

**ARCHAIC ECHOES, THE WORD AND THE TRANSFERENCE IN TEXTS:
A PSYCHOBIOGRAPHIC STUDY OF FRANÇOISE DOLTO**

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Abstract

The famous French psychoanalyst, Françoise Dolto (1908–1988), proposes a remarkable narrative of life between conception and weaning. Thoroughly original while loyally Freudian, Dolto discovers that precocious audition in a fluid blur of subject and object impacts psychological structuration, as «phonèmes» inform nascent symbolization. Dolto’s oeuvre derives from the assumption that life is sourced in the unconscious, thus she delivers a powerful attestation of the primary processes. Following Freud, this study elaborates Dolto’s particularly salient theory-by-testimony of the transference as an ‘inter-relational libidinal dialectic’—the wild circulation of unconscious affects. Dolto is the foremost theorist of the *archaic* stage of psychological development, wherein originates the transference as securitizing continuity with our idiosyncratic libidinal histories. And Dolto’s unusual body of work, equal parts personal and professional, permits an exceptional demonstration of the passive movement of the autobiographical in the theoretical, as her own archaic echoes reverberate in homonymic repetitions and weighty silences. Finding such *traces*—a notion I source in Derrida—suggests that the transport of dream-work through words produces in writing (thus enabling in reading) what I advance as *the transference in texts*. Dolto’s exploration of our unspeakable ‘time before thought’ is supported by a half-century of clinical practice, and engaging Dolto’s complex material, I venture into six overlapping fields of words as «objets médiateurs»: filiation, transmission, listening, reading, speaking and writing. Dolto proffers convincing evidence that primitive audition destines language to elude grammars, rooting it instead in «filiation symbolique»: a

paradoxical ontology of melancholy and play, as dreams offer consolations for our difficult coming to reality, and we only advance on confirmations of archaic security—witnessing. Thus bridging a compelling French corpus with English audiences, this dissertation unsettles biography, linguistics, literacy and pedagogy, as the investment of enigmatic phonemes with indelible significance troubles the word with a phantastic prehistory.

***Keywords:* continuity, dream-work, Freud, homonym, passive pulses, phoneme, psychoanalysis, trace, unconscious.**

Dedication

For Bertha Pappenheim, the first patient of the ‘talking cure,’

and for all the youngest patients of psychoanalysis, in enduring gratitude for their passage in the literature, I offer this small scholarly work as “an attempt to follow an idea consistently, out of curiosity, to see where it will lead” (Freud, 1920, 24). For highly original play is bound to the origins of psychoanalysis by virtue of the particular task it undertakes: “to lift the veil of amnesia which hides the earliest years of childhood” (Freud, 1933a, 28).

And for Françoise Dolto (née Murette), my inestimable subject-object,

in profound appreciation for her astonishing generosity in leaving behind a bounty of intimate materials, whereby I hope readers can experience the transference in texts: evidence of the unconscious in human creativity as “autobiographical—not what is called the ‘autobiographical genre’ but rather the autobiographicity that greatly overflows the ‘genre’ of autobiography...in an existential experience that is singular, and if not ineffable at least untranslatable or on the verge of untranslatability” (Derrida, 2001a, 41).

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At York University, I offer my sincere gratitude to Dr. Alice Pitt, Vice-Provost Academic, for her sustained interest in my work. I also acknowledge four outstanding educators who have encouraged me over the past eight years: Drs. Mario DiPaolantonio, Heather Lotherington, Carol Anne Wien and Dan Yon. I am very grateful to Dr. Aparna Mishra-Tarc and Dr. Lisa Farley for their teaching, their guidance, and their robust reviews of my first draft. I am thankful for Dr. Jen Gilbert, Graduate Program Director, who expertly chaired my examination and offered critical insights on subjectivity. And I thank Dr. Thomas L. Loebel for his provocative questions about the nature of my biographical engagement with Dolto. I also want to thank Dr. Paula M. Salvio, of the University of New Hampshire, for her remarkable queries on the pedagogical implications of Dolto's theories.

I would like to recognize Dr. Anne Marie Canu, a Dolto scholar, translator and psychoanalyst I met in Paris in July 2014, who has nurtured me since then with her generous correspondence. I am also grateful to Catherine Dolto, who maintains the «Archives Françoise Dolto». Her works about her «drôle de mère» [funny kind of mother] (Dolto, 1986b, 79) are beautiful and crucial. And I thank Marie Normandin of «La Maison Buissonnière,» in Montreal, for speaking so eloquently on Dolto in Toronto in November 2012, and Dr. Judith Hamilton of the Toronto Psychoanalytic Society for hosting her.

I am thankful beyond words for my three adult children, Sarah, Jacob and Peter. Their loving listening, rallying energy and twisted humour helped me through many days in graduate school where I found it hard to believe in myself. I am also much indebted to my dear cousin, Marie; my son-in-law, Shane; my good friend, Bridgit; my mother, Thérèse Dumont; countless colleagues and students who have inspired me; and my beloved 'T.'

While the reader may experience what seems like an avalanche of references, I believe I have done my best to simply be as thorough as possible, being fully cognizant of my responsibility in bringing Françoise Dolto's project to new audiences, in English. If I have managed to convey something of her phenomenal work and thought, she deserves full credit. Any interpretive failings, errors, omissions or weaknesses are mine alone.

On the use of the name “Dolto” in this work

Except where noted as C. (Catherine) Dolto, daughter, formerly Dolto-Tilitch, who is currently a pediatrician, midwife, writer and haptotherapist, as well as Dolto's legatee (Wikipédia, 2014f); or B. (Boris) Dolto, deceased husband, formerly a physician and a forerunner of physiotherapy in France (Wikipédia, 2014c), all occurrences of the name 'Dolto' in this work refer to Françoise Dolto, whose name prior to marriage was Murette.

On the translations in this work

I am a native speaker of French, originally from the city of Quebec, in Quebec, Canada. All translations herein (of Dolto, Derrida & others) are my own free translations. In the interest of concision, Dolto's precise, original wording in French is provided alongside translations only where it is deemed to impact directly on the main thesis of this dissertation, as in notably idiomatic or homonymic passages. On the other hand, where a French expression is a cognate of English (as in, «une expression tragique»), the translations are omitted instead.

A final note on translation

In German, Freud's *wortgebilden* educate, form and construct, being neither mere 'word-things' (objects) nor simply 'word-presentations' (visual). In turn, the expression, 'dream-interpretation,' silences the *trau* (trust) embedded in Freud's *traumdeutung*. And of his *trieb*—urge, sprout, desire, instinct and work—we translate only 'drive,' or in French, «pulsions.» Thus do both the word and the subject begin with the problem of translation.

Kathleen Saint-Onge (Toronto, 2016)

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List of Abbreviations

To enhance readability, key works referred to repeatedly are identified as follows:

AI: Potin, Y. (Ed.). (2008). *Françoise Dolto: Archives de l'intime*. Paris, FR: Gallimard.

APP: Dolto, F. (1956). Introduction au dessin d'enfants. *La vie médicale: Arts et psychopathologie, Numéro Spécial*, Noël 1956, 27 – 39.

ATP: Dolto, F. (1989b). *Autoportrait d'une psychanalyste: 1934-1988: Entretiens avec Alain et Colette Manier*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.

CD: Dolto, F. (1971). *Le cas Dominique*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.

CE: Halmos, C. (Ed.) (1994). *Françoise Dolto, rticles et conférences, II: Les Chemins de l'éducation*. Paris, FR: Gallimard. (Original work published 1946 – 1989).

DQ: De Sauverzac, J.-F. (Ed.) (1987). *Françoise Dolto: Dialogues québécois*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil. (Original work published 1983.)

D&R: Dolto, F. & Roudinesco, E. (1986/1988). Des jalons pour une histoire: Entretien. In J.Aubrey et al., *Quelques pas sur le chemin de Françoise Dolto*, Paris, FR: Seuil, 11–42.

DV: Dolto, F. (1986a). *La difficulté de vivre*. Paris, FR: Vertiges du Nord/Carrere.

DW: Dolto, F. & Winter, J.-P. (1986). *Les images, les mots, le corps*. Paris, FR: Gallimard.

EF: Dolto, F. (1978/1998). *L'enfant et la fête: Entretien*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France.

- EM:** Halmos, C. & Dolto, C. (Eds.) (1994). *Françoise Dolto, Articles et conférences, I: Les étapes majeures de l'enfance*. Paris, FR: Gallimard. (Original work 1946 – 1988).
- EN:** Dolto, F. (1986c). *Enfances*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.
- ES:** Dolto, F. (1989a). *Échec scolaire*. Paris, FR: Ergo. (Original work published 1980 – 1986.)
- EV:** Dolto, F. (1998). *Françoise Dolto: L'enfant dans la ville*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France. (Original work published in 1977 & 1987.)
- IIC:** Dolto, F. (1984). *L'image inconsciente du corps*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.
- JD:** Dolto, F. (1981). *Le jeu du désir: Essais cliniques*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil. (Original work published 1946 – 1978).
- JP:** Faure-Poirée, C. & Djéribi-Valentin, M. (Eds.). (1999), *Jeu de poupées*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France. (Original work published in 1949 & 1964.)
- LF:** Djéribi-Valentin, M. & Kouki, E. (Eds.) (1998). *Françoise Dolto, Articles et conférences 5, Le féminin*. Paris, FR: Gallimard. (Original work 1959 – 1988).
- LO1:** Dolto, F. (1977a). *Lorsque l'enfant paraît, Tome 1*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.
- LO2:** Dolto, F. (1978). *Lorsque l'enfant paraît, Tome 2*. Paris, FR: France Loisirs.
- LO3:** Dolto, F. (1979a). *Lorsque l'enfant paraît, Tome 3*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.

- MA:** Marette, F. (1940). *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie: Le complexe de castration, étude générale et cas cliniques*. Paris, FR: Amédée Legrand. [This is the original version of P&P.]
- MF:** Djéribi-Valentin, M. (Ed.) (2008). *Françoise Dolto: Mère et fille, une correspondance (1931 – 1962)*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France.
- NE:** Dolto, F. (1977/1984). Heures et jours qui suivent l'accouchement [...]. In E. Herbinet (Ed.), *Naître et ensuite?* Paris, FR: Stock, 187 – 266.
- PF:** Djéribi-Valentin, M. (Ed.) (2001). *Françoise Dolto: Père et fille, une correspondance (1914 – 1938)*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France.
- PJE:** Lévy, D.M. (Ed.). (2002). *Parler juste aux enfants: Entretien de Françoise Dolto & D. M. Lévy*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France. (Original work published 1978 – 1988).
- P&P:** Dolto, F. (1939/1971). *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie: les grandes notions de la psychanalyse, seize observations d'enfants*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil. [More modern reprint of MA.]
- PM:** Dolto, F. (1985/1998). *Parler de la mort*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France.
- PS:** Kouki, E. (Ed.). (2005). *Françoise Dolto: Parler de la solitude*. Paris, FR: Mercure de France. (Original work written in 1975).
- SF:** Djéribi-Valentin, M. & Kouki, E. (Eds.) (1996). *Françoise Dolto Essais: Sexualité féminine: la libido génitale et son destin féminin*. Paris, FR: Gallimard. (Original work: 1960 – 1985.)

SP1: Caldaguès, L (Ed.). (1982). *Françoise Dolto: Séminaire de la psychanalyse d'enfants, Tome 1*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.

SP2: De Sauverzac, J.-F. (Ed.). (1985). *Françoise Dolto: Séminaire de la psychanalyse d'enfants, Tome 2*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.

SP3: De Sauverzac, J.-F. (Ed.). (1988). *Françoise Dolto: Séminaire de la psychanalyse d'enfants, Tome 3*. Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil.

SS: Guillerault, G. (Ed.). (1997). *Françoise Dolto: Le Sentiment de soi, Aux sources de l'image du corps*. Paris, FR: Gallimard. (Original work published 1956 – 1957.)

TL: Dolto, F. (1987). *Tout est langage*. Paris, FR: Vertiges du Nord/Carrere.

VC1: Percheminier, C. (Ed.). (1991). *Françoise Dolto: Correspondance, 1913–1938*. Paris, FR: Hatier.

VC2: Djéribi-Valentin, M. (Ed.) (2005). *Françoise Dolto: Une vie de correspondances, 1938 – 1988*. Paris, FR: Gallimard.

VO: Manier, C. & Kouki, E. (2003). *Françoise Dolto: La vague et l'océan, Séminaire sur les pulsions de mort (1970 – 1971)*. Paris, FR: Gallimard

Chapter One: Introduction ~ Witness & Filiation

Abstract: In this chapter, I describe Dolto's opening to the archaic origins of the transference, and I source the *filiation* of her ideas in Freud's drive theory. Beginning with her childhood pledge to be a doctor of education, I outline her medical and analytic training, as well as her social context among noteworthy peers in France, where psychoanalysis began with the need for translating words. I relate Dolto's crucial desire to be a witness of the unconscious, and I introduce the reader to the enigmatic echoes of her corpus. I contextualize my work as a psychobiography, defining my method, and I present Derrida's notion of 'trace' as a means for thinking about the transference in Dolto's texts.

Trieb," the drive, also designates in German the sprout, in the sense of what grows...but also in the sense of the development of what is born, the shoot, the bud, the child...This pulsion, or this pulse, is a force, but a force whose meaning remains absolute, hence unspecified
(Jacques Derrida, 2003/2010, 158).

Introduction

This psychobiographic study of Françoise Dolto is a work of the archive in all ways. I rely on artifacts from her childhood and treasures from the analytic archive, like her dissertation of 1939—its fragile pages leaving a trail of dust, as if self-effacing while disseminating. With Dolto, I examine the human archive—the infant—primarily aided by Freud's archive, his 'dream book.' Thus I engage "primal scenes of reading" (Mishra Tarc, 2015, 66)—the infant's, Dolto's, Freud's and my own. For my work is rooted in early childhood ruptures that left me questioning the psychical work of biligualism (Saint-Onge, 2013),¹ while craving language memoirs and «joul» [slang]. And Dolto's project is also archival—narrating history before thought and "the infinitely other origin of language" (Derrida, 1967c, 224). She questions the boundaries of self, as pronouns slip from first to

third, engaging material not thinkable as ‘I,’ nor even thinkable. Thus, Dolto provokes the reader’s ‘othering,’ as we are invited back to a messy ‘time’ where words begin, into an as-if discursive ‘space.’ Enlisting the primary processes prevailing—drives and dream-work—I eschew linear chronology in favour of word-association as ‘method.’ So doing, I structure my chapters as six fields informed by language—filiation, transmission, listening, reading, speaking and writing—as content suggests its structure. Young-Bruehl explains: “When you write a full-length biography, turning-point images slowly emerge to you and you use them to frame the book” (1998b, 24). Through these fields, the reader will encounter Dolto’s phenomenal productivity and likely never think about the infant, or the word, the same way. For Dolto’s subject is precocious indeed, and his unconscious vitality inscribes, “dreams as records of what is unthinkable about history” (Farley, 2011, 24). I do not, however, tender a history of child psychoanalysis in France, nor do I focus on Dolto’s influence on her peers. Rather, I seek only the transference of affective investments from Dolto’s history to her thought. Transference is “that method by which we satisfy our instincts” (Freud, 1912/1990, 28), and it is of crucial value since, “psychic processes are essentially unconscious; becoming conscious, or being conscious, is not a necessary characteristic of psychic life” (Freud, 1907/1962, 124).

Psychobiography as a genre began with Freud’s study of DaVinci in 1910, and thousands have been published since then (Runyan, 1988, 299; Wikipedia, 2016). As Runyan explains, “psychobiography is spread across a substantial number of existing disciplines” (1988, 298), as “the use of any explicit or formal psychological theory in biography” (1984, 201). Freud’s DaVinci makes its first appearance as a work-in-progress in the Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society of 1 December 1909 (1909/1967, 338-

346). Yet 18 months prior, the Minutes reveal Freud's attention is already alert: "someday one should investigate how infantile impressions influence great achievements" (1908/1962, 361). And six months further back, Freud announces his interest in the "relation between the artistic creation and the poet's life" (1907/1962, 265-266). The idea spreads to Abraham, a Member, who studies first Giovanni Segantini, in the relation of the unconscious to "artistic creativeness" (1911/1955a, 211), and the capacity for sublimation (Ibid, 245); then Amonthep, showing, among other things, the after-effects of an attachment to a wet-nurse (1912/1955, 268f). Hitschmann, another Member, states in 1911 his desire to study "works from an author's youth...and the element that his writings have in common" (in Nunberg & Federn, 1974, 232), and writes his "psychoanalytic biographies" in 1912-1948 (Hitschmann, 1957). His notion of the genre usefully invokes theory as creativity, asking "Why does a man solve precisely this problem and in precisely this way?" (Ibid, 65). Two close disciplines should not be confused with the genre, however. The first is Lifton's "psychohistory" (2011, 344), about shared historical themes, intended to depart from the "psychoanalytic model of instinctual drives" (1974a, 31; 1983, 36; 2011, 365 & 373). The second is Edel's "literary biography" (1959; 1987), focused on how an author's fantasies enter stories, but refusing the unconscious, the drives, and psychoanalysts who "blazon their incompetence on ground where they do not belong" (1959, 93). Somewhat more congenial is Elms, who views DaVinci as the model (1988, 19), but is oddly harnessed to quantitative methods invoking hypotheses, validity and databases (2007, 111-112); further, Elms has an avowed "passion for pathography" (1994,9), in opposition to Freud's intention. Closer to Freud is Fernandez, who begins with DaVinci's "dream of the vulture" (1972, 17; 1975, 32), studies the "childhood of the artist" (1972, 39), and focuses on the "interaction between man

and the oeuvre in unconscious motivations”(1972, 38-39; also 1975, 12). In fact, his psychobiography of Cesare Pavese provides priceless references to a word appearing in associations in several novels (1967, 371-375)—and of the literary return of a wet-nurse (1967, 123, 158 & 305). But paradoxically, he rejects the «Freud archaïque» (1975, 281) and considers the «théorie de la sublimation...une imposture» (1975, 281-283). Roudinesco remarks on the anomaly, admitting Fernandez is a major proponent—yet one “inspired by the esthetic of psychopathology” (1975a, 30) that “distances itself from the Freudian initiative” (Ibid, 29). Conversely, Roudinesco lauds Bonaparte’s study of Poe as true to Freud’s intent, by concentrating on the unconscious, repressed childhood memory, and repetition in an oeuvre (Ibid, 46); Freud actually prefaces that study for his “friend and pupil” (1933d, 254). Following Freud, Gay roots his work in DaVinci (1988, 268), and declares his goal is “to integrate psychoanalysis with history...not psychohistory” (1984, 8). Thus he states Freud “impelled me to ask these questions, and left his mark on my answers” (1984, 10), while rejecting psychobiographies that “discount those instinctive drives” (1984, 227). Young-Bruehl, who also considers DaVinci the “touchstone of the genre” (1998b, 48), and whom I later engage, encourages “psychoanalytically trained biographers” (1998a, 237) to search “childhood materials, tracing developmental lines and considering cultural contexts” (Ibid, 240; 1998b, 9). Harris (1998) has similar recommendations.

Roudinesco believes the contribution of psychoanalysis to biography is in “recogniz[ing] what is doubtlessly the most revolutionary aspect of the Freudian discovery: the «lien» of the unconscious and language” (1975b, 85). Thus, the unconscious arrives in narrative as a provocation to revolt—a concept Kristeva takes up in 1996 (2000) that will matter to my thinking. The promise of rupture is announced in Freud’s most wildly popular

texts: his ‘dream book’ (1900) and studies of jokes and ordinary errors (1901-1905)—‘Freudian slips.’ This publishing event is quickly followed by Saussure’s (1907-1911) structuration of language (as repair?). The same two-step seems to happen 60 years later. For in 1962, the Minutes appear in English (first)—the archive of Freud’s Association. Also in 1962, SE III (1893-1899) is published—the archive of Freud’s thought. In it, he declares his debts to Charcot, whom he is translating, and to the Salpêtrière (1893c, 5&13)—and most provocatively, introduces “deferred action” (1895, 456): unconscious repetitions in, of, as reality. This notion of «après-coup» disturbs the meaning of ‘the present’ and dislocates rationality from its hierarchy, as simply, “our ordinary thought, unconscious, with occasional intrusions into consciousness” (1895c, 373). Levinas takes Freud’s offer by starting a radical narration in the wide space that opens in the fabric of historicity, with «La trace de l’autre» (1963). Thereupon (as response?), Starobinski (1964) releases the first translation of 99 secret journals from 1906-1909—the archive of Saussure’s thought—wherein the master of linguistics reveals “anagrams” in Latin poetry—a “repetition of syllables” (in Starobinski, 1971, 30-31) and “prevalent homophony” (Ibid, 129 & 134), as a “game on phonemes” (Ibid, 125). Starobinski minimizes, “Why not expect a combinatory art” (1971, 154 & 159) of «mot-thème» (e.g. Ibid, 17, 23)? Yet, as-if play insists, the reader hears Lacan’s (1971) homonymic «mathème» (Wikipédia, 2016). Others receive Saussure’s anagrams as “words beneath the words” (Scheidhauer, 2010, 123); and a “possibly unconscious production of a latent text within a manifest text” (Bachner, 2003, 4). While Kristeva derives from them her «paragrammatisme» (Forest, 1995, 253-255), as “displacements and condensations from phonemes” (Kristeva, 1974, 219) that prompt a need to “re-examine the functioning of language” (Ibid, 239). Yet I offer that the curious counter-

play between Freud and Saussure makes publishing both a force and a scene of its own in history, as inscription precedes discourse (and action)—being not merely a writing of what happened, but ‘that’ [«ca»] which happens. Of note, the same period inaugurates the «Tel Quel» [as-is] group, literary and philosophical theorists with whom Derrida worked (Marx-Scouras, 1991). Roudinesco maintains Derrida’s «trace» fuelled the movement, as it “gave the notion of writing a serious philosophical caution of which it was previously deprived” (1975b, 79); while Kristeva credits his related notion of “arch-writing” (1974, 129), as «la grammatologie derridienne» became the «référence essentielle» for the group (Forest, 1995, 259). In fact, Derrida was prolific in 1967, launching three major works (1967a, 1967b, 1967c) that elaborate ‘trace,’ as the unknowable transiting human writing (ergo, history). And he engages Freud specifically on writing (1967c, 293-340), invoking “dreams following old facilitations” (Ibid, 307 & 311; in Freud, 1895, 340). As Derrida notes, the “unconscious text is already woven of pure traces” (1967c, 314), making the encounter with reality a “rupture that will thereafter but resonate «à travers» language” (1967c, 169).

How this resonance happens, I submit, is what Dolto narrates. The precocious relation between the unconscious and the «phonème» formally enters her corpus in 1957 (SS, 210), along a trail from infancy to her dissertation, where Dolto deems analysis “a problem of language” (MA, 7)—seeking what is “behind words” (MA, 13), and the “passive storing of words” (MA, 28). Dolto first worked under Édouard Pichon, who (with Damourette) wrote an epic study of French grammar (Leroy & Muni Toke, 2007; Roudinesco, 1982). Ergo when Pichon joined the movement, he and Laforgue steered its vocabulary (Roudinesco, 1982, 315 & 386). Ironically, Laforgue, “the first French disciple” (Ibid, 290), had “imperfect French” (Ibid, 291). So “greeted in France under the auspices of

an obscure germanic thought” (Ibid, 397), tribulations multiplied: Freud and Laforgue disagreed on “scotomization” (Ibid, 315 & 391-392), Freud disliked the «Ça» for the unconscious (Ibid, 376-385), and so on, as translation became “the sea serpent of the history of the movement” (Ibid, 348). Thus I start my study of Dolto in this paradox of translation as continuity and rupture—with an apt new definition of psychobiography I find elsewhere, out of (apparent) context, in the writing on education by Deborah Britzman, as I try “to invite the writer’s own character to emerge from the work, and thus create a means to grasp the transference and call upon it” (2015, 9).

A being in language

Françoise Dolto (1908-1988), France’s ‘other’ most famous psychoanalyst and an icon of the 20th century, has a unique corpus of vital interest to psychoanalysis, narrative studies, linguistics and education. Equal parts autobiographical and professional, and continually rereleased, her texts interweave brilliant insights and intricate clinical portraits with humorous anecdotes and self-deprecating remarks that her opinion «n’a aucun intérêt» [is moot] (CE, 369). Even in a casual encounter, one is struck by the unusual word play and frankness in Dolto’s project. But in a slow reading, one begins to hear an uncanny echo between her childhood history and her theoretical notions about childhood, which alternately escape and attract her attention. Dolto’s key belief is that, “at the same time as we live our relation to the other, logic, referring us to the meaning of words, we also live on another register a relation to which we do not pay attention, from the domain of the unconscious” (1985a, 283). *Conveyance from this unconscious register*, which I will understand as ‘the transference,’ arrives in Dolto’s texts as an unstoppable countersignature—a trace. And following this trace takes us to the most unexpected destination imaginable: the archaic

stage of psychical development, a dreamscape wherein resides the infant from conception to weaning—essentially, nine months on either side of birth—only reluctantly departing towards reality. Through the transference in Dolto’s texts, we also learn something quite unexpected: not only is her corpus a spectacular example of trace, but it also offers an astounding theorization of transference itself. And it is this enigmatic blur of subject and object, heralding primary narcissism, that will help explicate how Dolto can be the subject *and* the object of her own theory—thus, how I will end up ‘explaining Dolto with Dolto.’

Dolto once said she could live as well not knowing where she was going (ATP, 26). But in the effort towards meaning-making with her difficult material, I propose an original movement that returns Dolto to Freud, who inaugurated her century and psychoanalysis with his watershed theorization on dreams, as I submit that her work (in an astonishing reciprocity) is its exquisite articulation. I also believe Dolto is the foremost theorist of the oral passive stage, and that in exploring the archaic origins of transference with her, we will find (as much as it is ‘findable’), “proof that what we are dealing with are impressions from childhood [that] must therefore be established by external evidence, and there is seldom an opportunity for doing this” (Freud, 1900a, 189). I am awakened to this method in psychobiography, enlisting trace, by Freud’s singular text of less than 100 pages on Leonardo DaVinci (1910b), largely relegated to the margins of his corpus. The publisher of a popular 1984 re-edition ironically warns “Freud never repeated the exercise” (frontispiece), and the book “seems to have been greeted since its publication with an unusual amount of disapproval” (Ibid). This is our first hint that we have come upon something that disturbs and disrupts: the unconscious cannot be far. For biography is normally a densely annotated timeline, but Freud writes something deceptively simple that

almost passes unnoticed, then becomes trivialized. Yet Freud's is the first demonstration of the path of instinctual activity toward thought (1910b, 136). The key to understanding future achievements, he explains, is in childhood phantasies (Ibid). I believe what Freud critically opens here is *the trace*: the irrepressible transiting of unconscious material in our works that makes us all what Jacques Derrida called "autobiographical animals" (1997/2008)—complex, anachronistic living beings that cannot help but leave, seek and find the transference in texts. Dolto's texts offer the transference as wild correspondence to an unknown addressee: a movement of traces. For the unconscious, the "essence of the living" (Derrida, 1997/2008, 50), is capable lifelong "of affecting itself with traces of a living self and thus, of autobiographing itself...to trace itself or retrace a path of itself...to call to itself" (Ibid). Derrida interprets the trace as "writing in voice" (1983, 81); a web of silent script (1978, 207); what proclaims as much as recalls (1967b, 97); and the road to open an itinerary (1995b, 149; also 1995b, 112; 1999/2004, 17), with no «destination assurée» (1982, 77), as text holds what is "traced and effaced" (1973, 154 & 156; also 1967b, 69; 1978, 226; 1987b, 17; 2001b, 393). Thus the trace is testimony to dream-work: access to an ever-absent referent originating in private audition long ago and far away—a *ruin* and a «*rue*» *in*—whereby we enlist our eyes to search for what our ears, alone, have lost.

Dolto's constructions—often punctuated by her expression, «tout se passe comme si» [everything happens as if]—will unsettle our comfortable repression from the start. She believes the child just born has already been living a long life of shared desires (CE, 350; JD, 273; PJE 71; SP1, 76). She also insists that the fetus is a being in language (CE, 43; 1977/1984, 208), and capable of ethical thought (SF, 342 & 345). Furthermore, she believes that through his un-obscured access to the unconscious, the infant is potentially stronger

than the adult (EM, 221), for reality extinguishes the richness of childhood (EM, 223). Freud anticipates the resistance Dolto's positions provoke: "they arise from the fact that we are here touching on the generation of anxiety and on the problem of repression" (1900a, 237). Hers is indeed a landscape of radical uncertainty where, as she often repeats, «on ne sait pas ce qu'on fait» [we don't know what we're doing] (e.g., CE, 329). Then, with few tributes to anyone but Freud, Dolto advances a novel project whose strength derives from her valuing what is childish and phantasmatic in herself (EN, 90, 120 & 124; Nobécourt, 2008a; Ribowski, 2004; WIN, 22), and her conviction that «l'enfant sait» [the child knows] (SP3, 9). Every child begins life in a story (PJE, 23; SP3, 19), Dolto contends. Thus, it is in the opening to her own story, so generously shared, that I begin to explore the oeuvre of a human being who said of her work, simply: «Je suis venue pour cela, pour vous témoigner de l'inconscient» [I have come for this, to witness (for/before you) the unconscious] (CE, 328). And in keeping this promise, I believe, she will most assuredly succeed.

Vineuse & Vava

Precisely as Freud is writing DaVinci, Dolto has a brush with death (EN, 62), thrown into suffering when her Irish nurse is dismissed. The memory is repressed until 1937, by which time Dolto has been in psychoanalytic sessions with René Laforgue for almost three years. She was well after the first year, she recalls, but insisted on another two because she wished to help others without thinking of herself (ATP, 119-122; DW 162-3; EN, 96). The question begs as to the feeling that something was being withheld. Yet three years in, a word arrives in repetitions of faint recollections of fragrant red hair and clinking glasses: *Vineuse* (AI, 144; Nobécourt, 2008a). Laforgue suggests she ask her mother if rue Vineuse means anything. Her mother reluctantly confesses: «la rue Vineuse, c'est une histoire» (Nobécourt,

2008a). And a story it surely was, one that will slowly decompose in the most remarkable way throughout our study. For now, our awareness begins only with «la nurse,» a young nanny aged about 18, from a respectable family of judges, who found Paris in the spring of 1909 just too hard to resist, taking her young charge to parties at a nearby hotel, parking the baby stroller just outside the door. The mother is angry the incident is remembered at all, adding to her resentment of psychoanalysis. But Dolto remains thankful to Freud, and to Laforgue, for all her years, for the chance to begin again after finally reaching the sorrow that had structured her life upon a «fondation boiteuse» [shaky foundation] (PF, 105). In fact, “it is precisely these most important of all impressions that are not remembered in later years” (Freud, 1913, 183). And yet, as Freud will theorize so decisively, and Dolto will illustrate so beautifully, these impressions are not exactly forgotten either.

Consciously, Dolto will be indebted lifelong to her analysis for how it helped her understand the troubles of children better than if she had only been a doctor (Nadal, 39f). Yet her brother, Philippe, suffered because she shared his analyst: it was «très maladroit» of Laforgue, she states (EN, 95; Roudinesco, 1982, 355)—«peut-être que Philippe a été malheureux que je *viene* aussi» [italics mine; perhaps Philippe was unhappy that I *came* too] (ATP, 121). Yet listening carefully, we cannot miss the word play by this Freudian. Indeed, Dolto’s life and work are a continuous invocation of the accidental, parapraxes as inevitabilities, the “indiscretions of the unconscious” (Britzman, 2003, 36). Such irruptions in the conscious fabric of human texts represent an overturning—a rising from underneath and in-between our words—by which the unconscious interrupts any comfortable linearity. So with psychobiography, we turn away from intellectual biography, where ideas scaffold

others in the progress of reason. For libidinal history is nothing of the sort, and we are concerned with intellect only insofar as its achievements are traceable to the unconscious.

Freud explains, in relation to DaVinci, that nature has a way of forcing its way into experience (1910b, 137), causing repetitions of childhood patterns. So Freud advises the biographer to look for the signature of the primary processes (Ibid, 119), especially where there is overdetermination (Ibid, 93). Freud then follows his method logically: if our earliest dream life affects our futures, later achievements should disclose traces of these phantasies and the work of the unconscious. By way of a demonstration, Freud then traces the phantasy DaVinci experienced in the cradle, a visit by a vulture (Ibid, 82), to his theoretical work on flight. Through the influence of his unconscious, Freud explains, DaVinci was “destined from the first to investigate the flight of birds” (Ibid, 92), being “bound up in a special and personal way with the problem of flight” (Ibid, 126). Freud notes the unconscious conveyance in technique, too, for after his passion for the Mona Lisa, DaVinci “transferred its traits...to all the faces that he painted or drew afterwards” (1910b, 110). Freud describes the transference as, “a universal phenomenon of the human mind” that, “dominates the whole of each person’s relations to his human environment” (1925[1924], 42), by which unconscious phantasies are externalized (1914c, 150-151). Yet while DaVinci refers to his childhood only once (Freud, 1910b, 82), Dolto is the only analyst other than Freud to have deliberately left a rich personal record. Through Freud’s correspondence and his *Autobiographical Study* (1925[1924])—and critically, through the exposition of so much of his life and character in his study of dreams—psychoanalysis is itself accidental upon autobiography. And what these two courageously witness is that life is entirely sourced in

the unconscious, being the origin of who we become and remain—though even now, we find few as willing as they were to admit enigma, the unconscious, into the human story.

Perhaps little Françoise was destined to be so frank from the start, born into biography we might say, as her name, «franc sois» [honest be], is literally the injunction to «parlai vrai,» speak truth, and we will find the ethics of speaking and listening to be the core of her project. As another case in point, her childhood nickname was «Vava» [go-go] (e.g., AI, 74; EN, 24; MF, 19-20; VC1, 34-35, 160-161 & 327). Known for her boundless energy and needing little sleep, Dolto reflects late in life that perhaps she can't stop herself because Vava lost her surname, «Marette» [to stop me-myself] (VC2, 453). She is only *half*-joking. For soon, we will discover the share of play in her thinking, this capacity for engaging phantasy and dream-work, to be the greater part of genius, as word-things upon her path become openings onto histories folded with significance. Young Françoise put her sleeplessness to good use, having liberal access to her father's library. By the age of 16, she had read psychoanalysis through Régis and Hesnard (1916) (AI, 116; ATP, 104) when two works by Freud were soon translated: *On Dreams* (1901), by Hélène Legros (1925); and *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), by Ignace Meyerson (1926) (Douville, 2009, 117 & 123). Dolto may also have read Freud in German, her mother's tongue—giving her even earlier access to his works—as a letter in 1931 suggests Françoise tutor Philippe in it (VC1, 331).

Françoise was educated largely at home, as her mother actively prevented school attendance (AI, 132; D&R, 16; EN, 92). It seems she was needed at home to keep the mother company, following the tragic death of the only other girl among seven children, beautiful Jacqueline, much preferred, who died in 1920 at age 18. This death would be the second to devastate the family, following that of a maternal uncle, Pierre, a young soldier

killed in 1916. In fact, the history of this bourgeois family quickly becomes far more nuanced than their material comforts suggest, exposing young Françoise to deep struggles: “She spent her youth in a climate of grief and guilt; a serious neurosis was the result” (psycho-analytikerinnen, 2013). Amid the jokes and the off-handed remarks of this candid woman, then, we find the question of death was already troubling her openly since the age of four: «La question...faut pas oublier...après la mort» [...I mustn't forget...after death] (EN, 12).

In 1924, after years of arguments, Françoise enrolled at Lycée Molière to get a «BAC» in philosophy, after which she trained with the Red Cross in 1929 and became a nurse at age 25 (AI, 28-29; EN, 82; VC1, 231). Then, against her mother's adamant belief it would make her unmarriageable, Françoise won the right to go to medical school (AI, 118-119; EN, 77)—ironically, so she could accompany Philippe (AI, 122). Dolto half-jokes again: “I would have said I was settling in a bordello and it wouldn't have been worse” (DW, 157; Nobécourt, 2008a). Her mother was particularly disgusted at her plan to study psychoanalysis, insisting Freud was a «villain monsieur» [wicked man] (AI, 125; EN, 99). No wonder that when Dolto completed her dissertation exam, 11 July 1939, she registered as a physician only two hours later. She was in a hurry to work (AI, 35; VC2, 16f). I offer the thesis itself as worthy of note, as the first with ‘psychoanalysis’ in its title among French filiations (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, xixi), from which Dolto would found the field of “the subjectivity of the child” in France (Ibid, 24f). Yet her mother put greasy laundry on her copy (AI, 125; EN, 99). Such was the home environment of this early reader of psychoanalysis whom Roudinesco (fully aware of Lacan's reknown) deems to have been the “most popular person of the French psychoanalytic community” (1986, 169).

Un médecin d'éducation

Of course, we can never know how much of her interest in psychoanalysis was nurtured by the curious concordances around her year of birth, 1908, which marked the first psychoanalytic congress (Gay, 1988, 184); the first dissemination of Freud in journals (Ibid, 157); and the formation of both the Vienna and Berlin psychoanalytic societies (Ibid, 174 & 181). By any measure, Françoise Murette was born at an auspicious time for psychoanalysis. And by the age of eight, she was already expressing a clear desire to be a ‘doctor of education.’ People would ask her, what is that career anyhow? And she would reply seriously, “I have no idea. But it must exist” (AI, 112; D&R, 17; EN, 68-69; 1985a, 231-232). Simply, she explains, she had begun to notice that when household staff had disagreements, the younger children would be chided, then vomit. She knew the (new) Irish nanny had been drinking and had words with the cook, but the doctor would be called, Philippe or André would be put on a diet, watched for eight days because of “indigestion”—but he wasn’t ill. Only there had been a scene between the cook and «l’Irlandaise» (AI, 112). And our nanny—that young «nurse Irlandaise»—echoes even here, as-if ever-present.

Lifelong, Dolto would value her years as a nurse, as it allowed her to see «l’avers du décor de la médecine» [obverse of the medical scene] (Nobécourt, 2008a), a difficult world where she was, in 1929, the only intern for 1200 patients (ATP, 127). Dolto grew her interest in being a pediatrician (EN, 84), and in doing psychoanalytic consultations around surgery (EN, 97-98). In a warm interview with Elisabeth Roudinesco in 1986, when Dolto is nearly eighty, it is clear she valued having had a practice that evolved out of the everyday life of a hospital (D&R, 14-15). For example, she felt displeased in 1946 with the first centre for psychoanalysis in Paris, at Claude-Bernard, refusing to join because some children could

have used a doctor as well (Ibid, 30). On the other hand, after hearing from Jenny Aubry about the realities of being a hospital physician, Dolto says, «j'ai fui la hierarchie » [I fled the hierarchy] (Ibid). This simple self-reflection symbolizes well her refusals of codification.

In this high regard for the ordinary work of hospitals is rooted much of Dolto's unmitigated respect for Freud. On the first page of her dissertation, she credits him with being a «homme de laboratoire» who prioritized examples (MA, 1) and who was always willing to rework his theories (VC2, 672). And throughout her working life, she will regard the clinic as an opportunity that «illustre la théorie inventée par Freud» (D&R, 33). The high respect given to Freud is convincing, as she credits him with the genius of inspiration (JD, 67), the «héroïque» beginning (DW, 22), and a “fantastically supportive schema” (TL, 36). She also honours Freud as the first to give the unconscious a prominent role in psychical life (MA, 14). Repeatedly, Dolto emphasizes that Freud is her only reference, with the caveat that she has used Freud to think about the period before «l'âge Oedipien» (AI, 217; D&R, 32; DW, 27, 31-32 & 39; Nobécourt, 2008b; VC2, 796-797). And Dolto wholeheartedly believes her own purpose is to dedicate herself to the research Freud inaugurated, to «la vérité qui parle depuis Freud, par sa souffrance et celle des autres» [the truth that speaks, since Freud, through his suffering and that of others] (VC2, 655).

The psychoanalytic project that comes to 19th century France as a response to personal suffering will be strangely marked by the public suffering that frames its eruption. One is prompted to notice, not for the last time, the performative in the divisiveness that fills the field of first adherents: “one is tempted to see in the psychoanalytic movement of the time of Freud the history of the psychogeography of Freud's thought, and the transference that makes it fertile and sustains it in the infinite movement of borrowings” (Douville, 2009,

v). So it is that psychoanalysis in France, born «entre deux guerres» [between two wars] will be irrevocably coloured by its peculiar time and space (Bourgeron, 1993, 14). In her own appraisal of the situation, Dolto reveals she despised polemics (ATP, 19; LF, 300; VC2, 225 & 333) and was never deeply aware of the controversy in England (Ibid, 31). Thus, she was happy when psychoanalytic institutions dissolved in France, believing they impeded freedom of thought (Ibid, 24; ATP, 133); she walked away from the Société de psychanalyse de Paris (SPP) in 1953 (D&R, 23)—though Philippe, also an analyst, stayed; she quit the Société française de psychanalyse (SFP) in 1963 (Roudinesco, 1986, 365-367), impatient with power struggles; she was frustrated by political machinations at L'École Freudienne de Paris (EFP), just prior to its closure in 1980 (VC2, 669-672); yet she was unfazed by her inadmissibility to the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) in 1953 (Roudinesco, 1986, 329, 356, 365 & 657; Turkle, 1995). As for the war, Dolto still met André Berge, Juliette Favez and Marc Schlumberger every two weeks, rotating homes, defying bombings and black-outs: «le travail d'analyse continuait» [work continued] (AI, 169). So it was that Dolto became a crucial member of the second generation of analysts in France (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, xx). And thus situated, she hobnobbed with the elite of her time, stunning even Roudinesco, also of the bourgeoisie (1986/1988). Yet what will matter to Dolto is never status but solidarity with those “convinced of the dynamic of the unconscious” (AI, 218; VC2, 796-797). Hers is a trust, then, in a particular human narrative.

Inner circle

Planted on the soil of war, the «noyau» [kernel] of French psychoanalysis was Marie Bonaparte, René Laforgue and Eugénie Sokolnicka (Douville, 2009, 116)—the first two deep in Dolto's inner circle. Regarding the Princess, whom Freud rightly valued so highly

(Bertin, 1982, 300; E.Freud, 1970, 158; Gay, 1988, 586) I find the suggestion on the name impossible to refuse: «bonne à part,» ‘good on the side,’ or ‘the good one with a share.’ Dolto’s correspondence includes a thank you note from the Princess for expressions of sympathy following Freud’s passing (VC2, 22). There is also an uncanny resonance, as the heroine of an unfinished novel by the Princess is «Vaga» (Bourgeron, 1993), who runs away to the Midi—a work paused when she decides to translate DaVinci the same year, 1925 (Bertin, 1982, 295). Bonaparte is sympathetic towards Dolto, writing a very particular message in a gift of her published notebooks: «Pour Françoise Murette, psychanalyste et femme, ces échos des drame d’une petite fille. En toute sympathie» [...psychoanalyst and woman, these echoes of the drama of a little girl...] (AI, 125). For her part, Dolto is sympathetic towards Bonaparte, commenting on her difficult life with a sadistic father and grandmother (SF, 313). Like Dolto, Bonaparte, familiarly known as «Mimi» (Bertin, 1982, 53), will have a beloved nanny she calls «zinzin» [dingdong] (Bertin, 1982, 189)—a word that performs its onomatopoeia in Dolto’s own work. In fact, the Princess is a neighbour, at rue Adophe Yvon (Douville, 2009, 177), a five-minute walk away. Dolto will be invited to her home on 12 (or 13) July 1939, hours after her thesis, for she had just been accepted as a member of the SPP (the first of two required cases had been submitted earlier, in 1937-1938) (LF, 292-293). Attendees that day included Ernest Jones and Melanie Klein (Ibid).

The other of the French «noyau», René Laforgue, will not only be Dolto’s analyst but Bonaparte’s too; and by 1925, Laforgue is dining regularly with the Princess (Bertin, 1982, 277; Bourgeron, 1993, 12). When Dolto defends Laforgue against charges of anti-semitism, Bonaparte supports Dolto and Laforgue unequivocally (Roudinesco, 1986, 175). Dolto credits Laforgue for being the first to practice psychoanalysis in France, at «la Pitié»

in 1914 (D&R, 17); and the first meeting of French analysts was at his home in 1926 (Bourgeron, 1993, 13). Roudinesco reflects rather unkindly on his “vulgar manners” and “modest origins” (1982, 353), believing his dissidence cost Dolto support by association (D&R, 20; 1999, 186), as Freud questioned the reception given to Sokolnicka, his representative in France and Laforgue’s analyst (Bertin, 1982, 264; Douville, 2009, 109; Roudinesco, 1982, 288; 294). Dolto sought Laforgue on the advice of her friend, Marc Schlumberger (EN, 92; Roudinesco, 1986, 169; VC1, 349f). Her analysis began on 17 February 1934 and ended in March 1937 (VC1, 402; VC2, 13f). Dolto appreciated that he valued intuition (SP3, 8; 1932/1963, 106); did not try to normalize her (EN, 119; PF, 70); and allowed silent sessions, including her first three, where she only cried (ATP, 118; EN, 104). In turn, Laforgue felt her gift for analysis, lowering his rate (ATP, 118; EN, 104) and obtaining a bursary for her from Bonaparte (Yannick, 1999, 27). Dolto vacationed in the Midi (MF, 95; PF, 61) with Laforgue and his other analysands, «le Club des Piqués» [the stung] (VC2, 526-527). Thus, the Marettes were among the first families in France touched by the potential for a revolt of one’s narrative inherent in analysis: her mother hoped (after six months) she would stop (MF, 81) and her father disliked the new personality (VC1, 532).

Of her generation, however, Dolto’s record with Lacan is the richest.² Dolto unabashedly admits she barely read Lacan (D&R), never adhered to his theories (Geissmann, 1998, 293), and did not know «petit objet a» (DW, 70). Further, she notes she was formed long before Lacan came on the scene (DW, 65). Aubry agrees: “Françoise does not need «mathèmes» to hear the unconscious of the child” (Aubry & Cifali, 1986/1988, 48). In sum, Dolto believes Lacan errs in two keys ways: in thinking everything could be put into words, while there are “additional supports that are rhythmized and coloured and have no

words, pulsions that are non-verbalized and non-verbalizable” (LF, 282); and in trying to master pulsions intellectually (LF, 307). Still, they shared warm conversations and correspondence for decades, Aubry noting his fascination for Dolto’s notions: “Lacan drank her words” (Aubry & Cifali, 1986/1988, 45). I leave aside any implications for his work.

We also owe a special regard to Sophie Morgenstern, who arrives in Dolto’s texts on the nebulous edge of repression—«mais j’oublie de dire le maître principal...c’est Madame Morgenstern» [but I’m forgetting to say my principal teacher] (DW, 23; Nobécourt, 2008b). Indeed, a survey of Morgenstern’s oeuvre reveals her significant contributions to Dolto’s. Morgenstern began her own practice in 1924, when she arrived in France (Morgenstern, 2003a, 9), and she volunteered with Heuyer for more than a decade (AI, 217; Geissmann, 1998, 149; VC2, 797). She was the first in France to employ psychoanalysis with children (Douville, 2009, 129; DW, 23; Nobécourt, 2008b; VC2, 797), and she recommended Dolto to Pichon (VC2, 786). She was analysed by Sokolnicka (Roudinesco, 1982, 344), but Dolto (at nearly 80) will recall—in a touching slip?—that Morgenstern said she was analysed by Freud himself (Geissmann, 1998, 140; VC2, 786). In fact, Morgenstern’s was a radical practice centred entirely on listening, a witnessing, “without any ethic of normalisation,” by which children reentered communication with other children and especially with themselves: “demutisation by graphic expression” (AI, 217; VC2, 797). It was “very precious,” an example in the medical tradition, Dolto says (AI, 217; VC2, 797). Morgenstern’s suicide in 1940 surely wounded Dolto deeply, as the reference to trying to help, and being unable to, comes up often: “I had gone to see her to bring her out of Paris in June 1940, but she did not want to come” (ATP, 137; D&R, 18; Geissmann, 1998, 150; VC2, 786). It was Morgenstern who taught Dolto to make children talk in trust, she

reminisces (D&R, 12; Morgenstern, 2003a, 12). And with Morgenstern's guidance, Dolto listened to babies on hospital night shifts, returning regularly (D&R, 11), producing one of the most powerful observations of her entire corpus: "the child waits for you even if you never speak to him" (DW, 24; Nobécourt, 2008b). Dolto wistfully adds that Morgenstern was a «douce et généreuse femme» [soft and generous woman] (D&R, 18; VC2, 786).

From Aubry to Winnicott

Dolto's connections beyond this point are a veritable 'who's who' of psychoanalysis in France. We first meet Jenny Aubry (E.Roudinesco's mother), a neuropsychiatrist who herself engages psychoanalysis in 1948 (Roudinesco, 1986, 222), and whom Dolto much admires for bringing analysts into the hospital for consultations (D&R, 27 & 29; VO, 233), as well as for diagnosing the illness of hospitalism as provoked by psychical trouble (VO, 233-234). Hospitalism, Dolto explains, happened when «l'Assistance publique» removed children from their parents, in aggravated separations that "if it did not kill them, made them autists" (Ibid). These children, Aubry found, were predictably prone to acute vomiting and 'green diarrhea' whenever their hospital caregivers argued—what Dolto explains as the consequence of "the auditory trial they had heard" (Ibid). Dolto reports that Aubry told the nurses, "Go ahead and argue, but know that the children are with you" (Ibid). Indeed, the record is abundant with the mutual respect and genuine appreciation between these two women, both medical pioneers, whose lifespans almost overlap (Roudinesco, 1982, 418).

From here, Dolto's extensive social connections are dizzying, embedding her in social relations right across the landscape of psychoanalysis in her time and place—through myriad conferences, meetings, clinics, dinners, walks and letters—in a paradoxical counterpoint to a highly innovative practice in which she will eschew referencing these very

same peers. There is Alice Balint's sister, who paints a portrait of Dolto (VC2, 511f). Raymond De Saussure (son of Ferdinand, the linguist and analysand of Freud's) (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, xx), congratulates her on her thesis (VC2, 17), and on her marriage and work (VC2, 153); he also solicits her help in finding employment for two colleagues (VC2, 153 & 369). Dolto visits Julia Favez-Boutonnier's vacation home in 1961, a place named, «Le Noyer» (MF, 138). She credits Sándor Ferenczi with teaching her much—the most after Winnicott (DW, 23)—for he was «un homme ouvert» [an open man], not too stuck on theory (SF, 309). I add that, like Dolto, Ferenczi believed in learning from patients, including children (Ferenczi, 1931/1980, 14-15 & 21). Ángel Garma and Heinz Hartmann are mentioned once, as providing supervision (control) for her training as an analyst, likely in 1938 only (EN, 104). Georges Heuyer gave her a tough time at her dissertation examination, as he thought IQ could not be improved with analysis, while she argued the opposite (D&R, 19); with Heuyer, she says she learned what not to do, for he was a harsh man who wrote insults in children's files and sent the ill to detention centres (ATP, 123). There are wedding greetings (VC2, 93) from Daniel Lagache, whom she could not differentiate from Lacan for years because they were inseparable, like “siamese twins” (D&R, 19-20), or “two zombies” (LF, 292). Of Serge Lebovici, she says much the same as René Diatkine—another set of twins, perhaps—but the comments are unusually negative for Dolto, who finds good to say about most people: “Lebovici was my enemy at the SPP” (VC2, 668), who criticized her intuition (JP, 35) and, along with Diatkine, mocked and insulted her (LF, 300; Roudinesco, 1986, 257). “I didn't care,” she adds, “I just kept going along my way,” adding ironically that while she never wanted to live with five brothers either, it helped her deal with the SPP (LF, 300-301). From John Leuba, then SPP secretary,

there are congratulations to «ma p'tite Mimi» in 1938, recognizing her membership (AI, 36). Rudolph Loewenstein names his daughter Marie-Françoise in her honour (VC2, 25); along with René Spitz (below), he took over supervision of her early cases from Garma and Hartmann (EN, 104). And there is a lovely dinner invitation in March 1960 from Maurice Merleau-Ponty (VC2, 313). In regards Sacha Nacht, there is more rare hate, as she accuses him of a “totalitarian gangster spirit,” paternalistic and coercive (LF, 294; VC2, 227-229). In correspondence, Jean-Bertrand Pontalis requests articles for publications (VC2, 351 & 622); and in 1978, his letter fondly recalls how “she let him walk with her to Trousseau” years ago (VC2, 622). There are many letters back and forth with Elisabeth Roudinesco, in thanks for gifts of their respective books (VC2, 585, 737, 818, 837, 886), and a note of sympathy when Aubry dies (VC2, 839); we also learn Dolto was Elisabeth’s childhood analyst (psychoanalytikerinnen, 2013). René Spitz is supportive throughout her career, advising her on her doctorate (VC2, 511-513); even after emigrating, he writes regularly and sends her “delicious” American baby food (LF, 293), while only months before Dolto’s death, Spitz’s daughter still corresponds (LF, 294). As for Donald Winnicott, “this is work as I would work if I were a man” (DW, 27). But Dolto bemoans the bandwagon of “doing the squiggle,” and how the transitional object is a family obsession (DW, 27 & 30). In a comment fully intended as a compliment, she adds, “Winnicott is not theory” (DW, 27). In fact, there is perhaps nowhere more than in relation to Winnicott that the reader new to Dolto will experience uncomfortable familiarity—as if he has already said what she says, or vice-versa—in a professional relation, sight unseen, that becomes a metaphor of what might be called ‘the problem of the English Channel.’ For not only is Dolto little known in English,

but it is as-if that body of water imposes a silence between kindred thinkers that, in turn, symbolizes in a most uncanny way the loss of that first beloved, English-speaking nanny.³

Charcot & Co.

I stop to double back, however, for it seems I have forgotten four without whom Dolto's story cannot be told. The first is Jean-Martin Charcot, whose work was so instrumental to psychoanalysis. All who are passionate about mental health can only be thankful for the revolution he inaugurated, in Paris, beginning with humane observations that the removal of organs was not helpful (Charcot, 1887/1971, 127); repetition is a symptom (Ibid, 200); and family environments are decisive in hysteria (Ibid, 165 & 202). Charcot's death in 1936 appears in correspondence from Dolto's mother (VC1, 542). But true to her lifelong rejection of mimetism, Dolto has little use for national illusions: some female hysterics put it on for Charcot, Dolto explains, because they loved him, but Freud noticed and called him out on it (SF, 326). From here, a little way around, I come upon Pierre Janet, Charcot's student, who pays homage to his master as the one who taught the study of hysteria «en savant» [intelligently] (1892/2013,78). But unlike Charcot, as charismatic in writing as in person, Janet is a hard read, his sentences constrained by his belief that the human spirit does not accept contradiction (Ibid, 16). So I leave him to Roudinesco, who pens him as the «philosophe d'un royaume déchiré, agressif, arrogant» [philosopher of a shredded kingdom...] (1982, 245).

From this point, the path around Charcot diverges. One branch follows Janet towards Édouard Pichon, his son-in-law (Bertin, 1982, 301; VC2, 26f). As Dolto's dissertation supervisor, he congratulates her (D&R, 19); and she reports favorably about his being her teacher (VC2, 228); on visiting him at Fontainebleau (VC2, 26); and on the chance to work

at Bretonneau from 1936 (D&R, 12-14; Roudinesco, 1986, 169). But a dark undertone seeps through, beginning with the revelation, in a footnote, that Dolto had not sent him a copy of her thesis, in which his preface is absent (VC,26f). True, too, Pichon clashed with Laforgue and Bonaparte, especially regarding the fledgling «*Revue française de psychanalyse*» (RFP) (Bourgeron, 1993, 13). And when he died in 1940, Dolto relocated to Trousseau (D&R, 25), as if his death allowed escape. Roudinesco does not mince words, calling him “Jekyll and Hyde” (1982,297), a psychotic, deranged, unyielding fanatic (Ibid, 299). On his acute paralysis from rheumatism and delusions, Roudinesco diagnoses the “evolution of incurability” (Ibid, 298). Sifting, I also discover Pichon once dedicated an article, “Death, anxiety and negation,” to Dolto (Roudinesco, 1982, 382). And I muse that his name for her, «la petite Murette» (Roudinesco, 1986, 168 & 277)—homonymically, “the little one stops me”—manifests in his symptoms, as a most curious contagion on suggestion seems to return us to Charcot’s hysterics. But in her early (contentious?) relation with Pichon, Dolto’s project seems destined from the start to be a work both in, and provoking, language.

