The Mirror Image Processes

THE MIRROR-IMAGE PROCESSES

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THE MIRROR-IMAGE PROCESSES

In order to show how the mirror-image process functions, its specific forms and operations, I shall return and examine further the creation of "In Monument Valley." The wide generality of the process illustrated here in a particular case shall be demonstrated later. In other chapters of this book, I shall consider a variety of cases and I will present some of the evidence, both clinical and experimental, supporting the conclusions to follow.

Janusian Thinking

When I traced the development of "In Monument Valley," certain salient factors emerged. The poet's relationship to his mother constituted an underlying unconscious and preconscious theme, and two particular conscious thoughts played critical roles at certain junctures in the poem's creation. The first of these pertained to a characteristic of horses: horses lived human lives. This formulation played an important role in the early phases of the writing and it guided the creation of what eventually became the last two stanzas of the poem. The second thought pertained to the horse in relation to a rider and it guided the creation of what became the two earlier stanzas. Together, these particular thoughts determined major features of both form and content and were crucial to the creation of the entire poem.

I will begin with the first of these, the idea that horses lived human lives. Previously, I called this thought the germinating idea for the poem despite its not technically being the very first one the poet had—remember both the first words he wrote, "Hot pumice blew in Monument Valley," and the original experience of seeing the horse—because it was, by the poet's own statement, the idea that propelled the poem forward. No explicit reference to this idea appears in the final poem but it is both implied and indirectly incorporated overall. Special connections between horses and humans are suggested in the reference to a bond between "his kind and mine" and in the narrative progression from a horse and rider together, a later meeting between them, and a final separation. That the horse as an intermediate species is a very important idea in the poem is further demonstrated by its forming the basis for the conception of the horse as an emblematic beast of our time—creating emblems and metaphors for the time and culture

is, of course, the very stuff of which poetry is made.

Some would describe this thought or idea as the "inspiration" of the poem, but I will refrain from using that problematic term. The term "inspiration" has many misleading connotations and there are many misconceptions about the role of inspiration in creativity.[1] Described more simply as an important early thought or as a germinating idea, it is less clothed in myth or mystery than described as an inspiration; nonetheless, it is a critical aspect of the creative process. As such a critical aspect of the creative process is seldom definitely and precisely identified or reported, it bears careful scrutiny.

In order to clarify the salient features of the formulation, "horses live human lives," I will focus on its structure. Rather than analyzing or discussing the particular perspective or bit of knowledge contained in the poet's conception of horses, as would usually be done in an aesthetic approach, I shall be primarily concerned with a formal property of the thought, a property that may not be immediately apparent and one that the poet himself may not have noticed when embroiled in the writing of the poem. I am interested in properties that poets have not noticed because that is the point of the exercise. If poets and other creators characteristically stopped during the process of creating to examine the structure or formal properties of their thinking, they would hardly progress with the business at hand. If creators could have done the job themselves, the psychological story of the creative process would have been told and would be well established by now. Another reason for focusing on formal properties derives from a special feature of creative processes and their outcomes. Not uncommonly, the content of creative thoughts seems self-evident retrospectively or a posteriori. After a creative idea is posited and elaborated, after its *plausibility* is demonstrated through logical explanation or presentation in a poem or other work of art, we sometimes find it to be remarkably apparent or true,- sometimes we even believe that we ourselves might have arrived at such an idea, had we "merely" known to look at things in that particular way. Consequently, if we focus on content alone, it might be difficult, even impossible, to recognize that the initial creative thought may not have been so plausible or necessarily conforming to the format of ordinary logic; it might be difficult to recognize that the initial thought may have been quite different in structure. It might be hard to realize that the particular thought was actually based on an apparent implausibility.

In the case of "horses live human lives," the basis of the thought was such an apparent

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implausibility. More specifically, the formulation was structurally self-contradictory. Note carefully the specific aspects of the idea: horses do not only share the human experience nor are they simply subjected to the wishes and needs of humans, they *live* human lives. Horses bridge the barrier separating humans from beasts, not in this case through an evolutionary relationship but because of their living their lives in the human sphere. Tameable animals renounce their kind in order to live human lives, the poet told me in our discussion of the idea. Yet the horse continues to be a beast and to retain his animal nature despite his *living* a human life. The idea was not that horses were equivalent to human beings, but that they lived their lives. As the poet conceived it, two opposite and contradictory propositions were true of the horse *at the same time. A* horse was human and a horse was a beast simultaneously. A horse was also simultaneously not-a-human and not-a-beast. The poet formulated a concept emphasizing distinctly antithetical aspects of the horse rather than a concept involving mutual modification of certain aspects or a compromise formation. Horses were not humanly beasts nor beastly humans, nor were horses thought of as related to humans on an evolutionary scale. He did not think of a combination of horses and humans such as the centaur, the mythical entity composed of the torso, arms, and head of a man merged with a horse's body. In the context of the poem, the horse assumed no human characteristics nor a human any horse-like features, nor, as in fable and myth, did the horse speak as humans do. The formulation consisted of a logical contradiction and the postulation of a simultaneous antithesis.

I designate this process[2] of actively formulating simultaneous antitheses "janusian thinking," a term based on the qualities of the ancient Roman deity Janus, the god whose many faces looked in several opposite directions at the same time. Janusian thinking consists of *actively conceiving two or more opposite or antithetical ideas, images, or concepts simultaneously.* Opposites or antitheses are conceived as existing side by side or as equally operative and equally true. Such thinking is highly complex. It is intrinsic to creativity and it operates widely in all types of creative processes, intellectual and pragmatic as well as artistic. It is different from dialectical thinking, ambivalence, and the thought processes of children or of schizophrenics. It is the mirror image of a dream quality and of primary process thought.

Keeping to the context of the creation of this particular poem, I shall specify the mirror-image quality of janusian thought. The poet's thought of a horse as both human and beast simultaneously occurred in full consciousness and in a totally rational context. There was nothing altered about his state of consciousness, as in hypnosis, drug intoxication, dreams, or other so-called altered states—nor was

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there any indication of an upsurge of unconscious thought. The poet's thinking was goal directed, clear, and he was fully cognizant and aware of logical connections and distinctions. He knew that horses did not actually live as humans; the idea was only figuratively true.

According to psychoanalytic theory, a cardinal feature of unconscious thinking is that opposites represent each other and operate interchangeably with no contradiction whatsoever. In the dream, something may be turned into and represented by its opposite. Such reversal and representation by opposites are considered to be characteristic of the primary process cognition responsible for dreams. There is a good deal of clinical evidence supporting these theoretical formulations about dreaming and unconscious processes. But, although opposites represent each other without contradiction in the Unconscious, or in unconscious thinking, and although primary process operations defy such opposition and contradiction, it does not follow that all interchangeable opposition or defiance of contradiction in thinking is a direct manifestation of the contents of the Unconscious, or of unconscious thinking, or of the primary process. On the contrary, in creative thinking, simultaneous opposition or antithesis, rather than interchangeable opposition, occurs as a function of a secondary process type of cognition. Secondary process cognition obeys the rules of ordinary logic—psychoanalysts refer to Aristotelian logic—and it is characteristic of conscious thinking. Janusian thinking occurs during full consciousness with full rationality and logical faculties operating at the moment simultaneous oppositions and antitheses are formulated. Janusian thinking is a special type of secondary process operation.[3] It is a mirror-image process in that its contents resemble the reversals and multiple opposites found in dreams, but its psychological characteristics and functions are the obverse of dreaming. The creator's thinking is goal oriented and directed, he is concerned with secondary process tasks in the aesthetic and scientific realm, and he produces images and thoughts that superficially appear to be similar to some spontaneously formed images in dreams. And, although he does not realize it, he reverses the psychological function of dreaming.

With respect to the aesthetic task, the janusian thought of a horse as simultaneously human and beast functioned to produce a fundamental tension undergirding the poem, "In Monument Valley." Guided by this thought, the poet introduced the idea of an ancient bond between man and beast, and later in the writing process he elaborated the making and breaking of this bond. The janusian thought also functioned to unify the poem because the relationship between man and beast complemented the

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idea of the weird blending of animate and inanimate in the shrieking rocks of Monument Valley.[4] Furthermore, the idea of the human-beast horse as emblematic for the modern age was one of the factors giving the poem universal meaning beyond the particular experiences described.

