

The Function of the Analyst –  
Bachmann's *Malina* Read Through Lacan

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Ingeborg Bachmann's only completed novel, *Malina* (1971), has enjoyed a varied and controversial reception history. Appearing in the highly-politicized German-speaking literary climate of the early 1970s, Bachmann's novel, in its radical subjectivity, was at first spurned by critics for its alleged lack of relevance to modern historical reality. Although the novel was subsequently rehabilitated (particularly following the posthumous publication of Bachmann's complete works in 1978), feminist readings in the 1980s and subsequently historical readings in the 1990s predominated.<sup>1</sup> And while the novel criticizes phallogocentrism, and, with its locus in post-war Vienna, references to fascism and the Shoah abound, these readings form only a part of the multiplicity of themes and interpretations which the text yields. An openness to new readings to supplement existing contextual interpretations, by a new generation of readers in the 1990s, has led to an explosion of psychoanalytic readings of Bachmann's work, leading to a greater emphasis on the problematic nature of subjectivity in *Malina* (Kohn-Waechter; Kanz; Lindemann).

The idea of analyzing literature through psychoanalysis is long-established given that literature from the modernist period onwards was greatly influenced by the ideas emerging out of Freudian psychoanalysis. As Thomas Anz notes in the study *Psychoanalyse in der modernen Literatur*, there is hardly a modernist author of importance after 1900 that does not engage with psychoanalysis, citing Arthur Schnitzler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal or Karl Kraus, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, Franz Kafka, Robert Musil, Alfred Döblin and Bertolt Brecht as examples. The connection between the literature of modernism (in which Bachmann may reasonably be included) and psychoanalysis is that they share the same concerns; namely, subjectivity, identity formation and the subject's role in society.

With regard to Bachmann's *Malina*, psychoanalytic interpretations have tended to focus primarily on Freud and Jung, whom Bachmann studied, was greatly influenced by, and makes explicit reference to in many of her works, including *Malina*.<sup>2</sup> While the second chapter of the novel, enigmatically entitled "Der dritte Mann," focuses

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on dream sequences revolving around the Freudian Oedipal triangle, the interdependency of the I-subject and Malina, meanwhile, has alternately been read as an archetypal ego/id conflict, or as an illustration of the Jungian anima/animus dynamic.<sup>3</sup> However, while both Freudian and Jungian readings do much to illuminate facets of the text, they neglect the central preoccupation of *Malina*, which is language and its relation to the formation of identity. With a text that makes its subject-matter the I-subject's attempt to articulate her trauma to her confidant, Lacan's theories of the subject's perpetual alienation within, and struggle with language seem very apposite here.<sup>4</sup> Lacan is particularly compatible with Bachmann because of his emphasis on the importance of the imaginary for the construction of subjectivity, as well as his emphasis on language as being central in the process of identity formation.

Several episodes in *Malina* are clearly Lacanian, and have been read as such in recent scholarship. Schottelius, for example, pays close attention to the 'mirror-episode' in *Malina* with regard to the Lacanian mirror-stage, while Kanz privileges the Lacanian concept of full and empty speech in analysis with regard to Bachmann's work.

Lacan claimed that the unconscious is structured like a language, and that psychoanalysis has only a single medium, the patient's speech. Although Bachmann does not at any stage refer to Lacan explicitly in her works, the topos of the split-subject and fragmented body permeating the *Todesarten* cycle, as well as the self-conscious preoccupation with writing and language, have led critics such as Sigrid Weigel to conclude that Bachmann almost certainly would have been familiar with theories of Lacan's early and middle period (Bachmann died in 1973) (Albrecht/Göttsche 230). Indeed, it seems impossible to imagine that Bachmann was not conversant with Lacanian theory given the plethora of Lacanian references in *Malina*, particularly with regard to the analyst/analysand dialectic, which is incredibly fruitful for bringing out the ambiguities of the interplay between the two main protagonists of the novel. This essay will explore: the Lacanian analyst/analysand relationship in *Malina*, whether or not a successful analysis takes place, and what implications this has for Bachmann's text.