Here, a final branch follows Angelo Hesnard, self-appointed interpreter of Freud who, as Roudinesco states, knew Janet’s hypotheses didn’t concord with Freud’s but tried to link them anyhow (1982, 262). Hesnard’s texts are a passive-aggressive monument to Freud right from the dedication, as he vows, “with his unjust criticisms to offer homage in pure admiration” (1926, n.p.). Two decades later, his mood has calcified, as he calls the unconscious a “postulate” (1946, 120) and attributes to Freud “cold and superhuman lucidity” (Ibid, 131). Hesnard’s sword strikes even Janet, “student of our great Charcot” (1946, 19)—thus, by implication, Charcot—for “few facts” and a “monotony of rules and hypotheses” (Ibid, 131). So I gladly abandon his reality in favour of a dream.

Unconscious energy

Freud opened his practice in Vienna in 1886, about a year after a trip to Paris to study with Charcot (Freud, 1886; Roudinesco, 1982, 60), financed by a grant he dreamed about (E. Freud, 1961, 166). He wrote to his fiancé, Martha, on 19 October 1885, that his dream came true on his first visit to the Salpêtrière (Ibid, 182).⁴ From this dream, Freud “devoted the first half of his life’s work to clinical phenomena which come into evidence more or less against the will of the ego” (E. Freud et al, 1978, 30). Freud’s interest in the unconscious (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 197) is first mentioned in an unpublished draft in 1892 (Breuer & Freud, 1892, 45f). And Freud’s oeuvre on dreams (1900) reveals the unconscious is responsible for “primary processes [that] are present in the mental apparatus from the first” (1900a, 603) as the “true psychological reality” (Ibid, 613), continuously active, day or night (Ibid). Thus, “what is suppressed continues to exist...and remains capable of psychological functioning” (Ibid, 608). The nature of that functioning is described as an “amount of psychic energy” (Ibid, 103) displaceable in “releases of pleasure and displeasure [that] automatically regulate the course of cathectic processes” (Ibid, 574). In fact, even in 1895, Freud observed that “affective process approximates to the uninhibited primary process” (1895, 357), so “where there is affect there is a primary process” (Ibid, 358); thus, we speak of quanta of affect (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 12, 325 & 448-450). And it is here, deep in Freud’s drive theory—his libido theory (1917b, 137 & 139)—that we root Dolto’s project: “Freud described the libidinal evolution of the human being whose pulsions of desire, active and passive, are organized during infancy in an unconscious structure,” she explains (SS, 26). And thus informed, she refers to libido as unconscious «énergie

modificatrice» (SS, 243; also LF, 9 & 11; SP1, 161), and to Freud's as a "theory of the unconscious dynamic of desire" (LF, 60). In effect, Dolto's use of «désir» should be read as synonymous with "libido," consistent with her close reading of Freud. She elucidates:

If needs must be satisfied in reality by consumption, there is something other in the human being, which Freud named libido, and that is desire. Desire which, at its origin, is always unconscious...and demands, too, the appeasement of its tension in an accomplishment, in a consumption for the sake of pleasure (JD, 269).

The unconscious introduces enigma into our thoughts because in "unconscious mental activity, processes operate which are of quite another kind from those perceived in consciousness" (Freud, 1913, 171), being "more comprehensive and more important than the familiar activity that is linked with consciousness" (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 197). We learn about the characteristics of these unconscious processes from studying dreams, the foundation of psychoanalysis (1912b, 265; 1913, 169-170). Dream-work, as Freud shows, enables us to witness psychical processes of a "more primary nature" (1900a, 177) that make use of symbolism (1900b, 352), and especially, of condensation and displacement (1900a, 177; 1909b, 36; also Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 197). And through a meticulous study of countless examples of dream-work, Freud discovers that "all dreams have meaning" (1913, 170), precisely because dream language...forms part of a highly archaic system of expression" (Ibid, 176).

We find Dolto to be entirely up to the task of playing with enigma. She believes, for example, that while it is a problem to deny reality, it is a problem to be too much in reality (SP1, 29), for "reality and phantasy are a contract we all need to assume" (SP1, 30). She stresses repeatedly that we cannot understand the "unconscious component" (DW, 30),

because while everything comes from the «Ça» (VO, 34 & 52), the «Ça» never obeys reason (JD, 326-328). Then again, Dolto says, that is exactly what is so interesting about the human, that he is never «définitif» (SF, 345). Dolto welcomes enigma, enjoys it even: «l'inconscient ne finit jamais de nous apprendre là où surtout il nous surprend» [the unconscious never stops teaching us there where it most surprises us] (SP2, 55). And since the unconscious is constituted of questions and answers (SP2, 62), she believes, the best interpretations in analysis are not statements but questions (DW, 54; SP2, 65)—or help clarifying the questions the unconscious asks (SP2, 66; VO, 56 & 66). Here is work on the terms of the primary processes, where we need to «travailler sans raisonner» as Freud said (1886/1974, 307). And working on these terms, we have the opportunity to encounter the transference. The transference first enters Freud's texts in 1888, interestingly in French, as «transfert» (1888, 48). Freud develops the notion through the next decade (1893e, 302 & 302f), leading to his treatise on dreams, where the transference is a displacement of an infantile scene onto the present (1900b, 546 & 567). There is also the transference of dream thoughts to dream content (Freud, 1901a, 667) that makes it both the centre and obstacle of clinical practice. In fact, the transference in dreams and in analytic cures, we will discover, is “indistinguishable” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 494), for both are means of displacement in service of the primary processes that are susceptible to being witnessed in analysis (Freud, 1900a, 184)—to being palpable as experience.

Résonateur

The displacement of unconscious energy in dreams and in the transference is evidence, Freud says, that “stress is laid upon making the cathecting energy mobile and capable of discharge” (1900b, 597), so of a “need of transference on the part of repressed

ideas” (Ibid, 563-564; 1905, 116). In meeting this need, the transference privileges the auditory (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 418), so the analyst becomes, as Dolto says, a «résonateur» (SS, 77). And by enabling the discharge of quanta of unconscious energy, the transference offers relief: «Il y a toujours des fantasmes, même quand il y a aucune expression mimique ou gestuelle...Ce sont les fantasmes, exprimés ou non, qui accompagnent la relation transférentielle, qui guérissent le malade» [there are always phantasms, even when there is neither facial nor gestural expression...It is these phantasms, expressed or not, accompanying the transference relation, that heal the sick] (Nadal, 130f). This very substantive contribution is buried in a letter to Diatkine, whom she hated, in the footnotes of a third party referencing an unpublished text in her archives. Our path of learning, it seems, is just as enigmatic as its content. Right from the start, Dolto recognizes the transference as the means of hearing the unspeakable, explaining in her dissertation that the transference reveals «réactions affectives,» and healing requires «le truchement» [intermediary, bypass] of the transference (MA, 148) for «libération libidinale» (MA, 202). And right to the end, in a letter marked ‘confidential,’ five months before her death, she explains that the transference enables the liberation of repressed libido by the re-living of an event in the history of a subject, and of «répétitions stérilisantes de processus archaïques» maladapted at the time and never spoken, that left «traces de traumatismes» (VC2, 853).

Freud creates a dynamic opening for the transference in “the personal influence of the physician in a haphazard fashion which has not yet been explained” (1913, 165). Dolto is equally content with ‘not knowing,’ believing theory is only useful in helping you explain the transference to yourself, as all kinds of things happen in the transference which actually cure (DW, 420; SP3, 21), though we don’t know what, exactly (EN, 124; SP2, 78; SP3, 14).

Ironically, the transference “creates and abreacts troubles” (DV, 162), evidence of the ontological priority of serving the vital requirement of displacing cathexis (DV, 8; JD, 288; SF, 314; SS, 256). Dolto credits Freud with discovering the transference, and she too believes it to be perpetually present in human relations (DV, 8), adding that it offers a source of pleasure in its symbolic function of securing affect and remembrance (DV, 158-160; JD, 286). And she takes on the skeptics preemptively: “Do not think transference acts by suggestion,” she states in 1939, with a remarkable force of authority, as “suggestion necessitates bringing something new to the subject,” but the analyst usually brings “absolutely nothing new” (MA, 148). Rather, it is the old that returns in the transference, a re-experiencing of something missed of the past (DV, 8 & 189; LF, 185), a transference of archaic relations (SS, 78 & 270). And as the transference brings much-needed liberation, we remain unconsciously in a state of «narcissisme alerté» (CD, 193), destined to seek to engage the “operational fact of the transference” (SS, 79; also CD, 201) as an unconscious dialectic (LF, 107; SS, 42, 244 & 269), an emotional resonance (SS, 79), «infraverbale» expression (CD, 195)—«échanges primitifs humains» (LF, 103) that are “archaic witnesses of a system of affective relays” (LF, 90)—in sum, unconscious associations.

Dolto’s acceptance of enigma, her humility before the transference, and her conviction of the correctness of Freud’s drive theory will define her practice. On this view, the “symptom is a condensation” (SP3, 17)—a proof, or witness, holding unconscious memory (CE, 40; DW, 46), by which the body, in health or in sickness, *is* language (CD, 200; DV, 48; IIC, 363, 365, 367; PS, 79; QS, 52; SS, 253; TL). Thus, when troubles are spoken, it liberates the symptom, returning the “peace of the body” (DW, 45; DV, 46 & 48; TL, 130). Like Freud (1914c, 150), Dolto believes treatment begins with repetitions (SP2,

183; SP3, 69; SP3, 189), as alienation is “overdetermined” (CD, 183). Unlike psychotherapy, she adds, analysis never aims to fix a symptom (DW, 45; TL, 23). Rather, the analyst should feel sympathy (EM, 316; MA, 60) and be open to whatever phantasms arrive (D&R, 28). Even a baby is sensitive to such consideration, she adds (EM, 176-177)—asking, “What if we took seriously the suffering of the child?” (MA, 153), instead of deriding libidinal suffering (DW, 81). For Dolto, it is belittling (dismissing, muting) suffering, not its mere presence, that causes psychological disorganization. And from her first publication, a natural grasp of Freudian theory is already hers (what detractors call her ‘intuition’): we are dealing with an «économie affective» (MA, 12), and we seek the «raison économique» for non-insertion (MA, 161). Hers is, effectively, an unabashed embrace of the emotional world.

Floating narcissism

And here, in this perplexing moment both precise and porous, is where I situate the problematic of organizing the inimitable material offered by the Dolto corpus. Misunderstanding first strikes as a symptom caused by the flush of details in personal stories that spin out from underneath key theories—set against the fact that Dolto seldom draws explicit connections between her history and her work. Casual remarks about being ‘a bit of an analyst,’ or her ‘archaic love’ for the lost nanny, are about as close as we will get. And yet, the reader cannot but notice uncanny associations, and how Dolto’s ideas seem overdetermined on (by) the unconscious landscape of her infancy. Further, once one ‘picks up the trail,’ so to speak, of the archaic heritage in Dolto’s formulations, one encounters the complexity of her thinking in ways that translate difficulty into clarity. It is as if one had unearthed a fragrance upriver that gave its scent to all downstream. And in countless

unsettling moments, that peculiar sensation that is the transference—the arrival from somewhere, but where?—becomes Dolto's inadvertent telling of a moving story carried fully beneath the conscious stories that she tells. Thus, her rare gift of biographical details is appreciated for the generous gesture that it truly is: ample testimony to the unconscious as a living force on the scene long before consciousness, operating continuously from earliest infancy as a dynamic pressure subtending and countersigning all our adult efforts. Hence, the biographical offers proof of (and desire for) the theoretical, and vice-versa. For there is no fixed partition between the explicit and implicit in Dolto, and no dramatic severing between phantasy and reality either. Enigmatically, everything and nothing is contradiction. And as the transference becomes our most potent tool for organizing her complicated texts, research becomes a matter of waiting (wading) through much reading—taking her words as our mediating objects—for the arrival of the unconscious effect of highly compressed stories that eventually become discernible by the sheer force of repetition. Our learning about primitive audition is, then, an experience of it, as Dolto's project exquisitely performs its content. In turn, our thematization becomes possible only thanks to word-things that become palpable through the sheer quanta of associations, eventually structuring research notes like a dictionary, in a wild proliferation of dream-work from writer to reader. With Dolto, then, learning is not just *of* transference but *in* transference, as subject and object blur entirely, and thought is co-opted by the primitive processes from which it originated in the first place.

What makes possible this radical learning is Dolto's willingness to share truthful personal stories about the young child she once was. Thus, just like the powerful dream of a bird to which Freud traced the origins of DaVinci's passion for flight, a psychobiographic study of Dolto reveals that knowing the thinker as an infant, pre-thought, helps us learn

something critical and new about his or her genius—and about the unconscious. Yet surely nothing unsettles education more than the notion that effective learning requires the student to know the teacher as a dreamer. From here, upon Dolto's precious stories, our ship sails. And where it goes next will astound, being an entirely non-locatable place somewhere “between silence and the rumour of language” (Derrida, 1986b, 64). Our navigational coordinates will be suitably contradictory. For the geography of primary narcissism is watery—a «narcissism flottant» [floating narcissism] (VO, 162) in the «indifférenciation de la masse liquide» (VO, 34; also AI, 120; SP1, 59), with stages that need to be «liquéfié» (DW, 34, MA, 258, SP1, 39, SP3, 92). And yet, here is also a warm hearth: a «foyer de réconfort» (CE, 205), a «foyer inconscient» (SS, 15). And desire itself is born, and reborn, of ashes (SS, 234 & 256), as Dolto's thought blends seamlessly with childhood memories of war-era food lines outside the «fourneau» [oven; i.e., soup kitchen] (EN, 54); and (on the same page), collecting coal at the docks with her mother (Ibid). Decades apart—yet somehow, affectively simultaneously—we will find comments about how psychoanalysis needs to reach the archaic, to «aller au charbon» [go to the coals] (D&R, 31); and that without Laforgue, she would have always seen in the nanny fragment «que du feu» [only fire] (EN, 119). Talking with Bernard Pivot, Dolto even says she admires «le charbonnier» [coalcutter], for whom she is merely «son élève» [his student] (Ribowski, 2004).

An organizing silence

Closing this chapter, it seems apt to cite the only direct quote from Freud in Dolto's inaugural work, most noteworthy because in the future, she will provide so few references:

Impulses which strive for pleasure are not all taken up into the final organization of the sexual function. A number of them are set aside as unserviceable, by repression

or some other means; a few of them are diverted from their aim in the remarkable manner I have mentioned and used to strengthen other impulses; yet others persist in minor roles, and serve for the performance of introductory acts, for the production of fore-pleasure” (Freud, 1933c, 98; cited in MA, 25).

Reading Dolto through Freud, because she did, makes experienceable the work of the primary processes: play with words as condensations; overdetermination through the accumulation of examples; and that other kind of conveyance from somewhere else that is the transference. Privileging return, I end this discussion of filiation where I began, in the story of one child. Here is Marcel, a 10-year old at Bretonneau in 1938 for school delays and balding (MA, 218-227). Dolto notices she needs to wait 20-30 seconds for his answers: “I take his rhythm.” Taking the dissertation to press after a year, she comments that Marcel is on the road to a recovery he may never reach. But at least he no longer thinks work is «*pas la peine*» [not worth it; also no(t) *suffering/pain*]. In her italicising is a subtle hint of the word play that will inform her life’s work. And in later editions, we will learn Marcel visited Dolto some 30 years later, in 1967, while passing through France, to introduce his 10-year old son (Dolto, 1939/2013, 194; P&P, 237). Marcel is the only one of the initial cases she saw again (P&P, 239), and his story lingers. Because walking with Dolto, we begin to feel we are in the company of someone with remarkable knowledge—but we can never be sure of how, or when, she came upon it. Just as Britzman writes of Freud, Dolto “felt the transference in the very activity of theory” (2003, 136). And thinking with Dolto, it becomes patent that language exceeds our intention, as the unconscious infuses unpredictability into our narratives—insight as a surprise, a sudden arrival—in stratifications of experience, like dreams layered upon each other (Freud, 1900a, 219f), compelling a reality that is never

unitary. Dolto believes philosophy is sourced in the unconscious (JD, 268), and in an uncanny echo, my own derives from an apparent stranger to Dolto who walked precisely the same block of rue Saint-Jacques for four decades: Jacques Derrida. Derrida posits the present as being perpetually deferred (1972/1987, 29), continuously compounded with non-presence and non-perception (1973, 4), as unconscious archives (1995a, 64) inevitably provoke «déhiscence» and «divisibilité» (1996, 61), informing an enigmatic otherness in the very nature we call human. Such is Dolto's conception of the unconscious as an undeniable dynamic, yet one that eludes and slips from our hands. Thus, the unconscious makes akin the problematic of psychobiography and psychoanalysis: how to tell the untellable story. And while my study of Dolto is not deliberately philosophical, perhaps it is accidentally so. For as Derrida describes, I begin "writing in the passion of the non-knowing" (1987b, 59), simply believing we are "structured by the phantasmic" (2001a, 89): constructed of, in and by dream-work; this "primary souvenir" (1967a,73) elaborates a "me of the living present as originally a trace" (Ibid, 95), wherein «la phonè» (Ibid,89) is intimately constructive. Thus, as Derrida notes, there is an "indelibility of certain traces in the unconscious" (1967c, 339f) perpetuating "a "purely idiomatic residue [that] is irreducible" (1967c, 310), as an enigmatic "signature brought forth produces events in the given language...illegible events" (1998, 66)—an encounter with "all that is inhabited rather than produced by writing" (1967b, 230). And as I work, a curious question insists: *Is not writing prior to the phoneme?* For the word, we will learn, arrives on the archaic scene of proprioception, as *the child is being written upon by experience while dreaming*, engaging the primal psychical structuration that will form the root of her thoughts. Thus, with Derrida, we might say that "arch-writing is at work at the origin of sense" (1967a, 95), and consider "writing as more interior to speech" (1967b,

68), as “writing that takes place before and in speech” (1967b, 444)—a “lithography before words” (1967c, 307), or “primary writing” (Ibid, 310). These are the deep provocations, I believe, of the transference in texts, as we try to bring into discourse “some structures in the relationship with the Other which do not reduce to intentionality” (Levinas, 1982, 61). For Dolto’s corpus reveals an intimate weave of what is remembered and forgotten as an unconscious resonance testifies to a register, beneath and between words, with an absent other. Dolto believes suffering inheres in the human condition (JD, 57; JP, 41; SS, 234; TL, 46). And if we cannot yet sense that transference offers securitization, we soon will, because Dolto believes it is a «silence organisateur» (SP1, 163), a potential for inter-human exchanges upon which our wish to live depends—passivity as an ironic potential for activity. She asks, “Who dreams? Is it ‘me’? Is it ‘I’? We are dealing with “an unknown that remains unknown” (Ibid, 13). And of the transference, «Qui, donc, parle à qui, et à quoi, de qui?» [Who, then, speaks to whom, and to what, from/about whom?] (SS, 256). Here is “knowledge of the enigmatic self, [as] Freud maintained” (Britzman, 2011, 27). With Dolto, then, we meet a subject both speaking and silent, amid witnesses filling a contemporary scene, tethered to secret, lost relics from a «passé antérieur.» And in that organizing silence wherein we will try to listen, Dolto will tell not only the story of one woman, but the story of man: that every *autobiography* begins in an idiosyncratic, unconscious, auditory prehistory as an indelible self-other with an enigmatic witness—as the subject of a *biography*.

Chapter Two: Family & Transmission

Abstract: In this chapter, I examine the transference of Dolto’s infantile libidinal history in her thinking about the child. I reveal Dolto’s construction of the infant as being continuously engaged in an unconscious symbolic function critical to his subjectivization. I show how Dolto privileges language, in theory and in the clinic, and how her evidence for words as mediating objects for the transference overturns linguistics. I elucidate regression to the archaic and passive *transmission* in libidinal development. And I demonstrate how wartime, family deaths and lost loves—most crucially, the departure of a beloved nanny—left traces that echo enigmatically in her corpus.

One may say of the impossible that it marks the limit of a possible or a power, more precisely, of an “I can” or a “we can.” Such passivity remains at work in the work.
(Jacques Derrida, 2002b, XXXiii).

In a wonderful interview in 1987, Bernard Pivot asks Françoise Dolto if one can speak of the existential anxiety of the baby—«sûrement,» she replies (Ribowski, 2004). For Dolto’s infant is anything but the ‘digestive tube’ of medicine. Nor is it mere rhetoric when Dolto tells Elizabeth Roudinesco that babies “invented everything” (1986/1988, 18) in her practice, as only they bring “something really new” (Ibid, 13). Dolto provokes a mute question: how can anyone learn from babies? And in its wake, the transference arrives. For what teaching could the *infans* ever convey if not via an unconscious conduit? In a lovely post-humous film project, Claude Halmos describes Dolto as “an ethnologist in the world of children” (Meirieu & Kübler, 2001). And what Dolto discovers in her explorations disturbs biography profoundly: the infant unconsciously “intuits his history” (CE, 242; VC2, 770), constructing his psyche on the truth he hears, ergo the need to «parlai vrai» [speak truth; homonym, «par les vrais» ‘by the true ones’] (ES,68; NE,202, 204 & 208; PJE,21; TL, 82 &

124). Herein is the paradox that the archaic sources all that is new—as well as a fine tension bound to every word. For what we will slowly learn is that *untruth* disturbs structuration by provoking anxiety, inciting regression; whereas *truth*, even if difficult, enables progression. Dolto theorizes that relational dependence is fundamental to humanisation, for if a child hears others speak of his suffering “it is taken from him” (DV, 37; Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978). Thus, speaking to a baby changes the diagnostic (EM, 217; Le Péron, 2008; TL, 16), especially speaking near the origin of trouble (JD, 129). But how can a baby tell what is true?:

I don't know what he [baby] says to me, but I know that he says, that he communicates with me unceasingly. And I know, I try to understand him, and he knows that I don't understand him exactly. But that is the work between us. With you [interviewer], it's the same...what I'm conscious of saying is a small part next to what I say unconsciously without knowing, and that these people [listeners] will hear with their unconscious, and that everyone in the world is like that...and the greatest desire of every human is to communicate his psyche with another human psyche (with Pivot, in Ribowski, 2004).

The transference is simply a fact of life for Dolto. And tracing her powerful conviction will require a rapid decent into her personal history, wherein we will encounter a tremendous psychological force palpable throughout her project, and we will source her theory in her infancy. Dolto believes that an analyst cannot bring a patient to a place in psycho-affective development which he has not attained himself (MA, 166; also, VO, 213), and that an analyst is someone capable of going backwards in his story (Nobécourt, 2008b), as “real psychoanalysis always revives archaic pulses” (CD, 149). Further, she says, the closer one has been to psychosis, the better the analyst (DQ, 99). Her provocative words admit a

difficult truth: Dolto works “from her own experience” as Roudinesco says (1986, 518)—or, in the words of Michèle Montrelay, “as a «revenant»...who came back fighting against death in an archaic state...where she reconstituted herself” (DeMezamat, 2008b).

Dolto begins each case with a detailed anamnesis, believing therapy is much longer without it (LF, 180-183; SP2, 60-62). Critically, she seeks names in a patient’s history (AI, 224-226). It is curious, she notes, how “de-rhythming” and developmental delays occur in orphanages because so many adults have the same name (EV,62) (i.e., ‘nurse,’ ‘doctor’). The same happens in families, she adds, thus children believe the wrong grandmother is married to the grandfather (EV, 67). In fact, the First World War, which framed Dolto’s childhood, inclined families towards using names as guarantors of the posterity of the dead (Cabanes & Piketty, 2007, 7). And Dolto’s own record includes a maternal grandmother and great-grandmother both called «DanMé»; a homonymic father (Henry) and paternal grandfather (Henri); and a family preference for names such that correspondence refers to dinner with “the Pierres,” or “the Andrés” (MF, 127-128)—and long after Jacqueline has died, the reader hears that “Jacqueline is still here” (MF, 146 & 145f). Freud himself felt his own children’s names made them «revenants» (1900b, 487). But so pronounced was this propensity in Dolto’s family that when her father went to register his baby boy (a replacement child for Jacqueline), with direct instructions from his wife to name him anything but ‘Jacques,’ that is exactly what he named him (AI, 85).

Family neurosis

Dolto’s parents had standing in the bourgeoisie (AI, 86; Roudinesco, 1986), but all was not as it seemed. Her mother hit her and pulled her hair, in a maniac state provoked by her very presence (AI, 130; DW, 157-161; EN, 99 & 103; VC1, 290). She had had an

inhumane mother, Dolto notes calmly (AI, 130), and a father who told her she was stupid, ugly and mean (ATP, 17-18). Then, when Jacqueline died, her mother lost her passion for life (EN, 61), calling her children serpents and vipers (ATP, 78), and railing publicly about why her pretty daughter died while the disabled don't (DW, 132). Dolto says she was already "somewhat of an analyst" listening to this mother (Nobécourt, 2008a). But it was not until analysis with Laforgue that she could talk back, telling her mother she was too hard (AI, 130; ATP, 244; MF, 74; Nobécourt, 2008a). Dolto thus depicts a mother who suffered much and passed on suffering as a legacy. As for her father, he is remembered as good, but simply too silent (AI, 122; EN, 91; PF, 113; Ribowski, 2004).

WWI made mourning a reality for children, where it left over a million orphans in France and a "codification" of bereavement (Cabanes & Piketty, 2007, 2). A touching letter to God by little Françoise in 1915 asks for protection for her beloved uncle, Pierre (MF, 45-46; VC1, 45-46). And the family record is rich with war efforts, including her mother and «Mlle» (governess) tending soldiers (EN, 31; VC1, 28-30 & 256), in a world of "women disguised as nurses" (EN, 29). Young Françoise herself tirelessly knitted «cache-nez» [mufflers; homonymically, 'hiding-birth'] (AI, 74; EN, 29), wetting and stretching them between chairs just to free a little play time (AI, 75). Of her early childhood, Dolto remembers WWI determining everything; and when it ended, she wondered how one could live as war was «l'expérience de la vie sociale» (AI, 66 & 74). She even had a quick response when she was caught daydreaming: "I'm thinking of the poor soldiers in «les tranches»" [trenches; also, 'psychoanalytic sessions'] (Ibid). In fact, the «Guerre de 14» (AI, 118) could not but strike our young girl in peculiar ways: women with wails sounding more like laughter, who came to her home about a «fils disparu» [lost son]—"but he clearly

wasn't at our house," she remembers thinking (AI, 74; ATP, 27-28; CE, 15; EN, 33). The literality of words is patent in so many of her poignant recollections. Further, few widows had jobs (AI, 69), thus many fell to "pathological mourning" (DW, 118), driving her own push for an education (AI, 118). For in a «famille comme il faut» [right kind] a widow simply never remarried (AI, 73; EN, 52-53; Ribowski, 2004). And by the age of eight, a widow is exactly what she believed she was.

«Uncle Pierre,» the «oncle oedipien» she adored—twice-decorated recipient of the Military Cross and Captain of the 62nd Battalion of «Chasseurs Alpins»—died on 10 July 1916, in Alsace, during his third tour of duty (AI, 69, 73 & 78; EN, 16 & 35; MF, 142f; VC1, 29, 60f & 209-210). He was her godfather (MF, 141f & 142f), but far more than that, she believed he was her fiancé. The story cannot be properly understood without considering the powerful support in reality for her belief: his letters from the trenches address her as «ma fiancée Vava» (VC1, 35), promise to marry her after the war (VC1, 44 & 57), and profess he dreams he is with her (VC1, 55). In turn, his sister (Dolto's mother) sends Françoise his Legion of Honour photo, telling her seven-year old that to deserve the marriage, she must "never cry again" (MF, 23 & 51). And his mother (Dolto's maternal grandmother) sends her two post-humous gifts: a diamond, as "she would have been his fiancé" (AI, 69); and a rosary for her communion, following the instructions he left (AI, 73; VC1, 99). But the night before that fateful day, Françoise learns that Jacqueline is dying of cancer, as her mother pleads that since "nothing is purer than a child before communion," Françoise should pray for her sister's survival (ATP, 20; EN, 50; Ribowski, 2004). Thus the deaths of Jacqueline and Pierre are co-immortalized, *as-if* in a union—«comme union»—in a haunting homonymic tension wherein suffering and the promise not to cry, silence, intertwine. A

letter to Mlle in 1928 still echoes mourning: “No one will know, perhaps not even myself, though I suspect it, the formidable influence upon me of the sadness of the death of Oncle Pierre” (VC1, 214-215).

Dolto believes she would never have become a psychoanalyst without the drama of Jacqueline’s death in 1920 (AI, 82), yet her psychological pain is patent far earlier in her admission to experiencing transient schizophrenia around age four (EN, 10, 14, 82 & 93). And one can only suppose that Laforgue (interestingly, from Alsace), conceived his theory of family neurosis (D&R, 21) with at least some reference to Françoise and Philippe. Indeed, it is a home where much catches our attention on the scene of orality. For example, by bourgeois standards, children have no right to speak at the table (ATP, 30; EN, 42), and seven-year old Françoise is punished for perceived rudeness towards a valet with a month of eating from a chamber pot (EN, 46-47). There are privations of dessert for dirtying her dress (MF, 20; VC1, 41); and a prohibition on eating anywhere but at the mother’s or maternal grandmother’s tables until she is 24 (Ribowski, 2004). In turn, hers is an ‘oral’ (aural) curiosity, turning on words: for example, the funny way conversations jump subjects (EN, 42), and the absurdity of idioms that suggest shrimp ask to be cooked (ATP, 24). «Je ne comprenais pas les mots» [I didn’t understand (the) words] (ATP, 27), she states. So her persistent questions got her reassigned to Mlle (aka Élisabeth Weilandt), as the other «nurses» could not stand her (EN, 65). And musing on how adults were like a different species (EN, 67), she wished, “When I’m big, I’ll try to remember what it’s like when you’re small” (Ibid). In fact, Mlle was two nannies removed, following a Miss Brice, from little Françoise’s very first English-speaking nanny, whose name is forgotten, in a home

where nannies are cut from family photos anyhow, as if they were never even there in the first place (e.g., AI, 144).

Médiation langagière

And in this presence-absence, we come upon the Irish girl whose story, unlike her name, is broadcast widely across Dolto's project (e.g., AI, 144; CE, 272; DW, 40-41; EN, 64 & 117-118; Ribowski, 2004). The vibrant 18- to 20-year-old enjoyed “coke and orgies” (AI, 144) at a local hotel by borrowing the mother's clothing and jewels, for which she was fired. Dolto explains her feelings for her as an archaic love (EN, 118-119), relating how she stunned her family by first babbling in English at 18 months, after a long silence (CE, 272-273). Dolto recalls the nanny dressing her fully in blue one day, dyeing even her shoes, calling her a beautiful “blue angel” (EN, 64; Dolto & This, 1980/2002; Ribowski, 2004). And Dolto describes to Laforgue, “auburn hair that smelled very good...long tables, served...like the Romans, with very tall people dressed like Russian generals” and an elevator man “dressed like a Brandebourg” (AI, 144; Ribowski, 1987/2004). And it is right here, on words, that we experience a dramatic dive into dream-work. For the Brandebourg style (Wikipédia, 2014d) is a strong match to Pierre's uniform (AI, 79; EN, 35; PF, 35), and to a so-called “Greycoat” soldier (Wikipedia, 2014k) of the (then recent) American Civil War. In one direction, this daydream takes us to the proximity of Greycoat *Hospital School*—doctor of education?—a prestigious English institute for girls (Wikipedia, 2014f). And in another, we somehow arrive at Billy Williams (Wikipedia, 2014b), whose huge hit in 1909 was “The Old Grey Coat,” and whose role in that ancient scene is inadvertently recalled by a street name right around Françoise's home—«rue Singer.» And right around the song, in 1905, a risqué German novel, *Professor Unrat* [garbage] centred its plot on a

wild cabaret, “The Blue Angel” (Wikipedia, 2014c). Thus, the nanny’s soundscape, though long silenced, becomes hearable again as archaic echoes weaving upon time and place, held in trust in the unconscious of the infant who loved her so. I offer that this is an example of a ‘trace’—and that this is ‘exactly’ where, and how, it begins. It is as if a word itself were a memorial preventing our ever forgetting what we could never, in infancy, ‘remember’—and whereupon a few precious syllables drenched in archaic affects will inform and countersign the far, far later landscape onto which thoughts (ergo, theories) will emerge.

Dolto believes the removal of a loved nanny is “an act of violence”; and that the loss of «*médiation langagière*,» in being more traumatic than the loss of a parent (CE, 241; EM, 202-204), causes «*maladies langagières*» [language illnesses] (EV, 61; IIC, 85). Adding to the lost nanny, I note that Dolto’s suffering was fed by potent guilt: not making enough scarves (EN, 30); not praying well enough (PF, 52); hurting those she loved (ATP, 28; EN, 94); asking too many questions (EN, 47); crying (MF, 21 & 42); making her mother anxious (VO, 199); even, having fun when her mother was bored (VC1, 305). Dolto describes her debilitating culpability as “narcissistic dereliction” (Nobécourt, 2008a; also DW, 163; EN, 84 & 93). And she reveals that her rescue from childhood guilt came via an angel, BAG (EN, 20-21), an acronym for «*Bon Ange Gardien*» [good guardian angel]—but strangely, English slang for theft. Visiting her nightly, so that she had to negotiate fair space on her bed with his big wings, BAG absolved her by explaining her mischief helped adults «*gagner leur ciel*» [win heaven] (Ibid)—in effect, that her way of being good was being bad. “It was a very, very big consolation” (Ibid). And the affect that transits her telling is overwhelming.

Dolto theorizes that the guilt originating in the “first preverbal sensations of the difficulty of living” (JD, 57) produces a narcissistic wound that blocks later investments of

erogenous zones (SP2, 52). Thus, the «névrose familiale» is a structure, she says, whereby the child is prevented from healing because he is needed to assume guilt (MA, 261; D&R, 21). And the greatest source of the infant's guilt is that of hurting the mother (VO, 199); though, ironically, she also states, “you cannot live without hurting your mother” (DQ, 116). In effect, guilt and suffering enter into our earliest relations of dependency, wherein «nous sommes punis donc sous sommes coupables» [we are punished hence we are guilty] (CE, 322). Thus, guilt enfolds narcissism (CD, 239), while the child will be alright “as long as he is not guilty” (EV, 78). Dolto will also develop the idea that losing a libidinal investment suddenly, before it has been displaced, causes an enclave «à bas bruits» [low-noise] (SS, 143; also EM, 280; MA, 29; QS, 9; SS, 143)—an “infirmation at the oral stage” (SF, 140) that provokes disinterest in the exterior world (MA, 29) and vulnerability to frustration that can return the “oral autistic type” (Ibid). Further, Dolto believes that a predominance of unresolved oral fixations leads to smoking, among other sequelae (MA, 29; SP1, 155), while a wet-nurse can aggravate or correct the lacks in the «structure libidinale des parents» (CD, 242f; CE, 29; DV 65; MA, 27; TL, 142). In fact, Dolto smokes in a film (Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978) and two photos (VC2, 391 & 400), having apparently been a heavy smoker (AlloCiné, n.d.; Marie, 2008). Yet her mother nursed all her infants for a full year (EN, 62 & 98), preventing the loss of the *actual* breast. Here, then, erupts the odd, illogical thought that the suffering of Dolto's weaning has nothing to do with her mother—rather, that her rupture of oral-stage love is lived entirely inside a (hi)story. “An impossible desire arrives with weaning” (SF, 250), she states poignantly, a “suffering of abandon” (SP1, 213). Thus, with the nanny, Dolto's ‘castration’ can be glimpsed as a symbolic loss informing a potent

contradiction (a telltale signature of dream-work?) where the one suffering oral castration too early or too quickly has, paradoxically, no oral castration.

Listening slowly

Thus grounded, Dolto privileges listening. Roudinesco describes it perfectly as a psychoanalytic method centred on hearing the unconscious (1986, 170), and Aubry, her mother, calls Dolto «géniale» in listening for the unconscious (Aubry & Cifali, 1986/1988, 44). “I listen naïvely,” Dolto simply says, listening for the other, (DW, 27), unconscious language (CD, 196), a human presence (DV, 293)—because learning is in listening (DW, 24), and the analyst must put himself in parentheses (DW, 163), refraining from impeding what the analysand says (DW, 30; NE, 207). Thus, Dolto will «écouter tranquillement» [listen slowly, quietly] (EM, 50), believing the analyst’s “non-reactivity” is what “reactualizes” what is unknown or forgotten in history (VC2, 799). In other words, the listener is foremost a witness (TL, 16). So she stresses, like Freud, looking at patients the least possible (JD, 69; Nobécourt, 2008a), as she works to decode unconscious fixations keeping the past alive, allowing patients to recover libidinal energy that had been unusable (VC2, 800). The elucidation of what is not said “transforms a person’s destiny,” she believes, and the energy put back in play is «irreversible» (VC2, 859). As she sees it, Freud opens a «dialectique du don» [bequest] (LF, 186) that returns liberty to humans who have been deprived of it (DW, 86). In sum, “reliving the enclave changes you” (SP 131). She sums up her belief as work, and vice-versa, in this way:

This faith of mine is that everyone has chosen to be born and that if he survives, then that is already something. So is something unhealthy already, or is there something still healthy and he has a right to the auto-defense of his libido? «Ça» [that, the

unconscious] is what I look for. And if he has the right to the auto-defense of his libido, and he suffers from not re-finding this auto-defense of his libido, I try to help him to express his anxiety (anguish), because then he can re-find his primary narcissism with a body that can experience joy sufficiently for life to be sufficiently good, and he can be happy—well, he can be sufficiently happy to continue to support the ordeal of living (Nobécourt, 2008b).

Dolto spontaneously lets theory spring from the clinic (Aubry & Cifali, 1986/1988, 44; Roudinesco, 1986, 170 & 519), as she admits trouble in formulating her work (D&R, 23; VC2, 452-453). She believes theory is moot without examples (CE, 343; VC2, 684), and that her work is more of a witnessing put into words (DW, 31), a conversation rather than a schema (DW, 42; SP2, 93): «je bafouille des choses qui sont pour moi des repères» [I stammer some things that are landmarks for me] (DW, 87). Yet we need to stop for a pause, to hear the spectacular homonymic echoes of «repères»—at once, ‘re-father, lose again, repair.’ Dolto tells us theory is not something to dwell on (DW, 41), so we follow her out from this place, this «repère,» but we will return. For now, we just accept the invitation to personify the word, this word-thing, with the sense of witness that permeates her thinking about the transference. Where the unconscious is concerned, she says, we are only witnesses—an idea infusing her entire project (e.g., CD, 194 & 199; Dolto & Dolto-Tolitch, 1989, 135; SP3, 14 & 162; SS, 154; TL, 49; VC2, 228). On the one hand, being a witness seems simple: listening and giving trust is a lot, she says, and you need to say «courage» (CE, 61), to try even when all seems impossible (VC2, 292). But beneath the surface, Dolto’s ‘witness’ is far more enigmatic, tethered to her belief that the analysand has a lucidity simply needing to be awakened (DW, 61; VC2, 678; 1985/1989b, 134), and that witnessing «ennoblit son existence qui a résisté aux difficultés» (CE, 40) [ennobles his

existence that resisted difficulties]. It is as if *the witness honours what survives, and so doing, reawakens a dormant capacity for self-defense originating in what is perennially well, the unconscious*, origin of the passive «pulsions» conserving life.

Dolto's 'witness' is a conduit to her notion of words as 'mediating objects' for the transference. For in her original approach, the *word* is the best 'transitional object' for the transference (DQ, 195-196; SP1, 136; SP3, 133; TL, 109). And what is at stake for Dolto re the word, the witness, and the transference is inseparable, theoretically or otherwise, and summed up well during a television interview she granted in the last year of her life. Asked to imagine if the walls in her office could tell a story, Dolto replies, after a silence:

If we had put a magnetic band... it would recount nothing at all, it would recount the words, but it would not say what had passed that was intense, lived by the person who spoke, behind the words that served as mediators between the unconscious of the patient and the unconscious of the psychoanalyst, and that, because of this mediation, allowed affects to be re-lived and definitively enter a past that no longer draws interest (AI, 220; Ribowski, 2004).

And in this belief about the word, we again find support for Dolto with Freud, who theorized that "intermediate ideas are looked for between two psychical dream-stimuli" (1900a, 235; see also *Ibid*, 228), to "transfer energy" by establishing connections (1900b, 596). Freud says this happens "with remarkable frequency...in speech" (*Ibid*) because the word has "predestined ambiguity" (*Ibid*, 340). In fact, central to Freudian theory is the notion that language is a privileged setting for transference (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 497). From 1939, then, Dolto steers the future of analysis in France; and the very first issue of the «*Revue Française de la Psychanalyse*,» in 1949 (Ribas, 2006, 95; VC2, 176f), features her invention of the «poupée-fleur» [flower doll] as a «procédé de transfert» for oral-stage

affects. Yet the acknowledgement due her remains «inédit» [unspoken], in talk of how the “classical study of the relationship between the thing-presentation and word-presentation in Freudian meta-psychology continues to underpin the thinking of French psychoanalysis” (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, 37), rooted in “very early Freud” (Ibid, 29) that “does not stray far from the focus on the drives” (Ibid, 31 & 27).

Relative autism

Grounding her understanding of primary narcissism in an enigma, Dolto believes the infant experiences suffering as a threat (JD, 21; SF, 78; VC2, 14 & 702), a narcissistic trial or wound (SF, 73-74; SP2, 45; SP3, 71; VO, 188). And in an original turn on what might seem self-evident, Dolto insists on the risk of “relational trouble” (SF, 73): a “language of refusal” or of not being heard (DW, 104; VC2, 641); a «phénomène de résonance» (SP3, 81); a «histoire vrai» [true story] that, in turn, renders the child «pas vrai» [untrue] (CD, 29)—essentially, a “depersonalization” provoked (enigmatically indeed) by “affect stripped of valor” (CD, 215). Thus, trauma is not always (or only) a real event for Dolto, but rather any break in structuring relations that is “pregenitally inverting” (LF, 137). So Dolto considers that her work consists of re-finding, recovering, children “by telling them the origin of the rupture” (CE, 528-529). A powerful idea emerges here whereby infancy and analysis share their roots: the talking cure works because suffering originates in the faulty insertion of a valorous young subject into the human story.

We meet Josette, age three and a half, very early in the dissertation (MA, 3-4). Josette is experiencing enuresis, nightmares, anorexia and a loss of play. Over three visits in a single month, Dolto speaks to the mother (with Josette) about how troubles commenced when parents made secret plans to move her out of their bedroom; and she explains to

Josette (with mother) about wanting to stay a baby. Dolto recommends speaking about the room changes directly and valorizing progression. So at home, the father talks to Josette about going to school soon and being proud of her. Then, on a single page, the heart of a powerful theory is put on the table so unpretentiously that it may be missed altogether, returning only after years, as if it were an après-coup of reading, following our own ‘storing’ (storying?) of words. What is overheard creates anxiety, Dolto says, causing «symptômes du négativisme»—a revolt against progress, sleep, food and games that prompts regression to a prior stage in «évolution libidinale» (MA, 153). Progression requires incremental unpleasure, she explains, a «sacrifice que t’impose la réalité» (Ibid)—but “*pleasure can never be renounced without an exchange for another pleasure*” (Ibid; italics mine). So what enables progression? It is «promesses de plaisirs inconnus» [promises of unknown pleasures] (Ibid)—*words becoming the site-means, the mediators, of unconscious affects that determine whether or not we can invest in reality*. Not only is an ontogeny of the transference patent here, but also the «rôle du transfert est visible,» Dolto adds, as the child herself insists on returning to tell her doctor she is well (Ibid). Thus, little Josette’s intimate deconstruction truly does “«bouleverse» (overthrow, disturb, overturn) the landscape in (on) which the science of language has peacefully installed itself” (Derrida, 1967b, 44). For the word is foremost a consolation for an unnameable absence from time immemorial.

In fact, Dolto’s career as an analyst began with Sophie Morgenstern, whose practice focused on «démütisation»: pulling children out of autistic, regressive states. Morgenstern observed that unresolved traumas lead to a predisposition to return to anterior libidinal stages (2003a, 75 & 78); death and departure are identical for a child (2003c, 131); and what is psychogenic about troubles is also what is most hopeful (2003b, 39). Acknowledging

Morgenstern to the end of her own life (VC2, 797), Dolto herself recalls that children became autistic during the evacuation of Paris in WWII (SP3, 78), and she believes “an autist is not something you are, but something you become” (SP2, 71). Autism is amenable to psychoanalytic treatment, Dolto insists, and she refuses the «fatalité» of autism (1985c, 527-528), insisting it is both «relatif» (SS, 221) and «réversible» (1957/1997a, 23). We find similar thoughts 40 years later in the work of Frances Tustin, who views autism as a regression to destructuration (1981, 169 & 186) that is reversible (1981, 173 & 188)—but without any reference to Dolto.⁵ The autist suffers from a break in relationality, Dolto insists: language did not “arrive on time,” so the child felt unheard, left with unsymbolized desires and unspoken suffering (ADT, 170; DQ, 36; DV, 117; DW, 87 & 111; ES, 183-185; EV, 54; JD, 269; SP1,139-140; TL, 96; 1985a, 527). The result is affective starvation (JD, 23), whereby children enter autism passively, no longer asking for anything (CD, 184; NE, 191); and by slow renunciation (CD, 70; SS, 37), they regress to anonymity and phantasy relations with sensations, in a private battle against solitude (JD, 23; PS, 21 & 64; SP1, 148 & 151-152; SP2, 70). Dolto even offers a remedy: explain the origin of the rupture to the autist while he is half-asleep (1985a, 529). And in a watershed work in 1957, Dolto explains that the autist simply needs “to go far enough back to find the other similar enough to himself to be in security with him” (SS, 24). In fact, Dolto is narrating an unconscious witnessing—a relationality that enigmatically inheres in our infantile autism, our apparent silence. After all, she says, right at the inception of her project, “the unconscious is not an obscure, mute receptacle of useless psychical representations” (MA, 15). For Dolto, therefore, autism is «proof of the symbolic function in humans» (1985a, 534), and fertile for “new psychoanalytic cures” (VC2, 606). Yet thinking with Dolto, we somehow cannot

shake the feeling that organization and disorganization work something like an elevator. We may have gone a distance along the road of theory, but it seems the nanny is still right here.

Sonar heritage

Further, in the apparent negativism of destructuration is, paradoxically, a positive opportunity for recovery—one Dolto believes makes regression a necessity (DW, 110; EM, 140-144; MA, 224-225; SP3, 90; SS, 16, 42, 165 & 265; VO, 225)—because of the crucial capacity of oral passivity (including sleep) for “re-narcissisation by deculpabilization” (LO3, 154; SP2, 19; SP3, 175; VO, 42; 50 & 190-191). In Dolto’s original view, regression is a right to live «larvairement» [larvally] (JD, 126; also SP3, 156) that enables healing because primary narcissism is an “automaterning” (SP3, 26-29, VO, 162): a self-assumption of repair as we “take ourselves as a relay object in the absence of another” (DQ, 196; SF, 220). Dolto even prescribes that patients be allowed to just live out a stage normally surpassed (JD, 149; MA, 17; Roudinesco, 1986, 497).⁶ This valuation of regression to oral passivity (MA, 30) circulates throughout Dolto's project, from Josette’s ordinary trouble with growing up, to the most profoundly troubling cases, which Dolto undertakes with unwavering optimism:

There is residual libidinal health conserved intact in psychotics behind the regressive tableau of their symptoms...The reactivation, in psychotics, of a state that remains sane but very archaic was therefore possible and could be followed by a restructuration of the relation to themselves and to the world (SS, 23)...Regression is or can be a positive process...every event that provokes a subjective disorganization returns the subject to the search for libidinal investments that were previously acquired and that, through his story, were imaginarily conserved as a place-time of existential security (SS, 25).

And what is the nature of this restorative oral passive environment? It is defined by «aimance absorptive» [absorbing love] (MA, 27), where “having” is indistinguishable from “being” (MA, 28). The first form of the oral stage is passive (MA, 28) and auto-erotic (MA, 27 & 53), being an unconscious existence (JP, 41; MA, 15, 30 & 30f), and the archaic stage of desire (JD, 296-297; LF, 255; MA, 30). As language is present in fetal life «au moins auditivement» [at least auditorily] (JD, 270), the infant organizes a «code d’appel» [code of calls] (JD, 273) immediately, Dolto insists, because the symbolic function is “foundational of the human being” (JD, 270 & 296), and the desire for communication precedes the need for assistance (JD, 273). Further, as phonemes encountered in fetal life leave «en mémoire l’héritage sonore» (JD, 286), links in language are crucial to elaborating the separation (SS, 244) of “aerial life” (QS, 9-10; VC2, 728). In effect, the child “passively stores words and sounds...to which he reacts according to their associations, agreeable or disagreeable” (MA, 28; also CE, 17; JD, 286). Crucially, in the liquid dreamscape of the oral passive stage, there is no “splitting” (DQ, 123), and the infant has no notion of a world differentiated from himself (MA, 27). Thus, he is vulnerable to “ethical devaluation” (JD, 287; LF, 103) from the environment, “drinking anxiety with his milk” (EM, 111); or, if put to bed with a bottle, “swallowing the ceiling with his milk” (LF, 126). His only recourse is a “passive defense” (LO1, 90; LO2, 50): returning, in effect, to a prior state of goodness and safety. “Precocious libidinal stages” are a proven fact, Dolto declares (SF, 69), as “the libidinal sub-basement of relations of dependence...that stays in later libidinal organizations” (LF, 103).

Dolto’s practice is centred on regression from the start, and the material on it dominates her project quantitatively. In 1939, Marcel, age 10, is diagnosed with «régression libidinale» (MA, 223); and in 1943, Marie-Louise B., age 28, is diagnosed with a

«régression la plus archaïque» (SS, 89). Living is an encounter with «tension régressivante» (SS, 17), as the death of loved ones causes “momentary regression” (JD, 226); as does removing the mother or trying to (JD, 163); and narcissistic trials (SS, 24 & 144). Humans react by withdrawing, “hiding” their desire (SS, 20)—provocatively, she says, as an “anorexic jouissance of slowing down” (SP2, 240), an “archaic symbolic satisfaction” (SS, 42). In turn, sleep is restorative as a “daily regression” (EM, 139), and a defense against the loss of relational protection (SP2, 19; VO, 190-191). We recall Freud’s mention of “attacks of sleep” (1896/1954b, 180), and “the instinct to sleep” (1940[1939], 166). Implicit in Dolto’s view of regression is a crucial “continuity” of the subject (CE, 29; EM, 61) wherein narcissism remains essential to future well-being (JD, 123), and the “narcissistic economy” (LF, 92) is supplied by a ceaseless «force désirante» (DV, 9). Dolto opens her dissertation with full credit to Freud for her belief that instinct and its physiological substratum characterizes all that is life (MA, 24), as she explains how pulses are subject to cyclical repetition (Ibid; also DW, 31); developmental shifts in the «zone érogène élective» (Ibid, 11 & 24); phases of excitation (Ibid, 24-25); and “mute rest cycles” (Ibid; also VO, 50), effectively a cathecting of silence. All affect is linked to narcissism (JD, 256) and “constructed in passive pulses only” (SF, 210). Thus, Dolto’s notion of primary narcissism is as a perpetually reachable subterranean river, supplying what grows, deeply reminiscent of Freud’s descriptions of “reservoirs” of narcissistic libido (1905, 218; 1917e, 252).

Dolto’s narration of archaic prehistory cannot help but astound, as she relates how biological processes result in a «symbolique narcissistique,» thus “constituting language” (SS, 74)—and language is described with the same tropes as pulses: “language is made to bounce” (ES, 107). Freud himself declared narcissism a limit-concept (1914/2001a, 85); and

instinct, the frontier of biology and psychology (1913, 182). For as early as oral eroticism is (Freud, 1905/1953c, 176, 205 & 233-234), its libido has already passed through an archaic scene. Ruth Mack Brunswick speaks (after Dolto) of passive modes enduring when active modes begin (1940, 298 & 306-7); Melanie Klein describes a passive “oral suckling stage” (1929/1998, 204 & 209); Karl Abraham identifies passivity within the oral phases of the libido (1924, 450); Otto Rank muses on the “pre-Oedipal” (1924/1993, 216); August Stürcke describes what is infantile as “archaic” (1921a, 197); and Sándor Ferenczi posits fetal mental life (1913/1950, 219), and passive object love (1931/1980, 16). But wherever we search, we will find no one exploring the archaic with Dolto’s dedication: “As for precocity, I really have no idea anymore where it is...It really seems to be right from the first day of life” (Coronel & De Mezamat, 1997b). The social and moral implications are astounding.

Régression à l’archaïque

Dolto credits Freud’s concept of regression with allowing her to hypothesize «régression à l’archaïque» (SS, 115-116; SS, 142 & 265). As she explains it, when life pulses are blocked from symbolic expression, the system complies for a while by inhibiting them (SF, 250); but if pulses accumulate too much, regression to a more infantile mode of expression is made necessary to release tension (JD, 30; LF, 113). Thus, in the absence of a means of symbolic expression (i.e., the *pre-verbal* child), for whom there is “untranslatable anguish” (JP, 38), regression becomes a trap that is seldom spontaneously reversible (JP, 38 & 41; SS, 11, 26, 75, 114, 118 & 128). We pause to hear the strong echoes of Dolto’s thought: regression is a solution for a quantitative excess of affect, but it can be pathological in the absence of symbolic mediation. For recovery requires «régression ...et *un appel au-delà*» [a call beyond; italics mine] (VO, 225). The role of this ‘call’ in the «processus de

régression et de leur résolution» (SS, 15-16) cannot be overstated, and we will hear of it later in Dolto's notion of a "third" to enable transference at the oral passive stage (JP, 39). But thus equipped with the capacity to mediate re-emergence, Dolto values regression as a "healthy folding" (SS, 24-25 & 144); a "dynamic involution" (LF, 97); a fall into passivity (DQ, 261); a fall back to restart (VO, 233); and a refuge or passive defense (EM, 140; LO1, 90; SP2, 154-155; VO, 233; 1965, 16). Freud himself describes regression as an involution or withdrawal of libido (1909b, 45; 1912a, 102; 1914b, 74-75 & 82); and as a refuge or flight from stimulus (1895, 296; 1900b, 547-548; 1914b, 101; 1917e, 251) made possible because of the indestructibility of unconscious paths (1900b, 553f; 1905c, 206; 1914b), and the role of unconscious complexes in attracting the liberation of affects towards the interior of the body (1900a, 174; 1900b, 467; 1912a, 103). But with Dolto, talk on regression somehow conveys familiarity, as if speaking of an ordinary given. And so she says, as if it were not only the most obvious thing but also the most comforting: "Negation is not absence. In negation, «Ça» [the unconscious] is there" (SP1, 123). Puzzlingly, recent historians claim a focus on regression characterizes French psychoanalysis (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, 41; also 15, 33 & 37), yet without crediting Dolto.

Dolto's view of regression, like Freud's, marks not just a return to an earlier distribution of psychological energy, but also to primitive methods of psychological expression (Freud, 1900b, 542-543 & 548; 1905c, 240; 1909b, 49; 1917c, 342 & 417; 1917e, 250). Thus, the symbolic function secures «désirs accordés» [granted wishes] (JD, 279). And in this register of dream-work, we really begin to appreciate that Dolto's «désir»—in French, meaning both 'desire' and 'wish'—is unconscious. It is unarguably Freud's greatest discovery that wishes are the motive for dreams (1895, 340; 1900a, 119, 121-122 & 133;

1900b, 553 & 589), guarding sleep (1900a, 233-234; 1900b, 570; 1917c, 417; 1940[1939],171), as the hallucination of satisfaction ends excitation (1900b, 565-566; 1905c, 213; 1914b, 80); and that the wish for satisfaction is present from the beginning of life (1900b, 603), emanating from an interior «source organique» (1900a, 22-23, 64 & 280; 1900b, 525 & 603; 1915a, 123), seeking the free discharge of excitation to limit tension (1895, 297-298; 1900b, 599; 1917c, 356). Freud finds that not only affect (1900a, 8 & 487; 1900b, 467), but also somatic stimuli influence dreams (1900a, 235; 1913, 169), as do fear, rage, mental pain, and sexual delight (1905c, 287)—even “quietly thinking...volition and attention” (1905c, 288). So how could the mother’s own influences not *affect* symbolic mediation in the fetal environment? Of note, Ferenczi also describes regression as wish-fulfillment, a “hallucinatory re-occupation of the satisfying situation” (1913/1950, 218 & 220-221; Dupont 1985, 83). But with Dolto, the biographical infuses each word, leading to the breathless expression of regression as ensuing from a “lack of love for silent sufferings and the teratological folding of the precociously banned” (EM, 283). A “tone of mourning colours the French understanding,” claim our historians (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, 37)—yet again, without recognizing Dolto.

