protracted syllable of "*me*." The sound extends, so to speak, beyond the reach of the play. Greek tragedies occur in sequences but the norm for later European tragedy is for the end to be the end. Byron's decision not to shape *Cain* as a tragedy is instructive here. Cain's "*me*" will resound and be inherited beyond its ending just as Abel's death will, in some other history, effect atonement rather than vengeance. Each mystery play generates action and resonance elsewhere in the huge and mysterious sequence of which it is a part. Byron will in fact go on to write *Heaven and Earth* beyond this ending.

Cain is not penitent or fully patient at the final pause of his play. His partial patience is impressive and gained—Byron puts in his rebuke of Adah's impatience to make sure that we notice it (I, II, 525)—but it is not Job's or Benedict's patience. The "*me*," we notice, is followed by an exclamation not a question mark. For Cain, that last "*me*!" carried into exile is the burden of a mystery which will be no longer questioned and whose weary and unintelligible weight will never be lifted. For us, that "*me*!"—to a remarkable extent—marks the end of a Romantic mystery play.

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The Self in History: Wordsworth, Tarkovsky, and Autobiography

The Wordsworth Circle 27:1 (Winter 1996), 9-13

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> Our knowledge is like sweat, or fumes, it's a function of the organism inseparable from existence, and has nothing whatever to do with Truth.
>
> (Tarkovsky, *Time*, 284)

The constructions of consciousness are frequently at odds with physical and emotional experience. An event that has been expected fails to materialize, or takes a different form from the one we had anticipated; yet the constructive activities of consciousness invariably continue unabashed, as though almost no amount of contrary evidence would be sufficient to derail them. The truths of consciousness, however, operate in a different dimension and on a different timescale from the knowledge of the body or the feelings. Here contradictions are often the norm; time may have little or no meaning, and the coherence of the self can fragment or dissolve. A few notable works of art bring the conflict between these two forms of experience into focus, in particular the major autobiographical work of William Wordsworth in *The Prelude* (1805) and the film director Andrey Tarkovsky in *Mirror* (1974). In both works, historical events are experienced in an immediate physical form, exerting a pressure that works to distort or negate the mental constructions usually proffered to contain them, so that the controlling, conscious self seems threatened with disintegration.

For Wordsworth, the tension between thought and feeling (speaking in summary terms) is apparent at many points in the local structure of his poem. For instance, at the Simplon Pass in Book VI, the post-hoc celebration of imagination seems oddly incongruent with the personal history of despondency Wordsworth relates at finding he has already crossed the Alps and the troubled night at the Gondo hospice. Similarly, in Book XI, the reflections that follow his description of the two spots of time on Penrith Beacon and above Hawkshead consort oddly with the feelings central to both episodes. His references to "The spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam" (*Prelude* (1805) xi.322), or the moralizing reference to God "who thus corrected my desires" (xi.374), seem to have little to do with the power of the episodes to which they are appended (all citations to Norton Critical Edition [1979], eds. Wordsworth, Abrams, and Gill). While evolution or conflict in feelings is central to Wordsworth's concerns, his attempt to make this process amenable to an explanatory framework is invariably belated. Wordsworth's pre-cognitive intimations are not only, in Tarkovsky's words, a function of the organism, but the point at which we taste the sweat and fumes of an immediate, lived historicism. While his terms are less earthy and immediate than this phrase of Tarkovsky, Wordsworth refers to his experience of Imagination on the Alps as "an unfathered vapour"; and, "I was lost as in a cloud" (vi.527, 529). In the 1850 text he also notes that this experience is called "Imagination" only "Through sad incompetence of human speech" (vi.593) — that, in other words, language is also belated and inadequate.

At such moments experience evades the constructions of consciousness most insistently; moreover, it makes contact more immediately with the historical undercurrent of human life which preoccupied both Wordsworth and Tarkovsky. Unlike Alan Liu, who argues in *Wordsworth: The Sense of History* (1989) that Wordsworth evades history in major passages

such as the Simplon Pass episode (e.g., pp. 23, 31), I would locate Wordsworth's historicism in his response to the humanized natural environment of his childhood, or that of France or Switzerland. But this presupposes not an alternative to, but a deconstruction of, the standard terms in which the major historical events of the period were construed. Wordsworth had little interest in the kinds of history that Liu sees him denying. For him, the interactions between human life and its environment are central to his concerns as a poet, and this preoccupation accounts for both his strengths and limitations as a poet: both his extraordinary power to convey a numinous sense of location (as in the "spots of time" episodes), as well as his tendency to the mundane or to the memorial.