But the janusian thought was derived from other psychological sources beside purely intellectual deliberations about the horse as emblematic of the modern age and even aside from purely aesthetic considerations such as providing contrast and unification within the structure of the poem. There is no doubt that the poet himself was aware of the intellectual implications of his thought and some of the aesthetic functions that it served, and there is also no doubt that he was *not* aware of some of the emotional roots of his thought at the time it occurred to him. He was not aware that the thought of a horse as human and beast simultaneously, or not-human and not-beast simultaneously, had roots in his own personal conflicts. And he was not aware that this janusian thought also served to bring some of the elements of these conflicts to the surface during the writing of the poem. This function or quality of janusian thinking, together with the quality of similarity to dream representation, constitutes the essential enantiomorphic relationship with dreaming. A janusian formulation superficially resembles a dream image but it functions in unearthing unconscious processes rather than in keeping them submerged and hidden.

Because of our unique knowledge of the emotional and unconscious material relating to this poem, we are in a position to trace this process quite specifically. The janusian thought, like all conscious secondary process thought, is accompanied by or merges with[5] preconscious and unconscious affects, wishes, and defense mechanisms. Thus, we can immediately see that the structure of the janusian thought, the simultaneous antithesis, coincided with the structure of an emotional process going on outside of the poet's awareness. The janusian thought consisted of mutually contradictory or conflicting intellectual elements relating to and merging with mutually contradictory or conflicting emotions and wishes. From the analysis of the poet's dream and other data, an analysis concerning the unconscious processes relating to the poem, we know that the poet was dealing with a conflict between wanting to be cared for and wanting to be free and independent. The conflicting qualities of the horse in the janusian thought represent this emotional conflict closely. As part of the human sphere, a horse is a beast of burden, supporting and taking care of the needs of humans as well as (by implication) being cared for by them. As a wild beast, a horse is free and independent.

Many other levels of conflict could also be considered to be incorporated and impressed into the image, depending on interpretations of other aspects of the poet's conflict. For example, the poet's conception of the horse-human relationship as pertaining to philosophical issues about the body and the soul could be considered a reflection of a conflict about sex, that is, whether sex is beastly or sublime. The poet's dream concerning Miriam contained definite sexual elements, she swooning in her underclothes, and both the remaining content of the dream and his later associations about Miriam's demanding qualities indicate he was conflicted about these elements. As Miriam was intimately connected to the underlying thoughts of the poem, an associated sexual conflict must have been incorporated there as well.

Simultaneous opposition suggests unconscious processes because it is structurally congruent with emotional conflict. Janusian formulations have roots in unconscious conflicts. The function of revealing and unearthing these unconscious conflicts and other unconscious material is due to a particular factor directly associated with janusian thinking. This factor is a specific mechanism of psychological defense, *negation.*

Janusian Thinking and Negation

First described by Freud in 1925,[6] the negation defense has a special position compared to other defense mechanisms in psychoanalytic practice and theory. More than any other defense mechanism, defensive negation seems widely accepted in psychoanalytic practice and so much taken for granted that it has become a virtual hallmark of psychoanalysis among the laity. A popular caricature of psychoanalysis is to describe it as the psychological theory asserting that a person spontaneously saying "no" really means "yes." Shakespeare's famous reference to the same defense—"methinks the lady doth protest too much"—is often cited not only as an instance of Shakespeare's psychological acuity but particularly of his having anticipated Freud by many centuries. Yet, very little specific attention has been paid to defensive negation in psychoanalytic theory, while there has been a good deal of theoretical discussion about virtually every other psychological defense.[7]

When Freud first described the negation defense, he cited the example of the patient who tells the analyst, "I had a dream last night, but it was *not* about my mother." Sagely, Freud pointed out that such a

gratuitous comment, an introduction despite its negative form of the thought of the mother, indicated that the dream most certainly *was* about the patient's mother. Fie went on to point out a most intriguing aspect of this defensive act—defensive because the negative form is used in order to avoid and protect against the anxiety attendant on entry of the content into consciousness; he stated that the defense overcomes the *effects* of repression without actually removing repression. Preconscious or unconscious material is allowed to appear in a person's conscious thought directly without that person recognizing or acknowledging its source. Negation sidesteps repression rather than overcoming it and, consequently, unconscious and preconscious material can appear in consciousness without anxiety. Like all ego defense mechanisms, negation functions unconsciously to protect against anxiety but influences and distorts conscious processes. All defenses potentially disrupt reality-oriented thinking to some degree. Negation is not a mechanism of primary process thought; it influences, secondary process thinking as an ego defense. Despite some defensive distortion of secondary process thinking, negation functions indirectly to reveal and thereby to unearth unconscious and preconscious concerns more than other defense mechanisms.[8] Bringing unconscious material into consciousness albeit in negative form is a step in an unearthing process.

Just such a defense mechanism operates in janusian thoughts. The psychological function of simultaneous and mutual contradiction, the function allowing unconscious and preconscious material to appear in consciousness without excessive anxiety, is defensive negation of content in janusian thoughts. With respect to the particular janusian formulation of the horse as not-human and not-beast simultaneously, defensive negation operated in the following way: the horse as not-human indicates that the horse actually did represent something human. A male horse at the time of the conception, the horse represented the poet himself. The horse as not-beast, or not a member of a wild beast species, indicates that the horse did represent something wild or beastly. This was the poet's own beastly nature; the poet was also a beast. Represented in part was the poet's wish to be free and independent like the wild beast, but the unconscious identification of himself with a beast or animal pertained to deeper and more unacceptable feelings. The double negation indicates that the poet unconsciously saw himself as a beastly human or a humanly beast. Given our previous analysis of his unconscious yearnings, he felt, "I am a beast who wants to be cared for by his mother." Both the human and beast aspects of the horse were figurative aspects of the poet's unconscious concerns.

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Defensive negation operates widely in the artistic creative process in other operations beside janusian thinking. Broadly speaking, it is the mechanism that allows a creator to incorporate into a work of art aspects of personal unconscious content without recognizing that he is doing so. When describing the feeling and perceptions of a specific character in a literary work, for example, the writer often uses negation when he tells himself (and the carping critics) that he is not representing any of his own feelings in the description. Another more dramatic example of the effect of negation in the creative process is the frequently reported experience of arriving at a point in artistic activity where "the work creates itself." At such a point, the work flows extraordinarily freely and the experience is exceptionally gratifying. Artists characteristically look forward to such gratifying occurrences, and they and others often term them as inspirations or believe the experience to consist of an altered state of consciousness; in many quarters such experiences are considered to be the sine qua non of creativity. Significantly, material produced in such a state often seems to be full of overt preconscious and unconscious content, one of the reasons many theorists proclaim that creativity involves a direct outpouring of unconscious material. But rather than such direct outpouring, these experiences are due to defensive negation; they occur at a phase when defensive negation is in full sway. According to both public and private testimony (collected in my own researches) of countless writers, the literary work only "writes itself" in a relatively late phase of the creative process, at a point when characters and situations have become quite sharply drawn. Characteristically, the writer avers to himself that the actions and emotions he constructs have *no relationship to himself,* that they belong to the characters alone and it seems that the work is writing itself.[9] Another observation bearing on this point is that writers almost invariably reveal more of their unconscious and preconscious concerns in their fiction than in their direct autobiographical accounts. This was demonstrated in a study comparing Strindberg's autobiographical writings with his fiction[10] and, more widely, it was suggested by data bearing on the psychodynamics of the creation of fiction in general.[11] It appears that the virtually intrinsic negation of fiction—"this is not about me, it is about imaginary people"—allows for the inclusion of unconscious and preconscious material without the accompaniment of excessive anxiety.

The function of defensive negation helps clarify an essential mirror-image characteristic of janusian thinking, the active postulation of simultaneous opposition or antithesis on a conscious, secondary process level; janusian thinking reverses the concealing operation of representing opposites

interchangeably by the primary process. Janusian thinking brings opposites or antitheses together in order to produce aesthetic effects, to solve conceptual and scientific problems, and it helps to reveal unconscious material without producing excessive anxiety. The defense mechanism of negation facilitates this revelation of preconscious and unconscious material in janusian thinking. Simultaneous opposition and simultaneous antithesis are accompanied by simultaneous negation, an operation allowing the creator to unearth unconscious and preconscious contents without becoming overwhelmed.[12]

What happens to the unconscious and preconscious material revealed by janusian thinking? Does such material simply appear and remain unacknowledged and inaccessible to the creator because of defensive negation? No, as a reversal and a fully reflective mirror image of dreaming, the creative process continues to make unconscious material increasingly accessible to consciousness. A specific example from "In Monument Valley" to follow will serve to illustrate how this continuation occurs.

