Chapter VI

Sexuality, Presence/Absence In *But We Are Exiles* (1965)
*Alibi* (1983) and *Puppeteer* (1992)

Kroetsch expresses his disappointment because before he arrived on the scene he found that his place was already taken, already written and the field already occupied. Kroetsch found “nothing to write about, that is what we have to write about” in his writing “naming act in a radical sense” he says he is in “Adam’s position, with no beasts out there. We even have to invent the beasts. He at least could say that’s a cow, that’s a chicken.” (*Labyrinth of Voice*, pp. 145). He found that he “cannot be Adam early in the morning. There have been too many Adams, and they have named everything” (*Bloom, Anxiety*, pp. 96). Therefore, Kroetsch’s act of naming is something, which he accepts distancing from it; by naming, he sacrifices the object, since the presence of the sign/word is the absence of the signified thing. The naming of objects separates him from them. For the acquisition of a name results in a thorough-going transformation of the position of the subject in his object world:

That a name, no matter how confused, designates a particular person—this is precisely what the passage to the human state consists in. If we must define that moment in which man becomes human, we would say that it is at that instant when, as minimally as you like, he enters into a symbolic relationship” (*Jameson, “Imaginary”* 18).

In other words Kroetsch’s self becomes illusionary. It does not mean there is no self at all but, he reserves the word self for one version of human being.

The novel *But We Are Exile* is narrated in the third person but it is focuses exclusively upon the consciousness of the chief character, peter guy who anticipates
later uprooted or dispossessed situation. In Kroetsch’s fiction, characters invariably seek, either through disguises or through the radical reshaping of personality, new identities. The narrative begins as the steamer M.V.nahanni jane prepares to make the year’s final trip downriver and across the great slave lake to Yellowknife. Peter has abandoned both his eastern origins and his university education to work as a pilot on the Mackenzie. He has acquired an identity appropriate to the remote northern frontier replacing Hornyak some times. The reasons for peter’s self- metamorphosis and escape from civilization lie hidden in the opening event of the narrative. As the M.V Nahanni Jane prepares for the final downriver trip, the crew is attempting to recover the body of the boat’s owner, Michael Hornyak, who has died in a shipboard explosion. The first in a series of sharply defined male characters, Kroetsch’s Hornyak is energetic, exuberant, and egotistical. Years before in Banff, Alberta, through a complicated chain of events, Hornyak had stolen peter’s fiancée, Kettle Freser (whose name, significantly, evokes two rivers) by the force of his strongly developed masculine ego. When the boat departs, Hornyak’s body has still not been found. This compels peter to reflect upon his past relations with Hornyak and kettle. In the end, peter resists the temptation to start over with kettle in his former role of an educated middleclass Canadian captures both his decision and his acquired personality in a single superbly gratuitous gesture: before setting off on the return trip to Yellowknife, peter gives his money to an impoverished Eskimo. On the return trip, Hornyak’s body is found, brought abroad the Nahanni Jane, and peter is faced even more forcefully with the problem of his relation to his one time friend, river boat, and superior in the acting–out of male roles. He must also face his possible culpability in Hornysk’s death since he had given him the unguarded lamp that had caused the explosion. Finally, caught in a blizzard on great slave lake, peter choose to join
Hornyak’s corpse on a castoff barge and through the ending is largely indeterminate, the narrative force of the incident is to suggest a decision to die. Through *But We Are Exiles* is the most conventional of Kroetsch’s novels, it lays the groundwork for his subsequent fiction. Themes such as loss, exile, quest, and metamorphic identity are all present in Kroetsch’s portrayal of peter guy, an emblem of the author’s interest in the fictional potential of elected, consciously reshaped personalities.

In *But We Are Exile*, peter guy is self/other and he is constructed from the always already operating sign system but Kroetsch’s particular articulation of those system in his novel is entirely unique. In *But We Are Exile* Peter is a peter:

“be kind, Peter. Be Peter the great.”
“at the rarte I’m going, I’ll be Peter the Peter.”
“not at the rate you’re going this morning.”
“I’ve got to go stand in the snow.” he said.
“be Peter the Peter,” she said,” come back to bed.”

