Parsifal / Druidess: Unfolding a Lithographic Metamorphosis by Odilon Redon

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In 1879, with an album of ten prints and one frontispiece entitled *Dans le rêve* ("In the Dream" or "Dreaming"), Odilon Redon started publishing lithographs. The album format proved congenial and successful: three more followed until, in 1886, the artist began issuing individual sheets with *Profile of Light* (Fig. 18). In April 1891, a first catalog of Redon's lithographs was published by the Belgian lawyer, writer, and critic Jules Destrée. He made a clear distinction between the isolated plates, which he introduced under the generic title *Pièces modernes* but regarded as "not linked by any special relationship," and the albums, which, "in the author's mind, form wholes, groupings that cannot be broken down without betraying his thought."[1] By then, these "Modern Pieces" numbered eight lithographs. Redon continued to produce albums, as well as prints for journals and frontispieces for books. In fact, his reputation as a lithographer continued to rest mainly on his albums, so much so that in 1898, while preparing a new catalog of his prints, the critic André Mellerio asked him why he had produced isolated pieces. Redon replied somewhat angrily that he had made them like "every other artist from the present and the past."[2] Mellerio's question signaled that the sequential character of the albums, the echoes and contrasts organized by Redon between the individual prints within them, were crucial to his appreciation. Despite Redon's irritation, the insight provided by such an approach remains valuable. The 1885 album *Homage to Goya*, for instance, opens and closes with two images that frame the series and are clearly conceived as opposed and complementary: the first one (Fig. 20) shows a male head, seen from the front on a dark background, with a melancholic and searching expression, while a female profile (Fig. 21), described by the caption as "severe and hard," detaches itself from the white sheet in the second one.[3]

We may, however, also disagree with Destrée's contention that Redon's individual prints are mutually unrelated. On October 11, 1891, the writer Joris-Karl Huysmans, who had organized the promotion of *Homage to Goya* and had become Redon's critical champion, received mail from the artist, which he answered with a note of thanks written on the same day: "My janitor brought me up this morning a pretty roll that, once unfolded, confronted me with the troubling figures you created. Ah! But they are perfect Redons, the one so strange and gentle and suffering with his arrow, the other so terribly animal with her crude profile and her shiny eye. And the two pale mystics!"[4] This description identifies three prints, which, according to Mellerio's catalog, were editioned in 1892: *Parsifal* (Fig. 1), *Druidess* (Fig. 2), and a linear depiction of two standing women entitled *Mystical Conversation*.[5] Given the fact that Huysmans received the three lithographs in one roll, it is only logical that he should have discussed them together, but his treatment of *Parsifal* and *Druidess* in the same sentence clearly considers them as a pair on a formal and semantic level, the gentleness of the former building a counterpart to the hardness of the latter.

This intuition of an intimate link between the two images was confirmed in an unexpected way when, in 1976, Suzanne Folds McCullagh and Inge Christine Swenson, two art historians working at the Art Institute of Chicago, discovered a version of *Parsifal* (Fig. 3) unmentioned in Mellerio's catalog, and of which only three proofs have been preserved.[6] A minute comparison of this unknown version (which I will henceforward call *Parsifal I*) with the impressions of Mellerio 116 (henceforward *Parsifal II*) in the Art Institute collection led them to conclude that it was not an undescribed state of the latter but had been "printed from a different stone and must therefore be a first, rejected version of the Parsifal subject." They supposed that the reason for this rejection must have been a flaw in the stone, "which created a horizontal black line through the entire composition, just above Parsifal's brow," and they argued for the equal quality but divergent "conception and emotional impact" of the two versions: whereas a harsh, broken light accents forms dramatically in *Parsifal I* and makes the hero appear "tormented by his fate," he seems merely "pensive" in the soft, even illumination of *Parsifal II*.

Extending the comparison to other Redon lithographs of the same period, McCullagh and Swenson made a second, even more remarkable discovery: that elements of *Parsifal I* recur in *Druidess*, as can easily be seen when one of the two compositions is turned upside down (Fig. 4). McCullagh and Swenson observed that the "apparently fortuitous assemblage of lines on Parsifal's white collar is found inverted on the Druidess's white headband." They proposed the following reconstruction of the passage from one lithograph to the other: "The priestess's profile is developed from the lighted area of Parsifal's neck and chin, the shaft of light beside him defines her veil, and the side of his helmet is transformed into her elegant earring." They added that in some impressions of *Druidess*, "remnants of Parsifal's right eye can be discerned at the bottom edge of the print," which now corresponds to the horizontal black line observed in *Parsifal I*. In other words, they suggested that after rejecting *Parsifal I*, Redon turned the stone upside down and, leaving out the smaller part of the lithograph divided by the aberrant line, transformed the larger part into a new image, *Druidess*, before returning to his initial composition and creating an entirely new version of it, *Parsifal II*, on a new stone.

This is a strange procedure, hardly corresponding to the genesis expected from such a work. Lithographic stones were routinely canceled and regrained after a print run was completed, so the material loss represented by the failed *Parsifal I* was not sufficient to call for a "recycling" of this kind. Was Redon reluctant to lose the image completely? As we shall see, it would have been easy to transfer the imperfect image

1 Odilon Redon, *Parsifal [II]*, 1891, lithograph on mounted ivory China paper, 12½ × 9⅝ in. (32.1 × 24.3 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1695 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

onto a new stone, and the more obvious outcome of *Parsifal I* is *Parsifal II*, which takes advantage of the rejected version to improve on it. The additional transformation of *Parsifal I* into the other, radically different image of *Druidess* must therefore have attracted Redon in its own right. In their brief article, McCullagh and Swenson rightly pointed to other documented instances in which Redon "created a wholly new image from another," including one in which he turned an early etching of a galloping rider (Fig. 5) into the vague evocation of a nude woman (Fig. 6), transforming the meandering lines of clouds into a depiction of hair after turning the plate on its side. They saw such cases as "indicative of Redon's ability to see alternatives in his creations and of his willingness to pursue these visions, nurturing one form from another." One can go even further and identify in this ability and willingness a key element of Redon's theory and practice of art. Before we take a closer look at this process of metamorphosis, though, we must ask ourselves to what extent the identity of the two figures at stake, following the indications given by Redon's titles, are involved in the genetic relation binding them.

Parsifals

Parsifal refers unequivocally to the eponymous hero of Richard Wagner's last musical drama. This work had been presented in Bayreuth in 1882, the year preceding the composer's death, and although Redon had not seen it, he could have read the libretto, and in any case, he knew of its plot, which was widely discussed and may have been already familiar to him from Chrétien de Troyes's late-twelfth-century tale of chivalry *Le conte du Graal ou le roman de Perceval.*

Redon had many reasons to be attracted to Wagner. Music had been important to him from his early years, and he would write that he had been "born on a sound wave."[7] One of his brothers played piano and wrote music criticism, and he was himself a fine violinist. More important, he had de-

2 Redon, *Druidess*, 1891, lithograph on mounted ivory China paper, 9⅛ × 8 in. (23.1 × 20.2 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1698 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

fined himself early on as a "symphonist painter," and he thought that the future of the visual arts depended on the musical model of "suggestion."[8] Many Wagner devotees were close to him, including the composer Ernest Chausson and Henri Fantin-Latour. The latter was using lithography to disseminate compositions after Wagner, including *Parsifal and the Flower Maidens* (Fig. 12), and introduced Redon to this technique. Redon, however, disapproved of Fantin's attempt to interpret with the colors of painting the musical world, which he deemed "solely internal and without any support in real nature."[9] In an unpublished note, he even dismissed Wagner himself as "yet another naturalist."[10] On several occasions, however, he also expressed his interest and even his admiration for Wagner's work, as well as his desire—which would remain unfulfilled—to visit Bayreuth.

By the mid-1880s in Paris, Wagnerites were advocating the theory of the "total work of art." Like other early proponents of Symbolism, they participated in an effort dear to Redon's heart, that of freeing the visual arts from the constraints of naturalism. The *Revue Wagnérienne* was founded in June 1885, and on May 8, 1886, Teodor de Wyzewa commented in its pages on the Salon of that year by calling for a *peinture wagnérienne*, "emotional and musical," to replace "sensational and descriptive" painting.[11] He mentioned among its already existing practitioners Redon, who, indeed, had already associated himself officially with the Wagnerian cause by accepting the editor Édouard Dujardin's invitation to create an image of Brünnhilde (Fig. 7) as a deluxe gift for subscribers to the *Revue*.[12] The head of this *Brünnhilde* bears a definite resemblance to the later *Druidess* (Fig. 2). Redon also exhibited *Brünnhilde* drawings in 1888 and 1890, and he would publish in 1894 a second lithograph with the same title, less dramatic and more Pre-Raphaelite in character.[13]

Devoting a lithograph to the figure of Parsifal in 1891 was therefore not a surprising choice on Redon's part. It took place in a series of explicit references to Wagner's interpretation of myths and reinforced the artist's association with Wagnerism and Symbolism, two cultural movements occupying by then the center of public attention. The dimension of publicity may raise a doubt about the degree of intrinsic relevance that should be granted to this choice of title, all the more as Redon is known for his love of indeterminacy, his rejection of traditional notions of "illustration," and his idiosyncratic and at times desultory treatment of iconography.[14]

3 Redon, *Parsifal [I]*, 1891, lithograph on mounted ivory China paper, 12⅝ × 9½ in. (32.2 × 24 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Robert M. Light, 1975.493 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

The Musée d'Orsay, Paris, owns a pastel drawing that Redon thus seems to have presented alternately as *Parsifal* and *Saint John* (Fig. 8).[15] Bearded, without helmet and spear but with a heavy coat, and standing amid a mountainous landscape, this figure has little in common with *Parsifal I* and *Parsifal II*, except perhaps for the oversize eyes and melancholic demeanor. Still, the hesitation between "Parsifal" and "Saint John" is revealing both of the semantic context in which Parsifal could be placed for Redon and of the artist's manner of identifying what he liked to call his "fictions."[16] In May 1904, he described in his chronological list of works an earlier drawing as "a kind of Parsifal, bard or knight, barbarous and mystical, seen from the front."[17]

The title *Parsifal* may thus have come to identify the figure of *Parsifal I* during or after its realization rather than have preceded and oriented it. However, even "a kind of Parsifal" labeled ex post facto has something to do with its literary and musical referent, so we must ask ourselves what in Wagner's "sacred festival play" could interest Redon. The libretto was inspired by the legend of the Holy Grail, as transmitted by Chrétien de Troyes and adapted in the early thirteenth century by the German poet Wolfram von Aeschenbach. It is already worth noting that in the 1860s—when Wagner was writing the first sketch for his *Parsifal* poem—Redon had been fascinated by epic literature, which he associated with an early stage of mankind and with the unadulterated landscape and people of his beloved Pays Basque.[18] His first major painting, shown at the 1870 exhibition of the Société des Amis des Arts de Bordeaux, was based on the eleventh-century chanson de geste *Chanson de Roland*: it depicts the youthful hero alone, separated from his troop by the dark mass of a mountain, his red cape forming a halo and alluding perhaps to his imminent sacrifice (Fig. 9).

Parsifal, the son of a knight killed in combat, was raised in

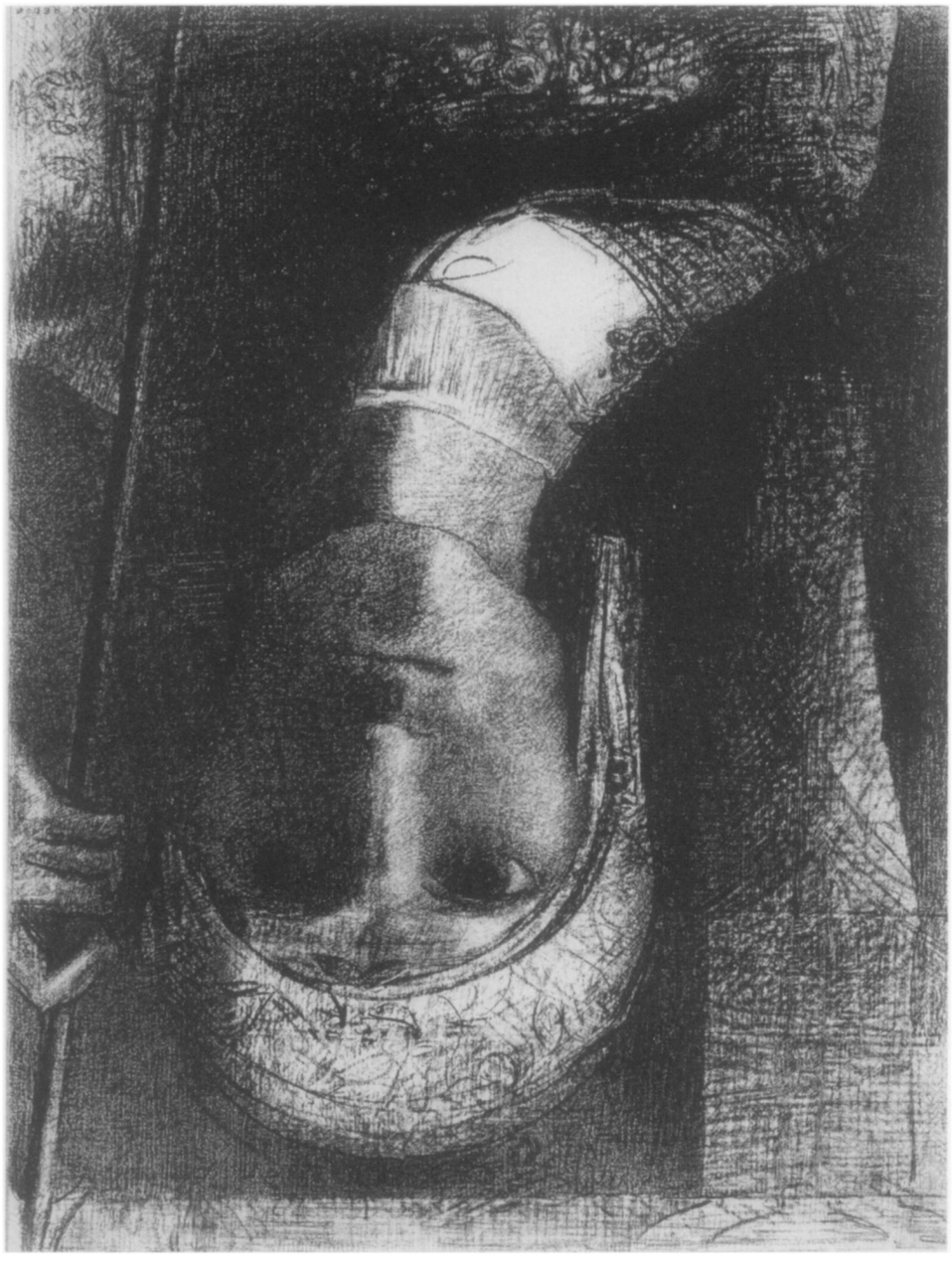
ignorance of his origin and of knighthood by his mother Herzeleide, who feared for his life—an element that may have appealed to Redon in connection with the complex history of his own childhood.[19] Following knights who pass through the woods, Parsifal reaches Montsalvat, the castle of the Holy Grail, and witnesses the drama unfolding within its walls without understanding it. Klingsor, a self-castrated magician rejected by the chaste Knights of the Grail, uses the Flower Maidens and the seductress Kundry to ensnare them; he has managed to take the Holy Spear from King Amfortas while the latter succumbed to Kundry and to inflict on him a wound that will not heal, making him unfit to perform the holy office of the Grail. Attempting to regain the Holy Spear, Parsifal resists the maiden but is tempted by Kundry into a kiss. Instead of being seduced, however, he realizes the nature of Amfortas's wound, rejects Kundry, and vanquishes Klingsor, recovering the spear that had pierced Christ's side. Cursed by Kundry, he does not reach Montsalvat again until after a long wandering, on Good Friday. There, he baptizes the repentant Kundry, heals Amfortas, and becomes King of the Grail.[20]

Parsifal's purity and chastity have performed the miracle, but not without the brief moment of weakness echoing the prophecy once heard by Amfortas: "Enlightened through compassion, the innocent fool [*Durch Mitleid wissend, der reine Tor*]." Wagner adopted for his hero's name an imaginary etymology proposed by Johann Joseph von Görres: a derivation from the Arabic *parsi* (pure, chaste) and *fal* (fool).[21] He also had Parsifal assume at the end the role of Christ, with Kundry playing Mary Magdalen, and he understood him as a figure of the artist who becomes capable of redeeming mankind by renouncing the world.[22] This combination of traits corresponds closely to the image of the artist that Redon had built for himself, in part to justify and sublimate his feelings of isolation and inadequacy.[23] Expressed in private texts, this image can also be detected in his works under the guise of many male figures, making their resemblances to *Parsifal I* and *Parsifal II* significant. *The Cask of Amontillado* (Fig. 10), for example, refers to the character of Fortunato in Edgar Allan Poe's short story but on a more generic level shows the fool as a victim.[24] The figure's tilted head, hard features, oversize eyes, closed lips, and melancholic expression can all be found—amid obvious differences—in *Parsifal I* and, to a lesser extent, in *Parsifal II*. Apart from more regular features, which bring it closer to *Parsifal II*, the same can be said of *Head Crowned with Thorns* (Fig. 11), a Christ-like representation of a "gentle" martyr, in which the dark eyes are emphasized even more by the light filling the lower part of the face and bust.