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## The Subject

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The anonymous *Ich*, or I-subject, of *Malina* evokes all four principles central to Lacanian psychoanalysis: the unconscious, repetition, transference, and the drive. The unconscious is manifest at the subject's every attempt at articulation. It is that which is always beyond the I-subject's articulation, marked by its *tuché*, too real in the Lacanian conception to be confronted. In her recounting of her dreams to Malina, she constantly omits information, so painful is this encounter with the Real. The Lacanian concept of the Real denotes the "domain of whatever subsists outside symbolization" (Lacan, *Écrits* 388).

The I-subject's repetition compulsion manifests itself in the recurring dream-sequences where the I-subject's father returns to haunt and torment the I-subject in various guises – book-burner, inquisitor, fascist, opera director, czar, prison guard, and priest, but remains constant as the I-subject's imaginary father, as opposed to her symbolic father.<sup>5</sup> Transference, meanwhile, manifests itself at the symbolic level in the appearance of Malina in the I-subject's dreams as the analysis progresses. The drive meanwhile is displayed in the I-subject's desire for the analyst, Malina, which is particularly characterized by the partial scopophilic drive of desiring recognition by the other.<sup>6</sup> This is revealed both in the I-subject's dialogues with Malina – "Was für eine seltsame Bemühung! Sogar richtig willst du gesehen werden?" (*Werke* 3: 312) – and her constant striving to correct misperceptions of herself by writing letters (which form a significant part of *Malina*) to those that have wounded her most in her life.

In Lacanian terms, the I-subject represents a classic case of the castrated subject.<sup>7</sup> In her attempts to correct misconceptions of her own identity, she is striving to achieve a wholeness that, due to the subject being constantly alienated from himself within the Symbolic, the subject never had in the first place.<sup>8</sup> In addition to this fundamental alienation within the Symbolic common to all humanity, is added the trauma of incest, catalogued in the dream chapter, which has made the instance of the symbolic father, and, therefore, of an unproblematic existence within the Symbolic, impossible for the I-subject. The enormity of the I-subject's trauma has severed the Borromean knot of the Real, Imaginary and the Symbolic, leading to psychosis.<sup>9</sup>

Although there is no doubt that the I-subject, particularly due to her vocation as writer, continues to exist within the Symbolic, the

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Imaginary is the order that she inhabits primarily. This is reflected most notably in the I-subject's recourse to the genre of the fairy tale for her "Princess of Kagran" legend, where the I-subject proposes: "[V]erstecken könnte ich mich in der Legende einer Frau, die es nie gegeben hat" (62). This self-reflexive biographical writing on the part of the I-subject therefore bears the explicit acknowledgement that the figure the I-subject proposes to identify herself with (a primeval, beautiful young princess, who, following several misadventures, is rescued by an enigmatic stranger) is an idealized imago, an ideal ego, rather than her real self.<sup>10</sup> It is "eine Frau, die es nie gegeben hat." Thus the I-subject shows a strong awareness that identification with an ideal-ego will always prove delusory as demonstrated in another episode, uncannily reminiscent of the Lacanian mirror-stage<sup>11</sup>: "Ich bin in den Spiegel getreten, ich war im Spiegel verschwunden, ich habe in die Zukunft gesehen, ich war einig mit mir und ich bin wieder uneins mit mir. [...] Einen Augenblick lang war ich unsterblich und ich, ich [...] es war ohne Bedeutung" (136). In this extract we see all the manifestations of the I-subject's *Spaltung*. The formulation "*ich* bin uneins *mit mir*" suggests a fundamental split in the I-subject. Identification with the imago of herself in the mirror provides only momentary solace; any self-identification is self-delusion, as the I-subject herself makes clear in the phrase "es war ohne Bedeutung." This is the subject that the analyst, Malina, faces as his analysand. The ways which he sets about the task of analysis, and the demands that the subject places on him, will be explored in the following section.