Janusian Thinking and the Unearthing of Unconscious Material

Janusian formulations frequently occur early in the creative process and serve to guide ensuing ideas and developments. Often, therefore, they are changed and elaborated and are not clearly identifiable in the completed work. Some formulations, however, emerge later in the process and remain intact and unchanged at the end. In the final version of "In Monument Valley," the first stanza lines "Stillnesses were swarming inward from the evening star/Or outward from the buoyant sorrel mare" constitute an intact janusian formulation. These lines describe a simultaneous opposition pertaining to the source of the quality of stillness, a suggestion that the stillnesses arise from two opposing directions—inward and outward—at once. In case that is not immediately clear, note a slightly ambiguous use of the conjunction "or" in the second of the two lines. In contrast to a conjunction such as "and," the "or" serves to produce a sense of simultaneity rather than sequence. The source of the rider's subjective sense of stillness is identified as being the evening star or the mare. As the subjective stillness is constant, the impact is that the rider does not precisely know where it comes from because it comes from both at once. With "and" the source of the feeling of stillness would seem sequential: first from the star and then from the horse and so on. With stillnesses swarming inward or outward, they swarm from both directions at once. Though a literalist might insist that the "or" merely indicates an alternative source of the stillnesses,

and such a meaning is also included, the primary thrust of the lines in context surely conveys simultaneous opposition.

I choose this example partly because these lines were not conceived all at one time, but achieved in a stepwise fashion. Hence, there is an opportunity to look closely at the process of janusian thinking as it unfolds, rather than only considering a fully formed result. I also choose this example because the formulation of the particular janusian construct is followed by the unearthing of some particular unconscious material. In the working manuscripts of the poem, the development of these lines occurred in the manner and the sequence to follow.

The poet made the first reference to "stillness" in this early version of the first stanza:

> We live mostly in the past or in the future
>
> These lines begin in one and end in the other
>
> The evening a summer or two after the war
>
> That I last found myself on horseback
>
> A swarming stillness under

After writing the beginning fragment of the line referring to stillness, the poet could not continue. Instead of going on, he recopied and revised the entire first stanza and, after many changes and revisions, his next version of the same line was: "A swarming stillness. A first star . . ." Making an attempt to begin another line after this one with a reference to "a strong and gentle animal," he soon got stuck and again tried to start anew. Then he wrote:

> One summer dusk a year or two after the war
>
> I found myself for what would be the last time
>
> On horseback, at Shoup's farm north of Woodstock
>
> A stillness swarming inward from the first star

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The world expanding buoyantly upheld

By the strong and patient animal

Who seemed himself to be enjoying things, his gait

Opening vistas of the absolute

Here again, he stopped and turned to work on the second stanza and, leaving the first stanza as above, he changed the second stanza to the following:

Or outward from the strong and fragrant animal

Who seemed to find sufficient my weight

Upon his back, just as I did his gait

Opening buoyant vistas of the

With this, he arrived at the janusian formulation, "A stillness swarming inward from the first star/Or outward from the strong and fragrant animal."

We must immediately consider several things at once. It is important to notice that the horse in this version is still referred to as male, a stallion, just as he had been in the other stanzas of the poem written up to this point. No reference to the "mare" of the completed poem, the word connected to his underlying wish, has yet appeared. Also, it should be clear that the very first thought referred only to a sense of stillness and that the rest of the formulation developed through a slow, erratic accretion of ideas. Early, the stillness was connected to a star, a far away and virtually abstract thing that conveyed expansiveness to the scene. The succeeding reference to "a strong and gentle animal" in the very next version indicates that the horse was thought of next, but the idea of opposing the stillness of the horse to the stillness of the star did not occur until two versions later. Only then could the stillness *also* come from something near, concrete, and relatively small. The transitional idea leading to the stillness emanating from the horse, it appears, was contained in the phrase describing the horse's gait "opening vistas of the absolute." Relating the horse to something "absolute" connected, or led back, to the star. It suggested, or otherwise

developed into, the janusian formulation of stillness coming from inward and outward sources simultaneously. But before this formulation was constructed, the heavenly star and the earthly beast had already been connected together.

Another point to bear in mind is that the wordplay involving the homophonic term "gait" provided the means whereby the horse could be connected to the absolute. The use of "gait" in the version just presented is somewhat like a pun; it refers both to the horse's stride and to the identical sounding word, "gate." Thus, the horse's gait is itself a gate opening vistas of the absolute. I shall shortly refer again to this particular punning-like connection in relation to another type of mirror-image process in creativity.

I also want to call attention to the phrase "strong and fragrant animal" used in this version of the stanza. Although the qualities of strength and fragrance together are not exactly antithetical or oppositional, especially in reference to an animal, there is a slightly jarring or arresting note introduced by the use of these two adjectives together. After all, the word "fragrance" does usually apply to delicate and pleasant odors and it is seldom used to describe a horse's smell except in a joking or ironic way. I am suggesting that the description of the horse as both strong and fragrant is the beginning of a janusian thought. I do this, not to push the idea of seeing opposition or antithesis to an unwarranted excess—I realize some such objection might be raised at this point—but to prepare for a full appreciation of the steps taken by the poet in the next version of this stanza. We are now ready to understand how the poet progressed to the virtually final formulation of these lines and to follow the operation of janusian thinking with respect to the unearthing of unconscious processes.

The next change the poet made in these lines was to substitute the words "sweet smelling" for the word "fragrant." The phrase became, "the strong and sweet smelling animal," a much more definite simultaneous antithesis and a janusian formulation.

Next, he rewrote the entire stanza, changing the horse's sex, as follows:

> Or outward from the strong and gentle mare
>
> Who moved as if not displeased by my weight on her back
>
> While I—a buoyant present entered through a gait

Bordered as by thick hedges of invisible lilac

Finally—that is, his final change before retyping and starting to work on the entire poem again from the beginning—-he changed the words "strong and gentle mare" to "buoyant sorrel mare," the description he used in the completed version.

Now we have observed in detail the specific point at which the change of the horse to a mare occurred! This important change occurred after two particular janusian thoughts had been defined. Earlier, it will be remembered, I strongly emphasized the importance of the poet's changing the horse's sex during the writing of the poem because, as I also emphasized, the word "mare" was homophonic with the French word, mere, meaning mother. I pointed out that this change provided evidence that the poet was unconsciously preoccupied with wanting to be cared for by his mother while writing this poem. Now I must emphasize that the use of this word also led to the unconscious preoccupation coming close to and finally appearing almost fully in consciousness. The poet, who is highly sensitive to homophonic qualities of words—note the punning use of "gait" just considered—and highly fluent in French, was not initially thinking of the specific homophony of the word "mare" while writing the poem. Later, however, when he focused on his use of the word, he himself immediately adopted the idea that the poem had a great deal to do with his mother. The overlooking of the homophony while writing the poem could hardly be attributed to anything but psychological blocking—especially in view of the dream evidence linking the poem to his mother—but his use of the word and his later quick acceptance of the link to his mother also indicates that the idea of mother was very close to his awareness. The rapid achievement of insight at that point indicated that the unconscious issue was at the threshold of consciousness.[13]

The janusian process, therefore, functioned in two interrelated modes at once: the aesthetic and the psychological. It gave structure, coherence, and abstract implication to the lines,[14] and it served to unearth the poet's unconscious concerns. The probable psychodynamic sequence was as follows: the janusian formulation of the stillness coming both from a heavenly body and a supporting animal involved an initial double defensive negation indirectly revealing that the source of the feeling of contentment was an unconscious element having dual characteristics. It was an element often considered both absolute—brilliant, all embracing, heavenly, might be better words—and supporting at the same

time: namely, a parent. Although I lack the poet's specific associations to this line in order to corroborate such an assumption, I am influenced by my previous knowledge that a star has been an unconscious image for the poet's mother in other poems he has written.

The element suggested by the operation of defensive negation in this general formulation is, however, vague and only dimly revealed. The next janusian formulation began to make it clearer and more specific. When the poet referred to a strong and fragrant horse, he began to reveal, through defensive negation, that the horse not only unconsciously represented a person, but a very specific person. Only his mother could be the one strong enough to support and care for him and to be fragrant and female at the same time. When he developed the full-blown janusian formulation through the substitution of "sweet smelling" for "fragrant," he was unaccountably moved—that was the way he explained it, "not really sure why"—to change the horse to a mare, a direct but not yet quite conscious representation of his mother.