He watched her in the mirror.(76bwe)

Peter guy is a subject a living voice as well the signification. By naming the other self peter guy, Kroetsch controls the set of events as his own “we control the world by naming it and lose it by naming it. Because the name starts to replace the whatever else (*Labyrinth of Voice*, pp.144) In other words peter guy is a present/absent self. “it already be speaks an absence”(* Labyrinth of Voice*, pp.143) Peter’s true meaning lies in the signification he acquires within the novel and his confident declaration of his self as “at the rarte I’m going, I’ll be peter the peter.”(76) is able to see his own face and can also hear his own voice : “ (I narrate) the line in peter’s hands came taut just then ; a chill shuddered up into his arms and aching neck.(I narrate) heard himself yell” (3). He glanced up at the “breath- tripping hush; at the broad river, mirror-
smooth in the afternoon sun… he looked down again at the water and this time he saw his own face watching him… he studied the reflection as if not sure whom he might see. (2) He is constantly stressing his personality as peter and peter the great might also be he/ she/ it and the meaning goes on multiplying in different forms.

Kroetsch presents his confused state of mind as in a form of lack/ lost and repressed. Though the “I” a position shifts from the self in Alibi Kroetsch tries to incorporates his identity in those negatives chapter called “NAGATIVE#1: AND BREAKFAST, AFTER” (28), “NAGATIVE#2: FOOTLOOSE, ON CRUTCHES” (81) NAGATIVE#3: IN WHICH THE TRAPPER STEPS INTO THE TRAP” (117), “NAGATIVE #4: DORF UPDATES HIS JOURNAL” (155), “ NAGATIVE #5 : DORF ATTEMPTING TO FIND A COFFIN MAKES A DISCOVERY” (176), and “NAGATIVE #6: AND THE LOVED, TOO, HAVE LOVERS” (Alibi, pp.213), the originality resides in the negative which is later on developed by other self as if those photos are his own. Kroetsch accepts the set of discourse is overruled on the originality on the set of rules he writes “the original notes, Karen’s birthday journal to me, are only negatives which now I develop” (232) these negatives are the royal road for Kroetsch unconscious and repressed mind. Kroetsch has a different sense of communication in the novel here. “Basically an open discontinuous system of communication. a great deal of what happens in Canada, including our literature, has to do with our having always to deal with gaps and spaces.” (Labyrinth of Voice, pp.121) In Writing admittedly, D. H. Lawrence says: “The mind, that is, transfers the idea of incest into the affective-passional psyche, and keeps it there as a repressed motive” (203). Literature and art, in Kroetsch writing is unlike dreams and neuroses, may serve the artist as a mode of fantasy that opens the reality. Kroetsch’s connection between the life of his own and his works is a creative art in fulfilling the repressed
desires. Kroetsch follows Freud’s earlier formula for fantasies: “A strong experience in the present awakens in the creative writer a memory of an earlier experience (usually belonging to his childhood) from which there now proceeds a wish which finds its fulfillment in the creative work” (Reader, pp. 442). Kroetsch experiences the separation as an emptiness of the phallic position. Louis Althusser describes this phase as follows: “When the little boy lives and resolves the tragic [. . .] situation of castration, he accepts not having the same right (phallus) as his father, in particular, not having the father’s right over the mother, [. . .] he gains in the process the assurance of one day having, later on, when he will have become an adult” (“Freud and Lacan” 28). With the transition from the ‘Imaginary’ to the ‘Symbolic’, in which he submits to language and reason, he loses a feeling of wholeness, of undifferentiated being. In Alibi he presents that triangle:

It was the marvelous possibilities of our little triangle that gave me no rest from desire. I felt not the slightest touch of jealousy. Indeed, by pretending just slightly that many was Karen, with his head of perfect blond hair, I was able to add a further dimension to our already outrageous joy. I truly felt no jealously. I was able to write in my journal exactly on each day those two blind words: he... I. And what did it matter, the slightest difference? we were together and as one. We were two as one and three as one and each of us, one as three, asosceles in our splendor. (Alibi, pp.130)

Thus the sexuality in his fiction spreads on the theory of Oedipus complex. In the following passage from The Interpretation of Dreams, Freud inaugurates the theory of the Oedipus Complex:

King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, merely shows us the fulfillment of our own childhood wishes [. . .] and we
shrink back from him with the whole force of the repression by which those wishes have since that time been held down within us” (Psychological Works 262-3).