Archaic identification

But just as narcissism is a limit-concept, it seems we reach the impossibility of describing the archaic. Our references to Freud become overly dense and over-determined in narrating the ontogeny of subjectivity—as much a ‘thing’ as a process—as we experience our own regression, our learning through compression, condensation. Besides, a trip to the archaic with Dolto is bound to leave the reader feeling exhausted and haggard, just like her interviewers. So we might well give up hope of ever making meaning were it not that this is

precisely where hope for the human story originates. Thus, in the sheer difficulty of speaking, a summation of the archaic ironically, passively arrives: there is always a point before the loss of hope where hope actually was. It is as if the nanny's archaic love is findable deep in Dolto's theory, as a hearing within a hearing. But we are beyond surprise by now, settled in for the ride. Dolto describes regression as a "surge of affect that reactualizes the archaic object" (LF, 99), as "all tension calls to the other or oneself as another remembered" (SS, 42). And what is the nature of this «époque très archaïque» (SS, 157)? It is a repressed «imbroglio émotionnel archaïque» (SP2, 27), a «vécu [lived] antérieur» (SP1, 76), «plans archaïque» (LF, 283), a «soubassement archaïque» (LF, 92 & 103), and a «structure unitaire à l'intérieur» (CE, 29). Archaic, unconscious libidinal organization is idiosyncratic (LO3, 170), as a «souvenir du langage interrelationnel... à l'origine de la structure psychique de la libido» (SF, 216). And what is the nature of this relation? It is an "archaic identification" (CH, 31; SP1, 90) with «parents archaïques» (SF, 208), a «famille intérieur» (DQ, 18) that makes those a child calls "parents" only his «premiers autres» [first others] (PS, 22). Freud writes of the infantile roots of love (1915, 166); and an early letter refers to a "prehistoric, unforgettable other person" (1896/1954b, 180). But Dolto has an unmatched willingness to speak about the archaic, as if she were sweeping away ashes in the basement of psychosis with a bold Cinderella's broom. A «mère archaïque» (SS, 41), or «mère phallique orale» (SP2, 130), is introduced. But even more prominent is an archaic, pre-symbolic father (CD, 179; DW, 100; SP2, 107 & 125-130; SP3, 204-206). The "father in space-time is not the real father" (DW, 100), Dolto states patly, and "the real father is never foreclosed" (Ibid). Further, "the only parents that are important are those within us" (SP1, 20), and what matters is living to "honour the parent inside...so the

internal parent is proud of you” (De Mezamat, 2008a). Dolto believes “the archaic always continues to exist within us; constantly there is a level that is archaic” (VO, 52). Thus, «ce qui les guérit, c’est de retrouver le père symbolique» [what heals them is to refind the symbolic father] (SP3, 204-206). Here is a fantastically dense yet subtle concept to which we will return: the «repère» [‘re-father’ and ‘landmark’] made possible by the father separating from the «co-moi papa-maman» [co-me father-mother] (EM 39; also CE, 27; QS, 14; DW, 166) of dream-work, and the archaic identification of the pre-subject with the one who, like himself, is a part of the mother yet not. We will eventually understand this bit of dream-work as the first moment of the pre-subject. Meanwhile, our historians disclose the particular interest of French psychoanalysis in “subjectivation”—this time, referencing Dolto with one sentence in a single footnote (Birksted-Breen, Flanders & Gibeault, 2010, 15 & 24f). But by now, the loss of the name, Dolto, cannot help but appear as a symptom that tries to hide its own mourning and obfuscate the path of its own regression. Then again, if all goes well, we are all too willing to forget the enigmas and paradoxes of the archaic. Thus, at the risk the losing the wide doorway Dolto opens onto autism and psychosis, we witness the very public tendency to relegate Dolto to an infantile amnesia. For Dolto takes up Freud’s narrative of precocious sexuality where(in) it is most provocative, at the dawn of the subject, and she seems engaged in a struggle for a hearing against the repression barrier itself. And teasing out Dolto’s notion of the ‘archaic parent,’ we find not the ‘super-ego’ or ‘ego ideal,’ but what is ontologically prior: dream-work, a phantasy of a parent. For nascent proprioception informs a dream of provision (under the pulses of conservation) that in developmental ‘progressions’ (paradoxically, in non-time) convey an enigmatic witnessing with an indissociable other that ensures survival—whose most ubiquitous material (remains

of the day for dream-work) are sounds. Repetitive sounds, then—environmentally contingent phonemes—become richly invested in this association with what we will come to know as the «père pré-symbolique.» Henceforth, the child will be unconsciously securitized by remaining in a continual «colloque muet affectif intime» with himself (SS, 41).

Wild transference

Deep in the womb now, we will at first barely hear the soft slide of meaning from physicality to something far more nuanced and dreamier: both maternal and paternal security are included in the mother (CE, 172; LF, 87); every mother is also a father (CD, 178; CE, 27; DW, 166; SP1, 126; 1988, 14 & 77); and the father is the one who occupies the thoughts of the mother (SP2, 125; TL, 43). Further, Dolto adds, because “archaic filial history is existential security” (CE, 243; SP1, 37), the primal scene enriches primary narcissism (SP1, 216-217). Yet oddly enough, we are far from Klein’s “primal scene,” with its fearful combined figure of a primitive couple, parents fused in intercourse—the mother containing the penis and the father containing the breast (Bott-Spillius, 271). For Dolto, the primal scene may be *one’s own conception* (SF, 141; SP1, 123).⁷ So we cease imagining mingled, mangled flesh to let ourselves fall beneath and before, onto a landscape described only by Freud, in the “combined figure” that is a piece of dream-work, as common features unite persons (Freud, 1900a, 112, 293, 321 & 324; 1900b, 342); one dream thought represents more than one dream element (Freud, 1896/1962a, 196; 1900a, 279 & 284); dream-content is over-determined (Freud, 1900a, 284 & 306-307); and the amount of condensation is indeterminate (Freud, 1900a, 279). Dolto takes Freud as her invisible cloth, as she deftly weaves her articulation of a continuously accessible, unconscious, combined but de-combinable parent as a «repère» that opens up her theory to some landmarks for our

own travels. And what we find emerging powerfully is the notion of a means for progression to reality (along the model of de-combining), and for regression to the archaic (along the model of re-combining). For the dream-work translating what permeates the fluid medium of primary narcissism makes possible the impossible in the offer of a critical path—one that enables us to theorize just how it is that projection could ever develop out of the passive domain of our archaic prehistory. I suggest that Dolto's thought invites a homonymic masterplay on the declaration of subjectivity itself, «je suis»—both 'I am' *and* 'I follow.' I further believe Dolto answers, inadvertently, the provocative question posed by Laplanche and Pontalis in their dictionary of Freud's oeuvre: "How is it possible to pass from a monad closed onto itself to the progressive recognition of an object?" (1967/2004, 263).

The liquid dream-work of the narcissistic environment renders archaic identification as an enigmatic, securitizing witnessing in an ironic, continuous potential wherein the pre-subject and combined parents are inseparable yet dissociable—a kind of 'two' that is also a 'three,' we might say. Critically informing this paradox, we come upon Dolto's notion of «prolongement» [prolonging], invoking both fusion and reversibility: "The human being is the «prolongement» of the being he loves, and that being is his «prolongement.» If they are apart, he believes he is that being—he is not where he is but at place of other" (CE, 262-263). Further, Dolto takes the path of "prolonging" toward the transference: all humans are mediating objects, and patients lend solutions to her while imagining what they'd do if they were the doctor and she were the patient (VC2, 206). Dolto believes all babies are fusional (Nobécourt, 2008c; PJE, 97), fusion happens better in sleep (SP3, 175), and children incline to "reversibility" (EN, 96). And where there is fusion, there is "fusional transference" (1985c, 197). Thus, Bernadette eerily remarks, "If I die, I will go live in my daughter" (JD,

137). If we listen well, we can hear the dream-work's preference for reversal and contraries (Freud, 1900a, 326-327); the lack of differentiation between inner and outer world (Stärcke, 1921a, 200), or between the sucking child and breast (Abraham, 1924, 450); the blurring of "subject and other, losing and receiving" (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 78); and the "repeated alternation between becoming one's own and not one's own...[that is] a prototype for the process of projection" (Stärcke, 1921a, 198). Thus, in "fusional transference," we locate the origin of projection in passive pulses—and of Dolto's famous «poupée-fleur.»⁸ At stake is a subject regressed so far back that he cannot find in his surroundings «des objets de transfert adéquats» (SS, 72). As flowers have life but no movement or speech (JP, 42), and are free of "digestive dependence" (JP, 40-42), the oral stage is «en resonance» with it (EM, 149; JD, 104; JP, 40-42)—as a kind of similar-enough other, or an as-if third. By this resonance, it opens the possibility of projection to liberate oral affects (JP, 47-48), securing abreaction even if found accidentally (JP, 37). Further, since it has no will, it is free of vengeance, enabling the "recuperation of narcissism without anxiety" (JP, 48), a clean start. And in an uncanny echo of Dolto's angel, BAG—who, it seems, is still right here—Bernadette and Nicole, *independent cases*, each state (while heaping verbal abuse and guilt on it) that the flower-doll's way of being good *is* being bad (JD, 140 & 154).

Of interest, Klein herself heard about the «poupée-fleur» in Paris in 1949 (JP, 8), and we also discover that Dolto attended one of Klein's 'control sessions,' candidly reporting that she was «horriifiée,» because "the subject was reduced to relations of parts of his body with other parts of partial bodies" (DW, 40-41), in an «*amputation de la théorie...de Freud*» (Ibid; italics mine, re her subtle play on parts). Morgenstern also reported shock about what Klein told children (2003b, 253 & 286-287). So while Dolto credits Klein with working to

“dephobize mental illness” (SF, 332), she believes Klein was too theorized and failed to appreciate how “every child really brings something new” (D&R, 13). Further, she disagrees strongly with Klein’s notion of the internal object (see Bott-Spillius, 2011, 409-412):⁹

One never constructs an internal object—fortunately for the subject—because the internal object is madness. The subject of desire must construct himself *for* someone, *with* someone and *by (through)* someone [italics hers]. Never is desire satisfied outside of the presence of someone—a presence sometimes hallucinated, as for psychotics who have the illusion of hearing the voice of the loved one. It is the «parole» [speech, word] of a third that presentifies, for a subject, an absent person. There is a presence restituted only *in* language, but always *by* a third [italics mine] (DQ, 203).

Dolto met Klein often (DW, 40-41; D&R, 13), commenting that one could “feel the theory in her head” (Ibid; DW, 40); and that Klein’s “stunning charisma” (DW, 40) and “securitizing human contact” (DW, 45) healed her patients, not her theory (DW, 41). She seemed like “an English nanny,” Dolto suggests (DW, 40). And archaic echoes jump the elusive gates of subjectivation into the wild outdoors.

Dynamic complimentary regulation

Believing a subject is constructed in relationality, Dolto makes potent claims about unconscious transmission. The notion of unconscious inheritance is familiar on French terrain, as Roudinesco explains (1982, 108 & 210; 1986, 584). And Freud writes of neurotics passing disorders to their children (1905c, 224 & 236); “hereditary transmission” (1937, 240); and “archaic heritage” (1896/1954b, 180; 1937, 240 & 241; 1940[1939], 167). But Dolto’s unparalleled observations lead to two phenomenal discoveries about infants: first, their unconscious «rôle dynamique complémentaire régulateur» (DV, 301; also DW,

104; SP3, 176; 1977/1984, 243) with parents; and second, that their libido wakes fragile adults and threatens that fragile state (CD, 243). In brief, the infant is in a state of hypnosis with parents, always between consciousness and unconsciousness (CE, 16, 268 & 293), sharing phantasms with the mother (NE, 243; SP1, 29), so the mother's dreams and ideas structure the fetus (DW, 34; SP1, 125; TL, 37); also, a newborn reacts to the unconscious projections of parents (LF, 98). As a result, every child becomes an "anxiety sponge" for parents (EM, 220; LF, 206-208; NE, 190; SP2, 213; 1980, 213), thus inheriting suffering (SS, 167); psychotic enclaves (QC, 67); phobia (JD, 19f; SS, 166); guilt and fixations (CD, 19; EM, 28; LF, 98-99; TL, 150); unconscious conflicts (SS, 172); and "libidinal mutations" (JD, 202)—essentially, archaic history (SP1, 31). Thus, what is "silenced in the first generation, the second generation wears on body" (DQ, 113; also EM, 82; SP2, 191), in a relation of complimentary "co-knowing or co-non-knowing" (JD, 281), and "co-being or co-non-being" (JD, 282). Dolto even speaks of the "dispatching of libido in a family" (NE, 190), «l'économie familiale» (EN, 108), and the regression of a whole family "by contamination" (CD, 214; LF, 219). "Destructuration is contagious" (CE, 33; also EM, 222-223), thus "narcissistic devaluation is a simple operation" (VO, 197)—one, to stress, contingent on idiosyncratic pre-histories of audition, affect and anxiety. In sum, Dolto is unequivocal on a matter of staggering import: we each inherit an unconscious education from our sources of affect. Such is the radical truth the archaic silently speaks, and that Dolto so acutely hears.

As Dolto puts it, "his own infancy is to an adult as foreign as the vital needs of a tadpole are to a frog" (AI, 192). Indeed, her corpus is an astounding demonstration of the play at the origin of thought, as digressions take us, lost stories insist, sentences continue

elsewhere, and theory is inferred. Further, as the transference enlists the archaic register of words—long before we are dealt a sentence, so to speak—language harbours what Derrida calls a hypothesis from underneath (2003b,167), a countersignature (1991,160)—i.e., a game in language (1967b, 73) of reversibility and repetition (1999/2004, 17) that “disorganizes and disturbs literalness” (1967c, 337). Psychobiography values these “unconscious ruptures in spoken language and contradictions” (CD, 206) because “contradiction [is] inherent in the human” (PS, 84; also CE, 320; SP1, 43; TL, 155; 1985/ 1989, 68), and a revolt of conscious narratives, from the unconscious, offers the possibility of something new, originality, in an ironic return from our origins. Not only does *unexpected material* arrive, but *unexpected processes* do too—dream-work, passive pulses—as “unconscious material...brings its own modes of working along with it” (Freud, 1940[1939], 167). Thus, as Freud states, “unconscious ideation” (1896d, 151) or “unconscious thinking...is also active in the day” (1900b, 613), making each of us a “dreamer in daylight” (1908a, 149).

Concluding this chapter, I offer that Dolto’s corpus opens the rare possibility of finding the trace at work, what Britzman superbly describes as, “the incredible and inaudible meaning, shards of history that compose and decompose psychical life” (2011, 5)—along with ample evidence that our “most unresolved problems concern the question of origin” (Ibid, 95). For in every sense, it is Françoise Marette, the “libidinal child who dreams yet still desires knowledge” (Britzman, 2003, 53), who underwrites the work of Françoise Dolto, the woman of genius. Like her theory, Dolto’s life reveals that a continuous wish for security that begins in fetal life is serviced by an enigmatic, archaic wealth perpetually inhabiting our narcissistic core, to which we remain unconsciously tethered and can return in our encounters with ordinary (and not so ordinary) suffering. Derrida, himself a

«revenant»—«rêve venant» [dream coming]—of rue Saint-Jacques, narrates the archaic as an “inheritance of transference” (1980/1987, 339) and a “silent coming that resonates, re-sounds” (1986b, 166). And upon that very street Dolto also walked each day comes another hearing within a hearing: the call of a sister, long absent, who returns on the name, as if our losses were never really lost at all. Thus, the archaic delivers unconscious assurance in our psychical advances and retreats, rooting each one of us in an “inscribed orient” (Derrida, 1999/2004, 216) of our own, whose echoes reverberate lifelong. And thinking of what resonates silently, we curiously find more common ground between Dolto and Derrida. There is questioning of the middle name, as Derrida shares *Élie* was his «prénom secret» (1991, 51-52; Peeters, 2010, 20; ‘*and bed/read*’). There is infantile suffering, for Derrida was a replacement child for the absent Paul Moïse, who died in infancy the year prior (1991, 51-52 & 130; Peeters, 2010, 22). And there is Derrida’s mother who, at his birth, refused to leave her poker game (1991, 42). Derrida and Dolto never met except (we could say) once on the same page (VC2, 906), and once in the same sentence (Roudinesco, 1986, 15). They do not, in fact, identify with each other on their infantile stories. But I do: “one ego has perceived a significant analogy with another...an identification is thereupon constructed on this point” (Freud, 1921, 107). I confess this is the reason I will invite key others to the textual space Dolto opens—Bertha Pappenheim, Hanna Segal and the Princess—for *I trust their thoughts*. As Warner says of the psychobiography by the Princess on Poe, she identified with his “early traumatic losses” (1991, 446). And Young-Bruehl divulges that in her psychobiographic writing on A. Freud and Arendt, her empathy was “grounded in identification and imitation” (1998b, 20). So one encounters the works of a stranger and yet, everything happens as-if it is the elusively unsaid more than their words, the instability of

play in dreams that arrive upon shared affects—a passive experiencing with, as-if, through an other—that vouches for the veracity of history.

Chapter Three: Infancy & Audition

Abstract: In this chapter, I study the relation between precocious audition and the transference. I follow Dolto into the clinic, where she demonstrates acute *listening* to the suffering infant. I reveal some of her evidence that the infant is unconsciously vibrant and seeking familiar echoes, thus alert to the transference in continuity with his archaic history. I relate her narrative of affect weaving with repetitive phonemes, like names, in the liquid landscape of primary narcissism. And linking Dolto's 'phoneme' to Freud's 'word-thing,' I explicate the suggestibility and the slippery subjectivity that inheres in the co-narcissistic state Dolto theorizes, and the inventiveness of her terminology.

Dream, poetical idiom, melancholy, ruin-abyss [abîme] of childhood...the secret resonance of the voice or of the voice-able sounds [vocables] that wait in us, like at the bottom of the first proper name. (Jacques Derrida, 2002a, 29)

If one word is repeated throughout the Dolto corpus more than any other, it is 'Trousseau.' It appears in virtually all her books, and a movie about her work has «l'Hôpital Trousseau» as its setting (Le Péron, 2008). In countless interviews, her daughter lovingly explains how she and her siblings knew this word from childhood because it came up so often. After all, Dolto worked there for almost 40 years, from 1941 to 1978 (ATP, 195). She had received her medical certification in 1937, after nursing accreditation in 1930 (1985/1989b, 124). And in her long career, there would be other hospitals, a private practice, and countless seminars. But nowhere was Dolto's commitment greater than at Trousseau. Yet we have just entered the world of Dolto, where we meet a surface that impresses, only to discover there is far more than meets the eye. For it turns out Dolto was never paid for this work. Yet every Tuesday for nearly four decades, from 9:00 to 14:00, she listened to children's suffering (TL, 49f; AI, 224). "I never missed a consultation, I never missed a

Tuesday,” she says, “ça me portait» (ATP, 196). And here, a bilingual reader feels a transit of something, as if an unseen window has suddenly opened. For while the phrase is a common idiom, ‘it carried me’ (i.e., it was naturally fulfilling), the «Ça» is also ‘the unconscious.’ Dolto has, in fact, just said that the unconscious carried her. Or has she? Recent translators sponsored by the French government, precisely to disseminate her work, comment in their preface about their own discomfort with her language (Hall, Hivernel & Morgan, xv-xvi). And one of her best interviewers admits to feeling “exhausted and haggard” after, though Dolto was barely fatigued (at nearly 80) (DW, 17). For Dolto’s rhetoric is a fluid mix of conversations and provocations from beneath that disturb, suggest and question, in interminable echoes that take some getting used to. Our translators note odd time-shifts in her story-telling, too (Hall, Hivernel & Morgan, xvi). Then again, why not? After all, Dolto says—as if it were commonly known—time is what is splitting (EN, 40). But *where* is she to talk like this? What is the vantage point of someone who speaks from a subject position prior to time? At the age of five, Dolto was already musing that she might be «née trop tôt dans un siècle trop vieux» [born too early in a century that is too old] (ATP, 46; VC2, 61). And even in adulthood, her location in reality seemed contestable: «Suis-je en retard, suis-je trop en avance?» [Am I late? Am I too early?] (VC1, 215). In fact, Dolto’s work is located on an archaic dreamscape where it is naturally easy to lose space and time, just as invented word-things arrive to describe those experiences, like «mamelonnairement» [nipplelingly] (LF, 97), and «chosifiant» [thingifying] (SS, 147). For an availability for play and nuance is required to be drawn by Dolto’s unusual discourse to the foremost element of her practice and theory: finely tuned audition. Thus, the reader too will need to be listening very carefully to hear the infant—the *infans*—the voiceless one who is prior to speaking.

At Trousseau, Dolto maintained an unusual practice for which the lack of payment soon seems secondary. For one, she worked with a Mme Arlette for every one of those years—yet Mme Arlette is silent in the analytic literature. She was, in effect, an assistant installed in the hall just outside, who served as a relay between (usually) the mother and Dolto. Letters and artwork, completed since the last visit, were also passed through Mme Arlette. Parents came into the consultation room with the child, and Dolto filled the remaining space with as many trainees as could fit. “It was barely big enough for five,” she tells us (VC2, 413; photos VC2, 390 & 391), with regret. And while Dolto is known for the symbolic payments (rocks, stamps, snippets) she asked of her patients, what should interest us far more is the trademark greeting Dolto addressed to every child, welcoming him by his first name, and how everyone present repeated it, “in choral” (CE, 74; QS, 11; SP1, 49; VO, 226). “You must always introduce yourself and address a baby by his name,” she iterates through her corpus (e.g. CE, 64; EM, 185). Here is the first hint that Dolto engages language differently, giving the *name* unique valuation. In turn, her practice will include detailed anamneses, and every case places the child in a story with family members and anyone else with a possible influence—each associated with their names. Dolto’s critical assumption is that the child is a subject of language from conception, so his subjectivity is always at stake in the encounter with words. And her project, above all, will show that the human subject is conceived in languaged relations and destined to be inserted in these relations.

Precocious audition

The assumption of a languaged being from the start takes us right to precocious audition, or the infant’s pre-language. Human existence begins and continues because “we are welcomed into language,” Dolto explains (LF, 207). We need a long moment here to

understand, then, that when Dolto says “all is language” (EM 230; IIC, 367; TL, 24), she intends passive receptivity here: it is *not* that the child speaks in every way possible (not yet), but rather, that at the archaic stage she is narrating, the child is purely passive and that in a state of receptivity, he makes every experience into a communication because that is what it means to be humanized. For “audition is prior to vision” (JD, 277) as a simple fact, she notes, and the fetus from conception inhabits a «climat sonore» (VC2, 239). Audition, then, is what “lures” (JD, 277) on a landscape of unconscious desires investing audition, and that will turn out to be critical. Further, we will always need to remember that when we speak of «désir» with Dolto, we are not speaking of which objects a subject might want for his use. Rather, we are speaking of the “pre-subject” (JD, 275) and his “unconscious desire” (VO, 185) for communication. For the fetus lives an “extraordinary social life *in utero*, right from conception,” Dolto posits (CE, 350; EM, 178), wherein his “audition is perfect” (LO1, 26 & 130). Here, he is in a «relation d’écoute» [listening relation] (LF, 73) with his mother, as he is effectively engaged in an “intra-narcissistic libidinal dialectic” (JD, 274; LF, 95; SF, 48, 71, 210 & 334; SP1, 176; 1977/1984, 192)—a dream of discourse, we might say. His audition is his access (JD, 276), and everything from the human heart to the mother’s organic affects and respiration are his language (LF, 86; JD, 277; LO2, 79; DV, 115), one in which the «paix des organes» [organ peace], in a two-time rhythm, represents the base of life (DV, 48; NE, 212; PJ, 105; SP2, 157 & 241). We stop for another moment to consider Dolto’s offer: it is an engagement with sound in a completely unconscious state, where inertia is the answer to our call for organic peace. We have, in effect, arrived at the notion of a wish of perfect provision. Everything happens as if, she says, babies “register their emotional climate” (SF, 153). In this way, “phonemes of the mother tongue” and “even

foreign languages” are heard before nine months of age (CH 16; JD, 250), while the child is in a purely passive state of expectation, living out organic peace in a fetal «purée de signifiance...la purée de mots» (PJE, 106)—a purée of words and their affects—so that audition is literally like eating (JD, 275-7; VO, 234). Thus, the child is born “waiting for human communication” from the outside (JD, 272), literally looking for «le chemin d’une écoute» [road of a listening] (CE, 17; VO, 154)—using «repères langagiers fantasmatiques archaïques» [archaic phantasized languaged landmarks], simply to *re*find archaic security (DV, 117; SS, 41; my emphasis), as perception slowly develops, and interiorized sensations first experienced as if they were words are replaced by actual words (ATP, 170; DV, 300). This is a critical turn not to be missed, for on the word there is a migration to reality—and a conduit to and from the archaic. Simply put, the body is a “mediator (but never a possessor) of truth” (PS, 92): access to a cultural-temporal history the child is born into, that continues after him. Further, so receptive is the passive child that he can “intuit his filiation,” having an innate sense of his story, including who his parents are (CE, 16-17, 133-134 & 242; EM, 63 & 230; PJ, 95), being in a “telepathic relation” with them (CE, 268 & 293; SP1, 120). This “symbolic filiation dominates over carnal filiation” (CE, 44) as “interpsychic communication” from fetal life through to birth (TL, 23), arising from «entendement intuitionnel» (CE, 339) [intuitive hearing] from three or four months’ gestation—or earlier, depending on his fetal history, what is heard, and his affective reactions (CD, 7; CE, 350; SP1, 119).

And so it comes to be that in 1955-56, the reader meets Lionel, an orphan, age four (SS, 95-104). Lionel likes to watch himself bleed, plays with his own excrement, and destroys all that he touches. His symptoms include encopresis, incontinence and insomnia,

and he is covered in scabs and scars. Small for his age, his arms are frozen to the touch and he smells horrible. Yet Dolto places him on her lap and they begin to model clay together as she carefully re-narrates with and for him the confusing story of a family where key men have the same name, and the mother and grandmother share theirs too, so that Lionel thinks his grandmother is his mother (SS, 95), and he has, thus, effectively lost in his own history his own dead mother. There will be a remarkably rapid return of cleanliness and sleep, and Lionel will begin to make friends in the public home where he will be placed in lieu of the psychiatric hospital where he was headed. At every rereading, this case evokes my tears in its powerful conveyance of empathy in the service of suffering. For Dolto had heard about Lionel from hospital staff and had insisted on a chance to see him, believing there was hope because, as she said: «Lionel parle encore» [Lionel still speaks]. Thus, beneath and before theory, we begin to sense Dolto's sincere reply to the distressed infant—her desire to help.

Soma of understanding

In a single sentence that could sum up her entire view of fetal life, Dolto states that it is as if “gestation is an affective incarnation along with the somatic, and the fetus constructs himself by an organo-emotional induction” (LF, 90). The words themselves are ‘vintage Dolto’—inimitable, genius, strange—a liquid flow of the oddly phantasmatic with the radically new that challenges normative discourses. Here is a non-space, non-time where bodily sounds and syllables, “veiled” for now (JD, 273), are auditorily invested, as ears “symbolize the soma of understanding” (JD, 62; SP3, 156). And in this fluid dreamscape of self-sufficiency and security that is oral passivity, there is only one other: Freud. Freud was the first to note the critical role of the word in our coming to reality: “becoming conscious...consists for the most part in the verbal consciousness pertaining to...the

associated word-presentations” (Freud, 1896e, 232; also 1915c, 209-215). Freud’s notion of the word-thing also helps explicate how words are subject to condensation and displacement, as-if things (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 418). And if first syllables can do this, Dolto’s work suggests, *all* can. For a sound in phantasy is without a definition—free.

So we locate the social life of the fetus in the nascent proprioception of sound that feeds the dream: “That the senses aroused during sleep influence the dream is well known and can be experimentally verified; it is one of the certain but much overestimated results of the medical investigation of dreams” (Freud, 1901a, 680). Further, we note that “stimuli arising during sleep are worked up into a wish-fulfillment” (Freud, 1900a, 228). Freud also explains how, “infantile experiences are ...sexual experiences affecting the subject’s own body...*sexual intercourse* (in the wider sense)” (1896a, 203), and elsewhere speaks of the “universally recognized influence exercised upon our dreams by states of excitation in our digestive, urinary and sexual organs” (1900a, 221). Ergo, we begin in a dream spun upon sounds in the elaboration of the wish to which all stimuli encountered in an unconscious state are subject. Thus, language always locates the symptom for Dolto, being the mediating object of unconscious content. And while her corpus is rich with clinical cases (easily more than 100), one that merits particular attention—not only because it is the only one with its own book—is that of Dominique Bel [beautiful], age 14. A footnote explains that “a few modifications of names and places were necessary” (CD, 8f) and enigma immediately arrives. For Dolto says he “dominated his mother, conforming to his name,” (CD, 71) and interprets “the sonar meeting of the patronym of the family and the adjective characterizing powerful specular seduction” (CD, 75); yet elsewhere, we learn that Dominique is a Russian

restaurant in Paris (VC2, 123f), and was her favourite man's name back in 1928 (AI, 88). So has she changed his name or not? And despite our new attunement to the phoneme, Dolto adds that the modifications do not hamper the «valeur associative significative» (CD, 8f).

Perplexity inheres as she waited almost ten years for publication, then provides a detailed analysis that hinges on family names. Nevertheless, through 12 sessions over a year and a half, her work with Dominique will explore the relation between his surname, «bel,» and its antonym, «laid» [ugly], as a homonym of «lait» [milk]; a regression to his nursery, «la salle» [room] as a homonym of «la sale» [dirty one]; a sister named Sylvie («si'il vit» [if he lives]), whose name evokes the death of an uncle; Dominique's desire to be a pirate, a «voleur de mer»—homonymically, «voleur de mère» [thief of the mother]; and an invisible river called «Elmoru» [she died]. Dominique's recovery is credited to his learning that there is such a thing as a «maire» [mayor], an exact homonym of «mère,» [mother] but male; and thus his becoming entitled to «lait» [milk; homonym of «laid»] despite being a «bel,» so being authorized to assume life in his name (CD, 9-172). The freefall of logic is spectacular, and a bold testament to how the oral passive stage is a startlingly different setting for thought, as the symptom takes the word as an opportunity to express the enigmatic affects of primary narcissism. Yet Dolto is always ready to risk herself for truth. Here, in turn, is 12-year old Tony, missing school for months due to acute pain in his «genoux» [knees]—homonymically, 'I-we.' Dolto comments: «Genoux? Je, nous...On dirait un jeu de *mots* ou de *maux*» [Knees? I, we?... It seems like a game of *words* or *pains*; italics mine on homonyms] (IIC, 365; also IIC, 363 & 371-372; SP3, 76). Disorientingly original, then, Dolto finds inroads for archaic regressions and progressive re-narrations right on the name. Further, we detect Dolto's unspoken awareness of the 'slippery pronouns' that herald

primary narcissism. Yet the healing is *real*. But why *this* symptom, Dolto is asked often in seminars (e.g., SP3, 43); “I have no idea,” she replies, “I am asking if you have an idea.”

Mamaïser

As a result of Dolto’s foundational beliefs about early audition—namely, that the infant is unconsciously attuned to the flow of language around him—much of her work will consist of untangling family stories, listening for the dream-work of words. “I listen *otherwise*, in effect,” she says cryptically (ATP, 24; italics mine). Working backwards along a regressive path to the archaic—not so far back for children—she will search for «malentendu» [misunderstood; but literally, ‘mis-heard,’ and ‘evil heard’]. For inherent in the notion that passive encounters with audition are formative to psychical structuration is the idea that such encounters can cause de-structuration, too—knots of libido, condensations upon a word that need to be released, unspun. This approach to the role of words in the psychical economy will critically inform her method in ways that cannot help but strike the unfamiliar reader as remarkable: one must warn a child that he will be told lies (DV, 30); one must never lie to a child (PJE, 17-18); every infant has a right to his truth, to know the trials he survived (CE, 40; SF, 156; SP3, 146); if you speak to a baby as an equal, then you will have an equal with you (CE, 255). Roger Bacon, currently one of the most sensitive readers of Dolto, rightly says, “How odd, how ‘other’ [is] not just the direction of her thinking but the language” (2013, 520). Always, Dolto is disarmingly candid and drily witty, professing she is a «zinzin» [dingdong] (VC2, 453 & 709), working with a «clientele de zinzins» (SP2, 230; TL, 38) in a «zinzinnerie» [dingdongery] (TL, 39). There is no pretension here, no sign of the bourgeois girl from the 16th. And there is no sign of a theory of illness either. For on the one hand, there is no coincidence: «Il n’y a pas de hasard» (DW,

25; SS, 99 & 113; VC2, 495). But on the other hand, there are no generalities either: «Il n’y a pas d’en général» (LF, 123 & 248). Thus the oral passive stage, and its sense of no-place, no-time, saturates the terrain of Dolto’s discourse. Her translators point out the continuous ‘I-we’ reversals, where the reader remains uncertain if ‘we’ means ‘colleagues’ or the ‘royal we’; how the subject pronoun is often uncertain for gender (unusual for French); and the slippery point of view (Hall, Hivernel & Morgan, xv-xvi). Time is unsettled, and space shifts, too. And in a story worth remembering under the giant clock tower at Trousseau,¹⁰ Dolto once commented comically that in the early century, «l’heure juste» [right time] was a funny idea simply because no one had it (ATP, 32 & 41). And here are more archaic echoes, as the bilingual reader hears another homonym: «leurre(s) juste»: ‘just (ethical) lure(s).’

Wary of the tenuousness of making meaning from so much homonymic play, we might choose to refuse it. And yet, by this very play, we are led to the uncanny discovery of one of the most useful words in her entire project: «mamaïser» [to motherify]—a term «qui dit bien ce qu’il dit» [that says well what it says] (JD, 281; LF, 126; SP2, 158; SS, 157). To «mamaïser» is to mark the present by the mother’s voice, to *lure* to reality. Soon, just like the fetus in his auditory climate, then, we too begin to detect sounds to which we can attach our phantasies as primitive ideas—where primitivity is not in the least the domain of debasement, but rather the force of life in the basement of man. For on this verb, «mamaïser,» the project turns. Here is the mother, hopefully at her best, as an “auditory caress” (SF, 359) on whose rhythms the child is dependent (LF, 102), leading Dolto to speak of the “psychical vitality woven to organic vitality” (PJE, 15). Our bodies depend on the «paroles» [word-speech] of our parents (LO1, 98) that is “more subtle than liquid” (SP1, 61), she says. Dolto is creating a narrative of life whereby we are drawn into reality by

hearing, from very early in gestational life, as language on the “outside” lures us into relations with the sources of those voices (TL, 15). Language is what “humanizes the world” (JD, 273), making it worthy of engaging, simply because *in utero*, “audition tempers anxiety” (VC, 329). Herein, within the security of the “language bath which is our body” (CE, 16), our wish to live is met by a dream of perfect provision that invests audition, whereby we are “conceived in language” (CE, 16). Thus, the subject survives by a «dialectique exprimée...par la parole et par les fantasmes sous-jacents à la parole» [a dialectic expressed...by word-speech and by the phantasms subtending word-speech] (1977/1984, 249). To stress, we are effectively “lured towards reality by being spoken *of*” (LO1, 111; emphasis mine). Enigmatically, this address needs no words—and here, we are reminded of the absence which is essential to any rhythm, by definition, and also of our dreams of discourse upon organically resonant sounds. Thus, Dolto says, there are mothers who speak to their babies in silence and others who engage in empty discourses (CE, 255). And we find in this provocative statement the foundational belief affecting Dolto’s approach to the infant, wherein she listens in silence to the one who listens in silence: that *unconscious communication* between mother and child, the ‘unsaid’ that necessarily precedes and exceeds anything that is said. As a result, the mother can “only be maternal in her mother tongue” (LO1, 130), the “language of her dreams” (SP1, 120), and her untimely death (or loss) will represent the “end of history” as the source of word-speech, «parole» (JD, 252). This is a radical concept to which we will find ourselves returning—the notion that mother and baby dream upon the same word in a “continuum that creates a memory of myself-other” (SP1, 196-201). The baby begins to be spoken of when the mother begins to have «*émois particuliers*»—“particular affects” for the child—and speaks of him, while

pregnant (CE, 55). But by now attuned to Dolto's condensations and the homonymic play informing them, we take a moment to reflect on her word here: «émois,» literally, 'and-me.'

Moi-mamère

Again, we might easily take this word-play as just another bit of madness of our own, except that it leads, once more, to another critical Dolto notion, the infant's indissociable state with the mother, for which Dolto coins another word: «moi-mamère» [me-mymother] (SP2, 127). Effectively, this term is a conceptualization of an indivisible, fluid psychical space that is *not* mother and child—and this is critical—but rather, mother *as* child, *and vice-versa*. In a nutshell, the term is a narcissistic «prolongement» [prolonging] (CD, 224; CE, 262), with all of the nuances of space and time folded in. This «sensorium» (JD, 125; also DW, 78; JD, 299; JP, 24; PJE, 87; SP1, 57; VO, 222; 2008b), credited to Pichon (in an atypical act of citation), is an environment she elaborates lifelong as an undifferentiated liquid mass (VO, 34); a liquid current (SS, 184); a gestational interpersonal emotional rapport (LF, 86); an unconscious fusional communication (EM, 37; 1989a, 68); an unconscious continuum (CE, 29); and an emotional climate (SF, 153). Like no other, Dolto elucidates the life of the human infant as a rising sense of presence inside incoherence. In sum, she says, the baby is in a state of «covivance» [coliving] with the mother (JD, 280). And for Dolto, crucially, this is interesting not as a dyad or as physical symbiosis, but rather in terms of the infant's primary narcissism being necessarily “co-narcissistic with the mother” (VO, 11-12), with huge effects. For one, we will share dreams and have “complimentary phantasms with our mothers” in unconscious life (SP3, 176; 1977/1984, 243). This alone is a shocking suggestion of “inherited education” (EM, 222), as “archaic transference” from our parents (SP1, 31; SS, 78)—a deep unconscious relation extending to

those we encounter in words in our families, for about three generations (CD, 242; 1985/1989b, 123). In fact, Freud himself expressed in his earliest work how, “an unexplained hereditary predisposition may be accounted for as having been acquired at an early age” (1896a, 202). With Dolto, ‘early’ has merely shifted months back. And critically, in this inseparable fusion of «moi-mamère,» as the mother is spoken to, the child becomes an unconscious addressee as words are first lived with soft, permeable boundaries between self and other. So archaic regression will necessarily entail an experience of the world through another that is as-if the mother (PJ, 95; SP1, 29; SP2, 18-19)—an inherent “reversibility of subject positions” upon the one to whom we speak (DW, 123), in whom we recognize “sameness” (JD, 256). And this, in a nutshell, is the archaic geography of primary narcissism, where it is not just a matter of finding traces, but where traces are the only thing we can find. The power of this analytic construct to the origin of the transference cannot be overstated. She asks: “Who speaks to whom, when someone «se tutoie» [refers to himself as ‘you’] in his «for intérieur»?” (SP1, 75). Indeed. For Dolto’s work reveals that the transference subtends human relationality as a circulation of discourses, a call to an-other-as-self in an inherent, unconscious reversibility. And what she bequeaths in legacy here, very provocatively, is the notion that the infant feels addressed within a text addressed to the «moi-mamère»—where the body is the conducting matter, the materia. Herein originates the passive experience of an address within language as an unconscious hearing-within-a-hearing, rooted in an archaic prehistory wherein we obtain security precisely because passivity is assured—thus whose continuity we instinctively need, so unconsciously desire.

In articulating Dolto’s work on the oral passive stage, then, we can say that subject-object reversals will privilege oral passivity as a highly receptive state for unconscious

security. Reciprocally, oral passivity will always evoke the affective experience of a subject-object reversal because it is a condition of fusion—a living ‘with, as-if, through’ an ‘other,’ a state of psychical indissociability wherein reversibility necessarily inheres. And the high degree of receptivity of the oral passive stage—a sort of active passivity, in effect—is precisely what is at issue. As a case in point, in 1954, we meet le «petit schizophrène» (DV, 30-37; SP2, 167-170; 1985c), during whose session something happened Dolto says “she will never forget,” as it unsettled her so much (DV, 31). At age 13, he is highly phobic (especially of scissors), volatile, insomniac (never sleeping more than one hour), and illiterate. Dolto works with him every eight days, and in what becomes the penultimate session, she helps him move clay shapes towards a scraper on the table. Surprisingly, she then helps his hand scratch the back of her hand with the scraper, saying, “You see, it is not you that is hurting, and this does not even hurt me.” “That is all?” he asks, in a flash of lucidity. And then, from his mouth, comes a haunting discourse in two voices, one high and pleading, the other older and stern: “You slut, you will never have him...” “Mother I want to keep him...” The next day, Dolto receives an urgent request from the mother for a meeting, because when he got home, he slept all night and woke up calm, «différent». In the conversations that ensue, Dolto learns the child was adopted and the conversational «bande magnétique» was real—overheard by the adoptive mother as she waited in hospital to receive the baby in a private arrangement between families. So horrible was the argument that the adoptive mother had never told anyone what she had been privy to between the birth mother and grandmother, and she experienced shock learning that Dolto knew, and how she had learned it. At his next session, the boy could not even remember having said it. But cured of his phobias, he inserted himself in the social—and he became a tailor!

Narcissistic cohesion

What we find most overdetermined in Dolto's practice, then, is a profound vesting of audition—a keen listening to words for which we will locate deep connections to Freud's earliest work. Foremost is her conviction about the critical value of a child's first name as a “symbol of primary narcissism” and “narcissistic cohesion” (CD, 198; CE, 239; DQ, 49; DV, 21; IIC, 46 & 93-94; JD, 125; PJ, 107; SF, 206; SP3, 145; SS, 117; 1977/1984, 202). Strong prescriptions issue from this belief: never change the first name of any child, including adoptees, as there is no way to predict the “toxic effect” on primary narcissism (CE, 239-240); and beware of the unconscious effects of giving the name of the dead (as when names are handed down), whom the child now represents in language (VO, 196-197). Furthermore, every child, even the profoundly deaf, must have a way to hear his name symbolized as early as possible (PJ, 108), for the absence or loss of a name leads to «*déréliction narcissique*» (VO, 42), as the name is what wakes up the child (IIC, 46 & 94). We are dealing in dream-work here, and Dolto herself urges us to keep in mind the key relation to overdetermination (CD, 183). Dolto then engages in what seem like wild discourses indeed, staking her own reputation to explain how the first name is “engrammed” like a magnetic band (IIC, 93); that a midwife assisting birth can be a «*sorcière de malheur*» [evil-bearing witch] (TL, 35), who marks destiny “as if it were written” (1977/1984, 234-235); and that “babies live from words” (PJ, 14). Amid the derision of nameless critics populating the edges of her project—and, sometimes, through the warm laughter in seminars of the most informed—it is easy to lose sight (in an auditory world without vision) of the very deft movements on the oral passive stage that are, quite literally, at play here. And while Dolto leaves drawing the connection to Freud to the reader, we will indeed find it

helpful to shore up her work on primary narcissism with Freud's, as we explore the pulsions of auto-conservation on the elusive first scene of "oral eroticization" (Freud, 1905/1953c, 181 & 205; also 1905/1953a, 52).

Thinking with Freud's watershed paper on narcissism (1914b), we consider not where the pulse is headed, towards the ego, but rather where it is coming from: a prehistory when the sexual libido that will eventually enable object relations is indissociable from primitive instincts, and conflict with reality is non-existent for the infant in a state of blissful satisfaction. Oral passivity informs that liquid first scene of eroticization as an unconscious experience of audition sourced in the orality of the other—sounds that arrive through enigmatic rhythms and silences in a phantastic weave with the affects they evoke, dream-work upon words in service of the wish. Freud's earliest studies on hysteria tell of Frau Emmy Von N., who called out her daughter's name—the same as her own—to "help her back to clear-headedness" (1893a, 80). Elsewhere, Freud remarks that, "a sleeper is much more certain to be woken by the sound of his own name than by any indifferent auditory impression" (1900a, 223), and the "best method of waking a sleeper or a sleep-walker is to call him by his own name" (1907, 27). There is also an uncanny reference on hypnotism, where the "subject behaves to the rest of the external world as though he were asleep" (Freud, 1905b, 295) while he hears and attends only to the hypnotist—a situation Freud precisely compares to "a mother who is nursing her baby" (Ibid). Dolto's work simply confirms this relation exquisitely. For our first encounters with words are actually right off the register of reality—deep inside a dream. Morphology is marvellously murky.

Eventually, listening to Dolto and her patients, the reader becomes accustomed to the unusual surroundings. We meet Isabelle, the trilingual who cannot add or spell in French

because this represents a separation from her father (SP1, 95); an 11-year old who becomes incontinent when he brings an English book home, as if the new language castrates his father (SP1, 99); Patrick, the eight-year-old who learns Italian from his nurse while in a coma for three months (SP1, 117); and Katia, whose analysis opens on a «ficelle» [thread], for which Dolto takes up the homonym, the «fils-elle» [son-she], as a direction for interpretation (SP1, 51). There is a nine-year old who howls and eats dirt in identification with a beloved dead gardener, Robert, and who names himself «Robert tombé par la fenêtre» [Robert fallen out the window]—homonymically, «feu-n'être/naitre» [the fire of non-being/birth]; there was hope, Dolto says, because he could “say the name,” so she understood he thought he was the gardener’s dog (SP3, 88-90). And there is the twelve-year old who was—according to Dolto’s favourite adjective for her patients, «superbe»—yet who had grave academic delays because his mother and father had the same last name, and because the maternal grandmother had died, he thought the paternal grandmother was the mother of both his parents. “What is the theoretical plan for an interpretation?” a seminar attendee asks. Half-laughing, Dolto answers, “You interpret the «chosification» [thingification] of living beings who are not seen as a meeting between two subjects” (SP3, 158-163). And there is Jeanne, one of the 16 cases in Dolto’s watershed dissertation, whose pivotal symptoms are a reversal of syllable order and saccadic speech (MA, 244); about a decade later, another is reported with a similar symptom, Nicole (age 5), who speaks only one syllable at a time (JD, 150). And there is Gilles, whose phobia of “murderous angles” is connected to the departure of a beloved uncle to war, in 1940, to join «les anglais» [the English] in «Angleterre,» homonymically «angle-taire»[hushing], as he became so anxious in keeping silent about collaborating, while his family were forced to host Germans (IIC, 53-

55; also Bacon, 2013, 521). One hardly knows where to begin or end the examples—and there is no clear line between them either. For Dolto's oeuvre seems compelled to convey by its style a message of continuity and reversibility, as-if it were an uncanny literary metaphor—an incidental performative—of primary narcissism as the condition of our origins in a non-space, non-time wherein there is fusion between self and other, inseparability. Dolto opens very provocative questions indeed about where a life, a subject, or an autobiography begins—or ends. So doing, she challenges our very view of 'history.'

Phonème

Yet by these strange travels, we arrive at a deep pool entirely without landmarks: Dolto's original psychoanalytic conceptualization of the «phonème» (e.g., IIC, 275; SS, 210), and the phantastic affective history of words it entails. The bilingual reader who has begun to play with homonyms will hear enigma announced on the word itself (one escaping her consciousness?): «faux-name» [false name]—and «faut n'aime» [must not love], as if it were a warning about reality itself. What in the world is going on in this thought-space? We are certainly far from the definition of a syllable as a mere organizer of speech sounds, a phonological building block on the thin surface of reality. For the infant is still silent, is he not? And yet, Dolto will show that the phoneme is the first mediating object between phantasy and reality, returning us to word-things in Freud's German: *wortgebilden*—words that build, form, infuse and structure. Words are pictures, in effect, for our earliest audition—only we repress the legacy of this dreamscape, as if reality itself were a troubling journey from synesthesia to amnesia. Dolto brings us right back to the discovery of the word-thing that is the blur of the autobiographic at the heart of analysis, beginning with Freud's book on dreams (1900). For she provides countless examples where words have

marked like «bandes magnétiques» as first significations of narcissising joy or de-narcissizing anxiety (in Grignon, 1997, 16; also DV, 73; DW, 76; EM, 178; PJ, 15; SP2, 96; TL, 34).

On July 29, 1987, less than a month before her death, Dolto stated that with *Tout est langage* [All is language], she had finished writing (VC2, 858). And in that book, she is asked: “So a word spoken in childhood can decide a whole life?” «Oui,» she responds, and silence hangs (TL, 91-92). Yet this astonishing statement perfectly resumes her thinking on the infant—and the phoneme. Further, what is at stake is not only what is said, but also what is not said. For in the “auditory climate” of primary narcissism, «ce qui n’est pas nommé n’est rien» [what is unnamed is nothing] (SF, 156). In this way, Dolto explains, we are all born into “the language of our parents, a language sworn to silence” (1977/1984, 191), inheritors of suffering “that did not give its name” (SS, 167). Here is the word in tension with its own reversal, as two key theories coalesce ironically: the «non-dit,» i.e., what marks because it *is not* said; and the homonymic «nom-dit,» the given name, i.e., what marks because it *is* said. Contradiction is installed right at the word, endowing it from our first days with the ongoing capacity for silent dreaming. Words are “heavy with phantasms for intelligent children” (VC2, 876) she states, and children experience language «de façon métaphorique, de façon métonymique» [metaphorically, metonymically] (SS, 181), playing with words, living words, and rooting truth in them (CE, 41; EN, 64; LF, 283; PJE, 14; VC2, 808 & 844).

The resulting “suggestibility of a child” (JD, 58) has staggering implications. For from the first moments of audition, «nous legions, en dette ou heritage, dans l’inconscient de l’enfant» [we bequeath in legacy, as a debt or an inheritance, in the unconscious of the child]

(CE, 344). Here again is the idea of an inherited education, as an unconscious trace that always exceeds the subject. In fact, even before his dream book, Freud wrote about how a “sound image was not perceived as a sequence of letters...[that] the word sound was a whole” (1891/2011, 36 – 37), and that “word-associations [were] evoked by the spoken sounds” (1901b, 60). We also recall how words are subject to condensation and displacement (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 418), and the “invariable rule that the words spoken in the dream are derived from spoken words” (Freud, 1900a, 304). Here is a very delicate tension in theory where words are remainders of the day for dream-work—that then return, archaically re-invested, to our encounters with reality, “reviving once more the sensations to which the verbal expression owes its justification” (Freud, 1893b, 181). I posit that this tension is exactly how Dolto’s project on the early human begins a remarkable reciprocity with Freud’s earliest work, whereby she is supported by him and also provides evidence for him. Furthermore, the investment of words with unconscious affect begins precisely because of the “credulity such as the subject has in relation to his hypnotist [as] is shown only by a child towards his parents,” and this leads to “mental-physical behaviour corresponding to the idea’s content” (Freud, 1905b, 296). There will be a moving example from a friend dying of Hodgkin’s, who dreams of a string of ‘meaningless’ syllables that filled her with a sense of being loved. Recalling her friend lived in India from age one to nine months (having had a beloved local girl as a nanny), Dolto wondered if these «phonèmes» might be real, and she advised her to consult a translator. In fact, the words were from a common Indian lullaby that said, “My dear love, whose eyes are more beautiful than the stars” (DV, 77-81; EM, 177-178; SP2, 174-177; SS, 238-239; 1985c, 199). The phonemes said “nothing to her when she was awake,” Dolto points out, but in her sleep, they

gave her “unspoken narcissistic joy” (SP2, 177). Thus, in the narrative of the oral passive stage Dolto elaborates, the word is woven with the wish, and archaic audition is tethered to private histories of love and suffering, as interminable movements of dream thoughts become both irrepressible and accidental through language. What is a word, then? A word is a signpost to unchartable regions of psychological life—and right off the sonar of linguistics.

Continuum of security

With unusually keen listening for manifestations of the oral passive stage, then, Dolto embarks on a career spanning 50 years, almost all of it overlapping with Trousseau, where she will begin uncommon observations: that the oral pre-moi stage is humanising and marked by archaic desires (JD, 296-7; P&P, 33; SS, 16); as important as gestation is first 10-12 months, before “character” arrives, being rooted in much earlier incidents (DV, 169; DW, 87); and the intelligence of infant is fully in the service of oral passive survival (JD, 27) until about nine months of age, the time of first teeth, when weaning is recommended (EM, 311; IIC, 104; PS, 25; 1961, 34f)—as teeth suffering demands biting (P&P, 34). Here is a fine movement we should note carefully, for passivity suffices until there is suffering, and passivity is prior to suffering; suffering at orality is what necessitates exterior libidinal investments at orality. Prior to reality, in other words, the baby hallucinates while sleeping (JD, 274), and the entire oral passive stage takes place in a dream-like, quasi-hallucinatory state that avoids the “devastation of solitude” by the continuous delivery of “unconscious pleasure” (CE, 16 & 33; P&P, 1; PS, 75; SP1, 157 & 161; SP3, 146; VO, 185; 1939/2013, 17). This dream of perfect provision secures the “wish to sleep” (Freud, 1900b, 570 & 590; 1901a, 680), in primitive auto-eroticism where “satisfaction is obtained from the subject’s own body and extraneous objects are disregarded” (Freud, 1909b, 44). It is a perfect

“continuum” or “habitus” of security and unity (APP, 32; CE, 29; JD, 256, 290 & 299; PS, 22 & 86; QS, 17; SF, 209 & 362; SP1, 20; SS, 41 & 184). And so pleasurable is this dream state that Dolto views anxiety as a “resistance to eroticization” (SP1, 27). Further, she explains, it is the enigmatic remains of that prior libidinal organization, our pre-verbal internal language that is “experienceable in transference” (LF, 103; PJ, 92). For Dolto, then, transference is a continuous interrelational phenomenon that begins at conception and is «perpétuellement présent» in human relations as a “receptive resonance” (DV, 8 & 158; PJE, 92; SP3, 11), the continuation of what is living, unconsciously, at the source of life (CE, 283; LF, 9, 11, 20 & 247; 1977/1984, 249) that is the archaic origin of language (CD, 189; LF, 68; SS, 117). Summatively, Dolto believes libido is “woven to the body but of the order of language” (SF, 334), animating the «fonction symbolique» (SF, 48).

We will also want to remember as we travel, exploring all that is accidental yet compelling about the movement of transference in Dolto’s texts, that the unconscious, “affective roots of language” (SP3, 192-194) are entirely idiosyncratic for individual human capital (LO3, 170; SP2, 151; 1977/1984, 205). Freud explains how “a combination of individual factors, physiological and accidental...determines how a person shall behave in particular cases of comparatively intense objective stimulation during sleep...to suppress...[or] overcome the stimulus by weaving it into a dream” (1900a, 229). Thus, idiosyncratically, the child engages “continuous unconscious rapports to a past from which he cannot be disjoint to assure his future” (SS, 41). So it is not merely that transference endures—but that we endure because of transference, as a resourcing by (in) passive pulses. And to understand Dolto, we will need to engage our own passive learning, as examples ‘arrive’ and become discernible not as single objects with definable edges, but as a quantity

inside a liquid, non-defineable space, only palpable in repetition. And that is how we come to value highly the odd case wherein Dolto explains the body as “fruit of «paroles échangées»” (SP3, 142-153). The 15-month-old boy is «superbe» during the day—in contact with others and objects, she says. But he is a profound insomniac, wailing all night, in full opisthonos, when he does not recognize his mother. Dolto sees him four times, biweekly. The last time, in a provocative session that disturbs the reader, she explains to him that he wears the name of a stillborn son preceding him (along a family tradition of handing down names), and that his mother is sad not to be able to think of her dead child with a name, so that perhaps he fears sleep as he is afraid to represent the dead child. The toddler pulls himself up to Dolto’s chair and gives her a long, penetrating look, then quickly asks to leave. Of note, other toddlers will say the same thing over the years—asking their mothers to leave this horrible woman. And yet, so typically, Dolto’s intervention installs a cure in a rapid après-coup, whereby he “re-found sleep,” and began to catch up in maturity—sitting, drawing and modeling. “But was this an interpretation or an intrusion?” a seminar attendee asks. “I don’t know,” Dolto answers. “It had «un effet libérateur,» but I don’t know” (SP3, 152). And soft laughter follows, like warm water. Of course, the reader cannot but wonder about his name. Yet it is never given, in a case she calls, “The lack of a name in the Other.”

