



I wanted to combine the two but it is impossible. I will keep them separate for the time being. The Friendship with the actual names of the people here seems to have more vitality than the Mirror, re-worked from the Friendship material, with an attempt to disguise the people with fictitious names. ("Thorn Thicket" 51)

Although H.D. claims that because of its facticity, the journal-essay has more "vitality," and although she felt that the writing of the novel originally did not "jell" (TT 14), it is my belief that the novel, despite its note-like and unrevised format, must be "resurrected" from its unpublished status, as it sheds abundant light on her relationship with Heydt as another "blameless physician" (Tribute to Freud 50), thus juxtaposing him with Freud. Further, the memoir becomes significant as a textual alembic which casts into sharp relief issues manifested in her other postwar works, i.e. the occult and its association with psychoanalysis through spiritualism, or other recurrent elements such as the image of the snake or the figure of Undine.

As mentioned above, Erich Heydt was professionally affiliated with Medard Boss (Abel Kreutz in MM) who was his analyst. Although starting as a Freudian disciple, Boss followed a Jungian psychoanalytic approach, not bound up by Freudian thought. Then he turned to Martin Heidegger and followed existential psychoanalysis with heavy reliance on psychopathology, defenses, and dreams which are seen not as symbols but as indications of how patients should control their lives. Heydt's existentialism will raise doubts for H.D. (Rica in the memoir): "perhaps it was this existentialistic analysis that he spoke of, that she brushed aside, as really too cob-webby" (MM 62). "He pretends to disregard the 'classic' Freudian technique but he is always eager for gossip of those very-far off days and people" (Part II, 5). Her thoughts are clearer and more focused in "Thorn Thicket": "But why should Erich Heydt and his new-fashionable Existentialist Analysis conflict with me and my ideas and findings and my loyalty to the classic Maestro of Vienna?" (2). Eric encourages Rica to reflect on the other "guests" (MM Part I, 22, 26) of the clinic; he thus turns her into a disciple, repeating Freud's predilection to have "classed her in the same category as the Flying Dutchman [Dr. van Leeuw] - [they] were students" (TF 18).

H.D.'s first encounter with Heydt unearths the past: "... with no preliminaries, he instructs Sister to prop my arm on a pillow and as he jabs in the hypodermic needle, he says, 'You know Ezra Pound, don't you?'" (CF 25). His question sets the pace for what it is to follow. Like Freud he will unearth the past in order to give answers to unanswered predicaments: "there was something he kept saying that she hadn't told him [...] something must have happened to you" (MM, Part I, 22). "'Two thirds is hidden,' he says" (Part III, 61).

What elucidates the relationship between Rica and Heller is the way he comes to be associated with visionary experiences, thus bridging psychoanalysis and the occult. One of the manuscript's interesting features is a vision of Heller Rica experienced. She "had now a dim reflection, but very dim of a face in the uneven mirror of the hat-rack and another refracted from the smaller glass, to her right by the office door, over the umbrella-stand" (MM 1). He was wearing a "wine-red velvet jacket" he was never in the possession of: "I have no wine-red velvet jacket" (Part I, 15). Rica thinks that he "was the same as usual, only a little more so" (16). Heller becomes her Rosenkavalier (14-15).<sup>1</sup> Unlike Freud, he does not see her vision as a "dangerous symptom" (TF 51). "It was something else that could be explained, though the explanation might be meticulous and tiresome" (Part I, 54-55). Rica "thought of him as a mirror or reflector that had for that instant [...] projected an image" (57). Besides, Heller was also endowed with the ticket to partake in visionary experiences: he was talking about the "most beautiful experience: madness, manic type ... [which] went on for two days. How sad when I had to face the stepping down to earth again" (Part II, 4).

