

THE LAST STRANGER: *QUERELLE* AND CULTURAL SIMULATION

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When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of second-hand truth, objectivity, and authenticity.

Jean Baudrillard

For Fassbinder's story is a history of a sellout, a sellout of the new style life. The man who once, in his early work, had rejected the customary shot/countershots, tracks, and zooms became in the end a master of a style he had himself discredited, the practitioner of a banal craft. In this way he became the bootlicking mirror image of the German establishment, the showpiece, in the guise of an outsider, of a corrupt and disaster-stricken Germany into whose favorite and most syrupy clichés he breathed new life, without any of the irony or the checks you would expect from a detached or objective mind. It was a pact forged by the outsider with the old oligarchs of the film industry, to turn the overworked formulas of "*Heimat-film*" into those of the faggot film.

Hans-Jürgen Syberberg
on Fassbinder's death

Syberberg's blast should be seen not simply as a condemnation, an anti-eulogy for his colleague, but as a criticism of the schizophrenia which has developed into the dominant mode of consciousness of postmodernism.¹ For Syberberg, Fassbinder's work represents the stalemate of Western so-

ciety, caught between mythic and ideological readings of history, but inevitably opting for the comfort of mythic (patriarchal) structures. Although the West has found the traditional mythic narratives supporting capital to be increasingly ludicrous in the wake of Nazism and imperialist ventures of the postwar years, it currently finds genuine ideological consciousness distasteful, naive, and insupportable after May '68 and the failures of numerous radical or bourgeois democratic movements of the sixties. (The situation in the U.S. describes the problem ideally: rather than recognize the historical lesson of Vietnam and Watergate, the populace has turned to the myth of regeneration through violence, pretending that the crises of the past twenty years were aberrations).

Rainer Werner Fassbinder's career is an acute representation of this predicament, although Syberberg misses the true resolution to Fassbinder's aesthetic and ideological positions. While Fassbinder, an artist of consciousness, attacked representation and illusionism, he was nevertheless a product (like most of the New German directors) of a "neocolonial" political and economic system. Raised on American popular culture,² he remained enamored of Sirk and Fuller, of genre cinema, of narrativity, and dreamed of a "German Hollywood" at the same time that he decried the postwar ravaging of Germany by multinational corporate interests. Nonetheless, Fassbinder attempted to undermine the centrality of the American imperialist culture with cynicism and a Brechtian distance in his artistic practice. Still, Syberberg accuses Fassbinder of refusing to confront directly the objects of Western fascination (including the gaze itself) within the text of a work, as in Syberberg's own *Our Hitler* and *Parsifal*. Syberberg has never suggested that his work has successfully parted company with the hero myth or the dream of Utopia embodied in the narratives of journey and recovery. Rather, he holds that his Brecht/Wagner conjunction has demonstrated the need for a critical apparatus within the artwork itself, as the audience of postmodernism remains in limbo between representation and presentation, between patriarchal myth and historical analysis.

Syberberg's assault on Fassbinder's work, especially his critique of Fassbinder's "Syberbergian" last reel of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* — with its pastiche apocalypse-cum-puppet show — is based on the notion that Fassbinder appropriated an effect, a style, without removing it from the province of illusionism and without either incorporating it within or distancing it from what is essentially a melodrama. Fassbinder's problem then, according to Syberberg, is common to the cultural inversion of postmodernism.³ Syberberg's tirade is ironic in that the real subject for investigation, Fassbinder's last film, is nowhere in evidence. *Querelle*, the film utilizing the greatest "Syberberg-effect," and demonstrating the lesson Syberberg has to teach, is Fassbinder's most important achievement as a work representative of the postmodern temperament.

Querelle de Brest, Genet's 1947 novel, has been analyzed chiefly in terms of its Dostoyevskian themes of degradation, penance, and redemption, and

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for concerns usually associated with Genet.⁴ It is remarkable and fortuitous that his project should have been taken on at a point just before the filmmaker's death. It has been suggested that *Querelle* is a transitional work rather than a "final testament"; it is important that the audience is forced to confront this work as a text on which is inscribed a significant transition in cultural history.

What is foregrounded in *Querelle* is an exploration of the mediated environment of postmodernism that has unwittingly bankrupted subjects of fascination in capitalist production and the Western narrative tradition. *Querelle de Brest* has the distinction of being an ideal model for intertextual discourse, exemplifying the need to reevaluate the subtexts of works within changing historical circumstances. In the hands of Fassbinder, *Querelle* becomes a device for the examination of a depleted signifying practice.