Marguerite & narcissus

We now move backwards in time in the style of Dolto herself, to «pas plus tard qu’hier» [not later than yesterday] (JD, 273). The year is 1949 and we meet Bernadette, a five-year-old schizophrenic who issued blood from her anus and mouth for 10 days perinatally (JD, 133-193; JP, 19-33). She remains a hemiplegic schizophrenic who talks openly of her hatred of her mother, walks with her head bent to one side, and speaks in a

monotone voice. She is anorexic, phobic, and very hostile, and she suffers from debilitating anxiety: “I had never seen such a grave case,” Dolto says (JP, 25). From the first, Dolto attends to Bernadette’s curious language, as the child turns objects into verbs: «se luner» [to moon yourself], «sapiner» [to fir-tree], «chaiser» [to chair] (JP, 25). And in a typical session, Bernadette draws a tree and narrates that she «sapinait» [was tree-ing] or making «sapinades» [tree-collectives]. Dolto offers the noun, «sapin» for the drawn tree, and «ça prenait» [enigmatically, ‘it took/worked,’ or ‘the unconscious took hold’]. Dolto saw Bernadette 18 times over 20 months in 1946–1948 (JP, 86f), and while the hemiplegia remained as the sequela of birth injuries, she became a well-adapted child. In turn, Bernadette became the inspiration for the «poupée-fleur,» a doll with the head of a «marguerite» [daisy], cathartic for injuries at the oral stage, Dolto explains (AI, 56; JD, 158-159; JP, 40; SS, 21). Simply, Bernadette had expressed in an early session that she disliked animals and dolls. “Perhaps Bernadette would like a flower-doll?” Dolto inquired. “Oh, yes, a flower-doll!” the little girl replied. “What in the world is that?” asked the mother. “I have no idea,” answered Dolto, “but it seems this is what she’d like” (JP, 27; JD, 139). So Dolto requested the mother make one, providing instructions.¹¹ The dolls would be used successfully to heal other children, becoming iconic of Dolto. Here is theory arriving in unanticipated moments made from unpredictable movements, then being welcomed. There is a lovely footnote, fifty years later, that a letter was found after Dolto’s death, forwarded by this young patient, now an orthophonist. In a strange circularity, she had found it after her own mother’s death, by accident. And though she recalls being told she had been treated by Dolto because of anorexia, she had no «souvenir de la poupée-fleur» and was moved to read her case (VC2, 258). Dolto relates finding «marguerites» [daisies] as identifications in

primary narcissism, perhaps because the “idea” came from her (AI 56; JD, 139)— overlooking here that it is her grandmother’s, and her own, middle name. Yet by now familiar with homonymic play, we hear the «marguerite» also as the «mère guérite» [healed mother] and «mère guerre-ite» [warring mother], as we find ourselves returned to the construction of primary narcissism as a co-narcissistic state with the mother, and the corollary that is Dolto’s prime clinical stance: that a psychologically well mother is the key preventative against childhood mental illness.¹² It seems knowledge has gone completely rogue, as theory is prompted by phantasies informed by word-things, whereby there is “change in the verbal expression of the thoughts concerned” (Freud, 1900b, 339). And while we ponder the *marguerite* on the soft ground between the biographical and the theoretical here, we cannot but recall the narcissus, flower and myth, amid the echoes of primary love.

In sum, Dolto’s project narrates our difficult encounter with reality, and explicates how continuous resourcing in the unconscious is the only thing that makes the strain bearable: “Once one leaves the womb, life is not always as one would want it” (EM, 22), she states drily, thus life is “indelibly associated with suffering” (JD, 57; JP, 41; SF, 362; SS, 234), because the umbilical separation from archaic security is a wound (PS, 27; SF, 362; SP1, 213). Her project flows with a powerful current in psychoanalysis, while also infusing its roots. For Dolto discovers that constitutional melancholy is intrinsic to human structuring, and the purpose of psychical work (cure and life), is therefore “to heal our suffering, but not to replace it” (SP1, 52).¹³ For Dolto, suffering is our undeniable heritage, not something to erase, and thus wellness means “transforming pathogenic suffering into useful suffering” (1989a, 133). As Dolto explains it from the vantage point of oral passivity, the problem is simply that we have, in our archaic prehistory, «beaucoup de peine à

s'exprimer» (EM, 96). The phrase is a spectacular play on «peine» [harm, hurt, sadness] that relates, at once, our *great difficulty* in expressing ourselves—and our *great sorrow*.

Souvenir

Dolto shares that she kept a great «souvenir» all her life of Trousseau (ATP, 195).¹⁴ So we journey there, in mind, with the help of a lovely photo that moves any witness (AI, 225), and the difficulty of living that is patent in Dolto's project. A little girl touches the necklace Dolto wears, and Dolto's empathic gaze, as she is bent to eye level, overflows words entirely. Thus we are returned, as if in a dream, to her beloved Irish nanny, summarily fired for stealing a necklace, a river of «diamants» (AI, 144; EN, 62). Dolto does not engage her own homonymic play here, but by now, we cannot miss it: «dit-à-ma'an» [words of the mother; also 'tell mother'] or «dit-à-ment» [word(s) for lying]. And there is an uncanny presence of Dominique's invisible river here too, «Elmoru» [she died], that we detect yet release (for now). For there is always more dreaming possible, and always something held in silence that we will never hear. The word opens onto what is heterogenous to its origins, for long before the first utterance is the phantastic unconscious prehistory of words. Elderly, Dolto will recall her nearly dying of double pneumonia at six months upon her nanny's departure, as their love was so great (EN, 62-65). In fact, the necklace had been the mother's most prized wedding gift (EN, 62), amid a rich «trousseau» [dowry]. Dolto regrets no one remembers her name (EN, 64), as she recounts how the incident left a lingering «malentendu» with her family (DW, 66). Meanwhile, back in her twenties, when tensions ran highest and her mother kept interrogating her, Dolto felt her mother took everything: "I have nothing for myself," she says, "So why live? I have not even a souvenir" (AI, 55). Dolto will spend long hours staring out the window when she is just four years old,

reflecting on death at the «fenêtre» [window]—the «feu-naitre/feu-n'être» [fire-birth/fire-not being], she muses homonymically (EN, 14), as-if the word play itself invests her genius. Poignantly, she offers, “it was my guilt at the window” (EN, 12). Indeed, the nanny’s departure left a big hole in her life: «un profound trou» (MF, 21). Arriving here, I cannot help but muse on the name, Bernadette—*burn-a-debt*? For the pseudonym of her famous patient is decipherable only in the nanny’s tongue, as we sense but cannot confirm that we are teasing out fragile but tenacious remnants of the deep sorrow of an infant who would have gladly repaid what the nanny owed, if only to keep her. Even the word, *souvenir*, seems to inscribe a silent story of rupture with the past, as if by suggestion in language itself: «sous venir» [under (to) come].

Seeking help ‘objectively’ specifying Dolto’s contributions to the study of the child, I locate the only other dissertation on Dolto, uncannily written by another «Québécoise,» Marcelle Gauthier, in 1995 (BNF, n.d; Worldcat.org, 2015b), whose research team met Dolto in France, in 1983 (Féger, 1983). Supervised by Arlette Mucchielli-Bourcier, a French scholar on dyslexia (Wikipédia, 2015a), Gauthier inquires into «ce que *fut* [what *was*] le phénomène Dolto» (1995, 15)—as if it has passed. She samples 132 parents and specialists in Nice and Montreal, collecting 8000 responses decidedly praising Dolto’s simple language (Ibid, 254-257); her advocacy for children (Ibid, 258); her clinical experience (Ibid, 264); her courage, humility and honesty (Ibid, 264); and her concern for the public good (Ibid, 265-266). Respondents refuse only Dolto’s instruction to evict children from the parental bed, and to grant them autonomy by age eight (Ibid, 259). The biggest contrast between sites is that Niceans, who listened to Dolto’s radio programs, want help with *their* children, while Montrealers, who did not, seek help working *with* children. Yet in ‘using’ Dolto differently

if heard (or not) in their youth, is there not a hint of “editions of transference” (Freud, 1905a, 116; 1915b, 168)—paths made variant by (in) the après-coup of listening? Gauthier actually mentions the transference only once, crediting the discovery to René Morichau-Beauchant, in 1909 (1995, 28). That this error would escape her supervisor, though, leads to the unanticipated and unsaid: Morichau-Beauchant and Mucchielli-Bourcier, with their oddly parallel names, both come from Poitiers—a *fact* that draws me into discovery only by the magnitude of the *slip*. But the ‘mistake’ is richer still, because this ‘first *transference*’ is actually (and homonymically) the first (postal) ‘*transfer (to) France.*’ For Freud writes to Jung on 3 December 1910: “I have received my first letter from France, from a Dr. Morichau-Beauchant” (Hoffman, 2011; also Douville, 2009, 50). Thus even in a purportedly quantitative study, unconscious affects countersign conscious works, as truth cannot help but be inscribed. Ergo, the past is never fully passed—and objectivity entirely eludes.

Working inside the Dolto corpus, one loses then refinds the subject, over and over. There is no direct correspondence between a case and a construct, or any one book that can make sense of the whole. We will never find unquestionable, explicit links between her childhood and her theories. In reality, our tethering will always be the stuff of dream-work, inviting still more questions. Thus, we will simply need to be content with playing if we are to learn anything at all, as Derrida counsels: “a «folie» [folly, play] must «veiller» [keep vigil] over our thoughts” (1992, 349). For we will be following diffuse associations upon unusual grounds for thought where sense issues only paradoxically, in ironic returns on suggestion and *contradiction*—what is ‘spoken’ against the flow of what is spoken. I believe we have, then, what Britzman calls, “thinking as our most personal narrative revolt” (2011, 126). Dolto herself felt she was “chasing an enigma” (AI, 157; also AI, 55; DW, 170). And

with Dolto, but without bearings, we come upon abundant evidence of “the unconscious [as] a particular realm of mind with its own wishful impulses” (Freud, 1916b, 212), whereby the nascent psyche develops in an organizing silence, as Dolto says—a hearing-within-a-hearing as the ineffable “text of the other...arrives in silence with a more or less regular cadence” (Derrida, 1980/2007, 152). This early association between survival and sound—and between self and other—bestows on language the potential to deliver securitization as an unconscious conveyance. For the fetus dreams in a long-established auditory world, and birth is an “originary self-estrangement” (Britzman, 2011, 60). Thus, our words will forever carry the traces of our unspeakable pre-histories—telling silent stories beneath the stories that we tell.

Chapter Four: Reading & Presentification

Abstract: In this chapter, I explore texts as a source of material for dream-work, ergo as a site-means for the transference. I survey Dolto's childhood setting and its associative pathways, as I find echoes of her early history with books in her writing, and diffuse transference across her corpus. I observe how word play inhabits phantasy and reality, and the legacy of archaically invested phonemes to the mother tongue. As homonymy becomes more salient, I note the luring effects of unconscious security in 'presentification': coming to reality as libidinal stratification upon our pre-histories. I consider the crucial element of trust in learning from texts, as I ask, 'What is *reading*?'

I become conscious to the point of being able to admit to myself of what in reading imprints itself in me, at the centre defended but prepared for mute joy...in a word, the resemblance «esquissée» [traced, outlined] by this homophone...the phantom at the bottom of the word
(Jacques Derrida, 1987b, 17).

In the summer of 1913, Dolto learned to read when Mlle first arrived to help Suzanne with her fifth infant (ES, 10; VC1, 61). Dolto's rich retelling of this story of learning (AI, 114-116; ATP, 81-85; ES, 9-14; 1985a, 214-226) makes patent her remarkable capacity for biography, and for witnessing childhood. Mlle used a Fröbel-inspired method—and “what is funny, is that it is very important for me that psychoanalysis be a method,” Dolto quips (ATP, 85). The book selected for daily sessions—sounding out syllables, 10 lines at a time—was a prize Dolto's scholarly father had won, «*Les Babouches de Baba Hassein*,» a collection of Orientalist stories by H. Balesta (1894) (the last, interestingly called «Le témoin» [witness]). This 237-page book that “most marked” her childhood (ES, 11) features 16 images, of which 10 are partially hand-coloured. Dolto recalls a “little donkey” (ATP, 82)—in fact, a scene where a mounted «passant» hears the faint cry of a rope-bound

child named Abd-Allah (p.157). Dolto hoped the book would explain how, as she opened and closed it repeatedly, its images seemed to move—though when she looked at each one, it did not. That it failed to do so became “one of the biggest deceptions of my life” (ATP, 82; ES, 11), revealing that “books were not at all that they promised from their images” (ES, 11). Devastated, she tried to *unlearn* reading by refusing to look, as she wept so profusely she needed a «mouchoir» (ATP, 85). After ‘theorizing’ about this anecdote for two years, I notice one day that the boy on the cover repeats on p.35; the shoe on p.7 is thrown on p. 35; the man on the title page returns on p. 105; and so on for a rosary (pgs. 47 & 93); a rope (pgs. 117 & 131); and a sun/moon (pgs. 7, 145 & 151). Still, any explanation masks the great significance at play. After all, why expect a book to narrate its own structure? Why is an inability to account for displacements discouraging? And why invest such promise in texts? Freud believes misreading stems from “an intense *wish* to reject what we have read” (1916a, 71). In obverse, then, Freud pens the enigma of reading to which Dolto testifies: text somehow receives, and carries an expectation of returning, unconscious investments.

Dolto memorized pages of *Babouches*, convincing almost everyone she could read, sounding out “syllables that meant nothing,” in an “absurd activity that led nowhere” (AI, 116; ATP, 84). But Mlle “saved her,” she vouches, by telling her to listen to herself (Ibid). She calls the moment sense arrived from her own voice a «miracle» (AI, 114; 1985a, 214), as a sentence became «activée, enchaînée» (AI, 114). “They were separate syllables,” she recounts, “but they meant something if you joined them while listening, linking them” (ATP, 84). So more questions beckon. Why aren’t word sounds naturally linked? And why is securing sense from one’s own voice difficult? In any event, from that day on, reading was “her happiness” (AI, 116), she was “full of vitality” (Ibid), and never wanted to «lâcher

le texte» [let go of a text] (ATP, 84; also EN, 80). Yet while the book's stories are, as she puts it, «idiot» (ATP, 84)—including the 6th and 8th, both set in Algeria—I notice a stunning bridge to her reality. On one side of 1913, two generations lived through the colonization of Algeria (Berkley Centre, n.d.), including Dan-mé Étan, the maternal great-grandmother born in 1839, when «Algérie» was named (Ibid). Its annexation was surely discussed in this educated family. On the other side, in 1915-1916, her mother sponsors a wounded soldier, Mohamed Ben Meckri (AI, 75); Oncle Pierre's company is the Sidi Brahim (VC1, 44); and Pierre writes fiction for her about a hero, Sidi Vava Ben Abdallah (VC, 58-59). So foreign words arrive, unconsciously registering in difference, repetition and affect, as reality plays with phantasy. And when Dolto asks gravely, *How can you live if you don't read?* (AI, 116), insisting it is «nécessaire» (EN, 81), she draws attention to its deep psychological work. I confess that it is here that I most feel with Dolto, “the secret of a shared autobiography” (Derrida, 2001b, 46). Dolto calls that first book “magical” (ATP, 82), and my own copy of this rare text feels that way too, full of portents. Asking myself why, I realize my deep investment in Dolto, who herself invested in it. Thus, in affective conveyance, the transference, I believe that it is possible to detect an enigmatic inheritance of trust, and the lure of a similar-enough other to follow. Then again, what else should be expected from the work of the passive pulses, begun under the sway of the instinct of conservation (the ultimate source of ‘trust’), when life was manageable only ‘with, as-if, through’ an other?

Writing the year Dolto was born, Freud reminds us “creative writing...is a continuation and substitution...for the play of childhood” (1908a, 152)—and I submit that this compels the notion of a *chain of custody in reading* (with incalculable implications for translation). For example, a term of great significance in my thinking about the work of the

unconscious in texts is *narrative revolt*. Admittedly Kristeva's (2000), it achieved use as a tool for me only upon my (re?)finding it in Britzman (2011; citing Kristeva). Prior, I had somehow over-looked it in Kristeva. Is there in reading simply what any analyst knows: the transference needs relations of trust? For it seems the reader is unconsciously affected in his ability to think with words—his capacity to 'take someone's word'—by their witness.

Écho de Paris

Thinking about the unconscious in autobiography, I favour what Britzman calls "something unknowable" (2010), where reading is an encounter with "communities from the limits of experience" (1998, 60)—a "transferential relation where we risk ourselves" (Ibid, 55 & 95), vesting hope in "refinding lost objects scattered in the world" (2009, 52). Freud begins his project by noting that reading is "very complicated...and entails a frequent shift of the direction of the association" (1891/2011, 75-76), sharing that when walking in a strange town, he reads "every shop sign that resembles the word in any way as 'Antiquities' ... betray[ing] the questing spirit of the collector" (1901b, 110). There is in the treasure of Freud's example, in one direction, a "disturbance in reading...utilizing a 'switch-word'" (1901b, 274) as "pre-cathected word-images provide a passage for discharge" (1895, 365-366), while in another direction, "reading...provid[es] an abundant and not easily traceable source for...dreams" (1900b, 419 & 495; 1901a, 668). But how are word-images pre-cathected? Britzman is right—we will need to "read slowly" (2009, 48). For reading emerges as a potent, archaic-systonic act offering to audition an echo of our pre-cathected word-things, in a reparation that returns our lost objects. Thus, each one of us cannot help but be what Derrida called, a "transferential addressee" (1996/1998, 3), who is receiving "the gift...of the trace at work...a counter-reading" (2003/2005, 157).

Dolto savoured reading each morning at dawn (ATP, 85; ES, 12; 1985a, 215). Flash ahead to 1939, and she advises a 10-year old patient to read Jules Verne and science books (MA, 210); and in 1952, she counsels a peer to prescribe stories “with a free lion or tiger” (VC2, 213), to invite “useful aggression” (Ibid; also EM, 209). Her dissertation even references Cinderella’s passivity (MA, 109)—ironically deleted from later editions. Children “use fairy tales to construct themselves in reality,” she states (DQ, 123; LO3, 37), as phantasms deform, develop—or help one escape—one’s own story (EM, 296; Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978). Thus, Dolto recommends “contradictory narratives” (SP1, 121) and reading fables without explanations (CE, 324), to enable the author’s presence (APP, 27; also ES, 107-108; LO3, 41; SP1, 79). Defending since childhood her right to phantasy—“Why do you call it imagination? Maybe it’s true!” (ATP, 21)—Dolto becomes a resonator of the archaic. Thus, for a child, a fairy “is not a story, it is true” (PJE, 15; TL, 36); she takes seriously Bernadette’s claim to be a wolf-child (JD, 142-145); and she translates a child’s problem with moving as a lack of a trail of crumbs (EN, 66). Freud notes the relation of dreams to fairy-tales is not accidental (1900a, 246); and he plays with their metaphors, explaining he “once experienced a beautiful fairy tale” (E. Freud, 1961, 29); titling a key draft, “A Christmas Fairy Tale” (1896/1954a, 146); and declaring himself “delighted as the dwarf” (1896/1954e, 322). Conversely, the psychoanalytic ‘object’ feels embedded in the exegesis of folklore by Vladimir Propp (1965). Even in Derrida, we paradoxically find: “If you devour more, says the grandmother and wolf for whom you work, it is still in the service of mourning...If it were me, I would have preferred never to have written that” (1987b, 39-41). Hearable is the arrival of otherness as an event that betrays its continued residence, along with seepage from the oldest strata of one’s reading to the present scene—and the

discomforting slippage of subjectivity entailed (Who is ‘me’? Who is ‘you’?). At merely 61 pages long, its source—«Feu la cendre» [*Cinders*]¹—is as marginal to Derrida’s corpus as Freud’s *DaVinci* (and just as remarkable), invoking not only Little Red, but Cinderella too. For in that text, Derrida reflects on his mentions of «cendres» [cinders, ashes] over 15 years: “I thought it was ingeniously calculated, mastered, subjected, as if I had appropriated it myself. But since then, unceasingly, I must admit the truth before the evidence: this sentence «s’était passé» [evaded, got through; also, ‘it was past’] without any authorization” (1987b, 7). The rogue movement of this word in his corpus speaks to its unruliness, and impels its use in countless concepts and discussions over the years. Yet as for the destination of even the same childhood story for different subjects, no two paths will align. For example, I submit that Bertha Pappenheim, who wrote lovely fairy tales (1888/2008) after her own passage in the analytic literature, derived from her prior personal relation with Cinderella the first definition of psychoanalysis: “chimney sweeping” (Jones, 1953/1982, 224). Thus does early reading legate elusive objects to literacy. And while this material rarely sees light, being normatively hushed in academic writing, as-if associating with primitivity precluded serious thought, Dolto rightly believes the opposite is true: phantasy drives trains of thought.

Remembering her subscription to *L’Écho de Paris*, a gift from her grandmother with a children’s page (EN, 73), and the weekly *Semaine de Suzette* she calls “an enormous thing that helped me live in reality” (EN, 67), Dolto reflects that texts arriving in her home enabled her to “love society,” since it meant there were others outside her family who understood children (EN, 68); and there were children like her, since they were interested in the same things (Ibid). So this “little donkey,” as Mlle called her (VC1, 70), spent the prize money she won (mostly for her marks) buying more children’s papers (EN, 73). And upon

her death, Dolto's children placed a wreath of flowers on behalf of the phantasy characters that populated their family life, such as Mr. Passe-Passe and «les petits êtres» [small beings] (AI, 15). For Dolto remained aware lifelong of the archaisms that subtended her childhood. Recalling time itself as an enigmatic encounter, Dolto relates her frustration at age 10 that one could study, in a single year, both ancient history and Lafontaine (EN, 39-40). She sought connections but found none (EN, 40), she says, searching the dictionary for the meaning of «littérature» (EN, 39), only to discover it was about “people who spoke otherwise than ourselves” (Ibid). Chronology is a kind of «morcellement» [splitting], she concludes (EN, 40), and a text is an offer to “read messages coming from persons alive in another space, another time” (ES, 13). But one should never attract readers by colour or presentation, she warns, for a book only “brings something” as «une expérience de la réalité» that can be “put back into real life” (LO3, 41; also CE, 94). Dolto's careful musing draws attention to the work of phonemes in our coming to reality—our «présentification» (IIC, 278; also IIC, 35; PS, 21-22)—as “quantities of synchronous external and internal encounters take on the value of language signs” (TL, 27), and the child constantly “imagines himself in an activity that valorises him” and sustains his «allant-devenant» [going-on-becoming] (TL, 31):

Sounds...interweave with the perception of his body in tension with needs, or in «fantasmes de désirs»...These sonar signifiers...are necessary to retain the child in reality through an ephemeral articulation of a perception that has come from the exterior world to which he remains attached, that is, «bribes de fantasmes» (IIC, 276).

Strange address

Still in 1913, just as the auditory landscape of *Babouches* arrived, Dolto moved with her family from 18 rue Gustave-Zédé to the 5th floor of an even more prestigious address at 2 Colonel Bonnet, a new building offering views of not only the Eiffel Tower and the Seine, but the renowned «Maison Blanche,» where once lived Maupassant (Murat, 2001/2013) [«mot passant»: ‘a/the word passing’]. Forbidden to look, she watched through a sheer as nurses served «thé spécial» in the garden to their patients, sometimes howling (ATP, 52). Even her building bore the “sign of syphilis” (Roudinesco, 1982, 210), as evident in her extended description (ATP, 52-64). For on the 6th was a man who periodically held a bag out the window, threatening to drop his (long-deceased) wife. A Russian princess-type lived on the 4th with her mentally disabled daughter, a tall girl who “resembled Dante” or a “witch” with a yellow face; the daughter’s husband, a giant hunchback dwarf; and a “caricature of a basset.” Another daughter, a skeleton, died at 18 of anorexia nervosa, while a gorgeous son twirled like a top to avoid clothing touching his skin. As the elevator was out during the war, families met on the stairs and Mlle advised not looking at him, as “the poor man has ideas in his head” (ATP, 61). On the 3rd lived «Quatrebarbes» [fourbeards]—“But he had only one chin, it gave me something to think about!” (ATP, 62). And on the 2nd, a woman with mystical delusions, who screamed at full moons, kept a heated table to lure children. “On the fifth,” Dolto sums up drily, “I knew madness well, I lived in it!” (AI, 60; Nobécourt, 2008a).

Reality and phantasy have entirely permeable boundaries here. For the new home has an elevator, recalling the lost nanny; story characters share her building; the mad take polite tea; and what one reads comes into circulation around the table, or on the sidewalk. With Dolto, like no other, we find the “strange address of childhood’s residency” (Britzman, 2011, 31), where “things are never what they appear to be” (Ibid, 47). For the child does not

separate reality from a “series of dreams continuing over weeks or months based on common ground” (Freud, 1900b, 525), perpetually living in the “neighbourhood of wish-fulfilment” (Ibid, 562), that “playground of transference” (Freud, 1914c, 154). And what makes Dolto extraordinary is her enduring comfort on that archaic landscape:

I close my eyes and I see quantities of things. I see...people who are walking about, I see cities...And these people...have features, they have a body, and I could, if I had the time, draw them all and represent them, they are not confoundable with any other, and yet, they are «anonymes»...I see «paysages» [landscapes, scenes] that are very specific, characterisable; it is not at all just anything, and it is new all the time...The visual creation is always in colour...But I ask myself this question: What is this, these people that I see, and that do not exist? (AI, 45).

Dolto accepts the richness of childhood that is her permanent heritage, in a “theatre of the mind” (Britzman, 2011, 128) highly reminiscent of Pappenheim’s “private theatre” (Breuer & Freud, 1892, 22)—and she lets it inform her relations and her work. It is “fantasy [that is] subtle and structuring...fantasy as a resource” (Britzman, 2010). Thus, Dolto is happy living “not knowing exactly where she was going” (ATP, 26), with one foot, we might say, on the «terrain de l’inconscient» (SF, 38 & 216), where “the echo of an archaic peace of one’s being resonates, peace prior to the time of appearances” (PS, 80).

So grounded in the archaic, Dolto’s cartography naturally adopts the water-and-road metaphors of Freud’s drive theory, wherein geography informs biography: his tributaries and channels (1900b, 479-480 & 483; 1905c, 232 & 237) of “an instinctual stream” (1905c, 232); and displacements along roundabout, connecting or indirect paths (1900a, 311; 1900b, 532; 1913, 168; 1913, 167; 1917c, 350). Humans live a “life of exchanges (a current)” in our “dynamic participation” with one another (CD, 67 & 67f), Dolto says, as libido flows like “a

sea” (MA, 14) towards its “dynamic creative goal” (VC2, 165). If detoured, libido “resumes a path previously employed” (MA, 19), or “meanders,” depending on the “terrain and quantity of the flow” (MA, 18). Any excess flows through «brèches spontanées» at the “point of least resistance” (MA, 19). Following the imaginary walk of Freud’s dream book (1900a, 122f)—his own archaic co-ordinates—Dolto believes archaic desires remain, and the child unconsciously projects them into vegetation, animals and nature, as security is unconsciously represented by “natural shelters” (SS, 59; CE, 351), especially around water—and phantasy, not reality, is his originary security. Childhood wishes can always return as experience is merely overlaid in «strates,» Dolto explains, extending from the «terrain actuel au terrain le plus ancien» (Ribowski, 2004). In the child, there are simply fewer layers, so transference is easier (Morgenstern, 2003b, 291). In sum, as Freud states, “in a particular province...relics of the past still survive” (1896/1954b, 175) upon which are structured “successive transcripts” (Ibid)—in a kind of layering (distancing) from an “archaic heritage” (1921, 127). Reality is always a displacement from that very first setting, as progressive associations move us psychically forward from, and by, dream-work.

Habitus de sécurité

Regarding her new home and its liminal characters, Dolto shares another gem: her angel, BAG, arrived at Colonel Bonnet—he was not at Gustave-Zédé (ATP, 71). He appeared in the days when she asked Mlle, newly arrived (EN, 66), hard questions about death and she felt «schizoïde» (Ibid). Associations to that nanny were surely left behind in the shift, but given any child’s blur of reality and phantasy, we cannot know what was lost that mattered most. The child has a «habitus de sécurité» (JD, 290), Dolto theorizes, and this “emotional climate” is unnoticed unless it goes away (JD, 289; also JD, 250-252; SF, 153).

For the child is attached to a place recalling security (SF, 105), context-bound (DV, 84). Further, the present is layered upon the past in messy ways, as time itself is felt to be splitting. In sum, just how unconscious security arrives is neither easily understood nor rational. Dolto's patient, Dominique, for example, regains his voice upon moving (CD, 22), while Morgenstern's patient loses hers (in Ribas, 2006, 11). Then is there only so far from our own archaic 'natural shelter' we can go at once? And just how do we port our unconscious investments in security from one place to the other, in coming to reality?

Thus, after meandering along circuitous trails and libidinal rivers, it seems we have re-found some questions, though they seem to be a long way from our queries about reading. But are they really? In fact, lifelong, Dolto could not easily be still (D&R, 18; MF, 29-30). Even when vacationing at Laforgue's, she walked extensively, hand-painting arrows to mark trails (PF, 75). And while working, she ran around her building between patients until one day, she says, she noticed she could just read a page of Racine and listen anew (DW, 166; Nobécourt, 2008b). Her interviewer seems dislodged momentarily by what cannot easily be reconciled with reason, as Dolto tenders brilliance, then moves on. Yet in a seminar (elsewhere, years earlier), Dolto once commented, «dévorer des yeux c'est courir» [to devour with the eyes is to run] (SP3, 47). Here again is this curious relation between reading and displacement, in a conjunction of statements that share neither time nor space. But the reader becomes accustomed to how, with Dolto, it is precisely in the tension of contradiction that genius arrives; further, that while time splits her project, as she warns, if her thought is gathered by its condensations instead—collecting word-things in quanta, associating notions from disparate regions of her corpus—her work begins to tell its truly radical story. Thus, in

being at its most comprehensible as dream-work, her project performs its main message: the unconscious directs all human psychological activity from the start, and in perpetuity.

So if reality and phantasy are blurred for the child, who lives comfortably with the logic of the wish, and if every landscape in reality involves a slow, uneven migration from the archaic—two steps forward, one step back—how is a story setting any different from a real one? Why would a word from an author or character have a different capacity to hold and move affect than a one spoken by family, or neighbours? Is this not, in fact, the deep provocation of *Babouches* and the peculiar terrain of childhood? That for the one whose dreams are many but whose strata are few, Cinderella *is* true? For the unconscious is a “blind force” (MA, 14) with us from our passive origins, when a word was not easily assignable from inside the veils of our passage, and dream-work played with whatever arrived. So why would we not retain the capacity to use any audition as a means of displacement: to vent by the transference in texts? Further, it is a given of drive theory that excitation requires an outlet in motility, so we must keep libido circulating to be well (e.g., Freud, 1900b, 566; 1917b, 139; 1919[1918]a, 163). Thus, a highly intelligent child, traumatized into feeling «schizoïde,» who had lost the love of her life and then, in a move, lost the tethers leading back to her, would need just what reading could offer: a bridge between phantasy and reality upon the word, taught by a middling being who, by her role, linked those infant dreams to her new reality. Do we not start to feel here the restitution of a secure climate? At the very least, we certainly have grounds to ask, *what is reading?*

Further, reality does arrive, so I muse about the role of the real parents as words echo in dreams. Dolto believes it is critical for children to be «alimenter en vocabulaire» (SS, 194), fed words, especially if precociously intelligent. She relates how children need to

«têter des paroles» [breast-feed words] (SP1, 83); “drink the words of a new teacher” (CD, 45); or “devour books” (ATP, 84; SP3, 47). After all, she says, the “gift of food is proof of love” (CE, 316), and the stories a mother tells are «lait culturel» [cultural milk] (JD, 281; SF, 88). She seems close to Schimideberg’s view, that absorbing knowledge corresponds to oral introjection (1930, 411); and to Strachey’s insight on the oral influence in metaphors for reading (1930, 324), such as “eating another person’s words” (Ibid, 326). So I pause among friends to daydream about how reading is, as it opens now, a feeding of oneself. In fact, Dolto states, every child needs to «s’automaterner dans les épreuves» [mother himself through trials] by age three (EM, 26; LO3, 65; TL, 51). On Dolto’s view, then, learning to read would mean psychical self-sufficiency—freedom—essentially, ‘auto-materning.’

Transferential colouring

But as Freud advises, “let us stop and look back, and consider whether we have not overlooked something important on our way hither” (1900b, 511). For it was not her mother but her father to whom Dolto credits her «liberté de lecture» (EN, 80; Ribowski, 2004). Mlle was also key, as she let her plan her own education from her 7th year of (home)schooling, giving her time to read (AI, 111; ES, 9). But as Hall (2009, 317) notes, it strikes any Dolto reader as a paradox that she valued literacy so highly, yet referenced virtually no one. The human defends his liberty since small (EM, 344), Dolto states, as liberty is what makes us human (SP2, 114). Liberty must “promise surprises...and allow refinding the self” (EF, 10); thus we must not restrict a child’s «liberté individuelle» (MA, 58). Freud places the transference in the service of free association, as Roudinesco says (1982, 55), and free association places words in the service of an “exteriorization that discharges anxiety” (JD, 189). So in refusing to suggest readings (as analysis refuses suggestion), does Dolto carry

her conviction about freedom to its ethical end? And while Suzanne was a great reader (e.g., MF, 129), Dolto recalls talking about books only with Henry (AI, 116; EN, 81). He allowed her to read everything in his huge library other than Zola, that “chamber pot” (AI, 110; EN, 80; Ribowski, 2004). Oddly, Zola’s «Une page d’amour» mentions rue Vineuse (Wikipédia, 2014r)—something Dolto never notes, but that raises a somber question about Henry’s ban. As ever, it seems that the beloved lost nanny is still right here.

So I take up the offer of strange play that inheres in that auspicious word, Vineuse: its near-homonym, ‘new life’—a word «mamaisé» in its time, now threatening the return the repressed (repressed because *mamaisé*?), silenced, perhaps deliberately. Just what is at stake in the free circulation of words in the social, anyhow? Evoking an archaic terrain, Dolto describes the social as «un champs d’écoute» [field of listening] for the “symbolic being” (SP1, 41), a «chemin d’écoute» [road of listening] in many directions (VO, 154) whereby the transference is diffused and diffracted (CD, 5-7, 196, 207 & 211; EN, 120). By simply communicating with other psyches, then, in what is the “greatest human pleasure” (JD, 286; Ribowski, 2004), we are naturally «renarcissiser» in society (SP3, 172). Her view endorses Freud’s that “outside analysis, it [the transference] must be regarded as the vehicle of cure and the condition of success” (1912a, 101). For the “wish-fulfilment’s power of representation is diffused over a certain sphere” (1900b, 562), Freud writes; likewise, the transference prefers our “diffuse general sensibility” (1900a, 35). Thus, the analyst listening for the work of the primary processes must be an attuned witness, freely «disponible» [available] (CD, 193f) through «attention flottante» (Ibid), Dolto states. And grounded in her conviction, she innovates a «mode de travail avec témoins» [work with witnesses] (CD, 5). This «coeur antique» [ancient choral] (QS, 11; also SP1, 49), “choral assistants” (JD, 168),

become “confounded” with her in “transferential colouring” (JD, 169). For the witnesses greet the child together (SP1, 49), then typically hold silent, taking notes as Dolto does. The witnesses are, of course, analytic trainees, doctors themselves, both learning and helping. Dolto’s application of diffusion is original, and her preference for this setting is at least partly accounted for by her belief that “humans have a caution against rooting themselves unsafely again and again” (DV, 66). Thus freely moving in the social, a wide field where the transference is diffused, “interrelations take you out of narcissism” (CE, 78), Dolto states, in a splendid tension whereby we are not just nurtured (renarcissized) but also externalized.

The enigma is left unresolved: “speech passes between us without us knowing how” (SP1, 114-5; also CE, 368). Dolto believes the transference happens even in sleep or a coma (SP1, 114-115), when we lack only the capacity to react (Ibid). And as it does, it heals (SP3, 235), offering “fruit” (VO, 39). Her metaphor evokes a gift devoid of any predefined sender or addressee—a “stimulus from the transference” (Freud, 1919 [1918]a, 162)—in a strange exchange by association to unconscious material in the listener, a silent translation from one to another operating somewhere in the vicinity of language. As Roudinesco explains, for Freud, the transference is only a particular case of the displacement of affect (1982, 168). And just as the transference is rogue for space, so it is for time—anachronistic as a “transfer of energy” originally belonging to an unconscious wish (1900b, 594; also 1900b, 546, 562, 589 & 596; 1900a, 141), that unpredictably repeats the past in the present (1914c, 151), as a “refinding” of lost objects (1905c, 222). As Dolto puts it: “every other is an object of transference from a location that is much more archaic” (SF, 208). Here is the social, then, as a hodgepodge of objects from different strata, vested or muted, until what finally appears as a “shared reality” is (even for adults) phantastically complex and idiosyncratically

textured. Dolto explains: the symbolic function, both atemporal and aspatial, secures our capacity to wake in others a “receptive sensory resonance attuned” to our own through a «simultanéité d’émotion» awakened by a «signal médiateur» that achieves «reconnaissance» [homonymically, ‘re-birth’] of a «semblable» [one similar], as the transference testifies to the “trial of separation being surmounted,” all this while consciousness is “not really awake” (DV, 158-161). Thus, while the transference is an intermediate region between illness and real life (Freud, 1914c, 154), Dolto compels the realization that we inhabit this intermediate region in perpetuity, as the transference quietly puts libido back into circulation (APP, 34; also MA, 148). Thereby, Dolto inadvertently ushers in a new theory of narrativity, as the social displaces affect haphazardly, and we each unconsciously seek the enigmatic resonances that hold the promise of our liberation. Through the transference, then, “humans are lured, more or less, towards a unity that never existed in body but that exists interpsychically” (SS, 234), she believes, as “we give to one another the lure of the approval of jouissance as a consolation for our perpetual suffering” (SS, 234).

Bain sonore

Such are the «effets leurrants du transfert» (VC2, 762; also VC2, 678), enabling the “restitution of continuity” (SS, 146). Central to Dolto’s view is the archaic root of our unconscious securitization in a rhythm of presence and absence, a dream of discourse where our call is answered by an enigmatic, indissociable other. Thus born, we “lure each other to the present” (SS, 256; also ADO, 127; CD, 198; CE, 78; PS, 63-65; SS, 185; TL, 15) using an unconscious register that recalls (and thus returns) our originary safety, as we help each other out of “uncreative solitude” (PS, 54; also (DV, 117). Freud begins his own project thinking about how sound directs attention (1895, 367; 1916a, 68); and how key phrases can

provoke excitation (1900b, 497), or offer a passage for discharge (1895, 365-366). “Speech is thrown out so it can be taken up” (DW, 29), Dolto declares inimitably. Yet if her call sounds bold, its echo is exquisitely delicate. For in this return of archaic objects upon audition, by listening or reading, we will discover a movement sufficient to symbolize the promise of the other to follow, «un semblant de vent [wind]» (SP3, 13). With Dolto’s objects of transference, we are returned to the basic economics of drive theory—to a “need of transference on the part of repressed ideas” (Freud, 1900b, 563-564; 1905, 116) that is so critical that release can happen even under a “mild and unpronounced transference” (1914c, 151). For the story of libido is simple at its core: insofar as humans are embodied subjects, venting is essential to regulating excitation (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 12, 325, 329, 333 & 340). In Dolto’s words, our relations must manage «l’*économie libidinale*» towards «l’*homéostatie*» (PS, 64). Thus, the infant intuits that the «*bain [bath] sonore du groupe*», (JD, 270), the «*bain de paroles*» of the social, is a source of securitization (JD, 59; also CD, 43), as auditory perceptions introduce reality (JD, 285) throughout his «*acquisition de l’autonomie*» (DV, 157). To emphasize, psychological development begins in a ‘*language bath*.’

Needless to say, wild transference makes wild things happen. I take but one example from Dominique, whose sessions started in the summer of 1962, five years after Mlle died—a span and season recalling learning to read—and six months after Suzanne died. Dominique’s uncle, like «*Oncle Pierre*», is «*perdu dans les montagnes*» [lost/killed] (CD, 113). Also coincidentally, 1962 marks Algeria’s independence (Berkley, n.d.), though he doesn’t mention it. But I pause first to note that in *Babouches*, “The three steers,” features the boy named Abd-Allah, the picture of the donkey, and a red steer sold to help widows (Balesta, 1894, 135-160). Dominique draws «*chameaux*» [camels; but also ‘cat word’] (CD,

61), and makes a clay model he calls a «nomade» pulling a «vache» [cow] he calls «Mlle» (CD, 61). He explains how the cow was sold (CD, 98), and “has just awakened from dreaming it belonged to a nomad” (CD, 60). Then, in two consecutive sessions, Dominique tells this story, ostensibly about «Fifi Brin d’Acier» (Pippi Longstocking) (CD, 48-54): ‘He’ had red hair, and his/her mother died when ‘she’ was a baby. She did a lot of nonsense... She had red hair and she put on the high heeled-shoes of her mother... She left... and when she knew her friends cried, she wanted to stay... the boy said, I will keep this one [red pup], but the father sent it away.” How have the lost nanny, Mlle and *Babouches* been displaced from Dolto’s archaic history to Dominique’s phantasies? Small wonder it is a problem if an analyst takes members of the same family, as Laforgue had with Phillip (his uncanny nickname, «Fifi»), for siblings “encounter themselves as twins,” as Dolto puts it (SP1, 31; SP3, 179). Dolto’s spectacular narrative of the transference—and the fact she herself never draws conscious attention to it—poses vibrant questions about the “production of common means” (Freud, 1905c, 183), about the *how* of the transference. Roudinesco believes Freud’s exposition of the transference is an “epistemological and theoretical act as important as the discovery of the unconscious” (1982, 168). And as I believe we begin to grasp, the transference and the unconscious testify for each other. By now, I offer that we should also understand, with Freud, that the chief “characteristic of libido is mobility, the facility with which it passes from one object to other” (1940[1939], 151); that “mediating ideas” are needed (1900a, 235); and that words serve as “nodal points” (1896a, 198f), enabling affect and ideas to “call up the other” (1900a, 236)—even if we can’t always figure out how bridging happens since “the *tertium comparationis* often eludes us” (Freud, 1913, 177). Dolto’s most significant contribution, I submit, is precisely here, in articulating the common

means: “words are the mediators between the unconscious of the patient and the unconscious of analyst,” she states (AI, 220; Ribowski, 1987), «objets transitionnels subtils» (SP3, 128). Yet as we explore the “mediating object’s role in bringing affect to consciousness” (APP, 37), we will need a loose notion of the *word*: “what is needed are verbal signifiers, not always a hearable spoken language, but a code of relations between two subjects” (PJ, 93). Not necessarily words, nor language, nor hearable, our relations are nonetheless verbal, as sounds and phonemes are subject to dream-work. But how?

Archaic phonemes

By a vigorous walk in archaic woods, then, we are returned to the phoneme. A “selection of cries valorizes mother tongue” (JD, 251), as “archaic phonemes [are] taken up, or not in the mother tongue” (SS, 37), as it is learned sometime during the “suffering of dentition” (MA, 28-29), after weaning (IIC, 102). We should be attentive to the pain coinciding with the “vocal and auditory selection coupled with mimicry” of the «langue dite maternelle» [tongue said to be maternal] (JD, 251; also LF, 112). For ‘the mother tongue’ arrives on an auditory scene of long duration rooted in a perfect wish, as “libido weaves with the body, being of the order of language” (SF, 334)—where, since the onset of audition, “the mother tongue produce[s] its own history in a perfectly natural, autistic, and domestic manner” (Derrida, 1967b, 62). Archaic history is thus a phantastic play with bodily sounds and phonemes arriving in difference, repetition and affect in a dream of discourse rooting our security. Thus, the infant is *already* the “translation of a subject” (SS, 210; also IIC, 246 & 275), emerging from a phantastic prehistory with words. From here, he slowly begins an «apprentissage verbal» in the «habitus physiologique» of his group’s code (JD, 287; VC2, 702), as his relations are “unconsciously mediated by the first humans who welcome him”

(SS, 117), and he adjusts to “this spoken or secret discourse going on prior to [his] arrival” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1964/2010, 326), ergo learning ‘the *mother’s* tongue.’

The child needs maternal mediation for all that is new (LO1, 145), Dolto states, as what is «mamaïsé» delivers securitizing continuity (EM, 191). Thus, the mother tongue (if all goes well) offers «mamaïisation sécurisante» (LO3, 48), as unconscious affect is invested on the phonemes of our individual prehistory. Here, Dolto quietly theorizes an origin for projection, while also presaging the value of old literature, maps, inscriptions and dictionaries (words of elders). For as the mother tongue offers mediating objects and the unconscious recognition of similitude, the mother facilitates libidinal displacements offering abundant associations on a field of archaic phonemes—a transference harvest. On Dolto’s view, then, the loss of access to the mother (or a beloved nanny) would diminish this luring to reality through a reduced audition of archaic phonemes, hence slow or stall presentification. And wherever we place our feet on this new terrain of thought, Freud’s river runs. Freud describes how the preconscious comes about by thing-presentations being hyper-cathected through links with word-presentations (1915, 207-208; also 1896e, 232), and how dreams use residues of verbal presentations (1900a, 49). It naturally follows, then, that the phonemes of the mother tongue will become remnants of the day for dream-work, and be richly cathected with libido. “Transference uses the mother tongue” (SP1, 120), Dolto states, which is why adults in analysis dream in their mother tongue (Ibid), and an analyst needs to speak to a child using archaic phonemes (Ibid). We should understand better now why an anamnesis is so critical for Dolto, as unconsciously invested phonemes are idiosyncratic. For example, we learn that Mlle (photos: AI, 63 & 97; VC1, 23)—dearly loved and “never mean” (AI, 114)—was from Luxembourg (VC1, 23f), so spoke German on

their walks, reciting German poetry (ATP, 86). Thus, Dolto's prehistory of affects arises in a confluence of German, French and English, as her archaic phonemes become entirely unfathomable—unique and unrepeatable. Besides, “the child's phonemes may not have sense for us,” (LF, 283) she explains, and “under the same words, people have different experiences” (DW, 22; also VC2, 844). Thus, in Dolto's notion of the phoneme as a mediating object for the transference inheres a profound regard for all that is individual in the notion of liberty—unique and idiosyncratic to each human being's archaic prehistory.¹⁵

Affective truth

In fact, “syllabic chemistry” (1900a, 297f) is also central to Freud's project. Beginning in 1891, Freud describes the word as a thing, an object of dreaming (1891/2011, 77; also *Ibid*, 36-37 & 83; 1900a, 295-297 & 303; 1900b, 340); and he shares a very rich example from Maury (1878), of a dream on “lo,” with *kilometres*, *kilograms*, *Gilolo*, *Lobelia*, *Lopez*, and *lotto* (1900a, 59). Freud believes dream-work has a “susceptibility to homonyms” (1900a, 59f & 320; 1900b, 596; 1905a, 99), as words serve as intermediate links, bridges or switches in displacing affect (e.g., 1900a, 177, 206 & 295; 1900b, 339, 375 & 605; 1901b, 30f, 58 & 109; 1905a, 65f, 90 & 105f; etc.). Dreams also engage in “auditory hallucinations” (1900a, 32 & 49-50), that “rediscover suggestion” (1917c, 446 & 451), working to get power over displacement (1900b, 567; also 1914c, 150; 1917c, 290)—just like “corroborative dreams” follow the analyst's suggestion (1911a, 95). And this inimitable, idiosyncratic weaving of phonemes, dream-work, hallucination and suggestion is exactly what is at play in Dolto's highly productive notion of ‘presentification.’

Homophones are very rich (DQ, 21), Dolto concords, and believing in the unmitigated force of the unconscious, she is informed by them continuously: the «nez»

[nose; a homonym of ‘born’] is critical to narcissistic libido (SF, 320-321); and the analyst needs to search «sous terre...sous taire» [homonym: ‘under ground/hush’] (CE, 340; DQ, 21; Ribowski, 2004). In a letter re a colleague’s young patient named Clément, Dolto explores his name, «clé ment» [key lies] (VC2, 482); in another letter, she muses that a child’s regression may be rooted in his believing his name, «Romain,» as a near-homonym of «gros main,» ‘big hand,’ suggests inability (VC2, 808). A 12-year-old at Trousseau ashamed of his father, a «boxeur» [fighter], is deemed to behave like a «boxeur» [dog] (SP3, 183); the «épicerie» [grocery store] in a child’s drawing is read for its carry of «pisse» [pee] (APP, 32); and she reiterates that reading as an act cannot be understood without considering the homonymy of «lit» [read] and «lis» [bed] (ES, 19; VC2, 876; 1979b, 17 & 21). Phonemes root words in an enigmatic “biological, affective truth” (CE, 41) that informs her emphasis on speaking truth to children. The resulting «justesse» of words (TL, 175) returns Freud’s “similarity between the stimulus and content of dream” (1900a, 24). And as stimuli may be misunderstood in a dream (Freud, 1900a, 221), literality heralds the suffering that marks the dreamer’s encounter with reality. In her keen witnessing of childhood, Dolto even remembers the first time she noticed this phenomenon, when WWI ended in 1918, and she paraded with her family down avenue «Terne» [dull, drab], only to discover that it was actually “full of colour” (EN, 36-37). Here is the phoneme in, and as, autobiography.

Dolto’s musing puts her in concert with two peers to whom she never actually speaks: Klein, for whom “when it comes to the unconscious, there is no difference between adults and children” (Britzman, 2003, 63); and Isaacs, who believes the inner world of the mind has a continuous living reality necessary to reality thinking (1948, 81; also Ibid, 94 & 96). The unconscious play arriving in random auditory encounters, to which Dolto draws

attention, suggests not only children are context-bound, inviting our play with the fact that Derrida, who also walked Saint-Jacques for 40 years, brings such corroborating dreams: “the phoneme...is the phenomenon of the labyrinth,” (1973, 104), “hallucination of a language determined on basis of the word or of verbal representation” (1978, 213), the “hidden resource of homonymie” (1993, 61), a «homonymie contagieuse» (2003a, 39) enabling «transferts homonymiques» (1986b, 193f) that “simultaneously impose themselves...«sens blanc, sang blanc, sans blanc, cent blancs, semblant» [white sense/direction, white blood, without white, one hundred whites, pretense] (1972/1987, 40), effecting a “parody («simulacre») of the same word subterraneously” (1986b, 47). The phoneme entails a “disposition to transference” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 498), as idiosyncratic pre-histories of audition retain the capacity to convey affect, and place itself has its say. So while De Saussure pleaded, “we must avoid speaking of the phonemes that make up the words” (1959/1974, 66), in fact, «phonocentrisme» is universal (Derrida, 2002/2008, 461; 1995b, 135), abounding in the most archaic languages, as in the “dense, rampant homophony” in Chinese (Tan & Perfetti, 1998, 37 & 40). Thus, catachresis is installed deep inside language, as the phoneme troubles the word with the ethical claim to a narrative revolt from the unconscious that is not only possible but inevitable, and we meet the impossibility of saturating meaning. Such is the “*fort-da* game by which we enter language” (JD, 7; SS, 220), Dolto states, as the child “plays with words” (VC2, 808)—metonyms, metaphors, differences and displacements (VC2, 702). It is a “game of forces” (MA, 16 & 165), as “narcissizing phantasms play their structuring game” (VC2, 457), and the “symbolic function is in play, constantly keeping watch over the child” (JD, 292). Thus, in Dolto’s theorizing-by-witnessing, and via uncanny echoes from one who shared her geography, we

locate the question of our primordial education: “Is there a degree of uncertainty we can play with?” (Britzman, 2010). For very early on indeed, Dolto discovers that this «jeu de forces» with phonemes assists our hard transition to reality, as we seek “precious compensations” in language for the loss of «jouissance» (DW, 36; VC1, 542), and “hidden phonemes bring narcissistic joy” (SP2, 177). After all, the “opposite of play is what is real,” Freud reminds us (1908a, 144). With Dolto, then, phonemes become a gift in a passive register, returning security by representing the wish as “fulfilled in a hallucinatory fashion” (Freud, 1913, 171; also 1900b, 566-568; 1901a, 647), as “consolations” (Freud, 1908b, 231). Further, as we “only [ever] exchange one thing for another” (Freud, 1908a, 145), since unconscious wishes are always active and cannot be influenced (Freud, 1900b, 553; 1909/2001, 53), reality must promise phantasy. Thus the transference is a powerful, continuously possible means whereby the “ill can repair itself naturally” (PJE, 99).

And so, by turning in circles, we somehow arrive somewhere new where now we can hear what whispers unceasingly across Dolto’s landscape: a rare narration of oral passivity. Right from her dissertation, Dolto describes the libidinal passive mode as essential to social adaptation (MA, 266; also MA 89, 106 & 109), for oral passivity serves the «principe de plaisir» (MA, 253), and «fantasmes autoérotiques hallucinatoires» return the subject to oral passivity where, though unable to communicate with the outside world, he is securitized (MA, 29-30). Still in 1939, Dolto describes the role of «pulsions passives séductrices» (MA, 91), as the subject unconsciously “attracts those who protect” him (MA, 112); registers everything arriving (MA, 109); and «attend ardemment» [ardently waits] (MA, 114). In sum, she believes “passivity exists” (VC2, 296; also SF, 305) and we should value the passive in a child (ES, 26), for passive pulses foster intense intellectual activity and

receptivity (ES, 14; SP1, 114). In describing passivity as a powerful and continuous resource, I offer Dolto follows Freud closely: his “quiescent cathexis” as energy inherent in the unconscious wish (1900b, 594), and instincts with a passive aim (1913, 181; also 1912a, 107). She also prefigures Isaacs’s superb portrait of the child content in phantasy until the external world “forces itself upon his attention” (1948, 93). Even in De Saussure, the “passivity of speech is first its rapport with language” (Derrida, 1967b, 99). And as De Saussure himself says, every language has a fixed number of phonemes (1959/1974, 34) subject to “passive agglutination” (Ibid, 176-177); and resonance characterizes phonemes by absence as well as presence (Ibid, 43)—*fort-da*—play at the origins of affective security.

Presentification

In fact, we have just re-found an old question about how a subject of the passive pulses, secure in autoerotic hallucination, ‘ardently waiting,’ ever emerges from a closed monad. Dolto’s theorization begins with time itself: the «présent» is “now and a gift” (IIC, 93). Yet unsaid, a «présent» is a gift only in English, or in archaic or literary French—not in standard French, where the right word is «cadeau.» In turn, a «fête» [party; homonymically, ‘what is done or made’]—wherein of note, presents normally arrive—is “liberty in security” (EF, 9), a “scansion of time” (EF, 18), and an «éruption du gratuit» [what is free] (ATP, 210; EF, 25; PJE, 59; VC1, 416). I play now with the uncertainty that opens. For “the child is always in the present” (LO1, 100; VC2, 808), Dolto notes, and “the present is rooted in repeated exchanges with same person” (JD, 251). Further, “audition exists *in utero*, not sight,” so «conditions de présence et d’absence...dépendent(ent) de l’audition seule» (VC2, 329; also JD, 277). On Dolto’s view, then, a beneficent arrival initiates a desire to follow

onto the landscape of reality—the same process by which invested absence (suffering) nurtures phantasies we follow in reverse, to archaic landscapes, into dream-time:

On «les avenues de langage» conjugated with the knowing and the «reconnaissance» [recognition; homonymically, ‘rebirth’] of the self and the other elected as co-being of pleasure...whose absence arouses his research...are supports for the «présentification» of the other in space and time, the other momentarily absent whose objects are a co-existential having(ness) of security in the solitude of the baby separated from the tutelary being he knows, and representatives of subtle communication, albeit lured (PS, 21-22).

In swirls more apt to a river, Dolto alludes to how the “thing and representation of a thing are equivalent for the primitive psyche as the object perceived and invested in its absence” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 415). Coming full circle, then, dreams depend on waking life (Freud, 1900a, 19, 26, 39, 174 & 228; 1909b, 35), while associations in reality depend on first being dreamed (Freud, 1900a, 206). Yet Dolto is unselfconscious about how her phrase, ‘avenues of language,’ not only recalls the first time she noticed suggestion on invested phonemes, but is also a priceless example: «a venue» being, in archaic French, ‘he/she/it arrived.’ The archaic is an odd landscape where our «attention flottante» helps, while our eyes confound us. For around the corner is Henri Paté, Dolto’s home from 1937—at number 13, with Laforgue at number 8 (De Sauverzac, 1993, 91)—a five-minute walk from Oliver Freud’s (in 1933), at 36 rue George Sand (E.L.Freud, 1970, 54). As with Derrida, autobiographies do not appear crossed; yet Laforgue analysed Oliver’s daughter, Eva, in the Midi in 1934-1938, the same years Dolto was in analysis, walking the same trails (Geni.com, 2015; Systemique.be, n.d.). *Henri Paté* is itself a strange address: one, the name of her father and grandfather, and homonymically, «en rit» [within laugh], as-if signed by

the pleasure principle; the other, humorously suggesting ‘food of the father.’ Here is a radical education where the nature of knowledge changes, and the last dreams of our walk begin.

“If a father is absent, the analyst must make him present in words” (CD, 197), for words return “the *reparative* object” (DQ, 196; PJE, 15), as Dolto’s «repère» arrives like a transference burst at the end of analysis. The father is discontinuous (CE, 27, 29 & 172; EM, 63), one who goes and returns (TL, 141) and takes his value from «l’attente» [waiting] (SP2, 126)—homonymy evoking all that is latent in psychical life *in utero*, and the invested absence by which a passive being engages a phantasy of projection on a filiation of testimony. With Dolto, a father in reality is merely a «prête-nom» [lend-name] (ATP, 126; ES, 9) relative to the archaic pre-symbolic father of the original transference situation securing indestructible wishes. Thus, Dolto rejects Lacan’s ‘foreclosure’ of the father: “I do not believe it is true,” she says, since “you can «déforclure» him” (DW, 99):

[We help a patient] to become conscious that the father who engendered him is always in him and totally integral (intact) (DW, 99)...without that, he would not be living (DW, 104)... The one who represents the model for his development is taken for the father, but he is not. He is only a resonator of the father that each one of us has in us (DW, 142).

