'I deserve the best and I accept the best': Exploring Female Narcissism in *Me Myself I*

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Pip Karmel made her debut as a film director and writer in 1999 with *Me Myself I*. Film reviewers in popular media have largely dismissed the film as yet another unimaginative, stereotypical and overtly judgmental representation of successful, but single, thirty-something career women and their professionally less ambitious but married coevals.[1] Film scholars have as yet all but ignored Karmel's feature, arguably because of its 'relatively unadventurous' stylistic approach.[2] In this article, I argue that the film both invites and deserves further attention. I analyse the film in view of the notion of the double, more specifically, by addressing the following question: does *Me Myself I* represent a female double that can be understood using the Freudian theory of narcissism and his notion of the uncanny and Otto Rank's application of these concepts to the double? Drawing on feminist psychoanalytic theories of the voice, I present an alternative reading of the double. I tackle the problem of whether Karmel's film is complicit with patriarchal ideology, and finally, I engage with the issue of just how unadventurous the style of *Me Myself I* really is.

In 1980, at the fifth Annual Florida State University Conference on Literature and Film, which was dedicated to doubles and doubling in literature and film, Clifford Hallam presented a paper in which he attempted to develop a definition of the doppelgänger that would take into account all major theories of the double.[3] His position regarding psychoanalysis is very clear: 'the Double motif, along with prose fiction in various technical aspects, has in fact developed a great deal in this century' and so have 'the mechanism[s] for our comprehending the phenomenon'.[4] Although Hallam considers other authors as well, most elaborately Carl Gustav Jung, he states:

> our understanding of the Double (in fiction or otherwise) is directly related to Freud's breakthrough in understanding the human personality … the vast majority of available evidence suggests that any Double figure … can in most cases be understood more fully, more clearly, and, in crucial ways, more convincingly by depth psychology.[5]

However, the significant problem, according to Hallam, is that 'the criteria for choice, say, Freud's uncanny over Jung's shadow, in explaining the phenomenon from a psychological standpoint is rarely offered'.[6] My decision to consider and, to some extent, adopt the Freudian framework is based on my observation of some striking moments of affinity between narcissism as outlined by Freud and narrative elements of *Me Myself I*, which is further reinforced by Freud's late thoughts on functions of narcissism in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality.

Freud's ideas of narcissism first emerged in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), assumed an increasingly important role in his books *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood* (1910) and *Totem and Taboo*

(1912–1913), and were finally elaborated in the paper entitled 'On narcissism: an introduction' (1914).[7] Here, Freud observes different manifestations of narcissism; that is, as a form of perversion, as an attitude in other mental disorders, and as a stage in 'normal' human sexual development. The latter is understood as a necessary intermediate stage between auto-eroticism and object-love, and it is more precisely described as primary narcissism. According to Freud, complete (heterosexual) object-love only happens in males whereas in females he observes an intensification of narcissism, for object-love requires repression of primary narcissism and the most significant part of repression is castration anxiety.[8] Once primary narcissism has been repressed, secondary narcissism may arise. The latter might yield itself to melancholia, in which, to alleviate the loss, a lost love-object is re-constructed inside the ego, and the frustrated and therefore withdrawn sexual libido is transformed (back) into narcissistic libido. Since primary narcissism is merely repressed and never abolished, it also reappears through the subject's setting-up of the ego ideal, which is essentially the substitute for the lost narcissism, and through the emergence of the super-ego, whose task is to ensure narcissistic satisfaction by means of demanding the ego's fulfilment of this ideal. If 'normal' human sexual development goes awry, at least temporarily, the repressed narcissism returns. This is the idea, which buttresses Otto Rank's 1914 theory of the double[9] as one of the possible manifestations of the return of the repressed narcissism in art and which finds an even more powerful elaboration in Freud's influential essay 'The Uncanny' (1919).[10] In Rank's and Freud's view, the double represents a personification of a pathological self-love and, at the same time, an embodiment of the fear of one's self. It is an uncanny manifestation of unrestrained narcissism and a symptom of paranoia. In Freud's later terms, the double emerges as the externalised, projected ego-ideal, stemming from the repressed narcissistic 'omnipotence of thoughts', that is, from one's overvaluation of one's own mental processes, and thus assuming a potentially friendly aspect; yet also as the split-off, detached and downright hostile superego, from which libido has been withdrawn due to its too severe demands imposed on the ego.[11] What becomes evident in this summary is Rank's and Freud's assessment of the inherently ambiguous, indeed ambivalent and uncanny nature of the double.