I would not insist that the janusian process was exclusively responsible for the poet's progress toward unearthing his unconscious concern while writing these lines. As I have stated, the entire creative process is the mirror image of dreaming, and other as yet unidentified processes played a role. Of additional interest regarding the poet's production of the janusian formulation in this stanza is the first construction of an image directly connecting the poem to the unconscious wish of his dreams. Beside using the word "mare," he also constructed an image related to being cared for. Immediately following his writing the line, "Or outward from the strong and fragrant animal," he referred to his weight on the horse's back, the first time he made a concrete reference in the poem to the idea of being a burden and being supported. As I have previously suggested, this reference is a representation of the feeling of being cared for. Interestingly, too, he initially used the understated wording "who seemed to find sufficient my weight/Upon his back" and then changed it to the slightly stronger, "who moved as if not displeased by my weight on her back." In the change, the horse is satisfied with her burden.

The poet mentioned these lines to me in connection with changing the horse's sex, a fact lending support to the supposition that this latter aspect of this version also touched on and began to unearth his unconscious concerns. He said he began to feel a sort of sexual relationship with the horse while describing his weight on its back. This feeling led him to make the horse female. The reference to a sexual

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relationship with the horse certainly recalls the oedipal aspects of the dreams I mentioned earlier.

Homospatial Thinking

The germinating idea for the poem was a janusian thought of a horse as not-human and not-beast and this thought became transmuted, transformed, and elaborated throughout the poem. Primarily, this janusian thought influenced the content of the last three stanzas of the poem and it is implied both in the line referring to "the ancient bond between her kind and mine," and in "tottering still half in trust, half in fear of man." Janusian thoughts are often implied or transformed in the final version of a poem, as well as in the final versions of other types of creations, because the simultaneous opposition is integrated into a unified structure such as an image, metaphor, or a complete poem or theory. Sometimes, especially in poetry, a janusian thought is manifestly expressed in the final product without transformation. The lines just discussed specifying an inward and outward source simultaneously are examples of such untransformed and manifest janusian constructions in the completed poem. Most often, however, janusian constructions are integrated into the final creation and are difficult to recognize. The integration of these constructions is produced, in part, by an entirely different thought process, a process that is also an enantiomorph or mirror image of dream processes and operations. This distinct and second type of thinking operates very extensively in the creative process. Not only does it integrate janusian thoughts, but it also produces a variety of other types of created phenomena. Like janusian thinking, this other, second type of thinking functions to unearth unconscious material during the process of creation.

To describe this other type of thinking, I shall return to consider the second important formulation influencing the creation of this poem. This was the poet's thought the day after he began the poem, the idea occurring on the morning after having the dreams concerning the playing field and the invalided grandmother. The poet described this thought in his notebook with the words: "His rider—he had never had a rider," and the idea strongly influenced the writing of what later became the first two stanzas of the completed poem. These stanzas, as the poet later told me, were intended to provide a history of the rapport between man and horse. The aesthetic intent was to sharpen the intensity of the final point of the poem. As I pointed out in chapter 1, these stanzas also contain the wish-fulfilling image relating to the poet's unconscious preoccupation. The mood is idyllic and the rider is supported by the horse much

as the poet wished to be supported and cared for by his mother.

It will probably surprise no one familiar in the slightest way with creative thinking, or for that matter any type of productive thinking, that the poet's thought about the horse and rider came to him originally as a visual image. After all, the word we always use in connection with creative and productive thought is imagination, a word originally referring to visual experience. Scientific studies of creative thinking have been strongly influenced by this root meaning of the word "imagination," and some have discussed or attempted to assess the role of visual imagery in the thoughts of both artists and scientists.[15] The poet's first mental formulation consisted of a visual image pertaining to a horse and rider and, unsurprisingly, he then took up his notebook to write the words mentioned above. However, the specific nature of this image should be surprising, because it was quite unusual and it has never been previously documented or described. The poet's mental image of a horse and rider was of two *discrete entities occupying the same space.* He did not see a clear image of a specific horse with a specific rider, the poet himself for example, on its back. He did not visualize a remembered scene, say a landscape, with horse and rider in it, nor was there even any definitely clear outlines of a horse and a rider. Instead, he referred to the image as a "double thing," a vague undefined whole with two aspects. Human and horse were diffusely represented together. Difficult as such an image is to describe, he told me that he imagined "both the riderless horse and the horse as he would be with a rider." The diagrammatic representation in figure 1 will give only an approximation of the nature of this mental event.

Because conscious visual experiences such as this may only occur during the creative process, it is possible that persons who have not engaged in highly creative thinking will have difficulty grasping the actual construction of this mental formulation. Even creative persons seldom focus on their thoughts while creating to the extent that we are doing here and they have therefore not themselves ever documented such a type of thinking. The poet visualized the horse alone riderless and unsaddled, and in the same mental space, he visualized the horse with a rider fully astride. In such an image, the horse alone and the horse with the human become fused and superimposed upon one another. Trying to comprehend this image probably leads one immediately to think of representations in dreams because dream representations do not respect ordinary conceptions of space. Neither does the type of thinking I am describing. But there is an immediate and major difference between dream representations and the poet's waking thought of both a horse alone and a horse with a rider occupying the same space: dream

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images and events are sharp and vivid but this waking thought was vague and diffuse. Whereas dreams might convey the *sense* of a horse without a rider occupying the same space as a horse with a rider by means of an image of a horse accompanied by a vivid feeling of an invisible rider's presence, or by means of a distorted but vivid compromise formation of horses and a rider merged, the poet's waking thought is rooted in reality and consists totally of a necessarily vague superimposition or fusion of discrete entities. To reemphasize, the illustration presented here is a diagrammatic representation of the poet's thought, not a picture of the actual image in his mind. It is impossible to present two or more discrete entities occupying the same space concretely because such an event never occurs in concrete experience. The actual image is necessarily a vague and abstract representation.

Fig. 1
An artist's conception of the nature of the mental image alluded to by the words. "His rider—he had never had a rider." Drawing by Robert C. Morris.

This type of experience occurs regularly in all types of creative processes. It occurs in full

consciousness and leads to aesthetic constructions and to solutions of scientific problems. It is somewhat similar to a dream experience but is not a manifestation of dream thought or dreaming in waking life. In a psychodynamic reversal of the function of dream processes, it serves to unearth, reveal, and neutralize unconscious material rather than to disguise and hide it. This type of thought is a manifestation of "homospatial thinking" (from the Greek *homoios,* meaning "same"), a mirror image of dream process.

Homospatial thinking consists of *actively conceiving two or more discrete entities occupying the same space, a conception leading to the articulation of new identities.* Concrete objects such as rivers, houses, and human faces, discrete sensations such as wet, rough, bright, and cold, and also sound patterns and written words are superimposed, fused, or otherwise brought together in the mind and totally fill its space.[16] Although the process is often visual, it may involve any of the sensory modalities: auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, or kinesthetic. A visual image may be accompanied by another type of sensory impression or factor, or a homospatial thought may consist of nonvisual entities and their sensations and qualities exclusively. Two or more discrete entities are conceived as occupying the same space as a preliminary step toward producing a new unity or a new identity. Because discrete entities cannot remain in this pre-unified state for very long, even in the mind, the homospatial thought is held as a rapid, fleeting, and changing mental impression or conception that soon leads to separating out of various components. As with janusian thinking, the creator is fully conscious and rational while having homospatial thoughts and he thinks of connecting links and plausible circumstances to express them. Thus, the poet thought of the "double thing," a diffuse image both of horse alone and of horse and human, and this led directly to the formulation of a horse with the poet (the poetic "I") as a rider when he "went off to study or to war."

The Creative Function of Homospatial Thinking

The specifically creative aspect of homospatial thinking is that components separated out of the fleeting conception are new ones, they are not simply *aspects* of the original discrete entities considered stepwise or independently. Homospatial thinking is not synonymous with analogic thinking, the stepwise comparing of partial similarities between two or more independent things. Homospatial thinking consists of the superimposition or fusion of whole entities rather than a side by side consideration of their aspects or parts. For example, the poet's conception of a horse alone and of a horse

and rider both together did not result from a search for entities with mutual attributes such as: horse and man are both alone; both carry burdens, give and need support and nurturance; both are mortal, and so on. Such analogues emerge from the homospatial conception after it occurs rather than initially producing it. Nor was there a simple association of a horse and a rider because of their commonly being found together in experience. The homospatial conception is based on the creator's idea that two or more entities *ought* to or *should* have mutual attributes. Hence, the poet thought of bringing together and superimposing an unridden wild unbroken horse and a horse gentled and ridden. Riderless horse, human rider, and ridden horse were all occupying the same space. Such entities are brought together for abstract and emotional purposes, and concrete images emerge. Furthermore, homospatial thinking is not simply a type of gestalt process where the formulation of new wholes or new contexts is the primary thrust. Homospatial thoughts effect the filling of gaps and formulations of wholes as a byproduct; the wholes are produced because of the filling of mental space.

