Fetishism and Recollections:
A Psychoanalytic Reading of Poe's "Berenice"

The purpose of this article is to present a psychoanalytic reading of Edgar Allan Poe's "Berenice" and to shed light on the subversiveness inherent in perversions in order to suggest that the protagonist's fetishism is not pathological. The narrator of the story, Egæus, is affected by fantasies, which support his fetishistic desires. He pursues "the wished-for object" with his cousin, Berenice, who was once his childhood companion. His fantasies are replaced with horrible memories when it is announced to him that "Berenice [is] no more." His strenuous attempts to articulate these recollections are indicative of his struggle for subject formation. The "materialized" teeth, scattering "with a rattling sound," can be considered as the symbolical representation of the thought that was given utterance to in his library, with which his earliest memories are connected. Berenice is described as "the wished-for object" with the fetishized teeth, which paradoxically indicates "the absence" of Berenice. Egæus's fetishism reflects a psychic process of representing the "materialized" teeth, with which he could momentarily "reconstruct" his recollections of "the ecstasies" behind his mental agonies.

Key words: Edgar Allan Poe "Berenice" fetishism

Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe's "Berenice" (1835) is the story of the protagonist's fetishism. Its narrator, Egæus, struggles persistently to satisfy his desire not for Berenice but for her teeth. Egæus has grown up with his cousin, Berenice, who was once "agile, graceful, and overflowing with energy" (Poe 643). However, when a fatal disease destroys "her mind, her habits, and her character...and even the identity of her person" (643), he desires her thirty-two teeth so intensely that he pulls them out of her mouth. Psychoanalytically, viewing teeth as the objects of sexual desire is regarded as inappropriate and abnormal. Such a perverse desire can be termed as fetishism, which is generally considered to be pathological. However, is a fetishistic desire really pathological? If fetishism is viewed as a pathological desire, the protagonist of "Berenice" would be regarded as "pathological.

Although most psychoanalytical criticisms of Poe's works suggest that his protagonists are pathological, there are a few feminist psychoanalytical approaches to the stories. In The Practice of Love (1994), Theresa de Lauretis attempts "an eccentric reading of Freud, through Laplanche and the Lacanian and feminist revisions, for the purpose of articulating a formal model of perverse desire" (de Lauretis xiii). Her theory could contribute to the reinterpretation of "Berenice" despite the fact that it makes no reference to Poe's works. An analysis of the plot of "Berenice" by using de Lauretis's psychoanalytical model of perverse desire could generate a new reading that suggests the subversive aspect of perverse sexuality and ultimately questions the traditional assumption that "perverse" implies "pathological." Feminists have critically discussed Freud since the 1970s. Freudian psychoanalysis has often been regarded by feminist critics as inimical to women: for example, Kate Millet offers an incisive criticism of Freud in Sexual Politics (1978). By contrast, several feminists, including de Lauretis, have argued that there are "theoretical reasons" (de Lauretis 4) for rereading Freud. In The Practice of Love, de Lauretis states that her intention is "not to praise Freud or to bury him, but literally to reread him" (4). According to her, Freud's theory of sexuality consists of two elements—"one explicit and affirmative, a positive theory of normal sexuality, and the other implicit and negative, appearing as the underside or the clinical underground of the first." (23). On the other hand, she asserts that Freud's
idea of sexuality is not divided into two opposing concepts—"normal" and "verse." She emphasizes the importance of the instability of sexual identity, indicating that "Freud was in a sense qualifying the perversions as positive" (24) because, in his theory, sexuality "is based on both representations and practices of sex that are, to a greater or lesser degree, 'verse'" (10). Similarly, Jonathan Dollimore refers to Freud in Sexual Dissidence (1991) and proposes that a "verse dynamic" is at work in Freud's theory (Dollimore 173). He also mentions repeatedly what he calls "the insurrectionary nature of the perversions" (198). Supporting Dollimore's remarks, de Lauretis concentrates on the subversive or insurrectionary nature of perversions.

