Subjectivity in the New Hollywood Cinema: Fathers, Sons and Other Ghosts

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Chapter 3

Indiana Jones and the Work of Archeology
Indiana Jones and the Work of Archaeology

Disjointed Time, History, World

The adventures of doctor Henry Jones junior, alias Indiana Jones, who is engaged both in an academic career as a university professor and in field research, cohere around his profession as an archeologist. In the first film of the trilogy he is introduced as an accomplished scholar. As a professor of archeology, expert on the occult and a collector of rare antiquities he is approached by intelligence agents who have just traced a German communiqué sent from Cairo to Berlin. The agents inform doctor Jones that Hitler is obsessed with the occult and that the Nazis have teams of archeologists all around the world searching for religious artifacts. They cannot decipher the message, nor can they understand where Hitler's interest lies. It is only when doctor Jones explains that “the staff of Ra” and “Tanis,” mentioned in the communiqué, are related to the “Ark” and that the army which carries the Ark before it is invincible, that the agents begin to grasp the importance of the message. They want Indiana Jones to find the Ark before the Nazis do and they are prepared to pay handsomely.

The adventures take place in the mid 1930s, hence that period of history when the Nazis were actually in power. In the third film of the trilogy Indiana’s adventures take him to a Nazi rally in Berlin. It is a scene where book-burning is in process, flags and banners displaying the swastika are waved euphorically (scene 1). Hitler is himself present, surrounded by a crowd of children who are pushing their autograph books at him in order to obtain his signature. Having retrieved his father’s Grail diary, Indiana is trying to get away from the hysteria of the rally. Suddenly, he finds himself face to face with Hitler (shots 3–12). Hitler mistakes him for one of his followers, takes the diary, opens it to the first page and signs his autograph. Here, a layer of history is added to the fabula, whereby reality becomes entangled with the story. To establish a connection between the man who signed the Grail diary and Hitler, we have to rely on extra-textual knowledge. Visual resemblance between the character in the film and the actual historical figure triggers a name. The information based on the iconic relation is immediately confirmed through the indexical sign - his signature (shot 10). The confirmation of identity based on indexicality yields more than just a further qualification of the character-image, it also helps us to give meaning to the interaction between Indiana and Hitler. Hitler’s sig-
nature has scarred the Grail diary, just as Hitler himself has corrupted history. The indexical relation furthers the process of semiosis and enables us to disclose the symbolic value of the interaction: Indiana’s repossession of the diary figures as a promise for a future history. This episode, I would suggest, emblematizes the “work of archeology” in the trilogy. It enables us to conclude that even though arche is tied to the past it can be reconstructed through the present of meaning production.

As in Back to the Future, the rescue operation will prove co-dependent on the re-structuring of the geschiedenis, implying that the re-vision of the fabula will have an immediate effect on the telling of history. Unlike Marty McFly, however, or Elliot and ET, who are interpellated in the process of telling through the structures of focalization, as well as action, Indiana’s main function is to propel action. In ET-The Extraterrestrial the character-image is decomposed, in Back to the Future it is doubled; in the trilogy, the character-image can be defined as an action-image, not so much in the Deleuzian sense, but rather in the vein of Greimas, hence as an actantial position. One of the aspects of understanding the fabula, according to Greimas, is the subdivision of actors into classes. In this model the classes of actors are called actants. The elements of the fabula play a crucial role here, or more precisely, the relationship between the events, the actors and time does. We can trace three general actants in the trilogy: 1) the good: Indiana Jones as Moses the son/Short-Round/Indiana Jones as the Arthurian Knight; 2) the evil: the Nazis/the Egyptians/Kali worshipers/the British colonial empire; and 3) the object of archeological quest: the Ark/ Indiana as Moses the father/Sivalinga/Indiana as the father-figure to Short-Round/Holy Grail/Henry Jones senior.

The actual oppressor from our recent history who functions as the villain in two films of the trilogy inevitably brings about a sense of preposterous history. More importantly, however, the distortion of the fictional world is reconfirmed through the preposterously structured relations in the narrative. As in Back to the Future, the disordered geschiedenis puts pressure on the offspring. The analysis will show that the rescue remains dependent on the son’s capacity to re-generate his father. That is, the inverted generational ordering is required to order the world. In Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, for example, Indiana’s structural position as actant is
dependent precisely on his capacity to exchange positions with the actant who is at the same time the object of his quest - his father. In *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, Indiana himself functions as a father who is brought back to life by the Chinese boy Short-Round. In *Raiders of the Lost Ark* as the analysis will show, he functions as "Freud’s Moses" - the Egyptian son who is at the same time the father of the Jewish race. When we take into account the relationship between the actantial positions, we can note that the accomplishment of the archeological quest is bound up with Indiana’s capacity to function as both the origin and the trace, the son and the father, the subject and the object of his quest. The exchangeability of actantial positions makes it possible to set the temporal sequence in order. Through the process of telling governed by the structure of *différance*, the temporal sequence of both the fabula and history will come into being. The new Hollywood’s "time-out-of-joint" is not new. We see it in the films' pre-texts such as in Philip K.Dick’s novel by the same title published in 1959, not to mention Shakespeare’s wordplay and structural play from the sixteenth century which insinuates a similar disruption of orders based on linearity, sequence and place, most famously expressed in Hamlet’s words that “time is out of joint.” Derrida also discusses Hamlet’s assertion in detail. He relates the dis-jointing of time with history and the world:

In the “time is out of joint,” time is either *le temps* itself, the temporality of time, or else what temporality makes possible (time as *histoire*, the way things are at a certain time, the time that we are living, nowdays, the period) or else, consequently, the *monde*, the world as it turns, our world today, currentness itself, current affairs: [...] Time: it is *temps*, but it is also *l’histoire*, and it is *le monde*, time, history, world. (Derrida, 1994: 18-19)

The world and time join in history but also in the fabula; the pre-posterous world is characterized by a specific temporal structuring or, more precisely, an (dis)order where the effect precedes the cause. The analysis of the trilogy will demonstrate that the disjointed time, world and history ultimately structure our understanding of issues such as ethnicity and race. It is my contention that such positioning
or ordering of the elements where the preposterously structured relations between time and the world come to infer a troubled history, and by extension a troubled subjectivity, is the most prominent strategy of the new Hollywood cinema. In *ET-The Extraterrestrial* the absence of the father provokes a crisis of Elliot's subjectivity. In *Back to the Future*, the father is elaborated as suffering a crisis of subjectivity. Moreover, while this father comes to personify the crisis of the authority which exceeds the fictional world, the son, with his prospective and retrospective vision personifies the agency who has the capacity to affect a future history.

With respect to this, I would suggest, Indiana personifies the urgency to prevent the *arche* from being snatched, scarred or erased. Thus he works through his competence as an arche-ologist. This work of archeology, as I have mentioned earlier, is dependent on the exchangeability of actantial positions. As in *Back to the Future*, I will read the conceptual process reflected in this structure as *différance*. I will argue that in the case of the trilogy, the insertion of Indiana into the structure of *différance* conditions his function as the son who is also the father of racial, ethnic and religious identity.

