

Love Machines: Prostitute/Hysteric/Automaton

Susan Lord

ALPHA 60: What is your religion?

LEMMY: I believe in the immediate inspirations of my conscience.

ALPHA 60: Is there a difference between the mystery of the laws of knowledge and those of love?

LEMMY: In my opinion, there is no mystery in love.

ALPHA 60: You are not telling the truth.

LEMMY: I don't understand.

ALPHA 60: You're hiding certain things... though I don't know yet what they are. So... for the time being... you are free.

“Doing one better than virgin birth,” writes Susan Buck-Morss, “modern man, homo autotelus, literally produces himself ‘miraculously out of [his] own substance’... The theme of the autonomous, autotelic subject as sense-dead, and for this reason a *manly creator*, a self-starter, sublimely self-contained, appears throughout the nineteenth century.”¹ The *myth* of autogenesis is a transparency of limitless reason – a Sadeian dream of sovereignty with the smart bomb as post-modernity’s “flesh of my flesh.” For, from the eighteenth century forward, “his own substance” is unthinkable apart from technology. Evelyn Fox Keller has argued that the “perennial motif” underlying much of scientific creativity is “the urge to fathom the secrets of nature, and the collateral hope that [in doing so] we will fathom the ultimate secrets (and hence gain control) of our own mortality.” But there are two sides to this quest evident throughout the history of science: “the search for the wellspring of life, and, simultaneously, for ever more effective instruments of death.”² And yet intricated with this autogenic “impulse” of modernity is the demand for freedom which echoes throughout Western institutions and rights discourses: autonomy. It is

therefore dangerous to conflate autogenesis as instrumental rationality with autonomy as critique; for, the former enchains historical self-creation in a means/ends ratio, while the latter looks to history for the possibility of human beings to become ends in themselves.³ Additionally, philosophical idealism and social objectification are not inimical, but work hand in hand. Thus, they not only obscure the relation between experience and meaning, but expand the gap that exists between them. As Horkheimer articulates, “the conceptual apparatus determines the senses, even before perception occurs; *a priori*, the citizen sees the world as the matter from which he himself manufactures it.”⁴

The tension between autotelic subjectivity as the marriage of technology and metaphysics and autonomy as critique defines modernity, and clearly in the history of modernity this tension is lived through and suffered by people differently, according to their race, class, and gender. In modernity’s ideological equivalence of women, the colonized, and the under- and working-classes with nature and/or immaturity, their “otherness” is at once manufactured (as the material of subjugation) and obscured as such through rationalizing discourses of science (natural and human), law and aesthetics. In the two hundred years since the promise of 1789, these “others” have at different moments stood as a type of camera obscura, their suffering, unfreedom, and resistance inverting the horizon of the bourgeois dream of (universal) self-creation. In their “otherized” suffering, they confront the sense-dead morality of modernity with a demand for an ethical relation that does not misrecognize their subjugation as universal freedom. And, importantly, this inversion is also the scene of the autotelic subject’s misrecognition of its own freedom.

Provoked by the particular (ir)relation of woman/autonomy are numerous questions surrounding experience, sentience, death, technology, and freedom. If the bourgeois subject is articulated in terms of self-creation and self-direction, how is sentience understood? What configurations do the circuits of affect take in modernity’s move from *aisthētikos* (that which is perceptive by feeling) to aesthetics as an autonomous institution of art forms, i.e., the Kantian formalization of aesthetic experience? In the synaesthetic reconstitution of the senses that is the space-time of cinema, how does “the feminine” come to be configured at once as a conduit between the senses and the scene of occultation which drives the overdetermination of vision? To what degree, then, is female subjectivity in modernity an optical illusion? And, finally, what’s love got to do with it? If in modernity love is figured through the scene of occultation, does it not both promise and foreclose any possibility of women’s autonomy?