A comparison with contemporary representations of Parsifal by other artists is also illuminating. Under the terms of a copyright obtained from King Ludwig II for *Parsifal*, written for Wagner's newly built theater, *Parsifal* could not be performed outside Bayreuth from its creation in 1882 to 1914. Nonetheless—or perhaps because of the restriction—images of it proliferated, generally based on Paul von Joukowsky's original sets and costumes.[25] Joukowsky and most of his followers distinguished between the Parsifal of the first act, a more or less rustic simpleton in peasant's attire, and the Christ-like Parsifal who appeared after Kundry's kiss and the triumph over Klingsor. Redon's Parsifal is closer to the second type, as the presence of the spear confirms, but his suffering or melancholic expression, particularly in *Parsifal I*, indicates an ongoing rather than a completed quest. The artists who indulged in what Wyzewa called "sensational and descriptive art," on the contrary, were more attracted by the erotic temptations encountered by the hero than by his inner torments. Fantin-Latour himself had shown him as an amiable semigod, gently making his way through the crowd of entreating maidens (Fig. 12). The late academic painter Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse gave a protocinematographic rendering of the same scene (Fig. 13), with a literal evocation—calling to mind Disney animation spiked with soft porn—of the flowers turning into women, and Parsifal standing transfixed amid them like a male Joan of Arc. These comparisons emphasize how clearly Redon chose the iconic over the narrative, as he had done in *The Cask of Amontillado*. His images of Parsifal show no action, no setting—except vaguely architectural forms in the first version (Fig. 3)—no secondary figures, and only a minimum of attributes: helmet, cape, and the spear. Significantly, the closest antecedents of his *Parsifal* in compositional terms are icons of Saint George in the Byzantine tradition, where the closely framed saint holds a spear that also looks like an arrow.

As to the transformation of Redon's *Parsifal I* into *Druidess*, there remains the question of whether Wagner's Parsifal had any reason to inspire a change of gendered identity. My comparison of Rochegrosse's knight with Joan of Arc already points in this direction: like other young characters defined as virgins, Parsifal tends to a certain sexual lability or indeterminacy; another case in point is Saint John, whom we have seen Redon equate with Parsifal. In addition, it is by rejecting sexuality that Parsifal transforms his initial "foolishness" into full-grown, spiritual purity. Among images of Parsifal contemporary with Redon's lithograph, the most interesting in this context is a slightly later drawing by Simeon Solomon inscribed *A Design for a Motif from Parsifal* (Fig. 14). It depicts two heads in profile, the one on the left looking upward and the other one, which is covered with a veil and a bird's wing, downward. Their features are almost identically androgynous but the second one's headdress lends it a more feminine appearance; as for their relation to Wagner's drama, one is tempted to interpret them as Parsifal and Kundry, but they could as well represent two aspects or two moments of the same person, since the sparse and ambiguous attributes chosen by Solomon give arguments for both readings.[26] Later developments in the twentieth century yield more explicit but also more idiosyncratic expressions of this tendency: in the woodcut *Richard Wagner as a Woman*, for example, Georg Baselitz not only depicted Wagner's head upside down but also feminized the composer, in order—according to the artist—to neutralize his love of pathos.[27]

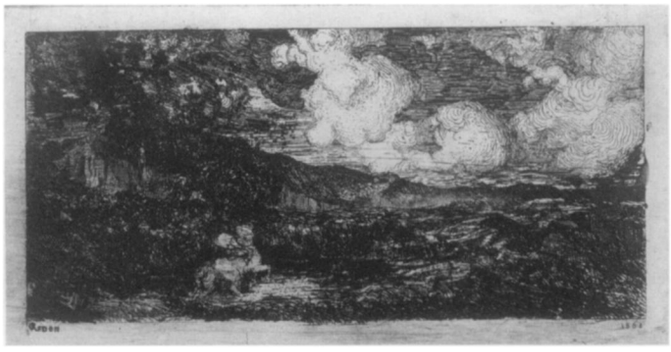
The later interpretation most relevant to Redon by far is Hans Jürgen Syberberg's 1982 film *Parsifal*, in which the hero is played by a man and a woman. In a "film essay" published in the same year, the director calls them "Parsifal I" and "Parsifal II" and explains their relationship as follows. During the overture, the two briefly appear united, as if sleeping together in an egg. Then Parsifal I stands up and "enters the film" while Parsifal II continues to sleep, intimating that the



4 Redon, *Parsifal [I]* presented upside down (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

following action is her dream while Parsifal I lives his adventure as "our dream."[28] The male Parsifal—looking remarkably like Redon's *Parsifal I* at this point—is replaced by the female one (Fig. 15) when Kundry's kiss reminds him of Amfortas's wound, which he now feels within himself. The cinematographic fusion of the female actor's face and body (Karen Krick) with the male singer's voice (Reiner Goldberg) produces an unforgettable double visual-aural "image," which for some spectators-auditors had the effect of "a chimera, a monster."[29] Syberberg explained that the replacement of the male actor by the female actor enabled him to show Parsifal's rejection of Kundry as mankind's resistance to temptation rather than as man's resistance to woman—as if, in an inner monologue, Kundry's "better part" was warning herself. The gender doubling of Parsifal thus presented a practical, visible solution to "the difficult intellectual task" of going beyond the biblical conception of woman as evil, to which Wagner was attached for historical, cultural, and polemical reasons.[30]

In addition to this intended improvement on and updating of Wagner's *Weltanschauung*, Syberberg also thought that the composer, who reportedly disliked tenors and once praised a Romeo sung by Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient, would have enjoyed "a female image of his androgynous Parsifal."[31] There are further good reasons to support this assertion. In her diary, Cosima Wagner noted on June 27, 1880, that after playing the first theme from *Parsifal* on the piano, Wagner explained to her that he had had certain words sung by a choir so that they would sound neither feminine nor masculine. He further compared this device to Leonardo's depiction of Christ in his *Last Supper* (Fig. 16), which amounted to "an almost feminine head with a beard" and was meant to portray "the human features in general, neither man nor woman."[32] It is worth noting here that Redon was a great



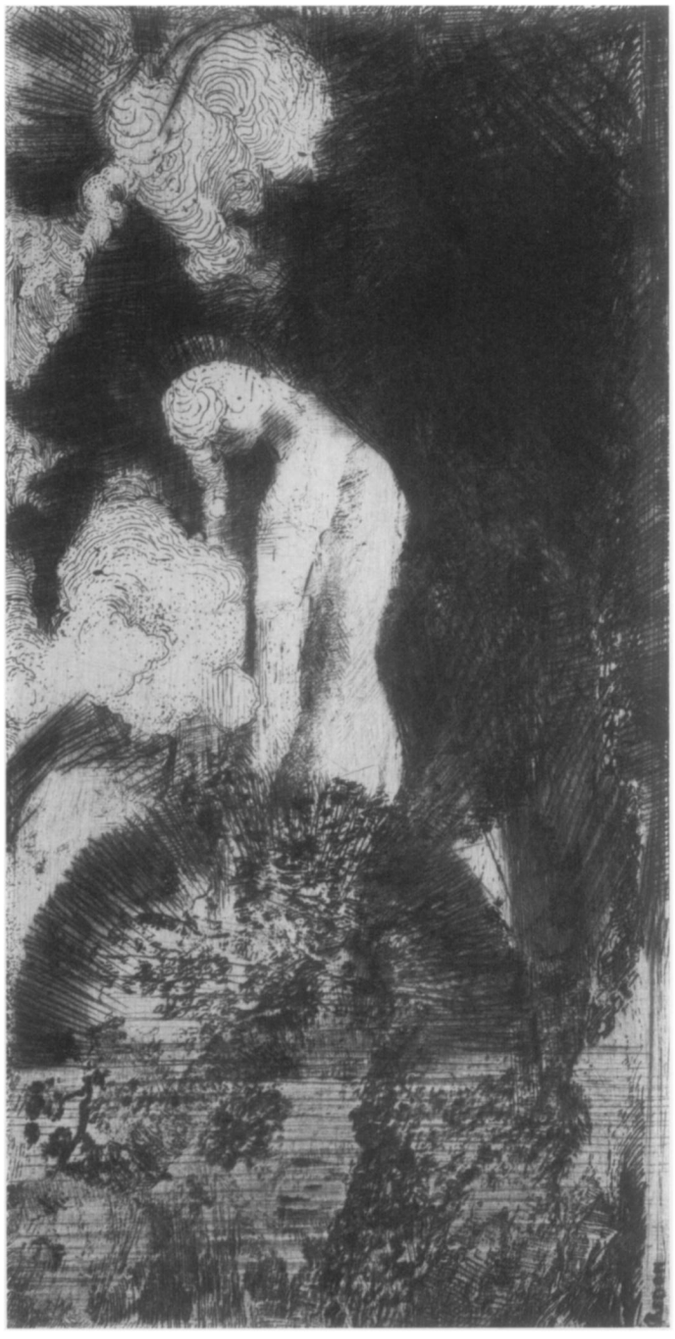
5 Redon, *Galloping Horseman*, 1866, etching on light gray chine affixed to ivory wove paper, 2½ × 5¼ in. (6.3 × 13.3 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1523 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

admirer of Leonardo and that his Parsifal bears a definite resemblance to the latter's Christ, although a less explicit one than the painting *Closed Eyes* (1890, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), a turning point in the artist's career, made popular by a lithographed version (Fig. 17). Musicologists have noted in *Parsifal* numerous "androgynous" treatments of timbre, rhythm, and voice, including the triple choir of the Grail ceremony (act 2, scene 2) in which the progressive spiritualization is expressed not only by a higher position in the cupola but also by a desexualization of the voices from the knights to the young boys.[33] These features have led the Canadian musicologist Jean-Jacques Nattiez to consider that the "religion of the future" preached by Parsifal and by Wagner aimed at the abolition of "all form of sexual and racial distinction."[34]

Druidesses

Redon's *Parsifal* thus clearly referred to a rich and topical context that included the issue of sexual ambiguity or indeterminacy. This is less obviously the case with *Druidess*, although the latter subject is far from isolated in the artist's work. A charcoal drawing with this title (Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo) shows a schematic female form standing beside a tree, as if they were two incarnations of the same being.[35] Beyond the connection of the Druidic cult with forests and oak trees in particular, Druidesses represented for Redon an expression of the affinity between women and nature.[36] *Druidess* also takes its place in the long series of his female profiles, one of which, entitled *The Fairy* (1882, collection of Mrs. Bertram Smith), served as a model for the 1886 lithograph *Profile of Light* (Fig. 18).[37] It shares with *Druidess* the elaborate headdress in conical shape and the flowing veils, as well as a relatively harsh profile with nose and forehead in one line. The direction of their gazes, however, is different, and the Druidess displays heavier and more "primitive" features, which prompted Huysmans to describe her as "so terribly animal with her crude profile." To some extent, their difference can be compared to that between the 1885 and the 1894 versions of *Brünnhilde* (Fig. 7). An 1883 charcoal drawing entitled *Spring* connects the female profile motif with the Druidess's association with trees and nature.[38]

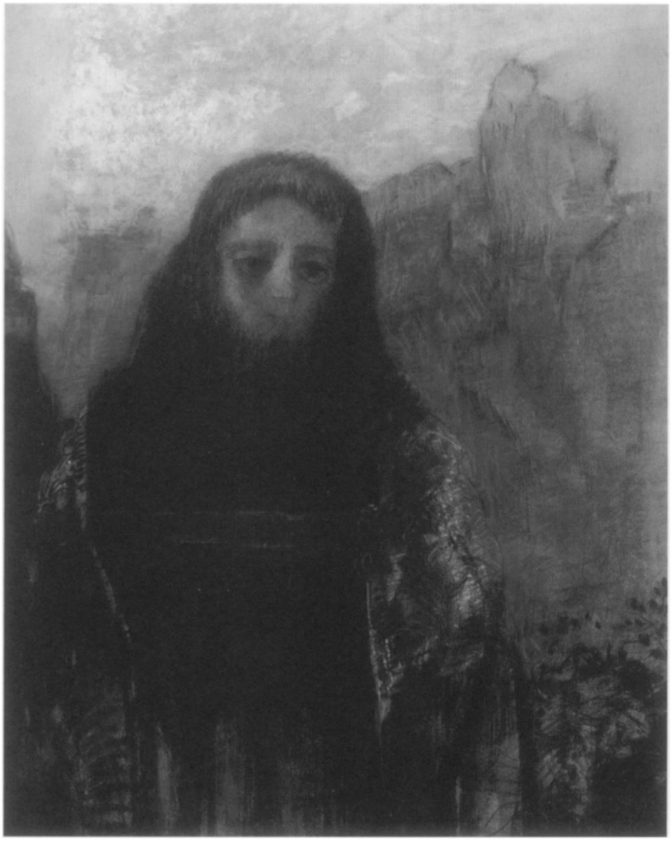
As for the reference to a Druidic priestess in a title, Redon seems to owe it to a comparison made in passing by the



6 Redon, *Bather*, 1904, etching and drypoint on ivory wove paper, 5¼ × 2½ in. (13.3 × 6.3 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1524 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

Belgian lawyer, art critic, and collector Edmond Picard in his "monodrama" *Le juré* (The Juror). In 1886, Picard had asked the artist to interpret this text with six drawings meant to be "reproduced" as lithographs.[39] Among the passages chosen by Redon was the description of a photograph of the hero's distant mother in which she appeared "dramatic and grandiose, with the hairdo [or the headgear] of a Druidic priestess, theatrical, imposing, filled with her factitious, luxurious and loud life, but with nothing motherly about her."[40] In typical fashion, Redon—who had reasons to complain about his own

7 Redon, *Brünnhilde*, 1886, lithograph in black on white wove paper, 4⅝ × 3⅞ in. (11.8 × 9.9 cm), published in *La Revue Wagnérienne* 8 (August 8, 1886). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1606 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)



8 Redon, *Parsifal or Saint John*, pastel on paper, 25¼ × 19¼ in. (64 × 49 cm). Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, fonds du Musée d'Orsay, Paris, RF 36521 (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Hervé Lewandowski, © the RMN)

distant mother—transformed this imaginative evocation of a socialite into yet another enigmatic female profile.[41] Picard, who bought *Spring* the following year, must have noticed and accepted this transformation, since he modified accordingly the simplified quotation from his text that he offered as a caption for the lithograph, extending the "Druidic" character from a fashionable detail to the whole character: "Dramatic and grandiose with her figure of a Druidic priestess. . . ."[42]

Interest in things Celtic was very much a part of Redon's fascination with origins and with the primitive. With the Romantic movement, to which the artist remained deeply attached, the Celts and their priestly class, the Druids, had been hailed as the true ancestors of the French nation. Brittany and the Pays Basque, where Redon had traveled from the 1860s on, were widely regarded as "the areas where these early origins had been least diluted by subsequent history."[43] In a semifictionalized account of his decisive 1863 trip to the Pays Basque, he declared that its soil was to him "like an ancient homeland," where he seemed "to have lived, to have suffered, to have loved," and he expressed similar feelings of historical continuity about Brittany.[44] In opposition to their conquerors, the Romans, who stood for instrumental reason, logic, and force, the Celts represented the irrational, fantasy, communion with nature, and the unconscious. In his *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*, which Redon read and annotated, Ernest Renan told in 1883 of the legends he had heard as a Breton child, and he contrasted the Greeks' achievements, symbolized by the Parthenon, with the Celts' ability to extract from the heart of man "the secrets of infinity"; what characterized the "Celtic race" and kept it in touch with the "primitive world," including India, was idealism, disinterestedness, "an eternal source of folly," and access to the *royaume de féerie*, the fairy-tale kingdom.[45]

On August 15, 1891, shortly before Redon created *Parsifal I* and *Druidess*, Édouard Schuré published in the widely read *Revue des Deux Mondes* a long essay on the legends of Brittany, in which he claimed that although the Celtic race may have lost its "distinct nationality," the "Celtic soul" continued to live in the French nation as its "deep consciousness and superior genius," preparing some sudden and "splendid resurrection."[46] In a later historical study about the Celtic revival, the same author defined the three "arcanes of the Celtic soul" as "the sense of the occult powers of Nature and the feeling of the Divine in Woman and in Love," as well as the sense of clairvoyance and prophecy.[47] Given the intimate connection between these ideas of femininity, the primitive, and the irrational, a Druidess had to be the ideal incarnation of the "Celtic soul." The most influential druidess from Romantic literature had appeared in François-René de Chateaubriand's *Les martyrs, ou Le triomphe de la religion chrétienne* (The Martyrs, or The Triumph of the Christian Religion), of which Redon possessed a copy in the 1809 original edition.[48] Inspired by the story of Velléda, a first-century Germanic

9 Redon, *Roland at Roncevaux*, 1868–69, oil on canvas, 24 × 19⅛ in. (61 × 48.5 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris, on deposit at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux, RF 1984.47 (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Lysiane Gauthier, © Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux)

priestess-prophetess who had supported the Batavians' failed revolt against the Romans, Chateaubriand gave her name to a third-century Gaul Druidess, last of the nine oracular virgin priestesses ministering the sanctuary of the Île de Sein, on which the Druids buried their dead.[49] The hero of the book, the Greek-born Christian Eudore, appointed Roman commander of Brittany, witnessed her attempt to raise a revolt among her people and quickly put an end to it while taking her prisoner. She then fell in love with him and eventually overcame his resistance in a dramatic nighttime scene by a cliff. As the Gauls rose to avenge her honor, she proclaimed Eudore's innocence and took her own life. Velléda is thus a touching and memorable figure, to whose physical and spiritual charms the narrator pays vivid homage, although he condemns as barbaric and superstitious her beliefs, including her claim to be a fairy. This condemnation is in line with the author's intention to prove the superiority of the Christian faith.