Karmel's film employs the double in its most straightforward form: its protagonist Pamela Drury (Rachel Griffiths) encounters a fully materialised version of her mirror image in the middle of the day and literally in the middle of the street. That some sort of a disturbance in relation to one's self — that is, neither the 'normal' feminine intensification nor the usual masculine repression of narcissism — is involved is signalled right from the opening titles of the film. The very first shot shows a running cassette recorder and the audience hears voices of adolescent girls, accompanied with close-ups of their faces shortly thereafter, discussing their plans and dreams for the future. In the following scenes, the viewers realise that the tape belongs to a journalist, Pamela, and we are offered numerous hints that she is writing the article on teenage girls as some sort of compensation for the utter dissatisfaction with her single life: she is completely convinced that she has 'missed the train'. Pamela's narcissistic unease emerges fully in the next scene, which takes place in front of the bathroom mirror, in which Pamela is reading the tags with her self-esteem-raising mantras. While the camera

allows the viewer to read the lot, Pamela picks out only the two most suggestive ones: I love and approve of myself and I deserve the best and I accept the best. With her face, posture and articulation distorted because she is simultaneously cleaning her teeth, the image of Pamela and the words she is uttering are in odd discord. This motif of self-observation and self-audition, combined with 'rehearsals' of how to behave or speak to be most likable, is repeated at several points in the film and quite accurately illustrates Rank's and Freud's ideas about the ambiguity of the double, that is, about its oscillation between self-love and fear or loathing or at least lack of confidence in one's self. Significantly, this is true of the scenes in which Pamela interacts with her reflection in the mirror. As soon as her double materialises in flesh and blood, considerable discrepancies develop.

Narcissism is worth considering on yet another level of the film, that is, outside the diegesis. Following Teresa de Lauretis,[12] Mary Ann Doane identifies 'the prevailing notion of woman's narcissistic overidentification with the image' in classical Hollywood cinema.[13] This 'prevailing notion' is based on the same kind of reasoning that supports Freud's assertion of the intensification of narcissism in women. In other words, 'the transformation of the woman into spectacle is easy' because the female herself collapses the distance between herself (as the subject) and the image (as spectacle, as the object).[14] This is the first point where *Me Myself I* challenges the 'prevailing notion' of female narcissism. The double has always been a particularly fascinating challenge to cinema as a medium: from Stellan Rye and Paul Wegener's *The Student of Prague* (1913) to David Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers* (1988) and beyond, film reviewers and scholars have never failed to observe the techniques employed to heighten the attraction as well as the verisimilitude of its visual representation. Indeed, the double lends itself easily to 'transformation into spectacle'.[15] Yet, *Me Myself I* never exploits this potential (the double remains a narrative element throughout the film), although the instances of spectacle — in most cases attached to Pamela's confrontation with a mirror or an old photograph from her past — are hardly scarce in the film. Karmel's feature makes use of them to destabilise any possibility of the viewer's narcissistic identification with the diegetic woman. The underlying pattern that structures spectacle in the film is paradox.

