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**RELIGION AS AESTHETIC SENSIBILITY
IN THE ARABIC AND RUSSIAN NOVEL:
NAGUIB MAHFOUZ, TOLSTOY AND
DOSTOEVSKY**

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Before a discussion on the topic of 'religious feeling' can begin, three concepts have to be clearly distinguished. They are: religion, belief and faith. Taken in their generic dictionary meaning, these three concepts appear to be synonymous. However, in this analysis, I am not interested in the general, dictionary-entry meanings of 'religion', 'belief' and 'faith' but in their much more specific usage and meanings within certain well-defined discourses. For these contexts I draw on three discourses:

First, Lev Tolstoy's modernist aesthetic manifesto, "What is art?" (1889) in which 'religious feeling' is associated with a new aesthetics of popular culture, general intelligibility and infectiousness of the work of art. I shall frame Tolstoy's manifesto with Walter Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" and the model of mass culture as a secular subversion of the originary *aura* of the authentic work of art.

Second, the concept of 'belief' is constitutive of the structure of meaning in Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatist philosophy of signs. Peirce's definition of 'belief' as 'habit' that leads to the resolution of doubt and the formation of 'opinion' (or meaning) as 'interpretation' will ground my critique of the Modernist model of representation that is grounded in the phenomenology of the 'gaze.' It will be the basis for my construction of a model of Modernist aesthetics in which religious feeling figures as sensibility through which it is distinct from archaic structures of religious belief as a metaphysics of origins.

For the concept of faith I draw on Mircea Eliade's anthropology. In his analysis of religious belief, Eliade raises the concept of 'faith' into an index of modern as opposed to archaic man. 'Faith,' according to Eliade, points to a new relationship between God and Man, as initiated by Abraham in his unquestioning willingness to sacrifice his late-born son, Isaac, to God's demand. According to Eliade, Abraham's unquestioning 'faith' in God transcends "the economy of the sacred" of "archaic theophanies that were concerned only with the circulation of sacred energy in the cosmos (from the divinity to man and nature, then from man – through sacrifice – back to the divinity and so on)." (Eliade: *The Myth of Eternal return: Or, Cosmos and History*. Bollinger Series XLVI, Princeton UP, [originally in French, 1949], 1991, p. 110.)

Eliade's differentiation between archaic ritual and the more modern concept of 'faith' is worth pursuing because it shows up clearly the distinctive meaning that the concept of 'religious belief' or 'religious feeling' acquires in Modernity. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how this modern inflection of the concept of 'religious belief' or 'religious feeling' impinges upon the aesthetics of the novel of Modernity that grounds both the Russian novels of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and Naguib Mahfouz's modern Egyptian novel. Demonstrating that the fictional heroes of both the Russian and the Egyptian novel experience 'religious feelings' as modern sensibility rather than an archaic cosmogony of the sacred or an "original ontology" will have implications for the question of the relationship between contemporary Islamic culture and European culture. It will also illuminate the vexed question of the alleged "Christian beliefs" of the two Russian writers, who since the Russian religious revivals during Russian Modernism, have been appropriated for the so-called Christian tradition. In the 1990s, this trend has been resurrected by Russia's post-communists: Tolstoy, but even more so Dostoevsky, is

being appropriated by Russia's right-wing nationalist ideology which is closely affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church.

According to Eliade, the concept of 'faith' hinges on the discovery of history as a linear sequence of events that, in the archaic world of myth and ritual, were perceived "outside time", in "mythical time" or at the "extratemporal instant of the beginning" (pg.4, pg.105). In the life of archaic man, human acts had meaning in as much as they reproduced "a primordial act" or repeated " a primordial example." (pg.4) Thus: "Nutrition is not a simple physiological operation; it renews a communion. Marriage and collective orgy echo mythical prototypes; they are repeated because they were consecrated in the beginning ("in those days," *in illo tempore, ab origine*) by gods, ancestors, or heroes." (pg. 4) Thus *repetition* figures in the structure of meaning in the world of the 'primitive,' archaic man, just as it does in the world of poststructuralism. However, by contrast with the *trace* without origins that is *always already* self-erasure in the act of its own constitution, the repetition of the primitive's ritual act is repetition of an act that has been "previously posited and lived by someone else, some other being who was not a man."(pg.5) In the world of archaic man, the "conscious repetition of given paradigmatic gestures reveal an original ontology. The crude product of nature, the object fashioned by the industry of man, acquire their reality, their identity, only to the extent of their participation in a transcendent reality." (pg. 5) Thus

"in the general behaviour of archaic man...., neither objects of the external world nor human acts, properly speaking, have any autonomous intrinsic value. Objects or acts acquire a value, and in so doing become real, because they participate, after one fashion or another, in a reality that transcends them. Among countless stones, one stone becomes sacred – and hence instantly becomes saturated with being – because it constitutes a hierophany, or possesses mana, or again because it commemorates a mythical act, and so on. The object appears as the receptacle of an exterior force that differentiates it from its milieu and gives it meaning and value. (...) a rock reveals itself to be sacred because its very existence is a hierophany: incompressible, invulnerable, it is that which man is not. It resists time; its reality is coupled with perennality. (...) it will be raised to the rank of 'precious,' that is, impregnated with a magical or religious power...Other stones will be sacred because they are the dwelling place of the souls of ancestors (India, Indonesia), or because they were once the scene of a theophany (as the *bethel* that served Jacob for a bed), or because a sacrifice or an oath has consecrated them." (pg.4)

Within the horizon of "archaic spirituality," the metaphysics of the sacred as ritual repetition of a mythical originary act dominates the concept of 'reality' or 'meaning.' The transcendent reality of "celestial archetypes" confers meaning to human acts and the human milieu through "imitation" of these archetypes (in ritual gesture and repetition). 'Reality' is conferred on man-made objects through their participation in the "symbolism of the Centre": "cities, temples, houses become real by the fact of being assimilated to the 'centre of the world.'" (pg. 5)

The *center* is the zone of the sacred, the zone of “**absolute reality.**” (pg. 17) The road leading to the center is a ‘difficult road’ (pg. 18) because it represents a “rite of passage from the profane to the sacred.” The difficult road is reflected in “the convolutions of a temple,” “pilgrimage to sacred places (Mecca, Hardwar, Jerusalem), “dangerous heroic expeditions (the quest for the Golden Fleece, the Golden Apples, the Herb of Life);” “wanderings in labyrinths.” (pg. 18) Creation itself “took place from a center”, marking the passage from “the non-manifest to the manifest”, from “chaos to cosmos”. (For Christians, Golgotha was at the center of the world, being the summit of the cosmic mountain and also the place where Adam was created and buried. The blood of the Saviour falls on Adam’s skull, at the foot of the Cross, and redeems him. According to Islamic tradition, the highest point on earth is the Kaaba because the “polestar proves that ...it lies over against the center of heaven.” Pg. 15) This cosmology of the Center is reflected in the symbolism of sacred cities and in geometric theories on the construction of towns.

