs after the ultimate attempt to absorb in one temporal organization a succession of sixteen feet. It is like a

wide open orifice—one can hardly escape the comparison—ready to engulf them all (see Fig. 1 above). Close scrutiny shows that the subsequent succession of clausulas [the catalectic trochees b^1 , b^2 , b^3 , b^4 , respectively] corresponds quite precisely to a peristaltic movement of incorporation—a maximum opening at first, then its repetition, and, once the prey is ingested, a gradual contraction to push it further inward, then, finally a definitive closure. This symbolic and unconscious reference to the child's body can lay claim to the same level of rigor as the representation of the nightmare. At this juncture, we may conclude that the exemplary nightmare is tied in an exemplary fashion to the anxiety of exemplary incorporation. Can we carry the analysis any further? First of all, the incorporation is completed in spite of apparent anxiety, a fact that indicates the force of the wish. It also indicates the ego's wily ability to realize the wish by symbolizing it through trickery and legerdemain. If you reread the first stanza, you will surely feel this enigmatic mixture of gloom and delight so characteristic of many of Poe's works. The skillfully represented "nightmare" is nothing but subterfuge, a crafty show for the superego. One question remains. Why is the wish so exceptionally intense? Clearly, an intense desire for incorporation corresponds to a painful sense of emptiness. Clinical psychoanalysis has rendered explicit the meaning of this desire by linking it to the early loss of a loved one. It is as if the child thought: "I have to put him back into my own body so that I am sure to have him when I want him." In such cases, the child gives up its excrement with the fear of becoming incomplete and only does so on account of external and organic pressures. The fantasy of reincorporation inevitably implies the same anxieties as the retention itself.

This is what explains the poem's Janus-like duplicity: the

loss of the loved one is its manifest content, the loved one's incorporation its latent sense. Just let the poem try to lure us into an insomniac fit of anguish. We know that we are faced with a necrophile who plays at dissembling. And this game is all important to him. The authenticity of this very need to mystify touches us to the depths of our soul.

It is interesting to see the way in which the duplicity of the rhythm is further elaborated in the story. A raven of the days of yore flutters in through the wide open door, a messenger of the beloved forever gone, a bird uttering its own ominously significant name: Nevermore. You will see her nevermore, I am despair, I will leave you nevermore. The beloved's failure to return and the narrator's despair cover up the accomplishment of the wish: the excremental raven is ushered into the room in order to remain there and, in the end, to pledge eternal loyalty. Under the cunning guise of misery and despair, the beloved, though lost and gone away, is reincorporated.

Having carried the analysis to the limit, let us restate that *The Raven's* rhythm is exemplary of all these levels conjointly. The ego the poem mediates is authenticated by the necessary connection of its four poles. Should an incompatibility arise, the exemplary nature of the poem would vanish and leave behind mere artifice devoid of meaning.

Such is this extraordinary poem and we need not be concerned with the psychology of its real author. Nevertheless, every work of art possesses a dimension that situates it in relation to its fictitious author. We can now answer the ultimate questions: What kind of author is induced by the poem? What did it mean for him to have created it? No doubt, it meant the creation of an indestructible, magical, and definitive object that, no matter how often it is reread, invariably delivers the same message of fidelity, always the same, perfect, and

eternal "Nevermore," the eternal "I will leave you nevermore" of a happiness recovered in art, grim and ungainly *Raven*, forever deadly and forever vivifying. The exceptional quality of this masterpiece is manifested in that its plot includes the poem's own exemplary reason for being.

Conclusion

Time did not allow us to pursue our reflections any further. The following points, however, seem vital: (1) the unconscious of a work of art appears indispensable to its aesthetic study; (2) a work of art must be considered a symptom in the Freudian sense, a symptom of itself, being both self-sufficient and necessary for epitomizing the unity of the psyche's four poles: the Wish and its Superego, the Ego and its Reality; and (3) an inauthentic work has no unconscious. It is not the resolution of any inherent problem. It is merely parrotry and antics unless it exploits the very procedures of trickery and fascination.

The way has been opened for elaborating the precise methodology of a psychoanalytic aesthetics in order to obtain a theoretical tool for the rigorous study of art forms. For the moment, there is only the pledge that it is possible, but to reject this out of hand is like letting oneself die of thirst beside a well.

— TRANSLATED BY NICHOLAS T. RAND

*Paradeictic: Translation,
Psychoanalysis, and the Work
of Art in the Writings of
Nicolas Abraham*

CHAPTER 4

1. Abraham's *sémantopoiésis* and *sémantopoiétique* (translated "semantopoiésis" and "semantopoietic") presumably make reference to Paul Valéry's *poïétique*, which Valéry characterizes as "the exploration of the domain of the creative spirit," the examination of "the action that makes" rather than "the thing made" (Paul Valéry, *Oeuvres* [Paris: Gallimard, 1957], 1:1342–44).

2. This gerund construction, *intentionnalité symbolisante*, parallels those of "imaging consciousness" and "rhythmizing intentionality" above.

CHAPTER 5

1. "Fabulation" translates *affabulation*: "the arrangement of the events constituting the framework of a novel or work of imagination" (*Le Grand Robert de la langue française*).

