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> Would Jews without enemies be just as boring as everybody else? […]. What makes extraordinary all the harmless banality is the bullet in the head.
> Philip Roth, Operation Shylock

Starring Klye MacLachlan, Anthony Hopkins and Juliet Stevenson, David Jones's film, *The Trial*, based on Harold Pinter's screenplay fulfills the writer's forty-year ambition. Pinter confirmed as much in an interview conducted in Prague by Fiona Murch for BBC Channel Four News during the filming of *The Trial* in which the writer recalled that the novel, which he read as a teenager, not only motivated his subsequent reading of Kafka's works at his local Hackney library, but "seeped" into his "subconscious," and "had […] an undeniable influence" on him as a writer in his early years (Murch, 2). However in 1982 when Pinter, a life-long movie buff who watched American gangster movies while the bombs were falling in London, and a screenwriter who has adapted some fifteen novels, met with Louis Marks, the film's producer, to discuss his writing of the screenplay, the playwright stressed the timelessness of *The Trial* and his cultural connection with the Jewish novelist.[1]

Recounting their initial meetings, Marks recalls that their discussions on *The Trial*, widely understood in England as replicating the experience of the Jew, encompassed Arthur Hertzberg's reading of *The Trial*, namely that the very idea of granting freedom to Jews during the Enlightenment implicitly contains a built-in assumption of guilt (336). It was a premise that Pinter believed a basic tenet of Kafka's novel.[2] Moreover, Marks vividly remembers that Pinter's motivation for wanting to write the screenplay — something that he had yearned to do since reading the novel — stemmed from the fact that he believed that the *right* way to film Kafka's novel, his way (as opposed to Orson Welles'), was to depict the nightmare of Kafka's vision in its ordinariness. "The point that he [Harold] was making," recalls Marks, was that "it happens […]. Therefore, you don't add the nightmare by shooting it in a nightmare way," as Welles did through spasmodic, half-adjusted lines, recurrent parabolic echoes, a mushroom cloud, perpetual disorientation created by the camera's rapid movement in concert with shrieks, sounds and lighting effects. Rather for Pinter, "The nightmare is in the reality,"[3] a premise that he has long illustrated in his stage plays.

A child of the thirties, Pinter has "always been very much at home with the idea of menace. It becomes like a second nature to me," he told Murch, recalling his childhood during the war when he was "well aware of the Gestapo […] the whole operation of the Thirties in relation to the victims — the many, many victims — and the many, many brutal oppressors," adding that he "was brought up in that […] territory" (Murch, 4). Harassed as a teenager by Fascist thugs, Pinter experienced first-hand the blatant "gutter-style racist anti-Semitism" that was "rampant in the East End in the late 1940s," but was no doubt aware of the more subtle and pervasive form of British anti-Semitism of exclusion of the Jew derived from the persistent conviction that Jews were not British. Perceived as perpetual aliens responsible for the hostility perpetrated toward them, Anglo-Jewry — whose behavior, social habits, and character were studied by two thousand observers funded by the Board of Deputies of British Jews to ascertain whether Jews were ostentatious, "keen on dirty picture machines, politically minded

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1 Louis Marks, interview with author, London, 14 August 1991.
2 Marks, interview.
3 Marks, interview.

and socially exclusive" — was pressured to assimilate or to remain apart from British society.[4]

In its most pernicious form British anti-Semitism took the form of "cold-blooded" refusal to save Jewish refugees in unoccupied France, whom the Foreign Office referred to as "wailing Jews," an response that still enrages Pinter. "People were dying," he told Barry Davis in an interview published in *The Jewish Quarterly*. "What the hell were they talking about?" (16).[5] Commenting on his heightened awareness to the widely held perception of Anglo-Jewry as the alien menace, Pinter vividly remembers the insecurity and vulnerability of his youth:

> from a child I've lived in a world in which there has been more and more violence of one sort or another […]. For example, there was a considerable amount of Fascist activity in the East End of London. In 1945, after the war. In the streets round a Jewish club I used to go to, and around Ridley Road Market — there was a big Fascist stronghold there — we used to bump into quite a few of the boys, you know, and we had a number of set-to's. It was really quite ugly. The used to beat up old Jews in the Dalston Junction area. In many respects it was a perfectly lively, quite vigorous community down there, but when night fell you never knew what you were going to meet. (Gross, 25)

