

“Joseph Losey’s First Four Post-Pinter Films”

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Losey's First Four Post-Pinter Literary Partnerships

Joseph Losey's flight from the Hollywood overrun by McCarthyism in the 1950s inaugurated his career in Britain. Losey's British cinema peaked in his celebrated three collaborations with Harold Pinter: *The Servant* (1963), *Accident* (1967), and *The Go-Between* (1970). In the four films that constitute the immediately subsequent period of his work, Losey's attention turned to international subjects in mostly historical and foreign settings, with international productions, though retaining mostly British actors: *The Assassination of Trotsky* (1972), *A Doll's House* (1973), *Galileo* (1975), and *The Romantic Englishwoman* (1975). After this set of films, Losey directed filmed opera and French films.

In place of Pinter, Losey worked with source material and adaptations by Henrik Ibsen, Bertolt Brecht, Tom Stoppard, Nicolas Mosley, David Mercer, and Franco Solinas. Losey's realization of *A Doll's House*, facilitated by Mercer's script, created new scenes at the outset of the play, rearranged some scenes, and excised much of the dialogue, particularly long didactic speeches in the final scene between Nora and Torvald. Losey's *Galileo* followed Charles Laughton's English version of the Brecht play, with its focus on the ambiguity of Galileo's heroism. Losey recruited Mosley for the Trotsky script. Mosley was the author of the somewhat semi-autobiographical novel that was the source for Losey's *Accident*. Losey then called in Solinas, who had collaborated on several films with Gillo Pontecorvo, principally *The Battle of Algiers*, to contribute a better understanding of Marxist thinking than Mosley could muster. Stoppard's script for *The Romantic Englishwoman* best approximates the Pinteresque dialogue of the three Losey-

Pinter films. Characters speak in short sentences. Some times just phrases. On the surface, everything said is clear and proper. But nothing important is said. Terrible tensions festering beneath the surface register silently in the pauses. Even as the dialogue repeats, the tensions remain unexpressed.

Losey's wanderings into broader cultural and historical contexts for the themes of these four films thus offer both an expansion of the timely and seemingly quintessentially Pinter themes, and a recapitulation of the film-maker's chosen transposition out of a cultural locale that he could by that time call adopted if not native home.

Gilles Deleuze's Reading of Joseph Losey

Deleuze situates Losey's cinema within the terrain of *naturalism*, which Deleuze demarcates as exaggerating realist features of a depicted milieu to surrealist effect.¹ *Originary*, other-than-realistic worldly impulses supervene upon actions that no longer are determined completely by the enveloping milieu. The distanced, other-worldliness present in the mundanely-detailed milieu removes the cathartic power of the impulses that drive characters' behavior. Though deeply ensconced in a recognizable milieu, the naturalist cinema is dependent upon neither its reliability in transmitting the world as it is, nor upon an idealized realm abstracted from that world. These impulses drive through characters' behavior, pre-existent and irreducible to anticipatable emotional states that may be available for sympathetic appraisal. Characters are animated by impulses that they can hardly be fathom. It is a realm of sub-surface turmoil, where drives originate from beyond the palpable effects of this world, with awesome vectors out of it. These impulses orient aspirations dizzyingly upwards and outwards towards unknowable

negation of all the facets of the milieu, “by the steepest slope” imaginable. Imagination becomes enlivened profoundly by these voltage charges across the gap of an inescapably determined realm and the need for transcending it.

Deleuze names Losey the third of the great naturalists of cinema, after Erich von Stroheim and Luis Buñuel.² As befitting this notion of naturalism’s separation from the seemingly realist milieux depicted, Losey’s flourishing (“American, but so slightly ...”) comes after chosen exile from a native culture, as had also been the case for Stroheim and Buñuel. Deleuze sees in Losey’s cinema a surmounting of the difficulty “to reach the purity of the impulse-image and particularly to stay there.” As a consequence of that sustained purity, the energy of the impulse remains latent, but as a furiously pulsating latent potential for violence, which engulfs a character, rendering him oblivious to its rule over and through him.

Though without mentioning these four post-Pinter films, Deleuze identifies four enduring traits of Losey’s cinema: the latent violence of the social milieu, the bogus weakling, the escapee from the milieu, and the shifting conflict of old and new milieux.³ For Losey’s own life and career, the intransigent social milieu fraught with latent violence was Hollywood. The shifting milieux will take him out of British cinema.

