

The Politics of Silence

**Bachar Chbib
Graduate Program in Communications
Department of Art History and Communication Studies
McGill University
Montreal, Quebec
August 2003**

Copy 1

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts.**

© Bachar Chbib 2004



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 0-612-98423-0

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 0-612-98423-0

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

This thesis would not have been possible without the following people: Professor Will Straw for his excellent counsel, feedback and advice, Jennifer Fisher for her guidance and remarks on the methodology, Erin Manning for her encouraging commentary, Danielle Schwartz for her proof reading, and several other fellow students for their helpful commentary. I would also like to thank my family and especially my daughter Maïa Nadon-Chbib for her continuous support and assistance throughout the thesis process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction - Much Ado About Silence.....	2
Chapter 1 - Silence: A Theoretical Framework.....	12
In the Beginning.....	12
<i>Primary</i> and <i>Secondary</i> Silence Concepts.....	17
The Linguistic Turn	22
Silence Begins to Speak.....	25
Chapter 2 – Silence in the Arts	30
Literature’s Consent.....	36
Movies <i>Mit Out Sound</i>	43
Music Beyond Negation	45
Absurd Theatre - Not!	48
Chapter 3 - Case Study: Moments of Silence on Television.....	54
Myth.....	63
Empathy	68
Memory.....	70
Chapter 4 – Silence: A Re-Configuration.....	73
<i>Re-Configuration</i> Through Deconstruction	73
The Politics of Silence	77
The Theatre of Death	80
Conclusion	84
Where do We go With Silence?.....	84
Speculation.....	86
Addendums.....	92
Links to Moments of Silence on the World Wide Web.....	92
Schedule for a Day of Commemoration	93
Bibliography	94

Introduction - Much Ado About Silence

According to a Sufi teaching anecdote: *a man knocked at the door of a tenant's home named Baiyazid. Baiyazid called out: "Whom do you seek?" The caller answered, "Baiyazid." Baiyazid replied, "I, too, have been seeking "Baiyazid" for three decades, and I have not yet found him."*

I once read this parable on the net years ago and was not able to relocate its source, which was most probably *silenced*, by the recent consolidation of web-hosting companies and the concomitant monopolization of Internet information distribution. Nevertheless, it seemed to me appropriate with regards to my own questions of identity as I engage with a 'multicultural' society in the New World nestled on the shores of the St-Lawrence seaway.

In a sense, my decision to return to graduate school is a ritual of death and/or a rebirth and most probably an occasion for reviewing and reclaiming my virtual self-identity. My loquacious tendencies in the various classrooms were peculiar not only to myself but to several of my colleagues. At first I tried to keep quiet, but I was compelled to utter my thoughts as the professors hurled the ideas at us. I would apologize for my talkative behaviour in the first few classes, and then I noticed that few students actually participated voluntarily in the discourse, unless addressed. Was I creating tension in the room when I expressed my opinions? Are they all quiet because they are not in the right program? Shy, self-conscious or are they just disinterested? Brian Wood puts the dilemma of my situation best in his essay *Auto Ethnography of Silence*, he states:

I have always been attached to silence as a form of being. Silence takes a hold of me in many situations that requires conversation or verbal communication. It has become a part of me, a part of my identity. It is so prevalent in me that there is not a person associated with me that would not put the word "quiet" in front of my name. Even though my silence has been with me ever since I became a social being, I still feel that it has been an ongoing controversy to me and others. This polemic feeling is only one in perhaps many translations of silence. I constantly ask myself why my silence causes discomfort in me and more importantly in others; why this negative view of silence? (Wood, 2002)

On several occasions I noticed smirks or quiet smiles between students whenever I expressed my opinion. This repeated itself from class to class. I decide to comply and reluctantly, I decreased my participation out of respect for their silent opinions, delivered to me by their not so silent smiles. In any case remaining silent may make me appear wiser. Once again the doubts, the impatience and the frustrations were engaging with my self-identity. This created a tension that needed to be elucidated, and I had to forgive the theatre of silence's attempt to pull down one veil of deceit, that is the veil of "*qui racet consentire videtur*" [one who is silent appears knowing]. Here, I speak.

I had noticed that I had developed an enthusiasm to express what had been silenced in my recent adventures in the cultural industries. Cultural industry silencing seemed to be at first a tool of power, a subtle and efficient liberal encroachment on the identity that I was debating and projecting on the screens. After the first few short documentaries, I began to make features that were subject to a wider distribution network. This felt like opening up Pandora's box. Government funding agencies, technical associations, film festivals and private sector producers, not to mention distributors and exhibitors went out of their way to indirectly express their right and authority over the feature film industry. I was told on several occasions that I was to stay in my place either directly or indirectly and that I was to be satisfied with the limited access to the financing and to the public that I was allowed to enjoy. The funding was also curtailed by regulations limiting either linguistically or territorially the production of features. The media played an important role in maintaining this elitist and quasi-nepotistic oligopoly of film production and distribution. Federal and Provincial Government policy consistently closed any loopholes that allowed for any freedom of expression by any member of a community outside the Franco-Anglo hegemony of 'founding fathers'.¹ In general, those filmmakers that were allowed to make features had to tow the liberal, democratic and multicultural ideology. This, I felt, was an imposition

¹ On a side note, I was a surprise to see the 'Fast Runner,' an Innu film, become so successful in such a repressive cultural milieu.

of 'otherness' and of 'multiculturalism' on my expression as a filmmaker by successive governments.²

My observations over the years lead me to believe that: during the post-Trudeau years multicultural policy was structurally ingrained in several government organizations involved in maintaining civic peace between the ethnic communities in Canada and the hegemony of the two founding nations. Not only was the cultural tension between the Francophone and the Anglophone communities intense but it was also distracted from the growing ethnic diversity of the nation. Silencing the immigrant was a mere ploy, a scapegoat primarily aimed at silencing the Anglo-Franco majority from fully expressing its racism and xenophobia against the newcomers, the immigrant. By controlling the Canadian content in media and cultural products through restrictive policies set by the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC), the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the federal media funding agencies and their counterparts the provincial funding agencies, including the tax incentives instated by Revenue Canada and their provincial counterparts, successive governments portrayed an image of Canada nationally and internationally, wherein the society lived mostly at peace with policies of fairness, freedom of speech and equal access under the flag of multiculturalism. Few digressed from this message and subsequent image because funding for cultural products was either wholly or partially controlled by the 'multicultural' funding agencies.

This government practice was thought to diminish any growing cultural tensions through imagery of co-operation, access, equal rights and equal distribution of power and funds. Yet, this image was not a reflection of the reality of everyday life. Only the immigrant that complied with neo-liberal multicultural policy of identity assimilation and subsequent appropriation had a publicized but limited access to the cultural and communication industry. For in the paradigm of the nation state the immigrant remains a guest forever subject to possible ostracism and eviction as the recent events of 9/11 have revealed. The immigrant is tolerated if he/she is quiet, politically inactive and not 'seen'.

² I shall not delve into the twenty years of making non-commercial films in the Quebec and Canadian cultural industry, but I should state that it was a constant battle for the right of self-expression as an immigrant and as an independent filmmaker. A list of my works can be seen online at www.oucira.com.

The question remains: Am I a Canadian, a Québécois, a Montréaler, or an indebted immigrant and thus a second-class citizen with a silenced voice, a limited one at best? Am I attached to any spatial environment whatsoever? To start, I begin with an excerpt from Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*:

Ceremony, and even, silence, from whatever motive they may arise, have a hurtful tendency, when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances; - Yet, as the domestic tranquillity of a nation, depends greatly, on the chastity of what may properly be called NATIONAL MANNERS, it is often better, to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation, on that guardian of our peace and safety. (Paine, 1776)³

Here, Paine implies silence suppresses political innovation. The control that I was subjected to as a filmmaker was a consequence of silence, a tool of power. This weapon imposed cultural silence through government policy and a socio-cultural stratification of administrative authority in the cultural industries. Power determines the limits of possible identities and the shape of the relevant discourses. Therefore I can say that my identity involves a complicated transaction between variously dis/empowered individuals in a particularly constructed social group. The epistemological problem of this complex and ethereal identity question opens up the discourse of the *forthcoming*, the *possible*. Can the guest/immigrant possibly feel at home?

Putting aside the likelihood of dysfunctional communication skews, I asked myself, were these silencing exchanges in the classroom power games or general misunderstandings? Knowing that misunderstandings are never resolved by silence, I decided to research silence as a tool of repression. I may inevitably be as loquacious on paper as I was in class, but I will communicate herein with myself, and a handful of others who would care to listen, an engagement in discourse in order to understand, take on and eventually counter the silencing events in life, in the field of material *reality*.

The effect of these technologies of silencing is that various discourses by particular individuals, organizations, art-forms, activists and other groupings of people are kept quiet. These technologies of silence are difficult to experience and essentially

³ Pamphlet released on January 10th 1776, written by Thomas Paine in the colonies. In his widely sold pamphlet (500,000 copies), Paine stated that there was no reason for the American colonies to remain

anti-democratic in nature and are highly detrimental to our shared and individual implementation of political and socio-ethical conducts and responsibilities.

Silence has traditionally been analysed in linguistic terms as those moments of non-speech/non-sound interspersed between words and sounds. A few researchers have attempted to understand the workings of these empty events occurring in speech/sound, and have worked out certain theoretical ideas aimed at recognizing the phenomenon of silence. I will attempt to take this academic reasoning further to *re-configure* established notions of silence and incorporate contemporary methods of investigation to arrive at a more viable and dynamic observation of the event. Silence goes beyond this simple dualistic and binary contrast and I believe may reveal itself as negotiator of language, wherein the impossibility of an absolute truth is translated into the *imminent*.

Furthermore, I will attempt to open up the discourse on the political inherent in silence. Discourse, as I understand it, is any form of communication or social interaction that produces and reproduces meanings and understandings including dialogue, conversation, text, song, pictures, dance, images, non-verbal communication, music, and so forth.

An opening up of the freedom from constraints imposed on language and symbolic discourse may be revealed to us in an eventual and continuous *re-configuration* of the politics of silence. This paper will be an attempt at a discourse that redefines silence's fleeting site as an impending source for the political *as such*. If Henri Louis Bergson's "*élan vital*" is the proof of free will in a world of imposing matter then silence is the diplomat of the unpredictable forces of change that propel matter further down the path ahead of self expression.

I must also herein explain my use of the term *re-configure*. In more recent cultural analysis the notion of deconstruction has been pragmatically used as 'method' and/or 'process' of redefining theoretical frameworks and hence optimistically illuminating academics in relation to their engagement with their site of study. I propose that such a 'method' of deconstruction is impossible without intervening in the inherent epistemological and ontological process of deconstruction analysis theory *per se*. I mean

by this that deconstruction inevitably loops back on itself because it uproots traditional methods of analysis and hence uproots its own essence and history by its methodology. However, this introspection and unravelling of classical methods of investigation of a cultural site also impedes such an analytical process by mere auto-phagocytosis of the analytic and philosophical discourse. In a sense deconstruction eats the hand that feeds it. In order to go beyond the limits of deconstruction without losing the creative elements of the process, I propose a *re-configuration* created by a congealing of a spatial discourse in fixed time in which the virtual site may be *reconfigured*, like a matrix or refraction, in order to allow for a new analytical process to take shape.

This *re-configuration* is a moment in time, in which an effective method of analysis intervenes with the apparatus. This is not to say that I am building a structure to be appropriated for understanding a *moment of silence*. This *re-configuration* falls immediately apart before giving the analysis any chance to materialize the process. It unravels as soon as it forms. The Subsequent deconstruction process of this virtual *re-configuration* can effectively cause the emergence of new ideas. *Re-configuration* is the *slow moving step of the regenerative amoeba*.

Many questions about the nature of a *re-configuration* of silence will most certainly emerge: Am I misreading "deconstruction"? Is it solely a reading? Can deconstruction be a dislocation or a destruction of a text as it redefines meaning? Is *re-configuration* always inherently deconstruction? Will there be an enlightening discovering of Derrida's *Eskamotage*? Can a reconfiguration of silence be the unfolding resolution of the aporia that is limiting recent deconstruction theory? Is it a coincidence that the recent increase of academic study in silence be linked to linguistic deconstructivist and structuralist thought?

To recap, *re-configuration* is a congealing of space and time followed by an immediate shattering of the virtual/refracted site rupturing into the process of analysis. This can be understood/imagined as a spatio-temporal *ebb and flow* into unknown dimensions outside of the material/sensory binary away from any 'true', empirical or cognitive content towards meaningless, unproved, unclear meanings. Paradoxes, tautologies, syntactic faux pas, linguistic determination, phenomenism and meta-languages become major players in a *re-configuration* of silence. Logic is not a rule by

which silence can be measured. Allowing unexplained phenomenon, ulterior senses and ideas to flow into the discourse of silence and opening the site to a greater understanding of its meaning and operation.

However, to differentiate *re-configuration* from deconstruction an understanding of one's sixth sense namely 'intuition' is primordial to the grasping of the analytical process imminent from the rupture of silence in its performative role as homeostatic negotiator of free will. As Michel Foucault so eloquently stated:

...one is forced to advance beyond familiar territory, far from the certainties to which one is accustomed, towards an as yet uncharted land and unforeseeable conclusion. Is there not a danger that everything that has so far protected the historian in his daily journey and accompanied him until nightfall (the destiny of rationality and the teleology of the sciences, the long, continuous labour of thought from period to period, the awakening and the progress of consciousness, its perpetual resumption of itself, the uncompleted, but uninterrupted movement of totalisations, the return to an ever-open source, and finally the historico-transcendental thematic) may disappear, leaving for analysis a blank, indifferent space, lacking in both interiority and promise? (Foucault, 1989, pp. 42-43)

This invites a return to a source where instinct and silence may merge with Foucault's blank space. Theoretical literature has not fully examined in depth silence as it applies to language, media, being, politics, culture, philosophy and society. I am particularly interested in the engagement of language and the substitution of the *subject/object* by the *sense/meaning/affect/rupture* matrix. This inevitably questions the role of silence within the ever-changing structure of language, politics and culture.

Art has in recent times attempted to counterbalance political hegemony, intolerance and repression. However in more recent years national and corporate authorities have appropriated art and the artist for their own political agendas and purposes. This has put the artist in a delicate and duplicitous position vis-à-vis its society. Capitalism has financially acquired the artist and gentrified the artist's 'product' diluting its content to silence. Joyce, Mallarmé, Cage, Beckett etc... are in my opinion art's last breath before a long sigh into silence.

Models of 'ideology', 'hegemony', and 'sub-culture' in social studies have allowed theorists to create systems and models that explore the inner workings of culture. These models should not be taken out of context in a *re-configuration* of the sites. Art must be

re-examined in order to elucidate on the death of the artist and bring forth the new discourses of resistance available to new generations of creators and forgers of enlightenment. I propose that studies in silence are at a turning point academically and creatively because never has the site been so meddled with intellectually as in the last few years. Silence may counteract the disparaging nihilist influence of the widespread anti-science movement in the arts. Sánchez-Colberg summarizes the use of silence in the arts best:

In this chaotic formulation silence adopts various forms. At its most elemental, silence indicates the gaps and ruptures and is paradoxically also the seams which (could) connect the two stories. Silence provides a syncopated, rhythmical alternation between the two stories whilst, concurrently dissolving any attempt at the construction of a single unifying narrative from the synthesis of the two. The silences, therefore, counteract any attempts to see the story as fully argued, ready for immediate consumption.⁴

In Chapter one of this thesis I will investigate the background of academic discourses on silence starting with the theist influences up to the poststructuralist forays into the site. Most theoretical work on silence has been generated in the last half century. These theorists have established the structures on which lie the meanings and discourses of the silence phenomenon within the set parameters of space and time. I suggest here that we build upon such meanings and discourses in this paper and further the foray into a specific site namely, the arts.

Chapter two will analyse several cultural sites dealing with silence including, in music, literature, film and theatre. The affect, engagement, *aporia* and meaning derived from the use of silence in the arts can prepare the ground for a more comprehensive understanding of the way expression is fostered. An outline of the political, linguistic and social utilization of silence in Western culture may reveal the historical and religious circumstance from which these present Western silence discourses have spawned.

Chapter three will take a specific event, the commemorative *moments of silence* in post 9/11 America. In this chapter, I will attempt to analyse and portray the mechanism of appropriation of *the moment of silence* on television by the American political sectors

for promoting their conservative agenda. The volatility of silence is inherently affective. Here, affect is not a measured tool of analysis but an internal determining factor. An understanding of the ways in which affect/meaning/aesthetics operates in silence may be helpful in understanding the body politic.

This will set the tone of chapter four of the thesis for an eventual inexorable re-evaluation of the silence site in cultural, political and social discourses. I will propose that silence is always an undefined, unrelenting arbitrator and negotiator of furthering discourse along its path. Furthermore, silence is closely linked to our concepts of death, revelation and creation and is thus inevitably affiliated to theology. In my research I have found that silence is deeply involved in theistic discourses that permeate western philosophical and cultural academic studies. Both theistic and non-theistic cultural discourses of silence are imbued with Judaeo-Christian ideology. I will explore this path more clearly in the final chapter of this paper.

Silence links these generations of thought not only in its form, but also in its distinctive function as a phenomenological link between 'and' and 'or'. I suggest that 'and' / 'or' (as I prefer to use in this text) are one and the same, for they represent clearly emergence, memory, rupture and "otherness" in one swoop.

Throughout the paper, I will investigate the real, present and concrete as a binding intrinsic opposition to silence not only in existential and materialist thinking but also in Western ideology and in death discourses. This exploration will reveal the theoretical framework with which further analysis of cultural sites may be opened up to investigation. A more engaged approach to analysis may reveal an *emergence* of new ideas. As P.J. Hopper states:

The notion of emergence is a pregnant one. It is not intended to be a standard sense of origins or genealogy, not a historical question of "how" the grammar came to be the way it "is", but instead it takes the adjective emergent seriously as a continual movement towards structure, a postponement or "deferral" of structure, a view of structure as always provisional, always negotiable, and in fact as epiphenomenal, that is, at least as much an effect as a cause (Hopper, 1987, p.142).

⁴ Tacit Borders: On Silence, Presence and Resistance in Contemporary Latin American Performance Ana Sánchez-Colberg accessed on January 12th 2003 at:
<http://www.autores.org.ar/spre/Creacion/Adaptaciones/pies/silence.htm>

My methodology involves the exercise of discourse analysis using an engaging, concise and suitable use of academic theory. I will attempt in this open ended exploratory adventure into ‘unfolding’ silence as a natural negotiator of language to remain dedicated to an open ended discourse. The innate logic of silence is most likely to be relegated to a mimetic paradox of meaning. I chose to read and incorporate several notions presented to us by Western philosophers, theorists and academics covering such intellectual subjects as deconstruction, cultural analysis, pragmatism, theology, logic, politics, linguistics, gender theory, notions of the ‘other’, psychology, psychoanalysis, creativity, art and of course death.

Let me ask here: what is the living truth? In our western society on the shores of the St-Lawrence seaway, the living truth is burdened with social distress, spiritual vacuity and material overload. A political process lacking participation, gender inequality and economic disparity fill the treasure chest of a post war century. Silence is an instrument of balance between discourse and meaning. A manipulation of this instrument of balance can weigh the odds in one direction or the other. Politicians are well aware of the fragility of theistic ontology in the formations of present day discourses. Rituals in society are the rupture points of anxiety, power and fear. When politics interferes with such sensitive rituals, the reaction can be both, violent *and/or* submissive. This is why I found it to be useful to analyse and portray the mechanism of appropriation of *the moment of silence* in the television medium by the American political sectors for promoting their political agenda. Subsequently, I have attempted to understand the various alternative and sublime workings of silence in the arts, religion and in politics. Silence is not only a question of removing voice but also it is one of controlling portrayals, replacing voices and determining origins. As George Steiner, in *Language and Silence*, states: “*Silence is an alternative. When words in the city are full of savagery and lies, nothing speaks louder than the unwritten poem*” (Steiner, 1967, p. 54).

Chapter 1 - Silence: A Theoretical Framework

In the Beginning

If medieval hostility to zero rested on Christian antagonism to 'nothing', since to talk of something being no-thing, to give credence to that which was not and could not be in God's world, was to risk blasphemy or heresy, then it must also be said that this antagonism was itself ambiguous and unstable. Christian adherence to the classical Greek denial of 'the void' was in conflict with its acceptance of the account in Genesis in which the universe was created out of 'nothing'. (Rotman, 1987, p. 4)⁵

As the Old Testament of the St-James Bible states in Genesis 1.1 and 1.2: "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*" Subsequently in Genesis 1.3 we find: "*And God said let there be light and there was light.*" In the new testament of the St-James Bible, John 1.1 states: "*In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.*"

What is assumed as obvious in the Old Testament was written in stone in the New Testament. The word was written, inscribed, taken from the ethereal to the pragmatic. The texts insinuate a congealing from nature, from a trace to a material object: the *word*. In *Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero*, Brian Rotman states:

This differentiation of subjectivity allows the Kabbalistic account of *ex nihilo* creation to turn in on itself: the creation of something out of nothing, of the immanent self-conscious I from the He of the original void, is, as Scholem (1941, p. 213) expresses, it the 'external aspect of something which takes place in God Himself'. Thus the figure of *kether* becomes in the Kabbalah a sign for autochthony, an iconic diagrammatic token of God's creation of himself and of the world out of the absolute of nothing. (Rotman, 1987, p. 78)

⁵ Brian Rotman, in *Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero*, states: "*The mathematical sign we know as zero entered European consciousness with difficulty and incomprehension. It appears to have originated some 1300 years ago in central India as the distinguishing element in the now familiar Hindu system of numerals. From there it was actively transmitted and promulgated by Arab merchants; so that by the tenth century it was in widespread use throughout the Arab Mediterranean*" (Rotman, 1987, p. 7).

In Genesis, God (*Elohim*) spoke only after he had created the material world. From ‘without form and void’, in other words from silence came his word, “*And God said let there be light and there was light.*”

The Hebrew term *Elohim* is most probably a derivative of the root word meaning “strong.” It is especially employed in the Scriptures to emphasize God’s creative power and *Elohim*’s sovereignty over the world. This sovereignty is inherent in the genesis of contemporary discourse. Once the ‘word’ has entered through the door of peace, silence was broken by a mere act of the ‘strong’. It is here important to note that theist ideology plays a progressive and essential role in the use and understanding of silence throughout western history. We shall come back to that a little later.

In Hesiod’s *Theogony*, the creature Chaos was a dark ominous void with no sign of life and absolute silence reigned everywhere. Chaos was boundless with no beginning or end. In time there sprang from Chaos two strange creatures, Erebus the creature of Darkness and Nyx the creature of Night. The two winged dark creatures faced each other blinking their hollow dark eyes without exchanging a word in total silence. The absolute silence and eternal solitude continued to sway the cosmos. The only difference between these two creatures and Chaos, their parent, was that Erebus and Nyx had a beginning and an end. Then the third of the primeval divinities Eros emanated from Chaos and came between the two grand creatures. Under the influence of Eros the absolute darkness/silence dissipated and thus they exchanged their first words. The engagement of Eros, night and darkness managed to drive away the endless solitude in order to bring forth warmth and light (Hesiod, 2002).⁶ Again I suggest we note the elemental importance of silence in early Greek thought.