Imitation of divine archetypes, through ritual and repetition, through rites of passages such as pilgrimages, through the building of sacred temples and profane houses, determines all spheres of human activity. These include human justice, manifest as “law” that has its “transcendent model in the cosmic norms (*tao, artha, rta, tzedek, themis*), and human art forms. According to archaic aesthetics, “works of human art are imitations of those of divine art” (Ananda K Coomaraswamy, 1938, quoted by Eliade, pg. 32) The state of *beatitudo* or happiness (*eudamonia*) is an imitation of the divine condition (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1178b, 21)(pg.32). So are the various forms of *enthousiasmos* – states of soul created by repetition of acts of the gods in mythical time (Dionysiac orgies etc).

Passing over now from this model of archaic spirituality and aesthetics to the Arab and Russian novels under consideration, it is possible to observe in the works of all three authors traces of archaic “paradigmatic gestures” (Eliade, pg. 32) as well as ‘traditional’ religious schemas of worship or behavior. However, only with certain characters in Mahfouz’s novels, notably in *Palace Walk* and *Palace of Desire*, are such portraits mimetic or drawn in the spirit of a Realist poetics of representing the observed manner and mores of a society in a particular moment in history. In the Russian novels, religious gestures and schemas are stylizations: they are representations anticipating the spirit of an ‘Ornamentalist poetics’ that is calculated to “make things strange” or “defamiliarize” familiar objects. The two Russian authors, mistakenly interpreted as ‘psychological Realists,’ are in fact proto-Modernists to whom all the major and minor Russian and European Modernists (Gide amongst the latter) return as progenitors of the phenomenology of *alienation*, modeled through an aesthetics of sensibility as *jouissance* and the *gaze*.

The representation of the world through the agency of a ‘sensible’ *gaze* is possibly the most salient distinctive feature of the cultural paradigm we, together with Baudelaire, identify as *modernity*. The combination of the faculties of imagination, reason, sensibility and the quality of childish curiosity or *naivete* constitute Baudelaire’s artist of modernity par excellence – Constantin Guys (1802-92). In an essay on Guys,

entitled “The Painter of Modern Life” (written in 1859-60), Baudelaire constructs a poetics of the ‘sketch of manners’ that was the grounding genre of 19th century Realism in both literature and painting. (The Russian version of the sketch of manners was the “physiological sketch” depicting all classes of Russian 19th society through their ‘typical’ – that is – historical features.) It is through the ‘artist of manners’ – Guys, the painter of modern life – that Baudelaire arrives at his definition of modernity. The artist of modernity is “observer, philosopher, *flâneur* – “call him what you will; but whatever words you use in trying to define this kind of artist, you will certainly be led to bestow on him some adjective which you could not apply to the painter of eternal, or at least more lasting things, of heroic or religious subjects (...) **he is the painter of the passing moment and of all the suggestions of eternity that it contains.**” (Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*. Trans & edited by Jonathan Mayne. Phaidon Press, London, 1964, pg. 4-5).

Baudelaire’s formula of modernity is thus the passing moment of history, of the epoch. Modernity is to do with the phenomenology of *epoche* - fashions, manners, mores of the city, the country, the province – but mainly the city with its bourgeoisie. That is why the French Realist manifesto of 1840, which included ‘sketches’ by Balzac, is entitled *Les français peints par eux-mêmes* and features dagherrotype illustrations not dissimilar to Guys’ paintings of modern city life. Following the same aesthetic principles, the Russians published their manifesto of Realism the following year (1841), calling it *Russians portrayed from nature by other Russians (Russkie spisannye s natury russkimi)*. The word ‘nature’ is a malapropism in this context, as is the name which the Russian writers of ‘physiological sketches’ (Dostoevsky included among them) gave to their Realist trend: “the natural school” (*natural’naya shkola*). As Baudelaire points out, the painter of modern life does not paint from ‘nature’¹ but from the ‘imagination’ and through the agency of sensibility and the gaze. The painter of modern life is “a man of the world”. His element is the world of the city, of passing phenomena, of social ephemera. The editors of *Les français peints par eux memes* evoke a similar artists/writer who is a ‘borrower’ from society (*emprunteur*), who then gives back to society through his recording of the way that society behaved, what that society thought, how its members dressed, what they believed, even what they ate. The writer in *Les français* comes close to being a ‘local historian’ or, in Foucault’s sense, an *archeologist*. Baudelaire’s artists/painter of modern life, Constantin Guys, is also such an archeologist. He is, in

¹ In another essay on art, which is part of Baudelaire’s « Salon » series, entitled *The Salon of 1859 : Letters to the Editor of the Revue Francaise*, published in four installments between 10th June – 20th July 1859, Baudelaire attacked the ideologues of a reductionist Realism who demanded that art be a ‘copy of nature’ : « In recent years we have heard it said in a thousand different ways, ‘Copy nature ; only copy nature. There is no greater delight, no finer triumph than an excellent copy of nature.’ And this doctrine (the enemy of art) was alleged to apply not only to painting but to all the arts, even to the novel and to poetry. To these doctrinaires, who were so completely satisfied by Nature, a man of imagination would certainly have had the right to reply : ‘...Nature is ugly, and I prefer the monsters of my fancy to what is positively trivial.’ And yet it would have been more philosophical to ask the doctrinaires in question first of all whether they were quite certain of the existence of external nature, or ...whether they were quite certain of knowing *all nature*, that is, all that is contained in nature. A ‘yes’ would have been the most boastful and extravagant of answers...these pedants...let us simply believe that they meant to say, ‘We have no imagination, and we decree that no one else is to have any.’ (pg.231-2, Charles Baudelaire, *The Mirror of Art*. Trans & ed by Jonathan Mayne. Phaidon Press, london, 1955).

Baudelaire's words, "a pictorial moralist, like La Bruyère" (pg 9), who is evoked by the editors of *Les français* as the 18th century progenitor of the sketch of manners who taught the subsequent generation of writers how to *see* the city (as opposed to the *court*) with its manners and mores.