Spectacle in *Me Myself I* works in two contradicting layers: one supports the narcissistic reading, the other denies Pamela the status of a point of identification for the spectator. After Pamela's dinner, organised through a personal advertisement, the camera cuts to a shot of her bedroom. The viewers hear the panting of a man and a woman in voice-over, while the camera tracks along bed linen and Pamela's clothes crumpled on the floor to a burning photo of her dinner-date until it focuses on Pamela drinking and watching pornographic tapes (and thus eliminates any doubts as to the source of the voices). Unimpressed, Pamela starts looking at the photos of her old lovers, which are revealed to the audience through a fast-edited montage that somewhat pauses the narrative and emphasises her feeling of having reached a dead-end. The music, firmly located in the diegesis through Pamela's walkman, escalates and thus functions to support Kaja Silverman's argument about music being a means of evoking the feeling of infantile plenitude (corresponding to the stage of primary narcissism).[16] Suddenly, the images and the sound slow down as Pamela finds the photo of the

paradigmatic Mr Right, her high-school sweetheart Robert Dickson (David Roberts). The scene, which had been carefully constructed to bring into play all stylistic elements to allude to, and perhaps bring about, a kind of regression (to narcissism, to a collapse of the distance between the subject and the object), ends with the image of Pamela whimpering with a toy rabbit in her lap. While there certainly may be points of recognition, identification as the collapse of the distance between the viewer and the image is considerably hindered. During these scenes, the woman is never constructed as the object of desire or fear; the spectacle rather holds itself up to ridicule as the representation of what a woman is really like. Pamela, on the other hand, is the object of ridicule only insofar as she perceives departures from the stereotype as deficiency, as lack.

Before outlining further discrepancies between Freud's conceptualisation of narcissism and its employment in *Me Myself I*, I want to draw attention to Freud's shorter writing 'Some neurotic mechanisms in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality' (1922).[17] Here, he points out the links between the three phenomena and narcissism, namely, their shared origin and/or mechanisms. Jealousy is defined as the result of the loss of (or the thought of losing) a love-object, the ensuing narcissistic wound, repression of unfaithfulness, and repression of homosexuality. The other two mechanisms operating in jealousy, besides repression, are projection and delusion. The most severe type, the 'delusional' jealousy, is particularly marked by repression of unfaithfulness. However, since the love-object in this case is of the same sex as the subject, delusional jealousy is also classified as one of the forms of paranoia. Paranoia — which is, according to Freud, a result of repression of homosexuality and which functions as 'defence' against it — thus includes two basic types: paranoia of jealousy and persecutory paranoia. They share the mechanism of projection, that is to say, what jealous and persecutory paranoiacs perceive in the unconscious minds of others are, in fact, their own repressed impulses towards infidelity and hostility respectively. More specifically, 'with the paranoic [sic] it is precisely the most loved person of his own sex that becomes his persecutor'.[18] With regard to the development of homosexuality, Freud offers an account of one of his male patients. Mechanisms he identifies in the aetiology of this case of homosexuality are fixation on, and subsequent identification with, the mother, 'retirement in favour of' the father and a very specific object-choice: the patient 'identifies himself with his mother, and looks about for love-objects in whom he can re-discover himself, and whom he might then love as his mother loved him'.[19] Conceptualised in this way, homosexuality represents 'a complete contrast to the development of persecutory paranoia, in which the person who has before been loved becomes the hated persecutor, whereas here the hated rivals are transformed into love-objects'.[20]

Clearly, the major problem in the last case seems to be Freud's urge to account for homosexual desire and object-choice by a necessary recourse to identification with the opposite sex. Another problem — and one that particularly concerns the viability of this text for the purposes of my analysis — is that it is an account of homosexuality in males only. However, as far as Freud's views are concerned, these two problems seem irrelevant, for in his famous case study 'Fragment of an analysis of a case of hysteria' (better known as 'Dora', 1905), Freud resorted to

the same explanation of the emergence of homosexual desire.[21] He described his patient's affection for Frau K as arising from the girl's identification with her father and Herr K.[22] These problems aside, Freud's text on jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality has at least one interesting implication: without the damming up of the subject's heterosexual libido, jealousy-caused homosexuality becomes a search for one's double.