⁶ Hesiod. *The Homeric Hymns*. Trans. Michael Crudden. Dublin: Oxford Press, 2002. “(ll. 116-138) *Verily at the first Chaos came to be, but next wide-bosomed Earth, the ever-sure foundations of all (4) the deathless ones who hold the peaks of snowy Olympus, and dim Tartarus in the depth of the wide-pathed Earth, and Eros (Love), fairest among the deathless gods, who unnerves the limbs and overcomes the mind and wise counsels of all gods and all men within them. From Chaos came forth Erebus and black Night; but of Night were born Aether (5) and Day, whom she conceived and bare from union in love with Erebus. And Earth first bare starry Heaven, equal to herself, to cover her on every side, and to be an ever-sure abiding-place for the blessed gods. And she brought forth long Hills, graceful haunts of the goddess-Nymphs who dwell amongst the glens of the hills. She bare also the fruitless deep with his raging swell, Pontus, without sweet union of love. But afterwards she lay with Heaven and bare deep-swirling Oceanus, Coeus and Crius and Hyperion and Iapetus, Theia and Rhea, Themis and Mnemosyne and gold-crowned Phoebe and lovely Tethys. After them was born Cronos the wily, youngest and most terrible of her children, and he hated his lusty sire.*”

In western theology the eternal source behind the Universe is God. The 'word' only appeared as an aftermath. However, man writes both these creation stories. Revelation was noted on material support. Word of mouth was fixed in time. Knowledge was encoded as in Foucault's archaeology of history. Not unlike ancient pagan creation-accounts, Chaos and God are offered and simply depicted as the existing Creators that have brought existence through speech out of silence, oblivion and chaos.⁷ Is this a 'forced issue' as coined by pragmatic William James? We "*either accept this truth or go without it*" (James, 1956). Therein lies the paradox of theistic discourse. Two academics studying silence, Peter Fuchs and Niklas Luhmann elaborate on the notion of paradox as follows:

The world can come into the world only as a paradox. Yet precisely this is possible through the enactment of communication. For this to happen, no logical analysis of the concept of paradox is required, and we therefore refer to the tradition of this concept in rhetoric rather than in logic. Logic observes itself as a paradox and as a tautology. It uses paradoxes and tautologies to delimit the space of its own operations, that is, as warning signs for the delimitation of a realm of communication that can be controlled by logic -- For the communication of paradoxes, the operative effect is decisive: it causes communication to oscillate, because each position makes it necessary to assert the opposite, for which the same holds in turn. (Fuchs & Luhmann, 1989)

We should keep this quotation in mind as we begin to address some of the perspectives and academic forays into silence.

Silence in classical Greek is *sige* a derivative of the word mother in Nazorean and "*Another Aramaic word for silence, Nich, also means 'will' and 'grace' "*⁸

And as the Consolidated Webster Encyclopaedic Dictionary states, silence is:

⁷ Brian Rotman, in *Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero*, states: "*One can say that from whatever direction, whether it be the source of heretical nihilism in Eckart, the incarnation of evil for St Augustine, the site of terminal self-deprivation for St Jerome, the object of Aristotelian horror for St Aquinas, the vehicle of moral suicide for the Jesuits, responses to 'nothing' within the discourse of orthodox European Christianity characterized as the locus of what was irredeemable negative and evil; a place where the presence of God was constantly in danger of being emptied out, denied, nullified, repudiated through apostasy, heresy and unbelief; a place of void to be religiously 'a-voided'*" (Rotman, 1987, pp. 69-70).

⁸ The Mandaic term for the original Mother appears to have been Dmutha, meaning Image or Counterpart. When this term was translated into Greek it became Sige, or Silence, perhaps because of the similarity and word play between Dmu and Dum. As accessed on the Nazorean site: <http://www.essenes.crosswinds.net/32uthras.html>

sī'lens, n. [Fr. Silence, from L. silentium, silence from sileo, to be silent] the condition prevailing when there is no noise; absence of sound; stillness; forbearance of speech; a holding of one's peace; taciturnity; a refraining from making knowing something; secrecy; absence of mention; oblivion. (Meine, 1946)

Here I would like to underline the '*condition prevailing when there is absence of mention*': meaning an absence of a *cursorial speaking of anything*, an absence of *mind* (*mens*). This may sound like it contradicts the previously proposed concept that silence partakes in language; that silence is inherent in the discourse. However, a mentioning of silence may reveal that it does so like a magician handles a card trick, a virtual refraction of its meaning, and in of itself. Such a definition brings back the specter of Derrida:

The word 'Escamotage' speaks of subterfuge or theft in the exchange of merchandise, but first of all the sleight of hand by means of which an illusionist makes the most perceptible body disappear. It is the art or a technique of making disappear. The escamoteur knows how to make inapparent. He is expert in a hyper-phenomenology. Now, the height of the conjuring trick here consists of causing to disappear while producing 'apparitions' which is only contradictory in appearance, precisely, since one causes to disappear by provoking hallucinations or by inducing visions. (Derrida, 1994, pp. 127-128)

I suggest that silence is an 'Escamoteur' in that it 'makes disappear' the relationship between the signifier and signified. It eradicates the rationalist binary position of the body and the mind. Silence beholds the mind in light of the body. Silence is an affect dissimulator. In the notes on the translation to Deleuze and Guattari's *Thousand Plateaus*, Massumi describe his use of affect in the translation from French in the following manner:

It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. (Massumi, 2002, p. xvi)

Silence engages *mention* through the feedback mechanism of the senses, and dissimulates the body into the meaning of thought, thus performing an 'eskamotage' by way of an affect metronome dissolving space into time and relinquishing in its eventual rupture the being of silence. For this reason, through the creation of an 'extensive' space, silence *becomes*. It is an opening of the potential of a contemporary discourse of '*real*

stop' operational events as defined by Massumi. Silence reveals the space (environment) in which it operates and defines the parameters of the engagement. In *The Silence in Progress of Dante, Mallarmé, and Joyce*, Sam Slote states:

... either there will be a simple insinuation in silence, rolling the dice ironically as if an action were to be taken but ultimately remaining restrained, or there will be some mystery, some mysterious outcome will be set forth into the proximate tempest of the world. There is nothing simpler than these two proffered alternatives, either action will be taken or it will not. (Slote, 1999, p. 154)

In traditional western mythology and Judeo-Christian biblical texts we have determined that silence was emptiness from which arose sound or speech. Later, the rationalists namely Leibniz, Spinoza and Descartes used the Aristotelian notion of substance as the bearer of property to redefine concepts of meaning. The empiricists Locke, Hume and Rousseau classified human knowledge and meanings on firm scientific postulates that were later to be called the *signifier* and the *signified* by the linguists. These notions separated concepts of meaning into their formative entities and subsequently silence was separated from sound into a binary of silence/sound.

More recently in the last 100 years or so, silence has been described as all encompassing and intrinsic to *itself*. As Jacques Derrida puts it:

Here the discourse comes up against its limit, in itself, in its performative power itself. It is what I here propose to call the mystical. Here silence is walled up in the violent structure of the founding act. Walled up, walled in because silence is not exterior to language. It is in this sense that I would be tempted to interpret, beyond simple commentary, what Montaigne and Pascal call the mystical foundation of authority. (Derrida, 1992, p. 13)

Contemporary thinkers like Derrida et al. open up silence to new discourses laden with concepts of identity, power and affect. My analysis of the silence site includes deconstructionist notions of 'beyond' in its process but also momentarily congeals the site for a closer analysis of silence's functionality, interdependence and self-expression.

Primary and Secondary Silence Concepts

George Steiner stated:

Language can only deal meaningfully with a special, restricted segment of reality. The rest, and it is presumably the much larger part, is silence. (Steiner, 1967, p. 21).

Most recent cultural analyses of silence focus on silence as metaphor rather than silence *per se*. That is, scholars are overwhelmingly concerned with the ancillary linguistic discourses of silence. Often these discourses are conveniently inscribed in compilations of theoretical linguistic models, feminist Web sites, human rights newsletters, structural formations, and in contemporary classical music or in gender specific manifestos and diaries of various kinds. Such silence projects are globally important, but their expressions are very different from the forms of silence to be analysed in this cultural and political discourse.

Many academics employ silence as part of a pronouncement of their cultural, gender, social or religious identity, a process burdened with the threat of victimization and angst. Many such examples are available in recent silence discourse and I cite, for example, Clare O'Farrell as typical of the way silence is used in the form of narrative symbolism:

Greatly affected by the poor reception of *La Volonté de savoir*, Foucault took a year of sabbatical leave from the Collège de France to travel to America. He then lapsed into a prolonged 'silence', (O'Farrell, 1989, p. 18)

Here, a prolonged silence depicts a state of self-censorship where silence becomes the *Super-Ego* of the philosopher suppressing his disaffected subject. Another example is New York editor and writer John Haber's eulogy to Ralph Ellison, author of *Invisible Man*, he notes:

How easy it was to accept Ellison's silence. We are all too used to artists who simply give up or destroy themselves, just as we are used to young black voices never penetrating below 125th Street. (Haber, 2003)

Ellison, a gay writer is also muting his discourse but for socio-political reasons on grounds of his repressed sexual identity. It must be noted however that silence in most

western discourses is justifiably used as a metaphor of resistance and of authoritarian abuse. For example:

In other words, the harassment of Arab-Americans, Muslim-Americans, and dissenters in general, including intellectuals, journalists, artists, and activists, will reach new levels of reach aided by intrusive surveillance and monitoring tools. Again, this generalized, state-generated fear has been accomplished without a shot being fired, without even an acknowledgement of the decimation of civil liberties that has occurred. The silence and complicity of elite's is akin to what must have occurred during the Nazi consolidation of power, and during the anti-Semitic repression, when millions of right-thinking Germans simply failed to raise a finger against the enormity of injustice that was being institutionalized. (Shivani, 2003)

Whether it is identity politic, intellectual discourse or post-colonial sites, silence is everywhere and anywhere. This makes the site difficult to analyse. Nevertheless, silence analysis has been so superficial in late twentieth century western discourse that I will attempt herein to set a distinction between different investigations, forms and uses of silence. In *Silence Across Modalities*, Alina Kwiatkowska states:

In all these cases, the silence is part of a behavioural schema: "a structured group of concepts which constitute the generic knowledge about events, scenarios, actions or objects that has been acquired from past experience" (Eysenck 1990: 322), and which we use to organize our comprehension of events and guide our actions. (Kwiatkowsky, 1997, p. 335)

Susan Sontag adds to this concept the essence of silence in our generated cognitive process:

Silence never ceases to imply its opposite and to depend on its presence ... without the polarity of silence; the whole system of language would fail. (Sontag, 1967, p.11).

Such dialectic and expressionistic uses of silence as I have noted in the early examples tend to involve what I term "*Secondary Silence Concepts*" that serve to analytically frame and use silence in order to draw meaning from a given cultural site of study. A confusion of metaphors, symbols, ideas and representation entangle silence in its present cultural uses and definitions as a '*Secondary Silence Concept*.'

The use of silence as a "*Secondary Silence Concept*" is also found in several notable sites of socio-cultural settings such as: gays coming out of the closet in Paul

Monette's *Politics of Silence*; and women speaking out against oppression in *The Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf, in which she writes that patriarchy:

...has rested for millennia on the unwritten but rigorously enforced rule that women and children keep the secrets of men, and suffer abuse in silent shame. (Wolf, 1192, p.21)

Others have also pursued silence as a "*Secondary Silence Concept*" including: Tillie Olsen feminist resistance novel entitled "*Silences*" published in 1978; Adrienne Rich's selected feminist prose titled *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence*, published in 1980; and, in environmental discourses Rachel Carson's famous anti-pesticide book *Silent Spring* published in 1962.

We can also observe silence discourse in the socio-political field on the internet in the globalized exposure of third world human rights abuses, such as may be found in '*Hijos Por La Identidad Y La Justicia Contra El Olvido Y El Silencio (HIJOS): Children for identity and Justice and against forgetting and Silence*'.⁹ Here again we return to a more common use of silence as a metaphor for discourses of repression and rupture as exemplified in one last example in Michael Zweig's popular book on the American working class:

When society fails to acknowledge the existence and experience of working people it robs them of an articulate sense of themselves and their place in society. We know from the vibrancy of other identity movements that to silence and leave nameless a central aspect of a person's identity is to strip them of a measure of power over their lives. A full, realistic self-identity is a basic requirement for human dignity. (Zweig, 200, p.61)

We can also find many examples of the use of these forms of silence in religious texts, preaching, documents, academic endeavours, liturgy and society. In most western theistic teachings thought is created from oblivion by the hand of a higher being. *Elohim* gives emptiness a light and subsequently from silence emerges the concept of life. Silence begets the 'word of God' from which eventually man is created, not woman. Silence is from the start inherent to man and not woman. Woman is thus predestined in theist thought at an ontological distance from silence. Silencing is the tool of man

⁹ Part of several organizations dealing with bringing human rights abusers to justice in South America: Sites are accessed in several URLs including in Spain at: www.nodo50.org/hijos-madrid/h-portada.htm and in Guatemala at: www.amnestyusa.org/countries/guatemala/actions/peace_accords/hijos.html.

because man understands silence before woman. Man calls woman silence in the Judaic bible. Man has the temporal advantage to define the emergence of silence to woman and to use it as a tool of subjugation for his own political discourse. (This is no different in concept to the contemporary western use of technology.)

This theistic socio-political precedence in western thought has sustained the maintenance of male dominance over the female. But I must take this one step further: it is also symptomatic of western male dominance of nature, of other cultures and races, of rhetoric and ultimately the suppression of his own ego. All these can be named the 'Other'. This line of thinking can clarify why silencing is used so regularly in *Secondary* forms by the oppressed 'others' namely gays, women, and minorities.

In this cultural and political analysis, I suggest silence is not expressed in terms of a "*Secondary Silence Concept*", linguistic or otherwise. Various sorts of silence can coexist in cultural and/or politically driven forms, including cultural theory, power paradigms, religious thought and incursions into Saussurian linguistics.

I focus on what is silence in this, the particular contexts in which 'being silence' matters and I call it a "*Primary Silence Concept*". Foucault clearly situates this kind of discourse in his *Archaeology of Knowledge*, he states:

How is one to specify the different concepts that enable us to conceive of discontinuity (threshold, rupture, break, mutation, transformation)? By what criteria is one to isolate the unities with which one is dealing; what is a science? What is an œuvre? What is a theory? What is a concept? What is a text? How is one to diversify the levels at which one may place oneself, each of which possesses its own divisions and form of analysis? What is the legitimate level of formalisation? What is that of interpretation? Of structural analysis? Of attributions of causality? (Foucault, 1969, p. 6)

By extrapolating from Foucault, I can ask: What is considered silence in this analysis? And, how does it work?

Simply put silence is a negotiator of meaning. In not so simple terms silence is tasted, thought, felt, loved, touched, rejected, smelled, praised, seen, denounced, heard and mostly, silence is an illusion. Silence is not a catalyst nor pedagogue, it allows for the forces of imminent meaning to express themselves free of any subjugation. It opens up the path for dialogue and like Eros it mitigates darkness.

Secondary and Primary Silence Concepts are not exempt from expressing violence, of being exploited or of rendering meaning. However, I limit these transactions and inner workings of *Secondary Silence Concepts* silence to metaphorical expressions of life/pleasure/death. In *Primary Silence Concepts* they are emergent.

This does not however exclude the metaphorical use of silence as an intermediary in the formation of meaning. It is important to reconcile these meta-uses of silence with the critical and political engagement I am about to embark with silence.

These sites, notions and uses that partake in a discourse of silence that I term '*Secondary*' are not to be admonished, trivialized or rejected but encompassed in a furthering of the understanding of the use of silence and its inherent logic and power in discourse. It appears that these '*Secondary Silence Concept*' are an array of retroactive feedback loops unsurprisingly innate in the use of silence and similar in performance to what Brian Massumi describes:

Extensive space, and the arrested objects occupying the positions into which it is divisible, is a back formation from cessation --- They are truly, real stop operations. Or, if they have movement, it is derivative, a second-order movement between back-formed possibilities. (Massumi, 2002, pp. 6-7)

Massumi's introduction to *Parables for the Virtual* articulates well the possibility of an opening of the potential of a contemporary discourse of '*real stop*' operational events such as silence. '*Secondary Silence Concept*' figure well into these feedback loops of transformed meaning. We will come back to that a little later.

Let me start with syntax and silence. I postulate that it is more and more apparent that in a scientific technologically minded world, silence is about to be appropriated for political uses by the educated scientific elite advising our political institutions. Many cotemporary thinkers work for institutions that are more and more at the service of the military industrial complex in North America. These scientific technocrats are after Silence. Silence is a weapons system and still remains to be perfected for political and military use.

As an ambiguous phenomenon both in the paradoxical position of creator and created, silence generates an ellipsis of syntax analysis. Semioticians and those studying semantics are already trying to outwit silence. In *The Syntax of Silence*, Jason Merchant states:

The fact that the syntax in these cases has no phonetic exponents certainly does make it more difficult to investigate, but it seems unlikely at this point that any other option will prove to be correct. It is the goal of the present study to argue for the conclusion that there is indeed syntax in the silence. (Merchant, 2001, p. 6)

Why not?

The Linguistic Turn

Signifiers always have several, sometimes extremely disjointed significations. The sentence, though, has one unique meaning, what I mean is that it can't be lexicalised--one makes dictionaries of words, of word usages or locutions, but one doesn't make a dictionary of sentences. Hence, some of the ambiguities tied to the semantic element are reabsorbed in the context, through usage and the utterance of the sentence (Lacan, 1991, p. 279).

On the linguistic front there are and have been several questions for academics to think about: What do we need to know about silence in order to understand the meaning? What do we learn from the use of silence in language, movement and/or any silence site in general? What aspects of silence in discourse become especially problematic? What are the identity cues we can discern through silence? How is language evolving in silence? How does silence work?

Linguistic analysis of silence observes the use of silence in phrasing, verbal and non-verbal communication and in discourse. Academics and researchers watch for ways in which the communicating subjects reveal their identity through silence (including non-textual/non-verbal aspects), and subsequently the ways the interacting subjects make use of the knowledge of each other's identity to modify their use of silence, including ways in which they try to assess the other's identity through silence.

Everything that is said can only be understood against the background of that which is not said. On the one hand, it occupies a relative position in the tradition of what has been said before; on the other hand, and at the same time, it occupies a place in a culturally and historically specific framework. Thus, as Merleau-Ponty states:

All speech is indirect or referential or, if you will, silence. (Merleau-Ponty, 1984, p. 73)

Silence in recent academic discourse has been given several meanings, structures and functions as for example the concept of 'turn-taking' as proposed by Emanuel Schegloff and Harvey Sacks whereby they describe how people adapt throughout their conversation to 'turn-taking' with no gaps, no overlaps to create for themselves the social discourse and event they mean (Schegloff & Sacks, 1999, pp. 263-274). By 'turn-taking' they mean how individual participants decide when to speak, and when to allow the referent to speak. What they failed to analyse is the patterns of silence as they appear in 'turn-taking' in different cultures and societies as was demonstrated by Keith Basso's important study on the Navaho Indians *To Give Up on Words: Silence in Western Apache Culture*, a classic reference in non-western culture's use of silence'. Basso produces a thorough ethnographic analysis of communication in Apache young men and women who are silent, until they have come to know each other and feel comfortable enough with the silence in each other's company. He notably moved beyond Schegloff and Sacks to show how ethnic diversity expresses differing uses of silence in discourse.

Academic interest in the inner workings of silence presented to us by Schegloff and Sacks, Basso etc.. also opened up new ways of understanding silence in the Quaker community (Richard Bauman), in the New York Jewish community (Deborah Tannen), and in the operative style of women in the competing, overlapping and sexist language of male talk (Jennifer Coates).

Tom Bruneau's article *Communicative Silences: Forms and Functions*, in *Journal of Communication* develops a theoretical framework of the *mental-time/artificial-time* relationship in sensation, mentation, metaphorical movement, social and socio-cultural interaction and perception, and especially in the manipulation of coders by silence in language. Bruneau breaks it down to three minor forms of silence: Psycholinguistic Silence (ex: ah, um, repetition, sentence correction); Interactive Silence (defined by length type and form of relationship with the other person); Socio-Cultural Silence communication (as in ceremonial or religious events or events where authority is involved such as court rooms and political gatherings). He reports that our clock time conceptions of time are said to be impeding our ability to properly investigate the

meaning of silence, and by this he is referring to slow-time¹⁰ forms of silence, which is paradoxically relative to *real* time. In summary he states:

Silence is to speech as the white of this paper is to this print. Physiologically, silence appears to be the mirror image of the shape of discernible sound for each person. Speech signs, created by necessity or will, appear to be mentally imposed grounds of silence. Mind creates both. (...) The entire system of spoken language would fail without man's ability to both tolerate and create sign sequences of silence – sound – silence units. In other words, significations of speech signs are possible because of their interdependence with imposed silence. (Bruneau, 1979, p. 307)

Traditional western academia has in a sense kept a lid on silence; silenced silence. This is not the only cultural site that has been neglected by critical theory. Foucault states in his *Madness and Civilization* a notion that is applicable to silence:

As for a common language, there is no such thing; or rather, there is no such thing any longer; the constitution of madness as a mental illness, at the end of the eighteenth century, affords the evidence of a broken dialogue, posits the separation as already effected, and thrusts into oblivion all those stammered, imperfect words without fixed syntax in which the exchange between madness and reason was made. The language of psychiatry, which is a monologue of reason about madness, has been established only on the basis of such a silence. I have not tried to write the history of that language, but rather the archaeology of silence. (Foucault, 1988, pp. x-xi)

Here, Foucault is generally interested in the way meanings are seen as being constructed through the process of language as an empowerment tool. Furthermore, silence is an instrument of social construction in the relationship between discourse and power-knowledge. Silence engages in the discursive construction of social subjects and knowledge, and as a mediator of discourse in social change silence is in the end politically engaged.

Much of critical discourse analysis identifies a set of perspectives that emphasize the relationship between language and power and the subsequent role of discourse analysis in contemporary social and cultural academic forays. Foucault's stipulates the criteria for an eventual localization of a discourse phenomenon such as silence for example. He states:

¹⁰ The notion of 'slow time' as pertaining to silence comes from a poem by John Keats *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. Arthur Quiller-Couch, ed. 1919. *The Oxford Book of English Verse: 1250–1900*.

Which strata should be isolated from others? What types of series should be established? What criteria of periodisation should be adopted for each of them? What system of relations (hierarchy, dominance, stratification, univocal determination, circular causality) may be established between them? What series of series may be established? And in what large-scale chronological table may distinct series of events be determined? (Foucault, 1989, p. 4)

These questions outline some of the challenges an analysis of silence must tackle in order to trace an understanding into furthering the exploration of *difference* as it unfolds into *différance* within the site. This process inevitably questions the absolute privilege of the original academic rhetoric on silence.