2. "Statics" and "dynamics" refer to two branches of physics, the first dealing with "the action of forces in producing equilibrium or relative rest," the second with "the action of force in producing or varying motion" (*Oxford English Dictionary*).

Rhythmizing Consciousness

CHAPTER A

1. On this Husserlian use of "evidence," see note 2 to the Preface.

2. "Rhythmizing" translates Abraham's unusual *rythmisante*—the gerund of the verb *rythmer* ("to give rhythm to"), used as an adjective. See 2.2–2.4.

3. On "intentionality" and "to intend" see note 1 to Chapter 1.

4. On my translation of *viser* as "to sight," see note 1 to Chapter 1.

5. According to others, the thesis (lowering the foot) was the strong beat, and the arsis (raising the foot), the weak beat.—Au.

6. Emergence translates *émergence*. The French word, like the English one, ordinarily designates the emerging itself rather than what emerges; in this text, therefore, it enacts Abraham's refusal to privilege the rhythm-object.

7. From this point of view, there is no essential difference between perceived objects that are encountered in the world and have not yet become rhythms, and perceived objects that we have generated ourselves.—Au.

8. We will study the principles of this motivation below (A.5–C.1).—Au.

9. "Alien" translates *aliéné*. This word means both "lunatic" and, literally (as the past participle of the verb *aliéner*), "alienated"; Abraham's quotation marks, both here and around *aliénation*, serve to emphasize this double meaning.

10. I have translated Abraham's coinage *récurrentiel* as "recurrential," distinguishing it from *récurrent*, which is translated as "recurrent."

11. On the phenomenological terms "retention" and "protention" see 5.2.

12. We will situate gradational rhythms in B.3.—Au.

CHAPTER B

1. "Teleutē" renders Abraham's *téleutē*, which is itself a transliteration of the Greek τελευτή, meaning ending, completion, close. "Prosteleutē" (*prostéleutē*) prepends to this the prefix, προσ, meaning a motion toward, a being beside, a connection and engagement with. "Terminary" (intra-terminary, extra-terminary) translates *terminaire* (*intra-terminaire*, *extra-terminaire*), following Abraham's nonstandard use of the word as the adjectival derivation of *terme* (term).

2. We have been unable to locate the plates in question here and later in the text.—Fr. eds.

3. Throughout this section, "dynamics" translates *intensité(s)*; it must, therefore, be understood in its musical sense as referring to the relative volume of sound.

4. "Alter-valent" translates Abraham's *altéro-valentes*, clearly meant as a logical, etymological contrary to equi-valent.

5. *Raison* means not only "reason," as I have translated it, but also "ratio." Thus, in what may be an operative metaphor here, the "common ratio" of a series is called its *raison*.

is an element of tension. . . . You have used Freud's entire topography, the [concept of] psychic agency, the interplay of the psychic agencies—you are in a position to speak about desire and obstacle in a completely formalized manner . . . for you have discovered both the desire and the obstacle in connection with a purified problem, the problem of time, that is, rhythm" (*Art et psychanalyse* [The Hague: Mouton, 1968], 68).

2. Abraham's examples are drawn from classical metrics; the value ascribed to iambs later in the paragraph refers to Greco-Roman poetic conventions.—Trans.

3. The concept of superego is used here in the most general sense and also includes pregenital formations.

4. The concept of *différent* subsumes both "difference" and "deferment," hence the neologism "differal." This translation of *différent* could also inform more contemporary attempts to render into English J. Derrida's concept of *différance*.—Trans.

5. With necessary adjustments, this also holds true for the structure of fear.

6. The position of 2n moments is in general privileged, at least within limits. The thirty-second weak beat, for example, no longer appears as corresponding to the sixteenth. The structures disintegrate beyond the twenty-fourth beat, unless they are kept alive through rhyming devices or by rhythmic incidents.

7. The English version of the Goethe stanza reflects the deliberate truncation of the final syllable in lines 12 and 16 of Abraham's French text and reinstates Goethe's meter in parentheses.—Trans.

8. The remainder of "The Raven" was translated into French by N. Rand in accordance with the principles of interpretation outlined here and appeared in *Bloc-Notes de la psychanalyse*, 3 (Fall 1983).—Trans.

Paradeictic

1. The present essay is a modified English version of our postscript to the French edition of *Rythmes*: it includes many quotations from Abraham's unpublished work for which we cannot provide page references.

2. See Abraham's *Jonas*, which is the translation into French verse, along with an extensive psychoanalytic interpretation, of the *Book of Jonah* by the twentieth-century Hungarian poet Mihaly Babits. Abraham also translated poems by Goethe, Hölderlin, Coleridge, Poe, and Hopkins, in addition to the work of several Hungarian poets. A posthumous edition, entitled *Poésies mimésis*, is planned.

3. The asterisks are occasioned by the system of cross-references used in the *Glossary*. A separate entry is devoted to the terms accompanied by an asterisk.

4. In the *Glossary*, the various types of paradeictic works were to be classified depending on whether the "model" referred to a so-called poem-object or not: Parapoetic Transitive Attitudes and Reflexive Intransitive Poetic Attitudes.