

SILENCE, EXILE, CUNNING.

In Mizoguchi's film, *Secret of the Late Chrysanthemums*, Kikunosuke Onoe, heir apparent to one of the great Kabuki families ("You will become Kikugoro the sixth"), finds himself in the, for him, unsatisfactory position of growing up in his father's shadow. His performance is applauded as a reflection of his father's brilliance (chip off the old block) while the father has little regard for his son's ability. The father's major concern is apparently that Kikunosuke should be a good son, or at least not be any trouble to him. However, since the idea of being a good son has embedded within it notions of family traditions and status, for Kikunosuke to become a great Kabuki actor is somehow taken for granted. The un-satisfactoriness of Kikunosuke's position lies in this assumption of greatness while the criteria by which he is to realize his arrival at that state remain unrevealed. He is a bad actor, but that may not be disclosed to him because he is his father's son, and his father's greatness is unquestionable.

Otuku, one of the household maids, has heard criticisms within the family of Kikunosuke's performances and goes to the theater to see for herself. Meeting Kikunosuke coming home late at night, she tells him this and offers her own outspoken criticism. What she has to say is not dismissive, but is offered in a spirit of sympathy with a belief in Kikunosuke's effort to really become great. This sympathy and belief meet an instant response from Kikunosuke, and an affair develops between the two which incurs the whispering disapproval of the household. Eventually after Otuku and Kikunosuke have been discovered alone together, the father learns of the alliance.

Otuku is dismissed and sent away to her uncle by her own family. Kikunosuke discovers her whereabouts, goes to her and asks her to marry him. The father, angered by his son's persistence in foolhardiness and concerned for his reputation, refuses the necessary permission. Kikunosuke, intransigent and unapologetic, refuses to abandon Otuku, and is disowned. He forms the resolve to become a great actor on his own merits and leaves Tokyo for Osaka. Otuku is kept separated from him by her uncle and is at first prevented from going with him. Kikunosuke obtains work in an Osaka theatre under the protection of an elderly uncle who has some insight into the young man's needs and faith in his commitment. Kikunosuke works but is discouraged by an apparent lack of improvement. Otuku slips away from her uncle and goes to Osaka.

Although Kikunosuke is low, she is able to tell him that his performance has improved, "although others might not detect it." Heartened by Otuku's arrival, Kikunosuke works hard and steadily. The couple develop a profound relationship and dependence on each other. The sudden death of his protector at the theater and subsequent reorganization of the company result in

Kikunosuke's dismissal, although he is offered, and takes, a place in a touring company. There follows a long period on the road which wears down Otuku's strength but gives Kikunosuke the apprenticeship he was seeking. He is left confident of his ability, though irresolute, since high ambition means once again entering the orbit of his family. Otuku is unwavering in her faith that he can, and will, become great.

After the final collapse of the touring company, the couple are in a cheap inn, with little money and no immediate prospects, when they discover a poster for a Kabuki production, the members of which are known to Kikunosuke from his Osaka days. Otuku recognizes the opportunity for Kikunosuke to attempt a major role. He, however, is uncertain of his reception, and it is left to Otuku to make the approach. The opportunity is granted and a promise made that if Kikunosuke is good, then a reconciliation will be made between him and his family. The price of such a reconciliation is that Otuku must disappear. She has long been prepared for this tragedy, but keeps it secret from Kikunosuke. The performance is masterful, and a triumphal return to Tokyo is certain. Otuku, by now very ill, contrives to miss the train and returns to their old lodgings in Osaka. She says that she and Kikunosuke have agreed to separate ("it didn't work out"). Kikunosuke is told of Otuku's sacrifice and at first refuses to leave without her ("I owe everything to her") but is persuaded to continue on his way to Tokyo "because that is what will make Otuku happy." In Tokyo he achieves the success he now merits. The family decides to go to Osaka for a season to celebrate. There, as Kikunosuke is about to head a riverboat procession, he receives the news that Otuku is nearby, ill and dying. His father tells him to "go and see your wife," acknowledging Otuku's part in Kikunosuke's development. This recognition of their relationship is the news that Kikunosuke takes to Otuku. She briefly reveals the extent of her own deprivations ("I won't have to listen to their whispering anymore") and her happiness at his success and the future that they can now have together. Otuku insists on Kikunosuke going to the procession. As the boats glide along the canal and Kikunosuke receives the ovation of the crowds, Otuku dies. The theme which I want to extract from this story is that of exile, and I want to try to give the notion of exile a particular meaning in relation to the ways in which artists avail themselves of their material. However, the kinds of meaning which I wish to derive and the relationships which I wish to build up between artist and material are not susceptible of precise statement (at least I am not capable of precisely stating them). I am, therefore, left in the position of laying interpretations and description on top of each other in the hope of eventually building up what I require, much as an oyster builds a pearl. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, James Joyce describes the necessary attributes of the artist as "silence, exile, cunning." Exile (and