Despite the fact that Karmel's film is generally perceived as a 'feel-good' movie, a light-hearted romantic comedy in which nobody dies, nobody gets permanently hurt and everybody lives more or less happily ever after, the double in *Me Myself I* engages seriously with Freud's ideas of the uncanny and narcissism as well as — if not even more so — with those concerning the underlying common features of jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality. Pamela Drury's encounters with her double — unlike most examples, which limit themselves to one aspect or another, the choice usually dependent on the genre — stretch from 'insurance against destruction', 'preservation against extinction' and possibly 'assurance of immortality' to an 'uncanny harbinger of death', with death and the double appearing in a somewhat unusual, intriguing rather than confused, order.[23] Pamela's first encounter with her look-alike happens almost immediately after her failed attempt at suicide, the common narrative resolution of classical tales involving the motif of the double.[24] The event is built up to in a rather absurd manner. After confiding in her best (and happily married and procreating) girlfriend Terry (Rebecca Frith) about a clairvoyant's mistaken information that she too should be 'happily married with two kids by now', Pamela meets Ben Munro (Sandy Winton), a too-good-to-be-true embodiment of all her expectations, only to be even more disappointed when she sneaks upon him and discovers that her latest Mr Right comes complete with two children and a partner. Convinced that there is nothing left to live for, Pamela is just about to drop her hair-dryer into the bathtub when a stroke of lightning cuts off the power supply and thus terminates her wretched suicide attempt. Evidently not announcing Pamela's death, her double appears the very next morning. However, the encounter is anything but pleasant and reassuring. Utterly upset by a religious propagator's enquiry if she considers herself happy, Pamela makes a dash for the street and is instantly hit by a car. The driver is none other than Pam herself, her other self, only this one is married to Robert Dickson. When the 'original' Pamela regains consciousness, the first thing she asks her doppelgänger is 'Am I dead?'.

Me Myself I's double thus retains the ambiguity of the Freudian uncanny apparition while it renounces its more ominous aspect. This, however, would not quite suffice to render this particular double exceptional, for Freud himself readily admits, 'Not everything that fulfils this condition — not everything that recalls repressed desires and surmounted modes of thinking belonging to the prehistory of the individual and of the race — is on that account uncanny'.[25] And, he adds, 'a great deal that is not uncanny in fiction would be so if it happened in real life', for in fiction, and cinema, we 'adapt our judgement to the imaginary reality imposed on us by the writer' and — it must be emphasised — the genre.[26] The more remarkable aspect of *Me Myself I*'s portrayal of doubles becomes evident when the striking resemblances between the film's plot and the processes and mechanisms that Freud had identified in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality are

brought into play. Nearly all segments of the plot of *Me Myself I* offer some sort of a parallel to these mechanisms. This is not to suggest that Karmel exercises a conscious, simplistic, uncritical or witty exploitation of the psychoanalyst's account; yet, the film cannot quite be read 'symptomatically' either.[27] Karmel's doubled female protagonist indeed exhibits the 'symptoms' identified by Freud, but their sequence is curiously reversed and their psychic function humorously overturned. In my view, these alterations are only partly due to codes and conventions of the romantic comedy genre; they are, rather, brought about by the film's insightful investigation of narcissism in women.

