

Historians do not care much for anachronisms, and for good reason: on the one hand, anachronism strikes at what they hold dearest, namely, rigorous attention to historical specificity; on the other hand, it serves as a disquieting reminder that interpretations of the past can be articulated only from the perspective of an inescapable present. Notwithstanding this cause for anathema – anachronism as that which must but cannot be eliminated if the historian is to exist – we should keep in mind that anachronisms, being as much the products of temporality as any other cultural formation, are open to historical inquiry. No doubt they have their stories to tell.

Take the example of a book that most Montaigne scholars would regard as a particularly egregious anachronism – a volume published in 1935 by Marvin Lowenthal under the title of *The Autobiography of Michel de Montaigne*. Lowenthal's project was as touchingly naïve as it was critically hopeless: he aimed to assemble a "continuous narrative" of Montaigne's life by extracting those sections of the *Essais* where the author spoke of himself, banishing thereby the digressions and "rank confusion" that for a modern public mar the reading experience: "Aided by scissors, paste, and patience, I have let [Montaigne] retell his life-story."<sup>1</sup> But would Montaigne really have understood what it might mean to tell his "life-story" in the form of a "continuous narrative"? As many recent commentators have hastened to point out, Montaigne's text betrays little sympathy for this steadfastly modern belief in the importance of personal chronology.<sup>2</sup> Armed with famous snippets from the *Essais* ("C'est un sujet merveilleusement vain, divers et ondoyant, que l'homme" [Truly man is a marvelously vain, diverse, and undulating object (I, 1: 9; 5)], "Si je parle diversement de moi, c'est que je me regarde diversement" [If I speak of myself in different ways, that is because I look at myself in different ways (II, 1: 335; 242)], and so on),<sup>3</sup> scholars of late have tried, in the face of readings such as Lowenthal's, to assert the otherness of Montaigne's view of self, a self rooted not in an organically unified life history but in contingency, exemplarity, and palimpsestic infinitude.<sup>4</sup> These corrections, numerous and persuasive, do make the autobiographical anachronism seem a pitfall that threatens a proper understanding of Montaigne and, more generally, of a time in which people did not yet function as self-realizing, coherent

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<sup>1</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *The Autobiography of Michel de Montaigne*, ed. Marvin Lowenthal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935), xvii-xviii.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Michel Beaujour, *Miroirs d'encre: Rhétorique de l'autoportrait* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), and Craig Brush, "A Self-Portrait Is Not an Autobiography," in Craig Brush, *From the Perspective of the Self: Montaigne's Self-Portrait* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), 23-35.

<sup>3</sup> All references to the *Essais* are taken from Michel de Montaigne, *Les Essais*, ed. V.-L. Saulnier (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1924). English translations are from Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald Frame (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1958). Pagination of both will be given parenthetically in the text: (book, chapter: French page; English page).

<sup>4</sup> See Antoine Compagnon, *Nous, Michel de Montaigne* (Paris: Seuil, 1980); Claude Blum, "Ecrire le 'moi': 'J'adajuste, mais je ne corrige pas'," in *Montaigne 1580-1980: Actes du colloque international*, ed. Marcel Tetel (Paris: Nizet, 1983), 36-53; André Tournon, *Montaigne: La Glose et l'essai* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1983); and Timothy Hampton, *Writing from History: The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). These arguments are many and varied; I will be referring to others in the pages that follow.

subjects.<sup>5</sup> And yet it would be a shame to dispatch too rapidly, as many have, the whole question of Montaigne's "autobiography." For it remains to wonder how that other time gave way to our own: what were the historical antecedents for Lowenthal's disrespect for Montaigne's text? Since when have readers wished he had written his own *Life*?

Lowenthal, it turns out, had a number of cutting and pasting predecessors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Starting with Pierre Charron, who pillaged the *Essais* to compose his enormously successful *De la sagesse* (1601), there followed at least three attempts to make Montaigne palatable for a contemporary readership.<sup>6</sup> Yet there was a great difference, for these compilers invariably *cut out* precisely those portions that Lowenthal wanted to highlight, producing not an autobiography but collections of thoughts – like the popular *ana* of the time, collections of witticisms organized into topics.<sup>7</sup> One might be prompted to conclude from this that an autobiographical reading of Montaigne has only become possible in the last century or so, but there is more. Lowenthal's enterprise was in fact uncannily congruent with a reading practice that dates to within a mere sixteen years of Montaigne's death, for it was in 1608 that appeared for the first time, appended to the *Essais*, a short (some 175 lines) text entitled *Sommaire discours sur la vie de Michel seigneur de Montaigne*. The *Sommaire discours*, reproduced in many editions of the *Essais* over the next two centuries, was a virtual template for Lowenthal's edition: it pieced together a biography of the author simply by quoting from the *Essais*. Catherine Magnien-Simonin has pointed out this text's innovation: the *Sommaire discours* was a purely chronological exposition of Montaigne's life, lifted from his own writings, whereas the biographical blurbs common at the time normally followed the rules of the *enkomyion*, divided as they were into the tripartite "biens extérieurs, biens du corps, biens de l'âme." According to Magnien-Simonin, it was the *Sommaire discours* that more or less put into circulation the legend of Montaigne wanting to depict himself "tout entier, et tout nud," as he put it in his "Au lecteur."<sup>8</sup> More precisely, we might say that the *Sommaire discours* indicates that a moment had come in which the self-portraiture that Montaigne himself evokes in his "Au lecteur" was expected to be chronological – a notion quite foreign to Montaigne's own text.

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<sup>5</sup> One might note that this type of warning has been frequently issued by scholars of the middle ages regarding anachronistically autobiographical readings of lyric poets such as Rutebeuf or Villon; see, for example, Leo Spitzer, "Note on the Poetic and the Empirical 'I' in Medieval Authors," *Traditio* 4 (1946), 414-22; and Paul Zumthor, "Autobiographie au Moyen Age?" in *Langue, texte, énigme* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), 165-80.

<sup>6</sup> Montaigne's thought was mainly disseminated in the seventeenth century via: Charron's text, which went through some 49 editions before 1672. The three collections, which had much less success, are *Esprit des Essais* (1677), *Pensées de Montaigne* (1700), and *Esprit de Montaigne* (1753). A fourth collection was published by Christophe Kormart in Germany under the barely recognizable title, *Abréée des mémoires illustres contenant les plus remarquables affaires d'état enrichi d'un sommaire des Essais de Montaigne* (1689). See Mathurin Dréano, *La Renommée de Montaigne en France au XVIIIe siècle, 1677-1802* (Angers: Editions de Ouest, 1952) for information on the contents of these collections, which I will return to later.

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Nicolas Boileau, *Bolaeana, ou les bons mots de M. Boileau*, ed. Monchesnay (Amsterdam: Lhonoré, 1742).

<sup>8</sup> Catherine Magnien-Simonin, *Une Vie de Montaigne, ou Le Sommaire discours sur la vie de Michel Seigneur de Montaigne* (1608) (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1992), 38, 53. As a point of comparison, Montaigne's contemporary Cardano's *The Book of My Life* (1575) consisted of fragmentary chapters with no chronological articulation between them – "Stature and Appearance," "Customs, Vices and Errors," "Testimony of Illustrious Men Concerning Me," etc.

The *Sommaire discours* does not, of course, "prove" that Montaigne wrote his autobiography after all, nor that his contemporaries wished that he had. But its existence is troubling because it complicates greatly the traces of reception furnished by the seventeenth-century compilers who ignored the biographical elements in Montaigne's work (say, his fall from his horse in "De l'exercitation" [II, 6]) in favor of his philosophizing. As a document, the *Sommaire discours* betrays the ambiguity of a moment in which biography and autobiography blended strangely: like Lowenthal, it let Montaigne tell his own life story, but only while simultaneously substituting the third person for the first in its transpositions – "Mon livre est toujours un" (My book is always one) becomes "Son livre a toujours été un" (His book was always one). It reminds us, then, that just as the *Essais* themselves were a deformation of the Renaissance practice of the commonplace book,<sup>9</sup> the reading of the *Essais* was also deformed over time, and these deformations hold clues as to the evolution of modern reading practices.

The question of chronologically understood identity is, however, but one component, vital as it may be, of reading autobiographically. Another component, and the one that will govern the following reading of Montaigne's and to a lesser degree Augustine's seventeenth-century reception, is interiority and its relation to writing. I mean interiority here in a rather specific sense, not simply as a vague term of approbation applied by modern scholars in an attempt to make early texts seem "relevant" to twentieth-century readers, even – and perhaps especially – when the metaphor is entirely absent from the works in question.<sup>10</sup> Interiority is a metaphor, and the question of autobiographical anachronism is linked to the metaphor's use: since when have Montaigne and Augustine seemed to readers to express their inner selves on the printed page?

### Reading Montaigne with Rousseau's Eyes

In 1774, or, by the literary calendar, roughly halfway between Rousseau's undertaking of his *Confessions* (1764) and their initial publication (1782), Montaigne's *Journal de voyage* appeared in print for the first time.<sup>11</sup> This record of Montaigne's travels in Europe had lain forgotten in a trunk until a historian of the Perigord region named Joseph Prunis happened upon it while searching the château of the author of the *Essais*. The then-owner of the château, Charles-Joseph Ségur, entrusted the *Journal's* publication to Prunis, who commenced by drawing up a preface for the projected edition. The reader of Prunis's preface is taken on a tour of Montaigne's fabled library; the editor points out the inscriptions painted on the walls, and laments the disappearance of the library's books – precious relics of the great man. By Prunis's day, Montaigne's pronouncement that he had, with the *Essais*, produced a "livre consubstantiel à son auteur" (a book consubstantial with its author [II, 18: 665; 504]) had become decidedly modest. For Prunis, all of the library was a

9 Cf. Francis Goyet, "A propos de 'Ces pastissages de lieux communs' (Le Rôle des notes de lecture dans la genèse des *Essais*)," *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Montaigne* 7ème série, no. 5 (1986), 11-26.

<sup>10</sup> Examples abound, but witness Gérard Defaux, who, in the introduction and notes to his recent edition of Clément Marot's works, argues for an autobiographical understanding of Marot's poetry through recourse to this metaphor, in spite of the fact that the concept of interior, subjective space – never mind the word "interior" itself – is completely absent from Marot's work: "[Etienne Dolet], for his part, understood that Marot's poetry was ... a poetry of interiority, and that it was in the self, and not in the poetic conventions exterior to this self, that it had its roots" (Clément Marot, *Œuvres poétiques de Clément Marot*, ed. Gérard Defaux, 2 vols. [Paris: Garnier, 1993], 2:xxix).

<sup>11</sup> On the discovery and publication history of the *Journal*, see François Rigolot's critical edition (Michel de Montaigne, *Journal de voyage*, ed. François Rigolot [Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1992]), which reproduces the prefaces quoted here.

sanctum; all of these books were somehow one with their owner. Even the inscriptions Montaigne had copied onto his walls were of interest, and Prunis saw to their publication, announcing: "Tout ce qui a trait à Montaigne est précieux" (Everything that has to do with Montaigne is precious)<sup>12</sup>

Anticipating the activities of the modern institution of the literary fan club, Prunis scoured the home of the great author, uncovering all the textual relics he could find. This obscure eighteenth-century historian's enthusiasm for Montaigne's work – any and all of it – brings to mind changes in what Michel Foucault has called the author-function. For Foucault, this term designates an ensemble of discursive practices – "the way we handle texts, the comparisons we make, the traits we extract as pertinent, the continuities we assign, or the exclusions we practice."<sup>13</sup> In publishing Montaigne's inscriptions, for example, Prunis was claiming for the corpus of the author's official "work" material that had previously been outside it. Montaigne was no longer simply a man who wrote a book called the *Essais*; he was the Author of a network of textual traces that needed to be piously conserved. But the story of the *Journal de voyage* continues, and it is this continuation that is of special importance for autobiography's history.

If, as Foucault maintains, our ideas of what an author is always involve an ideologically motivated selection, it follows that not all members of a reading community share precisely the same conception of authorship. And indeed, Prunis's selection, though clearly made with a mind to the concept of the author, was more limited than some at the time would have liked. Claiming that the *Journal's* countless descriptions of "la moindre humeur vitieuse" (the slightest ill humor)<sup>14</sup> might bore (or embarrass) readers less enthusiastic than himself, he made plans to publish only selections from the *Journal*. Ségur, the official owner of the manuscript, was less than pleased by Prunis's editorial choice, and turned to Anne-Gabriel Meunier de Querlon, in charge of manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Royale in Paris. To Querlon, then, Ségur gave orders to proceed with complete publication, a task realized by the edition of 1774. Despite Prunis's recognition of the author's importance, his editorial restraint would no longer do: everything about Montaigne had to come out in the open.

Like Prunis, Querlon added a preface, but rather than provide a few anecdotal details and descriptions, he availed himself of these pages to set up a way of reading the *Journal*. Querlon argues that, in contrast to the *Essais*, which were intended for publication, the *Journal* was private writing. "Ce journal (il faut bien le répéter) n'avait été fait que pour lui, pour son usage particulier" (He wrote this journal [I must repeat] only for himself, for his private use). And repeat it he does: Querlon reiterates several times that it is here, in this long-lost text, not in the *Essais*, that the reader is to find the most potent example of Montaigne's stylistic *négligence*. Given their public nature, the *Essais* are "un peu plus soigné[s]" (a little more polished) than the *Journal*, which is compared to a "[t]ableau croqué sans le moindre soin" (a picture sketched without the least care) by an artist "[qui] ne crayonne que pour lui seul" ([who] is only scribbling for himself)<sup>15</sup> Querlon warns adepts of the travel journal genre not to expect the usual long descriptions of art-works and edifices, nor digressions on local politics and manners: the *Journal* contains none of that. And so, faced with the necessity of justifying the relevance of this text to the interest of his readers, Querlon comes up with the following argument:

<sup>12</sup> Montaigne, *Journal de voyage*, 305n22.

<sup>13</sup> Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, ed. D. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 127; translation slightly modified.

<sup>14</sup> Montaigne, *Journal de voyage*, 303.

<sup>15</sup> Montaigne, *Journal de voyage*, 315-16.

[C]e qui rendra ce Journal intéressant pour les Lecteurs qui cherchent l'homme dans ses écrits, c'est qu'il leur fera beaucoup mieux connaître l'Auteur des *Essais* que les *Essais* même ... Ici [in *the Journal*] l'on ne voit plus l'Ecrivain, non pas même dans le moment le plus froid de la composition la moins méditée: c'est Montaigne lui-même. On le voit mieux que dans ses *Essais*, parce que c'est bien moins lui qui parle, qui rend témoignage de lui-même, que les faits écrits de sa main pour la décharge de sa mémoire, sans autre vue, sans la moindre idée d'ostentation prochaine, éloignée, présente, ou future.<sup>16</sup>

(This Journal will be of interest to Readers who seek the man in his writings, because it will allow them to know the Author of the Essays better than the Essays themselves do. ... Here [in the *Journal*] one no longer sees the Writer, not even in the coldest moment of the least concerted composition: it is Montaigne himself. One sees him more clearly than in his Essays because it is less he who is speaking and giving testimony, than facts written in his hand in order to discharge his memory, without any other purpose, without the least idea of ostentation, whether immediate or far away, present or future.)

This argument is the extension of Querlon's previous distinctions between private and public writings, between carefree and careful styles. Whereas the author of the *Essais* speaks incessantly of himself, he does so knowingly; his book is thus a construction, the work of a professional writer ("l'Ecrivain"). The *Journal*, on the other hand, is spontaneous discourse, on the surface less concerned with Montaigne himself, but in reality contiguous with him in a way that "concerted" ("méditée;" i.e., self-reflexive) writing could never be: "C'est Montaigne lui-même."

In these prefaces – prescriptions for tackling works whose readability was clearly in question – both Prunis and Querlon give clear illustrations of the application of the author-function to a text created in an authorial environment quite different from that of the 1770s. But Querlon's reading is particularly intriguing, for it demonstrates the extent to which autobiographical thinking was bound up with the institution of authorship: in that web of works spun out by the creature we know as the author there is one sensitive autobiographical spot where the author can be seen, naked and spontaneous, free even of the weight, the immense professional responsibility, of authorship itself. Querlon is much more specific than Prunis, who associates Montaigne with *all* of the texts he might have come in contact with – books owned, authors cited, and so on. Querlon argues that the author is not, in fact, reflected in all texts equally, for there are public texts and private texts, each having its own relation to the individual who produced them. Querlon reads the *Essais*, first, as a public discourse; and second, as so obsessively self-reflective that no clear portrait of Montaigne emerges from the jumble of brush strokes. Conversely, upon the *Journal de voyage*, Querlon projects his desire for a private text, linked intimately to an author who was writing for himself alone; this private writing is seen to be a spontaneous "discharge of memory" revealing the true Montaigne. The format of the *Essais* scatters the subject, while the private *Journal* restores his wholeness. The latter provides the raw center around which the rest of Montaigne's work gravitates.