The painter of modern life – the artist who seeks out "this quality which (Baudelaire says) you must allow me to call 'modernity' - ...makes it his business to extract from fashion whatever element it may contain of poetry within history, to distill the eternal from the transitory." (12) Baudelaire's 'painter of modern life', Guys, does his 'extracting' and 'distilling' in the manner of a child, who "sees everything in a state of newness; he is always *drunk*." (8) His inspiration "has something in common with convulsion" and "every sublime thought is accompanied by a more or less violent nervous shock which has its repercussions in the very core of the brain." This man of genius, who looks at the world around him with insatiable *curiosity* and *sees* the world like a child, with whom "*Sensibility* is almost the whole being" (8), is also a man of Reason. Thus he is "equipped for self-expression with manhood's capacities and powers of analysis which enable it to order the mass of raw material which it has involuntarily accumulated. It is by this deep and joyful curiosity that we may explain the fixed and animally ecstatic gaze of a child confronted with something new, whatever it be, whether a face or a landscape, gilding, colors, shimmering stuffs, or the magic of physical beauty assisted by cosmetic art." (8)

Baudelaire's 'painter of modern life' is reproduced, with an uncanny resemblance to Constantin Guys, by Tolstoy in the artist Mikhailov – a secondary character in the novel *AnnaKarenina* (1872-8), who lives in Italy as a Russian expatriate and who is commissioned by Vronsky, Anna's de facto husband, to paint Anna's portrait. It is almost certain that Tolstoy knew Guys' work. Not only did Tolstoy read English and subscribe to English periodicals and newspapers, in which Guys' sketches appeared. Guys also traveled in the Crimea during the Crimean War of the 1850s, from where he sent painted sketches back to France and England. At the same time, Tolstoy was an officer in the Russian army on active service in the Crimea, writing sketches about the war and sending them from the front back to a St Petersburg journal, whose editor serialised them under the title *Sketches of Sebastopol*. Thus, like Guys, Tolstoy acted as a kind of self-appointed war correspondent. These sketches were Tolstoy's *debut* on the Russian literary scene.

Like Baudelaire's 'painter of modern life,' Guys, Tolstoy's portrait painter Mikhailov is a self-taught craftsman, who paints from imagination and whose technique – *techne* - is an inalienable part of the 'content' of his paintings. The method of painting 'modern life' from imagination is described by Baudelaire as "barbarous." Guys, a late starter according to Baudelaire (who was mistaken about this), "drew like a barbarian, or a child, impatient at the clumsiness of his fingers and the disobedience of his pen. I have seen a large number of these primitive scribbles..." , says Baudelaire.

Mastery in this kind of *impressionistic painting* is not a matter of copying old models, or of an education acquired through the Academy. Baudelaire's painter of

modern life, Guys, is almost uneducated in the classical sense. He learns his 'trade' by trial and error, by 'tinkering.' He is almost like Derrida's *bricoleur*. ("Today, after discovering by himself [without the Academy of Art – MV-G] all the little tricks of his trade and accomplishing, without advice, his own education, Monsieur G. [who does not sign his work and who is accorded the same courtesy by B. who refers to him only by his initial – MV-G] has become a powerful master in his own way..." (6))

Tolstoy's Mikhailov is similarly uneducated. That is, he does not follow established models. He creates the world anew, by always seeking out the *limit* of the possible. Mikhailov is a painter of the limit.

Like Baudelaire's 'painter of modern life,' Guys, and Tolstoy's fictional painter of *the limit*, the Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz has virtually no academic models in Egyptian literature on which to base his narrative technique. Despite a short tradition of the Arab novel in the late 19th—early 20th century, Mahfouz is obliged to find new forms of expression for his observations of contemporary Egyptian life. This he does by reading and assimilating Russian and French literature (Balzac, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Proust). Research on Mahfouz is extensive but not exhaustive. Hence there are no substantial studies on Mahfouz's contacts with Western (French) literature or on how extensive his knowledge of this literature was. Thus it is not possible for me to say at this moment in my study of Mahfouz whether or not he knew Baudelaire's essay on Guys. However, this is not even that material. Whether he was or was not familiar with Baudelaire's model of modernity and the painter of modernity, Guys, Mahfouz became such a painter himself—in the verbal, not visual medium. In *The Cairo Trilogy*, he painted modern Egyptian life, starting with the period of WWI and continuing across three generations of a middle class merchant family to WWII and the makings of the socialist-communist revolution that created Nasser's Egypt. Mahfouz's chronicle of this period of modern Egyptian history is created through a series of family portraits. This narrative form is reminiscent of the techniques of Tolstoy in *War and Peace*. The family portraits are made real and convincing in that they are always constructed from a personal point of view, as an eye witness account of another character. Each portrait is a picture constructed through the gaze of an 'other.' Tolstoy uses this technique in the major novels, notably *Anna Karenina*. In the framework of this phenomenological poetics of the gaze, each individual portrait becomes an impressionistic account or sketch drawn by another character. This narrative technique is complemented by copious use of inner monologues that attempt to emulate Dostoevsky's dramatic monologues. However, Mahfouz does not quite manage the technique of free indirect speech or 'erlebte Rede' that is a feature of Dostoevsky's portrayal of 'demons' and 'doubles,' representing the split self-reflexive modern subject. Mahfouz's world knows no psychopathology of subjectivity. The 'split' experienced by the generation of sons and grandsons of Al-Sayid Ahmad, the merchant-patriarch and head of the family, is the split with tradition and the patriarchal order. Mahfouz's characters are generally not split with themselves. The unconscious plays almost no part in these sketches or family portraits. This is reflected also in the virtual absence of leit-motifs, metaphors, figurative meanings or allegorisation on the level of the abstract author of the narrative work. Metaphor is reduced to similes and comparisons that have a folksy ring and are couched in a turn-of-phrase that produces a type of folk-wisdom in place of modern aphorism.

In the framework of his restricted adaptation of the poetics of the sophisticated Russian and French Realist novel, Mahfouz nevertheless constructs a world of characters who are not moving in an archaic cosmogony of the sacred or who are partial to an “original ontology.” Although ritual references to Allah and frequent quotations from the Quran accompany all individual utterances in Mahfouz’s novel, these in themselves do not structure a world of “archaic man.” Nor does the “conscious repetition of given paradigmatic gestures (such as regular morning prayers or ritual cleansing under a cold shower) signify “participation in a transcendent reality.” All such ritual gestures, sketched by the ‘painter of modern Egyptian life,’ Mahfouz, have the value of pure repetition that upholds a traditional social order which doubles up as the symbolic order of the major characters. Thus the patriarch’s imposition of a strict set of near-despotic rules on his wife, daughters and sons, is emptied of archaic religious significance by virtue of Al-Sayid Ahmad’s abandon to the pleasure principle, and to the *excess* and a ‘two-dimensional’ *jouissance* of music, wine and women outside the hierarchy of the family. Under the gaze of the fictional narrator who becomes omniscient in order to train his lens on this ‘god’ of the traditional Cairo family (for no one can be an eye witness observer of God), Al-Sayid’s religious being is revealed.