According to Freud, jealousy is the first manifestation of the effects of the narcissistic wound caused by the loss of a love-object. The film's story is replete with instances of jealousy, all in one way or another originating from Pamela's narcissistic wound (caused thirteen years ago by what she now perceives as the loss of Robert even though she was the one to walk out on him): from her innocuous envy of her friend's baby and husband, through Pam's insistent (melancholic) search for his carbon-copy replacement, to her accusation of Robert's adultery. Interestingly, the latter occurs after Pamela had spent the afternoon with Ben and shortly before she 'finds out' that it is actually the other Pamela — that is, her other self, not Robert — who is having an affair. These motifs thus somewhat conform to Freud's interpretation of jealousy as the result of repression and projection of one's own infidelity. However, the story encourages yet another reading: as soon as Pamela comes to terms with her own two-timing impulses — going as far as her own standing-in for her husband's mistress (she is, after all, having an affair with her other self's spouse) — she starts putting things straight. Abruptly terminating both her budding relationship with Ben and the affair with Geoffrey (Felix Williamson), she establishes what is conventionally perceived as good (monogamous) grounds for giving the marriage with Robert a second chance, only to 'retire in favour' of the other Pamela — without any signs of reluctance — as soon as the latter reappears. This brings into play Freud's account of the aetiology of homosexuality, in which 'retirement in favour of' the parent or kin of the same sex plays an important part. Clearly the two women in Karmel's film perform a peculiar sort of exchange and do in fact retire in favour of each other (it soon becomes clear that the other Pamela had been seeing Ben — or rather his double — in the meantime). Yet, they both sustain heterosexual object-choices. In a distinctively comic manner, the film thus suggests that 'retiring in favour of' another individual of the same sex and repression of unfaithfulness might be more intimately linked with the cultural imposition of monogamy than with giving rise to homosexuality. In other words, one of the implications of the film — one that can most lucidly be brought forth by an analysis, which draws attention to Freud's ideas on narcissism, jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality, and which in turn reconsiders these ideas — is that homosexual object-choice is established independently and prior to identification with the opposite sex and withdrawal in favour of one's own sex.

Paranoia is the last ego-disturbance that Freud relates to psychic operations of narcissism. It is also the phenomenon that is most closely linked to the issue, which I find most fascinating in representations of female doubles and which is, surprisingly, also the most neglected aspect of theoretical discussions of these

representations, namely, the issue of the female voice.[28] The link between paranoia and the voice is fairly obvious. As Doane observes in her discussion of the function of paranoia in womens' films of the 1940s, the voice is 'the material support of the symptom — "hearing voices" — in paranoia'.[29] Silverman, in her analysis of the female voice in psychoanalysis and cinema, develops this observation further:

> Visual and auditory hallucinations have a critically important projective function [in paranoia] … the projecting subject protects itself against unpleasure by placing the unwanted quality at a visual and/or auditory remove — by making it the object of the scopic and invocatory drives.[30]

Doane and, less explicitly, Silverman argue that dominant cinema's visual and auditory regimes 'inadvertently reveal the weaknesses or breaking points of a contradictory ideological project', namely, making woman the looking and speaking/hearing subject within a patriarchal discourse.[31] In both authors' elaboration, the woman's look and voice are 'framed', 'bracketed', and ultimately objectified and 'exclu[ded] from symbolic power and privilege'.[32] Whatever the woman does she does not do it for herself — or the female spectator, for that matter. Woman, either the one on screen or the one addressed by the film, is lured into accepting the film as the story of the female subject, only to be eventually re-constructed as the object. She performs for the male subject, and thus Doane's and Silverman's studies of representations of women, in the end, turn into 'an investigation of the … defenses [sic] by means of which Hollywood fortifies the male subject against his own losses'.[33]

Me Myself I is not a Hollywood product; however, as a romantic comedy, it is clearly aimed at mainstream audiences. In fact, to some extent, Silverman's and Doane's arguments do seem to apply to the film. Most of its plot can be seen as a dream or hallucination, experienced by Pamela while she is unconscious after being hit by a car. Pamela's self-assertion is thus relegated to the status of an hallucinated wish-fulfilment, that is to say, her authority as an active agent is undermined. In this scenario, her waking up seems more like a metamorphosis, a domestication of the hyper-active eloquent journalist into a cooking and cleaning but rather inarticulate woman, whose most intelligent response to the advances of the man she likes is 'Hey, that's my orange!' The entire dream/hallucination sequence thus becomes merely another variation of the 'scenarios of waiting', which are 'crucial components of the love story and are offered as points of recognition and identification for the female spectator'.[34] However frivolous and entertaining this love story may seem, it conforms with their general characteristics; namely, their emphasis on duration and nonprogression; and even more, their outright resistance to any notion of progression.