Losey’s productivity during this period was marked by turbulent behavior and a series of difficult relationships with those close to him and those he needed to work with. These four films were together neither financially successful nor critically acclaimed. The critical reception to a large part found the political-historical messages excessively cynical or diversionary, particularly compared to the incisive social criticism more easily detected in the Pinter collaborations. The ironic distantiation underscoring the social

farce of *The Servant* and *Accident*, however, still prevails, but now directed to atypical protagonists in the context of social milieus beyond the contemporary national setting. The resulting isolating confrontation with a failure to alter an intransigent environment poses the standpoint of the individual's despairing reflection upon purpose and meaning. That theme may well resonate with different moments in the arc of Losey's own life-story, but also with the aftermath of the collapse of radical political momentum in the 1970s. Losey thought the prospects for radical political progress were bleaker at this point in time than ever in his life time.⁴

The Latent Violence of the Indeterminate Social Milieu

The first trait that Deleuze delineates is the latent violence of the social milieu. That latent violence underlies and penetrates human behavior.⁵ The violence stems from the guardianship of the milieu to repress the impulse to break out of its constraints. The strength of the impulse to resist the oppressive milieu is proportionate to the settled repressive force in place. The intent of the impulse is to exit the milieu. The impulse often takes the form of sexual energy, but only because sexuality most easily cathects the full force of the impulse. The impulse is equally anger, greed, obstinacy, or the will to control or punish – all without contextual reason or cause.

The individuals who are driven by the impulse become victimized by their own drive to escape by the steepest ascent possible, even more than they can be victimized by the milieu they desperately want to escape. The impulse puts those who embody it on stairways, on balconies, and in lifts – looking for that ascent. Mirrors litter the milieu

where the impulse thrives. The mirrors throw the gaze into possible transcendence back into the face of the gazer. Mirrors are meant to reveal but are really traps.

Mercer's revision of the *A Doll's House* for Losey invented scenes extrapolated from the past of the story to begin the drama. Excisions of much of the dialogue situate tensions in the latent violence in the milieu. In one of the preliminary scenes, Nils' spontaneous contretemps with his co-worker exemplifies how conflict derives from the social governing strictures of honor, status and money. These forces infect civil, professional and personal relationships with antagonism, resentment, and potential for violence. These same strictures are at hand in the reversal of servility between Nils and Torvald – resulting in the release of extraordinary anger from both men. Torvald's anger resurfaces when he's convinced that Nora has jeopardized his civic standing.

In *Galileo*, the milieu is defined by the authority of church in Rome, the superiority of aristocracy in Florence, and the mercantile class' preoccupation with commerce in Venice. The calm demeanor of the Cardinals in Rome in the conduct of their debates carefully masks just how tenuous is their control over the milieu. The church's own astronomer's casual proclamation that Galileo is right shows how easily the authoritarian milieu doesn't fear official proclamations of faith contradicting truth. The Pope – who as a man is sympathetic to Galileo – is presented with Galileo's case as his attendants cloak him for high mass. Resigned though he may be to Galileo's misfortune, he becomes less likely to be tolerant with each new layer of vestments. He is finally engulfed in a haystack of ceremonial finery, the physical trappings of the ecclesiastical milieu, under the weight of which one can hardly imagine a human being capable of autonomous motion or thought.

At the beginning of *The Assassination of Trotsky*, Trotsky in voice-over declares that “a revolution takes place only when there is no other way out.” This describes the powerful inertia of the milieu. Once the revolution happens, there is no way back, and also no way forward.

The milieu of the revolution in Mexico has no need for Trotsky. The muralist paints over functional concrete walls, which obscure the barren terrain and severe poverty of the country, just as the vibrant, uplifting murals obscure the brutal measures invoked for the sake of control of the revolution. The conspirators converging before the first, failed attempt to assassinate Trotsky go about their business as if swept along in a flowing river. The action elements of the attack are suggested only synecdochally. The police later round up the conspirators. Though they are uniformed authentically, and the conspirators impersonated policemen, the political expediency is the same in both. The police roundup shows the same natural flow of the prevailing milieu. The scenes of spirited public demonstrations at the outset of the film nevertheless suggest that nothing will change that has not already changed.