The "death of the hero," or the collapse of hero mythologies central to Western narrative art, is the subject of increased scholarly and popular discourse,⁵ particularly as the patriarchal ideology underneath this master narratives becomes temporarily appealing in the reactionary climate of the 1980s. Not ironically, *The Saturday Evening Post* has published an article outlining the transmutation of the hero myth that is relevant to an understanding of *Querelle's* exegesis.⁶ With the anxiety associated with that Silent Majority publication, the *Post* describes the transference of the public's collective fascination from figures of historical relevance (MacArthur, Lindbergh) to entertainers whose presence, although heavily mediated, affected cultural transformation and, as signifiers, had some foundation in the Real (Elvis Presley, James Dean, Marilyn Monroe). The situation is now quite troublesome. The historical dimension is inscribed with the names of "Dynasty" and "Dallas" characters — and Reagan as well — all as free-floating signifiers divorced from the referential, thus reinforcing delusions of the Imaginary. What the *Post* has informally described is the precession/procession of simulacra outline by Baudrillard:

- *it [the image] is the reflection of a basic reality
- *it masks and perverts a basic reality
- *it marks the absence of a basic reality
- *it bears no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum⁷

The relevance of Baudrillard's precession formula to the hero myth is the rupture of the myth from its signifying practice and historical role. *Querelle*, in its positioning the star/hero, has a unique place in this discourse. In *Querelle*, we do not have Dean/Presley/Brando incarnating within the field of the postwar spectacle Orphic/Dionysian myths, but Brad Davis — with a peculiarly characteristic slouch, cigarette centered in the mouth, eyes wary — simulating Dean/Presley/Brando. The film's sexual politics, i.e., its representation of homosexuality, must be approached exclusively

through the exploration of the bankrupt signifying practice it undertakes. *Querelle* can be understood only as "pure cinema," wherein the signifier (sexual and otherwise) is no longer adversarial but decorative, necessitating a discussion of the co-optation of sexual politics previously seen as adversarial by the dominant culture. The film's discourse is also a representation of the purely superstructural rebellion undertaken by adversarial sexuality, a rebellion now dissolved in the media. Questions about the disappearance of "love"⁸ in the film and *Querelle's* static text become obviated by this form of address.

Like much of the allusive art of postmodernism,⁹ *Querelle* contains an array of references to the implosion of meaning¹⁰ in narration to the point that its ostensible subject (criminality/sexual alienation) is actually erased. Fassbinder has constructed a Black Mass (with dolorous liturgical soundtrack) for the earlier cinematic communion centered on the sexual charisma of the movie star, or, rather, for the cult of male eros which has substituted for the chivalric romances and the sagas of the epic enablers. The simulacra have taken predominance as the hero no longer has an association with the political or the historical. It is not coincidental that Lt. Seblon — the repressed homosexual who idealizes *Querelle* — should function in the film not as the authorial *raisonneur* of Genet's novel, but as a figure for the mediation of desire with which the audience can identify. Seblon refers also to Aschenbach in *Death in Venice*, the invert who represents a cultural and ideological dilemma, viz., the torpor of the bourgeois *fin de siècle* (now become *fin-de-millennium*) temperament, driven into masochism and apocalypse out of an exaggerated self-image and expectation.¹¹ The Romantic idealization of Tadzio in *Death in Venice*, particularly when considered within the epic scope of Visconti's film version, reminds bourgeois society of its tacit contract in this enterprise, a pathological fixation located first in the bourgeois ideology of High Modernism, then in the particular scopophilia of postmodern culture. Fassbinder's *Querelle* pursues the crisis of Mann's novella and Visconti's film but in a reflexive manner, viewing the crisis at its end-point. The aspiration of Lt. Seblon must be contexted in its specific cinematic configuration. Seblon is, after all, Franco Nero, and necessarily becomes a simulacrum more so than Dirk Bogarde in *Death in Venice*, whose referential is a certain literary and historical reality. The beefcake hero of *Camelot* and *A Professional Gun* and numerous American and European grade-B genre films, Nero throws the cognoscenti back onto a contemplation of cinema's nurturing of the cult of male beauty.¹² Could the casting of Franco Nero be a joke? We attend also to the fact that Martin Sheen, a James Dean simulacrum, was an alternative to Brad Davis at an early stage of the film's production.¹³ The gaze itself, as it is focused on the simulacra of Hollywood "Homeros"¹⁴ is given its requiem in *Querelle*, along with some of the ideological assumptions underneath that phase of aesthetic production.