Chateaubriand's invention quickly became part of the "legends of Brittany" and inspired many artists well beyond its time. Thus, in 1883, the Breton painter Jules-Eugène Lenepveu gave a descriptive rendering of Velléda's first appearance in *Les martyrs* (Fig. 19) as witnessed by Eudore hidden on the shore. It is as remote from Redon's *Druidess* as Rochegrosse's *Knight with the Flowers* is from his *Parsifal*. But Chateaubriand may not have been the only or even the main source or reference for *Druidess*. In 1887, Schuré published a drama entitled *Vercingétorix*, which attempted to enlist Velléda in the post-1871 cause of French rejuvenation. In his preface, he explained that the Celts had brought to Gaul the Aryans' fire cult and their "doctrine of the heavenly origin of the soul and of the possibility of its return to the divine world . . . through the cycle of existences": such were the "old national sources" in which the "weakness of our generation" might find new vigor.[50] *Vercingétorix* is built around two figures, Vercingétorix and Gwynfea, "the free Hero and the inspired Seer."[51] Gwynfea, a virgin priestess of Bélen, predicts and

10 Redon, *The Cask of Amontillado*, 1883, charcoal on tan laid paper, 14¼ × 12⅜ in. (36.2 × 31.4 cm). Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, fonds du Musée d'Orsay, Paris, RF 35.822 (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Gérard Blot, © the RMN)

11 Redon, *Head Crowned with Thorns*, ca. 1895, charcoal on paper, 22½ × 18½ in. (50 × 37.5 cm). Collection of Dian Woodner, New York (artwork in the public domain)

supports the rise of Vercingétorix, who unites the Gallic tribes in a revolt against the Roman occupation. Vercingétorix, however, is not content with their spiritual communion and pressures her to give him her love. When she consents, she loses her superior powers and the Gauls are defeated. She kills herself in the belief that Vercingétorix is dead; he is made prisoner but refuses to ask for his pardon, while a shining Gwynfea appears to him and shows him the way to heaven. The relationship between hero and prophetess depends to some extent on what Schuré explains to be the Druids' doctrine of the three circles of existence: Anhwn (or Anoun) is a bottomless abyss corresponding to unconscious matter and animal life; Abred is the circle of transmigration corresponding to the human world; Gwynfyd is the superior circle of happiness, which Gwynfea inhabits until she steps down to Vercingétorix's level and catches a horrifying glimpse of the abyss.[52]

In *Vercingétorix*, Schuré gave an interesting twist to *Les martyrs*, his immediate source: like Velléda, Gwynfea loses her virginity and abdicates her priesthood, but in her case, it is on her protégé's entreaty, and she obtains a redeeming power after her self-inflicted death. Whereas Chateaubriand details Eudore's shame and remorse following his union with Velléda, Schuré lets Gwynfea have her say, and the words she utters while tearing herself away from Vercingétorix's arms after his kiss deserve our close attention: "The Fire, the Fire goes out! It is not on the altar any more, it burns my heart! The light of heaven vanishes. . . . I saw the abyss! Horror, nothingness, darkness and death!"[53] One is reminded of Parsifal crying after being kissed by Kundry: "Amfortas! The wound! The wound! It burns within my heart! O sorrow, sorrow! Fearful sorrow! From the depths of my heart it cries aloud."[54] A fortuitous resemblance can be ruled out since Schuré, a prolific writer and fervent Wagnerite, had published in 1875 a book entitled *Le drame musical*, the second volume of which was devoted to Wagner's "work and idea"; it was newly edited and augmented with a study of *Parsifal* in 1886.[55] It appears that Schuré deliberately conceived Gwynfea (in some aspects) as a female counterpart to Parsifal, and the kiss scene in *Vercingétorix* as symmetrical—with a gender inversion of the protagonists—to the one representing the dramatic climax and the turning point in Wagner's work.

Redon possessed a copy of the book that had made Schuré's name in 1889, *Les grands initiés: Esquisse de l'histoire secrète des religions* (The Great Initiates: A Study in the Secret History of Religions). It was inscribed with the dedication "en très sympathique hommage" (in friendly homage), but when exactly he received it is not known.[56] On February 25, 1892, Schuré sent him a copy of *Vercingétorix* with a letter of thanks for the gracious reception of the same day.[57] We learn in it that Redon had declared himself ready to design a set for one of the two scenes of the play that were to be staged at Paul Fort's Théâtre d'Art, specifically, the Temple of Fire for the fourth scene of the third act, the one in which Gwynfea becomes Vercingétorix's lover. In addition, Fort asked Redon for a small drawing, inspired by one of the two scenes, to be reproduced on the program and in a forthcoming history of

12 Henri Fantin-Latour, *Parsifal and the Flower Maidens*, 1885, lithograph, 17¾ × 12⅛ in. (45 × 30.7 cm) (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Bibliothèque de Genève, Geneva, Collection Charles Meunier 575, pl. 59)

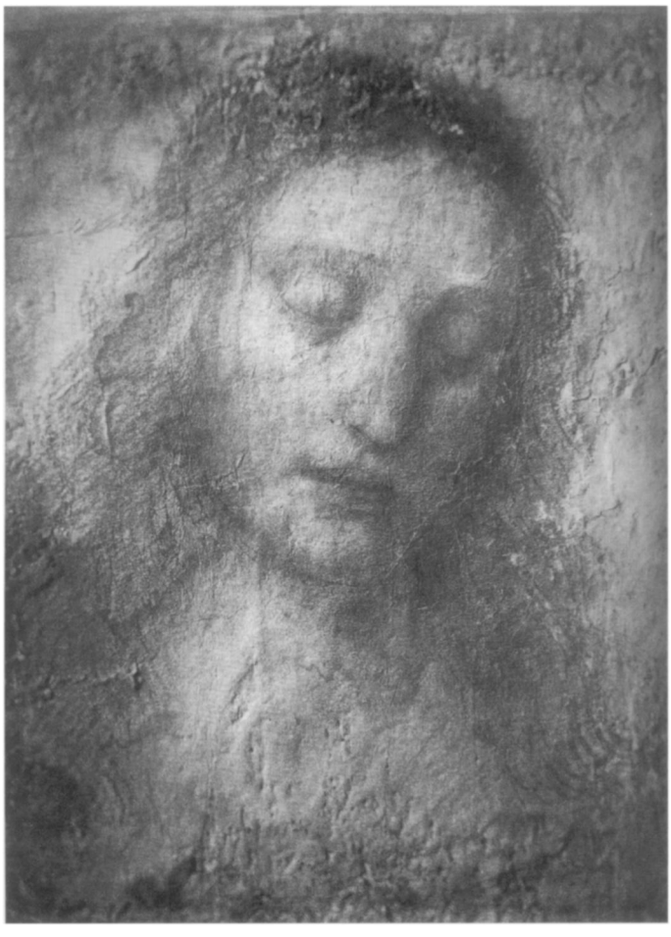
13 Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse, *The Knight with the Flowers*, 1894, oil on canvas, 92½ × 147⅝ in. (235 × 375 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris, RF 898 (artwork © 2007, ProLitteris, Zurich; photograph by Daniel Arnaudet, © the RMN)

the theater.[58] For an unknown reason, maybe the short notice, the sets were eventually created by Paul Sérusier, but apparently Redon's *Druidess* was reproduced on the printed program of the play.[59] Ted Gott has suggested that Schuré "may well have been led to approach Redon by the fortuitous

14 Simeon Solomon, *A Design for a Motif from Parsifal*, 1894, blue pencil on paper, 18¾ × 25⅜ in. (47.5 × 64.5 cm). Private collection (artwork in the public domain; photograph by José Manuel Costa Alves, Lisbon)

15 Still from *Parsifal*, written and directed by Hans Jürgen Syberberg, 1981–82, TMS Film Munich, showing Parsifal II replacing Parsifal I after Kundry's kiss

appearance of the *Druidess* on the eve of his own production."[60] However, the only chronological evidence regarding the creation and publication of *Druidess*—and *Parsifal II*—is Redon's dating of Huysmans's note of thanks to October 11, 1891, and Mellerio's catalog dating the prints to 1892. Moreover, *Vercingétorix* had been available since 1887, and Redon could have read it, or heard of its story line, well before receiving a copy from the author. By 1892, Redon's art had become popular with the mystic and occultist circles in which Schuré's reputation was greatest; both were living in the Rue d'Assas, and Fred Leeman has convincingly compared Schuré's syncretism to Redon's conception of the goal of art and his fusion of Christian and Buddhist themes.[61] Even if *Druidess* had appeared by chance just as Schuré was planning a staging of *Vercingétorix* and without Redon being aware of the play—which does not seem plausible—this coincidence rested on shared ideas and interests.



16 Leonardo, *Head of Christ*, study for *The Last Supper* in S. Maria delle Grazie, Museo di Brera, Milan, photograph by Léon Gérard, 1857–58, albumen silver print. Collection Dietmar Siegert, Munich (artwork and photograph in the public domain)

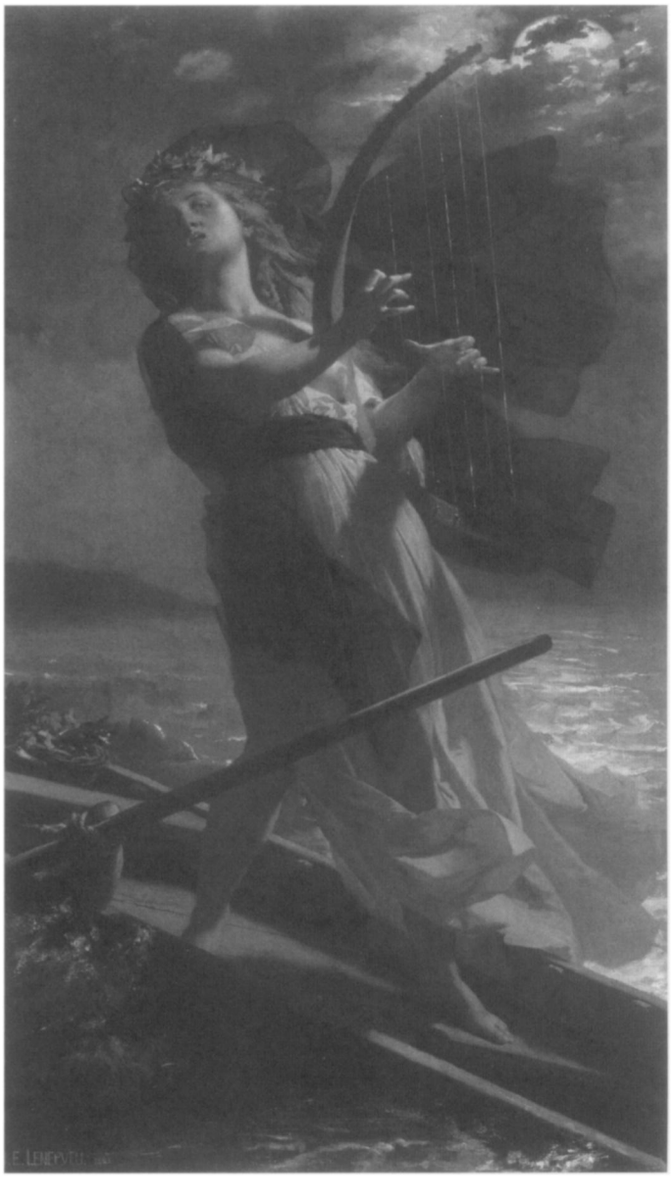
17 Redon, *Closed Eyes*, 1890, lithograph in gray-green on cream chine affixed to ivory wove paper, 12¼ × 9½ in. (31.2 × 24.2 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1672 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

Polarities and Inversions

It is clear by now that as collective cultural entities, "Parsifal" and "the Druidess" had many features in common, especially in fin de siècle France. To some extent, this affinity was based on their origins, since the Grail legend derived from the *matière de Bretagne* of orally transmitted Celtic legends and tales. This was a significant point for Wagner, whose interest in the legends of Perceval/Parzival had been stimulated by his reading of Théodore de la Villemarqué's 1842 *Contes populaires des anciens Bretons*, and it was a crucial one for Schuré, who insisted in his 1891 essay that the Celtic bards had given birth to the Arthurian legends culminating in Perceval's quest of the Grail.[62] For Redon, among others, both figures belonged therefore to a "primitive" world, steeped in nature and specifically the forest, combining national roots—and hopes of a national renewal—with a universal dimension expressed in a syncretic religiosity. Parsifal and the Druidess were not just part of epic, legend, and myth, they were also members of the select caste of heroes and prophets, having access to superior truths closed to reason and possessing redeeming powers. This superiority, however, could make them appear foolish or insane, a contradiction typical of the Romantic and Symbolist image of the artist.[63] And a condition of their access to the spiritual realm was their purity and chastity, inevitably endangered by their engagement with the material world and by the attraction they exerted. As for the differences between Parsifal and the Druidess, they made them appear as complementary, like the two halves of a yin-yang symbol. Parsifal's access to the spiritual was thus mediated, more unconscious and progressive than the Druidess's, but his access to action was more direct. This inverted symmetry was most obvious in matters of sexual identity: as a chaste young boy and something of a seer, Parsifal was relatively "feminine," while the Druidess was relatively "masculine" by reason of her power and heroic conduct. Schuré, as we have seen, exploited this complementary character and made it explicit by having Gwynfea act and speak like a female Parsifal; he also let her define herself as the spiritual twin of the hero Vercingétorix: "I am your sister, yes, your immortal sister!"[64]

This relation between the two figures as they existed in Redon's time, in addition to the genetic relationship between the two prints, seems to me a compelling reason to consider *Parsifal* and *Druidess* as forming together a double image. We have seen in the album *Homage to Goya* (Figs. 20, 21) that Redon had had such a contrast in mind for several years. Beyond his work, *Parsifal/Druidess* is in good company: polar images or images of polarity, combining traits from the two

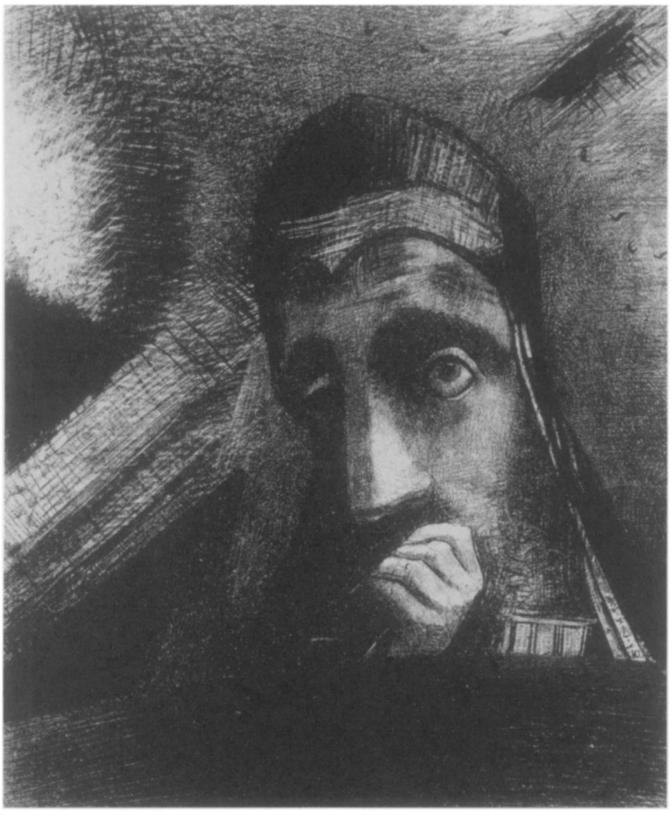
18 Redon, *Profile of Light*, 1886, lithograph on paper, 12 × 9½ in. (30.4 × 24.2 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1597 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)



19 Jules-Eugène Lenepveu, *Velléda, Moon Effect*, 1883, oil on canvas, 91 × 51¾ in. (231 × 131.5 cm). Musée des Beaux-Arts, Quimper (artwork in the public domain)

elements of one or several dualities, including that of gender, are common in most if not all societies and periods, from the Janus-like heads representing Dionysus "the Hybrid" in Classical antiquity to African bisexual anthropomorphic statues and to motifs still present in popular visual culture.[65] Many techniques have been used to produce the simultaneous or alternative presence of two images or aspects of the same image, and the list is constantly expanding: it includes painting on both sides of the same support—several Byzantine icons of Saint George have an image of the Virgin on the back—and on zigzag-shaped or T-shaped supports (in the case of *Riefelbilder* and *Lamellenbilder*); photomontage and "composite portraiture" (the superimposition of several images on one negative); industrial printing techniques such as the so-called 3D-stereo images, particularly popular with religious imagery; digital manipulations such as morphing and photomosaics; and, of particular relevance for our topic, a change of direction of the image, often of 180 degrees, as in the French type of playing cards.[66]

Semantic relations between the two elements of a double image and interpretations of their combination are varied and can be manifold, ranging from a statement of identity to one of complementarity to one of diametric opposition and mutual exclusion. Especially in times of conflict and disruption, they were apt to be understood in terms of lie versus truth, appearance versus reality, and the passage from one element to the other was construed polemically as an unveiling or unmasking. In this context, the change of direction benefited from the anthropological associations of the top/bottom opposition. Mikhail Bakhtin has famously demonstrated the subversive dimension of the carnivalesque toppling of values, but temporary and ritualized inversions tended to ironically confirm and eventually reinforce the hierarchies they apparently disrupted.[67] This is particularly evident in the case of the *mundus inversus*, a theme developed in prints from the sixteenth century on and still vivid in nineteenth-century popular imagery. In the "world turned upside down," animals whip their masters and children their parents, and women and men exchange roles.[68] The gender inversion forms the center of an early example of this ico-



20 Redon, *In My Dream I Saw in the Sky a Face of Mystery*, 1885, pl. 1 of *Homage to Goya*, lithograph in black on light gray chine affixed to ivory wove paper, 11½ × 9½ in. (29 × 23.9 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1587 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

21 Redon, *Upon Awakening I Saw the Goddess of the Intelligible with Her Severe and Hard Profile*, 1885, pl. 6 of *Homage to Goya*, lithograph in black on light gray chine affixed to ivory wove paper, 10½ × 8½ in. (27 × 21.5 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1593 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

nography (Fig. 22): a bearded man, wearing a dress and holding a distaff, kneels at the feet of a woman in man's garb with a sword, proudly leaning on a long lance; a bit further, a hen mounts a rooster.