Kroetsch sees the child’s relationship with its parents as critical for the achievement of its proper sexual identity because he lost his mother at his early age he thinks “some of the female presence in his book is almost a parody of the absence” (Labyrinth of Voice , pp. 22) of his mother figure thus the repression gets a tongue in his creative writing to express his desire through his symbolic figure peter. His entrance into the Symbolic Order thus involves the experience of separation from others, and the biggest separation is the separation from the intimate union we experienced with our mother during his immersion in the Imaginary Order. Experience of loss, and it is one that will haunt him throughout his writing

the child deals only with an alter ego, the mother, who scans his life with her presence […] and absence […], lives this dual relation in the mode of the imaginary fascination of the ego, being himself that other, some other, every other, all the others of the primary narcissistic identification without ever being able to take, in relation to either other or self, the objectivizing distance of a third party. (Althusser, “Freud and Lacan” 25-6)

The image mimicked his hesitation, mocked his doubt by repeating it. The deep-set eyes worried against the slant of light. The mouth, pursed and offering a kiss, in its subtle retreat, threatened now to open and drown. Peter shook his head to be sure it was himself he saw. A drop of water from the rising line scarred the face, exploded its frail composure. (But We Are Exile ,pp.2).
Peter guy is as well as other and peter is feminized as she the absent other Peter guy is a symbolic and a contradictory figure, he might be he/she, as:

He glanced up at the breath-tripping hush; at the broad river, mirror-smooth in the afternoon sun... he looked down again at the water and this time he saw his own face watching him... he studied the reflection as if not sure whom he might see. (2) She said, “come back to bed.” He watched her in the mirror. (76)

Koresh’s family structures are constitutive in this way- he wonders whether the father is a pretty strong figure” or the “mother is a strong figure” he wonders to “what extent actual experience is mistaken for the unconscious..... The notion of a collective unconsciousness, or whatever, makes (him) flinch a little.” Yet more he is coming up “with some startling stuff about what ( his) minds contain.” (Labyrinth of Voice, pp.104) thus he narrates” heard himself yell” (But We Are Exile 3). This narrating subject, and the face is in her absent presence, and peter guy “was trying to drive away his mother from looking at him and calling him drunkard” (118). This is the operation known as repression which he keeps in his mind that confusion he brings in as:

Peter took Hornyak down into the engine-room from the gallery and Hornyak bent over a bin of tangled extension cords and loose bulbs and rolls of tape and pulled out a lamp that had no wire mask protecting the bulb.

Peter hesitated, then said nothing.

“your old buddy, “Hornyak said, “needs some light, guy.

What do you say?”

Peter said nothing.
“guy you don’t know your own mind… my trouble is I know my own mind. And that’s a terrible thing.”(9)

The essence of repression lies simply in turning “something away and keeping it at a distance from the conscious” (Freud, *Psychological Works*, pp.147). Every time he reminds the reader that he is in his conscious as well unconscious as he describes “guy you don’t know your own mind… my trouble is I know my own mind. And that’s a terrible thing.”(*But We Are Exile*, pp.9). The fascinating aspect in Kroetsch’s novel is the psychological love which keeps on getting repeated in every text. For instance in *The Puppeteer*, In fact, Kroetsch works with the notion of performance through four layers of narrative embedding. At the centre, Dorf performs his desire and story through the shadow puppets to Maggie. Maggie then re-enacts her love affair with the puppets to Deemer: "Maggie, I suspect, felt that in telling me the story of the love affair with puppets was telling me back into my own desire. And in a way she was" (119). or in other terms He goes on differentiating himself from peter guy

For Kroetsch each story of the self and the other is a “new structure of desires.”(*Labyrinth of Voice*, pp.132)

you dumb young bastard, guy. A man is free here. You ever hear the word? He is so free that nothing else in the world is ever as good again. Never. But it’s a screwing jail, this place. *I can’t* leave. Just the sight of one skyscraper or one traffic light or one telephone booth-- and I’d be back. I tried at it once, guy … and you got here on a river. On a river that’s frozen most of the time. It’s frozen most of the time. It’s frozen hard. And I’m a free man down here, because you and your bunch can’t get me. (*But We Are Exile*, pp.46)
The freedom is more truly fear of other people or getting trapped in he/she in the fixed meaning. Peter guy challenges the syntax as well as the structure of discourse. Every time Kroetsch rules out the meaning by making the subject to play a game. In his quest for a spa for Deemer, Dorf gets sick of himself with desire, getting entangled in a triangular relationship. The famous spa doctor, Manny prescribes for Dorf who is under his treatment the mud bath of the smelly woman in Laspi. Hence Dorf sets out to Laspi with Karen Strike. While the men. Enter the mud bath, Dorf "was the only man left outside" (Alibi, pp.165). Then