The term "simulacrum" may seem overextended or inaccurate in this

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discussion, particularly when applied to someone like Martin Sheen (really an elder statesman of the cinema already reproduced in teen-idol simulations), who could more easily be termed an "imitation" or an actor "influenced" by another. The concept of the simulacrum, as used by Baudrillard, refers to the copy for which no original exists, the philosophical contention from antiquity which finds its concrete example in computer-generated imagery. The basis for the concept is the divorce of the image from representation, not just of a figurative sort, but in terms of the image's foundation in history and a mode of production. The Hollywood star was always in a precarious position in the representation process, but the increased cloning of stars, advancing rapidly with the voraciousness of the spectacle, has thrown the star into the category of the simulacrum. The undifferentiated chaos in which the star/hero is located is at the crux of Querelle's parody. Brad Davis and Martin Sheen become simulacra as we perceive their separation, in the current environment, from the radical assumptions that made a James Dean part of an adversarial cultural tendency.

It would be erroneous to periodize the destruction of male eros/divine enabler within the time frame increasingly associated with postmodernism (the past twenty-five years or so). Both the erasure of Dean/Presley/Brando as adversarial signifiers and the recycling of such figures as "trash archetypes" (fully enunciated myths produced in the mediascape as kitschy posters and associated souvenir art) are part of a long-term Enlightenment project, one that returns the concepts of sacrifice and hierarchy to Christianity. In his painstaking study of the representation of Christ's sexuality in Renaissance art and its erasure by the Enlightenment mind, Leo Steinberg notes that the depiction of Christ's genitals in Renaissance iconography affirmed the concept of God's alliance with the human condition.¹⁵ The puritan ideology constituting the "modern oblivion" to which Christ's sexuality was consigned effectively destroyed the humanization of the divine, the merger of the sacred and the profane. The tendency to appropriate the most progressive aspects of Christianity, and to re-define them in terms that will validate hierarchical systems and prevent class consciousness, have been controlling aspects of image production in the West. The setting of a progressive myth representing a transitional historical moment within a production system which can co-opt and overwhelm it is, of course, a feature of bourgeois ideology evidenced continually in the history of representation.

The signifying practice of the cinema inadvertently accomplished much in halting the desacralization process by the incarnation of its various pagan messiahs: the rough trade, hustlers, bums, and cultural rebels who proliferated in popular art at mid-century. The sensibility underneath this practice was represented very well by the work of Tennessee Williams, al-

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ready perceived as a "Southern Gothic version of Jean Genet for his mixing of sex, death, and salvation in beguiling contradiction."¹⁶

The sensibility of Williams (indeed shared by Genet) demonstrates the relevance of the homosexual experience to the mythic impulses of the narrative tradition; the influence is of such a magnitude as to necessarily cause it to be moved into a range of cultural and ideological discourse beyond the parochial limits both of conservative critics and Williams' and Genet's protectors within the gay intelligentsia. The myth of the dying and reviving god, the hero who brings fertility to the land, is absolutely central to Williams' plays and to their filmic renderings — in particular *Orpheus Descending*, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, and *Night of the Iguana*. The myth of the fertility god, a conservative emblem in the hands of T.S. Eliot, became for Williams representative of an important moment of radical culture flux. The charismatic stranger who is "the influence of evil, disruption, or destruction"¹⁷ and threatens the established order becomes a concept of enormous relevance, perhaps for the last time, in the upheaval which began in the 1950s and culminated in the activity of the 60s. Recent evidence¹⁸ that Williams may have rewritten *Battle of Angels* (later *Orpheus Descending*) so that the central figure, Val Xavier, becomes a wandering guitar player allegorizing the rise of Elvis Presley, suggests Williams' prescience and the preeminence of the myth in question. Although the mid-50s rebel hero became a representation of an assault on sexual and racial assumptions and a force disturbing to Eisenhower America, the figure was also circumscribed not only by the problematical hero myth and its attendant cult of individualism, but by the desire generated by the gaze, by the culture industry that turned even vital, activist individuals (Brando lived up to his image) into effigies.