In order to get at some of these questions, I will follow the nineteenth-century development of what I will call the “cinematicity” of the feminine: an erotically charged

specular invention dependent upon technological reproducibility and circuited through modernity's delineation of woman. The erotic affect of this cinematicity is produced through the tension between narrativity and fetishism; in other words, the forms or stagings (*mise en scène*) of desire produced through the movement of images in time and the stilling or petrification of such images. Fetishization and aestheticization become heavily intricated in the nineteenth century, strewn as that era is with representations of prostitute-bodies, bodies which are seen to hold a secret in their very "nature" as living commodities. Secret, too, is the "sublime machine" of the female hysteric which the French neurologist, J.M. Charcot was so determined to penetrate with serialized photography. And, with the invention of the female android or automaton, spectacularized in Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's novel *L'Eve Future* as the ultimate cinematic prosthesis, all secrets (of life and death) were to be revealed. The affect secreted through the cinematicity of the feminine, from the prostitute to the hysteric and the female android, in the era of *homo autotelus*, creates a number of conundrums for thinking about any possibility of women's autonomy. I am not attempting to write the "experience" of prostitutes or hysterics, for to do so would be to write another bachelor(ette) machine. I want, rather, to question the techniques deployed in the occultation of those very secrets that optical devices were invented to reveal.

The prostitute, hysteric, and female android were invented through an intersection of scientific/medical, legal, and aesthetic discourses, with the issue of visibility and the employment of optical technologies being central. Sight was the only viable (i.e., somewhat trustworthy) sense for the Enlightenment, for the *a priori* of the concept means that it is served by the eye and its extensions. Hence, sight is viable only insofar as it is always mediated by those representations produced according to reason. In other words, the privileging of sight resulted in its disembodiment – and its alienation. And, in its disembodiment, it was able to penetrate and to reveal secrets (of life and death, nature and mortality, the natural and the unnatural) – to go where no man had gone before.

The separation of the senses in the nineteenth century meant an "unloosening of the eye from the network of referentiality incarnated in tactility and its subjective relation to perceived space."⁵ Jonathan Crary astutely names this remapping of the senses "the autonomization of sight." It is important to note here that the new observer "fitted for the tasks of 'spectacular' consumption" coincides with Kant's argument for moral being as sense-dead and, thus, the rationalization of the aesthetic. And, of course, with the creation of this modern observer new objects of vision are produced which "assume a mystified and abstract identity"⁶ – in other words, these new objects, of which "woman" is central,

assume the status of concepts. But in all of this, what happens to sentience? Is it simply repressed? Or is it also reinvented? Does sentience become one of these distant, remote empiricities? Buck-Morss suggests the following:

The truly autogenic being is entirely self-contained. If it has any body at all, it must be one impervious to the senses, hence safe from external control. Its potency is in its lack of corporeal response. In abandoning the senses, it, of course, gives up sex. Curiously, it is precisely in this castrated form that the being is gendered male – as if, having nothing so embarrassingly unpredictable or rationally uncontrollable as the sense-sensitive penis, it can then confidently claim to *be* the phallus. Such an asensual, *anaesthetic* protuberance is this artifact: modern man.⁷

But, modern man does not so much “abandon the senses” or “give up sex”: he relinquishes the “burden” of feeling and of sex onto woman through the aestheticization of *aesthetikos* – the rationalization of the aesthetic. Thus mediated by reason’s representation, the aesthetic is then internalized (as fantasy or fetish) through *Einfühlung* (empathy or sympathy; the capacity to *feel* something for someone or thing). This internalized projection:

onto women passing by, as onto commodities in store windows, entails not the loss of self, but the incorporation of the world (women, things) as fantasy images within one’s own day-dreams (then losing oneself in *them*). . . . Benjamin describes *Einfühlung* as “the unlimited tendency to represent the position of everyone else, every animal, every dead thing in the cosmos.”⁸

It is possible, then, to see the *Einfühlung* of autonomous subjectivity as a recuperative gesture, an attempt to gather up all that in the bourgeois era is no longer ontologically guaranteed.



ALPHA 60: I will calculate . . . so that failure . . . is impossible.

LEMMY: I’ll fight until failure does become possible.

ALPHA 60: Everything I plan will be accomplished.

LEMMY: That’s not certain. I too have a secret.