On this perennially viable, pre-symbolic father rests Dolto’s deep belief that any child can «autopaterner» by five or six (EM, 26; LO3, 65; SP2, 14), being “auto-directed without being dependent on his mother or father.... as a sort of dialectic will structure his person” (SP2, 115). All we need is the transference available in the open circulation of language, including texts—as free associations in reading, «relations épistolaires,» are “sufficient for

the function of the symbolic father” (QS, 36)—returning venting despite our (perhaps pathological) relations of dependency. The notions of an indestructible archaic father and of reparation via diffuse transference guide Dolto’s work with even the most traumatized infant, one «sans désirs associés, sans repères» (SP3, 71; also 1977/1998, 81). Such is the economic role of the word, as the transference liberates affects in the social. So health requires refinding in the present objects of the archaic transference situation: phonemes. Hence, even the child deprived of the transferential harvest can find enough to eat.

Voies subtiles

Yet unlike tireless Dolto, her reader begins to feel dizzy on the unstable landscape, as-if reading about presentification oddly transmits the feeling of fragile subjectivity at the blurry edge of reality (where *is* the subject?)—while images move, but we don’t quite know how. And as I daydream about how this chapter’s journey began with *Babouches*, a random «présent» arrives in echoes of «parlai vrai.» For its homonym, «par livret» [by the book] returns reading, as seemingly discontinuous ideas achieve unity unpredictably. More sense comes in irony, too, as Dolto was never *by the book* but absolutely unique. Thus my research itself seems subject to passive pulses, as I wait ardently and play with whatever arrives in sufficient quanta to be discernable to my attention. Theorizing that experience, Dolto narrates how repeated phonemes from idiosyncratic, unconscious prehistories are invested with affect, becoming lures to reality, thus making words mediating objects for the transference. And in the process of distancing from the enigmatic witness in an indissociable elsewhere, reality is engaged only if it is good-enough—in offering a confirmation (the arrival of what is dreamt) or consolation (an unexpected ‘present’). Critically, in this gradual process of presentification, reading and hearing are equally usable sources of audition. Dolto

also reveals how the transference disregards space-time, using passive pulses that predate consciousness and thrive outside its control. In turn, the transference facilitates structuration if phonemes are associated with good-enough affect (dream continuity); or deconstruction, if phonemes are associated with anxiety (dream discontinuity). Dolto's is indeed a very complex corpus fusing life and work, wherein I believe we cannot grasp what she theorizes so originally (and subtly) without applying that very same theory. Further, by enigmatically learning about the transference *in* transference, a vital truth emerges: all that is new in Dolto, her genius, comes from all that is old in her. For Dolto fully taps her archaic inheritance in her witnessing, and so I agree with Lacan that she really does give good gifts (VC2, 422), of which the transformative experience of reading her is not the least. Dolto will actually make her way to Morocco in 1933, with a five-year plan to study medicine there (VC1, 356). But after a «féerie de 12 jours» [12-day fairy tale] (VC1, 369), as her father calls it, she returns to Paris. A decade later, in 1943, a charming photograph shows her first-born, Jean, nine months old, dressed in a homemade tunic and turban, the caption reading, «un prince asiatique faisant [taking] une promenade incognito» (AI, 178). So it is that lost stories tendering their truth in childhood become cryptic maps for an inimitable «chemin parcouru» [road travelled] (IIC, 275), each human's unique traverse on the terrain of biography, where the transference transects on «voies subtiles» (IIC, 69) [subtle routes; homonymically, 'subtle voices']. Thus, through coalescing notions of associative pathways, as I invest Dolto's texts with promise, one thing leads to another—though I can never say exactly how.

Chapter Five: Society & Interdiction

Abstract: In this chapter, I follow the wild transference of invested phonemes in Dolto's public legacy. I find echoes of her prehistory with words in her social projects, such as her radio programs and «Maison Vertes.» I demonstrate the importance she gives to *speaking* in liberating unconscious affect, and how this theoretical stance informs her construct of symbolic castration, her inroads on identification, her clinical attitude, her tireless efforts to teach, and her radical views on education. I observe her originality and, with it, her susceptibility to criticism for unconventionality. With Dolto, I show how transference mediates structuration as translation in the après-coup of libidinal history.

The route named translation remains as improbable as an accident, though intensely dreamed... Fable that you can retell as the gift of the poem... You will hear beneath this word the shore of the departure, as well as the referent towards which a translation carries itself (Jacques Derrida, 1992, 305).

Françoise Dolto recalls the end of WWI as an inflation of the senses—«a fièvre de vivre» [fever of living]—though she missed the Armistice Parade, watching out the window as her parents took her older siblings and the ladder (ATP, 43; EN, 36; LF, 273). She credits her love of a new commodity, radio, to her father, who sent her to “hear what was new,” including Branly's conference on «transfert sans fil» [wireless] (ATP, 31 & 43; EN, 81; Wikipédia, 2015c). Using tips in the «*Petit Sans-Filiste*,» she made her own crystal radio by age eight, and she taught herself the «*ti.ti.ti.*» with her Larousse (ATP, 31 & 42; EN, 74-75 & 115; VC1, 167). Back in 1914, she had learned war was “declared” by reading a notice board in Deauville (AI, 66). Now, translating Morse, *she* told her family news—“She's crazy! She's dreaming!”—yet the next day, the papers confirmed it (LF, 273). After Morse, Dolto notes, time was added, then music, as she imagined sound rippling across space like a «caillou» [pebble] in water, and English signals from America faded and returned (ATP, 32-

33, 41 & 49; EN, 74-76; VC1, 154). The world opened after 8 pm, “bringing people not there before,” like the voice of beloved Radiolo, and songs from the «Chat Noir» [black cat] and «Lapin Agile» [agile rabbit], cabarets in Montmartre (ATP, 33 & 42; EN, 75; Radiola, n.d.; Wikipédia, 2015b & 2015g). Movingly, she adds that radio in 1920 offered «du vivant de Jacqueline» [what was living] (EN, 75). For her pretty sister, who loved dances and celebrated the Armistice at 16, was dead by then, departing at 18, the same age as the Irish nanny who so loved Paris nights, whose name was already lost (EN, 106-108). Dolto’s parents kept secret that Jacqueline was dying (even from her) for 18 months, inscribing a “hidden drama”—and dead, her name was banned (ATP, 74; EN, 106-108). But in the consolation of dance music, can we not hear two losses echo jointly? Ahead to 1947, soon after the near-death of Dolto’s infant, Catherine (AI, 183; C.Dolto, 2005), Nicole asks her mother to make a «poupée-fleur» with the head of a rabbit, after hesitating between a cat or rabbit; in parentheses, Dolto notes Bernadette also recently drew a rabbit (JD, 142 & 156). Do we not hear an odd echo, in two animals among so many, of Dolto’s new grief reopening old chasms? And in this fleeting «transfert» of the «transfert-sans-fil,» we encounter *interdiction*: that potent tension between what is spoken, the «nom dit» [noun/name said]; and its ironic, homonymic reversal, what is prohibited, the «non-dit» [unsaid]. For in the broadcast transits the silent paradox of historicization: we release *and* retain all that is loved.

Docteur X

Forward 20 years to 1969, and Dolto is Docteur X in a phone-in radio program—«*S.O.S.Psychanalyste!*»—30 years after declining radio in 1939 (Frémeaux & Guéno, 2006; Vasquez, 1976; VC2, 25).¹⁶ As Dolto insisted on anonymity, a text assembling its 187 programs does not even bear her name (Vasquez, 1976). Medical colleagues complained to

Europe 1 about her free advice—but the real reason, she offers, is that it was painful to listen to the children (D&R, 35). A decade on, in 1976-1978, Dolto returns to radio, in her name, for «*Lorsque l'enfant paraît*» [when the child appears] on France-Inter (D&R, 34). Subject to wide coverage, its content proliferated (e.g., LO1, LO2, LO3; Marc-Pezet, 2004; VC2, 192-193 & 197). Parents wrote letters of at least five pages—many were helped just by that, Dolto notes (D&R, 36; DW, 154-155; Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978). Dolto then carefully chose letters for the program with her daughter, who recalls it as a rich collaboration (Dolto-Tilitch, 1998). Thus was psychoanalysis put in service of a whole society (AI, 228-229; Delphine, 2008; Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978). Dolto reports great anxiety before agreeing to the show (D&R, 34; DW, 152). For at stake was a complex history: after the evacuation of children from Paris in 1940, she saw 60 a day for treatment, and radio was a chance to help these kids, adults now, with their own (Nobécourt, 2008a). But children listened too, like Sophie Chérier (2008), who shares how it supported her. Thus Dolto became as loved as Radiolo. Yet the reader cannot help hearing, in her history with radio, the Second World War as an echo of the First. Can history be thought, then, as ‘editions of the transference’?

With Dolto, as Farley writes of Winnicott, psychoanalysis develops alongside the wireless (2012, 449). Thus, radio propels Dolto—«freudienne» above all (Golder, 2002b, 122)—to the “center of a dramatic French infatuation with Freud” (Turtle, 1995). France becomes the country with the most analysts in the world (Roudinesco, in Coronel & Mezamat, 1997c)—Dolto, its most popular analyst (Psychoanalytikerinnen, 2013). Hers is truly an «immense héritage» (Berger, 2006) transecting her society, as hundreds of places are named after her: streets, gardens, libraries, schools, even a star (Fédération Nationale du Patrimoine, 1988). The web is flooded with Dolto blogs and citations (e.g., Faye, 2008;

Freixa, n.d.). An American film festival showing «*Le désir de vivre*» (2008) declares Dolto “invented psychoanalysis for children” (Leonard, 2009); while the movie, *The Class*, is set at College Dolto (Cantet, 2008; Hamelin, 2011b). There are publications by non-specialists, and tributes by famous persons (e.g., Chapsal, 1994); even a well-researched work that places Dolto with Hannah Arendt, Marie Curie, and Eleanor Roosevelt (Adler et al, 2006). Dolto is as likely to be talked about in «*Télérama*» (Portevin, 2008, 40) as she is by Roudinesco, who notes her “fantastic optimism and vitality” (Ina.fr, 1988). Known above all for her “utter respect for the autonomy and intelligence of the child” (Reeves, 2010, 318), this “great woman of her time” (Ribowski, 2004) still met ordinary visitors, like a Canadian who recalls, “After meeting Madame Dolto, we don’t listen to a child or speak to him as we did before” (Camaraire-Santoire, 1983, 81). Yet while Gallimard (2015) has 51 active Dolto titles and Seuil (2015) has 28, unpublished materials fill the «Archives Françoise Dolto». ¹⁷ And though Dolto has the same volume of works as Klein, Lacan or Winnicott (about 400), and is translated into more languages (about 20), she has only one-quarter their library holdings (Worldcat Identities, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c & 2015d). ¹⁸ More perplexing, a scholarly Dolto dictionary omits the «phonème» (Ledoux, 2006). It is as if no matter what is present of Dolto, there is always more is in reserve. And while famous for her off-the-cuff “humour and auto-derision” (Grellet & Kruse, 2004, 142), her writing is “difficult for its density” (Halmos, 2000, 34). Thus Dolto’s words late in life are prophetic: “I am beginning to be a bit known” (in D’Ortoli & Amran, 1990, 28). Perhaps a simple reader says it best: “She gave me a love of my own human condition” (‘IC’ in Gauthier, 1995, 246). Or little Justine, who holds her new mother’s pen, as they sign adoption papers together (Coronel &

Mezamat, 1997c). For this is «l'héritage Dolto»: “human dignity is a precious sentiment” (IIIC, 265).

Of course, her project carries liabilities, too. Foremost is a vain search by some for a debt to Lacan (e.g., Guillerault, 2003; Ribas, 2006, 24; Sudaka-Bénazéraf, 1987/2012, 26-27; see Note 2). Dolto can also seem more religious than she was, simply for being “comfortable within the tradition of Catholic moral philosophy,” as Turkle (1995) notes (e.g., Binet, 1999; Guillerault, 2012; Dolto & Severin, 1977, 1978, 1979). Her marketability is exploited, with catch-phrases like «doltomania» and «enfants-rois» [baby kings], as her project is “gadgetized because it disturbs” (Halmos, 2000, 35). Oddly enough, another Kathleen from Quebec City becomes Dolto’s official biographer in 2004, but the project just vanishes (AI, 188; Beuve-Méry, 2008; Kelley-Lainé, 1997). True, Dolto’s generosity in giving interviews at 78 (on an oxygen tank) was not always to her advantage, and she could be “naïve,” her daughter admits (AI, 14). But supporters note how she is labelled ‘crazy’ or a ‘witch’ by peers (Yannick, 1999a, 34)—deemed, as Roudinesco puts it, “too charismatic” (1999, 186), with “too much intuition and not enough method” (1986, 496). ‘Witch,’ is a telling epithet, suggesting Dolto is branded by her work on the archaic, provoking an «interdit» of its own. What else explains, against all evidence, the vehemence of the comment that Dolto had “a reputation far beyond her own historical importance” (Geissmann, 1988, 293)?

Roudinesco believes Dolto never understood the hate she aroused (1986, 657), yet Dolto’s own theorization offers a full explanation. First, hate is a dynamic that originates in fear and functions as a “translation” of suffering (DW, 123 & 139; LF, 20). Society needs those who can tolerate hate, since hate is not the opposite of love—indifference is (DW, 140; 1988a, 218). Thus, hate is comprehensible. We find further inroads in her work on

«jalousie du puiné» [younger]. For Roudinesco thinks Dolto “incites a re-interrogation of the archaic” (1986, 518), and as Dolto says simply, “jealousy of the younger is actually a regression” (SP3,176). “Listening about regression regresses listeners and incites defenses,” she explains, against an «intrusion énigmatique» that tempts deconstruction, being an identification offering a «danger d’involution» (JD, 49-50 & 124-126: SS, 13). And as regression returns the pre-symbolic father prior to reality, “humans are jealous of those who don’t need a mother or father to be happy” (SP1, 18; TL, 130). Are not Dolto’s statements an entirely new sound arriving from someone who was not present before on our side of the English Channel? Thus, the difficulty with Dolto is not merely in translating her from French to English (or any other language), but in translating her non-temporal material into temporality. The work is akin to deciphering dots-and-dashes, an as-if «rythme binaire,» as we make ourselves available for endless echoes in Dolto’s wildly busy social oeuvre, and for affect arriving in all directions via that most archaic conduit, the «transfert,» in her transmission of an archaic prehistory that is not, and yet is, spoken.

Libidinal life

Dolto kept up a dazzling conference pace, from Geneva in 1936 (VC1, 508), to Canada in 1983 (VC2, 859). She held seminars at the EFP in 1971 (VC2, 495), while 600 attended the «Institut Océanographique» in 1972 (VC2, 523-524)—two granting university credits (VC2, 732)—and 400 were registered at the «Institut National des Sourds» [Deaf] in 1981 (VC2, 698). There were waiting lists for her training clinics, prompting Grignon to jokingly offer to be her driver just to attend, believing she “pushed furthest the place of trauma in psychogenesis” (2002, 37; VC1, 557-559). From bed in her last weeks, she still read manuscripts sent to her (C. Dolto, 1989, 9; C. Dolto in Yannick, 1999a, 5); and she

collaborated intensely with her daughter to help adolescents and families with infants (F. Dolto & C. Dolto-Tilitch, 1989; C. Dolto & C. Faure-Poirée, 2008; also C. Dolto, 2007), covering everything from incest to fetal audition of “the rumour of the world” (C. Dolto, 1985, 37). Even her husband’s book on kinesitherapy concludes, “It is in speech that the true relation is effected” (B. Dolto, 1976, 356)! And there are elusive legacies, too, like Anna Freud’s reading of two Dolto papers Spitz sent her in 1949 (VC2, 174; papers: JD, 96-132; EM, 63-72 & 94-107); and Dolto’s support of the next generation of analysts, like Aulagnier (1975/2001) and Mannoni (1965), with whom she was in regular contact (e.g., D&R, 24; PM, 9; VC2, 465, 486 & 585). Yet months before dying, Dolto insisted: “Remember, I don’t have any students!” (De Mezamat, 2008c; also, D&R, 33). In fact, she is right. For thirty years on, there is no following for Dolto, as for Lacan or Klein—and rare adjectivisation, *«doltoïenne»* (Guillerault, 2002, 1). There are, instead, innumerable minds worldwide inspired by Dolto, in the absence of any prescription for ‘doing Dolto.’ It is as if the teaching by which she encourages a return to the archaic acts on her society of readers and listeners, and emerging from their encounter, they each take unique, unpredictable paths. In sum, Dolto does not inspire adhesion—but she did not wish to: “If to live well we had to identify with our parents...we would still be Cro-Magnons” (1983). For a child who always wants to please his parents and thinks they are correct is in bad health (EM, 21), as imitation is “simian” and “inhuman” (CE, 330-331; EF, 31; EM, 175; JD, 40 & 128; VC2, 885). So, like Dolto, who consistently refused institutional work (VC2, 732), are not Dolto’s ‘(non-) students’ just what she teaches, and hopes for, them to be—*free?*

Dolto’s propositions “revolutionize education” in schools, too (Louchart, 2008; also Meirieu & Kübler, 2001), which she deems a “prophylaxis of psychosocial morbidity” (EM,

309; also 1965, 43). She rejects civilizing for useless things (CE, 25; EM, 373) and the sacrifice of independence to groups (APP, 39), believing “good habits are a violence against liberty” (EM, 313). Expecting others to please you extinguishes their potential (De Mezamat, 2008c; 1979, 15), she says, so adults should not impose ideas on children (DQ, 120; EM, 106; JD, 99). The problem, she adds drily, is that “when obsessional symptoms are shared, we consider ourselves well” (SP3, 18). Her solution is in opening up spaces, age groups and curricula, and reducing years of forced schooling (EF, 27-28; Ina.fr., 1978; SP1, 201-202; 1985/1989b, 130). Besides, a real education should awaken our critical sense (CE, 24 & 95-97; IIC, 17 & 346). For while “we all live upon what is false, it is important to make the child aware of the false that is important for us” (PJ, 103; also DW, 73). Dolto’s views invite a lively uptake (e.g. Binet, 2005; Chébaux, 1999b; Wittwer, 1992) that culminates at l’École Neuville, outside Paris (C.Dolto in Monteiro,2009,94)—an exploration of learning centred on talk, where children plan their own multi-disciplinary curricula within rural freedom. Dolto had a “passion for this place” (Ibid, 96), helping it secure a bank loan (Ibid, 95), visiting, and counselling its founders, D’Ortoli and Amram (Nobécourt, 2008b). Books and movies are devoted to it (e.g., D’Ortoli and Amram, 1990 & 2009b; Nobécourt, 2008d), including a school visit to Vienna (D’Ortoli & Amram, 2009a). For an education with Dolto always returns Freud. Thus, educators need to grasp the «rôle de la vie libidinale» (MA, 60; also EM, 99), and give children autonomy by 7-9, as «l’Oédipe est resolu» (CE, 20; DV, 29 & 87; PS, 44 & 67; SS, 134; VC2, 889). And her boldest words rise from her work: “Do not wreck the education of a child who almost dies but lives” (Ribowski, 2004; SP3, 138); and “schools overvalue conscious motivation and active pulses, missing the genius of unconscious motivation and passive pulses” (ES, 14). Thus, with

Dolto, psychoanalysis serves democracy, and *the child is a citizen* (EF, 48-50; JD, 285; PJE, 18).

Interdit & inter-dit

But of all the Dolto offshoots, the Maison Verte (MV) [green house] is unarguably her “key legacy” (Canu, 2009, 144; Nobécourt, 2008c). An MV offers precocious socialization for under threes and their caregivers (De Mezamat, 2008a; Dolto, 1985b; D&R, 38-42; Hamelin, 2011a; Malandrin, & Schauder, 2009; Nobécourt, 2008a; also CE, 378-380; EF, 12; PM, 19; Ribowski, 2004; TL, 95; VC2, 627, 715-716 & 876-877; Dumas, 1997; ina.fr.2, 1998). Opened collaboratively by varied local stakeholders, MVs are found throughout Europe and Latin America, with 154 in France alone (Archives Françoise Dolto, 2001a & 2001b)—and three in Canada, all in Quebec (Krymko-Bleton, 2012; Maison Buissonnière, 2014; Maison Ouverte, 2011; Normandin, 2012). The web is full of MVs: hours, committees, news (e.g., Rekhviashvili, 2008), and blogs—like one from Armenia with huge matryoshka dolls (Larajan, 2012)—as groups culturally mark and name each one. Research on 15 MVs in France, in 1984-1992, noted 1000-1500 visitors each (Neyrand, 1995)—200,000 yearly! “Françoise liked doing good,” Roudinesco notes (D&R, 39). Dolto won a prize from Lego for the concept (VC2, 876)—money she reinvested in children—and she continued to attend the flagship site she helped open in 1979 (D&R, 38; Maison Verte, n.d.; VC2, 793). Each MV is staffed with at least three analysed persons, among them a male and an analyst. But if we enter for a moment that «maison»—«mes sons» [my sounds]—Dolto dreamed about for 15 years (D&R, 40), I submit that we cannot but hear Dolto herself in its “echo and ricochet effects” (Hamelin, 2011a).

The original «Maison Verte» was named by children in a story Dolto fondly repeats, explaining they called it *green* though it was *blue* (ATP, 192; CE, 380; Malandrin & Schauder, 2009, 368; 1985b). Like This (2007), I wonder, *does the 'green house' echo the Emerald Isle?* Dolto cites the importance of *telling* an MV's two *rules*: wearing a waterproof apron to play with water, and not crossing the red line with vehicles. Thus the “*interdit* becomes the *inter dit*” (Canu, 2009, 152). *But do we also hear an echo of «m'arrête» [stop myself]?* At an MV, communication confirms who a child is, and basic prohibitions aid his becoming (Hamelin, 2011a), as he “uses his libido in social activities that are tolerated or stimulated” (MA, 19; also EM, 340; JD, 159, 283, 302 & 336; LF, 108; MA, 10 & 58; SS, 234). There is also the “technology of the ladder”—climbing play (D&R, 40). *Is this an echo of the missed parade?* Questions flow freely, with neither tracking nor reporting to outside agencies. We quickly note the paradigm shift re Tavistock's extensive record-keeping and their talks with parents without a child's permission (Harris & Bick, 2011). For there is anonymity at an MV, as only the child's name is written on the board at the entrance. *Is this an echo of the big board in Deauville?* The project offers infant-caregiver pairs a transition from being home alone, aiming to prevent sharp ruptures at entry to daycare or pre-school. *Is this an echo of children being evacuated during the war?* As children socialize, staff depathologize ordinary baby behaviour, “drinking” or “sponging” adult anxiety (VC2, 641; 1985b; also, Malandrin & Schauder, 2009, 213), that risks a child becoming a «hémiplégique symbolique» (Hamelin, 2011a). For a subject enters the world with his own desires and our task, Dolto says, is not to become human, but to remain so (Ibid). “You feel stronger as a parent when you leave” an attendee remarks (ina.fr.2, 1998). And true to form, Dolto is *incredibly* serious with the infants attending. There is no baby

talk, only intense attention and respect. And as we leave that «petite maison» (PM, 19)—*an echo of a fairy tale?*—we hear potent theorization floating about in chit-chats about MVs:

[1]The way we greet children wakes up a child’s attention, as the child is a “taker” if he knows he is with someone listening (Hamelin, 2011a); [2]The dead object [a toy] does not become living until someone takes hold of it. The child ignores that he himself has the power to give life to the toy, but accords that capacity to his «semblable» (Dolto, 1985b; SP3,13); and [3]The fact that we speak to a child in front of his mother signifies that we accord him an identity that is relational to her, but not fusional (Dolto, 1985b).

Awaiting for meaning to evolve, we “accumulate signs for later use” (AI, 189). In fact, transference effects at MVs are so common that some even write of «transfert sur le lieu» [transference on a site] (e.g. This, 2007, 147 & 158-162; Vasse, 2006, 95, 269 & 301); while others note rightly that “transference on place” actually requires a witness (Durif-Varembont et al, 1999, 305). Dolto herself is unequivocal that the transference requires a human presence: “healing takes more than displacement, it takes a relation for the transference to put libido back into circulation” (APP, 34; also DV, 188-198; JD, 269; 1939/1971, 239; 1977b, 43); and “the transference necessary for referencing oneself...must be lived on a socially integrated human being” (VC2, 228 & 799). So an MV is a «lieu de lien narcissisant» [site of a narcissizing link] (IIC, 69). Can it properly be called it, then, a place of *witnessing*?

Transfert fantasmatique

Freud explains that the transference is an exchange of affect that is present in all relationships (1900a, 177; 1909/2001, 51), and language is its privileged setting (Laplanche & Pontalis 1967/2004, 497). True to Freud, Dolto describes her therapeutic role in terms of

«transfert fantasmatique des relations passées» (SS, 157; also IIC, 33; SS, 113; 1985b), wherein she serves as a «prothèse temporaire,» “lending herself” to the subject (DW, 165; SP3, 173; SS, 16, 113-115 & 128), during difficult work that is «déréalisant» (SS, 16; also AI,104; Dolto & Hamad, 1984/1995, 13; MA, 60; SP3, 192; VO,173). She believes effective analysis revives the archaic (CD, 149; DW, 104; SS, 127-128), so the subject can “express repressed pulses while reducing his guilt” (APP, 37; MA, 161). Thus, her clinical attitude is simply to be “available” to receive projections (Dolto & Nasio, 1987, 66; DW, 163; MA, 22; Ribowski, 2004; SP2, 157; VC2, 200; VC2, 762; 1985c, 197), becoming a “resonator” to “wake” the subject’s “own analyst” (DW, 61 & 143; SS, 77; 1985/1989b, 134; VC2, 219). In effect, is she not elaborating how self-healing requires an analysed witness, a resonator of the archaic? Does this not return the notion (above) that *a child* is a taker if someone is listening? For is not “psychoanalytic listening always for *the child* in the adult” (Hamelin 2011a)? Repeatedly, Dolto notes the child listens better while busy, as if not listening (DQ, 80; SP2, 219; SP3, 35, 144 & 146; TL, 24; VC2, 728 & 808; VO, 226)—when he is passive, as a “third” in the conversations of others. Is the child a taker, then, when *someone else* is listening? Is this why a witness matters? But our questions stay open as more echoes arrive. The child needs a «fil» [wire/thread] up (SP1, 229; SS, 113) until he can be «sans-filet» [wireless] (VC2, 706). Thus, Dolto is optimistic for all her patients, even psychotics, or infants “in the throes of mortifying anxiety” (AI, 218; VC2, 796-797): “As the child has managed this long without you...there is no reason to assume he will do less well now that he has your support” (SP1, 43). But is there not an unsaid telling of her history with radio here—and of how suffering can turn to hope? For with Dolto, as Grignon says, “the analyst is for life” (2001, 142). Funny enough, Dolto’s first office (1936) was in a tiny flat on

Dupuytren: “I often forgot my key...so I had to climb up the ladder to the little window...but I was there at last!” (AI, 146). How can we not hear those war echoes of the missed parade?

True to form, Dolto is not bothered by the hatred that can arise in analytic relations, as it is a “duty to show tolerance for what others do not tolerate” (VC2, 763). She is “horrified” to hear of any “hate in the counter-transference,” as “you cannot work under these conditions” (SP1, 80-81). So, specifically to address hate, she invents her famous “symbolic payment” (e.g., ATP, 196; CE, 371; DW, 139; SS, 124-125; TL, 112; VC1, 342; VC2, 890): patients bringing a stamp, stone, coin, ticket, etc. Forgetting it, she says, means an unconscious refusal of treatment (DW, 139; TL, 112). The payment also prevents a patient from “mythologizing” the analyst (SS, 124), so while it is always desirable, it is critical with young children still resolving their «Oédipe» (SS, 15 & 125f). Dolto employed it from 1968-1988 (CE, 371), and an uptake seems to be starting (e.g., Puskas et al, 1991). Is there an echo here to details we had overlooked until now—about her wartime hobby of buying medals, and a medal ceremony for *Oncle Pierre* (MF, 22; VC1, 43 & 175)? For like the analyst, the symbolic payment works in phantasy, representing something unique for each person (VC1, 342). Oddly enough, then, Dolto inspired the children’s character, *Caillou* (Wikipedia, 2014d) that, though named by *someone else*, somehow echoes *her* daydreams about radio waves. In 1981, ironically at the Institute for the Deaf, Dolto comments on the political discords around her: “There are stories happening in all of these transactions, but I have only vague echoes” (VC2, 698). Could we not say the same? For what her uncanny corpus reveals is that no moment in time stands alone: all is ricochets, reconnaissance and *après-coup*—later editions of infantile history. Thus, the transference

itself is the *interdit*—what is banned from consciousness but still endures as an «articulation vitale» (IIC, 275), an “affective exchange that increases vitality” (JD, 57-58):

There is somewhere a subject who has his own desire, veiled, and who watches in his passive pulses for the moment when he will be found by someone...It is this availability towards the encounter with the most archaic pulses of a human being that is the essential transference of the psychoanalyst. Especially, of the psychoanalyst of children (IIC, 275).

Thus emerges a remarkable unsaid narrative, as primary processes secure self-regulation lifelong, and language (including its silences and slips, and eluding time) enables us to take in and release affect. So we can conceive of the transference simply as a passive operation serving a kind of unconscious circulation between subjects, one that sustains our survival.

Témoin, tiers & triangulation

Herein arrives Dolto’s theory of the «tiers, témoin» (SS, 15) [third, *your yesterdays*; witness, *your lessers*], silent and hidden in the “thickness of her propositions” (Halmos, 2000, 34). I do not claim a full grasp but offer only my translation of Dolto, as meaning arrived by a gradual condensing of dispersed associations. We begin with a fact: the fetus “cannot lose continuity” to survive (SS, 144). This causes a need for “relays” and “mediators of the symbolic function” (CD, 194; DV, 64-65; VC, 496; 1985d, 15), as the “securing of pleasure calms pulsions and abolishes a moment of time-space” (JD, 286). Developing, the “symbolic function...permits the substitution of pleasure from a short circuit of desire, immediate, to a longer circuit that mediates pulsions” (Ibid; also IIC, 83; PS, 29-30). Thus the fetus is referenced to unconscious security within a unique archaic transference situation consisting of a co-narcissistic «*pré-moi*» and an enigmatic *other(ness)*

of dream-work as a third, a pre-symbolic father. Near the horizon of time-space, through birth, substitutions of pleasure and the reversible circulation of affect effect a slow, uneven, anxiogenic migration to reality as the «*pré-moi*» remains unconsciously fusional with the mother; while restorative dream-work investing audition secures continuity with the archaic, returning as (an) otherness or third, so the pre-symbolic father offers a «*fil*» to the social. Triangulation is then observable in the relation of an infant with his mother and (usually) his father, as progressive substitutions enable longer circuits for taking in and venting affect from diffuse sources. Somewhere here is the porous place of ‘introjects.’ The reversibility inhering in triangulation means that a «*pré-moi*» holds shifting positions between himself and his mother, *and* between himself and the other, resulting in a blurry, ‘liquid’ subjectivity. Crucially, then, ‘two’ is always one, as a child in a pair returns to «*prolongement*.» Ergo, the child needs a *third*, a witness, in order to be *one*. Put another way, *triangulation is necessary for individuation*.

Dolto explains: “We are born in a triangular situation...[so] the child needs this triangular situation to continue (,) to develop” (CE, 333). The “triangular situation is constructed...completely unconsciously” (SP1, 216), as “any other perceptible by... effecting emotional variations on the mother...is, like him, felt to be in dyad...qualifying and quantifying her dyad” (LF, 87). She adds, “a *common interest* unites them emotionally. It is the beginning of a «*situation à trois*»...two united relative to a third (the *thing*)” (SF, 84; also, SF, 373). Here is a critical notion: *the child’s first «semblable» is the other of the mother*. Thus, a *word-thing* is a ‘confirmation’ restoring triangulation, a phantasy of a common interest—a mediating object—while a «*repère*» is an archaic landmark in reality. Ergo, witness, third, «*repère*» and confirmation condense. And as triangulation securitizes,

“the child wants to be witnessed” (Hamelin, 2011), phantasizing trees, birds, nature and even anthropomorphized objects as his witnesses (AI, 204; CD, 53f; SS, 39; VC, 734): “the child is always an interlocutor with an other, who is an interlocutor with an other. It is always a triangle” (Ribowski, 2004). So “you need to be careful that there is always a third, *always* a third, when you have relations with children” (CE, 333). Is a powerful recommendation not implied: *securitize a child with a triangular situation?* Further, since triangulation is driven by *passive* pulses, we re-find those ‘toys in the hand,’ as a child is unaware he can enliven (himself) until he follows a «semblable» who can. For children need “proof of existence,” Dolto explains, and they use each other for identification (Hamelin, 2011a; PS, 41; SP3, 13; TL, 31; VC2, 762; 1985c, 190). And so the libidinal dynamics of passivity are installed.

In turn, a “social third” or “lateral person” prevents fusion, i.e., the loss of individuation (CE, 263; Hamelin, 2011a). Thus the analyst “enters as a third...freeing the child” (SP3, 36)—effectively theorizing her own work with witnesses (e.g., Nasio in Authier-Roux, 2000a, 21-22). A choral clinic is “more operational,” “radically curative,” and an «extraordinaire rapidisant» of work, as it “returns the original triangular relation” (Charial, Eliacheff & Valentin, 1999, 50- 53; Coronel & Mezamat, 1997d; 1977b, 28). So too for presentification, then, as the “child needs to hear the mother speak to an object other than himself” (SF, 210; also EM, 180; QS, 10; SP2, 126; 1985/1989b, 126). This nurtures a “mediated relation instead of a dual one” (SP3, 179)—effectively theorizing the MVs as what is relational rather than fusional, and a “social milieu as a witness” (JD, 20). Of note, Dolto discussed the *third*, a «présence affective de ‘témoin réactif,’ sensible, passif et impartial,» as early as 1939 (MA, 166). I offer that her narration is of a dream of inter-

subjectivity by which we engage reality as a relational echo of the archaic, as historicization presents anxiety to which the transference is a salvific response. And from the issue of translation where we began, a new word arrives in the transference, condensing Dolto's difficult theory: «personne» [someone/no one, as-if personifying the said/unsaid]; and its homonyms: «père/perd/pair sonne» [father/lose/pair/peer sounds/ rings], and «perçons» [we/let's pierce]. True to Dolto's genius, triangulation also returns the «interdit», since the affect enabling individuation requires the interdiction of fusion.

We pause for more of Dolto's generous examples. In 1942, she marries Boris, a *Russian* (AI, 162; VC2, 88). She recalls seeing the *Russian* Church from Henri-Paté, as if “written in her destiny” (AI, 161). Boris first dined with the Marettes to replace her brother, *Pierre*, serving in *Morocco* (EN, 99-101; VC1, 427f; VC2, 85). Upon first hearing of Boris, her father exclaimed, “Of course, she couldn't help bringing us a *Tartare!*” (EN, 100). How can we not hear (amid echoes of *Babouches*) the homonym, «tard-tard» [late, late], in wild play against her old nickname, *Vava* [go, go]? She explains that *Do l'oto* means “sculpting tool” in *Old Slavonic* (AI, 27; VC2, 453)—and we cannot stop its homonym, *l'auto*, from evoking little wheels at MVs that *m'arrête* at the red line. We also recall the nanny's elevator man, dressed as a *Brandebourg*, like «généraux russes» (and *Oncle Pierre*) (AI, 144; Ribowski, 1987/2004, etc.). In fact, *Brandenburg* Province joined the *Weimar* Republic after WWI (Wikipedia, 2015d). How can this not return Freud, “born [in *Weimar*] amid a *slav* population” (1900a, 196)—and *Brandenburg*, *Luxembourg* (Wikipedia, 2015b), home of Mlle, that dear nanny replacement? Dolto recalls worrying about Boris meeting Laforgue, feeling great anxiety on Blvd *Delessert* as they walked over (ATP, 148)—its near-homonym evoking those 15-day privations of *dessert* (EN, 21) for naughtiness. Here are abundant

substitutions, all on names, as the word-thing (phoneme) serves as a common affective interest—a mediating object. So when Dolto says of her love of Boris, that it was “not in time and space” (DW, 170), how can we not agree?

Identification & inter-projection

To further elaborate fusion, “this first captive mode of object relations” remains throughout life (MA, 28). So a child cannot make contact with anything that interests him without “anthropomorphizing it” and experiencing «un transfert» (Dolto in Guillerault, 1989, 137; also CE, 63; PS, 86). Critically, she adds, “it is also possible that the affects of pre-genital stages need, in order to be expressed in the transference, a reciprocity of behaviour” (JD, 191). And as our first means of engaging an other requires a «semblable,» “[primary] narcissism is reversible on whom we speak to” (DW, 124; also Charial, Eliacheff & Valentin, 1999, 53). Beautifully, “the child «protéiforme» progressively weds the forms he faces” (CE, 78; also DW, 98). At work is simply a «processus psychologique primitif» whereby “the human identifies himself with his entourage” (JD, 124; also SP2, 193). Yet this sustaining start makes it “hard to learn limits of self,” leading to “over-identification in «transfert» that is more and more sticky” (CE, 263; SP2, 193; VO, 170); i.e., fusion causes an “infernal cycle” of inter-projections, trapping both people (CE, 263; EF, 31; IIC, 231; PJE, 43; VC2, 220, 703, 762 & 807). And in this mode where *to love is to be like*, “the child unconsciously loses” (DQ, 130; CE, 270; EM, 205, 333 & 348-349; VC2, 808). Dramatically, Dolto adds that outgrown identifications to parents are «fatale» by age six or *seven* (CE, 243 & 330-331; PS, 39; SS, 51; VO, 109)—being a contamination by identification (CD, 211; JD, 50; SS, 38). For symbolic communication requires distance (CE, 33, 244, 277 & 355; IIC, 71-77, 99, 102 & 326; JD, 189 & 301; LF, 113; PJE, 103; PS,

23, 85 & 89; SS, 73 & 124). And if the mother never separates from the child, he will not know he exists (DW, 106; 1985/1989b, 126). Here we pause for another fine example of substitution, still on the name. Dolto relates learning, at *seven*, the good news that Saint-François (Francis of Assisi) was her patron saint—not Saint-Françoise, as she had always thought (ATP, 71; VC1, 85)—calling him a «hippie de la Renaissance» (JD, 247; PJE, 61) who “invented a psychodrama of a non-fusional generous maternity” (VC1, 214). Isn’t what is at issue here not religiosity at all, but rather, the subtension of Dolto’s theorization on identification—and an indissociable fusion of history and work?

Dolto’s dense texts on incest are also rooted in fusion. “Incest means «pas séparé»” (PJ, 44), as separation calls for “assuming one’s identity while renouncing the identification to the parents” (SP1, 37; also JD, 126-127). Dolto discusses real incest: “precocious sexual initiation, incestuous or not, is always traumatic” (VC2, 589; also, CD, 94; LF, 51; PJE, 44; VO, 201 & 206). But even being “phantasized as incestuous,” as a “precious object of excessive identificatory love,” incurs guilt (CE, 166-167; NE, 212; TL, 189); and she recalls a five-year-old traumatized by a “parody of marriage to his mother” (SP3, 104). How can Uncle Pierre not echo here? Dolto explains: “If there is no phantasm of incest, there is no humanization; but if there is an actualization of that phantasm, there is no society” (LF, 255; also CE, 243; DQ, 19; LF, 54; VO, 207). Thus the most vital education of all is to tell a child by age three about «l’interdit de l’inceste» (CE, 73; DW, 167; JD, 260; PJE, 35). Dolto credits Freud for articulating the incest taboo, stressing its universality (CE, 354; DV, 22; JD, 228-229; IIC, 181 & 186-199; LF, 51; SS, 144)—reminding parents to share that “they suffered [it] and survived” (PS, 46-48). But by this instruction, is the «interdit» of incest not also a witnessing by a «semblable»?

In fact, Dolto prompts a full rethinking of identification and individuation through the (tria)ngle of witnessing, opening up radical hope. We return now to Robert, her psychotic nine-year-old patient, the mute wolf-child who howls, as we listen a little more:

There were in him two positive identifications: the animal identification [to the gardener's dog], and the identification to a dead man [beloved gardener dead of a heart attack].... This identification to the deceased was very beneficial because...he could relive the trauma of dying by falling out of the window, that is, having been separated at 15 days by forced weaning by the mother who birthed him, then at about two months, having almost died of dehydration [as his mother lost her milk during WWII] (in De Sauvernac, 1992, 169-170).

Recovering a psychotic child, then, requires helping him find «un semblable» to liberate his expression (Nobécourt, 2008a). Conversely, the mother perfectly identified to a child, dressed as an exact copy, is “a superb creature from the veterinary point of view” (TL, 185), Dolto says drily. So from her own life, she offers a tip: “If you remain vigilant and question, you will not identify” (EN, 120). For any subject's true identification is archaic:

There is always an interiority that precedes, and we must help the child to get rid of his false identification, because we all live on the basis of identifications that we must, little by little, demolish to refind our authenticity, regardless of what persons are around us. It is altogether like the layers on an onion [homonym: *on nie on*: ‘we deny us’] (DW, 99).

At issue in Dolto's theorization is the endurance of the archaic, by definition. Ergo, if phobia or loss precipitate an incapacity for obtaining security in reality (via identification), then the transference simply facilitates the return of continuity. Resourcing by regression delivers sufficient securitization to then enable progression back to reality by substitutions (new identifications) that bridge phantasy and reality. Thus, the notion of ‘continuity with the

archaic' harbours (retains) a phenomenally reparative potential. And so Dolto's 'true archaic identification' is merely a return, by symbolic filiations, to the prehistory of each «*pré-moi*» on a landscape constructed in dream-work. Thus, we each need to “keep something archaic and stable when identity is changing too quickly” (CE, 31)—as in war (VC1, 252)—Dolto says, adding she has always been interested in “what is continuous that links what seems discrete” (EN, 42). We recall that our first «semblable» is the *other of the mother*: the pre-symbolic father representing our «richesse libidinale» (MA, 58), the “source of life” (DW, 126), our «filiation langagière» (CE, 44; SP1, 67). Thus, Dolto analyses identifications (LO1, 124 & 128; VC2, 208), finding that a child often lives “archaic object relations” with his entourage without anyone noticing (D&R, 12). And as regression (therapeutic or traumatic) returns prior identifications, she reports being “identified with an older time after analysis than before” (AI, 88). Dolto is (again) in fine company with Hannah Arendt: “All my life I considered myself Rahel [Varnhagen, 1771-1833] and nothing else” (Goldstein, 2009, 1); and with Bertha Pappenheim, “identified so deeply with Glückel [von Hameln, her ancestor, 1646-1724] that she commissioned a dramatic portrait of herself as Glückel” (Guttman, 2001, 191). There is also Dolto's nearer identification with Lou Andreas-Salomé:

Later, only, when I read her and I read some works about her, I thought that she was like Françoise Murette or Françoise Dolto. I felt myself to be entirely ‘«de la même veste» [in/of the same vest' [of the same cloth? same *investments*?] as Lou Andreas-Salomé (D&R, 32).¹⁹

Beyond Dolto's audible substitutions, on the name, are unspoken returns of Weimar (where Lou met Freud in 1911—Leavy, 1964, 131), as Lou is transferentially coloured with Brande(n)b(o)urg, in a fine example of the diffusion of affects in the social. Further, as

lovely Lou was «la russe» [a Russian], she returns the lost nanny with the auburn hair (AI, 144; Ribowski, 1987/2004)—«la rousse» [red-headed female]. So as we listen to Dolto explain how, walking in Nimes (in the Midi) one day, she naturally thought of her «semblables» 2000 years ago (PF, 35), do we not begin to feel, with her, the marvelous fluidity of identifications, and how time-space is indeed a lot more porous than we think?

Liberating words

Near the end of her life, Dolto wonders if she is «pas conforme» because the lost nanny—who lost her own mother when young (EN, 64; Ribowski, 2004)—was «une marginale» whose punishment it was to go to France (EN, 118). Dolto is breathtakingly candid here about what is indelible in her oeuvre: her early identification. Nearby, she recalls how her mother, depressed after Jacqueline’s death, had identical clothes made: “So if she did not dress exactly like me, who was living...” (EN, 120). And in the ellipsis, do we not hear a silent echo of the ‘toys in the hand,’ and this human need, born of our enduring passivity, to *follow* life to *have* life? And are both banned words—Vineuse and Jacqueline—not pulsing together again, just like in her early radio days? A subject has “a symbolic link with no one if no one knows his history *or can speak it*” (EM, 278), Dolto explains. Thus, parents “hold the treasure of liberating words” (1985d, 14), and a child is “most vulnerable if he cannot get answers to his questions” (PJE, 20). Again, how can this not echo her own difficulty in getting answers to her early questions about death? Thus, it is crucial “to put true/just words on suffering” (IIC, 367; JD, 104), returning the notion of the witness:

Prevention...is not to spare a child from suffering.... It is to put words on that from which he suffers, and recognize his right to suffer from it, and that we recognize with compassion that he suffers from it. But not to spare him from it, making a zone of

shadow on his suffering. This will provoke a trauma that will leave a trace.... If we give him the right to suffer from the absence of his mother, we give him the right to also accept that another suffers, and that suffering is a part of humanization (De Mezamat, 2008b).

Ergo, Dolto's passionate concern for the deaf: the "most phobic and most persecuted is a deaf child" (DW, 94; PJE, 85 & 111; VC2, 242 & 703). Dolto will spend half her Lego prize to help deaf children (VC2, 877 & 819f), remarking fondly how, from her window on Saint-Jacques, she could hear recesses at the Institute for the Deaf (Nobécourt, 2008a; Ribowski, 2004). And from this acute valuing of words in remediating suffering comes her *strongest* message: desire is a call to inter-human communication (JD, 272 & 283; PJE, 94; TL, 93; VO, 192; etc.); we only exist because we are linked to others in words (CE, 256; JD, 286; PJE, 13-15 & 101; TL, 44; etc.); and what is spoken soothes (CE, 204 & 351; DV, 40 & 89; EM, 25, 305 & 326; FT, 198; IIC, 213; JD, 298; NE, 211; SS, 75; TL, 46 & 84; etc.). She quips, "psychotherapy begins in the morning, when you live alone, when you speak to the news seller" (DQ, 109). As ever, her simple words port phenomenal complexity: *humans unconsciously securitize in triangulation via what is said and read*.

In short, the child is a worthy "interlocutor" to whom we should tell the truth (NE, 210; SP1, 69; TL, 31), while invested words forced into hiding take with them countless associations. Take the 14-year old for whom a word arrived, «putain» [slut], by which he "re-found his story"—details of visits by his mother (a prostitute) to his foster home—restoring his capacity for learning (SP3, 83-86). Or take Katia, a four-year-old hemiplegic psychotic in Dolto's choral clinics (SP1, 49-56); Katia insists she has «vinguit» friends [*sic*:28], as Dolto tells the reader: "There is a condensation of something here, for this

returns a name, *Valerie*, appearing later, and *valgus*” [her deformity]. In fact, condensation is everywhere (Freud, 1913, 174), and as it is dream-work, the most archaic phonemes hold the most associations.²⁰ Is this not why psychoanalysis is “a talking cure” (Breuer & Freud, 1893/1957, 30), and words are its “tools of treatment” (Freud, 1905/1953c, 283)? For “language is a substitute for action, whereby affect is abreacted almost as effectively” (Breuer & Freud, 1893/1957, 8; 1895, 365-366)—or as Dolto says, “communication ventilates everything” (D&R, 39; DV, 66; JD, 22; PJE, 23; QS, 22). Yet as *anxiety is released by using phonemes* (IIC, 328; SS, 37), the “phantasms subtending speech are expressible only in the mother tongue” (NE, 249; also, PJE, 95), giving the mother tongue a «fonction historisante» (Chaperot & Celacu, 2010, 439). Condensations thus harbour narrative revolts, being words that speak in silence (as affect), impose silence on speech, and promise a rogue return. So it is that following associations across Dolto’s vast corpus, we experience an odd phenomenon wherein the more we gather, the fewer separable notions we have, as condensations form, revealing the texture of dream-work in her genius. Dolto is correct: “It is a small surface with which we make our speeches, but what is living is entirely in the unconscious” (CE, 283). Thus, as we come to understand it, narrative revolt is a laborious process of becoming that writes against culture, as the subject achieves unitary status in symbolic exchanges, inter-psychically. By it, the unconscious not only *legates* to thought (ergo, to theory), but *sustains* thought through the continuous transport of prior investments and a prehistory of play, we might say—our dream-work. I believe this notion of transference in theory carries tremendous implications for cultural receptivity and transmission. For, on the one hand, a common language offers common phonemes to the neonate; while, on the other hand, no two dreamers ever encounter even a single phoneme

on the same intra-psychical terrain, so contingent is any libidinal history. Thus, the unconscious predicts the absolute unpredictability of the (hi)story of man: genius as a surprise, a sudden arrival, an interruption—and our human groupings as inheritors of dream-work engaged in the language baths of our complicated childhoods, in endless ruptures that fold elliptically. Needless to say, then, phonemic play and enigmatic condensations make impossible the adventure of translation, as Derrida notes abundantly (e.g., 1988, 305; 1995b, 120; 1998, 66; 1999/2004, 168; 2003/2005, 162). Even just trying to read theory becomes an “interpretation akin to a translation” (Freud, 1900a, 277; 1907, 60 & 93; 1913, 176). And though, for Dolto, it is true that the “only true transitional support is the word” (Guillerault, 2007, 56), Dolto’s words are, as she says, «pas classiques» (MA, 13), and plays porting their transference effects are, like slips of the tongue, resistant to translation (Freud, 1916a, 31f & 40f). Thus, the English translation of her dissertation (2013) cannot but disappoint—it is as if the rebus is gone. And here we come to the tragi-comedy of the present project. Dolto shares an anecdote from Deauville, that departure point for Britain where the family summered (AI, 66; EN, 25; VC1, 69, 91 & 157). The bilingual news seller stuttered, saying 15 as «cinq-dix» [five-ten] instead of «quinze» and calling out *mititi* (the name they gave her) as she announced news at «midi» [noon] (EN, 32; VC1, 92 & 115). How can we not recall the *ti.ti.ti.* of Morse code (or the dictionary decoding it, the *Larousse*), and the Midi, her adult refuge? Yet we watch from an English shore as French messages recede like radio waves.

Castration symboligène

Dolto writes that a second language is a way to “run from yourself” (AI, 140)—just as she is reading Katherine Mansfield “to escape” (Ibid). In fact, Dolto was competent in

Latin, English and Italian (AI, 119; ATP, 75, 80 & 99; EN, 86; VC1, 322 & 330-331). In 1931, she also writes of thinking and speaking “in the accent of the Midi” (VC1, 473 & 478), and in 1934, of reading in Provençal (VC1, 306 & 311). Truth be told, it was a second language that had brought that beloved nanny to her home (Ribowski, 2004), always staffed with «l’anglaise des petits» [the English girl for the little ones] (EN, 44 & 50). Musing on second languages, Dolto relates how a French psychiatrist, a victim of incest, found peace in Australia (LF, 54)—for a new language may make the incest taboo redundant, she says (SP1, 99). This is its advantage for those “who cannot continue to use the mother tongue without finding themselves trapped” (SP1, 21; also APP, 34). And we recall Pappenheim here, who while German, was “at her best and most free” in French and Italian (Breuer & Freud, 1893/1957, 25)—and who, at the depths of her illness, could only speak in English nursery rhymes (Ibid, 39). The «language salvateur» just needs to not conform to the mother’s rhythm (TL, 16), Dolto explains, so that even an accent helps, offering security in “camouflage” (SP3, 237; TL, 33; VC2, 213). The problem is, however, that the second language then “risks breaking filiations” (SP1, 99)—essentially, losing innumerable (but never all) tethers to the archaic. Is this not exactly the risk (thus, the grave responsibility) of any act of translation, as we try to cross an inexplicable chasm against an «interdit»?

This “as-if severing” inhering in a second language takes us to Dolto’s «castrations symboligènes» [symboligenic castrations] (SCs), elaborated from 1939. Enjoying wide uptake, SCs are aptly described by Grignon as “permitting access to sublimations” (1997, 21; 2002, 66 & 179); while «symboligène» (e.g., 78-90) is a prime example of her non-classical terms. Dolto explains that while SCs are ongoing, psychical development hinges on three major castrations—umbilical, oral and anal (e.g., IIC, 90-147); and that “Klein is

justified” in speaking of oral and anal castrations, while she herself has merely added the prior «castration ombilicale» of birth (VC2, 516). An entirely unconscious process is at issue in SCs (MA, 11), wherein the frustration of a desire impels the subject to transfer investments to subsequent objects, allowing a wider field of exchanges (e.g., D&R, 29; IIC, 78; SP1, 47-48; SS, 124)—migration from short to longer circuits (IIC, 83). Do castrations, then, not serve as a continued elaboration of how the subject substitutes pleasures in triangulation? Every trial is a “springboard” that ruptures fixity (De Mezamat, 2008c; JD, 131; PJE, 46; PS, 37-38; SP1, 16)—and a “drama for the one who lives it” (DW, 70). But growth requires risks (ina.fr, 1978), and we are actually «fragilisé par une *non*-castration» (DW, 99)—as play on the «nom» [the (given) name] softly echoes birth. It is, as Britzman writes, a use of “aggression as a way to call reality forth” (2004, 263); or, as Dolto notes, a “need for aggressive energy to detach oneself from what fascinates”(LF, 307).²¹ And it is as if, I offer, it were a difficult unconscious apprenticeship to the oral active stage. Progressive SCs comprise a necessary «processus de mutation» (IIC, 79; JD, 302) that “reinforce desire in front of an obstacle” (IIC, 78), yielding a richer symbolic life (D&R, 29; JD, 301; PM, 55; PS, 85; TL, 72): symbolic fruit (DW, 71). In brief, “all separations have a narcissizing value for the one who survives” (SP2, 161), being «libératrice» (Nobécourt, 2008c), as long as the restriction is “partial and compensated” with greater pleasure (DW, 46; JD, 29). Dolto compares the process to pruning a tree (LO3, 120) or flower (IIC, 79) for better growth. Intended to dovetail Freud, whom she credits (LF, 263; VC2, 516), SCs do seem to elaborate his notions about temporary un-pleasure making possible an attainment of greater pleasure (1905c, 209-211 & 211f); instinctual demands being forced from direct satisfaction to substitutive satisfactions (1915b, 170; 1917c, 349; 1940[1939], 210); libido being in a

“complemental series” with frustration (1917c, 347 & 347f); and a “fruitful source of disappointment and renunciation...[being a] stimulus to dreaming” (1900/1953a, 130). With SCs, Dolto theorizes human survival as hinging on a tension between endogenous castration anxiety (JD, 227) and an “a-priori right to self-defense against guilt” (TL, 68):

The unconscious economic objective (purpose) of these states of powerlessness is the neutralization of castration anxiety.... The castration complex is a ...success for the libidinal dynamic of the subject” (Dolto, 1939/1965, 7; oddly, only in 2nd edition & not in MA).

On this view, trauma is simply a “failed castration” (IIC, 345-346), while health requires successive «deuils» [bereavements]: of fetal sonority (SP1, 147; SP3, 11); identification with one’s mother (JD, 215; SS, 210); childhood (PJE, 42); even the preceding hour (PJE, 42)—in sum, to “separate from the «soi-même» [oneself] of yesterday to seek the «soi-même» of tomorrow” (PJE, 46). And somewhere here, I believe something *other* arrives—something «interdit,» unsaid, in that «interdit,» castration. For Dolto is narrating human suffering in the encounter with time-space, deriving from castration a compassion for our sacrifice to the material world—melancholy as the cost of living. Dolto’s emphasis on SCs being *given in language* is well commented: “another human being signif[ies] to him that the accomplishment of his desire, in the form he’d like to give it, is prohibited” (Dollander & De Tychey, 2004, 258). Thus it is a *witness to suffering*—a loving other speaks upon an existential trial—from which a thickness of paradoxes emerges. For by the witness, what *prohibits* desire *serves* desire for continuity with the archaic, as in *surrendering* what we love, we *keep* what we love; by the word, castration offers its own compensation, that pleasure of archaic audition, as the *non* of prohibition is the *ouïe* [hearing]); and by the

witness's word, that «interdit,» an *impasse*, is a *passage* to reality to follow in passivity, as “when we speak, we project part of ourselves” (IIC, 28; JP, 29).

