

The Toronto-Star.

Or: How a young American unintentionally invented Psychoanalytical Narrating

by Christian Eigner

Just over 100 years ago, a young American in Canada invented psychoanalytic writing. Actually, he had already started to invent it, but in Toronto it came into full.

Paris in the winter is rainy, cold beautiful and cheap. It is also noisy, jostling, crowded and cheap. It is anything you want - and cheap.

Of course, this sounds absurd because Sigmund Freud was supposed to have invented psychoanalytic writing and this young American, *Ernest Hemingway*, was known to have rejected psychoanalysis. And yet he did it.

Because in Toronto, and especially with his contributions to the *Toronto Star*, he finally invented *assertoric writing* for himself, i.e. writing that consisted primarily of speech acts of statement and thus, in the broadest sense, of speech acts in the sequence of acts of perception. *Paris in the winter is rainy, cold beautiful and cheap.*

Truth in speech, in language; that's what it's all about

In doing so, he overturned a literature that most of the time prefers to consist of *illocutionary* speech acts, i.e. speech that is concerned with *validity* and *claims* to validity; *you know what I mean? Where you are assured that it is the way it is because you were there and you emphasize that, and you also refer to Fred and John, who were also there and could confirm everything....* That kind of talk.

With his *assertoric move*, Hem of course makes the claim to truth and that only that should apply - and that is precisely how he invents psychoanalytic writing. Or rather: *Psychoanalytical narrating*.

Because that is exactly what *this* is supposed to do: To move from illocutionary self-sketching determined by third parties and their demands to a genuine representation of oneself and one's life and experience. In other words, to an assertoric narrative.

At least this is the case with the late *Wilfred R. Bion*, who understands better and better that the *unconscious* or the *ES* are important categories; even more important, however, is that they are used in a *new style* with regard to oneself. Namely in a narrative style, as Hem does (although Bion doesn't really call it that):

One narrates, enumerates, even feels, which is thus no more than a *qualia moment* in an arrangement of assertoric statements.

Oh Jake, we could have had such a damn good time together.

Yeah, isn't it pretty to think so?

A Toronto-Star from the Toronto Star.

But how to write about it, talk about it?

Well, maybe in a kind of remake of *The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio*. Hem and Bion and maybe a few strangers in the Toronto CN Tower:

What are you doing there, Bion asked Hem. He looked through the fixed windows. Over there, far over there, the waves of Lake Huron shimmered. Like breakers on a vast ocean..... (To be continued).