In a confrontation between the religious man, Shaykh Mutawalli, and Al-Sayyid Ahmad Abd al-Jawad, Mahfouz demonstrates the split nature of his main character’s religious beliefs. Catechised by the religious man about his libertine ways with wine, women and song, Al-Sayyid has a long inner monologue in his own defense:

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What emerges from this self-defense of his ‘faith’ is a modern libertine (sladostrastnik – lecher/sensualist) like Dostoevsky’s Fyodor Karamazov, minus Karamazov’s self-parodying European learning that constitutes Dostoevsky’s character as the embodiment of cultural intertextuality and citationality. Al-Sayyid is all pleasure principle that remains in the economy of need and satisfaction, not demand and desire; “...he opened his breast to the joys and pleasures of life. He delighted in fancy food. He was enchanted by vintage wine. He was crazy about a pretty face. (...) At no time in his life had he felt estranged from God nor a target for his vengeance. He communed peacefully with Him. Was he two separate people combined into one personality? Was his faith in the divine magnanimity so strong that he could not believe these pleasures really had been forbidden? Even if they were forbidden, should they not be excused so long as no one was harmed?” What troubles Al-Sayyid more than the thought of his transgressions is the thought of thought itself: “Thought...was a burden and revealed how trivial his knowledge of his religion was.” (43/I) Al-Sayyid’s religious piety is of the nature of ritual repetition. He is, indeed, two people instead of one. However, instead of a modern subject, whose ‘split’ is the unconscious as logos and the symbolic order as linearised meaning or infinite semiosis, this modern Egyptian bourgeois is split between two archaic modes of religious belief. One schema is the “mythical” which is “outside time” and which invests his ritual religious observances with moral authority to the exclusion of a personal moral agency. The other is a consciously felt ‘faith’ that authenticates Al-Sayyid’s religious belief as subjective experience and sensibility. However, unlike Abraham’s, Al-Sayyid’s ‘faith’ does not hinge on the discovery of

history as a linear sequence of events. Despite his active support of the nascent Egyptian nationalist movement, his patriotism comes to expression in ritual gestures of monetary donations (mimicking his ritual observances or religious rites). His mind and soul, however, remain outside history. They are locked between an archaic schema of religious belief and a quasi-modern individual sensibility that comes to expression in an economy of the satisfaction of need. This economy includes the need for pleasure but knows only 'positive' *excess* - the 'sevdakh'[abandon] induced by traditional music and the partial self-oblivion of *bacchanalia*. It does not know the death drive which is a precondition for alienation and the constitution of the unconscious as the locus of 'the other.'

Al-Sayid is symbol of the Law of patriarchy – not of Islamic religious belief. This is the 'split' that structures Mahfouz's novel: that the social formations of family life belong to a 'restricted economy' while the ideas circulating in modern Egyptian life belong to a general economy of the heterogeneous. This economy of the heterogeneous is reflected in the eclectic and voracious reading of European philosophy by Al Sayid's grandsons (the third generation in Vol 3) but also in the repressed Modernist sensibility of the major characters that continually disrupts the established order like an underground spring of modern desire. This is equally true of the first generation (Al Sayid and his wife Amina) as of the two subsequent generations of this Cairo family.

Al Sayid's wife, Amina, ostensibly believes like a primitive in Eliade's sense of the term. Amina's submission to her husband's law, which is the law of God on earth, is absolute. She is not permitted to leave the house on foot or show herself uncovered in public. She tolerates her husband's nightly peccadillos, grateful, as her mother taught her, that her husband has not taken more than one wife as Islamic law permits. She is of "one piece" – like Eliade's archaic man or in Prince Myshkin's evocation of the paradigm of people with one mind (medieval man) and people of two minds (modern Russian 19th century man) in *The Idiot*. Amina's religious belief is close to magic (she believes in the jinn, is superstitious and terrified of house ghosts). Her visit to the Mosque – her only transgression against her husband's prohibition – is a true archaic religious experience – of transport, exaltation, holiness of place, of the centre, close to the Prophet and his Grandson. Her submission to the higher order of patriarchal law and custom goes hand in hand with her archaic spirituality. She is totally humble, loving and forgiving and frequently invokes her father, a shaykh and one of the Islamic religious scholars, favoured by God "over all creation because they knew the Qur'an by heart." (I/64) To Amina, it was "inconceivable that any knowledge could equal" that of her father. She thirsts for this Qur'anic knowledge and finds the greatest pleasure in learning her youngest son's suras by heart while helping him with his religious homework. Amina also loves the "legends she knew and believed to be an inseparable part of the reality and essence of religion. She may even have seen in them an eternal element of religion. Most recounted miracles of the Prophet and prodigies of the Prophet's companions and saints, along with various spells for defense against the jinn, reptiles, disease." (64) These legends do not surface in Mahfouz's narrative. They are like a repressed content that never materialises as a linguistic unconscious. This imparts an unintended flatness to Mahfouz's Arab novel: it is like a painting without shadows, without light and dark. The absence of an unconscious of the text cancels out the possibility of a religious

unconscious as constitutive of a primal scene in the Freudian sense. This has grave consequences for the sense of identity of the 'modern Egyptian' portrayed by the painter of modern Egyptian life, Mahfouz. Although the generations of Al Sayid's sons and grandsons (in Part II and III of the trilogy) embrace Egypt's modernization and europeanization with heart and mind, the graft of European ideas takes place only on the level of ideology. This version of 'modern faith' (in Eliade's sense) is the ideology of Egyptian nationalism and the struggle against British domination. This 'faith'/ideology is tinged with ideas of socialism and communism in the generation of the grandsons, on the eve of WWII. Such a model of identity could explain the rites of passage into modernity of most modernizing Third World countries.

On the plot level of this flat narrative, the youngest son of Al Sayid, Kamal, is reported to be enchanted by the legends that constitute the essence of his religious education: "Kamal was enthralled by the legends in a way that none of his dry lessons could match. Filled with enjoyment and flights of imagination, his mother's lesson was one of the happiest hours of the day." (64) This is reminiscent of Dostoevsky's novice hero, Alyosha Karamazov, who learns from his Elder Zosima that the most important element in an adolescent's education is the narrative element. Zosima tells how his 'religious sensibility' was grounded in the Biblical legends and stories that were part of his growing up in the Orthodox tradition. However, unlike Mahfouz's novel, Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* thematizes these ancient legends, not as content, but as form: as a stylized archaic language that shapes Zosima's speech as well as Alyosha Karamazov's writing of that speech. This stylization of the modern narrative through an archaic narrative schema becomes the concrete textual embodiment of the speech of "the other" which constitutes the unconscious of the modern subject as *logos*. As a result, Dostoevsky's modern subject is not an ideologue. His identity is not a Russian national identity but a heterogeneous, polymorphous negativity that shapes the modern bourgeois and citizen of capitalism and the society of exchange and the simulacrum (representation). This is illustrated by Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, whose being resides in transgression that constitutes itself as a linear consciousness or narrative: Anna is all *logos*, both as substance of Tolstoy's representation and, symbolically, as a writer of children's stories. This modern consciousness as *logos* is nothing but a sensibility experienced as *jouissance* that has its origins in the death drive.