However, persecution against Anglo-Jewry was limited neither to the East End nor to the post-war period. Ten years later Pinter encountered an anti-Semite in a bar in the Sloane Square tube who complained that "Hitler didn't go far enough." After a momentary hesitation, Pinter instinctively assaulted the man who called him a "filthy Yid." Every detail of that "very ugly incident" has remained with the playwright, who has subsequently understood that he hit the man with such a powerful blow "because he wasn't just insulting me […]. He was insulting people who were dead, people who had suffered." (Pinter quoted in Davis, 10–11)

Persecution is never far from Pinter's mind just as persecution and intimidation were never far from Kafka's experience. Born in Prague to middle class first-generation assimilated Jews, Kafka, argues Ernst Pawel in *The Nightmare of Reason*, "undoubtedly met up with street-level antisemitism even in grade school, certainly on the way to it" (60).[6] As a post-bar mitzvah teenager Kafka "would have had to be deaf and blind not to be aware of what to the grown-ups around him was a constant preoccupation," namely the Prague pogrom known as the "December storm" (1887), an anti-German protest to the new language laws that escalated into a three-day anti-Jewish riot in Prague whose damage to property, Jewish self-esteem, Czech-Jewish relations and Jews's sense of citizenship was enormous. Vicious anti-Semitism, mob violence and a flood of anti-Jewish pornography erupted again in Prague's streets and newspapers two years later during the bloody progroms of 1899, which saw Jewish stores and pedestrians who looked liked Jews attacked, an anti-Jewish boycott, organized riots, the rise of anti-Jewish pornography, what Pawel terms "gruesomely illustrated pamphlets," and any ostensible provocation sufficient motivation to turn against the Jews (42–43). Living in early twentieth century Prague, Kafka and his family were part of a Jewish community comprised of secular and religious Jews who were surrounded by two warring anti-Semitic ethnic groups, the Czechs and the Germans, neither of which would accept the Jews socially or

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[4] From 1938–39, 2000 observers funded by the Board of Deputies of British Jews undertook a detailed analysis of anti-Semitism in Britain, primarily in the East End. The "Mass Observation Report," submitted by Tom Harrisson, studied stereotypical behavior and traits to determine "the ways in which Jews consistently behave differently […] make themselves conspicuous or make themselves almost unconsciously felt 'outsiders.'" Although unpublished, this report is retained at the Wiener Library in London. See esp. pp. 1 and 53.

[5] In this interview Pinter confirms that his identifcation with Judaism is not only instinctive; it is intellectual. Studying the art and poetry of the Holocaust, the works of Paul Celan, Nelly Sachs, Elie Wiesel, and Primo Levi, as well as the history of the pograms of the late nineteenth century that anticipate the Holocaust, Pinter has become fully conversant on an event he considers the most horrific in this century.

[6] Pawel's biography of Kafka underscores the inextricable connection between Kafka's prose and aspects of his life, surroundings, and the development of a strong Jewish identity.

culturally. Deracinated, marginalized and rejected by the gentile society solely on the basis of ethnicity, Kafka and other West European German intellectual Jews of a similar mindset, sought Jewish roots and identity. Attracted to the proud, un-selfconscious ethnicity, piety, and sense of community that characterized the cultural Zionism of Eastern Jewry, Kafka rebelled against his assimilationist upbringing. Yiddish actors, whose performances he attended in a Prague café in 1910 and 1911–12, induced in Kafka a consuming interest in an "authentic Jewish civilization" that was manifested in his lifelong study of Jewish history, literature, and the sources of Judaism, and that nourished him as a writer and as a Jew (Bodoff, 263–280).

Although "nothing on the surface of Kafka's novels and stories betrays the Jewishness of the author or the protagonist," and *The Trial* "makes perfectly coherent reading without reference to Kafka's Jewish background," Robert Alter persuasively argues in *Necessary Angels* that in repeatedly and

variously raising questions of exile, assimilation, endangered community, revelation, commentary, law, tradition, and commandment, the novel both "reflects the writer's cultural predicament" and "converts the distinctive quandaries of Jewish existence into images of existential dilemmas" (53).[7] In so doing Kafka's *Trial* is entirely consistent with a "cultural and literary history" that has "long been seen as an arena in which the manifestations of anti-Semitism are played out, often in ways that predate their appearance within greater social reality." (Gilman and Katz, 2)

