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The ‘Coincidentia Oppositorium’ in Douglas Gordon’s art installation ‘Between Darkness and Light (after William Blake)’

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CONTENT

This essay is an attempt to analyse and interpret the art installation *Between Darkness and Light (after William Blake)* by the Scottish visual artist Douglas Gordon. The installation shows two movies, *The Exorcist* by William Friedkin (1973) and *The Song of Bernadette* (1943) by Henry King, projected from either side onto a freestanding screen in the middle. The two main characters in the films, Regan in *The Exorcist* and Bernadette in *The Song of Bernadette,* are possessed. Regan is possessed by the evil demon Pazuzu and Bernadette sees Marian appartitions. For the analyses of the two films separately I make use of (post) Freudian ideas, whereas I interpret the entire installation from a Jungian point of view.

INDEX WORDS: Douglas Gordon, contemporary art, Film, The Exorcist, The Song of Bernadette, coincidence of opposites, Doppelgänger, Freud, female adolescence, possession, Marian apparition, Jung, Erich Neumann, the Great Mother archetype.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the art installation *Between Darkness and Light (After William Blake)* (1997) Douglas Gordon, a Scottish visual artist, assembles the films *The Exorcist* by William Friedkin (1973) and *The Song of Bernadette* by Henry King (1943). *The Exorcist* is a horror film which tells the story of a young girl, Regan, who is possessed by the demon Pazuzu. Gordon juxtaposes this work with a biopic of Saint Bernadette and the genesis of the pilgrimage place, Lourdes, in *The Song of Bernadette*. This installation was first shown at the Skulptur Projekte Münster in an abandoned, draughty tunnel which had earlier been used as a pedestrian subway. An appropriate location in several aspects so it seems, as the awkward subject matters of both films usually remain hidden from public attention, too, while the flowing air in the tunnel echoes the draughts that foreshadow both the demonic possession and the Marian apparitions. The underground space furthermore symbolizes the occluded world of the unconscious and secret sexual desires, and it also represents a transition from one phase to another, e.g. from adolescence to adulthood.

Gordon projected the films from either side of the tunnel onto a freestanding, transparent screen in the middle, so that they could be watched simultaneously. They were played as loop films. Every time a film ended, it just started anew, integrally, including the title sequences, the opening and closing credits. As *The Exorcist* takes about 127″ and *The Song of Bernadette* 155″, the images joined together on screen were never the same. I have tried to re-create a similar effect by watching a youtube version of *The Song of Bernadette* alongside *The Exorcist* DVD, following Gordon's loop principle as well. In doing so, it is uncanny how much these two divergent films communicate with each other aesthetically, not only in terms of photography but also in terms of sound and text, regardless at which points in

the narratives the films are seen together. When in the first take the films start at the same time, the introduction scene set in Iraq in *The Exorcist* comes with the glissandi of an Islamic chant which is harmoniously mixed with the sonorously sounding church bells in the Pyrenean village of *The Song of Bernadette*. These ancient voices prepare the viewer for the religious content of the films. Next, the bustling activity of a sunlit Iraqi excavation juxtaposes with the early morning quietness in a shaded room in which we see two sleeping girls. At the same time Father Merrin kneels to inspect some stones in a sandy niche, Bernadette's mother Louise bends to light the fire while the ominous looking women in black abayas fit the habit-wearing nuns who walk down the windy street. Light and dark, fire and earth, wind and sound, both films introduce the viewer to basic elements that have never changed and must always remain part of everyday's life. An analysis of the films and their unison in Gordon's installation will provide a clear explanation of the double, and of Christianity's duality in the past century, as their contradictory tales blended together turn out not to be in combat but in symbiosis. These films are opposites that mutually explore the unspoken theme of possession; the subject matter of both films find their construction in folklore, that is in myths and religion, and as three separate productions featured in 1943, 1973 and 1997 that traverse in traditional culture, they provide a true reflection of the later twentieth-century spirit.

Despite their contradictory contents similar features bind the films together. Demonic possession as well as Marian apparitions belong to the Christian realm; and, the young girls Regan and Bernadette have both entered puberty, which is a painful, difficult age period, a time of change and transformation. In popular discourses feminine adolescence often becomes "a priviliged site of the uncanny" and "theories of femininity [propose] girlhood as a self-

estranged, partial or divided subjectivity, which is haunted by oedipal masculinity" (Martin, 135). Deborah Martin's essay concerns the cultural construction of adolescent girlhood in horror and gothic specifically, however I would add that her observations may apply to adolescent girls in other genres as well. She adheres to Nicholas Royle's definition that "the uncanny is a crisis of the proper: it entails a critical disturbance of what is proper …, involving feelings of uncertainty, in particular regarding the reality of who one is" (qtd. in Martin, 138). According to Martin the adolescent girl sees herself being placed in a patriarchal system, which may be experienced as a liminality (138), and therefore, as Royle puts it, "[she feels she] may thus be construed as a foreign body within oneself, even [having] the experience of oneself *as* a foreign body" (qtd. in Martin 138). Martin contends that in Freudian terms the adolescence phase in a patriarch society is "gendered masculine" (140) which implies that becoming feminine is a "departure from natural or normal subjecthood" (140). Parodoxically or perhaps consequently, it also means that when the girl reaches puberty she "[is] expected to sacrifice the parts of herself that our culture considers masculine on the altar of social acceptability" (Martin, 140). Martin explains her idea through Judith Halberstam's point of view regarding the 'tomboy': "we could say that [...] tomboyism is tolerated as long as the child remains prepubescent; as soon as puberty begins, however, the full force of gender conformity descends on the girl" (Halberstam qtd. in Martin, 140). Once the girl enters adolescence she will never be able to deal successfully with the Oedipus complex and that accounts for "feminine sexuality [emphasizing] doubleness, partiality, an experience split, dislocated and at odds with itself" (Martin, 139). Martin infers that ambiguity is the adolescent girl's gender or identity and in that she inclines towards Carol Clover's conclusion that the girl "is a physical female and characterological androgyne" (Clover qtd. in Martin, 141).

Although ambiguity may be a source of anxiety and complexity, it also brings in the

psychological power of the double since "it can stand for contrast or opposition but likeness as well … [It also] arises out of and gives form to the tension between division and unity" (Milica Živković, 122). Živković qualifies the double as "the archetype of universal duality" (122) and posits that one important aspect of the double is that:

> it has preserved its form but altered in character in accordance with changing notions of what exactly constitutes "reality" and "human identity". The increasing ideological polarisation of the existential continuum into irreconcilable opposites - of body and soul, life and death, man and woman, good and evil - basically changes the character and status of the double in Christianity (123).

In the course of time the double developed from a guardian angel, who reassured us of the prospect of immortality into in modern society a presage of death (Rank, 76). According primitive beliefs the soul was seen as one's shadow, one's double, inseparably connected to the person but disappearing at night when the sun would set (Rank, 74). Each day the sun went to the underworld and "gave to the souls who continued to live there their shadow-life, that is the possibility of survival and return to earth" (Rank, 74). However, in modern civilization death could no longer be denied as the end of existence, therefore, the double changed into the forerunner of death (Rank, 75). This evolution is mainly caused by the process of human self-perception, the process of identification and consequently, the designation of what is different from itself, or the concept of otherness (Živković, 124). Gradually, the double draws away from a religious orientation, from the supernatural and immortality, and becomes an "aspect of personal and interpersonal life, a manifestation of unconscious desires" (Živković, 124). The many variations on the Faust motif in nineteenth century literature and art, such as the two parts of Goethe's *Faust* (1808/1832), Oscar Wilde's

A Picture of Dorian Gray (1891), Wagner's *Faust Overture* (1840) and Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), all provide evidence of a shift in perception concerning the demonic, evidence that points to "the internal origin of the double" (Živković, 124). Faust signed his contract with his blood, bearing responsibility for his own fate. Until now good and evil had been forces lying outside human control, steered by providence (Živković, 125). However, the double as the manifestation of unconscious desires makes it an inconsistent phenomenon that confronts humans with their own "heart of darkness" (Živković, 125); therefore, the double is neglected and "silenced by society" (Živković, 125). Živković claims that in a rational and positivistic society - that is, a common-sense society according to the Lockean worldview - otherness can only be acknowledged as "foreign, mad and bad" (126):

> The double has constantly been dismissed by critics as being an embrace of madness, irrationality, or narcissism and it has been opposed to the humane and more civilized practices of 'realistic' literature. The dismissal of the double to the margins of literary culture, however, is in itself an ideologically significant gesture. As a symptom of unreason, and of desire, the double has persistently been silenced or re-written in transcendental, rather than transgressive terms (126).

Not only do the margins of literary culture accomodate the double. Popular culture in general embraces the double to celebrate 'the return of the repressed' (Freud, 17) or welcome 'the unfamiliar which is familiar' (Freud, 3). Freud's ideas of the Oedipal complex have provided important insight into (almost) bygone family structures that epitomise a patriarchal system with a father as the head of a social unit. Sara Williams points out that *The Exorcist* renders a deeply conservative view that "articulates anxieties about the implosion of the traditional nuclear family with the innocent and well-mannered child at its core, yet does not allay these

anxieties through the eventual re-establishment of a moral force" (233). In her post-freudian text she furthermore hypothesises that by choosing a demonic possession that needs exorcism, Regan's Oedipal process will not be resolved and as such is a threat to patriarchy (220).

