

only this, it would not destroy the secretive, the one who remains hidden even when manifest—as is made clear by his non-appearance in the mirror at the location where he is ostensibly standing with his interlocutor (this revealing the latter's perception to have been a *positive hallucination*). Light, what renders visible, manifest, can destroy the vampire, the secretive only because light is simultaneously the paradigm of the secretive (and not just in the case when it comes in excess, blinding, hence maintaining in the secret).

The first version of this secretiveness was Lorentz-FitzGerald's theory of contraction. Trying to save the ether wind theory, George Francis FitzGerald explained the negative results of the Michelson-Morley experiment, 1887—the light speed is constant—by postulating that the ether wind puts pressure on a moving object, causing it to shrink a little in the direction of the motion, the contraction increasing as the object's speed approaches the speed of light. The contraction would be just enough to keep the speed of light constant: the ether wind contracts the arm of the interferometer pointing into the ether wind, so the reduction of the velocity of the light traveling into the ether wind and back cannot be detected (a secret). This theory cannot be tested by measuring the length of the apparatus to see if it shortens in the direction of the earth's motion, since the ruler would also shorten in the same proportion. Lorentz also postulated that clocks would be slowed down by the ether wind, and in just such a way as to make the velocity of light always the same.<sup>131</sup> The theory became known as the FitzGerald-Lorentz contraction theory.<sup>132</sup>

The contemporary version is the double slit experiment: a very weak coherent light—one photon at a time—moves from source to detector, between which is a screen with two very tiny slits, at A and B. If B is closed the photon goes through the open slit. The same if A is closed. When both are open and we do not know through which slit the photon passed, there is interference. If we put detectors at A and B to be able to tell through which hole the photon goes when

both holes are open, interference no longer occurs. We can have interference only if the path the photon took remains a secret to us.

The quantum Zeno effect: an unstable particle, which has a known half-life when we apply intermittent observation to it, does not decay when a continuous observation is supposed.<sup>133</sup> Observation has to have refractory periods for there to be change since the latter happens in secret. Gilles Deleuze, writing on Bergson: “You can bring two instants or two positions together to infinity, but movement will always occur in the interval between the two, in other words behind your back.”<sup>134</sup>

#### Are You Sure I Saw It?

While Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc*, which consists mostly of close-ups, is constructed through looks and eye directions, his next film, *Vampyr*, tackles the impossibility of looking and/or the undecidability of whether an act of vision is taking place. In the fourth shot, Gray moves a few steps away from an inn's glass door and looks up. The next shot is a pan of the roof that continues with a tilt down and ends with Gray entering the frame that was supposedly his point of view shot. Hence, as early as the sequence formed of the fourth and fifth shots, one is witnessing either:

— A dissemination of vision, Gray looking at himself, one expecting that an explicit dissociation or out of the body experience or hypnagogic state will be undergone by him, since these states make it possible for someone to witness what otherwise he or she cannot see.

— Or else an impossibility of vision, the fifth shot revealing itself to be an objective one rather than a point of view shot. The two-shot sequence would then serve to caution the film spectator not to take a shot of what is before the open eyes of the vampire as the view of the vampire, to wit of the dead, not to forget that the dead cannot see. It seems that Dreyer was aware that this cautionary measure will either be overlooked or else prove inefficacious, so he made the dead addi-

tionally blind. After sucking the blood of Leon in the garden, “the figure turns its head irritably and stares at the newcomers with the dead eyes of a blind person.”<sup>135</sup> A shot of Gray and Gisele, who have come to rescue Leone, follows. How strange that the spectators who consider the scene toward the end of the film in which a shot of Gray in the coffin is followed by his point of view shot as anomalous do not hesitate to take the aforementioned shot of Gray and Gisele as the point of view of the blind vampire! But that the vampire should have a point of view shot is more paradoxical than that Gray laying in the coffin should have one, for what’s taking place in the latter’s case could be similar to what occurs in zombie and tetrodotoxin poisoning cases: paralysis of motor functions with retention of consciousness.<sup>136</sup>

It is not obvious that the ghost sees, at least in the normal way, through the eyes; it may be that he sees through the voice he utters. Therefore prior to beginning to talk to prince Hamlet, the ghost of King Hamlet does not see him; he sees him only as he speaks to him. He sees him with his speech. While in Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, and Godard’s filmic adaptation of it, it is matter of looking with one’s ears (King Lear to the blinded Gloucester: “A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears” [4.6]; Cf. “The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man’s hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was” [Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, 4.1]), in his *Hamlet* it is a matter of looking with one’s speech. If we ask the ghost to speak, it is less to hear his message, for we always intimate more or less what he has to say (Hamlet: “O my prophetic soul!”), but so that he would reciprocally see us through his talk (even if in his characteristically askew way). So the question is not only whether one will see the ghost (Queen Gertrude: “To whom do you speak this?” Hamlet: “Do you see nothing there?” Queen Gertrude: “Nothing at all; yet all that is I see”); it is also whether he will see us.