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### Analysis

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Lacan wrote that "analysis appears to be [...] and the analyst sets himself up to receive, a demand for happiness" (*Ethics* 292). This is true as much for Lacanian as Freudian analysis. The difference between the two schools (a difference which Lacan himself as a professed disciple of Freud would no doubt deny), is Lacan's deep scepticism that a subject, having undergone analysis, would emerge ready to act in the world as a well-adjusted citizen and be able to form relationships successfully having finally resolved the Oedipal conflict. As Lacan once famously stated, "there is no reason why we [psychoanalysts] should make ourselves the guarantors of the bourgeois dream" (302-3).

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However, happiness is something the I-subject, as most subjects undergoing analysis, deeply desires, a desire that is manifested both in her relationship with her lover, Ivan, an ego-ideal onto whom she projects a *Heilsbringer* image, and in the writing that she engages in. Both the *schönes Buch* that she writes for Ivan in the form of the “Princess of Kagran” legend, and the I-subject’s letters, revolve around the dialectic of critique and utopia. As the repeated formulation in the “Princess of Kagran” fragments illustrates – “Ein Tag wird kommen” (*Werke* 3: 121ff) – the I-subject’s demand for happiness is projected into a distant future. It is a desire that in Lacanian terms can never be satisfied, and the aim of Lacanian analysis is to lead the analysand to recognise this truth about his or her desire. In Lacanian analysis there is no “Sovereign Good”: “Not only doesn’t he [the analyst] have that Sovereign Good that is asked of him, but he also knows there isn’t any. To have carried an analysis through to its end is no more nor less than to have encountered that limit in which the problematic of desire is raised” (*Ethics* 299).

So how does Malina go about this task? First, in his own persona as analyst, Malina seems to present the ideal of the Lacanian psychoanalyst. From the outset, Malina is firmly in control of the analysand/analyst relationship. He is the one who initiates the dialogues with the I-subject, preferring to start the “analysis” at a time that is convenient for him rather than for the I-subject. His variable-length *séances scandées* (the distinguishing feature of Lacanian analysis), his nonchalant ease and self-assurance with the I-subject, combined with an enigmatic distance – “Dennoch wird er immer Distanz halten, weil er ganz Distanz ist” (*Werke* 3: 299) – establish him as “the subject supposed to know” (*Concepts* 233).<sup>12</sup> This is a function augmented by his public role. He is the paragon of the well-adjusted citizen, both in his job as Class A civil servant in the Austrian Army Museum, and in his social life, where he plays the role of an adept mediator.

Malina’s conversations with the I-subject revolve primarily around the I-subject’s aforementioned dream-sequences, episodes from Malina and the I-subject’s life together, and Malina and the I-subject’s discussions about the self. The Lacanian analyst should know how to listen and how to intervene, and this is precisely what Malina does, with characteristically sharp and incisive comments: “Darum geht es nicht, ich will deine *Geschichte* nicht, *du* weichst mir immerzu aus”<sup>13</sup> (*Werke* 3: 222). A Lacanian contrast is therefore set up between the subject as constituted in language (the *Geschichte*), and the essential core of subjectivity (*du*). It is a contrast that is elaborated further in one of

Malina's and the I-subject's final dialogues. Malina repeatedly highlights a contrast between the I-subject's conception of herself, and his interpretation of what she is. Here, the knowledge of the "subject supposed to know" takes on a violent aspect as the analyst takes little notice of the I-subject's emotional suffering, instead believing it to be beneficial – "weil du dir nur nützen kannst, indem du dir schadest" (311) – refusing the I-subject any agency over her own identity: "Aber nicht dir, wie du denkst" (ibid). In the same dialogue, Malina insists that the outcome of the I-subject's analysis will be successful, promising a triumph – "siegen" (313) – but insisting that this will not take place via the traditional method of ego-psychology as pioneered by Freud: "Du wirst aber auch nicht mit deinem Ich siegen" (ibid).