Homospatial thinking operates throughout the creative process, in its earliest phases as well as its later ones. In the creation of the "In Monument Valley" poem, the homospatial conception fusing and superimposing the riderless horse and the human rider on the horse functioned to integrate into an effective literary construction the previous janusian thought of a horse as simultaneously not-beast and not-human. Indeed, one of the important functions of homospatial thinking is to integrate janusian thoughts occurring early in the creative process. The poet's first formulations pertaining to his janusian thought in this poem were the lines, "A tradition in China as in modern verse/Gives to each age its emblematic beast." Although these lines do not explicitly spell out the idea of a horse as not-human and not-beast, the reference to an "emblematic beast"—that is, the horse as an emblem of the nonbelonging-ness and personal alienation characteristic of our times—strongly implies it. But these early lines are really rather prosaic and heavy, as the poet himself would be the first to agree, and the presentation of poetic imagery rather than explicit ideas improves the poem enormously. Through poetic imagery, the horse is shown to be an emblem and the point is conveyed emotionally. Also, the poetic statement is made through emotionally effective and structural changes.

The homospatial thought led to poetic images, structural changes, and the construction of lines integrating the janusian thought into the fabric of the entire poem. There is, first, a sense of temporal development and change: as a result of the homospatial idea, the poem begins with a relationship of

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harmony between man and beast in the first two stanzas; it moves to a later chance encounter, followed by a breaking of a bond. Second, the presentation of horse and rider virtually merged together in the first two stanzas (e.g., "with one accord we circled the small lake") was derived from the human and horse occupying the same place within a portion of the homospatial conception and resulted in a vivid representation of the janusian thought about the kinship between horses and humans. This representation or poetic construction (image or metaphor) is necessary as a background for the explicit reference to the paradoxical nature of this kinship in the lines of the last stanza, "still half in trust, half in fear of man." Both the poetic image and the explicit reference together state the theme; neither would be sufficient alone. Finally, the poetic image of the horse and rider together allows for a peaceful idyllic emotional tone in the first two stanzas contrasting sharply with the turbulent tone of the last three stanzas and especially with the statement of emptiness and renunciation at the finale. There is a strong emotional impact and a sense of climax.

Homospatial thinking is a type of cognition best described as a mode of spatial abstracting. The conception of two or more entities occupying the same space is an abstraction from nature, not a form of concretion or a concrete mode of thinking. It functions to integrate janusian thoughts and it also functions in many other aspects of the creative process. One of its chief effects is to produce metaphors, artistic metaphors as well as those used in scientific theory. It produces these metaphors sometimes in combination with janusian thinking and sometimes in a more direct way. Saying this, I have begun to anticipate the discussion in a later chapter (chap. 10) of some of the wide-ranging manifestations of this thought process; rather than go on, I will return to my theme and to the spelling out of how homospatial thinking operated as a mirror-image process of dreaming in the poem we are considering.

Homospatial Thinking as a Mirror-Image Process

Following his homospatial thought of the horse alone and the horse and rider together, the poet had not immediately had the idea of reformulating the beginning of the poem. Later that day, he sat down to work and began another version starting with his original line, "Hot pumice blew "In this version, he described the meeting with the horse in Monument Valley and, after referring to the gift of an apple core, he brought in the horse and rider relationship with lines that tended to reproduce the structure of the homospatial conception. I present these lines again in figure 2 to show what I mean.

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The denotation of each of the aspects of the conception, a riderless horse and a horse with a rider, leads into lines indicating an interaction and relationship.

Poetic Lines Second Version	Aspects of the Homospatial Conception
A gentle broken horse	[the horse alone]
For all he knew it could have been I who first	[the horse and rider together]
Broke him, rode him, abandoned him	[development of the image]
When I went off to study or to war.	[development of the image]

Fig. 2.
Lines from the second version of "In Monument Valley" are on the left; the column on the right identifies the aspects of the structure of the homospatial conception explicated in each corresponding line.

He did no further work on this idea that day, and on the next he worked sporadically on various parts of the poem. But his work was interrupted by the planned trip to the city, and so he did not fully develop the horse and rider relationship as contained in the final version of the first three stanzas until four days later. He wrote the fully developed version on the day after his having the dreams about Elizabeth Bishop and Marianne Moore.

The main point about this sequence is that the homospatial conception continued to be in some form in his mind—a portion of the poetic image had been constructed and specified—and it facilitated the process of unearthing his unconscious concerns, an unearthing that had begun with the janusian thought of the horse as not-human and not-beast simultaneously. I have already pointed out that the idea of the poet himself on the horse's back, the offspring supported by the parent, was a more direct representation of the poet's unconscious wish than the dream presentation of a parent on an offspring's back. But lest I be accused of a tautology here, because I have used the poetic construction of the horse and rider as a means of interpreting the wish fulfillment of the dream, I will marshal final and telling evidence for a mirror-image unearthing process in the creation of the poem as follows: the first written material derived from the homospatial conception contained an allusion to a time in the poet's life when *his wish to be cared for by his mother*—or at least to be the center of his mother's, as well as his grandmother's, attention—*came closest to being realized.* He referred in this first formulation to a time before "I went off to study or to war." From facts gathered in our later discussions, it is clear that the

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phrase referred to a very important period in his life. During this period (mentioned in chap. 1), his relationship to his mother and grandmother had a very special character.

The poet had a brief sojourn in the army in his late teens which interrupted his college education. Prior to his college experience (before going "to study"), there was a series of summers and shorter holidays, as well as some short holidays during his first college year (a time prior to his going "to war"), which he spent almost exclusively in the company of his mother, his grandmother, and his grandmother's sister. His parents had gotten divorced some years before and his father had moved away. The poet's sibling was older than he and no longer lived at home. The maternal grandmother, an on-and-off resident from the time her own husband had died, had by then moved in with the poet and his mother permanently. The grandmother's sister, whom the poet "adored," was also a widow and she visited for the entire summer each year. It was a time when the poet was the only male in a house of women. He remembered especially being with his grandmother constantly during this time because his mother was away from home running a small business. Although the grandmother was somewhat of a burden, there were important emotional compensations.

As a period of his life during which there was no male competition in the house, the years including these summers and holidays provided the closest realization of his wish for exclusive nurturance he ever experienced. He was the sole object of attention of the three women and it was a period of relative peace and gratification compared to a stormy earlier time. If he were not totally cared for by his mother, he at least had a good deal of her attention. This period of his life was clearly the latent reference of the manifest imagery in the second early dream, the actual time during which he had been responsible for his grandmother and had felt pleasure at the prospect. The actual ride on Shoup's farm—there was one, a very happy one—took place several years later, during the summer.

The poet did not consciously think of these summers with his mother, grandmother, and the grandmother's sister while writing the lines designating the time before "I went off to study or to war," but he did think of words referring to himself as the rider of the horse and also referring virtually directly to this important period of his life. The homospatial thought led to a more direct connection to the latent reference and the underlying wish of his dream. It brought close to consciousness the time of his life when his wish to be the sole object of his mother's and his grandmother's attention came nearest

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to being gratified.[17]

After the poet wrote the lines connecting the horse to himself and to the wish-fulfilling time of his life, the process of unearthing unconscious material continued. His dreams of several days later pertain to the same issues and they develop the unconscious themes further. In the dream prior to his writing the full and definite version of the first two stanzas of the poem, there is a fairly direct representation of an oedipal wish. Marianne Moore, the aged and respected poetess, was to marry a younger man, this younger man, it is fair to assume, was the poet himself, while Marianne Moore represented his mother and/or grandmother. His underlying wish, therefore, consisted of wanting to marry his mother and/or his grandmother, a further extension and development of the desire to be the sole focus of female attention.