While he seems not to have been aware of Wordsworth's poetry, Tarkovsky's autobiographical *Mirror* is an attempt to pursue a similar set of issues using somewhat similar means. Just as *The Prelude* brings the private experience of Wordsworth as a child and young adult into conflict with the French Revolution, *Mirror* brings into focus both the immediacy of recorded "spots of time" from childhood and the devastating impact on individual experience of contemporary history, that is, the Stalinist terror World War II. Tarkovsky also situates his understanding of the resulting contrasts or conflicts of feeling within a humanized natural environment, showing as he does so that this is the only possible context for endowing human experience with meaning, and that the stable ego of consciousness that insists on the separation of what is human from nature must be abandoned. As the doctor remarks, near the beginning of the film, we rush around talking in platitudes: "That's because we don't trust in nature, in what is in us" (citations from script broadcast in the U.K.). Tarkovsky's film, like Wordsworth's poem, calls into question the meaning and agency of the self: for him also this appears to be an illusion (indeed, a potentially disastrous one), as the historical evidence provided by the film bears witness.

For Tarkovsky the relationship of the individual to history is central. In his account of the film, Tarkovsky points to this principle in the way he describes one of its central and most puzzling features, the documentary footage of the Soviet army crossing the Sivash marshes. When he first discovered this film after looking through thousands of metres of newsreel, he says, "I knew that this episode had to become the centre, the very essence, heart, nerve of this picture that had started off merely as my intimate lyrical memories" (*Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*, trans. Blair [1987], 130). It is perhaps the physicality of war that is most impressive about this previously unknown sequence: we see how the issues of the war are translated into the intense bodily weariness of the soldiers, the intransigence of their heavy equipment being hauled across the water. But the same forces that have shaped this moment also shape the most private, most domestic moment: this appears to be behind Tarkovsky's insistence on the significance of this episode. Of course, these are not the forces announced in propaganda bulletins or official histories. What we witness of the soldiers' experience has nothing to do with the "Truth" of our conscious, public constructions. Tarkovsky attempts to address our emotions not our ideas: as Vlada Petril puts it, he evokes "highly visceral responses in the viewer, instead of triggering ideas meant to support a particular attitude towards society and history" ("Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery," "*Film Quarterly* 43 ['89-90], 28). But the sense of history in his film, according to Tarkovsky, should be pervasive:

> In *Mirror* I wanted to make people feel that Bach and Pergolesi and Pushkin's letter and the soldiers forcing the Sivash crossing, and also the intimate, domestic events — that all these things are in a sense equally important as human experience. In terms of a person's spiritual experience, what happened to him yesterday may have exactly the same degree of significance as what happened to humanity a hundred years ago . . . (*Sculpting*, 193)

And at the level addressed by Bach or the footage of the Sivash crossing, all times are equally present, as Arseny Tarkovsky declares in the poem that accompanies the Sivash episode:

> I will call up any century,
> Go into it and build myself a house.
> That is why your children are beside me
> And your wives, all seated at one table,
> One table for great-grandfather and grandson.
>
> (*Sculpting*, 143)

But to show how different times co-exist requires the kind of dream logic that Tarkovsky employs to structure the film — including this bold contradiction between scenes of death and a poem asserting eternal life.

Such a technique engages with the historical issues in an unusual and disturbing way. Another method involves the form of both works. It is worth noting that *The Prelude* and *Mirror* show several structural similarities. While both are autobiographical, both rather consistently disrupt conventional linear narrative. Indeed, *Mirror* hardly contains a narrative at all. Both works contain frequent departures from chronological order (a feature that is particularly confusing when first viewing *Mirror*). While Wordsworth certainly provides a sense of himself as an evolving individual—in growing beyond what he calls his idle, partly dissolute life at Cambridge, portrayed in Book III, or in getting beyond Godwinian reason in Book X—yet the linear model of development is clearly inadequate. In Book II, for example, as an adult he partakes in the identity of the child whose experiences of nature he has just described, since these left with him

> a register
> Of permanent relations else unknown.
> Hence, life, and change, and beauty, solitude

More active even than 'best society' (ii.311-314)

Yet earlier in the same book he also voices his sense of a deep discontinuity with the same childhood experiences: sometimes when he thinks of them, he says, "I seem / Two consciousnesses — conscious of myself, / And of some other being" (ii.31-33). Tarkovsky, perhaps more deliberately, also throws contradictions in our path. Not only are identities of mother and wife conflated but also Maria appears both as a young woman at the 1930s *dacha* with her small, shaven-headed children, and as an old woman with the same children. These aberrations disable our usual sense of cause and effect, suspending our ability to decode the signs of narrative logic in both works. But at the level of feeling, each of these contradictory perceptions seems true.