In order to understand discourses surrounding matriarchy and maternal care that are so central to both *The Exorcist* and *The Song of Bernadette*, it is useful to trace developments through the following short historical account. Freud's psychoanalystic focus on the father has reinforced, "the [division of] the visible universe, as it were, into two categories, the 'I' and the 'not-I'" (Rank, 246). Everything the father/man considers worthwile or positive belongs to the I-class and the rest is placed in the not-I class (Rank, 246). Rank believes that the transition to a masculine society dates back to the time of Moses, or possibly even earlier, who was named after his mother according to the matrilineal rule. Moses's journey through the desert, guiding the Jews, reflects the change from the mother-cult of ancient Egypt into the father-cult of Judeo-Christianity. That is, the worship of the Golden Calf still gives evidence of veneration of a mother-symbol while its subsequent condemnation led to "[t]he Torah proper [that contained] the new masculine Law of Moses" (240). This event also entails that the concrete image was replaced by the abstraction of words. Rank explains that "[p]rimitive religion [...] abounds in pictures of a self-sufficient or (later) hermaphroditic goddess who originally creates life without the aid of man before creating man, who in turn creates her in his own image (Rank, 236).

Rank goes on to say that in the Christian tradition there is a similar, hermaphroditic, relationship between Christ and Mary, although Rank insists it does not concern a parallel but a reinterpretation of the mother-cult. Christianity interprets the incestuous implication of the pre-modern religion as a "spiritual rebirth", that has nothing to do with biology. However, according to Rank "this semi-religious development … expresses an ideological need in man

to blot out the mother-origin in order to deny his mortal nature" (236, 237). Following from this, the power of words has obliterated the mother-goddess representation as well as her biological context. The desecration of the Marian statue in the Georgetown church by Pazuzu, a Babylonian and Assyrian demon from the first millenium BC, and its sexually focussed insults could be seen not only as a transgressive act of blasphemy but also as a reference to a pre-Christian origin. In the context of the obliterated mother-goddess representation, I would suggest that Gordon's work reframes the relative importance of image and language. The narratives of *The Exorcist* and *The Song of Bernadette* are audible and comprehensible, though what is said is not essential to grasp the meaning of the whole installation. Besides, it is not difficult to watch two different images at the same time but it is to keep pace with two coinciding narratives.

In a further comprehensive account Rank makes clear that "language is masculine", and that "language, which originated as a free expression of the natural self, gradually developed into a rational means of communication voicing the predominant ideology" (242). Camille Paglia contends that to Freud language was the most important tool and that therefore his psychoanalytic sessions mainly consisted of talking (12). She specifically refers to Berta Pappenheim's hysteria and invention of 'the talking cure', which I will discuss in connection to Regan's possession later in this paper. Freud also exhibits his fondness for wordplay in his elaborate discussion of the semantic paradox of the words 'heimlich' and 'unheimlich' (Freud, 1-4). As a consequence Freud relies on causality (Avens, 197). Therefore, I shall make use of Freud's ideas in the context of narrative and the separate analyses of *The Exorcist* and *The Song of Bernadette* in chapter two. Freud's idea's prove less useful regarding the subverted nature of the narrative in Gordon's installation. Carl Jung, on the other hand, with his notions of dreams and emphasis on creativity shows in his theories on the unconscious a

sensitivity to image and matters that lie outside the domain of language, or at least outside its causal condition, domains such as “the experiences of our ancestors” and “the sum of instinct and their spiritual correlates, the archetypes” (Avens, 198). Unlike Freud he believes that the unconscious consists of two parts: the personal unconscious, which contains “forgotten repressed material and sumbliminal impressions and perceptions”, the part similar to Freud’s ideas of the unconscious, and a collective unconscious which contains “the wisdom of ages, our innate potential, that emerges from time to time in the form of ‘new’ ideas and various creative expressions” (Avens, 198). As to the double Jung believes that it is neither good nor bad; the double is “a manifestation of desire, which seeks that which is experienced as absence and loss … good and evil are simply complementary opposites, each a necessary condition for the other” (Živković,126). Concerning the final analysis on Gordon’s installation in my essay I shall therefore pursue a Jungian course; firstly, I also favour the Jungian definition of the double, and secondly, Jung and his follower Erich Neumann have discussed the figure of the Great Mother Archetype, a concept regarding a figure which will bring the opposing stories of the films together. That is to say, both girls, Regan and Bernadette, show a strong attachment to the mother figure. Regan has a very close relationship with her mother and lives in a matriachal household, something which mirrors Bernadette’s situation in which her life is confused by the Marian apparition, a vision of the mother.

In the next sections I will first analyse the films *The Exorcist* and *The Song of Bernadette* separately. These analyses will also include biographical and contextual information considered necessary in relation to the two films and the Gordon installation. I will give a biographical account of the directors William Friedkin and Henry King, but also of William Blatty, the writer of the novel *The Exorcist* and Franz Werfel, the writer of *The Song*

of Bernadette. The analyses of the movies will mainly revolve around the subject of possession, its history and its different facets. The third part of this paper comprises an examination of the life and work of the artists Douglas Gordon and William Blake, and an interpretation of Gordon's installation *Between Darkness and Light (after William Blake)*. Finally, in the conclusion, I will investigate the social and art historical context of Gordon's installation. At the end of the millenium many visual artists tended to look backwards, delving into cinematographic sources which might have expressed a need for some sort of narrative principle, a process in time that would defy the timeless frozen moments, characteristic of sculpure, painting and photography.

Chapter 2

William Friedkin and William Peter Blatty: The Exorcist

In November 1972 Pope Paul VI published a message in which he articulated his growing concerns on the increasing influence of the devil in the world:

> Evil is not merely a lack of something, but an effective agent, a living spiritual being, perverted and perverting. A terrible reality ... So we know that this dark and disturbing spirit really exists and that he still acts with treacherous cunning; he is the secret enemy that sows errors and misfortunes in human history ... (qtd. in Kermode, 8).

Against a backdrop of students' riots, the slow defeat in the Vietnam war and a controversial president who was about to leave the White House in disgrace, *The Exorcist* came out theatrically on Christmas Eve in December 1973. In making this film the director, William Friedkin, had presumably not been aware how apt was his response to the spirit of the time. The movie provoked "wildly divergent reactions" (Kermode, 10). Viewers witnessed a changeover of a sweet and innocent, young girl into foul-mouthed creature, who vomitted green dirt and masturbated with a crucifix. The famous critic Roger Ebert reviewed the film in the *Chicago Sun-Times* and wrote that:

> Never for a moment - not when the little girl is possessed by the most disgusting of spirits, not when the bed is banging and the furniture flying and the vomit is welling out - are we less than convinced. The film contains brutal shocks, almost indescribable obscenities ... We feel shock, horror, nausea, fear, and some small measure of dogged hope (Ebert, rogerebert.com).

The media reported extreme reactions. Some people became violent, others went back to church. Friedkin was surprised by the commotion, because "[he] had been working on the thing for two years and it had ceased to have any power for [him]. In fact, [he] thought that a lot of it would be thought of hysterical[ly funny] by the audience" (qtd. in Kermode, 85).

Prior to *The Exorcist* Friedkin had proved himself an accomplished director. He won several awards for 'best director' and 'outstanding directorial achievement' for the film *The French Connection* (1972). The film *The Exorcist* received two awards and was successfully re-released in 2000. Friedkin, born in 1935 in a Jewish family, was not a school trained director but worked himself up from a job in the mailroom at Chicago's WGN TV station to becoming a director of live televison and a documentary maker when he was very young. His breakthrough came with his documentary, *The people vs. Paul Crump* (1962), about a death row prisoner whose punishment was commuted as a consequence of all the publicity surrounding the documentary. Several commercial flops later, among others Hollywood's first movie about gay men *The Boys in the Band* (1970), Friedkin adapted the bestseller *The French Connection* in 1971, using his documentary skills to film this thrilling cop movie. The success of this film was immense, only to be surpassed by the box office of *The Exorcist* (Bozzola, L. nytimes.com).

The collaboration between Friedkin and his screenplay writer and writer of the novel *The Exorcist*, William Peter Blatty, was not flawless. Friedkin had rejected Blatty's first draft and assisted in making the second draft screenplay, so Blatty had to accept drastic changes in his screenplay then. Eventually though, despite the many concessions in earlier stages, Blatty was entirely banned from the editing room shortly before the first public performance as

Friedkin had decided to cut a number of scenes with a view to "play down the metaphysics and play up the horror" (qtd. in Kermode, 78). From the beginning Blatty, a true Catholic believer, aimed at a more theological perspective and thought the version that featured in 1973 "*was* highly effective ... [b]ut it lacked a spiritual centre" (qtd. in Kermode, 96). Also, Linda Blair regretted that people saw *The Exorcist* "as primarily a 'horror movie'" (Kermode, 94). She remarked that "instead of being frightened by the film [people] should have thought a bit about what its message was. ... I just wish that the film had affected people in a more positive way, to make them follow a more positive spiritual path" (qtd. in Kermode, 94).