In a number of scenes in *Vampyr*, the cycle of shot of a person

looking/point of view shot/shot of the same person looking is short-circuited. As Gray enters a cluttered, dust-covered room and looks ahead, the camera tracks laterally to an empty coffin and beyond it to a placard with the inscription “Doctor of medicine.” The camera then swish pans from the latter to Gray moving away. Vision remains uncertain without a return to a shot of the looking person, and thus without re-claiming. It is not only the spectator who is unsure whether Gray saw the inscription before he moved away: the uncertainty extends to Gray himself. It is a secret even to him whether he saw it.

The vampire becomes definitively dead only when a measurement collapses all but one of the possibilities to which the late reverts, actualizing it alone. Unfortunately, regarding the vampire, it is easy to mistake a positive hallucination for a measurement: in Browning’s *Dracula*, on looking from Mina speaking with the vampire to the mirror, the doctor sees her talking alone.<sup>137</sup>

Since the undead is not really there, only layered on a location, and thus not clearly localizable, his victim’s look is awry with respect to the abstract line the film spectator traces between vampire and victim. In some future vampire film, the first section, which takes place in some postwar city (Sarajevo, Beirut ...), and in which all the characters are still living, should digitally incorporate several long-dead actors who interact seamlessly with the contemporary living ones. In the subsequent section, which takes place in Transylvania, with only living actors but with some of the characters now undead, the gazes should frequently be askew. As Harker moved, the gaze of the vampire moved with him, but always remaining at an angle, awry. It accompanied him but at an angle, hence accompanied him while not accompanying him.

In Wenders’ *The Wrong Move* (1985), a medium shot of a girl sitting in a train and looking is followed by a shot of a train seat stained with blood, then by a medium shot of the adult male protagonist sitting at

the opposite window and looking in the direction of the stained seat. Whose point of view was the shot of the blood stains on the seat? Not children in common, but point of view shots.<sup>138</sup> This is also the case between the disciple and his spiritual master, even, or rather especially, when the former is dead.

In *Last Year at Marienbad*, a shot of five people looking in different directions is followed by a point of view shot, which is followed by the same shot of the five people still looking in the same directions. This induces a strange memory since it is not clear whose point of view the interpolated shot was. The uncertainty is not merely that of the spectator but belongs to the diegetic world: any of the five can remember what the point of view shot showed if not in actuality then de jure. Thus, even those of the five who could later have affirmed that they were looking at something else then—perhaps all five will earnestly affirm this—will nonetheless probably have the impression that they are amnesiac about something.

In one scene in Fritz Lang's *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*, Baum gets hypnotized by (the already dead) Mabuse. The shot of Baum reading at the beginning of the scene is intercut with shots of masks, skulls, and a painting with distorted faces. These are gazing at Baum, from the same point of view, since the reverse shot, showing Baum, is from the same angle irrespective of the fact that the direction of the eyes of these objects, located in different sections of the room, is not the same. *Ça vous regarde*: 1. it concerns you; 2. it looks at you. Such conjunction is misleading, for it is only when something *qui ne vous regarde pas* [which does not concern you] intrudes on you that *ça vous regarde* [it gazes at you], you simultaneously losing the possibility of looking: the vision of Baum becomes impossible as the objects in the room gaze at him going deeper and deeper into hypnosis. The indifference of what is seen to the direction of the look indicates that in Baum's state of altered consciousness, it is not the eyes that gaze but the whole face, indeed the whole body.

A black hole is invisible. Nonetheless, it can be detected since it exerts a gravitational force: Cygnus X-1 consists of a visible, normal star orbiting around an invisible object. Similarly, the vampire is not visible in the mirror, but his presence can be detected by the attraction such a hypnotic absence of an image exerts on the look of the other, reflected person. While standing with Nosferatu in front of a mirror in Herzog's *Nosferatu*, the gaze of Lucy, who is to the left, is attracted to the right side of the mirror although there is no image there (while the vampire's gaze, since he has no reflection and since the camera has been positioned in place of the mirror, seems to be and is in fact directed at the film spectator).<sup>139</sup> This blankness is a blind spot in the mirror, turning the latter into a quasi eye. Therefore, like the eye, the mirror has a refractory period, and consequently evinces a *persistence of reflection*: Magritte's *Le Soir qui tombe*.