By contrast, Mahfouz's modern Egyptian man remains anchored to a national identity that is ultimately totalising in a way not dissimilar to the totalising of archaic religious schemas. There is no authentic transgression and hence no *jouissance* in Mahfouz's Arab novel. For example, young Kamal, whose sensibility is shaped by Qur'anic legends just as Zosima is formed through Russian Orthodox biblical stories, remains respectful to the father in ritual gestures of obedience to the very end. Kamal's transgression is constituted by his pursuit of knowledge (scientific and Humanist) instead of the law as a profession: he becomes a teacher of European literature against his father's wishes. His love for a 'thin' girl who speaks French – an allusion to the decadent heroines and mistresses of artists in the novels and lyrical plays of Modernism – , whom he can't imagine cooking in the kitchen like his mother and sisters, is a desire for the ineffable that will claim his religious soul for the dialectic of negativity. However, although they experience suffering to various degrees, none of Mahfouz's characters in

The Cairo Trilogy attain the unrepresentable or the limit. There are no artists among them and there is no 'artistenproblematik' or meta-narrative of representation that is emblematic of the 'painter of modern life' in Baudelaire's sense. Thus sensuality, constituted as transgressive *jouissance*, does not characterize the Egyptian citizen and bourgeois of Mafhouz's Arab novel. This is reflected in the structure of the modern Arab novel which despite its conformity to Baudelaire's poetics of Realism, fails to translate a poetics of representation into a textuality that constitutes itself as sensibility (Baudelaire's 'imagination' and Lacan's imaginary) of the split subject depicted by the French and Russian painters of modern life, Baudelaire, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. However, this failure, too, captures correctly the 'historical' moment of Arab society depicted by Mafhouz. That is why a study of the Arab novel goes beyond the study of literature. It is an accurate indicator of the state of Egypt's culture at a particular historical moment of confrontation with a non-Islamic imported culture of modernity. The nature of this appropriation can shed light on many contemporary issues impinging on the relationship of Islamic societies to Western society, to cultural globalisation and the phenomena of terrorism and fringe culture.

By contrast with the construction of religious sensibility and identity in the Arab novel, the Russian novel of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky offers an Oedipal cultural model of subjectivity (transgressive desire as repression and the symbolic) as the finitude of language and infinite semiosis ("infinite finitude" – Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Sense of the World*, [1993 *Le sens du monde*], U of Minnesota P, 1997).

The sensibility of Tolstoy's painter of modern life, Mihailov, consists in the spirit of "atheism, negation and materialism." His 'lack of education', stressed repeatedly by his aristocratic patron Golenishchev, amounts to a new form of freedom: freedom from authority and traditional, outlived, clichéd forms. Or, as Golenishchev says scornfully, Mihailov's form of libertinage ('*volynodumstvo*') has never known the concepts of "religion, law and morality".ⁱ That is to say, Mihailov's ethics has never been under the aegis of totalization or a totalizing system, such as is represented by religious dogma, or a body of law or a prescriptive moral code. Such totalizing systems inevitably call into existence an 'excluded' other. With respect to the upper class Russian society whose social code is portrayed in Tolstoy's novel, Anna and Vronsky represent the 'excluded'

other *vis-a-vis* a totality called 'Russian society'. Their travels abroad represent a continuum of 'avoidance tactics', undertaken in order not to come into 'awkward situations', among people who would not have the required tolerance ('tact') with respect to their 'irregular' (that is, 'exclusive') relationship. This 'avoidance' is in itself glaring testimony of their 'exclusion'. Anna, in particular, represents the 'excluded part'.ⁱⁱ Anna is not 'excluded' (ostracized) because she commits adultery, but because she allows it to be *seen* that she does. It is because she turns adultery into a transgression that belongs to the realm of the gaze that she propels herself into the orbit of Mihailov's realm of the living totality of the signifier. Mikhailov 'feels' his subjects as living totalities,ⁱⁱⁱ constructed through his artist's (phenomenologist's or archeologist's) gaze. Through this living totality, both Anna and Mihailov inhabit the sphere of the heterogeneous, which has been identified by Georges Bataille as a modern form of the sacred.^{iv} FINISH HERE with SACRED as an OUTSIDE!!

The 'materialism' that Golenishchev attributes to Mihailov is 'Darwinian'. But this 'Darwinism' is nowhere substantiated through Mihailov's own thought on art or anything else. Hence this alleged 'materialism' of the artist (who is cast in the role of 'the seer') is nothing but a metaphor. It is the metaphor of atheism, which in turn is a metaphor for the supremacy of the sign or signifier, in whose realm 'God' (or the signified) is dead. But the 'death of God' does not signify the death of religious thought. This is made clear in Mihailov's choice of subject matter for his paintings, which echoes that of his (and Tolstoy's) contemporaries. In particular, Mihailov's portrait of Christ and Pontius Pilate is said by Golenishchev to be 'in the style' of the "Ivanov-Strauss-Renan attitude to Christ".^v The Orientalist and Hebrew scholar Ernest Renan (1823-92), in his 1863 book *La Vie de*

Jesus [The Life of Jesus]), and the Wurtemberg theologian David Strauss (1808-74), in his *Life of Jesus*, portrayed Christ as a historical character and not as the 'Son of God'. In his most famous painting of Christ, *The Appearance of Christ to the People* (1837-1857), Alexander Ivanov portrayed Christ as a background figure, while foregrounding 'the people': individual figures, whose eyes are 'averted' from the spectator and directed, instead, towards the back of the picture, at the unremarkable and almost 'insignificant' figure of Christ, who becomes a 'sign' like any other sign. What Ivanov's picture heralds is the absence of a 'transcendental signified'. In its stead, Ivanov's picture foregrounds the gaze.