His miraculous gift met her own now, half way, or her 'hallucinations', her occasional "beautiful experience" needed no apology – she need never explain again. She had, in fact, had no further vision of Visit, as she sometimes called it, or the Protean manifestation – of which the original Rosenkavaller had served as the bond between them. (Part II, 4-5)

Why is she attracted by Heller who is idealized as a Rosenkavalier (Knight of the Rose) in her vision? The plot of Richard Strauss' comic opera *Der Rosenkavalier* may not interest her as much as the rose itself constituting the knight's distinguishing characteristic. What makes the rose so important? A consideration of the rose as a leitmotif in H.D.'s work will provide important speculations about Rica's (H.D.'s mask) preoccupation with the "Rosenkavalier." First, as Freud saw it, the rose is a sexual symbol: its "particular shape [...] associates it most directly with the shape of the vulva" (Seward 7). Thus Heller reawakens Rica's sexual passion in the same way Lionel Durand and Sir John Perse rejuvenated H.D. in *Hermetic Definition*:

Why did you come  
to trouble my decline?  
I am old (I was old till you came);

the reddest rose unfolds,

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<sup>1</sup> She saw the Richard Strauss opera, *Der Rosenkavalier*, during her analysis with Freud in 1933-34. In the MM manuscript other variant spellings of this name are encountered: *Cavalier* and *Rosencavaller* (Part I, 57), and *Kaveller* (Part II, 9). Norman Holmes Pearson in his postwar letters to H.D. referred to himself as her "Chevalier," the French version of "Kavalier," often signing his letters to her as "Your C" or simply "C." She adopted this nickname for him, thus linking her two principal male supporters late in her life (See *Between History and Poetry: The Letters of H.D. and Norman Holmes Pearson*).

(which is ridiculous  
in this time, this place,  
  
unseemly, impossible,  
even slightly scandalous),  
the reddest rose unfolds; (3)

However, H.D., in her romanticism sought a spiritualized sexuality that she found reinforced by her discovery of Count Zinzendorf's theological view that the Holy Spirit is female (G 10, 263). Thus, the reawakened sexuality becomes more important as Heller exudes an aura of spirituality and becomes a pole of attraction for Rica who, much like H.D. endowed with "gifts of understanding of the latter day psychoanalytic mysteries," wished to "transfer" them to the "strange relationship" with Heydt (CF 72). At this point, it is important to note the use of the word "mysteries" as if H.D. wishes to stress the occult/mystery inherent in psychoanalysis, something that Freud would adamantly reject but what Heydt seems to be endorsing.

Secondly the rose is associated with Isis. It is her sacred flower and it is "solar and maternal in significance" (Seward 10). As such, it greatly appeals to H.D. since its maternity comes to be associated with women's procreativity and hence with generativity: the role of the woman as a begetter of children but also as a generator of poetry and fiction: "the un-born child or the about-to-be-born Book is the gloire" ("Thorn Thicket" 41). Further, the spirituality, mystery and magic inherent in the name of Isis is another challenge for H.D., who in *Trilogy* wishes to "recover [her] secret" (51). In "Magic Mirror," Heller invites Rica to join him on a trip to Egypt: "You must come to Egypt with me" (Part I, 56),<sup>2</sup> as if wishing to recover the figure in her birthplace.

A further association joins the rose with the myth of Undine. In Teutonic folklore an "ondine"<sup>3</sup> was created without soul but she could obtain one by marrying a mortal, thus becoming mortal and human herself. In Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*, Lucius, who has been transformed into an ass after he is unsuccessfully engaged in witchcraft, has to eat Isis's sacred roses in order to redeem his human form and his soul. In both cases, Undine and Lucius are engaged into a quest for the human form, not only corporeality but the acquisition of a soul which in Lucius' case is translated as spirituality: he finally becomes Isis' priest and much like H.D./Rica had his own spiritual reformation in the visionary encounter with Isis (196).

Finally in alchemy the red rose is masculine (it is the King) associated with sulfur, whereas the white rose represents salt and the feminine principle (the

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<sup>2</sup> The figure of Isis features prominently in many of H.D.'s works, including *Trilogy*, *Hermetic Definition*, and *Helen in Egypt*.

<sup>3</sup> Paracelsus was the first to coin the word Undine (L. unda=wave) as one of the four elementals, the others being air, earth and fire.

Queen). The union of the two stands for the alchemical opus, *coniunctio*,<sup>4</sup> and its successful completion results in the emergence of the child Hermaphroditus, an important figure who symbolizes the union of female and male in the divine being, a reflection perhaps of H.D.'s own mythic interpretation of her bisexuality. At the same time, the primary goal of *coniunctio* is the conversion of base metals into gold, a procedure which also entails spiritual purification for the alchemist himself. Thus, the marriage of the white rose and the red comes to embody H.D.'s spiritual quest, her attempt to give answers to matters "unresolved in consciousness" (MM Part III, 21) by accessing the realm of vision.