At first, Friedkin did not want to hear about re-shooting and re-editing scenes, asserting that "Hitchcock made many errors in his films but never went back to correct them" (Kermode, 88). However, after twenty-five years he changed his mind and considered a re-release which would include the missing scenes and a new ending with a more positive tenor. Having left the editing room for the second time, he admitted to Blatty: "I finally realise[d] what you were trying to do with this picture" (qtd. in Kermode, 95). Further on Friedkin explains: "Viewing both versions now, I can see that the old version *is* a colder film, more dyspeptic and abstract. ...This new version is much warmer. And, I think, much better" (qtd. in Kermode, 96). The version Gordon used for his installation in 1997 is the first version of *The Exorcist.*

The re-edited film begins with a shot of the Georgetown house, and next, a shot of a white marble Marian statue in a church. Then comes the unaltered scene set in Iraq, where Father Merrin, an archeologist, works at an excavation in Hatra, a city founded between the third and second century BC. Hatra was known for the many temples in the city and hence

was named the Beit ‘Elaha’ which means ‘House of God’ (Hatra, Encylopædia Britannica). It was in the news last March, as Islamic State militants seem to have destroyed this ancient town which had been an important religious and trade centre once. (According to *The Guardian* the Assyrian archeological site of Nimrod was bulldozed, too, previously in the same week (Johnston, 7 March 2015)). In Hatra Father Merrin finds a small artefact which he recognises as a sign from his old enemy the demon Pazuzu. Pazuzu has a rich past of evil, especially in the comic and film world. However, his reputation of entire mischief does not seem fair. In an attempt to rehabilitate Pazuzu, as being slightly displeased with Hollywood’s carefree eclecticism, Regina Heilmann argues that the neutral technical term ‘daimon’ has been negatively connoted in the course of time and in combination with an “unheimlichen visuellen Erscheinung” (196), interpreted by Christians as devilish, Pazuzu has become a source of maliciousness (196). Yet, Pazuzu does not look pretty for a good reason. Apart from being the demon of the south west winds that brought misfortunes and illnesses, his/its representation was used to ward off the powerful, thoroughly evil goddess Lamashtu, who is related to Lilith and Lamia and who, among others, caused harm to mother and child during childbirth. The orientalist Nils Heeβel describes Pazuzu as follows:

> Most notable are a rectangular form of the head, capridic horns, canine jaws with the teeth and tongue shown, and large, round eyes set deep under thick eyebrows. A horizontally cut human beard, human ears, round bulges head and a throat marked by horizontal lines are furtherfeatures characteristics of this demon. A prolonged, small, almost famished canine body with protruding ribs, ... human shoulders and arms ending in the claws of a predator are representative as well. Two pairs of bird wings on his, back, a penis erectus

> ending in a snake's head, and the tail of a scorpion complete Pazuzu's iconography (357, 358).

Heilmann believes that Blatty was well aware of Pazuzu's atropopaic function, which means that Pazuzu was used to ward off evil, but this just did not fit in the context of his novel or the film (212).

From the portentous atmosphere of the ancient world, the film returns straight to Washington, the transition of which is visually supported by a shot of a bridge. When the camera zooms inside the house, the viewer sees Chris, Regan's Mother, working late. Chris hears scratching noises in the attic and a while later checks on her daughter, who is sleeping with the windows wide open, having kicked off her bedcovers. Pazuzu has arrived. After a spooky scene in the attic, the camera cuts to the church where a priest discovers the bloodstained Marian statue, defiled with breasts and an large half erected penis in addition. It is the first physical sign of Pazuzu's presence. This incident is not resolved in the film but I would say that it looks as if Mary was forcefully converted into her primordial hermaphroditic goddess state. It could also represent contempt for the 'real' mothers in the story, Damien Karras's mother Vasiliki and Chris. In a first real fit Pazuzu barks: "keep away from her, the sow is mine", pushing Chris's head towards Regan's bleeding crotch. And when Father Merrin has died, Pazuzu takes on the appearance of Damien's mother, working on his feelings of guilt by mimicking her voice and repeating her words -"Why did you do this to me, Dimmy?"- so as to break him mentally. Either way, these events point at Pazuzu's fascination for, or perhaps undesirable attachment to, the mother figure.

When Regan starts acting strangely, she is taken to hospital for several physical examinations. During these examinations she shows erratic behaviour and responds

aggressively to the doctor's inquiries. At some point she tells him "to keep away from my goddamned cunt." His diagnosis is "a disorder of the nerves …. often seen in early adolescence. She shows all the symptoms: hyperactivity, her [bad] temper, performance in math …." Regan's condition grows worse. In the second round she resists the painful examinations physically and verbally, and indeed, more violently as they involve injections with large syringes, a blood drain and an arteriogram. Regan's situation is intercut with shots of Vasiliki who is taken into a miserable, psychiatric hospital for "the edema [has] affected her brain". While Damien is approaching her bed at the far end, her pitiful but also hideous fellow patients cling to him. There is even one woman who holds him tightly, refusing to let him go. Vasiliki is strapped to the bed; she is crying and reacts angrily, turning her head away from Damien when he attempts to alleviate her grief. Kermode observes that "[t]he connection between Regan and Karras's disturbed mother is to become still more explicit. ... All [her] actions will later be mirrored exactly by Regan as symptoms of her demonic 'infestation'" (40).

If there is such a strong connection between Regan and Vasiliki, the question then arises as to whether Regan is really possessed or suffers from an psychiatric illness. In Regan's first medical evaluation Dr. Klein suggests that Regan's behaviour might be a reaction to the divorce and her father's absence. According to Sara Williams, the novel version of *The Exorcist* in paricular "can be read as a specifically Oedipal hysteria narrative through which Regan-as-demon expresses both sexual desire for the absent father and a violent rejection of the mother" despite Blatty's claim that his novel is based on a real case of possession (219).

Williams expands on Ann Douglas contention that "Regan's possession is an extreme version of Bertha Pappenheim's acute hysteria of a century earlier, which Freud and Josef

Breuer [have] immortilize[d] as the illness and recovery of Anna O" (qtd. in Williams, 219). Dianne Hunter appoints Bertha Pappenheim (1859-1936), who was the inventor of the 'talking cure' as the "'legend' of the origin of psychoanalysis" however, someone whom is "[barely] given attention [regarding] her role as a contributor to psychoanalytic theory and technique" (464). Freud "was profoundly impressed when he heard about Pappenheim's unusual treatment by verbalization and catharsis" (Hunter, 466). Pappenheim was a bright woman, born into a rich Jewish family in Vienna, who had had an education proper to her class of women, that is, mainly in languages - English, French and Italian - embroidery and lacemaking. Having grown up in a orthodox Jewish milieu, she had limited access to society. Beside tedious household tasks she was allowed to do charity work such as nursing the sick and the aged (Hunter, 469). Breuer reports that "[t]his girl who was bubbling over with intellectual vitality, led an extemely monotonous existence in her puritanically-minded family" (qtd. in Hunter 469). Her hysteria developed rapidly in the time she nursed her father. It made her suffer from an eating disorder, paralysis, headaches, deafness, sleepwalking, disturbances of vision, temper tantrums and most tellingly "profound disorganization of speech and total aphasia" (Hunter, 467). At certain stages in her recovery process, she could speak the foreign languages she knew fluently but not her native tongue. Hunter suggests that "speaking coherent German meant integration into a cultural identity Bertha Pappenheim wanted to reject" (468). At times she mixed all four languages, producing sentences that were not understandable (Hunter, 468).

Apparently, the devil and hysteric share a queer inclination of languages. Regan can talk English backwards and Damien tells Chris that it would be an evidence of Regan's possession, if she was suddenly able to speak a foreign language. Another striking change in

Regan is her voice. Her voice, or Pazuzu's, has a low, grating sound, which enhances the uncanniness of her appearance. As previously recognized, she can change her voice at will so as to manipulate her 'audience'. Barbara Creed notes that while critics generally knew the voice belonged to the actress Mercedes McCambridge, they accepted it as the voice of Regan masculinised by a male devil (39). Regarding such an instance, Steven Connor explains the attitude of the critics as 'rationalist mystification' (22). It is rational in the sense that the critics know whose voice it is, but mystification because the voice is nevertheless attributed to a girl who could never have attained that kind of voice. Synchronisation,which can be seen as a form of ventroloquism, often happens in films, e.g. in musicals, sometimes very obviously so as in Dennis Potter's *The Singing Detective* (1986). In the beginning the viewer of *The Singing Detective* is startled but quickly accepts the synchronisation after all. The actress McCambridge acts in this case as a kind of ventriloquist who projects her voice through Regan the dummy. The ventriloquist's illusion is based on the human's inability to locate the exact source of a sound, and consequently connects acceptable and credible visual signs to the source of the sound (Connor, 217). The voice has a double function along these lines as performance is a significant symptom of a hysteric disorder. The voice itself is a performative instrument that can reflect inner moods and invoke emotions. According to Helene Basu "[t]he voice links language and the body and it is more than a medium of speech" (328). Basu cites Mladen Dolar who perceives "the voice as a precarious border between the inside and the outside: while the voice emanates from within the body, it is also a part of the world, an uncontrollable outside ..." (qtd. in Basu, 328). The meaning of what is being said is determined by intonation, rhythm and a high or low pitch, which changes the voice into "an ambiguous phenomenon [as] it does not belong to linguistics ... or to the body, since the voice

'floats' and has detached itself from its source" (Schuster qtd. in Basu, 328). Voices play an important role in a culture, metaphorically as well as literally. They can express madness but also one's conscience. In religion the voice is an instrument of faith, persuasion and morality. Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* narrates the tragic destruction of an entire family induced by voices out of the blue attributed to God, proving that "voices that materialize without apparent cause have the power to disrupt our sense of reality, our sense of a unified, coherent self" (Judson, 23).

Regan's mother Chris prefers to have Regan possessed as she is not keen on a diagnosis of hysteria because that would imply a paternal trauma of which she would be guilty through the divorce (Williams, 227). However like Williams, Barbara Creed interprets Regan's possession in a metaphorical sense - or in Williams words: "rearticulates the demonic possession narrative into a psychosomatic one" (228) - and thus argues that "Regan is possessed not by the devil but by her own unsocialized body" (40). Creed claims that Regan's rebellious behaviour is motivated by her "desire to remain locked in a close dyadic relationship with the mother" (39). Not entirely ungrounded, as Freud at first thought that the development of the Oedipus process was the same for boys and girls, but in *Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes* in 1925 he revised his theory on the Oedipus complex by proposing a female Oedipus complex, a pre-Oedipal stage, "where the girl's first love object is her mother" (Williams, 219). Williams also sees Regan's possession as the enactment of the female Oedipus complex as "recent feminist scholarship has recast hysteria as symptomatic of the yearning for the pre-Oedipal maternal dyad" (219).