Any reader of the *Journal* would probably find Querlon's reading aberrant – it is after all a dryly impersonal text, the first third of which appears to have been written not by Montaigne at all, but rather by an anonymous "secretary" who refers to his employer in the third person. But it is the very outrageousness of Querlon's judgment, its strained quality, that alerts us to the urgency

<sup>16</sup> Montaigne, *Journal de voyage*, 316.

transfiguring reading practices in the same years that Rousseau, following the prohibition of his public reading of the *Confessions* in May 1771, was hard at work on *Rousseau juge de Jean-Jacques*. The example of Querlon's preface to the *Journal* hints at the existence of a reading public training itself to project values – authenticity, privacy, and transparency, for instance – upon certain texts held to be experiential, and to accord those texts pride of place in the network of an author's production.

If by appealing to the autobiographical urge Querlon hoped to sell books, he must have been disappointed. In a review article in the *Correspondance littéraire* on the occasion of the *Journal*'s publication, Querlon's potential readers could read: "Il n'est pas étonnant que les *Voyages* de Montaigne aient été attendus avec tant d'empressement; il l'est moins encore qu'ils aient fait si peu de sensation depuis qu'ils ont paru" (It is not surprising that the *Voyages* of Montaigne were so eagerly awaited; but it is even less surprising that they have caused so little sensation since they appeared)<sup>17</sup> The expectation explains the burst of five editions (in different formats) in 1774 and 1775; the lack of subsequent interest explains why no others were forthcoming. But this failure must not be interpreted as a rejection of Querlon's values, for the reviewer for the *Correspondance littéraire* – probably Grimm – thirsts as much as Montaigne's editor for an intimate, autobiographical rapport with the author; it is just that for him that rapport comes from the *Essais* and not the *Journal*. Echoing ideas that had become commonplace by the eighteenth century, the reviewer writes:

On aime à suivre Montaigne dans l'intérieur de sa maison, à s'enfermer avec lui dans sa chambre, à s'asseoir à ses côtés au coin de son feu, et à écouter ainsi toutes les confidences qu'il se plaît à nous faire de ses opinions, de ses idées, de ses sentiments, de ses goûts particuliers, de ses affections et de ses pensées les plus secrètes.<sup>18</sup>

(We enjoy following Montaigne into the interior of his house, being closed up with him in his room, sitting down next to him by the fire, and listening to all the confidences he wishes to accord us concerning his opinions, his ideas, his feelings, his private tastes, his affections and his most secret thoughts.)

What this sentence proposes is nothing less than a topography of the autobiographical subject: taking us from the outside to the inside, to the bourgeois space of subjectivity as it was developing in the 1700s (house, fireside), we as readers of the *Essais* are also brought through a clear

<sup>17</sup> *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, Etc. ...*, ed. Maurice Tourneux, vol. 10 (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1879), 430.

<sup>18</sup> *Correspondance littéraire*, 431. By the eighteenth century, notes Dréano, Montaigne's much-discussed vanity had become a virtue (*La Renommée de Montaigne*, 163). The motif of the fireside chat is recurrent in accounts of the time, as is an emphasis on the *Essais* as the space of the secret heart's divulgation: "Comme c'est le portrait du cœur humain qu'il [Montaigne] fait, en faisant le sien, les lecteurs ne pensent qu'à eux-mêmes, en lisant Montaigne, ils se recherchent, et ils s'étudient en lui. La plupart même se flattent dans la comparaison secrète qu'ils font de leurs idées, de leurs mœurs, et de leurs sentiments, avec du plus naïf, du plus profond, et du plus singulier Ecrivain que nous ayons" (Since it is the portrait of the human heart that he [Montaigne] is drawing, in drawing his own, readers think only of themselves while reading Montaigne, they look for themselves and they study themselves in him. Most even flatter themselves with the secret comparison they make between their ideas, their mores and their feelings and those of the most naive, most profound, and most singular Writer we have) ("Observations sur le *Huetiana*," *Mercure de France*, 1744, 5, 946-47).

progression from the implied exteriority of the cerebral to the emotional/experiential, passing from opinions and ideas to feelings, taste, and secret thoughts. These last are, more precisely, Montaigne's "most secret thoughts": reading autobiographically implies navigating this graduated topography, plumbing the depths of a subject who is not simply constructed of appearance and underlying reality, but who is layered, a human onion.

### Is Montaigne Shallow or Deep?

Bringing up the issue of Montaigne's interiority may well seem pointless to Montaigne scholars of whatever persuasion – both to the group of critics who find his interiority self-evident, and to those who find it hopelessly anachronistic. For the former group, concerned with the problem of the self in the *Essais*, Montaigne's frequent use of a term such as "dedans" cannot but imply the existence of subjective space, and open up to us thereby a phenomenological understanding of the Montaignian relation between self, world and text. These observations rapidly lead to a kind of received wisdom in Montaigne studies – namely, that the *Essais* are, in the words of Richard Regosin, "interiority externalized, ... the invisible made visible."<sup>19</sup> This insistence on Montaigne's modernity, his ability to speak directly to us after some four hundred years, is a point of irritation for those who prefer to emphasize the historical particularity of Montaigne's *moi*, and to applaud Montaigne's quite un-modern, indeed sometimes postmodern, insight into the self's inherent performativity: the author, the *Essais* seem to prove, is not "expressed" in a text of which he is the referent, but constituted in the very act of writing. How else can one interpret the utter circularity of the famous "Je n'ai pas plus fait mon livre que mon livre m'a fait, livre consubstantiel à son auteur" (I have no more made my book than my book has made me – a book consubstantial with its author [II, 18: 665; 504])?<sup>20</sup>

An enormous gulf separates these two readings of Montaigne's ubiquitous *moi* – the gulf, I would argue, of depth itself. As Foucault has shown in his later work on sexuality, all reflexive first-person discourse does not necessarily take its place in the same continuous and ever-increasing concern with "individuality." On the contrary, he argues: the West has known two radically different "technologies" of the self. One, which dominates particularly the modern world, and defines the type of autobiographical reading of Montaigne I have been exploring, Foucault calls a "hermeneutics of self." For the West, the self is conceived of as something pre-existing that people

<sup>19</sup> Richard L. Regosin, *The Matter of My Book: Montaigne's "Essais" as the Book of the Self* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 200. Note that recently the question of Montaigne's interiority has come under closer scrutiny by scholars who wish to situate him in a subjective evolution while maintaining his historical specificity. See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 177-84; Eva Kushner, "Intériorité, altérité, spatialité chez Montaigne," in *Le Lecteur, l'auteur et l'écrivain: Montaigne 1492-1592-1992*, ed. Ilana Zinguer (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1993), 31-40; and Fausta Garavini, "Voyage du 'je' au pars de l'écriture," in *Montaigne: Espace, voyage, écriture*, ed. Zoé Samaras (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1995), 237-42.

<sup>20</sup> Glossing this very passage, Lawrence Kritzman writes: "The work is created at the same time as it creates [Montaigne] ... The authority of the text depends on its being erected as the monument of a self analyzing itself and offered to the world in the movement of its own production" (Lawrence D. Kritzman, *Destruction/Découverte: Le fonctionnement de la rhétorique dans les Essais de Montaigne* [Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1980], 124). See also Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 273: "In that the *Essais* aim to project the image of a self which conforms to the book, they are neither memoirs nor autobiography, but rather a surrogate self, an auto-performance which cannot but displace the 'real' Montaigne."

(notably the subject him or herself, but also someone like a psychoanalyst) strive to interpret; it is the locus of a hermeneutic act undertaken in the conviction "that there is something hidden in ourselves and that we are always in a self-illusion which hides the secret." Confession, autobiography, psychoanalysis, the TV talk show – all would be unthinkable without the hermeneutic lure of discovering, Foucault writes, "the truth that inhabits the individual."<sup>21</sup> All form the library of our culture of avowal, "a literature ordered according to the infinite task of extracting from the depths of oneself, in between the words, a truth which the very form of the confession holds out like a shimmering mirage."<sup>22</sup> To this hermeneutics, which turns the self into the subject of the discourse of truth, Foucault opposes a concept that characterized most of the ancient world and only slowly mutated into the hermeneutic imperative – care of the self. To take care of the self (the Greek precept *epimeleisthai sautou*) is not to discover a buried truth, but to engage in a daily ascetic regimen. Rather than revealing the extradiscursive truth of the subject, caring for the self involves an *assimilation* of truth – for instance, a memorization of laws of conduct so complete that desired actions (fearlessness in the face of death, indifference to pain or pleasure, and so on) become automatic. Last, according to this Stoic view there is no essential division between what I am and what I appear to be; I can become what I want, for "I" is nothing else but a blank slate ready for inscription. Care of the self, therefore, has as little use for the metaphor of depth as a hermeneutics of self depends on it.

If I mention Stoicism here, it is certainly not by way of resurrecting Pierre Villey's now unfashionable theory of the "evolution" (from Stoic to Skeptic to Epicurean) in Montaigne's thought.<sup>23</sup> No doubt there is in the *Essais* a certain tension between competing Classical "ideas" from which Montaigne produces an uneasy (or happy) synthesis, but this philosophical tension appears as somewhat of an epiphenomenon next to the discordant technologies of the self that govern each appearance of the Montaignian *moi*. It is this opposition – between self as a practice and self as the locus of a preexistent truth (i.e., an interiorized subject) – that accounts for the deceptiveness of Montaigne's interiority. Because the *Essais* mark the intersection or overlapping of two different models of identity, even Montaigne's most inward turns are doggedly shadowed by the ethic of the malleable self. Moreover, the coexistence of these competing models for an "I"-centered world has made inevitable the split in critical writings concerning the subject of Montaigne's "self" – between partisans of a modern, autobiographical Montaigne, and supporters of a flat pre- or postmodern nonsubject.

Admittedly, distinguishing the self-as-practice from the hermeneutic subject is not always a simple matter, especially given the insistence with which modern readers view any mention of reflexivity

<sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self*: ed. L. Martin, H. Gutman and P. H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 46, 33 (translation modified).

<sup>22</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Volume I: *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1978), 59.

<sup>23</sup> . It has long been observed that the Renaissance owed much to the rediscovery of Stoic thought (e.g., Léontine Zanta, *La Renaissance du stoïcisme au XVIe siècle* [Paris: Honoré Champion, 1914]); regarding Montaigne specifically, it was Pierre Villey who initially traced Stoic motifs and theorized their gradual disappearance over the fifteen or so years the *Essais* were composed. According to Villey, an initial Stoic phase, in which Montaigne meditated on heroic exemplarity, gave way, after an intervening bout with skepticism, to a somewhat hedonistic Epicurianism that rejected ascetic effort as useless if not downright perverse. See Pierre Villey, *Les Sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne*, 2 vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1908). For a sample critique of Villey's now-discredited thesis, see Hugo Friedrich, *Montaigne*, trans. Dawn Eng, ed. Philippe Desan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 66-70 and 322-24

as a primitive form of an evolving concern with individuality. That is, given the subsequent subjective developments of which we ourselves are a product, we tend to read all Montaigne's pronouncements on himself as if they involved a hermeneutics, a discovery of something deep and hidden. A perfect example is "De la solitude" (1, 39), which begins with the common Montaignian opposition between *particulier* and *publicq*, which translates, here and elsewhere in the *Essais*, the problematic possibility of what Timothy Hampton has described as "productive social action." Because of this opposition, Hampton writes, Montaigne becomes two – "the solitary Montaigne, who is able to create and recreate himself through the process of writing in the protected space of his study, and Montaigne the actor, who finds himself misunderstood and misinterpreted by those around him."<sup>24</sup> This disjunction leads Montaigne to a series of proclamations that one is tempted to read as interiorizing: "[I] faut ramener [l'âme] et [la] retirer en soy" ([W]e must bring [the soul] back and withdraw it into itself [I, 39: 240; 176]); "Il se faut reserver une arriere boutique toute nostre" (We must reserve a back shop all our own [241; 177]); "La plus grande chose du monde, c'est de sçavoir estre à soy" (The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself [242; 178]); "Nos forces nous faillent; retirons les et resserrons en nous" (Our powers are failing us; let us withdraw them and concentrate them on ourselves [242; 178]); "Retirez vous en vous" (Retire into yourself [247; 182]). Indeed, the repetition of the pronoun "en" with personal pronouns, coupled with the architectural metaphor of the "arriere boutique," do seem to suggest a turn inward: Montaigne, here, might be read as prefiguring those moments of inner monologue when the Princesse de Clèves withdraws to her *cabinet* in order to sort out her feelings for the Duc de Nemours. What could be more modern than this retreat into a private space?

And yet the whole enterprise of retreat for Montaigne has little to do with introspection as such, if one understands that term, as I believe we must, as literally as possible – as the search for a truth located metaphorically inside each one of us.<sup>25</sup> Instead, retreat here is a matter of engaging in a practice of self-government ("[se] gouverner" [247]) by which one prepares oneself for misfortune through the contemplation of hypothetical events or exemplary figures: "presentez vous tousjours en l'imagination Caton, Phocion et Aristides" (keep ever in your mind Cato, Phocion, and Aristides [247; 183]) he advises the reader of "De la Solitude." Withdrawing into his "arriere boutique" is thus flight from public action, and, furthermore, a means of "bridl[ing]" ("bride[r]" [I, 8: 21; 32]) the disorderly flux of the mind, of establishing "a definite organization in [one's] head" ("certaine police en sa teste" [II, 1: 333; 240]), of "train[ing] [one's] life ... toward a definite goal" ("dress[er] ... sa vie a une certaine fin" [II, 1: 337; 243, translation modified]). This is undoubtedly a self-reflective turn, in that social action, action on the stage of history, is discredited in favor of a care of the self; but no reiteration of the simple words "en moi" would make this a hermeneutic introspection, as the briefest comparison with Rousseau would suggest. When Rousseau writes of the pleasures of solitude, the act of retreat makes possible a type of self-cultivation in which the subject, and not some exterior idealized model, is the point of origin. Hence, Rousseau writes of his idyllic stay at "Les Charmettes" as follows:

La méditation me tenait en cela lieu de connaissance, et une réflexion très naturelle aidait à me bien guider... Ne sachant a quel point le sort ou la mort pouvaient arrêter mon zèle, je voulais à

<sup>24</sup> Hampton, *Writing from History*, 153.

<sup>25</sup> As an aside, it comes as no surprise that "introspection" has seventeenth century roots. In English, its first appearances date from the last quarter of the century (OED); the word, unlisted in Furetière's dictionary, only enters the French language much later, in the early nineteenth century.

tout événement acquérir des idées de toutes choses, tant pour sonder mes dispositions naturelles que pour juger par moi-même de ce qui méritait le mieux d'être cultivé.<sup>26</sup>

(In that way meditation took the place of knowledge for me, and a very natural reflection contributed to my guidance... Not knowing at what point fate or death would put a stop to my zeal, I wanted as a measure of precaution to acquire ideas about everything, so that I could both sound my natural dispositions and judge for myself what most deserved to be cultivated.)

Solitude enables Rousseau to "sound" the depths of his "natural" reflections and dispositions, to substitute for mere book-knowledge a guidance that seems to take root in the autonomy of the subject. Similarly, he leaves the throngs in order to come face to face with an authentic experience of being that the agitations of social life occlude: on the island of Saint-Pierre, he experiences an enjoyment "[d]e rien d'extérieur à soi, de rien sinon de soi-même et de sa propre existence" (of nothing exterior to oneself, of nothing but oneself and one's own existence).<sup>27</sup> Retreat is thus a gesture that the modern subject will re-appropriate and invest with subjective qualities absent two centuries earlier, when it was still associated with scholarly study and aristocratic *otium*.<sup>28</sup>

Readers familiar with what Villey called Montaigne's "Epicurean phase" know that Montaigne will come to critique Stoic exercises of the type that appear in "De la solitude," founded on the idea of imitation: "Mes actions sont réglées et conformes à ce que je suis et à ma condition" (My actions are in order and conformity with what I am and with my condition) he writes in the 1588 edition, admitting that since he is "ny Ange, ny Caton" (neither an angel nor Cato [III, 2: 813; 617]), he may as well try to be neither.<sup>29</sup> But if the crisis of exemplarity leads Montaigne to reject imitation, does the breakdown of this identity paradigm cause him to envisage truth as lying at the bottom of individual experience? Does Montaigne replace a Stoic care of the self with a hermeneutics, thus opening up an interior space, the space of modern subjectivity? The answer is complex.

On the one hand, a number of critics, generally inspired by deconstructive critiques of reference, have argued that the breakdown in previously accepted identity paradigms – notably imitation, but also the citation of prior authorities – leads the Montaignian *moi* into something of a closed loop. In other words, Montaigne cannot predicate his identity on a correspondence between the *moi* and an ideal, because all ideals – such as honor ("De la gloire" [II, 16]) – are a type of false money or empty signifier; he therefore imagines a kind of self-presence-through-writing. This self can exist *only* in writing; there is nothing to imitate, but neither is there something "there," in the subject, before the act of writing itself. The author is not "expressed" in a text of which he is the referent; instead, Montaigne presents us with an endlessly reiterated self-reflexivity, qualitatively different from "subjectivity," which, following Descartes, would be assumed to precede language and to

<sup>26</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Confessions*, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond, Vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 234-35.

<sup>27</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, 5, in Rousseau, *Œuvres complètes*, 1047. It is no accident that Rousseau conflates retreat with imprisonment, both being manifestations of what John Bender calls the "penitentiary idea" – "an ideal of confinement as the story of isolated self-consciousness shaped over time" (John B. Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987], 44).