The commodification process implicit in the gaze becomes the death knell to this final manifestation of the hero myth, a manifestation wanting in credibility at its outset due to its production circumstance. The language "consensus" inscribed in the cinema's myth of the hero, in this phase of modernism and of image production, is exposed in *Querelle* as a fraud. Notwithstanding the audience-industry relationship, the myth in question is seen by Fassbinder's project as fraudulent because of its superficiality and circumscription by the narcissistic gaze. The stasis and staginess of *Querelle* which so upset critics is Fassbinder's Syberbergian maneuver: Genet's criminal becomes a conceit for exposing both the Hollywood narrative (upon which Fassbinder was always dependent) and audience positioning in this narrative tradition.

The parodic element to *Querelle* is immediately available. The theme of the journeying, revivifying hero was already there, explicit in Genet's novel,¹⁹ except that Genet unlike Williams, turns it on its ear. While Val Xavier in *Orpheus Descending* becomes a symbol of sexual liberation and racial harmony for the women of Two River County, *Querelle* brings alienation and inversion to the city of Brest. The notion of the stranger caus-

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ing a *disruptive* as well as redemptive process is essential to the hero myth and the messianic impulse; the revolutionizing of society necessarily brings a phase of upheaval, an element visible in the narrative of the New Testament and the epic romances. In Fassbinder, the emphasis on the disruptive function is meant to precipitate a reevaluation of the premises of the myth itself. *Querelle* demonstrates that as the population remains fixed on the gaze,²⁰ unable to apprehend the myth as collective *projection*, the disruptive function becomes predominant. The tendency of the bourgeois as audience, with its association of the hero with the primacy of individualism, is to project the figure solely as ideal ego rather than as an image signifying a transitional historical moment. Examples of the relationship between the gaze and the hero as metaphorical figure are rife in the international cinema.

Films such as *The Fugitive Kind* (*Orpheus Descending*) propose the hero as an awakened radical potential in the population.²¹ Other, more mainstream films of Hollywood narrative demonstrate how easily co-opted this archetypal myth is (particularly when it is understood precisely as "archetypal" and metaphysical rather than created by a language system, as Levi Strauss would approach the topic), and how it is ultimately inadequate in providing metaphors of revolutionary change. Joshua Logan's *Picnic* (based on Inge's play — a watered-down variation of a theme developed by Williams) suggests that not only can bourgeois society be easily recuperated after the stranger's passing, but that the stranger's principal function is as object of the gaze. This problem is represented in Hal Carter (William Holden), both through narrative strategy and in the film's famous ad campaign (Kim Novak kneeling behind Holden as he demurely covers/brandishes his nude torso, a device borrowed from Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire*). Such narratives, at best, merely reverse (temporarily) the scopophilic construct in which the female is usually the object. In *Picnic* (and in the far more conservative *Shane*) the changes posited are relatively superficial, and never address class relations or the politics of the intimate. At the same time that *Picnic* offers a challenge to upwardly mobile capital (Hal Carter's betrayal by Benson and Madge's rejection of Benson in favour of Carter) and to sexual mores of Middle America, the film waxes nostalgic in its Norman Rockwell depiction of 50s culture. More important, the only narrative that could "follow" *Picnic* would be a tempestuous romance between Madge and Hal. The sense of disruption figured in such films has more to do with a "shaking up" of society only to permit its recuperation. Narrative closure becomes complete, along with concepts of bourgeois normality.

Pasolini's *Teorema* is the most radical challenge to the messianic (patriarchal) impulse underneath the hero myth prior to *Querelle*. The film occupies a kind of middle ground in its thesis on the hero, since the Stranger (Terence Stamp) unleashes a number of disruptive forces within a bourgeois family — signifying the overturning of society — while at the same

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time being delineated by Pasolini as projection. The distinction between this film and, say, *Picnic* is the parodic attitude toward the heroic figure. In one important sequence, the Stranger poses in the manner of a Bernini saint as the daughter takes snapshots, suggesting a sardonic self-consciousness on the part of the object of fascination — self-consciousness missing from the populace. The film occupies “middle ground” since the parody is limited, as well as the film’s revolutionary faith. While the notion of the hero and the primacy of individualism are sent up, the disruptive forces unleashed suggest no specific revolutionary program beyond anarchy and the attack on bourgeois sexuality and religiosity. *Teorema* is certainly the inverse of *Shane* (with which it is often compared),²² but the heroic process is kept relatively intact not only through the heavy mediation by this myth but because of a traditional Marxist perspective toward the social. More problematic is the Stranger’s radicalizing function being reducible to a kind of “atomic individualism,”²³ with its key images alluding as much to Christian iconography as to the literal and figurative wasteland of postwar industrial society.²⁴