Après-coup

Dolto's elaborations emerge from a liquid space where contradictions inhere: it is thinking with dream-work. Still explaining Dolto with Dolto, we recall another vendor in Deauville who sang about sharpening scissors and knives (EN, 32); and her sewing teacher, Suzanne (whose fiancé, a «chasseur alpin» like Oncle Pierre, died the same year), who gave her certificates for excellence in cutting (ATP, 55-56; EN, 37, 65 & 77-78). To this, we add a somber fact: Jacqueline died of a hematoma 18 months after a bad fall; her leg needed amputating, but her mother refused (AI, 83; EN, 108). Published post-humously, the find evokes the tragic irony of the dance music on the radio. It also testifies to Dolto's view of the «interdit» (and melancholy) from the intimate grounds of her bereavement, in the «après-coup» [archaic: *after-cut*] of war framing such losses, and the «transfert sans fil» offering a balm on her suffering. Dolto's corpus leaves little doubt that our childhood histories of love resound in our later work, leaving an unconscious trace that is always readable in our texts.

In 1932, Pierre visits Deauville, and his infant (Dolto's godchild) almost gets *otitis* (PF, 38 & 118f)—a “defense against hearing” (SP1, 213)—as the first grandchild encounters repressed stories of war, death and departure, and her suffering symbolizes our own. For our chapter structure cannot but disturb the reader-hearer, as a non-linear engagement with theoretical density defying logical exposition, where echoes begin in a place unseen and never end. Dolto's texts are “a rendez-vous with a voice, words that resemble nothing that we have heard until now” (Halmos, 2008)—“another regime of communication than that

which bends to the dominant discourse” (Louka, 2003, 149)—while the “true dimension of her word remains largely unknown” (Halmos, 2000, 33). As our habitual means of thought are supplanted by binary rhythms of presence and absence, we can’t help wanting to open a few paradoxes, to expand into time-space along segues, seeking lures to reality. But regression calls for the reverse: for sieving by compressing, as “elements as allow any point of contact...are condensed into new unities” (Freud, 1933a, 20), to give audibility, in a space without volume, to an experience of the archaic inseparable from the presentification of its theory. Co-ordinates without «raison» [reason]—but *with* «ré-son» [re-sound]—reveal the other-ness that is also our selves, as the transference invests associative thinking with an archaic legacy: “Non-belonging—textuality itself—intervenes, that is interrupts, right from the ‘first’ trace, that already marks itself as duplication, an echo” (Derrida, 1972, 398).

Pulling back a bit now, I offer that the beauty, subtlety and complexity of the transference in Dolto’s texts makes patent the interconnectedness of her ideas, and the (counter)signature by which her archaic prehistory is enigmatically made audible. At the least, we should value the witness that *is* the infant: the auditory record by which she attests to an infantile history wherein she was, as all infants are, deemed to be barely present at all. And contemplating the infant in this way, I cannot but recall the words of Levinas, her peer:

My reflection on this subject [the joy of what exists, the abundance] starts with childhood memories. One sleeps alone, the adults continue life; the child feels the silence of his bedroom as “rumbling”.... It is something resembling what one hears when one puts an empty shell close to the ear, as if the emptiness were full, as if the silence were a noise.... In the absolute emptiness that one can imagine before creation—there is.... It is a noise returning after every negation of this noise. Neither nothingness nor being (1982, 48).

Perhaps as a bourgeois girl from the 16th, with a few grey hairs by the 60s, Dolto seems like an unlikely witness to the same ruptures of narrative probed by the next generation, at *Tel Quel*, at the same time and place—even, at the same publisher (Seuil). Yet not only is Dolto a powerful witness to the unconscious, as she wished; she also elaborates our understanding of the unconscious as an ever-present *testifier* in each human life. And the unconscious is an unlikely witness by definition: “neither hereditary, nor cerebral, nor automatic, nor neural, nor cognitive, nor metaphysical, nor meta-psychical, nor symbolic” (Roudinesco, 1999, 70). Thus countersigned by the unconscious, the word is inscribed in its prehistory by an unending dream that attests to the passive vitality of the primary processes that enduringly secure us, by which the edifice of reality is only ever a stor(e)y.

Conclusion ~ Chapter Six: Trace & Publication

Abstract: In this chapter, I elaborate the transference of the autobiographical in the theoretical in Dolto's history of *writing*, including her correspondence. I find the element of suggestion and wild homonymic plays in invested words from her family and early landscape, as the unconscious après-coup originating thought. I witness dream-work spilling over from her history to her clinic, as I explore biography as co-dreaming. I return three vital tools for my thinking—archaic echoes, narrative revolt and trace—as I explore the legacy of oral passivity to theorizing literacy. I conclude with reflections on my project, and some offers to pedagogy informed by ‘the transference in texts.’

This interweaving, this textile, is the *text* produced only in the transformation of another text. Nothing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere ever simply present or absent. There are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces
(Jacques Derrida, 1972/1987, 26; italics his).

“Sir, I am the little Françoise Marette who wants a doll car, a «tir au père fouettard»[game], and a «cantinière» [inn-keeper] costume. I think of you” (AI, 96). Such is the letter of our young analyst to Santa in 1910, scribed by an unknown other. By 1913, she herself pens what Mlle annotates as her «1^e copie»: “The little Françoise asks the good Noël to bring her a doll car [still?], a small letter box and a doll cradle. She promises to always be «sage» [obedient] (AI, 98 & VC1, 20-21). By 1916, with Pierre dead, she writes to Santa unassisted, asking for no toys but only for «sagesse», for the war to end, to please DanMé, and to be nicer to Jacqueline (VC1, 84-85). Accompanying a “magic potion” for «sagesse,» a «tableau» [board] and stamps, Suzanne composes a reply from Santa warning that if she is not tidy, the «tableau» will disappear into the night (VC1, 85). The board evokes Deauville and the Maison Verte, though Dolto is mute on this connection, as she cautions simply that a Santa who threatens to retake gifts is «pervers» (PJE, 71), and advises caregivers to give

only what is asked for, to demonstrate listening (PJE, 74). And in this precious correspondence resides not just a history of desire and suffering, but a rare narrative of an education in writing—from being scribed, to copying, to authoring—that takes us to what is arguably the most beautiful and compelling material in Dolto’s corpus: the enigmas of trace and witness that inform a «non-dit» theory of the work of writing in the passive access to presentification. For Dolto allows us to theorize writing as a means of arrival for invested phonemes; and by the work of the enduring passive pulses, the transference facilitates (as in the archaic) an insertion in language in the absence of a sufficient capacity for projection.

Flash forward to 1962, and the Minister of Posts, Jacques Marette, asks his sister to compose a letter from Santa to be received by 5000 children in its inaugural year:

My beloved child, your nice letter gave me much happiness. I’m sending you my portrait. You see, the mail carrier found me, he’s very crafty. I received many orders. I don’t know if I’ll be able to bring you what you’ve asked me for. I’ll try, but I’m old and sometimes I make mistakes. Forgive me. «Sois sage» [be good], work hard, I’m sending you a big kiss. Le Père Noël (Le Point, 2012 & 2014; Notre Famille, 2015; VC2, 360).

By 2012, following two minor revisions (1965-1980: VC2, 712; 1981-present: VC2, 713), as a free service of the Ministry of National Solidarity, Dolto’s message will be delivered to 1.7 million children in over 120 countries (Chérier, 2008, 34; Wikipédia, 2014i), recalling the «*Semaine de Suzette*» she credits for her own psychological survival. Dolto’s “Santa letters” are a paradoxical writing in the name of the father by what many called a «*mère rêvée*» [dream mother] (AI, 236 & 237f; Provence, 1995)—they are contradiction symbolized. And in Dolto’s esteem of Santa as a “supportive myth” (VC2, 563; PJE, 74), her theory, at first as fine as snowflakes, begins to arrive. For Santa holds archaic value that secures reparation:

being without parents, and accepting that the child cannot conform, thus being an adult “outside of actual time” on which to “discharge guilt” (PJE, 72-73). Further, Christmas trees are timeless, retaining their needles—symbols of «enfance éternelle» (PJE, 78-79). Dolto adds that we can all play Santa for each other, offering «irruption du gratuit» (PJE, 59 & 61): the delivery of joy as surprise. And silently, passivity, and its ardent waiting, returns.

Script-girl

Psychobiography is a repeatable technique, and among the primary sources it engages—material issuing from the primary processes—is human correspondence. For unselfconsciously, we find the writer inscribing his unconscious history, unintentionally telling a counter-narrative in the transference. Dolto’s letters to her mother, for example, are largely confessional, addressing minutia of daily life, seldom conveying real emotion. Suzanne actually begs her daughter not to write so much (MF, 52; VC1, 316)—while the daughter, likewise, asks her mother not to write so much (MF, 88 & 96). Dolto also overwrites to continue a message, ostensibly to save paper (VC1, 50; also noted by Malandrin & Schauder, 2009, 353)—but symbolically, as if to cross it out. It is a performance of *contra*-diction we re-find in 1915, when she writes to her father on the back of letters to her mother (VC1, 36 & 38); in 1934, when her writing is so microscopic as to be unreadable (noted by Djéribi-Valentin, AI, 138); and in 1938, when a 25-page letter to her father about her suffering—written within days of Freud’s passing through Paris (Freud Museum London, 1992, 37; Gay, 1988, 629)—was perhaps never sent (PF, 91-115; VC1, 560-574). Contradiction also returns us to 1913-14, when she wrote «Vava» (or drew cats and flowers) on her legs—but never her real name (EN, 24); and to 1925, when the girl banned only from Zola—transporter of the muted street, Vineuse—took notes at Lycée

Molière in a distinct «alexandrin» style (e.g., AI, 117)—the name of Zola’s wife, who spent her own life looking for a lost child and died that very year (Wikipédia, 2015i). Is biography, thus history, formed by such enigmatic passages of what is *in yet exceeds* language—through rogue, unconscious correspondences just beneath the horizon of coincidence?

The information gained by this kind of reading—one open to unconscious plays and conveyances—is an unintended message that, ironically, the letter’s recipient may not have heard at all while years later we, who are not addressed, may hear in the après-coup of anachronistic associations we bring to the corpus, following our own libidinal histories. Slowly, we become aware *in reading* that something quite accidental but highly significant—elusive yet surprisingly tangible—has somehow happened *in writing*. Suzanne’s careful record of the family correspondence will be invaluable indeed as verifiable testimony of her daughter’s childhood history (AI, 17; EN, 60 & 118). But the act of writing against and behind the correspondence also alerts us to a presence transiting the text—one that struggles for articulation and succeeds, ironically *in yet despite* the text. More deeply attuned, we thus begin to hear the extraordinary unconscious resonances in Dolto’s written exchanges not only with her trusted friend, Alain Cuny,²² but also with Mme Chapdelot (also noted by Grellet & Kruse, 2004, 218 & 283)—an old family friend who “heard my hopelessness,” as Dolto puts it (ATP, 209; VC1, 562). Unassumingly, Chapdelot writes of continuity with the archaic (VC1, 453 & 456); the need to leave things to arrive (VC1, 416); the mystery of refinding (VC2, 342); and our unconscious differences with those we seem identified with (VC1, 542). The reader hears the homonym on her name [cat of the water] and her fairy-tale nickname, «Milou» [half wolf] (MF, 143; VC1, 381, 416 &

454), as Chapdelot's mail indeed offers a huge "field of nuance," as she herself calls it (VC2, 94), where Dolto's theory-as-life seems grounded. Even Dolto's love of owls, and her need of eyes (a reader) to witness her writing (Note 22; also owl art, ATP, 215 & 1979c), returns us, in 1930, to Milou's «hiboux amoindris» [diminished owls/sight] (VC1, 378). Dolto herself believes letter-writing is "critical for humans" (DQ, 115) as an "expression at a distance with those whom one loves" (VC2, 681). Small shifts evoke Freud's Hans, the first analysis by correspondence (1909a); Bernadette, whose letters to her absent mother in 1947 (scripted by her father) reduced her anxiety (JD, 136); Dolto's radio subscribers, who improved simply by writing; and her casual observation that "treatment continues in letters" (SP3, 236). And in this blur of time, sender, addressee, word, silence and dream-work that is the transference, we reinvest in a comment that at first, she herself could not read her letters, but others could (AI, 95 & 98), as we start to follow the slow articulation of «le rôle de script-girl» which "seems lowly but is, après coup, of great critical interest" (CD, 6).

Quartier Muet

We slip through time again to Dolto's first house, where she hid coins and small objects to forget them on purpose, for the sheer pleasure of refinding them, or as a surprise for others—what she calls «jouer à qui perd gagne» [playing 'who loses wins'] (AI, 17; EN, 115-117). Deep within a wild field of nuances, this game offers thoughts as play: the value of the lost consciousness of objects—and the accidental passing of objects in the social. By this game, we also refind the nanny with the lost name who is, aptly, the «non-dit» rooting Dolto's inimitable inroads into infancy. And on «rue Vineuse»—a near homonym of «révineuse» [dreamer]—Dolto comments: "The street was without importance in our «quartier» [neighbourhood], yet it awoke in me an interesting climate, without my knowing

why” (Ribowski, 2004; also Destombes, 1989, 292). “Was it a «grand chagrin» of love?” the interviewer asks. «Absolument,» she replies—and looks sad still (Nobécourt, 2008a). Yet while admitting the role of a street in her own life, she unselfconsciously theorizes 50 years earlier about a six-year-old boy made «muet» due to “passing along streets rendered taboo by phobias” (APP, 38). It is as if Dolto’s theory is engaged in a timeless correspondence with her history, receiving wild messages that find their way into her writing. Thus we encounter, near her death, this stunning clinical reflection where time and subject are entirely porous:

We discover the root of the illness in a first story that took place, for example, at the departure without explanation of the young girl that took care of him until then. No one enlightened the child on the strangeness of the lived sensation. Suddenly, he found himself without the reference that gave him what he knew himself to be...Sometimes it’s not the mother they lost, it’s a person that took care of them completely. They even thought their mother was a maternal substitute, a second wife of their father (EV, 16 & 52).

Here again are unconscious resonances palpable to the familiar reader, of a silenced story that insists on a telling, disregarding the apparent subject. In fact, «rue Vineuse» dates to 1693 (SHAP, n.d.; Wikipédia, 2013a & 2014r), in Quartier Muet [aptly, ‘mute quarter’], which actually begins at 1 rue Benjamin Franklin, marked by his statue. Dolto’s second house, at 2 Colonel Bonnet, bore a plaque attesting that it had served as Franklin’s home, where “thunder had been” she says (AI, 62; ATP, 45). Thus the house itself is an address for odd correspondence around Franklin, a postmaster keen on saving time (Schiff, 2005, 367 & 413-414, 367; Wikipedia, 2015f). And time is soft indeed in the game of ‘who loses wins’:

I remember very well the place where I discovered the ignorance of adults.... It was next to the passerelle that crosses «le Chemin de fer de Ceinture,» at the end of rue du Ranelagh.... Each time...I hoped a train would pass underneath...to hear this big sound that passed and that frightened a bit but not too much. ...I always said to myself, coming back down, she [my governess] will have to tell me what happens after death.... The smoke was perfect because we could not see, only hear (EN 10-12; also ATP, 70-71).

The passerelle was “before reading,” she adds, among “ancient perceptions that return when reality is obscured” (EN, 17). And as a further return in a field without boundaries, Ireland’s Ranelagh Road is next to its own Ranelagh Gardens (Wikipedia, 2015e). Did the lost nanny speak about Britain? And when she was dismissed, did she not leave Passy by that very train, boarding at the «Gare de la Muette»? In this dream-work also arrives Dolto’s paternal grandfather, *Henri Marette*, who died a hero saving five women from a train fire, making her father, *Henry Marette*, an orphan—as the homonymic play loses to speaking what can only be re-found in writing, the /y/ and /i/ (AI, 240; ATP, 230-232). So when Dolto says, in a late clinical text, that a «passerelle» [under tracks] is a place of strange acoustics (EF, 26-27), advising children, “if you want to play there, you can” (Ibid)—or that the bridge between beings is made by language (TL, 167)—she is actually evoking the archaic echoes of a distant past, and the wild transit of audition through the mediation of words by which unconscious associations are awakened unpredictably. We further learn that “the passerelle made her feel called” (EN, 17; also, ATP, 70-71; EN, 10-12). And if we let ourselves drift almost to the point of sleep, letting go all of our bearings, we will hear Dominique, in 1963, telling Dolto about a good man who died saving another from a fire (CD, 158-159); it is the same session wherein he speaks of a man with a lung entirely eaten by microbes—the

symptom that almost kills Dolto as an infant, and decades later does. Thus, it seems there is new understanding securable through the transference simply through haphazard incidences in the social, as words move between us in a fluid, rogue network of correspondences. Through the transference, we come across enigmatic echoes—familiar, yet somehow *othered*—of our idiosyncratic archaic auditory pre-histories, an offer of what is neither consciously intended nor sought. In effect, then, we all play ‘who loses wins,’ continually, unconsciously, as our means of securitizing, as we slowly give up the dream for reality. It is the game at the origin of thought. Thus, any thought is necessarily the *après-coup* of a forgotten dream of love and safety engaged in a correspondence of its own, in a wildly associative translation from latent to manifest, across a challenging gap of space-time.

Rue Saint-Jacques

Walking distance from the plaque about Franklin is another on rue Kleiber about the Frères Murette, for Henri and his sibling were architects for Queen Isabella II (AI, 240), and designers of «Place des États-Unis» (ATP, 230). In 1929, the place name would ironically draw the son, Henry, to New York, to convince the Americans to join WWII (EN, 56; PF, 22; VC1, 26). Dolto remembers believing the US was celebratory because her father brought back «Ô Solé Mio,» which he sang daily (EN, 56). “I dreamed of it [the US],” Dolto volunteers (EN, 57)—and we will follow this dream soon. For now, we muse only on the coincidence of the American «Maison Blanche» and the one near her home—and how her father purchased there a stainless knife that cut badly and could not be sharpened (EN, 55), so goods were not «coupable» [cuttable; also, ‘guilty’], enigmatically evoking *symbolic* castrations. It is intriguing play, but we must let go because the material calls *otherwise* through the other (maternal) side, her great-grandfather, Auguste Demmler. This officer of

the Wurtemberg Court, who fought in 1870 with the French (AI, 243; ATP, 87), left odd correspondence addressed to himself, in a game of names, encouraging his descendants to seek their ancestors as «points de *repères*» (AI, 236). Yet again, theories familiar by now seem invested by archaic terms—continuous and tethered along enigmatic word plays.

Some distance from Kleiber, in the «5^e,» we come upon rue Saint-Jacques, where Dolto lived from 1942 to her death. Walking there, we will pass, in the «15^e,» a plaque commemorating the late senator, Jacques Marette, our other postmaster, and that other family recipient of the Military Cross (Wikipédia, 2015h & 2014m). Dolto helps raise Jacques when Suzanne rejects her replacement child for Jacqueline for being a boy. She recounts being part of a tag team with Mlle for his care (EN, 113; MF, 38), and how with Jacques, whom she loved dearly, she discovered the intelligence of a child, as she read to answer his questions about statues and tried to understand his suffering (EN, 109-111). There is strange name play here, too, as Dolto, Jacques' godmother, 'fiancé' of deceased Pierre, walked baby Jacques with her older brother, Pierre—like a family of revenants—and how Jacques himself married a Jacqueline (VC1,427f). An astute researcher notes that the “consequences of the death of Jacqueline are multiple and durables...re the «signifiant Jacques»” (De Sauvernac, 1993, 67). In this repetition, and the human history written on land—streets, plaques and statues—we find not only a relation of the transference to place, but a circulation of stories in that other human displacement, walking. We recall here the arrival of the transference, for Freud, at the Acropolis (1936; E. Freud et al, 1978, 184)—and his passion for “My Italian Moses...that love child,” the statue he contemplated for weeks [1912, 412f; also, E. Freud, 1961, 412; Freud, 1914a). For in these inscriptions of

words upon geography, and in our random reading as we move about, we meet a question we cannot ignore: are we addressed by the address?

Over the years, Dolto travels a long way to another plaque in the mountains of Alsace, at «Sphinx de la Tête des Faux» (VC1, 60f; see e.g., *Lieux Insolites*, 2010)²³—a name with its own Oedipal echoes across slippery time—where Pierre was mortally wounded in 1916 (AI, 76-77, 79 & 207-211; VC1, 391). In 1928, she paints the scene and writes to six-year-old Jacques, back home, about Pierre’s death (VC1, 205 & 209), calling it the trip that opened her eyes (VC1, 210; also AI, 208). Ahead to 1941, in a waking dream, Dolto sees a “young man of pain” who says she “must go further” (AI, 155)—while our «chasseur alpin» leads to rich plays of his own: «chasse heure» [chase hour]; «chat soeur» [sister cat]; and inverting, «lapin» [rabbit]. Then without any personal reference, in 1980, she gives this clinical advice: “Why...do you make a mountain thinking of the past? You need to go further” (EM, 237). Poignantly, Dolto asks, “This lived trajectory that, in my solitude, I apprehend as my history, am I its object or its subject?” (PS, 61). Her question, recalling the fusional dream-work of our archaic origins, is also the query posed of any biographic project, as the transference becomes an odd correspondence between the texts one reads and writes, and one experiences a kind of suggestion in the suggested readings. Thus, much like Didier, age 10, we too “learn to read with Mme Dolto” (D’Ortoli & Amran, 1990, 53). But it is a different kind of reading that reading Dolto teaches: one open to the transference—a fluid passage that escapes the constraints of direction, subject and time to convey what transits but exceeds the text—hearable precisely because it is *other* yet strangely recognizable. Thus the game of ‘who loses wins’ is a trope for the uncanny, that “return of what is familiar but repressed” (Freud, 1919b, 241 & 247) embedding an

indescribable sense of place, “homesickness” (Ibid, 245). Here, the game yields an unexpected gain: that the key function of the repression ‘barrier’ is ensuring the *disremembering* of the archaic, a becoming unconscious, so echoes feel as if they arrive from elsewhere, like our dreams on sound first did. Coming to reality, it seems, contradictorily requires tethers from the latent to the manifest to be unbroken yet forgotten. And the powerful theorization Dolto enables oddly presages Hanna Segal’s symbolic equations (1957/1981, 53), in another confluence of autobiography and history²⁴:

I had a very traumatic childhood. I think that if I had turned out to be schizophrenic, people would have said, ‘No wonder, with that childhood’.... The loss of the breast was combined with the loss of the person.... Some of my bloody governesses were French.... What kind of girl would go to Poland to be a nanny? (Segal in Quinodoz, 2008, 1-6).

Thus we learn with Dolto that the passive operation of the transference depends on the necessary surprise of refinding archaically invested phonemes—unconscious echoes across an enigmatic gap, recalling our originary dreams of discourse *in utero*, that call-and-response with an indissociable other, the «père pré-symbolique», our first semblable, who first secures the enduring experience of a witness. Our earliest phantasies upon sound inform archaic terrains that help us be lured along associative paths—scaffolding that lets us translate our dreams into thoughts. And any real other with whom we exchange words—even in texts—returns to us a letter whose transport he was not aware of effecting. For the transference paradoxically retains an absolute unchartability by which we will locate it—a *trace*, as our other Jacques of rue Saint-Jacques called it, “the subsistent presence of a «reste»” [remainder, everything else, ‘Stay.’] (Derrida, 1986c, 62).

Secrétan

Dolto's language reaches its arc in the "unconscious image of the body" (UIB), what many consider to be her "most important theoretical work" (Canu, 2009, 144), and for which she is widely known (Wikipedia, 2015a). Like art, the *image* is but a «*médiation pour les dires*» [sayings] (IIC, 16), a "game of words" (Grignon, 1997, 19): /i/ for *identité*; /ma/ for *maman*; and /ge/ for *je* [I] (Dolto & Nasio, 1987, 13). But unlike its simple name, the UIB, "mediatized by language" (Esterle, 2011, 16; also Paquis, 2008, 6), is "almost unintelligible in a theoretical register" (De Sauvernac, 1993, 245), thus best engaged *passively*: "We understand nothing at all and then, we let ourselves go «dans le libre» and end up receiving it in a quite curious manner" (Petit in Grignon, 1997, 31). While taken up by some Lacanians (e.g., Guillerault), the UIB marks a "real divergence with Lacan" (Yannick, 1999b, 398; also Gerrardyn & Wallegem, 2005, 299; Wikipédia, 2015d), being "the articulation of a subject who is neither temporal nor spatial...a subject of desire in terms of not only a witness, but an actor in his own history by the intermediary of the body" (IIC, 370). I submit that the UIB actually offers a boldly original narration of primary narcissism with reference to the passive pulses that continually inform an unconscious self-as-otherness woven from phonemes:

This «*pregnance des phonèmes les plus archaïques*»...shows that the unconscious image of the body is the structural trace of the emotional history of a human being. It is the unconscious «*lieu*» (and present where?) from where is elaborated all the expression of the subject: «*lieu*» of emission and of reception of interhuman languaged affects (IIC, 48).

At a «colloque» in 1958 (Archives Françoise Dolto, 2001c; see JD, 60-95), Dolto first suggests the UIB as the «médiateur de présentifications» (ironically) outside space and time (JD, 72-73). This tension of presence and absence alerts us to 1957: Mlle died; Dolto went to Egypt (*Babouches?*) and Vienna (AI, 97; VC1, 23; VC2, 262-263, 267 & 508); and she wrote key papers on art (APP) and regression (SS). And in 1958, Catherine (b. 1946) turned 12, her own age when Jacqueline died. At another «colloque» (1985), Dolto states that, “what someone lived at a certain age will play on his child of the same gender at the same age” (1985/1989b, 123). Thus does the UIB carry the traces of its re-sourcing in the archaic.

In fact, the death of loved ones severs a key source of invested phonemes. Dolto notes mutes lack semiotic elements for their alimentation (VC2, 701), and sudden weaning (lost sources of affect) causes mutism (IIC, 215), as *does suffering* (PF, 47;SS, 216). In other words, one’s own (fear of) near-death is a regressing ‘event.’ The mutism entailed offers a passive defense (CE, 21), metamorphosis to passivity (JD, 144), as we *continue with another* to exist (SP2, 149; SS, 24-25) in a «rêve d’exister» (IIC, 222)—a subtle link beyond space and time (PS, 53), refuge in “our mute sayings in the silences that scan them” (PS, 92-93):

[Re symbolization] It follows that pre-language verbal phonemes have something of the paranormal...at once a perennial thing and language confounded with the relation child-mother or child-father: materialized language, phantom of unspeakable words, unconsciously conjugated with a sensory having-ness that seems to answer from a being-ness in a passive state that would passively conduct to the subject-being (IIC, 64).

Barely translatable, Dolto’s genius speaks at the nebulous edge of understandability,²⁵ as writing laboriously relays archaic material—offering, like art, “demutization by graphic expression” (AI,217; also APP,38). Valuing art, Dolto saw 2-25 children daily, millions of

drawings (Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978), and her legacy to art in analysis endures (e.g., François, 1999b). Yet she always sought *the auditory in the visual*: «ce qui est dit en dessin» [what is said in drawing] (D&R, 37; also Dolto & Nasio, 1987, 14; SP1, 26; SP2, 207). She herself joined art classes and contests as a child (AI, 119-121; EN, 79; PF, 26; VC1, 192 & 238), producing self-portraits when she didn't know «quoi prendre» [what to take (up)] (AI, 101; ATP, 213), and 50 of her lovely pieces are in her corpus. We learn the nanny, too, was «artiste» (EN, 65). But the making of art itself is never what matters; rather, “what is needed is a witness” (VC2, 467; APP, 38), a “putting into resonance of affect by a witnessing” (AI, 192; APP, 27), as true art is private (APP, 30 & 38). Thus graphic expression calls for a witness who looks only to hear. Does it call for a reader, then?

Feeling our way to the archaic along symbolic filiations, we locate DanMé's father, Pierre-Eugène Secrétan [‘sacred time’], a socialist-leaning industrialist whose telegraph address was «Tansecré» [‘sacred time’] (AI, 238). His factory (near Deauville) made the Statue of Liberty, so at his death in 1899, NYC gave Paris the replica now beneath the «Pont de Grenelle» and DanMé donated the copper casts to the Louvre; and when Jacques died, his widow gave the artist's model to Paris City Hall (AI,245-248). Secrétan's letterhead was «Toujours tout droit» [always straight ahead] (AI, 238), and his art collection included the «Angelus,» which was sold in 1889 to a US buyer when copper markets sank; it returned to the Louvre in 1909, oddly enough the year Dolto almost died (AI, 248; also, Note 10 & 20). A worker wrote a grand funeral hymn for him to «La Marseillaise,» for Secrétan had saved his company with the French patent for electrolysis: «le procès Elmore» [‘she dies’] (AI,246; Western & Co., 1892; Wikipédia, 2014h). Dominique curiously utters «Elmoru» five times in 1963 (CD, 109-100 & 156), as Dolto muses unselfconsciously: *Is it a country?*

The problem of the mother? (CD, 156). Dominique insists it is a «rivière invisible» and «secret» (CD, 109). We also learn the “sense of the sacred” is inherent (CE, 299), so a child “can identify with another who keeps secrets” (SP1, 88; SP2, 91), as a field of nuances paradoxically invokes repression, that secret history in which every child invests. Further, children should be told about family deaths, which provoke regression (JD, 226 & 252-53; 1976,81), for the notion of death is what gives life meaning (CE, 202-204; LF, 233; SS, 124; VO, 49 & 102). Thus, cemeteries offer peace (PS, 100), even maternal security (SP2, 232). And finding one in Passy (Landru, 2008), just one block from Vineuse, it occurs to me only now that the nanny (who stole the «rivière de diamants») was likely said to have died. Then, in a handful of pages shifting quickly between death, Assisi, Santa and the «gratuit,» Dolto states the «sacré» [‘the unconscious creates’] exists “by the sheer fact we can pronounce it” (PJE, 66). Digressions thus mark the experience of reading Dolto, like visiting the Louvre—while correspondence from Secrétan moves straight ahead in her texts. Yet her astounding examples of the transference open a wide theoretical inroad: that in open circulation, where reversibility and multidirectionality inhere, any strict notion of *counter*transference is moot.

Blue

In March 1911, Maeterlinck’s grand fairy tale, «L’Oiseau bleu» debuted in Paris (ATP, 259; Albert-Buisson, 1965, 264). Its ‘blue bird’ could not but affect a two-year old who had just been a ‘blue angel,’ and the tale itself is full of phonemic play: Myltyl (a girl), her brother Tyltyl, Mother Tyl, Father Tyl, Tylô the dog and Tylette the cat. In her 20s, in Deauville, Dolto read Maeterlinck’s (1919), «*Les sentiers [trails] dans la montagne*» (VC1, 176); while in her 70s, she describes Grandfather Demmler being like the one in «L’Oiseau Bleu» (ATP, 69). Riding the «train bleu» (to the *Méditerranéan*) (EN, 26)—a play on «mes

dits»[my sayings], Midi, even Mititi—we meet a stunning ‘phantasy-as-fact’: Dolto insists on having «origines amérindiennes» in a «rêverie généalogique» of which she is “intimately convinced” (Potin in AI, 238-243). True, DanMé’s mother, Cécile Secrétan, did go to America to marry an *Overmay*, Irish-born (EN, 57), a name akin to another ancestor, *Duvernoy* [both homonyms for ‘of green born’] (AI, 236; VC2, 1014-1017; Provence, 1995, 30-38). Dolto reports telling her dentist (in the early 60s), “Look, I have a hematoma!”—and the reply, “You have an Amerindian stain in your mouth...a blue stain” (AI, 239; ATP, 247; EN, 25 & 57). In 1963, Dominique (speaking of «Elmoru» and a train) describes a man sickened by a «piqûre au bleu» [blue needle/*sting*] («Club des *Piqués*»?), as she annotates: *Is it a souvenir of a «hématome»...Or of the «maladie bleu» of the little dead cousin when Dominique was eight?* (CD, 156). Thus the transference teaches that words, as inheritors of invested phonemes, inhabit an uncanny gap between the literal and symbolic across which our indelible dream histories, ostensibly ‘forgotten,’ inevitably find their way into thought.

Like the UIB, the transference in texts is encountered passively: not by thinking, but by *floating attention while reading*. As Halmos counsels, Dolto’s is an “oeuvre in need of «passeurs»” (2000, 35): “How do you read her? Without method and haphazardly” (2008). So doing, *thoughts seem given*, arriving in the «résonance émotionnelle» that is the “operational fact of the transference” (SS, 79). Thus, language effects a continuous “transference of things past, archaic things” (LF, 304; also SP1, 31) “through the words proffered by him and the emotion «éprouvée» by me” (Dolto & Nasio, 1987, 63), as “originary events reappear in the «après-coup d’un dire transférentiel»” (Dolto & Nasio, 1987, 66; 1985c, 197). “Each time I speak with people, there is always a transference, and the other does half the road,” Dolto notes (in Destombes, 1989, 296); and as if anticipating

our work, “I transmit clinical documents concerning the transference, that of patients and my own...with hidden meaning I myself have not seen” (AI, 217; also VC2, 796-797). Thus, by signposts barely audible at first, personal shibboleth, correspondence arrives on unexpected roads. For example, Dolto’s note that Yvette Guilbert sang for Pierre’s 21st (in 1924; ATP, 212) gains my attention as Freud befriends Guilbert from 1929 (Douville, 2009, 179; Freud Museum London, 1992; Wikipedia, 2015g). Following the trail by reading Guilbert²⁶—a «dame rousse» in «satin vert» featured at the «Chat Noir»—I find her song about a «nurse anglaise» (1927, 59, 75 & 221). Thus the ‘party’ offers a counter-narrative of deep losses: nanny, Jacqueline and Pierre. And Freud’s own interest in DaVinci’s vulture returns his anxiety dream (1863-64), of he and his mother “carried...by two (or three) persons with birds’ beaks” (1900b, 583); its quanta increases when Emmy von M. (1888) dreams of a monster with a vulture’s beak (Breuer & Freud, 1893a, 62). For the transference in texts releases potent affects as we suddenly see only because we *hear* again—and «déjà-vu» seem born of «déjà-entendre.»

Linotte

We can follow trails of archaic material in texts simply because passivity is a mode of operation in its own right, one evoking Derrida’s “interpretation of the Freudian unconscious in terms of trace” (Roudinesco, 1986, 395). For as dream-work prescribes an itinerary of transference, writing serves the “duty of testimony” (VO, 193) as “the act of leaving a trace” (SP1, 46; also PS, 101). I recall Freud’s ardent desire for a plaque marking the secret of dreams (1896/1954e, 322; 1900a, 121). And Dolto, too, is keen to publish (AI, 218; VC2, 796-797), even self-publishing the book that “started psychoanalysis in France” (Roudinesco in Coronel & De Mezamat, 1997a). She observes: “Some are capable of going

back in relation to their time, as a result of their history or a belated understanding of their history” (DW, 140); and “by the mediation of psychoanalysts who expose their work, successful or not...patients...come to the help of future analysands and practicing analysts” (AI, 217; VC2, 796-797). In fact, a child is written from the first, “inscribed in the civic record” (IIC, 94; SP3, 147), like little Jacques. Dolto’s childhood art was often printed in *L’Écho de Paris* (EN, 73; VC1, 110-111); even with Boris, “I was first a person who had written an interesting book” (D&R, 22). Yet ironically, an unfinished autobiography (1979-80; in AI) set against a flurry of prefaces (1965, 1967, 1977b, 1979b, 1979c, 1985d, 1985e & 1989c)—and a stunning biography of Dolto for children (Farkas and Ratier, 2011) crafted only from line drawings and sparse text—deliver her most vital message: the «non-dit» always exceeds the said. Thus the human constructed in symbolic relations necessarily harbours an otherness he can never contain: “This other, that is myself, I love him too,” says Dolto (VC2, 14). Further, as an indelible countersignature, the transference testifies to authorship—just as Freud said of *St. Anne with Two Others*: “After...some time, it suddenly dawns on us that only Leonardo could have painted it...the picture contains the synthesis of the history of his childhood (1910b, 112). Indeed, Dolto’s testimony offers rare “proof that we are dealing with the impressions from childhood” (Freud, 1900a, 189), and Dolto’s corpus confirms the radical truth of her theories: *the infant has a vibrant unconscious life*. But we readjust our hearing a little now to listen to her raw dream material, «4 rêves sur Laforgue,» written on the back of a wedding invitation in 1934, and cross-matched with her diary:

Diary entry, 27 February: Phone Milou. Lunch at Pierre’s with Philippe and Marc.
Good [italics hers]. *Dreams 27-28 February*: *One*, a young woman predicts that all

marked with a symbol is “good,” and her tea service is so marked. After a man takes her, she escapes into *Two*, a salon full of dancing people, including a thin, nebulous female [Dolto sketches her in a long dress and cape]. Four people stop laughing as Philippe arrives, angry, with an older man who “wants to be a doctor.” The doctor has ugly, sinking eyelids but shows that her own eyes are not properly opened—her ‘dead eyes.’ “So I am ashamed and say, ‘This man is strong who has guessed my life from this «mois»[month/me].’ But I laugh to hide from him that I am «piquée au vif»[deeply]. The doctor tells Philippe, “She laughs, but we have understood each other...we will go progressively.” *Three*: “Father at Deauville...me at L[aforgue’s]. Father and Mother.” *Four*: “A narrow boat leaves for England.” (AI, 140-143)

Here are remnants of the day in use by the dream, as the lost nanny and analyst are brought together in phantasy on the (real) occasion of a wedding, at the hotel where love and suffering continue to reside—and there is a curious marking in English at orality (the tea set), as-if literalizing a trace. Dolto’s rush to write it on a pre-used, discarded surface (rather than in her journal) symbolizes what is, and is not, inscribed in biography. Daydreaming, we find 28 July 1988, when Dolto says she was «mort pour de rire» [dead for a joke], i.e., in a coma (D’Ortoli & Amran, 1990, 253). Waking after three days, she hurriedly writes to a colleague, for while dreaming, “the thought of you and of your request, refused by me, came back...I authorize you to use my name Françoise Dolto to «parrainer» your social realizations” (VC2, XXIX; VC2, 899 & 899f). So it was that Philippe Béague, a Flemish educator and analyst (e.g., 2009, 2010), became the conduit by which the right to Dolto’s sponsorship passed to HRH Queen Mathilde of Belgium, who currently endorses a parallel «Association Françoise Dolto» (1989). In turn, this question of the name, Dolto, as the «nom-dit» passed between these two nations is a most uncanny actualization of a statue on

«avenue Montaigne» honouring the «Guerre de 14-18,» with two women as France and Belgium, holding hands, harbouring children between them (Wikipédia, n.d.).

Dolto's corpus conveys palpably the unbreakable tether of text to dream, and the radical unforeseenness of the transference. Thus, she takes care to scribe in the clinic almost word-for-word (CD, 6 & 218; IIC, 303): “When you heal, which I hope, we will understand the road you followed” (D&R, 18)—“It was a method I applied, that is all” (Ibid). For “it is that, to be a psychoanalyst, to note the most possible” (AI, 8). Thus, she is with Dominique, “the one who writes what you say” (CD, 110), not unlike Sammy telling McDougall (1969, 1), “Write what I dictate.” In fact, writing helps not only the patient: “What I received...it was not at that moment that I made the connection. I made the connection writing my thesis” (EN, 119). And a rich homonymic return takes us to 1938 and Jeanne, 13, derided as a «linotte» [linnet; i.e., *dodo*]. “It[‘s]...a little bird,” Dolto explains, “[But] a «linotte» [‘read note’] is very nice and knows enough to make its nest, cover its eggs and take care of its young” (MA, 251). Thus, by scribing the “representative signs of phonemes” (IIC, 75), we too “arrive at thoughts that surprise [us]” (Freud, 1901a, 672). Further, the “writing...by which the intensity of self-observation may be increased varies considerably according to the subject-matter” (Freud, 1900a, 103). Young-Bruehl, for example, experienced the transference while writing on Arendt (1982) and A. Freud (1988), and she believes “biographers sometimes have a crucial dream in which their subject appears” (1998b, 3), as the “biographer relates in the medium of fantasy to the subject’s fantasy (Ibid); her approach—as “a celebration of the subjectivity of biographers” (Ibid, 44)—richly endorses the notion that something important is learnable from the transference in texts.²⁷ And as “it is a common event for a dream to give evidence of knowledge...the waking subject is

unaware of possessing”(Freud, 1900a, 14), I offer two from my research trip to Paris in 2014:

15-16 July: Dolto, about three years old, appears to me and says, sadly [and bilingually]: “I ask every day, «mais où est le collier» [but where is the necklace?], and no one ever says, ‘that’s right, that’s a big problem.’” *17-18 July:* I awaken in the night with a jolt, and I hear loudly, slowly, in an odd voice as-if from inside my bones: “It was crucial for patients to have their own words read back to them, this script-girl function, making biographies.”

And from this transference of dream-work between subject and object—enigma textured with confirmation—I can begin to end this psychobiography of Dolto in four final notes.

Archaic echoes

By reading, Dolto states, “two beings communicate” (in Severin, 1978, 164), through a “mediator [who] permits us...to have...by his words some thoughts that are its inheritors” (PM, 56). Again, she presages our project, as we seek by her texts to inherit her thoughts, and mingling our words with hers, we write what Derrida calls, an “interlacing of «voix» [voice(s); homonym: ‘lane’] and «envois» [dispatches; homonym, ‘in voice’] in writing” (1982, 76)—his fine play lost, like much of Dolto’s, in translation. And as unconscious resonances in writing suddenly become hearable through our availability while reading—attention to the barely audible—archaic echoes return, like *après-coup*, to “disrupt, disturb, entangle forever the reassuring distinction between...past and future” (Derrida, 1995a, 80). On (in) the gap across which they return, we re-find a ‘simple’ comment, easily overlooked: “I accord much importance to the thought of neutral «lieux»” [sites; homonym: ‘read them’; ‘link (to) them’] (QS, 64). For in a small note on safe spaces, unconscious play offers text as

materia (space) for *the othering of the archaic and its return*, as our other Jacques continues to interpret: “Spacing as writing is the becoming-absent and becoming-unconscious of the subject” (Derrida, 1967b, 100). Dolto remarks how “a fruitful encounter is produced only when both give and neither takes the given he received from the other” (VC2, 370), in a “giving to the other what one never possessed” (PS, 92)—i.e., the *non-ownership of the transference* inscribed by reversibility—as “they give of themselves in a presence that is ignored, rich with this life that inhabits them...that «ruisselle» [trickles] from themselves” (PS, 61). And as thought is passively displaced, without intention, in the transference, psychical energy is released in the après-coup of words—ergo, phonemes retain the potential energy of a displacement. After all, Dolto says, the unconscious is designed to show effects much later (QS, 58). Iterativity and anachronism are inherent in unconscious inscription.

And in this liquid space of Dolto’s texts, wherein the archaic interrupts, insists and enriches, we meet Jean Rostand, a famous biologist fascinated by life *in utero* (e.g., 1953; VC2, 186; Wikipédia, 2015f). ‘Eight days’ after her dissertation, Rostand wrote her that it was his most interesting reading since Freud (D&R, 16; SF, 38; VC, 18 & 37). During regular visits, he prodded her, *What did you see?* “It made me work,” she says (D&R, 22); and Sundays, she attended his salons for “biologists, writers, theatre people” (Ibid). Rostand helped publish the 2nd edition (1939/1965, 6), wrote an homage to Laforgue (1964), and named his only son François. Oddly enough, in 1939, she proposes a delayed, “larval” Oedipus Complex (MA, 93) as potential energy in the unconscious. But things neither end nor begin here. For Bonaparte’s secretary, Anne Berman (an analyst and translator of Freud), wrote her dissertation on «La famille des borraginacées (BNF, 2015): *forget-me-nots*. Oddly near is Gauthier, 85 in 1995(!), formerly a mycologist (Bessey, 1950, 178;

Gallica, 1937)—as the larvae, fungi and plants arriving out of nowhere also return Freud’s dream, the “Botanical Monograph” (1900a, 169 & 191). Born of the après-coup of archaic transferences, do we simply seek witnessing in archaic life? In fact, continuity with the archaic is the aim of passive pulses, as Dolto elaborates throughout her project. Thus we need the echo of an address, a «repère», to console our slow (never complete) passage to reality: “To perceive...is to perceive the self-other that makes the unity of the subject” (Dolto & Hamad, 1984/1995, 68), to “refind familiar affect” (in Malandrin & Schauder, 2009, 215):

On the «voie de l’hypothèse de regression» of the affect of the subject...an archaic image of the body without doubt resurges on the occasion of a trial of his history to which the subject cannot renounce without «du même coup» [at once] losing the notion of «sa continuité, sa sécurité d’exister.» So he can neither accept himself, nor accept to communicate with others, in the conditions of his actual reality that do not permit him to recognize ‘the other’ sufficiently «semblable» to himself to be in security with him (SS, 24).

By the transference, encounters “produce resonances in the unconscious of one and the other” (SP3, 14), offers of «secours indispensable» to his «reconnaissance» (VC2, 219; also SF, 209). Thus, the phoneme is vital: “the word is an «objet transitionnel» the child acquires to never be separated from it” (Dolto & Nasio, 1987, 24). For it is through the phoneme that we transfer our attention to words, porting libidinal investments, as «la parole» “demands to be awakened” (SP3, 129); conversely, the subject experiencing discontinuity in reality, “exhaust[s] himself from not having any «rencontre faisant écho» [echoing encounter]...to give him coherence”(Ibid). As Dolto puts it plainly: “Nothing is to repair, nor replace. It is to effect a relay all along” (in Malandrin & Schauder, 2009, 252).

Perception thus disassembles a melancholy born of our debt to an enigmatic archaic witness, an incalculable culpability, whereby the human condition is marked by ontological suffering. And so, the remainder of life is a narrativisation of the way we can live in, and with, forgetting: the impossibility of pardon *and* its necessity. Our gift of survival is something we must understand without and beneath words, for it is a profound challenge to our conscious comprehension—*unthinkable*.

Narrative revolt

Not only does the transference guarantee a narrative revolt, but it predicts that what arrives must surprise by a mismatch between intention and conveyance. Here we take as examples Lacan's terms, such as «parlêtre» (1979; e.g. LF, 277); and «lituraterre» (1975; e.g., Soler, 2008), etc. His “game of calculated disorthography,” as Soler (2008) calls it—or, what Roudinesco calls “a game of words, calculated lapsus, or mockeries” (2011, 75)—*is* a deep provocation to thought. But it is not *unconscious* play. Who knows how inevitable unconscious relations with Dolto may have affected famous French writers of her time, like Lacan, her colleague—or former patients, like the playwright, Jacques Audiberti (VC2, 123, 129, 139 & 139f; Wikipédia, 2015e), and the novelist, George Perec (Wikipédia, 2014j). But the transference changes how we listen. Thus the Dolto reader cannot help but pause on learning that Lacan's reportedly contentious «L'expérience de la Passe» (1978; Wikipedia, 2015c), with its «passeurs» and «passants,» was read at Deauville, where war had already been declared—and Secrétan, the beloved Irish nanny and *Babouches* all passed into history.

Dolto's texts overturn traditional theory, as asides hold significance, what arrives passively is the most valuable, and there is an “enormous animation of silence” (TL, 154). Dolto teaches us to listen to the “investment behind words” (DW, 22)—the “force that filters

through words” (SP1, 136). Further, as Dolto elaborates a backward narrative, *regression to autism*, she reveals *autism as regression*. And since the transference does exit us from infantile regression, Dolto is optimistic about recovery from autism: “all that is living is still living in language” (TL, 77) as, poignantly, the observant child “refinds roads and retains names” (SP2, 68). In fact, Dolto finds so many inroads in theory that a new continent is discovered: the archaic. If this is not genius, what is? Canu sums it up perfectly: Dolto “went forward in a region she called “the archaic” (2009, 161). Thus Dolto underwrites the story of birth with a living source in the unconscious and a securitization of reality that permits our survival by «voies d’accès» of language via the transference traversing words, *mediating objects transporting and ensuring continuity with fetal audition in echo*—memorials of witnessing in a past that is ever-present. And while biographers rarely consider their subject’s first two years, Dolto’s corpus shows convincingly that adult achievements are undeniably linked to infancy (also noted by Grignon, 1997, 25). Thus, what Dolto proposes contradicts the human narrative by giving a «place de sujet à l’enfant» (Halmos, 2000, 33-35), as a complex being engaged in a vibrant archaic history: “one who has already unconsciously thought about his life without living it is very powerful...this is case with babies...theirs is a «souffrance du livre» [book; also, being delivered/born] (Ribowski, 2004). Dolto evokes here not only what life writes upon us, but narrativization itself as the work of infancy, of all “until the confirmed conquest of mobility, that is, all that precedes «l’oédipe» and that is inscribed in the unconscious, that the body assumes in lieu of being able to become conscious of it” (VC2, 640). In turn, it is the loss of “the right to know what he knows” that “prevents the development of mental life” (CE, 265)—losing the right to one’s story. And while Dolto’s brilliance stuns, she always defers to patients: “Theory without examples serves nothing,

whereas an example without theory can still serve” (SP3, 8)—asking, “Is there any other pedagogy but that of the example?” (VC2, 540). With Dolto, then, we observe theory as the site of accidental autobiography—and conversely, how archaic histories of love and suffering construct theory in *après-coup*. And of this *transference of the autobiographical in the theoretical* in Dolto, as Freud made clear (with himself as example, nowhere more than in his dream book), “the fact a theory is psychologically determined does not...invalidate its truth” (1913/1953, 179). In a burst after her coma (1988), as *otherness* nears, I believe Dolto offers the key to her entire project: «L’acceillant» [welcome] is in availability and «non-savoir» [*not* knowing;underline hers] (VC2, XXIX; VC2, 899). Her obituary, three weeks later, honours her “simplicity and warmth,” and her “oeuvre of listening” (Ina.fr., 1988). And listening to Dolto, we find just what Freud predicts: “wish fulfilment is in the chain of intelligible waking mental acts” (1900a, 122), as “the secondary elaboration of dream-content is identified with the work of waking thought” (1900b, 499). We also observe what Freud said of himself: “There runs through my thoughts a continuous current of personal reference” (1901b, 24). Thus Dolto teaches us to ask a new question of any theory: what is autobiographical about it?

Trace

Thinking with Dolto, we can narrate the trace as a valuable «repère» to repair continuity—a relay to the father’s library (a «*récupération*»?) we might say, circulation on a phantasy of a common interest in the word. The recovery of continuity through the transference in texts is possible simply because reversibility and inseparability inhere in the archaic, so the animated silence of reading effects, unconsciously, *I hear/I am heard*. Thus the trace offers proof of life, confirmation of/by the «père pré-symbolique.» Without that

(«ça»), we wait continually, exhausted, Dolto says—whereas “the desire to die is greatly reduced if someone hears” (SP3, 10). The trace delivers a letter of love in après-coup, “communication beyond space-time” (PS, 33), whose “message can cover many centuries before meeting an other” (TL, 78). And (while talking of tadpoles) Dolto notes a “putting into resonance of his affectivity, by a similitude of being, of the affect or thought evoked in him by this witnessing of the author” (AI, 192). From 1939, Dolto finds “traces of the complex of castration” (MA, 9), for we “keep a trace of the first «lien perdu» [lost link; homonym: ‘father owed’] (SS, 113; also DV, 51)—i.e., our ontological debt. Thus, in “speech and hearing [a] trace of archaic security remains” (SS, 26), compellingly implicating literacy:

Hic et nunc...communication can also be deposited in traces on paper...as differed and diffracted portions in effects parallel to verbal language, or substituted for it, that need to be ‘heard.’ Psychoanalysis aims for the study and the deciphering of this unconscious language «sous-jacent» consciously communicated language *hic et nunc* (CD, 195-196; italics hers).

Literally suspended between *here and now*, Dolto exposes a fine tension where not only do traces mark writing, but traces mark the subject. She elaborates: “His [the infant’s] most subtle functioning is marked by/of writing, we could say, like a network of lines of force, of traces, left by inter-relational language” (SF, 207). And as the archaic is moot for space-time, texts “keep bearing fruit...even if you are long dead” (TL, 76). Thus, Dolto listens for:

Hidden truth transmitted by the «fil» [thread] of associations in spoken language... unconscious meaning...truthful foundation of this ‘subject,’ for which conscious discourse... is the carrier of his irreducible authenticity...Concomittant phantasms...«transparaissent» [transpire; appear in transit] *in silences, in jumps of*

theme, in lapsus, in brief, in «les failles»[failings, ruptures] of conscious discourse. It is these phantasms that «décèlent» [detect, reveal] the actual dynamic, unconscious, of desire (CD, 196-197; italics mine).

Simply put, “writing leaves traces” (SP3, 236)—while *homonyms* are portentously mute in Dolto’s list. Klein herself suggests “strokes, dots, etc. of the present script...are the result of condensation [and] displacement” (1923/1998, 66f)—dream-work—while Freud discusses an “unconscious psychical trace” (1896d, 154), and how “phantasy carries traces of its origin” (1908a, 149). As Dolto explains, the «tissu langagier» (SO, 531) of a text is a “witness to suffering or joy...as proofs of the [author’s] affect...making us feel a «semblable constitution emotionnelle»” (SF, 209). Thus there follows both a duty to leave testimony and the inevitability of doing so—in a return of Pierre the reader cannot miss:

The very fact of writing is for leaving a witnessing. The one who has written or has created, to witness his passage, does so for others. These are witnessings that we gather like blades of grass, everywhere! For example, someone goes to the high mountains, to repair a shelter demolished by a storm...It’s «ça», the human being! His behaviour is always with rapport to an «oeuvre commune» that, even if it is not in the same moment, is an oeuvre in time. Alpinists will return the next season, they will find sugar, oil, because the conquest of the mountain is an «oeuvre commune»...an oeuvre in time (VO, 193-194).

The revolt the unconscious promises is inevitable because reality causes “contradiction [that] leaves traces in the libidinal economy” (IIC, 325), as “the archaic affect of the fetal epoch leaves its living traces in narcissistic organo-emotional representative associations” (LF, 90). Thus we “each have a «rapport narcissisé (traversé de narcissisme)» to sensory elements in resonance with vocabulary words” (IIC, 44), and concomittant “hearing

available to all significant traces” (CD, 193f). Fittingly, then, just after «*Tout est langage*» (1987), Dolto states, “Now I feel I have finished writing” (VC2, 858).²⁸ And querying with Dolto just *how* ‘all is language,’ we come upon the *libidinal story of ideas* in powerful evidence that since “the unconscious is a fact of the human species” (VO, 34), the word is a testament to discursive forces from somewhere entirely other. Language is neither fully real nor fully rational—outside the traditional jurisdiction of teaching and learning. And via the trace, the surprisingly nuanced «rôle de script-girl» (imbibed with humble service, and counter-signed in the nanny’s tongue) indeed acquires staggering value in après-coup, as a recollection of our young analyst pre-1913 returns with the cadence of theory. For she notes that when she first wrote, another could read what she herself could not. Related, Dolto’s pivotal observation is that scribing a patient’s words (spoken in the presence of a witness), then *rereading these notes to him* at a later date, secures the transference *for him*, thus enabling his presentification. Reciprocally, annotating a patient’s words, and privately *rereading these notes to herself* at a later date, secures the transference *for her*, thus enabling her intervention. Can we say, then, that rereading analytic notes can secure the trace for the writer and reader? We also recall that the defining quality of the archaic transference situation (original *bio-graphy*, writing-by-two) is its utter *fluidity*: a timeless, spaceless, reversible, indissociable, unconscious subject-witness—(reader-writer?)—when phonemes of common interest in dream-work become mediating objects that lure to reality. But don’t archaic echoes naturally occur (ergo, arrive) in one’s own texts? So doesn’t *rereading* biographical fragments offer *archaic-systonic play*: an anachronous, randomized, passive encounter with invested phonemes? Can archaic continuity be restored through the transference in texts securable by the sufficient othering of one’s words (to surprise): by

time (forgetting, non-chronology); space (publishing, re-arranging); or an other (inscribing, translating)? Thus, our script-girl enlists trace in a startling provocation of pedagogy: can key literacy practices be curative? So Dolto fuels our curiosity even as we depart, as we realize the finest correspondence retrievable from the archaic is not knowledge per se, but *the desire to know* heralding the «*désir de vivre*.» In turn, we come to understand Dolto's genius, and the transference, through word plays—most notably, homonymic transfers—that arrive in such quanta in her texts as to defy coincidence, and that become readable in our anachronological approach: our treating her writing like notes, condensing dispersed material around indexical phonemes that repeat haphazardly in the après-coup of her archaic history. So we secure meaning by translation, as we enter into a kind of co-writing, a chain of custody, with her. Then again, is this not how narcissism, as *biography*, always starts?