**The Work of Archeology: Structuring the Narrative**

The implied intertwinements between fabula and history as they are related to the specific work of archeology in the trilogy evoke the concepts of Michel de Certeau rather than those of Michel Foucault.\(^vi\) The difference between the two concepts of archeology implies in the first place a distinction between two concepts of history; history as a series of silenced discourses, and history as a narrative structure.\(^vii\) While Foucault is examining the archeology of discourses, in *The Writing of History*, de Certeau focuses on the archeology *in a discourse*:

> Perhaps it is a question of giving a specific content already to the "archeology" that Michel Foucault has surrounded with new prestige. For my part, born as a historian within religious history, and formed by the dialect of that discipline, I asked myself what role religious production and institutions might have had in the organization of the modern "scriptural" society that has replaced them by transforming them. Archeology was the way by which I sought to specify the return of a
repressed, a system of Scriptures which modernity has *made* into an absent body, without being able to eliminate it. This “analysis” allowed me also to recognize in current labors a “past, accumulated” and still-influential labor. (de Certeau, 1988: 14)

In de Certeau’s view the historian’s discourse is always in fact a production of fiction, a fabrication of former interpretations, implying that ultimately, historiography is dependent on narrative structuring. According to de Certeau, fiction in any of its modalities - mythic, literary, scientific, or metaphorical - is a discourse that informs the real without pretending either to represent it or to credit itself with the capacity for such a representation. Historiography on the other hand has the ambition to speak the real and it is this ambition that “turns into a mythic structure whose opaque presence haunts our scientific, historical discipline” (de Certeau, 1986). Hence, de Certeau’s archeology presupposes that (the writing of) history is dependent on the modes of telling, and conversely, that the process of telling can inform us about history.

The recurrence of the Oedipus myth in the new Hollywood films, or rather the recurrence of a corrupted version of the myth have come to symbolize a sense of a distorted historical present. Through our own indexical relation with this cultural myth which conditions historical coevalness, we can interpret the implied distortion as related to our historical present. Traditional history, in contrast, “thrives on distancing the past from the present in order to grasp it better” (Bal, 151). In *Back to the Future*, the preposterous history is indexed through the preposterously structured relations in the Oedipal scenario. Similarly, in the *Indiana Jones* trilogy, particularly in the last film of the sequel, the wrongs of history can be apprehended through the urgency to reverse the chronological sequence. But contrary to the Oedipal scenario, the father will be repaired, rather than killed.

In *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, Indiana is invited to go on a mission to recover the Holy Grail. It appears that the man who had been engaged in the project has disappeared and Indiana is asked to take his place. When he mentions that it is his father who should rather be invited since he is the expert on the subject, Indi-
ana is informed that the missing person is precisely his father Henry Jones. Hence, Indiana’s search for the “Cup of Christ” becomes in fact a search for his father. In order to force Indiana to guide the way to the temple where the Grail is hidden, Nazi stooge Walter Donovan shoots Henry. Since the healing power of the Grail can save his father, Indiana seems to have no other option but to face the final challenge of the Crusaders. Once he is in the Well of Souls, as a true knight he chooses the right chalice. He delivers the water from the Well of Life to his dying father and thereby undoes his deadly wound (scene 2).

The story does not end here, however. Elsa, the German archeologist who had managed to seduce both the father and son, ignores the warning of the guardian Knight, snatches the Grail and rushes out of this sacred place. When she steps on the edge of the Great Seal, the ground beneath her starts to shift and then splits open. Indiana’s attempt to save her is without success because instead of reaching out for Indiana’s hand, Elsa stretches in the opposite direction reaching out for the cup. As a result of this rescue attempt Indiana ends up on the verge of the abyss, moments away from losing his own life. His father grabs one of his hands, but he cannot pull him out because Indiana, just as Elsa did, is trying to reach the Grail. The father finally manages to save his son by calling out his name. We have to remember that throughout the entire film the father keeps calling his son “Junior” even though the son wants to be called “Indiana.” The father (who is himself re-created through the work of archeology of the son) is about to bring the son back to life and, in accordance with biblical narrative this act of (re)creation occurs through the act of naming.xi

Paradoxically, the name the father utters is “Indiana,” the name the son had chosen for himself in the future. Therefore, through the “work of archeology” of the son, the father is brought back to life, but this in turn secures the son’s own existence because the father is the one who can teach him what arche is really about. Through this work of archeology the past is both re-named and re-framed through the present; that is, the arche is generated through the present of the meaning production. Unlike Ulysses, Agamemnon, or Oedipus, who are tied to the archaic levels of the reign of their predecessors, Indiana as well as his alleged predecessor is generated through the “now” of the process of telling.
The work of archeology (as doctor Jones tells his students) presupposes that myths cannot be taken at face value. Nevertheless, the biblical myth about the Ark (Raiders of the Lost Ark), the Hindu myth about Sivalinga (Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom) or the Arthurian myth about the Holy Grail (Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade) are taken to account for the origin of invincibility, fortune, glory and eternal life. By positing Hitler as a threat to the artifact/origin, and by inventing the savior of the endangered origin/artifact (chiasmus intended), Spielberg’s trilogy reinforces the importance of arriving at, and re-producing the origin. Apart from introducing the actual historical figures who pose a threat, the sequel simulates scientific explanations (provided by the experts) and archeological quests (traveling to far-away places). The result of this strategy of confusing history with fiction, replacing explanation with story, is that the trilogy is ultimately sending off its own myth. As that myth has it, the archeologist, Henry Jones junior, alias Indiana Jones, manages to protect and thus preserve the series of artifacts/"origins" from the forces of evil and darkness.

The problem of interpreting a narratival mode where history is fictionalized and fiction is historicized is comparable to Freud’s works on origins, Totem and Taboo and Moses and Monotheism. Although both texts can be read as examples of mythical discourse, or as Freud called them himself, theoretical fictions, they need to be considered separately, especially in terms of considering Freud’s own stakes in the writing of his history of the Jewish people in Moses and Monotheism. But before we can make the distinction between the creation of the Oedipal myth as in Totem and Taboo and the refiguring of Jewish history as in Moses and Monotheism, it is first necessary to point to the features which principally define the realm of mythical discourse. In a later section of this chapter I will bring to the fore de Certeau’s discussion of Freud’s writing of history. In this section Totem and Taboo will be taken as a point of departure for a discussion of mythical discourse. According to Bal, this work exemplifies mythical discourse in that it constructs an argument which tries to explain structures by stories, and consequently, it replaces articulation with origin (Bal, 1991).

The emerging issues are relevant for an examination of Spielberg’s trilogy, because what the trilogy obscures is the same
thing which myths in general try to conceal - the subject of vision. The story by which Freud accomplishes his narrative explanation of human phylogensis, appears as a rendering of a universal truth. Bal explains that the universalism of myth allows the subject to obliterate its contingent nature by obliterating itself (Bal 1991: 98):

The idea of myth allows this illusion to be entertained and also the need for it to be repressed. [...] Thus conceived, myth cannot be defined but as an empty screen, a structure that appeals to the individual subject because of its pseudostability, a stability that helps overcome the feeling of contingency. (Bal, 1991: 98)

According to Bal, this illusion of the stable signified allows the user of a myth to project more freely, because s/he can hide behind a supposedly stable, eternal and hence, undisputed truth. Bal distinguishes Freud’s Totem and Taboo, as a paradigmatic case of mythical discourse, “where fantasy and primal fantasy come together in a pseudohistorical escape from history,” as a staging of an “explanation” through the conflict between universalism and historicity:

The utmost universality is in this view equal to the utmost historicality, via the assumption that the further removed from the present, the older, the truer the story is and the more general its range of application. Within this line of thought, origin counters - replaces - articulation. (Bal, 1991: 111)

When origin replaces articulation, Bal notes, “ideas and fantasies get a father and become sons” (Bal, 1991: 111). But the father constructed through mythical discourse only obscures the actual “father” of mythical discourse. This discursive strategy whereby ideas acquire the status of a father-origin can be compared to a Platonic schema that assigns the origin and power of speech, of logos, to the paternal position. In fact, Plato privileges speech over writing because in his view, writing, unlike speech always needs a “father” to attend it. In “Plato’s Pharmacy” Derrida argues that Plato comes to his explanation precisely through recourse to mythical discourse, that is, through the myth of Theuth as the father, the inventor of writing (Derrida, 1981). Moreover, the fact that speech or logos does
not need a father implies according to Derrida, that the paternal position is already invested in logos. In his view, this fatherly position of logos ultimately discloses the blind spot of idealist philosophy. Accordingly, the recourse to the myth about the origin of writing, which produces the origin, or the inventor-father of writing, at the same time tries to cover up the actual “father” of Plato’s own logos.