On the day after this dream, the process of unearthing unconscious material continued with the writing of the first two stanzas of the poem. In working out the homospatial thought concerning the horse and a rider, the poet came even closer to unearthing the nature of the unconscious connection to his mother, he changed the horse's sex to female at a moment when, as he put it, he began to feel a sexual relationship or sexual overtone between the rider and the horse. In other words, he more consciously experienced sexual feelings related to his mother, and came closer to a full recognition of the oedipal attachment. Previously, I explained the manner in which a janusian thought facilitated the unearthing process during the writing of this section of the poem; now, the phenomenon of unearthing can be seen as a combination of the effects of both janusian and homospatial thinking. One other example from these stanzas, an example of another homospatial process functioning to unearth the poet's unconscious concerns, shall at this point further clarify the mirror-image operation and the particular psychodynamic factors that facilitate unearthing.

I have mentioned the punning use of the word "gait" in the initial formulation of the poem's second stanza. I pointed out that the words "gate" and "gait" were homophones and that the overlapping sound of these words allowed for a connection between "the horse" and "the absolute" as well as "the horse" and "a star" ("his gait opening vistas"). The overall conception and the use of this homophonic connection in the poem is also an example of homospatial thinking.[18] Having conceived of the words "gait" and "gate" together—he had used each of the spellings in different manuscript versions of the

poem—the poet experienced two discrete kinesthetic sensations occupying the same space in his consciousness. He thought of both the up and down rolling motion of the horse and the opening motion of an entrance way together. The word "gate/gait" allowed two discrete entities, or discrete sensory qualities of entities, to emanate from and occupy the same space. He did not, to be sure, invent or create this double meaning for the word "gate/gait"; it was already present in the English language. Unlike the previously described homospatial thought of the riderless horse and the horse and rider together, an unusual type of conception helping to integrate a janusian idea, there is nothing strikingly unusual or even inventive about recognizing that gait/gate has a double reference. What is unusual, and what is part of the creative process, is actively conceiving and using the two sensory references of the word together. That the two sensations were jointly present in the poet's mind in the manner I have just described is evident from the phrase, "his gait/Opening buoyant vistas of the . . . ," the participle "opening" clearly referring to the entrance way meaning of the word and the adjective "buoyant" clearly referring to the horse's stride. Horses' gaits cannot open anything, nor can gates be buoyant unless floating on water.

At this point in the writing, however, the phrase read mostly like a bad pun. But punning—either good or bad—and homospatial thinking are not the same; the homospatial process functions as an integrating factor and it functions to unearth unconscious material. There is more at stake than simply demonstrating a double meaning for the word gait/gate and, as a pun does, producing pleasure through the recognition of the familiar.[19] There is a unifying purpose and a special congruence between the elements of a homospatial conception and the context from which it develops. There is additionally a special congruence between the original psychological context and the unconscious material unearthed by the homospatial process. Like janusian thoughts, homospatial thoughts may also not appear directly in the final version of the creation. The double reference of gate/gait does not appear directly in the final version of this poem, but it served to stimulate the following sequence:

1. After the version of the phrase employing "gait" just mentioned, "his gait/Opening buoyant vistas of the . . . ," the poet tried:

> While I—A buoyant present entered through a gait
>
> Bordered as by thick hedges of invisible lilac.

The earlier connection of the gait/gate to "the absolute" was dropped,- the word and idea "buoyant" was connected to the rider rather than to "vistas," and a new idea of a "gate" bordered by lilac was introduced.

2. Following this, he tried another version using the "gate" spelling of the word and describing an affect of happiness, rather than the buoyant kinesthetic experience:

While I—Happiness had entered through a gate

Burdened by thick hedges of invisible lilac.

3. Next, he decided to consolidate the two lines into:

Her gait swung onto meadows heavy with unseen lilac

4. Finally, he decided to drop completely the idea of using the double meaning of gate/gait in these lines, changed "heavy" to "heady," and produced the essentially finished version of the line:

Meadows welcomed us, heady with unseen lilac.

(Final: "Meadows received us, heady with unseen lilac.")

The progression has, it is clear, gradually led to a description and an overt formulation of a sense of peace and happiness in these first two stanzas. The series of lines starting from "Meadows received us, heady with unseen lilac" to the end of the second stanza surely intensify the sense of fulfillment expressed in the poem. These lines were definitely derived from the homospatial conception with fused discrete kinesthetic sensations in the idea of the double word gate/gait, despite the final disappearance of the explicit idea. As we know, the image of the rider on the female horse represented the poet's unconscious wish in this portion of the poem, and now we see that the homospatial conception consisting of gate/gait has functioned to produce specific lines and to unearth an affect of happiness and fulfillment which was surely connected to that basic image. But the unearthing process did not stop there. The poet continued to think about using gate/gait, and while deciding to drop it from the line above referring to the meadows, he thought of putting it into another place.

He thought of using the word "gate" as part of the name of another natural monument in Monument Valley. Turning at that point to his earlier written line, referring to the "Three Sisters" as a natural monument, which read, "Shreik the 'Three Sisters!' No place for a picnic," he added the phrase

"St. Peter's Gate." Dissatisfied, he then tried "Gates of Heaven" and soon he arrived at the particular construction he used in the final version, "Hell's Gate." He cast the entire line into its final form as: "The 'Three Sisters' howl, 'Hell's Gate' yawns wide"—an effective change, I believe all would agree.

In a strange but rather dramatic way, this change represents another instance of the unearthing of unconscious material: when the poet and I had discussed the phrase "Hell's Gate," he told me that he had been thinking of the Rodin sculpture "Gate of Hell" in Paris as well as of the German word *hell* meaning "light." Also, he laughingly (and anxiously) told me about another connection—his mother's Christian name was a fairly common one with an unusual spelling. Her name was spelled, "Hellen," and he had been conscious of this double "1" spelling of her name since he was a child. In his words, "once I had even teased my mother about the 'hell' portion of her name."

The path leading from the homospatial thought of gate/gait to a manifest reference to the mother's name and thereby to the mother herself was not accidental. As I have repeatedly emphasized, the mother was an important underlying focus of this poem. Moreover, given the libidinal emphasis of the underlying oedipal wish, the presence of an erotic connotation in "Hell's Gate yawns wide" (mother's vagina opening) constituted another aspect of the progression toward unearthing unconscious meaning. The homospatial process unearths these aspects of the underlying ideas and helps to unify the poem in structure as well as emotional content.[20]

Psychodynamics of Homospatial Thinking

With regard to the unearthing of unconscious material, psychodynamic factors involved in the homospatial process differ from those operating in the janusian process. Fusion of drives and resultant neutralization of drive energy rather than defensive negation play a major role in the homospatial process. Such drive fusion and neutralization function to overcome repression and to unearth unconscious material.

Psychodynamically, the process generally responsible for the release of adaptive or neutralized energy is the fusion of affects and drives, particularly sexual and aggressive drives, usually as a result of a working through of unconscious conflicts. Drive fusion and neutralized energy are, as is well

recognized in modern psychoanalytic theory,[21] necessary for ego adaptive activity. Such ego adaptive activity involves a wide range of positive psychological functions and it includes the development and use of insight, a progressive unearthing and integration of unconscious and preconscious material by the conscious ego. Through neutralized energy, repression can be increasingly overcome. Although fusion of drives and adaptive or neutralized energy play an important role in the general adaptive functioning of every individual, I shall here merely point out how a particular drive fusion is a direct result of the homospatial process and the factor responsible for unearthing unconscious material.

When discrete entities are brought together in the mind to occupy the same space, fusions of cognitive and perceptual elements are surely taking place. Elements must be thought of and perceived as fused to some degree in the vague and diffuse homospatial experience. This fusion is not, however, restricted to the cognitive and perceptual realm. As I pointed out previously in connection with the janusian process, conscious (secondary process) thinking involving cognitive and perceptual events is not separated from affects and drives. Affects and drives accompany the cognitive and perceptual events within the homospatial process, and the fusions on the perceptual and cognitive levels also involve these accompanying drives and affects to some degree. Although this fusion of affects and drives does not necessarily result from a working through of unconscious conflicts and does not produce real resolution of conflicts between affects or drives, basic sexual and aggressive factors are always represented in the homospatial conception and some drive neutralization therefore occurs. As a result of the bringing together and fusion of the sexual and aggressive aspect of the content, and a concomitant fusion —even to a minimal degree—of unconscious sexual and aggressive drive, neutralized energy is available to the creator's ego. This neutralized energy facilitates overcoming repression in the same manner as neutralized energy functions to facilitate overcoming repression in the achievement of emotional insight, such as in psychoanalytic treatment or, for that matter, in any form of adaptive psychological activity. Moreover, neutralized energy is available for further ego adaptive activity. The homospatial process, therefore, facilitates all types of ego adaptive activity involved in the creative process. In this way, the creative process becomes self-generating with respect to neutralized energy and ego adaptive functioning.