Another important similarity is the eruption of historical events at the centre of both works, situated between opening and closing sequences of intensely lyrical and apparently private experience. While Wordsworth avoids reference to events on the world state until reaching Books IX and X, Tarkovsky reminds us earlier in his work of the historical context of the 1930s in the printing house episode, with its pervasive atmosphere of fear. The major sequences in the centre of the film, however, offer a collage of war scenes and other world events (the Spanish Civil War, World War II, the confrontation with the Chinese on Damansky Island in 1969): these seem at first sight disconnected both from each other and from the autobiographical context of the film. And Wordsworth, for his part, having described his perspective on the French Revolution (acknowledging his limitations as a narrator) during his early twenties, is then almost silent about the events that followed and those that took place while he wrote much of the second half of the poem in 1804 and 1805 (he mentions Napoleon only very briefly, x.932-940). But then Wordsworth is explicit in rejecting official versions of history. In Book VIII, after saying that "our high-wrought modern narratives / Stript of their humanizing soul" had "never much delighted me," he adds that what had been done and suffered through the ages weighed most with him: this "could support the test of thought — / Was like the enduring majesty and power / Of independent nature" (viii.774-786; cf. xii. 112-119).

Both Tarkovsky and Wordsworth frame their accounts of historical events in terms of individual perspective. For example, in *Mirror*, Natalia mediates the transition to the newsreel segments by listening to the Spaniards' conversations and seeing the bullfight on television; but more important, the tension and verbal parrying of the argument she has been having with her estranged husband Alexei find a parallel first in the violence of the Spaniards (the bullfight, the father slapping his daughter in the face), then in the scene of bombing in Spain. Similarly, if more mysteriously, the scenes of World War II are framed by our view of the recalcitrant Asafyev, who has been refusing to cooperate with the drill instructor: after he climbs the snowy hill away from the firing range, he looks off camera to the right as though the scenes intercut with our view of him (the Russian tanks, the corpses of soldiers, the atomic bomb exploding) are seen by him — proleptic at this moment, since all lie in the future. His resistance to the conditions that war would impose on him, and perhaps his transcendence of them, are represented by the bird that comes to perch on his hat. He takes the bird in his hand, just as Alexei, apparently lying on his deathbed, does later.

This unexpected shift of focus to a symbol drawn from nature is consistent with Tarkovsky's technique elsewhere in *Mirror*. The first striking example is the wind that suddenly sweeps across the field as the doctor departs, making him pause. Wordsworth achieves a similar effect at numerous points in *The Prelude*, displacing himself from a scene in which he had been central to give a sense of natural forces: for example, when stealing raven's eggs,

> While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
> With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
> Blow through my ears; the sky seemed not a sky
> Of earth, and with what motion moved the clouds! (i.347-350)

In both the poem and the film, the human motivation that is normally central to narrative is defamiliarized. The figures in the landscape undergo a type of figure-ground reversal, so that the environment within which human beings derive their meaning and agency is itself foregrounded. Thus Wordsworth's emphasis in the childhood experience he relates, as well as in later episodes such as crossing the Alps, regularly displaces attention from the experiencing self on the natural processes with which the narrator's feelings appear to be continuous. While Wordsworth hangs perilously on the crag, that is, he notices feelings of concordance with the wind and sky that intervene upon his immediate motives. The "gentle shock of mild surprise" (v. 407) experienced by the Boy of Winander records a similar moment. Through these shifts of consciousness, Wordsworth foregrounds a set of natural forces that contrast, conflict, or participate to produce the environment, at the same time showing that these replicate or echo the forces that interact within human feelings (the forms and functioning of the feelings, that is, not their content: nature does not replicate what human feelings are *about*).

In the Simplon Pass sequence, Wordsworth records his thwarted expectations; the merely human motive is found wanting by circumstances, and the anticipated experience of the sublime is missed. But he then goes on to record quite a different experience in the Ravine of Gondo, with its "stationary blasts of waterfalls," muttering rocks, and "raving stream." These, he says, "were all like workings of one mind, the features / Of the same face" (vi. 558-569). What we witness here is a representation of the work of feelings at the basis of human nature, not only much more significant than the aesthetic experience that Wordsworth consciously sought

in mounting the Simplon Pass, but also an image of conflict, power, and transformation underlying the time-bound self of our ordinary perceptions, hence its apocalyptic character.