The protagonist of "Berenice" is depicted as a man "ill of health, and buried in gloom" (Poe 643); his violation of Berenice's grave to extract her teeth is indicative of his insanity. On the other hand, Poe begins this story with statements that are full of inconsistencies:

Misery is manifold. The wretchedness of earth is manifold. Overreaching the wide horizon as the rainbow, its hues are as various as the hues of that arch—as distinct too, yet as intimately blended. Overreaching the wide horizon as the rainbow! How is it that from beauty I have derived a type of unloveliness?—from the covenant of peace, a simile of sorrow? But, as in ethics, evil is a consequence of good, so, in fact, out of joy is sorrow born. Either the memory of past bliss is the anguish of to-day, or the agonies which are, have their origin in the ecstasies which might have been" [italsics Poe's] (642)

These sentences, indicating that something "lovely" or "joyful" can be replaceable with "a type of unloveliness," might imply the subversiveness inherent in fetishism, which is generally supposed to be a type of disease. The purpose of this article is to present a psychoanalytic reading of "Berenice" and to shed light on the insurrectionary nature of perversions in order to suggest that the protagonist's fetishism is not pathological.

I What Lies Behind the Fetish?

Berenice, who has been "agile, graceful, and overflowing with energy" (Poe 643), is so completely transformed by her fatal malady that Egæus is overwhelmed with grief: "Alas! the destroyer came and went!—and the victim—where is she? I knew her not—or knew her no longer as Berenice!" (643) Meanwhile, Egæus is gradually affected by his own "disease," the nature of which is "intense and abnormal meditation" (645); he is "living within [his] own heart, and addicted, body and soul, to the most intense and painful meditation" (643). Poe explains this mental condition by using the concept of "monomania," and describes it as "a morbid irritability" (644) of the mind. "Monomania" consists of "a nervous intensity of interest [italsics Poe's] with which the powers of meditation (not to speak technically) busied and buried themselves, in the contemplation of even the most ordinary objects of the universe" (644). According to Poe,

the state of a person in the grips of "monomania" is completely different from that of a dreamer. The most striking difference lies in the fact that a person possessed by "monomania" is strongly attracted by a frivolous object, while, by contrast, a dreamer is interested in objects that are not necessarily "frivolous" and finds "the incitamentum [italsics Poe's], or first cause of his musings, entirely vanished and forgotten" (644) at the end of the dream. Poe says that a person in the grip of "monomania" is deeply absorbed in considering "frivolous" objects:

To muse for long unwearyed hours, with my attention riveted to some frivolous device on the margin or in the typography of a book; to become absorbed, for the better part of a summer's day, in a quaint shadow falling aslant upon the tapestry or upon the floor; to lose myself, for an entire night, in watching the steady flame of a lamp, or the embers of a fire; to dream away whole days over the perfume of a flower. (644)

The protagonist evidently displays symptoms of "monomania," meditating upon "invariably frivolous" [italsics Poe's] (Poe 644) objects, which assume "a refracted and unreal importance" through the medium of his "distempered vision" (644). These "invariably frivolous" objects, or the primary objects from which monomaniac contemplations originate, are, in this story, the teeth of Berenice. When the hero beholds the teeth that "disclosed themselves slowly to [his] view" (646), he is so captivated by them that he has "no thoughts but for the teeth" (646) and long for them "with a frenzied desire" (646):

The teeth!—the teeth!—they were here, and there, and everywhere, and visibly and palpably before me; long, narrow, and excessively white, with the pale lips writhing about them, as in the very moment of their first terrible development. (646)

These teeth, the objects of the protagonist's "frenzied desire," can be explained as a fetish. De Lauretis defines the fetish as a sign as follows:

[W]hat signifies desire is a sign which both elides and remarks that separation in describing both the object and its absence [italsics de Lauretis's]. This sign, I am arguing, is a fetish. (de Lauretis 229)

The fetish, that is, this sign that refers to an object buried and forgotten (Freud 154), represents "both the object and its absence" [italsics de Lauretis's] (229). Laplanche and Pontalis conceptualize a relationship between an object and its sign by using metaphor of milk and a breast. According to them, the metaphorical relationship between the two is based on the assumption that there are the two stages: the first when the child is with the mother and the second when the child is separated from the mother. These two stages are "represented by real experience and its hallucinatory revival, between the object that satisfies and the sign which describes both the object and its absence" (Laplanche and Pontalis 24-25) This argument regards milk as a "real object" in the first stage, while the breast is considered its sign in the second stage of "hallucinatory revival which describes the now absent or, better, lost object [italsics Laplanche and Pontalis's] (the breast with milk)" (24-25)
The objects of Egæus's fetishistic desire—Berenice's teeth—can thus be regarded as a sign of the lost object, similar to the breast in the metaphor discussed above. The "hallucinatory revival" (Laplanche and Pontalis 24) of the real object paradoxically indicates the absence of the real object. Therefore, Egæus, who desires the teeth, has already lost his real object and seeks its "hallucinatory revival" (24). For him, the lost object is the era of "the brightest days of her unparalleled beauty" (Poe 645). Since the fetish as a sign describes "both the object and its absence" (italics de Lauretis's) (de Lauretis 229), the representation of the teeth implies "the absence" of Berenice in her "unparalleled beauty" (645).