The analyst's unnerving words, unnerving primarily because they are confronting the I-subject with the Real, awaken a state of paranoia in the I-subject: "Aber dann verstehe ich gar nichts mehr [...] Ich müßte mich ja selber beiseitigen" (311). Similarly, the I-subject perceives Malina's omniscience as threatening: "Du bist der Klügere, du weißt doch immer alles, du machst mich noch krank mit deinem Alleswissen" (179). However, "inducing in the subject a controlled paranoia" is another technique of Lacanian psychoanalysis, allowing the analyst to proceed to "split" the subject's ego (*Écrits* 15). This "splitting" of the ego constitutes the analyst teaching the subject how to apprehend himself as an object, "it is to the analyst's *ego* that the subject's ego that the subject is expected to conform" (91). It is interesting, particularly with regard to *Malina*, that Lacan uses the metaphor of the subject's ego passing over to "the other side of the *wall* that separates the analysand from the analyst"<sup>14</sup> to illustrate this objectification of the subject (ibid). The wall in question may reasonably be interpreted as the wall of language, alienating the subject from himself and from the other, while the analysand's readiness to accept the construction of himself or herself as object by the analyst causes this wall to disappear due to the analysand's fusion with the ego of the analyst. However, this identification will never be complete, prompting the analysand to attempt to retrieve some of their *ego*, in order to bring it back to the other side of the wall: "Half of the subject's *ego* passes over to the other side of the wall that separates the analysand from the analyst, then half of that half, and so on, in an asymptotic procession *that will never succeed*"<sup>15</sup> (ibid). The enigmatic ending of *Malina* therefore, where the I-subject's disappears into a crack in the wall, may be read as an unusually successful analysis in Lacanian terms, where the I-subject ego seems to pass wholly to the other side of the wall to the analyst's ego: "Es ist eine

sehr alte, eine sehr starke Wand, aus der niemand fallen kann, die niemand aufbrechen kann, aus der nie mehr etwas laut werden kann” (*Werke* 3: 337). Although this passage suggests that the I-subject’s ego has finally been annihilated, the events immediately preceding these lines would suggest otherwise. The wall itself, meets with resistance: “und es ist etwas in der Wand, es kann nicht mehr schreien, aber es schreit doch: Ivan!”<sup>16</sup> (336). These lines illustrate the struggle for articulation that has dominated *Malina*, and highlight the Lacanian notion that entry into the Symbolic constitutes a Herculean struggle, with the subject trying to assert his or her own subjectivity through a medium that is both impenetrable and alien-to-self. The I-subject’s cry is an understandable “flight” response to the analyst’s attempts to divest the I-subject of her subjectivity, and fashion her into a “caricature” of herself, an analyst’s prototype: “weil ich zu einer Karikatur geworden bin, im Geist und im Fleisch” (331). It is a resistance on the part of the analysand, manifested as negative transference, which Lacan summarizes as *amour-propre*; the analysand, displaying an aggressivity towards the analyst which is rooted in narcissism, cannot bear to be “freed by anyone other than myself” (*Écrits* 91). It is this double bind of the transference principle to which I will now turn.

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### Transference and the Desire of the Analyst

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Lacan saw transference as crucial to analysis, quite simply, it is “the enaction of the unconscious” (*Concepts* 267). Following the principle of repetition, the analysand “acts out” the libidinal impulses which constitute his being through the twin processes of positive transference (love towards the analyst), and negative transference (aggressivity and hatred towards the analyst). What Freud termed the process of the analysand “falling in love” with the analyst is, in the Lacanian conception of desire, almost inevitable as desire is constituted by a lack, and the analyst’s enigmatic mirror surface allows the subject to construct a fantasy which fills out this lack in the other (Forrester 30ff). Indeed, the construction of fantasy is what the I-subject engages in from the earliest stages of her acquaintance with Malina, likening him to an enigmatic society figure of the same name, and investing him with further aura by associating him with “Prinz Eugen, der edle Ritter,” which was the first song the I-subject was made to learn, “und damit auch den ersten Männernamen” (*Werke* 3: 20). It is therefore a

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conflation of both Freudian regression and repetition in the I-subject's desire for Malina (the I-subject's choice of erotic love-object is bound up with childhood Oedipal identification) and of the Lacanian concept of the Name-of-the-Father. The Name-of-the-Father functions as the child's entry into the Symbolic order in Lacanian theory. Hence "der erste Männername" equates Malina with the Law of the Father, becoming the I-subject's point of entry into the Symbolic order. Malina is the figure, after all, who monitors the I-subject's every utterance, displaying a privileged relationship to the Symbolic.

