

# Doubling and Redoubling Bergman: Notes on the Dialectic of Disgrace and Disappearance

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper plots the interrelations of some of the oppositions pervading the work of Ingmar Bergman, particularly ones between Romanticism and Expressionism, a Scandinavian cinema and a German one identified with the natural and the stylized respectively, art cinema and traditional art, masculine and feminine, and face and mask. In each case, selecting one pole nevertheless leaves the other in play. The works' unsettled status reflects their positioning between an art cinema that risks alienating audiences, and a tradition threatened by inauthenticity. Bergman's concern with the dangers of the self's visibility correlates with themes of shaming and with the difficulties of the actor's status, which accentuate those of a modernity characterised by mobility. One consequence, a simultaneously real and metaphorical feminization of the male artistic self, entails a dual conceptualization of disappearance, which oscillates between the positive and the negative. Identity becomes always double, each face a mask, and vice versa.

**RÉSUMÉ:** Cet essai retrace les interrelations entre certaines oppositions imprégnant l'oeuvre d'Ingmar Bergman, plus précisément entre le romantisme et l'expressionnisme, un cinéma scandinave dit «naturel» et un cinéma allemand stylisé, l'art cinématographique et l'art traditionnel, le masculin et le féminin, le visage et le masque. Le statut indéterminé de l'oeuvre reflète leur position entre un cinéma d'art risquant d'éloigner son public, et une tradition menacée par l'inauthenticité. Le souci de Bergman face aux dangers de l'exposition du soi correspond aux thèmes de la honte et aux difficultés qu'amène le statut de l'acteur, accentuant ainsi les dangers d'une modernité caractérisée par la mobilité. Une conséquence, une féminisation à la fois réelle et métaphorique du moi artistique masculin, implique une double conceptualisation de la disparition, oscillant entre le positif et le négatif. L'identité se dédouble toujours, chacun fait face à un masque, et vice et versa.

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his paper discusses some of the oppositions and distinctions often seen as structuring the work of Ingmar Bergman. That work dissolves those oppositions, which include ones of tradition and modernity, film and literature, realism and fantasy, and gender. The distinctions, derived from intellectual or artistic history, suffer a similar confounding, the primary ones considered here being those between Romanticism and Expressionism, and Scandinavian and German art. (At least one distinction may also be conceived oppositionally, Scandinavian cinema having had from its inception an association with shooting in natural settings, and German Expressionism with sets.) In all cases, be it a matter of oppositions or distinctions, I would argue that the richness and dialectical complexity of his work, places him fruitfully on both sides. Bergman, therefore, is always double. Consequently, my discussion is framed primarily in relation to two distinct works within which both Romantic and Expressionist influences are in play, though the former dominates the earlier film, *Summer Interlude* [*Sommarlek*]<sup>1</sup>, and the latter is most explicit in the other, *Sawdust and Tinsel* [*Gycklarnas afton*]. I will also consider some other films incidentally, particularly *Hour of the Wolf* [*Vargtimmen*] and *To Joy* [*Till glädje*]. First, however, I will posit a general framework focussed primarily on issues of tradition and modernity.

## Bergman and the idea of art cinema

If art cinema can be defined as suspended between the identification that dominates mainstream American cinema and the radical self-reference of modernism (Bordwell), the work of Bergman up to the early 1960s could well have furnished Pier Paolo Pasolini with a proof-text for his 1964 statement that art cinema had concentrated on narrative, rather than the more radical and poetic “free indirect subjectivity” he would discern in Antonioni’s *Red Desert* [*Il deserto rosso*] (Pasolini 1976). Ironically, given his earlier work’s apparent allegiance to the earlier tradition of narrative-based art cinema, shortly after Pasolini’s essay Bergman would achieve an obvious, if apparently brief, breakthrough to such problematic subjectivity in *Persona*. Nevertheless, to some extent the generalization seems to hold for the films that precede and follow that stupendous work, which is linked to its predecessors and successors by its concentration on the image of the artist. (The extent to which even those works challenge the generalization will be considered shortly.) Bergman’s work and self-image see-saw between different conceptions of himself as artist: someone who may be a mountebank, because specializing in illusion, but also aspiring—according to a statement that became notorious—to resemble the artisans working anonymously on Chartres cathedral. In an interview for *Cahiers du cinéma* Bergman quoted Jean Anouilh’s