"a huge old man, huge and fat, with stringy long hair, a figure that hardly seemed human, raised up a fat arm out of the mud. The arm, pure black with mud. He waved to me, signaled to me to come in. Then, with his mud-covered hand, he drew a design on his face. He drew a circle on his face with his face inside the circle. Then he put a dab of mud above each eye. Only it wasn't a dab of mud. There around each dab, around each of his eyes, he drew an eye" (165)

The man, in other words, makes a mask out of his own face; As Kroetsch writes:

we dwell in the body, nowadays. With the world gone hawk-end and haywire too, we live in the self’s body, as if to cure the body’s pain is to be cured. We are all St.Augustines in this broken world; saints not of the soul but of the body, of the bloodstream and back. Deliver us from the heart’(113-114)

It is apparently here that Kroetsch over turns the hierarchy of the body and the spirit. Julie observes: “the cure is always, finally, in the acceptance… of desire.”(125) Kroetsch desire is to wear a mask of language on the body or upon the
conscious is the site of giving tongue to a new retelling: “when I wavered, ever slightly, she lifted me back to our mutual joy. Julie took me in her mouth and I was happy. I was lifted again and again into a newer need. her mouth was my only cure”(126) his need to live eternally in different bodies with different tongues to express his repressed thoughts. He delivers his separation from the unity in Alibi by masking the body wrapped with female signs.

He is rejuvenating his face with new A soul to enter into the world with a new life It is quite clear to be mentioned’ that he is performing the processes to present himself as “Other” which refers to anything that contributes to the creation of one’s subjectivity, or what one commonly refer to as ‘selfhood’: For example, “the Symbolic Order, language, ideology—which are virtually synonymous—or any authority figure or accepted social practice (Tyson 31). Ideology might be seen in Lacanian terms as ‘the Other’ whose ‘misrecognition’ of us becomes incorporated in our identity. The misrepresentation that it reflects back leads us to misrepresent what we are to ourselves—a formulation that evokes Althusser’s definition of ideology—and this misrepresentation becomes a cornerstone of our identity. We may expect everything that is ideologically undesirable within a given culture to have found refuge in the unconsciousness of its members. If we see ideology in psychoanalytic terms, that is as the conscious dimension of a given society, then we may posit an unconscious where everything that ideology represses—social inequality, unequal opportunity, and the lack of freedom of the subject. Lacanian criticism sees this repeated on a smaller scale when we read literary texts. In the process of reading, one enters into a complex relationship with a text in which one allows to master one, to fill one’s lack. In the novel it is the oldest man in the mud.
bath who draws the figure of female genitalia on his own head. To describe the other absent to make her present.

Kroetsch’s metaphor of mirror in his novel is his desire to violate or break the boundaries or it indicates a collapsed system of syntax as he writes, the mirror offers an alibi, a complicity between oral and writing: “he believed he did not want to believe what he saw, the eloquence of flesh and desire caught dispassionately in the glass mirror”(48). Eagleton best describes this mirror.

The ‘metaphorical world of the mirror has yielded to the ‘metonymic’ world of language. Along this metonymic chain of signifiers, meanings, or signified, will be produced; but no object or person can ever be fully ‘present’ in this chain, because as we have seen with Derrida its effect is to divide and differentiate all identities. (145)

Koresh’s Ideology to present the confusion through the mirror gives us the illusion that it makes us whole; it would seem to neutralize the desire that results from our entry into the ‘Symbolic’ It is this desire to both stop the play and yet continue the game – a doubled desire. The familiar mirror image functions in the same way. After the first reflection of his own face in the water, imagined as Hornyak’s, the image of the mirror recurs as a haunting reminder of the fatal attachment to self, the guy which restrains any possibility of rebirth. Peter, “put his first through the mirror in the him washroom; he was trying to drive away his mother from looking at him and calling him drunkard”(bwe118). Presenting the “double –self” in an illusory unity as again he said: “ no ;peter. Break the mirror for me. Break it, break it please, smash it, peter. Listen to me, smash it”( But We Are Exile 24) here Kroetsch “serve to define consciousness not as a relatively autonomous vehicle of enlightenment but as a
wholly reflexive, deeply heteronymous imposture” (Rabaté 160). When Hornyak proposes to take Kettle back to the hotel, as she is tired:

And that evening with a contract in his pocket and a promise of work in the morning, Peter walked into her room; cracked the door, afraid she was asleep; looked in on a mirror and the image of two raging bodies, a tumble of dark hair. And he was caught. He fled and fled and was caught there, trapped, doomed in that long mahogany frame. He fled and went on searching and could not see himself” (144 - 45)

Finally, after breaking the mirror, Peter "had to look. He had to see that face, bear-touched and broken. The young face bleached to whiteness. This time he had to look” (145). Kroetsch exhibits his initial experience of being ripped out of an original imaginary fullness of being and separated from the object.