However, while this positive transference drives the I-subject's narrative forward in the earlier stages of the novel, it is increasingly transposed into negative transference in the latter half of *Malina*. Transference is manifest at the unconscious level of the I-subject's dreams, in which Malina, the analyst, increasingly features. In these dream sequences he remains a benevolent figure, alternately dancing with the I-subject or leading to the ceasing of an attack of the I-subject by her father. However, the transference becomes sinister, as the Borromean knot proceeds to unravel, and the real, imaginary and symbolic Father become conflated in the final dream sequences. The Father in the I-subject's dream sequences becomes divested of the characteristics that mark him as the real father for the I-subject. Firstly, the I-subject, looking into the Father's sleeping face, in one dream sequence, does not identify what she sees with the face of her real father. Instead the I-subject recognizes someone else in the space that is symbolically reserved for her real father, but this cognition constitutes a Lacanian encounter with the Real, and is therefore immediately repressed: "Mir kommt in meiner Erschöpfung ein Verdacht, aber der Verdacht ist zu groß, ich schlage den Verdacht sofort nieder" (206).

The I-subject continues to insist in the subsequent dream-sequence that she narrates to Malina that the Father in her dream is indeed her real father. However, this time around, he is divested of the voice which would identify him as the subject's real father: "Mein Vater, der nicht die Stimme meines Vaters hat" (235). In this episode we see the I-subject and the Father in dialogue for the first time, but the Father's only response to the I-subject's every assertion of self-identity – "Ich glaube, ich weiß es bald, wer du bist," and "Ich sage: Ich werde leben!" (233) – is the nonchalant "Und?" (233-4). It is not difficult to draw parallels here between Malina's interrogatory techniques, and those of the Father. Further evidence of transference is displayed in the I-subject's verdict on her relationship with the Father, "weil wir immer auseinanderkommen und weiter auseinander und weiter" (235), which

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cannot fail to remind the reader of the I-subject's earlier description of her relationship with Malina as "die divergierende Welt" (126). The Father therefore becomes conflated in the process of transference with the figure of Malina.

Malina, furthermore, does nothing to dissuade this process of negative transference by the I-subject, which clearly prevents "the demand for happiness" (*Ethics* 292) that the I-subject places on Malina, the analyst, ever being realized. On the contrary, the analyst is no longer able to cope with the I-subject's negative transference, because he has brought his own subjectivity and desire into play. The desire of the analyst in this instance appears to be mastery over the I-subject in the Hegelian master-slave dialectic that greatly influenced Lacan. There is no doubt that Malina constitutes a large part of his own identity through his exercising of power over the I-subject during their analysis; the master is just as dependent on the slave (the role which the subservient I-subject may be said to occupy) as the slave is on the master, indeed, in the Hegelian conception, more so. In order to force the other to recognize the subject's idea of himself or herself, the subject and the other are forced to engage in a fight for recognition or "pure prestige," which inevitably turns into a "fight to the death" (*Seminar* 223). This idea is reiterated by Malina who stresses that there can be no war *and* peace, bringing the I-subject to the realization; "Es ist immer Krieg [...] Es ist der ewige Krieg" (*Werke* 3: 236).

However, the Hegelian desire that Malina manifests is by no means constitutive of Lacanian psychoanalysis where "the desire proper to the analyst" is "the desire to obtain absolute difference" between himself and the analysand, thus allowing the analysand's own truth to emerge in the treatment (cf. Evans 39).<sup>17</sup> Malina's failure to keep his own desire out of the metaphorical consulting room, therefore, is a failure of his function as analyst in the novel, and, as a narrative device serves to highlight the inadequacy and ambivalence of Lacanian psychoanalysis as such. Far from allowing the subject to achieve "true speech," the "fight for pure prestige" (Evans 105) that Malina has introduced into the equation means that the I-subject, in her dialogues with Malina, is constantly constructing herself for the other (Malina). It is to *his* truth that she is expected to conform, thus rendering the goal of Lacanian psychoanalysis highly problematic.