Losey credits Mosley with the inclusion of the bullfight to foreshadow the assassination.⁶ The bull is taunted cruelly but the outcome is inevitable, expected, protracted, anti-climatic and cheered obligingly by the crowd. The young matador smiles dimly afterwards. He hardly seems capable of killing a ferocious animal. The killing is clumsy. The bull bleeds profusely, staggers, then finally falls, turns over and dies quietly. The world watches the ritual spectacle, not surprised by any part of it. Whispering, dissonant vocals, and muted chants of “Ole!” substitute for crowd noise as the bull agonizes.

Trotsky fights furiously against his assassin, screaming, but then becomes calm once help arrives to subdue Frank Jackson. The screaming then transfers to Jackson when Trotsky's guards tackle and pummel him. In the police interrogation room, Gita is disbelieving and subdued, and Jackson cowers. Finally Gita realizes what Jackson has done and the screaming transfers to her. Trotsky becomes quiet and contemplative. He dies quietly, like the bull. Both the resignation and the outrage are symptoms of the impulse.

Mirrors adorn nearly every wall in the Fieldings' house in *The Romantic Englishwoman*. Magritte reproductions occupy much of the remaining wall space. The mirrors expand the sense of space in the vast house, but effectively close in its occupants against their own gaze. The Magrittes offer up the same empty refractions of space. Lewis wants to know "what if?" but no one pays him any mind. Questions of alternative milieux pose no threat because they pose no real possibilities.

Lewis lights up the elegant greenhouse to illuminate the affair between Elizabeth and Thomas and thus bring them back into the household milieu – where he can hope to control them. They all act as if it were expected. They speak as if their lines were rehearsed. This dissipation of confrontation into banal speech is borne out again in their final confrontation. Looking up to where Thomas appears high above her, Elizabeth is hardly surprised that the precious briefcase presumed to house his poetry contains only blank sheets of paper. When Lewis and Elizabeth return home, they find all their friends at the party they had organized but forgotten about. The invitees held the party without the hosts, whose presence or absence would change little.

The Resentful Bogus Weakling

The second trait that Deleuze delineates is the bogus weakling. The bogus weakling belongs to the milieu, but ardently wants to flee, but cannot.⁷ The anger stemming from the suppressed impulse emerges as bursts of vicious verbal brutality that immediately subsides, often with reversion to childhood tearful remorse. The impulse overwhelms the man, but he is not able to rid himself of it. In the failure to attain transcendence, the bogus weakling becomes the most ferocious guardian of the milieu.

The bogus weaklings in *A Doll's House* are Torvald and Nils. In *Galileo*, Virginia, the Venetian merchants, the Cardinals of Rome, and all of Galileo's close followers are all bogus weaklings – with guises of civility only conveniently abating ferocious repression. Frank Jackson is an exemplary bogus weakling, nearly a parody. Lewis and Elizabeth Fielding are both bogus weaklings. Though each fantasizes escape, this will be the effect of being governed by the inexorably futile impulse to break out.

Nils and Torvald are both capable of spontaneous outbreaks of rage, which then dissipate without consequence. Torvald's grim outlook fixates on caution. Nils stewes resentfully about his disgrace. Torvald and Nils are defined by their responsibilities, against which they chafe bitterly. When he is drunk Torvald's cruelty emerges full-fledged towards Kristine. Nils rages as he explains to Nora that he would fight for his job as he would fight for his life. Torvald's deepest fear is that people will believe that his wife controls him. The superciliousness of his work looking after business is the counterpart to Nora's need to posture constant cheeriness, and also to lie to him on topics large and small.

Galileo sequesters Virginia from his thinking and discoveries, for her protection, perhaps, or perhaps because he does not imagine her otherwise. Virginia barely contains her resentment of her father for the ruin of her betrothal to Ludovico, and then copes with her fate, which is still linked with her father. She invests desperately in her faith, retreats into a religious order, and grovels for salvation. In the end she controls Galileo's activities assiduously, lest being his daughter should condemn her to perdition.