alienation) result when the ideology of the individual is at variance with his milieu. In politics, exile is the punishment exacted when the ideas expressed or opinions held by the individual constitute an active threat to that which legitimates the state's authority. The social order is the manifestation of a particular set of ideas and is therefore vulnerable to other ideas. The threat is removed by removing the individual from the only milieu in which his ideas have currency.

There is an argument to the effect that things, as they appear to us, do not appear as they really are but, rather, appear only as we are able to perceive them. Thus, things have qualities of color, shape, pattern, surface, etc. not inherently but in appearance. Although this is intelligible, we are still left with considering what it means to perceive in this context and what are the consequences for an understanding of the nature of experience. While it is undoubtedly true that sensory data have limits imposed by the physiological capacities of the sensory apparatus and that therefore impose a limit on the range of our perception, how those perceptions are constituted as experience and how those experiences constitute a world is our prime concern. The fact that what we perceive as red has measurable limits and gradations within those limits tells us absolutely nothing about its being red although its being red tells us something about ourselves.

There is a temporal succession of experiences, and there is such a unity among the temporally extended series of such experience so that self-consciousness may be attributed to the subject of such experience (Strawson/Kant). The notion of there being an "experience" carries along with it the notions that there is a self-conscious subject and that such experience is not an isolated event in the life of that subject.

We behave, in the fullest possible sense, in response to our experience, but if we say that "that experience includes awareness of objects which are distinguishable from our experiences of them in the sense that judgments about these objects are judgments about what is the case irrespective of the actual occurrence of particular subjective experiences of them and that these objects are essentially spatial" (Strawson), then a part of our experience apparently has objective reference.

Something exists, yet what exists for us is no more (and no less) than what is given to us in our experience. But the formation of that experience is dependent on the ideas that we have about it; "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (Kant). When we talk about representation, it is that formation, both abstract and concrete, that is under discussion— abstract by virtue of the general and underlying structure of that formation and its necessary continuance; concrete in the available means by which our consciousness of particular experience manifests itself.

Representation is the embodiment of the abstract and concrete, contained by and containing our experience and its formation.

The forms of representation are themselves mutable, as societies are mutable, responding to changes in social conditions which entail fundamental changes in social forms. One is a member of a particular society at a particular period in its development and one embodies the (lived) contradictions characteristic of that situation. Over and against these contradictions are characteristics of the individual life. It is the manifestation of this continuance and individuality which is contained within the absence of historical dimension (empathy) felt in observing certain works of art. A history of the forms of representation is a history of these former contradictions. It is only through the forms of representation that the individual is enabled to show or to become himself. Earlier, in introducing the idea of Exile, I intended to characterize a means by which the individual transforms the tension existing between available forms and his "new" experience in order to become himself. Only as an exile can Joyce become an Irish writer. It is not without significance that both Rodin and Brancusi made sculptures entitled *The Prodigal Son*.