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### The Subject Beyond the Established Limit

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As already explored, Lacan maintained throughout his life that his style of analysis had a clear ethical dimension, beyond that of the narrow aims of ego-psychology. In the *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, Lacan states that whatever the subject's needs or "appetites" may be, none of them will find satisfaction in analysis, and that the most the subject can expect, at the end of the analysis, is to "organize his menu" (*Concepts* 269). If Lacanian analysis abandons ego-psychology, "psychological harmonization" and the successful resolution of the Oedipal conflict as its primary aims, what does it replace these aims with? (*Ethics* 302) In the end, it seems that this is where Lacanian analysis reaches its limit, circling around the Real: "du kannst nur Vergebliches tun" (*Werke* 3: 313) pronounces Malina; any subject within the Symbolic order, within Language, is condemned to suffer the fragmentation of the self that is constitutive of subjectivity.

Thus, the Lacanian analyst can only present the subject with an impasse: the subject is forced to recognize that their ego-identification is false (this constitutes the advent of true speech), but that there is no place for the subject outside of the Symbolic order. Accepting the fact that existence within the Symbolic order will constitute a permanent *Krieg* is the key to avoiding psychosis. But what happens when the subject refuses to accept this deeply problematic existence within the Symbolic, as the I-subject appears to do in her struggle against Malina's attempts to force her to recognize herself as an object? Here the I-subject's struggle may be said to take on a tragic dimension akin to that of Antigone, whose story Lacan holds up as emblematic of the subject's noble refusal to accept an unsatisfactory existence within the Symbolic. Both the I-subject and Antigone can be categorized as "beyond established limits [...] separated in one way or another from the structure" (*Ethics* 271-2). Antigone's valiant fight against the Symbolic Law, and acceptance of death as an alternative to an unsatisfactory existence within the Symbolic, is also manifest in the I-subject. Although it is debatable whether the I-subject suffers a real death (the symbolic death precedes the real death for Lacan) as in the case of Antigone, the I-subject's entry into the wall of language constitutes a symbolic death or "a life that moves into the realm of death" (248).

However, in the Lacanian conception, the subject commits suicide every time that he enters Language, and hence constructs himself

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as an object for the other, leading to an “original” splitting or *déchirement*. Lacan saw this *déchirement* as constitutive of modern subjectivity as such, with its emphasis on image capitalism, and claimed that recognition of this fact was crucial for training analysts: “Let him be well acquainted with the whorl into which his period draws him in the continued enterprise of Babel, and let him be aware of his function as interpreter in the discord of languages” (105-6). This close alignment of the subject’s psychological alienation to structuralist linguistic theory is one that Bachmann would have identified with. Bachmann called literature “ein tausendfacher und mehrtausendjähriger Verstoß gegen die schlechte Sprache – denn das Leben hat nur eine schlechte Sprache” (*Werke* 4: 258). Thus, the poverty of language, in terms of the inevitable alienation that the subject undergoes upon entry into it, is nevertheless contrasted with the utopian agency of literature that through its diffuse and dialogic nature, its *jouissance* around the Symbolic, serves to continually negotiate the limits and boundaries of the Symbolic, even if these cannot be removed.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, the analyst/analysand dynamic in *Malina* serves the narrative function of illustrating the constant struggle with language and the Symbolic. The inevitable failure of the Lacanian analysis in *Malina*, due to the analyst’s “non-desire to cure” is reflective of the problematic nature of modern subjectivity as such (*Ethics* 218). However, while for Lacan every entry into the Symbolic constitutes a death, Bachmann’s text invites us to maintain the struggle against such a death, which is illustrated both in the I-subject’s spirited dialogues with Malina, and in the diffuse and dialogic process of writing in which the I-subject is constantly engaged. Although the attempt to escape symbolic fixity will never be satisfactory, leaving the subject permanently alienated both from himself and from others, cognition of this fact (which is the aim of Lacanian psychoanalysis) invites the subject to at least move towards the truth of what constitutes his desire and identity, even if its attainment remains a utopia.