The expression “father of logos” cannot be understood as a simple metaphor. One must rather proceed to undertake a general reversal of all metaphorical directions, “no longer asking whether logos can have a father but understanding that what the father claims to be the father of cannot go without the essential possibility of logos” (Derrida, 1981: 81). By pointing to the fact that the relationship between logos and its father is conditioned through difféance, Derrida is indirectly pointing to the interdependency between the subject in the text and the subject of the text. The narrated content can only be known on the account of the narrator. The father—as the origin produced through the process of telling depends on the father of the discourse, the narrator. The problem of accounting for the subject of the text is particularly acute when mythical discourse is at stake:

If the meaning of the myth is unstable, it is because of this very split between the subject who tells the story about itself and the subject it tells about [...] The story is virtually nonexistent, and the telling of it is all there is to it. The telling in turn is different each time, so that the meaning is unfixed. (Bal, 1991: 98)

Because the telling is all there is, we tend to forget that the narrated content is always inextricable from the narratorial authority responsible for the framing of this content. The genealogical break which is obscured through this process, that is, the occurring absence of the “father” (of the text) needs to be supplied through the process of analysis. The absence is supplied by those who attend it, “who are present with the presence of a father.” This is a supplementation conditioned through difféance. Consequently, the responsibility for logos, for its meaning and effects goes to those who are involved in the production of meaning:
The importance of telling reassigns responsibility, taking it from the teller, who disposes of the means to propose his or her own view, and assigning it to the viewer, reader, listener, who takes over by processing the work. In this light, myth becomes a pre-text and a pretext that is, in both senses of the word. (Bal, 1991:127)

Critical discourse based on the narrative fallacy intrinsic of mythical discourse whereby origin replaces articulation, appears quasi-objective. It is precisely this narrative fallacy, however, that conditions the restoration of origins in the trilogy. As it so happens, the trilogy stages a conflict between universalism and historicity not only to generate its own myth, but to put the origin into place. As in mythical discourse, the genealogical break or the estrangement from the origin which occurs in the act of telling is covered up. In my own archeological quest, I will demonstrate that it is possible to “recover” the subject of vision; and, that the process of disclosing the subject of vision is dependent on fabulation, that is, on the ideological and personal concerns which inform the vision of the fabula. It is on this level that we will be able to trace the interdependency between the subject in the text and subject of the text. If in *Totem and Taboo* origin replaces articulation, in the *Indiana Jones* trilogy, articulation, or a specific mode of telling, is required both to produce and to erase the origin. As I have suggested, it is through *différence* that *arche* is ultimately re-produced. What needs to be examined then is the rhetorical and historical specificity of this signifying structure. Through the play with the split of the paternal position, underscored through the exchange of actantial positions, both the origin and the father are put into place.

Freud has suggested that the semantic structure emerging from his analysis of a primal society in *Totem and Taboo* is the Oedipal structure; he concludes this work with the assertion that “the beginning of religion, morals, society and art converge in the Oedipus complex,” (Freud 1990: 219). The production of an origin of a particular race through the erasure of that very origin, or the refiguring of both the fabula and the father traceable in the *Indiana Jones* trilogy, however, is comparable to Freud’s discursive strategy in his later work, *Moses and Monotheism*. In *Freud’s Moses, Judaism Terminable and Interminable*, for example, Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi
gives an account of Freudian psychoanalysis by drawing a relation between psychoanalysis based on ethnicity and Freud’s Jewish heritage:

That Freud should have turned to history to solve his Jewish riddles comes as no surprise. Historicism of one kind or another has been a dominant characteristic of modern Jewish thought since the early nineteenth century, while the historical bent of psychoanalysis itself is, theoretically and therapeutically part of its very essence ...Predictably, the only Jewish history that could be of moment to him was the history of the Jewish psyche, and it was not through the scrutiny of an endless series of texts and documents that it could be fathomed. In order to recover it, Freud the historian employed a blatantly ahistorical, and even anti-historical method, at least as we ordinarily conceive the rules of the game. (Yerushalmi, 1991: 19)

Even though it may be far-fetched to claim that Spielberg’s turn to the “history” of the late 1930s serves to solve his own Jewish riddles, it is not far-fetched to contend that Spielberg’s turn to history echoes a re-turn of Freud’s Jewish riddles. The repairing of history through the reinvention of the fabula in the trilogy will turn out to be comparable to the strategies Freud deploys in Moses in Monotheism. My contention is that much like Freud who is preoccupied with the refiguring of Jewish history, the narratorial authority of the films in question intervenes into the fabula in order to “correct” both the past and the future. The concealing of the genealogical break in mythical discourse provides the genealogical foundation, for it elicits the “origin” of a particular group of people. I will argue that mythical discourse as it is bound up with the re-structuring of the fabula reveals a preoccupation with the preservation of racial, ethnic and religious identity.

The Origin of Indiana Jones
In the three films of the trilogy Indiana Jones is successively interpellated into the myths of Judaism, Hinduism and Christianity. Unlike the forces of evil who want to cannibalize peoples’ origins, and thereby erase “otherness,” Indiana Jones radicalizes the possibil-
ity of existing as both different and the same. The fact that Indiana is narrativized through différance implies that he thematizes the decomposition of the sign and the splitting of the origin. Comparable to the paradox implied in Freud's "Moses the Egyptian," the decomposed image of Indiana Jones is predicated on "making room" for difference.

While in the first and third film of the trilogy Hitler represents the force of evil, in the second film Indiana's adversaries are not the Nazis but Kali worshippers. The problem of race is temporarily replaced with the problem of colonization expressed through the domination of a religious cult. Due to the evil practices of Kali worshippers the people of a village in India are faced with draught, hunger and death. The Kali worshippers are stealing the children from the village and, as we soon find out, the worshipers of evil have set up work-camps in the Pankot Palace where the imprisoned children are digging away in search for the two missing Sivalinga stones. Although the film does not deal with the Nazis, the year is 1935, and we know that at this time in history, the "world is out-of-joint." In 1935 the Nazis were already in power, but even more pertinent to this film is the fact that India was still colonized by the British. The film does not take the actual colonizers as the representatives of evil - this is displaced onto the Kali worshippers. The village chief explains to Indiana that the maharaja has taken the Sivalinga or the sacred stone from the village shrine, because the people in the village refused to pray to the evil god. As an expert in archeology, Indiana is familiar with the Sankara legend in which five rocks with magic properties are mentioned; the one who succeeds in putting all five rocks together will acquire infinite fortune and glory.

This time Indiana is accompanied by a courageous streetwise Chinese boy, Short-Round and the spoiled but attractive club-singer Willie, who became involved in the adventure by accident, that is, against her will. Short-Round was orphaned when the Japanese bombed Shanghai, and in that respect he is a direct victim of an act of colonization. Willie, on the other hand can be understood as a personification of the Western obsession with fortune and glory in far-away lands. It is in the company of this woman and this child that Indiana will depart on an elephant journey towards the Pankot Palace. The threesome symbolizes a nuclear family which conditions the development of familial relations especially between
Indiana and Short-Round. As an eminent archeologist, Indiana is cordially received upon arriving at the palace and he is offered the pleasure of dining with his royal host. At dinner we find out that the maharaja is actually a young boy who is utterly bored with the conversation of his adult guests and that the figure in charge is Chattar Lal, the maharaja’s prime minister. Apart from doctor Jones, the other prominent guest introduced here is Captain Blumbart, a British official who came to inspect the state of affairs in Pankot. Doctor Jones commences a discussion about the Thuggee cult or the practice of Kali worship with human sacrifices. It existed in Pankot in the past, but Captain Blumbart proudly asserts that the cult has been dead ever since the British army did away with it. With this comment Captain Blumbart is implicitly perverting the role of the British army in India, for he is leading us to believe that the British are liberators rather than colonizers. Because he does not seem to understand his own relation to the people of India, it is quite clear that he is not the one who can help them.