<sup>28</sup> On retreat in the early modern period, see Bernard Beugnot, *Le Discours de la retraite au XVIIe siècle: Loin du monde et du bruit* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> As Hampton demonstrates, even Cato's example provokes problems of readability (cf. *Writing from History*, 159-66).

found the latter's referentiality.<sup>30</sup> The mirror relation of absolute similitude, the pure tautology that Montaigne claims to exist between his person and his book ("tout le monde me reconnoit en mon livre, et mon livre en moy" [everyone recognizes me in my book, and my book in me (III, 5: 875; 667)]) precludes the idea of hermeneutic quest.

Seen in this way, as part of a history of subjectivity, the proliferation of the *moi* in Montaigne has been portrayed not so much as the beginnings of an autobiographical consciousness, but rather as a sort of primordial soup from which such a consciousness would be able subsequently to emerge. According to Antoine Compagnon, for example, Montaigne sits astride two radically different modes of attributing authority to texts: the *Essais* represent a moment of *dérive* following the "fabulous mobilisation of the text"<sup>31</sup> provoked by the invention of the printing press, after which the medieval practice of copying and commenting institutionally approved authorities (such as Aristotle) could never be the same; and they precede the Cartesian *res cogitans*, which will anchor all discourse in the self-evident experience of thought. In this subjective no-man's-land, Montaigne can but oscillate between citation and assertions of originality, between the half-fetishized, half-disenchanted discourse of the Latin Other which he is driven to incorporate into his own text, and the anxious repetition of a *moi* menaced by this discourse's proliferation.<sup>32</sup> Compagnon concludes by comparing Montaigne's situation to that of French philosophy a century later:

The reference, still potent at the time, which Montaigne attempted to avoid was that of the great man, the *auctoritas* who would confer on him an identity. For Malebranche this no longer exists and the reference is completely different: it is the subject itself; any subject is its own reference. ... Montaigne refused the test and the guarantee of tradition, but he did not know of a new one. This is why he was unable to do anything other than speak, tirelessly and incessantly, of himself.<sup>33</sup>

This is also why, according to such arguments, Montaigne's abundant concern with himself should not necessarily be taken for a step on the road to the "discovery of the individual." All first-person pronouns are not alike, and the advent of the subject can be lead in the movement from the direct object pronoun in Montaigne (by which the individual takes refuge from duplicity by closing itself within an infinitely repeating circuit) to the Cartesian "I" (which takes as its object the world itself). Since this Cartesian subject has not yet been articulated, Montaigne is led to multiply self-reflexivity in the anxious quest for a ground for the "I": "le plus seur estoit de me fier à moy-mesme de moy" (the surest thing was to entrust myself ... to myself [III, 12: 1045; 799]).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> On "the hermeneutical illusion of personality, of hidden intentions and individuality" in relation to the Cartesian text, see Dalia Judovitz, *Subjectivity and Representation in Descartes: The Origins of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). On the prominence of reflexive verbs in the *Essais*, see also Jean Starobinski, *Montaigne en mouvement* (Paris: Gallimard, 1982), 27.

<sup>31</sup> Antoine Compagnon, *La Seconde main, ou le travail de la citation* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), 235.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*, 307: "invasion by alien authors is countered by a withdrawal into his own property, an imaginary *rus* where, alone, the writer fabricates a book which is exactly his."

<sup>33</sup> Compagnon, *La Seconde main*, 311.

<sup>34</sup> For similar readings see, for instance, Anthony Cascardi, who maintains that although Montaigne is not yet "modern," his strange and somewhat unhinged use of the first person is indicative of a crisis to which the modern subject à la Descartes will be a response (Anthony J. Cascardi, *The Subject of Modernity* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], 65). See also Timothy J. Reiss, "Montaigne and the Subject of Polity," in *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*, ed. Patricia Parker and David Quint (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University

In spite of accounts such as Compagnon's, which situate Montaigne squarely beyond or before the advent of "modern subjectivity," it is difficult not to recognize another trait of the *Essais* that some might prefer to reject as anachronistic – Montaigne's repeated if inclusive gesturing towards an inchoate depth. Montaigne manages to combine both unbridled self-reflexivity – a reflexivity which admits of nothing outside of the textual practice that constitutes the "I" – *and* a persistent deployment of topographical tropes that from time to time open up an experiential subjective world of which the *Essais* are the hermeneutic tool. I have argued in the case of "De la solitude" that Montaigne, in writing of that need to "ramener [l'âme] et [la] retirer en soy" (bring [the soul] back and withdraw it into itself [I, 39: 240; 176]), often stops short of the opening of an interior space. At other moments, however, Montaigne shifts from the ethic of the care of the self to a more interiorizing vocabulary, as in the justly famous passage that follows:

Le monde regarde tousjours vis à vis; moy, je replie ma veue au dedans, je la plante, je l'amuse là. Chacun regarde devant soy; moy, je regarde dedans moy: je n'ay affaire qu'à moy, je me considere sans cesse, je me contrerolle, je me gouste. Les autres vont tousjours ailleurs, s'ils y pensent bien; ils vont toujours avant,  
nemo in sese tentant descendere,  
moy je me roule en moy mesme.

(The world always looks straight ahead; as for me, I turn my gaze inward, I fix it there and keep it busy. Everyone looks in front of him; as for me, I look inside of me; I have no business but with myself; I continually observe myself, I take stock of myself, I taste myself. Others always go elsewhere, if they stop to think about it; they always go forward;

No man tries to descend into himself;  
as for me, I roll about in myself.) (II, 17: 657-58; 499)

Here, a centripetal divorce between self and world is replaced by what can be described as a scopic movement ("je replie ma vue") in which a still vague interior ("dedans," "dedans moy") is taken as a object of interest; the metaphor of interiority is furthermore enhanced by the citation from Persius's fourth Satire, according to which "no one tries to descend into oneself." But is there truth to be discovered in these depths? At first glance, no: this object of *interest* is not an object of *inquiry*, in that at the moment Montaigne lexically looks inward – literally, introspects – he can only but assert the familiar tautological self-presence resulting from a proliferation of reflexive verbs and object pronouns ("je me roule en moy mesme"). And yet, just when the reader is about to conclude that what introspection there is here comes to naught (in that nothing is really uncovered), Montaigne continues: "Cette capacité de trier le vray, quelle qu'elle soit en moy" (this capacity for shifting truth, whatever it may amount to in me), suggesting that Montaigne may well occupy a hermeneutic stance with respect to his depths after all.

The numerous modern commentaries on this passage have done little to throw light on Montaigne's hesitation here, on the inconclusiveness of his metaphors of interiority. Jean Starobinski, in his long gloss of the passage does highlight the paradox that nothing is in fact to be discovered in the indeterminate inner space Montaigne creates. Yet for Starobinski, paradox can be ascribed only to the insight of the author. Montaigne's pronouncements on the self, in other words, should always be read with an eye to reconstructing the ultimately consistent phenomenological world view that is

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Press, 1986), 115-49: "I am tempted indeed to suggest that in the *Essays*, the 'subject' is glimpsed only by these signs of its *absence*. In Descartes, the subject is *there* by the certainty of its *presence*" (134).

their origin. Hence, given the difficulties involved in reading Montaigne, here and elsewhere, as describing a self-as-hidden-truth, the critic opts for a synthesis that restores Montaigne's unique and rigorously consistent perspective on selfhood: "Our true self is not the obscure and insubstantial reality toward which the incomplete effort at knowledge tends," Starobinski writes, "it is this very tension and incompleteness."<sup>35</sup> Starobinski's reading, in this respect, ignores the possibility that Montaigne's textual pronouncements on and descriptions of his *moi* are traversed by the contradictions of a historical moment and partially determined by metaphors that have origins and fates that lie outside of the text itself. For in this passage and others, one can witness both a subjectively "modern" Montaigne *and* his pre-modern double, the Montaigne of those who view the *Essais* both as "interiority externalized, ... the invisible made visible,"<sup>36</sup> *and* as the text of a self that is not yet a subject.

My point, then, is that Starobinski's attempt to offer an alternative to each of these dominant readings of the Montaignian self succeeds no better than they do in describing a text in which many conflicting ideas of selfhood come into play, often in one and the same passage. If Montaigne's thought varies ("Si je parle diversement de moy, c'est que je me regarde diversement" [If I speak of myself in different ways, that is because I look at myself in different ways (11, 1: 335; 242)]), it is not only because, say, his ideas or perspectives change, but also because he is writing at a moment when human beings were starting to metaphorize themselves in a very specific way. To appreciate the contradictions of the text one must lead it against the evolving vocabulary of inwardness that one sees, for instance, in Renaissance debates on imitation and authorship. As Terence Cave has shown in his discussion of Erasmus's and Dolet's quarrel over Ciceronianism, it is precisely to Renaissance questions on the attribution of authenticity to texts that one can trace one of the earliest occurrences of a reflexive use of the verb "to express" ("exprimer"): "If you want to express Cicero totally," Erasmus writes in his *Ciceronianus* (1528), "you cannot express yourself. If you do not express yourself, your discourse will be a lying mirror." Du Bellay in a similar context avails himself of the trope of interiority that will from time to time surface in Montaigne's *Essais*, as for instance when he maintains that the good translators must "pénétrer aux plus cachées et intérieures parties de l'auteur qu'ils se sont proposé" (penetrate into the most hidden and interior parts of the author they have taken up).<sup>37</sup> Metaphors such as these are inseparable from the development of the autobiographical mentality, even if they here occur in treatises with no personal content. Montaigne's originality, if he must have one, is to have begun the deployment of interiorizing tropes in a first-person text still massively dedicated to the care of the self.

### Innards

The distinguishing feature of the hermeneutic self is its hiddenness, the difficulty the subject as well as the observer has in accessing secret truths. It is this difficulty in "getting it out" that guarantees the authenticity of the confession, the truth of the utterance, and the depth of the

<sup>35</sup> Starobinski, *Montaigne en mouvement*, 272-73.

<sup>36</sup> Regosin, *The Matter of My Book*, 200.

<sup>37</sup> Qtd. by Cave, *The Cornucopian Text*, 42, 65. Cave has more recently proposed the beginnings of what he calls the philological history of the self, tracing notably the first uses of the substantive "le moi" See Terence Cave, *Pré-histoires: Textes troublés au seuil de la modernité* (Geneva: Droz, 1999).

subject.<sup>38</sup> Certainly, Montaigne speaks often of the possibility of transparency, of the restoration of a world in which inside and outside were in fact no different – this is the promise of sincerity that will so often accompany autobiographical avowal in the modern age.<sup>39</sup> Hence, in his discussion of dissimulation he offers the maxim, "Un cœur genereux ne doit point desmentir ses pensées; il se veut faire voir jusques au dedans" (A generous heart should not belie its thoughts; it wants to reveal itself even to its utmost depths [II, 17: 647; 491]); and "Du repentir," obsessively centered on the "dedans" as a space of authenticity, concludes with the wish, "Je me veux presenter et faire veoir par tout uniformément" (I want to present and show myself uniformly throughout [III, 2: 816; 620]). Yet wholeness remains always tantalizingly out of reach, only to be projected nostalgically on a Classical past that in all probability never existed in the first place. The logic of interiority requires, on the contrary, a remainder of the hidden, a resistance to transparency, something that, at best, can be pointed to but not "expressed": "Or, autant que la bienséance me le permet, je faicts icy sentir mes inclinations et affections. ... Ce que je ne puis exprimer, je le montre au doigt. ... Je ne laisse rien à desirer et deviner de moy" (Now, as far as decency permits me, I here make known my inclinations and feelings. ... What I cannot express I point to with my finger. ... I leave nothing about me to be desired or guessed [III, 9: 983; 751]). It is at moments such as this last, in which Montaigne admits of something that problematizes the consubstantiality of his book, that a subjective world opens up, a world to be shown, peered into, scrutinized, in search of some secret – "jusques à noz intimes et plus secretes ordures" (even to our inmost and most secret filth [III, 5: 888; 677]), as he writes in "Sur des vers de Virgil," a chapter concerned precisely with the voicing of the hidden and censored.

One of the most significant moments in which the Montaignian text starts to take human hiddenness as its subject occurs in a passage, added to the 1595 edition, that would feel familiar to a modern reader even if it had not been so extensively cited, usually as proof of Montaigne's modernity:

C'est une espineuse entreprinse, et plus qu'il ne semble, de suyvre une alleure si vagabonde que celle de nostre esprit; de penetrer les profondeurs opaques de ses replis internes; de choisir et arrester tant de menus airs des ses agitations. Et est un amusement nouveau et extraordinaire, qui nous retire des occupations communes du monde, ouy, et des plus recommandées. Il y a plusieurs années que je n'ay que moy pour visée à mes pensées, que je ne contrerolle et estudie que moy; et, si j'estudie autre chose, c'est pour soudain le coucher sur moy, ou en moy, pour mieux dire.

(It is a thorny undertaking, and more so than it seems, to follow a movement so wandering as that of our mind, to penetrate the opaque depths of its innermost folds, to pick out and immobilize the innumerable flutterings that agitate it. And it is a new and extraordinary amusement, which withdraws us from the ordinary occupations of the world, yes, even from those most recommended. It is many years now that I have had only myself as object of my thoughts, that I have been examining and studying only myself; and if I study anything else, it is in order promptly to apply it to myself, or rather within myself.) (II, 6: 378; 273)

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Foucault, *History of Sexuality*: "[Confession] had to be exacted, by force, since it involved something that tried to stay hidden" (66).

<sup>39</sup> Here I follow Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 28, who details how the reign of what she calls "inwardness" is productive of two interdependent fantasies: that selves are obscure, hidden and ineffable, and that they are fully manifest or capable of being made manifest.

Like so many other parts of the *Essais*, this one deals with flux, specifically, the flux of the mind; one can easily associate it with dozens of other sections of the *Essais* in which Montaigne comments on the state of continual passage that characterizes history as much as the individual.<sup>40</sup> Two elements of this particular text, however, deserve closer scrutiny – those elements that impart a subjective familiarity to the passage. The first is a metaphor, the metaphor of the fold, sandwiched between two metaphors of movement: this "alleure si vagabonde" and these "agitations" the self-observer seeks in vain to "arrester" are separated by "les profondeurs opaques [des] replis internes" of the mind, a depth the observer tries to "penetrer." If movement and folds can certainly be thought of as staples of "Baroque" aesthetics – characterized by change and inconsistency – much, nevertheless, separates them. Movement *undoes* the notion of unified truth, while the fold suggests that something lurks inside: the fold at once marks a scission between exterior and interior and sets up a meandering relation between the two.<sup>41</sup> Montaigne's justly famous movement is a metaphor for a selfhood not yet anchored in the depths that hide truth; it is a vivid metaphor indeed, but only for someone already equipped to map experience in terms of inner and outer does it imply interiority. It is only these internal, subjective folds – which may well seem unremarkable to the reader accustomed to, say, the labyrinthine metaphors of a Racine – that present the reader with one of the *Essais's* most explicit references to the subject's depth and its relation to writing.<sup>42</sup>

This deepening is something that strikes Montaigne himself as worthy of emphasis; it cannot "go without saying," as the tell-tale hesitation at the end of the citation makes clear: "c'est pour soudain le [i.e., an exterior object of study] coucher *sur* moy, ou *en* moy, pour mieux dire." Montaigne frequently uses the preposition "en" with the pronouns "moy" or "soy." Yet a false-start of this sort ("ou en moy, pour mieux dire") underlines that the preposition "en" is to take its meaning from the foil of "sur"; in other words, it alerts the reader to a moment of semantic shift in which the preposition "sur," with its connotations of superficiality, is explicitly declared inadequate. But we can go further: it also suggests that ideal conduct or belief is no longer seen as something the individual *applies to* himself as if it were a mask ("coucher sur"); rather, the individual must

<sup>40</sup> E.g., "Certes, c'est un sujet merveilleusement vain, divers et ondoyant, que l'homme" (Truly man is a marvelously vain, diverse, and undulating object [I, 1: 9; 5]); "Si on ne les [les esprits] occupe à certain sujet, qui les bride et contreigne, ils se jettent desreiglez, par-cy par-là, dans le vague champ des imaginations" (Unless you keep them [minds] busy with some definite subject that will bridle and control them, they throw themselves in disorder hither and yon in the vague field of imagination [I, 8: 32; 21]); "Je ne peints pas l'estre. Je peints le passage" (I do not portray being: I portray passing [III, 2: 805; 611]), etc. On movement in the *Essais*, see Starobinski, *Montaigne en mouvement*; and Michel Jeanneret, *Perpetuum mobile: Métamorphoses des corps et des œuvres, de Vinci à Montaigne* (Paris: Macula, 1997).

<sup>41</sup> On the Baroque fold as that which harmonizes inferior and exterior, see Gilles Deleuze, "The Fold," *Yale French Studies* 80 (1991), 227-47. On Montaigne's "Baroqueness" more generally, see Richard A. Sayce, "Baroque Elements in Montaigne," *French Studies* 8 (1954), 1-16.

<sup>42</sup> Hence Richard Regosin's gloss of the passage leads him to generalize: "Montaigne's journey toward the self takes place in the figurative space of interiority" (Regosin, *The Matter of My Book*, 166). This may, however, be overstating the case, in that references to psychological depths are not exactly common in the *Essais*. Invoking the same passage, another critic comments: "There are indeed a few passages in the *Essais* in which Montaigne refers to those depths in himself whose secret ferment he sometimes feels and which he is attempting to explore in writing. These passages are not numerous" (Garavini, "Voyage du 'je'," 237. The metaphor of interiority does not organize all of Montaigne's reflections on himself; rather, it is a concept he hits upon from time to time.