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- <sup>1</sup> See Albrecht/Götttsche for a detailed analysis of *Malina's* reception history.
- <sup>2</sup> "Freud, Adler und Jung gelesen bei 360 Watt in einer einsamen Berliner Straße" in *Malina* (*Werke* 3: 81).
- <sup>3</sup> The relationship of the I-subject and Malina invites a multiplicity of readings, particularly with regard to gender theory. Some critics read Malina and the I-subject as two aspects of the same person, where Malina represents masculine, rational objectivity, and the I-subject feminine, emotional subjectivity. Malina and the I-subject's relationship has also been read as a Freudian analyst/analysand relationship, where the male analyst attempts to cure the female analysand of her hysteria. Gender is a major aspect of both *Malina* and Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, which would be impossible to address in this paper. See Kanz or Röhnelt for further exploration of the issue.
- <sup>4</sup> Any critic writing on *Malina* is immediately confronted with the problem of how to refer to *Ich*, the anonymous female narrator of *Malina*. I have chosen the term 'I-subject' as I feel it best reflects the *Ich's* subjectivity and interdependence with the figure of Malina.
- <sup>5</sup> Lacan distinguishes between the symbolic, imaginary and real father in his work. The imaginary father is an imago, "the composite of all the imaginary constructs that the subject builds up in fantasy around the figure of the father" and "often bears little relationship to the father as he is in reality" (Evans 62). The symbolic father is the person who enforces the law for the subject, with regard to the Symbolic order. The real father is defined as the biological father of the subject. Lacan argues that psychosis occurs when the symbolic father is reduced to the imaginary father.
- <sup>6</sup> See table of partial drives (Evans 48).
- <sup>7</sup> For Lacan, the term castration is not only associated with the Oedipus complex. Entry into language and the Symbolic also constitutes castration as the subject's entry into the social law prompts a split between his desire and the manner in which it can be expressed within the Symbolic.
- <sup>8</sup> Lacan defines the Symbolic as the social world and the laws that structure it. The subject's relationship to the Symbolic is mediated by language, thereby language itself also takes on a symbolic dimension.
- <sup>9</sup> The Borromean knot is a group of three rings, linked in such a way that if any one is removed, all three become separated. See Evans for an illustration (19). Lacan saw the successful maintaining of the three components or orders, the Real, Imaginary and the Symbolic, as crucial to avoiding psychosis. The Symbolic has already been explored. The Real for Lacan constitutes everything that is beyond the Symbolic, that is outside language and that resists symbolization. The Imaginary, meanwhile, is linked with the imagination and serves to synthesize and project an image of wholeness, helping the subject to overcome the severity of the Symbolic order and to hold the more unnerving aspects of the Real at bay.
- <sup>10</sup> The ideal-ego originates in the mirror stage and constitutes identification with an idolized image of oneself. The ego-ideal is identification with another who constitutes an ideal for the subject (Evans 52).
- <sup>11</sup> The Lacanian mirror stage, crucial to the formation of subjectivity, describes the process of identification with one's own image. This causes a fundamental alienation in the
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subject as the subject will never become one with his image. Nevertheless, he will strive constantly to make the other ratify this image.

<sup>12</sup> The “subject supposed to know” is a manifestation of transference on the part of the analysand regarding the analyst. The analyst does not possess ultimate knowledge or truth, but his embodiment of this function is crucial to transference, and thereby analysis, taking place.

<sup>13</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>14</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>15</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>16</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>17</sup> See the entry on the “desire of the analyst.”

<sup>18</sup> *Jouissance*, in Lacanian terms a “painful pleasure,” can be understood as a playful and transgressive testing of boundaries.

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