The late nineteenth century saw a surge of double images (and multiple ones) as part of an exploration and exploitation of visual ambiguity by cartoonists and independent, "avant-garde" artists alike.[69] A popular genre that then enjoyed its heyday was the picture puzzle known in French as the *image-devinette*, in which spectators were asked to answer a question expressed in the caption of the drawing by discovering one or several iconic features hidden within it. The most common device employed by draftsmen to conceal these features—generally one or several figures—was the change of direction of the image. In an undated example, reproduced in 1938 by Georges Hugnet, a member of the Surrealist group who delighted in such antecedents of the "paranoiac-critical method" of interpretation, the bearded and turbaned face of a sultan, considered upside down, "reveals" that of his favorite (Fig. 23).[70] It is worth noting a compositional similarity in Redon's *Parsifal/Druidess*, in which the man's neck also turns into the woman's headdress. The sultan/favorite image belongs to the type of "upside-down heads" often printed on cards, matchboxes, and so on, with two captions commenting on each aspect and on the passage from one to the other. A Spanish series of 1875 uses the beard/hair analogy to oscillate between male and female busts. In one instance (Fig. 24), the simultaneous presence of both sexes is made explicit: "What is in me vanity, / Once reversed, shows gravity. // If you fall in love with me, pretty one, / Be aware that I am a hermaphrodite."[71]

This "hermaphrodite" has monstrous features, but in the fin de siècle, the figure of the androgyne increasingly became an ideal one, in connection with the social changes that challenged traditional sexual roles and identities. Drawing on many sources from Plato's *Symposium* to Honoré de Balzac's *Seraphîta*, "Decadent" and Symbolist authors defined the fusion of male and female traits in one person as the original and final form of mankind, its "archetype" and its salvation.[72] This ideal was approached from both sides of the usual divide, with figures of young men and young women displaying the symmetrical indeterminacy we have seen in Parsifal and the Druidess. The androgyne was frequently evoked in the works of Gustave Moreau, Edward Burne-Jones, Fernand Khnopff, and many other artists, especially in the "literary" branch of Symbolism gathered from 1892 on by the flamboyant "Sâr" Joséphin Péladan around his Salons de la Rose+Croix in Paris.[73] Redon explicitly declined Péladan's

22 *This Way Goes the World Turned Upside Down*, detail, late 16th century, engraving on paper. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet des Estampes, Paris (artwork in the public domain)

23 *The Sultan and His Favorite*, late 19th century, published in Georges Hugnet, "Devinettes," *Minotaure* 5 (1938): 35 (artwork in the public domain)

invitation to participate in the first of these exhibitions, but there were many indirect links between the two men at the time that Redon created *Parsifal* and *Druidess*.[74] In a letter of January 10, 1891, to Edmond Picard, Redon defined the lithographed version of *Closed Eyes* (Fig. 17) as "the head of an androgyne."[75] In the same year, Péladan published the eighth volume of his cycle of novels *La décadence latine* under the title *L'androgyne*. This story of a fifteen-year-old "modern hero" with "all the femininity of appearance and of nerves that is compatible with male positivity" was dedicated to the pianist Marie Thérèse Gastelier, whose execution of *Parsifal* and *Tristan* had reminded Péladan of the sensations he had experienced in Bayreuth. This enabled him to admire her head "*à la* Correggio and *parsifalized*" before kissing her "hands of a musical Druidess. . . ."[76]

Process

Given the inverted symmetry existing on a semantic level between the cultural figures of Parsifal and the Druidess, the widespread character of "upside-down heads" and visual puzzles, and the topicality of the androgyne, one may be tempted to conclude that far from being a meaningless studio accident, the transformation of *Parsifal I* into *Druidess* must have resulted from a conscious intention and corresponded to a predetermined program. This, however, would be going too far in the opposite direction, and we must pay heed to the warning that Redon gave André Mellerio a few years later as the latter was preparing the catalog of the artist's prints and asked him about the "preliminary concepts" guiding his hand. Such a concept, Redon replied, could exert only a "relative and indirect action" and was often but an initial plan quickly abandoned along the way "in order to follow the enchanting and unexpected paths of the imagination, our sovereign lady, she who reveals to us magnificent seductions that take us by surprise—and conquer us." Instead, he stressed the role of the artistic materials, and confided that he was "horrified by a sheet of blank paper" and needed to "scribble over it in charcoal, pencil, or any other medium, and this operation gives life to it."[77] He emphasized on several occasions this agency of materials, comparing the creative process with divination: "Matter reveals secrets, it has its own genius; it is through matter that the oracle will speak."[78]

These declarations illuminate our subject in two ways. First, they show that the prophetic character of Parsifal and the Druidess corresponded not only to Redon's image of the artist as seer but also to his understanding of the artistic process. His metaphor of a "way" opening onto "unexpected paths" is similar to the "wandering" performed by Parsifal—like so many knights in tales of chivalry—especially after Kundry's curse: "The way you seek, that / You shall not find: / For the paths and ways / That lead you from me, / I curse

them for you: / Wander! Wander!"[79] After wandering "along paths of error and suffering" and, in a sense, *by way of* his wandering, Parsifal eventually reaches the domain of the Grail. The analogy with an artistic quest was implied by Wagner and would be made explicit by Joseph Beuys in an interview with Antje von Graevenitz, who pointed to wandering as a theme common to the composer and the artist.[80] When she added that Wagner's wandering heroes abandon control and fail, Beuys replied that Parsifal, on the contrary, "wanders to find the secret" and is led to the highest spiritual aim. He gave an epistemological interpretation of this quest that enabled him to contradict Friedrich Nietzsche's condemnation of Wagner and to reconcile the ideal of searching with the attainment of "spiritual truths": "In someone who wanders there is always a new human being, who keeps opposing himself or herself, and is never at the end of his or her evolution. This is what the Grail really is."[81]

Second, Redon's statements imply that, as we had already imagined, he may not have started working on *Parsifal I* with the intention of representing Parsifal but rather may have discovered or "recognized" him along the way. A comparison with *Parsifal II*, which was certainly begun with the "predetermined concept" of representing Parsifal, confirms this hypothesis (Fig. 1): while reproducing the main traits of the original composition, Redon also eliminated the vaguely architectural elements at the top and on the left, which, rather than belonging to the Parsifal iconography, look like vestigial remains of "paths" abandoned in favor of the one we see. Since Redon gave no explanation about the process leading to *Druidess* and *Parsifal II*, we are left with what a close examination of the prints and a knowledge of lithographers' and Redon's working methods can yield.

Redon generally drew his lithographic compositions on autographic paper, which was then transferred onto the stone; he made on the stone itself more or less extensive additions and corrections with lithographic crayon, liquid tusche, and various scrapers.[82] Any paper, properly prepared, could be used for transfer, and Redon often exploited the structure of the sheet or of a support placed beneath it while drawing for textural effects and to stimulate his imagination, in a way anteceding Max Ernst's *frottages*.[83] In the case of *Parsifal I*, it appears that he used a laid paper, since the grid formed by the finely spaced vertical laid lines and the coarsely spaced horizontal chain marks is clearly visible close up, especially in the upper part. The "architectural" elements already mentioned follow this grid and may have been inspired by it. The transformation of *Parsifal I* into *Druidess* could also have been made by way of autographic paper: in order to avoid extensive scraping, it was possible to pull an impression of a design onto a sheet and then shift it via the transfer process onto a newly grained stone. The stones themselves, on the other hand, could travel back and forth between the printer's and the artist's studio.[84] The transformation of *Parsifal I* may also have taken place in the print workshop and the printer have played a role in it.

In retrospect, Redon complained about the fact that an artist producing lithographs had to work very closely with the printer. He defined the latter's participation as "precious when intuitive, harmful and deplorable when it senses or guesses nothing," and he insisted on the artist's preeminence: "One makes a temporary, badly matched union with the printer, and it is sensible that one should agree and get along with him. But a work of art is not made by two people. One of them must yield."[85] The comparison with a marriage led Pat Gilmour to comment that "Redon was essentially a loner who could not conceive of art as collaboration and coupled this inability with a nineteenth-century conception of marriage."[86] An examination of Redon's relation—professional as well as private—with his wife Camille Falte does not support this contention, but, in any case, few artists if any at the time would have conceived of a collaboration challenging their artistic authority. The sensitive intuition expected by Redon from the printer and especially from the master pulling the trial proofs goes a long way toward granting him a truly participatory status.

24 Matchbox cover with double reversible head, 1875, Spain. Collection Van der Plank (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Julian Rothenstein)

Redon's conclusion about the duration and success of these "matches" must be related to his relatively frequent changes of printing partner. In early 1887, he had stopped working with the Lemercier firm, which had editioned all his lithographs from the start, in favor of Becquet, who printed his stones until 1894. Unfortunately, nothing is known about Becquet's personality and his collaboration with Redon. The

25 Redon, *Young Girl in a Blue Bonnet*, probably early 1890s, pastel, 20⅞ × 15½ in. (53 × 39.5 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris, RF 40493 (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Hervé Lewandowski, © the RMN)

two must have agreed that *Parsifal I* was a failure and could not be editioned. Did Redon chance to see the stone upside down in the studio and think of turning the unhappy image into a new one, possibly encouraged by the vogue for reversible heads and visual puzzles?[87] Did the printer propose that Redon "recycle" the result before producing a new version of *Parsifal*? We have seen that the meanders of Redon's creative "way" could include changes of orientation and redirections of subject matter (Figs. 5, 6). In fact, many such cases remain to be discovered: to give only one example involving heads and a reversal of 180 degrees, the pastel *Young Girl in a Blue Bonnet* (Fig. 25), turned upside down, reveals a second (probably female) profile slightly to the right of the first one and running parallel to it, with the eye at the level of the mouth and vice versa. Whether Redon intentionally left enough of this earlier stage of the work visible for an expert eye to notice is hard to say, but he clearly relished the ambiguity and mystery created by this way of working in layers, which has been aptly named the "archaeological method" by Gert Mattenklott and analyzed in depth by Harriet Stratis.[88]

The metamorphosis of one head into another is more straightforward in *Young Girl in a Blue Bonnet* than in the case of *Parsifal I / Druidess*: the faces correspond closely to each other and are "simply" inverted. Conversely, the passage from *Parsifal I* to *Druidess* is far from obvious, as a comparison between the two demonstrates (Figs. 2, 4). The front part of the Druidess's headdress with her veil emerges effortlessly (and without significant modification) from the portion of Parsifal's bust uncovered by his mantle, but constructing her face and her own bust required disregarding—and erasing, which did not completely succeed—the outline of his neck, as well as his mouth, nose, and eyes. To sense—with the benefit of hindsight—the possibility of the *Druidess* pattern latent in *Parsifal I* considered upside down, it is necessary to concen-

trate on the tonal values rather than on the outlines and to ignore the representational functions of the forms while probing their iconic potential. In this way, the ectoplasm-like bright zone formed by the illuminated side of Parsifal's neck and face, connected to the crescent interpreted as a headdress, can coalesce into a female profile.

It is worth reflecting on the cognitive abilities and the psychological state involved in such a process. It requires a capacity for abstraction that is not opposed to iconic representation but rather serves it in the end. To some extent, this is what the studio practice and the art theoretical notion of *macchia*, the "blot" in which the nucleus of a composition is contained and out of which it may develop, had been about since the Renaissance.[89] In the 1890s, the *macchia* was used most spectacularly by Gustave Moreau in his abstract sketches, which were long considered nonobjective but have begun to be connected with existing paintings.[90] Disregarding the iconic function or "meaning" of visual stimuli is also something that John Ruskin had recommended when he defined in 1857 the "innocence of the eye" as "a sort of childish perception of these flat stains of colour, merely as such, without consciousness of what they signify," and something that the Impressionists, Claude Monet above all, had been pursuing.[91] In 1895, Paul Valéry expressed a radical epistemological version of this ideal in his *Introduction à la méthode de Léonard de Vinci*, in which he reproached most people for seeing "with their intellect much more often than with their eyes" and advocated a "pure gaze on things."[92]

What interested Redon most was the evocative virtue of this disregard, its ability to stimulate invention and lead to other iconic interpretations—aspects that Leonardo had indeed explored and expressed in his works and writings. Moreover, Redon wanted to preserve the possibility of multiple interpretations in his finished works and to let the viewer continue the process he had initiated, which accounts for his letting the successive layers shine through their surface instead of obliterating the traces of his "meandering." How clear-sighted and articulate he was about this attitude can be grasped from the definition he gave in 1902 of the "sense of mystery," which, he wrote, "consists in continuous ambiguity, in the double and triple aspects, hints of aspects (images within images), forms that are about to come into being or will take their being from the onlooker's state of mind."[93] The works produced in this manner called for a particularly active beholder; in fact, they delegated to the beholder part of the artist's agency. This is also what the *images-devinettes* were doing in a more explicit and deterministic way, and their popularity at the time both supported and attested to the availability of such an active, even manipulative approach to images. A few years later, in 1896, Alfred Jarry submitted a print by Albrecht Dürer to precisely this kind of reading, using his remarkable sense of the dynamism of forms to extract from the engraved lines of *The Martyrdom of Saint Catherine* the "hidden" figure of the already decapitated saint.[94]

Whereas the commercial designers of visual puzzles would normally start their drawings with the intention of hiding something and an idea of what they wanted to conceal, Redon let himself be led by the suggestions of artistic materials and associations of ideas. This means that the "way" he followed was not only winding but could also occasionally turn back, as well as continue from one given work into the next one. It appears that this is what happened with *Parsifal I* and *Druidess*. We have seen that the front part of the Druidess's headdress emerges easily from the portion of Parsifal's bust uncovered by his mantle. In fact, it makes more iconic sense as headdress than as shoulder, and in *Parsifal II* Redon has taken care to open up this shape and integrate it into the rest of the bust. If we reconsider the inverted *Parsifal I* (Fig. 4) in this light, we understand that the outline of Parsifal's shoulder has actually disrupted another outline linking the Druidess's headdress to her train; a new look at *Druidess* (Fig. 2) shows that Redon had only to obliterate the rest of Parsifal's bust for this earlier outline to reappear. Moreover, the numerous shapes of leaves and flowers scattered throughout *Parsifal I*, which mostly disappear in *Parsifal II*, fit better into the Celtic Druidess iconography than into the Grail context.

For all these reasons, it seems logical to suppose that Redon began by drawing not a Parsifal but a Druidess of which there exists no impression. The hypothesis of this *Druidess I* lying buried in *Parsifal I* even helps to explain Parsifal's strangely uneven shoulders, which his raised arm and awkward cloak do not suffice to justify. A composition that recurs in Redon's work, which is certainly related to his youthful infatuation with the landscape and women of the Basque country, shows a female bust in profile in front of two steep mountains, with a rising or setting sun forming a halo for her head. Redon's second lithographic album, *À Edgar Poe*, included a version of it in 1882 (Fig. 26), the 1885 *Brünnhilde* (Fig. 7) significantly connected it to a Wagnerian female warrior, and another version would appear in 1896 in the third album devoted to Gustave Flaubert's *Temptation of Saint Anthony* (Fig. 27). The reference to Poe may have prompted Redon to resort to the "black sun of Melancholy," while Flaubert's evocation of the goddess Cybele as "the Idaean Mother of the Mountains" gave him a ready opportunity to reintroduce this image of divinized femininity. An approximately contemporary version in oil (Fig. 28) reduces the composition to its bare essentials and paints the sun/halo in a red revealingly close to that used for Roland's cape/halo in the 1868–69 painting (Fig. 9): in this detail also, the male hero and the female quasi-goddess are relatives.[95]

Returning to the inverted *Parsifal I*, we see that what became the outlines of Parsifal's shoulders could have served first to delineate two similar mountains. Centrifugal rays can be detected in several parts of what would have been the sky area (Parsifal's bust), most strikingly in the lower part of the Druidess's veil: it is as if, thanks to this device, the sun and the woman had become one. The flowers and leaves that can also be detected here are generally absent from the "woman-bust-against-sun-between-two-mountains" formula, but they are present in many other images of female profiles with possible references to Druidism, such as the already mentioned *Spring*. The composition and proportions of the hypothetical *Druidess I* are almost identical with those of *Head of a Woman* (Fig. 28) if one leaves out its lower part, which was indeed canceled when passing from *Parsifal I* to *Druidess*. But before we embark on a final reconstruction of this metamorphosis in all its successive stages, we must try to establish whether *Druidess I* is more than a hypothesis or, worse, a retrospective

26 Redon, *Before the Black Sun of Melancholy, Lenore Appears*, 1882, pl. 2 of *To Edgar [Allan] Poe*, lithograph, 6⅝ × 5 in. (16.8 × 12.7 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1571 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

27 Redon, *Here Is the Good Goddess, the Idaean Mother of the Mountains*, 1896, pl. 15 of *Temptation of Saint Anthony* (3rd series), lithograph on *chine appliqué*, 5⅞ × 5 in. (14.9 × 12.8 cm). Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, Cabinet des Estampes (artwork in the public domain)

projection of *Druidess* onto *Parsifal I*. What can tell us this is an unambiguous trace of the former *in* the latter, since, unless several states of it have been printed, a lithograph delivers all its chronological "layers" together, making it impossible to distinguish between them or to retrieve the earlier ones with the techniques used for the scientific analysis of paintings or even drawings.[96] Macrophotography, however, can help to confirm observations made with the naked eye. If we compare enlarged details of the Druidess (Fig. 29) with those of the corresponding section of *Parsifal I* (Fig. 30), we note that curved lines faintly visible at the base of Parsifal's neck already indicate the spot where the Druidess's eye will appear. The (re)imposition of this eye and other facial details in *Druidess* was not drawn with the lithographic crayon but with a pen and lithographic tusche, which fortunately results in a distinctive appearance for the two stages. Should one still fear projecting the Druidess onto *Parsifal I*, a superimposition of the two details, each colored differently and slightly shifted (Fig. 31), should dispel any doubt: when drawing the Druidess's eye with a pen, Redon was retracing and accentuating a design that was already present.[97]