It seems that the line between possession and psychiatric illnesses is a thin one. In a study on possession disorder in Italy the three writers/psychiatrists stipulate that "[h]ad we

been unaware of the possession phenomena - a strictly private religious matter that they might never have disclosed to a nonreligious practitioner - we would have clinically classified most of these participants as neurotic patients resembling high functioning [Dissociative Identity Disorder]" (Ferracuti, Sacco, Lazzari, 537). Herman Westerink argues that modern medical approaches to illnesses, either physical or mental, have never departed from but instead reveal a logical continuation of early modern medical practice which was fraught with religious beliefs (336). Philippe Pinel (1745-1826) was the first physician who openly discarded the superstitious beliefs that madness and witchcraft had anything to do with demonic possession. However, he did not dismiss religious notions. He just conjectured that "some people could be struck by melancholy and thus be plagued by despair and terror of conscience after having been in contact with overzealous preachers", and that "mental disease was caused by ... overzealous ambitions, religious fanaticism or obsessive love" (Westerink , 336). In such cases he prescribed "seclusion and detachment from a religious milieu", agreeing with "moderate pastoral models" as many pastors in those days also "opposed the overzealous preaching of discomforting ideas that sometimes provoked insanity" (Westerink, 336). Pinel succeeded in reformulating the concept of mental illness by "draw[ing] upon the function of religious authority in order to emancipate psychiatry and moral treatment from medicine" (Westerink, 336).

Lutherian physicians unanimously rejected the Catholic practice of exorcism and assessed it as "fraudulent and false belief in magic" (Westerink, 340). Their thoughts were based on Martin Luther's re-interpretation of the perception of demonic possession. Luther discriminates a bodily form of possession and a spiritual one. The bodily form does not influence the soul, so the soul is not lost; it represents the 'normal' possession, the symptoms

of which - deviant behaviour, tantrums, and paralyses - are discussed. As the soul is not lost the possessed remains within the congregation. However, the spiritual possession is a crisis in which alienation from God is at issue (Westerink, 340). Westerink claims that Luther's differentation "contributed to the division of realms between medical doctors and pastors (sometimes referred to as 'spiritual doctors')" (340). Through Regan's domineering performance in the film, Damien Karras's spiritual crisis is easily overlooked though the title 'the exorcist' clearly indicates it is not about Regan. In fact, within Luther's frame of thoughts *The Exorcist* gives an account of two possessions. Carol Clover asserts that "for all its spectacle value, Regan's story is finally significant only insofar as it affects the lives of others, above all the tormented spiritual life of Karras" (87). At first, Karras gives in to his faltering faith by looking for purely medical causes such as hysteria or psychosis, but by opting for an exorcism he hopes his faith will be restored. Clover dryly observes that "[c]ertainly the novelist's (and filmmaker's) target is not the female body, but the transformation that body prompts in the male psyche" (88). Through Pazuzu, Blatty has shown himself an eclecticist before, so I assume he is aware that he, a devout Catholic, offers a Lutherian worldview that strongly disapproved of the exorcism practice. Surprisingly, *The Exorcist* emerges as an ecumenical enterprise featuring a Jewish director, a Catholic writer/producer and a Protestant plan.

Henry King and Franz Werfel: The Song of Bernadette

Franz Werfel (1890-1945) wrote the historical novel *Das Lied von Bernadette* when he had arrived safely in America in 1941. Before his flight, he and his wife Alma Mahler Werfel had been hiding from the Nazis in Lourdes (McGreevy, 17). Werfel was born Jewish but

converted to Catholicism in order to conform to his wife's wish. He was already quite receptive to the Catholic faith as his nanny, Barbara Simunkova, had frequently taken him to Catholic services when he was a child. After his marriage he wrote *Barbara oder Die Frömmigkeit* (1930), which is a "story of a man inspired by his nurse …. to live a life of faith, simple expectations, and unquestioning acceptance of hardship, and to eschew political activism and theological argument" (Ann T. Keene, "Werfel, Franz Victor"). This novel seems to reflect Werfel's anti-modern convictions, which remained with him for the rest of his life (Keene, "Werfel, Franz Victor"). During their stay in Lourdes they read and heard about Bernadette Soubirous. In his anxiety to escape, Werfel made a vow to write about Bernadette as a form of thanksgiving to the Lady of Lourdes, if he and his wife managed to flee to America. It was not at all certain if everything would work out according plan, thus Werfel hoped for a miracle and often drank from the well. Explaining afterward his feelings he said "[i]n my anguish I turned for refuge to that maternal power of the universe which had so beneficently manifested itself in the poor life of Bernadette Soubirous" (qtd. in John T. McGreevy, 17). As soon as he arrived he kept his promise and completed the novel within four months. To his surprise the sales figures were high; apparently, it filled a gap in an overall Protestant America. In a study on religious diversity in America between 1940 and 2000, the researchers Michael Hout and Claude S. Fischer found that in 1944 over 80% of the American population was Protestant, while less than 10% was Catholic. The number of Protestants dropped in the second half of the past century to 65%. The Catholic population, on the other hand, increased to almost 30 % (15, 16). The novel *The Song of Bernadette* became a huge bestseller and was adapted into a screenplay for the film of the same name in 1942 (McGreevy, 17). The film, directed by Henry King, had its first theatrical performance just

after Christmas in 1943, and turned out to be a major success, too. Remarkably, both *The Exorcist* as well as *The Song of Bernadette* were released around Christmas time and during wartime, that is, *The Exorcist* in the Vietnam war and *The Song of Bernadette* in World War II. At the time of *The Song of Bernadette,* however, the Americans were 'on the good side'. The film received four Oscars in 1943 and three Golden Globe awards in 1944 (Roger Fristoe, tcm.com). The film's mainstream popularity even encouraged the primarily Protestant American soldiers to visit Lourdes during the war. McGreevy recounts that the army provided the soldiers with copies of *Bernadette*, and paid all expenses if off-duty soldiers wished to go on a trip to Lourdes, where an American priest, Fr. Andrew Nowak, would welcome them, guide them through the village, facilitate a mass the morning after plus a viewing of the film. After the film the soldiers joined "the nightly procession of pilgrims, holding candles and singing the hymn 'Ave Maria' under Nowak's direction" (McGreevy, 421).

The success of the religious drama *Bernadette* was also achieved by virtue of Henry King's (1886-1982) accomplished directionary and his expertise in literary adaptations, already witnessed in his versions of Rafael Sabatini's *The Black Swan* (1942), Niven Bush's *In Old Chicago* (1938) and Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* (1936). King was not shy of genre pictures either, having directed throughout his career swashbucklers, psychological war and religious dramas, epics, musicals and westerns. He began his career as an actor accidentally in 1913. Two years later, however, he started directing movies. After several successful films in a row, he felt confident and considered the subsequent change from silent to sound pictures in 1929 a formality (I. S. Mowis, imdb.com). In an interview in 1975 with the film critic Peter Nellhouse, a NYU film student very familiair with King's films, King confided he converted to Catholicism at the time he made *The White Sister* (1923). According to Nellhouse "*The*

White Sister is one of several films Henry King has made about the idea of commitment to an ideal, or an act or faith or belief. One of the themes of King's films is about dedication towards a possibly abstract idea at the cost of personal comfort, or even one's life" (Nellhouse, coffeecoffeeandmorecoffee.com). Furthermore Nellhouse believes that "unlike some filmmakers where the concept of faith is a given, King's films are about people in conflict not only with outside influences, but their own very valid self-doubts" (ibid.). Nellhouse also thinks that King's faith inspired him to make *Bernadette* (ibid.).

King was noted for his instinct for talent. He promoted Gary Cooper, Jean Peters and Tyrone Power, who all became popular stars in their day (Mowis, imdb.com). He had chosen Jennifer Jones (1919-2009) for the role of Bernadette among many other applicants - presumably also under slight pressure from the powerful Hollywood producer David O. Selznick whose protégée she was - recalling that "only Jennifer looked as if she saw a vision", factually though "she was looking at a man behind the camera waving a stick". Jones won an Oscar for 'Best Actress in a Leading Role' and a Golden Globe Award for 'Best Motion Picture Actress' (Fristoe, tcm.com).

Jennifer Jones was born as Phylis Lee Isley and attended the American Academic of Dramatic Arts in New York where she met her first husband Robert Walker. Soon after she had signed her contract for the MGM producer Selznick, it came to light that Selznick's interest in her was not only business-related but also personal. During the filming of *The Song of Bernadette* she was still married to Robert Walker but their relationship began to crumble. In 1943 their divorce was a fact. However, in her next film *Since You Went Away* (1944) Selznick cast Robert Walker as Jones's lover. This situation confused and troubled everyone

working on the set, though it resulted in “one of Selznick finest films and a beautiful example of movie making at its best”. Five years later in 1949 Jones married Selznick. Selznick was devoted to Jones’s career. As a producer he cast her as very different kind of character in order to prevent her becoming a type-cast. One of her most famous films - though according to Phillip Oliver, an ardent admirer and owner of a website dedicated to Jones, not one of her best - is *Duel in the Sun* (1946), directed by King Vidor and produced by Selznick. Oliver recounts that it was reviewed in the media with headlines such as “From Saint to Sinner in just three years” and dubbed by the critics as “Lust in the Dust” as Jones played a “ravishing, sultry and sexy” woman (jenniferjonesweebly.com). Oliver is lyrical concerning the film's photography, which foregrounded Jones’s beauty, and the excellent cast, but less enthusiastic about Jones’s acting. He finds “[h]er acting decidedly mixed here. In most scenes, she pulls it off well, but in many she displays a smoldering intensity that borders on overacting” (jenniferjonesweebly.com). Her acting achievements, Oliver believes, are much better in another remarkable movie, *Portrait of Jennie* (1949), a fantasy film directed by William Dieterle and again produced by Selznick. In this film Jones is the muse of the painter Eben Adams. Eben discovers that Jennie is not from this world and will also leave him, though she has become the inspiration for his painting and so he must learn to paint without her presence. Gonzalez argues that with this film “Dieterle establishes a difficult duality between art and life”, which emerges the question “how Eben [would] channel Jennie into the reality of his painting without losing himself to her ghost” (Gonzalez, slantmagazine.com).