Frank Jackson poses as shy. He is hideously juvenile. He strives to be the hard man, the man chosen to kill Trotsky, but he cannot cope with his inability to assimilate his assigned role. Jackson discusses his mission with his secret contact on stairs of abandoned church. His descent from bull arena is along long narrow exposed stairs beneath the vast superstructure of the arena, as the bull is dragged out by a team of horses. Seen from above as he lies supine on boat, the canal water and all of the history of the milieu flows slowly and silently beneath him. The image of Stalin in the water emerges out of his head.⁸

The young matador is Jackson's perfect metaphor. His innocent smile after killing the bull suggests nothing more than a child's accomplishment. In his rehearsal for killing Trotsky, Jackson can hardly breathe. In the final act, once he has retrieved his weapon from his coat, he cannot turn back, however terrified he may be. He trembles, hardly able to control his limbs to deliver the blow. Jackson's absurd proclamations after the fact recall the lore of the killings of Wild Bill Hickcock and Jesse James: he did it because "they" killed his mother. "I killed Trotsky" is his answer to the police investigator's question, "who are you?"

Lewis Felding imagines syrupy scenes for featuring a character derived from Elizabeth for the movie script he's writing – lame prosaic speeches about running away for romance. He guesses her actual dialogue before she says it, or steals it after she has. The hackneyed banality of what he writes for her contrasts starkly with Stoppard's Pinteresque dialogue for Lewis' interactions with Elizabeth and the Thomas. There is thus much less in what transpires in his own marriage than he is able to capture in his own writing. He listens to Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* while Elizabeth enjoys watching Thomas read to the Fieldings' child, David. Elizabeth cites fears of having a child die as the severe responsibility of parenthood. David likes to climb out onto window ledges and play, blissfully unaware of danger. David is thus the perversely perfect child for stoking his parents' struggles with the impulse. David cheerfully chases after the football that Lewis and Elizabeth idly kick around for his entertainment while they bicker bitterly, presumptuously just out of earshot of the cavorting boy and presumptuously one-level above his comprehension. The boy's cheeriness in this scenario however better reflects not lack of comprehension but his contentment with the resentment his parents harbor for each other and their disregard for his need for both play and love.

Lewis is at home in his white-walled, cramped, claustrophobia-inducing attic study – his measured ascent up away from his milieu. He peers down from it to oversee whatever transpires outside or inside. Lewis redirects his inexplicably volatile anger with Elizabeth at her friend, Isabel. Later he will flirt with her when Elizabeth leaves with Thomas. Lewis doesn't want Elizabeth to fly, more for the sake of how that would approximate escape.

Elizabeth toys with escape, but in the end she is as much a bogus weakling as Lewis. She is coyly nervous at the Casino gaming table in Baden Baden – she doesn't belong there, even more than she doesn't believe she belongs where she came from. Elizabeth deduces Lewis slept with Catherine – perhaps wrongly, just as wrongly as Lewis has deduced that Elizabeth made love to Thomas in the hotel lift in Baden Baden. She defaces her own photographs in Lewis's study – in the manner of Salvador Dali's addition of a moustache and goatee to the *Mona Lisa*. But injecting Dada into Lewis's thoughts about her won't be noticed. She lies to Lewis because she knows he wants to believe that she's been unfaithful so as to justify his resentment. She berates and strikes Catherine for neglecting David but really jealously because she suspects Catherine has allowed Thomas to seduce her.

The Impervious Transient

The escape from the milieu is the third trait that Deleuze identifies. Those who can escape the milieu are those who are indifferent to the strictures of the milieu, enter and depart it at will, and thus also not susceptible to the impulse to smash out of it.⁹ The escapee will be ahead of the milieu's own organic evolution, but also for not belonging it nor being inhabited by it. The impervious transient walks away with ease, which would be a befuddling impossibility for the bogus weakling. Instead of conforming to the milieu, the escapee forges pathways to creativity, lyricism, and freedom. Dealings with the intricacies of the milieu engender a practical wisdom for how to persevere without becoming possessed by it.

Deleuze notes that the escapee is usually a woman, as will be exemplified by Nora.¹⁰ But Galileo and Trotsky fit this mold, as does the poet-gigolo, Thomas, though ironically. Nora says that she must rush, fly in first scene, the first of three appended to the beginning of the film. What gives her the potential for escape is thus established in the Losey realization as prior to marrying Torvald. The dream she explains to Kristine envisions a creative flight. Her monetary machinations are creative and secretive. She keeps her plans secret from Torvald. Nora uses money creatively, intentionally, just as she believes the law should reflect the creative morality of the sincere, benevolent intention. She withholds information or deceives as necessary – and without any tinge of remorse. Torvald ultimately cannot match her cleverness, nor her skill in coping. Even as she confronts him in the last scene, searching dispassionately for a ground of reconciliation, it's doubtful that she has ever not understood that disparity.