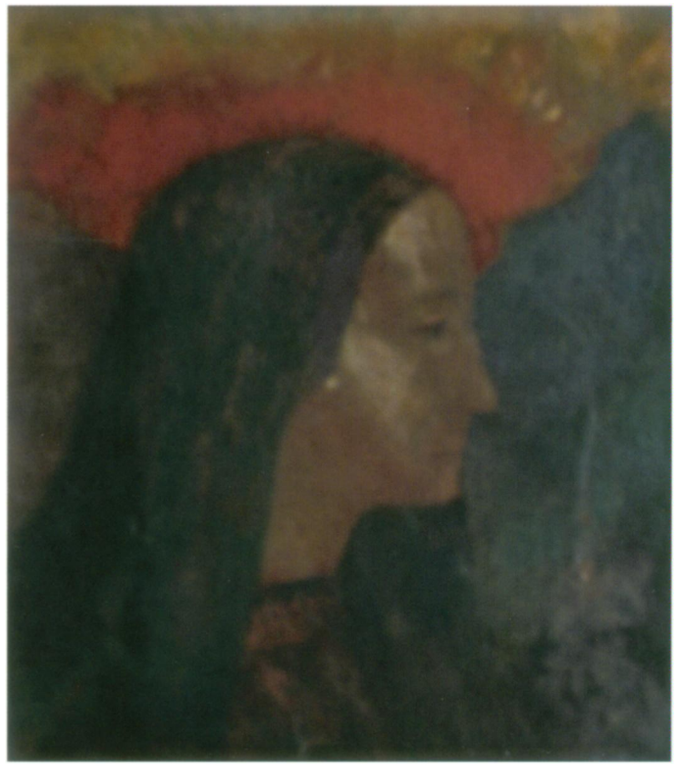
We must therefore assume that Redon began by drawing a composition of the type I called "woman-bust-against-sun-between-two-mountains," with vegetal elements probably already pointing to an association with Druidism. At some point, and for reasons yet unknown, he turned his support upside down and transformed the incipient *Druidess I* into *Parsifal I*. The observations I made about the passage from *Parsifal I* to *Druidess* apply to this earlier one, and comparing a particularly light impression of *Druidess* presented upside down (Fig. 32) with *Parsifal I* (Fig. 3) can be illuminating.[98] This transformation from *Druidess I* to *Parsifal I* may have happened in the printer's studio, and Becquet may have played a part in it, all the more as master printers, who were responsible for the etching process of the stone, could regain chemically earlier elements of a design and produce intentionally the "ghost images" that sometimes result from an insufficient regraining.[99] As for Redon, he displayed at this stage the ability already discussed to reinterpret and reorganize a visual configuration completely, inverting, for instance, the figure-ground relation by turning the negative space between the mountains into the positive shape of Parsifal's bust. He also needed more space for the new figure's head and spear, and he obtained it by adding a new piece of autographic paper: this is what explains, rather than a flaw in the stone, the horizontal line running at the level of Parsifal's eyebrows, that is, at the top of the initial composition.[100] In order to extend what had been the Druidess's veil and make sense of it in this new context, Redon turned it into a vertical pillar supporting a vague lintel. The result, it must be admitted, was rather awkward, and this may be one of the reasons why the artist decided not to edition *Parsifal I*. Another reason could be that for someone aware of this genesis, the

Druidess and Parsifal remained enmeshed together in this image, a bit like the male Parsifal I and the female Parsifal II at the beginning of Syberberg's film.[101] In any case, Redon's eventual solution amounted to separating them: he retraced his steps toward the Druidess figure, redrew her features, and eliminated most additions, concealing also the landscape and the plant elements under a uniformly dark background. Then he drew an altogether new Parsifal, based on the previous one but freed from the unsatisfactory features engendered in the process of metamorphosis.

"Unconscious" Synthesis

Now that we have a schematic but complete view of this phenomenon, it is possible to return to the question of its relatively "accidental," "intentional," or "unconscious" character. The last term was introduced by Redon himself and requires a brief look at the prehistory and early development of psychoanalysis. In his already quoted letter of 1898 to Mellerio, Redon concluded the description of his creative process by adding that imagination, *la fantaisie*, "is also the messenger of the 'unconscious,' that lordly and mysterious personage."[102] His use of the term "unconscious" in quotation marks probably refers to Eduard von Hartmann, the German philosopher whose 1869 *Philosophie des Unbewussten* had been translated into French in 1877.[103] Hartmann considered the "psychological unconscious" to be the origin of conscious mental life and thought it derived from an "absolute unconscious" forming the substance of the universe. He held that artistic production was based on unconscious processes and described artists, together with martyrs, prophets, and mystics, as the principal repositories for a "fusion of voluntary sensation and involuntary hallucination."[104] Redon must also have been aware of the highly publicized work of Jean-Martin Charcot and Hippolyte Bernheim, but it is unlikely that he would already have heard of Sigmund Freud's analysis of the unconscious. The parallels, however, are too numerous to be fortuitous and point to common sources and concerns. Freud, who gave sexuality an importance comparable to that accorded by Wagner in his works, including *Parsifal*, distinguished between a manifest and a latent content of dreams, and he repeatedly used a comparison with archaeology to describe the effort of psychoanalysis to go from the manifest back to the latent, to "unveil" the deepest layers of the psyche. The free association of ideas, which he turned into a therapeutic tool, also has similarities with Redon's understanding of the creative process, geared toward fostering the "coming" of the "unconscious."[105]

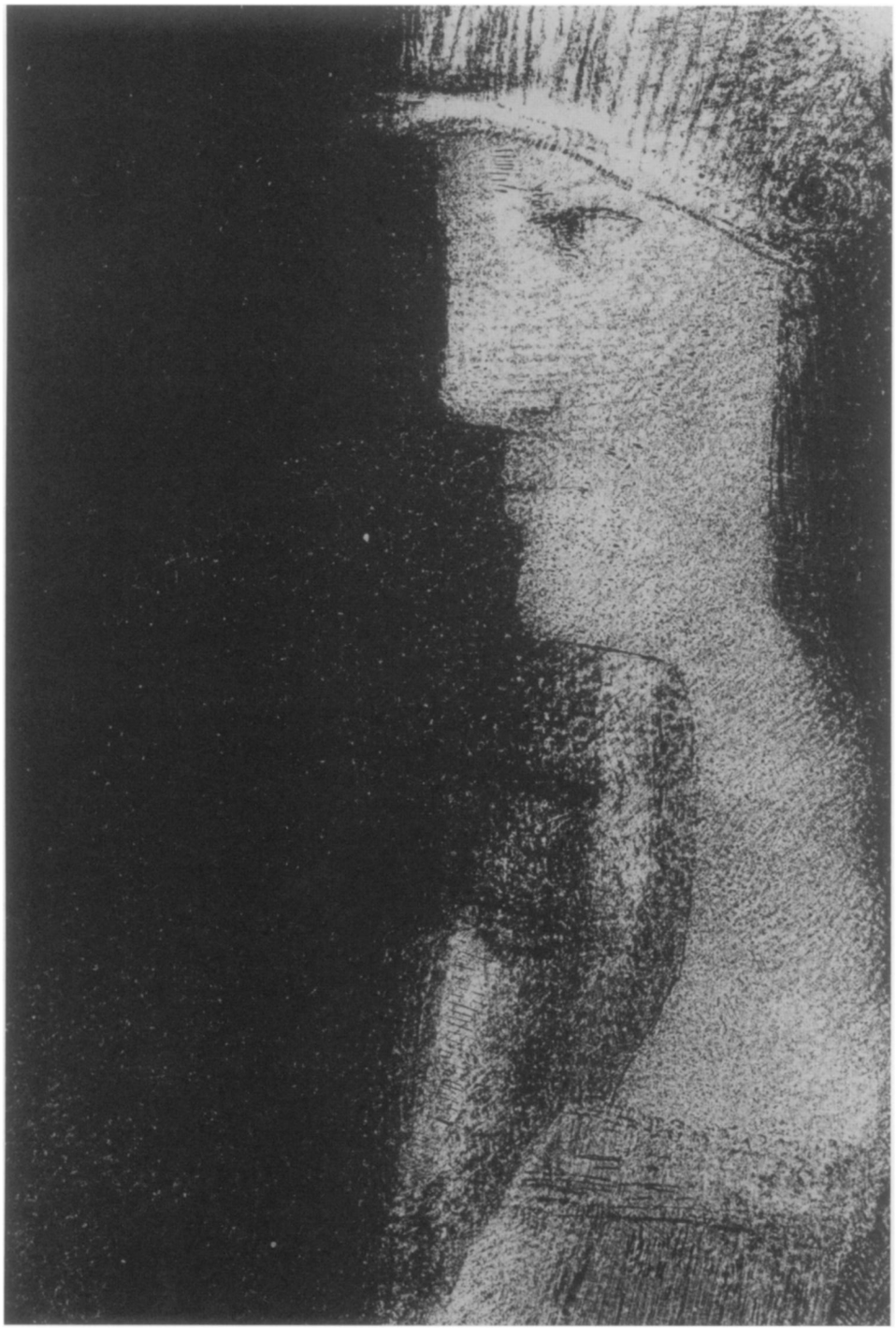
Freud had an intense interest in the visual, and some of his disciples applied the new psychological science to images. In 1913, Oskar Pfister used the technique of dream interpretation to analyze automatic drawings produced by a French painter at his request.[106] He regarded these scribbles as a cryptography revealing in coded form a content of which their author was unaware. Pfister further argued that similar elements could be found in works of art and called them "unconscious *Vexierbilder*," using the German name for picture puzzles. He gave the example of a vulture that, inspired by Freud's *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, he had discovered in the draperies of *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne and Saint John the Baptist* in the Louvre after giving



28 Redon, *Head of a Woman*, 1896, oil on cardboard, 10⅞ × 10 in. (27.7 × 25.5 cm). Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (former Bonger collection), S 467 N/1996 (artwork in the public domain)

a 90-degree turn to a reproduction of it (Fig. 33).[107] Since the "vulture" derived from a faulty translation used by Freud, this observation is of little relevance to Leonardo, but it demonstrates a turn-of-the-century approach to images—already applied by Jarry to Dürer—that was schooled by the *images-devinettes* and oriented by the "unveiling" impulse of psychoanalysis. Freud mentioned Pfister's "discovery" and reproduced its explanatory drawing in the 1919 edition of his Leonardo study, in which he added that in the Louvre painting, the position of the Virgin seated on her mother's lap resulted in the two being "merged together like badly condensed dream figures."[108] Among the operations of the "dream work" according to Freud, "condensation" (*Verdichtung*) is the equivalent of the making of double or multiple images, and *Parsifal I* could be said by analogy to merge together Parsifal and the Druidess "like badly condensed dream figures."[109]

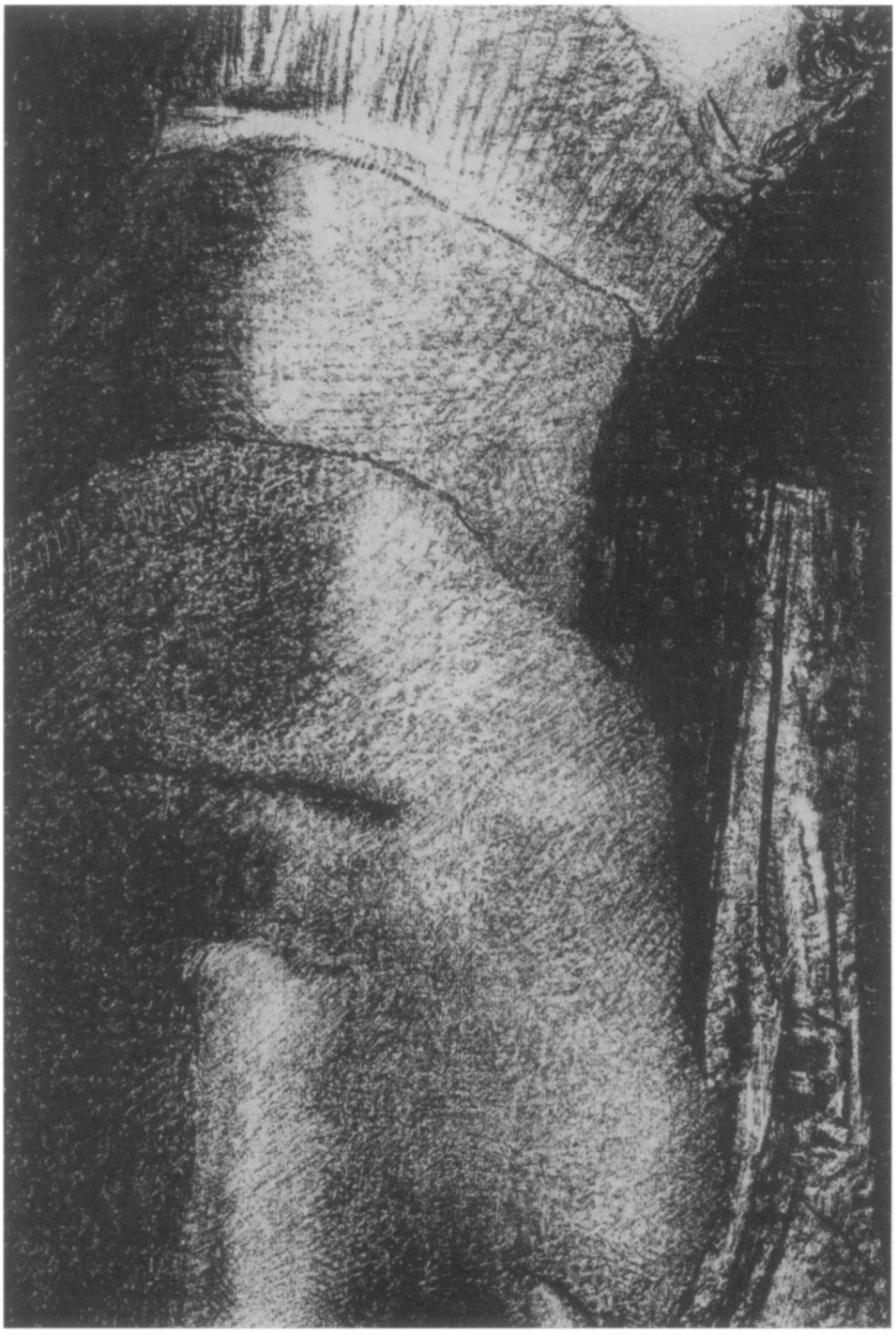
By far the most influential analytic use of images was devised in the same years by the psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach, a friend of Pfister, and made public in 1921.[110] The biographical and cultural origins of the Rorschach test still need to be explored, but an interesting point for us is that it derived in part from divination techniques, parlor games, and spiritualistic experiments popular in southern Germany and German-speaking Switzerland since the mid-nineteenth century.[111] What Rorschach did was to put the interpretation of blots, a tool that had been used for both ludic and transcendent communication, in the service of a psychological analysis of perception. It would take too long to show how



29 Redon, *Druidess*, detail, 1891, lithograph on mounted ivory China paper, 9⅛ × 8 in. (23.1 × 20.2 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, the Stickney Collection, 1920.1697 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

widespread the artistic recourse to chance was around 1900.[112] By "scribbling over" the sheet of paper to give it life and approaching the artistic materials as if they were oracles, Redon developed such a technique to produce his "fictions." Changing the direction of the support and disregarding the iconic function of the image, as he did to transform the putative *Druidess I* into *Parsifal I*, amounted to treating his work almost like a scribbling or a Rorschach test—almost, since the semantic affinities between the Druidess and Parsifal show that the former was involved in its metamorphosis and that it functioned like a mine for extraction as much as a surface for projection.

A last disciple (turned rival) of Freud who must be mentioned is Carl Gustav Jung, who provided the model for Rorschach's psychological typology. As a child in the mid-1880s, Jung had filled a whole notebook with ink blots and enjoyed their "fantastic interpretation."[113] His later work, bordering on anthropology, would find in a universal *musée imaginaire* a pathway to the "collective unconscious." This notion relates to Hartmann and may be closer to Redon's understanding of the unconscious than Freud's pansexual conception. Jung notoriously broke with his mentor around the role of sexuality in the libido, which he saw as a more universal, primordial vital energy. He also reproached Freud



30 Redon, *Parsifal [I]*, detail, presented upside down (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

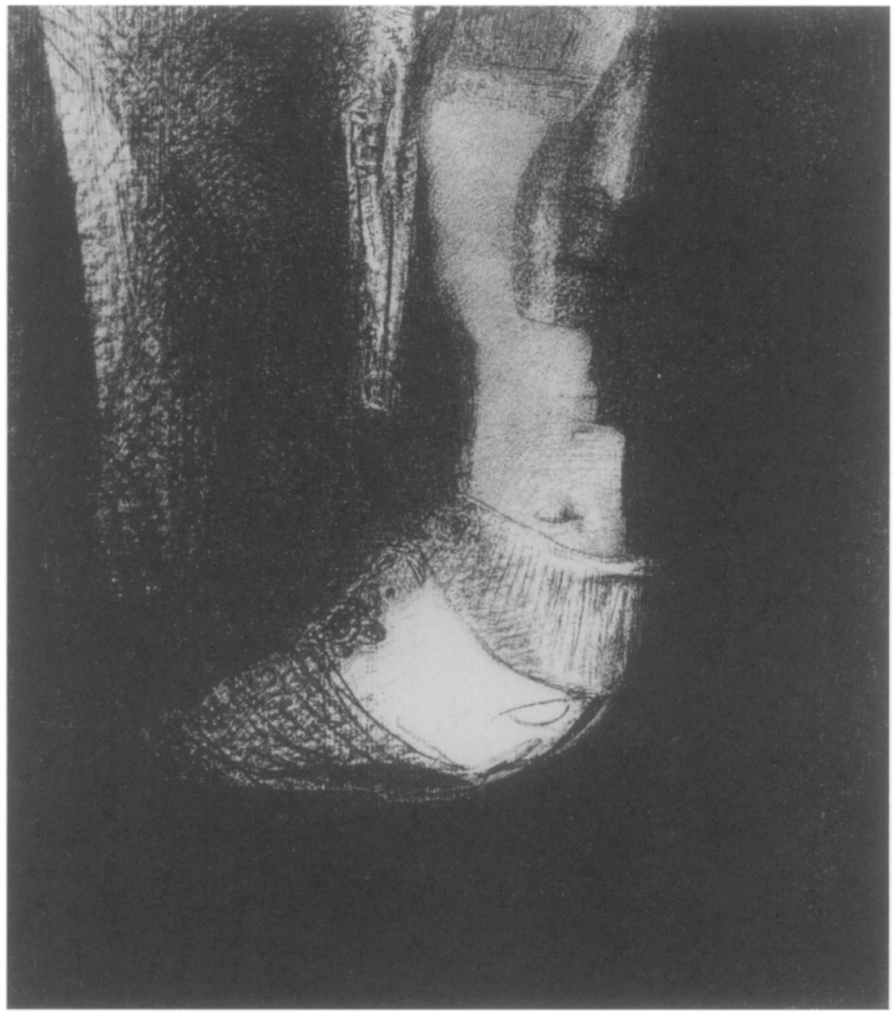
with being "blind to the paradoxical and ambiguous character of the contents of the unconscious, ignorant of the fact that everything emerging from it has a top and a bottom, an inside and an outside."[114] In his 1912 book *The Metamorphoses and Symbols of the Libido*, Jung explained the presence of phallic symbols on statues of goddesses by the fact that "something masculine is hidden within woman just as something feminine is hidden within man."[115] He later developed this idea into the concepts of *animus* and *anima*, two "archetypes" personifying a "masculine nature" in the unconscious of woman and a "feminine nature" in the unconscious of man and connecting individual consciousness with the collective unconscious.[116] Jung attributed to these hidden "others" a dynamic tendency to become autonomous, and he interpreted, for example, Wagner's figure of Brünnhilde as Wotan's *anima* turned independent, much to her father's displeasure.[117]