When doctor Jones attempts to establish a connection between the sacred rocks of the Sankara legend and the doomed village, he is again told there is nothing to worry about; the prime minister contends that any implications of the revival of the cult are based on mere misunderstanding. But already during the first night of their stay in the palace Indiana and his companions will realize that if something is not done immediately, the people from the village will disappear. The spectacle that Indiana, Willie and Short-Round secretly observe is rather disturbing; as an expert on the occult, Indiana will identify it as a Thuggee ceremony, which consists of ripping a victim’s heart out and, while he is still alive, throwing him into a fire pit. Indiana also notices a human skull with three rocks inside it. He reminds his companions of the legend that states that when the rocks are together the diamonds inside glow - implying that in this particular instance, the sacred rocks are energizing the ceremony of evil. As soon as the ceremony is over, Indiana rushes to take the rocks from the shrine of evil and thereby to disempower his adversaries. But just as he is about to proceed with the mission in search of the imprisoned children, Indiana is captured by the guards. The master of evil ceremonies, Mola Ram has a special plan to punish his new prisoners. Short-Round will be chained up in the catacombs with the other children, Indiana will be forced to
drink human blood and become hypnotized and fall into the “black sleep of Kali Ma,” while Willie is to be sacrificed during Indiana’s initiation ceremony.

The condition for the installment of an evil force is the arrival at the origin. The “work of archeology” in which the Kali worshippers are engaged echoes the work of archeology of the Nazis. Both forces of evil presuppose the wiping out of whole races: they presuppose an effective absence as a condition for the installment of their evil presence. Captain Blumbart, juxtaposed to the child maharaja, underscores the patronizing role of the representative of the British colonialist empire. Precisely because he is a colonizer who sees himself as a liberator, the people’s doom escapes his view. Indiana is elaborated in the exact opposite way: he appears as the answer to people’s prayers and he will come to personify their own endangered origin. Indiana ends up hypnotized, with no control of his actions. He is about to tie Willie up and throw her into the fire pit. Hence, the only one who can change the order of things is the little Chinese boy, Short-Round. Short-Round manages to free himself from the chains and interrupts the Thuggee ceremony. He burns Indiana with a torch which causes him to snap out of the hypnosis, and bringing Indiana back to life.

The “father” is re-born via the “son.” This reversal conditions a restoration of the “family.” This is clearly an inter-racial family; in the closing scene of the film Indiana and Willie are functioning as parent figures, not only to Short-Round, but for all the children who have safely returned to the village and now surround them. Hence, Indiana figures as the father of a nuclear family as well as the father of a race. He is able to act out his role as the savior, because unlike the colonizer in the film, he enters an exchange where the oppressed, in the guise of a chained child could save him.

**The Overlapping of Archeological Fields**

The question of race as it is related to the endangered origin is elaborated in a somewhat different manner in the first film of the trilogy, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The force of evil is Hitler and the artifact he wants to acquire, the Ark, is directly related to the genealogy of the Jews. The connection between the Ark, the Jews, and Hitler is established in a scene from the film’s opening where the intelligence agents come to the university to seek help from doctor Jones in
interpreting the German communiqué. While explaining to the agents the significance of the Staf of Ra in locating the Ark in which the Ten Commandments were deposited, doctor Jones makes use of a picture from a book. It is a very vivid drawing of a group of people carrying the Ark. We learn here that these people are the Hebrews, which implies that the artifact Hitler wants to obtain belonged originally to them.

As the story goes, doctor Jones is asked to go on a mission and find this artifact before the Nazis do. His mission takes him to Egypt where the Nazi diggings have already transformed the landscape and where thousands of natives are engaged in heavy labor under the surveillance of German officers. The visual means employed to depict this “archeological field,” the desert, the pyramids, people wrapped up in their traditional robes, construction posts spreading in all directions, in combination with the extremely wide angle which emphasizes the monumentality of the action, transform the geographical location into a historical site. The comment coming from the local archeologist and Indiana’s friend, Sallah, underscores all that is insinuated via the images, “It looks as though the pharaohs have returned.” Due to the collapse of archeological sites a similarity is established between the men in uniforms from the 1930s and the mighty oppressors from another, mythical time.

If the pharaohs have returned it means that the Hebrews are suffering a life in bondage. Evocation of this mythical site is an evocation of the biblical narratives which are constitutive of Jewish identity. Biblical narratives are deployed from the outset. As we know from the explanation of the experts, doctor Jones and his older colleague Marcus Brody, the Hebrews put the crushed pieces of the tablets in the Ark and when they reached Canaan, they put the Ark in the Temple of Salomon in the city of Jerusalem. The Ark remained there for many years until it suddenly disappeared without a trace. As Marcus Brody informs the agents,
in 980 B.C. an Egyptian pharaoh invaded the city of Jerusalem, took the Ark and hid it in secret chambers called The Well of Souls in the city of Tanis. About a year after the pharaoh had returned to Egypt, the wrath of God came over the city; Tanis was consumed by a desert storm that lasted an entire year.

The analogy between the pharaohs and the Nazis, which is made in the conversation between doctor Jones and the intelligence agents, is reconfirmed in the scene where the two “archeological fields” come to overlap. But there is more than simply an iconic relation at work here, because what appears as the repetition or the collapse of historical sites will condition an indexical relation. As Bal has it, “an indexical relation between the screen and the myth is obscured by the illusion of an iconic relation” (Bal, 1991: 128). In the trilogy, the visual resemblance between the past (of the pharaohs) emerging in the present (of the Nazis), or rather, the iconic relation between the two historical sites produces the indexical relation. The iconic relation enables us to see the similarities between the sites, but the indexical relation urges the connection between the past and the future. Because the Ark as well as a life in bondage are constitutive of Jewish identity, the attempt of the Nazis to seize the Ark signifies that bondage from the past is coming back from the future.

Therefore, the affirmation of the “origin” is urgent because the old oppressors in the guise of the new despots are threatening to erase it. Hitler’s obsession with that which the Jews possess, is radicalized in a scene from the film’s closing where the theft of the Ark by the Egyptian pharaoh is restaged. The sequence begins with a procession of Nazi soldiers and officers who are carrying the Ark to a special place where the Ark is to be opened and where the archeologist Belloque, employed by the Nazis, will “test” its magical powers. Even though the film has established a relation between the Nazis and the pharaohs, there is another analogy. The image from doctor Jones’s book from the
film's opening which represents the Hebrews carrying the Ark, overlaps with the image of Nazi soldiers carrying the sacred artifact which belonged to the Hebrews (scene 3 A).