In The Puppeteer Koresh’s uses frames to narrate signifiers and presents his collective consciousness through the master puppeteer Dorf as Maggie has to get him cellophane, tubes of paint, cardboard, wire, needles, thread, bed sheet, rods and so forth, until the whole attic becomes "a living goddamned theatre in my house" (Puppeteer, pp.164). Specifically, Dorf uses "Karaghiosi, the most popular of all the Greek shadow puppets" (115) to express his desires. Karaghiosi is emerges as an imaginary figure in which Kroetsch’s truth is gets alienated reflecting what Lacan thinks “The intellectual elaboration of the symbol cannot desalinate it. Only the analysis of its imaginary elements, taken individually, reveals the meaning and the desire that the subject had hidden within it” (qtd. in Jameson, “Imaginary” 11). It is the language which gives him the identity as Karaghiosi and shapes its personality which Kroetsch plays frequently brings karaghiosi him on the screen to perform the language game the puppet show put up by dorf is a “text within a text” in:
Karaghiosi bent forward and knocked at the door with his head.

'Go away,' the voice said from inside the house.

'Do you want out, Maggie Wilder?'

'No, I do not,' Maggie's voice answered.

'Do you want me to join you in there, Maggie Wilder?'

'Never, never, never. I want to be alone.'

The voice of Karaghiosi was coarse, mocking. Then why don't you tell me to stop knocking?'

Maggie moved from the sofa and sat at her desk. She couldn't resist, she broke in and said, 'Karaghiosi, you are always pretending to be someone you aren't. I know that much about you. You're pretending to be Papa B.' (Puppeteer, pp 116 -17)

Karaghiosi returns with an enormous pizza, and "Papa B spoke in Maggie's voice." Now where is Inez? The pizza is here and Inez is nowhere in sight" (117). Even the dish pizza replaces the character and Inez becomes a part of the play until he reappears on the screen. As he show progresses the frame between fiction and reality gets collapsed/erased.

Maggie touched a hand to the bed sheet that was the screen. A hand touched hers in response. She felt the hands finding hers and pressed against it and tried to speak.... She went on pressing her hand against the hand that responded and she knew she had entered into the house on the screen" (Puppeteer, pp .118)

Kroetsch reverses the relationship of signifier/ signified and that refers not to the object but to the chain of language, that is to other signifier as Maggie’s breaking the frame: "The attic itself had become part of Papa B's puppet show. He had gone
through the frame. The attic and the story he purported to tell had become one and the same for their precious Papa B" (153). Thus Kroetsch declares that the presence is a kind of precipitation out of a system of difference, in fact their presence is essentially bound up with absence

Kroetsch expresses unconscious by a material, the wedding dress in the form of complex displacement that is to say a substitution for an unconscious object of desire which plays a different role like sign and signifier

Only after a long while did Maggie think of the wedding dress. The puppets on the screen were busy with each other, admiring the house, admiring each other and themselves. Maggie slipped away, unheard, she believed; she went down to her bedroom and took the wedding dress out of the closet and carried it up to the attic. She laid it across the sofa and sat down again at the desk" (Puppeteer, pp. 122).

Thus the white wedding dress plays different roles on the set of the show Maggie needs the dress to perform on the screen the creators/ Maggie’s psychology is to tell the wedding story through the puppet. For Maggie, however, the wedding dress operates as an escaping center reflecting what Derrida observes:

If this is so, the entire history of the concept of structure, before the rupture of which we speaking, must be thought of as a series of substitutions of center for center, as a linked chain of determinations of the center. Successively and in a regulated fashion, the center receives different forms or names.(108 Modern Criticism and Theory Derrida)