The resemblance between these ideas and the *Druidess I / Parsifal I / Druidess* transformation is striking: Parsifal emerged out of the Druidess and the Druidess out of Parsifal very much like crystallizations of their respectively male and female "unconscious." But have we gone from chance to design to finally attribute this metamorphosis to "the unconscious," individual or collective? It is well known that Freud, after

31 Combination of details from Redon, *Parsifal [1]* (1975.493) in purple and *Druidess* (1920.1697) in orange, slightly shifted, composite photograph by Karin Patzke, the Art Institute of Chicago (photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

envying writers and artists for what he regarded as their "endogenic" knowledge of the human psyche, progressively came to regard them as neurotics and to treat their works as symptoms.[118] The issue of the degree of control over the creative process was of great relevance to Redon, who had good reasons to fear the psychopathological explanations of artistic departures from convention and common sense, all the more as his subject matter included dreams, hallucinations, and even insanity. In 1885, the young critic Charles Morice set the record straight in a way that especially pleased the artist. Commenting on the lithographic album *Homage to Goya*, in which the caption to the first plate (Fig. 20) started with "In my dream," Morice wrote: "M. Redon's dream . . . Let us be clear! The meaning to be given to the word Dream is not the popular prosaic one (inevitable visions in sleep), nor the rare poetic one (voluntary visions when awake); it is both of them, awake and dreaming, it is strictly the dream of a dream: the voluntary arrangement of inevitable visions."[119]

Using this model, we can envision the creation of *Parsifal* and *Druidess* as a dialectical process involving both chance and design, consciousness and "the unconscious." Accidental and unconscious (or rather subconscious) factors must have played the greatest part at the beginning, during the elaboration of *Druidess I* and especially during its transformation into *Parsifal I*, whereas conscious control took the upper hand while giving shape to *Druidess* and above all *Parsifal II*.

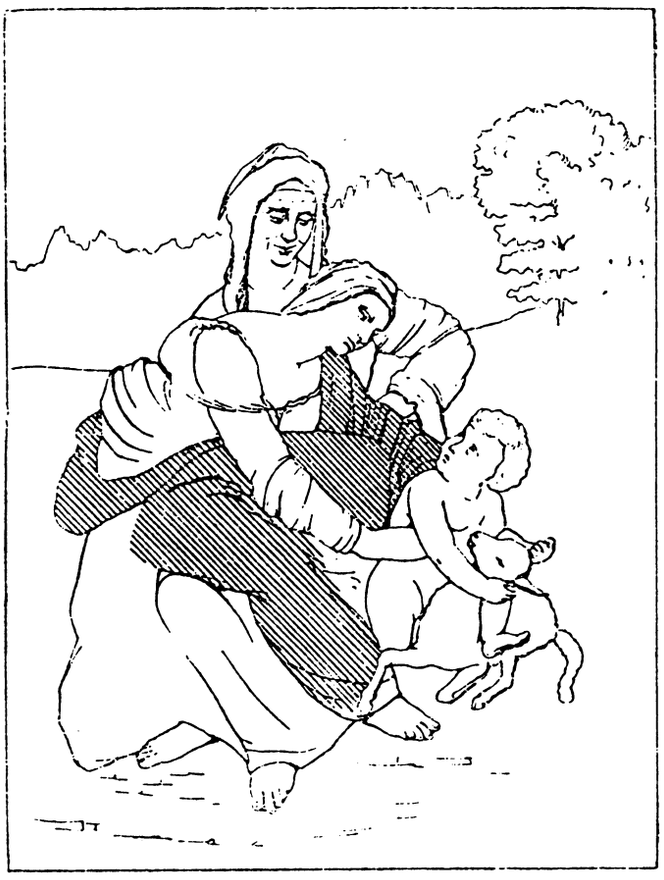


32 Redon, *Druidess*, 1891 (1920.1697), presented upside down (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Institute of Chicago)

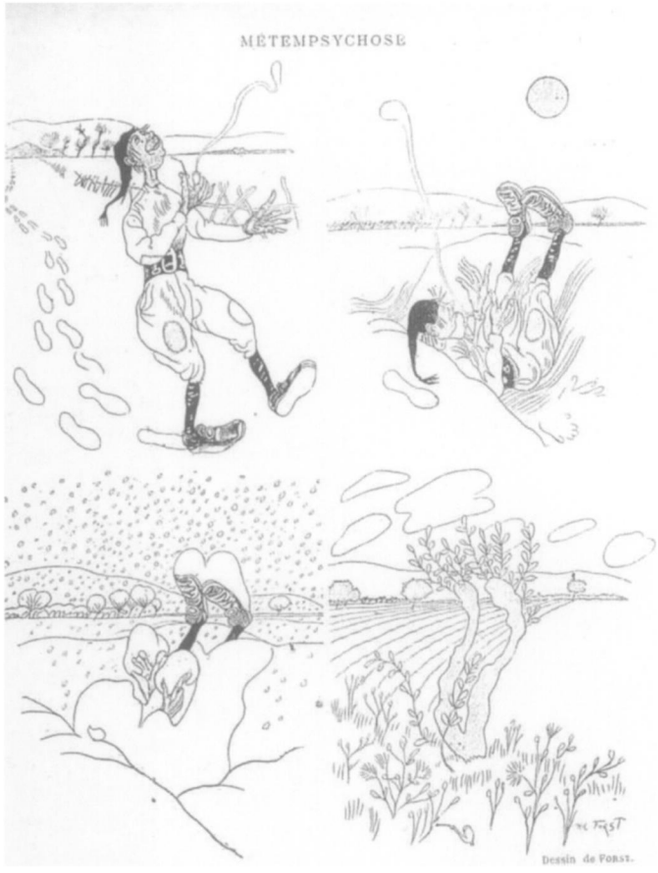
Among the agents of this process, we must count not only the artist, the materials, and possibly the printer, but also what the British anthropologist Alfred Gell proposed to call the "prototype," that is, "the entity which the index [the work of art] represents visually."[120] This is not to contradict Redon's declaration to Mellerio and postulate an existence of Druidess and Parsifal as "preliminary concepts" prior to their lithographic incarnation, but to emphasize that the dynamic nucleus as well as the outcome of these images are figures, presences, or quasi-persons. The personification of the unconscious as a "lordly and mysterious personage" in Redon's text testifies to this. Like him, the Druidess and Parsifal belong to a superior realm and mediate access to it. We have seen, though, that for Redon, as for Wagner, they are also connected with the ideal image of the artist as an individual person and as a social function.

Redon's identity is therefore at stake, so this process can equally be described as one of self-searching and self-representation. This is clearly the case with *Parsifal*, an image closely resembling other artistic projections of Redon (Figs. 10, 11). One of the artist's alter egos in his early writings, "the Fakir," thus went through the crowd "like a sleepwalker," a description fitting Parsifal's progress.[121] The matter is more complex with *Druidess*, who shares with Parsifal traits such as the bond with nature and the prophetic gift but is opposed to him by her gender and what Huysmans called her "crude profile." This apparent paradox corresponds to the inverted symmetry already mentioned: the chaste and foolish Parsifal looks "gentle and suffering," while the Celtic priestess bears heroic features. Both Chateaubriand and Schuré had stressed the active role and high standing of women among Gauls.[122] As for Redon, he had found in Basque women a model for the "virile will" that attracted him, the social and sexual Other for whom he longed.[123] In this sense, also, the Druidess and Parsifal are complementary and can be said to represent two sides of the same coin.

While creating *Parsifal* and *Druidess*, Redon was exploring two aspects of his personality and negotiating through them an identity that was neither individual nor stable but was nourished from collective representations and oscillated between genders. The collective dimension corresponds to Wagner's choice of legend and myth as his subject matter, which Charles Baudelaire had underlined in his 1861 essay on *Tannhäuser*, a work that Redon must have read attentively.[124] The French poet defended this choice with the assertion that "the history of an individual brain represents in miniature the history of the universal brain," and he gave on that occasion a striking expression of his dualism: "Every well-formed brain carries within itself two infinites, heaven and hell, and in every image of one of these infinites it



33 Oskar Pfister, schematic drawing after Leonardo da Vinci, *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne and Saint John the Baptist*, from "Kryptolalie, Kryptographie," *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen*



34 H. C. Forst, *Metempsychosis*, published in *Le Rire*, December 5, 1896 (artwork in the public domain; photograph by Jack Abraham, provided by the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick)

recognizes suddenly half of itself."[125] Baudelaire's remark on the "individual" and the "universal" brain refers to the biogenetic law—later popularized by the German naturalist Ernst Haeckel—according to which "ontogenesis recapitulates phylogenesis"; Redon, who had been fascinated from his youth by transformism and evolutionism, also fell under its spell.[126] With such philosophical conceptions as a background, he may have connected the process of metamorphosis to the notion of metempsychosis, which he knew from his long familiarity with Indian texts and which Wagner had introduced in *Parsifal* by way of Kundry, who is hailed by Klingsor as a reincarnation of Herodias and a certain Gundryggia.[127] We have seen that the Basque country and Brittany made Redon feel as if he had lived there already, and that the "doctrine of the Druids," as exposed by Schuré, saw the human realm as that of the "transmigration of souls."[128] Metempsychosis was a popular concept in the Symbolist era, and a cartoon of 1896 (Fig. 34) shows that a caricaturist could see it as an equivalent of the reinterpretation of graphic shapes essential to his trade and to Redon's art.

We have somewhat neglected *Parsifal II* and its position within the process of metamorphosis. Its image of the hero looks softer, gentler—in short, more "feminine" than in *Parsifal I*. To that extent as well as for its compositional and formal clarity, it does not represent a return to a *statu quo ante* but a further step integrating elements from the preceding ones, as if Redon had been, like Wagner, searching for an expression of the *Menschliches*, the properly human, neither masculine nor feminine. These steps can be described by means of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis formula associated with Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, which had been developed by Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte and had already impacted French art before 1860, with Gustave Courbet's *peintures à système* (system paintings).[129] Having reclaimed for the visual arts ambitions comparable to those of literature and philosophy, Redon could well have been aware of the virtues of this dialectical tool.[130] In his operas, Wagner had realized a synthesis of various myths, and in *Parsifal*, as Claude Lévi-Strauss pointed out, he defined the Grail kingdom and Klingsor's domain as two simultaneous and diametrically opposed aspects.[131] Schuré concluded his 1891 essay by evoking the "harmonious synthesis of Ancient science and Christian spirituality," insisting that the victory of Christianity had not represented the destruction but a rejuvenation of the Druidic religion.[132] The notion of synthesis was also topical in Redon's artistic circle around 1890, since Paul Gauguin and Émile Bernard were using it to define a new "ism" particularly relevant to his own critique of Impressionism.

The point of this comparison is not, however, that Redon may have had the thesis-antithesis-synthesis formula in mind

while working on *Parsifal* and *Druidess*. It is that the process I have been analyzing unfolded in a way analogous to this model, by creating categories (here figures) mutually opposed and dependent, and by going beyond them without refuting or annihilating them. Hegel adopted such a model when discussing the relations between being, nothing, and becoming in his *Science of Logic*.[133] Becoming (*Werden*), he wrote, means both coming into being (*Entstehen*) and passing over (*Vergehen*), and it consists of both being and nothing, each of which includes the other as a necessary reference. Becoming "is the passing over of being into nothing, and of nothing into being"; it "contradicts itself, because it unites what is contradictory"; and it can be defined as "an unstable restlessness that sinks down into a motionless result."[134] This transformation—or metamorphosis, to emphasize the analogy with our object—was expressed by Hegel with the verb *aufheben* (to sublate), which he found relevant enough to devote a terminological note to it. What intrigued him was that *aufheben*, which he defined dramatically as "one of the most important concepts of philosophy," possesses in the common language two opposite meanings, that of preserving something and that of putting an end to something. He proposed to reconcile the two by observing that what has been put an end to is still a result of what used to be and is determined by it.[135] Hegel's wonder at the "double meaning" of *aufheben* can remind us of Jung's critique of Freud's "blindness" to the fundamental ambivalence of the expressions of the unconscious. But Freud himself, in fact, had been fascinated by an essay written in 1884 by the linguist Karl Abel, according to which the most ancient languages were devoid of the principle of contradiction and contained words with two opposed meanings, words combining elements with opposed meanings, and reversals in the order of phonemes.[136]

Freud saw this absence of the principle of contradiction as a distinctive trait of primitive thinking and believed that it confirmed the "regressive, archaic nature of thought expressed in dreams." Hegel, on the contrary, found it "encouraging for speculative thought to find in the language words that possess a speculative meaning in themselves" and go beyond the "sensible either/or."[137] I believe that the *Druidess/Parsifal/Druidess* metamorphosis, rather than representing an instance of "regressive" visual "thinking," similarly possesses a self-reflexive quality. An example of the common usage of *aufheben* often cited to illuminate Hegel's idea is jam, which is *aufgehoben* because the fruit is *aufgehoben* in it, that is, terminated and yet preserved in a different form. Redon's approach to images confronted him with the problem posed to Hegel by "becoming." The technique of lithography, by preserving images in the "memory" of the stone while replacing them with new images that may turn out to perpetuate them in modified form, provided him with a tool comparable to the word *aufheben* for the philosopher. This may have been one of the reasons why Redon became attached to this medium and made it such an important part of his oeuvre.

Extensions

Redon's praxis of process differs from Hegel's theory of becoming in that it does not—or does only temporarily—lead on to a "motionless result." While *Parsifal II* can be seen as a "synthesis," the oscillation between the Druidess and Parsifal is closer to Beuys's notion of "wandering" as a continuous self-opposition and never-ending evolution. It may have been noted that in this essay I repeatedly made an "anachronistic" use of later developments to bear on earlier ones. One justification for this is the idea, expressed shortly before his death by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, that the reception of works of art unfolds their potential and that "it is the work itself that has opened the field from which it appears in another light, it is the work that metamorphoses *itself* and *becomes* what follows, and the interminable reinterpretations to which it is *legitimately* open change it only into itself."[138] Another is that Freud or Jung did not invent their theories ex nihilo but participated in an ongoing debate, to which artists like Redon, with their own means, have contributed as well.

The notion of art as process is familiar to students of twentieth-century art and to all twentieth- and twenty-first-century students of art. But this familiarity does not breed knowledge, and the role of the late nineteenth century in its advent still needs to be assessed. Other major artists of the period who developed practices comparable to the one demonstrated by Redon include Edgar Degas, who worked in layers and occasionally changed the direction of his supports, and Auguste Rodin, who resorted to casts and photographs of his own statues to produce new works.[139] Historians of Rodin's *Balzac* have been able to summarize their reconstruction of its complex genesis into a veritable family tree, and Degas's preference to process over product is wonderfully expressed in an anecdote told by Ambroise Vollard.[140] As the dealer seemed disappointed to find a small dancer, which he hoped to finally cast in bronze after its twentieth transformation, turned back to the state of wax ball, the artist told him: "You think above all of what it was worth, Vollard, but had you given me a hat full of diamonds, it would not have given me the same pleasure I had in demolishing this for the sake of starting again."[141]

This story shows that at stake is an extension of the model of process and metamorphosis from one work or group of works to the artist's oeuvre as a whole. Many notions have been proposed to conceive of this extension, for instance, combinatorics, developed by the Surrealists from various earlier sources.[142] Alfred Gell made another proposal of special interest in relation to the working methods of Redon, Degas, and Rodin: he suggested seeing the artist's oeuvre as a "distributed object" dispersed in space and time and resulting from a "career-long generate-and-test sequence."[143] Individual works are stages or stops in this "cumulative process of discovery," mutually connected by *protentions* (prospective or future-oriented relations) and *retentions* (retrospective or past-oriented ones). These terms derive from the philosophy of time of Edmund Husserl, who wrote that "each retention is intrinsically a continuous modification, which is to say carries the heritage of its past in itself"—a remark that could suit, for example, *Druidess* and *Parsifal II* as "retentions" (in various ways) of both *Druidess I* and *Parsifal I*.[144] Gell himself sketched an application of his model to the work of Marcel Duchamp, while recognizing that his claim to a universal value could be diminished by the historical proximity between Duchamp's intellectual milieu and the "[William] James–Bergson–Husserl conception of temporal flux or the 'stream of consciousness.'"[145] This objection to universality

need not detain us here; on the contrary, Duchamp is a prime example of the direct link between twentieth-century notions of the oeuvre as process and late-nineteenth-century philosophical and artistic developments.[146]

It takes but one step more to conceive of the whole world of art, images or artifacts, as one endless process, and this step has been made with notions as diverse as "appropriation," "intericonicity," and "sampling." Dario Robleto (b. 1972), a young artist from the United States who employs the last expression in the sense made popular by the disc jockeys' recycling of sounds and musical fragments, recently created a work entitled *Men Are the New Women* (2002, collection of Linda Pace, San Antonio), consisting of a male rib molded from the powder of a pulverized female rib. The explicitness of this gender reversal and sexual metamorphosis, the deliberate aspect of the procedure could hardly be further removed from Redon. But the older artist might have also thought of the biblical account of a genetic relationship between man and woman, which the transformation of *Druidess I* into *Parsifal I* already turned upside down, and it is notable that in Robleto's work, too, the substance of the first element should be *aufgehoben*—annihilated and preserved at the same time—in the new one.