Mihailov's painting of Christ and Pontius Pilate does not, in fact, resemble Ivanov's large and populous canvas, but rather a smaller painting by N.N. Ge, whose title is the question "What Is Truth?" (1890).^{vi} This painting contains only two figures, Christ and Pontius Pilate, who are divided by a broad shaft of light falling on the ground between them. There is no further resemblance between Ge's painting and Mihailov's. While discussing Mihailov's painting, the aristocratic visitors both praise and criticize it. Golenishchev objects to the subject of the painting - Christ - a sacred subject, which in his opinion ought not to be a subject of art. In other words, it ought not to be a subject of representation and hence, by implication, should remain in the realm of the transcendent, the unknowable. Golenishchev holds to a view that from Mihailov's perspective appears outdated. This is clear not only from Mihailov's paintings but also from his defense of Ivanov's painting of Christ, in which Christ does not appear as the bearer of a transcendental Truth but as the silent response to the question "what is truth?" When Golenishchev objects to the "destruction of unity" in Ivanov's painting, issuing from the

question which Ivanov's Christ gives rise to: "Is this God or is this not God" - Mihailov answers: "I should have thought that for educated people...the question cannot exist."^{vii} In other words, for Mihailov, the artist, who can conjure up life and create Being from impressions and memory (Baudelaire's painter of modern life from 'imagination' not nature), a life and Being which is representation, there can be no question of God's existence. For that would imply that not everything could be represented. Golenishchev is cast as a somewhat old-fashioned and outmoded gentleman, who has 'nothing to say', nothing to contribute to the world of 'discourse', represented by his book project which fails to mature into writing. In this he resembles Vronsky, who also has nothing to 'say' in painting and hence gives it up. Vronsky's and Golenishchev's educated, 'classical' point of view coincides with a 'classical' model of culture evoked by Michel Foucault in *The Birth of the Clinic* and *The Order of Things*. The 'classical' model of European culture, which is coeval with its 'transcendent phase' of thought, which lasts from Plato to Descartes, [Eliade's 'primitive' ontology of belief has a Platonic structure. Thus, according to Eliade, "Plato could be regarded as the outstanding philosopher of 'primitive mentality' who gave philosophical currency "to modes of life and behaviour of archaic humanity", pg. 34, ME:MER]

comes to a close towards the end of the 18th century, when in the place of a transcendental signified - God and God-Man as Christ – there appears the gaze, heralding modern science with its 'clinical gaze' and its imperative of the transparency of the signifier.

Mihailov, with his painting of Christ, personifies this new European cultural paradigm, based on the model of the gaze and identified by Baudelaire, Foucault, Benjamin and other thinkers as the age of modernity. What focuses or brings into sharp relief this conception of modernity is Friedrich Nietzsche's declarations about the 'death of God' and

the announcement of the emergence of the 'Superman' or 'Man-God'. This 'Superman' is the signifier, who has turned out to be the last Master of modern Man. Christ is represented as 'Man-God' or as a pure signifier in Mihailov's painting. When asked why he had not painted a 'traditional Christ', Mihailov answers that he could not paint what was not in his soul.

Mihailov represents the sensibility of 'modernity', the religious feeling of which does not emanate from an identification with the transcendent. This is not to say that this 'modern' sensibility has no religious feeling. On the contrary, Mihailov is 'religious' about his art. He is 'jealously' anxious to preserve its 'autonomy', its 'exclusiveness', its 'uniqueness' and 'unrepeatability'. He is even (mistakenly) accused of being 'jealous' of Vronsky, the aristocratic Master, who has 'everything' without effort. But Mihailov is not jealous of any 'Master' in the Hegelian sense. He trembles only before the ordeal of *expression* - of putting 'things', and the experience of the desire of representing 'things' - into representational *form*. He even loses his power of speech before this task, and his lips tremble like those of a man gripped by inhibition in the presence of the sacred. Like the sect of the Shakers, or like the Russian religious *klikushi* or *shriekers*, Mihailov's speech apparatus literally goes into spasms before the experience of *uttering* or putting into speech that which is 'invisible' - the only authentic object of the 'painter of modern life', whose task is, according to Baudelaire, to bring out "all the suggestions of eternity" - B's code for the invisible/immutable/unrepresentable - contained "in the fleeting moment" of history.

This 'hysteria' of inhibition (or repression) is the other side of Mihailov's effort to 'uncover' or 'reveal' an invisible 'reality' in his paintings. The 'invisible' reality that is subject to revelation in art is not 'nature as it is', or 'life as it is', but rather a *limit*. It is a "*limit of content* [read: representation]" or a *limit* of that which is representable. The same limit is captured in Ge's painting in the shaft of light, which puts Christ on one side

and Pilate on the other side of imminent transgression (of the Hebrew Law) and crucifixion. The notion of the 'limit' is also clearly present in Tolstoy's original text, although it is completely obscured in Edmonds' translation. The original reads:

*A samyi opytnyi i iskussnyi zhivopisets-
tekhnik odnoiu mekhanicheskoiu sposobnostiu ne mog
by napisat' nichego, esli by emy ne otkrylis'
prezhde granitsy sodержaniia.*

[But the most experienced technically accomplished painter would not be capable of painting anything by dint of his mechanical ability alone, if the limits of representation had failed to reveal themselves to him beforehand.].
viii

Christ, in Mihailov's painting, is the metaphorical representation of this limit envisaged as light and space. This is revealed in Golenishchev's covertly disapproving (unconscious or unwitting - hence 'truthful') comment about Christ's figure in the Pontius Pilate painting:

...i kak sdelana eta figura, - skol'ko vozdukha, oboiti mozžno...

[...and how well executed the figure is, - how much space there is, one could walk around it...].^{ix}

Christ in Mihailov's painting is thus not a replica of any Christ figure in Russian contemporary painting, although it points to a few. It is a representation, not of a figure, but of space and light, in other words, of nothing or nothingness. This nothingness is itself a metaphor of negativity.

Mihailov's Christ as negativity is thus the necessary precondition for *meaning*, a meaning that is always in the future as possibility and experiment, without origins and without closure. Meaning which is grounded in this negativity or nothingness carries an absolute unity of form and content. In this symbiosis, form is content and content is form or expression. In other words, meaning comes to 'expression' as pure representation or appearance. The whole conversation about technique angers Mihailov because he knows that to separate meaning from its expression is impossible, just as it is impossible to give 'bad content' expression through 'good technique' - "*kak budto mozžno bylo napisat' khorosho to chto durno*" ["as if it would be possible to express something bad well"].^x

Mihailov's proposition about art is in essence a proposition about language, which echoes

Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophy of language in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. The unity of form and content in art is analogous to the unity of sign and logical grid, which 'precede' the *sense* of a proposition. Sense is thus a matter of language, that is, of the 'right' expression. Language (or expression) sets a limit to thought. "Everything that can be thought at all can be thought clearly. Everything that can be put into words can be put clearly."^{xi} And: "If a sign is *possible*, then it is also capable of signifying..."^{xii} And: "We cannot give a sign the wrong sense."^{xiii}

According to this *semiotic* model of meaning and perception, which is Mihailov's (and Tolstoy's) *avant la lettre* (avant C S Peirce), non-sense or 'un-sense' is something that cannot be represented. For what exists *beyond* language - on the 'other side' of the limit, as it were - is not a transcendent being but *silence*. Mihailov's silent Christ (as well as Dostoevsky's silent Christ in *The Legend of the Great Inquisitor*) is an expression of this limit. The facial expression of Mihailov's Christ - such as it is rendered for the reader through Mihailov's musing (inner monologue), is eloquent silence. Christ's expression is *polyvalent* - among other things, it is that of "pity for Pilate" - but also "of love", of "a peace not of this world", "a readiness for death", and of a "sense of the vanity of words" ("*soznanie tshchety slov*").^{xiv} Mihailov's Christ is portrayed *listening* serenely to Pilate's "irritable haranguing". It is a Christ who is silent before (value) judgement, just as Mihailov is silent before the critical and evaluating glance of his visitors. Christ's expression is thus an image of the limit, the limit of meaning, which is death as finitude, and silence as the Other of speech or logos.