Querelle is a more “advanced” film not in a revolutionary sense but in its situation within the culture of simulation and its total refusal of the idea of the social which provided consensus to the heroic narrative. The forces *Querelle* unleashes are *merely* disruptive: they are in no way efficacious from the standpoints of recuperation or transformation. Fassbinder establishes this quickly in a voice over passage by the Narrator, reworked from Genet, as we gaze at Brad Davis:

Gradually we have come to recognize how *Querelle*, already part of our flesh and blood, grows larger inside ourselves, how he germinates within our souls and feeds from the best we have in us. Now that we acknowledge that *Querelle* is part of us, we want him to become a hero even to those who would deny him. When we follow his growth within us, we can see how perfect he is as a hero and how he will be fulfilled in his ending, an ending that is to be both his destiny and desire. The drama we wish to relate is the transposition of the familiar Event, and *Querelle* is its revelation. We can further say of this event that it is comparable to the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary by the Archangel Gabriel.²⁵

Fassbinder’s “belief” in *Querelle* is manifestly less than Genet’s. The entirety of the preceding narration is a metatheatrical gesture. The “gradual” process of *Querelle*’s adoration by Seblon/the audience is involved wholly in projection; that is, in the construction of *Querelle* as ego ideal through the gaze. The audience does not study the process of the hero’s “growth within us” in a self-conscious manner, which would deny the myth through its articulation. Fassbinder suggests that projection as such must remain intact for the hero to be accepted “even by those who would deny him” (read: by those who would see this figure as merely part of an historical

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process). The insight of this passage is in the notion of the individual becoming a transcendent subject at the moment that the projection of the bourgeois collectivity is complete. Querelle becomes a hero only insofar as he is desired, and as individuals recognize this desire saturating the community. Seblon's personal inadequacy (his scopophilia and inversion signified both by his fixation on Querelle and his attraction to imagery such as his art books in general) recapitulates the Aschenbach/Tadzio construct alluded to earlier. Such Romantic self deprecation is transmuted into the media simulacrum of Seblon.

The operation of the Imaginary necessary to sustain this form of narrative is assaulted, however, with Querelle as subject performing at odds with the projection of his perceivers. Querelle represents a reified alienation traditional to Genet which in the cinematic context takes on the messianic configuration associated with the star/hero. The aggrandizement of alienation is made clear by the presence of Franco Nero as interlocutor, as signifier of this manifestation of projection in pop culture. A constant sense of irony informs Fassbinder's delineation of the hero myth; Querelle's "blood sacrifice" (the killing of Vic) has no relationship to the "humiliation" envisaged by Seblon, who sees Querelle as a messiah out of his exaggerated self image, his feeling that he "lacks the charm to subjugate someone else."²⁶ Seblon's role as a Naval officer does not represent him as a "closet case" (although he admits to this), nor is his position as voyeur distinguished merely by his class security and Romantic longing for ideal beauty (as in *Death in Venice*). His scopophilia is wholly of a bourgeois cast, with its ego projection built on associations of sexual charisma with power. But Seblon's projections, which form the text of his life, dissolve as the projection/fantasy of this mediated figure dissolves in the narrative. The figures of the gay counterculture threatening to bourgeois society, including Theo, Mario (in his "hot cop" phase), Nono, and Querelle himself, are so heavily mediated by pop culture (the Village People, etc.) as to be innocuous as figures of ideological change.