Another symptom of the increasingly processual understanding of cultural production, which aims at the same time at being a tool for its analysis, is the approach to literature called *critique génétique* (genetic criticism), which shifts the object of interpretation from the "final" text, known from authorized editions, to the writing process documented in such forms of *avant-texte* as writers' notes, sketches, drafts, manuscripts, typescripts, proofs, and correspondence.[147] Since its beginnings, art history has given attention to "*avant-images*" such as notes, sketches, maquettes, studies, and models, but the distinction between "public" works and what precedes them tends to be a more complex and shifting affair.[148] Prints, because of the editioning process, come closest to literature in this regard, which enables us to conclude by asking to what extent Redon intended the public to become aware of the *Druidess/Parsifal* metamorphosis.

Druidess and *Parsifal II* were published and thus made public, but as individual prints, and the recognition of their relationship was left to the spectators' perceptiveness. They could find clues in the formal echoes between the two lithographs, in the semantic associations of their titles, and in a sense of the "intericonicity" formed by Redon's oeuvre and, within it, by the category of the *Pièces modernes*. This may sound like asking a great deal from one's viewers, but Huysmans's early comment shows that he was on the right track, and Redon had very attentive and imaginative beholders. *Parsifal I*, on the other hand, and within it the (faint) traces of *Druidess I*, remained unpublished and probably unseen—except by the printer—during Redon's lifetime; neither did the artist mention its existence to Mellerio, who did not include a reference to it in his 1913 catalog. However, Redon kept at least three proofs of it, which, after his death, duly found their way into the hands of his collectors. By 1891, Jules Destrée had already demonstrated to Redon how meticulous his admirers could be, and his commercial strategy shows that he knew the value they attached to the rare impression.[149] In short, by preserving the trial proofs of *Parsifal I*, Redon ensured the transmission to posterity of a small but precious mystery.

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Notes

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1. Jules Destrée, *L'oeuvre lithographique de Odilon Redon, catalogue descriptif* (Brussels: Edmond Deman, 1891), 72. See Adrienne Fontainas and Luc Fontainas, *Edmond Deman éditeur (1857–1918): Art et édition au tournant du siècle* (Brussels: Labor, 1997), 138–41.
2. Odilon Redon, *Lettres d'Odilon Redon 1878–1916* (Paris: Librairie Nationale d'Art et d'Histoire; Brussels: G. van Oest, 1923), 32.
3. See an interpretation of this relationship in Dario Gamboni, *La plume et le pinceau: Odilon Redon et la littérature* (Paris: Minuit, 1989), 129.
4. Joris-Karl Huysmans to Odilon Redon, October 11, 1891, in Roseline Bacou, ed., *Lettres de Gauguin, Gide, Huysmans, Jammes, Mallarmé, Verhaeren . . . à Odilon Redon* (Paris: Corti, 1960), 125: "Ah ! mais elles sont du parfait Redon, l'une, si étrange et douce et dolente avec sa flèche, l'autre si terriblement bestiale avec son profil fruste, son oeil verni." Huysmans had simply dated his letter "Sunday morning," to which Redon added "October 11, 1891."
5. André Mellerio, *Odilon Redon* (1913; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), 110, nos. 116–18. Further references to this catalog will be to "M," followed by the catalog number. A proof of *Druidess* inscribed with a manuscript dedication to Huysmans and belonging to the collection of Dr. Frederick Mulder in London is reproduced in Ted Gott, *The Enchanted Stone: The Graphic Worlds of Odilon Redon*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1990, 110, no. 52.
6. Suzanne Folds McCullagh and Inge Christine Swenson, "A New 'Parsifal' by Odilon Redon," *Print Collector's Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (October 1976): 108–9. According to Mellerio, fifty copies of *Parsifal* (M 116) and *Druidess* (M 117) each were printed by Becquet on *chine appliqué* and the stones were canceled; the copies were uneven for *Parsifal*, good for *Druidess*. McCullagh and Swenson knew of two proofs of the first version of *Parsifal*: one in the collection of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (66.4197), to which it had been given in 1966 by Joseph H. Hirshhorn; the other, donated to the Art Institute of Chicago by Robert Light (1975.493), had been purchased by him at the June 11, 1975, auction of Kornfeld and Klipstein in Bern (lot 838; R. M. Light, e-mail to the author, January 4, 2007). This second proof came from the collection of the Swiss Richard Bühler by way of his daughter-in-law Hanne Bühler (Eberhard W. Kornfeld, letter to the author, January 9, 2007); Redon's widow, Camille Redon, had sent to Richard Bühler in 1918 a series of lithographs, including the last proof of *Parsifal* in her possession (Camille Redon to Mrs. Bühler, January 18, 1918, private collection). A third impression, once mistaken for a charcoal drawing (*Odilon Redon 1840–1916*, exh. cat., Galerie des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux, 1985, 92, no. 41), has reappeared since in another private collection; it was ac-

quired from Camille Redon in 1919 by the Swiss art historian Hans R. Hahnloser, son of the collector Arthur Hahnloser (Margit Hahnloser-Ingold, telephone call to the author, January 8, 2007). It had been cropped on all sides except the left one, probably by Redon himself, and is well reproduced in *Richard Wagner, visions d'artistes: D'Auguste Renoir à Anselm Kiefer*, exh. cat., Musées d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva (Paris: Somogy, 2005), 109. See also Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 96.

7. Redon to Edmond Picard, August 25, 1894, quoted in Mellerio, *Odilon Redon*, 80; for biographical information, see Douglas W. Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams, 1840–1916*, exh. cat., Art Institute of Chicago (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 34ff.
8. See Bacou, *Lettres . . . à Odilon Redon*, 88–89; Odilon Redon, *À soi-même: Journal (1867–1915); Notes sur la vie, l'art et les artistes* (1922; Paris: Corti, 1961), 177 (1878).
9. Redon, *À soi-même*, 156 (November 1882).
10. André Mellerio Papers (henceforward, AMP), Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago, A-1, 7.
11. Teodor de Wyzewa, "Notes sur la peinture wagnérienne et le Salon de 1886," *Revue Wagnérienne* 2 (May 8, 1886): 100–113, at 106.
12. Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 97, no. 41.
13. Mellerio 130; see Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 97–98, no. 42; and Alec Wildenstein, *Odilon Redon: Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint et dessiné*, 4 vols. (Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 1992–98), vol. 2, no. 1043 (further references to this catalog will take the form of W followed by the catalog number).
14. See Gamboni, *La plume et le pinceau*, 26–30, 92–95, 146–50.
15. W 626.
16. See Redon, *À soi-même*, 27, 128.
17. AMP, "Mellerio-Redon Chronology," 49.
18. See Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 41.
19. See ibid., 21ff.
20. See Richard Wagner, *Parsifal: Dichtung, Entwurf, Schriften* (1914; Walluf: Sändig, 1973).
21. See, for example, Paul Lindau, *Bayreuther Briefe vom reinen Thoren: "Parsifal" von Richard Wagner* (Breslau: Schottlaender, 1883), 11–12.
22. See Jean-François Candoni, "'Le dieu Richard Wagner irradiant un sacre': À propos de la religion de l'art dans *Parsifal*," in "Parsifal," ed. Christian Merlin, special issue, *L'Avant-scène Opéra* 213 (March–April 2003): 123–27; and Richard Wagner, "Religion und Kunst" (1880), in *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, 16 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1911–14), vol. 10, 211–52.
23. See Gamboni, *La plume et le pinceau*, 19–30, 134–37; and Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 23–24, 71–72, 89–93.
24. See Dario Gamboni, *Das Fass Amontillado: Der Traum eines Traumes* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1988).
25. See *Parsifal 1882–1982: Une documentation illustrée autour du centenaire de la création de l'oeuvre de Richard Wagner* (Geneva: Grand Théâtre de Genève, 1982); and Merlin, "Parsifal," 144–59.
26. See Jean-David Jumeau-Lafond's entry for this work in *Richard Wagner, visions d'artistes*, 152, no. 37; and *Love Revealed: Simeon Solomon and the Pre-Raphaelites*, exh. cat., Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 2006. Another interesting element of comparison is Jean Delville's androgynous and mystical charcoal drawing *Parsifal* (1890, private collection), reproduced, for instance, in *Richard Wagner, visions d'artistes*, 127, no. 23.
27. See Rainer Michael Mason's entry in *Richard Wagner, visions d'artistes*, 220–22, no. 71.
28. Hans Jürgen Syberberg, *Parsifal: Ein Filmessay* (Munich: Wilhelm Heyne, 1982), 69.
29. Jacques Longchampt, "Par la faute d'une chimère," *Le Monde*, May 20, 1982, reprinted in Merlin, "Parsifal," 187.
30. Syberberg, *Parsifal*, 161.
31. Ibid., 35.
32. Cosima Wagner, *Journal*, ed. Martin Gregor-Dellin, vol. 3 (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), 592–93. A few years earlier, in 1877, Wagner was already thinking of using "a mixture of voices" to "express the immaterial spirituality of Christ . . . ; it must be neither a woman, nor a man, but a neutral element in the highest sense of the word" (ibid., entry of September 26, 1877).
33. See Merlin, "Parsifal," esp. 17–19, 40.
34. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Wagner androgyne* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1990), 197. The question of the male-female relationship kept preoccupying Wagner after *Parsifal*: shortly before his death in 1883, he wrote the essay "On the Feminine within the Human" ("Über das Weibliche im Menschlichen [Als Abschluss von 'Religion und Kunst']," in R. Wagner, *Dichtungen und Schriften*, ed. Dieter Borch-meyer, vol. 10 [Frankfurt: Insel, 1983], 172–74), and he left unfinished another one entitled "On the Masculine and the Feminine in Culture and Art."
35. *Druidess*, W 609. See also W 627 and W 167, which, however, is entitled *Woman of the East* in Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 203, fig. 10 (cropped).
36. See ibid., 62, 328ff.
37. W 266; ibid., cat. no. 71.
38. W 239; ibid., cat. no. 82.
39. See Bacou, *Lettres . . . à Odilon Redon*, 149–59.
40. Edmond Picard, *Le juré: Monodrame en cinq actes* (1887; new ed., Brussels: Paul Lacomblez and Vve Ferd. Larcier, 1904), act 4, 59: "Elle se montre à lui, dramatique et grandiose, avec sa coiffure de prêtresse druidique, théâtrale, imposante, imprégnée de sa vie factice, luxueuse et bruyante, mais sans rien qui soit de la maternité."
41. *Dramatique et grandiose avec sa figure de prêtresse druidique . . .* , W 238, Mellerio 80.
42. Bacou, *Lettres . . . à Odilon Redon*, 156: "Dramatique et grandiose, avec sa coiffure de prêtresse druidique. . . ."
43. Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 40.
44. Odilon Redon, "Un séjour dans le Pays Basque" (ca. 1869), AMP, A-5, 2: "Le sol basque est pour moi comme une patrie ancienne où il me semble avoir vécu, souffert, aimé"; and Claire Moran, *Odilon Redon: Écrits* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2005), 29; see Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 41–42.
45. Ernest Renan, *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1883), 75, 78, 83. See Roseline Bacou, "La bibliothèque d'Odilon Redon," in *Festschrift to Erik Fischer: European Drawings from Six Centuries* (Copenhagen: Royal Museum of Fine Arts, 1990), 29–37, at 36.
46. Édouard Schuré, "Les légendes de la Bretagne et le génie celtique," *Revue des Deux Mondes* 106 (August 15, 1891): 865–902, at 895.
47. Édouard Schuré, *La druidesse, précédée d'une étude sur le réveil de l'âme celtique* (Paris: Perrin, 1914), 11.
48. Bacou, "La bibliothèque d'Odilon Redon," 32.
49. François-René de Chateaubriand, *Les martyrs, ou Le triomphe de la religion chrétienne* (1809; Paris: Garnier, n.d.), 153–75 (bks. 9–10).
50. Édouard Schuré, *Vercingétorix: Drame en cinq actes* (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1887), iv.
51. Schuré, *La druidesse*, 20; Schuré referred here to Celtil and (again) Velléda, the main characters of *La druidesse* (1914), an adaptation of his own *Vercingétorix* that enabled him to better reconcile Druidism and Christianity by setting it in the first century.
52. This is a major point for Schuré, who found it in Adolphe Pictet, *Le mystère des bardes de l'île de Bretagne* (Geneva: Cherbuliez, 1856).
53. Schuré, *Vercingétorix*, 77–78: "Le Feu, le Feu s'éteint!—Il n'est plus sur l'autel, / Il me brûle le cœur!—La lumière du ciel / S'enfuit . . . j'ai vu l'abîme! Horreur, néant, ténèbres / Et trépas!"
54. Merlin, "Parsifal," 63, line 307: "Amfortas!— / Die Wunde!—Die Wunde!— / Sie brennt in meinem Herzen.— / O, Klage! Klage! / Furchtbare Klage! / Aus tiefstem Herzen schreit sie mir auf."
55. Édouard Schuré, *Le drame musical*, vol. 1, *La musique et la poésie dans leur développement historique*, and vol. 2, *Richard Wagner, son oeuvre et son idée* (Paris: Sandoz et Fischbacher, 1875); *Le drame musical, nouvelle édition augmentée d'une étude sur Parsifal* (Paris: Perrin, 1886).
56. Édouard Schuré, *Les grands initiés: Esquisse de l'histoire secrète des religions; Rama—Krishna—Hermès—Moïse—Orphée—Pythagore—Platon—Jésus* (Paris: Perrin, 1889); and Bacou, "La bibliothèque d'Odilon Redon," 33.
57. Édouard Schuré to Redon, February 25, 1892, in Bacou, *Lettres . . . à Odilon Redon*, 244; Bacou quotes a very positive, undated note written by Redon after a discussion with Schuré: "Very musical, he reminds me of Boissé [a friend from Redon's youth]. Youthful soul in an ageless body [Schuré was born in 1841, Redon in 1840]—and much religiosity. He is charming."
58. This copy of *Vercingétorix*, on which Schuré had marked with a red pencil the two scenes selected for the Théâtre d'Art, is not mentioned in Roseline Bacou's description of Redon's library ("La bibliothèque d'Odilon Redon").
59. A detail from what appears to be the program of the play, including a reproduction of *Druidess*, is reproduced without caption or source in Marcel Guicheteau, *Paul Sérusier* (Paris: SIDE, 1976), 83; see Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 111.
60. Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 111.

61. See ibid., 98; and Fred Leeman, "Redon's Spiritualism and the Rise of Mysticism," in Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 215–36, at 227–30. Buddhism, especially its ideal of renunciation, was also important for Wagner's conception of *Parsifal*, which used material from an earlier, unrealized project of a "Buddhist" opera entitled *The Conquerors*; see Merlin, "Parsifal," 6, 105, 111.

62. Merlin, "Parsifal," 101, 109; and Schuré, "Les légendes de la Bretagne," 875–76.

63. See, for example, Émile Hennequin, "Le pessimisme des écrivains," in *La Revue Indépendante*, 2 vols. (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970–71), vol. 1, 445–55 (October 1884), vol. 2, 61–78 (November 1884). In Schuré's "Les légendes de la Bretagne," Merlin is told that as a prophet, he will be persecuted by humans and demons, and that while he can expect the highest joys and the "divine ray of light" as a reward, "insanity, shame and solitude" will also watch out for him (882).

64. Schuré, *Vercingétorix*, 17.

65. See, for example, Élémire Zolla, *The Androgyne: Fusion of the Sexes* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981). A late-tenth- or early-eleventh-century statue of this kind, from the Djenné region in Mali, was recently acquired by the French state for the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris; reproduced in Hélène Leloup, *Statuaire dogon* (Strasbourg: Amez, 1994). Traditional shutter fasteners in Venice display a male head when the shutter is open and a female one when it is closed, the three-dimensional figure being designed in such a way that the male's bust becomes the female's hair and vice versa.

66. See Thomas Eser, *Schiefe Bilder: Die Zimmernsche Anamorphose und andere Augenspiele aus den Sammlungen des Germanischen Nationalmuseums*, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, 1998; Bodo von Dewitz and Werner Nekes, *Ich sehe was, was Du nicht siehst! Sehmaschinen und Bilderwelten; Die Sammlung Werner Nekes*, exh. cat., Museum Ludwig, Cologne (Göttingen: Steidl, 2002); and Dario Gamboni, "Composing the Body Politic: Composite Images and Political Representation, 1651–2004," in *Making Things Public—Atmospheres of Democracy*, ed. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, exh. cat., ZKM-Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), 162–95.

67. See Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1968).

68. See Frédéric Tristan, *Le monde à l'envers* (Paris: Hachette, 1980).

69. See Dario Gamboni, *Potential Images: Ambiguity and Indeterminacy in Modern Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 68–130, 149–67.

70. Georges Hugnet, "Devinettes," *Minotaure* 5, no. 11 (1938): 34–35.

71. This image and two others from the same series are reproduced in *Redstone Matchbox No. 1* (London: Redstone Press; San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998); similar double heads can be found in Julian Rothenstein and Mel Gooding, *The Playful Eye* (London: Redstone Press, 1999).

72. A late but particularly lucid exposition is Joséphin Péladan, *De l'androgyne: Théorie plastique* (Paris: Sansot, 1910). It must be added that there was no necessary contradiction between "monstrous" and "ideal" in this context: see Evanghélia Stead, *Le monstre, le singe et le foetus: Tératogonie et décadence dans l'Europe fin-de-siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 2004).

73. See, for example, works by Armand Point and Alexandre Séon, in Jean-David Jumeau-Lafond, *Les peintres de l'âme: Le symbolisme idéaliste en France*, exh. cat., Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels (Antwerp: Pandora, 1999), 120–35, 168–76.

74. See Gamboni, *La plume et le pinceau*, 193–94; Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 98–106; and Leeman, "Redon's Spiritualism," 215–36. Among persons connected to both Redon and Péladan were Émile Bernard, Elémir Bourges, and Antoine de la Rochefoucauld.