self-definition as an artisan, adding that this statement was made “to exorcise fear” (1967 16). It seems to be that, for Bergman, that fear comprises two anxieties about the relationship between the status of the artist and the qualities of art: if an excess of tradition may render it clichéd, inauthentic, too much modernity may lose it its audience. For Bergman, to fail to satisfy either demand is to fail as an artist. The length and tortuousness of Bergman’s maturation, the sheer extent of his juvenilia, registers the difficulty of finding ways of tying together credibly the modernist and the traditional strands, without glaring unevenness in texture and degrees of intensity. Such unevenness still menaces Bergman’s work even after the first reasonably convincing formulae began to emerge in the early 1950s. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the near-incompatibility of a traditional orientation towards wholeness and organicism with a modernistic one towards the fragmentary and the intense, the failure to unify the two strands completely is almost continual, making Beckett’s creed of art as failure one to which Bergman could subscribe also. (That failure, and the difficulty of avoiding it, is one version of the scenario of humiliation and disappearance that will be my recurrent theme.) This double-bind is why his oeuvre generates a wide variety of types of works as Protean attempts to achieve a form that would escape the dilemma, ranging from the apparently more traditional to the overtly modernist. A *Persona* may be more obviously modernist, but it is linked to the more traditional *Wild Strawberries* [*Smultronstället*], for instance through the doubling between characters or the way each begins with a dream or dream-like imagery (most obviously so in the pre-credit sequence of *Persona*). Dressed in traditionalist garb, Bergman may evoke fear, as in the autopsy sequence of *The Magician* [*Ansiktet*]; but then, like a modernist, almost self-mockingly Brechtian, he bares the terrifying machinery, showing the corpse as neither ghostly nor resurrected but still alive, along with the methods the illusionist has employed to harrow the soul of the rationalist doctor. At the same time, though, stage-managing death represents the illusionist’s attempt to control his own fear of the real, material demise of which artistic failure is only the shadow. Such fear and doubling, of course, pervade both Romanticism and Expressionism, whose see-sawing relationship is that of two key Bergman films of the early fifties, *Summer Interlude* and *Sawdust and Tinsel*. I will begin with the former, more Romantic work.

## Romanticism and Expressionism: *Summer Interlude*, Fantasy and the Real

With Expressionism, and the pre-Expressionism of Munch and Strindberg—to both of whom Bergman acknowledges debts—the real and imaginary traffic between Germany and Scandinavia becomes two-way. This movement marks

Bergman's art and life also, which rediscovers that *fin-de-siècle* moment. In *Laterna Magica* [*The Magic Lantern*], he describes his 1934 visit to Germany as a sixteen year-old exchange student in terms that leave no doubt about the influence of German culture upon him, Berlin becoming the stand-in for a city that haunted his dreams (Bergman 1988 131), while his later tax troubles with the Swedish authorities precipitated a brief exile in Munich, as if it were a home from home. Given his self-reproach over his adolescent enthusiasm for the spectacle of 'thirties Germany, and his recurrent doubts about the morality of art, one might imagine him echoing the Thomas Mann who gave the title "Brother Hitler" to an essay describing the artistic disposition as inherently suspect. Indeed, the Swede named Bergman may well have wondered if he might really have been German, or possessed a double nationality, as the name resembles German ones more than it does most Swedish ones. Meanwhile in *The Serpent's Egg* Liv Ullmann's Manuela lives in a Bergmanstrasse, while the protagonists of the early *Port of Call* [*Hamnstad*] planned to flee to Germany. In the end, of course, even Germany is only a symbol of the impossible place of refuge and disappearance: at the end of *The Serpent's Egg* we are told that Abel Rosenberg left it and vanished.