Nora and Kristine master many trains of involvement simultaneously, in contrast to the single-mindedness of Torvald and Nils. Kristine is much more at ease with her plight than the text would or other realizations and stagings of the play would suggest. That she suffered no grief with the loss of her husband she delivers with a contented smile. Kristine carries aspirations strong enough to dissipate Nils' apprehensions and anger. She plots her escape gracefully and pragmatically.

Jane Fonda's constant bouncy dance in movements and speech climaxes in the Tarantella. It is not her impropriety but the audacity of Nora's assertive, exuberant verve in her dance that outrages Torvald. This is the most important of a series of turning points for Fonda's Nora. The drop in Nora's tone in the final scene is already prepared in the pivotal irreversible transformation of the dance.

Galileo's energetic intellectual work seems like play. He exults in the very advent of reason, curiosity and empiricism. These are his means of escape, but which are misperceived as insolent, heroic challenge by his detractors and admirers respectively. His glorious deductions that the moon doesn't glow on its own, that Jupiter has revolving moons, that the sun rotates, and that earth is a planet – all abolish the mythical vision of the heavens. All of this delights him for the sake of the *reasoning* it requires. He is indifferent to the milieu, which he strives to understand no more than is practically needed. He retreats into silence and laughter as defenses against persecution and fear.

Trotsky is caught in a side-track of history. He is no longer relevant, set aside to re-hash events 18 years past. Trotsky lectures to a recording machine, and plays it back. The playbacks are constant, and no one pays attention, not even Trotsky. It continues during the birthday party, and while he strolls pensively around the fortified courtyard. The camera revolves around table where his secretary takes his dictation, with a radius slightly longer than at arm's length. That circle will capture how far these sayings will reach out to impact the world. As Natasha opens his study windows during his reflections about his mortality, his dictation turns impressionistic, and then elegiac towards Natasha. But he delivers even these personal notes in the same declamatory tone as his proclamations about the current state of the world. Trotsky likens himself to Lincoln, but he will have been the catalyst for so much less than what he aspired to, though sharing with Lincoln having been the center of epic revolutionary warfare and ultimately pointlessly assassinated after the turning point critical to world history has passed.

Thomas is a shameless moocher. He steals opportunistically. He sees it as fair. He isn't liberated since his character shows no trace of the milieu's influence. He can be Elizabeth's liberator because he has practical wisdom in how to operate in the milieu. His clever traversal of it comprises his poetry – but he joyless and soulless. Catherine and Thomas create their assignation secretly without Lewis and Elizabeth knowing – sharing silent, deft signals that Lewis and Elizabeth miss because they miss the complexity of their own household. Elizabeth wants to domesticate Thomas, Lewis wants to subjugate him. The view of the three of them in the convex mirror shows how their reciprocal servility quickly inverts.

Shifting Milieux

The fourth trait identified by Deleuze is the world of shifting milieux.¹¹ Natural terrain is indistinguishable from transformed terrain. Architectural space folds into Piranesi-like vertical and horizontal labyrinths of turns and ascents that lack the full view that might grant them either ostensible beauty or simple function. Natural sounds, sounds of traditional life, and the noise of the modern world of motors, appliances, and jet engines pepper the soundtrack. The noise is all equally abrasive, and no one seems to hear it. Signs of the morbid decay of the old milieu, which is far from dead, and hints of the vision of the new, which is far from being born, play against each other in the imagery – creating vertiginous contrasts.¹²

The open fields in the Norwegian town – the ice skating pond, wide snow-covered streets, hills where children sled, bridges over the river – all comprise the open possibilities firmly in control of the milieu. Though the action takes place in late

December, there is blinding white light outside, even when the sky is dark. There is similar light inside, even at night. Clock chimes, door bells, sleigh bells punctuate the soundtrack randomly.

Nils discovers Nora hiding under the table, which places her in the fissure between her present world – playing with her children – and the one she will be propelled into. She places herself at spatial junctures in the house where she can see and interact with different people simultaneously, who are unseen to each other. Mirrors decorate every room. She addresses her private disquisitions to herself into the mirror, which thus serves her differently than it does the bogus weakling. She plots out the timing of events in the last day in her house this way.