Mihailov emulates this silence and thus becomes the incarnation of his own Christ figure in the novel's diagesis by his repetition of the gesture of silence. Mihailov is silent

when Golenishchev outscores him on the question of the legitimacy of the subject matter for his painting. He is also unable to voice or to verbalize his 'opinion' about his own picture.

Mihailov's philosophy is alleged to be rooted in the conviction that "nothing exists" ("*nichego net*"). Nothingness, represented as Christ's silence in M's picture, is thus the starting point for the model of representation which grounds the art of this 'painter of modern life.'

The 'pure' space (spatiality as a quality or state of affairs), represented through the metaphor of silence, is, paradoxically, not empty. But its content is nothingness. Into this 'pre spatiality,' the painter 'collects' and 'stores' impressions, in particular impressions of faces and facial expressions. These images - which are Peirce's icons in the sense of proto-signs - are stored as memory for future 'resurrection' and inclusion in a totality - a meaningful picture or Peirce's 'symbol.' The 'iconic' signs ('faces') thus collected, do not have a total meaning at the moment at which they form an inscribed impressions. They are stored as unconscious memory traces. They are resurrected into meaning only during the creative process, when they are inserted into a 'complete picture' or a signifying chain. As impressions (with the underlying assumption that they are visual impressions), the icons are memory traces, defined by Jacques Derrida as follows:

The trace in fact is the absolute origin of sense in general. Which amounts to saying once again that there is no absolute origin of sense in general. The trace is the difference which opens appearance [l'apparaître] and signification. Articulating the living upon nonliving in general, origin of all repetition, origin of ideality, the trace is not more ideal than real, not more intelligible than sensible, not more a transparent signification than opaque energy and no concept of metaphysics can describe it.^{xv}

[In Mihailov's painting, the memory trace is represented literally as a *trace* left on the paper by the grease of candle-wax. This candle-grease stain is amorphous, but it is transformed; that is, it acquires form through the intervention of the painter's gaze. It is under the force of Mihailov's gaze that the candle-wax stain begins to impart new meaning and new contours to "the figure of a man in a violent rage".^{xvi} Supporting the gaze is the structure of the memory trace - "the powerful face of a tobacconist with a prominent jaw" which Mihailov recalls and superimposes on the contours of the candle-wax stain.^{xvii} But what is essential to this semiotic model of perception and consciousness is the anteriority of the gaze to sense. It is the gaze that comes before sense or meaning, and it is the gaze that creates the image.]

The birth of the image - understood as the first appearance of meaning and, conversely, as meaning in the sense of appearance - is a process without origins. There is therefore no image that could be identified as the *arche*- image, the 'first principle', the 'ideal form'. Instead, there is a palimpsest effect: the candle-grease has obscured part of the 'first', discarded drawing. But this 'first' is not an 'original' image, from which the second is derived. This 'first' is first only in C.S. Peirce's sense of *firstness*, in that it must be followed by a second, third and fourth.^{xviii} It is not an originary, ideal, essential or primary first, but only one that can be derived by reversing a sequence, thus a first inserted in a linearized progression. And this linear sequence is the sequence of signification underlying the linearized structure of consciousness.

In Mihailov's 'artistic process', which models the process of perception as such, a painting (or meaning) comes into existence when a memory trace (the remembered features of the tobacco merchant) are raised into a context. The memory trace, in itself

immaterial (one could almost say occult), acquires materiality through being represented. The process of representation is analogous to the process of tracing or of 'superimposing' one trace upon another as in a palimpsest.^{xix} This method of 'tracing' meaning is emulated in modernist painting through the technique of rubbing or *frottage* (used by Max Ernst, for instance). Mihailov's painting technique consists of just such a 'tracing' of meaning by the removal of 'layers' that 'veil' the meaning hidden 'underneath'.

However, this 'hidden' reality is a non-existent reality. It is nothingness or negativity. It is what is not. The artist has to turn this nothing into appearance. He does this by literally 'stripping' or 'uncovering'. Mihailov is seen 'taking off' the veil twice: once by raising the curtains to let in the light and removing the covers on the paintings in his studio before his visitors arrive, and once again as he is in the throes of his creative process. In his creation of a picture, every brush-stroke is a taking off of the veil. Tearing off this veil too soon, too quickly or carelessly, would 'damage' the 'reality' that is emerging into appearance.

Like Vronsky, therefore, Mihailov also does not paint from life. But what distinguishes the dilettante from the true artist is the difference in their 'models'. Vronsky appears to take 'historical forms' that have degenerated into clichés as his models. These he has acquired through an extensive 'education' - "he knew all the schools" in painting and thus it was for him only a matter of 'selecting' a style he wished to emulate or copy.^{xx} Mihailov has no 'education' and thus no 'models'. He creates 'on the spot', in the immediacy of the present, which he 'stores' as memory traces. It is this immediacy that makes his work 'authentic' or 'unique'. But this is not the 'authenticity' of the 'original' and 'unreproducible' work of art, posited by Benjamin as an essential characteristic of 'classical' art before the age of technical reproducibility.^{xxi} At this point, Mihailov's 'poetics' has nothing to do with painting, but with the structure of narrative and discourse, and hence with the structure of *Anna Karenina* as a model of discourse. For what Mihailov 'sees' when he paints Anna is not 'nature'. What characterizes his relationship to

the 'live' model Anna is the dynamic interpretive attitude. Mihailov interprets Anna's being or Anna as Phenomenon, as Being. It is, in fact, Anna as Being that Mihailov 'captures' in Anna's portrait. He captures this living, dynamic Being, which is Anna in 'her' totality and as 'a' totality - a totality of actions, gestures, a libidinal economy. Mihailov captures this totality through a loving, all-inclusive gaze. Mihailov's gaze literally devours impressions and images. But it is his 'artist's gaze' that has the power to capture "the inexpressible, ineffable complexity of all living being" ("vsia kartina ego ozhila pered nim so vseiu nevyrazimoiu slozhnostiu vsego zhivogo").^{xxii} This "full gaze of the artist", with which Mikhailov, the 'painter of modern life,' sees things, is equivalent to an inner experience - the ultimate 'inner experience' of creation - of meaning or discourse.^{xxiii}