*incorporate* ("coucher en") this exterior ideal.<sup>43</sup> Hence Montaigne, in his hesitant move from the care of the self to a hermeneutics of the self, might be said to demonstrate the process by which the modern subject internalizes cultural norms and values and comes to view them as arising within him or herself. Montaigne describes an incorporation that will eventually erase its origin, leaving the individual as self-regulating subject, forgetful of the fact that this standard has come to him from outside.<sup>44</sup>

Replacing "sur" by "en" in a context in which we have already been invited to penetrate the opaque folds of the subject hardly appears, then, an accident; and it appears still less so when later on in the same addition of the Bordeaux copy we hear a strong echo of the metaphor of the fold. Speaking of the task of painting "[s]es cogitations, sujet informe" ([his] cogitations, a shapeless subject), Montaigne writes: "Je m'estalle entier: c'est un *skeletos* ou, d'une veuë, les veines, les muscles, les tendons paraissent, chaque piece en son siege" (I expose myself entire: my portrait is a cadaver on which the veins, the muscles, and the tendons appear at a glance, each part in its place [379; 274]). Not only does this passage explicitly relate writing to the anatomical uncovering of internal bodily organs,<sup>45</sup> but it also leads us to suspect that the previous metaphor of the mind as fold ("les profondeurs opaques de ses replis internes") might be something closer to an anatomical description of the brain than simply a variation on a Baroque topos. Vesalius's seminal *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543), for example, contains a number of plates depicting the cranial folds of the brain. Montaigne's text here may well find itself on the same epistemic ground as the Renaissance science of anatomy, given to understanding what Foucault has described as "the tangible space of the body, which is at the same time that opaque mass in which secrets, invisible lesions, and the very mystery of origins lie hidden."<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> "Ideas and events of the outside world, and the writer's own life there, become a function of interiority" (Regosin, *The Matter of My Book*, 171).

<sup>44</sup> For a theory of how power creates a psyche metaphorized in terms of interiority, see Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), esp. chap. 6: "[Conscience] is the vanishing point of the state's authority, its psychic idealization, and, in that sense, its disappearance as an external object. The process of forming the subject is a process of rendering the terrorizing power of the state invisible – and effective – as the ideality of conscience" (191). Butler here is elaborating on Althusserian "interpellation" and especially on Foucault's contention that a disciplinary society ultimately relies on the subject's own participation in the maintenance of power: "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles" (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan [New York: Vintage, 1995], 202-3). In Montaigne, of course, the power that is internalized is not state power, but rather that of the *exemplum*.

<sup>45</sup> Rousseau as well will put his autobiographical project under the sign of anatomy – "intus, et in cute," reads his epigraph – but by that time the ubiquity of the medical gaze, as well as human interiority, will have become givens. See, for example, Rétif de la Bretonne, who in his 1794-97 autobiography repeatedly makes reference to his writing as a sort of "dissection morale" (Nicolas Rétif de La Bretonne, *Monsieur Nicolas, ou le cœur humain dévoilé*, vol. 1 [Paris: J.-J. Pauvert, 1959], xxxvii).

<sup>46</sup> Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la clinique: Une Archéologie du regard médical* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963), 123. For a detailed discussion of the relation between the sense of human interiority and anatomy in the Renaissance, see Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995); his work extends the "archeology of the medical gaze" Foucault undertook in *Naissance de la clinique*, which is limited to the nineteenth century. On the anatomical gaze and seventeenth-century subjection, see Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body*, 65-102. On the growing

The occasional but nonetheless insistent invitation to penetrate metaphoric opacity, the suggestion that under the fold might lie some secret truth that writing will make available, are often in Montaigne just such an anatomical affair. Unsurprisingly for someone afflicted with kidney stones, his concern with the internal (e.g., "interne vergogne" (inner shame) [II, 17: 648; 491], "constitution interne" (inner constitution) [III, 2: 810; 614], "interne santé" (inner health) [III, 13: 1079; 826]) is inseparable from the modern science of the subject that is medicine. In this, he delivers much more than he promises in his "Au lecteur," where he declares he will present himself as naked ("tout nud"), for truth, he discovers, is not skin deep. Instead, it seems to lie "au dedans et dans [l]a poitrine" (within, in his own bosom) (III, 2: 808; 613). Something inhabits the hidden world of Montaigne's "entrails" and "veins" (III, 10: 1004; 767). Thus when Montaigne writes that his heart is unknown to the world ("Les estrangers ne voyent que les evenemens et apparences externes; chacun peut faire bonne mine par le dehors, plein au dedans de fiebrve et d'effroy. Ils ne voyent pas mon cœur, ils ne voient que mes contenance" [Strangers see only the results and outward appearances. Any man can put on a good face outside, while full of fever and fright within. They do not see my heart, they see only my countenance (II, 16: 625; 474)]), the reader would do well to restore the anatomical specificity of the reference. Certainly the heart had long occupied a key symbolic place in Western culture, but what attracts Montaigne – and so many mystics of the following century, as well as the partisans of Enlightenment *sensibilité* – to the organ is its interiority.<sup>47</sup> The heart is true because it is physically hidden; inside, invisible, it demands unveiling. What remains to be determined is the extent to which contemporaries of Montaigne came to conceive of his writing as the instrument of subjective dissection.

### From Aristocrat to Penitent

In 1669, the year before Pascal's attack on Montaigne's "sot projet ... de se peindre" (foolish project ... of portraying himself) appeared in his posthumous *Pensées*,<sup>48</sup> the last complete edition of the *Essais* for the next fifty-odd years appeared in France. While Arnauld and Nicole were, along with Pascal, chastising Montaigne for his excessive use of the first person, only "chop jobs" would appear under Montaigne's name; books like the *Esprit des Essais* (1677) and *Pensées de Montaigne* (1700), by carefully excising content deemed too personal, promised to dispense with all that was offensive to Classical sensibilities.<sup>49</sup> What happened, after decades and decades of frequent

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late-medieval interest in innards – such as the "opening virgin" statues of the fifteenth century which combined anatomical curiosity and Marial piety – see Marie-Christine Pouchelle, *The Body and Surgery in the Middle Ages*, trans. Rosemary Morris (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

<sup>47</sup> On the heart as a symbolic organ from the Greeks to the seventeenth century, when its precise anatomical function was discovered, see Milad Doueihi, *A Perverse History of the Human Heart* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997). For an account of the heart's role in the developing cultural politics of the emotions during the transition from Classicism to the Enlightenment, see Joan DeJean, *Ancients Against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 78-123. The link between Enlightenment *sensibilité* and medicine is explored by Anne C. Vita, *Enlightenment and Pathology: Sensibility in the Literature and Medicine of Eighteenth-Century France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

<sup>48</sup> Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, ed. Philippe Sellier (Paris: Mercure de France, 1976), 322.

<sup>49</sup> As the anonymous reviewer of the *Pensées de Montaigne* put it, "La principale fin qu'eut Montaigne en écrivant ses Essais, fut de tracer son Portrait, et de se faire connaître. Quel besoin le public avait-il de cette connaissance? Quelle nécessité qu'il fût informé des travers de son esprit, de ses pensées vaines, de ses idées fausses, de ses opinions dangereuses, de ses passions folles et insensées?" (Montaigne's principal aim

reprints? Was it a question of Classicism's victory over Montaigne's subversive Renaissance individualism, a containment of his Baroque ebbs and flows? Perhaps in part, but I would like to show in this section how Montaigne did not precisely go out of fashion or become unreadable in these years. Rather, his sudden exit from the seventeenth-century scene was due to the fact that little by little, the *Essais* could no longer be read as moral philosophy, but instead became a repository of inner truths that were best kept hidden.

Scholars who have traced Montaigne's reception in France – and there have been many – have not failed to point out the extent to which his contemporaries appear to have appreciated the *Essais* for reasons the average twentieth-century reader might find strange.<sup>50</sup> Witness La Croix du Maine (1584), who glosses Montaigne's choice of title as meaning "discours pour se façonner sur autrui" (discourses for modeling oneself after another),<sup>51</sup> Pasquier's statement (c. 1602) that the book is above all "un vrai séminaire de belles et notables sentences" (a veritable school of beautiful and notable sayings)<sup>52</sup>, or the very un-modern title choice given to Florio's 1603 English translation: *The Essayes or Morall, politike and millitarie discourses of Lo[rd] Michaell de Montaigne*. These are but a few examples of a climate in which self-knowledge was equated with (aristocratic) moral philosophy, with the care or fashioning of a self not yet deep.<sup>53</sup>

Statements such as these, however, mingle from the very outset with a biographical consciousness that puts emphasis on the personal nature of the text: the *Essais* are also, especially in the third book, "une ample Déclaration de la vie ... de Montaigne" (a full Declaration of Montaigne's life) (La Croix du Maine again)<sup>54</sup>, "une histoire de ses mœurs et actions" (a history of his mores and actions) (Pasquier),<sup>55</sup> and, as Marie de Gournay hinted in her objection to the inclusion of the aforementioned *Sommaire discours* in the volume, a virtual biography: "Aussi suis-je contraire à cette vie de l'Auteur, qu'ils [the editors] ont logée en tête, étant complète dans le volume" (Thus I

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in writing his essays was to trace his Portrait, and to make himself known. What need had the public for this knowledge? What necessity was there to be informed of the errors of his mind, his vain thoughts, his false ideas, his dangerous opinions, his mad and insane passions?) (*Journal des savants pour l'année MDCCI*, tome29 [Amsterdam: Chez Waesberge, Boom et Goethals, 1702], 437).

<sup>50</sup> For studies of Montaigne's reception, see Alan M. Boase, *The Fortunes of Montaigne: A History of the Essays in France, 1580-1669* (1935; New York: Octagon, 1970); Pierre Villey, *Montaigne devant la postérité* (Paris: Boivin, 1935); Donald Frame, *Montaigne in France, 1812-1852* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940); Dreano, *La Renommée de Montaigne*; Ian Winter, *Montaigne's Self-Portrait and Its Influence in France, 1580-1630* (Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1976); Jules Brody, *Lectures de Montaigne* (Lexington, Ky.: French Forum, 1982), 13-27; Olivier Millet, *La Première réception des Essais de Montaigne (1580-1640)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1995).

<sup>51</sup> François Grude La Croix du Maine, *Les Bibliothèques françaises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier* (1584; Paris: Saillant et Nyon, 1772), 130.

<sup>52</sup> Estienne Pasquier, *Choix de lettres sur la littérature, la langue, et la traduction*, ed. D. Thickett (Geneva: Droz, 1956), 47.

<sup>53</sup> On the many readings of Montaigne as moral philosophy, see especially Villey, *Montaigne devant la postérité* and Millet, *La Première réception des Essais*, 28-33. Huet's statement that "A peine trouverez-vous un gentilhomme de campagne qui veuille se distinguer des preneurs de lièvres, sans un Montaigne sur sa cheminée" (Hardly will you find a country gentleman who, wishing to distinguish himself from the local rabbit catchers, does not have a copy of Montaigne on his mantelpiece) (qtd. in Villey, *Montaigne devant la postérité*, 310-11), indicates to what extent this care of the self, like the doctrine of *honnêteté* that continued it, was coded as an aristocratic concern.

<sup>54</sup> La Croix du Maine, *Les Bibliothèques françaises*, 130.

<sup>55</sup> Pasquier, *Choix de lettres*, 46.

am opposed to this life of the Author which [the editors] have placed at the beginning of the work, for it is contained completely in the volume).<sup>56</sup> More important for the history of a hermeneutics of self, however, is the increasingly interiorizing reading that accompanied this biographical consciousness. To passing allusions to Montaigne as, for instance, "celui qui sait le plus aisément exprimer le monde intérieur" (the man who is able to express the inner world with most ease)<sup>57</sup>, will be added a much more precise understanding which was partially a misunderstanding – of the *Essais* as the expression of a secret self.

It is in the pages of admirers such as Jean-Pierre Camus and Marie de Gournay that Montaigne's occasional metaphors of interiority undergo an amplification indicative of a shift in the manner in which the *Essais* were read. Many of those who have looked into the question of Montaigne's reception have attempted to gauge contemporary reaction to and appreciation of Montaigne's *peinture du moi* – that is, did his readers "grasp" his radically individualist project or not? What interests me in remarks such as those of Pasquier and La Croix du Maine is something more specific, to wit, the extent to which self-portraiture came to imply the effort to express a hidden truth. "The private," as Habermas has noted, originally designated not the hidden subjective richness which moderns tend to associate with the term, but simply the life of men having no public (i.e., political or military) role.<sup>58</sup> Yet "vie privée" in Guez de Balzac's judgment on Montaigne, for example, takes on quite different shades of meaning from this traditional use:

Ce qu'il dit de ses inclinations, de tout le détail de sa Vie privée, est très agréable. Je suis bien aise de connaître ceux que j'estime, et s'il y a moyen, de les connaître tout entiers, et dans la pureté de leur naturel. Je veux les voir, s'il est possible, dans leurs plus particulières et leurs plus secrètes actions. Il m'a donc fait grand plaisir de me faire son Histoire domestique.<sup>59</sup>

(What he says of his inclinations, of all the details of his private Life, is quite pleasing. I am delighted to know those whom I esteem, and, if there is a way, to know them entirely and in the purity of their natural hearing. I want to see them, if possible, in their most particular and most secret actions. For this reason it was a great pleasure to have him relate to me his domestic History.)

On the one hand, private life here seems to be simply the way one is at home ("son Histoire domestique"); but on the other, it is clear that the home is now the locus of "natural" man, a man with "particularities" and "inclinations" which can be read if one can only peer into this "secret" sphere. "Du Repentir" contains a similar passage in which Montaigne writes of the necessity to keep order "jusques en son privé, ... où tout est caché, ... en sa maison [et] en ses actions

<sup>56</sup> Marie de Gournay, "Préface de 1635," *Montaigne Studies* 2.2 (1990), 93.

<sup>57</sup> Dominique Baudier, qtd. in Villey, *Montaigne devant la postérité*, 303.

<sup>58</sup> "'Private' designated the exclusion from the sphere of the state apparatus. ... The authorities were contrasted with the subjects excluded from them; the former served, so it was said, the public welfare, while the latter pursued their private interests" (Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger [Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989], 11). Montaigne's typical use of private is in line with Habermas's characterization: "On attache aussi bien toute la philosophie morale a une vie populaire et privée que à une vie de plus riche estoffe" (You can tie up all moral philosophy with a common and private life just as well as with a life of richer stuff) (III, 2: 805; 611). On how the concept of the private in Montaigne fails to produce a modern subject, see Reiss, "Montaigne and the Subject of Polity."

<sup>59</sup> Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac, *Œuvres*, vol. 2 (Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), 659.

ordinaires" (even in private, ... where all is concealed, ... in our own house [and] in our ordinary actions) (III,2: 808; 613); this is the same passage in which, as we have seen, Montaigne makes his anatomical gesture towards an inner space, "au dedans et en sa poitrine" (within, in his own bosom). At moments like these, then, something like *privacy* displaces the dominant meaning of the private; and the *Essais* emerge as the key-hole onto the double space of a concatenated interiority, the home and the subject himself.<sup>60</sup>

Guez de Balzac also includes two qualifications – "s'il y a moyen" and "s'il est possible" – which are also essential elements of the developing discourse of interiority: expression of the depths must be aleatory, a promise but not a guarantee. Too great a transparency between inside and outside and the distinction itself collapses: this is the phantasmatic limit of the autobiographical mentality, the promise of restored totality and of an end to division, a limit that can never be realized precisely because of the autobiographical text itself. Balzac's qualification enables us to distinguish his reading from Pasquier's comment that proclaimed Montaigne's death to be "un beau miroir de l'intérieur de son Ame" (a beautiful mirror of the interior of his Soul).<sup>61</sup> Pasquier here uses the word *intérieur*, but continues to deploy it within the Medieval context of the mirror of the soul, a context in which the soul and body are exact reflections of one another. This contention Montaigne himself had taken pains, especially in "De la physionomie," to refute: mirrors, he notes in his critique of imitative exemplarity, are "vague" (hazy) (III, 13: 1088; 834). Yet for Guez de Balzac, no refutation is even in order because a new solution to the problem of misleading appearances has been developed – the truth of personality can be discovered slowly, uncovered layer by layer as more information is gathered through the observation of privacy.