Egæus has "a memory like a shadow—vague, variable, indefinite, unsteady" (Poe 642), which is indicative of fantasy in psychoanalytic theory. In Freud's definition, the fetish is like a "screen-memory," representing "a submerged and forgotten phase of sexual development" (Freud 154). De Lauretis develops Freud's theory of desire, suggesting that the aim of the activity of fantasy, that is "dependent on an internalized, primary, and absent object of desire," is "repeating a past experience of satisfaction" (de Lauretis 222). In Egæus' case, however, there was no "past experience of satisfaction" that could be reenacted in his fantasy because he never loved Berenice in the past:

During the brightest days of her unparalleled beauty, most surely I had never loved her.... I had seen her—not as the living and breathing Berenice, but as the Berenice of a dream; not as a being of the earth, earthly, but as the abstraction of such a being; not as a thing to admire, but to analyze; not as an object of love, but as the theme of the most abstruse although desultory speculation. (Poe 645)

For the narrator, Berenice in the days of her beauty is not "the living and breathing Berenice" (645) but a thing to analyze, or a theme of speculation, because he had not recognized the ontological existence of Berenice in the past. His fetishism, therefore, does not presuppose an "internalized" or "primary" object behind the fetish, but "the wished-for object whose absence is represented in the fetish" (de Lauretis 230).

Psychoanalytically, fetishism is related to the castration complex, or the subject's disavowal of the mother's castration—it occurs as a defense from the threat of castration. De Lauretis, following this premise, states that the object of fetishism is "an entirely fantasmatic object [italics de Lauretis's], as is the maternal penis in Freud's definition of fetishism" (de Lauretis 230-31). She also cites Bersani and Dutoit, who use Freud's notion of fetishism 'against' him, and delineate "a formal model of desire's mobility" (Bersani and Dutoit 72). In this model, desire is "no longer attached to a privileged object, nor dependent on the phallic as its privileged signifier, but also moves on to other images and objects" (de Lauretis 223). Bersani and Dutoit suggest that the fetish can be regarded as a "fantasy-phallic" because it is "an inappropriate object precariously attached to a desiring fantasy, unsupported by any perceptual memory" (Bersani and Dutoit 69). According to them, what a fetishist does is to "derange his system of desiring," even to the point of "deconstructing and mobilizing the self" (69); that is, fetishism embodies a peculiar model of desire.

II Desire in Fantasies

Egæus, whose "line has been called a race of visionaries" (Poe 642), is always seeing visions, including those of Berenice. He looks upon her "not as the living and breathing Berenice, but as the Berenice of a dream" (645). On the afternoon of the misty day, Egæus, sitting in his chamber in a state of daydream, does not immediately notice the figure of Berenice because her outline is "so vacillating and indistinct" (646): "I sat (and sat, as I thought, alone) in the inner apartment of the library. But, uplifting my eyes, I saw that Berenice stood before me" (645-56).

As Richard Wilbur suggests, the indistinctness of her outline is due to the protagonist's imaginative operation: "The image of...Berenice [is] worn away [italics Wilbur's] in the hero's mind by the action of his imagination, until...[it has] grown so manageably indistinct" (Wilbur 17).

These visions can be psychoanalytically regarded as fantasies, that generate Egæus's fetishistic desire for Berenice's teeth. As soon as he beholds the figure of Berenice like a visionary image, his "consuming curiosity" (Poe 646) is stimulated. At length he casts his "burning glances" at the teeth of Berenice and cries frantically: "Would to God that I had never beheld them, or that, having done so, I had died!" (646) These fantasies support the protagonist's fetishistic desire for the teeth. His case could be explained by usingJacque Lacan's argument, developed in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis: "The phantasy is the support of desire; it is not the object that is the support of desire" (Lacan 185). Following this remark, de Lauretis explains the relationship between fantasy and desire: "it is through their [the objects'] representations in fantasy that the drives become properly sexual, in the psychoanalytic sense, and hence, it is only through fantasy that desire is sustained" (de Lauretis 83-84).