The Rosenkavalier is not merely any knight that has infatuated H.D./Rica in old age but one who unlike Freud and Havelock Ellis can join her in her spiritual quest. Although Rica deems her psychoanalytic sessions with Freud invaluable, she feels that "[i]t was Eric who had lifted the 'curtain' for her – suddenly it had happened" (Part I, 36). Analysis with him is "a sort of Eden retrouv  , to use the alchemist phrase from her thumbed and shabby copy of Jean Chaboseau, when a phrase, a verse, a line, a word was new to him. His finding or her revealing it to him, gave her back this virgin freshness" (Part III, 41). Her sessions with Heydt constitute both a revitalization of the occult and a recovery of the alchemy of language. Word association now was not a mere psychoanalytic tool but a means of accessing the visionary. Heller is a healer – Heller, "healer" – (Part III, 48).<sup>5</sup> Along with him, who is not a native English speaker, she has to delve into words anew and unearth the hidden alchemy, the different associations which endow them with a palimpsestic series of meanings and enable her to see them from a fresh perspective.

Carrying on this alchemical-psychoanalytic game of word association, she saw herself as the female Eric, Rica, Erica, "Am-Erica," a game which leads her back to her home country and recalls her half-brother, Eric. A scene resurfaces:

I was lying on his bed. I must have been about fifteen. He was reading to me. My father walked into the room. There was nothing wrong – there were only the two straight-backed wooden chairs. My father didn't say anything – our father, that is [...] I don't remember that I felt anything. Only something must have broken. (Part III, 51)

The tone is apologetic. There were two uncomfortable chairs; thus, the only comfortable place for her to sit and listen to Eric was the bed; it was not a place for sexual games; nothing had happened; she hadn't felt anything. Only

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<sup>4</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the alchemical opus, see C. Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy, Alchemical Studies and Mysterium Coniunctionis*.

<sup>5</sup> Concerning her choice for "Heller," as a mask for Heydt, she writes to Norman Holmes Pearson on March 15, 1956: "I found his name and he seems to like it – thank you for your own suggestions. He will be Eric Heller – a simple enough name but he says not really common-place and he likes the idea of the Heller, light – and relationship with the Hellen [sic]" (*Between History and Poetry* 182).

something had been destroyed. Does she insinuate sexual harassment? No evidence emanates from Freud's analysis. Perhaps this can merely be seen as another "invasion" from the over-protective Professor, one preceding his later discovery of H.D. with her then fiancé Ezra Pound engaged in "demi-vierge embraces" (End to Torment 19). But no, Eric was "a sort of young father. He adored [her]." They "were inseparable" (Part III, 47).

In *Tribute to Freud* H.D. expresses her frustration and conflict with Freud: "The impact of his words was too dreadful – I simply felt nothing at all. I said nothing. What did he expect me to say? (16). More explicitly in her poem "The Master, she voices her anger at his reluctance to supply her with definite answers to her predicaments. "I was angry at the old man,/I wanted an answer,/a neat answer" (Collected Poems 454). In much the same way, in "Magic Mirror" Rica in a stream of consciousness manner reflects on her relationship with Heller and forms her own analysis of him. Doubts start to accumulate when she finds his comments and insights about her writing extraordinary and beyond his own ability to comprehend texts written in English. She feels that there is someone else behind him who guides him into this. Heller has talked to her about an ex-medium and his library of occult literature. "Eric had spoken of a party he had been to, at the house of a former German 'medium,' he called him. He said the gift had left this 'medium' but that he had a whole library of valuable occult books" (Part II, 83). Rica can sense that there was something else in the air: "There was some alchemist at work here" (Ibid.). "There was someone in the background. There was a certain curious feeling of insecurity [...] Was parapsychology another name for magic? [...] It might be some other person altogether" (Part III, 83). Freud did not accept her visionary powers; and Ellis would ridicule them.<sup>6</sup> Although Heydt did not share Freud's disapproval of her visionary experiences, he was in a way skeptical about her collapse after Lord Dowding had doubted her spiritual encounters with the RAF boys. Heydt "turned on her, 'you can't believe that sort of thing now'" (40). Was it "paranoia"? Whatever it was, it sustained her and gave her a new force to continue with her writing; "[s]he could collect herself [...] She could make it quite clear" (41).