Silence Begins to Speak

I believe that cultural systems are, to a great extent, communicative systems and that language is only one, although probably the most important, of the communicative (sub) systems. Analysing linguistic phenomena such as silence in association with related aspects of other cultural-communicative systems opens new ways of studying socially motivated language use in general and of silence in particular. (Jaworsky, 1993, p. xi)

Adam Jaworsky is one of the most notable contemporary linguists studying silence discourse as a mode of expression in the liberal arts.¹¹ As an anthropological linguist, Jaworsky is more interested in how silence works in a specific cultural site rather than what it intrinsically is. In his tomes he collects articles from several recent theorists studying silence and then compiles a general impression of silence in linguistic, political, interpersonal, musical, social, and cultural discourses.

Jaworsky states:

The only difference between researching silence as opposed to speech is that in the cultural assumptions prevailing in most communities from which the studies in this book have gathered their materials; talk consists of “vessels” filled with meaning, whereas silence is a void. The authors of this book, following many others before them, have made an effort to challenge, or at

¹¹ He has written several texts on silence discourse including: *Power of Silence: Social and Pragmatic Perspectives* (Sage, 1993), *Silence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Mouton de Gruyter, 1997), *Sociolinguistics: A reader and Course book* (with Nikolas Coupland, Macmillan, 1997), *The Discourse Reader* (with Nikolas Coupland, Routledge, 1999).

least question such negative assumptions about silence. (Jaworsky, 1997, p.397)

Jaworsky considers silence as an active player in a range of communicative functions. This include the structuring of discourse, the manifestation of social power asymmetry in the use of silence in language, silence as metaphor, in aesthetic effects, silence as a 'keying' device in the performance frame of musicians such as Laurie Anderson or Philip Glass. In his examination of Laurie Anderson's use of silence he states;

All the sounds and silences, anticipated and accidental, included in the musical notation and outside the 'score', belong to the musical piece. (Jaworsky, 1997, p. 21)

When the lights go out on stage and the music and slide show stops in Anderson's performances it is 'visual silence'. In the same compilation of articles, Marcia Hafif discusses monochrome paintings as being visual silence as opposed to visual noise, she adds:

There are other silences in experiencing painting, and here my attention follows two paths. One leads toward the mystic, the Judaeo-Christian, "the Sublime", often discussed in relation to abstract expressionist work and thought, another toward Mallarmé with his use of blank spaces on the page and the Zen practicality of John Cage as he makes silence as important as sound. (Hafif, 1997, p. 342)

These statements reveal the inter-textuality of three discourses that interest me in this paper: silence, theism and the arts. We will return to these sites in the chapter on silence in the arts.

One of the most often cited theorists on silence, Bernard P. Dauenhauer, develops in his *Silence: The Phenomenon and its Ontological Significance* the idea that silence is inherently part of discourse in an intricate set of constructs. These constructs are similar to those suggested by Max Picard's in *The World of Silence*, in 1948 wherein Picard states that silence:

...interferes with the regular flow of the purposeful. It strengthens the untouchable; it lessens the damage inflicted by exploitation. It makes things whole again, by taking them back from the world of dissipation into the world of wholeness. It gives something of its own holy uselessness, for that is what silence itself is: holy uselessness. (Picard, 1948)

Dauenhauer cites the influence of Heidegger, Picard and Merleau-Ponty in his academic pursuit to further the ontological interpretation of silence because, as he puts it:

It can account for (1) the uncancellable possibility of the difference between tradition and new discourse, (2) the difference between the two regions of discourse, and (3) the possibility of a multiplicity of types of discourse with their respective sorts of silence. (Dauenhauer, 1980, p.190)

Dauenhauer postulates that silence marks the absence of an affirmation to the act of speech and that this puts the sole role of the spoken word as a conveyer of meaning into question. Dauenhauer is primarily interested in the ontological significance of the phenomenon of silence.

Dauenhauer breaks down events in silence as follows: 1. 'Intervening silence': *"involved in pacing of utterances, intervening silences punctuate those components—word phrases, musical notes, gestures, painted or sculpted shapes, etc.—which belong to an utterance taken as a whole"*, 2. 'Fore-and-after silence': *"by the occurrence of silence which immediately precedes the first sound phrase of an utterance and the occurrence of silence which immediately follows its last sound phrase"*; and, 3. 'Deep silence': *"silence of intimates, liturgical silence, and the silence of the to-be-said"*.

For Dauenhauer, silence is related to utterance or 'active human performances' and is never an act of unmitigated autonomy; it functions through understanding of finitude and wonder, and yields, binds and joins discourses. Being is the interplay of the "determinate" and the "non-determinate" and Dauenhauer's silence has a major role in discourse and is equiprimordial with utterance. This may be a positive reaction to Wittgenstein famous quote: *"What we cannot talk about, we must pass over in silence"* (Wittgenstein, 1961). To which Žižek responds:

Immediately the stupid question arises: if it is already stated that it is impossible to say anything about the unspeakable, why add that we must not speak about it? (Žižek, 2001, p.164)

Robert Scott takes silence one step further in his studies of classical Chinese texts, and observes attentive silence; terminal silences, and silences that punctuate discourse. Here he pursues a Saussurian discourse whereby silence like '*langue*' is a closed well-defined structure. Scott takes silence to an active state as a co-creator of meaning and

dependent on other meanings in a well structured system of signifiers. The listener actively partakes in the structuring of the meaning of the discourse laden with silence. In his analysis communicating the negative calls attention to a 'possibility' in the Derridian sense. "*It becomes thinkable, whereas silence leaves it in the realm of the unthinkable*" (Scott, 1993, p. 17).

George Kalamaras states that the poststructuralist turn will open up the '*knowing*' of silence. He states:

By insisting that there is an ideal condition distinct from language, Plato not only separates language and reality, but also suggests that the condition of silence has a mysterious aspect, an aspect to which language users may not have access. This inaccessibility has deepened the West's mistrust of mysticism, casting it as an elite practice that again privileges only the fortunate few. (Kalamaras, 1994, p. 2)

Kalamaras proposes that silence is a condition of emptiness, paradoxical, full, fluid and generative as experienced in Eastern spiritual words, proverbs, concepts, metaphors and traditions. Silence is not an operation outside of society it is distinct, conflictive and non-dualistic and can be seen as a refraction into which society comes to see that what is not, *is not*.

This is in line with Niklas Luhmann's approach to silence. He claims that silence is a state of inert communication, which reciprocally relays its inherent functioning to address its own complexity to the configuration of the discursive system in the neighbouring environment. He states:

...the fact has not been "sublated" that every communication, including this one, produces a difference as an operation and that, because of the recursivity of its operations, every system includes something and excludes something else. Every system coproduces that which, as environment, does not enter into the system, and this may then be called "silence" –though silence, silence in a second sense: silence without the ability to connect. (Luhmann, 1994, pp. 25-37)

Luhmann suggests that one must avoid the distinction between speaking and silence, so that it becomes evident that the problem of breaking the silence by way of speech is a paradox in itself. Silence is possible only within the self-drawn boundaries of speech, namely as in the production of *différance*. To follow through with this idea,

James Paul Gee states in his *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis* that 'language-in-action is always and everywhere an active building process.' (Gee, 1999, p.11)

In a *re-configuration* of discourse, we are unable to isolate silence because it participates from within the process: silence is never silent. The signifier and the signified are in collusion and meaning is continually being built even as Dauenhauer's *utterances* have dissipated as sound waves into the infinite.

Nevertheless, silence returns to haunt the discourse in the form of memory and trace. This inevitably questions the role of silence within the ever-changing structure of language, politics and culture as suggested in Massumi's *Parables for the Virtual*:

That there is a difference between the possible and the potential needs to be attended to. Possibility is back-formed from potential's unfolding. But once it is formed, it also effectively feeds in. Feedback, it prescripts --- Potential is unprescripted. It only feeds forward, unfolding toward the registering of an event: bull's eye. Possibility is a variation implicit in what a thing can be said to be when it is on target. Potential is the immanence of a thing to its still indeterminate variation, under way. Implication is a code word. Immanence is process. (Massumi, 2002, p. 9)

Here Massumi suggest an idea that may be applicable to a furthering of the study of silence: a feedback loop and a Deleuzian unfolding of silence's continuous unprescripted 'immanent' potential. Here the 'real stop' operations mentioned in the introduction engages in the feedback loop of formation from a state of 'aporitic' closed discourse.

In his *The Prose of the World* Merleau-Ponty states:

We should consider speech before it has been pronounced, against the ground of the silence, which precedes it, which never ceases to accompany it, and without which it would say nothing. Moreover we should be sensitive to the thread of silence from which the issue of speech is woven. (Merleau-Ponty, 1973, pp. 45-46)

As the academic forays into silence progress in the late 20th century, it is evident that silence is more than just moments of non-sound/non-words interspersed between sound and words. Silence is inherent in the structure of language and partakes in the creation of meaning. Therefore, silence is generative and an underlining living ecosystem for speech/noise emergence.

Chapter 2 – Silence in the Arts

What is not obvious is that the apparent boundaries of the sculptures - the boundaries of all the different shapes - are not their real boundaries. After we become sensitive to them we realise that there is a secondary invisible sculpture around each one. I find it really extraordinary that if we try, we can actually perceive the influences of sculptures out into what is apparently empty space. Blind people apparently become quite sensitive to this phenomenon. When walking down the street they can "feel" an object with enough mass, like a tree or a wall or a rock, even from several feet away. This has been called "face vision." Despite all its undeniable physical presence, its real boundaries are not easy to quantify. Sculpture - art that is sometimes seen as just a lump of matter - actually mediates events and shapes space. It can create differences between us and everything that happens. Sculpture doesn't take us out of life, it doesn't separate us out of the mix." – (Fisher, 2000)

The American sculptor Joel Fisher describes here in his press release the essence of the workings of silence. At an intuitive level silence is felt, sensed and its real boundaries are not easy to determine. Silence mediates events not only through time but also through space, shapes and textures. These mediated events happen in art and appear in several Western cultural sites including painting, performance, literature, dance, television and theatre to name but a few.

Artists, in western society have established a sub-culture determined to push the socio-political envelopes beyond bourgeois norms of identity. In a middleclass, social/capitalist 'democratic' society the artist is given a fragile *carte blanche* to express the hopes, anxiety and passions of the population. In more recent years, globalization efforts have incited artists to engage with concepts of the 'Other' in order to open up the limiting discourse of western capitalist democracies. Freedoms, rights and opportunities are mostly unavailable to those that are defined as 'Other' and who emanate out of immigration, diaspora, nomadism, ethnic wars and economic disparity.

Many artists use silence as a '*Secondary Silence Concept*' to serve and to frame other aspects of silence for a given cultural site. These are usurped for expressing other meanings usually ancillary and/or metaphoric in nature, such as I have noted earlier. They participate as gages, levellers and metronomes of the phenomenon. They feedback meaning into the process as silence is created, appealed and ruptured. These uses of

silence are important but not central to my venture into silence as a mediator and agent of transformation.

My interest here lies in how silence works in the arts as a negotiator, as part of the rupturing process of meaning and mostly in the arts as a sensed phenomenon burdened with affect. Some of the sites discussed herein will use silence as a tool for the creation of their art form, their language and their discourse.

Other artists feel they need to rip open silence with an announcement of their identity, as I cautioned this is a discourse process fraught with risk, dialectics and anxiety. I will concentrate on observing the unintentional yet manifest technological use of silence as an inherent phenomenon within the artist's creative process. Here the 'Other' is not extrinsic to the venture but intrinsic within the workings of silence.

Information can still limit, distract, confuse, and lead us to silence, either advertently or inadvertently. In reality, it is often the most evident, powerful, and readily identifiable forms of discourse that camouflage and/or de-emphasise certain harmful and dehumanizing realities of silence. In the arts, silence has many expressions, meanings and *modus operandi*. In this chapter, I shall touch on a few examples in order to outline the various uses of silence in Western cultural sites.

Here are some questions to think about: What does an artist need to know about the 'Other' person in order to discourse with them through silence? How does the artist feel and 'create' silence? How does this translate back to the artist's world given the limits of the language and identity cues? What aspects of discourse between the artists and the public become especially problematic when silence is at play? What are the universal identity cues that we can discern via silence language? How is language evolving stylistically with the conscious use of silence? How does the written word bring about silence?

Steiner states:

As empty space is so expressly a part of modern painting and sculpture, as the silent intervals are so integral to a composition by Webern, so the void places in Hölderlin's poems, particularly in the late fragments, seem indispensable to the completion of the poetic act. (Steiner, 1967, p. 48)

Steiner is able to place silence in the context of creativity as integral to the work. This allows silence to partake in modernist analysis. However we must take silence further

and engage it with the site. Deconstruction within postmodern art is said to be intrinsic to the avant-garde movement, and it is always at work within modernism itself.

Anthony Giddens and Lyotard have preferred to stipulate that we are still in the modern era. They propose that postmodernism in art is that which is so new and different in the avant-garde that eventually it will be called 'modern' in hindsight. Postmodernism is the experimental precursor to a changing modernism. Thus the postmodernist artist acts as the rupturing agent for the reception and meaning of an ever-changing 'modern' art. The transformation of the euporia to the aporia and back to the painters art is said to lie in a *paideia*, one which manages to see a "presence in an absence," and therewith "something" in "nothing," in spite of its supposed Eleatic impossibility in that there is more than one indivisible reality. I suggest that silence bargains the 'something' with 'nothing'. Silence in the postmodern art form goes beyond terms as 'precursor' and engages in the meaning of art.

For Lyotard postmodern art disturbs the norm and then settles back into the norm. This creates an epistemological problem. The artist mediates the essentially impossible through a fictional world and attempts to return to the norm through self-induced criticism and reflexivity. This elliptical process can only fall into the paradox of creation at its limits. The *Lyotard Reader* states that:

This power of disturbance is related to the feeling of the sublime, and it is an indication of the differend. In this context, modern and postmodern art can be distinguished in the following way. Both are concerned with the unrepresentable: that which cannot be presented (or represented) in art. Modern art, however, presents the fact that there is an unrepresentable, while postmodern art attempts to present the unrepresentable. This is a paradoxical task, and arouses in the viewer the mixture of pleasure and pain that is the sublime. (Benjamin, 1989)

Lyotard derives this idea from Heideggerian notions of 'unconcealment'. To witness in art is to create the tension that Heidegger would call '*Herausfordern*' or a challenging of our mechanic of understanding and presencing of meaning. In other words when a text remains silent when it should be saying something the memory and past experience we have had with the text are challenged. The *Lyotard Reader* states that:

Postmodern art has a political importance for Lyotard, since it can call attention to differends through the feeling of the sublime, showing us that a wrong has been done. (Benjamin, 1989)

We are constantly trying to comprehend the act of both the absence and the presence created by the silence in order to give it a meaning and a political understanding. These events are almost always ambiguous, and rely on the multiplicity of the sites at play and entice us to reveal the inherent meaning. Marcia Hafif, in *"Silence is painting: Let me count the ways,"* states:

Modernism is thus a factor in the development of monochrome painting. The fact that endless discussion can go on, never (or rarely) touching on a purpose on a purpose for painting, a definition of its function, a choice of subject, is, in my mind, one basis for the existence of monochrome painting. One could say the monochrome painting is generic, A Painting, which, Modernism having run its course, can fulfill all the need there is for an embodiment of Painting. (Hafif, 1997, p. 340)

So when we enter a museum or gallery and expect images of reality framed and hung on the wall to admire in order to live a momentary affect and knowledge in the aesthetic realm, we are confused when a blank painting of plain white monochromatic textured acrylic is painted on a displayed canvass. What is this silence in painting? Hafif states:

Painting is a literally silent form (as are most visual arts). Paintings have been built up, stripped down, appliquéd with objects (chair caning, a nail, printed music – tires, parts of chair ...), but most often the painting does not speak or play music, sing or make loud noises. Neither does the viewer feel inclined to speak, sing or dance in front of the painting. This is its most obvious level of silence. (Hafif, 1997, p. 340)

In Stacie Withers' *"Silence and communication in art"*, silence in art is the essentially the *'intensity of its concentration, the removal of the time element, the appeal to a noetic faculty'* rather than the logical. She implies that there is an economy of symbols in postmodern art and a harmony with the technology used by the artist, meanings may be unavailable to the viewer. She calls these areas of discourse the *'silence of the indifference'*. The artist communicates with the viewer beyond the limitations of the form into the utterances of the seeming edges. She states:

There is no narrative in silent painting, but a concentration on the now; there may be an ambiguity to keep the viewer guessing and at loss for words, or alternatively, to break the narrative because ambiguity implies an uncertain state or hesitation at the moment of choice. (Withers, 1997, p. 365)

Bram van Velde's *Blank Canvas*, and Rauschenberg's white paintings create this postmodern anxiety and disturbance that settles into the sublime. These paintings can be ultimately and metaphorically described as silence on canvas. Alina Kwiatkowska, in "*Silence Across Modalities*", states:

Silence is part of linguistic communication, but, as we have seen, it may also be part of the language of vision, and one may find its analogues in other modalities. It is connected with the similarly cross-modal ability to figure/ground distinctions, which is one of the most essential characteristics of the human perceptual system. (Kwiatkowska, 1997, p. 336)

This observation leads Kwiatkowska to extrapolate that silence has similar communicative functions in different modalities and ultimately has more in common with other forms of discourse than meets the eye. The sensorial communality and context of the work relinquishes all rational thinking to an intuitive incursion into the communicative feelings and emotions of the artist's expression. This brings about the question: To what extent has scientific rationalism influenced contemporary art and its subsequent elucidation in theory? Kwiatkowska states:

There is an obvious connection between language and perception. As many researchers have argued recently, language is dependent on perception in most fundamental ways, and since human perception is visually oriented, there is an intimate connection between the visual and the verbal. A neuropsychologist (Sereno 1990: 3) suggests "language comprehension in sighted people might best be thought of as a kind of code-directed scene comprehension that draws heavily upon specifically visual, and probably largely prelinguistic processing constraints." (Kwiatkowsky, 1997, p. 329)

The senses play an important role in codifying meaning in our perception of silence. Language use and understanding is a complex inter-nodal process of creative and subsequent destruction of meaning. We now understand that the visual cortex in humans is involved in language comprehension. Sereno argues that since language use is fairly recent and originated rather abruptly in the development of the human brain, the existing unimodal visual areas of the cortex of the primate cortex must have been reused for linguistic purposes.¹² This leads us down to the medulla Oblongata, which may be considered by some as the root of all-evil where instinct lays awaiting to usurp and

¹² Sereno, M.I. (1990) Language and the primate brain. CRL Newsletter 4:4.

moderate perception. If the proof that humans are animals lies anywhere it is in that little area of the brain that is found to be in common with most mammals. I speak of this little part of the brain above the back of the human neck, which can be easily ruptured. In *Language and Silence*, George Steiner states:

“It is better for the poet to mutilate his own tongue than to dignify the inhuman either with his gift or his uncaring.”(Steiner, 1967, p. 54).

In the physical arts performance, dance and theatre and in most other artistic endeavours silence becomes a strategy for disruption and rupture exposing the limits of language within the representation manifested by the ever-present instinct. The cortex and the medulla oblongata exchange information by both diminishing and augmenting signals, and impulses creating meaning imbued in affect, intuition, feelings and emotion. This opens up the discourse of silence into areas of creativity, the body and cognition whose interactions are only recently understood and discovered by researchers.

Consequently, a more comprehensive understanding of the notion of silence needs to take into consideration the manner in which the performer's physical presence, technique and *gnosis* affect the relationship between text and silence. In dance, television, theatre and performance silence, text and the body need to be reassessed in a mutually influential tri-partite relationship. Silence's intra-textual ambivalence, its ability to unite and separate meanings, and its ephemeral quality ruptures the performer's being in a spatio-temporal reality. In *Silence: The Phenomenon and Its Ontological Significance*, Bernard P. Dauenhauer states that:

Silence is not merely linked with some active human performance. It itself is an active performance. That is, silence is neither muteness nor mere absence of audible sound ... unlike muteness, silence necessarily involves conscious activity. (Dauenhauer, 1980, p. 4)

Further investigation into the literary, musical and theatrical sites can perhaps reveal the possibility of silence as a para-linguistic phenomenon uneasy in its paradoxical state of being. Silence is not a being *per se*, nor can it be physical, material or even conceptually understood by the recent scientific turn in philosophy. We must consider the limitation of the human sensory and intellectual process. Silence can only be lived intuitively, beyond reason.

I fall into the same scientific discourse (the language of the day) when I say: *a re-configuration is followed by an immediate shattering of the virtual/refracted site rupturing into the process of analysis. This can truly be understood/imagined as a spatio-temporal ebb and flow into unknown dimensions outside of the material/sensory binary.* The limited scientific language of contemporary North American society does not suffice for a proper textual unravelling of silence.

It should be added that an understanding of one's sixth sense, namely intuition, is primordial to what I am trying to get at in this text. Investigating the role of intuition in various discourses may be as creative in elucidating the nature of silence, as Freudian and/or Jungian dream analysis was successful in understanding human consciousness. Intuition partakes in silence, the unknown, the unconscious, the 'un-sensed'. Simultaneous yawns, hypnosis and telepathy to name but a few of the unexplained human phenomenon, also inadvertently fall into the realm of unexplained forms of communication that lie beyond our cognitive deciphering of the senses. Auras, potentials, corporeal electromagnetic fields each play an important role in what we generally consign to the realm of *intuition*. We understand that they exist and we can partake in the communication, but we cannot comprehend the manner in which they function. In that way silence also has the same qualifications and attributes and must be analysed by linking it to these 'para-normal', para-linguistic phenomenon.

Literature's Consent

Goethe suggests in Faust that the word was not there in the beginning as the Old Testament states. He eludes that the word is secondary to action:

Faust: "Tis writ: 'In the beginning was the word!'
 I pause, to wonder what is here inferred?
 The 'word' I cannot set supremely high,
 A new translation I will try.
 I read, if by the spirit I am taught,
 This sense: 'In the beginning was the thought'.
 This opening I need to weigh again,
 Or sense may suffer from a hasty pen.
 Does thought create, and work, and rule the hour?