From the first drawings of the female skeleton in the 1750s to de l’Isle-Adam’s Charcot’s *Attitudes Passionnelles* to Villiers’ *L’Eve future* to Méliès’ magical cinema, modernity’s technological investment in the visible truth of sexual difference is connected to two other realms of obsessive interest: nature and technology itself. The dedicated interest given to women by medical science and technology during the Enlightenment was driven by the

political question of “natural rights.” Condorcet had, after all, specifically included women in his argument for universal rights; but this claim could not dispel the earlier question arising out of natural law: “Does natural law submit women to men?” Hence, the problem of women’s place, value, function, and meaning in the public sphere was a problem given to science to determine.⁹ This initiation into modernity, circumscribed as it is by science, produces woman as discourse on the one hand, and invention on the other. The biological delineation of sex difference as incommensurable provided the social delineation between the private and public realms with greater clarity. The bodily inscriptions of this incommensurability were then to ensure the subjugation of women in the private world to the laws of the “fraternal” state; ensuring as well that “women’s politics must be the politics of morality.”¹⁰

The delineations and inscriptions of sexual difference – or, more pointedly, given the issue of incommensurability, sexual division – marked the unattached “public woman” with a sign of criminality and/or pathology, because her presence in the public realm served to indicate the historical, rather than “naturally ensured,” division between private and public life. This disturbance in the order of things was understood as an effect of *her* impropriety (both in terms of property relations and moral codes) and/or her unnatural/pathological status. The “impropriety” of the public woman both revealed and reflected the contradictions underpinning the modern polis, for not only was she evidence of the Enlightenment gone awry, she also embodied the disintegration of idealized love and beauty. No longer the auratic tie to universal values, love is materialized and the feminine becomes the cipher of death.

{S}ince Buchner, the body’s finitude, its characteristic ontological corruptibility and the aesthetic of fragmentation it induces, is crystallized in prostitution... the woman’s body, deprived of its maternal-body, becomes desirable only in its passage to the limit: as death-body, fragmented-body, petrified-body.¹¹

The illusory status of man’s autonomy is brought into stark relief with the rise of prostitution, for the prostitute “conjoins private morality and a social ethic... her sensuality in the private realm finds expression in the public realm...”¹² Thus, the prostitute’s activity exposes the hypocrisy of a social ethic whose underlying tenet is greed and domination, an hypocrisy which, by extension, underpins the bourgeois household. In effect, the prostitute-body can be seen as confronting the bourgeoisie with the realization of the degree to which human relations have become commodified relations. This form of exchange precipitates a further crisis of identity: the prostitute is not a “true commodity” (i.e., the object is not identical to itself because the prostitute’s subjectivity is not exchanged) and hence can-



not affirm the autonomy of the client's subjectivity, or she affirms only his subjectivity as consumer. To desire the fashionable, purchasable woman-as-thing is to desire exchange-value itself, that is, the very essence of capitalism.¹³ In this sense, the prostitute stands as a critique of autonomy, disturbing the autotelic insensitivity of the bourgeois subject. It is due to this critical bearing that the prostitute-body becomes, for many, an heroic icon, confronting bourgeois institutions and market relations by bearing the burden of autonomy (as "free agents") without the ideology which equates freedom with free market.

This crisis of subject/subject and subject/object relations, the crisis of male autonomy and female subjugation, is rationalized through a dizzying labyrinth of legal and medical discourses constructed to ensure "difference" and, hence, immunity for the male subject. These discourses – antidotes to the evidence of commodified relations (which robs "man" of his humanity) which extends from the boulevards to the nuptial bed – placed any public woman under the sign of pathology and criminality.¹⁴ The optical technologies of the period were crucial in the production and evaluation of the "evidence." As photography was now institutionalized in the form of taxonomic "portraits" for legal, anthropological, and medical purposes, documentation was compiled and edited so as to prove the theory that such women were inherently and radically "different." The law put these images to use in the invention of the criminal body of the prostitute. Hence, the female body was entering the public sphere as image, its suffering erased and its secrets deciphered, by way of technology.