German art influences Bergman not just through the often-noted, often-mocked connection with Expressionism: the affinity extends to the German Romantics, and it may be that for Bergman Expressionism enfolds a Neo-Romanticism—as it did for Lotte Eisner. If this is so, the reason lies in the focus on the graphic, on the chiaroscuro of native Northern light and art history, in both Eisner's *Haunted Screen* and Bergman's oeuvre. Central to that Romanticism is a sense of nothingness as both promise and threat. If, in *Summer Interlude*, Marie yearns to disintegrate and vanish into nothing during a summer night, but Henrik fears nothingness, it is because ecstasy doubles as self-extinction, eros as thanatos, and imaginative self-transformation bodies forth self-extinction also. This dual reaction suggest that the transgending of autobiographical experience P. Adams Sitney discerns in a later film like *Cries and Whispers* [*Viskningar och rop*] pervades earlier ones also. Nevertheless, the difference in the two characters' reaction to that thought of nothingness suggests that attributing it to a male brings it closer to home than its ascription to a female. Entry into the consciousness of Marie would represent a doubly fantastic transformation of, and escape from, Bergman's own experience, redoubling the double who is Henrik. Its embodiment in Henrik would correspond to its really unchanged, simultaneously persistent actuality. Marie would be a dream-incarnation of living for and in an idealized art alone; Henrik's exclusion from it, meanwhile, would figure art itself as exclusion, barren life in a realm of nothing but signs. Henrik is always looking in at a primal scene which finds Uncle Erland and Marie together, for all the real impossibility of their union. (The comedy in Bergman both mocks Henrik's fear of cuckolding and reiterates it in another, major key, as Bergman's women usually mock their men, embodying and reinforcing, on another level, the castration threat their laughter

pretends is a fiction.) But, in the dream that is the work as a whole, are not Marie and Uncle Erland already united, as we learn near the start, even before the flashbacks, that she belongs to a class of women children call Aunts? Read in Freudian terms, Henrik's death would be self-willed; the actualization of fear means there is nothing left to fear, placing him out of harm's way in a manner resembling the Frost's imagined "disappearance" in the womb in *Sawdust and Tinsel* (of which more later). Alternatively (as if the scenario itself had been written by Freud), death would be a metaphorical refiguring or absorption of the castration threat. Revolving endlessly, each threat—death, or castration—disappears continually behind the other, the medieval scythe-wielding Death representing both and so being himself double.

Thus *Summer Interlude*, like almost all Bergman's best work (*Shame* [*Skammen*] and *The Magic Flute* [*Trollflöjten*] being possible exceptions), entraps viewers through a pincer movement of fantasy as realism, and vice versa, occupying a double register. The fusion appears to be rooted in personal experience. Although it may not be unusual for someone to describe his childhood as a period when "det var svårt att skilja det fantiserade från det som ansågs verkligt" [it was difficult to differentiate between what was fantasy and what was real] (1987 20; 1988 13), the interference of imagination and the objective persists well beyond that time. The following sentences, for instance, stem not from a character in *Cries and Whispers* but from Bergman's own reaction to the sight of his mother's corpse: "Jag tyckte att mor andades, att bröstet hävdes, at jag hörde en stilla andhämtning, jag tyckte att det ryckte i ögonlocken, jag tyckte at hon sov och just skulle vakna: vanans bedrägliga lek med verkligheten" [I thought that Mother was breathing, that her breast was heaving and that I could hear a quiet indrawn breath. I thought her eyelids twitched, I thought that she was asleep and just about to wake, my habitual illusory game with reality] (1987 12; 1988 7). His work does not so much combine with sovereign ease the two registers of realism and fantasy as refuse ever to separate them. Any separation is only ever apparent. This dream-like reality suggests a Lacanian-Žižekian Real of death, trauma and exclusion by the *jouissance*—though one might prefer other words, less weighted towards the simply sexual, such as "self-sufficiency" or "inscrutability"—secreted within the obdurately unreadable gaze.

The possibility of a unification of death, fantasy and the Real is most apparent in the image of which this film's narrative can be deemed the temporal declension: that of an old woman in black treading a road near Marie. The way this sequence evolves out of an apparently banal registration of a sunlit boat-trip exemplifies Bergman's ability to grip viewers with an unexpected intensity through *mise-en-scène* and surprise: the surprise of the sudden intensification of winter within a day whose bright sunlight may have tempted one to see it as non-wintery, even summery, and in any case unthreatening; the insinuation of cold and mystery in the entry of wind on the soundtrack; and the dark and unusual garb of the old