Twere best: 'In the beginning was the power!'
 Yet, while the pen is urged with willing fingers,
 A sense of doubt and hesitancy lingers.
 The spirit come to guide me in need,
 I write, 'In the beginning was the deed!'" (Goethe, 1909)

Goethe's prose is an example of the paradox that the written word must face in its auto-exegesis. This paradox of which comes first, the word or silence, must be reconsidered in our exploration of the workings of silence in 'modern' literature. In his history of the book website Richard Clement outlines the development of the medieval book. At first the book is read out loud in a form of self-dictation in the monastic scriptoria as if the sentences were musical notes without punctuation. Then Clement suggests a change occurred in western literature as follows:

However, in the eighth century in England and Ireland we find the first word division in manuscripts. This was a pedagogical device that aided those whose grasp of Latin was less than perfect. By the ninth century we find word division in manuscripts produced on the Continent, and by the eleventh century it had become commonplace. Word division began as an aid to oral reading, but far more significantly allowed the development of silent reading. (Saenger, 1982, pp. 367-414)

This translation of the silence interspersed between words from an aural to a written tradition, from a phoneme and a grapheme, is not new and can be traced back to early cuneiform, hieroglyphic and Sanskrit writings. To digress for a second, Derrida who criticized Saussure's phonocentrism states:

The play of difference, which, as Saussure reminded us, is the condition for the possibility and functioning of every sign, is in itself a silent play. Inaudible is the difference between two phonemes, which alone permits them to be and to operate as such. The inaudible opens up the apprehension of two present phonemes such as they present themselves. If there is no purely phonetic writing, it is that there is no purely phonetic *phone*. The difference, which establishes phonemes and lets them be heard, remains in and of itself inaudible, in every sense of the word. (Derrida, 1982, pp. 3-27)

However concrete evidence of the imposition of silence upon the act of reading seems to be unique in this medieval context. Monasteries were the centres of copying books in pre-renaissance Europe. They began to impose silence on their scribes as

punctuation replaced the oral repetition of the written word and composition became written and reading in silence. As writing further developed, silent reading introduced composition directly on parchment or paper rather than wax tablets and furthermore with a simple and easily legible *Gothic* cursive script. Clement continues:

Silent reading increased one's comprehension of complex ideas as one could take in information at a much faster rate. As scholastic texts became more complex, books reflected these complexities in their organizational design and layout. --- These developments included dividing the text into chapters and sub-chapters, and the addition of tables of chapter headings, alphabetical tables by subjects, and running heads. New forms of punctuation, such as colored paragraph marks, were introduced. Quotations were underlined in red, marginal notes were added, and diagrams were supplied. The resulting multi-structured apparatus, perhaps most commonly seen in a glossed Bible or Psalter, was visual and was meant for a reader, not a hearer. (Saenger, 1982, pp. 367-414)

It could be said that silence literally entered the written text by way of authorship. The Benedictine Order's strict work ethic imposed silence on the written text by muting the aural tradition of the monk in the scriptorium. By the twelfth century, a class of professional scribes was created often employed by monasteries. Unlike Monks they could travel to copy manuscripts and books at distant places. The use of daylight and silence was imposed upon the scriptorium, but copying was not silent because the scribe dictated to himself, and the scriptorium was abuzz with sound. However, silent reading was a development of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the difference between a phoneme and a grapheme eventually become obsolete. In the act of writing, the grapheme takes on the similar characteristics to phonemes in usurping silence in its process.

In more modern times Dante, Mallarmé, James, Bataille, Joyce, Acker and many more writers challenged these punctuations and writing formations to the outer limits of the book. Literary theorists, like Paul de Man, predicted the end of the author, and of the book because the language we use in fiction is so ambiguous and to every individual a word, phrase, sentence, or metaphor has a different meaning depending on their emotional state, class, education etc... Thus de Man says the book is read with a bias, and the meaning is defined by a third fictional party, the reader him/herself. This in a sense

nullifies the book, and the author as the traditional logo-centric artist and creator (de Man, 1979).

I suggest that it is not the end of the book but the beginning of the 'modern' novel in that these writers pushed the edge of the text to a point of rupture, physically and metaphorically speaking. And not unlike Massumi's suggestion, the text itself should be understood as a generative and an underlining living ecosystem for speech/noise emergence. Blanchot writes in his *Thanks (Be Given) to Jacques Derrida*:

The disappearance of the 'author' gives even greater necessity to teaching, writing (the trace prior to all text) and speech, to the speech within writing, the speech that does not vivify writing which otherwise would be dead, but on the contrary impels us to go towards others, caring for the distant and the near, without it yet being given to us to know that, before all else, this is the only path towards the Infinite. (Blanchot, 1995, p. 323)

Although silence would certainly provide the mechanism, which befalls the *anti-author/death of the author* via the text, silence could be understood as tearing down all problems of agency or the agent's connection with the written site. This leads to this inevitable paradox that self-criticism does inevitably figure in any recognizable text, through the ethical injunction to flip this criticism metaphorically in favour of what lies beyond the silence. Silence is relinquished to the role of both diplomat and traitor. This is difficult to deal with because it requires both bridging the gap and maintaining the discrepancy between a meaning unconditioned by the act of writing and on the other hand the act of simply communicating. Sam Slote, in *The Silence in Progress of Dante, Mallarmé, and Joyce*, states:

But it would seem, following from Blanchot's argument above, that this *original unreadability* is not an origin after all. Unreadability is the preposition of reading that cannot be pinned down. The double-motion that we will be traversing in our three writings then is this paradox that in the happy reuniting of the book there is the intervallic dissolution, *and* this intervallic dissolution, rather than sunder unity, is also the mark of the possibility of the book. (Slote, 1999, p. 6)

This notion of possibility allows the book to replenish and to re-activate its inner form as a cultural commodity in this post-modern era. Silence allows the inter-modality of the word to become the traces and vagueness of the emergent meaning and thus allows the

book and its content to open up to a recurrence of content beyond nostalgia back to what is perceived as the real. In Mallarmé's *Un Coup de Dés*¹³ silence is a sincere friend and enemy that partakes in the posturing of the text within its context and meaning without revealing itself on the page. Slote states:

One reads *Un coup de Dés* page by page, the poem's syntax derives from pagination, from a *mise-en-page*. The spaces articulate the hypotheses. Indeed there is a notable absence of any and all formal punctuation marks, the syntax is orchestrated by the page and its blanks. (Slote, 1999, p. 140)

In the same way that the blank painting refuses to give us a clear signification, Mallarmé's poem requires the act of knowing through the imaginary condescending continuity of the page and the text. A continuous act of retrospection and extemporal epiphany is at play. We are thrust simultaneously forward into the empty and back to the present and real in one blow. He states:

Each metalepsis is sylleptic, open to multiple directions of being construed. The poem's hypotaxis (the hierarchies of rapport between phrases) is articulated through a sylleptic parataxis. This multiplicity of possible conjunctions between these mutually aligned and aligning statements *inflects* semanticity into a subjunctivity. There is a danger of construing the poem's blanks as a *signifying* force that would constitute a different sphere of semantic articulation. This would happen by admitting that the spaces merely replace punctuation. (Slote, 1999, p. 144)

Blanchot states in his *Mallarmé and the Art of the Novel* that Mallarmé was an idealist in search of writing the perfect novel. This attempt, Mallarmé calls the 'literary game', is fraught with risk and futility. How can one write the perfect novel? Blanchot suggest that his game, the endeavour and the zeal can only lead to silence:

Herein lies the supreme danger, the danger that, by the exercise of an intelligence caught up in infinite labours and by the rigour of the mind that ceaselessly rediscovers chance, leads the creator into silence [...] Such silence has a seemingly perfect beauty. Images are abolished. Metaphors have dissipated. Words are broken up. There is only, deep in the mind, a henceforward incorruptible poem that a complete necessity seems to have reduced to absence and which, none the less, recognizes itself in the absence as the image – the final image – of plenitude and of the absolute. (Blanchot, 1995, p. 46)

¹³ The poem can be accessed on the net in English at: <http://membres.lycos.fr/mulrooney/toss.html>

It is herein obvious by the integrity of his statements that Blanchot believes in the ultimate truth, in 'God'. I digress.

This quest and rigour in finding the diversity of solutions to expression are what made Mallarmé exceptional. Blanchot suggests that Mallarmé has grasped the notion that language establishes human experience and the consequent universe. Blanchot suggest in *The Novel is a Work of Bad Faith* that the novel:

...succeeds in constituting a world of untruth in which it is possible to put one's faith that even it's author finds himself reduced to naught by dint of believing in it; and if at the same time it makes of the untruth of this world the element of emptiness in which, finally, there comes into view the meaning of what is most true. (Blanchot, 1995, pp. 72-73)

When you read this passage, and arrive at a blank space between words, phrases or sentences, silence leads the way and causes a repetition of the meaning and a repetition of the cognitive effect. The affect imbues knowledge in the text revealing the point in time and space of the ruptured absent meaning prior to the fragile and ephemeral trace of the present meaning. The present meaning is thus left to unknowingly settle into the caverns of memory. Silence is petrified as meaning in the neurons and fixed into the present of past memories to which one can always return in the future. Time is now out of whack. Silence mercilessly interrupts the flow of information in order to reconstruct the receptor for the next wave of meaning. This alterity precludes the present and obliges the absent. This causes a transformation and a *re-alignment* of our understanding of the silence phenomenon. A *re-alignment* that is necessary for a better understanding of silence *per se*.

This is exemplified in the poems of Bataille, Mallarmé and the writings of Joyce and more recently Kathy Acker. George Steiner, in *Language and Silence*, states:

This revaluation of silence – in the epistemology of Wittgenstein, in the aesthetics of Webern and Cage, in the poetics of Beckett – is one of the most original, characteristics acts of the modern spirit. (Steiner, 1967, p. 48).

It is Bataille who first addresses this unspeakable communality as "*the negative community: the community of those who have no community*." The interest in death, pain and its transgression haunts Bataille. In theatre and poetry Antonin Artaud and Rimbaud also were stung with the same strain of 'modernist writer's fever'. Both these authors

lived an extremely complicated and dramatic life. In their actions they surpassed their writings in a fashion true to their own claim about their art form. In *Language and Silence*, George Steiner states:

“Rimbaud’s abdication is seen to have a very different sense. It signifies the elevation of action over word. (Steiner, 1967, p. 48)

Nevertheless reading these authors necessitates a rupture with the linearity of a conventional reading and requires convocation of various voices, a self-referential simultaneity and/or multiplicity of readings. This invoked an introduction of the pause or silence as part of a structural element. In his analysis of James Joyce’s *Finnegan’s Wake* Michael Heumann writes:

Hence, “SILENCE.” This argument, however, does not take into account the question that is cut off by the silence: namely, “What is the ti...?” The castrated word could be “tit,” “tip,” or “tap,” each of which recurs through the text and are generally figured as sounds coming from the exterior of HCE’s dreaming body. --- After “SILENCE,” however, all of these images, desires, and so on are displaced, consumed, negated. Instead of enabling a particular line of discourse to reign above all others, “SILENCE” posits an empty vessel at the heart of the text, an absence in spirit, psyche, and material substance. (Heumann, 1998)

Joyce turned the novel ‘modern’ with his challenges to the hegemony of the book. He broke the dominance that structure had over content in various ways and silence played an important part in this literary transformation. The ambiguity of the discourse causing one to forever return into the written word in order to reveal the hidden meanings is exemplary in this Joyce. It shows us without a doubt how silence has mediated the word into paradoxical and multiple meanings of presence and absence. Blanchot is right in demanding an opening up of the written word, the novel. Poetry, allegory, story and form are constantly rethought and expanded upon but Blanchot would like a rupture with traditional modes of writing. I would propose a kind of re-invention of the *récit*. Sam Slote, states:

“C’est pourquoi il n’y a pas de récit, c’est pourquoi il n’en manque pas” (Blanchot 1959, 15). Blanchot bemoans this lack of attention from novelists to desist from teleology and he ends his essay with a dream of an ideal novelist, a novelist (of the) *à venir*: “Ce romancier, pour lequel un écrivain comme Joyce nous offre quelques traits, se poserait assurément les mêmes problèmes

dans lesquels Mallarmé a épuisé sa vie, et comme Mallarmé, il serait heureux de vivre pour effectuer en soi des transformations singulières et pour tirer de la parole le silence où il doit mourir” (Blanchot 1943, 1968). The novel might, by digression, have “rearrived” (Finnigans Wake: 003.05) at silence. (Slote, 1999, p. 186)

It is comprehensible that Joyce, Mallarmé, Artaud, Rimbaud etc... returned to the essence of the text following the Romantic Movement. The Romantics were pre-occupied with representing the un-representable. And as Blanchot stated only negatively, could the unrepresentable be represented.

The absence of the written word was a natural progression after the Romantic strategies of justifying the impossibility of representing the absolute. Irony, allegory and puns were now available for twisting the reality of the Romantic text onto itself. Modernism appropriated the Romantic text and took it one step further into the realm of abject silence. This new adventure into silence was soon to become a trip into a *cul-de-sac* in which lie the paradoxical notions of eternity and infinity.¹⁴

Movies *Mit Out Sound*

Silence has been the founding counsellor of cinema. From the early days of Meliès and the Lumières Brothers, followed by Griffith, Chaplin and Keaton, silence has been silent cinema's platform. However, the kind of silence that I have been discussing in this paper has been limited in the cinematic site by the complexity of the creative process, the capitalist nature of the theatrical exploitation, and the textual realism of the medium.

The use of silence as a metaphor, which I have called '*Secondary Silence Concepts*', abounds in cinema. Political repression, stylistic uses in editing, photography, sound, experimental uses, silent movies and social exploitation of cinema make it very accessible to such a '*secondary*' analysis. Very few movies however attempt to go beyond these uses of silence into the realm of silence as we have discussed so far. In my opinion attempts have been few and far between. Here are some that come to mind:

¹⁴ As one of my characters states in *Seductio*, a film I made in the early 80's "*Je vois le firmament et il est bleu.*"

In the 1990's film by Abbas Kiarostami, *A Taste of Cherries* the protagonist is buried alive at the end of the movie and the camera lies with him subjectively underground. We hear the storm brewing above ground and the heavy breathing in the casket of the hero for more than five full minutes of darkness in the theatre. The politics of this film, the notions of suicide and the statement regarding freedom of speech in Iran are all clearly expressed in this work. The influence of Paradjanov, Bresson, Tarkovski, Bunuel and Makhmalbaf are evident in this picture and reflect the preoccupation with silence by these directors in their own works. Fellini, Ozu, Tati, Dryer, Antonioni, Kieslowski, Ackerman, Tarr and Scola have also adventured with silence in various scenes of their films. However few dealt with silence in the way the Iranians have in the last few years. *The Silence* by Mohsen Makhmalbaf ventures into a deaf child's perception of the world in contemporary Iran. The poetry of the picture has opened up the possibility of a rupture in an otherwise lethargic world cinema drowned by its own Babylonian glory and prone to a resurgence of moralizing romantic neo-realism and nostalgic retrograde.

In earlier cinema, Charlie Chaplin's talent as a mime in *The Great Dictator* and in other movies such as *Modern Times* and *Gold Rush* enabled him to use silence as a political and cultural tool involved not only in exposing the reader (viewer) but simultaneously the text (film) itself. Thus silence ruptures politics into sensation and meaning. His talents united the novel, theatre, dance, and photograph in a hyper-textuality unsurpassed to this day. In *Marcel Marceau ou l'aventure du silence*, Guy et Jeanne Verriest-Lefert interview Marceau who says:

Il ne faut pas oublier qu'à l'origine le cinéma a été très influencé par la pantomime anglaise. C'est elle qui a suscité la merveilleuse école burlesque américaine, encore que Chaplin ait puisé une certaine élégance chez Max Linder, en France. On y trouvait Chaplin, Mack Sennett, Buster Keaton, Laurel et Hardy, les Marx Brothers, qui s'appuyaient sur un comique d'accessoires ou axé sur des situations cocasses, absurdes ou tragiques, un comique de satire sociale. (Verriest-Lefert, 1974, p.57)

Marceau's comment ties in well Chaplin to Maya Deren who in her *Meshes of the Afternoon* opens up silence in cinema to a 'modern' American art. Interspersed with the music and vocalization of her husband Teiji Ito, Deren mimes, vanishes and dances time

away in utter textual rather than aural or visual silence. Wendy Haslem describes the sensation most efficiently:

...she (Deren) establishes a silent connection with the eyes, suggesting the possibility for reverie or even hallucination. It foreshadows her experiments with superimposition and the juxtaposition of disparate spaces. It is an image that suggests the most compelling themes of her film work: dreaming, reflection, rhythm, vision, ritual and identity. (Haslem, 2002)

Here she clearly elucidates the ellipsis of silence in a medium unbearably grounded in time and space. Several examples of the use of silence in film can be conjured. Film deserves an eventual comprehensive analysis in order to make out the media's interaction with silence.

Music Beyond Negation

Seldom do we hear mimes speak. Their lives are spent fighting the silence medium and appropriating it for their art form. But Marcel Marceau understands silence not only in performance but also organically. Marceau says:

Il est vrai que le mime s'appuie sur le silence, tout comme le musicien prend des temps et s'appuie aussi sur le silence. Car le silence est fait de musique, comme la musique est faite de silence. Pour le mime, le silence est aussi important que la réplique pour l'acteur parlant: si le mime n'arrive pas à s'appuyer sur un silence qui envoûte, c'est qu'il n'est pas assez musicien et n'a pas la force nécessaire pour créer les éffluves auxquels le public peut répondre. Le lyrisme du mime, c'est la musicalité du geste. (Verriet-Lefert, 1974, p.53)

In depicting the similarity of the use of silence in music and performance Marceau introduces a common thread in silence and the arts: the notion of all encompassing silence. This brings us to music's obvious example: John Cage.

Cage is not a deconstructionist despite the debate over his philosophical allegiances. He could well be a postmodernist obsessed with breaking the silence. He states:

I have nothing to say, and I am saying it. (Cage, 1951, p.51)

Cage starts with Joyce. He may at times challenge the very system of conceptual opposition that makes the musical order possible. For Cage, sound and silence are like

Dauenhauer's view: sound exists in a pitch of silence abuzz with sound. As a musical theorist, Cage partakes in all the classical acts of composing, performing, exploring musical theory, conducting and scoring his music and he subsequently sells tickets and recordings. On occasion his more serene deep listening music, reminiscent of Philip Glass and pop idol Brian Eno, specifically challenges the established methods in the intellectual musical world. He plays with music and sound as if rules are made to be broken, in the same manner as La Monte Young, Terry Riley, or Steve Reich.

John Cage composed 4' 33" in which the pianist and/or any number of musicians sit in silence for that length of time. The piece was written in 1952 and was influenced by Zen Buddhist philosophy. When a composer writes a rest in the score he is really allowing the noise to be heard. Silence becomes a noise. Cage practices something called *Anapodeictics* in this piece an anarchy beyond negation, 'beyond being' the perishable truth that science can never achieve. What it proposes is that the listening subject is to compose his/her own music from the very absence of music. In the same way that the blank canvas creates an affect tempered with anxiety, Cage tells us to take the anxiety of the frustrated musician and create our own rupture out of the silence in the room. It invites a coughing fit at worst.

In this piece his statement is political and an affront to traditional contemporary composers and its sub-culture on the surface; but the underlying intellectual endeavour is concomitant with the abstract movement, the nihilist theatre and the disjunctive poetry of the day. 4' 33" is however an exception to his often atonal, random, and mostly confusing noise. Cages music contravenes both the invented and figurative affect of noise emerging out of silence and yet firmly grounds it in the 'present' possibly 'real'. The gibberish makes sense out of silence. In Cage, the inaudible is difference and silence can be distinguished between two different sounds without being reduced to any *present* sound whatsoever. This ellipsis is absurd but paradoxical in adventure and in act it is like the workings of a sluice in language. Merchant states, in *The Syntax of silence*:

The internal syntax of the sluice means investigating the structure of silence: attempting to determine what structure must be present in order to generate the perceived interpretation of elliptical phrases. (Merchant, 2001, p. 54)

This musical sluice is an inaudible difference emerging from silence and must be possible *a priori* as the eventual chance of all the untried differences; this perceptible difference lies in silence between various rational and cognitive experiences of sound. Through his sluicing Cage challenges the perlocution of the text and its ontology with the purest of the art forms, music and silence. George Steiner, in *Language and Silence*, states:

But it is decisively the fact that language does have its frontiers that it borders on three other modes of statement – light, music, and silence – which gives proof of a transcendent presence in the fabric of the world. (Steiner, 1967, p. 39)

This transcendent quality is evident in Cage's work. It comprises not only of silence as an area where there is an emergence of sound but also silence as the amplificatory site of noise. Joddy Murray pursues silence not as an act of force, or as perlocution, but as 'amplification' described in his article as a:

formal rhetorical technique, which collaborates with chance, introducing a seeming synonymy by dividing and particularizing an assertion, creating thereby an expanded set of words for which, in turn, the audience can invent an expanded sense of reality. If the reality is convincing, the amplification evaporates, becomes literal description once again when measured against the new reality. (Murray, 2003)

Cage is well aware of the inner workings amplification and tonality. Murray suggests that rhetorical amplification allows the audience to invent a sense of reality and thus enhances detail, metaphor, and repetition in a discourse.

Intensification of sound is said to arise out of silence, and it also offers an instant in time for the listeners to augment meaning in discourse. Murray states:

...deep silence, especially the kind associated with "what-ought-to-be-said," adds authenticity to the utterance, providing the listener a measure to judge the impact of what is being said with what is not being said. (Murray, 2003).

Murray continues his proposal and explains the inner workings of the anxious silence of Cage's musical composition. Without 'fore-and-after silence', discourse would collide with itself, making it almost illegible. He states that:

During moments of deep silence, then, tact becomes embedded in the imagination of the audience, allowing for polite public discourse while also allowing for the possibility of communicating an alternate truth

...Psychologists may call such “interpretation” a kind of projection, but that is exactly the nature of amplification in discourse: listeners creating their own reality in the time silence leaves available (Murray, 2003).

Amplification is said to work because it *allows* for interpretive space in discourse through the dimension of time and allows for the listener to fill, invent, and augment speech. Cage’s *4’ 33”* amplifies silence in a musical poetry equivalent to Orpheus and his lyre. In *Language and Silence*, George Steiner states:

It is in music that the poet hopes to find the paradox resolved of an act of creation singular to the creator, bearing the shape of his own spirit, yet infinitely renewed in each listener. (Steiner, 1967, p. 43)

Absurd Theatre - Not!