"However, to understand Jewish identity in the Diaspora as it is portrayed artistically," argue Sander Gilman and Steven T. Katz in *Anti-Semitism in Times of Crisis*, "one must understand the creation, generation and the perpetuation of the negative images of the Jew." Given that "Anti-Semitism is central to Western culture as the rhetoric of European culture is Christianized," they continue, the literary representation of the Jew specifically "reflects and shapes (or is reflected and shaped by) the political reality of the Jew within the society of the Diaspora," especially apparent in times of crisis (18). And, as one regularly subjected to the insults and defects of a despised and caricatured people and surrounded by an environment informed by race hatred, Kafka was undoubtedly shaped by his political reality. Obsessed with the physiognomy and psyche of Jews, "his self-image in later years shaped […] in no small measure by hooligans and pogromchicks" (Pawel, 204), Kafka encodes *The Trial* with ample evidence of the Jew viewed as different and Other in a parable that parallels ritual murder trials. However, to illustrate the Jew's higher virtues, Kafka implicitly informs his narrative by its biblical allusion to Joseph who was and remains — in tradition and legend — a teacher of righteousness, whose moral integrity, intuitive intelligence, and loyalty defined his relationships (Wiesel, 169). A highly respected administrator in Egypt at thirty, Joseph, the first assimilationist Jew, was a just man torn by contradictory forces, who assumed his destiny and infused it with meaning, paralleling the experience of Kafka's protagonist, Joseph/Josef K.

To Pinter, for whom writing the screenplay of *The Trial* was "a wonderfully difficult proposition" (Murch, 2), the principal goal, to find the visual focus of the parabolic novel, was intensified by the need "to tell the story straight, as it were, as a hard, taut objective series of events" whose "narrative is itself remorseless and inevitable" and by the need to reimagine the themes of difference and separateness within a British context and discourse (Marks, 18). Set concretely in the pre-war central European milieu of Prague, Pinter's stunning screenplay, depicting "the process of entrapment […] the manipulation of an individual by some "higher" (or lower) order," gains the authenticity and claustrophobia singularly absent in Welles' abstract approach (Karl, 534). Unlike Welles who demonstrated little respect for the integrity

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[7] Viewed for many years as a prophet of political oppression, more recent studies of Kafka as a Jew take into account his quest for Jewish identity. In this regard see esp. Gershon Shaked, *The Shadows Within* and Richie Robertson, *Kafka: Judaism, Politics and Literature*.

of Kafka's novel, Pinter captures the spirit of the novel and faithfully parallels its narrative structure in a series of highly dramatic, mostly two-character scenes that are confrontational in nature. Employing a terse but suggestive cinematic language that capitalizes on the novel's humor and reveals its focus on the abuse of power, Pinter's screenplay manifests the sensibilities of the playwright primarily in the synthesis of speech, silence and space. Further, it is consistent with the tripartite structure of ritual murder trials as a discourse,"[8] which eluciadates Pinter's linguistic focus on accusation, interrogation (inclusive of judicial torture and protestation of innocence), and execution (and silencing) of evildoers. Indeed, it is through Pinter's masterful treatment of speech and silence that we hear Josef K's voice — and see his vitality — metamorphose from righteous indignation to silence.

Those familiar with Pinter's work for the theatre will recognize the powerful narrative of threatened identity, images of entrapment, the linguistic imposition of power, a character whose dignity derives from his resistance, echoic encoding in English discourse of the moral imperative, as well as the prominent role of the consequence of conduct, social responsibility, respect for human rights, and orientation to life that typify the Jew. Riveting attention on what the playwright has characterized as "the most important thing [of how the man] fights like hell all the way" (Gordon, 50), Pinter's screenplay for *The Trial* "plays like Pinter: inscrutable in the initial delivery, lethal in the final blow" (Johnstone, 10). To borrow Louis Marks' phrase, it "kicks you in the gizzards."[9]

Pinter sets the tone in the initial sequence. Converting the passive, often reticent discourse of the novel — at once logical, reflective and defensive — into an active present tense characterized by its caustic, combative tone, the playwright quickly and clearly establishes the confrontational nature of the dialogue. Comparison between the novel and the screenplay explicitly illustrates this disparity. In the novel Josef K, a literalist — specifically labeled "a quibbler over words" [a Jew] (Kafka, 10–11), deliberates on the severity of his arrest in a discourse comparable to that of the *pilpul shev hevel*, the typically aggressive traditional Talmudic mode of argument based on analogy and approximation, characterized by quintessentially Jewish hairsplitting and quest of resolution implicit in seemingly contradictory positions (Gilman 1986, 90). "Certainly, I am surprised, but I am by no means very much surprised," K tells the Inspector. Following this line of analagous thinking, he continues:

> I mean […] that I am very much surprised, of course, but when one has lived for thirty years in this world and has had to fight one's way through it, as I have had to do, one becomes hardened to surprises and does not take them too seriously […]. So I don't say that it's a joke […]. But on the other hand […] it can't be an affair of any great importance. I argue this from the fact that though I am accused of something, I cannot recall the slightest offense […] But […] the real question is, who accuses me? What authority is conducting these proceedings? (K 10–11)[10]