If the *Essais* had any direct literary descendant, it was surely Jean-Pierre Camus's *Diversités* (1609-18). Under Montaigne's spell and wanting to emulate the *Essais*, Camus, the future proponent of "devout humanism," had conceived of the *Diversités* as the work of a lifetime. Like Montaigne, Camus shunned overarching architecture by assembling independent chapters, each devoid of fixed subjects and filled with citations from classical authors. In addition, Camus was as attuned to Montaigne the self-portraitist as to Montaigne the compiler: "Mais de se peindre soi-même, son corps, son esprit, ses humeurs, ses vices, ses vertus, ses défauts, sa valeur, cet auteur est le Phenix en cette matière" (But in portraying oneself, one's body, mind, humors, vices, virtues, faults, and worth, this author is in these matters a Phoenix). As in the case of Balzac, however, this self-portraiture is once again inflected in the direction of interiority: Montaigne's "étude de soi" (self-study) was no mere aristocratic care of the self, but promised rather to "pénétrer plus profondément dans les secrets cachots et recoins d'un esprit" (to penetrate more profoundly into the secret dungeons and recesses of a mind). The *Essais* emerge as part and parcel of a hermeneutic act that can only be undertaken by the subject himself: "Qui peut mieux parler de lui que lui? Qui l'a mieux connu qu'il s'est connu soi-même? C'est un[e] erreur populaire de croire plutôt un tiers parlant d'un autre, que celui qui parle de soi-même" (Who can speak of him better than he? Who knew him more than he knew himself? It is a popular error to believe a third party who speaks of another rather than he who speaks of himself).<sup>62</sup> Sentences such as these will gain increasing currency as the seventeenth century wears on and the speaking subject, displacing the

<sup>60</sup> These are not the only moments in which Montaigne's text reflects a change in usage of the term – "découvrir ses humeurs privées" (discover his personal humors) (II, 10: 414; 302) and "Il n'est action si privée et secrète" (There is no action so private and secret) (I, 30: 198; 147) are two other examples.

<sup>61</sup> Pasquier, *Choix de lettres*, 49.

<sup>62</sup> Jean-Pierre Camus, *Les Diversités*, reproduced in Millet, *La Première réception des Essais*, 189, 169, 190.

"tiers parlant," will become the locus of a discursive authority inseparable from and predicated on the idea of interiority.

Balzac and Camus only provide us with passing references, indications that formulations which were vague or unusual in Montaigne's own work were being picked up, sharpened, and used to qualify the *Essais* as a whole. If these sentences were buried in much longer works, however, and can hardly be supposed to have influenced a seventeenth-century readership, the same is not true for Marie de Gournay, who in two prefaces (1595 and 1635) to the *Essais* provided a blueprint for reading that would accompany most editions until 1669. In proposing what she herself called "quelques règles pour se gouverner en cette lecture" (some rules for guiding oneself in this reading), Gournay goes the furthest toward eliminating the old aristocratic view of the *Essais* as reading for soldiers and statesmen, and substituting a new understanding of the *Essais* as the discourse of an interiorized subject.<sup>63</sup>

In the wake of increasing interest in Montaigne's "fille d'alliance," or (figuratively) adopted daughter, the story of Gournay's original preface to the first posthumous edition of the *Essais* in 1595 has become fairly well known. Shortly after the appearance of the 1595 edition, Gournay expressed shame at her long and sometimes shrill preface, going so far as to rip it out of copies sent to her friend Lipsius. The next edition (1598) bore only a short note retracting the previous preface, and it was this that appeared until 1617, when it was replaced in its turn by a partially reworked version of the original 1595 version.<sup>64</sup> Scholars have recently focused attention on how this reception, and indeed the 1595 preface itself, seem to mime what François Rigolot has called "the twists and turns ... of marginalized feminine discourse in the seventeenth century."<sup>65</sup> Writing as a woman, Gournay could not limit herself to advancing the cause of Montaigne's book, but in addition had to defend the very right of a woman to speak; and once she did speak, she immediately experienced guilt over her transgression.<sup>66</sup>

The fate of the 1595 preface does indeed suggest such conclusions, but this text, and the almost entirely new one that replaced it in 1635, can tell us much as well about modes of reading, and specifically about the predicating of textual authority on interiority. Though the original preface contains little or nothing in the way of interior metaphors of the sort that will be used by Balzac or Camus, it does betray a particularly acute attention to the person of the author. Gournay does not so much adumbrate the usual considerations evinced by contemporaries regarding the seamliness of self-portraiture, but instead attempts to theorize the person as author; she analyzes the link that joins person and text. Hence, when Gournay discounts attacks on Montaigne's belief in God by saying, "C'est à moi d'en parler; car moi seule avais la parfaite connaissance de cette grande âme, et c'est à moi d'en être crue de bonne foi, quand ce livre ne l'éclaircirait pas" (It is for me to speak of this; for only I had a perfect knowledge of this great soul, and one must believe me in good faith

<sup>63</sup> Marie de Gournay, "Préface à l'édition des *Essais* de Montaigne," *Montaigne Studies* 1.1 (1989), 34, 43. Millet has noted Gournay's instrumentality in eliminating the aristocratic reading of Montaigne (*La Première réception des Essais*, 14).

<sup>64</sup> For a description of the varying paratextual accompaniments of the various editions of the *Essais*, see R. A. Sayce and David Maskell, *A Descriptive Bibliography of Montaigne's Essais, 1580-1700* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1983).

<sup>65</sup> François Rigolot, "Introduction [à la préface de 1595]," *Montaigne Studies* 1.1 (1989), 11.

<sup>66</sup> On this, see Catherine M. Bauchatz, "Marie de Gournay's 'Préface de 1595,'" *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Montaigne* 3-4 (1986), 73-82, and Richard L. Regosin, *Montaigne's Unruly Brood: Textual Engendering and the Challenge to Paternal Authority* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 48-79.

in those places where the book does not adequately shed light on it),<sup>67</sup> this is more than hysterical presumption (as a whole misogynist tradition of Gournay's critics have claimed), and more too than a proto-feminist strategy (as modern scholars have correctly maintained). It is a gesturing toward the person of the author as unifying principle that can be known either through his text or personally – the two being situated somehow on the same plane. If the book isn't quite clear, Gournay seems to say, appeal can be made to his life so as to assemble a coherent view.

Like Querlon's reading of Montaigne's *Journal de voyage* over 150 years later, Gournay's remarks furnish a perfect illustration of Foucault's theory of the author-function, or, as he defines it, "the manner in which a text apparently points to this figure who is outside and precedes it"<sup>68</sup>. Thus, while Balzac will merely regret that Montaigne did not include more biographical information – for instance, what kind of mayor he was – Gournay does far more than highlight the "personal" nature of the work. Instead, she proposes a mode of reading founded upon a newly reversible relationship between subject and text: the person of the author guarantees the text, and conversely, the text can and should be explained by the person of the author. But this reversibility can only imply a second, similar rapport, this time linking author and reader. Hence the following remarkable statement of Gournay's, which constitutes a veritable theory of readerly identification with the person/author, Montaigne:

[J]e ne puis faire un pas, soit écrivant ou parlant, que je ne me trouve sur ses traces; et crois qu'on cuide souvent que je l'usurpe. Et le seul contentement que j'eus oncques de moi-même, c'est d'avoir rencontré plusieurs choses parmi les dernières additions [of the Bordeaux copy] que tu [the reader] verras en ce volume, lesquelles j'avais imaginées toutes pareilles, avant que les avoir vues.<sup>69</sup>

(I cannot take a step, whether in writing or speaking, without finding myself on his track; and I believe it is often suspected that I am usurping him. And my only source of pride is to have found several things among the last additions [of the Bordeaux copy] which you [the reader] will see in this volume, things which I had imagined that way ever before having seen them.)

In reading, one slips into the skin of the author; one is able, somewhat in the manner of Borges's Pierre Ménard rewriting from scratch Cervantes's masterpiece, to generate the whole of the work from one of its parts. Richard Regosin, who reads Gournay's text as "both express[ing] and perform[ing] the insistent and unending desire for the other in friendship," casts this same passage as a female reappropriation of a long tradition of male friendship literature; nevertheless, its subjective specificity merits special emphasis.<sup>70</sup> For if it can be argued that readerly empathy lies at the root of modern novelistic reading practice (one thinks of the reception of Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* and Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse*),<sup>71</sup> autobiography certainly shares this foundation. Hence it comes as no surprise that the conversion experience that Gournay

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<sup>67</sup> Gournay, "1595," 34.

<sup>68</sup> Foucault, "What Is an Author?" 115.

<sup>69</sup> Gournay, "1595," 45-46.

<sup>70</sup> Regosin, *Montaigne's Unruly Brood*, 69.

<sup>71</sup> See, respectively, Maurice Laugaa, *Lectures de Mme de Lafayette* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1971) and Robert Darnton, "Readers Respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic Sensitivity," in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 215-56.

underwent upon reading the *Essais* for the first time necessarily leads to a two-year thirst for meeting "leur auteur même" (their very author).<sup>72</sup>

In a sense it is entirely logical that the 1595 preface has been so insistently read with reference to the facts surrounding the real-life relationship between Gournay and Montaigne, for the empathic theory of reading proposed is completely particularized. Gournay's 1635 preface, with many cuts to and amplifications of the original version, takes a different tack: whereas in 1595, Gournay founded the authority of the text on her own privileged relation to it, forty years later Montaigne's whole literary enterprise is offered as exemplary of a general will to interiority that each and every reader must – the imperative is Gournay's own – exercise with respect to him or herself. That Gournay's consideration of the question of self-portraiture will be treated differently the second time around is evident even in the small changes imparted to the vocabulary used in the first version. In 1595, Gournay had qualified Montaigne's action as that of "se produire nu devant le peuple" (showing himself naked before the people); the second preface, however, changes the phrase to "produire sa vie nue aux yeux du monde" (showing his naked life to the eyes of the world).<sup>73</sup> A small change, without a doubt, but an important one, if one pauses to reflect that the second metaphor implies writing and readership whereas the first seems modeled after monarchical representation. Montaigne no longer just stands naked, he offers up a naked life (or *Life*), and this not before the crowd, like a king, but before the eyes of the world. The evolution is slight but perceptible, in that the implied mediation of textuality in the act of "producing oneself" becomes central to Gournay's concerns.

The significance of this change would be imperceptible if it were not for a further array of additions that shift attention away from a previous defense of self-portraiture on grounds of pedagogical utility – the *Essais*, according to the 1595 preface, taught the reader to become an "honnête homme" (wellbred man), and were a necessary apprenticeship for any "grand chef d'armée et d'état" (great military or state leader).<sup>74</sup> This justification, which involves what I, following Foucault, have described as a care of the self, subsists in Gournay's second preface, but it is extended by a long excursus on the necessity of confession and public avowal that greatly amplifies and sharpens Montaigne's own brief allusion to confession.<sup>75</sup> Here, we learn that Montaigne's critics think themselves superior because "ils se gardent d'avouer leurs vérités" (they are careful not to confess their truths), and that all evils of the world come from the disguising of one's true self: "levez le masque d'entre nous," Gournay proclaims, "car les hommes seraient bons par tout, si par tout on les voyait" (lift the mask from between us, for men would be good on all sides, if one could see them from all sides). Like Montaigne, Gournay inserts the *Essais* into the Christian tradition of confession, citing the example of Augustine; but she goes further still, founding the possibility of any and all justice, secular as much as divine, on the exhumation of hidden truth. In the same astonishing breath, the Catholic Church's prescription of confession and the judicial use of torture

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<sup>72</sup> Gournay, "1595," 24.

<sup>73</sup> Gournay, "1595," 43; Gournay, "1635," 85.

<sup>74</sup> Gournay, "1595," 43.

<sup>75</sup> "En faveur des Huguenots, qui accusent nostre confession privée et auriculaire, je me confesse en publicq, religieusement et purement. S. Augustin, Origene et Hippocrates ont publié les erreurs de leurs opinions; moy, encore, de mes meurs" (In honor of the Huguenots, who condemn our private and auricular confession, I confess myself in public, religiously and purely. Saint Augustin, Origen, and Hippocrates have published the errors of their opinions; I, besides, those of my conduct) (III, 5: 846-47; 643).

emerge together as ancestors and analogs of Montaigne's text, now seen as the corollary of these institutional practices:

[L]a Justice ne tire son effet que de la découverte des crimes: donnant la ghéhenne aussi, pour y contraindre les hommes: et l'Eglise parfait sa confession auriculaire, par la générale et publique. Chacun au reste se doit constituer Juge sur soi-même: comme tel, mon Père [Montaigne] déclare et fouette ses vices, non en privé seulement, mais en public.<sup>76</sup>

(Justice derives its effect only from the discovery of crimes: it also provides for torture, so that men will be so obliged: and the Church perfects and completes its auricular confession by the general and public one. Each man must moreover make of himself a judge of himself: as such, my Father [Montaigne] declares and lashes his vices, not only in private, but also in public.)

The *Essais*, then, are no longer a tool for caring for ourselves so that we may become wise gentlemen; the reader is required, rather, to follow the hermeneutic lead of this "scrutateur universel de l'homme intérieur" (universal inspector of the inner man) who offers us a surgical guide to subjective truth, "l'Anatomie parfaite d[es] passions et mouvements intérieurs" (the perfect Anatomy of the passions and inner movements).<sup>77</sup> The duty is imperative: "Il faut voir son vice, et l'étudier pour le redire: ceux qui le cèlent à autrui, le cèlent ordinairement à eux-même: ils ne le tiennent pas pour assez couvert, s'ils le voient" (One must see one's vice, and study it in order to repeat it – in words: those who conceal it from others ordinarily conceal it from themselves: they do not think it is sufficiently covered up, if they themselves still see it).<sup>78</sup> Gournay's advocacy of avowal is not quite an anti-Machiavellian tirade against willful deceit, for her language here is redolent of what Charles Taylor has seen as "the assumption behind modern self-exploration" – the idea "that we don't already know who we are."<sup>79</sup> Here, the hidden is not hidden as if behind a curtain that one pulls strategically around one's true motives; instead, evils lurk inside, deep down, in the anatomical depths of a subject driven to come clean. "Voilà pourquoi," Gournay writes, presenting the view as Montaigne's own, "il les faut souventefois remanier au jour: les ouvrant et les éventrant du fond de nos entrailles, d'une main impitieuse" (That is why one must repeatedly bring them back into the light: opening them up and cutting them out from the depths of our entrails, with a pitiless hand).<sup>80</sup> By 1635, the *Essais* had metamorphosed into the exemplary tool of a hermeneutics of self.

The image of Montaigne as self-flagellating penitent glaringly contradicts what many modern commentators like to think of as the spirit of the *Essais* themselves – say, an equanimous acceptance of one's own shortcomings seen for what they are. And yet Gournay here can not be accused of total projection, in that she is simply extending a specifically anatomical metaphor already present in Montaigne's own discussion of the *Essais* as confession: "Ceux qui se mescognoissent, se peuvent paistre de fauces approbations; non pas moy, qui me voy et qui me recherche jusques aux entrailles" (Those who have a false opinion of themselves can feed on false approbations; not I, who see myself and search myself to my very entrails) (III, 5: 847; 643-44).

<sup>76</sup> Gournay, "1635," 87.

<sup>77</sup> Gournay, "1635," 92, 80.

<sup>78</sup> Gournay, "1635," 88.

<sup>79</sup> . Taylor, *Sources of the Self*; 178. Cf. also Foucault's contention that modern avowal takes as its subject not only what the subjects *wants* to hide, but more importantly, "what [is] hidden from himself" (*History of Sexuality*, 66).

<sup>80</sup> Gournay, "1635," 88.

Nor is this the only place Montaigne understands subjective flux as visceral: he refers elsewhere to "la presse domestique que j'ay dans mes entrailles et dans mes veines" (the domestic pressures that oppress my entrails and veins) (III, 10: 1004; 767). But that which is isolated or occasional in Montaigne becomes central for Gournay, the linchpin of an entire way of reading that cannot but dictate a renewed interest in textual authenticity. Once the text is considered not as a work linked to other works by the intertextual play of citation, but as a unified manifestation of a subjective truth, it becomes increasingly important to explain, as Gournay attempts to do, why Montaigne's use of Classical authorities does not "usurper la propriété de son Oeuvre" (usurp the ownership of his Work). Her response is that any reader can distinguish the *Essais* from a mere compendium such as that of the "perpétuel copiste" (inveterate copyist) Charron's *De la sagesse*, for one can "sentir au Génie d'un Livre qu'il est tout d'une main" (sense in the Genius of a Book that it is all from one hand).<sup>81</sup>

If the autobiographical anachronism, then, was partially present in Montaigne's very text, it was in the course of the seventeenth century that the uncovering of the hermeneutic self – the notion of identity founded on the secret depths of the subject and manifested in an authentic text – became *the* goal of reading. In order to express these depths, Gournay reached for a confessional vocabulary of sin and crime – those secrets that religious and judicial authorities, respectively, sought to uncover. No documents exist that would help us take the measure of how influential this reading was; of the ten subsequent editions of the *Essais* that would appear before 1669, her 1635 preface appears in six.<sup>82</sup> As I have alluded, the only subsequent editions of Montaigne, the *Esprit des Essais* of 1677 and the *Pensées de Montaigne* of 1700, would steer as far clear from the confessional as possible, selecting only "les choses historiques et divertissantes" (things historical and entertaining) that were capable of serving "l'utilité publique" (the public good).<sup>83</sup> But rather than view the eclipse of Montaigne's "confession" as proof of a lack of interest in the hermeneutic self, one might propose quite the contrary – that this self had become, in Pascal's famous words, "haïssable" (hateful) only because it had finally been "born." For indeed, Montaigne's concern for the interior, to the extent that it originally existed in the *Essais* and was amplified by glosses in the first half of the seventeenth century, was not forgotten, nor was it in any way "unreadable" by a public still somehow behind Montaigne's times: it was more or less *repressed* in a gesture that, rather than contradicting the developing obsession with interiority, only exacerbated it.