Opening this section on the use of silence in the theatre of ‘modern’ times, Steiner states:

That which we call fact may well be a veil spun by language to shroud the mind from reality. Wittgenstein compels us to wonder whether reality can be *spoken of*, when speech is merely a kind of infinite regression, words being spoken of other words. (Steiner, 1967, p. 21)

Berthold Brecht wrote in *The Life of Galileo: Little Monk: Will not the truth, if it is the truth, prevail either with or without us?* Galileo: *No, no, no! So much of the truth will prevail that we make prevail!* Brecht’s theatre is an oxymoron, an acute folly. It is preoccupied with mimicry of life whereby God is the playwright and the actors are the biblical characters that the audience (contemporary humanity) are spiritually, intellectually and emotionally engaged with. When I say an acute folly I also mean obtuse. Simple minded, thick headed and insensitive are compliments for the theatre I am about to engage in. Maeterlink, Ionesco, Genet, Chekhov, Bernard, Beckett and Esslin are devoted employers of silence both as non-sound and as non-speech in their theatrical works. In *Ionesco and Genet*, Jacobsen and Mueller state:

Among the influences, then, on the drama of Beckett, Ionesco, and Genet are man’s sense of his mortality, alienation, and inhumanity; the proclaimed death or silence of God; and the loss of communicability through words or feelings. By means of a surrealist, nightmarish style and tone, their plays convey to us

the very feeling of absurdity itself, an absurdity so congenial to mid-twentieth-century life. (Jacobsen & Mueller, 1968, p. 21)

Pinter and Artaud must be added to this list of illustrious Escamoteurs or conjurers of silence. Showmanship and magic are their art. In *Harold Pinter: The Poetics of Silence*, James R. Hollis states:

When we consider the Pinter corpus, we find that much of what he is doing was in some way anticipated by the absurdists in their exposure of the exhaustion of language and the consequent breakdown of communication and by the angry young men who tried to accurately record the conversations they heard in order to hold them up for our critical scrutiny. (Hollis, 1970, p. 17)

One can imagine that the theatre of the absurd can express meaning, whereby consciousness makes a trace of memory and experience. For example many of the plays by these 'modern' playwrights include in their dialogue scatological discourse, dramatically incorporate emotional violence and require physical acrobatics on the part of the actors. In Beckett plays, the characters are forever in the realm of the unfinished, the imaginary, the temporary thus withdrawing them from temporal, spatial and societal reality. Meaning is derived in the aporia created when bourgeois middle class values and anarchic amorality clash on stage. In *Samuel Beckett's Real Silence*, Hélène L. Baldwin states:

Throughout the Beckettian canon the most sacred terms of reference in Christian theology are juxtaposed to the plainest, most downright, disgusted and disgusting references to basic functions of the body, which appears completely inappropriate to the mystical pursuit. Indeed, most critics see this juxtaposition as irony at the expense of religion. Perhaps it is, but Beckett's enormous preoccupation with religious matters suggests otherwise. (Baldwin, 1981, p. 13)

However what is also common in the works of these playwrights is the emergence of silence as a leading character. The London's Royal Shakespeare Company premiered Pinter's, *Silence* 1969, as part of two one-act plays titled *Landscape* and *Silence*. There, silence was used by Pinter to increase dramatic tension, accentuate sarcasm, and expose secretive gossip. In *Harold Pinter: The Poetics of Silence*, James R. Hollis analyses the use of silence in Harold Pinter plays. Pinter was preoccupied with the silence, which drifts behind the text and menaces to rupture into the lines delivered by the actors on stage in their performance. In Pinter this silence is noticed as in Cage's music when the

loud incoherent noise subsists. Silence thus accentuates and intensifies the spoken word and amplifies the tone. He states:

This is the silence, which emerges when the most important things are left unsaid [...] This silence is the result of a character's anagnorisis (unfolding) or insight into the nature of some supra-personal reality. It is comparable to the central ineffability of the mystical experience in which the character attains the consciousness of unity with the "Other." It is the outward manifestation of the inner *kinosis*, the emptying of the self into the larger non-self. This emptying is not the occasion of emptiness but the experience of fullness (Hollis, 1970, p.16- 17)

Hollis suggests that the Pinter corpus precedes the absurdists in their introduction of the collapse of language and the consequent breakdown of communication and subsequently propels their desire to reproduce the landscape of the real. I would propose that here, the exhaustion of language in the performed text comes out of an internal mystical monologue that the playwright has with the writing of the play. The act of writing the imagined scene is a priori the act of breach and emergence of silence. The playwright as creator attempts to control the rupture of silence not only in his mind as he writes but the outcome on the stage as it is performed. For the audience this becomes evident in the self-reflection that such text causes as each guest engages in the play. For the critic it's hell. Matthew Feldman delves into this perceived incomprehensibility and absurdity of Beckett's plays by the theatre critics.

Feldman looks into the manner that Ihab Hassan presents the dilemma of the modern critic in his text *The Literature of Silence*. Hassan is said to declare that '*the old principles of causality, psychological analysis, and symbolic relation, principles on which the bourgeois novel once comfortably rested, begin to crumble*' when the critic is faced with Beckett's '*art of impossibility*'. Feldman states:

In his (Hassan's) view, positivistic criticism is simply not in a position to interpret an 'anti-literature' aspiring to a fourfold silence that rejects Western civilisation; holds the self to be unknowable; contains its own denial; and makes the principle of indeterminacy an artistic centrepiece. (Hassan in Feldman, p. 6)

A new wave of critics had to be formed and accustomed to the new discourse. It did not take long for 'modern' theatre to make its case. Capitalism and personal freedoms

including those of expression opened up the space for an unabashed interiority of the playwright's text. This internal mystical monologue of the playwright seems very quiet in comparison with the spoken words on stage. Yet it is louder and more powerful than the actor's performance or the audience's reception. Silence here reflects the thoughts, memories, fantasies and/or daydreams of the playwright. Silence is the presence of the playwright and his absence simultaneously. This may be a spatio-temporal paradox, but it is not a metaphor for describing the state of being. This would be a misunderstanding of the mystical emergence in the text through materialist reference. I suggest silence is that moment when audience, performer and playwright commune. Mary E. Hazard in

Elizabethan Silent Language states:

The paradoxes thus engendered by absence or silence fall under the umbrella figure for amplification called *synoeciosis*, or in Puttenham's homely translation, *cross-couple*, so called because "it takes me two contrary words, and tieth them as it were in a paire of couples, and so makes them agree like good fellowes, as I saw once in Fraunce a wolfe coupled with a mastiffe, and a fox with a hounde" (*Arte of Poesie* 206). When John Hoskins described this figure in *Directions for speech and Style*, he quoted the example from Sydney's *New Arcadia*, "absented presence," a key phrase in this chapter, and, indeed in the works of Sydney, with his heavy use of his absent presence poetically, such as occupatio, metonymy, and synecdoche (36). While verbally sparring with Benedick, Shakespeare's Beatrice unhappily employs the figure, "I am gone, though I am here" (*Much Ado about Nothing* 4.1.292). (Hazard, 2000, p. 234)

Narratives of negation and absence shatter traditional romantic theatre. Anxiety and introspection became the recurring themes of 'modern' theatre. Playwrights begin a search for the inner self and awaken a spiritual engagement with the natural in an age where God has inadvertently exited the stage. The Japanese No theatre, Javanese shadow play and traditional Persian theatre influenced the works of the 'moderns'. Similarly, the influence of Eastern mysticism on Beckett allowed him to experience silence and its ability to open up the stiff and voluptuous discourse of romantic theatre.

The key to Japanese culture lies in the asymmetrical intervals: spacing, rhythms of writing, designing, music, dancing, and the arts. Above all, it lies in the ability to see and feel space. The MA perceived as an area of change – of hues, of brightness, shape – becomes symbolized in all sorts of gestures, idioms, etc., throughout the cultural and practical arts, and comes to be symbolized in the area of freedom. (Lanier, 1970)

The Japanese word MA means 'something important between'. MA space is an empty, silent space where the coming and going of meaning is created and situates the 'in-between' and the 'among' in essence the 'and' and 'or' of meaning. In his book *The Quest For Silence* Jungian analyst Harry Wilmer writes:

The American grammar of silence is noise, conflicts, and plugged gaps. There is no English expression comparable to MA. The widespread hunger for the mysterious, spiritual, and mystical experiences is blurred by obsessive rational and scientific opinions. (Wilmer, 1998, p. 120)

This explains the contradiction inherent in 'modern' western plays. The sudden search for silence in the arts in modern time has opened up a field alien to Western creativity. It has allowed a glimpse into the unknown, immaterial and the mystical. In her essay *On Silence, Presence and Resistance in Contemporary Latin American Performance* Ana Sánchez-Colberg outlines her research into the world of silence in Latin American theatre:

Silence therefore, is liminal, both rupture and portal. It allows the body to contaminate the text and enter the theatrical space actively participating in its creation. In two earlier studies (Sanchez-Colberg 1996, 1998b) it has been proposed that the entrance of the body (at the point where silence shifts from teleological negation to topological affirmation) presupposes a focus on a body-space nexus. From a phenomenological perspective this nexus rather than generating a logo centric crisis (and as Esslin would have it, an atrophy of identity) in fact marks the beginning of perception and sets the first 'coordinates anchoring the body in a subject' (Merleau-Ponty, 1966, p. 146). Silence thus signals the entrance into a corporeal dimension which, rather than foreboding a retreat from the world, is in fact 'our general medium of having a world' (Merleau-Ponty 1966: 146).

The senses become primordial to the understanding of silence in performance. The erotic is accessed through the body politic generated by silence, the discourse. The flexibility and homeostasis of the sensational operates on a level distinctly resonant to Massumi and Deleuze's notions of *ebb and flow*. The body becomes the 'and' and 'or' of corporeal silence. This 'and/or' of the body's act is translated to a constantly redefined memory, experience, identity and subjectivity in that chronological order and back to memory through cognition to a new Deleuze and Guattari 'plateau' of consciousness.

Pinter is well aware of these uses of silence in his plays. He states in an interview with Kane:

I think we communicate only too well, in our silence, in what is unsaid, and what takes place is continual evasion, desperate rearguard attempts to keep ourselves to ourselves. Communication is too alarming. To enter into someone else's life is too frightening, to disclose to others the poverty within us is too fearsome a possibility (Pinter in Bloom 91).

Post-structuralist critics have decisively answered this call for a literary critical paradigm shift, and have as a result provided a compelling alternative reading of Pinter, Ionesco et al. The challenge was to substitute an analysis of language within the text's signification.

Chapter 3 - Case Study: Moments of Silence on Television

The first moment of silence occurred at 8:46 a.m. EDT, marking the instant when American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the north tower of the gargantuan complex. A second was held at 10:29, at the time when the second jetliner hit the south tower. (CBC News, 2001)

The *moment of silence*, within the context of the commemorative ceremonies of the events of 9/11, is part of a ritual in western tradition that can play an important role in understanding public and political discourse of democracy and citizenship in the early 21st century. A prevailing common purpose, in traditional rituals that participate in a *moment of silence* such as funerals, commemorations, prayer gatherings, vigils, and other public and private events invoke reflection, peace of mind and meditation. This highly personal introspective contemplation is in the process of being redefined and appropriated in the course of expansion of democratic capitalism.

This aesthetic and political analysis of the *moment of silence* can be applied to several commemorative televisual events that have been aired in the post 9/11 era including the *Ground Zero* commemorations in New York, the Pentagon and Pennsylvania sites, the special tributes for firemen and for police officers, the post 9/11 religious congregations, memorial events in other countries, and subsequently on Veterans Day, on the one-year anniversary of the 9/11 'terrorist' attack, and on the anniversary of Pearl Harbour, including many local ceremonies held in other countries, etc...¹⁵

These commemorative public events frequently perform as part of their ritual a *moment of silence* and are televised not only throughout the nation, but also worldwide. Since the advent of television in the 50's they have become more and more common, and they have include such moments as the Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Vietnam, Oklahoma city, Lady Diana and 9/11 commemoration ceremonies. This correlates positively with America's ascension to monolithic super power and the development of the televisual text. Therefore the inherent imperialist seizure of this moment of personal,

¹⁵ Several links to clips of these commemorative events are listed at the end of the paper and can be viewed on the Internet.

introspective contemplation and its transformation to a new instrument of manipulation on television is not to be underestimated.

It would not be a far stretch to say that silence is music without sound *à la* Cage. Like music silence is instinctive, pre-cognitive and rhythmic. Pierre Bourdieu in his *Aristocracy of Culture* says music is the most 'spiritual' of the arts of the spirit, and a love of music is a guarantee of 'spirituality' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 19). Then he informs us of the value of 'listening' in psychoanalysis and thus music is bound up in 'interiority' ('inner music') of the 'deepest' sort. He adds that 'Music says nothing and has nothing to say', and that 'it is opposed to drama' because it has no expressive function.' Here silence, as a figure of music can become the most 'absolute form of the negation of the world and especially the social world, which the bourgeois ethos tends to demand of all forms of art' (1984, p. 19). Music, 'the purest of the arts' and silence, have a common attachment to instinct. Silence is not non-music or pure art (1984, p. 19). As he states in his analysis of bourgeois notions of aesthetics, 'music the most pure and spiritual of the arts, is perhaps simply the most corporeal...It is pitched not so much beyond words as below them, in gestures and movements of the body rhythms' (1984, p. 80).

Refusing to analyse the physical, guttural, communal and individual origins of the *moment of silence*, which must be continuously reinforced by the need for mourning and self reflection, prevents us from investigating the auto genesis of the *moment of silence* that is from a non-historical perspective, and thus emphasizes the political and arbitrary charge of the *moment of silence*. If I may extrapolate, the legibility of the *moment of silence* is most probably its most poignant tool and reinforces its inherent meaning. As the *moment of silence* is appropriated as a tool of authority in the bourgeois society and is institutionalized, the seduction created by this tool is most probably on the verge of being fetishized by the subservient masses. This will inevitably shield it from any substantive analysis.

The inability to understand and disassemble the sign creates a rift and collusion between the classes, between the tool bearer and the receptor. Which brings me to the multiple versions of televisual texts relating to the *moment of silence* at the 9/11 commemorative events. Given the importance and significance of the events, several media giants went out of their way to cover every moment of prayer, gathering and

commemoration, nation wide, and also internationally. Many of the televisual texts had the same structure, aesthetic, affect and politic, and therefore turn into conventional tools in the analysis of these sites.

The slow camera zooms, the slow pans over the processions, the use of extreme wide angles of the masses, the respectful medium close ups of the mourners, the live sound pushed to a level not usually heard in manipulated news, the slow march of authoritative figures in the z-axis, the crispness of the image and the static exposure of the anchors re-enforces the notion of live and now, of being present and involved (Metallinos, 1996). The close ups on the sorrow of the mourners accentuates the mood. 'Television news exploits one of the most distinctive features of TV in general, namely the representation of people, and in particular of people's faces, expressive features and eyes, in the process of narration.' (Hartley, 1992, p. 76) Like soap operas we see the faces full of distortion and tears; however this is real and very personal. The most poignant use of televisual techniques at these events is the notion of 'Live' and 'on location'. As Saenz puts it 'Liveness assumes a sense of collective immediacy and participation...' (Saenz 1994, p. 576).

The silence, the mood, the dramatic representation of public emotion, the multiplicity of publics in the same circle of mourning, the emotional contagion, people sobbing everywhere, hugging, looking tense and unhappy are some examples of the captured affect. The viewers gawk and feel with each other like one big family, one community, and one nation, a nation that thrives to survive in the American wilderness. When Buck-Morss talks about '*sniffing danger*' in Kester's interview (1997, p. 12) she is referring to our basic instinct for self-defence, survival and safety. These instinctive reactions along with the emotions of fear and insecurity are constantly engaged at these *moments of silence*.

However fear and anguish are subsequently shielded, dominated and parceled in order to be expelled. 'The formal handling of painful or dangerous transitions helps regulate the expenditure of emotion. Funerals have long served to channel and control grief.' (Taylor, 1999, p. 63)

'It was the public's command performance' to invoke Diana Taylor. Her comments about her daughter's reaction to Princess Diana's funeral were revelatory:

'Our tears were of a different kind-hers about pity and fear; mine complicated by my determination to resist this kind of identification which I found coercive and humiliating.' (Taylor 1999, p. 59) Taylor's comments on the public's reaction to Lady Diana's procession passing by in silence can easily be applied to most of the events commemorating 9/11; 'As in theatre emotion gave way to applause.' (1999, p. 59) In several of the events covering the commemoration of the 9/11 attack a sudden 'inappropriate' applause germinates from within the anxious crowd. Inappropriate in that sudden burst of applause are a new form of expression in recent commemorative mass events as Taylor noted in her article on Diana's funeral. These events tended to be quiet, sombre and solemn in tone and similar to the emotions evoked by many lamenting ancient Greek choruses in plays by Euripides.

Bourdieu says 'the theatre divides its public and divides itself.' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 19) Hence we can extrapolate that it is a naïve stare that the public participates in, a generated narrative made to be real and part of their personal life. Acts of consumption and practices of identity are confounded; class struggle is undermined and subjugated to greater ends, that of the social well being through capitalism. Hence the mass acknowledges its subjugation by embracing authority, like a child returns to the parent after punishment to seek relief and forgiveness. Like the child, the mass has learned its lesson and will alter its behaviour. In this way, television is pedagogical at both the individual and social level.

In a patriarchy, televisual authority consoles and re-appropriates the mass audience. Every television set embraces every weeping viewer. 'The mosaic form of the TV image demands, participation and involvement in depth of the whole being, as does the sense of touch.' (McLuhan, 1964, p. 291) Television is haptic, and McLuhan may propose that television is controlling, in that it reaches out and touches us, but he forgets that it takes 'two to tango'. A receptive audience may react in manners not favourable to the manipulator's initial intention or touch. Terry Eagleton concludes in part 1, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic, Free Particulars* 'To lend fresh significance to bodily pleasures and drives, however, if only for the purpose of colonizing them more efficiently, is always to risk foregrounding and intensifying them beyond one's control' (Eagleton 1990, p. 28). This ties in nicely with the mass' ability to assert its identity. Television is

not only learning experience that is reactionary in form, but also it can cause an engaging social transformation in character.

In its way, the *moment of silence* contributes to the collectively shared narrative by tapping into the commonly stored memories, and thereafter consuming personal history, protecting the bearer from the social hegemony of the mass and within a spatially delineated one minute of reflection, translating the anxiety driven common faith into, a new personal narrative to be stored back again into the individual's identity, as a revelation of an altered moment of truth. Thus social change at the individual level precedes the eventual public discourse and is herein conditioned by a sullen *moment of silence*. The spectator in this process of restructuring and deconstructing the memory of identity becomes a kind of post-modern artist, re-assembling truth in parts and parcels, only to fall back into the norm of the 'modern'.

On Freud's *Nachträglichkeit*, (deferred action) Buck-Morss in Kester's interview concludes that 'no human unhappiness is reducible to childhood experiences. Every trauma must find a present experience for its continued expression. There is always something new in the experience as well - - which is why it is possible to be healed of the trauma.' (Kester, p.45) In a separate article she writes 'the senses maintain an uncivilized and uncivilizable trace, a core of resistance to cultural domestication. That is because their immediate purpose is to serve instinctual needs- for warmth, nourishment, safety, and sociability...indispensable to the self preservation of the individual and the social group.' (October, 1992, p. 6)

When Buck-Morss discusses Kant's comments on the *sublime*, she extrapolates from Kant and writes 'that, faced with a threatening and menacing nature- towering cliffs, a fiery volcano, a raging sea- our first impulse is to be afraid... but when viewing these awesome forces from a safe place, by which nature is small and our superiority immense,' (October, 1992, pp. 8-9) the subject tends to self reflect on his/her *physical impotence* and simultaneously reveals an *independence* from and thus a *superiority to nature*. This again places the audience in a position of artist-child subservient to authority. Buck-Morss derives from Kant that: 'Both statesman and general are held by Kant in higher 'aesthetic' esteem than the artist, as both, in shaping reality rather than its

preservation, are mimicking the autogenetic prototype, the mature- and self-producing Judaeo-Christian God.' (October, 1992, pp. 8-9)

Kant's transcendental subject purges himself of the senses which endanger autonomy not only because they unavoidably entangle him in the world, specifically because they make him passive instead of active, susceptible like 'oriental voluptuaries' to sympathy and tears.' (October, p. 9) The *moment of silence* is manifestly a powerful intoxicant, a drug of sorts, which operates on the aesthetic of the ego, as well as the social. Its affect is libidinal and operates on the collective unconscious.

Similarly, Mellencamp writes 'Anxiety is television's affect.' (1990, p.243) Each individual aligns his/her ego to such a pure state of transcended hyper-reality that on the mass level the anxiety spawns a generalized communal panic. This socialized panic inevitably and unconsciously aligns each individual to conform to one homologous subconscious mass state of being, responding to the lowest common denominator of emotions, namely fear. This crystalline social structure may be susceptible to a sudden shattering. Subsequently this may cause an ultimate fragmentation of the mass, generating a disempowerment and/or a re-alignment at best of the forces uniting this said mass.

On the social level, a similar examination of the *moment of silence* can be structured. Grossberg writes: 'affect is closely tied to what is known as the *feeling of life*'; (1992, p.80) and 'is a socially constructed domain of cultural effects,' that 'circulates around notions of investment and anchoring. It circumscribes the entire set of relations that are referred to within such terms as 'volition', 'will', 'investment,' 'commitment.' and 'passion.' (1992, p.81-82) Furthermore 'affect defines a structure and economy of belonging.' (1992, p.84) and 'everyone is constantly living within a field of the popular.' This leads Grossberg to ascertain that affective empowerment can 'render ideological and material realities invisible behind a screen of passion ...they can easily be articulated into repressive and even totalitarian forms of social demands and relations.' (1992, p.87) He asserts that 'for it is in their affective lives that people constantly struggle to care about something, and to find the energy to survive, to find the passion necessary to imagine and enact their own projects and possibilities.' (Grossberg, 1992, p.83)

It may well be that the healing processes of these collective *moments of silence* are safety valves, that release the collective anxiety produced by a society living in a techno-centric pressure cooker. Wilmer states:

It is acceptable to ask for one minute of silence in remembrance of someone who has died; making the point that words cannot express our deepest feelings. Thinking technologically, we have created an artificial silence as a product to be inserted into the stream of words or noise. Thinking psychologically, we have moved to preverbal, primitive existence. (Wilmer, 1998, p. 122)

Tribal, insular and self indulgent as the American society seems to be, such releases of pressure may well cause significant changes not only to the production and expression of an inward-looking public but also to the relationship between the authority and the mass. 'Popular culture, operating with an affective sensibility, is a crucial ground where people give others, whether cultural practices or social groups, the authority to shape their identity and locate them within various circuits of power.' (Grossberg 1992, p.83)

An analysis of the *moments of silence* would suggest that the authoritarian, well TV tooled, patriarch asserts his intrinsic right to control the form of the mass during the silence of the wake. The American administration explicitly repeats the same political and ethical refrain in each of the *moments of silence* in order to assert and maintain control over information and culture. The rhetoric of 'evil' is everywhere. The statements made by the statesmen are surreal and the silences during the interspersed moments of the commemorations are politically and socially deafening. This attitude may be detected in the many conceited speeches on television by the US President, Generals, Governors, Senators and Congressmen lined up daily in a continuous post 9/11 monologue of sorts, extolling the economic and military grandeur of America.¹⁶

Unaware of the social changes undergoing in the mass, authority's sudden realization of this social transformation can only bring about violence and oppression for establishing a 'new world order'. This may be a 'new world order' different from Republican aspirations. Television is a powerful tool and like a double-edged sword cuts both ways. To re-conjure up Taylor for a moment 'The spectre, the spectacle and the

¹⁶ See annex of addresses of websites of speeches accessible on the net.

spectator are all dancing at this funeral.' (1999, p.64) and 'the redressive action of one social drama signals the moments of breach in another.' (Taylor 1999, p.67)

In distinguishing between ritual and ceremony Margaret Morse indicates that the news is a form of ceremony and 'does appear regularly' and 'is a vehicle of transformation' when it appears as ritual, 'a means of social control which does not engage the person at the most subjective, relational level.' (1990, p.76) In essence the news is perceived and understood at the individual's rational level and is considered a ceremony because of its an orderly and timely repetition within a traditional form. On the other hand the *moments of silence* can also be considered a ritual that goes beyond the informative form of the broadcast news. As noted earlier the unexpected repetition of the catastrophe linked, ritualistic and mnemonic *moment of silence* conjures up an instinctive reaction germinating at the level of the subconscious.

Morse also comments that when broadcast news appears as ceremony with a news anchor it is a 'commodity' (1990, p.76), however the distinction is not made for *crisis news* where both ritual and ceremony are taking place at the same time as in the *moment of silence*. The crisis aspect diminishes the effect of the talking head and relinquishes him to the rational state. The anchor is tolerated out of habit but is not cognitively fully embraced by the audience in a crisis related ritual such as the *moment of silence*. This may be due to the emotional state of the viewer and may reflect a form of rebellion to a form of 'anchor' patriarchy, a dismissal of sorts. A bypassing of the anchor by the audience prevents the network from inserting advertising in the text. His role as mediator between the commodities and the consumer is negligible. The networks understand that no interruption is to be inserted during the viewer's intoxicant fix. This may have a substantive affect on the evaluation of *crisis news* as a commodity in a capitalist culture.