As mentioned above, certain leitmotifs present in H.D.'s other works are also manifested and further elucidated in "Magic Mirror." The serpent, an image that is foregrounded in *Tribute to Freud* and associated with Aesclepius (god of medicine) and hence with Freud as the "blameless physician" is present in "Magic Mirror" as well. Madame Graf, a manic depressive Brunner resident, talks about a "boa-constrictor" that has attacked her. Rica doubts the veracity of the incident, but becomes preoccupied with it. One does not fail to associate it with the dream H.D. recalls in *The Gift*. A serpent with "great teeth crawled on Papa-and-Mama's bed and he was drinking water out of a

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<sup>6</sup> Commenting on H.D.'s visionary experience at Corfu, Ellis noted that she went "right out of her mind" (Grosskurth 297).

kitchen-tumbler” (113). H.D. and her two brothers, Harold and Gilbert, were there, but there was also another snake which had “sprung” at her and “bitten the side of [her] mouth” causing pangs of horror at the thought of death. Their maid, “dark Mary,” the “good enough mother,” (see Winnicott’s *Playing and Reality*) proffered milk to heal the wound (*Ibid.*). The phallic serpent strongly recalls the primal scene and the exclusion of the girl from the *jouissance* (see Ruth Robbins’ *Literary Feminisms*) experienced by the parents. She writes in “Thorn Thicket”:

We all know the original ‘primal scene,’ the consciousness or actual ‘picture’ of father-mother in the act of creating – creating ‘us.’ That was long ago. They seem small and far away, at most, sun spots on the sun” (19)

Archaic memories resurface in dreams. The *jouissance* she is excluded from is further elucidated as creative *jouissance*. Although she is the one to be created she is an outsider. When she finally receives the attack of the snake it is merely pain that she experiences.

Further, as she mentions in *Compassionate Friendship*, the snake could be “the old serpent of “Gnosis [sic] biting its tail. Around, around it all, was the fulfillment, the actuality of the ‘love story’ and of the religious or mystical search, the alchemy and the hermeticism of the old grimoires, affirmed and realized together” (30).<sup>7</sup>

In *The Gift*, H.D. intuitively partakes in one of Mama’s reveries about snakes. Mama, who “was proverbially afraid of snakes,” recalls the story of Moravian leader Count Zinzendorf, who was miraculously saved from the attack of the “puff-adders” who left him intact but merely “passed over the paper and his hand held steady.” Why would the snakes refrain from touching him? What was he involved in at that moment that made the serpents stop? One speculation was that he was “pondering one of his poetic strophes” (G 73, 245, 274). Were the puff-adders immobilized before poetry? As serpents of the gnosis were they aware of the visionary powers of the poet? Did they stop out of awe? It is interesting to note that this visionary stream-of-consciousness attributing special mystical “gifts” to Zinzendorf takes place in Mama’s mind just as she is about to visit the gypsy who predicts that she will have a similarly “gifted” child, the “child born under a star” (79).

The mythological figure of Undine which is present in *White Rose and the Red and The Sword Went out to Sea*, features prominently in “Magic Mirror” as well. There are references to the play *Ondine* (1939) by French playwright Jean

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<sup>7</sup> The serpent biting its tail implies the Uroboros (ουροβόρος= the one eating its tail) the dragon devouring its tail, as stated by Jung in *Psychology and Alchemy* (126). Uroboros represents the cyclical nature of things and constitutes the basic mandala of Alchemy, the *prima materia* of the alchemical process.