In Tarkovsky's work, the natural setting of his childhood home in *Mirror* becomes the principal agent for representing a similar set of forces, in particular the edge of woodland blown by the wind, which recurs as a motif at several points during the film. As with the Wordsworth examples, Tarkovsky switches to this scene, both as a way of recontextualizing a moment of human feeling or expectation, and to disable conventional narrative satisfactions, since instead of offering something for the comprehension, this enigmatic scene directly addresses the viewer's feelings. Moreover, it is notable that Tarkovsky consistently uses a leftward tracking movement to achieve this end — a technique that can probably be explained psychologically as follows. In a leftward movement the view first appears in the lefthand part of the screen: since the left visual field projects to the right hemisphere, this gives primacy in interpretation to the right hemisphere, with its analogue and affective powers. The meaning of this repeated scene is perhaps finally revealed only during the last episode of the film. Here, Tarkovsky's consistent use of this technique culminates in a final, lengthy denoument which enables him to pose within a single frame the questioning of identity which the film has posed its insistent historical awareness, and the dissolution of individual identity within the larger cycle of generation and death.

The identities of Maria as a young and as an old woman, already partly merged with that of Natalia earlier in the film, here appear to dissolve into one another. The young Maria is asked by her husband, "Do you want a boy or a girl?" Her mixture of emotions in response is expressively conveyed by the actress, Margarita Terekhova, but she then turns her head away from us to the right, and paralleling Asafyev's view of historical moments to come, appears to see a scene taking place that is literally impossible: herself as an old woman, leading her two young children through the overgrown garden. Intercut with this, the camera undertakes its longest leftward track in the film (58 seconds) across the vegetation in the garden, suspended briefly by a pause on a fallen tree trunk. The whole sequence is accompanied by the music of the opening chorus of Bach's *St John's Passion* (the words being sung here may be translated as "Lord, our master, whose glory fills the whole earth"). It is as though individual selves of the characters, above all that of Maria/Natalia, are transformed in consonance with the natural forces on which we focus in that central, long leftward tracking shot. The themes of generation, decay, and death suggested in nature here, find their parallel in the sequence of generations shown in the human figures in the garden, where Maria, her face showing contradictory emotions, seems endowed with prophetic power that sets her both within and outside time.

The ecological awareness of the Romantic poets has been emphasized by Jonathan Bate in *Romantic Ecology* (1991) and by Karl Kroeber in *Ecological Literary Criticism* (1994). In this respect, the issues raised by the poets are, of course, more pertinent now than they were two hundred years ago: this aspect of the Romantic legacy has a renewed vigour and urgency. As my discussion has suggested, Tarkovsky's film seems preoccupied with a similar set of concerns, and it deploys techniques that, allowing for the difference in medium, show suggestive similarities to Wordsworth's poem, and indicate that both were concerned with the same underlying problem: the disparity between consciousness and feelings. This disparity is critical: it is the foundation for the misconstrual of our place within nature and the ecology of the mind, in which feelings, not cognitions, drive the system. For both Wordsworth and Tarkovsky, art is the key to recovery, since art bypasses our conscious construals and puts us back in touch with the formative force of the feelings within us. And it is feeling evoked in this way that realigns us with nature.

For example, Wordsworth reconceptualizes the mind of the reader as the focus of natural forces in Book V of *The Prelude*, where he assimilates the power of poetry to that of nature. He claims that we

> Receive enduring touches of deep joy
> From the great Nature that exists in works
> Of mighty poets. Visionary power
> Attends upon the motions of the winds
> Embodied in the mystery of words;
> There darkness makes abode, and all the host
> Of shadowy things do work their changes there
> As in a mansion like their proper home. (v. 618-625)

What to the modern eye may be merely an organizing trope, seems intended literally by Wordsworth. By referring to "darkness" he suggests that the power of foregrounding in poetry is something that we can hardly glimpse directly; it is a force operating outside consciousness, where "shadowy things" effect changes below the surface of awareness. Yet they do so "As in a mansion like their proper home": that is, the changes are recognized by us; they seem appropriate. The "mansion" refers, of course, to the mind of the reader. Through poetry, then, a power equivalent to that of nature is at work in us, transforming our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Both Wordsworth and Tarkovsky, I have been suggesting, urge us to rethink our role as agents within nature, and this means rethinking the self. Through the imaginative power inherent in the "darkness" of feelings we will be able to conceive a different, less violent form of life. In the words of Coleridge (referring to the power of feelings while reading poetry): "We *become* that which we understandingly behold & hear, having, how much God perhaps only knows, created part even of the Form." (*Notebooks*, ii.2086). By en-

gaging with the most destructive and apparently incomprehensible historical events of their time (the French Revolution, World War II, and Stalinism), Wordsworth and Tarkovsky show that the self produced by our present culture is malformed and in a state of radical dissociation. In so doing, they teach a new modesty about human understanding, and illuminate the consonance of human feelings, rightly conceived, with the laws of our natural environment.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, the Dialogic Situation, and Speech as Act