This capitalist psyche may have deeply penetrated the American society by way of an addictive predisposition that Americans have to notions of God and materialism merged together in a chimera of theistic ethics and individualism. On the continent and in more ancient nations and cultures capitalism has been applied and contextualized within traditional cultural identities and ideologies. It may be argued that the 9/11 commemorations are neither crisis nor ritual but only incident in 'other' countries. The loss of an elite working class of one nation was not the world's loss, as the American

media would like to proclaim. This does not take away the tragedy that the victims had to suffer, but clearly the pain and suffering was national.

In many of these *moments of silence*, media coverage of other countries attempted to show that the masses in other countries were reacting in the same way as in America. This cultural appropriation mediated by the networks and aired on American television and fed back to the world on CNN does not reflect the true picture. An analysis of these *moments of silence* (although not herein documented and without methodology) reveals that many countries did not participate in the mass mourning.

If we understand the *moment of silence* as a tool that may be used by the media giants, then the media giants are erroneous in assuming that the world is watching and consuming the products of these tools. The world is not embracing the television sets with the same intensity as America. The *moment of silence* as a tool is just that. Silence as a theist metaphor is usurped as a means of manipulation of the American God fearing public. Middle America is Christian and perceives silence with its theist connotations and epistemology. Here silence per se is defined theistically despite its paradoxical aporia. The affect of the *moment of silence* in non-western countries I would suggest is most probably entirely distorted. Silence cuts both ways.

Several countries actually celebrated (as sad as that may be), but mostly many countries went on with their own day-to-day activities. This assumption of a world-wide consensus by the American media giants and subsequent televisual airing of some official commemorations in London, and Brussels (NATO), Canada and other mostly English speaking nations as representative of a world wide reaction to the event is quite uncanny. In effect it can open up the discourse that television is an Anglophone medium, an Anglophone means of expression. English was the language of television from its beginning. What I mean by that is that the largest exports of the televisual text come from Anglophone countries specifically the United States, Canada and the U.K. and this inevitably coincides with the imperialist use of the televisual medium as a tool of information and of propaganda at the service of expansion and control by the American government and its capitalist allies.

Myth

The Greek god of silence, Harpokratus, sat speechless on a lotus flower. The goddess of silence, Angerone, stood with an uplifted finger touching her lips, suggesting her silence and her suffering. (Wilmer, 2000, p. 37)

'Consensus narrative' is defined by Thorburn as a narrative that 'speaks for and to the whole of the culture' (Thorburn 1987, p.7) and 'operates at the very centre of the life of its culture and is in consequence almost always deeply conservative in its formal structures and its content. Its assignment- so to say- is to articulate the cultures central mythologies in a widely accessible language, an inheritance of shared stories, plots, character types, cultural symbols, and narrative conventions.' (1987, p.8) It is not possible to assume that the world is participating in this consensus narrative because different cultures perceive shared cultural signifiers in different ways.

Thorburn goes on to say that the 'consensus narrative is always a deeply collaborative enterprise. Such stories are created by an elaborate web of transactions or interactions or contested collaborations: between the text and its audience which brings to the story experience, an essential historical and aesthetic literacy;' (1987, p.10) 'The conservatism of consensus narrative, that is to say, makes it a chief carrier of the lore and inherited understanding of its culture, as well as society's idealizations and deceptions about itself.' (Thorburn 1987, p.11) In other words, the televisual text is not only site specific but also theatrical and deceptive. Baudrillard states:

The current strategy of the system is to inflate utterance to produce the maximum of meaning. Thus the appropriate strategic resistance is to refuse meaning and utterance, to simulate in a hyper-conformist manner the very mechanisms of the system.... It amounts to turning the system's logic back on itself by duplicating it, reflecting meaning, as in a mirror, without absorbing it. (Baudrillard, pp. 177-178)

This provides a substitute for speaking and theorizing this position of the televisual discourse as an object one step back from voyeurism. The televisual text is thus no longer just news but a theatrical expression of the real within the confines of space.

The idea that the space plays an important role in creating the intimate feeling of theatricality and deception works well with the ideas of Horace Newcomb who writes about intimacy, continuity and history as it relates to television and its audience. (Newcomb 1974, p.614) 'Iconography of rooms is far more important to television than is that of exterior locations' (1974, p.616) and he adds that the smallness of television creates intimacy: 'its presence (in the living room as furniture) brings people into the viewers home to act our dramas' the emphasis is based on the human reaction to action, to the human response.' (Newcomb 1974, p.615)

Newcomb states that on television 'America discovers new sets of values overnight'; creates characters from an 'older time'¹⁷; deals with issues in linear historical fashion; and, sites 'current facts and figures' but subsequently returns these issues to older times so that they can be dealt with 'firmly, quickly, and within a system of sound and observable values.' (1974, p.623) In essence 'that vaguely defined older realm becomes the mythical realm of television' (1974, p.623)

With regards to history Newcomb says that the television public has 'taken a contemporary concern... and placed it in an earlier time, a traditional formula.' In the 2002 *Ground Zero* commemorative celebrations a Druid-like set up was installed at the centre of the site, and the circle was covered with flowers. One could comfortably ask 'is the pomp associated with the past, in the service of monumentalizing the present?' (Taylor, 1999, p.62)

Inevitably Newcomb declares that 'the mythical frame dissolves and the history we see is our own' (1974, p.626) Where does the mourning break up from a *moment of silence* for the victims of 9/11 to a *moment of silence* for the TV viewer's own personal struggle with life. Diana Taylor sees it as 'These rituals of passing insist that we forget that we don't belong even as we remember.' (Taylor, 1999, p.77)

In addition, several flashbacks are used in these ceremonies recalling other *moments of silence* in previous months, such as those at the end of the clean up of *Ground Zero*, and special tributes for firemen. Newcomb also adds that on TV 'history is used here both to insulate the audience from the immediate impact of these unresolved

¹⁷ Such as small town icons like firemen and police officers in traditional wear present at most commemorative *moments of silence*

issues and to demonstrate, at the same time, that the issues are universal, unbound by history and defined by the fact that we are all humans.’ (1974, p.627)

Or is it that history is appropriated, contrived and drawn-out by the Bush administration, to elicit support for its own war on terrorism or its imperial take over of the sources of energy (Iraq), so desperately needed by an over consuming society that is sensing the downfall of its technological era? The spectacle of the *moment of silence* decries nostalgia for better days. We shall not be defeated! The procession and the charge with which the *moment of silence* is cloaked declare self-preservation and a re-emergence of the phoenix (the eagle) from the ashes. When Taylor says “Her (Diana’s) image gave a ‘universal face’ to the disembodied globalism facilitated by satellites and the worldwide web.” (Taylor, 1999, p.74) The *moment of silence* at *Ground Zero*, televised worldwide, unites a seemingly subjugated ‘disembodied’ community of nations against the globalism defined by the Bush administration. Unlike Lady Diana, America was not vulnerable, unhappy and distressed but proud, strong and aggressive. In ninety percent of the world, compassion for the victims was mute compared to the compassion with the so-called ‘victim’ Lady Diana. ‘But as always there is an ambivalent push-pull in the imperial fantasy.’ (Taylor, 1999, p.77)

This push and pull reflects another perspective on the *moment of silence*: a less concrete and more abstract analysis of how contemporary democracies appropriate illusion and phantasmagoria in their power struggles. This perspective will allow for an alternative perspective on how the *moment of silence* contributes to the aesthetic and the political.

The term ‘Phantasmagoria originated in England as the name of an exhibition of optical illusions produced by magic lanterns.’ (Buck-Morss 1992, p.22) In the interview with Susan Buck-Morss on *Benjamin writing about Proust*, Grant H. Kester suggests ‘the effect of modern culture, the phantasmagoria, is to break the links between self-knowledge and social knowledge. It has the effect of paralysing the (social) imagination of the viewer.’ (Kester, 1997, p.42)

Susan Buck-Morss’ summarizes Walter Benjamin’s ideas on politicising art. This plays a crucial role in this analysis of the *moment of silence*. Buck-Morss says:

Benjamin is demanding of art a task far more difficult -- that is, to undo the alienation of the corporeal sensorium, to restore the instinctual power of the human body senses for the sake of humanity's self preservation, and to do this, not by avoiding new technologies, but by passing through them... Aesthetics would be transformed, indeed, redeemed, so that, ironically (or dialectically), it would describe the field in which the antidote to fascism is deployed as a political response. (Buck-Morss, 1992 p.22)

In this way 'Technology doubles back on the senses as protection in the form of illusion, taking over the role of the ego in order to provide a defensive insulation.' (Buck-Morss, 1992 p.22) Illusion then becomes a vehicle for understanding the present and coping with its failures.

'In fascism (and this is key to fascist aesthetics), this dilemma of perception is surmounted by a phantasmagoria of the individual, a part of a crowd that itself forms an integral whole- a "mass ornament" to use Siegfried Kracauer's term.' (Buck-Morss, 1992 p.37)

It is also the ritualistic return of all the same jesters and nobility that accentuates this bond with the spectacle. Here I mean recognizable television actors like Bush, Pataki, Bloomberg, Giuliani, the firemen, the soldiers, the police officers, and local politicians. 'We see the same characters over and over.' (Newcomb, 1974, p.621)

In Benjamin on Baudelaire 'The mimetic shock absorber' applause of the audience reacting to the president walking down the pathway results, according to Buck-Morss analysis of synaesthetic shock 'its goal is to numb the organism, to deaden the senses, to repress memory: the cognitive system of synaesthetic has become rather one of anaesthetic.' It is, as she says 'a crisis in perception' as Benjamin is paraphrased by Buck-Morss 'the technical apparatus of the camera, incapable of "returning our gaze", catches the deadness of the eyes that confront the machine -- eyes that have lost the ability to look'. This leads the individual to transgress reality and fall into the world of fiction. 'Being in touch with reality is reversed to a way of blocking out reality, destroys the human organism's power to respond politically even when self preservation is at stake.' (Buck-Morss, 1992 p.17-18)

Again paraphrasing Benjamin on Baudelaire Susan Buck-Morss says 'someone who is past experiencing is no longer capable of telling...proven friend...from mortal

enemy.’ (Buck-Morss, 1992, p.18) This is crucial in building the consensus narrative that is based on myth rather than on reality.

In a society without such a tool of manipulation like the TV media the consensus would have maybe been altered by this *moment of silence*. Anxiety would not have been dissipated into transforming the ego of the mass but maybe would have translated into anger towards the authority, civil unrest or disobedience. A reaction to a patriarch that has allowed this catastrophe to happen through what may be considered mismanagement of foreign policy by a greedy network of capitalists would have been inevitable before television and its inherent conservative tools.

Buck-Morss adds ‘The camera can aid us in the knowledge of fascism, because it provides an aesthetic experience that is nonauratic, critically testing, capturing with its unconscious optics precisely the dynamics of narcissism on which the politics of fascism depends, but which its own auratic criticism conceals.’ (October, 1992, p.41)

In agreement, following a similar argument, Mellencamp states that ‘catastrophe... is both thrill and preclusion’ (1990, p.243) ‘Theories of catastrophe are predicated on models of time and fear of death.’ (1990, p.244) The *moment of silence* congeals these models into one space and one time. As a tool of television the *moment of silence* cannot be indiscriminate and may not be dissociated from its handler. Like the hammer and the sickle they are intertwined to the mass. Here again the relationship between the audience and the tool are stressed: “the audience does make a contract with TV during catastrophe coverage, a painful ritual which mirrors masochistic (un) pleasure.’ (1990, p.249)

It was a genius of fascist propaganda to give the masses a double role, to be observer as well as inert mass being formed and shaped, and ‘the mass audience seems somehow undisturbed by the spectacle of its own manipulation.’ (Buck-Morss, 1992 p.38)

Silence bemoans memory.

Empathy

The empathy expressed and cultivated during the memorials is mind numbing. The mechanism of empathetic affect in humans is not fully researched however it is known to cause disorders when improperly induced by the individual or a stimulating drug. A viewer feeling the emotion of the victims in the commemorations and believing that the victims have that same emotion at the same moment is incongruous with the ways empathy functions in reality (such as feeling for a person with a broken arm). As an echo of the emotions expressed by the victims empathy organizes a systems of mirror emotions that conflicts with direct emotions that are constantly dealing with social and individual caring, survival, justice and suffering.

For, if death is indeed the possibility of the impossibility and therefore the possibility of appearing as such of the impossibility of appearing as such either, then man, or man as *Dasein*, never has a relation to death as such, but only to perishing, to demising, and to the death of the other, who is not the other. The death of the other thus becomes again "first," always first.... The death of the other, this death of the other in "me," is fundamentally the only death that is named in the syntagm "my death." (Derrida, 2000, p. 76)

The empathy blindly devours "my death" and is what Maurice Blanchot calls an "unavowable community" of the communal sharing of dying (Blanchot, 1988). This failure to properly recognize empathy by an individual watching the *moment of silence* on television is like taking a hit of Ecstasy, or MDMA, which was originally classified as an Empathogen for its empathetic effects. Ecstasy is a stimulant with hallucinogenic properties releasing hormones in the human body. In catastrophe television, empathy may function like a drug and cause a numbing of the senses and subsequently a distortion of the emotions related to them. Has the 'opium of the masses' been purified to *silence*?

The *moments of silence* are mirrored as spiritual moments of inner realignment of well-being and reflect a manipulation by a greedy authority in collusion with its public. A kind of denial and indifference clued onto itself. Obligation and freedom are put face to face like the dark silent forbearers of life in early Greek mythology.

In analysing the pro-Thatcherism politics of the news coverage of a hospital worker's strike, Hartley concludes that 'the common ground between news and political struggles is what can be called popular discourse.' He follows by saying 'populist

discourses are also the ground upon which politicians seek to cultivate support. Thus the news enters into unwitting collusion...and by doing so allows its populism to be colonized or captured by Thatcherite (*Busherite*) populism.' (1992, p.90) This collusion with power can only be maintained as long as television assumes its role as a conservative medium. To maintain this political strategy television must do two things: sell products and convince the public of its integrity. In order to sell products the economy must be in perpetual growth. In order for growth to continue a catastrophe must be avoided at all cost to prevent consumer confidence from declining. But catastrophe is a double-edged knife. It can also act as a scapegoat.

Catastrophe is defined by Webster's as 'the final event of the dramatic action esp. of tragedy.' Doan states catastrophe is an 'unexpected discontinuity in an otherwise continuous system.' (1990, p.227) She adds that it 'does, however, always seem to have something to do with technology and its potential collapse,' and as part of a 'linear, fundamental, irreversible' utopian progress catastrophe operates as a dystopia in the ideological process wherein 'technology penetrates nature'. Catastrophe is said to delineate technological progress and thus mirrors 'the limits of technology, the limits of signification.' (p.233) Thus referentially catastrophe is part of the televisual ebb and flow of anxiety 'in the somewhat laborious construction and maintenance of a memory of catastrophe.' (p. 234) This obliges the mnemonic televisual text to function as the other and is a function of a conservative political agenda impressed by the ephemeral concepts of nostalgia and progress. 'The spectator must be led to remember, with even a bit of nostalgia, those moments which are pre-eminently televisual-' (p.235)

The Bush administration's persistent use of the *moment of silence* as a symbol of overcoming catastrophe in several of the commemorative events in the past two years is neither accidental, nor respectful of the victims of 9/11, nor is it a political discourse about safety or citizenship, but here catastrophe is, as Doan suggests 'a commodity linked spectacle ... (a) temporal limited process ... (a) political strategy and an immediate collision with the real.' (1990, p.237-238) 'Catastrophe makes concrete and immediate, and therefore deflects attention from, the more abstract horror of potential economic crisis.' (1990, p.237) Doan's analysis of catastrophe summarizes the political

manipulation of crisis news by the American power structure and may be applied to the *moment of silence*.

As Hartley so aptly puts it: 'In place of wider historical context, TV news substitutes an illusion of presentness populated by officialdom.' In other words, as institutions of spectacle replace history, the notions of citizenship, belonging and community become more and more ephemeral and intangible. It is fast food politics at its core. 'The TV network news continuously reassures us of the viability of society's official institutions.' (1992, p.102) McLuhan may have been right when he said: "As a cool medium TV has, some feel, introduced a kind of rigor mortis into the body politic." (1962, p. 269)

Memory

In other words, silence becomes a presence, can testify to a rupture of history, only if this rupture is apparent against the already narratively imbedded into our realm of knowledge continuum of history. (Kariacva, 1997)

Silence is deeply rooted in body and primitive bodily experiences. However memory plays a final and most important role in the way the *moment of silence* works within the context of aesthetics and politics. Mellencamp states that "television is a medium of remembrance more than memory, and remembrance is essentially conservative, memory is destructive." (1990, p.242) and 'TV enacts the contradiction of destructive conversation.' (P.242)

Mellencamp rightly states that: 'TV administers then diffuses stimuli in containing doses,' (1990, p.254) unifying a dispersed audience worldwide. 'The shift into mourning and pedagogy...is a significant part of the reassurance stage of catastrophe coverage, fear turning to grief, acceptance of loss, and a return to normalcy.' (1990, p.256) this ties in both the need for catastrophe and the exploitation of the body politic to the point of understanding and revelation, that is the *moment of silence*. Mellencamp adds that '...to retrieve and later *re-configure* the real' (1990, p.256) 'television's participatory

non participation ... (and) is the ultimate reassurance of our status as safe outsider.' (1990, p.262) 'No matter what the content, the form of the three networks ended toward similarity.' (1990, p.259) In this commemoration broadcast, all the television media in general were synchronous and held a common political ground.

Mellencamp continues arguing that television 'materializes reality by stimulation; obsesses with time while eradicating it; and repeats catastrophes which tell us that we are safe.' (1990, p.262) This inevitably presents confusing messages to the *Super-Ego* in that it allows the *Ego* to gain control of the moral implications of images without processing the ethical value. The image of the father figure in the *Super-Ego*, which Freudian psychoanalysis talks about, is replaced by the affect-imbued discourse of televisual text. The pleasure derived by the *Id* is unmitigated by the *Super-Ego*. Mellencamp continues: 'In relation to victims, our response is an anti identification, the relief of "not me" resulting in gratitude.' (1990, p.262) This takes us beyond the *Ego* to issues of trans-corporeal identity and social formation.

Assuming that what appears on television gives an insight into the '*structure of feeling*' of a generation (Williams 1977, 132) and that the *moment of silence* is part of an implicit social knowledge and draws from a collective memory 'the ethnic seeks to *re-configure* her identity developing constantly changing relationships with national, ethnic or class culture.' (Saenz 1994, p.575)

These common modern-day uses of silence at funerals and memorial events in Western liberal democracies have appropriated the ritual of the *moment of silence* in the fundamental development of culture. This exposes the *moment of silence* as an important determinant of the individual's limits of incursion into and within the collective. The unpredictability of the *moment of silence* is inherently aesthetic. Here, aesthetics is not a means of analysis but an internal formative factor.

Mellencamp writes 'as with time and money, the stock and trade of television, there was no stable tangible object, only effects and victims. Our history might be determined by after-effects.' (1990, p.251) TV urges us to stay at home, to continue watching.

Certain thinkers like Foucault remind us that 'a culture of silence becomes more and more important...this is a positive condition for acquiring truth. The tradition is

picked up during the (*Roman*) imperial period, where we see the beginning of the culture of silence and the art of listening rather than the cultivation of dialogue as in Plato.’ (1988, p.32) If he is right then silence may be a golden measure in the new empire.

“The ultimate catastrophe for the audience is silence on TV.” (Mellencamp, 1990, p. 256)

Chapter 4 – Silence: A Re-Configuration

Re-Configuration Through Deconstruction

In Of Grammatology, Derrida negotiates the inherent tensions between speech and writing, and suggests:

This explanation of “usurpation” is not only empirical in its form, it is problematic in its content; it refers to a metaphysics and to an old physiology, of sensory faculties constantly, disproved by science, as by the experience of language and by the body proper as language. It imprudently makes of visibility the tangible, simple, and essential element of writing. (Derrida, 1976, pp. 42-43)

Jacques Derrida’s analysis of Saussurian structure of *langue* brings up the trouble with silence to the forefront. Silence may not be relegated to solely act as a negotiator of sound, but of writing as well. I propose that silence plays a crucial role in Derrida’s ‘exterior’ and ‘interior’ forces as they create an ebb and flow of *potentials* between the ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ of speech and writing. The act of writing is thought to fix the sign usurping it from the arbitrary nature of the relationship between signifier and signified. The meaning is set into stone, no longer open to immanence.

However as Derrida suggests meaning is not limited to the power structure of the sign that has been established by the act of writing. Meaning is allowed to splinter into several forms of significance. Silence propels the word from the phonic to an array of new meanings. Silence is the *ether* in which these Derridian forces are playing. Silence is the space in time and the time in space.

Derrida continues:

Above all, in considering the audible as the natural milieu within which language must naturally fragment and articulate its instituted signs, thus exercising its arbitrariness, this explanation excludes all possibility, of some natural relationship between speech and writing at the very moment that it affirms it. Instead of deliberately dismissing the notions of nature and institution that it constantly uses, which ought to be done first, it thus confuses the two. It finally and most importantly contradicts the principal affirmation according to which “the thing that constitutes language [l’essentiel de la langue] is . . . unrelated to the phonic character of the linguistic sign”. (Derrida, 1976, pp. 42-43)

Silence allows for the inside/outside of writing to open up to each other, to a melding of the signifier and the signified into an empirical state of 'aporia', a state of elaborate virtual problematic constructions and paradoxes. Silence becomes the arbiter of the inside and outside, of the senses and the affect. It is at this stage of rupture that affect is sublimed in the collective mind of the American masses partaking in the *moment of silence* on television, or in a Beckett play or in a Cage concert.

At this stage meaning merges with its homologous triple point of sense/affect/rupture and thus reaches its revelation at this juncture and then, suddenly vanishes. Meaning vanishes when the encounters of this narcissistic matrix confronts *Echo* at the moment of the merging. Silence becomes *silentness*, the state of being silent. Here, silence could be defined as awe, or in cruder terms it could be described as the state that a dear experiences when it is stunned by the headlights of a car on a freeway as it is about to merge with death.

Deconstruction, disintegration ensues and like Euridice meaning turns into the physical, the cuneiform, under the final gaze of Orpheus. There, silence is trapped between the physically fixed ontological meanings and the ephemeral paradox of meaninglessness. When it disintegrates it becomes a "*Secondary Silence Concept*" mediator to be once again usurped and thrown about by the already affected audience or viewers. Silence is the breath of reality. But the question remains is silence itself real?