The Hebrews are absent from the scene but their presence is conditioned through the Nazis who have come to take their place. There is a contradictory analogy at work here: on the one hand, a connection is established between Hitler and the Egyptian Pharaoh; on the other hand, however, the Nazis come to figure as the Hebrews. The information coming from the future compels me to question the implications of the exchange. Considering that we possess information from the future, where Nazis will kill six million Jews, we can interpret the scene as a premonition of the future which has already taken place in the past. With respect to this, I would suggest, the scene thematizes the paradox involved in treating the sign as the origin of meaning. This paradox echoes the absurdity of Hitler's obsession to seize the Jewish "origin." By investing the sign with a contradictory meaning, by supplying the image of the Hebrews via those who attempted to exterminate them in the future, the subject of vision radicalizes the possibility of providing effective presence of an origin precisely through this very impossibility. Having come into possession of the Hebrew artifact, the Nazis have also taken the place of the Hebrews in the mini-narrative. Spielberg’s trilogy reconfirms de Certeau’s discussion: the arrival at the origin is essentially not related to a return to the distant past, because the production of the origin as well as arche occurs through its simultaneous erasure, that is, through the present of meaning production. Paradoxically then, having arrived at the origin of Jewish identity, the Nazis have become that which they wanted to erase from the face of this Earth - Jewish.

**Structuring the Subject of Vision**

In *The Raiders of the Lost Ark* the Nazis need to find the head-piece of the Staff of Ra, because the head-piece holds the crucial information for locating the Ark. When the staff is placed on a given spot in the Well of Souls at a precise time of day, the sunlight beaming through the head-piece will point to the place where the Ark is resting. If the staff is too long or too short, the location marked by the sun will be a faulty one. As it so happens in the film, the French archeologist Belloque who is engaged by the Nazis, acquires a false
head-piece and as a consequence, the archeological diggings he instigates prove futile. Unlike Belloque, Indiana Jones knows how to trace the genuine head-piece.

His retrieval of the head-piece is related to an Oedipal drama which is embedded into the fabula. He first makes a detour to Nepal to restore contact with his former professor and father-figure, Abner Ravenwood who invested his entire life and professional expertise in finding the head-piece of the staff of Ra. Even though Ravenwood is dead, as Indiana discovers, the head-piece is still safe, for Ravenwood’s daughter Marion is wearing it on a chain around her neck. Correspondingly, before we are confronted with Indiana Jones dressed up in a Moses-like manner - with a prototypical head-dress and holding a staff as he walks across the desert leading his own crew of Ark-diggers - a transgenerational relationship is established between Indiana and Ravenwood as the “father of the head-piece.” From the conversations between Indiana and Marion we learn that Ravenwood had broken off all contact with his student who was “more than a son to him.” The reason why the “son” became alienated from the “father” was Marion; that is, Ravenwood was not ready to give Marion up to Indiana. Now that Ravenwood is dead, however, Indiana can take his place as both the holder of the head-piece of the staff of Ra, and as the holder/the father of Marion.

It seems, then, that the “return of the pharaohs” through the Nazis calls also for the return of Moses via Indiana Jones. In terms of the film’s narrative, however, the Moses-like outfit also appears to be a logical necessity. Considering that Indiana Jones needs to operate undercover while digging for the Ark, the Moses-dress works in the first place as his disguise. This discursive pro-creation of Indiana Jones as both the son and the father serves as a preparation for the figure of Moses that he soon comes to represent. In other words, the filial and the paternal position acquire yet another function when they are brought into relation with the Egyptian son Moses who is at the same time the father of the Jewish race.

Indiana’s function as representative of the Mosaic tradition is confirmed in the scene where the Ark is finally opened. Belloque wants to see what is inside the Ark and he wants to be sure of the presence of its divine content. In the company of the Nazi officers Belloque stages a spectacle with a traditional Hebrew prayer. Instead
of witnessing a spectacle, however, the Nazis themselves become a spectacle (scene 4). Their eyes suddenly pop out of the sockets, their flesh melts, their heads explode and body parts fly in all directions. Those who attempted to exercise their power over the Ark through the power of the look are destroyed by their own scopic desire. Meanwhile the Nazi prisoners, Indiana and Marion obey the Second Commandment and keep their eyes shut (shot 25).

In the Old Testament the name of God is too sacred to be uttered, as his presence, is too sacred to be imaged. The prohibition against image-making from Exodus can be seen as a precursor of the critique of the metaphysics of presence: similarly, the Nazi attempt to open the Ark and “check” whether the Hebrew God is “present” results in their own destruction. As Françoise Meltzer asserts in Salome and the Dance of Writing: “The prohibition against image-making rests upon both God’s ability to assume any manifestation he chooses, and upon the repression of sensory representation. God’s very name, of course, means ‘Present One.’ The name, too sacred to be uttered, is like God’s presence, too sacred to be represented” (Meltzer, 88). Spielberg’s film critiques the attempt of the Nazis to see the Hebrew God, and at the same time distances itself from this act. Before Belloque opens the Ark, we notice a Nazi camera crew preparing to film the entire event. The Angel of Death will destroy all the observers, but it is especially interesting to note the manner in which it blinds the cameraman (shots 33, 34). The angel enters into the camera via the lense, flows out through the viewfinder, and burns the cameraman’s eyes. Most importantly, this camera is marked by a swastika, which emblematizes the relationship between the focalizer and the focalized content. Spielberg is expressing a critical view here, albeit in a shot that lasts only a moment. This intervention reminds us that the subjectivity of the camera is always implied, that there is no such thing as the objectivity of the camera. Even when the subject of vision is not symbolized as conveniently as in Spielberg’s film, what the camera sees is determined by a subjective framing.

In terms of the structures of focalization in the scene itself, we can gather that not one focalizer is able to survive the act of looking. Indiana and Marion remain alive because they refrain from focalizing. The film draws on the contradiction between the prohibition of images and fascination with images; telling seems to be
allowed, while imaging is prohibited. Yet the text in which this is
"told" is itself visual. This paradox is comparable to the tension
between iconicity and indexicality which resides in mythical dis-
course. The prohibition of image making is, as Meltzer asserts, a
prohibition of mimesis. But if mimesis is necessary to memory, and
Meltzer quotes Derrida here, "we remember that which we mentally
re-represent to ourselves" (Meltzer, 10). Because there must always
be a time lag between the event and its memory, mimesis is neces-
sary to thought itself:

Representation quite obviously means to present again. This is
certainly the crux of mimesis. But it also means to bring
before the mind, to display to the eye, to symbolize, to stand
in the place of. The word "representation," then, tied as it is
to the notion of mimesis, is also and equally tied to that of
thought, or at least to the way in which we represent thought
to ourselves. Consciousness is thought brought before the
mind; mental concepts are mimetic of our experience; words
themselves can stand in the place of thoughts, objects, peo-
ple; writing may stand in the place of speech (or vice versa).
Even the biblical tradition that prohibits representation, or
image-making, serves to increase its power by virtue of
acknowledging the potential seduction of the image. (Meltzer
10)

What the scene evokes is a discourse on the Second Commandment.
Indiana knows the Law, and he respects it. According to Meltzer, the
Mosaic Law which on the one hand, prohibits image-making, but on
the other hand, remains oblivious to the production of images
through discourse, secures the power of the One who has instituted
the Law precisely through his implied invisibility, and irrepresentabil-
ity. This Law, issued via the Word, affects pictorial representation.
There are three issues to be considered here: 1) the potentially
regressive nature of the Law which governs representation; 2) the
potentially productive value of the Law in the case when the image-
makers are evil forces such as the Nazis, who are threatening to
insert their own symbols in the place of God's image; and 3) the
paradoxical, visual representation of these issues.