Both of the cited examples of homospatial thinking in the creation of the poem illustrate fusion of unconscious sexual and aggressive content. From our analysis of both of the dreams of the night before

the poet conceived the riderless horse and the horse and rider together, we know that the riderless horse —the horse of the final stanzas— initially represented the poet's wish to be aggressively free and independent, to make his own bed and go his own way. Hence, the riderless horse was a representation of his aggressive impulses. The horse with rider aspect of the homospatial conception was, on the other hand, perfused with sexual content. As evident from the dreams, the horse and rider represented his oedipal attachment to his mother, an attachment that—as we later saw—was highly eroticized. Horses, it should be added, are frequently the objects and representations for sexual feelings, for persons of both sexes. This homospatial conception, therefore, actively fused sexual and aggressive content. The fusion of impulses in the conception provided some of the neutralized energy to enable the poet to think more concretely of a wish-fulfilling time before he went "to study or to war" and to unearth, in part, the connection of his poetic thoughts to his mother in the change of the horse to a mare.

The use of the homophonic words "gait/gate" in a homospatial process also served to produce a degree of fusion of unconscious sexual and aggressive content. There can be little doubt that the sensations of an opening gate conjured up in the poet's formulations had sexual overtones. The early line, "While I—A buoyant present entered through a gait/Bordered as by thick hedges of invisible lilac," is readily suggestive of sexual intercourse,- the idea of a "gait/Bordered as by thick hedges" readily arousing an image of pubic-hair-surrounded vaginal orifice. Focusing directly on the word "gait" referring to the horse's stride, there seems to be a definite representation of aggressive feelings. Although I cannot prove this particular premise from the poetic material itself, a horse's gait is so vigorous and powerful that it is difficult to imagine it's not representing aggressive qualities to some degree.

To my emphasis on psychodynamic fusion involved in the homospatial process, some might raise an objection and insist that the mental events I have described do not indicate adaptive fusion but a wish for primitive or regressive fusion on the poet's part. Reversing the psychodynamic sequence in a sense, they would propose that the dreams as well as the horse and rider image in the poem derive from the poet's primitive wish to fuse with his mother. The genesis of the homospatial conception, according to this, would be the poet's attempt to effect a symbolic fusion between himself the rider and the horse his mother, through his daytime waking fantasy. The poetic creations following this fantasy then would result from some form of elaboration and, as Freud put it, "changes and disguises" and the offer of a "purely formal, that is, aesthetic pleasure."[22] Such an objection and explanation would categorize the

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homospatial conception as a manifestation of primary process thinking and it would conform to traditional explanations of creative thinking as manifestations of "regression in the service of the ego"[23] or narcissistic fusion states.[24] But, just as Freud's emphasis is on disguise and change or on the mysterious invocation of what he called "formal. . . pleasure," these explanations do little to advance our knowledge of the specifics of creative processes and, more importantly, they neglect the quality of the poet's waking thought and the crucial sequence of mental events I have described.

There was a progression from the initial waking thoughts about the poem to the dream thoughts and back again to the thoughts about the poem, a progressive unearthing rather than a disguising, of unconscious meaning. The homospatial conception was not an eruption of primary process material into consciousness which was then mysteriously controlled by some undefined ego operation. The homospatial process is itself an ego operation and a form of secondary process thinking. The conception did not occur during a period of "with- drawl of cathexis," a decrease of attention in the environment or an immersion in fantasy as required by Kris's concept of regression in the service of the ego.[25] It occurred when the poet was fully aware of his environment and *beginning* to think of how to modify his poem in process. Finally, two points of crucial importance derived from the data. (1) The homospatial conception was a conscious, intentional superimposing and fusing of two images in which the overall configuration was vague and diffuse; in distinction, primary process symbolization results in vivid sharp images in which compromise formation, e.g., a horse with a human head, occurs. (2) The horse was clearly considered to be a *stallion* rather than a mare *at the time of the homospatial conception;* only later was it changed to a female representation of the mother. Consequently, even if fusion with his mother was the poet's underlying wish, it would be erroneous to consider the particular homospatial conception to be merely a disguised representation of that wish. Psychodynamic fusion is a function of the homospatial process, but it is not merely a representation of primitive or regressive function,- it is an active cognitive and affective function that is adaptive and energy neutralizing.

Neutralized energy is the factor fueling the ego in all its healthy and adaptive functions. I do not mean to say that the neutralized energy produced directly in the creative process by homospatial thinking is necessarily as stable or as generally available to the individual himself as that produced directly through processes such as conflict resolution, skill development, or psychological maturation. The homospatial conception is a temporary fusion of cognitive and perceptual elements accompanied by

temporary drive and affect fusion. Therefore, it always has limited albeit valuable success; the fusion is temporarily effective only within the creative process, that is, energy is provided for creative work. Just as the success of the fusion is limited, the degree to which unconscious material is unearthed and meaningful insight occurs is also limited. The writing of "In Monument Valley" brought the poet's wish in relation to his mother closer to consciousness, but he did not become fully aware of it until after he finished the poem, analyzed his dreams, and so forth.

The limited effectiveness of the fusion in homospatial thinking explains, in part, how it is that some creators behave healthily in the creative process—the process clearly requires good reality testing while it is going on—and also may behave in quite an unhealthy manner in their everyday lives. There may be little carryover between the spheres of creative activity and of everyday interpersonal relationships. The creative process generates its own neutralized energy and sometimes provides real psychological insights to the creator. However, creativity does not necessarily lead to psychological health. A healthy person is not necessarily a creative one; there is reason to believe that psychological health is helpful and important for creativity, but it is still necessary to have the capacity to use the mirror- image processes.

There are other mirror-image processes operating in the creative process besides the ones I have mentioned, but I must first recapitulate and spell out a fuller psychodynamic understanding of the writing of "In Monument Valley" before all the threads are lost. In the course of this recapitulation and extension, some of these other mirror-image processes will emerge and become clear.

Notes

1 See discussion of the role in inspiration in creativity in A. Rothenberg, "Poetic Process and Psychotherapy," *Psychiatry* 35 (1972) :238-52.

2 Throughout this book, I use the term "process" to apply to the creative thought patterns because, in all cases, there is an extended sequence consisting of selecting and designating either opposites or discrete entities, posing them simultaneously, fusing them, etc., and applying these conceptions to the creative task.

3 Note the distinct difference between this formulation and the "regression in the service of the ego" of Ernst Kris. Kris states that the creator shifts between primary process and secondary process thinking. Primary process productions are modified by the secondary process *after* they appear (Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations,* esp. pp. 291-318).

4 Some might want to insist that this earlier image of rocks as simultaneously alive and dead was the original janusian thought. I have no

quarrel with such a point and it simply starts the janusian process at an earlier phase of the creation of the poem. The poet himself, when reading over the section above after I had written it, suggested that the structure "Hot pumice blew . . . causing the Elephant Rock to howl" was a formulation of an inanimate production of the animate and was therefore an instance of the type of thinking I was describing.

5 The precise relationship between cognitive functions and affect or feelings as well as psychological defenses against affects has not yet been satisfactorily worked out in any current psychological theory, including psychoanalysis. Whether cognition is always accompanied by affect, whether cognition and affect are two aspects of a single process, or whether it is appropriate to postulate an integration of the two processes that does away with the distinction entirely has not yet been settled. Although there is a good deal of disagreement about the most appropriate formulation among these alternatives, there is general agreement that the old sharply drawn distinction between cognition and affect—in common parlance, between thought and feeling or between intellect and emotion—is incorrect. Cognition and affect are clearly highly interrelated. See J. C. Harper et al., eds., *The Cognitive Processes: Readings* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall,1964), esp. part 5, "Cognition, Motivation and Personality," pp. 387-582; S. J. Korchin, "Anxiety and Cognition," in *Cognition: Theory, Research, Promise,* ed. C. Scheerer (New York: Harper & Row, 1964); J. S. Antrobus, ed., *Cognition and Affect* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970); J. C. Mancuso, *Readings for a Cognitive Theory of Personality* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston,1970). A full description of janusian thinking, as well as the other thought processes discussed in this work, requires the settling of problems such as this one. It also requires the elaboration of a more complete theory of the relationship between thought and personality than is currently available. Certainly, such a task cannot be attempted here.