Whereas the protagonist of the novel internalizes questions regarding the warder's identity and authority, as well as deprecating observations on their "intellectual poverty" (K 8), Pinter's Josef K, retaining Talmudic argumentativeness, makes no pretense of analysis. Aggressively and assertively he engages the Inspector in a dialogue:

> I know I'm being charged — but with what and on what grounds and who is making the accusation? This is what *I* would like to know. This is a legally constituted state,

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8 For a brilliant analysis of the tripartite structure of ritual murder and host desecration as discourse and its parallels to *The Trial* see R. Po-chia Hsai, esp. pp. 116–123 and 131.

9 Marks, interview.

10 Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, translate by Willa and Edwin Muir, pp. 10–11. Further citations will appear parenthetically in the text with a "K" preceding pagination to differentiate from pagination of the Pinter screenplay.

> the rule of law is fully established. Who are *you* and what is *your* authority? I demand clear answers to these questions. (Pinter, 5–6)[11]

Having drawn a distinction between "I" and "you" (a technique familiar to Pinter audiences namely in Davies' and Aston's exchange at the end of *The Caretaker*), and outlined *his* list of demands, Josef K apparently takes charge of the interrogation, attempting to establish the grounds of accusation, the identity and authority of the accuser, and the justification of a wrongful arrest in a legally constituted state. But, his belligerent tone and hostile tirade, however, are immediately undermined by the Inspector's terse warning and implied threat: "You've been arrested. That's all we know. But don't worry about us. Worry about yourself. Worry about what might happen to you. And don't talk so much" (6). At once cutting off the explosive inquiry by silencing the accused, asserting his authority to control speech, and devaluing K's demands by his own refusal to speak to them, the Inspector, like the warders, a couple of Cockney Fascist bullies who initially harass Josef K, illustrates that K obviously "doesn't know this Law" (3). As Francis Gillen correctly observes in "From Novel to Film," the opening arrest scene is as much about arrest as the perception of arrest, a point illustrated by K's cognizance that he is being watched by two sets of watchers (139). Like Kafka, Pinter focuses on observation to intensify awareness of visual and verbal impressions of identity, specifically the ways of seeing and being seen.

While retaining the authenticity, intention, and implicitness of the novel, Pinter's spare, multivalent dialogue heightens awareness of anti-Semitic stereotypical representation. Although Pinter does not denote the identity of his protagonist as Jewish any more than Kafka does, Josef K's numerous stereotypical traits — alternately portrayed as assertive, disputatious, querulous, deluded, blind, ugly, obsessed with money and sex, and rhetorically brilliant (traditional negative qualifiers of Jewish nature) — are encoded in a rhetoric "that is saturated with the imagined projection of the Other" (Gilman 1986, 13). As Moshe Lazar explains in "The Lamb and the Scapegoat: The Dehumanization of the Jews in Medieval Propaganda Imagery," the mythicazation and diabolization of the Jews that culminated in their dehumanization included the representation of Jews as those who rage, dispute, mock, act as madmen, are blind, hard-necked, or mad dogs and stigmatized Jews as carnal, lecherous, and avaricious, characteristics discernible in or attributed to Josef K both in the novel and screenplay (Gilman and Katz, 135–36).[12] To this litany of negative images of the Jew, Pinter adds Josef K's monetary acumen and money-lending of a substantial sum to Frau Grubach, coupling these aspects with his temperament and "deviant" sexual nature. To the indictment that the Jew is a captive of the letter rather than the spirit of the law, Pinter links the standard, yet pernicious anti-Semitic attack on usury as evidence of base adherence to the letter of the text. And, depicting Josef K as a dissolute womanizer disguised in banker's clothes, whose wealth and social position afford no protection from persecution, as it did not in either in the Inquisition or the Holocaust (Gilbert, 59),[13] Pinter's film reveals him smothering Fräulein Brüstner and the washerwoman in kisses and lascivious embraces and dragging Leni to the floor in salacious sexual acts. Thus, from an anti-Jewish perspective, Josef K shows himself to be concerned with carnal (read Jewish) rather than spiritual (read Christian) values.

Additionally, Pinter's screenplay clusters several stereotypical figures, namely the Jew as usurer, as deviant, and as the cause of infection. As literary and linguistic analyses are central to our comprehension of literary antisemitism, suggests Guy Stern (232), we are especially

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[11] Harold Pinter, *The Trial*. All further citations to the screenplay will appear parenthetically in the text.