In *The Song of Bernadette* Jennifer Jones played the visionary Bernadette Soubirous (1844-1879), a 14-year-old girl born in Lourdes, a small town in the Pyrénénees on the river Gave, as the eldest of five children to Louise and François Soubirous. Her father used to be a

miller but lost his job hence the family lived in a former prison cell, a damp place which probably aggravated Bernadette's chronic asthma condition. Bernadette could hardly read and write and had difficulties learning her Cathechism. If she was sent to her aunt in Bartrès she tended the sheep (bernadette-of-lourdes.co.uk). The first time she saw the Lady Mary was on 11 February 1858. The second time she saw the vision on 14 Februari, she had to promise the Lady to come back every day for a fortnight. At the place of the visions a clear water spring arose on 26 Februari from which to date thousands of unhappy and sick people drink, hoping for a miraculous recovery. The Lady's request to Bernadette to reveal she wanted a chapel to be built has resulted in a number of chapels and churches at Massabielle. The Catholic Church were at first reluctant to acknowledge the Marian apparitions, but after a canonical examination proclaimed that Bernadette's visions really had occurred at Massabielle cave. The reports of the apparitions and the healing miracles invoked by the water from the fountain travelled fast and attracted many visitors who wanted to see Bernadette personally, and to hear from her how she experienced the visions (Tejvan Pettinger, biographyonline.net). It made Bernadette famous, however she longed for a secluded life in a cloister. Due to poor health she was not admitted to the Carmel convent and went instead to the Convent in Nevers in 1866. The last years of her life, Bernadette suffered from various painful illnesses and she was bedridden for long periods. She died in 1879. It was said that when her body was removed from her grave after thirty years it was still intact and undecayed (Pettinger, biographyonline.net).

According to Sara Horsfall the first Marian apparitions occured in the fourth Century, and since then there have been 21,000 recording of apparitions in the Christian world. The number of apparitions even increased in the last 200 years (Horsfall, 375). Maurice Ryan

claims that most apparitions mainly occcur in European regions where the community is prevailingly Catholic while it is unclear what the seers exactly see (566). The Marian apparitions seem to have a preference for young and often poor children. For this reason Freudian scholars claim that these visions are “hallucinations intended to gratify unconscious childhood desires” (Carroll, M. qtd. in Horsfall, 377). This point of view would be in agreement with critic Janet Hada’s perspective, which focuses on what these visions meant to Bernadette, although she draws on the theory of the self-psychology developed by Heinz Kohut (1913-1981) and not on Freud’s work (Astel, 16). The principle of the self-psychology is that self-esteem, “sense of personal worth and ability [...] is fundamental to an individual’s identity. Family relationships during childhood are believed to play a crucial role in its development” (self-esteem, Encyclopædia Brittanca). Hada argues that “the reciprocal gaze” is essential for the forming of a child’s identity and suggests that Bernadette “has never received sufficiently from her own mother this reciprocal gaze, which satisfies from infancy each person’s need for to be valued in the eyes of a significant other” (Hada qtd. in Astel, 16). From a distance, Hada’s standpoint seems highly speculative but if her hypothesis makes sense, then the contrast to Regan’s personal situation could not be more apparent. An only child Regan grows up in an affluent, warm home and receives plenty of attention and affection from her protective mother. This could spawn the black and white moral lesson that the devil preferably assaults the comfortable bourgeois home of the rich and, as Regan’s mother Chris is an actress, the glamour of pretense, whereas the Lady Mary comes to the poor and sick. However, good and evil almost never act in separate spheres, a thought that will be discussed by means of William Blake’s interpretation of the *Book of Job.* Both Blake and the *Book of Job* are crucial to the understanding of Gordon's installation, particularly as they

explore the coincidence of opposites.

Like all miracles, the religious Marian apparitions are an awkward phenomenon. Ryan assumes that its enormous popularity could be "an uncritical surge towards certitude, or proof of God's presence via sense-ible signs. This surge is particularly apparent when the times are perceived to be threatening or dangerous" (564). Horsfall argues that "the apparitions represent the feminine side of religious experience. Devotion to Mary is characterized by mercy and forgiveness, healing and comfort, in contrast to the judgment often felt as the more masculine quality of the religious experience" (382). But she insists that it does not merely concern "an escape into an idealistic world without strife" (Horsfall, 382). The message of the Marian apparition to three children in Fatima, Portugal in 1917, incited to raise an army and battle against the Communists (in spiritual terms), while "[m]any of the apparition messages also point to the concept of suffering as punishment" (Horsfall, 382). Ryan observes that the content of the European and North American Marian messages is rather conservative, "represent[ing] Mary as anti-modernist, anti-communist, and opposed to Catholic Church innovations such as Vatican II and the new liturgy" (566), which is in contrast with the Latin American messages. In Latin America Mary still retains "the image [...] as warrior but [then] she is enlisted on the side of the forces of liberation and subversion" (568). The Catholic Church authorities have always been reluctant to recognise the authenticity of the Marian apparitions and articulate their point of view diplomatically but ambigiously. They agree:

> that the appearances are [not] historical realities, but rather that the reports are without fraud, manipulation, intent to deceive, attention seeking, psychological imbalance, or demonic intent. As such they are worthy of pious devotion, but

> do not form part of the Church ’s official belief (Ryan, 573).

Ryan believes that the mass popularity of the Marian cults has a “revolutionary potential” (574), which, for example, the influence of the Latin American Marian apparitions can testify and that this popularity undercuts the Church as a conservative body and an “established religious and political [authority]” (574). In general, Ryan is not positive about the Marian cults. His somewhat harsh opinion is that their messages “border on the trite and banal”, that they often benefit those “who experience the apparitions” and that these cults offer “simplified solutions that mask the complexity ... [of] the major issues in the world” (574).

All the same, the Bible is full of visions and the very first biblical vision reported is notably from Adam, whose “ ‘deep sleep’ ... that God sends upon [him] is ... *exstasis*,” (Barbara Newman, 10) or *alienatio mentis,* that is “a state of spiritual intoxication or excess of joy, in which the soul forgets itself and the world and becomes only of God” (Newman, 11). In his ecstasy Adam went to heaven “while God was creating Eve” (ibid.) and learned from the angels about his “marital union but also the union of Christ and the Church” (ibid.). However, according to Newman’s study of medieval visionary experience most visionaries were in fact women (2). Women were “often deemed too 'simple' to speak of the things of God unless they became direct channels of his Word” (ibid.). Newman describes three circumstances in which visions can occur: in a near-death experience, spontaneously or as “the fruit of a complex spiritual discipline” (4). In the last part of the film *The Song of Bernadette* Sister Vauzous bitterly tells Bernadette of all the sacrifices she made in vain as the Blessed Virgin never appeared to her:

> Look at my eyes. They burn like the very fires of Hell. Why?
>
> Because they need sleep, which I will not give them. My throat is parched from

> constant prayer. My hands are gnarled from serving in humiliation. My body is pain-racked from stone floors.

The spiritual discipline "did facilitate visionary experience" (Newman, 4) but could not make certain that visions would appear although the mind developed "a sensitivity to its modes" (ibid, 4). Horsfall's study, which points out the characteristics of Marian apparitions, reveals that "visionaries control the apparitions to the exent that they can create the right conditions for the apparitions to come" (381). Furthermore, apparitions have been reported at diverse places in Europe and Latin America but "the apparition always speaks to the visionaries in their own local language" (Horsfall, 379). In adddition, Ryan argues that the messages the apparitions gave to their visionaries, which as said before were often quite conservative in nature, tend to "disclose the visionaries's own worldview and perceptions of society" (568). Having summed up these features, it comes to mind that visionaries see their own projections and thus that Bernadette witnessed a projection of an inward image, a double, an idealised version of a person who could give her what real persons could not give and guide her to a life she desired. The Lady Mary is a double for Bernadette but also a double of the real mother, Louise, she needed and also possibly the father. Her decision to live in a convent, inspired by the apparition, could be seen as her reaching for a substitute for her own family. However, this double is not without harm either, because during one of the first meetings the Blessed Virgin said: "I cannot promise to make you happy in this world, only in the next." Consequently, when Bernadette is terminally ill, suffering from inexpressible pains through a large tumor at the knee and tuberculosis of the bones she refuses to bathe in the Lourdes spring, asserting "the spring is not for me". When Bernadette dies her last words are "j'aime", which is "a last earthly greeting to her returning Lady" (Astell, 18). According to Werfel the

"I" in Bernadette "that loves and has grown in love" (ibid, 18) indicates that Bernadette has now entered the state of individuation (Werfel qtd. In Astell, 18). The concept of individuation is often used in Jungian analytical psychology and refers to a process of transformation of the psyche where by the personal and collective unconscious become conscious.

Chapter 3

Douglas Gordon & William Blake: Between Darkness and Light (after William Blake)

Douglas Gordon is a prize-wining contemporary artist. He was born in 1966 and grew up in Dumbarton, a town north west of Glasgow, as the eldest son to James Gordon and Mary McDougall. After the Protestant comprehensive school in Dumbarton he went to the Glasgow School of Art; in 1988 he left for the Slade School of Fine Art in London. His best known work is probably *24 Hour Psycho* (1993), in which he slowed down Hitchcock's *Psycho* in order to make it last for 24 hours. In the installation *Through a Looking Glass* (1999), he has also looped the Robert De Niro's 'you-talkin'-to-me?' scene from Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976). In this scene Travis Bickle plays with his new gun in front of a mirror, anticipating a confrontation with a criminal city dweller. Gordon replays this loop on two screens. After a while these two projections run out of synch so that it looks as if the two De Niro's are having a dialogue. In more recent works he does not use someone else's films anymore but makes them himself or otherwise handles the camera himself. He has made, amongst others, films of animals, such as elephants and flies (*Play Dead; Real Time*, 2003 and *Film Noir (Fly)*, 2008), and parts of the body e.g. eyes (*Phantom*, 2012), an installation created in collaboration with the singer song writer Rufus Wainwright. The melancholic music for this installation is from the album *All Days Are Night: Songs for Lulu*, which Wainwright partly wrote in memory of his mother. In his first feature film Gordon shows the arms and hands of a conductor at work, who is conducting the score to Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (*Feature Film*,1999). He was frequently asked, if he had not inserted subliminal images of *Vertigo* in it as viewers believed that they

had actually been seeing the events that went along with the music in the film.