Losey's slowly-creeping tracking camera follows in on people where they have trapped themselves. One important step in Nora's escape occurs when she leaves Rank's sleigh and with that step also that part of her life that Rank oversaw, and thereby kept her where she was, in habiting Torvald's house and domain. Before she makes her way atop the sledding hill where Nils will see her and confront her, Losey's camera tracks in and around while zooming out – creating a spatial warp similar to a moment in *Accident*, where he had accomplished the reverse effect, also with cinematographer Gerry Fisher.¹³

Opulent pastels in geometric compositions in the ecclesiastical and temporal architectures contrast to Galileo's disorganized, earth-toned work areas. The intellectual terrain that Galileo can see through the telescope is the milieu that is centuries from being born. It is far from the world that the church, aristocracy, and mercantile classes control. Not knowing how to place value and redemption in the new is what terrifies people still spiritually dependent upon the old milieu. Faith has cogency only if it entails what is

palpably absurd and contrary to simple empirical truths. Challenging this absurdity is taken as challenge to moral authority, which Galileo had never imagined he wanted. Embellished shadows against white sheets in the theatrical setting of the abjuration scene amplify the historical significance of Virginia, Andrea and Galileo's small entourage as they debate whether he will recant. That projected significance resonates beyond their own cognizance.

The open spaces of parades in streets of Mexico City, the river, the courtyard of the compound all portray static realms of danger. Canal boats float aimlessly in the slowly flowing canal, which underscores the impossibility of dramatic change. The political struggle ossifies into rituals as regimented as those of the bullfight arena.

We first see Elizabeth mirrored against the vertiginous forested terrain she views from the train window. The immense depth of terrifying possibilities shows in the morose recognition in Elizabeth's face. It remains ever unclear whose fantasy it is – Lewis' or Elizabeth's – about the episode in the hotel lift. Guilt and suspicion as well as delight and excitement that either may harbor in the fantasy are the same regardless whether it happened or not. Shadows in the doorways, figures in mirrors – there is more complexity to the household than Lewis or Elizabeth can fathom. Ambulance noises evoke Elizabeth's ambivalent anticipations of tragedy. Airplane noise at Fielding house, traffic noise, dogs barking, noise in the car – these are tacit reminders of the unconnected frayed strands of the fabric of the milieu. It is the easy presumption that one's world wraps around seamlessly – but it doesn't, and these noises are the signs that it does not. Lewis's disruption by household appliances vibrating up into his writer's loft anticipates his argument with Elizabeth about the moment in the lift.

Loseyeen Becoming

Deleuze warns that Losey's characters will defy coherent psychological profiles. One should add that detailed political, social and economic explanations of the nature of the milieu are also elusive. Losey's intent rather is the logic of the impulse. The logic or explanation of the milieu he leaves untouched – an assignment for a different kind of film, or a different kind of intellectual endeavor entirely. One can capture enough of the origins of alienation just by trapping its human impact, thus made available for scrutiny in no more detailed context than is needed to see it in force. Nora's exuberance has an origin more primary to her character than her devotion to Torvald. Galileo abstains from the need to demonstrate heroism. Trotsky abhors his fate but finds his place in the arena without regret.¹⁴ Thomas suffers neither guilt nor shame, not even when arrested. But, except for circumstances, there isn't much to differentiate Thomas from Frank Jackson.¹⁵ There isn't any normative basis for sorting out these characters and their choices, nor any deliberate optimistic or pessimistic view of the human predicament. The complexity of the response to the constraints imposed by the milieu layer motivations and introspections obscurely.

From this vantage point, the milieux and their shifting conflict amounts to an ontology of the world as constantly stimulating the impulse to break out of it. The particular accomplishment of these four post-Pinter collaborations lies in the expansion of those worlds of conflict beyond the model of British class society into a variety diverse enough to adumbrate undifferentiated conditions for human existence.