The *Logique, ou l'art de penser* of Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole (1662) illustrates how, by the second half of the seventeenth century, even attacks on the deep self tended to be waged in interiorizing terms. For the profoundly Cartesian thinkers of Port-Royal, an interiorized self is one that solipsistically attributes truth to its own utterance alone; with this insight, and a remarkable

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<sup>81</sup> Gournay, "1635," 92.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Sayce and Maskell, *A Descriptive Bibliography*.

<sup>83</sup> Montaigne, *Esprit des Essais*, "Préface," n.p. An account of all the changes imparted by these editions would be fastidious; suffice it to say that they both more or less do away with the book-self relationship, cutting, for example, the "livre consubstantiel" of II, 18. In the context of confessional discourse, an additional example is telling: the passage at the beginning of "De la praesumption," from "nous ne sommes que ceremonie" (we are nothing but ceremony) to "quant aux branles de l'ame, je veux icy confesser ce que j'en sens" (as for the movements of my soul, I want to confess here what I am aware of) (II,17: 632-33; 478-80), in which Montaigne writes of Lucilius, "[qui] commettoit à son papier ses actions et ses pensées, et s'y peignoit tel qu'il se sentoit estre" ([who] committed to his paper his actions and thoughts, and portrayed himself there as he felt he was), is totally eliminated from both editions.

degree of prescience, they describe the nature of the person we might call the "modern subject." Such a localization of truth, however, is "hateful" in that it can only represent a threat to God's order, not to mention the institution of the Church, and this is why, broadly speaking, the *Logique* condemns Montaigne for speaking of himself. Thus, when Arnauld and Nicole read Montaigne's proclamation that "mes actions sont réglées, et conformes à ce que je suis et à ma condition" (my actions are in order and conformity with what I am and with my condition), they must exclaim: "Paroles horribles, et qui marquent une extinction entière de tout sentiment de Religion" (What horrible words, which reflect a complete extinction of all religious sentiment). Yet the paradox of this critique is that it only contributes to the depth of the subject: an increasingly reified hermeneutic self, Arnauld and Nicole maintain, needs to be kept bottled up, as it were, lest it obscure divine truth:

[C]'est pourquoi les personnes sages évitent autant qu'ils peuvent, d'exposer aux yeux des autres, les avantages qu'ils ont; ils fuient de se présenter en face, et de se faire envisager en particulier, et ils tâchent plutôt de se cacher dans la presse, pour n'être pas remarqués, afin qu'on ne voie dans leurs discours que la vérité qu'ils proposent.<sup>84</sup>

(This is why the wise avoid as much as possible exposing their advantages to the eyes of others; they flee from presenting themselves directly and from being seen alone, and they try instead to hide themselves in the throng to escape notice, so that we may see in their words nothing but the truth which they put forth.)

This critique, then, manages to cause interiority to become impacted; the subject as ground of truth – a truth that, according to Arnauld and Nicole, competes with the Christian truth – is sentenced to banishment, but the subject can be so banished only if its censors first concede its existence. The gesture that consigns the self to the realm of the hidden ("se cacher ... pour n'être pas remarqués"), at least in the *Logique*, opens the door to the self's existence.

Somewhat counterintuitively, the success of Gournay's hermeneutic reading of the *Essais*, therefore, might be said to lie in the resistance Montaigne encountered in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Montaigne had to be eliminated as soon as the implications of subjective depth became clear to the keepers of the religious flame; but the grounds proposed for his elimination ironically confirmed the victory of interiority. And as with Montaigne and Gournay, this victory can be read in the *Logique's* metaphors. Arnauld and Nicole gesture repeatedly at the depths, more insistently than Montaigne ever did because by their time it seemed self-evident (but still novel enough to rate considerable interest) that the something was lurking "dans le fond du cœur des hommes" (in the depth of men's hearts), something secret ("une secrète complaisance, ... une aversion secrète"), unruly ("[les] désordres"), and evil ("cette disposition maligne et envieuse") that one can either show ("decouvr[ir]") or hide ("cacher," "cel[er]").<sup>85</sup> Although some supporters of Port-Royal, Arnauld and Nicole report, could go as far as advocating the avoidance of the first person pronoun, by dint of the Foucauldian paradox elaborated in *The History of Sexuality*, not talking about oneself only drives the truth deeper; one of interiority's characteristics is its production in interdiction. "Soupirs d'autant plus doux qu'il les fallait celer" (Sighs all the sweeter

<sup>84</sup> Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole, *La Logique ou L'Art de penser*, ed. Pierre Clair and François Girbal (Paris: Vrin, 1981), 268; 266-67.

<sup>85</sup> Arnauld and Nicole, *La Logique*, 266-69.

for having to be hidden), wrote Racine (*Bajazet* I, 1), who had been educated at Port-Royal, where the language of interiority seemed to prosper in direct proportion to hatred of the *moi*.<sup>86</sup>

### Modernizing Augustine

The language of interiority, so prevalent among Jansenists, derived at least partially from their use of Augustine, on whom Cornelius Jansen had written the work that gave the movement its name. I would hasten to establish from the outset, however, that I do not believe that this is merely a question of "influence," and even less of "doctrine." First, the importance of interiority for modern culture and subjectivity comes out of its pervasiveness, its ability to transcend denominational, national, and gender barriers and to transform how people wrote, independent of beliefs best characterized as epiphenomenal. The case of Montaigne, who may well not even have read the *Confessions*<sup>87</sup>, and who nonetheless still sketches out the beginnings of metaphorical depth, speaks volumes about the limits of an exclusively intertextual understanding of subjective phenomena. Second – and this will be the thrust of the remainder of this chapter – one might say that seventeenth-century readers (some but not all of them Jansenists) influenced Augustine as much as Augustine influenced them, in that they took the *Confessions* out of the Latin culture of scholasticism and, in four separate translations, pushed his concept and language of interiority further than he ever had. The *Confessions*' popularity, I will argue, was due to a perceived degree of harmony between Augustine's concerns and those that were reconfiguring, twelve centuries later, the subjective landscape.<sup>88</sup>

The question of the "inner" in Augustine's works has been approached many times, especially by scholars of religion whose accounts inevitably seem to credit Augustine with the triumphant "discovery" of inner space.<sup>89</sup> These studies, however, like those of critics who neglect to consider

<sup>86</sup> To give just one example: Antoine Arnauld's *De la fréquente communion* (1643) contains 38 uses of variants of "secret," 21 of "intérieur," 12 of "cache," 10 of "profond," and 7 of "invisible."

<sup>87</sup> Nigel Abercrombie discusses the question of Montaigne's knowledge of the *Confessions*, and concludes on the side of unfamiliarity (Nigel Abercrombie, *Saint Augustine and French Classical Thought* [1938; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972], 40). Friedrich establishes a comparison between Augustine and Montaigne while nonetheless following more or less Abercrombie's assertion (*Montaigne*, 217). For a recent *mise au point* on the question, see Cave, *Pré-histoires*, 123n37.

<sup>88</sup> For more general assessments of the influence of Augustine's thought on the century, see L. Barbedette, "L'Influence augustinienne au XVIIe siècle," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 93 (1926), 279-93; Abercrombie, *Saint Augustine*, the April-June 1982 special issue of *Dix-septième siècle* devoted to "Le Siècle de Saint Augustin," and Bruno Neveu, *Erudition et religion aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), 451-90. The question of the seventeenth-century dissemination of Augustinian *topoi* such as his conversion scene has been analyzed by Pierre Paul Courcelle, *Les Confessions de Saint Augustin dans la tradition littéraire: Antécédents et postérité* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1963), chap. 7.

<sup>89</sup> See Pierre Blanchard, "L'Espace intérieur chez saint Augustin d'après le Livre X des 'Confessions'," *Augustinus Magister*, no. 1 (1954), 535-42; Gareth B. Matthews, "The Inner Man," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (1967), 166-72; Boghos L. Zekiyan, "Interiorismo agostiniano e l'autoconscienza del soggetto," *Augustinianum* 16 (1976), 399-410; Karl Joachim Weintraub, *The Value of the Individual: Self and Circumstance in Autobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), chap. 2; Maria Daraki, "L'Emergence du sujet singulier dans les Confessions d'Augustin," *Esprit* (Feb. 1981), 95-115. Taylor (*Sources of the Self*; 126-42) inserts Augustine's concept of the interior into the unfolding narrative of the modern self, as does Jeremy Tambling, *Confession: Sexuality, Sin, the Subject* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), though from a considerably more critical position. For a good overview of evolving theological conceptions of the inner man from the Old Testament to recent times, see André Derville and

the lapses and contradictions in Montaigne's equally reputed interiority, do little to probe the limits of Augustine's idea of depth, or to situate it with respect to the modern "hermeneutics of self" which was transforming the seventeenth century's understanding of the *Essais*. The following brief account of the *Confession's* Latin is meant to provide background for an inquiry similar to that brought to bear on Montaigne's reception. These two canonical examples complement each other nicely, for while Montaignian interiority was perceived, exaggerated, but ultimately occulted by a secular readership that valued pithy reflections or maxims above an interiorized relation between subject and text, Augustine's work, penetrating into a totally different milieu, found acceptance based on the very same qualities for which Montaigne was censored. For among a religious readership, the vogue for interiority turned Augustine's text into a cornerstone of a new type of mystic literature of the heart that purported to make accessible the most remote parts of subjective experience.

Augustine derived his conception of the "inner man" from Saint Paul, who employs the expression three times in his Epistles. These uses, however, are only crudely related to the modern metaphor of psychological depth, because the "inner man" for Saint Paul is an essentially allegorical expression that opposes the spirit to the sinful body: "For I delight in the law of God in my [inner man], but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members."<sup>90</sup> Doctrinally speaking, it is this understanding of the "inner" that Augustine elaborates on when he defines, in *De Civitate dei* (13.24.2) and *De Trinitate* (12.1.1), *homo interior* as the soul, as that which distinguishes man from animals, and *homo exterior* as the body. It follows, therefore, that this "inner man" differs substantially from the alternately anatomical and psychological notion of the interior or inside of man, as represented by Montaigne and Gournay's "entrails." For Saint Paul, and Augustine, the soul is represented allegorically as a "little man inside," a man with metaphorical ears, eyes, and so on.<sup>91</sup>

The concept of inner space as it starts to develop in the early modern period finds a corollary or antecedent less in these theological distinctions than in Augustine's literary language itself, which developed around them. Metaphorical interiority of the sort I have spoken of regarding Montaigne is perhaps best visible in Augustine's discussion of memory in book X of the *Confessions*. In a famous passage, memory (which for Augustine is both a repository of personal sense impressions and a Platonic *anamnesis*, or remembrance of past existence) is compared to "vast palaces" (*lata praetoria memoriae*) (X, 8, 185).<sup>92</sup> The palace of memory possesses "profundity" (X, 8, 187), or,

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Aimé Solignac, "Homme intérieur," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, ed. Marcel Viller, vol. 7 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1939-94), col. 650-74.

<sup>90</sup> Rom. 7: 22-23, translation modified: the Revised Standard Version glosses over the theological specificity of the words *interiorem hominem* in favor of "inmost self," a term that projects back onto the Epistles precisely the depth-structured subjectivity whose history I am trying to trace. The original Greek, clearer still, reads "kata ton eso anthropon" (according to the inner man) – there is no "my" whatsoever. (Thanks to Jeff Fort for bringing this last detail to my attention.) Additional references to the *homo interior* can be found at 2 Cor. 4: 16 and Eph. 3: 16.

<sup>91</sup> Matthews, "Inner Man," 166.

<sup>92</sup> For a brief discussion of the Augustinian concept of memory, see Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 134-36. All citations from the *Confessions* indicate the book and chapter, followed by the page from Henry Chadwick's recent translation (Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991]), which is especially useful because of its refusal to subsume Augustine's prose in modern metaphors. (On two

more literally, an inner sanctum, the Latin word for which, "penetralis," coming from the verb "to penetrate," of necessity connotes a space of depth that can be explored.<sup>93</sup> Memory, then can have this architectural interiority, that of a structure composed of "recondite receptacles" (de abstrusioribus quibusdam receptaculis) (X, 8, 185).<sup>94</sup> The spatial conception of memory actually ends up blending with the inner-outer distinction as inherited from Paul. In the following passage, the outer is still associated with the body and the senses, but the "man within" is now clearly a subjective *region* that can be entered into:

To the best of my powers of sense-perception, I traveled through the external world. Starting from myself I gave attention to the life of my own body, and examined my own senses. From there I moved into the recesses of my memory, manifold vastnesses full of innumerable riches in wonderful ways.

(Iustravi mundum foris sensu, quo potui, et adtendi vitam corporis mei de me sensusque ipsos meos. Inde ingressus sum in recessus memoriae meae, multiplices amplitudines plenas miris modis copiarum innumerabilium.) (X, 40, 217)

Memory's recesses, for Augustine, are infinitely deep: "Who has plumbed [memory's] bottom?" (Quis ad fundum eius pervenit?) (X, 8, 187). The *Confessions* contain an array of Latin expressions centering around the heart that suggest subjective depth – "intimus cordi est" (IV, 12), "ex intimo cordis meo" (IV, 13), "a fundo cordis mei" (IX, 1) – much as in English one would speak "from the bottom of one's heart." Both the case of the deep heart and that of memory are in harmony with the idea of the inner man as that part of us that enables us to know divine truth.<sup>95</sup> Thus, Augustine's famous apostrophe to God as He who was "more inward than my most inward part and higher than the highest element within me" (tu autem eras interior intimo meo et superior summo meo) (III, 6, 43) makes clear that this particular interior trajectory does not, in fact, establish man as the ground of his own truth. As Etienne Gilson has put it, the Augustinian path "lead[s] from the exterior to the interior and from the interior to the superior"<sup>96</sup>. Augustinian interiority, then, would seem to leave us somewhat short of a hermeneutics of self, in that the truth discovered in introspection is not the subject's own at all. The end-point of all language, and all subjective desire, as John Freccero insists, is God himself.<sup>97</sup> This point is certainly supported by the structure of the *Confessions* as a whole, for the text, in the last three books, becomes rigorously impersonal

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occasions I have modified Chadwick's word choice.) The original Latin, given in parentheses, is taken from the text of the Loeb Classical Library edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977-79).

<sup>93</sup> Augustine uses the term only once more, again speaking of memory – "into remote recesses" (in remotiora penetralia) (X, 11, 189). He may well have got this use from his much-admired Ambrosius, who had written of "penetralia animi."

<sup>94</sup> Cf. also "See the broad plains and caves and caverns of my memory" (ecce in memoriae meae campis et antris et cavernis innumerabilibus) (X, 17, 194). Elsewhere Augustine refers to an allegorical "inner house" (interioris domus meae) (VIII, 8, 146), the "intimate chamber" of which is the human heart (in cubiculo nostro, corde meo).

<sup>95</sup> "[I]n interiore homine habitat veritas," *De vera religione* XXXIX.72 (qtd. in Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 129).

<sup>96</sup> Qtd. in Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 136.

<sup>97</sup> John Freccero, "The Fig Tree and the Laurel: Petrarch's Poetics," in *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*, ed. Patricia Parker and David Quint (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 22-23.

as the individuality of the autobiographical "I" whose story occupied the previous books is eliminated.<sup>98</sup>

At many moments, however, man's insides lack this divine clarity, and that which is deep or inner is associated with the base, with sin. These are the moments when Augustine has become a "problem" for himself (*mihi quaestio factus sum*) (X, 33, 208), bent on introspecting not so much to see God as to discover his own iniquities: "From a hidden depth a profound [consideration] had dredged up a heap of all my misery and set it in the sight of my heart" (*Ubi vero a fundo arcano alta consideratio traxit et congegessit totam miseriam meam in conspectu cordis mei*) (VIII, 12, 152). Man has within a "deep darkness" (*hac profunda caligine*) (III, 11, 49) and the causes for his actions are an abyssal mystery: "Who can untie this extremely twisted and tangled knot?" (*Qui exaperit istam tortuosissimam et implicatissimam nodositatem?*) (II, 10, 34), he asks, contemplating his motives for stealing a pear. If Paul had indeed written that "before [God] no creature is hidden, but all are laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13), Augustine is much more specific, in that in his hands God's gaze penetrates the inner depths of every person, an idea absent from the Pauline text: "Indeed, Lord, to your eyes, the abyss of human consciousness is naked. What could be hidden within me, even if I were unwilling to confess it to you?" (*Et tibi quidem, domine, cuius oculis nuda est abyssus humanae conscientiae, quid occultum esset in me, etiamsi nollem confiteri tibi?*) (X, 2, 179). In other words, God's omniscience in Paul (He sees everyone) becomes, in Augustine, a penetrating gaze that sees *inside* each one of us. Augustine's proto-"hermeneutics of self" is all the more convincing because he does not simply *choose* to hide sin; rather, the opacity of the human interior is such that one can never be sure subjective truth has been discovered:

That is how I see myself, but perhaps I am deceived. For there are those deplorable blind spots where the capacity that lies in me is concealed from me. My mind on examining myself about its strengths does not regard its findings as easy to trust. What lies within is for the most part hidden unless experience reveals it.