A passive education

Dolto once told her daughter, “a good mother is one you can leave” (AI, 12). Thus I end my psychobiographic study of Françoise Dolto, whose evidence, at least as convincing as DaVinci's, enables us to “find meaning in the forgotten word...[so] stray thoughts can be linked to a forgotten history and narrated anew” (Britzman, 2011, 47). With Dolto, we uncover the infant's crucial testimony that “we creatures of impression are affected by what is not known, so learn before we can understand” (Ibid). Montaigne is right: our principal government *is* in the hands of «nourrices» [wetnurses, infant carers] (1580/1958a, 114). For childhood experiences have a determining influence for the whole of later life (Freud, 1901b, 46; 1905c, 239; 1909b, 36), the earliest legating the most (Freud, 1896a, 214). *Dolto affirms that as infants [infans], we are fully alive unconsciously: hearing, being written upon by life—even writing a little story of our own in dreams where we are never alone. From*

here, “past, present and future are strung together... on the thread of the wish that runs through them” (Freud, 1908a, 148; also 1900b, 621; 1900a, 184). And by putting psychoanalysis at the service of biography (Freud, 1930, 212) as I hope I have, we “obtain information that could not be arrived at by other means” (Ibid). Learning in the transference with Dolto and the children who teach us so much—Bernadette, Dominique, and many others—is a *passive education* proffering decisive evidence that phonemes hold a potential for displacement, as “oral libido continues lifelong... slowly integrating other modes” (SS, 269). While the animated silence of the archaic—the “origin of language as protective isolation” (CD, 192)—makes deeply ironic the mother tongue, in the bittersweet game of reality that calls for our learning to speak *and* to self-mute:

[From, “In the game of desire, the dice are loaded and the cards are rigged”:] In this phenomenon of the cry, incompatible with attention...is inscribed an endogenic necessity to repress for (to obtain) a certain pleasure. The pre-subject himself represses a pulsion of passive expression...to focus his energy on an active pulsion, the cry (JD, 284).

Thus, keeping silent in same stream by which we speak, we are all like Dolto’s favourite statue, «La Marseillaise de Rude,» “mute and wailing” (EN, 37).With Dolto, “psychoanalysis has taught us that desire can manifest by *active pulses*, but also by *passive pulses*” (ES, 14). But despite all we learn, the unknowable inhabits Dolto’s corpus. Dubois (1994) notes the “strange strangeness of meeting her,” and the English reader new to Dolto may well experience that strangeness. Yet *the problem with Dolto is precisely what makes her so important: her opening onto the archaic*. And it is by archaic means that she conveys the infant’s ‘reality’: a non-time, non-space of inseparability, reversibility and passivity

where we only hear ‘*with, as-if, through*’ an ‘*other.*’ Dolto reveals an intimate correspondence whereby presentification via a mediating object makes preconscious the transference therein, and we survive just because we never leave the source of life, our oral passive origins, wherein we are receptive, in receipt of a bequest and a debt without whose reconnaissance life has no sense. So narrating the archaic, we too encounter the big question of our little analyst, as the dilemma of existence is posed not only in, but of, childhood: we spend our lives in service of a gift that can’t be understood, or repaid, or forgotten, or remembered.

Françoise Dolto’s breathtaking oeuvre delivers unprecedented proof of the archaic origin of language, the precocity of the emotional world, the pre-symbolic witnessing underwriting survival, and the living legacy of the unconscious to human achievement. And what the present work attempts, in trying to gather some of the après-coup of Dolto’s texts into a given space and time, I again leave to Montaigne to explain: “I do not portray the being, I portray passing” (1580/1958b, 18). For the vital fact we learn, with her, is that the ‘time of the dream’ is actually never over. Thus, it isn’t that we can’t live without the transference, but simply that we do not.

Conclusion

Arriving at the point of departure, and reflecting on my work as a whole, Derrida’s question frames my thoughts: “What, then, are the chances of the readability of such a discourse against its unreadability?” (1998, 72). For a survey reveals the oddity of a vast textual terrain imbued with homonymic word plays and echoes in wild transits, and the absolute illogic of the transference in texts. Seeking perspective, I refind Dolto’s advice: “Let us begin again from Freud’s discovery that libido is linked to the principle of pleasure”

(Dolto-Marette, 1947, 795; JD, 122). Beginning anew with Freud, “libido is an expression taken from the theory of emotions” (1921, 90); and by elaborating thought as the derivative of dream-work, Dolto’s corpus reveals that the intellectual world is beholden to the emotional world. Also back to Freud, “the high valuation of the word seems to contain the meaning that perceptions can become conscious only by being given a name” (1907/1962, 150); and by manifesting the lifelong resonance of archaic echoes, Dolto shows how the phoneme is vital to presentification. I offer that even the word for an infant—«nourisson» [«nouris son», ‘fed sound’]—seems like a «jeu de forces», as he makes of words his alimentation, ‘digesting’ phonemes in his archaic emotional world. What of early ‘reading’ then—stories heard while ‘falling’ asleep? Is there any practical difference if words come from life or a book? And with the young child’s nascent (impartial) investment in consciousness, are words regularly delivered (correspondence, subscriptions) as-if punctual milk sustaining early survival—reliable provision somewhere between reality and phantasy? And if a word is a feeding, what is literature? Of the dream-work of words, then, I believe it is as Freud once put it, “we have acquired no new fact, but only a more comprehensive view” (1914c, 151). Of course, Freud is widely recognized for contributing to literary studies (e.g., Ciabattari, 2014). Yet psychoanalysis is oddly absent where we might expect it, as in the «théorie de la réception» by Jauss (1967), with “horizons of waiting,” and catharsis by identification contingent on prior reading (Leblanc, 2005; Marzloff, n.d.; Starobinski, 1978). After all, “wishful activation will produce the same thing as a perception” (Freud, 1895, 319); and with Dolto, we understand identification inherits from fusion—that passive co-living circulating affect, the archaic transference situation. As we develop, we just migrate our investments (by substitutions, as new editions)—like finding bigger shells. For

example, as a young man, Freud signed ‘Cipión’ writing to Silberstein (‘Berganza’) for 10 years, identifying with the psychological “Dialogue of the Dogs” (1613) by Cervantes (Boehlich, 1990; Riley, 1994). And Lucy Maud Montgomery’s journals detail her changing identifications over a lifetime of reading (Woster, 2015).

Enigmatically, Freud once said, “reading is a terrible infliction imposed upon all who write” (1896/1954c, 270). Drive theory predicts, in fact, that we will resist abandoning a libidinal position. Yet it is also true that, “the universal and indispensable attribute of all instincts...[is] their capacity for initiating movement (1909a, 140-141)—in other words, there is a “need of the unconscious for liberation” (1907/1962, 102). This tension between inertia and circulation marks psychological life as an economic response to environmental impingements, ergo the necessity to vent affect. This need is so essential to survival that a mechanism ensures it lifelong, passively, unconsciously. We recall that dreams follow old facilitations (1895, 340)—and we add now that in an affective state, facilitation prevails (Ibid, 357). For economic reasons, then, we port investments using well-worn pathways proliferating since our prehistory; thus, we are naturally lured by unconscious identifications continuous with those facilitations. Is this not Dolto’s symbolic filiation? Eventually, migrations of investment move us towards reality: “conscious systems of thought...are merely projections...translations... from the unknown, unconscious” (Freud, 1907/1962, 150). So we now formulate a new theory of reading wherein the transference in texts serves identification. For “identification is the original form of emotional tie with the object...[that] may arise with any new perception of a common quality shared...the more important this common quality is, the more successful may this partial identification become” (Freud, 1921, 107-108). And, I offer, this is why the phoneme’s archaic investments are so crucial:

they open site-means of ‘partial identification’ in continuity (filiation, facilitation). Freud cites a patient: “‘If anyone speaks, it gets light.’ Thus what he was afraid of was not the dark, but the absence of someone he loved; and he could feel sure of being soothed as soon as he had evidence of that person’s presence” (1905c, 224f). Recalling that wishful activation produces the same result as a perception, echoes of invested phonemes serve unconscious identifications to relieve that most primal anxiety: ‘no one comes.’ Further, in fusion, an indissociable «semblable» [like-me] is securitizing; so we also tease out the origins of projection as a means, in phantasy, of making another ‘like-me.’ As it is governed by the principle of pleasure, the primitive ‘learning’ of projection seems to stall if there is precocious severing—i.e., as suffering and the loss of the ‘like-me’ enabling progression; the sequelae provokes regression (even fixation) to a prior, more passive libidinal position. Yet as wishful activation is securable along facilitations, the phoneme retains the capacity to return affect (archaic love). In sum, the transference in texts enables a kind of ersatz projection. Further, given that diffusion and diffraction open associative pathways for the transference, I believe we can infer something about the viability of identifications. For pathways most likely to be replete with archaic echoes prevail in the corpus of a beloved author (following his facilitations); in a beloved story retold in versions through history (filiations on names); ergo, also, in our own disremembered scripts. Of course, the closer to one’s actual reality, the shorter the road to sublimations. It is an understatement that reading influences structuration.

The unconscious affect securable by the transference is only a later edition of the archaic transference situation—the dreams of our primary narcissistic state—thus, it returns a phantasy of provision. And any ‘other’ invested by the mother is a site-means for

investment along resonant associations: echoes. Such is the construction of the ‘father’ and access to language: it is indeed the ‘father’s library’ where, browsing passively, we find landmarks as precocious symbolization leaves us susceptible to unconscious authoring. Here, I offer a late arrival as I reread my notes: «page»—homonym, «pas je» [not I]. In fact, any page of mine is, yet is not, ‘me.’ This is the special relation of writing to dream-work: it disseminates libidinal investments, providing a context facilitating retrieval and elucidation: psychological self-sustenance. Writing transports invested phonemes as an unconscious act, so we inevitably leave (weave) a trace in our texts: there is always transference of the autobiographical. Yet we cannot manipulate or describe it ourselves—I can say nothing about the trace in my work. Only another can, for writing calls for a witness, and there is always an otherness to my writing that eludes and exceeds ‘me.’ Thus the transference in texts surprises us with what is living in us that we cannot know: it is a silent witnessing of the unconscious via unintentional writing, and unintentional reading. Our texts must simply be forgotten, dealigned or translated (transformed) to be unrecognizable to immediate perception. So Dolto’s ‘script-girl’ presents a new theory of writing as ‘inter-scripting’—co-writing on the same ‘page’ across a gap of time-space. It is biography as interruption: “The most authentic drawings are drawn on a surface already valorized by «du vécu» [some lived] (1956, 31). Dolto thus reveals writing to be a sponsor of dream-work that uses remains of the day (reading) to make offers to the present, stratifying life on the already lived—while offering the most intimate identification (closest to the ‘knot’ [not?] of symbolic filiation) with ‘that’ [«ca»] inscribing upon us in a cadence of dreaming: the first witness, the ‘other’ of primitive life, the ‘writing before the phoneme.’ Akin to a pen by the bed, it induces the transference by paradoxical availability and non-intention—ardent waiting, oral passivity.

Like writing out dreams, inter-scripting makes dream-work preconscious on a terrain for exchange—‘passage for discharge’ (Freud, 1895)—as the transference is called upon, investing words as objects for thought. So the ‘write to think’ returns the ‘right to think.’ And it is radically curative because witnessing archaic echoes makes reality feel safe: by the transference, “our cures are cures of love” (Freud, 1907/1962, 101); and “if the child finds the ‘love’ in himself, he does not need the love of parents and teachers” (Ibid, 35). Thus, we are all subject to dreaming on words. And with only hours left in three years of work, as I muse on being «civilisé» (from primitivity), I suddenly hear its homonym: «si vie lisez» [if life read]. What of that thought is new to me? What has been with me forever? I have no idea.

Dolto’s project compels us to grasp that the word not only escapes the formal story but precedes it, entering into its own free associations. Reality is only ever a later edition of time-space where forgotten objects arrive unpredictably, in an uncanny circularity wherein object relations are always shored up by unconscious affects in continuity with the archaic. There is also an inevitability of the return of lost objects to which we remain resonant lifelong, as the articulation of subjectivity ‘with, as-if, through’ others in the social. Such is the bequest of oral passivity to language—our humanization through symbolic filiation. There is no absolute exit of objects from the field either, in an enigmatic retention of dream-work as potential energy, as-if signed by the pulses of conservation. Thus, education inherits a peculiar complication, in that every moment of learning is incalculable, and it requires randomness, interruption, silence and revolts of ongoing narratives. Further, the social seems strikingly collapsible—a dilemma of meaning-making from unnarratable psychological activities that introduce hazards and gains we never register consciously, yet that impact our possibilities for living ‘economically,’ venting rather than suffering. For learning bypasses

and subverts conscious programs, while unconscious resonances make our accidents into meaning, and vice-versa. Dolto challenges our views of the pedagogical relation by a provocative narration continually sourced in the unconscious. And thus, arriving from elsewhere—affecting the futurity of meaning—a word can change a life. Here, Oedipus makes a last return upon his riddle—symbolic of the unsaid and unspeakable of human history—as the question of origins becomes a problem of translation between the neighbouring lands we all traverse: reality and phantasy. Through the transference in texts in Dolto’s corpus, I believe we reinvest literacy as vital psychical work, with staggering implications for education, linguistics and biography. Indeed, a thousand questions awaken in the après-coup of Dolto, but a deceptively simple one has me by the throat: ‘Are not libraries the most vital human institution safeguarding liberty?’ Thus, my hope for the reader of this psychobiographic study of Dolto is only as Levinas once wished—elsewhere, out of (apparent) context—that it be “not just that one learns words from it, but in it one lives ‘the true life which is absent’”(1982, 21). ▣

Notes

Chapter One: Introduction ~ Witness & Filiation

1. Like Dolto, I believe a biographer should share her autobiography, as learning requires trust: “We are but human and we hold onto one another but by our word” (Montaigne, 1580/1958a, 33). Exploring bilingualism in my traumatic infancy (Saint-Onge, 2013), I found the most difficult excavations concerned my early reading: fairy tales, *National Geographic* (covers), Beatrix Potter, Dr. Seuss and Alice (in Wonderland). Dolto’s desire to be doctor of education overlaps my own, as do some thoughts: e.g., “Am I the subject or the object of this weird art that is my body, my life?” (Ibid, 209, but written in 2010, before meeting Dolto); and, “This lived trajectory that, in my solitude, I apprehend as my history, am I its object or its subject?” (PS, 61). Dolto, as a research topic, was kindly suggested to me by Deborah Britzman, when I had almost lost my ability to think and write. Ironically, I had been warned by a well-meaning mentor that psychoanalysis would take me away from language. In fact, it moved my sociocultural inquiry, as both a language teacher and linguist, “Why did I leave my mother tongue?” to the question underpinning (undermining?) linguistics: “What is a word?”

2. Lacan and Dolto are captured in an iconic photograph in 1963 that implies a parallel view (photo: VC2, 389). Yet I believe writers err when they consider them a theoretical couple (e.g., direct or implied reference in Hivernel, 2013; Golder, 2002a; Guillerault, 2003 & 2005; Roudinesco, 1986, 274, 519 & 649; etc.)—however prestigious. In fact, their views are far apart, and Dolto is unafraid to resist Lacan: «Je dis que lorsque Lacan croit que l’enfant...se réjouit de voir l’image de lui-même dans le miroir, et que cela le structure dans son unité, il se trompe. Cette expérience est une surprise toujours à effet d’étrangeté, parfois phobisante, morcelante» [I say that when Lacan thinks that the child...is pleased to see his own image in the mirror, and that this structures his unitariness, he is wrong. This experience is a surprise, always with the effect of an estrangement, sometimes inducing phobia, splitting] (SS, 225; VC2, 751). Their relation is best understood through

three interviews within two years of Dolto's death (LF, 281-307; DW, 1986; D&R), and their correspondence. Dolto states often that she did not understand what Lacan said (e.g., DW, 65-67 & 70; LF, 281 & 282). She says he and Lagache often talked rudely through conferences (DW, 68), and she thought his short sessions caused suffering (DW, 81; LF, 282), but she believed he used his seminars well to make up for them (DW, 81). In fact, Dolto attended Lacan's seminars for years, finding "one or two pearls," she declares (DW, 69; LF, 290)—though she likens the remainder, tongue-in-cheek, to "a musical climate, perhaps in *la minor*" (DW, 69). She describes him as a "wounded maternal type" who sought disciples "like a wet nurse wants babies" (LF, 276), until no student could think for himself (LF, 286 & 299), as he tolerated no dissension (LF, 276-277 & 307). Yet she appreciates Lacan's efforts to dissolve linguistic rules, since before him, no one gave enough value "to words and their meaning for the child's unconscious prior to reading and writing" (LF, 276). Dolto credits Lacan's capacity for «un registre d'abstraction» (LF, 276 & 287), and for generating interest in psychoanalysis (LF, 295). But she bemoans that he did not sufficiently appreciate silence or resistance, causing him to «conscientisait» [make everything about consciousness], so that even his followers falsely believe that to speak of psychoanalysis is to speak of the intellect (LF, 282-284). Dolto and Lacan had arguments, mostly about publications and the EFP (LF, 302-304; VC2, 224-225 & 667-672; Wikipédia, 2014g). They used the informal pronoun, «tu» (not without interest, a homonym of 'kill'), because this was the code of the SPP (Wikipédia, 2014s), but they were never friends, she will say in retrospect (ATP, 148; D&R, 23; LF, 301). And Dolto opposed his efforts to close the EFP, when he issued a mock public notice on behalf of «*l'objet a*» announcing the «décès de l'inconscient» [death of the unconscious] (see notice: VC2, 667). Yet their correspondence is otherwise supportive and includes frequent thanks for her gifts (VC2, 422; 462; 554; 602; etc.). And he apparently even sent her a few of his difficult cases (Coronel & De Mezamat, 1997a). Summatively, Dolto draws Lacan as a paradoxical image: he had value in elucidating suffering, but not for his patients (LF, 296); he did not understand the precocious stages, but at least he was without derision (DW, 81); he was ambitious, but not opposed to the ambition of others (VC2, 229); he experienced the wild transference of his students (CE, 342), yet suffered in solitude (LF, 277); if you stayed

yourself, he respected you (LF, 301)—but threw a chair when she would not take his side against Aulagnier (LF, 303); he was both a vibrant “cultural event” (DW, 69), a “dandy” (1962/1999, 32), and a “tragic artist-cleric” (LF, 297). Further, Dolto intuits (but cannot confirm) he lost his mother very young (LF, 286), believing, «Je suis désolée qu’on ait pas l’histoire de la vie de Lacan. Je trouve que là, il a manqué son devoir de psychanalyste» [I regret that we do not have a life history of Lacan. I find that in this, he failed in his duty as psychoanalyst] (ATP, 15). However, she trusted Lacan’s students as good listeners of children (ATP, 149; DW, 79; D&R, 25; Roudinesco, 1986, 353) who appreciated «les plans archaïques» (LF, 283), and she believed only his analysands could understand “what was anterior to Oedipus” (D&R, 1986/1988, 25). Thus she addresses Lacanians directly—but around the phoneme, not the mirror: “I think those among you who understand Lacan’s formulations on the Name-of-the-Father will find in it what I have said about the archaic prior to phonemization and writing” (SP2, 132). And it seems far more sensitive to their complex relation to consider the pair widely known as «petit et grand dragon» (Ibid, 277) as, instead, what Catherine Dolto calls them, «compagnons de route» (Pernicone & Dolto, 2002). Thus, we allow for the possibility that some Lacanians may well locate a «non-dit» debt to Françoise Dolto, who for decades was indeed «l’interlocutrice de Jacques Lacan» (DeSauvernac, 1993, 67). And in playing as thinking—rather than trying to engage Dolto through Lacan, as history has sometimes been prone to do—perhaps we might consider doing precisely the reverse. We begin with his name, homonymically, «là? quand?» [there? when?]. In fact, Lacan and Lagache were sometimes called «l’Aga Khan» (LF, 293), both homonym and fusion, and Lacan enjoyed punning on his own name, as in his reference to speaking «à la cantonade» [from the side] (Lacan, 1964/1977, 208f). We further observe an odd movement in his «petit a,» effectively a phonemic inversion of «apetit» [appetite]—its single “p” over the modern “pp” being a signature spelling of archaic French (Greimas, 1969, 35), when the word meant, “that which gives desire” (Ibid). Here are Dolto’s key notions—the archaic, fusion, the phoneme, oral passivity and desire—all in the transference on his own “Name-of-the-father,” through the unconscious conveyance of a reversal at the thin interface of reality, where place («là») and time («quand») elude. Thinking with Dolto, then, we can follow his libidinal history through his archaic phonemes, dream-work and the

transference in texts, to arrive at his theoretical notions of the mirror and the «Nom-du-père»—and we also source the origin of his «petit a.» Thus I offer that we may find in Lacan another suitable example of the *trace* in psychobiography.

To be honest, I have to admit that I appreciate Lacan more now than before I met Dolto. Their letters (their last years excepted) are warm and friendly, and I find it endearing that a man destined to be a humble mustard seller (Roudinesco, 2011, 22-24) instead became the “adventurer of his century” (Ibid,23). Lacan largely elaborated his thought between 1953 and 1963 (Ibid, 77)—a time through which Dolto was “Lacan’s greatest friend” (Ibid, 97). Like Dolto, Lacan shared a “veritable vocation for public medicine” (Ibid, 21), practising at Saint-Anne’s for decades—an auspicious name indeed, in the context of DaVinci where my study begins. But we return to his idea of the «Nom-du-père», first uttered in 1953 and «fixée» in 1956 (Ibid, 48). As I understand it from Roudinesco (Ibid, 48-49), the father intervenes as a «privateur» of the mother, and through this, the child acquires a separate identity through the primacy of language; in 1957, Lacan also speaks out on castration, the interdiction against incest, and the dialectic of desire (2011, 80). How can we not hear Dolto in his work? Even he often told Dolto, “You don’t need to understand what I am telling, because without theorizing, you say the same thing as me” (Ibid, 97). I submit that it is only a strong affection for Dolto that can explain Lacan’s words, for there are actually substantial differences between them, none more evident than in his belief that algorithms can explicate the transference (or vice-versa?): “the transference—I hope to approach it next time—will introduce us directly to the algorithms that I thought necessary to set out in practice” (Lacan, 1964/1977, 19), part of his larger belief that “the unconscious is structured like a language” (Ibid, 149). For Dolto’s project in its entirety exemplifies precisely the opposite: *the unconscious defies structure*.

3. Reading Dolto, one gets used to the quirkiness of some remarks. Winnicott shared with Dolto a serious approach to babies, audiences of not only professionals, and a tendency to speak without references, as Winnicott puts it: “I shall not first give a historical survey and show the development of my ideas from the theories of others, because my mind does not work that way” (1945, 137). Dolto’s mind did not work that way either. So we quickly

reach a quagmire of overlapping concepts, none deeper than “continuity.” In 1957, Dolto makes multiple references to «continuité» (SS, 277, 285 & 288) and an «allant-devenant continue» (SS, 267 & 286; also APP, 28 & SS, 291), as «la continuation de l’intégrité biologique» (SS, 260), and to “continuity” as the «sécurité d’exister» (SS, 265). Of course, the expression evokes Winnicott’s “going on becoming” (e.g., 1956/1992b, 303). In 1949, we first find Winnicott’s “continuity” (Ibid, 184, 189 & 191), “going along” (Ibid, 183) or, “going on being” (Ibid, 188)—a concept explored in his string game (1953, 19), and equivalent to his later “continuity of being” (1956, 387; 1960, 591-595). In fact, Dolto’s «allant-devenant» does appear in 1947 (JD, 124, 125 & 130), but it was likely added in a re-edition, when she happily helped herself to his helpful term but—and this is crucial—*not to his idea*. For Dolto had come to the notion of continuity in 1939, on her own, re the «acquisitions nécessaires à la continuation normale du développement psycho-affectif» (MA, 69). And in 1949—at the 16th International Congress in Zurich—while discussing cut flowers in children’s drawings, she describes «la solution de la continuité» (JP, 24). At the risk of straining the argument for her originality, I suggest there is also a subtle difference, whereby we feel with Winnicott the infant’s trajectory *towards* consciousness, whereas what is very palpable in Dolto is the trajectory *from* the unconscious. Something of this nuance of stances also pervades Guillerault’s analysis, as he explains it is as-if Dolto and Winnicott do not ask the same question: he asks, “How does the infant use objects?”—while she asks, “How does the infant arrive at subjectivity?” (2003, 50). Thus, too, the ‘transitional object’ means something different for both of them: in Winnicott, we are talking about an *actual* object, albeit one that inhabits an intermediate zone between reality and phantasy (1971, 1); whereas with Dolto, the *word* is a transitional object (see also Guillerault, 2003, 56). Particularly useful is Farley’s statement that Winnicott puts emphasis on the “visual realm” (2011, 11), as it enables a contrast with Dolto’s strong focus on the auditory realm. Yet what they arrive at by complimentary approaches seems especially significant—and ‘continuity’ is just such a construct.

4. For two weeks in July of 2014, I walked through Paris in Dolto’s footsteps. My best guide was an autobiographical work, *Enfances* (1986)—an interview that feels more

like a journal. In an earlier edition the same year, Dolto muses that the desire for a retrospective had, perhaps, something to do with «la magie des soixante-dix ans» [the magic of 70 years] (1986b, 78-79). It is a mute play offered elliptically, in parenthesis—for this age, 70, is homonymically ‘be without speaking.’ The line appears in a stunning two-page essay, arguably the most beautiful of her corpus, that is, ironically, the only text removed from the second edition (1986c). In fact, this flickering sense of ‘here and gone,’ like little Ernst Freud’s toy (Freud, 1920, 14-15), pervades the study of Dolto. So it was that, alone, without a laptop or reliable cell phone, I became unhooked from Canada as I followed her through eight decades of love, suffering and work. I placed roses on her grave at Bourg-la-Reine, at a family monument that includes her son, Carlos, a popular singer (Wikipédia, 2015e), that is covered with flowers, pebbles, and tiny animal statues. Then, on an evening when the heat soared, as if suspending time, I sat on the patio of «Le Franklin» on rue Vineuse (Wikipédia, 2014r)—an innocuous-looking little hotel where the infant Françoise’s history was forever altered. Only days earlier, I had walked along rue Sigmund Freud, located along the exterior of the massive defensive wall around Paris, the ancient «Enceinte de Thiers» [homonym: ‘pregnant of thirds’]. As ever, metaphors arrived with the force of the repressed, as if Freud offered protection, but from the outside. Yet of all I experienced in Paris, no place touched me more than l’Hôpital Pitié-Salpêtrière. I went three times, each time sensing the ineffable as palpable. Situated on the Seine, the Salpêtrière is designed like a castle commune Freud felt “vividly recalls the General Hospital of Vienna” (1893c, 17; 1886, 6). And though it is in the heart of the city, near one of the busiest train stations in Europe, its grounds are remarkably still, as if holding in reserve faint whispers of 400 years of humans moving between loss and hope. Its use as an arsenal, then as a hospice for the disenfranchised—the homeless, old, mad and women—resonates in its stone walls, the hauntingly sparse «Chapelle Saint-Louis,» and faint vestiges of former gardens (Wikipedia, 2014h) once well-nourished by an ancient river, the Bièvre, whose winding path through Paris is almost forgotten (Vessier, 1999, 24). Wide billboards dot its walks with images of periodic destruction and reconstruction (Ibid), while lab coats scurry between buildings, returning the present.

I believe the Salpêtrière is Paris's most enigmatic treasure, in a city with no shortage of wildly impressive buildings and a historical record that is abundantly archaic. For at the Salpêtrière, one locates the beginnings of psychoanalysis: the radical suggestion that psychical suffering can be healed by talking, and by a certain kind of listening. Ironically, a century later, Pitié-Salpêtrière will still be a place of dreams, enlisting subjects in modern 'scientific research' under the pop label of 'neurology and pathologies of sleep'—where, using the most advanced technological methods imaginable, conclusions will amuse for their paradoxically anecdotal character: for example, that writing out or drawing nightmares, then rereading them, reduces fear (Arnulf, 151 & 207). So on my last day, I made my way there as I thought Freud might have in his days with Charcot in 1885-86 (Freud, 1886; Gay, 1988, 47-51; Wikipédia, 2014o). I found the two homes where Freud lived in Paris thanks to Marie Bonaparte's report on a lesser-known second location on Impasse Royer-Collard, a block up from the first at 10 rue le Goff (Bonaparte, 1938). Both addresses are within earshot of rue Saint-Jacques, the oldest street in Paris, unmoved since at least the first century (Wikipédia, 2014q), where Dolto lived and worked from 1942 on. Dolto's mother even belonged to a metaphysical society for which Charcot was responsible for a time (ATP, 74). A slow path takes the journeyer along a hilly stretch towards the soft green river, past broad trees whose stoic witnessing of each revolution seems recorded indelibly. I believe something happens to a solitary walker in Paris, to the hearer open to its sounds and ellipses. And in another return, in the same cemetery outside of Paris, on a «rue Bièvre,» right where Françoise Dolto lies buried lies Pierre Janet, who inherited responsibility for the «Pitié» from Charcot (Wikipédia, 2014p).

Chapter Two: Family & Transmission

5. We locate in Tustin (1981) a number of other concordances with Dolto: the notion of precocious symbolization, "much earlier than thought possible, even at 30 days old" (Ibid,132); of regression on encounters with reality, in that "trauma before or after birth" provokes "inhibitory recoil" (Ibid,169); in "fusion" (Ibid, 170 & 199); in coming to reality as a "slow alignment with outside-occurring regularities"(Ibid, 21); in associations on

phonemes, wherein “words which sound alike must be connected” (Ibid, 228); and crucially, in how in “infantile transference, transference and counter-transference cannot be clearly delineated” (Ibid, 170). I am no expert on Tustin, and perhaps Tustin would disagree that autism is “proof of the symbolic function in humans,” or that “infantile autism” is a normative primary state. But there is strong agreement in the field that autism is a protective response to separation. Dolto concurs, but she is also clear that coming to reality in itself can be traumatic if there is a loss of unconscious continuity. At stake in Dolto’s narration is that our first separation is a slow movement from a dream-scape—dream-work on nascent perceptions (primarily, sound). We recall that symbolization—by Tustin’s own admission—begins precociously, i.e., when the infant is largely unconscious. Ergo, the fact that the infant is capable of what we might call an ‘autistic response’ to reality is, Dolto argues, precisely because of this precocious capacity for symbolization by which, unconsciously, he is capable of a reconnaissance of his archaic symbolic filiation in reality, his «repères» (as security, enabling progression)—or of the lack thereof (as absence of security, provoking regression). Furthermore, we need to keep in mind that the infant is vulnerable to losses that might not register as ‘trauma’ objectively—for example, being left with wonderful caregivers during a mother’s hospitalization. Thus, for Dolto, regression to fusion is never understood as any kind of deadness, for unconscious life continues vibrantly, and the passively regressed remain alert (thus susceptible) to the transference. In addition, for Dolto, there is always somewhere to *regress to* because there is psychical progression from the first moment of intrauterine life. The infant is autistic in passage, we could say, emerging from a monad to which, suffering, he withdraws to—coming to reality ‘two steps forward and one step back.’ I believe this is captured by Freud’s remark on “sleep as a defense against the external world” (1907/1962, 223). By way of a summary, then, if we are to consider ‘autism as pathology,’ it is rather as Farley writes in the context of Winnicott, that “the baby’s madness only becomes true madness if it appears later in life” (2011, 10). I recognize that Dolto and Tustin do not agree on all points, nor do they need to, for they have both worked diligently, independently, to narrate the one who is, by definition, deprived of the capacity to narrate. However, I cannot but regret that Tustin does not cite Dolto, as Dolto is effectively

silenced in a field where she had been contributing for years prior to Tustin's work, and once more rich grounds for engagement seem to have been lost across the English Channel.

6. In a relatively new genre of literature, autists teach us something critical: securing communication hinges on 'speaking (or writing) through,' and 'listening through' a mediating object for the transference. Dolto's opening onto the oral passive stage, and her «effet poupée-fleur» (JD; JP; also Note 8), enable us to describe a process whereby the subject engages reality *indirectly* (passively), through the mediation of an other with whom he is unconsciously continuous, who offers «non-réactivité émotionnelle» (VC2,799; also Ch. 1) by which he can privately be "living out slowly an out-of-date phase" (MA, 217) that would normatively have been transitted in infancy or early childhood—thus slowly venting affect and "waking." Further, these works reveal the autist's vibrant presence, even as many assume his functional "absence," just as Dolto diagnosed:

The autistic child, for example, that is the child who looks at nothing, hears everything. He only seems to be elsewhere, and it is that which is troubling and that results, finally, in our speaking about them without addressing ourselves to their person... We must never believe that the subject is not in full lucidity, even if the individual... seems besotted, sleepy or even comatose (SP1, 118).

The autist as a writer also shares his critical awareness that his securing speech has, in fact, fundamentally depended on a very particular (type of) mediating object, a «semblable» "from which he can construct an interior unity that allows him to speak in his name, wherever he finds himself, even if it is in a manner that does not satisfy the neighbours" (SP1, 43). Interested readers are referred to Sean Barron, Blaze Ginsberg, Temple Grandin, Alison Hale, Naoki Higashidi, Thomas A. McKean, Dawn Prince-Hughes, Stephanie R. Marks, Kamran Nazeer, Tim Page, Birger Sellin, Daniel Tammet and Donna Williams, for example. Of these, the most recommended is by Pulitzer-prize winning author, Ron Suskind, about his autistic adult son, Owen, who communicates through Disney "sidekicks" (*Life Animated*, Kingswell, 2014). These works all make the compelling point that while autism typically entails an inability to engage language actively, there paradoxically resides in the autistic subject a potent capacity to engage language passively, for "in passivity we are

extremely receptive” (SP1, 114) Thus, autistic writers confirm Dolto’s steadfastly optimistic, progressive views on autism: the need for a mediating object for the transference, and the potential for passive learning.

7. In personal correspondence (11 May 2015), Deborah Britzman—then in press on Klein—notes that, “the monstrous combined parent is for Klein a phantasy dedicated to epistemophilia or sadism at its height and in this sense is [also] one’s own conception.” Her valuable comment invites us to put Dolto in conversation with Klein a little longer regarding the internal object and the combined parent figure—that “part-object form” (Spillius, 2011, 452)—in the child’s “earliest conception of the primal scene” (Ibid). For Dolto, the primal scene may enigmatically be one’s own conception or the coitus of parents (MA, 178). In an interview in 1986, Roudinesco suggests that in France in the 1960s, Dolto had Klein’s place in London: «peut-être» [maybe], Dolto answers (1986/1988, 32). And in 1984, Dolto comments on her concept of the «moi idéale bicéphale,» in parentheses: “(This may be what the school of Melanie Klein calls the combined parent)” (IIC, 271). The “maybes” and parentheses signal Dolto’s reserve in constructing a dialogue with this ‘other’ pioneer who, in more ways than one, does not speak the same language. For Dolto evokes an undifferentiated, un-split, liquid, passive pre-subject: a «co-moi papa-maman» [co-me father-mother] (EM, 39) for whom there is necessarily no ‘object’ that is not a part of the self. Further, the archaic’s “subtle objects” (PS, 21-22 & 89; SP1, 61; SP3, 128)—sounds, including phonemes—are as fluid and reversible as the pre-subject, arriving as an enigmatic echo that becomes a path to be followed, reversibly, to the dream as much as to reality. Thus, the notion of an ‘internal object’ to be taken in or used, in coming to reality, in whatever primitive and phantastic ways, is best set aside for a conception far more «anobjectal» (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 262) before we can think with Dolto—not about developmentally limited or transitory “infantile transferences” (Rustin, 2008, 377), but rather, about the very origin in infancy of the lifelong (passive) human capacity for transference.

Our difficulty in thinking about these matters will originate in the problem of time in the archaic, or the absence thereof. At issue is that the «pre-moi» begins archaic

identification while he is without vision, an active mode or a distinct subjectivity—with only liquidity, audition, passivity and an unconscious symbolization of presence and absence forming a primordial «rhythm binaire» (CE, 94, 257 & 350; DQ, 70; IIC, 90; PJE, 105) in the fetal environment. The weaving of enduring organic sounds with an incrementally ‘present’ exterior (audition on an evolving soundscape) continues a symbolic relation in service of the wish—a dream of discourse with an enigmatic witness—in what is, effectively, the inaugural “total transference situation,” to borrow the wonderful coinage by Betty Joseph (1985)—oddly inside that same window of time, though evidently inspired by Klein’s “total situations transferred” (1952/1997, 55). The inherent inseparability and reversibility of the indistinct pre-subject in the non-space, non-time of the archaic mean that the inception of the subject is not isolatable in time, and we will never be able to see the horizon of the combined parent as a distinct figure. Rather, with Dolto, it is rather more as-if the father and child split from the mother, but only if one understands that we are speaking in, and of, a moment of pure metaphor, in a dream register with no reality (space or time) whatsoever. So it becomes paradoxically sensible to describe a 2nd that is a 3rd that is a 2nd—as Dolto puts it, “one and one makes three” (ES, 39); or as Bernard This formulates, following Dolto, “1+1=3” (2007, 157). In short, this «situation triangulaire» (SP1, 215- 217) is the source of «sécurité intérieure» (Ibid). This’s shorthand here should not be confused with Winnicott’s “sum I am,” referring to the unit self (1968/1986b, 57, 62 & 64), from which our discussion of the «pré-moi» is developmentally very far behind. We should note, though, the uncanny way we return here to the «je- nous» [I – we] Dolto speaks of re young Tony with his sore «genoux» [knees]—the “play of words” (IIC, 365; SP3, 76; see Ch. 2) — and how Dolto talks of the «je-nous» (SP1, 217) in this context, commenting on «the mother coupled with the father and with their child» (SP1, 215). Here, she adds her frequent witnessing of psychical instability in children whose parents over-use «on» (SP1, 217; also CD, 99; DW, 129; LF, 291; PM, 38)—a nebulous pronoun in French that can mean *I*, *we*, *everyone*, and *no one in particular*—as nascent subjectivity in reality is impeded through “the problem of non-castration of the other” (SP1, 217). In fact, we are elaborating Dolto’s explanations of the otherwise inexplicable archaic with contra-dictions (what is said against what is said, i.e., reversals) and homonymic echoes, as the auditory environment itself

provides the only instruments of any use in trying to fathom the unthinkable. So doing, we begin to appreciate Dolto's own archaic subject position, and the enigmatic pool from which she draws her formidable analytic wisdom on the oral passive stage. With Dolto, we not only witness the archaic scene, but we experience the archaic process by benefitting from the mediation of word-things. After all, Dolto says, "all games are mediators of desire" (EM, 168). Further, once things begin to lose their dreaminess at the encounter with reality, the relation to the mother is (by definition) castrated, while that to the other endures, effecting the continued, securing presence of the «père pré-symbolique»:

The human being...is animated without discontinuity since birth with/by the symbolic function. What he perceives of the interior...is articulated with what is, perceived as coming from the exterior world, apprehended by him as a call or response of others to his desire. These two sources of perception, coming from himself and from others, weave themselves like warp and weft (1982a, 146-147).

Thus it is as-if the father indicates the secure direction to follow in the child's capacity to exit the monad to engage object relations, from its «prolongement» to language and its unconscious register, the transference. As Dolto explains it, "the father is discontinuous (EM, 63), "separated out" from the mother (CE, 172), emerging from a dual relation from the "heart of the mother to the body of the child" (SP2, 126). Ergo, the "other of the mother" (TL, 43) offers the potential for separability in reality that inheres in his perpetual continuity with the subject, along which path we develop symbolic relations in reality. Here is where we begin to fathom the crucial work of the transference not only in our coming to reality, but our remaining in it—our ability to engage in incremental sacrifices, like little Josette. Refinding the symbolic father involves a letting go of even the profoundest identifications "taken in" from the side of reality, such as Klein's internal object, "the mother as a loved object [that] needs to have been introjected or internalized" (Spillius, 2011, 363). This is why, for Dolto, the notion of a subject founded on a late arrival from the outside is madness: she assumes the permanence of safety is inscribed into the subject's ontogeny long prior to his birth, one neither referred to, nor dependent on, reality at all. Simplifying greatly, we suggest that the psychological history Klein narrates is after Dolto's developmentally. Thus, in a performance of theory, Dolto's subject does not easily progress onto the Kleinian scene,

meeting anxiety as a «tension regressivante»; while the Kleinian subject, holding his internal object, regresses with great difficulty onto Dolto's scene. For while Klein discovers that the child has already repressed the infant (Roudinesco, 1999, 159), Dolto discovers that the infant has already repressed the fetus.

Shifting frames of reference a bit, we note another contrast in that Klein's internal object is threatened by anxiety at reality, risking the child; whereas Dolto's subject is perpetually bound to a past he must never disjoin, thus he will throw reality 'out with the bathwater' and simply go back to the archaic, carried along what Andreas-Salomé once lovingly described as "a stream of subterranean water we hear murmuring once more" (1977, 208). Further, Klein's "good object" is laden with maternal tropes—described with relation to a splitting between "good breast" and "bad breast" (Spillius, 2011, 348), and "conceived in the mind of the infant in terms of bodily parts"(Ibid). In contrast, Dolto's "archaic identification" is a symbolic communication devoid of any sense of body parts, informed solely by the fluidity of sound in a purely unconscious life, and the indivisibility of the «pre-moi» with its archaic environment. Thus, I suggest Dolto would disagree with Klein's idea that "the unrealistic nature of the extremely 'good' or 'ideal' object leaves it unstable and constantly under threat from reality" (Ibid, 349). For the *unrealistic* extreme goodness of the «père pré-symbolique» is precisely what can give the subject, given continuity with it, his security in reality. Further, the archaic landscape and its «père pré-symbolique» are never at risk from reality or under threat as they constitute, by definition, a permanent phantasy of infallible security—a wish. Rather, the only thing reality threatens is reality itself, in that one will simply not come fully 'into it,' withdrawing instead to the "incomparable strength of the first affective ties of human creatures" (Freud, 1930, 209), the "perennial first inclinations" of dream-life (Ibid). The primitive response to anxiety, then, is simply to refuse it—to refuse "to be distressed by the provocations of reality, [or] to let itself be compelled to suffer" (Freud, 1927, 162). And here we touch, I believe, on the "necessary aggression" Dolto will speak of in the context of the «poupée-fleur,» that is required to counter the anxiety (without regressing to the archaic) that threatens the subject from the side of reality. For along economic lines, we will always choose safety above all else, grounding subjectivity in the bold and infallible primitive 'logic' of the instinct of

conservation, the pulses. In sum, Dolto's project powerfully conveys the paradox that we are conscious only because of our enduring capacity to remain unconscious, in a negotiation of reality wherein the symbolic relation to the 'other of the mother' is a 'pivot' continued in language through the transference. I recall how instrumental one particular interview was for my understanding—Dolto's moving talk with Bernard *Pivot* (Ribowski, 2004), which I watched repeatedly. And when thoughts connect like this through unexpected word-plays, we know we are approaching the archaic. Then again, did we ever leave?

8. I confess that when I began reading Dolto, I believed the «poupée-fleur» (PF) to be a secondary construct in her theorization—a secondary revision, as it were, of the dream-work I felt to be in circulation. I was profoundly mistaken. For the PF emerges as central to Dolto's creativity, being a notion with traces to her own and her grandmother's middle name, Marguerite (Ch. 2 & 3), in the most authentic signature imaginable; not to mention that by her choice of husbands, she became “*Dolto*” in 1942 (AI, 162). And once one experiences the transference in Dolto's project, the PF seems to turn up everywhere, as a sudden arrival in countless thoughts—play inside the work. In fact, the PF is a spectacular mediating object for the transference, just as Dolto suggested. Thus its current non-use is, as Roudinesco says, a blatant overlooking of Dolto's «génie clinique» (1986, 169 & 278). Dolto invented the PF to help Bernadette (Ch. 2), whom she met in November 1946. Dolto relates her clinical observations in a watershed paper whose first part was in the inaugural issue of the prestigious *Revue Française de la Psychanalyse*, No. 1, jan.-mars 1949, as «Cure psychanalytique à l'aide de la poupée-fleur» [...with the help of the PF] (in Ribas, 2006, 95-108); with the second part featured in *RFP No. 1, jan.-mars 1950* (VC2, 176f; in JD, 133-193). The PF made a third entrance that year at the 16^e *Congrès international de psychanalyse*, 10 May 1949, in Zurich (VC2, 176f). In a letter to Philipp Sarasin, its Secretary, 30 May 1949, Dolto elaborates her «hypothèse» in rather substantial detail:

The plastic representation figured as a vegetal creature holding by its body a human form, and by its head a floral form, provokes in the child (and, in general, in all human beings) a projection onto this object of pre-genital libido relating to affects lived during the epoch of the oral stage. This projection and the secondary reactions

of the transference he experiences/feels vis-à-vis the «objet poupée-fleur» brings the neurotic subject to a beneficial abreaction of oral libido that had remained pathogenic. Subjects for whom repressions lived in anterior stages have led to states of libidinal regression to pre-genital stages react the same way...experience demonstrates that the disappearance of the anxiety pertaining to the repressed oral-stage pulses immediately permits the subject to address and abreact libido in pathological translations pertaining to the anal stage. This libido is very rapidly integrated into the «moi». It seems that the narcissistic neuroses are those which benefit the most from the utilization of this process of transference, as well as all the conversions of anxiety from functional symptoms of the digestive tube. The advantage is, for the psychoanalysis of children, the possibility of treatment in depth requiring only sessions that are far apart, and for the psychoanalysis of certain adults, the possibility of unblocking those who are «grands anxieux traumatisés au stade oral» or who are incapable of directly expressing in the transference the emotional or 'love-interest' states of the affects of their pre-genital stages due to their absence of logic (VC2,177; also JD, 154 & 192).

The PF made its fourth appearance the same year at the SPP's 12^e *Conférence des psychanalystes de langue française*, on narcissism, on 4-5 June 1949 (JP, 8; VC2, 176f). Its fifth appearance that year was in the article, «La poupée-fleur. À propos des états narcissiques de l'enfant» [The PF. On narcissistic states in children], in *RFP No. 4, oct.-déc. 1949* (JP, 86f; VC2, 176f; in JP, 19-33). Soon after, the PF made its sixth appearance of the year, on 18 October 1949, when it was a central topic for discussion at a meeting of the SPP. The proceedings included Maurice Benassy, Simone Blajan-Marcus, Françoise Dolto, René Held, Jacques Lacan, Serge Lebovici and Sacha Nacht (in JP, 34-42). It seems Lacan took to the PF quickly, as he elaborated theoretically that very day on the critical relevance of its having no mouth (in JP, 34); Lacan also spoke to attendees about the value of the PF having «pas de visage, pas de mains ni de pieds, pas de face ni de dos, pas d'articulation, pas de cou» [no face, neither hands nor feet, neither face nor back, no articulation, no neck] (Ibid, 37). To this we add our own dreams of audition on Lacan's «cou» [neck], a perfect homonym of «coup» [a hit]. This is a play of some significance given that Lacan would earn

much credit in the years to come for providing emphasis to Freud's concept of *nachträglichkeit*, the «après-coup»—interestingly, from the 1950s onward (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967, 33). In 1949, the PF is also found in the treatment of Nicole (JD, 149-174; see Ch 2), as well as in observations of 10 others (JD, 174-193). With seven-year old Monique, for example, use of the PF immediately restores continence (JD, 176). From there, the PF is used successfully in Dolto's psychoanalytic work with schizophrenics in asylums for 10 to 15 years, “liberating affects tethered to oral-stage libidinal investments” to achieve an “unblocking” as, “thanks to the mediation of this object, they could re-find, going from themselves to this other, the alternating affects of emotional participation and projection that characterize personal rapports beginning at the oral stage” (SS, 21). There is a normal need for aggression to be invested at the oral stage, Dolto says—one that is impossible to satisfy when met in reality with “responses of painful aggression” (SS, 21f). Dolto provides clinical examples where the PF revives libidinal history (JD, 191); returns dreams and useful aggression (JD, 193); and enables patients to work on their integration (JD, 189). Even the doll-maker reports uncharacteristic laughter while fabricating exemplars (JD, 184; JP, 50). Dolto readily issues prescriptions for it (with a sketch) to every mother presenting with a child refusing food (e.g., VC2, 258-259; also 258f). And turning to a local «atelier,» she has them produced for wide use in her consultations, even giving some to friends with children (VC2, 261 & 261f). Yet, typically self-effacing, Dolto states humbly in 1949: «cette hypothèse ne vaut peut-être pas grand-chose» [this hypothesis is perhaps not worth much, not a ‘big thing’] (JD, 189).

Some fifteen years later, arguably the most brilliant theoretical articulation of the PF is published ironically, marginally, by the pharmaceutical giant, Anphar: «L'enfant et la poupée-fleur, de bouche à corolle, et de corolle à oreille» [The child and the PF, from mouth to corolla, and from corolla to ear], *Phot, No. 3, déc. 1964* (JP, 87, 15f; in JP, 43-50). And in November 1985, nearly 40 years from the PF's arrival, but near the end of her own life, Dolto offers the powerful note, in a personal letter, that the «non-réactivité émotionnelle» of the psychoanalyst is what achieves the «réactualisation des événements inconnus ou oubliés de son histoire» [events unknown or forgotten in his (hi)story] (VC2, 799; also Ch. 1). Here, we enjoin Lacan's valuation of the absence of a mouth (in JP, 34), and comments by Muriel

Djéribi-Valentin (among the project's trusted editors) that the PF is an «objet végétal sans défense» [without defenses] (in JP, 11), thus offering an opportunity for an enigmatic «révolte de la passivité» (in JP, 15). At the proceedings of the SPP, Dolto identifies and names the therapeutic gain, «l'effet poupée-fleur» (JP, 42). And in closing her talk to her distinguished audience that October night, she says of her concept, simply, «il est utilisable» [it is usable] (Ibid). The PF allows the projection of “illogical affects” (JP, 39), and as Djéribi-Valentin explains, Dolto witnessed countless clinical observations of free drawing, wherein children “indicated a projection of their narcissism in representations of flowers or vegetal forms” (in VC2, 176f). The PF had, in effect, arrived in over-determination. Among the innumerable treasures of the Dolto's corpus, then, the PF is “one of her most stunning clinical inventions” (Djéribi-Valentin, in VC2, 176f). And though the PF works in the intermediate zone between reality and phantasy, it is not a transitional object. First, whereas the transitional object (TO) is varied, such as a teddy, doll or toy (Winnicott, 1953/1971, 1), the PF is highly specific in shape: it has “no face, no hands, no feet, no back, no front” (VC2, 259), being vegetal green with the corolla at eye-level, and at least seven petals (JP, 46). Second, while the TO is the “first 'not me' possession” (Winnicott, 1953/1971, 1), the PF is functionally the opposite—a kind of ‘always me,’ that mediates the transference in a regression to a perpetually findable and indestructible archaic history. What is most operational with the PF, then, is that ‘the object is never being destroyed,’ as a “stimulus for the transference” (1919[1918]a, 162). Third, while the TO marks a routine passage through childhood, the PF is a clinical tool addressing narcissistic injuries at the oral stage (JD, 148 & 159)—for those who are, as Dolto puts it, «figés [stuck/frozen] dans des symptômes régressifs profonds» (JP, 11). And while the PF is not a TO, it is interesting to speculate whether the former might, perhaps, have inspired the latter. Melanie Klein is recorded among several attendees who came from London for the SPP's conference that summer of 1949 in Paris (JP, 8), but there is no mention of Donald Winnicott.

9. This construction of the subject ‘for, with, by (through)’ the other expresses nothing other than the dominance of oral passivity during the development of primary narcissism—and yet, it hugely complicates what we understand by an ‘object.’ I begin with

Dolto's provocatively simple definition, rooted unhesitatingly in the oral stage: "Object: food, for example" (MA, 24). On the other hand—yet keeping with the idea of alimentation—is the complexity of the 'object' as metaphor: "the thing (breast), its invested meanings, and the interpretive psychosocial processes we bring to it" (Mishra Tarc, 2015, 135). At issue is that the object never exists strictly in the concrete or metaphorical realm—but always in both, and between. Thus, a 'lost object' may be a real thing, or a phantasy once serving a wish. Similarly, milk is a 'reparative object'—but so is an unconscious «repère.» And when we invoke 'archaic objects,' we cannot functionally distinguish between a lost grandfather, his lost name, or the enigmatic love of the «père-présymbolique.» In short, any object, however physical it may be, has inseparable, unconscious symbolic significance (associated through dream-work) that is necessarily idiosyncratic for individual prehistory. Besides, any distinction between the reality and phantasy of an object is moot, in a way, for in our 'use' of it psychically, as Freud tells us, "it is a matter of indifference whether this internal process of working-over is carried out upon real or imaginary objects" (1914b, 86). Furthermore, every object acquires, or rather inherits, its significance in symbolic filiation, such that by reduction (but not to absurdity), every object is ultimately returned unconsciously to "the earliest period of life...[when] the child's primitive attitude towards object is a simple matter of pleasure or pain" (Abraham, 1923/1955, 87). Thus we will be lured towards the use of an object by an unconscious process of identifying with it (or part thereof), in association with its predecessor. As Freud puts it, "to find the object, however, is, in truth, to rediscover it" (1907/1962, 87; also Ibid, 108). So, enigmatically, all objects derive their symbolic filiation in a non-time, non-space of no-object, where the pre-subject is self-contained: a monad. And following Freud's line of thought backwards, we arrive at a construction of primary narcissism as an "autoeroticism...when there is no object" (Ibid, 118). With Freud, we confirm that "identification is the earliest and original form of emotional tie...where the mechanisms of the unconscious are dominant, [and] object-choice is turned back into identification" (1921,107); in other words, "during the state of narcissism, they [object-libido and ego-libido] exist together" (1914b,76; also 1914c,82). Thus, primary narcissism is a state of nascent environmental impingements spun into dream-work, and what is affectively

securing in reality (by offering symbolic filiation, continuity, with one's prehistoric, archaic psychical landscape) acquires value in 'luring.' Furthermore, as Dolto makes clear, *the most fluid, accessible, early-encountered, ubiquitous, repetitive—therefore, most likely—such mediating objects (lures) for our coming to reality are phonemes*. Critically, object use is not comfortable at first, at least until sensory modalities are sufficiently developed to enable the experience of gratification (pleasure) from the side of reality (assuming such is offered). And with Freud, we recall—not for the last time—the importance of inertia in primary narcissism: “by being born we have made the step from an absolutely self-sufficient narcissism to the perception of a changing external world and the beginnings of the discovery of objects...we cannot endure the new state of things for long, [so] that we periodically revert from it, in our sleep, to our former condition of absence of stimulation and avoidance of objects” (1921,130), as “the condition of sleep... impl[ies] a narcissistic withdrawal of the positions of the libido on to the subject's own self...on to the single wish to sleep” (1914b, 83). Paradoxically, then, in the primary narcissistic state, the infant (economically speaking) would rather *not* use real objects—impingements; and when he does, it will always be in compliance with libidinal economics, insofar as the object is vested archaically (transference), serving an unconscious phantasy of the *non-use* of the object (continuation of what exists), in accordance with “the principle of inertia” (Freud, 1895, 296-297). Thus, it follows that the use of an object in reality is facilitated by its closest possible relation to phantasy in one's unique (idiosyncratic) prehistory. Only with maturation is there migration to objects with a lesser share of phantasy: “infants derive their first objects from the experience of satisfaction... in connection with vital functions which serve the purpose of self-preservation” (Ibid, 87). So for a young child, a pen *is* a sword, a tissue *is* a mouse's carpet (etc.), as the development of speech simply makes it possible to observe the infant's archaic heritage in his use of real objects—and the return of any object (along a trail of crumbs eventually made elusive by associative distance) to the monad of self-love, paradoxically to 'no' objects: “the child takes himself as object of love prior to choosing external objects...of which intra-uterine life is the archetype” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967/2004, 264). On the one hand, then, primary narcissism is “inadequately designated as anobjectal” (Ibid, 265), for as Klein put it, “narcissistic states are defined by a

return of libido on interior objects” (Ibid). On the other hand, there is no ‘internal object’ that is not, originally, a phantasy of something indissociable from the self, lacking boundaries, and right off the horizon of space-time. Thus, I find it helpful in thinking with Dolto to conceive of an anachronistic archaic landscape operating with, in and as dream-work; and I believe the idea of an object from the side of reality is best conceived as an offer to perception (including proprioception), hence constituting “disturbances to which a child’s original narcissism is exposed, the reactions with which he seeks to protect himself from them, and the paths into which he is forced in doing so” (Freud, 1914c, 92).