The publication *Douglas Gordon* by the Kunstverein Hannover (1998) must be read backwards. At the end - or the beginning, if you like - it features a biography preceded by a blurred photograph a of a small boy in a swing, contributed by 'a friend', most likely Gordon himself. 'The friend' reveals that Gordon's birth, so he was told, was a difficult one. He still feels guilty towards his mother about this. He said he apparently did not want to go out into the world ('a friend' in *Douglas Gordon*, no p. ref). One of his earlier works (*Something between my mouth and your ear*, 1994) consists of a collection of VCR's and music tracks which he claims his mother had watched and listened to during her pregnancy and he, being inside her womb, enjoyed all these, too (Morrison, '24 Hour Psycho' Douglas Gordon Documentary).

In the seventies Gordon's mother and all of his mother's sisters, except one, abandoned the traditional protestant Church of Scotland and became Jehovah's Witnesses. Gordon cannot remember what caused the religious shift. The one aunt who did not convert to Jehovah's Witnesses had never wanted to have anything to do with any religion whatsoever. Gordon's mother took her four children to the local Jehovah's centre, Kingdom Hall, where they received spiritual and emotional education. These teachings were not always pleasant. The Jehovah practice included giving bible readings for the congregation and 'door-to-door' preaching. But he enjoyed the atmosphere of the Art Schools in Glasgow and London. He now lives and works in Berlin and Glasgow ('a friend' in *Douglas Gordon*, no p. ref.).

The recurrent themes in his work concern memory, doubling and the *Doppelgänger*.

The material he uses to express his ideas lie within reach: the religious memories of his youth, old Hollywood movies, natural elements like animals and the human body. Not only does he objectify the human body through films, he has his body decorated with tattoos and he loves to wear jewelry, too. In an interview in 2014 on the occasion of a first retrospective on 20 years of work in Australia at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in Melbourne, Gordon says:

> [This exhibition] reveals a lot about my influence from conceptual art where there really is not so much of a beginning or an ending or even a middle point, which is of course a reference to Jean Luc Godard where he says that 'every story has a beginning, a middle and an end, but not necessarily in that order…' and I wanted thát disorder here. (Sullivan, Acca interview, Douglas Gordon)

Regarding using existing material Gordon remarks that for him sampling and remixing is not a problem, as it is part of the music, film and online culture his generation has been familiar with from a young age. The installation *Pretty much every video work from about 1992 until now., 1999*, is about "kidnapping, quoting and referencing from cinema" altogether. (Sullivan, Acca interview Douglas Gordon). He comments on his work as "cross referential, [a] cross pollination aesthetic" (ibid.), which is a crucial way of working to him because he always had the desire to mix languages in order to be understood. For this purpose he prefers to use, what he calls, the "common denominators" (ibid.), such as *Psycho, The Exorcist* and *Taxi Driver*, the ones that had been forbidden territory earlier. Gordon concludes his interview by stating that it was obvious to drift towards these forbidden denominators and "actively pursue working with these images, those narratives, to get lost again" (ibid.).

The back-to-front graphic composition of Douglas Gordon's catalogue for the exhibition in Hannover at once raises confusion as to whether the book's beginning is the end or vice versa, also given the fact that there are no page numbers used either. In addition, Gordon has revealed that for the retrospective exhibition in Melbourne (2014) he intended a disorder of the displayed works in chronological and categorical terms, abiding by Jean Luc Godard's unconventional view of the narrative, that is, the causal structure in a story is not necessarily confined to a strict order of a beginning, middle and end. Gordon expresses his preference for a non-linear structure or sometimes even lack of structure not only in the way he organises his exhibitions but also in his artistic pursuits. The *24-hours-Psycho* installation (1993) gives a scattered representation of the original version, since the sound of the film - music and text - is stripped away, and with it the narrative that glues the images together. The installation radically deconstructs Hitchcock's 'Psycho' inviting the viewer to contemplate the purely aesthetic aspect of the images. Catherine Fowler remarks that:

> artists' film and videomaking has typically operated at a critical distance from the cinema; consequently, any re-use of cinema's past was carried out in a spirit of destruction of its glamour, its linearity, and its illusionism (27).

In this context Fowler recollects the conclusions drawn by Kerry Brougher's study, *Hall of Mirrors*, concerning the relationship between artists and film up to 1990. Brougher believes that there are three common themes used in art-works that reflect on cinema: firstly, "the desire to look back at moments that have now past"; secondly, "there is a sense of loss (of potential, of an ideal, and of wonder) once one does look back"; thirdly, "there is a need to break film down as if to reduce it to most fundamental component" (qtd. in Fowler, 27). According to Fowler the emphasis in Brougher's study and his supporting evidence, including

Andy Warhol's underground films and Weegee's photography in *Naked Hollywood* (1991), "was on taking apart the cinematic experience and destroying our attachment to narrative and suturing illusionism" (27). However, Fowler detects a "re-entchantment with cinema's past" and a "tendency to look back not with regret but with pleasure" (28) amid the post-1990 artists who embrace film. Furthermore, Fowler believes that these pleasurable "revisitations" testify of the vitality of cinema's past, which thus still seems "unfinished and unfixed" (28).

Douglas Gordon's installation *Between Darkness and Light (After William Blake)* fits quite well in terms of Fowler's argument. Not only does Gordon's recontextualisation result in a renewed interest in these films separately, it also sheds light on the commonly shared theme of possession of both girls, happening on the fringes of society. Besides, the average film viewer of *The Song of Bernadette* would perhaps not have interpreted Bernadette's visions as a form of possession. Most of all, however, the entire installation makes one wonder why the dyad of such opposites works out so fittingly, even so magically, an accomplishment that oddly enough distances the viewer from both films as well. Fowler qualifies the spell of Gordon's work by arguing that he has selected "memorable films" and "film moments", films "that have already been celebrated as classic and thereby assured a place in the cinematic canon" (34). Through the "large installation screens" the viewer is "overwhelmed by the greatness of such canonical moments" (Fowler, 34).

The title that credits William Blake (1757-1827) takes the viewer to an even more distant historical moment, a pre-cinematic past, although Blake was one of these artists who was able to create inseparable text-image representations. Perhaps he was a film maker 'avant la lettre; from a very early age William Blake had visions and he was convinced that Archangels guided him in making his art work through visions. He was a painter, poet,

printmaker, mystic and philosopher but his work was not appreciated and mostly neglected. He drew on the bible and mythology for his art work as he was also a deeply religious person ("William Blake" *Bio*.). In his sincerity though he rejected the orthodox doctrines of the Church of England, of any church for that matter. His parents had been dissenters which means that his "religious views were developed in an atmosphere of inspiration, exitement and revelation" (Hossick, 'William Blake'). His symbolic poetry and paintings, however, have turned out to be highly influential, even in the contemporary art world. Blake's visionary art and radical political views have appealed to the beat poets and the singer song writers who represent the counterculture of the sixties such as Bob Dylan and Allen Ginsberg. The writer of the widely treasured epic trilogy *His Dark Materials* (1995, 1997, 2000) Philip Pullman admits his lifelong adoration of and inspiration by William Blake's work and ideas, specifically by Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Pullman is also the president of The Blake Society in London.

William Blake was born in London on 28 November 1757 and died on 12 August 1827. There is a monument at Bunhill Fields in London, a former cemetry in the Borough of Islington, which is inscripted with the words 'Near by lie the remains of the poet-painter William Blake and of his wife Catherina Sophia'. The actual burial location was lost in 1965 due to the construction of a new lawn (blakesociety.org). After Blake's death Catherine was taking care of by Frederick Tatham, a fellow artist and friend, and she worked for him as a housekeeper. When Catherine died Tatham unlawfully inherited Blake's work as his legacy should have gone to Catherine's sister instead. Tatham possibly destroyed a number of Blake's manuscripts. He reprinted some of Blake's illuminated books, but maintained that the copperplates had been stolen (Gilchrist, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography).

So much as Blake's significant influence, for some he remains too enigmatic or eccentric a figure to be taken seriously. He is confined to the shadows by the art critics of *Between Darkness and Light (after William Blake)* and hence there is hardly any literature that sheds light on the relationship between Gordon's art installation and Blake's work despite his prominent presence in the title. In general, literature on Blake is commonly available and some scholars within the academic field of theology, in particular, have penned lucid papers on Blake, several of which suit the purpose of this thesis. In an insightful paper David Hiles discusses Blake's and Jung's response to the old-testamentical *Book of Job*. It is an investigation that compares the moral implications that Blake as well as Jung came upon through their respective interpretations of the *Book of Job*, the result of which gives an idea of Blake's and Jung's attitudes in life. Hiles found in both interpretations the "recognition of the *coincidentia oppositorium* as the crucial archetype of the human psyche" (2). The *Book of Job* is considered "an authentic account on human suffering" (Hiles, 2). It was written between 600 and 400 BC, and it describes Job's agony when God has put his faith to the test at the insistence of Satan who maintains that when all is taken away from Job, Job will turn his back on God. He loses everything: his possessions, children and his health. His friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar try to persuade Job to confess his sins. They believe he must have committed terrible deeds to be punished like this. However, Elihu, a younger friend, tells Job that "in questioning God's reasons, he has placed himself above God" (Hiles, 4). After Elihu's words God appears to Job in a vision, "[outlining] the nature of creation both in its glory and magnificence" (Hiles, 16). Until the end Job stays faithful to God. Satan has lost his bet, and God returns to Job even more than what was taken from him.