(*Ita mihi videor; forsitan fallar. Sunt enim et istae plangendae tenebrae, in quibus me latet facultas mea, quae in me est, ut animus meus de viribus suis ipse se interrogans non facile sibi credendum existimet, quia et quod inest plerumque occultum est, nisi experientia manifestetur.*) (X, 32, 207)

Interiority, here, represents something more than, and even the contrary of, the doctrine of the "inner man," for it is now human sin and desire that are hidden within.<sup>99</sup>

Already, then, the tropes and concepts of hermeneutic selfhood are present; but the autobiographical mentality that assembled these building blocks some twelve centuries later transformed unambiguously the *Confessions* into a text of deep experience. This was accomplished in two ways: first, the translations themselves "modernized" Augustine's own language of interiority; and second, the imperative of subjective interiority was dictating changes in the way

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<sup>98</sup> Commentators have frequently adduced this final impersonality in order to differentiate Augustine's text from modern autobiography. See for example Blanchard's account of how Augustine's metaphor of inner space eventually gives way to an abolition of the notion of that space ("L'Espace intérieur"). Similar views of how Augustine abolishes the speaking subject can be found in Eugene Vance, "Augustine's *Confessions* and the Grammar of Selfhood," *Genre* 6 (1973), 1-28, and Beaujour, *Miroirs d'encre* (42-53).

<sup>99</sup> An additional example is provided by the reference to the infant who has no means of communicating inner desires to the outside, adult world: "For my desires were internal" (*illae [voluntates] intus erant*) (I, 6, 7).

seventeenth-century translators attempted to situate the *Confessions* for a new public. For the sake of brevity, I will restrict myself to a few particularly telling examples of the vicissitudes of translations. The first comes from Arnauld d'Andilly's 1649 version, the language of which probably does the most to "deepen" Augustine's text.<sup>100</sup> In book X, chapter 6, Augustine inquires into what he loves in God, excluding any criteria that would have to do with the outer man – that is, the senses. He then concludes that the object of his love must be something else, something beyond though to some extent analogous to the sensory universe of light, sound, smell, taste, or touch:

[T]here is a light I love, and a food, and a kind of embrace when I love my God – a light, voice, odor, food, embrace of my inner man, where my soul is illuminated by a light which space cannot contain, where there is a sound that time cannot seize, ... and where there is a bond of union that no satiety can part.

(et tamen amo quandam lucem et quandam vocem et quandam odorem et quandam cibum et quandam amplexum, cum amo deum meum, lucem, vocem, odorem, cibum, amplexum interioris hominis mei, ubi fulget animae meae, quod non capit locus, et ubi sonat, quod non rapit tempus, ... et ubi haeret, quod non divellit satietas.) (X, 6, 183)

The "interiority" of this passage is limited to that of the allegorical "inner man" ("interioris hominis") who shares the senses of the outer man but transposes them to a spiritual plane. Yet in the hands of Arnauld d'Andilly, however, Augustine's inner man starts to become the interior of Augustine himself:

Mais cette lumière, cette harmonie, cette odeur, cette viande, et cette volupté ne se trouvent que dans le fond de mon cœur, dans cette partie de moi-même qui est toute intérieure et toute invisible, où mon âme voit briller au-dessus d'elle une lumière que le lieu ne renferme point.<sup>101</sup>

(But this light, this harmony, this smell, this food and this voluptuousness are found only at the bottom of my heart, in this part of myself that is all interior and invisible, where my soul sees shining above it a light that space cannot contain.)

The inner man has subtly but unmistakably metamorphosed into the "invisible," "interior" part of Augustine lying at the "bottom of his heart."

Indeed, "the bottom" ("le fond") and "the deep" ("le profond") surface with remarkable regularity in Arnauld d'Andilly's translation, rendering Augustine's rare "fundus" ("a fundo cordis mei" [IX, 1]) and "intimo cordis" (cf. IV, 12 and IV, 13), as well as his more common "intus" ("inside," "inwardly"). Hence a phrase such as "Inwardly I said to myself" (dicebam enim apud me intus) (VIII, 11, 150) becomes "Car je disais en moi-même du plus profond de mon âme" (for I said within myself from the deepest part of my soul).<sup>102</sup> Arnauld d'Andilly's predilection for "le fond," however, inevitably accentuates Augustine's metaphoric interiority: in this last example, the translator is given to adding the idea of depth of soul, even when the "je disais en moi-même" had already rendered accurately Augustine's Latin. Similarly, "le fond" is wont to appear unsummoned:

<sup>100</sup> The text of Arnauld d'Andilly's edition, minus its important preface, has recently been made accessible by Philippe Sellier's edition (Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Arnauld d'Andilly, cd. Philippe Sellier [Paris: Folio/Gallimard, 1993]). One can easily see from Sellier's own presentation of the work that its interiority continues to be trumpeted in much the same terms as it was three centuries ago.

<sup>101</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Arnauld d'Andilly, 133.

<sup>102</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Arnauld d'Andilly, 286.

hence, while Augustine asks, "What else has stirred my mind to ask and discuss and consider this question?" (quid est, quod mihi venit in mentem quaerere et discutere et considerare?) (II, 8, 33), Arnauld d'Andilly's French transforms the mind's curiosity into a sounding of the subject's depths: looking into the question, Augustine "examin[e] la disposition de [s]on esprit, et sond[e] le fond de [s]on cœur" (examine[s] the disposition of [his] mind, and sound[s] the depth of [his] heart.)<sup>103</sup>

This passage, in which Augustine searches for the causes that drove him in his youth to steal a pear for the sole pleasure of stealing, can be taken for representative of a general trend among the French translations, that of an increasing willingness to impose a modern vocabulary of interiority onto Augustine's language. Goibaud du Bois, for example, in his 1686 translation, follows Arnauld d'Andilly in interpreting Augustine's questioning as a hermeneutic act the subject performs upon his own interior: "Que se passa-t-il donc en moi, et par où puis-je pénétrer quel fut le vrai motif de cette méchanceté?" So what happened in me, and how can I penetrate the true motive of this wickedness?).<sup>104</sup> By contrast, the two French translations that had preceded Arnauld d'Andilly's had been quite sober renditions of the original. "[D'où] me vient maintenant cet[te] humeur de vous demander cela, mon Dieu, d' en rechercher la raison, et de la considérer si avant?" ([Whence] comes to me now this penchant to ask you this, my God, to search for its cause, and to pursue my speculations?), asks Aemar Hennequin's Augustine in 1582,<sup>105</sup> whereas in 1638, René de Cérésiers's enquires only: "[D]'où me vient ce dessein d'examiner cette matière?" (Where did I get the idea of examining this matter?)<sup>106</sup> Only a complete reading of Arnauld d'Andilly's or Goibaud du Bois's translations can give the reader a feel for the combined effect of these apparently minute changes, but these few examples of interiorizing exaggerations and improvisations should be sufficient to suggest the metaphorical trends at work.

More than the lexical minutiae of the translations themselves, however, it is the paratexts accompanying the French *Confessions* that serve as a barometer for the rapid changes the notion of human interiority underwent in the relatively short space of a century. Translation required the sensitizing of a new reading public – vernacularization demanded vulgarization – and thus translators availed themselves of prefaces and dedications in order to elaborate on what made the text so accessible to those with no theological training. If the *Confessions* were to become such popular reading in the seventeenth century – and the holdings of major libraries suggest printings in almost every year from 1649 on – this was only possible once the book was wrenched from its traditionally theological, elite readership, and moved into the domain of devotional literature. To achieve such a displacement, translators appealed to an incompatibility that Michel de Certeau has pointed to as a structuring feature of the seventeenth century's spiritual landscape – the irreducible

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<sup>103</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Arnauld d' Andilly, 82. Another word commonly used by Arnauld d'Andilly to translate (and extend) Augustine's metaphoric subjective depths, "replies," has a similar tendency to appear where little in the original seems to warrant it. Whereas Augustine writes, "But you, Lord, know everything about [man]; for you made [him]" (tu autem, domine, scis ejus omnia, qui fecisti eum) (X, 5, 182), seventeenth-century readers found the following: "Mais vous, Seigneur, penetrez clans les replis les plus cachés de son âme, parce que vous le connaissez comme l'ouvrier connaît son ouvrage" (But you, Lord, penetrate into the most hidden recesses of his soul, for you know him as the artisan knows his work) (338).

<sup>104</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Philippe Goibaud du Bois (Paris: JeanBaptiste Coignard, 1686), 84.

<sup>105</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions...*, trans. Aemar Hennequin (1582; Lyon: Pierre Rigaud, 1609), 40v.

<sup>106</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. René de Cérésiers (1638; Paris: Compagnie des marchands libraires du palais, 1665), 55.

opposition of the doctrinal and the experiential, the mind and the heart.<sup>107</sup> This perceived divorce was responsible for the *Confessions*' exceptional status as a paradigmatic text of interiority, and necessitated a double editorial isolation. For translators separated the *Confessions* from the rest of Augustine's writing, deemed cerebral, and then effected a further and internal separation between the work's first ten books – where Augustine's experiential "I" is most in evidence – and the last three, more theological in scope. In this way, just as Augustine himself had appropriated Pauline ideas in ways that Paul would have found foreign, the seventeenth century could only read, and transmit, the *Confessions* based on its own evolving understanding of the very concepts that Augustine's work had helped put in circulation.

Judging by the scarcity of the early editions of Aemar Hennequin's 1582 translation, the *Confessions* took some time to find an audience other than scholastic and Latinate.<sup>108</sup> Hennequin dedicates his innovative enterprise to none other than Henri III, whom he praises for his work against the heretics who, unlike the French monarchy, have rejected the sacrament of confession. Describing Augustine as "un des plus grands Evêques, plus digne[s] Confesseur[s], plus excellent[s] Docteur[s] que nous avons eu[s] dans l'Eglise" (one of the greatest Bishops, most worthy Confessor[s], [and] most excellent Doctor[s] we have had in the church), Hennequin's presentation conjoins a purely sacramental reading of the *Confessions*'s title and assertions of Augustine's double – institutional and theological – orthodoxy.<sup>109</sup> Augustine's first foray into the vernacular is, then, inseparable from the context of the religious wars and the nascent Catholic League; the reader is summoned to appreciate how, eleven hundred years in advance, this great confessor "a combattu, écrit, et disputé contre les Lutheriens d'Allemagne et les Calvinistes de France" (fought, wrote and argued against the Lutherans of Germany and the Calvinists of France).<sup>110</sup>

Hennequin's polemical preface acts as a perfect foil to those that would follow, for little in it hints at the devotional and interiorizing uses to which the *Confessions* were soon put, starting with the Jesuit René de Césisier's translation, published for the first time anonymously in 1638 and reprinted at least a dozen times until 1709. Part of this inflection consists of reconceiving elements

<sup>107</sup> In the early modern period, writes Certeau, "the difference (considered intolerable) between the religious *consciousness* of Christians and the ideological or institutional *representations* of their faith becomes sharper. Is this truly anything new? What is in any case especially striking in the texts is less the *fact* of this difference ... than the explicit *feeling* of a gulf between beliefs and doctrines, or between experience and institutions" (Michel de Certeau, *L'écriture de l'histoire* [Paris: Gallimard, 1975], 135, italics in original). Much of Certeau's work has been an elaboration of this gulf, which I will explore in greater detail in subsequent chapters [of "Being Interior" C.A.]. It should be stated from the outset, however, that although the incompatibility between experience and institutions may have been more perceived than real, the perception of divorce resulted in two very separate reading publics, the devotional and the theological; their libraries, in fact, did not mix. On the multiple readerships of religious works, see Henri-Jean Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société à Paris au dix-septième siècle (1598-1701)*, 2 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1969), 2:776-90.

<sup>108</sup> The Library of Congress contains a copy of this edition, indicated as the first by Remi Ceillier, *Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques*, vol. 9 (Paris: Louis Vives, 1858), 813; note, however, that Ceillier's dates are often quite wide of the mark. The earliest copy in the Bibliothèque nationale, which possesses several editions dating to 1633, is from 1609.

<sup>109</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Hennequin, 5r. In ecclesiastical Latin, confessio could refer to avowal (as a penitential discipline), to praise of God, or to the confession of faith pronounced by martyrs before the tribunal. The first two meanings are interdependent, as in the Hebrew term jada – the avowal of sin is at the same time praise for the God who pardons.

<sup>110</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Hennequin, 12V.

already present in Hennequin's version. If, as in Hennequin, the *Confessions* are assimilated to the penitential act of avowal, C erisiers goes much further than his predecessor in that confession is metaphorically described as an exteriorization, an uncovering of secrets and shadows:

Tous les courages ne sont pas assez grands pour publier des p ech es qu'on n'a faits qu'en cachette: souvent on a autant de v eritable peine de (*sic*) les exposer, qu'on a eu de faux plaisir   les faire. [Mes fautes] sont de cette nature, ils aiment les t en bres, et ne peuvent souffrir la lumi re.<sup>111</sup>

(Not everyone has enough courage to make public the sins one has committed only in secret: often exposing them causes as much real pain as committing them has given false pleasure. [My faults] are of this sort, they love the shadows and cannot tolerate the light.)

C erisiers's insistence here on sin as the element the subject makes public even as he claims to want to keep it hidden certainly takes its place in the Foucauldian narrative of avowal (in *The History of Sexuality*) that spans the whole of the modern age, from the prescription of private confession once a year in 1215 all the way to the work of Freud. But C erisier's preface contains much more than a mere confirmation of Foucault's thesis, for the "interior turn" that the *Confessions* take over the course of the century – indeed the entire culture of interiority that characterizes modernity – is not at all limited to an exacerbated sensitivity to concupiscence. Things other than darkness lay in the depths within.

If for the seventeenth century the *Confessions* seemed a "deep" text, it was above all because the work was increasingly assimilated to the mystical discourse of experience, a discourse that will, as will become more clear in the following chapter [of "*Being Interior*", C.A.], relentlessly seek out autobiographical testimony to contact with the divine within. C erisiers's preface is rife with the devotional, eroticized language of seventeenth-century mysticism ("Jouissez donc du cher objet de vos amours, go tez   loisir la devotion de ce S eraphin visible, consommez votre bon c oeur des saintes ardeurs de ses flammes" [Take pleasure then in the dear object of your love, taste at leisure the devotion of this visible Seraph, consume your delighted heart with the holy ardor of his flames]), a language that clearly indicates that the *Confessions* were finding a new audience composed of readers searching for certain values that devotional currents will label "interior." Augustine's pages, for example, are full of "feux invisibles" (invisible flames) that are said to melt all but the hardest readers. C erisier cautions his readers against reading the *Confessions* as a narrative exposition of sin, and casts them instead as a salutary divine fire: "Partout cette excellente Confession n'est pas tant un [lavoir] o  on peut nettoyer ses taches, qu'une fournaise o  l'on doit embraser ses froideurs" (This excellent Confession is throughout not so much a [wash basin] where one can cleanse one's stains, as a furnace where one must set one's chills ablaze). In this, C erisier's preface demonstrates how ideas of hidden depth and difficult avowal contain not only the rhetoric of sin but also a more happy double, the language of affective mysticism that promised experiential plenitude with every turn inward. If the hermeneutic self is such an attractive idea to moderns, it is surely because the promised truth within is not *only* sexual sin, that "privileged theme of confession" – though it is certainly that too.<sup>112</sup> The object of what Foucault has characterized as a *scientia sexualis*, the human interior constitutes itself as a zone of happy

<sup>111</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. C erisiers, "Eclaircissement," n.p.

<sup>112</sup> Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. I, 61.

authenticity only when it becomes the object of another science, what seventeenth-century mystics called "la science expérimentale," the science of experience.<sup>113</sup>

The *Confessions*, then, emerged as the book of two interrelated concepts of interiority – the interior as dark center of the secretive subject, but also the interior as the burning, experiential heart visited by mystical graces. This doubly interior reading persists and deepens in what was by far the most popular seventeenth-century translation of the *Confessions*, that of Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, the elder brother of the important Port-Royalist Antoine Arnauld. Once again, the reader is invited to embark on a hermeneutic approach to the hidden self, one in which Augustine's "clear" and "penetrating" gaze peers, "avec une sévérité de Censeur" (with a Censor's severity), "jusques dans les replis les plus cachés de son âme pour y découvrir les moindres défauts et les moindres faiblesses" (down into most hidden folds of his soul to discover in it the most minor faults and weaknesses).<sup>114</sup> Once again, too, the translator moves the *Confessions* in the direction of the mystical relation of graces. From the very outset of Arnauld d'Andilly's long "Avis au lecteur," the translator argues for a break between a literature of the heart and one of the mind, a break that has situated the *Confessions* squarely among the former: "l'unique fin des livres de dévotion doit être d'élever à Dieu l'esprit et le cœur de ceux qui les lisent, et beaucoup plus encore le cœur que l'esprit" (the unique aim of devotional books must be to raise towards God the minds and hearts of their readers, and much more their hearts than their minds). Whereas in other works Augustine spoke the reasoned language of men, in the "ravisements" (ravishments) of this "ouvrage d'amour" (work of love) he targets his self-control ("[s]a retenue") and gives in to an "effusion" of mystic proportions: "[S]i partout ailleurs [dans son oeuvre] il paraît des étincelles de ce feu céleste qui le consumait, il en paraît ici des flammes qui sont capables d'échauffer les plus froids et de fondre la glace des âmes les plus endurcies" (if everywhere else [in his work] there appear the sparks of this celestial fire that consumes him, here appear flames that are capable of warming even the coldest and of melting the ice of even the most hardened souls).<sup>115</sup> This devotional vocabulary is essentially that of Césisiers, and the fact that the reading of the *Confessions* that the Jansenist Arnauld d'Andilly proposes so firmly reinforces the de-theologizing and interiorizing started by his Jesuit predecessor demonstrates how immaterial sectarian differences can be where subjective trends are concerned.