In Wenders' *The American Friend*, a stranger proposes to Jonathan to kill someone for a large sum. His reply is: "You must take me for somebody else." Later, a frontal tracking shot of Jonathan going to meet the same man in the airport is followed by a tracking shot, at the same pace, toward Jonathan sleeping on an airport couch. The latter shot could be Jonathan's point of view. In which case, we are witnessing a dissociation. This dissociation marks the decision to commit the crime.

The suspended movement and awry looks of people in Edward Hopper's paintings are the effects of a gravity-induced slowing down of time and bending of light. Many Hopper paintings empty of any human presence seem to be the points of view of the persons looking off-frame in some of his other paintings. If, nonetheless, there is a strong sense of the absence of vision in these points of view, it is due to the extreme slowing down of the rate at which the light reflected off these objects reaches the human figures, up to its suspension. The virginity in Hopper's work is not to be found in nature, but mainly in this delay that suspends the look so that the painted view as a point

of view is nonetheless seen first by the spectator of the painting.

We are moving toward a telepathic era, one that deals with matting and overlay, which means we are increasingly turning blind to the immediate environment, over a section of which is superimposed the blank monochromatic matte. In Buñuel's *The Phantom of Liberty*, 1974, the parents, who have been asked to come at once to the school because their daughter was kidnapped from her classroom, stand there with the superintendent and the teacher reviewing the circumstances in which the kidnapping occurred, while the daughter, standing in the same room, is chided by her mother when she interrupts the adults' conversation. The parents *and their daughter* then go to the police to report on the continuing disappearance of the daughter and to ask that the police find her. These two scenes show a response that will be, with the mounting use of mattes, much more frequently encountered: the person one is perceiving in the same space-time with one is treated as overlaid, hence as not really present there.

#### **The Emperor's New Costume, Or the Case of the Missing Mask:**

A fear so pervasive it blocks even the hypnotically dissociated part from performing automatic writing.

The conversing guests were moving their lips soundlessly. Was his state of altered consciousness distorting what he was seeing, the soundlessness of the conversations either a subjective visual illusion, or the result of his projecting his fear onto others? Or was it revealing to him the others' constant fear? Were they scared without knowing it, and even as they laughed and talked? Seeing them, he was reminded how when horrified one opens one's mouth to scream but cannot utter the shout. Their soundless conversations are a scream, one as expressive as that of the vice-consul in *India Song*, and as that, implied, of the wounded woman in Eisenstein's silent film *Potemkin*. He, like the protagonist of Munch's *The Scream*, placed his hands over his ears.

The inability to scream caused by fear is the beginning of a deafness.

Fear makes one unable to speak—even in the form of the interior monologue.

Seeing the vampire at the end of the corridor leading to his room, the guest was so terrified he could not utter the scream. Needles to say, the bite of the vampire was acupuncture that released his scream.

David Pirie is set in his *The Vampire Cinema* on correcting mistakes. He mentions that a number of early shorts have wrongly been included in vampire filmographies: *Vampires of the Coast* (1909), *The Vampire* (1911), *The Vampire's Tower* (1913), *The Vampire's Clutch* (1914), *Vampires of the Night* (1914), *Tracked by a Vampire* (1914), *A Village Vampire* (1916). Many of these movies used the term "vampire" in the sense of vamp, femme fatale. Yet he writes on page 46 of the same book: "Later he sees a snowy-haired wrinkled old woman and watches her being handed some poison by the village doctor." It is the other way round in *Vampyr*: the vampire hands the doctor the poison bottle. On the same page, the caption of a still of Gisèle (played by Rena Mandel) tied in the vampire's lair reads: "Leone, the vampire's victim in Dreyer's *Vampyr*, is played by Sybille Schmitz." What sloppy work from someone whose mediocrity shields from fear and its effects! Jean-Louis Schefer writes: "In Dreyer's film, *Vampyr*, a mill wheel, flour, the vampire pressed against a wall ... Dreyer's vampire expires before our eyes, caught simultaneously in the machinery's movement, in a shower of white powder (like the body of an insect falling within the sand of an hourglass) ..." <sup>140</sup> He mistakes the doctor for a vampire. Roland Barthes writes, "In Dreyer's *Vampyr*, as a friend points out, the camera moves from house to cemetery recording what the dead man sees ... the spectator can no longer take up any position, for he cannot identify his eye with the closed eyes of the dead man," <sup>141</sup> when in fact Gray's eyes are open. Shouldn't the last two errors be ascribed to fear, which