[12] For a discussion of mockery and humor as "an atavisitic sign of sexuality of the Jews, during the fin de siècle" see: Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body*, pp. 135–136.

[13] Gilbert's chilling study of the Holocaust provides numbing evidence of a propensity to humiliate wealthy Jews and to show contempt for Jews of lower class.

attentive to what is said to K, about him and by him, mindful that "Everything he [Pinter] wants to say is in the line and if he had wanted a different meaning or nuance he would have written the line differently" (Marks, 21). Thus, when Frau Grubach implies that Fräulein Bürstner is a prostitute who she has observed "in out-of-the way streets and each time with a different man," K angrily comes to her defense: "I warn you not to say anything to Fräulein Bürstner. I know her well. There's not a grain of truth in what you're implying" (9). Even if there were not "a grain of truth" to the malicious supposition, the linkage between the Jew and the prostitute during the fin de siècle "had become a commonplace in all of Christian Europe." And, argues Gilman, anti-Semites found empiral evidence for this relationship which was believed to have a social dimension," primarily because both profitted "either from the conversion of sex into money or money into sex" (1991, 122). But Frau Grubach is unconcerned with *the* truth. Rather, motivated by what she perceives as the truth and her financial interest in maintaining a "clean" boarding house, Frau Grubach succeeds in enraging Josef K: "Clean! If you want to keep the house clean, you'll have to start by throwing me out" (10). The scene is prophetic. Notable for Pinter's characterization of the pariah as rebel, a stance evident in K's indignant outrage and querulous disputation — what Hannah Arendt has termed in a different context as "vaunted Jewish values" — the scene is equally memorable for Pinter's inclusion of the one word, "clean," the coded correlative to the "dirty Jew" resonating through centuries of anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic propaganda imagery.

K's defense of Fräulein Brüstner, common to both the novel and the screenplay, foreshadows the pivotal courtroom scene where Pinter's Josef K, whose mockery of the court elicits bursts of laughter and resounding bravos from the audience, and whose attack of the judicial network of functionaries ironically inverts stereotypical phrases typically reserved to criticize Jews ("at the very best degenerate, arrogant, ignorant, and corrupt"), and whose arrest he likens to "being waylaid by a bunch of louts in a dark alley" (20). For K, ethical principle and social responsibility govern behavior. Thus, as he relates his story, K universalizes his arrest as "an indication of the kind of intimidation many people are being subjected to. It is for these people I am speaking […]" And, the subject about which he speaks is as important as the *fact* that he speaks, namely that Josef K uses language to attack what he terms "the great organization" whose significance consists of "securing the arrest of innocent people and instituting against them senseless proceedings […] " (20–21). His speech diminished by the debauchery taking place in the rear of the courtroom that has diverted the other accused individuals, providing further evidence of their depraved behavior, K pushes his way through the courtroom, reminded by the magistrate's threats that he has "thrown away all advantage that a hearing can afford an arrested man." In the face of advantages neither demonstrated nor defined and a "hearing" in which Josef K has apparently been holding court, the accused slams the door on justice: "To hell with your damn hearings" (21).

Principle similarly informs the whipping scene, that more than any other in the film blatantly illustrates the abuse of power about which K has spoken in the courtroom. Again we observe a marked disparity between Kafka's protagonist, who equivocates on the subject of blame and Pinter's, who seeks to affix guilt to the organization. The screenplay sharply distinguishes between the warders who are "blameless," and "the organization that's to blame" (32). Pleading his own innocence regarding their punishment, as much out of proportion to the crime as his own, K explains, "I never asked for you to be punished […]. I was only concerned with the principle of the thing" (31). A parody of the courtroom scene, his words of protest and his allegations against the organization are drowned out, this time by the crack of flogger's whip savagely cutting into Franz's back and a scream that is "unending" (32). Expanding this scene in the novel from the night that K discovers the floggers in the Lumber Room into late in the next afternoon when the flogging is still ongoing — at which point K is unable to articulate even one word of protest — Pinter underscores his conviction that torture

is continuous and ubiquitous.[14] For Pinter, as for Frederick Karl, who maintains that "the entire *Trial* must be perceived as a huge cry, a protest," the visually and aurally graphic whipping scene is surely part of "the scream of protest" that best describes the novel (521).