woman, whose decontextualized walk makes her a figure more allegorical than real, anticipating the better-known Death of *The Seventh Seal* [*Det sjunde inseglet*]. The sequence is, of course, a dream of death, its trees leafless, its skies bleak, allegorizing—even before the old woman’s appearance—the deadening of Marie’s own inner landscape by the contaminating touch of Henrik’s death. The old woman is both Death and the unacknowledged double of Marie herself: not just “Death and the maiden” but Death as also maiden. Its function with respect to the film’s remainder also suggests an anticipatory dark-skied doubling of the overexposed dream of Borg in *Wild Strawberries*. Death anxiety and castration anxiety intertwine and metaphorize one another to render the real fantastic and vice versa. As noted, Marie is always already Aunt, always already paired with Erland, and so Henrik’s fear is both a paranoia and an archetypal, accurate proleptic vision. The threat to love is multiform, lours and leers from one side after another. Again, this is both paranoia and lucidity. Love is menaced by time, by the imminence of winter, the emotional cold caused by devotion to art, the old woman who is another form of time (Marie’s future self in a nightmare, the two women a double exposure misleadingly split by realism)—and also, of course, by Uncle Erland, the father in disguise. (It will take *Summer with Monika* [*Sommaren med Monika*]—in this sense at least an appendix to *Summer Interlude*—to add another, more down-to-earth threat to love: impecuniousness.) All these elements are of course only illusively separate, as all overlap. The sheer illusiveness of appearance seduces: Uncle Erland is only the most obviously masked of the figures. As so often in Bergman, person after person is really persona, mask, and the powerfully overwhelming, carnally present body is also the haunting, spectral absent-presence of another. It is as if the close-up became a recurrent Bergman trope in reflection of an obsessive desire to check who it is one really has before one. The Swedish summer night becomes the most seductive, most illusory of all, looking like day. No wonder it haunts one ‘fifties Bergman work after another, until the 1960s arrive and the focus incorporates winter explicitly. No wonder Henrik dives to his death in a sea that had seemed deep enough, as all is seeming. In other words (and this is the rationale for Bergman’s continual return to artist protagonists), all is art. All is dream, artifice, metaphor, symbol, displacement, theatre, falsity, however real it may seem. Similarly, as he remarked to *Cahiers du cinéma*, film itself is a fraud, the black lines between the frames meaning that for every film that lasts an hour the spectator in fact spends twenty minutes in the total darkness that is the inner lining of light (1967 35). Since there is nowhere where an image seems more real than in the cinema, Bergman is the reverse of “literary.”

One image that itself thematizes the simultaneity of the real and the fantastic is a widely-reproduced one from near the film’s end, showing Marie’s new love David framed in her dressing-room’s doorway in the upper part of the image, and the dancing instructor made up as Coppélius from *Tales of Hoffmann* framed in a

mirror below. The doubling of David and Coppelius suggests the latter as a fantastic identity for the former. Although the one sports that blatant signifier of fantasy, the mask, and the other is framed as a reality entering the world of art, the visual echoing contaminates the two. After all, both figures may be read as puncturing Marie's solipsistic world of mourning, and the old man/young man pairing reiterates the Erland/Henrik scenario of an earlier part of the film. It is as if the recognition of their possible similarity is the necessary prelude to Marie putting both in the past. Doubling itself suggests both death and resurrection, each of which Marie is undergoing. Moreover, it is as if, Marie being older, the strength of the opposition of age and youth has faded to the point at which previous opposites can converge, enabling the work to end.

## Expressionism as dominant: *Sawdust and Tinsel*

A similar contamination of the codes associated with realistic and fantastic representation suffuses *Sawdust and Tinsel*, whose debt to Expressionism is of course more explicit still. Indeed, it may be said that whereas in *Summer Interlude* Romanticism dominates Expressionism, here the dominant is reversed. In other words: the earlier film subordinates the Expressionist elements to the sense of the shaping force of the natural world that pervades both the classic Scandinavian cinema of the early twentieth century and Romanticism; in *Sawdust and Tinsel*, however, as in German Expressionism, nature itself becomes a set. The humiliation of the clown Frost and his wife Alma near the beginning may be recounted as a real event, but its Stroheimian harsh visual contrasts and overwrought atmosphere leave the viewer stunned and harrowed, as if indeed disoriented by a nightmare that prevents one perceiving as real the reality that follows it, making one view it numbly and inattentively. Subsequently, and partly as a result of the sense of distance created by the echoes of a silent cinema aesthetic, what might seem dreamlike becomes susceptible of reclassification as a mythical sequence of events in the time before time: the primal *illud tempus* studied by Mircea Eliade (23-38). Consequently, its fantastic reality bleeds into the rest of the film, beginning with moments rendered continuous with the opening nightmare by a repetition of its percussive, would-be jaunty brass music, connoting both sexuality and derision, and a muting of natural sound—when circus director Albert and Anne walk to the theatre—and later through the reappearance of Frost, whom spectators may be tempted to classify as a dreamlike apparition, and/or dead, but who now becomes an Expressionist double of the cuckolded director, appearing after Anne's infidelity, as if through hallucination. Meanwhile, the theatre interiors are de-realised by the repeated low angles and by a dizzyingly extensive use of mirrors, which both disorient and direct the actors' faces to the audience in a manner that showcases their performances and underlines an isolation one is tempted to call