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"*Language*, in the isolated word and in connected discourse, is an *act*, a truly creative *performance of the mind*," declared the philologist Wilhelm von Humboldt in the 1830s (*On Language*, trans. Heath [1988], 183). Humboldt's dynamic conception of language has been recognized by twentieth-century thinkers as both typically Romantic and peculiarly modern. More than one scholar has referred to the period since 1930 as a "Humboldt-Renaissance," and if Constatin Behler's claim that hearkening back to Humboldt has "almost become the fashion in twentieth-century linguistics and philosophy of language" is somewhat overstated (*Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 63 [1989], 2), it is nevertheless remarkable what a wide range of application Humboldt's ideas have found. He has been seen as anticipating Saussure's concept of the linguistic system, the linguistic relativity of Sapir and Whorf, and even Derrida's displacement of logocentrism and phonocentrism (J. Trabant, "Gedächtnis und Schrift," *KODIKAS/CODE* 9 [1986]; C. Stetter, " '*Über Denken und Sprechen*'," *Wilhelm von Humboldts Sprachdenken*, ed. Scharf, 26). He has been claimed as forefather of "Neohumboldtians" like Leo Weisgerber, of Gadamer's hermeneutics, and, infamously, of Chomskian transformational grammar.

But what of Humboldt's relationship to twentieth-century conceptualizations of language as *act* and *performance*? The emphatic statement of Humboldt's with which I began suggests there are correspondences to be explored with the speech-act philosophy of J. L. Austin and John Searle. Or, to name a much closer relationship still, Humboldt's work is open to comparison with the linguistics of Emile Benveniste, whose concept of performativity emerges out of his conviction that subjectivity and dialogue are fundamental to discourse, and that discourse (as opposed to the system of language) is an essential object of linguistic study. These are convictions that he shares with Humboldt. Indeed, Humboldt's clear emphasis on the dialogic situation as the basis of linguistic, mental, artistic, and social development also raises the possibility of parallels with twentieth-century theorists from Bakhtin to Habermas. These are not issues of direct influence—or, if so, only in a very remote sense. To my knowledge, neither Austin nor Searle ever mentions Humboldt, who, as a Continental statesman, linguist, literary critic, and notoriously unsystematic writer, stands outside of the main line of development of twentieth-century analytic philosophy of language. The connections between Humboldt and Benveniste are potentially closer, and it seems more than possible that Benveniste read Humboldt, yet no explicit references to Humboldt in Benveniste's work have been remarked on either.

In this paper, I would like to focus on Humboldt's concept of the utterance as a moment of reciprocal interaction among self, word, and world, and on the resulting parallels with speech-act theory, especially the version proposed by Benveniste. I suggest that this juxtaposition can produce a concept of the speech-act that is particularly significant for our encounter with Romantic literary texts.

Of primary importance in any discussion of Humboldt as a forerunner of speech-act theory is his constant emphasis on the *individual utterance* as the proper object of the philosophy of language, an emphasis that he shares with his older contemporaries Herder and James Harris, who also use the term *energeia*—energy or activity—to characterize the nature of language. In other words, a linguistics of the speech-act has its origin in the Romantic period contemporaneously with the birth of comparative and systematic linguistics, although the focus on the speech-act was not developed until it was reintroduced to linguistics a century and a half later by Benveniste, and to analytic philosophy by Austin.

At first sight, Humboldt's concept of utterance as the spontaneous act of an individual speaker may seem to have little in common with Austin's idea of verbal performativity as determined by societal convention, or Searle's notion of speaking as an activity governed by constitutive rules. For Austin, it is a community's agreement on the conditions that give authority to a declaration that allows a speaker's declaration to perform successfully; for Searle, it is a hearer's recognition of the accepted rules for declaring that allow an utterance to count as a declaration. When Humboldt refers to speaking as an act, on the other hand, he is primarily referring to the moment in which the utterance, by uniting a