The reference to the Second Commandment in the scene
from *The Raiders of the Lost Ark* is also a reference to the roots of Judaism; and the confirmation of the power of the Law is accordingly an affirmation of the Judaic tradition. The affirmation of the tradition is urgent because the Nazis are threatening to erase it. Preserving the tradition and the Law in this particular case requires, paradoxically enough, a disobeyance of the Law. In other words, the Law is redeemed through filmic images, hence precisely through disobeying the Commandment. The three issues listed above have become particularly acute in the discussions and controversies regarding Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List*. As Miriam Hansen points out in “*Schindler’s List* Is Not *Shoah*: The Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory,” the most difficult objection to this film is that “it violates the taboo on representation (*Bilderverbot*), that it tries to give an ‘image of the unimaginable’ (300).” Hansen adds that the critique of *Schindler’s List*, in high-modernist terms, reduces the problem of representing the unrepresentable to a “binary opposition of showing or not showing—rather than casting it [. . .] as an issue of competing representations and competing modes of representation” (202). According to Hansen, we need to understand the place of such a popular film in the contemporary culture of memory and memorializing:

> Whether we like it or not, the predominant vehicles of public memory are the media of technical re-production and mass consumption. This is especially exacerbated for the remembrance of the Shoah considering the specific crisis posed by the Nazis’ destruction of the very basis and structures of collective remembering. (Hansen, 1996: 310)

Therefore, paradoxical, visual representation of the Second Commandment is a strategy which ultimately helps
to preserve the memory of that which according to this Commandment must not be represented. In Thomas Elsaesser’s view, the specificity of Spielberg’s films generally is that they enable us to recognize a typically postmodern hubris, that is, the faith that cinema can redeem not only the past and the real, but also that which was never real (Elsaesser, 1996). There is just so much that cinema can repair, however. The first film of the sequel ends in Washington D.C. where Indiana and Marcus Brody are arguing with the government officials about the Ark. Even though both archeologists insist that more research needs to be done, they do not manage to remain in charge of the archeological artifact. As we learn from the last shots of the film, the Ark is marked “top secret” and just as in the old times when it was snatched by the Egyptian pharaoh, it is placed in the “secret chambers.” The Ark is in a safe place, but the year is 1936 and Hitler’s quest for the “origin” of the Jewish race has just begun.

**Freud, Spielberg and the Restorative Function of Myth**

In order to demonstrate the ways a myth can be subverted, and to show that through mythical discourse both the father and history can be refigured, we need to recall that even when they appear conjured up by themselves, myths are always “fathered.” As I have suggested in the earlier sections, Indiana Jones personifies this narratorial authority who is preoccupied with setting history in place. The preposterous ordering of events in each Indiana Jones film points to a dis-jointed history, requiring an according reversal. In other words, this type of structural play with history presupposes the need to “set things in order.” Moreover, the disjointed history puts pressure on the characters. Indiana can act as a savior because he is elaborated as both different and the same. The despotic adversary loses the contest for the origin because Indiana Jones is elaborated as both the origin and the trace. As such, he urges us to establish a connection between contradictory poles, the oxymoron implied in joining “Indiana” and “Jones.” I will suggest that this oxymoron is comparable to the contradiction implied in the notion of “the Egyptian Moses.”

De Certeau begins his analysis of Freud’s historical novel *Moses and Monotheism* by pointing to the oxymoron “the Egyptian Moses” which unites two contradictory poles, the Jew and the Egyptian (de Certeau, 314). This strategy of Freud works to interior-
ize the division which has until then figured as a “distinction” with respect to others. “Separation from the Egyptian had been the founding act of the election of the Jews, its doublet being the act that instituted Yahweh as unique and as creator through his separation from the world” (314). By installing two in place of the one, Freud is annihilating the self-identity “that has been acquired through the elimination of a “remainder.” “Identity,” as de Certeau asserts, “is not one, but two. One and the other” (314). De Certeau describes this strategy as the principle of writing, of analysis (which is division, decomposition), and of history. I have suggested earlier that this strategy is comparable to the narrative modality of dif-
férence, which is the structure at work in new Hollywood films such as the Indiana Jones trilogy.

I have brought the structure of difference into relation with a disjointed history, and demonstrated that the repairing of this history is predicated on the genealogical break or the discursive dependency between the father and the son. The historical period in which Freud was writing his theoretical fiction of history is that period when Nazi anti-Semitism already took hold. Freud himself was a victim of racial hatred and he was eventually forced into exile. The question he posed regarding the rising tide of anti-Semitism was not the obvious question, “why do they hate the Jews?” Rather, his point of departure was, “how did Jews come to attract such hatred?” Slavoj Zizek describes this attitude as a historical gesture:

It is precisely here that, for the sake of democracy itself, one has to gather strength and repeat the exemplary heroical gesture of Freud, who answered the threat of Fascist anti-Semitism by depriving Jews of their founding father: Moses and Monotheism is Freud’s answer to Nazism ... by way of an almost masochistic inversion, Freud targeted Jews themselves and endeavored to prove that their founding father, Moses was an Egyptian. Notwithstanding the historic (in)accuracy of this thesis, what really matters is its discursive strategy: to demonstrate that Jews are already in themselves “decentered,” that their “originality” is a bricolage. The difficulty does not reside in Jews but in the transference of the anti-Semite who thinks that Jews “really possess it,”... the anti-Semite is the one who “believes in the Jew,” so the only way effectively to
undermine anti-Semitism is to contend that Jews do not possess "it." (Zizek, 1995: 220)

Since an in-depth analysis of Freud's work is beyond the scope of this chapter, I will limit the discussion to a consideration of the work's narrative strategies as they are related to the intertwinament of history and myth.

As I have already noted, by joining "Moses" and the "Egyptian," Freud erases the constellation which symbolized the opposition of Israel and Egypt. Secondly, there is an inversion Freud foregrounds, which served to Judify the Egyptian Moses, and which Freud explains through the structure of "family romance." Freud draws on Otto Rank's *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, as a model for this structure. In the stereotypical myth there are two families, the royal family and the modest family. The royal family abandons the hero, the poor family adopts him and they take care of him until he takes vengeance upon his father and supplants him. Freud takes recourse to this myth to argue that the family romance traceable in the Biblical text is in fact an inversion of the original structure, and that this inversion serves a concrete purpose. In Exodus, a modest family of Levites abandons Moses, the noble family of the Pharaoh raises him, and when he grows up, he returns to his true family.xxiv

While the structure in the pre-text glorifies the hero, the biblical inversion, according to Freud, obliterates the Egyptian origin of Moses. De Certeau comments on Freud's strategy in the following way:

In fact, this detail is secondary in respect to the fact that, because it is produced in a Jewish place, the legend establishes the same (the Jewish place) as an origin: the Jewish birth functions here as a noble origin, and it legitimizes the place by classifying foreignness in the (apparently) noble exteriority, where the hero of the family was provisionally adopted. (de Certeau, 1988: 334; italics in original)

The two in the same place, which in the model myth signified the single place occupied by both the son and the father, is transformed in the biblical legend into one existing in two places. The operation yields a profit, as de Certeau suggests in his interpretation of Freud's narrative, for it saves the identity of the place where the legend is
produced. It saves the place where the legend was “fathered,” for the “father” of the discourse is ultimately the one who produces the “son,” and in this particular case, it is the father who needs the son to construct his own origin, that is, “noble place.” By evoking the biblical inversion of the family romance, by demonstrating that the discourse in question is a construct, Freud is simultaneously engaging in a re-construction, or re-fabulation of the legend.

Another move Freud takes is to reexamine the opposition between monotheistic and iconoclastic religion in ancient Egypt; his argument is that monotheistic religion is in fact a displacement of iconoclastic religion. He distinguishes an Egyptian Moses and a Midianite Moses; the former Freud compares to a mythical figure by the name of Akhenaton who, akin to Moses, abolished the cults and idols of Egyptian polytheism and established a monotheistic worship of the new god Aton. In the place of Aton, Freud contends, the Midianite Moses introduced Yahweh, the volcanic demon of the Midianites. According to Freud’s narrative, the Jews rebelled against the Egyptian Moses, personified in the figure of Akhenaton, and the rebellion resulted in murder. They repressed this murder and consequently they only remember the Midianite Moses as their founding father.