75. Gamboni, *La plume et le pinceau*, 303.

76. Joséphin Péladan, *La décadence latine: Éthopée* (1891; reprint, Geneva: Slatkine, 1979), vol. 4, *Coeur en peine; L'androgyne*, vii–xi, xvii.

77. Redon to André Mellerio, August 16, 1898, in Redon, *Lettres d'Odilon Redon*, 33–35.

78. Redon, *À soi-même*, 128 (1913).

79. Merlin, "Parsifal," 71, line 320: "Den Weg, den du suchst, / dess' Pfade sollst du nicht finden: / denn Pfad' und Wege, / die dich mir entführen, / so verwünsch' ich sie dir: / Irre! Irre!" In a remarkable comment on Wagner's interpretation of the Grail legends, Claude Lévi-Strauss suggested that the composer's "contribution to universal mythology" consisted precisely in Parsifal's requirement of "knowing and not knowing, that is, knowing what one ignores"; Lévi-Strauss, "De Chrétien de Troyes à Richard Wagner," first published in the program of the 1975 Bayreuth festival, reprinted in Merlin, "Parsifal," 100–107, at 107.

80. "Joseph Beuys im Gespräch mit Antje Graevenitz: 'Im Wanderer steckt stets ein neuer Mensch,'" in *Der Raum Bayreuth: Ein Auftrag aus der Zukunft*, ed. Wolfgang Storch (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2002), 199–208, at 203; the interview had taken place in the fall of 1982 in Beuys's studio in Düsseldorf (Graevenitz, e-mail to the author, August 16, 2006). See also Antje von Graevenitz, "Erlösungskunst oder Befreiungspolitik: Wagner und Beuys," in *Unsere Wagner: Joseph Beuys, Heiner Müller, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Hans Jürgen Syberberg; Essays*, ed. Gabriele Förg (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1984).

81. "Joseph Beuys im Gespräch mit Antje Graevenitz," 208.

82. For a detailed analysis of Redon's working methods in lithography, see Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 27–36.

83. See Matthias Schatz, *Der Betrachter im Werk von Odilon Redon: Eine rezeptionsästhetische Studie* (Hamburg: Krämer, 1988), 48.

84. Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 33, 36.

85. Redon, *À soi-même*, 129 (1913).

86. Pat Gilmour, "Lithographic Collaboration: The Head, the Hand, the Heart," in *Lasting Impressions: Lithography as Art*, exh. cat., Australian National Gallery, Canberra, 1998, 308–59, 378–81, at 322; see Gott, *The Enchanted Stone*, 42–44.

87. For evidence of Redon's interest in visual puzzles, see Gamboni, *Potential Images*, 153–54.

88. Gert Mattenklott, "Zum sozialen Inhalt von Redons 'monde obscur de l'indéterminé,'" in *Selbstgespräch: Tagebücher und Aufzeichnungen 1867–1915*, by Odilon Redon (Munich: Rogner und Bernhard, 1971), 207–19; and Harriet K. Stratis, "Beneath the Surface: Redon's Methods and Materials," in Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 353–77.

89. See Benedetto Croce, "Una teoria della 'macchia'" (1905), in *Problemi di estetica e contributi alla storia dell'estetica italiana* (1909; Bari: Laterza, 1923), 238–48; Hans Sedlmayr, "Bruegel's Macchia" (1934), trans. Frederic J. Schwartz, in *The Vienna School Reader: Politics and Art Historical Method in the 1930s*, ed. Christopher S. Wood (New York: Zone Books, 2000), 323–76; Heinrich Schmidt, "Leonardos Macchia," *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kuntwissenschaft* 12 (1967): 70–89, no. 1; and Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, *L'art de la tache: Introduction à la nouvelle méthode d'Alexander Cozens* (Paris: Limon, 1990).

90. See *Gustave Moreau 1826–1898*, exh. cat., Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1998), for example, 159, cat. nos. 72, 73; and Raphael Rosenberg, "Hasard et abstraction: Les palettes d'aquarelle de Gustave Moreau," in *Gustave Moreau: Mythes et chimères; Aquarelles et dessins secrets du musée Gustave-Moreau*, exh. cat., Musée de la Vie Romantique, Paris (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2003), 93–107.

91. John Ruskin, *The Elements of Drawing: In Three Letters to Beginners, with Illustrations Drawn by the Author* (London: Smit, Elder, 1857), note to sec. 5; and see Richard Shiff, *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

92. Paul Valéry, *Introduction à la méthode de Léonard de Vinci* (Paris: Gallimard, 1957), 25, 33, previously published in *La Nouvelle Revue* 95 (August 15, 1895): 742–70.

93. Redon, *À soi-même*, 100: "Le sens du mystère, c'est d'être tout le temps dans l'équivoque, dans les double, triple aspects, des soupçons d'aspect (images dans images), formes qui vont être, ou qui le seront selon l'état d'esprit du regardeur."

94. Alfred Jarry, "Commentaire pour servir à l'intelligence de la précédente image," *Perhindérion* 2 (June 1896), in *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 1, ed. Michel Arrivé (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), 998–99. See Dario Gamboni, "Dürer als Pataphysiker: Eine Bildlektüre von Alfred Jarry," in *Jenseits der Grenzen: Französische und deutsche Kunst vom Ancien Régime bis zur Gegenwart; Thomas W. Gaehtgens zum 60. Geburtstag*, vol. 3, *Dialog der Avantgarden*, ed. Uwe Fleckner, Martin Schieder, and Michael F. Zimmermann (Cologne: DuMont, 2000), 29–41.

95. When he sold this small painting to Andries Bonger in 1898, Redon described it as "the small head of a woman standing out in profile against a red sky [*la petite tête de femme se profilant sur ciel rouge*]," and later in answer to a question from his Dutch patron and friend said that it had "no special title" (see *André Bonger en zijn kunstenaarsvrienden Redon—Bernard—Van Gogh*, exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1972, 16, no. 9). In his list of works sold to dealers and collectors, he noted it as *Head of a Woman* and described the figure as "pensive, in profile on an orange-colored red sun . . . on a vague background of [crossed out: "violet"] mountains" (AMP, Mellerio Redon Account Books [MRA], 1, 31). I thank Fred Leeman for giving me access to his catalog of the Bonger collection (Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum, forthcoming).

96. See Stratis, "Beneath the Surface."

97. The demonstrative effect is even stronger if one shifts, as can be done

on the computer screen, the degree of coincidence of the superimposition. I thank Karin Patzke for having suggested and realized this experiment.

98. Ted Gott described this impression as "a proof of a first state of *Druidess*, before the filling in of the background and additional tonal work on the face and head-dress" (*The Enchanted Stone*, 110, no. 52), but a new comparison with the other proof in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago (Fig. 2) showed only differences ascribable to the printing process.

99. I am indebted to Rainer Michael Mason and Harriet Stratis on this point. According to an isolated testimony, Redon "frequently furrowed the granite [*sic*] so deep that several millimeters had to be pumiced," an unorthodox method that was "a source of annoyance to the professionals"; Claude Roger-Marx, *French Original Engravings from Manet to the Present Time* (New York: Hyperion Press, 1939), 31–32, quoted in Gilmour, "Lithographic Collaboration," 379 n. 53.

100. I owe this explanation to Harriet Stratis.

101. The cropped proof of *Parsifal [I]* (see n. 6 above) may have resulted from an attempt by Redon to reduce this tension by concentrating the image on the figure of Parsifal.

102. Redon, *Lettres d'Odilon Redon*, 33–34.

103. See Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 93, 104.

104. Eduard von Hartmann, *Philosophie des Unbewussten* (1869; Berlin: Duncker, 1874), 239, 252.

105. See Dario Gamboni, "Im festen Zustand der suggestiven Betrachtung: Odilon Redon und das Schweben als Voraussetzung und Metapher für das künstlerische Schaffen," in *Die Couch: Vom Denken im Liegen*, ed. Lydia Marinelli, exh. cat., Sigmund-Freud-Museum, Vienna (Munich: Prestel, 2006), 123–42.

106. Oskar Pfister, "Kryptolalie, Kryptographie und unbewusstes Vexierbild bei Normalen," *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen* 5 (1913): 117–56, esp. 129–41.

107. Ibid., 145–51.

108. Sigmund Freud, *Un souvenir d'enfance de Léonard de Vinci / Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci* (1910; Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 206–7. On the "vulture" problem, see Meyer Schapiro, "Freud and Leonardo: An Art Historical Study" (1955/1968); and idem, "Further Notes on Freud and Leonardo," in *Theory and Philosophy of Art: Style, Artist, and Society; Selected Papers* (New York: George Braziller, 1994), 153–200.

109. In relation to his notion of "condensation," Freud refers not so much to man-made images as to Francis Galton's famous "composite photographs"; this notion has antecedents in earlier research on the dream, which had been available to the general public in France since the 1860s. See Jack J. Spector, *The Aesthetics of Freud: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: Praeger, 1972), 125–27; Stefanie Heraeus, *Traumvorstellung und Bildidee: Surreale Strategien in der französischen Graphik des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Reimer, 1998); and idem, "Artists and the Dream in Nineteenth-Century Paris: Towards a Prehistory of Surrealism," *History Workshop Journal* 8 (1999): 153–68.

110. Hermann Rorschach, *Psychodiagnostik: Methodik und Ergebnisse eines wahrnehmungsdiagnostischen Experiments (Deutenlassen von Zufallsformen)* (Bern: Huber, 1921).

111. See Henri F. Ellenberger, "The Life and Work of Hermann Rorschach (1884–1922)," *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 18 (1954): 173–219; Lebensztejn, *L'art de la tache*; Peter Galison, "Image of Self," in *Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science*, ed. Lorraine Daston (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 257–94, 414–18; and Gamboni, *Potential Images*, 56–58, 189–90.

112. See Dario Gamboni, "'Fabrication of Accidents': *Factura* and Chance in Nineteenth-Century Art," *Res: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* (Autumn 1999): 205–25.

113. Carl Gustav Jung, *Erinnerungen, Traüme, Gedanken von C. G. Jung*, ed. Aniela Jaffé (Zurich: Walter, 1971), 24. Jung uses the term *Klecksographien*, which goes back to the nineteenth-century Swabian poet and physician Justinus Kerner; see his *Kleksographien: Hadesbilder kleksographisch entstanden und in Versen erläutert*, ed. Horst Brandstätter (Stuttgart: Lithos, 1998), written in 1857 and first published in 1890.

114. Jung, *Erinnerungen*, 157.

115. C. G. Jung, *Symbole der Wandlung: Analyse des Vorspiels zu einer Schizophrenie*, 4th rev. ed. of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* (Zurich: Rascher, 1952), 373.

116. Jung, *Erinnerungen*, 408–10. A partial antecedent can be found in the psychological monograph *Des Indes à la planète Mars: Étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie* (Geneva: Atar; Paris: Fischbacher, 1899) devoted by its author, Théodore Flournoy, to the young female medium Élise Catherine Müller ("Hélène Smith"). Among the several personalities she developed was a male spirit named Léopold, identified by participants in the séances as a reincarnation of the eighteenth-century occultist Giuseppe Balsamo (Cagliostro). While impressed by the way in which Léopold "became incarnated" in Miss Müller, Flournoy remarked that the two personalities did not coexist but alternated and proposed a rational account of Léopold's "psychogenesis" in which this "austere and rigid mentor" represents "a very general psychological given" present in "every feminine soul of high birth" (75–134).

117. Jung, *Symbole der Wandlung*, 628. We have noted a likeness between Redon's *Brünnhilde* (Fig. 7) and his *Druidess* (Fig. 2).

118. See Sarah Kofmann, *L'enfance de l'art: Une interprétation de l'esthétique freudienne* (Paris: Payot, 1970).

119. Charles Morice, "L'hommage à Goya," *Petite Tribune Républicaine*, April 2, 1885: "Le rêve de M. Redon . . . Entendons-nous! L'acception qu'il faut donner au mot *Rêve* n'est ni celle vulgaire et de prose (visions fatales du sommeil), ni celle rare et de poésie (visions volontaires de la veille); c'est ceci et cela, c'est la veille et le sommeil, c'est proprement le rêve d'un rêve: l'ordonnance volontaire de visions fatales." On Redon's approval, see Ted Gott, "Silent Messengers—Odilon Redon's Dedicated Lithographs and the 'Politics' of Gift-Giving," *Print Collector's Newsletter* 19, no. 3 (July–August 1988): 92–101, at 95.

120. Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 26.

121. Odilon Redon, "Le Fakir," AMP, A-12, 1–33, at 4. See Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 72; and Moran, *Odilon Redon: Écrits*, 91–114.

122. Chateaubriand, *Les martyrs*, 153, 156, 161; Schuré, *Vercingétorix*, iv; and idem, *La druidesse*, 10–11, 18, 20, 52–56.

123. See AMP, A-5 (Moran, *Odilon Redon: Écrits*, 29–46), B-2, 4; and Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams*, 41–42.

124. Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Claude Pichois, vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 792.

125. Ibid., 793, 795.

126. See Ernst Haeckel, *Anthropogenie, oder Entwicklungsgeschichte des Menschen* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1874). On Redon's scientific interests, the most recent, book-length study is Barbara Larson, *The Dark Side of Nature: Science, Society, and the Fantastic in the Work of Odilon Redon* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

127. See Redon, *À soi-même*, 18; and Merlin, "Parsifal," 46, 47, lines 131, 109, 111. The connection between metamorphosis and metempsychosis was already established by Ovid in the Pythagorian introduction to bk. 15 of *The Metamorphoses*; see the entry "Métamorphose" in Pierre Larousse, *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle* (1866–79; reprint, Geneva: Slatkine, 1982), vol. 11, pt. 1, 136.

128. Metempsychosis was generally recognized as an essential trait of the Druids' metaphysics: see, for example, Larousse, *Grand dictionnaire universel*, s.v. "Druide," vol. 6, pt. 2, 1301–2, and "Métempsychose," vol. 11, pt. 1, 145–47.

129. See Gustav E. Mueller, "The Hegel Legend of 'Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis,'" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 19, no. 3 (June 1958): 411–14; and Henri Dorra, "The 'System' in Courbet's 'System Paintings,'" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 121 (February 1993): 93–100. Mueller shows that Hegel himself feared the automatic and prescribed character of a "spiritless scheme" leading to "monotonous formalism" and attributes the association of this "triplicity" with Hegel to Karl Marx by way of Heinrich Moritz Chalybäus.

130. See Gamboni, *La plume et le pinceau*, 31–48.

131. Lévi-Strauss, "De Chrétien de Troyes à Richard Wagner," 107.

132. Schuré, "Les légendes de la Bretagne," 867, 901.

133. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik* (1812–16), vol. 1, *Die objektive Logik*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. H. Glockner (Stuttgart: Frommann; Bad Cannstatt: Holzboog, 1965), vol. 4, 118–21.

134. Ibid., 119: "Das Werden ist eine haltungslose Unruhe, die in ein ruhiges Resultat zusammensinkt. / Dies könnte auch so ausgedrückt werden: Das Werden ist das Verschwinden von Seyn in Nichts, und von Nichts in Seyn. . . . Es widerspricht sich also in sich selbst, weil es solches in sich vereint, das sich entgegengesetzt ist. . . ."

135. See Hermann Glockner, *Hegel-Lexikon*, 2nd aug. ed., vol. 23 of Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: Frommann and Holzboog, 1957), 150; and Philippe Büttgen, "Aufheben, Aufhebung," in *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies: Dictionnaire des intraduisibles*, ed. Barbara Cassin (Paris: Seuil / Le Robert, 2004), 152–56.

136. Sigmund Freud, "Über den Gegensinn der Urworte" (1910), in *Studi-*

enausgabe, vol. 4, *Psychologische Schriften* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1970), 227–34.

137. Ibid., 234; and Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, 120: "Für das spekulative Denken ist es erfreulich, in der Sprache Wörter zu finden, welche eine spekulative Bedeutung an ihnen selbst haben; die deutsche Sprache hat mehrere dergleichen"; quoted in Glockner, *Hegel-Lexikon*, 150.

138. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *L'oeil et l'esprit* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), 62: "C'est l'oeuvre elle-même qui a ouvert le champ d'où elle apparaît dans un autre jour, c'est elle qui *se* métamorphose et *devient* la suite, les réinterprétations interminables dont elle est *légitimement* susceptible ne la changent qu'en elle-même. . . ."

139. See, for example, Richard Thomson, "On Narrative and Metamorphosis," in *Dealing with Degas: Representation of Women and the Politics of Vision*, ed. Richard Kendall and Griselda Pollock (New York: Universe, 1992), 146–58; and *Le corps en morceaux*, exh. cat., Musée d'Orsay, Paris (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1990), 201–18, 237–51.

140. *1898: Le Balzac de Rodin*, exh. cat., Musée Rodin, Paris, 1998, 244–52.

141. Ambroise Vollard, *Edgar Degas 1834–1917* (Paris: Crès, 1924), 112–13, quoted in Anne Pingeot, *Degas sculptures* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1991), 26: "Vous pensez surtout, Vollard, à ce que ça valait, mais m'auriez-vous donné un chapeau plein de diamants que je n'aurais pas eu un bonheur égal à celui que j'ai pris à démolir ça pour le plaisir de recommencer."

142. See Hans Holländer, "Ars inveniendi et investigandi: Zur surrealistischen Methode," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 32 (1970): 193–233.

143. Gell, *Art and Agency*, 232ff.

144. Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (1893–1917), quoted in ibid., 241, with reference to J. N. Findlay, "Husserl's Analysis of the Time Inner Consciousness," *Monist* 59, no. 1 (1975): 3–20.

145. Gell, *Art and Agency*, 243.

146. On Duchamp's debt to Redon specifically, see Gamboni, *Potential Images*, 142–48.

147. See Jed Deppman, Daniel Ferrer, and Michael Groden, eds., *Genetic Criticism: Texts and Avant-Textes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

148. See "Formes," the recent issue of *Genesis: Revue Internationale de Critique Génétique* 24 (2004), devoted to the visual arts.

149. See Gott, "Silent Messengers," 92–101; and idem, *The Enchanted Stone.*