Yet, this is only one possible reading of the film. More significantly, it is precisely the reading that underlies the dismissal of *Me Myself I* as unimaginative. A far more exciting subtext emerges — and a significantly more adventurous representation of woman becomes evident — by shifting the focus of attention on how the film's auditory elements work to undercut the narcissistic interpretation of the double. Silverman argues that, in dominant cinema, synchronisation and the 'codified deviations' (for example voice-off and voice-over) from its construction of the sonic vraisemblable function to tie the female voice to the (always diegetic)

female body, 'submitting' it to the 'destiny of the body', which is ultimately the site of fetishistic spectacle for the male subject.[35] *Me Myself I* subverts this operation of dominant cinema without turning to an avant-garde approach to filmmaking.

The detachment of the (audible) female voice from the (visible) female body is enacted by the already mentioned Pamela's habits of rehearsing her utterances in front of the mirror and of literally reminding herself to be narcissistic: whatever it is that she is supposed to say, however she is expected to behave — either in a specific situation or as a woman in general — she clearly needs practice to make it look and sound plausible. All of her telephone conversations work similarly to assert a certain disengagement between her image and her voice: there is not a single statement that could be described as true in Pamela's phone conversations. They are all either plain white lies or 'emergency-exit' echoes. On a broader level, *Me Myself I* playfully appropriates scenarios and symptoms of paranoia as outlined by Freud. Hearing voices transforms into a woman having conversations with herself; imagining things translates into a woman seeing her double. These two coupled with a woman being cheated by her husband with her own other self become the epitome of a paranoid female subject, whose most loved person — for the innately narcissistic woman, this could only be herself — returns to haunt her. Yet, Karmel's film inverts this scenario, particularly through the two women's verbal interaction, which ultimately consolidates the relationship between the two Pamelas into a bond of mutual understanding, compassion and support without collapsing the distance between them (as narcissistic identification would require).

Me Myself I subtly subverts the ideological underpinnings of the mainstream genre that the film situates itself within, namely, romantic comedy. It does so by overtly employing those conventions of the dominant cinema, which draw on the idea of narcissism as specifically feminine attitude, and by gradually infusing them with insoluble contradictions, particularly through sustaining the distance between the woman and the image and through disengaging the female voice from the female body. The film thus seriously discredits the potency and reliability of dominant modes of representation, particularly language, without discrediting its female protagonist's discursive capacity. The film is not confrontational enough to overturn the 'existing power relations'; however, it does not 're-secure' them either, as Silverman had described the effects of dominant cinema.[36] Karmel's film comes closer to a rather different strategy, the one that Luce Irigaray designated 'mimicry' and described as follows:

> One must assume the feminine role deliberately. Which means already to convert a form of subordination into affirmation, and thus begin to thwart it. … To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it.[37]

The woman in *Me Myself I* experiences narcissism less as her characteristic feature — which should render the man's active pursuit, conquest and subordination of her feasible — but rather as a means that she can appropriate to reconcile her own stifled desires with her fulfilled ambitions. Narcissistic disturbance leads Karmel's protagonist (or, rather, both of them) towards constructive integration/alteration of her alter ego; its acting-out sets the woman's demanding superego at rest. Most importantly, it renders the prospects of her

future not only bearable but actually quite satisfying. *Me Myself I* may seem frivolous at first glance; yet, its style, particularly regarding the female voice and sound in general, proves to be anything but unadventurous, and its employment renders the film a refreshing contribution to the longstanding and usually sinister and conservative tradition of the motif of the double.