In his The Sublime Object of Reality, Slavoj Žižek refers the real as a;

...paradoxical, chimerical entity which, although it does not exist, it is impossible, but it produces a number of series of effects, it becomes clear that the Real par excellence is 'jouissance': 'jouissance' does not exist, it is impossible, but it produces a number of traumatic effects. (Žižek, 2001, p. 164)

Now let us try to explain that construct. We shall start with an apology that may also be said to be a disclaimer. This is already written, already sensed and has its defined significance in its inherent history as an *écriture/oeuvre* in cultural studies but is herein appropriated, usurped for my own purpose. Foucault writes:

Hence the cautious, stumbling manner of this text: at every turn, it stands back, measures up what is before it, gropes towards its limits, stumbles against what it does not mean, and digs pits to mark out its own path. At every

turn, it denounces any possible confusion. It rejects its identity, without previously stating: I am neither this nor that. It is not critical, most of the time; it is not a way of saying that everyone else is wrong. It is an attempt to define a particular site by the exteriority of its vicinity; rather than trying to reduce others to silence, by claiming that what they say is worthless, I have tried to define this blank space from which I speak, and which is slowly taking shape in a discourse that I still feel to be so precarious and so unsure. (Foucault, 1989, pp. 18-19)

In as much as I would like to propose a theoretical structure for silence, a *jouissance* of sorts, I feel obliged to reject such an act. Silence is not only where conversation, written words, musical notes, discussion, and debate *are not*; it is also where they *are*. In silence, there is no *Eureka!* Dauenhauer, Jaworsky, Tanner, Bruneau, Kalamaras, Luhmann et al. have attempted to set down in writing postulates, theories and treatises on silence in order to better explain those cultural uses of silence which I have called “*Secondary Silence Concepts*.” The theoretical discourses presented by these distinguished anthropologist, sociologists and linguists inevitably hit a wall of scepticism when faced with tackling silence because they soon realize that one cannot speak about silence with integrity without returning to the theist discourse.

Derrida’s word-concept “différance” is an endeavor to make known the kind of thing that is made possible by what cannot be spoken about, what cannot be known. In essence silence is closely linked to notions of *différance*. Derrida states emphatically in many of his volumes that meaning, truth and silence for that matter cannot be known. Is Derrida refusing an argument on silence? Is his mind already made up? Set in stone? Petrified? Is his intellectual quest futile *a priori*? Derrida’s line of thinking falls within platonic discourse and reveals Derrida’s *différance* as a paradox of being admonished to the level of a footnote to un-embodied theist discourse.¹⁸ Eskamotage!

¹⁸ Brian Rotman, in *Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero*, states: “*The Greek refusal of the void was at once a philosophical proposition, a conclusion explicitly and safely debated within the domain of rational discourse. Ontologically it was impossible to attribute being to ‘nothing’ since ‘nothing’ is that which is not, and epistemologically ‘nothing’ was without meaning. It could only be known by knowing nothing (...). At the same time there was a phobic and terrified reaction by Greek thinkers to emptiness, a shrinking back from the disruption, chaos and anarchy that they feared would issue from granting significance and presence to that which is not. Both the fear and the reasoned argument inseparable from it have their original expression in the picture of an eternal changeless universe given by Parmenides*” (Rotman, 1987, p. 61).

Lyotard associates the identification of a *diffèrend*, with the sense of the sublime, at the junction of pain and pleasure, which takes place as the unreasonable becomes reasonable. (Lyotard 1988) This also links the matrix of silence at its point of rupture with affect and the senses.

In every article that I have read regarding the possible understanding of the workings of silence an uncertainty is reached at the point of juncture between the operational and theoretical aspects of the site. Silence is thereafter co-opted for analytical purposes (Bruneau, Luhmann), ontological explications (Jaworsky), theoretical manifestations (Dauenhauer) and/or political convenience (Kalamaras and Tanner).

I prefer to allow silence speak for itself:

S
I
L
E
N
C
E
!

Well that was not very decipherable. Or was it? My point is that silence was given the opportunity to speak for itself in a limited space on a piece of paper. However, this space succumbs to the power in which silence is limited, by relinquishing its will and meaning to the simultaneous writing, *l'écriture/l'oeuvre*. It has a space *given* to it and thus, the object *silence* is dominated by the subject, the writer/the language. It is thus appropriated, just like any subjugated Canadian independent filmmaker. But it also has

the time given to it by the reader, to be heard and maybe understood (that dimension is for another paper).

Here silence is also limited to the time the reader gives that space, silence is intrinsically restricted to express itself. I mean here that silence is a creature of man. There is no such thing as silence. It is auto-determinant in the process of language. Yet silence is self-induced, autogenously imminent and auto-performative. Silence is a pre-existing preface.

The Politics of Silence

In George Steiner's *Language and Silence*, Ionesco is quoted as writing in his *Journal*:

A civilization of words is a civilization distraught. Words create confusion. Words are not the word [*les mots ne sont pas la parole*].... The fact is that words say nothing, if I may put it that way.... There are no words for the deepest experience. The more I try to explain myself, the less I understand myself. Of course, not everything is unsayable in words, only the living truth. (In Steiner, 1967, p. 52)

What I mean by 'silence is political' is that silence has been adapted to its end. I propose that academic thought reaches a wall of silence because thought does not emanate from silence. However academics like Bergson, pursue the illusion that silence is the site of emergence of mention and of hope.

Underneath the clamors a silence is growing, an expectation. Why could it not be a hope (Bergson, 1944, p. 26) ?

Furthermore as an environmentalist of being, silence is political for it engages in being, yet it is preface to appearance and dissimulating, and may cause harm when fixed in writing. For silence cannot judge itself, it is at the mercy of internal forces that operate under duress. Why should one fixate the discourse? When shall we speak? What should we say? How should it be spoken? And finally where is it written? As Paine suggests earlier in this text regarding his own self censorship: "*it is often better, to pass some things over in silent disdain.*" Silence is political.

These may be questions asked by silence before it enacts its performative rupture into being. It relinquishes mention imbued in affect. How political is that distinction it has suddenly acquired? Lev Vygotsky states:

Thought itself is engendered by motivation, i.e., by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions. Behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency, which holds the answer to the last “why” in the analysis of thinking. A true and full understanding of another’s thought is possible only when we understand its affective-volitional basis. (Vygotsky, 1962, p.125)

Notions of sociability begin in volition and emerge from the subsequent intra/extra-silence discourse between the individual and the group. Silence as a social, cultural and political phenomenon translates without difficulty from notions of emergence, *différance* and emancipation. Robyn Sheriff in her ‘*Exposing silence as cultural censorship*’ states:

Silence, like discourse, must be deconstructed in such a way that these interests are explicitly located within a range of differentiated and opposed social positions in which both linguistic and non-linguistic forms of power are distributed’. (Sheriff, 2000, pp114-15)

As I have noted the spatial-temporal fluidity of silence employs a homeostatic mechanism of *policing* the rupture of meaning. The affect, possibility, engagement with *aporia* and meaning derived from the use of silence in cultural analysis can prepare the ground for a more comprehensive understanding of the way expression is fostered at the point of rupture, at the point where affect is generated. Beyond this simple dualistic contrast I believe we can affirmatively postulate silence as a negotiator of language, wherein the impossibility of an absolute truth is translated into the imminent. This brings about the question: Is there absolute truth?

The spectre of the political is called upon. Plato’s dialogues ends in unsettled Socratic silence (gr. *Aporia*). Language is in the end both problematic and insufficient to define the Greek democratic ideal. Politics, in as much as it proclaims sociability, relinquishes the individual in the realm of silence. The Socratic method can lead the dialogue between identity and politics to an impossible understanding. In silence meaning may never be generated even though unachievable absolute truth and exists in a phantasmagoria of theist/platonic theories. Democracy is never to be reached. It is *impossible*.

The discourse of silence is inherently an elliptical interruption, and a paradoxical rupture of discourse itself (political and/or theoretical). This inevitably questions the role of silence within the ever-changing structure of language, politics and culture. Theoretical ideas aimed at recognizing the phenomenon of silence have, as I stated earlier, preferred to portray such expressionistic uses of silence that involve what I term “*Secondary Silence Concepts*” that serve to frame other aspects of silence for a given cultural site.

In a political analysis, I suggested that silence is not expressed in terms of a “*Secondary Silence Concept*”, linguistic or otherwise. Silence performs an ellipsis of paradoxical meanings. This brings us back to that famous Wittgenstein phrase: ‘*wovon man nicht sprechen muss, darüber kann man schweigen*’. It is most probable that silence, because of its inherent ellipsis is parasitic on absenteeism and idleness. This may be Marxist in theory but may ultimately be anarchic in practice. In *The Syntax of Silence*, Jason Merchant states:

Elliptical processes capitalize on the redundancy of certain kinds of information in certain contexts, and permit an economy of expression by omitting the linguistic structures that would otherwise be required to express this information. (Merchant, 2001, p. 1)

Silence is political in that it engages in meaning at that triple point of redundancy with affect and speech. Speech here is a preface to writing, as unmitigated thought, free of authority. It is intuitive and belongs to the senses and is directly sourced at the *medulla oblongata*. Writing petrifies the absence of meaning into the present and is secondary in the communicative process. In *The Syntax of Silence*, Jason Merchant continues:

Such facts make the point that, although expressing redundant information may be necessary condition to license the omission of linguistic structure, it is surely not a sufficient one. In fact, languages differ extensively in how they allow redundancies to be reduced by the grammar, in typical systematic ways. Because of this, the possibility for ellipsis, being language- and structure-specific, cannot solely be attributed to general principles of information redundancy, and must be encoded in some way in the grammar. (Merchant, 2001, p.2)

Sense, meaning, affect and rupture are encoded in the grammar of silence and lies in the paradox of its ontology which makes silence political and forthcoming at all times and in all spaces.

The Theatre of Death

In *Language and Silence*, George Steiner states:

According to the Neo-Platonic and Johannine metaphor, in the beginning was the Word; but if this *Logos*, this act and essence of God is, in the last analysis, total communication, the word that creates its own content and truth of being – then what of *zoon phonanta*, man the speaking animal? He too creates words and creates with words. Can there be coexistence other than charged with mutual torment and rebellion between the totality of the *Logos* and the living, world-creating fragments of our own speech? Does the act of speech, which defines man, not also go beyond him in rivalry to God? (Steiner, 1967, p. 37)

Philosophers like Steiner have taken the theist torch from the pulpit of the priest to their lecture halls. Philosophers have appropriated notions of creation, living and death from theist mythologies. However death is imminent and because of the inevitable aporia that it beholds it has been a favourite of thinkers. Derrida states in *Aporia*:

Is my death possible?
Can we understand this question? Can I, myself, pose it? Am I allowed to talk about my death? (Aporia, P.7)

Silence can be conceived as a site imbued with aporia, and is permeated with similar structural and metaphysical properties. Aporia, from the Greek, means an inconclusive argument, a stalling point in thinking which provides no obvious solution, literally a non-passable situation, a place without pores [*a-poria*]. In his book '*Aporia*' Derrida does not claim to be able to unblock the problem, if that is even desirable or possible, but enacts a circulation of questions to try to better understand the 'non-understandability' of the aporia. He states:

"What is the place of this unique aporia in such an "expecting of death" as "expecting" the only possibility of the impossible? Is the place of this non-passage impossibility itself or the possibility of impossibility? Or is it that the impossible be possible? Is the aporia the impossible itself?" (Derrida, 1993:73)

But Derrida wants to emphasize a previously glossed over statement in *Sein und Zeit*. Derrida cites Heidegger's sentence on "[death] as the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all" (242) as a paradoxical statement of possibility as impossibility. If

such possibility is the condition of the ability to receive the disclosing of truth and of impossibility, then truth is bound up in its own paradox. Silence behaves in a similar fashion. In silence what is possible can become impossible and vice versa. Derrida cites this "possibility as impossibility" as transcending an aporetic moment. It can also be a *moment of silence*.

In western culture death and mourning are presented as an inevitable quandary. Joshua Schuster describes this theatre of death appropriately:

However, forced mourning is the repression of mourning. We hide both the event and the meaning of death in institutions and silence, both of which support each other. In a recent issue of *Newsweek*, the issue of death graced the cover in tribute of the recently deceased Cardinal Joseph Bernardin. The only people who were permitted to discuss their deaths in the magazine were clergy or those who had AIDS or cancer. (Schuster, 1997, p. 3)

The concealment of death in institutions under a 'veil' of silence reflects the human inability to accept death and its aporetic predicament. Subsequently, our language is baffled by the notion of eternity, which is beyond human imagination and reason, except in metaphor. Eternity is commonly understood as an un-ending length of time; or as timelessness; or as a state that precludes, includes and also goes beyond time. The intellect can conceive of these options, but the imagination rejects soundly--as it does in quantum physics. Originally, the most common meaning of eternity in Judeo-Christian thought was "on and on," but it is as difficult to imagine an infinite succession of moments as it is to imagine a timeless moment; both images seem to go against the subjectively experienced finiteness of time. In this world, humans lack the imagination and vocabulary to define or describe heaven without using the metaphor of time. Heaven is silence in theist thought. We are limited by our own creation, and stunted at the intellectual level by our innate comfort and '*in-différance*'. In *The Silence in Progress of Dante, Mallarmé, and Joyce*, Sam Slote states:

The work thus depicted is not the book, not just the physical artefact of the book, but rather the effect of silence that it produces: *peindre non le livre, mais l'effet de silence qu'il produit*. In Dante, Mallarmé and Joyce nought comes to the nullity wither and whence it had not been. That we still cannot read Dante, Mallarmé and Joyce is not our fault for the books that are there take the place of *what could be read*. (Slote, 1999, p. 279)

Silence will always be understood in theist terms by philosophers and no deconstruction will open the field to any new understanding of silence because silence is theist by nature in western thought and because epistemologically speaking as I have argued silence is created by the thought of man. Are you convinced yet? Is it possible to convince you that theism is the root of all western ideology and subsequently philosophy is inherently fundamentalist in present day western academic society? Is this discourse technique leading to too many paradoxes, and vague ephemeral conclusions? Why can't deconstruction achieve and/or reach any impasse beyond the death drive?

Massumi writes:

Generating a paradox and then using it as if it were a well-formed logical operator is a good way to put vagueness in play. Strangely, if this procedure is followed with a good dose of conviction and just enough technique, presto! The paradox actually becomes a well-formed logical operator. Thought and language bend to it like light in the vicinity of a super dense heavenly body. This may be an example of miraculation. (As if lucidity itself could be invented.)... The logical resources equal to emergence must be limber enough to juggle the ontogenetic indeterminacy that precedes and accompanies a thing's coming to be what it doesn't. Vague concepts, and concepts of vagueness, have crucial, and often enjoyable, role to play. (Massumi, 2002, pp. 13-14)

Is this Massumi's *Eureka*! Let us try from a different perspective. Let us ask: what takes place, what comes to pass with silence? Is it possible to undergo or to experience silence as such? Is it then a question of going beyond aporia? Is silence the *ether* in which discourse is mitigated?

Silence discourse takes meaning to a point of rupture and then recedes back into silence just before the framing at the limit, the margin and/or the border of discourse before having to search for another point of rupture *ad eternam*. Like the liquid in a lava lamp, silence meets with thought at the breaking point. At minus 4 degrees centigrade where water, ice and steam collide is the triple point. Let me call the *triple point of silence*, the point where meaning, sense and affect rupture. Here death meets and relinquishes, the instinct, the word and pleasure in the realm of meaning. Derrida states:

No context can determine meaning to the point of exhaustiveness. Therefore the context neither produces nor guarantee impassable borders, thresholds that no step could pass [trespasser], trespass [in English in the original]. (Derrida, 1993, p. 9)

To study the engagement of language in silence requires a substitution, a *trespass* of the subject/object by the sense/meaning/rupture distinction. An engagement *trespassing* the historico-political ontology of discourse is a pre-requisite. A redefinition of silence as contemporaneous to discourse will demystify the fleeting site as an impending source for the political *as such*. Foucault states:

We must renounce all those themes whose function is to ensure the infinite continuity of discourse and its secret presence to itself in the interplay of a constantly recurring absence. We must be ready to receive every moment of discourse in its sudden irruption; in that punctuality in which it appears, and in that temporal dispersion that enables it to be repeated, known, forgotten, transformed, utterly erased, and hidden, far from all view, in the dust of books. Discourse must not be referred to the distant presence of the origin, but treated as and when it occurs. (Foucault, 1989, pp. 26-28)

CONCLUSION

Where do We go With Silence?

Max Picard, the Swiss philosopher states:

When language ceases, silence begins. But it does not begin BECAUSE silence ceases. The absence of language simply makes the presence of Silence more apparent. (Picard In Wilmer, 2000, p. 37)

New philosophy and the subsequent emergence of redefined concepts of ontological discourses have opened up the senses and thrown out the antiquated myths of space/time dialectics. Erin Manning in her publication *Ephemeral Territories* states:

There is no “beyond” of metaphysics, only a continual *différance* of its terms. The ephemeral can be contextualized as one of these mechanisms of difference, for the ephemeral both defers and differs. It defers insofar as it does not lay claim to more than the present, the moment, and the finite. It differs in that it prizes that which is other to the confining, stultifying encapsulation of time and space within a regulatory discourse of containment. Within the vocabulary of the ephemeral, the “beyond” cannot extend past today. It is in text-in-the-making that the ephemeral lives, now. (Manning, 2003, p. 152)

In the event that such an opening in discourse proposes a ‘*beyond*’ in the present as a relinquishing of ‘*Eskamotage*’ to the annals of history, Manning reclaims the theist discourse of the body in order to emerge it out of the lethargic state that rationalist Cartesian thinking has imposed on the senses in contemporary philosophy.

Silencing the body has been a tool of scepticism and rhetorical expediency in recent philosophical endeavours. These philosophical trends have inevitably opened up the discourse of silence, because silence can easily be appropriated for notions such as the paradox, the impossible, the nomadic, the *différance*, the schizophrenic, the imminent and the Other. All these notions are discourses of the ‘miraculation’ imbued in theist ontology and epistemology. Something that occurs from nothing and subsequently

returns to the nothing, the non definable and unknown. A *re-configuration* of theist discourses is inevitably calling for a petrification of silence into the present and moreover into the act.

In discussing the logic of silence, we need an insidious unravelling of the 'wall of silence' and a simultaneous thinking at the limits of its uneventful reality. This will open up the link between silence, death and knowledge.

An aesthetic analysis may avoid any romanticism inherent in such western adventures into the unknown, akin to *Wunderlust*. The complicity of silence's engagement with thinking, speaking and *Being* will appear as present and past at the same time, with memory, performance and the possibility of death at its portal. An unfolding activated by a homeostatic processing mechanism of potential differentiation allows silence to perform like Eros in the face of death and Chaos.

Derrida states:

If death is indeed the possibility of the impossible and therefore the possibility of appearing as such of the impossibility of appearing as such either, then man, or man as Dasein, never has a relation to death as such, but only to perishing, to demising, and to the death of the other, who is not the other ... The death of the other, this death of the 'other' in me is fundamentally the only death that is named in the syntagm 'my death' with all the consequences that one can draw from this. (Derrida, 1993, p. 76)

This theist reference to the meaning of a signified silence remains dependent upon a reflection involving writing which would combine the paradox and the emerging word as a trace in the form of signifier.

The paradox becomes the harbinger of speculation and transcends silence, in other words death. It is in this sense that I maintain that when the term *and/or* is used the separation between *and* and *or* in such binaries as *and/or* or for that matter signifier/signified is non-existent. The separator, slash typed in by the act of writing is the embodiment of silence in a 'real stop' matrix.

Thus *and* and *or* are the same word with the same meaning signifying both sides of the same coin, delivering a choice that is not *cuneiform* or historically fixed in space and time but as in silence, a virtual meaning. *And/or* is the phenomenological distinction between the 'other' and the 'Other'. One delves into the other despite the slash. One emerges from the other without knowing the other at the moment of rupture.

Speculation

Brian Rotman adventures into Greek thought regarding the notion of the void and states:

Abhorrence of emptiness, though a central element in the thinking of Parmenides, Zeno, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, was not universal within Greek thought. The atomists (Epicurus, Leucippus, but principally Democritus) accepted the existence of the void as a rational, coherent concept. The universe in all its manifestations was not, as Parmenides insisted, a plenum – full, indivisible, motionless, and one – but was composed of a plurality of atoms in movement which, though themselves were indivisible and so on, had come together in the void to form the physical real, material, empirical world. (Rotman, 1987, p. 70)

Returning to this root of platonic theist discourse delivers the sharp philosophical motivation behind this incessant refusal to engage silence honourably. As the old testament of the St-James Bible states in Genesis 1.26: *“And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”* And subsequently in Genesis 1.28; *“God blessed them and God said unto Them be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon earth.”*

The Franco-Germanic philosopher must reconcile the ontological and epistemological weight of his/her cultural and educational baggage in order to relinquish the burden of matter as propagated by western mytho-poetic religious doctrine. Silence cannot be silenced, admonished, hailed or discovered, it must always remain at the impossible of possibility in western thought. Silence thus serves the impossibility of death. Oral Poetry approaches silence more than any other western art form.

My brief exploration into ‘modern’ music, theatre, literature and television have shown a conscious intent on the part of artists to engage with silence more bluntly than their predecessors. The written word, prosaic and enchanted is deeply rooted in human cultural history prior to the word and the text; and when spoken it is passed on from tribal storyteller, to Orphic orators, to apostles, and finally to the Rimbauds and Joyces of our

day who in their own way have touched silence unbeknownst to themselves and their contemporaries. In *Language and Silence*, George Steiner states:

Ideally each poet should have his own language, singular to his expressive need; given the social, conventionalized nature of human speech, such language can only be silence. But neither the paradox of silence as the final logic of poetic speech nor the exaltation of action over verbal statement, which is so strong a current in romantic existentialism, accounts for what is probably the most honest temptation to silence in contemporary feeling. (Steiner, 1967, p. 49)

The deconstructionist academic's argumentation is mostly honourable but for lack of words *and/or* over indulgence in words, the deconstructionist idea remains conservative, baroque and speculative. Some writings by Deleuze, Baudrillard, Mouffe, Agamben, Žižek, Kittler and Massumi have been able to deconstruct archaic notions of philosophical discourse only in that they have opened the door to let the specter of memory out of the house of history. This engagement is with the moment of time and constantly desires an engagement with creation. Humanity must and will 'create' cultural sites in order to surrender the instinctual being from its own predetermined chains of significance and myths to the freedom of nature. In essence such deconstruction is based on a fear of an eventual engagement with the real and is devoid of individual memory in the context of the social. It is inherently nostalgic in nature.

Aporia describes the sense of being confused, reduced to silence by a quandary. To philosophize means to develop the sense that can approach aporia and try to understand the questions of thinking beyond the limits of our ignorance. To philosophize is to fall out of silence. If silence partakes in memory then silence can only take us out of ignorance. Silence is not speculative or ghostly, *it is*.

Hegel suggests that simply opposing theology becomes theology. That is the impending opportunity that is lost in negative dialectics. Silence hushes the theist into obedience because the thinker demands patriarchy out of the phenomenon of silence. These demands must be transformed and truth must be left to the annals of platonic libraries.

As a fellow student once explained to me: Deleuze and Derrida et al. attempt to escape this dialectic while undoing Theos. Therefore schizo-analysis and deconstruction

are both tactics of fluidity, displacement, multiplicity, and difference that are engaged with Theos. These deconstruction debates refrain from opposing theistic ideology and they certainly do not ignore it. They engage in the fluidity and moving multiplicities of difference through theistic discourses. Cynically, I suggest that these tactics participate in the theistic discourse in order to re-evaluate and re-claim such discourse for a newly created deconstruction ideology mostly induced by fear of the unknown and death.

In exchange for a localization of silence within the multiplicity of historical and theoretical frameworks of being, I suggest a spatial-temporal fluidity of narratives rising like a phoenix from the ashes of theist philosophical dissertation followed by a subsequent resurgence as redefined by new generations of post-theist ontological discourses.