Giraudaux (1882-1944), and Eric as a Rosenkavalier figure is looking for Undine (Part II, 29) associating Rica with her: “‘You are Ondine?’ But later he had agreed with her that it was Maya [one of the inmates] who was Undine or Ondine as he pronounces it” (Part I, 27). The myth H.D. has in mind is most likely Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué’s version of the old Celtic myth of the Melusine to which she must have been introduced as a child. Rica “had read it at school” (Part II, 29). The story revolves around the power of love as conducive to the acquisition of a soul. This recalls the Danteian notion of love, endorsed by the Pre-Raphaelites and recycled by H.D. in *White Rose and the Red* in the relationship between Elizabeth Siddal and William Morris. Why is H.D. fascinated with the legend? Why does she recycle names from the myth in her own work?<sup>8</sup> Miraculously incidents from the story recall her story and they thus become part of her personal revisionist mythology. The trip to Vienna of Sir Huldbrand, Undine and Bertalda strongly recalls her “pilgrimage” to Vienna to be psychoanalyzed by Freud. Their trip proves disastrous for it “unearths” Undine’s “watery” past; the outcome of H.D.’s trip to Vienna is miraculous as it unearths long-forgotten – repressed – truths that will eventually alter her life. Further the triangle of the three (Sir Huldbrand, Undine and Bertalda) reverberates not only the “erotic triangulation,” as Eileen Gregory puts it (H.D. and Hellenism 35) but the general triangulation motif manifested in many of her works, i.e. in the poems of Hymen (Christodoulides in *And Never Know the Joy: Sex and the Erotic in English Poetry* 317), which may not be purely erotic but also alchemical in nature. When the points of a triangle are joined a circle is created which leads to the mandala. For Jung, mandalas appear in patients’ dreams during difficult and chaotic periods of their lives and symbolize the path to individuation and the wholeness of the personality (*The Archetype and the Collective Unconscious* 645). Thus, the triangulation theme of the Undine story becomes H.D.’s own triangulation concern which will finally lead to the creation of her own mandala her own “archetype of wholeness” (Ibid. 715).

Another interesting speculation on the Undine story is one associated with the name of Havelock Ellis and his close friend Olive Schreiner. Schreiner, an advocate of women’s rights particularly attracted to groups working for the advancement of women, wrote a book titled *Undine*. Further, she left many insightful comments about the way women were treated and was brave enough to foreground women’s right to sexual jouissance, a notion ignored and underestimated by the patriarchal society of the time. Some of her remarks had to do with not only the equality of the two genders but with the intellectuality of women; to those who saw women as a sexual res, she answered that she was well aware that certain men “think that it is only a woman’s body which they think they touch, but in reality it is her brain and her creative power” (Grosskurth 80). Thus far, I have not been able to locate any evidence among H.D.’s published and unpublished material to suggest

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<sup>8</sup> For instance, Sir Huldbrand becomes Hallblithe in *Majic Ring* and Hailbraith in *White Rose and the Red*.



her possible acquaintance with Schreiner's work, but most likely she was a figure that H.D. could not have possibly missed, especially in light of her role as an advocate of women's rights.

Of course the Undine/Schreiner speculation can be extended further and encompass the broader notion of sexuality and spirituality advocated by both Schreiner and Ellis.<sup>9</sup> Schreiner declared that "sex intercourse is the greatest sacrament of life" (Ibid. 94). Ellis supported this:

... the physical thing taken, of course as a symbol of the spiritual. I cannot feel anything at all about physical sexual feeling except as a "sacrament" – the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. (Grosskurth 105)

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"Magic Mirror" becomes H.D.'s "tribute" to Erich Heydt, her effort to "produce the story in terms of the now accepted extra-sensory perception theories" (Part I, 41). The memoir was not going to be "automatic writing" (Ibid. 43), and since she could not resolve the issue of the book's technique, she merely saw it as a work in progress "it isn't finished [...] I may change many things – and I had this fantasy of you, at one point – paranoia, you might say. I haven't worked it out – the relation to those fantasies and the projection of the – double, shall we call it?" (Part III, 59). And its title? "'You must call it Magic Mirror,' [Eric] said. 'It was what I meant,' she said, 'seeing you and as it were your double – but they were alike, so I didn't know it wasn't you'" (59). Despite its lack of closure and its rough, unpolished nature it is an "opus," a work that means something (Part III, 49). With it, "[s]he had finally succeeded, within the limits of human understanding, to get her story written. That was the story that [Heydt/Heller] had tried to worm out of her, perhaps in the character of psycho-therapist" (Part I, 58). The motivation to consolidate her experiences with him in "Magic Mirror" was a short-term outcome of her acquaintance with Heydt. There was also a further gift that he bestowed on her: "It should be enough and is enough that by some psychic method of association, I was given a place or given back a place among the writers that I had known in the old days. Nor was I being dragged back to the past, I was being fortified for the future" (114-15).

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<sup>9</sup> The ambivalent relationship between H.D. and Havelock Ellis is merely touched upon by her biographers, especially in light of the 1922 trip to Greece which they took together along with Bryher, but the further implications of the relationship for both has been neglected, deemed secondary when compared with that with Freud. The same plight awaited her bond with Heydt which is the focus of "Magic Mirror," "Compassionate Friendship," "Thorn Thicket" and *End to Torment*.

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