However, as Bataille has told us in his study of this experience, the nothingness is represented as Silence or as Night. This Night is Darkness. However, this "[Darkness] [is] not absence of light but absorption into the outside." (Example: AK at Night under dome of the sky and tears shed on the Earth.) The ultimate Outside, as we know from Foucault, is language or the symbolic order. 'Inner experience' is thus modernity's experience of alienation or of the Outside of the Symbolic. "In this silence made of the inside, it is no longer an organ, it is entire sensibility, it is the heart which has dilated." (Bataille, Inner Experience, p.17)

Modern sensibility as an outside, as the « heart that has dilated » is the 'religious ground' of the aesthetics of the Russian 19th century novel. As such it is the sensibility of Baudelaire's 'painter of modern life' whose 'gaze' captures the historical moment in its symbolic totality, as a limit phenomenon between the visible and the invisible.

A gloss on the meaning of 'religion' in the world of the painter of modern life – Tolstoy – is obtained from T's aesthetic manifesto « What is art ? » 1897-8. Although Tolstoy appears to speak in the language of Orthodox Christianity, he was in fact

excommunicated from the Church for his unorthodox views. Moreover, it is Tomashevsky's opinion that T's so-called religious crisis of the 1880s was in fact an aesthetic crisis. T. was seeking new forms and means of expression in art. The result of his quest, via the production of 'pedagogic' material for peasant children on his estate, was a model of popular culture grounded in the principles of accessibility and infectiousness. His preferred form of narrative in the 1880s became speech and his favourite narrator became a skaz narrator. His *Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *My Confession*, *The Kreutzer Sonata* and all of his so-called simple stories, were outpourings of an unstoppable flow of language that world literature comes to witness later, in the *recit* of a Blanchot or a Kafka. The use of terms such as «religious consciousness» of our time was hence a code or a metaphor that constituted T's new aesthetics and model of representation of reality. This was an inclusionary, non-oedipal and non-hierarchic model that somewhat resembles D&G anti-oedipus and 1000 plateaus. According to this model of representation, a work of art must be universally intelligible – understood by all people in all classes. Tolstoy thus rejects the idea of a bourgeois or class art (opera, melodrama, even tragedy). He posits a new model of art that is consistent with the principles of popular culture. It is an art that is democratic – in that it addresses the lowest common denominator in its audience- and infectious, that is, it 'transmits' authentic emotions between sender and receiver. It binds through communicability and dialogue. It builds a community of addressors and addressees. It is this community, grounded in the symbolic exchange of signs in a level playing field (art works must be understood by anyone who is in the field), that makes up an aesthetics of 'popular culture' that is not yet mass culture

or pop art. This model of culture is not outside 'Culture', but it obliterates the boundary between 'low' and 'High' culture or it inverts the hierarchy.

XX

29 May 2002

Tolstoy's understanding of religion: a Relational model of meaning framed by archaic origins and teleology:

"Religion is a relationship established between man, everlasting life, and God in conformity with reason and contemporary knowledge, and which alone pushes humanity forwards to its destined aim." (Chap 17, What is Religion and of What does its essence Consist? pg 128

[Jacques Berque (1974/1978):332: on Islamic fundamentalism – fundamentalist is always radical – reason: not ubiquity of the sacred but social totality of *Usul*.

Origins = paradigm of Arab societies.

"For many centuries thereafter the framework of all social life placed in effect schemas drawn from the chronicles of the Prophet and his companions. "Antecedentism" - *salafiya* - never lost its force. The blessed model set forth was to be imitated indefinitely. (Jacques Berque, pg. 326-7.

"The idea of such a society was not...either immobility or imitation (in the sense of imitatio Christi), but unlimited resort to its own structures, these latter coinciding with the originals to the same extent as the free play the allowed." 327.

Oedipus treated in Arab literature: pg. 71/M M Badawi Modern Arabic Lit & the West 1985

Al-Hakim (1949 – his own version of Kin Oedipus (al-Malik Udib): Greek spirit of tragedy = religious sense . Man not alone in the universe!= religious sense.]

ⁱ Source????????????????????

ⁱⁱ Compare George Bataille's theorising on the 'excluded part' in his *La part maudite*(1967), translated as *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy*. Tr. by Robert Hurley. Vols I, II, III, New York: Zone Books, 1991-93.

ⁱⁱⁱ Source????????????????????

^{iv} Compare Georges Bataille..the sacred...QUOTE Pefanis etc!

^v Source????????????????????

^{vi} Tolstoy could not have had this particular painting of Ge's in mind when writing his novel, but he might have seen a sketch of an earlier version of the same or a similar motif executed by some other contemporary artist. The correspondence between the Ge painting and the picture attributed to Mikhailov in Tolstoy's novel is, to say the least, remarkable if not uncanny.

^{vii} L. N. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*. Tr. by Rosemary Edmonds. Penguin, p. 501.

^{viii} L. N. Tolstoy, *Sobranie sochinenii v dvadtsati tomakh. Pod obshch. red. N. N. Akopovoi, N.K. Gudziia, N.N. Guseva, M.B. Khrapchenko. GIKHL, Moskva, 1963, tom deviatyi*, p. 50, my translation. Rosemary Edmonds, in the Penguin edition of *Anna Karenina* , reads "*granitsy sodержania* " as "the lines of his subject", taking "*granitsa* " in its possible synonym of 'outline' or 'contour'.

^{ix} *ibid* ., p. 50, my translation

^x Source????????????????????

^{xi} (*Tractatus*, 4.116)

^{xii} (*Tractatus*, 5.473)

^{xiii} Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Tr. by D.F. Pears & B.F. McGuinness. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1989, p.???????????????????? (First German edition published in *Abbalen der Naturphilosophie*, 1921; first English edition, with translation, published 1922). (*Tractatus*, 5.4732)

^{xiv} Source????????????????????

^{xv} Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. Tr. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976, p. 65.

^{xvi} Source????????????????????

^{xvii} Source????????????????????

^{xviii} Compare C. S. Peirce, “

^{xix} meaning an "original drawing erased to make room for a new drawing"[COD],

derived from the Greek palin = 'again, and psao = 'rub, smooth

^{xx} Source????????????????????

^{xxi} Compare Walter Benjamin's 1936 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", in Walter Benjamin *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, tr. by Harry Zohn. New York:Schocken Books, 1969, pp. 217-251.

^{xxii} L. N. Tolstoy, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v dvdsdstaty tomakh, opt. cit.*, vol IX, p. 49.

^{xxiii} Compare Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*...