Blanchot states:

None the less, transgression, the end of history and the death of God are not equivalent terms. But each indicates the moment at which the logos comes to an end, not in negating itself but in affirming itself and always again anew, without novelty, through the obligation – the madness – of repetition.
(Holland, 1995, p. 279)

If we can apply this theistic approach to an agnostic perspective for a moment then a *re-configuration* of ideas must be generated at the level of discourse in speech prior to writing in order to re-embody the *being* without the ghost that has escaped it. Blanchot and Derrida's forays into the illuminative discourses and the impossibility of language must be taken to the level of cognition and speech prior to writing and thus prepare the course for the new *arrivant*: illusion within speech and reason.

Speculation must not be engaged, if discourse is to adapt as an alternative to un-ghostly/non-ghostly embodiment of thought. This body must be made of (un)flesh, in order to avoid a re-emergence of the ghost and the spirit in theism. As Derrida states:

Speculation always speculates on some spectre, it speculates in the mirror of what it produces, on the spectacle that it gives itself and that it gives itself to see. It believes in what it believes it sees: in representation. In this sense speculation is always theoretical and theological ... but theology in general is 'belief in ghosts.' (Gespensterglaube). (Derrida, 1994, p. 146)

Silence must be re-articulated, re-spoken and re-generated in contemporary discourses of political and cultural ideologies, social bureaucracies, cultural sites, radical

citizenship and private rhetoric. Silence can play an important role in the dissemination of an understanding of eventful critical discourse. Silence as particular to the six or more senses is imperative in understanding how the body can be taken back from divisive and scientific discourse towards a more natural/sensory line of thought. A naturalization and immigration of silence can allow it to transcend boundaries of filiation and the inherent filibuster of patriarchy. As Kane states:

‘silent responses and muteness reinforce the portrait of man as not merely estranged from his world but entrapped in the hell of the self’ (Kane, 1984, p. 24).

It is engaging to remain silent in the context of an academic seminar. The politics of silencing speech may inherently impose the substitution of speech by the written word. Hence silence becomes political in fixed typography. Silence dissimulates the affect and engages the possible in the written word. Silence engages the political metaphorically and virtually speaking. Engagement in the current political debates and actions is a must for silence to be awakened:

Nevertheless, in defending the *indirect* supports of freedom, we remain weak as a movement. In this country, we have entirely failed to prevent a government, with which we have been closely associated, from putting the Common Law through the legislative equivalent of a shredding machine. The right to silence under police questioning has just been abolished. The burden of proof in criminal cases is being rapidly reversed. The right to trial by jury has been limited to about 15 per cent of criminal cases. The right to peremptory challenge to Jurors has been abolished. There are calls to give the prosecution a right of appeal from "perverse" jury verdicts. (Gabb, 1994, p. 6)

What Gabb describes is the transformation of the American dream of freedom, liberty and opportunity into a nightmare of oppression, control and inequality by elitist American fundamentalist ideological principals. The democratic republic is at a crossroad that leads away from *Res Publica* in all the possible directions that may be trespassed. There is no turning back. The use of silence during such turning points in the making of history may lead the path through open fields or pave it over out of sight.

Language in terms of a re/de-construction is in the end deficient and cannot lead us to the unattainable absolute truth. There will always be a re-alignment and a redefinition of meanings. The paradox is that deconstruction theory falls into the elliptical

process of defining truth with un-truth and the unlimited. Silence theory cannot be used to defragment and then re-condition in search of the absolute. Silence may well be more helpful if left to its own nature. This may be where much ado about silence brings us back to do, to act and to engage.

In *Violent Silence: Celebrating Georges Bataille*, edited by Paul Buck, Bataille says:

I believe that truth has only one face: that of a violent contradiction. Truth has nothing in common with ALLEGORICAL figures, with figures of NAKED WOMEN: but that foot of a man who was living a few minutes before had the violence – the negative violence – of truth. In other words, truth is not death: in a world where life disappeared, truth would be, in effect, that “unimportance” which suggests a possibility, but which, by the same token, withdraws it. And without doubt, through the immensity, an indefinite, eternal possibility subsists, but since in me (in the one who writes), that foot announces the terrifying disappearance of “what is”, I will henceforth no longer see “what is” except in the transparency of the foot which, more than a piercing cry, announces annihilation. (Buck, 2000, pp. 26-27)

With this paper I wanted to begin a discussion not just about particular sites that close down our options for evaluation and understanding, but also about some political and social “technologies” of silence and silencing that, I speculate, currently inhibit the quality and authenticity of discussions.

As I have stated earlier, furthering such an analysis will hopefully open up investigation into this complex and important entity of being and of language. Ancillary studies of these notions of silence may be applied to better understanding how silence works in the liberal arts including music, paintings, literature, television, movies, theatre, opera, performance and the Internet. *Re-configuration* techniques are imperative and must not entail a nihilism involved in *de-re-configuration* theory. The use of silence by authority must be understood and elucidated in order to maintain a resistance to its use as a destructive and manipulative force against human rights.

In *The Power of Silence*, Adam Jaworsky states:

The difference between political strategic silence and other forms of communicative silences is that the former does not have to rely on its context to make its meaning predictable, whereas the meanings of the other kinds of communicative silence can only be interpreted in relation to the verbal and other nonverbal context in which they appear. The *political* context of

strategic silence always results in the creation of “*mystery, uncertainty, passivity and relinquishment*” (Brummett, 1980, p. 290). (Jaworsky, 1993, p. xi)

Western liberal democracies have appropriated silence in their public events. These share a prevailing common purpose, in traditional rituals that participate in a *moment of silence* such as funerals, commemorations, prayer gatherings, vigils, and other public and private events invoke reflection, peace of mind and meditation. I have stated that this highly personal introspective contemplation is in the process of being redefined and appropriated in the expansion of ‘democratic’ capitalism.

Here, another possible use of silence analysis may unfold the significance of the televisual ritual in the fundamental development of culture, exposing the *moment of silence* as an important measure of the individual’s limits of incursion into and within the social and political. A manipulation of this instrument of balance can weigh the odds in one direction or the other. As I have stated, when politics interferes with such sensitive rituals, the reaction can be both, violent *and/or* submissive. It would be useful to further analyse and portray the mechanism of appropriation of *the moment of silence* in several sites by the American political and industrial sectors for promoting their authoritarian political agenda.

"The art of living well and the art of dying well are one." (Epicurus 55)¹⁹

¹⁹ Epicurus, *Letters, Principle Doctrines, and Vatican Sayings*, tr. Russel M. Geer (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1964)

Addendums

Links to Moments of Silence on the World Wide Web

These sites were accessed on the 7th of February 2003. It is hoped that most will still be accessible for the reader.

1. Bush taking a moment of silence zooms in to him and governor

[http://media.videoaxs.com/startrib/Top_Stories/09182001-19.html'%20'player','width=460,height=409,toolbar=no,scrollbars=no,left=100,top=10'\)](http://media.videoaxs.com/startrib/Top_Stories/09182001-19.html'%20'player','width=460,height=409,toolbar=no,scrollbars=no,left=100,top=10'))

Found in <http://www.startribune.com/stories/1576/685338.html>

Also on white house lawn: http://media.videoaxs.com/startrib/Top_Stories/09182001

2. A second flag day

<http://media1.dfw.videoaxs.com/startrib/Religion>

3. Bush is to hug and cry

http://media1.dfw.videoaxs.com/startrib/Top_Stories

4. Moment of silence

http://www.syracuse.com/news/clips/index.ssf?/news/clips/091102_moment-silence.frame

5. European moments of silence

http://media1.dfw.videoaxs.com/startrib/International_News

6. Ceremony

Part 1

<http://www.newsday.com/news/local/newyork/ny-gzceremony2,0,1139690.realvideo>

Part 2

<http://www.newsday.com/news/local/newyork/ny-gzceremony1,0,1008617.realvideo>

7. Bloomberg's Getty address

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/09/11/september11/main521625.shtml>

8. Bush walking down to WTC ground zero in silence

http://www.whitehouse.gov/911/live_events.html

Schedule for a Day of Commemoration

8:45 a.m. Ground Zero ceremony begins.

8:46 a.m. Moment of Silence

8:48 a.m. New York Governor George Pataki reads the Gettysburg Address.

8:50 a.m. Musical interlude.

8:54 a.m. Rudy Giuliani, former New York mayor, begins reading the names of those who died at the World Trade Center site. One hundred and ninety-six people will continue the reading after Giuliani.

9:03 a.m. Reading stops for the ringing of a bell to mark when the second plane hit. Marianne Keane, the daughter of a victim, will speak.

9:04:15 a.m. Reading of names continues.

9:59 a.m. Reading stops for bell marking the collapse of the South Tower.

10 a.m. Young person TBA reads a selection.

- Reading of names continues.

10:28 a.m. Echo Taps played. Two trumpeters play, one on stage, one in the pit. Taps will not be played until all names are read.

10:29 a.m. Bells ring across NYC marking when the North Tower fell. If all names have not been read by this point, reading resumes after the bells.

- New Jersey Governor James McGreevey reads from the Declaration of Independence.

- Musical interlude ends ceremony.

- Following the ceremony, families are invited to go down into the pit to put roses in vases as part of the permanent WTC memorial. This continues until 1:30 p.m.

10 a.m. United Nations ceremony, expected to run one hour. Occurs on the North Lawn of the United Nations. • Remarks by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Remarks by Incoming General Assembly President Jan Kavan. Remarks by U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. John Negroponte.

- Remarks by the president of the U.N. Staff Committee. U.N. staff are invited to make brief remarks.

10:29 a.m. Churches around the city of New York are asked to ring their bells to mark when the North Tower fell.

11:00 a.m. Chelsea Firehouse, Engine 3, Ladder 12 - Changing of the firehouse flag. Will remove black bunting from firehouse exterior. Will lower the flag that has been at half-staff since September 11, 2001. A new flag will be raised to full-staff.

11:00 a.m. Opening bell, New York Stock Exchange.

11:00 a.m. NASDAQ opens

11:00 a.m. Trinity Church begins choral "Evensong" service. Lord Mayor of London presents new church bell.

12:15 p.m. End of Evensong service.

12:30 p.m. Eucharist service.

2 p.m. Port Authority Memorial Service, at Riverside Church in upper Manhattan.

- Service begins with entrance of Port Authority Police Pipe and Drum Band and Color Guard.

- Reading of names of PAPD personnel who lost their lives at WTC.

- Readings by three Port Authority chaplains.

- Musical selection by the Riverside Church Choir.

- Governors Pataki and McGreevey have been invited to speak. Christy Ferer, whose husband, Port Authority Executive Director Neil Levin was killed in the attacks, will participate in the service.

5:30 p.m. Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Cardinal Egan presides over special memorial Mass.

7:12 p.m. Battery Park/Sunset observance. 91 heads of state at event site.

- NY Philharmonic Brass play "Fanfare for the Common Man," conducted by Lorin Maazel.

- Mayor Bloomberg reads President Franklin Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech.

- Musical selection plays. Lighting of eternal flame.

- Two children carrying lighted candles move through audience aisles to the flame, accompanied by Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki. Each of the children lost a family member on 9/11.

- As children reach the stage, Giuliani and Pataki move to the side. The two children, on either side of Mayor Bloomberg, share their candles with Mayor Bloomberg.

- Bloomberg gives brief remarks.

Bibliography

- Basso, Keith H. Western Apache Language and Culture: Essays in Linguistic Anthropology. Tucson: Arizona UP, 1990.
- Baudrillard, Jean. "The Implosion of Meaning."
- Bauman, Richard. Let Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence Among Seventeenth Century Quakers. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983.
- Benjamin, Andrew (Ed.). The Lyotard Reader. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.
- Bergson, Henri. Creative Evolution. New York: The Modern Library, 1944.
- Blanchot, Maurice. The Blanchot Reader. Ed. Michael Holland. Cambridge, Ma: Blackwell Publishers Inc. 1995.
- Bloom, Harold. Modern Critical Views. New York: Chelsea Rouse Publishers, 1987.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. The Aristocracy of Culture. Cambridge MA.: Harvard UP, 1984.
- Bruneau, T.J. "Communicative Silences: Forms and Functions." In Journal of Communication 23, 1973.
- Buck, Paul (Ed.). Violent Silence: Celebrating Georges Bataille. N.p.P.: Georges Bataille Event, 1984.
- Buck-Morss, Susan. "Art in the Age of Its Electronic Production." In Ground Control: Technology and Utopia. London: Black Dog Publishing, 1997.
- Cage, John. Silence. 1951
- CBC News, "Too Many Names, Too Many Tears." Accessed at www.cbcnews.com.
- Clement, Richard W. Article found in the ORB Online Encyclopaedia (Manuscript Books and Universities Medieval and Renaissance Book Production - Manuscript Books Richard W. Clement) <http://www.the-orb.net/encyclop/culture/books/medbook1.html>
- Coates, Jennifer. Women Talk. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
- Dauenhauer, Bernard P. Silence: The Phenomenon and its Ontological Significance. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1980.
- Dauenhauer, Bernard P. Silence. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1980.

De Man, Paul. Critical Writings 1953-1978 ed. Lindsey Waters, Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis P, 1989.

Derrida, Jacques. "Force of Law; The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority'." In Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice. Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, eds. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Derrida, Jacques. Aporias. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1993.

Derrida, Jacques. Différance. Margins of Philosophy, Chicago: Chicago UP, 1982.

Derrida, Jacques. Of Grammatology. 1967. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976.

Derrida, Jacques. The Specter of Marx. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Doane, Mary Ann. "Information, Crisis, Catastrophe." In Logics of Television: Essays in Cultural Criticism. Bloomington: Indiana UP and London: BFI Publishing, 1990.

Eagleton, Terry. The Ideology of the Aesthetic. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

Eco, Umberto, Faith in Fakes: Travels in Hyperreality. London: Minerva, 1995.

Esslin, Martin. "Language and Silence" in Harold Pinter, Harold Bloom (ed), New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987.

Feldman, Mathew "'The Screaming Silence of No's Knife in Yes' Wound': The Beckettian Dialectic and Notes toward a Synthesis" in: Samuel Beckett Today, Oxford: Oxford Brookes University.

Fischer, Joel. Accessed on the net February 2003 at:
<http://www.elam.auckland.ac.nz/ArtisinRes/joelfisher.html>

Foucault, Michel. "Technologies of the Self." In Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault. Amherst MA: Massachusetts UP, 1988.

Foucault, Michel. Madness and Civilization. 1961. New York: Vintage, 1988.

Foucault, Michel. The Archaeology of Knowledge. 1969. London: Routledge Classics, 1989.

Fuchs, Peter & Niklas Luhmann. "Reden und Schweigen." Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989.

Gabb, Sean. A Libertarian Conservative Case Against Identity Cards. London: Libertarian Alliance, 1994.

García, Adrián M. Silence in the Novels of Carmen Martín Gaité. New York: Peter Lang, 2000.

- Gee, James Paul. An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. Faust. 1808. New York: P.F. Collier & Son 1909.
- Grossberg, Lawrence. We Gotta Get Out of This Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture. New York & London: Routledge, 1992.
- Haber, John. The Invisibility of Ralph Ellison. New York: accessed on the net April 2003 at www.haberarts.com/ellison.htm.
- Hafif, Marcia. "Silence in painting: Let me count the ways." Jaworsky, 1997, 339-349.
- Hafif, Marcia. "Silence in Paintings." In Silence: Interdisciplinary Perspective Univ. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter & Company, 1997.
- Hartley, John "Home Help for Populist politics: Relational Aspects of TV News." In Teleology: Studies in Television. London & New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Haslem, Wendy. "Maya Deren." Accessed on May 12th, 2003 on the net at: <http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/02/deren.html>
- Hazard, Mary E. Elizabethan Silent Language. Lincoln: Nebraska UP, 2000.
- Hesiod. The Homeric Hymns. Trans. Michael Crudden. Dublin: Oxford, 2002.
- Hester, David J. "Irony and the Narrative Rhetoric of the Ending of Mark." Journal for the Study of the New Testament 57, 1995.
- Heumann, Michael. Ghost in the Machine: Chapter 6 Sound and Technology in Twentieth Century Literature. Dissertation given in 1998. Accessed on the net at : <http://www.hauntedink.com/ghost/>
- Holland, Michael (Ed.). The Blanchot Reader. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1995.
- Hollis, James R. Harold Pinter: The Poetics of Silence. Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1970.
- Hopper, P.J. "Emergent Grammar." Berkeley Linguistics Conference (BLS) 13, 1987.
- Jacobsen, Josephine & William R. Mueller. Ionesco and Genet: Playwrights of Silence. New York: Hill and Wang, 1968.
- James, William. The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy. New York: Dover, 1956.
- Jaworsky, Adam. "Aesthetics, communicative and political silences in Laurie Anderson's performance art." & "White and White, Metacommunicative and metaphorical

- silences.” In Silence: Interdisciplinary Perspective Univ. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter & Company, 1997.
- Jaworsky, Adam (Ed.) Silence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997.
- Jaworsky, Adam. The Power of Silence. Newbury Park: Sage, 1993.
- Kalamaras, George. Reclaiming the Tacit Dimension: Symbolic Form in the Rhetoric of Silence. Albany: New York State UP, 1994.
- Kane, Leslie. The Language of Silence: On the Unspoken and Unspeakable in Modern Drama. London/Toronto: Associated University Press, 1984.
- Kariaeva, Natalia. “Public and Private: Challenging Pain's Triumph in the Poetry of Witness Comparative Literature.” New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University. (Notes from The Conference on Poetry, 1997. Accessed on the net at: <http://english.rutgers.edu/pain.htm>)
- Kester, Grant. “Aesthetics After the End of Art: An Interview with Susan Buck-Morss.” In The Art Journal 56, 1997.
- Kwiatkowski, Alina. “Silence across Modalities.” Jaworsky, 1997, 329-337.
- Lacan, Jacques. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book II: The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis 1954-1955. Trans. Sylvana Tomaselli. Ed. Jacques-Alain Miller. New York: Norton, 1991.
- Lanier, Emilio, cited by Edmund Carpenter on “Interval” in They Became What They Beheld. New York: Ballentine, 1970.
- Luhmann, Niklas. “Speaking and Silence.” In New German Critique 61, 1994.
- Manning, Erin. Ephemeral Territories. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2003.
- Massumi, Brian. “Notes on the Translation and Acknowledgments” in: Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. 1987. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2002.
- Massumi, Brian. Parables for the Virtual. Durham: Duke UP. 2002.
- McLuhan, Marshall. The Gutenberg Galaxy. 1962. Toronto: Toronto UP, 2000.
- McLuhan, Marshall. Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man. 1964. Cambridge, MA: MIT UP, 1994.

- Meine, Franklin J. (Ed.) The Consolidated Webster Encyclopaedic Dictionary. 1940.
Chicago: Columbia Educational, 1946.
- Mellencamp, Patricia. "TV Time, History and Catastrophe, or Beyond the Pleasure Principle of Television." In Logics of Television: Essays in Cultural Criticism.
Bloomington: Indiana UP & London: BFI Publishing, 1990.
- Merchant, Jason. The Syntax of Silence. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "Das mittelbare Sprechen und die Stimme des Schweigens."
1951. In Das Auge und der Geist. Philosophische Essays. Hamburg: 1984.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge, 1966.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. The Prose of the World. Ed. Claude Lefort. Evanston:
Northwestern UP, 1973.
- Metallinos, Nikos "Applied Rules for Composition of Television Pictures." In Television Aesthetics: Perceptual, Cognitive and Compositionai Bases. Mahwah N.J.:
Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996.
- Morse, Margaret. "Video Installation Art: The Body, The Image, and the Space-in-between." In Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art. New York:
Aperture & Bay Area Video Coalition, 1990.
- Murray, Joddy. "Silence as Amplification in Discourse" accessed on the net May 2003 at
<http://morrisemurray.net/project3.htm#Context>.
- Newcomb, Horace "Towards a Television Aesthetic." In Television: The Critical View.
Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1974.
- O'Farrell, Clare. "A New Generation of Thinkers." In Foucault: Historian or Philosopher?
London: Macmillan, 1989.
- Paine, Thomas. Pamphlet released on January 10th 1776, accessed on the net at
<http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1776-1800/paine/CM/sensex.htm>
- Picard, Max. The World of Silence. Trans. Stanley Godman. London: Harvill, 1948.
- Rich, Adrienne. On Lies, Secrets and Silence: Selected Prose, 1966- 1978. New York:
Norton, 1979.
- Rotman, Brian. Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero. London: Macmillan, 1987.
- Saenger, Paul. "Silent Reading: Its Impact on Late Medieval Script and Society." In
Viator 13, 1982.

- Saenz, Michael K. "Television Viewing as a Cultural Practice." In Television: The Critical View. New York & Oxford: n.p. , 1994.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. Nausea. Trans. Lloyd Alexander. New York: New Directions Publishing, 1964.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. and Harvey Sacks. "Opening Up Closings." In The Discourse Reader. Adam Jaworsky and Nikolas Coupland, eds. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Schuster, Joshua. Other Voices. 1997.
- Scott, Robert L. "Dialectical Tensions of Speaking and Silence" In Quarterly Journal of Speech 1, 1993.
- Sheriff, R.E. "Exposing silence as cultural censorship: A Brazilian case." In American Anthropologist 102, 2000.
- Shivani, Anis. America's Hyperreal War on Terrorism. Accessed in 2003 at:
<http://www.dawn.com/2003/05/02/index.htm>
- Slote, Sam. The Silence in Progress of Dante, Mallarmé, and Joyce. New York: Peter Lang, 1999.
- Sontag, Susan. "The Aesthetics of Silence." 1967. In Styles of Radical Will. New York: 1969.
- Steiner, George. Language and Silence. 1967. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican Books.
- Steiner, George. Language and Silence. 1958. New York: Atheneum, 1967.
- Tannen, D. Talking Voices: Repetition, Dialogue and Imagery in Conversational Discourse. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.
- Taylor, Diane. "Dancing with Diana: A Study in Hauntology." The Drama Review. 43, 1999.
- Thorburn, David. "Television as an Aesthetic Medium." In Critical Studies in Mass Communication. June 1987.
- Verriest-Lefert, Guy & Jeanne (Interview & Texts). Marcel Marceau ou l'aventure du silence. Mouscrou, Belgium: Desclée De Brouwer, 1974.
- Vygotsky, Lev. Thinking and Speaking. 1934. Edited and translated by Eugenia Hanfmann and Gertrude Vakar. Cambridge MA: MIT UP, 1962.
- Wilmer, Harry. Quest for Silence. Einsiedeln, SW: Daimon Verlag, 1998.

- Wilmer, Harry. Quest for Silence. Einsiedeln, Switzerland: Daimon, 2000.
- Withers, Stacy. "Silence and communication in art." Jaworsky, 1997, 351-366.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. 1922. London: Routledge, 1961.
- Wolf, Naomi. The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
- Wood, Brian R. Autoethnography of Silence: "I was still the most silent in class"
accessed on the net at: <http://www.hackwriters.com/Silence.htm>. 2002.
- Žižek, Slavoj. The Sublime Object of Ideology. 1989. London: Verso, 2001.
- Zweig, Michael. The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000. Baldwin, Hélène L. Samuel Beckett's Real Silence. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1981.