<sup>113</sup> On the tendency of the interior to be alternately, in the formulation of one religious author of the time, a muddy well and a font of pure water, see Mino Bergamo, *L'Anatomie de l'âme: De François de Sales à Fénelon*, trans. Marc Bonneval (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1994), 17-19. As I shall explore in more depth in Chapter 4, "la science expérimentale" needs to be read also as "experimental knowledge": both of its terms had dual meanings. Foucault, it should be pointed out, did not overlook the mystic science of experience. On the contrary, he assimilated Christian mysticism to the Classical legacy of the *ars erotica*, which made of pleasure the source of any and all truth. See *History of Sexuality*, vol. I, 70-71.

<sup>114</sup> I quote Arnauld d'Andilly's (unpaginated) "Avis au lecteur" from the second edition (Paris: Chez la veuve Camusat et Pierre le Petit, 1649).

<sup>115</sup> Cf. also the Church approbation, which confirms the splitting off of the *Confessions* from Augustine's theological contributions: "Quoique taute l'Eglise ait toujours été dans de très grands sentiments d'amour et de respect pour la doctrine de s. Augustin, il faut avouer néanmoins que les livres de ses Confessions ont emporté l'estime et l'approbation de tout le monde par dessus tous ses autres écrits, parce que cet ouvrage était encore plus une production de sa piété ... que sa doctrine" (Although the Church has always had great feelings of love and respect for the doctrine of Saint Augustine, it must be admitted nevertheless that the books of his *Confessions* have won every one's esteem and approbation more than all his other writings, because this work was even more a production of his piety ... than his doctrine).

Both of the last two translations I will be discussing, that of Philippe Goibaud (or Goibaut) du Bois (1686) and Simon-Michel Treuvé (1703), participate in this same vogue for works that touch the heart; their prefaces are filled with the devotional language contained in the previous two versions of the *Confessions*.<sup>116</sup> Their works are particularly significant, however, on account of their amplification of an idea already present in C risiers's commentary – to wit, that the *Confessions* are in fact two books, one speculative and cerebral, one experiential and cordial, and that the division between the two occurs precisely where the autobiographical account of the first ten books gives way to the meditations on time and Genesis in books XI to XIII. C risiers had warned his reader not to put off by the "subtile recherche" (subtle inquiry) of the books that followed the "histoire de sa vie" (story of his life), and Goibaud du Bois, too, speaks to the increasing difficulty the work's hybrid composition poses to its new readership: "La plupart de ceux qui lisent les Confessions de s. Augustin en demeurent au dixi me livre, et laissent les trois derniers." (Most of those who read the *Confessions* of St. Augustine stop at the tenth book and leave the last three [unread]).<sup>117</sup> Goibaud's goal seems to be to encourage his readers to overcome this thorny (" pineux") difficulty, which he excuses through recourse to historical explanations. If book XIII, for example, appears incongruous, this is, he argues, owing to the necessity of allegorical interpretation in Patristic times.

Treuv , however, in an editorial decision that provides a fitting climax to the trends that had brought the *Confessions* very far indeed from where Hennequin had first positioned them over a century earlier, felt no need to reconcile his modern readership with passages that had clearly lapsed into irrelevance. Treuv , another relation of Antoine Arnauld's, and much appreciated in Jansenist circles, had already authored two highly successful devotional works – *Instruction sur les dispositions qu'on doit apporter aux sacrements* (1676) and *Le Directeur spirituel pour ceux qui n'en ont pas* (1691). The latter especially appealed to a burgeoning market for books we might think of as "self-help," that is, inspirational books for those who profess themselves weary of or excluded by institutional mediation. Treuv 's *Confessions* were aimed at just such an audience: he proposed an abridged version in which, as his title read, "l'on n'a mis que ce qui est le plus touchant et le plus   la port e de tout le monde" (we have included only what is most touching and most accessible to everyone).<sup>118</sup>

What was most "touching" and "accessible" in Augustine's work? Treuv 's translation amputates the last three books entirely, and condenses what remains into five books that leave out what the translator views as extraneous historical material, such as the account of Augustine's disputes with the Manicheans or his biographical sketch of his mother in book IX. The result is a volume that guarantees that the moving and tender qualities of the work triumph over those that might dry out

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<sup>116</sup> Goibaud du Bois, for instance, urges readers to follow Augustine's example and "work on their hearts" ("travailler sur [leur] c ur"). Goibaud du Bois had formulated elsewhere a theory of spontaneous eloquence in order to account for the devotional appeal of Augustine's work, an eloquence that came not from study but from a "disposition int rieure" (inner disposition): "[I]l n'appartient qu'  un c ur touch  de la v rit  d'en passer le sentiment dans les c urs des autres" (Only a heart touched by truth can impart its feeling to the hearts of others) (Philippe Goibaud du Bois, *Avertissement en t te de sa traduction des sermons de saint Augustin*, ed. Thomas M. Carr, Jr. [1694; Geneva: Droz, 1992], 109).

<sup>117</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Goibaud du Bois, xiv.

<sup>118</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions de saint Augustin abr g es, o  l'on n'a mis que ce qui est le plus touchant et le plus   la port e de tout le monde*, trans. Simon Michel Treuv  (Paris: Charles Robustel, 1703).

("déséch[er]") the heart.<sup>119</sup> Treuvé's editorial project, aimed at bringing the strangeness of Augustine's work in line with the expectations of contemporary readers, bears more than a passing resemblance to Martin Lowenthal's production of Montaigne's "autobiography" that I evoked at the outset of this chapter.<sup>120</sup> And his early example of the autobiographical anachronism was far from a historical anomaly: it was preceded as far back as 1638 by an English translation (printed in Paris): *The Kernel or Extract of the Historical Part of S. Augustine's Confessions, Together with All the Most Affectuous Passages Thereof, Taken out of That Whole Book and Severed from Such Parts as are Obscure, Device, or Ornament*. In 1660, Abraham Woodhead even offered a *Life of Augustine* in two parts, the first volume of which was autobiographically entitled *The Life of S. Augustine. Written by Himself in the First Ten Books of His Confessions*.<sup>121</sup>

The appearance of Treuvé's abridged *Confessions* at the opening of what was to be the century of *sensibilité* – an age in which emotional response founded not only the standard of literary worth but the very possibility of a scientific approach to the human body – was supremely appropriate.<sup>122</sup> The *Confessions* had become an intimate experience, one of reader identifying with writer through the precious material mediation of the portable book. For Treuvé also vaunts his translation for its physical properties, which are something like the material complement of its touching content: "on pourra facilement le porter toujours avec soi, et avoir la commodité d'en lire quand on voudra quelque chapitre" (one may easily carry it with oneself at all times and have the convenience of reading it whenever one wishes). It goes without saying that people had carried the *Confessions* with them for private reading before this time (the case of Petrarch comes to mind).<sup>123</sup> But

<sup>119</sup> A few years before Treuvé's edition, François Paris had also remarked in his *Prières et élévations à Dieu extraites des livres des Confessions de s. Augustin* (Paris: Edme Couterot, 1698) that these last four books were full of abstractions that left them "hors la portée du commun des fidèles" (beyond the reach of the average person of faith). Paris's book differed from the translations of the *Confessions* discussed above, for his goal was to create a text in which Augustine's "I" could be assimilated by the "I" of the reader. He therefore eliminates historical specificity, and even goes so far as to move Augustine's narration into the present tense. This type of devotional use of the text was also quite popular (similar volumes include *Les Plus tendres sentiments d'un cœur envers Dieu, tirés exactement du livre des Confessions de s. Augustin* [1688]), and led to the repeated publication of another "accessible" work of Augustine's, the *Soliloquies*, for those readers seeking "l'intelligence de ce gémissment intérieur" (knowledge of this inner moaning) (*Les Soliloques, le manuel et les méditations de saint Augustin* [Paris: Chez Charles Savreux], "Avis," n.p.). Devotional thirst for interiority, then, took many forms, some autobiographical, some aiming at the reproduction in the reader of Augustine's own state of mystic grace.

<sup>120</sup> It reminds one as well of the fact that college courses of the "Great Books" type often assign only the first nine or ten books of Augustine's classic. Significantly, some of the most interesting modern literary analysis of the *Confessions* has concerned itself precisely with trying to uncover the logic of a text that to modern eyes can only appeal as fractured. According to Beaujour, for example, Augustine sets up an autobiographical "I" only to abolish it: "The tenth book retraces the process by which one comes to forget oneself by emptying the memory of all temporal residue" (*Miroirs d'encre*, 44). Vance ("Augustine's *Confessions*") reaches similar conclusions.

<sup>121</sup> The second volume (1679) completed the first by adding Possidius's well-known biographical piece, and by cutting and pasting passages from Augustine's other works. Translations of only the first nine or ten books of the *Confessions* would be popular in England until the beginning of the twentieth century.

<sup>122</sup> On sensibility as the grounds for scientific and literary exploration of the human subject, see Vila, *Enlightenment and pathology*. Some time ago and in passing, Lionel Gossman pointed to Treuvé's title as an indication of the changing readerly tastes that would eventually culminate in Rousseau's own autobiographical work; see his "The Innocent Art of Confession and Reverie" (*Daedalus* 107.3 [1978]), 75n7.

<sup>123</sup> See Petrarch, *Epistolae de rebus familiaribus* IV, 1.

Treuvé's explicit reference to the advantage of portability marks the *Confessions'* definitive move out of the ecclesiastical domain, and their journey into the private world of "literature," where they would enjoy, until this day, their status as the West's first autobiography.

### Becoming Autobiography

I have tried to suggest that Augustine's and Montaigne's use of metaphoric interiority, and the deliberate enhancement of that interiority during the seventeenth century, offer some insight into the origins of the anachronism that is autobiographical reading. Martin Lowenthal's "autobiography" of Montaigne is the result of changes that lead back to readers who enjoyed Treuvé's edition of Augustine, readers who would certainly sympathize with picking and choosing those bits of Montaigne's own work that echo their own concerns. But I have also tried to show, via my discussion of the texts of Augustine and Montaigne themselves, that if these readings were incomplete, they were also startlingly perceptive in the way they zeroed in on aspects of these authors' work that would for centuries define their popularity. Thus, the modern tendency to privilege autobiographical readings can and should be understood not as something totally foreign to the texts themselves, but rather as part of a diachronic process in which these important works have *become*, bit by bit, autobiographies. There is never any one moment in which an expressible "inside" becomes suddenly thinkable, a moment in which the hermeneutic anachronism becomes possible; rather, in a long series of repositionings, the present takes from the past something that it recognizes as its own, and brings it into harmony with prevailing expectations. Historical difference is suppressed, and likeness enhanced, but the latter is no more a complete fabrication than the past is "in fact" totally other. Indeed, it is this eerie mixture of familiarity and difference that even Foucault, the theorist of "epistemic rupture," came to appreciate most when working with texts of Antiquity.<sup>124</sup>

Yet there is a paradox here, one that hints that the origins of this anachronism are more complicated, that there is more in this than a sweeping narrative of the advent – good or bad – of a hermeneutic, interiorized subject that expresses itself through writing. This paradox is that at the same time Augustine and Montaigne were subject to the same interiorizing logic, the comparative fates of the *Confessions* and the *Essais* in the seventeenth century were quite divergent. Judging by their publication history and the many texts that aimed to frame the works for their readers, one can remark an inverse relationship in the popularity of the two authors – Montaigne's fortunes turned sour just as Augustine's were hitting a high point. Here are two of the works most likely to be mentioned as ancestors of modern autobiographical practice, and yet they could not have been treated more differently even as they were read in similar ways. Why did the *Confessions* excite such enthusiasm in the second half of the century, while the *Essais* attracted only opprobrium, if they both were seen as manifestations of a deep self?

Beneath the diachronic narrative of the rise of human interiority as a paradigm for modern subjectivity lie synchronic discrepancies, tell-tale signs of the diverse and contradictory social forces in which interiority was, and remains, embedded. Although interiority is indeed part of the general fabric of early modern culture, from science to literature to religion, certain developments,

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<sup>124</sup> The historian's goal, Foucault writes, is to "examine both the difference that keeps us at a remove from a way of thinking in which we recognize the origin of our own, and the proximity that remains in spite of that distance which we never cease to widen" (Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Volume II: *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley [New York: Vintage, 1980], 7n [translation slightly modified]).

such as the important link between writing and the inner world, seem to prosper in one or another specific terrain. Before the rhetoric of autobiographical interiority moved out into secular literature in the eighteenth century, that terrain was religious. Marie de Gournay's foregrounding of the penitential sincerity with which Montaigne exposed his "entrails" and made the hidden interior readable was in this light no accident. In moving to separate the *Essais* from the then-popular works on aristocratic self-fashioning with which they were often lumped (e.g., Nicolas Faret's *L'Honnête homme ou l'art de plaire à la cour* [1630], who cites Montaigne) and in trumpeting them instead as confession, Gournay showed tremendous prescience, for the subjective future belonged to interiority and interiority was, for the moment, preeminently religious.

Of course, Gournay's efforts to portray Montaigne as an exemplary penitent came to nothing, and he fell from favor: the *Essais* did not make a good devotional text. Explanations for this failure are not hard to come by – Montaigne's skepticism, his worldliness, his lack of contrition (in spite of Gournay's assertions), and, most of all, his conception of a God far removed from the goings-on of men. The devotional milieu demanded not only confessional penitence – of which the *Essais* offer little – but also first-person narratives of mystic experience. For if Augustine met with approval, it was certainly not because his text somehow implied, as one modern commentator has put it, "the destruction of the speaking subject."<sup>125</sup> On the contrary, I hope to have shown how that destruction, in the last four books of the *Confessions*, left his readers "cold," to use the same expression as his translators, and they disregarded it. Rather, Augustine offered a text of experience – man's experience of God as something lived and within that can be expressed through writing. So while Montaigne may well – on occasion, at least – have looked within himself, and been appreciated for so doing, the Augustine of the seventeenth century actually found something there – something sinful, yes, but also a hidden brightness that moored his identity and demanded to be exposed.

In its thirst for inner experience, however, the devotional public did not limit itself to the reading of one exemplary man's canonical text. Unlike "heroic virtue" (one of the saintly traits necessary for canonization by Rome), and unlike theological sophistication, experience belonged to everybody. Experience's seductive charm was that it could not simply be learned, nor imitated, as one might imitate a supreme act of charity; instead, it had to be "caught," like a divine fever. "Je souhaite, mon cher Lecteur, que ce feu de l'amour divin qui a embrasé le cœur de Saint Augustin, et qui lui a fait produire un si excellent ouvrage, jette de si vives étincelles dans le vôtre" (Dear Reader, may this fire of divine love that set Saint Augustine's heart aflame, and that made him produce such an excellent work, cast such bright sparks into your own), writes Arnauld d'Andilly with a logic that can only suggest that those flames in the hearts of Augustine's readers would be, in their turn, autobiographical.<sup>126</sup> The inner pleasure of experience implied that contemporaries too do what Augustine did, and indeed, as I shall show in subsequent chapters, by the second half of the century, large amounts of what were repeatedly touted as autobiographical "gémissements intérieurs" (inner moanings) would for the first time find their way into print. Yet the rest of this book [Being Interior; C.A.] will also attempt to highlight a paradox that lies in wait at every turn in the investigation of our culture of interiority. The type of experiential, collective enthusiasm that Arnauld d'Andilly hoped Augustine's *Confessions* inspired was always dogged by the contrary hope *not* to be understood: my experience, after all, is only mine if it is not quite yours. As an

<sup>125</sup> Eugene Vance, "Le moi comme langage: Saint Augustin et l'autobiographie," *Poétique* 14 (1973), 165.

<sup>126</sup> Augustine, *Les Confessions*, trans. Arnauld d'Andilly, "Avis" n.p.

anonymous compiler put it, with regard to Augustine's "gémissements inénarrables" (unspeakable moanings), "ces délices des âmes fidèles sont si intérieures, si secrètes, si cachées, si inconnues, qu'il n'y a que les personnes mêmes qui les éprouvent qui les puissent comprendre: et mêmes après l'expérience que l'on en a faite, on n'est point encore capable de les expliquer" (the delights of faithful souls are so interior, so secret, hidden and unknown, that only the same persons who experience them can understand them: and even after the experience one has had of them, one is still incapable of explaining them).<sup>127</sup> Somewhat contradictorily, then, experience was both readable and hidden, common to all and yet specifically one's own; it couldn't be had through books and at the same time reading and writing about it were an integral part of its cultivation. Such was a logically untenable position, certainly, but it is precisely this friction – between assertions of irreducible depths and extravagant hopes for textual communities united by a commonly ineffable experience – that fired the dream of autobiography, a book that was not quite a book, an ostensibly transparent window nonetheless tantalizingly opaque.

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<sup>127</sup> Augustine, *Instruction tirée de S. Augustin sur le gémissement intérieur, où nous devons être durant tout le cours de notre vie* (Paris, 1653), 5, 7.