In his Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism, Jan Assman asserts that with this inversion Freud is able to practice différance: to reverse the traits of Aton and Yahweh, whereby all the imperfections of the biblical God and his Law come to be attributed to Yahweh, the God of the Midianite Moses, whereas the Egyptian deity comes to stand for the true and perfect religion (Assman, 1997: 155).

There are several important reasons why Freud’s historical novel is pertinent for this study: first, as I have already suggested, it is exactly this type of structure, the structure of différance, or the production of origin through erasure that is projected onto the field of archeology in the Indiana Jones trilogy. The archeological field as a screen for transference comes to bear the mark of the Freudian de-centering, the racial bricolage, the filial production of the father through alienation, or through the preposterous ordering of events. History seems to be out-of-joint because the mnemonic archive is out-of-joint; and Freud’s intervention into the myth from the past is bound up with the attempt to “correct” both the present and the
future. In that respect, the issue of ethnicity needs to be taken into consideration not only in terms of the mythical content, or the subject/protagonist in *Moses and Monotheism*, but in terms of the split between the subject in the myth, Moses, and the subject of vision, Freud.

Freud’s historical novel demonstrates the ways history can be renegotiated through mythical discourse. This is precisely my own contention in relation to the mythical discourse at work in the Indiana Jones trilogy. Freud’s history of the Egyptian Moses is an exemplary case of narrativizing *différance*. This structure is comparable to the oxymoron implied in joining “Indiana” and “Jones.” Indiana is conceived according to the image of the fortune hunter whom young Henry encountered as a scout. He is an adventurer who can jump onto a moving train, drive a car, ride a horse. Jones is conceived according to the image of the father; he is a book-worm who does nothing, but study.

The structuring of the new Hollywood narrative implies a refiguring of the Oedipal myth, and this refiguring can be observed as analogous to the decentering of the origin, the racial bricolage traceable in Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*. Thanks to Indiana Jones, a place for difference is created, for he is constructed through a simultaneous decomposition into the multiple elements structuring the tension between the son/the father, Indiana Jones/Henry Jones, Indiana/Moses, or Indiana/Arthurian Knight.

To understand that history can be renegotiated through mythical discourse - and it is in this respect that Bal’s discussion on the “fathers of myth,” and Derrida’s critique of Lévi-Strauss’ structural analysis of myths confirms its relevance - we need to take into account the present of meaning production. The *arche*, to put it de Certeau’s terms, emerges through the process of division, through its simultaneous death and birth, through negation and affirmation, through science and fiction. “It is the historiographical equivalent of the Egyptian Moses: science-fiction is the law of history” (347). In this manner, archeology, just as history, becomes more than simply a process of re-counting and re-telling, it becomes a process of repairing. One of the crucial conditions for the restorative function of history, as we learn from Spielberg’s Indiana Jones and Freud’s Egyptian Moses, is precisely mythical discourse. The room for the other, the place of difference needs to be marked in mythical discourse, it
needs to be fabulated; only then can it affect memory and accordingly, cultural history.

The productive aspect of this perspective is that a place for difference is created. I will explore this potential of mythical discourse further in chapter seven where I discuss Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List*. The aspect which requires critical investigation, however, is the investment of this cinema in the already prominent preoccupation of Western culture with fathers and sons. De Certeau’s definition of Freud’s project as a “theoretical fiction” can shed some light on the problem I am announcing:

The text initiates a play between religious “legend” (*Sage*) and Freudian “construction” (*Konstruktion*), between the object under study and the discourse performing the analysis. This play takes place in the fuzzy area of an ambivalence, in what gives “fiction” the meaning both of a production (*fingere*, to fashion, to fabricate) and of a disguise or a deceit. Everything is unraveled in the field of relations between the labor that constructs and the ruse that would “make us believe” in the fiction - a mixed terrain of production and lure. What history creates and what narrative dissimulates will meet in that very place. *Moses and Monotheism* is situated at this intersection of history and fiction. But its elucidation does not escape what it is elucidating. In the fashion of a fantasy, it tells a story of what is produced in a tradition. This theory of fiction is indeed a “theoretical fiction.” (308-9)

What Freud’s narrative reveals then, are the strategies by means of which theoretical fictions are generally produced. It will suffice to mention the women in the trilogy: Marion, the daughter-figure patronized by Indiana; Willie the combination of vamp and spoiled brat as well as a personification of the fortune hunter; and Elsa the treacherous female scholar and Nazi collaborator. While they are products of the same fabulation as Indiana Jones, they unfortunately constitute only a residue in the production of a future history. The effect of theoretical fictions on the construction of female characters will be the particular focus of chapters five and six. In the next chapter I will examine the new Hollywood’s preoccupation with redeeming the father in relation to the son’s capacity to give both
the father and history a new face. I will suggest that mythical discourse, which plays a crucial role when it comes to repairing the father and history, in the case of female characters, still needs to be reinvented.

footnotes

1 Deleuze distinguishes between action-image and time-image. The analysis demonstrates that Indiana cannot be constrained by this division. Even though he functions as an actant, hence as a structural position, the analysis demonstrates that his character-image is overlaid with grains of time. In that sense he can rather be understood as an action/time-image. Indiana functions as a frame of reference, a slot to be filled. This may give the impression that everything about these films is extremely banal, too obvious and overtly simplistic. I would suggest, however, that precisely the fact that Indiana Jones has the capacity to function as a frame of reference gives rise to a play of historical sites, and persons, that come to overlap in a single screen. When he is not outfitted in a suit and a bow tie, which indicates his role as an academic, the accessoires of Indiana Jones point to a man-of-action. He appears as a combination of cowboy, lion tamer, and explorer. He refuses to ride a camel but, as a typical hero of the westerns would, insists on a horse. Thus when he takes off on a chase after a Nazi truck, it is the horse of the hero from a western that becomes counterposed to a Mercedes. The self-referentiality of cinema in these evocations of generic stereotypes works not only towards a confusion of historical periods, but the conflicting relations between these stereotypes also condition the exchange of history and myth.

2 Bal explains that the model starts from a teleological relation between the elements of the story: “The actors have an intention: they aspire toward an aim. That aspiration is the achievement of something agreeable or favorable, or the evasion of something disagreeable or unfavorable [. . .] An actant is a class of actors that shares a certain characteristic quality. That shared characteristic is related to the teleology of the fabula as a whole. An actant is therefore a class of actors whose members have an identical relation to the aspect of telos which constitutes the principle of the fabula” (1997: 197).