The *Book of Job* captures a morally complex situation. The story shows that being

good is not always rewarded, as righteousness and faith in God is not a policy to gain wealth. However more importantly, Jung argues in his *Answer to Job* that "[t]he ambivalent God-image plays a crucial part in the *Book of Job*. Job expects that God will, in a sense stand by him against God; in this we have a picture of God's tragic contradictoriness" (qtd. in Hilen, 5). According to Hilen Jung comes at an angry conclusion as Jung points out that:

> the portrayal of Yahweh is as both a persecutor and a helper in the same image and both aspects are as real as each other. Yahweh is not split but a totality of inner opposites, and this Jung identifies as the *coincidentia oppositorium*, the conjunction of opposites. … Jung proposes that this terrible tormenting image of Yahweh constitutes his moral defeat at the hands of Job, and consequently Job should be seen as standing morally higher than Yahweh (5).

Blake, on the other hand, has taken the liberty to interpret this complex book more freely, and perhaps therefore arrives at a milder and reconciliatory conclusion. He neglects in his *Illustrations to the Book of Job* the long speeches and concentrates on the concept of loss, as Blake considers this a core aspect of human suffering. According to Hiles's interpretation Blake divides the process of loss into seven stages, that is, Attachment, Loss, Denial, Abandonment, Insight, Acceptance and Return, assigning an equal amount of plates to each stage. The book consists of twenty-two plates, including one title plate. In plate eleven the confrontation with God's contradictoriness is depicted in an image of God entwined by a serpent (16). Plate fifteen represents an image of God with out-stretched arms, indicating that:

> God's creation includes everything, crucially this includes the interplay of opposites -light and dark- above and below- joy and suffering. … Job realizes

> that everything in the world has been placed for a reason. Although beyond our understanding, suffering too has its place. Suffering is necessary to being human (Hiles, 16).

Hiles disagrees with Jung's findings by proposing that if suffering is necessary for human growth, "the God archetype could not manifest itself in human consciousness in any other way. … The notion of a moral defeat, over God by Job, is really a symptom of being *stuck* in the *coincidentia oppositorium*, and not being able to move from it" (21).

The concept of the *coincidentia oppositorium* is significant in relation to Gordon's installation which visualises the fluid nature of opposites. Moreover, the opposing contents of the united films in *Between Darkness* agree with Blake's appeasing philosophy of life set out in his treatment of the *Book of Job*. The *Book of Job* and *Between Darkness* have in common that they explain and display the often incomprehensible and contradictory nature of humans. *Between Darkness* seems a contemporary version of Blake's intelligent and wise observation that embracing good as well as evil is the key to self-knowledge and therefore mitigates suffering. That is, the influence the films exert on each other has a soothing effect, which slackens Hollywood's entertainment quality but opens the door to philosophical rumination.

According to David Henderson the Latin term *coincidentia oppositorium* is often attributed to Nicolas of Cusa, though he was neither the first with this concept nor the only person to make use of it. Yet, the coincidence of opposites is "one of the three central doctrines of Cusa's thought" (Henderson, 104), and he "was the first to develop the concept systematically and to make it a lynchpin of his philosophy and theology" (Henderson, 104). Cusa (Niklas Krebs, also known as Cusanus, 1401-1464), "variously described as ... a 'transition-thinker' between the medieval and modern worlds (Frederick Copleston), and the

'gate-keeper of the modern age' (Rudolf Haubst)" (Dermot Moran, 173). Moran additionally portrays Cusa as a humanist scholar, Church reformer, papal diplomat and Catholic cardinal, who "attempted to reconcile papal and conciliar ecclesiology, Greek Eastern and Latin Western Christianity, Muslims and Christians, traditional theology and emerging mathematical science" (173). He was also an apophatic theologian which means that "his understanding of God [was] the notion that God, in his essence, is totally transcendent and unknowable. In this understanding God can only be designated by negative attributes: it is possible to say what God is not, but it is impossible to say what God is" (John Meyendorff, Encyclopædia Brittanica). David Henderson adheres to H. Lawrence Bond's view that for Cusa the coincidence of opposites is a way of existing. Bond posits that according to Cusa:

> The coincidence of opposites provides a method that resolves contradictions without violating the integrity of the contrary elements and without diminishing the reality or the force of their contradiction. It is not a question of seeing unity where there is no real contrarity, nor is it a question of forcing harmony by synthesizing resistent parties. Coincidence as a method issues from coincidence as a fact or condition of opposition that is resolved in and by infinity (qtd. in Henderson, 104).

In a study on Jung's reading of Cusa, Henderson explains Jung's "lifelong preoccupation with the coincidence of opposites" as an attempt to "understand the simultaneous appearance of apparently incompatible phenomena, events or situations" (103). Under the circumstances, the coincidence of opposites becomes "one of the fundamental organising principles in Jung's thought" (101). According to Jung's point of view "the practice of psychology [is] a kind of performance of the coincidence of opposites" (Henderson, 102). Henderson cites Dennis

McCort's remark that the "psychotherapist's office" is "a modern, underground hideout in the West" for the coincidence of opposites (McCort qtd. In Henderson, 102). I would add, nonetheless, that art, science, literature and film are places where interpretation may be various, and two contradictory things may be true at once, and as such prove to be perfect shelters for the coincidence of opposites without the connotation of mental disturbance. However, Henderson is also critical of Jung's adoptation of Cusa's coincidence of opposites, deriving that Jung has not properly understood Cusa's sophisticated notions as he spots many inconsistencies in Jung's use of Cusa's concepts. For example, Jung belittles Cusa's understanding of his own ideas, surmising that Cusa "did not have the necessary psychological concepts at his disposal" (Henderson, 105). Henderson counters that Cusa used the coincidence of opposites "not only as a theological tool, but [he] applie[d] it to all aspects of reality, including to the natural world" (105). Furthermore, Jung contends that Hell should be a part of the deity, because God is a coincidence of opposites as "the concept of an all-encompassing God must necessarily include his opposite" (Henderson, 111). Jasper Hopkins sees it differently. He elucidates Cusa's coincidence of opposites by summing up its thematic aspects. One of Cusa's tenets was that "[i]n God opposites coincide, and, yet, God is beyond the coincidence of opposites" (2). This is, I believe, is a paradox that suits *Between Darkness*, as it represents two opposing forces that nevertheless fit well together from the spectator's and artist's omniscient point of views.

For all that, with a waiting room full of patients in need Jung comes to the fore as a more pragmatic person, less scholarly than he might have seen himself, and as someone who, as Henderson puts it, "adopts and subverts historical resources to build his own theory" (113).

In passing, Henderson touches upon Jung's association of the coincidence of opposites

with alchemy, which again may be interesting and relevant in the context of *Between Darkness* because of the dreamlike quality of the installation. Jung became conscious of the history of alchemy when he began to suspect a relationship between the dreams and phantasies of his patients and the symbols of the alchemical practice (Robert A. Gilbert, Encyclopædia Brittanica). Jung gives attention to the symbol of the dog, among others, regarding which he asserts that "the ambiguity of this figure is thus stressed: it is at once bright as day and dark as night, a perfect *coincidentia oppositorium* expressing the divine nature of the self" (qtd. In Henderson, 112). Apparently, the dog commonly appears in dreams which recalls the emergence of the dog demon Pazuzu. Jung's poetic definition does not do full justice to Pazuzu's capricious reputation but it covers Pazuzu's twofold function nevertheless. The *Alchemy Electronic Dictionary* phrases the dual meaning of the dog in this fashion: "[d]ogs signify primitive matter, natural sulfur, or material gold. A dog being devoured by a wolf symbolizes the process of purifying gold using antimony."

An important symbol in the alchemical lore is the symbol of uroboros (also ouroboros) which is represented by a snake (or dragon) "with a tail in its mouth continually devouring itself and being reborn from itself. ... uroboros expresses the unity of all things, material and spritiual, which never disappear but perpetually change form in an eternal cycle of destruction and re-creation" ("Ourobouros," Encyclopædia Brittanica). Erich Neumann, a disciple of Jung, writes in addition that the uroboros:

> is the symbol of the psychic state of the beginning, of the original situation, in which man's conciousness and ego were still small and undeveloped. As symbol of the origin and of the opposites contained in it, the uroboros is the 'Great Round', in which positive and negative, male and female, elements of

> consciousness, elements hostile to consciousness, and unconscious elements are intermingled (18).

The explanation of the uroboros symbol is relevant as it represents "the united primordial parents" that procreate the figures of the Great Mother and the Great Father (Neumann, 3).

Regarding the installation *Between Darkness* I would like to consider the role of the Great Mother archetype, assuming that *Between Darkness*, which I am proposing operates as a paradigm of the *coincidentia oppositorium*, and thus chimes with the theory of the analytical psychology concerning psychic wholeness and archetypes. An archetype in analytical psychology exist as "an inward image at work in the human psyche" (Neumann, 3). The evidence of its presence is found in myths, dreams, art works, rituals, fantasies, but also in health and illness. The processes in the psyche, set in motion through the archetype, take place "both in the unconscious and between the unconscious consciousness" (Neumann, 3). In turn, these psychological processes manifest themselves in emotions, depressions, fascinations and so on (Neumann, 3).