According to Baudelaire, the prostitute is the possessor of a secret, and a secret knowledge which can be denied or mystified, but not ignored. The discourses of the period were used to penetrate and reveal the prostitute's secret, with the same impulse as the "perennial motif that underlies much of scientific creativity – namely, the urge to fathom the secrets of nature, and the collateral hope that, in fathoming the secrets of nature, we will fathom the ultimate secrets (and hence gain control) of our own mortality."¹⁵ The iconicity of the prostitute-body functions as an image that, by its pretence to provide a "difference" from the repetitive sameness of industrial processes, not only legitimates that humiliating sameness, but also becomes, via industrialization itself, a fetish-object. Industrialization's success in surveillance and self-surveillance is able to provide the illusion of privacy, of escape from industrialization itself. As Benjamin wrote: "In an arcade, women are as in their boudoir." Because it is an illusion of escape – an image of difference – "it" (the public female body) becomes a fetish, a holder of the secret of freedom. This entangling of secrecy, love, freedom, and privacy is an optical and discursive invention which traverses another specifically "feminine" body: the hysteric.

The link between impropriety and institutionalization includes not only “spectacles of vice” but also “spectacles of *folie*.” The institutionalization of women had a great deal to do with issues of reproduction and the propriety of motherhood.¹⁶ Greater and greater medical interest was given to the uterus, the clitoris, and to their relationship. It was discovered late in the eighteenth century that women need not have orgasms to conceive, thus permitting further delineation and inscription of the female body with forms of propriety: the orgasm’s “superfluousness” to conception robs the woman of her clitoris and her uterus, rendering them the “property” of men and under the care of the state. Clearly, it is women’s assertions of autonomy which the law seeks to punish:

The asylum exchanges women by marking women’s refusal to submit to traditional, socially accepted forms of exchange. It registers them for attempting to challenge the forms of expression to which they had been assigned. The dossiers of the Salpêtrière swell with cases of women handed over by their husbands for flirting too much, of daughters turned over by fathers for refusing chosen mates, of mothers committed by sons for showing too much religious fervor.¹⁷

Once institutionalized, women became the special objects of experimentation and surveillance, the special extensions of the new technologies of the body, and the property of science. A new wing of the Salpêtrière clinic was built in order to house a photographic laboratory and an increased number of patients. It was here that J.M. Charcot composed his extensive collection of serialized photographs representing female hysterics in different stages of crisis. The compilation, entitled *Attitudes Passionnelles*, provides images meant to display the total collapse of meaning (the symbolic) into the materiality of the signifier; the images index the language of the body. Of course, this language is already spoken by the interpreter’s symbolic order. Charcot is the lexicographer, compiling a vast dictionary of symptoms and their representations. The “portraits” compose a language from which a narrative is made. In the ordered iconography, patients move through stages of dementia to total ecstasy; and although the images are of different patients, they are composed in such a way as to make the women indistinguishable from each other – exchangeable medical objects. There exists, in this arrangement of “ever the same in countless number” (Benjamin’s description of the commodity), a sense of narrative progression in time, and a fetishization through the repetition of iconic stillness. The narrativization of women’s pathologies is underscored by the performance aspect of Charcot’s work. Every Tuesday, Dr. Charcot would give a lecture-demonstration to his colleagues and students. Taking the form of a stage show, complete with floor lighting, Charcot would subject the patients to mechanical devices, apply the appropriate pressure to the appropriate zone, and *voilà*, a “passionate attitude.”

Il arguait de ses fantastiques réussites expérimentales... pour affirmer une espèce de toute-puissance de l'hypnose: "C'est vraiment, dans toute sa simplicité, l'homme-machine rêvé par de La Mettrie, que nous avons sous les yeux." – Je note que La Mettrie, quant à lui, ne chachait pas ceci, que si l'homme est une machine, alors les médecins seront les maîtres: car la médecine sera seule à pouvoir "changer les esprits et les moeurs avec le corps." [embedded quotes taken from Charcot's writing]¹⁸

The invention of the hysteric as "sublime machine" in the nineteenth century is of particular interest in relation to the questions of autogenesis and autonomous subjectivity. The performance of the theory of female pathology in the form of hysteria is the privilege of sense in the creation of nonsense, which is then scientifically observed through a gaze that is eroticized through its "decoding" of sublime secrets, "redeeming" that gaze into a symbolic order. But what specifically is being sought after in the delineation of these "passions"? Is hysteria not a dis-ease in the heart of conjugal love? Do the techniques deployed to cure the suffering of the hysteric translate the history of the pathology of family romance into a secret ontology of femininity, out of which emanates (from her own substance), for all to see, love disfigured by corporeality? In the serialized photographs, the particularity of the patient (her corporeality) is occultated, leaving a trace (the decor-porealized secret) of her "being" visible only in the subsequent photograph. While the differences between portraits drive the narrative, the significance of this love story exists only through the "ever-the-same" of femininity. The photographic spectacle that is the hysteric can thus be seen as a type of bachelor machine.