3 In her article on the preposterous events in the works of William Shakespeare, Patricia Parker explains that the word preposterous comes from post-terous (after or behind) and pre (in front or before), that it connotes a reversal of “post” for “pre,” back for front, second for first, sequel for beginning and that more generally, the term alludes to the inversions that disrupt a “proper” or “natural” sequence (Parker, 1992). The notion of preposterous
history is discussed in more detail in Bal’s *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History.*

\[ ^{\text{IV}} \] I am referring here to Yerushalmi’s discussion of Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism* in *Freud’s Moses, Judaism Terminable and Interminable.* I will deal with both works in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

\[ ^{\text{V}} \] In “Nostalgia for the Present,” Fredric Jameson takes Dick’s novel in terms of its “paradigmatic value for questions of history, representation, and historicity in general...Historicity is neither a representation of the past nor a representation of the future (although its various forms use such representations): it can first and foremost be defined as a perception of the present as history: that is, as a relationship to the present which somehow defamiliarizes it and allows us that distance from immediacy which we call historical” (523).

\[ ^{\text{VI}} \] What Foucault called “archeology” are those histories which are excluded from history; in *Madness and Civilization, The Birth of the Clinic* and the *The Order of Things* he is disclosing a transgressive history which emerges as a disorder within the order of things.

\[ ^{\text{VII}} \] In the third volume of his *Time and Narrative,* Paul Ricoeur also discusses the interweaving of history and fiction; while de Certeau insists that fiction and history are quasi-identical, Ricoeur asserts that fiction is quasi-historical just as much as history is quasi-fictional, “History is quasi fictive once the quasi-presence of events being placed ‘before the eyes of’ the reader by a lively narrative supplements through its intuitiveness, its vividness, the elusive character of the pastness of the past, which is illustrated by the paradoxes of standing-for. Fictional narrative is quasi-historical to the extent that the unreal events that it relates are past facts for the narrative voice that addresses itself to the reader. It is in this that they resemble past events and that fiction resembles history” (190). Although theorized from different points of departure, de Certeau’s and Ricoeur’s views can be said to coincide on those points where the overlapping of history and fiction concerns the refiguration of time.

\[ ^{\text{VIII}} \] De Certeau’s view on history can be brought into relation with his concepts of popular culture. In *his Practice of Everyday Life,* he argues that the popular has a transhistorical constancy. The popular has the capacity to inscribe displacements into ordinary language which scientific reason has eliminated from operational discourses in order to institute “proper” meanings. According to de Certeau it is precisely in the popular that we can trace responses to the distributions of power in socioeconomic and symbolic formations.

\[ ^{\text{IX}} \] De Certeau takes the notion of the real from Lacanian psychoanalysis; by real he implies a world of unmarked space and time that cannot be mediated by language or signs. The object-universe, like the unconscious dimension of history is impervious to language.

\[ ^{\text{X}} \] I am drawing here on Bal’s ideas from *Quoting Caravaggio: Preposterous History,* particularly her discussions on the deixic relation between the sign and the analyst which is predicated on indexicality. I have dealt with this relation in the previous chapter in connection to “the image of the second person.”

\[ ^{\text{XI}} \] Recall for example Benjamin’s discussion on the creation through the act of naming in his “On Language as Such and on the Language of Man.” In
Selected Writings.

**xii** What Derrida questions in *Plato's Pharmacy* is precisely the idealist proposition that truth or nontruth can be discovered in ourselves by ourselves, or that knowledge can be sought in oneself by oneself.

**xiii** Derrida explores the association between writing and *pharmakon* in Plato's *Phaedrus*. He explains that “one and the same suspicion envelops in a single embrace the book and the drug, writing and whatever works in an occult, ambiguous manner open to empiricism and chance, governed by the laws of magic and not the laws of necessity.” Hence, Derrida examines the opposition Plato sets up between books, dead and rigid knowledge shut up in *biblia*, recipes and formulas, and pharmakon as the living knowledge, or simply *pharmakon* as it is opposed to medical science. “In dealing with Plato, who knew so well on occasion how to treat myth in its archeo-logical or paleo-logical capacity, one can glimpse the immensity and difficulty of this last opposition. The extent of the difficulty is marked out - this is, among a hundred others, the example that retains us here - in that the truth - the original truth - about writing as a *pharmakon* will at first be left up to a myth. The myth of Theuth...” (73).

**xiv** The relation between Freud's heritage and his work but also Yerushalmi's "dialogue" with Freud is discussed in Derrida's *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* and Richard J. Bernstein's *Freud and the Legacy of Moses*.

**xv** This will be discussed particularly in the following chapters in relation to the cinematographic apparatus.

**xvi** In *Cinema without Walls*, Timothy Corrigan discusses the *Indiana Jones* trilogy as an example of "cartoon narratives" which bring about the recycling and remaking of the classical. He also describes it as a case where heavens are made out of historical hells. “As in Spielberg's *Indiana Jones* cycle (beginning 1981), hell in many of these films becomes an unrecuperable historical moment like the holocaust of World War II and heaven becomes the myth of an archeologist's prehistory. Mediating between the two and often replacing narrative logic itself is usually the spectacle of technology. Thus, the counterpart of Spielberg's transcending narratives is Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985), [... ] epic of hell put in place by a fascist technological apparatus whose shattering of human subjectivity and motivation (in the name of a Christian teleology of heaven on earth) counterpoints Spielberg's technological heaven" (164). Corrigan announces the debate which will actually emerge with Spielberg's *Schindler's List*.

**xvii** In fact, the film begins in a Shanghai nightclub, in a spectacular scene which brings about a clash of Chinese and American culture. See for example *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai 1922-1943*, ed. Yingjin Zhang. In those years the films produced in Shanghai were very much influenced by Hollywood productions. With respect to this, Spielberg's staging of a clash between cultures can be understood as an attempt to forge the space for otherness in his new Hollywood film. Making a Chinese version of the theme song from the Hollywood musical *Anything Goes* from 1936 can be understood as a new Hollywood way of reframing the act of colonization.

**xviii** Willie is introduced as a singer but she is also the girlfriend of a powerful but corrupt local man. All Willie cares about are diamonds and finding a rich husband. Her disappointment when she finds out that the maharaja is a
young boy reminds us of Marilyn Monroe's disappointment in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* when she learns that the millionaire is just a kid.

In his critique of Spielberg's *Schindler's List*, "Toward a Theory of Spielberg History," Armond White contends that this film is submerged by hegemonic criticism and that his earlier films are actually much more "historical." He mentions the example from the *Last Crusade* where Adolf Hitler autographs Indiana's father's personal diary. "It unexpectedly summed up the psychic, historical imagination... Such clever business didn't necessarily identify Spielberg as Jewish, or as a history scholar, but it evidenced the wit, the political preoccupation and the sensibility of an auteur... The *Last Crusade*'s self-reflexive, accordion like compression of the *Indiana Jones* series play with history, anthropology, and colonialist lore." Miriam Hansen would disagree with this; she asserts that in *Schindler's List*, Spielberg uses the devices of classical Hollywood style "in a relatively more intelligent, responsible, and interesting manner than one might have expected, for instance, on the basis of Spielberg's earlier work." in "*Schindler's List* Is Not *Shoah*," (306). It may be important to add that Spielberg himself has expressed regret for the way he dealt with Nazis in the *Indiana Jones* trilogy. BBC documentary on the occasion of *Saving Private Ryan*. I will return to these opposing views in chapter seven.

It is important to recall scene 1, where in order to perform his work as archeologist, Indiana must first survive the interaction with Hitler. The only way he can do this is under false pretenses. He must be a master of disguise, a magician, a master of presentation; in effects premonition of the character who can perform the miracles of history, such as Oscar Schindler, as I will demonstrate in chapter seven.

Relevant here is W. J. T. Mitchell's "What Is an Image?" in *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, particularly his reformulation of the question "what is an image," into "how do we transform images, and the imagination that produces them, into powers worthy of trust and respect," or yet more precisely, "what interest does the split between images and words serve?" Bal explores this problematic in her work, she addresses this question for example, in "Reading Caravaggio Basic Instincts and Their Discontents," in her *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History*. At this point I am only introducing the discussion that I will deal with specifically in chapter seven.

In "Subject Positions, Speaking positions: From Holocaust, Our Hitler and Heimat to Shoah and Schindler's List," in *The Persistence of History*, Thomas Elsaesser sets up a distinction between internal and external limits of representation which coincides with Hansen's notion of popular modernism. This is according to Freud's narrative.

I am drawing here on Derrida's *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*.

I am referring to Derrida's "Structure, Sign, Play" from *Writing and Difference* where he critiques Lévi-Strauss' structural study of myth. Derrida argues that in the work of Lévi-Strauss there is a neutralization of time and history.