With the shutting of a door, Egæus notices the absence of Berenice in the chamber. Nevertheless, he cannot drive "the white and ghastly spectrum" (italics Poe's) (Poe 646) of her teeth from his mind. Paradoxically, in the absence of her figure, Egæus conjures up a clear image of her teeth:

"I saw them now even more unequivocally than I beheld them then" (italics Poe's) (646). He gazes fixedly at "the phantom" of the teeth, which can be perceived as a substitute for his vision of the fragile Berenice.

The teeth were "present to [his] mental eye," and became "the essence of [his] mental life" (Poe 646). Joan Dayan states that the teeth "indent [ed] themselves on his memory and fill [ed] his mental life" (Dayan 142) and were "keys to the operation of mind and memory" (137). The teeth, for him, are "des idées": "que tous ses dents étaient des idées! Des idées! — ah, here was the idiotic thought that destroyed me! Des idées! — ah, therefore it was that I coveted them so madly!" (italics Poe) (Poe 647). As Harry Levin explains, the narrator adopts these French sentences because of his "groping to explain his fetishism" (Levin 230). Moreover, the phrase "que tous ses dents étaient...
des idées!" accounts for the protagonist’s intention of fixing upon this particular fetish. Dayan maintains that this phrase is "the resonant incantation that fuses teeth and ideas" (Dayan 142). She states it as follows:

The compound dents/idées makes up identity (identité). Note the literal condensation (densification) of disparates: from identity to teeth to indenture to "I" /dents/idées. (142)

Egæus beholds "the white and ghastly spectrum" [italics Poe’s] (Poe 646) of the teeth with his mental eye in pursuit of his "I" /dents/idées. Since the teeth "stand for or constitute his identity" (Dayan 145), the protagonist’s persistent desire for Berenice’s teeth can be regarded as the process of constituting his own identity.

Psychoanalytically, the fulfillment of a desire in fantasy is associated with the formation of the subject. Laplanche and Pontalis assert that the fantasy, that is, the support of desire, is created at the different stages of subject formation. They point out a "profound continuity" between various kinds of fantasy scenarios and identify three primal fantasies—the primal scene (the child imagining the parental coitus), seduction, and castration. Subject formation originates from each of these primal fantasies: the origin of individuality is pictured in the primal scene, the origin of sexuality in seduction, and the origin of the sexual difference in castration (Laplanche and Pontalis 19). De Lauretis, on the other hand, claims that the origin of fantasy is connected with "the origin of the drive itself, which in turn has its origin in autoeroticism" (de Lauretis 83).

Autoeroticism is usually regarded as the first stage from which the subject may participate in the world of objects. This premise is based on the general supposition that autoeroticism appears before any object relationship. However, Laplanche and Pontalis suggest that the subject’s drives become autoerotic only after the loss of an object of desire. According to them, autoeroticism is rather

a mythical moment of disjunction between the pacification of need—and the fulfillment of desire,... between the two stages represented by real experience and its hallucinatory revival, between the object that satisfies [the real object, milk] and the sign which describes both the object and its absence [the lost object, the breast]: a mythical moment at which hunger and sexuality meet in common origin. (Laplanche and Pontalis 24-25)

Separated from the libidinal development of the subject, autoeroticism is instead "a mythical moment of disjunction" between an object and its sign. Fantasies produced in "a mythical moment" are therefore separated from the world of objects. This is because the origin of autoeroticism is "always renewed" (Laplanche and Pontalis 25) when sexuality, "disengaged from any natural object, moves into the field of fantasy" (25).

Even after Egæus entered adulthood, he does not leave the "palace of imagination" (Poe 642), where he has spent his boyhood.

It is [italics Poe’s] singular, that as years rolled away, and the noon of manhood found me still in the mansion of my fathers—it is [italics Poe’s] wonderful what a stagnation there fell upon the springs of my life—wonderful how total an inversion took place in the character of my commonest thought. (643)

His stay in this "mansion of his fathers," or the world of fantasies, is indicative of the stagnation of his mental growth, and consequently, a difficulty in his subject formation. Moreover, Poe’s emphasis on the word "is" [italics Poe’s] in the present tense implicitly suggests that Egæus’s desire is constitutively unsatisfied at all times. Accordingly, for fulfilling his fetishistic desire, Egæus, the desiring subject, experiences autoeroticism not as the first step toward libidinal development, but as a reiterative stage in the process of his subject formation.