And there is no bachelor machine quite like Hadaly, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *andrêide*, the most captivating representation produced in the nineteenth century to offer the ideal release from degradation. First published in 1885 and written by Baudelaire's student and Mallarmé's master, *L'Eve future*, in its marriage of metaphysics and technology, fully inflects the technologization of the woman's body through institutions of social control with the fantasy of the conquest of nature – a procedure already at work in the nascent cinematicity of the hysteric and prostitute-body.

Since our Gods and our aspirations are no longer anything but scientific, why shouldn't our loves be so, too? In place of that Eve of the forgotten legend, the legend despised and discredited by Science, I offer you a scientific Eve.... Far from being hostile to the love of men for their wives – who are so necessary to perpetuate the race (at least till a new order of things comes in), I propose to reinforce, ensure and guarantee that love. I will do so with the aid of thousands and thousands of facsimiles, who will render wholly superfluous all those beautiful but deceptive mistresses, ineffective henceforth forever.¹⁹

So speaks the protagonist of *L'Eve future*, Thomas Alva Edison, "the man who made a

prisoner of the echo." This "Sorcerer of Menlo Park," promises his audience an ultimate positivist fantasy: the production of new beings who "will function in a second nature, rendered more perfect by Science." Edison's friend, Lord Ewald, is suicidal over the non-perfectibility of the beautiful woman, Alicia, whom he loves. Her physical beauty is incommensurate with her "vile soul," for it has been "afflicted with reason." Edison's mission is to replace the mortal beloved with an equally beautiful cipher, an *andréide* who "perfectly reflects man's desire,"²⁰ and is, importantly, the bringing to life of art. Hadaly (which we are told means "ideal" in Arabic), is, Edison assures his friend, more real than the original, so much so that even Alicia's dog, endowed with a powerful sense of smell, will bark at the original and obey the Illusion. Edison's description of Hadaly's perfection is worth quoting at length for its astonishing prescience of what becomes the cinematicity of the feminine:

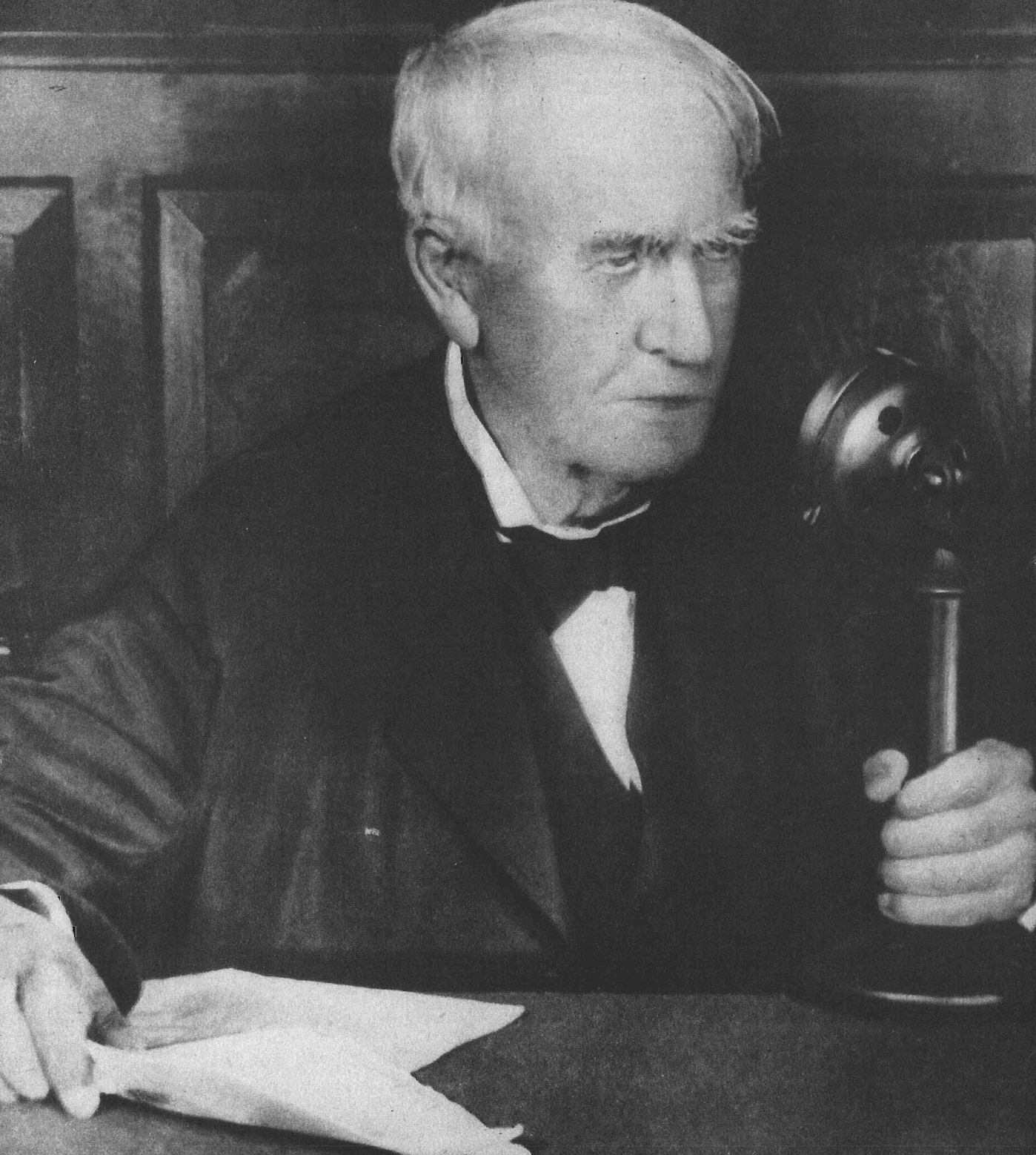
I can capture the grace of her gesture, the fullness of her body, the fragrance of her flesh, the resonance of her voice, the turn of her waist, the light of her eyes, the quality of her movements and gestures, the individuality of her glance, all her traits and characteristics, down to the shadow she casts on the ground – her complete identity in a word. I shall be the murderer of her foolishness, the assassin of her triumphant animal nature.²¹

This promise to "raise from the clay of Human Science as it now exists, a Being made in our image" is fulfilled: as Hadaly says to her new master, "Like a true woman, I will be for you only as you desire me,"²² and will not be if not desired. The creation of Hadaly is a "specifically phallogocentric variant on the Frankenstein complex"²³ – she is the bachelor machine *par excellence*.

Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's rendering is but a short stretch from the real Edison, the inventor of the phonograph whose ultimate aim was total representation, the synchronization of the image and sound. As Noël Birch observes:

spectators overstep the narrow limits of their lives in a communion with "artists and musicians long since dead," projecting themselves into the latter's survival... Edison's wish to link to his phonograph an apparatus capable of recording and reproducing pictures... is not just the ambition of an astute captain of industry; it is also the pursuit of the fantasy of a class become the fantasy of a culture: to extend the "conquest of nature" by triumphing over death through an ersatz of Life itself.²⁴

This fantasy is also, and importantly, a male fantasy of autogenesis which is articulated to the fullest in Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's novel. The removal of women from the place of reproduction is, after all, the ultimate technological fantasy of conquest. Yet, the central and obsessive concern in the novel is not just the "triumphing over death through



an ersatz of Life itself," it is also absolutely necessary that this Eve of the future guarantee love. She is "nothing but the first hours of love, immobilized, the hour of the Ideal made the eternal prisoner"; and, as she contains "the souls of all other women," desire itself is forever sated.²⁵ Hence, at work is a mesh of fears overcome; the fear of woman, nature, and technology itself – all of which are constructed as autonomous and other – are infused with love, that very love which has been mortified and banished by modernity's "progress." Edison's desire is, after all, to save his friend from the wretchedness of history, and he does so by first disposing of *her* corporeality.