Antonioniesque. Thus the spatial set-ups involving Frans and Anne suggest that neither is really looking at the other, even when we know them to be so doing, but rather that each is using the other—in the case of Anne, really staring at a fantasy figure, a metonym of a life she dreams of having. Even the outdoors scenes feel not so much natural as allegorical, their recurrent silhouetting creating the illusion of an enormous stage which knows no sky but rather a blank backdrop from which nature has evaporated.

### *Sawdust and Tinsel* and the idea of shame

While discussing the thematic centrality of humiliation to Bergman's works, Paisley Livingston cross-references Immanuel Kant's definition of shame as occurring when one discovers that others do not see one as one believes oneself to be (53). Kant's remark suggests the particular appositeness of cinema for investigating such matters. This would render Bergman's work—despite the well-worn accusations of “literariness”—well-placed to exploit a central element of the cinematic one may even dare to designate a “specificity.” The tight fit between theme and medium extends beyond cinema's inevitable preoccupation with sight; rather, the movement between self and other is that of a cut, and the splicing together of the person and their apprehension by the other becomes a negative form of suture. Two shots echo one another dissonantly, their inversion affecting meaning as well as perspective. Unlike the suturing process so often ascribed to classical Hollywood, here there is no smoothing of transitions or implication of fullness of knowledge but rather an Eisensteinian collision of images. Indeed, Eisenstein may be conjoined with Bergman and Bertolucci in a triumvirate of anti-paternal cinematic revolt. He may also be invoked appropriately on the grounds of Bergman's fondness for privileging looking by removing or muting natural sound and subordinating it to silence, inserting into works like *Sawdust and Tinsel*, *Wild Strawberries* and *Hour of the Wolf* dream-like passages akin to quotations from silent films, and played out with unspeaking protagonists. The shifting point-of-view alluded to by Kant creates an implicit doubling, as the feeling that one is not where one thought one was (not accepted, but outcast) causes one to see—or, rather, project—oneself elsewhere. As the person in whom one expected to see one's own humanity doubled and acknowledged rejects one, a punctured unitary selfhood leaks away into a series of metaphorical equivalents, the most prominent being the mirror and the mask. The logic of such doubling is summed up in those two famous Wellesian *tours de force*—Kane's walk past double mirrors multiplying his image to infinity, and the mirror-maze finale of *The Lady from Shanghai*. It concludes in the generation of a series in which selfhood disappears, becoming literally “neither here nor there,” and hence “nowhere.” In *Sawdust and Tinsel*, Albert sees the series extend into

other metaphorical equivalents, the images of the clown and the bear. Humiliation being, as Livingston points out (53), asymmetrical, Bergman's interest in Strindbergian power games, and in Strindberg generally, follows naturally.

As defined in the cultural anthropology of Ruth Benedict,

Shame is a reaction to other people's criticism. A man is shamed either by being openly ridiculed and rejected or by fantasizing to himself that he has been made ridiculous. In either case it is a potent sanction. But it requires an audience or at least a man's fantasy of an audience. Guilt does not.  
(223)

If this is so, Bergman's heightened sense of shame may have required him to work not just in cinema, but also in theatre, where the audience is palpably present. Benedict's placement of fantasy and real events upon a single plane is also relevant, as it effaces a distinction Bergman himself dissolves too. Whatever other factors may have prompted his rejection of Lutheran Protestantism, its rootedness in guilt, rather than the more theatrical shame, was surely one.