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1   See <http://us.imdb.com/TUrls?COM+0183503> [last accessed 15 September 2002] for an extensive list of reviews.
2   James Berardinelli, *Me Myself I*, <http://movie-reviews.colossus.net/movies/m/me_myself.html> [last accessed 15 September 2002].
3   Clifford Hallam, 'The double as incomplete self: toward a definition of doppelgänger' in Eugene J Crook (ed.), *Fearful Symmetry: Doubles and Doubling in Literature and Film. Selected Papers from the 5th Annual Florida State University Conference on Literature and Film,* University Presses of Florida, Tallahassee, 1981, pp 1-31.
4   Hallam, op cit, p 11.
5   Hallam, op cit, pp 12-13. Depth psychology is an alternative but less frequently used term for psychoanalysis. Cf. *Encarta World English Dictionary*
<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/dictionaryhome.aspx>.
6   Hallam, op cit, p 18.
7   James Strachey (ed), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* [SE], Hogarth Press, London, 1953-1975. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (SE vol VII, pp 125-245); *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood* (SE vol XI, pp 59-137); *Totem and Taboo* (SE vol XIII, pp 1-162); 'On narcissism: an introduction' (SE vol XIV, pp 67-102).
8   For a concise explanation of the different implications of castration anxiety in girls and boys, according to Freud, see Elisabeth Bronfen's entry on castration complex in Elizabeth Wright (ed), *Feminism and Psychoanalysis. A Critical Dictionary*, Blackwell, Oxford, UK, and Cambridge, Mass., 1992, pp 41-5.
9   Otto Rank, 'Der Doppelgänger', *Imago: Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften*, vol III, 1914, pp 97-164. Cf. Otto Rank, *The double. A Psychoanalytic Study*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1971.
10 SE vol XVII, pp 217-56.
11 Freud, *The Ego and the Id* (1923) in SE vol XIX, pp 1-59.
12 Teresa de Lauretis, 'Oedipus interruptus', *Wide Angle* vol 7, nos 1-2, 1985, p 38.
13 Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1987, p 9.
14 Doane, op cit, p 6.
15 ibid.
16 Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1988, p 85.
17 SE vol XVIII, pp 221-32.
18 SE vol XVIII, p 226.
19 SE vol XVIII, p 230.
20 SE vol XVIII, p 231.
21 SE vol VII, pp 1-124.
22 Cf. John Forrester, 'Freud, Dora and the untold pleasures of psychoanalysis' in Lisa Appignanesi (ed.), *Desire*. ICA Documents, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 1984, pp 4-8.
23 SE vol XVII, p 235.
24 E T A Hoffmann's *The Sandman* (1816-1817), Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) can serve as some of the best known literary examples, whereas Rye and Wegener's *The Student of Prague* (1913) represents one of the doppelgänger's earliest cinematic incarnations.
25 SE vol XVII, p 245.
26 SE vol XVII, p 249.

27 The expression designates a reading of 'extreme instances, limit-texts which inadvertently reveal the weaknesses or breaking points of a contradictory ideological project'. (Doane, op. cit., p 45; emphasis added)

28 For an interesting discussion of Freud's overemphasising the specular at the expense of the auditory in 'A case of paranoia running counter to the psychoanalytical theory of the disease' (SE vol XIV, pp 261-72), see Doane, op. cit., p 168. For a similar observation concerning Freud's disavowal of the woman and the status of her voice in the psychoanalyst's reading of the myth of Narcissus, see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Echo + women and narcissism', *New Literary History* vol 24, no 1, Winter 1993, pp 17-43.

29 Doane, op cit, p 151.

30 Silverman, op cit, pp 16-17.

31 Doane, op cit, p 45; emphasis added.

32 Silverman, op cit, p 31; also cf. Doane, op. cit., p 100 et passim.

33 Silverman, op cit, p 41.

34 Doane, op cit, p 107.

35 Silverman, op cit, pp 38-9 et passim. The term vraisemblable comes from Michel Marie's *Lectures du film* (1975) and designates the anthropomorphic verisimilitude of cinematic representations.

36 Silverman, op cit, p 12.

37 Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1985, p 76.