Despite ample evidence that verbal protest was ineffective in dissuading the whippers, Josef K, a man of language, arrives at the proposal of defending himself by "survey of life from every conceivable angle" — a perspective whose "advantages" he believes are "indisputable." However, his advocate Huld, whom Josef K subsequently dismisses, seeing neither the advantages of K's advocacy nor the value of disputing K's faulty premise, rejects the proposal out of hand as "madness […]. Absolute madness" (41). In an interesting study of madness in Pinter's stage and screenplays, Penelope Prentice maintains that the complexity of Pinter's dramatization of madness, informed by both personal experience and "concern for communal and global madness," repeatedly "extends the boundaries between sanity and madness" (Prentice). It is in Tittorelli's attic room — a scene which Pinter greatly condenses and simplifies — that the associational connection between "madness" and K's physical appearance are illuminated. "A truism of medical science," especially at the end of the nineteenth century, observes Sander Gilman, was that "the male Jew from the East" — whom K most closely approximates in behavior (rather than his acculturated cosmopolitan contemporaries) — was "at most risk for hysteria." Indeed, in the mid-nineteenth century and the early twentieth century "being black, being Jewish, being diseased" — no doubt from living in filth and poverty or the Jew's special relationship to the most frightening disease of the period, syphilis — and being "ugly" are inexorably linked with madness. In an historical period in which the aesthetic values determined the beautiful and the ugly, "ugliness" was attributable to the black skin of the syphilitic, "proof" of the internal moral state of the Jew reflected in physiology and psychology.[13]

Although Pinter omits the entire section of Kafka's *The Trial* narrating Tittorelli's painting of heathscapes and winged, menacing judges, a trinity of Goddesses of Justice, Victory and the Hunt, he does expand a discussion with Block from which a portrait of K, replete with negative stereotypical imagery emerges. Taking full advantage of the power of the portrait to intensify our perception of K's physiognomy, Pinter enhances Kafka's description of the accused as horrified and speechless at seeing upon K's "lips the sign of his (their) condemnation" (K 174).[15] In Pinter's screenplay Block significantly functions as a spokesperson for the accused who conveys their compassion for Josef K, an emotion generated by their assessment of his visage and "the outline of his lips" which in their experience has been indicative of both speedy conviction and delusion. Latching on to Block's elusive reference to lips, Josef K explodes:

> JOSEF K My lips! I can't see anything special about my lips. Can you?
> BLOCK Absolutely nothing at all.
> JOSEF K Superstitious rubbish. (50)

However, such "superstitious rubbish" as the black Jew's "muzzle shaped mouth" and "overly fleshy lips" constituted visible proof of racial impurity and race poisoning at the beginning of the twentieth century (Gilman 1991, 203–204). And, it is this "group prejudice and pseudo-scientific theory of race," argues Nicholas de Lange, that best define scientific (racial) anti-

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[14] In "Pinter on Pinter," Pinter tells Miriam Gross that he is "raddled" by the reality that torture is "ever-present": "while we're talking, people are locked up in prisons all over the world, being tortured in one way or another" (25).

[15] See Gilman, *Jew's Body*, where he argues convincingly in "The Jewish Psyche," "The Jewish Nose," and "The Jewish Disease" that the Jew was (is) not merely heard, he or she was *seen*. It was believed in the nineteenth century, notes Gilman, that Jews marked by the discernible stigma of the black skin of the syphilitic, the syphilitic *rupia*, literally bore the evidence of their racial impurity and pathology on their anatomy and in their psyche, esp. pp. 63, 96–100 and 173–174.

Semitism. Dating from the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth, it laid the foundation for the extermination of six million Jews (de Lange, 21–22).

Thus, in an original contribution to the screenplay, Pinter establishes an allusive link between delusion and deception and K's ranting that he is being poisoned and hounded. What exactly are we to make of K's rantings, whose roots may be traced to a previous conversation and are entirely credible as the perceptions of a persecuted man driven insane by his thoughts and the persecution of others? Paralleling Pinter's dramatic works (notably *The Birthday Party*, *The Caretaker*, and *No Man's Land*), the snippets of seemingly unrelated dialogue in *The Trial* that appear to be irrelevant, irrational, and unrelated, namely "I am slowly being poisoned" and "They're hounding me," are hardly the ravings of a madman (53, 57). Jews have long been thought to be guilty of poisoning the wells, spreading the plague, of polluting discourse, of polluting the religion of the majority, of corrupting society. Indeed, as Lazar observes, "the Jew has been cast in a mythological image from which all other negative attributes were to be genealogically derived: liar, deceiver, agent of corruption, and debauchery […] poisoner and killer" believed to be guilty of poisoning, pollution, perversion (Lazar, 45). Replacing these allegations with his own, K in Pinter's screenplay employing an ironic inversion of negative stereotypical representation of the Jew, deflects accusations from himself and once again affixes blame to those madmen whose oppression and persecution corrupts the very fabric of society.