Inasmuch as shame can be linked to a falling between identities, Bergman's performer-protagonists are particularly vulnerable to it. Erving Goffman, the pre-eminent sociologist of everyday life as presentation and performance, once remarked that "the person who falls short may everywhere find himself inadvertently trapped into making implicit identity-claims which he cannot fulfil" (107). The relevance of this to Bergman's characters lies in the implicit claims their roles make about their selfhood. Actors may think themselves safe behind the mask of a role, but the audience's very knowledge that they are players prompts a will to peer behind it, to assess the relationship between virtual appearance and actuality. The audience is most prone to react thus when the actors are travelling players, not a stable part of the community. Not only would their exposure not damage anything integral to that community: it might reinforce its cohesion by underlining the dangers of the alternative community that is the theatre troupe, whose attractions are metonyms of those of the world to which they have the keys. The community probes for disparities between mask and face to prevent the troupe member from using the fleetingness of encounter to display a seductive front; thus it can mask its sadism beneath a rhetoric of opposition to hypocrisy. The rapid venue changes experienced by Bergman's travelling players can translate into a social mobility, becoming a metaphor for modern aspirations to enhanced status; as Goffman notes, "to experience a sudden change in status, as by marriage or promotion, is to acquire a self that other individuals will not fully admit because of their lingering attachment to the old self" (106). (Is this possibly relevant also to the frequency with which Bergman moved from one life-partner to another?) That refusal of acceptance manifests itself in the determination to take the travelling players down a peg. It is after the mask's

removal that—to quote Goffman again—“the expressive facts at hand threaten or discredit the assumptions a participant finds he has projected about his identity” (107-08).

The ephemerality of such encounters and their links to ambition and false self-presentation make Bergman profoundly modern, rendering the period trappings of so many of his works the distancing devices that permit representation of a traumatic experience of modernity. “Because of possessing multiple selves the individual may find he is required both to be present and not to be present on certain occasions,” Goffman notes (110). The archetype of such an occasion is the appearance of the actor, and in particular that of the cinematic actor: not just because screen presence is famously also a physical absence (a Metzian motif found much earlier in Lukács), but because the public relentlessly tracks the stars in the hope that their passage will bless the desecularized surfaces of everyday modern life with the scattered stardust of the photogenic.

Bergman’s artists are chronic itinerants, travelling players ultimately able to stage their drama anywhere, as in *The Rite* [*Riten*]. With displacement one’s lot, one may well seek to make a virtue of it by turning it into a Protean metaphorical flight that will render the self ungraspable. This is the primary source of the dream of disappearance. In *Sawdust and Tinsel*, it is surely significant that Frost’s account of his dream sees Alma offering to make him as small as a foetus so that—as she puts it—“Då skal du få krype ind i min mave og der skal du sove rigtig godt” [you can crawl into my belly where you may sleep properly]. At this point in the dream, Frost says, “Jag blev mindre och mindre och till sist var jag bara ett litet frö och då försvann jag” [I grew smaller and smaller and, at last, I was just a little seed corn, and then I was gone] (Quoted in Gado 170). The dream of comfortable return to the point of origin secretes a wish to make a virtue of the erotic humiliation visited upon Frost. Could this be the final destination of the concealment begun when the clown first dons his make-up? The self-protective process that begins as smallness ends as a disappearance whose virtue is its readability as a form of invisibility. Shame, that ontological affliction, strikes at the heart of being, dissolving one before mocking gazes.

The fact that those gazes are inescapable indicates their origin in the self: in other words, their status as dreams, projections, mirror images, inversions. They may be conceptualised also as internalised forms of the parent. In Bergman, as in the greatest films of Bertolucci, the other whose look originates in the self is of course also a form of the double, and doubling embodies a neither-norism whose upshot is disappearance. Doubling is the lot of the performer, who is unlike others inasmuch as those others are singular; and this difference generates shame. Disappearance is only the idealized form of the death one fears: magically one embraces it, calling it disappearance, in order to control it. Simultaneously, one counters the fear of the invisibility that is death by establishing one’s visibility through a courting of shaming. Doubling and shame are thus linked, and each is

both problem and solution. In shooting the bear, Albert kills a double he does not recognize as such, for it comes in the doubly mystifying guise of a metaphor and a reality. Its masked status is part of his unconscious categorization of it as an Other whose demise he can and does survive. His action is shameful, the elimination of a helpless caged beast that seeks to suppress his own shame-ridden awareness of the extent to which he too is caged, viewed as lesser—in other words, as humans view animals. To kill the animal is to claim to be able to wake up and put behind one, like a mere dream, a past as real as the even more dreamlike opening humiliation of Frost.