6 S. Freud, "Negation" (1925) (London, 1961), 9:235-42.

7 Anna Freud, in her classical work on ego defenses, did not even include negation as one of the ten familiar and prominent defenses,- see A. Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* (New York: International Universities Press, 1946). As an exception to the general psychoanalytic neglect of this defense, David Rapaport gave it some attention in his seminal work *(Organization and Pathology of Thought).* Also, Jacques Lacan, the psychoanalytic innovator, developed an aspect of his own theory from Freud's article on negation; see J. Lacan, "Reponse au Commentaire de Jean Hyppolite sur la 'Verneinung' de Freud," *La Psychoanalyse* 1 (1956) :41-58; also in *Ecrits* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966), pp. 381-99.

8 In distinction to other defenses, the person using negation often recognizes its defensive function fairly readily, even when it is not pointed out by another person.

9 This process is often mistakenly attributed to the defense of projection. The writer is considered to be projecting his inner feelings onto the *characters* he has created. But such a formulation overlooks the psychological reality of the situation and, like primary process theories of creativity, tends to overlook the creative person's rationality and his clear grasp of distinctions during the creative process. The writer does not project his inner feelings onto his characters as though they were real people. He knows they are fictional and are products of his own mind at all times. But he does attribute what he writes to aesthetic necessity alone and he negates any direct relationship to himself. In an unpublished experiment carried out by Eugene Shapiro and myself, results conclusively demonstrated that literary works are not analogous to projective tests, projection is not a major or a primary factor in literary creation (A. Rothenberg and E. Shapiro, "Psychological Approaches to Literature," in prep.).

It is also incorrect to label the major mechanism as either intellectualization or rationalization on the basis that the concept of aesthetic necessity is used as a justification. For one thing, writers acknowledge that this phase is related in some way to unconscious processes and therefore defensive justification alone could not be involved. Rather than mere justification, there is an active *negation* of any direct congruence between the specific contents of the material and the specific contents of the writer's own Unconscious.

10 A. Rothenberg, "Autobiographical Drama: Strindberg and O'Neill," *Literature and Psychology* 17 (1967) :95—114.

11 Rothenberg, "Poetic Process and Psychotherapy."

12 Eric Plaut has called my attention to the possibility that the defense of ego splitting operates in conjunction with janusian thinking. Ego splitting was defined by Freud: "Two psychical attitudes have been formed instead of a single one—one, the normal one, which takes account of reality, and another which under the influence of instincts detaches the ego from reality. The two [contrary attitudes] exist alongside of each other" ("An Outline of Psychoanalysis" [1940 (1938)], 23 [London, 1964] 202; see the remainder of the discussion on pp. 202-4 and see also S. Freud, "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defense" [1940 (1938)], 23 [London, 1964] 275-78). Although Freud only sketched out the nature of this defense, it has received a good deal of attention by modern theorists of the borderline states such as Otto Kernberg and Margaret Mahler. Primarily, it functions in a rather holistic way to involve large segments of the psychic structure, and it consequently has a major role in borderline states and psychosis. Although it could be involved initially in stimulating an orientation toward janusian thinking in particular creative persons, or more fleetingly in the initial development of specific janusian formulations by a broader range, it functions primarily to produce psychopathological structures and symptomatology. In this splitting defense, the "two attitudes persist side by side throughout their lives without influencing each other" (Freud, "Outline," p. 203), a point also emphasized by Kernberg. Splitting therefore would not allow for the creator's awareness of contradiction in janusian formulations, nor for the unearthing of unconscious material. As a psychopathological defense, splitting bears the same type of mirror-image relationship to creative functions as do other psychopathological mechanisms (see discussion here, chap. 6). As an initiator of an orientation to janusian thinking as well as a fleeting instigator of particular janusian formulations, splitting functions in a manner similar to ambivalence (see discussion here, chap. 9). See also O. F. Kernberg, "Borderline Personality Organization," *Journal of the Ameiican Psychoanalytic Association* 15 (1967) :641- 85; M. S. Mahler, "A Study of the Separation-Individuation Process, and Its Possible Application to Borderline Phenomena in the Psychoanalytic Situation," *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 26 (1971):403-25; J. F. Masterson, "The Splitting Defense Mechanism of the Borderline Adolescent: Developmental and Clinical Aspects," in *Borderline States in Psychiatry,* ed. J. E. Mack (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1975), pp. 93-102.

13 His achievement of insight could not be attributed to my presence except in a small way; he frequently had such insights on his own, and he and I were merely discussing the poem in a general fashion, not exploring any underlying meanings.

14 I think the improvement in the poem throughout the stages of revision I have presented and the aesthetic power of these lines is self-evident without further elaboration. I think all would agree that the stillness coming both from the horse and the star is consistent with the body-soul overtones of the poem, that this construction conveys a sense of unity and peace, and that other aspects of the changes are highly effective. But to go into any further critical and aesthetic discussion at this point would clearly be diversionary, if indeed it is necessary.

15 See A. Roe, "A Study of Imagery in Research Scientists," *Journal of Personality* 19 (1951) :459—70; F. C. Bartlett, "The Relevance of Visual Imagery to the Process of Thinking," *British Journal of Psychology* 17 (1927) :23—29; P. McKellar, *Imagination and Thinking* (New York: Basic Books, 1957), and "Three Aspects of the Psychology of Originality in Human Thinking," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 3 (1963): 129—47; A. Paivio, *Imagery and Verbal Processes* (New York: Holt, Rinehart &. Winston, 1971). For a philosophical account and an assessment, see E. Casey, *Imagining* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

16 Clearly, the reference to space in this context is to the subjective experience of inner space in the mind. The expression, "imaginary space in the mind" conveys the sense of what I am referring to, but I have avoided it because of the possibility of a confusing tautology. Homospatial thinking is a component of artistic imagination and, therefore, it would be confusing to use the term "imaginary" in any part of a definition. The most accurate description psychologically is that the homospatial experience fills, or totally occupies, consciousness.

17 I refer to the mother and grandmother interchangeably because I think it is clear that they have equal psychological importance here, at least as far as the wish to be cared for is concerned. The grandmother was a constant presence throughout his childhood and was a direct object of the poet's longings. That there are differences in his orientation to his mother and grandmother will become clearer in the next chapter, but we are not interested in pursuing a detailed analysis or reconstruction of the poet's

life, his unconscious contents, or the psychodynamic structure of his personality in this book. By the same token, the wish-fulfilling memory of the summers with the three women could be a screen memory for infancy, but this deeper psychodynamic sheds no further light on the matter being discussed, nor does it in any way invalidate the analysis.

18 In this discussion we are entering into an especially complicated theoretical area because the use of homophones enters into punning. Freud extensively analyzed the psychological structure of puns and proposed that they were products of a process he called "joke work," a process similar to dream work; see Freud, "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious." In chapter 10 below, I shall take up this theoretical issue more fully, but I must emphasize here that I am discussing not the construction of a pun but how a homophone is used in the creation of a poem.

19 Freud's explanation [see ibid.), stated here, of the psychodynamics of the pleasure derived from puns is, I believe, quite correct.

20 The process through which the "Hell's Gate" phrase was finally arrived at seems also to have been influenced by janusian thinking. First designated as a heavenly gate, the nether region may also have been in the poet's mind at the same time. He did, in any event, shift from heaven directly to its opposite in these versions; no intermediary was formulated at all. It is quite common for janusian thinking or aspects of the janusian process to operate in concert with homospatial thinking.

21 H. Hartmann, E. Kris, and R. Lowenstein, "Notes on the Theory of Aggression," in *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* (New York: International Universities Press, 1949), vols. 3 and 4:9-36; H. Hartmann, *Essays in Ego Psychology* (New York: International Universities Press, 1964); A. Solnit, "Aggression: A View of Theory Building in Psychoanalysis," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 20 (1972) :435-50.

22 Freud, "Creative Writers and Daydreaming," p. 153.

23 Kris, Psychoanalytic Explorations.

24 G. J. Rose, "Narcissistic Fusion States and Creativity," in *The Unconscious Today,* ed. M. Kanzer (New York: International Universities Press, 1971), pp. 495-505.

25 "The general assumption is that under certain conditions the ego regulates regression, and that the integrative functions of the ego include voluntary and temporary withdrawal of cathexis from one area or another to regain improved control" (Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations,* p. 312).