There are long sections of the novel dedicated to the mechanics of this invention, whose lungs are made of two gold phonographs, styluses poised in anticipation of inscribing the voice of Alicia, the beauty with a vile soul. The voice will then speak the words "invented by the greatest poets, the most subtle metaphysicians, the most profound novelists of this century..."²⁶ The synchronization of the movement of the lips with the grain of a voice is an obvious preface of the cinema to come; but the novel's "main content constitutes a marvellously apt metaphor for the imaginary operations of the future Institution [of cinema]."²⁷ This operation, similar to the act of *Einfühlung*, involves losing oneself in those objects and images once they have been incorporated by the imaginary, thus allowing one to live, to feel through them. But, importantly, this is not a shedding of the ego, not a loss of self, for this experience of synaesthesia is prosthetic. As Hadaly explains: "Who am I? A creature of dreams, who lives half awake in your thoughts, and whose shadow you may dissipate any time with one of those fine reasonable arguments which will leave you, in my place, nothing but vacancy, sorrow, heartache..."²⁸ Hadaly's utterance stages the *jeu* of death erotics which marks much of modernism, an aesthetic which bears the newly conjured face of the Sadeian hero who seeks to overcome his state of alienation by taking pleasure in, through conquest or passivity, the inalienable right of death.

The cinematicity of the feminine is not a claim for an essential moment which pre-determines and underlies all of cinema's fascination and eroticism. Rather, the development of the Institutional Mode of Representation intersects with, and absorbs within it, the historicity of the feminine as a circuitry of affect bound to narrative through the "fantasy of a class become the fantasy of a culture." The "universal man-machine" of the nineteenth century was "no longer seen as the testimony to the genius of mechanical invention: it rather becomes a night-mare, a threat to human life," and concomitantly, it becomes (with few exceptions) a woman.

The *aesthetization* of woman then operates to decipher what had become an unbearable

burden of sentient experience – a desperate attempt to recircuit the nightmare. Through the remoteness of optical perception, the “loosening of the eye,” which comes about in the rationalization of society and the creation of the new observer – the new objects of vision in mass society were made to stand in for, to mediate, the sensate world. Simultaneously, these “objects” become possessions and extensions of the sense-dead bourgeois self. And hence, in themselves, these “objects” do not exist.

ALPHA 60: For our misfortune, the world is a reality... and I... for my misfortune... I am myself – Alpha 60.

LEMMY: Natasha... hurry!... hurry!... Natasha... think of the word love...

Notes

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1. Susan Buck-Morss, “Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin’s Artwork Essay Reconsidered,” *October* 62 (Fall 1992): 8, 10.

2. Evelyn Fox Keller, “From the Secrets of Life to the Secrets of Death,” *Body/Politics: Women and the Discourses of Science*, ed. Mary Jacobus, Evelyn Fox Keller and Sally Shuttleworth (New York: Routledge, 1990), 177.

3. The system the Enlightenment has in mind, writes Max Horkheimer: “is the form of knowledge which copes most proficiently with the facts and supports the individual most effectively in the mastery of nature. Its principles are the principles of self-preservation. Immaturity is then the inability to survive. The burgher, in the successive forms of slaveowner, free entrepreneur, and administrator, is the logical subject of the Enlightenment.... As the transcendental, supraindividual self, reason comprises the idea of a free, human social life in which men organize themselves as the universal subject and overcome the conflict between pure and empirical reason in the conscious solidarity of the whole. This represents the idea of true universality: utopia. At the same time, however, reason constitutes the court of judgement of calculation, which adjusts the world for the ends of self-preservation and recognizes no function other than the preparation of the object from mere sensory material in order to make it the material of subjugation.” (“Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality,” *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1987), 83-84)

This rather lengthy quote offers a critique of instrumental reason, insofar as reason becomes identified with instrumentality exclusively, while simultaneously sending a warning signal to those who, in the employment of the notion of autonomy as something purely ideational, overlook all of those who become the



“material of subjugation” in the call for freedom. Of course, in the last sentence of the quote, Horkheimer is talking about the subjugation of nature (which does include “man’s” species being), or to put it differently, the enfolding of empiricities within ideational structures.