In shame, inner and outer change places: others can see written on one's face the thoughts one had hoped were hidden. Self-defence may retort that these thoughts reflect not the self but another personality—a mask—, but, as noted above, the separation of face and mask creates new opportunities for humiliation. The exteriorization of the inner is a revelation of the child within the adult: one is not as mature as one seemed to be. Indeed, one's very belief that others can discern the child within and perceive one's thoughts is itself child-like, ascribing to others the omnipotence of thought one feels one possesses oneself, and reflecting one's lack of access to the form of the face that functions as an ever-present social mask. One's inner childishness becomes apparent in the same way as a dream related in company; the dream's possession of its own logic and control of signification, in spite of the conscious intentions of its dreamer, marks him with the helplessness of the child. As Veronica Vogler says to Johan in *Hour of the Wolf*: “Det nesligaste kan hända; drömmarna kan bli uppenbarade” [The worst can happen. Your dreams can be made manifest]. (In the same film, Heerbrand puts it slightly differently: “Jag tummar på själarna och vänder ut insidan” [I turn souls inside out].) The result is the derision that greets Johan, lipsticked and thus clownlike, as he prepares to make love to Veronica before his assembled demons. The artist's telling of dreams out loud becomes a strategy to control the inevitable by appointing himself its self-alienated executor, striving to avert humiliation by brandishing dreams before others, as if in the hope that their monstrous messiness will protect like a Medusa's head.

One method for rendering oneself invisible is the donning of a mask privileged by Bergman. However, although the mask may shield the face and the selfhood invested in it, its status as a face to the second power can provoke the unmasking that is synonymous with humiliation: the unmasking suffered by both Albert and Anne in *Sawdust and Tinsel*. One may wonder whether it is any accident that the Asian societies a cultural anthropologist like Ruth Benedict once described as shame-based are highly preoccupied with the loss of face, or that the actual removal of the face should be one of the darkest Bergmanian nightmares, as in *Hour of the Wolf*. The actual removal of the face literalizes the idea of “loss of face” in the manner of the dream-work Freud describes as translating word-representations into thing-representations. For Bergman in general,

meanwhile, the best mask is another face, that of a woman, and the experience of powerlessness so often coded as feminisation engenders the transgenerating identification with women discussed by Gado (408) and Sitney (41). Thus, in *To Joy*, Frost's dream of disappearance is anticipated by Marta when she says she wants nothing and adds: "Jag skulle vilja gräva ner mig, långt ner så ingenting kom åt mig" [I'd like to burrow down so far that no-one could reach me]. The intense identification with women embodies and disembodies a dialectic of empathy and castration; the empathy of the presentation of Marta at this moment is counterbalanced by the one later in the same film when the seductive Nelly holds down the hand of Stig and paints his nails. To revert to my opening remarks, the dialectic of these moments is one of tradition and modernism, realism and the unconscious, surface and tangled depths.

In this context, Bergman's aspiration to resemble an artisan working at Chartres becomes another form of the artist's vanishing. Thus the disappearance of the artist Johan, mentioned at the start of *Hour of the Wolf*, becomes a negative form of the variety of identification with the partner idealized by his wife Alma. Is it relevant that an identically-named character, Sister Alma, also idealizes the other in the previous film that is *Persona*? Could the vanishing of Johan be a consequence of his absorption into his wife, like that of Frost within yet another Alma, and could this be the meaning of the later Alma's hope that she might think Johan's thoughts? Certainly, when she sees one of his demons the very next day it is as if she has indeed entered his mind, even suffered possession, the term for Johan's condition that Bergman's anti-Christianity—his polytheism (of which much more could be said)—would cause him to reject. If the disappearance is hopeful, however, it is because it secures a final invulnerability to the humiliation of what Laura Mulvey once called, in a coinage whose Germanic ring makes it most appropriate to Bergman, "to-be-looked-at-ness": the humiliation of simply being seen.

#### NOTES

1. Although the normal practice of this volume is to treat the original title of non-English films as primary, Bergman's films are so well-known under their (sometimes varying) English titles that we will follow the normal scholarly practice of treating their English titles as primary, supplying their original Swedish titles only when they are introduced for the first time.

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