Picking up the threads of the previous discussion, Pinter establishes a logical and linguistic associational connection between delusion and deception, pollution and poisoning, blindness and sight, and speech and perjury that characterizes the quintessential conversation in which all these motifs are woven into the tapestry of K's conversation with the priest in the Cathedral. The Cathedral scene, pivotal in the novel, is simply stunning in the screenplay and in Jones' film. Pinter, whose stage plays and screenplays are notable for their interplay of speech and silence, takes full advantage of the priest's "resonant, well-trained voice" (K 209) rolling through the silent Cathedral realistically deserted at 11:00 A.M. and the priest's credible and obvious domination of speech through sermon. Condensing this scene as it is narrated in the novel, Pinter incisively focuses on the philosophical, linguistic, theological, and physical distance between the priest and Josef K, which is strikingly communicated visually in the film.

Whereas the priest appears to be a corporeal image of Titorelli's painting of the judge, an imposing figure beckoning to K from his pulpit, the accused, on the other hand, appears diminished in stature and emotional stability, evidence of the cumulative effects of the case closing in on him. In fact, as the priest addresses the themes of innocence and guilt, spirituality and secularity, and light and darkness, an agitated and notably silenced Josef K appears visibly trapped between the priest and the door. Paralleling Pinter's stage plays, the scene in the Cathedral contrasts sharply with the initial scene, counterpointing confirmation of arrest and implication of conviction, assumptions concerning the Law and explications of the Law, arrogance and anxiety of the accused, and language and silence. In a reversal of the film's opening scene informed by the warders and Inspector's evasiveness and non-committal utterances and K's insistence on his identity, the priest immediately clarifies any questions of identity — both his own and K's — sets the inquisitional and instructional tone of the conversation (which Josef K characterizes as a sermon), and establishes its focus: "You are an accused man," observes the priest. "Yes," responds K, the literalist, with characteristic, but tacit rejection of the Priest's assumption of guilt: "So I have been informed." Commanded to set aside his guidebook to the Cathedral, the accused answers by throwing it away so violently that "it skids, twists and comes apart on the Cathedral floor," all but distracting K from his purpose (59). But the priest, who formerly surprised K by identifying him by name, now startles him by riveting attention to the status of his case:

PRIEST Do you know that your case is going badly?
JOSEF K I have that impression.
PRIEST How do you think it will end?
JOSEF K I don't know. Do you?
PRIEST No, but I fear it will end badly. Your case may not get beyond a lower court. You are considered to be guilty.
JOSEF K But, I am not. And anyway, how can any man be called guilty? We're all human beings, aren't we? One human being just like another.
PRIEST That's true, but that's how all guilty men speak. (59)

Despite his efforts to universalize guilt, K is momentarily silenced by the priest's leap of logic: that the primary evidence of guilt is one's speech. This focus on speech is entirely consistent with Pinter's canon, where those that have power express that power linguistically and repress the speech of others. However, once again the subtext of the Priest's comment points to a long tradition of regarding the Jews' language as the language of the thief and the trickster, the language of the degenerate Jew as coefficient of and coterminous with the language of perjury. "For even if the Jews could speak perfect grammatical syntactic and semantic German," observes Gilman in *Jewish Self-Hatred*, "their rhetoric revealed them as Jews and gave them a distinctive linguistic identity." Whether in intonation or accent (Yiddish) or mode of articulation or rhetoric, the discourse of the Jew implied difference. Criminals, therefore, whether Jewish or not, were typically called "mock Jews" (Gilman 1986, 68–76). Thus, close examination of the duologue between the priest and Josef reveals that it is encoded with the anti-Semitism of the historical period. As Walter Sokel observes in his study of dualistic thinking and ontological anti-Semitism — best defined as hostility toward the Jews that concentrates on their being — the Jew of the anti-Semite of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is not only "the embodiment of darkness," he or she is seen to be "constantly conspiring against the principle of the light" (154–55). Implicitly and explicitly calling attention to the blindness of the Jew, the priest both passes the lamp to Josef K and apparently seeks to enlighten him on the Law through the parable of man and the door-keeper.