A great virtue of Fassbinder's rendering of the novel is his adherence to Genet's sense of theatre, or, rather, to performance as essential to interaction in bourgeois society. As it is developed in the cinema, Genet's theatricality exposes projection as a byproduct of the experience of the gaze, making the incorporation of the means of the oppressor one element of Genet's theme of identification clearer in film than it is in novelistic or dramatic presentation. Although unconscious of the phenomenon operating transpsychically among them, the characters of the film lose their fascination for Querelle as the Self/Other demarcation dissolves and as Querelle is made human. The process of humanization in this case, in contrast to the myth underneath the projection of Seblon/the narrator, actually "desanctifies" Querelle. While the messianic figures of the Christian tradition dispel alienation, Querelle, as signifier of the total alienation of the simulated environment (mediated society), represents the individual's

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viability only as image. Thus, it is very difficult to see Genet's work as other than parodic in Fassbinder's hands. The exaggerated desire centered on Querelle explodes gradually, first with Querelle's attempt to "give in" to Seblon on the docks of Brest, then with the final alienation of Lysianne, keeper of the brothel/inn theatre.

Until about midway into the narrative, when Querelle becomes involved fully in the affairs of the world (the Gil episode), Querelle is the quintessential subject of idealization central to the Romantic style and the scopophilic drive advanced by bourgeois ideology. Relationships as projection continue in the choreographed duel (itself a parody of male bonding rituals) between Querelle and his brother, a confrontation based on the notion of Querelle as ideal (or "evil") Other in a parody of the good/bad brother construct. At this point a mock procession to Calvary interrupts the action of the narrative itself, exploring the operation of myth in the most presentational manner. Then, with the attempted reciprocation by Querelle with his admirer (Seblon), and with the exposure of Querelle as merely flesh (a criminal), Querelle is abandoned. Querelle is a hero only when static, not when fully involved in the narrative (history). The emblematic stills of the film are of Brad Davis leaning against a lamppost (quoting numerous images of the 50s rebels), or Davis covered with soot from the *Vengeur's* boiler room (Dean in *Giant*).²⁷ At the film's conclusion, these images are returned to us, as Querelle is offered as transcendent subject even as alienation within society is complete (represented by the pathetic situation of Lysianne). There is no irony here, since the "Angel of the Apocalypse" has proceeded into the range of the simulacra: the social has ceased to exist.

Querelle's apotheosis occurs at the moment he enters "the lofty region where mirror images converge and are united."²⁸ Yet while the narrative suggests the myth's final reification, the narrative ends up running in two separate directions; the audience is hyperconscious by now of Fassbinder's presentation of Querelle as myth, and the very presentational ending underscores the beginning of Querelle's failure, the disintegration of his credibility as myth for the characters in the narrative. None of this signifies, however, that the dimension of the historical has been entered into and the mythical left behind. Even as Querelle begins to collapse under the projection of the collectivity and the myth that has been constructed around him, his receding does not prevent the recuperation of the idealization process. The political lesson of the film, and Fassbinder's most incisive remark on postmodernism (irrespective of Syberberg), is the bolstering of the commodity status of the image. The film, very fittingly, ends up as a "beautiful" coffee table book, each still of which recalls Hollywood and the cinematic history which "masked" the fact that the image, in constantly repeating the myth, has destroyed the bourgeois narrative/history which has depended on mythic consciousness for its survival. We are left with the frozen moment of the still, the image as pure exchange value.

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The audience is made complicit in a situation which Genet could not have intuited at a time before the triumph of the spectacle and "technotronic"²⁹ society. The myth of the hero which Hollywood tried to recuperate but bankrupted is chronicled and eulogized in *Querelle*. The historical situation (and fate) of the spectator within the climate of post-modernism becomes aligned to the degree of recognition that

narcissism, sadomasochism, a hyperactive will and imagination combined with unusual passivity in practical matters, a compulsive attraction to ritual, and a tendency to take the sign for the substance ... are qualities that belong to ... Genet's heroes, and to the Genet who reveals himself in his style.³⁰

This extends as well to the transpsychical crisis which has incorporated the spectator into this style.