The wedding dress situates Maggie in a “linked chain” where she is an as author/performer,. Significantly, she narrates how if Dorf wears the wedding dress he
looks “like nothing so much as a Greek Orthodox priest” (Puppeteer, pp. 1) Maggies feminizes Dorf through the dress “he was just as startled as she. She was wearing a wedding dress. She had just that day discovered that when she put on her old wedding dress she could hear the story she intended to tell” (2). Through Maggie’s proposal "to write the autobiography of a wedding dress" (15), Kroetsch frustrated in its attempts to mold the world in a self-comforting image. Kroetsch resorts to art, to create its world of fantasy, exposes the fantasized fulfillment of what is to wish, feminizing the gender which in reality is denied and prohibited by the social standards of morality. The words of Marie Bonaparte are relevant here she avers:

Works of art or literature profoundly reveal their creator’s psychology and, as Freud has shown, their construction resembles that of our dreams. The same mechanisms which, in dreams and nightmares, govern the manner in which our strongest though most carefully concealed desires are elaborated, desires which often are the most repugnant to consciousness, also govern the elaborations of a work of art. (209)

Object traversed by the signifying chain, which extends through the wedding dress.

Maggie's art of an 'autobiography' of the dress is an intellectual elaboration of the symbol traverse through different entities. Maggie remembers the power of "dress, twenty-three years earlier, that made her agree to marry the man she had until then been refusing to marry" (Puppeteer, pp. 4). Josie Pavich likewise discounts the autonomy of the subject who wears it, admitting, "She made the dress. She remembers the dress, but she says she doesn't remember you. Brides look alike, she says — in the long run, it's the dresses that differ" (27 - 28). The dress reveals the story of Fish who was supposed to be married to Julie Magnuson before she chose
Jack Deemer instead. Patricia Limerick in Legacy of Conquest describes the undertaking metaphorically, in terms of theater:

Everyone became an actor in everyone else's play; understanding any part of the play now requires us to take account of the whole. It is perfectly possible to watch a play and keep track of, even identify with, several characters at once, even when those characters are in direct conflict with each other and within themselves. The ethnic diversity of Western history asks only that: pay attention to the parts, and pay attention to the whole. (Puppeteer, pp. 4)

At Fish's request, "Josie embroidered all the soft colors of the dress into the scales of a rainbow trout, the trout in a mountain stream, the stream and its flowered banks under a hint of mountains, the wide range of mountains under a raft of cumulus clouds, windows afloat among the clouds" (58) both as a symbol and as a metaphor countries of the old world might be seen as first of all having a history of the landscape — that is, the land, the way it has been used, the edifices that have been built on it — and parallel to the history of the human alteration of the landscape runs the history of the various peoples and empires lived there. Between person and earth has been a gradually evolving relationship."(Matt cohen.pp.57)

Interestingly, Freud talks about on a writer's childhood. to Freud Memories used in a from his assumption that a creative work is "a continuation of, and a substitute for, what was once the play of childhood" (Reader 442). And yet the story embroidered in the dress is not of Fish but of the histories of the people associated with it.
Dress tells an even better story of Deemer’s marriage to Julie, a social order which differentiates the behavior of human personality from the animal behavior which controls each and every actor in the institution of marriage as,

we were a part of the scheme and design and tapestry that graced the dress.... In the tumult of the dress we were the story that Josie Pavich had only guessed; we were the lovers in animal form that she had so carefully pictured, the man with the body of a fish, the horse-headed man, the woman with octopus arms.... We cried out, shouted, and with our gasping mouths began again. And always the dress was our bed and our inspiration (Puppeteer, pp 176 – 77).

To Josie Pavich and Ida Babcock, the dress plays a negative role and Invents a “lived” relationship with collective system as: "The woman who sold the dress, in a little shop in a shabby street in Vancouver, had insisted on telling the bald truth. The dress had brought disaster to its first wearer" (Puppeteer, pp. 4). Maggie tells them that the dress is in one of her trunks: " The last damned thing we need in this car is that dress. It's double-digit bad luck" (52). Josie agrees with Ida: "Bad luck is bad luck;" the reason, she says, is "the woman who got married in it got married to a monster" (52). We can see that a social norm is in control of characters and vice-versa. Various marriage discourses associated with the wedding dress creates a second self as Maggie becomes someone else after wearing the dress. She wants to see the consequence of the dress therefore she writes: "On the last page of the last story there's a woman who remembers her wedding dress. She says that one day she is going to put it on again. See what happens" (26). What happens when Maggie puts on the dress herself is she picks up a marriage-threatening quarrel with her husband:
"He had an island picked out. He'd rent a place with an extra bedroom that would serve as a study where she could sit and pretend to write her autobiography of a dress. And they had argued about that too, that had been the subject of their parting words. 'Biography,' Henry said, correcting her. 'Autobiography,' Maggie said. And then she was gone through (airport) security" (23).