III The “Materialized” Teeth

Egæus, who lives in the “palace of imagination” (Poe 642), perceives realities as dreams or visions: "The realities of the world affected me as visions, and as visions only, while the wild ideas of the land of dreams became, in turn, not the material of my every-day existence, but in very deed that existence utterly and solely in itself" (643). In the mansion of his fathers, he does not pursue the "materialized" teeth but their "spectrum" or "phantasma." Nevertheless, even while exclaiming his immediate need for possessing the teeth, the narrator predicts that his adherence to this haunting "phantom" will destroy himself: "I felt that their possession could alone ever restore me to peace, in giving me back to reason" (647).

Even after the passing of the darkness of that following evening, the second night finds Egæus still sitting motionless in his chamber of dreams, "buried in meditation" (Poe 647); the "phantasma" of the teeth floating in the chamber at length "maintained its terrible ascendancy" (647). His dreams are broken by "a cry of horror and dismay" (647), when, rising from his seat and opening the door, he is told that "Berenice [is] — no more!" (647). The "spectrum" of the teeth, which was to be a substitute for the feeble vision of Berenice, is obliterated the moment he becomes aware of her death. The complete absence of his beloved could neither be replaced nor described with "the phantom" of her teeth.

Subsequently, the narrator leads us again to the scene of the library, where Egæus is still sitting alone but is no longer dreaming: "It seemed to me that I had newly awakened from a confused and exciting dream" (Poe 647). He senses a memory "replete with horror—horror more horrible from being vague, and terror more terrible from ambiguity" (647) instead of the "spectrum" or the "phantasma" of the teeth. The "memory" was a fearful page in the record of [his] existence, written all over with dim, and hideous, and unintelligible recollections" (647). He attempts to decipher these recollections, "but in vain" (647).

Egæus’s strenuous efforts to interpret these recollections can be traced in a following manner. When "the shrill and piercing shriek of a female voice seemed to be ringing" (Poe 647) in
his ears, Egæus, for the first time in the story, loudly asks the question "what was it?" (647), which returns directly as "the whispering echoes of the chamber" (647), "what was it?" [italics Poe's] (647). Besides, his eyes drop to the sentence in the open pages of a book written by the poet Ebn Zaiat: “Dicebant mihi sodales si sepulchrum amice visitarem, curas meas aequantulum fore levatas” (648). When he reads these words “promising alleviation of misery by visiting his beloved's grave” (Dayan 153), “the hairs of [his] head erect themselves on end, and the blood of [his] body become [s] congealed within [his] veins” (Poe 648). Articulation is indispensable for the process of subject formation. Egæus makes a clumsy attempt to outgrow his mental stagnation by articulating his memories “replete with horror...and terror” (647): horror or terror is suggestive of his difficulty in recollecting the memories.

Julia Kristeva asserts that a fetishist always has terrible memories: “the fetishist episode peculiar to the unfolding of phobia is well known” (Kristeva 37). Egæus's struggles to articulate his horrible memories can certainly be interpreted as “the fetishist episode.” Nevertheless, the protagonist's attempts to articulate these recollections cannot be specific to the fetishist because, as Kristeva insists, “any practice of speech...is a language of fear” (38). She argues that “language, precisely, is based on fetishist denial (‘I know that, but just the same, ‘the sign is not the thing, but just the same,’ etc.) and defines us in our essence as speaking beings” (37). In an accepted view of fetishism, “fetishist denial” implies the subject's refusal to acknowledge the absence of the penis in the mother. In Egæus's case, however, he articulates his memories when he refuses to perceive the absence of Berenice. Egæus's struggles to interpret his fearful memory can consequently be considered as his “fetishist denial,” which will form the basis of his language.