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Notes

1. The definitive discussion of schizophrenia as emblem of post-modernism is in Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Post-modern Culture*, Hal Foster, ed. (Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1983), pp. 111 — 126. A more developed version of this essay is Jameson's "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," in *New Left Review* 146 (July-August 1984), pp. 53-94.
2. This is discussed in John Sandford, *The New German Cinema* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1980), pp. 63-103.
3. See the cited discussions of postmodernism by Jameson.
4. Representative works are Richard N. Coe, *The Vision of Jean Genet: A Study of His Poems, Plays and Novels* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), pp. 170-213; Bettina Knapp, *Jean Genet* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1968), pp. 70-87; Philip Thody, *Jean Genet: A Critical Appraisal* (New York: Stein & Day, 1970), pp. 119-141.
5. The range of (ideologically divergent) discourse can be seen in, for example, the special issue of the arts journal *ZG*, No.8 (the "Heroes" number), and in the various publications of the Popular Culture Association, including Ray Browne and Marshall W. Fishbank, eds., *The Hero in Transition* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983).
6. Jay Stuller, "Legends that Will Not Die," *The Saturday Evening Post*, July/August, 1985, pp. 42-54.
7. See Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), p. 11.
8. Paul Taylor and Adrian Martin, "Where is Love? Describing *Querelle*," *ZG*, No. 12, Fall, 1984, p. 19. A discussion of *Querelle's* sexual politics is in James Roy MacBean, "Between Kitsch and Fascism: Notes on Fassbinder, Pasolini, (Homo)sexual Politics, the Exotic, the Erotic and Other consuming Passions," *Cineaste*, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1984, pp. 12-30.

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9. See Noel Carroll, "The Future of Allusion: Hollywood in the Seventies (and beyond)," *October* 20, pp. 51-83.
10. This concept is derived from Baudrillard's piece "The Implosion of Meaning in the Media," in *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities...or the End of the Social*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and John Johnston (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), pp. 95 — 113.
11. I refer here to the notion of desire developed in René Girard, *Deceit, Desire and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structures*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965).
12. See for example, Donald Spoto, *Camerado: Hollywood and the American Man* (New York: Plume/New American Library, 1978), and also Michael Malone, *Heroes of Eros: Male Sexuality in the Movies* (New York: Dutton, 1979).
13. Described in Dieter Schidor's foreword to Rainer Werner Fassbinder, *Querelle: The Film Book* trans. Arthur S. Wensing and Richard H. Wood (New York & Munich: Schirmer/Mosel-Grove Press, 1983), p. 7.
14. See Parker Tyler, *Screening the Sexes: Homosexuality in the Movies* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1972), p. 17, *passim*. Also relevant to this discussion is Tyler's *Sex Psyche, Etcetera in the Film* (New York: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 73-78.
15. Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (New York: Pantheon/October Books, 1983), p. 11.
16. Foster Hirsch, *A Portrait of the Artist: The Plays of Tennessee Williams* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1979), p. 14.
17. John Howlett, *James Dean: A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), p. 128.
18. Elaine Dundy, *Elvis and Gladys* (New York: Macmillan, 1985), pp. 298-300.
19. See Tom F. Driver, *Jean Genet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 22.
20. Probably the most incisive discussion of the gaze and the cinematic experience is Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," reprinted in Brian Wallis, ed., *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (Boston: Godine, 1985), pp. 361-375. I might suggest that also relevant to my comments on spectator relationship to the star/hero is Parker Tyler's description of Brando portrayed "with a maximum of artifice" in *One-Eyed Jacks*. See Tyler's *Sex, Psyche, Etcetera in the Cinema*, p. 76.
21. An intelligent comment on the changing cultural perception of the heroic enabler is in John E. Mack's remarkable biography of *T.E. Lawrence, A Prince of Our Disorder* (New York: Little Brown, 1976), pp. 198-242. A transitional figure in the bourgeois conception of heroic individualism, mention of Lawrence is appropriate to this discussion. The work of Herman Melville now seems an especially important prelude to *Querelle*. See Robert K. Martin, *Hero, Captain, Stranger: Male Friendship, Social Critique, and Literary Form in the Sea Novels of Herman Melville* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1986).
22. Raymond Durnat, *Sexual Alienation in the Cinema: The Dynamics of Sexual Freedom* (London: Studio Vista, 1972), p. 211.
23. *Ibid*, p. 219.
24. *Ibid*, pp. 212-220.
25. *Querelle: The Film Book*, p. 81.

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26. Ibid., p. 132.
27. The movement of these figures into simulations (and the periodizing and trivialization of revolt in the postwar years) is seen in, for example, David Dalton and Ron Cayen, *James Dean: American Icon* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1984) and Jerry Tillotson, "James Dean: End of the Cult Gods?" in *Hollywood Studio Magazine*, May, 1984, pp. 8-11.
28. *Querelle: The Film Book*, p. 174.
29. This is the "end of ideology" concept of the rightist strategist of postindustrialism, Zbigniew Brzezinski. See *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technotronic Era* (New York: Penguin Books, 1970).
30. Tom F. Driver, p. 22.

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