Neumann explains that the term Great Mother stands for a combination of "emotionally colored symbols" (11). Mother is not only "a relationship of filiation but also a complex psychic situation of the ego" while Great refers to the "superiority [...] of the archetypal figure to "everything human and created nature in general" (11). Symbols "relate ... to the whole of the psychic system, therefore they "[contain] conscious and unconscious elements" (Neumann, 16). The primoridial archetype reveals itself "in the early phase of human consciousness before differentation into the particular archetypes" (Neuman, 7). The primoridial archetype configurates the Great Mother who has three different forms: "the good, the terrible, and the good-bad mother" (Neumann, 21). In a diagram Neumann shows the

interrelations between the dynamic characters of the Mother archetype. The diagram consists of two axes and four circles. Each axis has a negative and a positive pole. One axis has the Good Mother at the positive pole and is balanced at the other end of the pole by the Terrible Mother. The Good Mother is essentially characterised by "the function of *bearing* and *releasing* as basis of growth and development" while the Terrible Mother controls "the function of *holding fast, fixating* and *ensnaring*, which indicates the dangerous and deadly aspect of the Great Mother" (Neumann, 65). At the positive pole of the other axis lies the positive anima, the virgin, who counts for "the function of *giving*, differentiated into the functions of protecting, warming and nourishing" (Neumann, 66). The negative anima, the seductive witch, occupies the negative pole. She has "the function of *rejection* and *deprivation* [...] which belongs to the dark aspect of the Great Female" (Neumann, 66). The first circle in the middle represents *containing*, the second *transformation*, the third *spiritual transformation* and the fourth circle the *mysteries of vegetation, inspiration, death and drunkenness* (Neumann, 65-74). Suffice it to say that, complicated as this is, this only sketches an outline of the Mother archetype. However its concise description, the theoretical structure of the archetype might be suitably applied to Gordon's installation. Clearly, this is a hypothesis based on formal and conspicious similarities, and there could be other methods to unravel Gordon's work of art, leaving aside the conclusions the analytical psychologist would or could draw as these lay beyond the reach of this paper.

The two looped films in one frame can therefore be seen as acting as a proxy for the Great Round, the uroboros, in which opposites, such as light and dark, male and female, good and evil, happiness and sorrow, are all present. The desecrated Marian Statue converted into some malicious female deity reflects the Terrible Mother and the death mysteries, which

bring sickness, extinction, death and dismemberment. She also manifests itself in Vasiliki who devours her son Damien. The Terrible Mother is kept in check by the Good Mother, the Immaculate Conception who harbours the Fraserian vegetation mysteries performed by fruit, birth, rebirth and immortality. The negative end of the other axis could be allocated to Regan, the seductive witch, whose path leads to the mysteries of drunkenness which include ecstasy, madness, impotence and stupor. Both girls lose their identities in opposing ecstasies as the inspiration mysteries that promise wisdom, vision, and inspiration but also ecstasy lie at the other end, where the virgin Bernadette, the giving character resides. The nun Vauzous's place in the diagram changes throughout the story. At first she is cold and unforgiving but in the end she moves from a Terrible Mother to Bernadette's place, the virgin. Finally, the mothers Louise and Chris who shift from good to bad and back. Louise is a loving mother but cannot pay attention to Bernadette's needs as she is too busy to make ends meet. She was not eager to support her daughter's quest but stood by Bernadette after all. Chris is still in the process of accepting her divorce from Howard. She feels as if she has put her career before Regan's need of her father. But she is a very loving mother and her bond to Regan is close, perhaps even too close, too fixating for Regan to transform from a child into a young woman.

Conclusion

In this essay I have attempted to reveal the complexities present in *Between Darkness* through a Freudian approach regarding the separate movies, and a Jungian reading of the entire installation. It is not my intention to be disrespectful and dismiss the powerful religious experience Bernadette Soubirous underwent or the relief that thousands of people find in Lourdes. I just consider the shaping influence of family, and in particular the parents, more significant in understanding what originally happened at Lourdes, keeping in mind that religious ideas and beliefs have seeped in every pore of our culture and control our views of normality, happiness, the ethical life, and the experience of suffering. At the same time I am curious of the compensating strategies of the mind that might operate when a person is thwarted or damaged by circumstances, and how these mental conflicts come out in the open and are passed on to the next generation. When Regan's mother Chris gets disproportionally angry with her ex-husband, she shows Regan her inability to move to a next phase, a failure that changes her into an unpleasant, swearing stranger. Regan follows her mother's example when she sees her own transition to womanhood as a demonic visitor that against her will takes possession of her body. Similarly, Bernadette's fragile nature is not able to put up with the coarse conditions of poverty. Being physically and psychologically undernourished, she escapes from the demands of imminent womanhood through a vision of the ideal mother. This psychological reading stresses the sexual and social nature of the girls' possessions. Regan's language is fraught with obscenities, while it is not certain if the bleeding from her vagina is caused by the cross she uses to masturbate, but it is clearly a reference to menstruation. At the time of the apparitions Bernadette falls in love with Antoine with whom she wishes to share a normal life and raise a family. However, eventually Bernadette prefers spiritual love and

breaks off her engagement. Lynne Cooke claims that the interest in psycholigical illnesses or rather "psychic (well-) being lies at the heart of Gordon's aesthetics. Ranging across the extremes of spiritual and mental states, states which includes the psychotic and the ecstatic, the demented and the euphoric, this concern is ultimately deeply moral, not to say religious" (*Douglas Gordon*, no p. ref.). Cooke refers here to Gordon's intense religious upbringing and to the ways it has marked his work.

Cooke believes furthermore that Gordon's decision to work with icons from popular culture is based on a "start with the familiar, the well-known and the generic." From there, "he radically reframes them, revealing them afresh, while exposing aspects that had formerly been overlooked, unnoticed or disregarded" (Cooke in *Douglas Gordon*, no p. ref.). She defines Gordon's installation *Between Darkness* as the culmination of the 'double' theme, the problem of the divided self, that is, not the alternating good and bad in one person like the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde but an enactment of these qualities in one representation at the same time (Cooke in *Douglas Gordon*, no p. ref.).

A rather peculiar view of *Between Darkness* is from Philip Monk who has appropriated Jacques Derrida's philosophy in order to offer a reading of Gordon's installation. He identifies the screen in the middle of this installation as that which Derrida would call the 'hymen':

> the screen between suspends the images in the boundary of their interpenetration (neither inside nor outside each other) but disappears in their transparency to each other. … On the one hand, the hymen is merely a tissue or veil … [but on the other hand] the hymen "produces the effect of a medium (a

> medium as element enveloping both terms at once; a medium located betweenthe two terms). It is an operation that *both* sows confusion *between* opposites *and* stands *between* opposites at once (qdt. in Monk, 121).

Monk adds that it is not a coincidence that in this case the 'hymen' is a reference to marriage, the loss of virginity and hence feminine adulthood as well which reflects Regan's and Bernadette's situation (121).

In a museum context, both very popular mainstream films in their day gain a new aesthetic meaning. According to Fowler, Gordon was not the only artist in the nineties who looked back at films of the past and reframed them in a pristine, high-browed gallery space. Fowler refers to Chantal Akerman, Stan Douglas, Steve McQueen, Monica Bonvicini and many more (25). She argues that the added value of the films in the gallery context "lies in the fact that they offer a *new way* of looking backward that is alive with personal rewards, since it incorporates our personal engagement with the cinema" (27). In the gallery our understanding of the film changes because we are "not 'there' with the original footage but 'elsewhere' with the viewer" (Fowler, 27). In this way "retrospection is replaced with introspection and circumspection" (ibid.). Fowler argues that the reframed versions of the films in the art space generate a different "sense of 'the visual' and hence 'the image'" (35). Gordon's re-use of films do not change anything content-wise, but by providing a new context he alters to a certain extent the narrative experience into a visual experience (Fowley, 34). I would suggest, however, that the switch to film and the revisitations to cinema's past could also indicate a preoccupation with time, and narrative as the expression of a process in time, which itself could be part of the 1990s 'fin de siècle' spirit. The end of the millenium is a period of mixed

feelings, decay, cultural fatigue but it also features hopes for a new beginning. The narrative establishes these hopes by giving a beginning, middle and end, though not necessarily in this order as according to Godard's notion. Gordon expresses his commitment to narrative and time by subjecting the films he uses to deconstruction and fragmentation. Meanwhile, in mainstream cinema directors have likewise adopted a non-linear structure as shown in works such as Quentin Tarantino's film *Pulp Fiction* (1994), followed by Christopher Nolan's *Memento* in 2000, or Michael Gondry's *Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind* (2004). Obviously, there were many more films produced in this vein during the last two decades, but these ones have successfully and explicitly investigated the non-linear or multi-form narrative. The pre-occupation with time and narrative, where the film world merges with contemporary art, is also revealed in the remarkable film/documentary *D.I.A.L. History* (1997) by the Belgium artist Johan Gimonprez. *D.I.A.L. History* is a chronological yet coherent narrative composed of documentary television footage on skyjacked airplanes throughout the past age, beginning with a skyjacking in 1931. The film is partly voiced over by Don Delillo and undercut with passages from Don Delillo's novels *Mao II* and *White Noise*.

In the two films *The Exorcist* and *The Song of Bernadette* two young innocent girls are doubled while in the entire installation these girls double each other with no clear outcome due to their looped constructions. Since it is in the concept's very nature to be inconclusive, to exist beyond boundaries, it is difficult to come to conclusions when it concerns the double. Among other things, the double is an expression of the indivdual's self-division that wishes to re-unite with its subject, and therefore something to be viewed psychologically. However, its emergence is also a sign of opposition against a prevailing ideology, which makes it a

phenomenon related to a social context (Živković, 121). Both the films are preocccupied by questions of femininity and sexuality, but there is no allusion to procreation. Bernadette chooses the convent over her fiancé and Regan re-obtains her innocence by having no memory at all of what happened in the past period. In other words, there is no conclusion to the middle and the beginning which Gordon's installation maintains through the films' endless repetition. Perhaps that the real haunting Doppelgänger of the two girls would be a sexually mature woman who could provide the missing end of the narrative, ánd through her procreational ability a new beginning as well.

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