In turn, these considerations take us to the question of anxiety. Is anxiety only there because of reality? Yes, *and no*. True, anxiety is a response to what arrives insofar as it exceeds what can be managed economically in maintaining a phantasy of inertia. In short, “anxiety must enter the psyche from elsewhere” (Freud, 1911/1974, 318). And Winnicott observes: “there is certainly before birth the beginning of an emotional development” (1949, 182), whereby “the ordinary birth process can be accepted by the infant as a further example of what has already happened, but a difficult birth goes far beyond any prenatal experience of impingement” (Ibid,184). However, anxiety does not arrive with ‘reality’ as normally understood (time-space), but with ‘reality’ as anything which phantasy cannot dispose of easily enough; for under the sway of the pulses of conservation, such impingements are felt as “the threat of annihilation” (Winnicott, 1960, 591), or a “dread of being devoured and destroyed” (Klein, 1928/1998, 187). As Dolto explains it, when “pulsions, upon their appearance, find an interdiction exterior to the subject, *the idea* is repressed but the affect remains, provoking anxiety ... which we call ‘primary’” (MA, 16; italics mine, to recall this tension wherein dream-work struggles for sublimation as thought). ‘Secondary anxiety,’ in turn, occurs when pulsions «entrent en *résonance*» by “unconscious association between actual ideas and ideas that had, in the first experiences of childhood... provoked primary anxiety” (MA, 17; italics mine, to stress the auditory realm and its echoes). In this context, the potent archaic legacy of phonemes to linguistics, education and literacy seems especially palpable.

Chapter Three: Infancy & Audition

10. In a 2001 press release honouring the 100th anniversary of «l'Hôpital Trousseau» (Wikipédia, 2014k), Catherine Dolto says her mother invented a tunnel toy for her clinic, and that Salvador Dali tried to crawl through it but could not (C. Dolto, 2001). It is impossible to know why Dali sought a symbolic birth with Dolto, but it is entirely possible she invented such an object. For she was, as Freud said of Charcot, one whose “common sense was touched by genius” (1893c, 9; 1961, 196)—besides, she believed children love passing through tunnels and tubes (EF, 12). Tunnels also transect her history, beginning with her immense question about death, at age four, as trains moved beneath the «passerelle» where she walked (EN, 10), and she discovered the ignorance of adults (AI, 94f). It is also plausible it would not occur to Dolto to file a patent, for she would have considered the concept ridiculously obvious, and she believed in the free exchange of ideas. Case in point, there is no patent for the spectacular «poupée-fleur» (Dolto, 1949/1999a; 1949/1999b). A search reveals that Barbara Clark filed a US application for a “Tunnel Toy” in 1931, to securitize a child, as “crawling into a hole is instinctive” (IFI Claims Patent Service, 2012). But Dolto had absolutely the contrary objective, as articulated elsewhere: to help a child find his «cheminement hors de son tunnel» [his path out of his tunnel] (Dolto, 1989c, 17; also, C. Dolto & Faure-Poirée, 2008, 37). Perhaps the same obsession possessed Dali when he insisted Millet’s “Angelus,” haunting him since childhood, was actually a baby’s burial, so that he fought for years to have it x-rayed and even wrote a book about it (AI, 248; Wikipedia, 2014a). Curiously, the original hung for years in the home of Dolto’s maternal grandfather, the copper industrialist and art collector, Pierre-Eugène Secrétan (AI, 248; Wikipédia, 2014h; see Ch. 6). The prized work was sold at an auction in 1889 to fund corporate restructuring (AI, 248), sending it across the Atlantic. It returned to France in 1909, soon after the birth of Françoise, when its new collector donated it to the Louvre (Ibid). There, in 1932, oddly enough, it was lacerated by a patient of Lacan’s (Ibid). The painting is now in the «Musée d’Orsay,» while its memory dominates nearby Barbizon, Millet’s home town, in the forest of Fontainebleau (Wikipedia, 2014g), where Dolto’s silent father spent his childhood. Françoise longed to visit him there in 1930, but didn’t (PF, 29 & 31), only finding her way to Fontainebleau in 1939 to see Pichon (VC2, 26). In Montmartre,

a lovely museum, «Espace Dali,» lets the modern visitor witness the tremendous impact on Dali of both psychoanalysis and Freud, whom he met in London in July 1938 while sketching his portrait (Douville, 2009, 178)—though Freud apparently did not reciprocate the admiration (Wikipedia, 2014j). Among the critical objects for the Dolto reader is a giant sculpture, “The Snail and the Angel,” that oddly recalls «escargotage» [snailing] (e.g., SS, 220; 1985f), her idiom for self-enclosing psychical development, akin to Freud’s “strangled affect” (1893d, 39; 1909b, 18; 1914c, 156). Also significant is Dali’s “Profile of Time”—a melting clock, a theme he repeats, as in “The Persistence of Memory”—and how it is reminiscent of Dolto’s childhood stress on the difficulty of knowing the exact time. We find her famous analysand, “Dominique,” telling Dolto during a session (date unknown, but discernible as 1963 by the death of a Pope upon which Dominique comments) how much he enjoyed a recent Dali exhibit (CD, 155). He critiques it as being full of «des trous et puis des tiroirs dans les gens» [holes and drawers in people]. Dolto does not say if she has seen it, though he asks. Yet her correspondence has many references to her making, viewing, and even exposing artwork (e.g., AI, 120-121; PF, 26; VC1, 165, 192, 238 & 246); she also valued art in her seminars and clinics (e.g., APP; see Ch. 6). So it is not far-fetched to imagine her encounter with these iconic works and their transference—just as Dali was unconsciously moved by works from Dolto’s landscape. Further, knowing Dolto may have kept her patient’s name, one notes it is twice Dali’s name, for he was Salvador Domingo Felipe Jacinto Dalí i Domènech (Wikipedia, 2014j). One hardly knows what to say about the complex weave that threads Dolto with Dali. It is a coincidence only if one believes in such, but Dolto does not (DW, 25; SS, 99 & 113; VC2, 495). Further, Dolto believes about art that “like a dream, it is a witness of the unconscious” (SS, 116), a vehicle for the transference of latent content (VC2, 447). So the effect of «Espace Dali» on the Dolto reader is uncanny indeed. Yet soon, one realizes it is situated precisely on the first site of the «Maison Blanche,» an asylum that relocated next to Dolto’s family at the turn of the century, from where it profoundly influenced her childhood and career (Murat, 2001/2013). Dolto is correct, then: knowing the exact time is extremely difficult in the dreamscape of Paris.

11. Dolto shares her plan for the doll (AI, 57; JP, 46; VC2, 259; photo: VC2, 275 & AI, 54), so it seemed like good research to make one. My own ‘flower doll’ is 36 cm high, and I admit to experiencing a significant return of old psychical material (in French) tethered to choosing its name (which I am reluctant to disclose), its fabric (too slick, scratchy...), and the shade of green (too dark, bright...). After constructing it in July 2013, I left it next to some large chronicles about Freud and my small rock collection from Paris. Yet oddly enough, I only managed to overcome a very difficult emotional impasse in starting to write the current work by placing it on my desk, where it remains as a presence: a witness despite (because of?) its blindness.

12. The notion of a well mother to the wellness of a child is universally held, and Dolto is certainly among her peers (educators and analysts) in this essential concern of her practice. But Dolto’s *infans* in the archaic stage is prior to speaking and, before birth, even prior to being present in the usual sense. Dolto’s construction of the infant in the archaic stage is that of a full subject in continuity with an enigmatic other in a non-time, non-space where dreams are spun upon what arrives. And her foremost concern for instinctual life founds a radically liberating view: «c’est le foetus qui demande à naître» [it’s the fetus that asks to be born] (SP1, 225). Dolto has no need of an apologist, and she is the first to admit, “I don’t write in a literary sense” (AI, 217; VC2, 796-797). But if we can get beyond her words, or rather in front of them, we begin to fathom the precocity of the subject position at stake in Dolto’s conception of the archaic: there is a “life anterior to primary narcissism” (SP1, 76). On this view, the mother and other adults may grant or withhold *their agreement to life*, and it is “their duty to subsequent generations to sustain fetuses in their desire to be born” (SP1, 225). As uncomfortable as Dolto’s words feel, they compel a more careful listening, a second hearing, and a playing with reversals. For the “fetus desiring to live” is none other than a *wishful* being—alive unconsciously, subsisting blissfully in his dreams in the jurisdiction of the instinct of conservation. According to Dolto, to stress, the fetus is already a subject. As Freud explains, there is an auto-erotic state prior to primary narcissism since, “something must be added to auto-eroticism to bring about narcissism” (1914/b, 77). And in this state, “auto-erotic sexual satisfactions are experienced in connection with vital

functions which serve the purpose of self-preservation” (Ibid, 87). Helped by Freud, we follow Dolto easily now when she muses on how the mother’s obligation to help confounds pregnancy with the «interdit» [prohibition; homonymically, «inter-dit», ‘spoken between us’; and even «in-terre-dit», ‘spoken in the ground’] of illness and death (SP1, 225)—for her view of infancy is rooted in the primacy of the instincts. Of course, this auto-erotic state *in utero*, prior to primary narcissism, is not ‘auto’ at all: “there must be, actually, neither life pulsions nor death pulsions, everything is absolutely linked to the mother” (VO, 114). Then again, as Freud noted, the infant is content with his dream of self-reliance: “The charm of a child lies to a great extent in his narcissism, his self-contentment and inaccessibility....an unassailable libidinal position which we ourselves have since abandoned” (1914b, 91). Freud’s humour is an apt reminder that primary narcissism forms in a field of dreams dominated by the pleasure principal, where it is difficult “to find our bearings” (Ibid, 78)—and, as Dolto easily conceded, we “face the possibility of error” (Ibid, 79). Dolto’s valuing of examples serves the Freudian oeuvre well, as “legitimate extensions of the theory of libido come from observations of children” (Ibid, 75). And commenting on her own clinical attitude, in an interview with J.-P. Winter in 1986, appearing in print and film (DW, 109; Nobécourt, 2008b), Dolto states: “It’s never their fault, but it happens to be their fact.” Of course, the notion of primary narcissism as auto-erotic is paradoxical since the subject does not subsist autonomously; and in the absence of boundaries for the «pré-moi», the idea of a co-narcissistic state remains perplexing. And yet, these *are* the provocations of Dolto’s unprecedented opening onto the archaic stage. Freud himself admits the difficulty of hypothesizing on primary narcissism, given “the importance and extensiveness of the topic” (1914b, 100), and calls his own crucial work merely “remarks...somewhat loosely strung together” (Ibid).

13. It is impossible to deny that Dolto’s view of melancholy seems beholden to Karl Abraham (1924/1949), who describes patients in a “passive mode” (Ibid, 450), experiencing an “archaic form of mourning” (Ibid, 437). Abraham notes that, “the melancholic is trying to escape from his oral-sadistic impulses” (Ibid, 450); and melancholia is characterized by the “extensive detachment of the libido from the external world” (Ibid, 453) brought on by a

“disappointment in love” (Ibid, 456 & 459). Here, as elsewhere, Abraham seems to capture the infant’s world perfectly. And in his adding that later repetitions of this primary disappointment can bring on melancholia (Ibid, 459), we can understand, on Dolto’s terms, regression to the archaic due to the loss of continuity. Citing Stärcke, Abraham reminds us that coming to reality requires the successful withdrawal of the breast as a “primal castration” (Ibid,463). That we will hear Stärcke in Dolto, then, is equally undeniable. I believe that consistent with this is Freud’s comment on “the desire to go to sleep where one has slept in childhood” (1907/1962, 156). For in the infant’s melancholia, it is an archaic ‘location,’ a dreamscape and its securing affects, that is lost—left behind in coming forward. I submit that what is crucial about this view of melancholia is that *what is deemed pathological in clinic is, in fact, just a way of life for the infant*. Thus, while popular constructs prefer the infant as a ‘digestive tube’ or ‘bundle of joy,’ psychoanalysis reveals the radical truth—one that resounds throughout Dolto’s project: *the infant is intensely susceptible to suffering*. I turn to consider, philosophically, just how the human subject is born in such a melancholic tension:

I must carry the other and his world... Melancholy welcomes the failure and the pathology of this mourning...Melancholy must ever resign itself to idealizing introjection...The norm is nothing other than the good conscience of amnesia. It allows us to forget that to keep the other within the self, as oneself, is already to forget the other...Melancholy is therefore necessary (Derrida, 2003/2005, 160).

I believe Dolto’s intrinsic theorizing on the human narrates a developmentally necessary melancholy contingent on our origins in dream-work. In this sense, it is not melancholy as pathology but as the formidable legacy of our unconscious heritage—i.e., an intimate “secrecy which holds to the responsibility for the Other... from which one does not escape, and which, thus, is the principle of an absolute individuation” (Levinas, 1982, 81). So I submit that Dolto comes to her notion of ‘constitutional melancholy’ largely on her own, and that she contributes something original—notwithstanding that she surely read Abraham and found him to be a like-minded human who was speaking a critical truth. And in view of Abraham’s belief that melancholia is “not as yet sufficiently understood” (1924/1949, 434), I suggest that Dolto can add much to our comprehension.

14. I went to France in the summer of 2014, between reading and writing Dolto, seeking a certain «je-ne-sais-quoi»—an enigma. I found it on my first full day there. I confess I was already in a melancholy mood, after spending hours at the «Cimetière Père Lachaise,» searching for a possible relative. His site was unkempt, so I slipped upon his mossy resting spot, falling on his grave, his «tombeau»—a homonymic play of ‘fall-water’ and ‘fall-from-high.’ Onlookers asked after me as I hobbled on, constructively humbled. But if this is how easy it was to be symptomatic in Paris, it was going to be a long trip. From then, I began noticing the sea of my first language, something I seldom encounter outside Quebec, my place of origin. Yet though I was in a cemetery, in the rain, alone, and injured, I was entirely unafraid—whereas ‘back home,’ my anxiety has such high walls to guard. That is how I overheard a graveyard guide reading an inscription to her group: «Que devient le rêve quand le rêve est fini?» [What becomes of the dream when the dream is done?]. It was an absolutely uncanny question. For it is arguably my whole question—not just of the day, or of Dolto and the present project, but of my life. So as I walked from the cemetery to Trousseau, I began to lose my sense of the misty rain that had helped my foot comply with my tongue, yet I became potently aware of having arrived at a most unusual destination. For my route, as the map suggested, was a simple trek of a few blocks—but it became, instead, a place of unmappable resonances. Taking Avenue de «Saint-Mandé» [saint-requested; homonymically, breast-requested], I entered a nearby church, «L’Église de l’Immaculée Conception,» drawn by architectural curiosity and the desire to explore landmarks upon the geography Dolto desired to return to, for free, for 40 years. I came face-to-face with an immense tree-like tapestry behind the altar remarkably like the one in Dolto’s home office on St-Jacques (AI, 231 & 233; VC2, 650 & 829). Once more outside, I found a street post near a «passerelle» like the one where Dolto questioned death as a child (EN, 10). Its signs stated that, as well as being on Saint-Mandé, I was nearing «Bois de Vincennes,» one of two forests in Paris—homonymically, ‘the drink of twenty cents.’ I drifted absently to 1921, when a graphologist suggested young Françoise drank—«boit»—obstacles (AI, 94; PF, 20; VC1, 114), and I couldn’t help thinking of her symbolic payment (e.g., ATP, 196; CE, 371; DW, 139; SS, 124 & 125f; TL, 112; VC2, 890). I might have worried about my grip on

reality through this bounce of sounds, except for one thing: it was amusing. So as I took in my soundscape, and words reverberated between past and present, here and elsewhere, life and texts, I began to realize that this *is* the life of a child—a confabulation of homonymic possibility as yet unlimited by reality.

Back in Canada, I would read Freud's discussion of refinding the familiar, and how similarity of sound serves the libidinal economy through dream-work as "joke work" (1905d, 120-122). I was, that day, simply "in possession of a childish source of pleasure" (Ibid, 170). Yet as I turned from Saint-Mandé to locate Trousseau, I was stunned again at the sight of three giant palm trees—surely here when Dolto was. And I was returned to the landscape of the book that made her want to learn, then unlearn, reading: *Les Babouches de Baba-Hassein* (Balesta, 1894/1902; see ATP, 82 & Ch. 4), a set of orientalist short stories for children. After all, here were some of the only such trees in all of Paris. And just above them was a high clock, «l'heure juste» [exact time], affixed to «l'Édifice de l'horloge» [clock building] (L'oeuil du Cartier Bel-Air Sud, 2011). «L'heure juste» is mentioned often enough in Dolto's early life to be the title of a lovely children's biography of her (Farkas & Ratier, 2011). Thus reading Dolto while standing, I heard echoes of her autobiography in this place, until the line between theory and history blurred to a vanishing point. So while Dolto said that she kept an excellent souvenir of Trousseau (ATP, 195), I offer that Trousseau kept an excellent souvenir of Dolto. For a close reader is left with little doubt that Trousseau's peculiar «géographie» (homonymically: 'I have water-written/above-written') returned, in transference, the landscape of Dolto's childhood phantasies—securitization unconsciously sought and found—that echoed in her work, subtly advancing. In effect, the thin mesh between reality and phantasy in this neighbourhood (for her and for me) evokes the archaic rhythm infusing her entire project. This archaic echo is the ordinary business of childhood, a psychological working-through to which we give a deceptively simple name: *listening*. For safely hidden beneath our adult movements in reality, a continuous call rises from the soft bottom of our infantile origins that we seek to refind on solid land. Dolto's spectacular success in assuaging human suffering invites the conclusion that this archaic securitization is the source of our creative potential. I could only listen in wonder, then, on

refinding my archaic security in French after half a century, following my own infantile rupturing. For here at Trousseau, with Dolto, I learned to play again.

Chapter Four: Reading & Presentification

15. On her fine construction of psychical liberty, I believe Dolto incidentally but decisively dismisses the most significant claims of Jung and Rank. Dolto narrates archaic prehistory as a highly idiosyncratic, unconscious experience of audition and transmission, blurring the pre-subject and mother-father, wherein the fetal environment is necessarily impacted by parental prehistory (audition, love and suffering among others), and woven with variable physiological factors, such as anxiety toleration, auditory acuity, etc. It is a tautology that geographic, linguistic and familial proximity will enable common words to serve as mediating objects for the transference—but what happens from here, in terms of symbolization, is anyone's guess. For Dolto's theoretical work makes the eminent point that symbol formation is a dynamic process that does not happen in isolation from human relations. Put another way, symbols are not formed except in movement and displacement. In contrast, Jung seems to favour a rather more undifferentiated, static or fixed (fixated?) infant, we might say: "Complexities of the infantile mind stem from its original identity with the prehistoric psyche. That 'original mind' is just as much present and still functioning in the child as the evolutionary stages are in the embryo" (Jung, 1957/1990, 139). Yet by the umbilical castration, Dolto argues convincingly, every subject is already psychically unique, and thus set to bring something new to the world in which he arrives. Arguably, then, is as if while purporting to value dreams themselves, the Jungian project actually disavows dream-work. Further, the visual symbolism inherent in Jungian archetypes ignores the primacy of audition in the archaic, as amply articulated by Dolto. On the key stake of audition, Dolto's comment is un-selfconsciously witty indeed: «Je ne connaissais pas un mot de Jung» [I did not know a single word of Jung's] (Nadal, 2006, 125). What we discover with Dolto then, beginning with her notion of the «phonème,» is that no dictionary of unconscious symbols is ever possible; rather, the unconscious uses the dictionary, so to speak. Dolto herself warns: "let us beware of symbolic dictionaries" (SP1, 208). And in a letter in 1962, she strongly

disagrees with guessing the sense of drawings from supposedly common unconscious experiences (VC2, 370). Further, in a letter in 1980 to Lacan, that other revenant of our iconic street, “My dear Jacques,” Dolto recalls how Laforgue believed Jung (and Adler) departed from Freud’s thought and could not be considered psychoanalysts (VC2, 668). Dolto actually met the aging Jung in Switzerland in 1957 (photo: VC2, 278). She recalls their conversation thus:

Jung told me, ‘He [Freud] believed I wanted to take myself for a father, but it was him who took himself for a father and wanted me to be his son.’ See these brave people! It was the beginning of psychoanalysis! Only, it’s quite fine, this fascination of Freud’s eyes that fainted fixing Jung’s profoundly...Will we ever know what Freud experienced at that moment and what there was in Jung of a «désir» for the death of Freud, who served as an Oedipal substitute for him? I think Freud saw very clearly. Jung didn’t want to continue along Freud’s line...He wanted to leave the old father and create a school on the side...That it was an Oedipal story between them is very possible. But whose? Neither was father nor son...Jung didn’t want to admit the primacy of the Oedipal Complex (VO,110).

The umbilical castration is also precisely where Dolto’s engagement with Rank is found, though it must be inferred, as there is no record of a physical or literary encounter. Rank spoke of what is before the Oedipus Complex in 1924 (1924/1993, 216); and he is credited as the first to use the term “pre-Oedipal” publicly, in 1925 (1996, 43). But from this word, they depart. In a nutshell, Rank believes “every infantile...anxiety or fear is a partial disposal of the birth anxiety” (Rank, 1924/1993, 17; also Laplanche and Pontalis, 1967/2004, 77). Dolto, however, considers that while birth introduces new sources of anxiety, the pre-subject (indissociably ‘co-me mother-father’) has long been managing impingements. Further, Dolto believes unhesitatingly that birth brings possibilities for pleasure: «La naissance est une libération: on naît à la liberté» [Birth is a liberation: we are born into liberty] (SP1, 133). Besides, “anxiety is a result not a cause of the failure of «allant-devenant»” (JD, 199). It is actually remarkable to witness how Dolto is so Freudian that her work cannot help but discount those who divert or dilute Freud’s drive theory by overlooking his vital discovery that “what is essential in dreams is the process of the dream-

work” (1933a, 8). Meanwhile, Dolto’s elaboration of the ontogeny of the transference in our archaic prehistory, and of the work of the transference in our idiosyncratic psychical structuration, makes imaginary any ‘collective unconscious,’ and secondary any ‘trauma of birth.’

Chapter Five: Society & Interdiction

16. Olivier Douville offers a perfect example of what may, or not, be the après-coup of Dolto’s radio programs. Born in 1953, he was 16 in 1969, when Dolto first aired *S.O.S. Psychanalyst!* Did he listen to it? We cannot know. Nor can we know what he or any French analyst has read of Dolto’s abundantly available works. Yet Douville ends up interested in reports in the Senegalese literature of the 1960s of children with precocious phobia and mutism, thought to “be responded to by ancestors” (2004, 189, 198, 201 & 210), and viewed as “the parent of the parent” (2004, 199). He sees in his Paris clinic 8-year old Cumba (Ibid, 210-215)—fragile, nearly mute, dependent and violent—her name, he notes, meaning ‘old woman.’ He reports her mother disbelieving she was pregnant and worrying about losing the baby, and he deems the child further marked by a ‘game of translations’ between her origins and France, and between her parents (Ibid, 205 & 212-213). During a pivotal session, he says Cumba leaves “the angle of the wall” and puts a paper in his pocket, as he concludes she was «une *présentification* d’une nostalgie mélancolique» (Ibid, 215; italics mine). Despite his odd usage of that term, is it even possible *not* to hear Dolto? Yet she is unreferenced. Douville shows, then, how French psychoanalysis has been operating for 80 years in the ‘climate’ of Dolto, whose legacy to generations is ever-present, if unspoken. Ironically, too, it is as if the problem of (the lack of) references in Dolto self-perpetuates.

17. While in Paris in July of 2014, I had the opportunity to spend about six hours at the «Archives Françoise Dolto,» 21 rue Cujas. It was an odd feeling to have read so much about Dolto, and so to find myself at home where I had never been before. The room is situated in the area normally occupied by a courtyard in a bourgeois Paris home. It is wood-paneled and lined with shelving that features, floor to ceiling, a selection of Dolto’s

favourite books and various items that include three «poupée-fleurs», several exquisite watercolours and sculptures by Dolto, and over three dozen small owls (see AI, 5, 220-221 & AI, cover; for owls in her own art, e.g., ATP, 215 & 1979c). The publications that fill the shelves include posters for post-humous conferences; published and original transcripts of books; hundreds of unpublished articles and notes; and the oldest document, her medical dissertation from 1939, including Pichon's hand-written comments on her first draft. In countless folders, meticulously organized by her daughter and a volunteer team, one witnesses how each paper was hammered out on a manual typewriter and repeatedly revised, as Dolto tirelessly reworked her material for decades. And overlooking everything along the only wall without shelves is a huge photograph of Dolto almost two metres high whose eyes follow the observer with a penetrating look of wonder, pain and a silent plea—as if it were the gaze of an ageless power to be reckoned with, who suffered much. The archive was unofficially hosted for me that day by the archivist's infant daughter, nearly one and just learning to walk. Crawling from one shelf to another, she pulled herself up, looked towards me, and gestured to the materials with one hand and some verbalizations. It seemed so apt that a baby would be my guide, as Dolto insisted all her life that she had learned everything from babies, her peers, and that one should always regard infants as «un hôte d'honneur» [honourable host] (De Mezamat, 2008a; LO1, 119). I believe Dolto would have wanted it just like this. For the archive, that archaic repository, is first and foremost a place of transferences—a condensation of the past in the present whose area of influence in après-coup is immeasurable. Thus its significance can only ever make an effort at words. As it turns out, about a year to the day later, Dolto was deservedly honoured by a relocation of these materials to the prestigious «Archives Nationales» in the heart of Paris, rue des Francs Bourgeois.

18. In her dissertation of 1939, Dolto cites 21 texts by Freud; 17 by Pichon; 5 each by Morgenstern and Laforgue; 3 each by Bonaparte and R. De Saussure; 2 each by A. Freud & Leuba; 1 by Jones; and 5 by others (MA, 269-271). Of interest, these references appear in the first edition but are absent from all further editions: 11 in French alone (1940,1961,1965,1971,1976,1979,1986,1988,1994,1998,2008; see worldcat.org, 2015a).The

number of references required (about 450) to write a research text on Dolto now, on the other hand, is a powerful witness to the breadth of her work and the productivity of her thought—fertile grounds indeed.

19. I am grateful to Lou Andreas-Salomé for offering a possible interpretation for the name of Laforgue's analysands, «Le Club des Piqués» [The Stung], in her incidental sharing of a French proverb I either never knew or forgot: «Ce n'est pas le plus mauvais fruit que la guêpe choisit de piquer» [It is not the worse fruit that the wasp chooses to sting] (Pfeiffer, 1983, 168). And I am grateful to Dolto, without whom I might have continued to overlook Lou, whom Karl Abraham believed had a “deep and subtle intelligence for psychoanalysis” (Livingstone, 1984, 173). Space precludes an extended discussion, but some uncanny material emerges. First, Lou was with Rilke in Paris in 1902-1910 (Steig & Michaud, 2001), coincidentally during both the birth and near-death of little Françoise. Lou's reference to Freud (rather than her father) being the “father-face that presided over her life” (Pfeiffer, 1972, 241) also opens speculation about an early history of loss. Our suspicions are strengthened when Lou reports that “On Narcissism” is her favourite Freud paper (Pfeiffer, 1972, 217), and she writes a fair bit on primary narcissism (1977). In an odd coincidence, the preface for Lou's autobiography, «*Ma vie*» [my life] (Pfeiffer, 1979), is written by Jacques Nobécourt, whose daughter, Emmanuelle (Who's Who in France, n.d.) produced a film series (Nobécourt, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c; 2008d) and a movie (Nobécourt & Simonetta, 1978) about Dolto—and who himself carries the name of our revenant. But while Dolto felt she could not write well, Lou is lyrical: «Nous avons une mémoire, mais nous sommes le souvenir» [we have memory, but we are remembrance] (Andreas-Salomé, 1977, 164). And though Lou dismissed Jung for his “proclivity to premature synthesis” (Leavy, 1964, 150), she herself had a strong tendency toward synthesis, as noted by Freud (Livingstone, 1984, 209) and her own biographers (Ibid, 188)—while in sharp contrast, Dolto plays productively with questions and enigmas. So what prompted Dolto's identification? After reading virtually all of Lou's corpus in English and French, I believe Dolto's comment was of a personal nature, as a resonance with a similar-enough other, not only on the word. We are first alerted to a person with infantile suffering, perhaps, in a story about her lost childhood

name, Liola ou Lolia (Pfeiffer, 1979, 29), or Lyolya (Livingstone, 2984, 12), of which nothing more is said; Lou also admits a “strong infantile regression, or a desire to linger in childhood” (Pfeiffer, 1979, 19). Furthermore, Lou (a prolific writer) maintains that creativity thrives best in «récepteurs passifs» (Pfeiffer, 1983, 158), and that psychoanalysis was the gift of a lifetime (Leavy, 1964, 90). But more than these overt references, an affect of wounding and loss comes through Lou’s fiction, letters and theory. I wonder myself, too, why it feels impossible to name her Andreas-Salomé—she is just ‘Lou’—and why her corpus evokes a closed door *and* a call. In Lou Andreas-Salomé, I believe we have an ideal subject (for someone fluent in Russian) to follow the trace of infantile remnants and daydreams. For the faint echo of a little girl with a hard history informs a haunting loneliness that transits Lou’s texts and cannot help but lure the wounded reader. Perhaps it drew Dolto too.

20. We find a fine example of a “condensation”—a richly tethered mediating object—in the project inspiring our own, Freud’s “DaVinci.” Naming the bird that visits the cradle, Freud uses *geier* (rather than the better German word, *milan*) for DaVinci’s *nibio* (modern, *nibbio*; in Italian, bird *and* kite). Freud’s editors concede that “in the face of this mistake, some readers may feel an impulse to dismiss the whole study as worthless” (1910b, 61; also, 82f). Quite the contrary, I believe the ‘error’ makes Freud’s study even more valuable. For DaVinci was forced to leave the city of Milan, the secure home wherein “his position was assured” (Ibid, 65). And with Freud’s use of *geier*, *milan* is ironically made more palpable by its absence, as the act of translation hides in the very same movement whereby it reveals the word-thing, *milan*, that bridges the subject and his biographer. For by it, we hear an echo of Freud’s own departure from home: “Deeply buried within me there still lives the happy child of Freiberg, the first-born child of a youthful mother, who received his first indelible impressions from this air, from this soil” (1931, 259). Melancholy permeates Freud’s loss of “the transference on place”—proliferations of unconscious associations to a private history—as silence itself becomes a memorial to that wound. Enigma signs even the publication, as what Freud considered “the only beautiful thing I have ever written” (Gay, 1988, 268) continues to be derided or ignored. In fact, this unique

work is of vital interest as a witness to the unconscious—not just DaVinci’s, but Freud’s. For it offers another example of the transference in texts as testimony to a kind of ‘co-dreaming’ that happens as Freud reads, then writes, DaVinci during his own biographic project. Thus Freud demonstrates, beautifully indeed, the dream-work that is at stake as words paradoxically ventilate and repress affect, inscribing narrative revolt—and how a problem of translation is exactly what we would expect from such a potent investment of what is latent.

For another instance, we turn to the re-analysis of Freud’s “Wolf-Man” (1918[1914]) by Torok and Abraham (1986). In a letter in 1986, Dolto comments briefly that they worked “around the signifiers of the Russian language” (VC2, 812). Ironically, Torok and Abraham admit, “We do not know Russian...it permits us to...follow better the avenues of our own listening” (1986, 34). A detailed discussion would indeed take us down strange avenues. But Derrida’s preface suffices, in which he observes a “cryptic motivation,” a “proper-name effect,” by which Torok “induces the word-thing *tieret*,” to advance the “importance for the Wolf-Man of the root *tr*, *tor* (*tor*: the past tense of *tieret*)” (1986a, xlvii). Derrida aptly concludes that Torok “work[ed] doubly, in his own name, on his own name” (Ibid). For in what he deems to be the Wolf-Man’s word-things, Torok’s own are unconsciously inscribed. And his lack of Russian (as-if being an absence of a problem of translation) cannot prevent the investment of what is latent in Torok. To this, I add only the playful discovery that Taroc was “Freud’s favourite card game” (E. Freud, 1961, 99f; see also Boehlich, 1990, 180). Thus on two phonemes echoing enigmatically, the transference in texts is a witness to the enduring force of archaic objects, and of the rogue unconscious associations that trade affect between us in human engagements.

For one further, powerful example of words as mediating object for the transference—in particular, of richly associated words, or condensations—I return to Dolto’s corpus, to «huit jours» [eight days]. So frequent is its repetition that it has predictive value: whether Dolto retells or prescribes, the time is invariably ‘eight days.’ Homonymically, the phrase is nearly «oui joue» [yes play]. We detour from Dolto’s home to nearby rue *Pajou* [no play], to the maternal great-grandmother’s house where her parents went alone every Friday, as Dolto reminisces about learning time based on routines: “The

days were marked by, ‘This is the day when...’ (EN, 43). Yet others in her circle use the unit too: her mother (PF, 40); father (PF, 97); brother (PF, 59); sister-in-law (PF, 369); maternal grandmother (PF, 109); daughter (VC2, 403); and husband (VC2, 422). The family record also gives this as the time it took the maternal great-grandmother to die in 1925 (AI, 102); and how long it took Dolto’s husband, Boris, to die in 1982 (AI, 212). The weekly, *La Semaine de Suzette*, is described as arriving every «huit jours» (EN, 68)—and in a letter to her father in 1921, her handwriting analysis (in its latest issue), her mother’s illness, and her wish to see him are all in «huit jours» (PF, 20; VC1, 114). In four texts alone, I count 34 instances and make no claim to exhaustivity (e.g., PF, 66,89,114,150,164,320,331,454; VC2,50,324,480; EN,68,73,86; ATP,89,92,130,137,157,226,233). Even Lacan uses it (VC2, 337), as does a friend, Agnes (VC1, 254); while both Dolto and Mme Chapdelot (Ch.6) use «une huitaine» [group of eight] (VC1, 454 & 484), an old colloquialism for “one week” (Wiktionnaire, 2014). Also, her patient Leon (age 8) is said to answer eight days later the questions asked eight days prior (IIC, 297). In fact, the Romans used an eight-day week for about eight centuries from 800 BC, the «nundinae» [no dinner; and its uncanny homonym, which I will not ‘hear’ until the near-end of my project: «non/nom dit est [is]» (Wikipedia, 2014i). On the one hand, then, a speech habit circulates among proximal individuals. On the other hand, something excess and unquantifiable seems to be conveyed, as if not only phonemes but a cycle were engrained—as if, Dolto suggests, the dates of repetitions begin in archaic rhythmic exchanges (CE, 257; JD, 251; SP3,144). We further muse that *two* phonemes are a ‘rhythm in *double* time.’ Dolto believes a «rhythm binaire» heralds uterine life (CE, 94-95, 257 & 350; DQ, 70; IIC, 90, PJE, 105), leading to «rhythms de déplacement» (EM, 274; LF, 61), as we unconsciously seek a lost rhythm (SP1,148; also, CE, 350; DV,213; EV,62; JD,24). She also observes that some patients return about pain on key dates (Dolto & Roudinesco, 1986, 17). Here, we recall Freud on Dora: “We had only *two* hours more work before us. This was the same length of time which she had spent in front of the Sistine Madonna, and...the length of the walk which she had not made round the lake” (1905a, 119). Thus things settled for a year in my mind until, as I walked alone one morning, contemplating the teaching day that lay ahead, a thought suddenly ‘arrived’: Jacqueline died at 18, its digits readable (as Mititi spoke) as «dix-huit» [homonym: ‘say

eight’]—as-if a suggestion of play with ‘eight days.’ Once heard, the elusive seemed so obvious. Yet I scribbled it down quickly, afraid to forget it. Such is learning in *après-coup*: not just the impossibility of boundaries of knowledge, subject, time or space, but the risk of losing what is fleeting, as the transference trickles in quietly, unexpectedly, amid the thunder of reality. Yet «huit *mois*» [months; homonym: ‘me’] later (honestly), I discovered while sifting through my old research on local architecture that the correct word for a male *automat* (evoking «*automaterner*»?) on a clocktower is a «*jaquemart*» [homonym: ‘jacques dead’ or ‘jacques bites’]—the female being a «*jacqueline*» (Wikipédia, 2014). And pre-modernity, uncannily, a «*jaquemart*» was the peasant who rang the *angelus* (Ibid; see also Note 10 & Ch. 6). Further, the lost nanny was said to be 18, the address at Gustave-Zédé (the first home without her) of our infant born in 1908 (who died in 1988), marked so deeply by the War of «14-18.» Left to dream, I hear «le glas» of that bell’s rhythm from an archaic soundscape, effacing absence. For as words flow between us, and the transference circulates wildly, we each tell a finely tethered story that began long before us, that will go on when we are gone.

21. The question of aggression brings us to complex theoretical intersects. In oral passivity, the infant lives in unconscious fusion ‘with, as-if, through’ another. The importance of inertia to understanding oral passivity cannot be overstated, being essential to grasping how projection could ever enter that scene as primary aggression. I begin with Freud’s description of the infant: “sleep is his natural condition, from which he is roused only by his bodily needs. As soon as these are satisfied he falls asleep again...[and] continues his fetal state” (1907/1962, 222). As Winnicott puts it perfectly, in the oral passive stage, “the environment that impinges cannot yet be felt by the infant to be a projection of personal aggression, since the stage has not yet been reached at which this means anything” (1949, 185); it is “a state of not having to react, which is the only state in which the self can begin to be” (Ibid, 183). We are, in sum, at a time prior to projection when regression to the monad is the only defense possible. We should further recall that at this juncture in development, the pulses of conservation are indissociable from the sexual pulses (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967, 148). Of course, coming to reality introduces impingements, while the

prime consideration for the psychical system throughout this process will remain, as always, economic efficiency—thus, the necessity of maintaining henceforth what is closest to inertia, i.e., the least energy expenditure possible. In turn, this primary condition of inertia will favour the forward transport (disposal) of unconscious affects as opposed to their accumulation (as anxiety), along with the least possible expenditure on defense (leading to the production of the ego, we could say, as an environmentally-contingent, routinized, economically efficient individual adaptation). For, as Freud explains it, “the mental apparatus is first and foremost a device for mastering the excitations which would otherwise be felt as distressing or have a pathogenic effect” (1914b, 85); and “a sexual aim...consists in replacing the projected sensation of stimulation in the erotogenic zone by an external stimulus which *removes* that sensation by producing a feeling of satisfaction” (Freud, 1905c, 184; italics mine). We can restate this in terms of fusion as economical efficiency, since the other is indistinguishable from the «*pré-moi*,» thus defense is moot. Fusion will be favoured economically whenever projection is impossible (due to not having been achieved developmentally) or unfeasible (due to the demands of defense being too great), such as during too-rapid changes in the infant’s life, when «*repères*» may be lost, triggering “regression to dependence, in order to get behind the period at which impingements became multiple and unmanageable” (Winnicott, 1949, 193). And in that a mother essentially “provides a setting” (Winnicott, 1956/1992b, 303) for the onset of projection on a high frequency of lures, there is a potent discussion to be had of the sequelae of moving or immigration, as the loss of language mediation, being a threat for the (fragile) infant as serious as the mother’s prolonged absence—though it would take us far afield. Still, Dolto’s notion that the phoneme is a transitional object and audition is primary in coming to reality, long before vision, should seed fields of thought for a future uptake.

For emergence in reality is, as Freud describes it, contingent on continuity under the control of the pleasure principle: “Satisfaction must have been previously experienced in order to have left behind a need for its repetition” (1905c,184); in a footnote, Strachey adds, “an ‘experience of satisfaction’ is only a special application of Freud’s general theory of the mechanism of wishes, as explained in ...*The Interpretation of Dreams*...The whole topic links up with Freud’s views on reality-testing” (1905c,184f). So here we have, as clearly as

we ever will, the indispensable idea of *continuity from the archaic as symbolic filiation with a precocious experience of pleasure that predestines the receptivity of the passive infant to the detection of «repères» as potential sites of investment, i.e., projection*. Thus, projection enables “sublimation” as an economic efficiency, as Freud says: “powerful components are acquired for every kind of cultural achievement by this diversion of sexual instinctual forces from sexual aims and their direction to new ones” (1905c, 178; also 1921, 139). Freud stresses projection is a reaction to fear: “[the paranoid] projects his unconscious impulses outward” (1908/1962, 291), as “the self-reproach is repressed in a manner which may be described as projection” (1896c, 184)—“projecting...into the external world” (Ibid, 209). Further, projection is a normative process: “The mechanism is frequently employed in normal life and it is from such normal examples that one must proceed” (Freud, 1906/1962, 33). Reciprocally, interprojections in the monad—de facto, ‘fusion’—is an economic response to phobia as a perception of the sudden loss of continuity (absence of any securitizing «repère»). Aided by Dolto’s thinking, we thus understand projection to the exterior as an attempt to repeat on the side of reality the economics of interprojection, to reduce the need for defense and return what is closest to inertia (given perceptual impingements cannot be prevented from encroaching, especially prior to displacement, i.e., walking). Put another way, *identification is an experiment in projection that enables differentiation*. And thinking with Dolto, I offer that projection is an unconscious means of complimentary regulation by which the subject is *making* a «semblable» (in phantasy), as a process requiring greater libidinal investment (thus constructed progressively) following the developmentally prior process of simply *finding* another «semblable.» In other words, sometime during the oral ‘aggressive’ stage, projection begins as the aggression of primary narcissism. Klein defines “projective identification” in 1946, precisely as an unconscious effort to incite complimentary behaviour (Spillius, 2011, 126). In turn, “projective identification” is *almost* named by Dolto in 1939, when she writes, “thought at the anal stage is characterized by mechanisms of *identification, of projection...*inherent to the sado-masochistic ambivalence of object relations” (MA, 36; italics mine).

Pausing, we observe that the capacity for projection is a sign that the oral passive stage is being surpassed (later regressions notwithstanding). And here we encounter the

notion of “sublimation,” which Freud first elaborated in the context of DaVinci (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967, 148)—a concept of staggering significance to psychobiography as the exploration of the vicissitudes of the pulses. As Ledoux puts it, sublimation and symbolization are “close terms in the thinking of F. Dolto,” for whom sublimation has a “technical sense” linked to symbolic castration and the displacement of aims favoured by the super-ego, as the capacity for “archaic pleasure to be surpassed” (2006, 326-327). From 1939, in fact, Dolto theorizes on sublimation as “the utilization of libido in social activities tolerated or stimulated by the exterior world,” such that “repression is silent, without anxiety” (MA, 19); while “if sublimations are insufficient...there will be a tension that ‘translates anxiety’” (MA, 20). Freud himself explains sublimation in terms of primary narcissism, as a retreat of libido into the «moi» critical to its formation, as sublimation functions to “unite and link” (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967, 466). As Freud states, “If this displaceable energy is desexualized libido, it may also be described as sublimated energy...If thought processes in the wider sense are to be included among these displacements, then the activity of thinking is also supplied from the sublimation of erotic motive forces” (1923, 45). We stop to ponder the phenomenal watershed: thought, as the inheritor of dream-work, is itself sublimation. In sum, we are witnessing the developmental progression from a passive-state human being to the increasing need (and, hopefully, capacity) to project in response to environmental impingements by cathecting identifications on the exterior, rather than by the primary defense of regression. This transition from oral passivity to the ‘anal-sadistic’ stage is effectively an ‘oral aggressive’ phase—alternately conceptualized as an ‘oral stage’ divided into a passive and a later active/aggressive phase. Successful sublimations mark the subject with the capacity for fluidly displacing libido onto appropriate socio-cultural objects (including words) as environmentally-contingent affective investments, optimizing routinized defenses as economic efficiencies.

Chapter Six: Conclusion ~ Trace & Publication

22. Françoise Dolto met Alain Cuny (1908 – 1994) while she was on her way to René Laforgue’s, most likely in 1934 when he first became her analyst. Cuny apparently

blocked the road, furious and baring a revolver, saying it was for Laforgue, «le salaud» [scum]; deadpan, Dolto said she wanted to talk to Laforgue first, then joked Cuny would be better off eating supper with her, as he could always kill Laforgue the next day (ATP, 123-125). Delighted by her offer of play, Cuny dined with her at «L'Hotel de la Loube,» in Roquebroussane (PF, 119), a splendid evening in which he recited Baudelaire. So began a profound friendship that endured until her death. By 1936, they were both active members of Laforgue's «Club des Piqués» (AI, 124 & 131), chanting its parodic theme song (VC1, 526-527)—and their lives, begun the same year, would soon overlap again at the «Maison Blanche» where they worked (VC1, 490-491; photo:VC1, 507). This adult asylum was oddly at the juncture of rue Secrétan (named after Dolto's paternal grandfather), and bore the same name as the «Maison Blanche» near her home, though it was unrelated to it. Here, Dolto and Cuny remained during the mid-1930s (VC1, 507), unhappy with the demoralizing overcrowding, after which they each turned to the work that would result in their becoming two of their country's most well-known citizens: Dolto, as a household word whose work forever shaped psychoanalysis, education and family life in France; and Cuny, as one of his country's most popular actors (Wikipédia, 2014a). The letters between them for more than five decades are potent with genuine affect, conveying a bond beyond temporalities. He will tell her that he is braided with her because she supports his mutism (VC2, 4), that she helps him overcome the interdiction against breathing (VC2, 14), and that she is the moon that makes his day (VC2, 549). She will confess to him that she is afraid of death, and she always holds something in reserve (VC2, 14); and she pleads to hear from him so she won't be forgotten in a «trou» [a hole] (VC1, 491). The reader stops to muse that she was content for decades at «trousseau»—a homonymic cluster of hole-hop, hole-water, hole-bucket, and hole-high, as well as “dowry”—in sum, holes with means of escape. The game of sounds is reciprocal, for he says she is his symbolic and real «manger,» a play on the English “manger” and French «manger» [to eat] (VC2, 309). Then, in a letter he writes her on a «samedi 20» [Saturday the 20th], he toys with the date's homonyms: «ça me dit: vain?» [It tells me something, vainly?]; and «ça me divin» [it makes me divine, it divines me] (VC2, 494). He also names his new home «Savon noir» [black soap], as a phonemic inversion of «non-savoir» [non-knowing] (VC2, 494f). Even simple exchanges over family events

convey a feeling that reality is merely something to manage atop their deep, unconscious tethers. And when Dolto worries about not being able to write her dissertation, saying she needs “eyes looking at me, obliging me to talk...waiting for me to talk” (AI, 124), Cuny sends her two porcelain panther eyes (Ibid). Thus the woman marked as a child for her «yeux ronds» [round eyes; an idiom for great curiosity] (EN, 9; DW, 67) begins her watershed work (AI, 124). His letter of 1988 is the last public correspondence (VC2, 901), and a late photo honours their 50-year trust (VC2, 761).

23. The statue of Jean de la Fontaine is the most famous object at the Jardins de Ranelagh (Wikipédia, 2014n). Erected in 1985, it features a full-bodied Lafontaine looking down on a crow giving a fox a big coin (photo: AI, 94). Yet prior to it stood an earlier version (1891), which is the one young Françoise actually saw daily. So a visitor familiar with Dolto has the odd feeling of a reversal in time, as if its revision had been influenced by her “symbolic payment” (CE, 371; VC2, 890; SS, 124 & 125f; TL, 112; ATP, 196; DW, 139). That first statue featured Lafontaine’s bust, a woman with wings and clouds, a child with wings, various animals, stalks of wheat, and a crow holding cheese (Ass. du Musée Jean de la Fontaine, n.d.). Arguably, though, another statue here is far more prominent: a white marble structure of a young fisherman dragging a net holding a human head. Erected in 1883, it is Longepied’s, «Pêcheur ramenant la tête d’Orphée dans ses filets» [Fisherman bringing back the *head* of Orpheus in his nets] (Wikimedia, 2012). I daydream about the effect, over years, of her passing by this adult head, and its being the burdensome catch (debris, even?) of a powerful child. Further, it returns beloved «Oncle Pierre,» who died at the «Sphinx de la Tête des Faux» [‘of the head of false ones’], which became a site of pilgrimage for the family (AI, 79; VC1, 60f, 207, 209 & 391).

24. I believe Segal’s symbolic equation is a translation on Kleinian grounds of that which on Doltoian grounds we will describe as continuity with the archaic via «repères.» Segal explains: “It is the time of hallucinatory wish-fulfillment, described by Freud, when the mind creates objects which are then felt to be available. A leading defense mechanism in this phase is projective identification...[wherein] the subject in phantasy projects large parts

of himself into the object, and the object becomes identified with the parts of the self that it is felt to contain...[This is] the beginning of the process of symbol formation” (1957/1981, 53). Meanwhile, congruent with what we understand, with Dolto, as the normal reality of the infant, Segal describes how “excessive projective identification equates the object with the projected part of the subject...treating the symbol...as part of oneself” (1994, 396; also 1981, 12 & 134). This thinking about the infant dovetails perfectly Winnicott’s note that we find the “root of symbolism in time” (1953/1971, 6)—for we are precisely, or rather nebulously, at the infant’s entry into time-space. I also consider Winnicott’s discussion of how transitional phenomena become spread over the “intermediate territory” between inner and outer reality (1971a, 5) to be enriched by Dolto’s narration of symbolic filiation, in that coming to reality is mediated by the primary processes, thus we can predict just such a slow formation of associations, a “spreading,” as ordinary dream-work—elsewhere also explained by Dolto in terms of ‘transferential colouring,’ ‘diffusion’ and ‘diffraction.’ Further, I believe Winnicott is describing the symbolic equation when he narrates “the infant’s hallucinating and the world’s presenting, with moments of illusion for the infant in which the two are taken by him to be identical” (1945, 142); only with Dolto, we are always prompted to consider the critical value of the *audition of priorly-invested phonemes* in those presentations. We also invoke Abraham’s pertinent reference that, “communication by means of symbols is chosen by those who must not give free expression to their thoughts and yet are unwilling to suppress them completely. Symbolism is both revealing and concealing” (1911/1955, 243). Is this not, in effect, the infant’s life in a nutshell? Abraham further clarifies that, “the symbolism which occurs in the dream occurs in all unconscious activities” (Ibid, 242), and this is what Dolto finds, as dream-work on phonemes enables our engagement with reality as a ‘refinding.’ Dolto’s theorization on these matters is clear from 1939, where she describes how the “liquidation of the castration complex is translated by the dream” (MA, 206), and how a child’s symbols reveal the «âge affectif» of the subject (MA, 53). In each bringing to their theoretical work the après-coup of their precocious infantile trauma, I believe Dolto and Segal reveal how early inscription begins, and the permanence of this record as a legacy to thought.

25. Dolto says, “all I write seems too elliptical” (VC2, 453), yet her words harbour a curious beauty:

In 1957: Desire for intersubjective communication is the fundamental desire that above and beyond the whole world of sensory objects of pleasure for the body is essential to the human being...They recognize, in something, one and the other as «semblable» in desire, and one by the other complementary together as granted in this intersubjective encounter...The «lien» that unites them beyond their separation is an «ensemble» of signs that, little by little, are elaborated in language. The imaginary sensori-motor representation of this language recalls the joyful encounter of the sensory presence, and the signifier of the psychical ‘more of life’ that accompanied the encounter permits the temporalisation of desire while waiting for the re-finding of this other... These memorized traces are as much in the body of the desiring one as in the souvenir of the sensorial exchanges that represent the living with the pleasure that accompanied their encounter. The other thus becomes woven with the body proper of the one who desires his return. The other is thereby guarantor of my existence in space and time, the same way that for him, being his elective other, the souvenir that he has of me is guarantor of his existence... Elective affinities between human beings derive from these perceptions, holders of subtle accords between them, that make them recognize each other as «semblables» and at the same time constantly new and never totally knowable, provoking each other to a creative renewal of mutual adaptation... Freudian decoding by psychoanalysis opens onto the origin of language necessary to co-living, but reveals the punctual contingency of intersubjective communication through time and space between individuals of the human race (SS, 244-246).

In 1975: Desire continues its route that develops in spiral with an expansive dynamic movement through that which, in the body of man, is growth and multiplication, by the adjunction-disjunction-elimination, that relational life symbolises in expressive language in its continual «mutance» [shedding, mutation], fruits of its partitions. This desire, when its dynamic is immured in its isolation instead of continuing in its expansive destiny, sees the spiral inflect its movement, enroll upon itself and, after

phantasmatic consumptions of structures of the anterior «moi» that have become ersatz exterior elements, encyst language and the symbolic function inherent in human desire, making him scission his own potentialities taken for an elsewhere and invert, without ever ceasing, if no one comes from the exterior of this individual to break the vicious cycle (PS, 88-89).

26. Freud first met Yvette Guilbert in Paris in August 1889, encouraged to her show by Mme Charcot (Steel, 1982, 84). They met again on her tours to Vienna, eight between 1892-1929 (Freud Museum London, 1992, 209-232). Guilbert, whose portrait hangs in London next to the Princess and Lou Andreas-Salome (Ibid, 86), was Eva Rosenfeld's aunt (Ibid, 85). On an evening with Guilbert and her husband, Max Schiller, Freud shared poignantly, «Meine prothese spricht nicht mehr französisch» [My prosthesis no longer speaks French] (Scheidhauer, 2010, 70 & 70f; Steel, 1982, 87). And when Freud passed through Paris on his way to England, Guilbert was among the few guests (Steel, 1982, 89). Oddly enough, there is no mention of Freud in her memoirs, literally a 'who's who' of her time (Guilbert, 1927 & 1929)—as if she holds Freud closely, privately. But in January, 1938, she writes about him in her column in «*Ce soir*»: “We are stupified to realize that we had never been interested in our mechanism” (Scheidhauer, 2010, 75; my translation). Guilbert never read Freud (Steel, 1982, 90), but her interest in the wellsprings of creativity prompts his letters to her and Schiller in 1931: “It is really interesting for me to have to defend my theories against Mme Yvette and Uncle Max” (E.Freud, 1960, 442). Freud explains to her how *Saint-Anne* can only be grasped, “if we understand the particularities of the infancy of Leonardo” (Ibid, 443). Given that he did not much enjoy music, Freud's relation to Guilbert seems ironic to some (e.g., Charuty, 2015, 83). Yet in fact, Guilbert was not a singer but a «diseuse» [sayer]: a highly compelling story-teller—and a lay scholar of ancient French songs. Further, we learn from his colleague that Freud's disinterest in music was rooted in his regarding it as an “unintelligible language” (Hitschmann, 1957, 27). In his letter to Guilbert in 1938 (E.Freud, 1960, 494), Freud bemoans missing, due to illness, “the chance to become young again for even an hour thanks to the «charme magique d'Yvette»” (Ibid). Guilbert's corpus is ripe for psychobiographers—while a curious love of French

persists as a subtext in Freud's life, and one feels he might well have chosen Paris instead of London were it not, paradoxically, for "France being impossible for us due to the language" (E.Freud, 1960, 493-494). Ambivalence entirely resists a settling here.

27. Of the biographer's dream, Leon Edel says, "In the last stages of the writing of his life, he [Henry James] came to me in my dream world, early one summer morning" (1987, 3). And Winnicott notes, "When I write a paper for this [British Psycho-Analytical] Society on any subject, I nearly always find myself dreaming dreams which belong to that subject" (1949,177f). Even scientists at the Salpêtrière note one gets more dreams asking for a journal of them (Arnulf, 2014, 17). In fact, Freud said the same thing a century prior, after walking the same grounds and translating Charcot: "Anyone who takes an interest in dreams remembers a considerably greater number of them after waking" (1900b, 572). So I wonder, is writing biography an 'asking for dreams'?

28. The «Archives Françoise Dolto» issued its most recent book in 2008, for the 100th anniversary of her birth. «*Archives de l'intime*» (Potin, 2008), a project steered by Dolto's daughter, Catherine, is unarguably the most beautiful of the corpus. A rare collection is here, including extracts from «*Traversée du siècle*»—Dolto's unpublished co-autobiography with Boris, as well as memorabilia and images of her art reproduced nowhere else, even in the huge volumes of correspondence (VC1 & VC2). I believe its most precious content is a little poem from the journal of 16-year old Françoise dated April 1924. The time of writing should not be overlooked, being a work produced in «l'entre-deux-guerres.» In 1924, Dolto is herself between her birth (1908) and her rebirth in name, via marriage (1942). Her beloved Irish nanny is gone (1909); as is Jacqueline (d.1920); her uncle-fiancé-godfather, Pierre (d.1916); her maternal grandfather, Arthur Demmler (d.1912); her paternal grandmother, Marie-Charlotte Landry (d. 1921); and a paternal grandfather she never met, Henri Murette (d.1880). On the other hand, her youngest sibling, Jacques, has just arrived (b.1922); and still alive are the elder of greatest influence, her maternal great-grandmother, Cécile Overnay («Dan-mé Étan») (d.1925); her maternal grandmother, Henriette Marguerite Secrétan («Dan-mé») (d.1938); her parents and other brothers; and Mille (Élisabeth

Weilandt), governess since 1919 (AI, 97; VC1, 23) (d.1957). So, from the last pages of the last text, I offer “The Dead” (AI, 240), as I wish to give Dolto the last word in this work, more hers than mine:

I live with the dead more than with the living. .
Around me, I feel, I see, I hear their soul,
and their plaintive call claims me unceasingly,
remainder of the love I had for them...before!
I love this place, calm and silent,
where some rose bush, some leafless flower,
marks their home until...Eternity...
It is a cemetery, yes, but it is joyful.
And yet, it is not only to cemeteries
That I go when I want to speak with them,
to come closer to them and then tenderly hear
the worried whisper of familiar shadows.
And I don't need to be kneeling either.
Often, in the screeching crowd that brushes by me,
I have felt a hand tapping my shoulder,
An invisible being telling me, “Think of us!”

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