Josie and Ida feel that it is the dress itself which is bad luck. Even Maggie is tempted to believe that "It's an albatross.... That wedding dress. It's a curse, an abomination" (Puppeteer, pp. 58).the subjectivity reveals the effect and affects of the dress on the social perforce here the dress “might just be talking. Don't you think?" And yet he worries about "Jack Deemer. He wants the dress for the same reason that he wants me. He wants, so to speak, to keep us quiet" (28). Is an act of performing another desire and this Kroetsch has to do “endlessly or be reduced to silence.” (Labyrinth of Voice, pp.931) because they will reach a “point where they all connect and becomes more realized or identifiable” (93).

After Maggie has hung the wedding dress on a clothesline in the Greek villa she shares with Deemer, she images, "Dress in a landscape.... Good title. Must go write that down." As Deemer thinks, "Perhaps she intended, should I prowl sleepless on my patio, or in my garden, to give me the fright of my life. Or the revelation.... All perhaps aside, it was surely her intention that I should, one way or another, encounter the ghost of Julie Magnuson" (Puppeteer, pp 230). Julie Magnuson wife of Deemer meets, had faked her death meets her husband wearing the wedding dress. it is easier for her to come back with new face with new life to perform the other way of life what Lacan calls the other At the end the dress pointing toward death thus Kroetsch
psychological relationship to death is projected through psychological concepts like regression, crisis, projection, fear and fascination with death.

Kroetsch fulfills his desire to reach the unique unity of his repression displays his otherness by feminizing “Mr. Jack Deemer, thief and thug” (34), another collaboration to the dress manifest content “Wearing the dress, I was no longer simply myself” (251). In truth, he is no longer but a bride: "I was wearing my wedding dress. The policemen of Siphnos have a profound respect for brides. Not one of them would come close to touching me" (257). The man himself is his bride he takes the place of the other in the symbolic order. His intention is that he says: "I had first of all put on the dress simply as a disguise to make sure no one would recognize me there at the chapel. I put it on. And then something precious happened" (251). Thus for Kroetsch the unconscious is, of course, not itself accessible to the conscious self except in disguised form and those disguised form substitutes attainable gratifications for unattainable ones, and which works to substitute thought for sensory and affective memories.

Kroetsch explains through the Deemer that how the discomfort is produced by the conflicts that we inevitably feel through repression and prohibition as he realizes the plight of a bride waiting at the altar: "Waiting there, sitting, pacing, I came to understand how Julie Magnuson must have felt on the morning of her delayed wedding" (252) and created a new in the image of God: "That one particular icon - the artist, apparently, saw him as - female. Saw her as female. God. The monks of Mount Athos - you know. Out of the public eye, if possible - Scandalous" (203). He is trapped in that link (disguised) and released. This is how the narrator’s repression of self-revelation is resolved and gives a healing relief to secret mental emotion of lost
family romance or what Maggie think “disguise. Gave you that disguise. In order to get rid of who you really were” (14).

Kroetsch serves to disguise his real motives and objects from the conscious mind. The disguised fantasies “disguise is a prod to desire” (119), the experience of lose haunts his life is introduced in the form of dual fascination The "pious fraud," he says, "believed in his own disguise even if it didn't for an instant fool another human being" (22). At first, this blunt rival for Maggie's love sees Dorf only as that "imposter who went around dressed as a Greek monk, delivering pizza" (7). and that introduces him to the symbolic order an acceptance of language and of the social and cultural systems. The objectivizing language that will allow him to say I. Kroetsch demonstrates it in the puppeteer through deemer “I was only my blunt and honest self” (119). He even expresses his desire to murder Dorf: "I, Jack Deemer, would have given a million dollars to be in Maggie's place that late night, a gun in my hand instead of a cup of coffee. And I bear no grudges, believe me, let the past be the past. AH I want is to play out the show to its consequence, with justice and truth triumphant" (86). Ultimately, however, Deemer claims: "I was content to be the supreme puppet of her imagination, let Papa B connive as he might. Maggie took off her panties, her brassiere. That she might have touched herself was part of our shared pleasure, hers and mine, for she was released and so was I, by our Karaghiosi” (124).