4. Ibid., 84.

5. Much scholarship has been done in the area of the place of vision in modernity, with Jonathan Crary’s recent *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991) offering a comprehensive view of that scholarship and its historical materials. Yet operating with what has become known to feminist readers as “the blind spot of an old dream of symmetry,” Crary mentions sexual difference only in passing. Nonetheless, I do rely on this text for its research and its analysis of the separation of the senses in the bourgeois era. Through his analysis of the philosophy, science and art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Crary indicates that the sense of touch had been “an integral part of classical theories of vision” (p. 10). The term Terry Eagleton employs for the form of cognition which relies on the corporeal sensorium is the aesthetic as *aesthetikos*, i.e., perceptive by feeling – involving all of the senses. Of course, the sensorium was well on its way to decorporealization in the eighteenth century, with Kant and Sade both defining the bourgeois subject/libertine in terms of disinterest, distance and remoteness: “Sade portrays ‘understanding without the guidance of another person’: that is, the bourgeois individual freed from tutelage” (Horkheimer, *ibid.*, 86).

6. Ibid., 19.

7. Buck-Morss, 1992, 8.

8. Susan Buck-Morss, “The Flaneur, the Sandwichman and the Whore,” *New German Critique* 39 (Fall 1986), 122.

9. “Beginning in the 1750’s, doctors in France and Germany called for a finer delineation of sex differences; discovering, describing and defining sex differences in every bone, muscle, nerve and vein of the human body became a research priority in anatomical sciences. . . . [The] scientific measure of women’s lesser “natural reason” was used to buttress arguments against women’s participation in the public spheres of government and commerce, science and scholarship.” See, Londa Schiebinger, “Skeletons in the Closet: The First Illustrations of the Female Skeleton in Eighteenth Century Anatomy,” *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Catherine Gallagher and Thomas Laqueur (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 42-43.

10. Thomas Laqueur, “Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology,” *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Catherine Gallagher and Thomas Laqueur (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 24.

11. Christine Buci-Glucksmann, “Catastrophic Utopia: The Feminine as Allegory of the Modern,” *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 226.

12. David Wallace, “Bourgeois Tragedy or Sentimental Melodrama? The Significance of George Lillo’s

The London Merchant, Eighteenth Century Studies 25.2 (Winter 1991-92), 135-36.

13. See Buck-Morss (1986).

14. Any woman who fell outside the domestic order and its property arrangements fell outside the public order as well. With the ensuing battery of infectious disease laws, the public woman was made to pay dearly for the evidence her body brought forth. These laws, marked the sex of any woman who sought release from the hypocrisy of the private realm.

As Corbin has shown, the need for regulating these "spectacles of vice" inspired five images of the prostitute-body: the *putain* as putrid woman ("putain" derives from the word "pudrid"); as "seminal drain"; as corpse; as the incarnation of syphilis; and as "the double-faced servant, both Martha and Mary Magdalen, whose body serves as an object of obsession in the master's house and who sometimes undertakes the adolescent's sexual initiation or sets out to conquer the marriage bed..." See, Alain Corbin, "Commercial Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century France: A System of Images and Regulations," *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 212-13.

15. Fox-Keller, 177.

16. As Jann Matlock has noted, "while the asylum offered squalorous conditions and torturous 'therapy' for men as well as women, it entrapped women with greater ease, kept them longer and released them with less frequency than their male counterparts. Furthermore, its investments in observing and representing female madness were linked to a refinement of gender-based social control and to an increasing medicalization of sexuality." See, Jann Matlock, "Doubling Out of the Crazy House: Gender, Autobiography and the Insane Asylum System in Nineteenth Century France," *Representations* 34 (Spring 1991), 167.

17. *Ibid.*, 170.

18. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention de l'hystérie: Charcot et l'iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière* (Paris: Éditions Macula), 183. As this text is so comprehensive in both its analysis and materials, I refer the reader to it rather than reiterate its contents.

19. Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, *Tomorrow's Eve*, trans. Robert M. Evans (Urbana: University Press, 1982), 164.

20. *Ibid.*, 31.

21. Villiers, 63.

22. *Ibid.*, 199.

23. Noël Burch, *Life to those Shadows*, trans. Ben Brewster (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 31.

24. Burch, 28, 7.

25. Villiers, 135, 137.

26. Villiers, 131.

27. Burch, 31.

28. Villiers, 198.