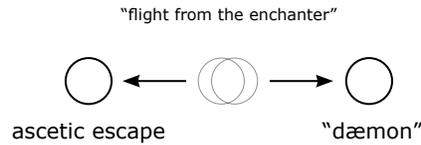
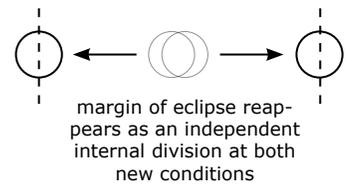


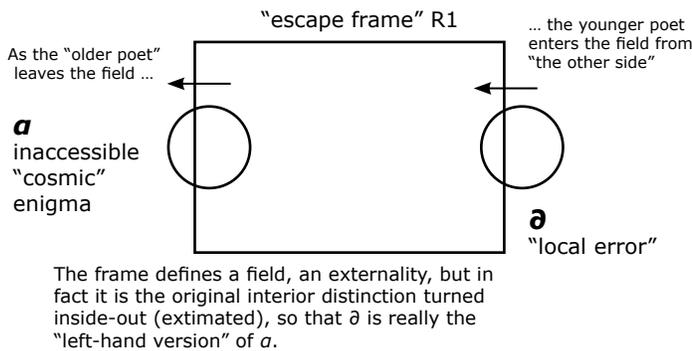
Dæmon: the younger poet is fully contaminated by the older and cannot create without the uncanny sense of *apophrades*, the “acoustic” voice from the past that haunts his/her work. The past speaks through the present, making it into a “dummy” (*le mort* in French). The only dimension holding the present from total eclipse is that of resistance, awareness of falseness. The old poem speaks through “signaling” from within the new.



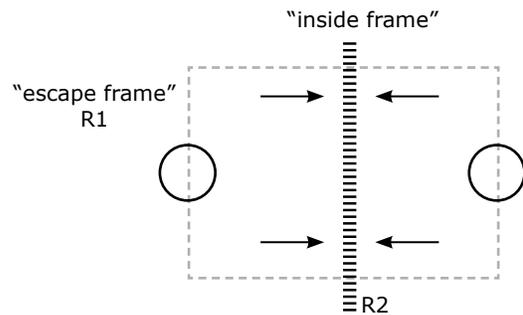
Askesis: the younger poet seeks to detach from influence, to invent an “original approach.” In general, this is the motif of isolation and separation, such as gave rise to the establishment of monasteries as a model of modern universities.



Kenosis: separation from the tradition of influence creates a “half-condition” dominated by the idea of loss, silence, hidden treasure, and other metaphors that portray the former eclipse not as a contamination but as a harmony. *Kenosis* is the rigor behind *askesis*, as a strategy of isolation, and the immediate result is that knowledge becomes halved (*tesseræ*).



Apophrades and *Tessera*: the margins that were derived from the “minimal margin” between the younger and older poet are reconnected into a frame, defining a field created by *askesis*. On the new poet’s side is the function of misreading, ∂ , and on the old poet’s (demonic) side is the enigmatic element of genius, a . These conditions of objective subjectivity and subjective objectivity relate to two kinds of realities, an “ultimate,” bounding reality, R1, and the reality of immediate experience, R2. R1 is related to the young poet’s escape from influence anxiety; R2 is the site of misreading/falsification.



Tesseræ: the inside-out, “Möbius-band” condition of the frame, which equates outside with inside and *vice versa*, becomes the basis of the *déjà vu* phenomenon by which the young poet discovers the source of the resistant “enigmatic element” that had eluded him/her for so long. It is the “key interpretant” created by the younger poet him/herself, the initial insight that formed a bond between the two poets. At opposite ends of time, though identical, they recombine the “sequence” of influence enabling the new poet to be both free and an incarnation of the original poet. This is the enigmatic condition of *kenosis*.

BLOOM’S SEQUENCE

Harold Bloom argued, in *Anxiety of Influence*, that a younger poet, transfixed by the overpowering influence of an older poem/poetic, was forced into a series of negations that would invert the temporality of influence. In the course of misreading the predecessor (“misprision”), the poet would construct an anachronistic fantasy, that the older poet had been somehow influenced by the younger “all along,” and that this influence lay hidden until the moment of revelational misreading.

As irrational as this account may be, it combines the uncanny phenomena of *déjà vu*, Plato’s *anamnesis* (the theory that all knowledge is really a form of memory), and Vico’s theory of imaginative universality with widespread shamanistic practices of consulting the spirits of the dead (*manes*) and mythic narrative motif of the visit to the underworld (the *katabasis*). These latter ethnographic sources help explain the functioning of the ancient domestic household, whose space centered around the culinary and spiritual functions of the hearth; as well as the oral traditions surrounding heroic travel. One could say that the former “stayed at home” while the later ventured out to assimilate diverse other cultures. As Euripides’ play *Alcestis* demonstrates, the logic of the hearth was not unrecognized in classical Greek times; the complexity of sexuation and its relation to the emergence of democracy, as treated by Nicole Loraux in her book on ancient Athens, is directly involved.

With instances of anachronism so broadly found in history and folklore, Bloom’s theme of “anxiety” can no longer be considered as a case isolated to literary criticism, or even to the poet’s predicament. It may argue for a broad application of Bloom’s system of six key “ratios” to conditions of thought and life in general. Certainly, the system is important for anyone undertaking a creative or intellectual project, or especially series of projects, where the relation of the personal to the public must be clarified. Anxiety in Freudian terms relates directly to the uncanny. It is not a question of needs that can be met functionally or symbolically, but rather of the specifically human structure of need that leads to dissatisfaction, for which there is no escape except into false consciousness, collective delusional thinking, and ideology (cf. Todd McGowan’s notion of the contemporary post-modern “Society of Enjoyment”).

Certainly false consciousness and its variations are, as anxiety, the fuel for ideological manipulation of modes of instruction and distortions of knowledge. Thus, the individual thinker cannot voluntarily “turn away from” ideology but must carefully plan an escape. This escape is what Bloom envisaged for the poet trying to escape the demonic ventriloquism of the older poet; but it is good for any thinker or maker who, under the flag of “idiocy,” must seek in privacy both a method and optional access to truth.