

HE NEVERTHELESS DECIDED to turn his back to the sea and entered a small woods where he lay down after taking a few steps. The day was about to end; scarcely any light remained, but it was still possible to see certain details of the landscape fairly clearly, in particular the hill which limited the horizon and which was glowing, unconcerned and free. What was disturbing to Thomas was the fact that he was lying there in the grass with the desire to remain there for a long time, although this position was forbidden to him. As night was falling he tried to get up, and, pushing against the ground with both hands, got one knee under him while the other leg dangled; then he made a sudden lurch and succeeded in placing himself entirely erect. So he was standing. As a matter of fact, there was an indecision in his way of being which cast doubt on what he was doing. And so, although his eyes were shut, it did not seem that he had given up seeing in the darkness, rather the contrary. Likewise, when he began to walk, one might have thought that it was not his legs, but rather his desire not to walk which pushed him forward. He went down into a sort of vault which at first he had believed to be rather large, but which very soon seemed to him extremely cramped: in front, in back, overhead, wherever he put out his hands, he collided brutally with a surface as hard as a stone wall; on all sides his way was barred, an insurmountable wall all around, and this wall was not the greatest obstacle for he had also to reckon on his will which was fiercely determined to let him sleep there in a passivity exactly like death. This was insane; in his uncertainty, feeling out the limits of the vaulted pit, he placed his body right up against the wall and waited. What dominated him was the sense of being pushed forward by his refusal to advance. So he was not very surprised, so clearly did his anxiety allow him to see into the future, when, a little later, he saw himself carried a few steps further along. A few steps: it was unbelievable. His progress was undoubtedly more apparent than real, for this new spot was indistinguishable from the last, he encountered the same difficulties here, and it was in a sense the same place that he was moving away from out of terror of leaving it. At that moment, Thomas had the rashness to look around himself. The night was more somber and more painful than he could have expected. The darkness immersed everything; there was no hope of passing through its shadows, but one penetrated its reality in a relationship of overwhelming intimacy.

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The Solar Anus *Georges Bataille*

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translated by Allan Stoekl

It is clear that the world is purely parodic, in other words, that each thing seen is the parody of another, or is the same thing in a deceptive form. Ever since sentences started to circulate in brains devoted to reflection, an effort at total identification has been made, because with the aid of a copula each sentence ties one thing to another; all things would be visibly connected if one could discover at a single glance and in its totality the tracings of an Ariadne's thread leading thought into its own labyrinth. But the copula of terms is no less irritating than the copulation of bodies. And when I scream I AM THE SUN an integral erection results, because the verb to be is the vehicle of amorous frenzy.

Everyone is aware that life is parodic and that it lacks an interpretation. Thus lead is the parody of gold. Air is the parody of water. The brain is the parody of the equator. Coitus is the parody of crime.

Gold, water, the equator, or crime can each be put forward as the principle of things. And if the origin of things is not like the ground of the planet that seems to be the base, but like the circular movement that the planet describes around a mobile centre, then a car, a clock, or a sewing machine could equally be accepted as the generative principle.

The two primary motions are rotation and sexual movement, whose combination is expressed by the locomotive's wheels and pistons. These two motions are reciprocally transformed, the one into the other. Thus one notes that the earth, by turning, makes animals and men have coitus, and (because the result is as much the cause as that which provokes it) that animals and men make the earth turn by having coitus. It is the mechanical combination or transformation of these movements that the alchemists sought as the philosopher's stone.

It is through the use of this magically valued combination that one can determine the present position of men in the midst of the elements. An abandoned shoe, a rotten tooth, a snub nose, the cook spitting in the soup of his masters are to love what a battle flag is to nationality. An umbrella, a sexagenarian, a seminarian, the smell of rotten eggs, the hollow eyes of judges are the roots that nourish love. A dog devouring the stomach of a goose, a drunken vomiting woman, a sobbing accountant, a jar of mustard represent the

confusion that serves as the vehicle of love. A man who finds himself among others is irritated because he does not know why he is not one of the others. In bed next to a girl he loves, he forgets that he does not know why he is himself instead of the body he touches. Without knowing it, he suffers from the mental darkness that keeps him from screaming that he himself is the girl who forgets his presence while shuddering in his arms.

Love, or infantile rage, or a provincial dowager's vanity, or clerical pornography, or the diamond of a soprano bewilder individuals forgotten in dusty apartments. They can very well try to find each other; they will never find anything but parodic images, and they will fall asleep as empty as mirrors. Love and life appear to be separate only because everything on earth is broken apart by vibrations of various amplitudes and durations. However, there are no vibrations that are not conjugated with a continuous circular movement; in the same way, a locomotive rolling on the surface of the earth is the image of a continuous metamorphosis. Beings only die to be born, in the manner of phalluses that leave bodies in order to enter them. Plants rise in the direction of the sun and then collapse in the direction of the ground.

Trees bristle the ground with a vast quantity of flowered shafts raised up to the sun. The trees that forcefully soar end up burned by lightning, chopped down, or uprooted. Returned to the ground, they come back up in another form. But their polymorphous coitus is a function of uniform terrestrial rotation. The simplest image of organic life united with rotation is the tide. From the movement of the sea, uniform coitus of the earth with the moon, comes the polymorphous and organic coitus of the earth with the sun. But the first form of solar love is a cloud raised up over the liquid element. The erotic cloud sometimes becomes a storm and falls back to earth in the form of rain, while lightning staves in the layers of the atmosphere. The rain is soon raised up again in the form of an immobile plant.

The sea continuously jerks off. Solid elements, contained and brewed in water animated by erotic movement, shoot out in the form of flying fish. The erection and the sun scandalize, in the same way as the cadaver and the darkness of cellars. Vegetation is uniformly directed towards the sun; human beings, on the other hand, even though phalloid like trees, in opposition to the other animals, necessarily avert their eyes. Human eyes tolerate neither sun, coitus, cadavers, nor obscurity, but with different reactions.

When my face is flushed with blood, it becomes red and obscene. It betrays at the same time, through morbid reflexes, a bloody erection and a demanding thirst for indecency and criminal debauchery. For that reason I am not afraid to affirm that my face is a scandal and that my passions are expressed only by the JESUVE. The terrestrial globe is covered with volcanoes, which serve as its anus. Although this globe eats nothing, it

often violently ejects the contents of its entrails. Those contents shoot out with a racket and fall back, streaming down the sides of the Jesuve, spreading death and terror everywhere.

In fact, the erotic movements of the ground are not fertile like those of the water, but they are far more rapid. The earth sometimes jerks off in a frenzy, and everything collapses on its surface. This eruptive force accumulates in those who are necessarily situated below. Communist workers appear to the bourgeois to be as ugly and dirty as hairy sexual organs, or lower parts; sooner or later there will be a scandalous eruption in the course of which the asexual noble heads of the bourgeois will be chopped off. Love, then, screams in my own throat; I am the Jesuve, the filthy parody of the torrid and blinding sun.

The Sun exclusively loves the Night and directs its luminous violence, its ignoble shaft, toward the earth, but it finds itself incapable of reaching the gaze or the night, even though the nocturnal terrestrial expanses head continuously toward the indecency of the solar ray. The *solar annulus* is the intact anus of her body at eighteen years to which nothing sufficiently blinding can be compared except the sun, even though the anus is the night.