The emergence of the “materialized” teeth offers the protagonist an occasion to complete his “fetishist denial.” These teeth are similar to “the final bloody outburst of those fruits of Egæus' brain” (Dayan 155). Immediately before an “outburst” of the teeth, Egæus hears “some broken sentences” that a menial utters “in a voice tremulous, husky, and very low” (Poe 648). When at last the “thirty-two small, white, and ivory-looking substances...are scattered to and fro about the floor” (648), the protagonist may understand the meaning of these “broken sentences” (648). The scattering of these “materialized” teeth are symbolically represented as utterance in response to the inquiry, which returns as “the whispering echoes” of the chamber, “what was it?” The teeth, which dispersed “with a rattling sound (647),” provide the image of his words uttered in the “library chamber,” so that the recollections of [his] earliest years [may be] connected” (642). Egæus shudders when he peruses Ebn Zaiat's phrase “promising alleviation of misery by visiting his beloved's grave” (Dayan 153), while Dayan states that “Poe substantiates the taking of teeth as occasion for the restoration of peace” (153). The protagonist's visit to Berenice's grave to get the “materialized” teeth, namely, the irreducible parts of his beloved, momentarily relieves his grief and fills him with great joy. Only the “materialized” teeth can become the fetish “describing both the object and its absence” [italics de Lauretis’s] (de Lauretis 229), when the hero can momentarily “reconstruct” his double recollections: the scenes of his horrible visit to the grave of his beloved to extract her teeth and those of his earliest days, which he spent with his beautiful cousin Berenice. These recollections can be interpreted as “the ecstasies which might have been” [italics Poe’s] (Poe 642) because, in the fetishized teeth, “the absence” of these ecstasies must be represented.

Conclusion

Poe suggests that “the ecstasies” and “the anguishs of to-day” are two sides of the same coin: “Either the memory of past bliss in the anguish of to-day, or the agonies which are, have their origin in the ecstasies which might have been” (Poe 642). This sentence is indicative of the subversiveness immanent in Egæus's fetishism because his constitutive mental stagnation implicates something “joyful” (642) that can always be described as “the wished-for object” (de Lauretis 230) with the fetishized teeth. The “materialized” teeth, scattering “to and fro about the floor,” could function as something like the apparatus that replaces “the anguish of to-day” (Poe 642) with “the memory of past bliss” (642), when the protagonist could overreach “the wide horizon as the rainbow (642)” with the “materialized” teeth and realize that “Misery is manifest” (642), or “The wretchedness of earth is multiform” (642).

Egæus's fetishism as described in "Berenice" might generally be perceived as a pathological condition, a manifestation of his mental disorder. On the other hand, the psychoanalytic model of fetishism, especially the one presented by de Lauretis, calls into question the general presupposition that perverse desire should be regarded as pathological. Egæus's desire for something “inappropriate” for sexual purposes is not pathological, but symptomatic of the process of our subject formation—its difficulty can be exemplified in the general exertion of mankind. His fetishism, therefore, depicts his psychic process of representing the “materialized” teeth with which he could momentarily “reconstruct” his recollections of joyful scenes. These scenes are “the ecstasies which might have been” (Poe 642), lurking behind his mental agonies.

Notes

1. Freud's originality lies in the fact that he used the existence of perversion as a weapon with which to throw the traditional definition of sexuality into question” (Laplanche and Pontalis 307).
2. De Lauretis connects the model of fetishism with that of lesbian desire, and states that “the lesbian's desire is sustained and signified by a fetish, a fantasy-phallus...unsupported by any perceptual memory” (de Lauretis 227-28).
3. Bersani and Dutois insist that the "mythical moment" manifests "its permanence and presence in all adult sexual behavior" (Bersani and Dutois 69). According to Laplanche and Pontalis, the subject in fantasy does not live in the world of objects but in "the setting" (Laplanche and Pontalis 26) of desire because, in fantasy, the subject "appears caught up with himself [sic.] in the sequence of images" (26). In fantasy located in autoeroticism, the subject "is himself [sic.] represented as participating in the scene" (26) because all distinction between the subject and the object has been lost.
Egæus's search for an indefinable and unrecoverable past through fetishism entails his reminiscence of something obscure, which may be termed as a sort of nostalgia. In the usual sense, nostalgia is regret or yearning for a lost past. On the other hand, Jane Gallop indicates two types of nostalgia in *Reading Lacan*: homesickness and 'melancholy regret...for what one has not experienced' (Gallop 148). Gallop goes on to explain that the nostalgic subject's desire is 'constitutively unsatisfied and unsatisfiable' (151) because the repressed object can never be present. The nostalgic subject is hence 'in a foreign land, alienated' (148).

**Works Cited**


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