The dissociation of the Loseyan naturalized milieu from a context of social causality renders the alienation evident in the impulse devoid of social-theoretical explication. Exactly as the impulse-image dangles without cathecting sympathetic response, any political implications that might derive from the abject suffering and dissolute behavior of impulse-stricken characters will fail to register connection, much less cogency. The relevance of original causation of the tensions of the milieu is blocked off from comprehension, and the suffering of the impulse-stricken is thus rendered clinically distanced – abstract, invented variations of known forms of alienation with their associated theoretically identified evils, yet here without the evils to abjure or hate. Losey fleshes out varieties of Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* simultaneously with the sustaining of the purity and variety of the impulse-image, just as these varieties map out corresponding varieties of Marxian *Entfremdung* that no longer derive from the unequal exchange of wages for labor-power.¹⁶

The intolerable suffering of the bogus weakling, taunted by the nearness of the transient impervious to the strictures and sufferings of the intransigent milieu fosters a striving for rapturous release – the transcendent ascent by the steepest possible slope of escape. But this will be a hoped-for transcendence without *becoming* different from belonging to the milieu. The idealized transcendence is thus figured by the milieu that inspires it. Just as Losey removes the ground whereby we might identify and comprehend real purposes in transcendence so figured, his naturalism orients comprehension along the diametrically opposed vector – towards becoming that is undetermined by the particularities of a milieu.

Whereas Deleuze had associated the bogus weakling with male characters and the impervious transients with women, this division no longer holds for the four films Losey completed during the period of his loosening situation in British culture. Reading the text carefully, Deleuze's associations are clearly inductive generalizations and not predicated upon gender differences within Losey's cinema or *per se*. Thus, in keeping with growing Scholarly explication of Deleuze's own notion of *becoming* as necessarily released from the determinate structures of class, gender, colonialism, modernism, the Other, the Oedipal, etc., one finds elucidation of that broader consideration in these Loseyean ontological imagination-experiments of the early 1970s.¹⁷ Just as much as theory of the imaginary will fail us if thought necessarily as blended to contain all the right ingredients of perceived difference, so Losey projects, melancholy scenarios notwithstanding, probings of open-ended becoming.

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¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 122-125.

² Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, 136.

³ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, 136-140.

⁴ Richard Combs, "The Country of the Past Revisited: Losey, Galileo, and the Romantic Englishwoman," *Sight and Sound* 44:3 (Summer, 1975), 141.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 136-137.

⁶ Michel Ciment, *Conversations with Losey* (London: Methuen, 1985), 324.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 137-138.

⁸ Richard Combs, "The Country of the Past Revisited: Losey, Galileo, and the Romantic Englishwoman," *Sight and Sound* 44:3 (Summer, 1975), 141.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 138-139.

¹⁰ Deleuze mentions Freya Neilson (Viveca Lindfors), the sculptress, in *The Damned* (1963), Eve Olivier (Jeanne Moreau) in *Eve* (1962), and Frédérique (Isabelle Huppert) in *La Truite* (1982). Vera (Sarah Miles) in *The Servant* (1963), Anna (Jacqueline Sassard) in *Accident* (1967), and Marian (Julie Christie) in *The Go-Between* (1970) also fit this observation perfectly.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 139-140.

¹² Losey describes the recurrent theme of "the invasion of one kind of life by another" as essentially Hegelian. Michel Ciment, *Conversations with Losey* (London: Methuen, 1985), 322-323.

¹³ The combinatorial zooming-in while tracking-back occurs at the end of Stephen and Anna's country walk, where they stop at a rail fence, their hands resting close but not touching on the top rail, and the countryside effectively having collapsed in upon them – as if the tension of Stephen's suppressed infatuation and Anna's languid reciprocity were palpable to the land itself. It is a moment that singularly epitomizes what Deleuze borrows from Jena Genêt in identifying the essential mark of Losey's naturalism: "the extraordinary violence which can be contained in a motionless hand at rest." Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, 136.

¹⁴ Michel Ciment, *Conversations with Losey* (London: Methuen, 1985), 323, 339.

¹⁵ Richard Combs, "The Country of the Past Revisited: Losey, Galileo, and *The Romantic Englishwoman*," *Sight and Sound* 44:3 (Summer, 1975), 141.

¹⁶ See Frederic Jameson, *Brecht and Method* (London: Verso, 1998), 35-88.

¹⁷ See Paola Marrati, "Time and Affects: Deleuze on Gender and Sexual Difference," *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 21, no. 51 (November 2006), 313-325; Claire Colebrook, "Is Sexual Difference a Problem?" In *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, edited by Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Series, 2000), 110-127; and Rosi Braidotti, "Teratologies" in *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, 156-172.