In puppeteer (1992) the “tongue” is a mediator of desire, plays so enormous is the role of the Symbolic Order in the formation of what Lacan refer to as our ‘selves.’ In fact, for him we are not the unique, independent individuals we think we are. Our desires, beliefs, biases, and so forth, are constructed for us as a result of our immersion in the Symbolic Order. We may think that what we want out of life, or even what we want at any given moment, is the result of our own unique
personalities, our own wills and judgments. However, what we desire is what we are taught to desire. This is what Lacan means by his claim that “desire is always the desire of the Other” (The Seminar 235). Tongue is an agent of taste expresses the desire of other but it is a medium which expresses itself in food:

But the voice of Karaghiosi went on, addressing Inez. It did nothing more than offer a list: papaya. Bacon. Greenpepper. The voice swam softly in the darkness. Smoked oysters. Onions. Salami. Feta. The attic was pitch dark. The floating hands attached themselves to bodies. The floating words attached themselves to tongue (Puppeteer, pp.118)

Karaghiosi a puppet "a new figure was on the screen. The puppet on the screen was monk-like in his dress" (120). raised in a different culture that is, in a different Symbolic Order it has different desires.

who manipulated their desire. His shaping hands were mysterious gifts that fell from the dark and onto ears and nipples. Karaghiosi, that slave and fool, became master. His mouth' surprised their mouths, their thighs, with urgent raids. He was the suddenness of teeth, the quickness of a tongue. In the blank dark his long fingers turned pages" (126).

In other words, the Symbolic Order consists of society’s ideologies: its beliefs, values, and biases; its system of government, laws, educational practices, religious tenets. it is Kroetsch responses to his version of society and ideologies that make him who he was. For Lacan, we need the response and recognition of others and of the ‘Other’ to arrive at what we experience as our identity. Our ‘subjectivity’ is construed in interaction with ‘others’. We become ourselves by way of other perspectives and other views of who we are, by the drives, the unconscious, and the
Symbolic Order of our culture, the social languages that identify us and lend us identities, all of which exceed consciousness and never assume the form of knowable or conscious identity. Karaghiosi takes an identity from outside, Kroetsch become himself under the gaze of the ‘Other’ This ‘Other’ is not a concrete individual, although it may be embodied in one but stands for the larger social order like Karaghiosi, the most popular of all the Greek shadow puppets. “He swaggered across the screen. He was dressed in traditional Greek dress, a skirted man, a short and hunchbacked and bald-headed man with a low forehead, a huge and bulbous nose and feet to match, a lone and hinged right arm that dangled below his knees” (Puppeteer, pp. 115 - 16) Deemer is narrating Maggie's story, and the legal orders:

Legal cases, I trust.' She hoped her voice offered just a hint of spite.
Murder cases, she wanted to add. Stories about murderers who disappeared and then had to be traced through all the disguises and then properly tried and then properly exposed and then properly imprisoned and tortured and hanged (11).

Deemer had earlier referred to these appearances and disappearances: "They staged their disappearances, the two of them; they were staging their return" (185). As Dorf enters in a new form of Alibi, William William Dorfendorf "going to keep a journal, I'm going to love two women, I'm going to tell the truth. Life is unendurable. The trouble is, I enjoy it. Yesterday made sense, I can see it all now, but today doesn't. Maybe that's what journals are about. Or Karen Strike's documentary" (Alibi, pp.39). He transcribes the “notes from my journal into a proper manuscript.”(229) “sometimes remiss, sometimes left little gaps here and there, (he) make a connection, where necessary" (231). And sometimes “tear out the transcribed pages from the journal" (Alibi, pp.229). Those are used "when I light my fire in the morning" (229).
Dorf needs “emendation” for the “original notes”(232) here Kroetsch uses the language is of other where in the journal Dorf is not able to control the prefabricated structures he finds they are inadequate to express his desire therefore he goes on re-emending those entries Dorf engages in a problematic play. Dorf says “I cannot lie to my journal either" (134). As language creates the absent Dorf through the faked hands of Karen but Karen had already read the journal: "I found her instead propped up on our two pillows, reading the entries in the journal that she'd given me for my birthday" (60). Karen invents Dorf in the journal and Dorf as a narrator narrates: "you'd rather talk to yourself than to anyone else. You're fascinated. You invent yourself, each time you sit down to make an entry, and I feel envy. Watching you” (61).

Karen rewriting shows the displacement as Lacan says even the slip of the tongue is a result of repressed unconscious desires or in other words lack is invented through various forms. Thus Kroetsch in his fiction creates emptiness because it is just an endless process of difference and absence.