Notably Pinter underscores the depiction of difference between the seeing and the blind in the screenplay when the exasperated Priest explosively remarks: "Can't you see what is going to happen to you? Can't you see what is staring you in the face? (60). But, if K is literally the Jew in the darkness, he is not blind to the abuse of power. In fact, as portrayed by Pinter, he is "a light unto the nations":

JOSEF K The door-keeper deceived the man.
PRIEST Don't be too hasty.
JOSEF K It's obvious. The door-keeper didn't tell the man the truth unti it was too late.
PRIEST He wasn't asked the question until then. And remember he was only a door-keeper.
JOSEF K But he had power! And he used it to destroy the man. He's a criminal. He should have been dismissed. (62)

Once again, Pinter inverts the stereotype of polluted and polluting discourse of the lying Jew. It is not the accused but the door-keeper, observes K, who demonstrates criminal behavior, because having had the power of speech, he abused that power by refusing to speak the truth. Ignoring the priest's equivocation that the door-keeper was *only* a functionary, K protests that the man's human rights were abrogated, but his argument falls on uncomprehending ears. Again we note a striking difference between the novel and the screenplay. In the former, K, having registered his opinion that "the doorkeeper's deceptions do himself no harm but do infinite harm to the man," finds further discussion impeded by the priest's objection, "it is not necessary to accept everything as true, one must only accept it as necessary." Finding such a conclusion melancholic, K replies that "It turns lying into a universal principle" (K 220). Similarly, in the screenplay K defends an ethical position, but his objection is vehement and

his condemnation of the doorkeeper unequivocal. Paralleling the novel, the priest blocks further discussion: "The scripture is unalterable" (63). However, in reviving the intent of a passage deleted by Kafka from the novel, namely that K "faltered […] when it came to him that he had been drawn into a train of thought that was entirely foreign" (K 262) K's few words and silent stare powerfully communicate his contempt for such a foreign way of thinking and thought. Raising questions as to which of them is an embodiment of darkness, Pinter's K calls attention once again to their separateness and difference.

Consistent with his intention to portray K's unceasing resistance and his commitment to portray K's nightmare within the context of reality, the final scenes of the Pinter's screenplay brilliantly crystallize K's defiant dissent. Like his biblical namesake Josef, who illustrated for Israel that the impossible is possible, K is indignant and independent until his death. Speaking "half to the Men, half to himself," he admits to being "grateful" that his executioners, "two half-dumb imbeciles have been sent to escort" him, not to engage him in pointless dialogue (65). And, in the absence of dialogue, the silence of this scene is deafening. K's apparent acquiescence in death may be explained by his intention to take control of a situation in which he is otherwise powerless; in other words, he refuses to play out either of the roles expected of him: wailing Jew or raging idiot. Having set the pace of his final journey to the quarry — whether rooting himself to the square or outpacing his executioners so that they are forced to keep abreast of him — K and the two stooges play out the scene, the executioners chuckling while passing the knife back and forth across his body in a parody of "pass the bag" in Pinter's *The Caretaker*. "It is all reality or all dream," Pinter wrote Louis Marks in a letter that accompanied the first draft of the screenplay. "But one must remember that the knife which plunged into K's heart is real" (Marks, 18). In the moonlight of a desolate quarry, K is suffocated and stabbed in the heart, butchered "Like a dog!" (66) in a scene so brutal that Pinter averted his eyes during its filming.

Reconsidering *The Trial*, which he had previously translated, with a heightened sensitivity and understanding in 1983, Primo Levi observed:

> The trial brought against the diligent and narrow-minded bank official concluded in a death sentence, never pronounced, never written; the execution takes place in the most squalid, denuded environment, without pomp, without anger, with bureaucratic meticulousness, at the hands of two puppet-executioners, who fulfill their task mechanically, without saying a word, trading silly compliments. It is a page that takes your breath away. I, a survivor of Auschwitz, would never have written it. (108)

For thirty-five years, Pinter has not only written this scene, he has peopled the wound. From *The Birthday Party* to *Party Time*, Pinter has overtly dramatized accusations, interrogations and exterminations. Criticizing "authoritarian postures […] and powers used to undermine, if not destroy the individual […] which refused to become part of an easily recognizable set of standards and values," he has answered oppression and endangered identity with a powerful demand for common justice, compassion, and respect for human life (Ford, 5).[16] Indeed, Pinter recently told Kate Saunders, "I find that [it] a really ulcerous concept — that to think about the fate of other people at all is stupid and ingenuous. I am very conscious of the way the real forces of the world act." (5)

However profound and prescient the Czech-born writer was to foresee a society where the rule of law would bring about the worst crimes against humanity in this century or any other, Kafka immortalizes K's dissent and Pinter's screenplay brilliantly illuminates Hillel's philosophical justification for outspoken radicalism and personal responsibility: "If I am not for myself, who will be? And if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?"

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[16] In a lengthy interview with Anna Ford, "Radical Departures," Pinter admitted the political nature of his early plays, trans. 5.

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