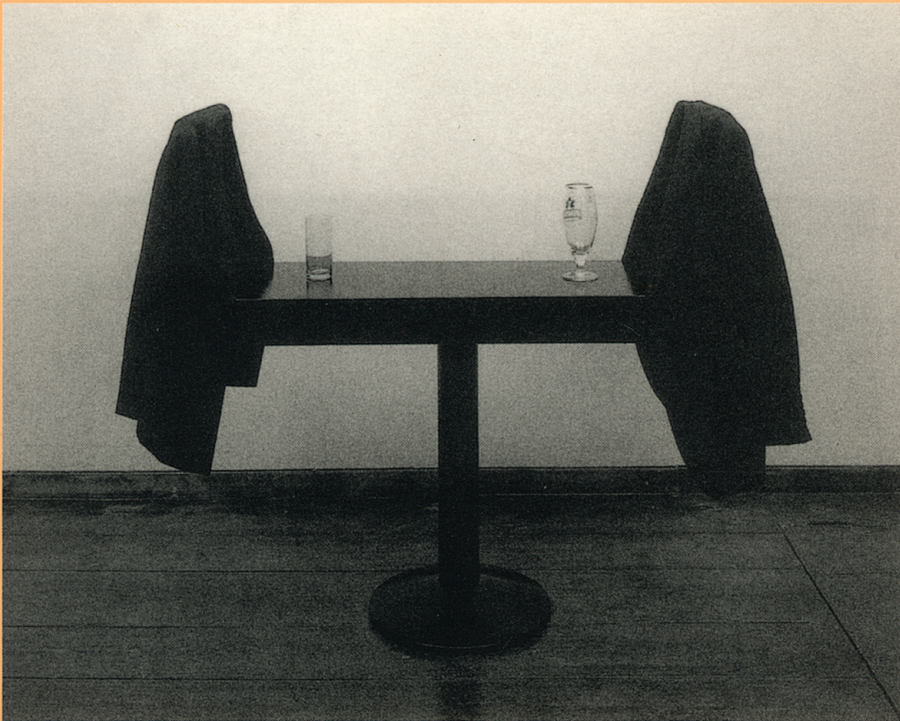


LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS



Proceedings of the
Seventeenth International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis
Bialystok (Poland) • July • 2000

Edited by **Frederico Pereira**

Published by **Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, Lisbon**

Cover plate: *Untitled*, 1994, by Mariusz Kruk. Courtesy Gutsch Galerie + Edition, Berlin

Photocomposed by *Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada* – Lisboa

Printed by *Printipo - Indústrias Gráficas, Lda* – Damaia

Depósito Legal n.º 172091/01

ISBN 972-8400-36-5

2001

SEVENTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Edited by **FREDERICO PEREIRA**

Bialystok

(Poland)

July ♦ 2000

Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Culture (SUNY-Buffalo, USA)

Institute for the Psychological Study of the Arts (University of Florida, USA)

Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada (Lisbon, Portugal)

Janus Pannonius University (Pécs, Hungary)

Group for Psychoanalytic Studies (University of Massachusetts, USA)

Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Littéraire (Université Paris VII, France)

Published by **Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, Lisbon**

Contents

The phenomenology of space – Residence hotels	3
Sherry Lutz Zivley	
Reading Marius’s secret	11
Scott Sprenger	
What figure in the carpet?	17
Robert Silhol	
Violence and intertextuality: Apollinaire’s castration fantasies	27
Anca Mitroi	
<i>Enter Achilles</i> – An exploration of toxic narcissism	33
Marcia Landau / Jennifer Predock-Linnell	
Bertolt Brecht’s <i>Puntila</i>: The dynamics of duality or the monsters in the garden of the imagination	41
David Landau / Jim Linnell	
Anality, masculinity, and <i>South Park</i>, or Why the Devil is Gay	51
Judith Kegan Gardiner	
The gender wheel, concerning gender and sexual identification issues within popular culture arenas: An essay	61
Charlotte Ann Frick	
The madness of the word-lover Dr. William Chester Minor: Madman and «Amateur» lexicographer	75
Max Day	
Oedipal triangles and regression in Polanski’s <i>Knife in the Water</i> (1962), <i>Cul-de-Sac</i> (1966) and <i>Death and the Maiden</i> (1995)	83
Georgiana M. M. Colvile	
The mother complex of Bai Xianyong’s persona	91
Chapman Chen	
Age, memory, and the Holocaust: Three case studies	105
Anne M. Wyatt-Brown	

P A P E R S

The phenomenology of space – Residence hotels

SHERRY LUTZ ZIVLEY (*)

... I have gone at dusk through narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows...

T. S. Eliot, «The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock»

It is obvious that living spaces have had various configurations, uses, and therefore various phenomenological implications in different countries. The centuries-old English hotel that is a combination of pub and travelers inn, although configured and used similarly to the bar/hotel of the old American west, has different implications – the former having remained functional into the twentieth century because it was a safe, respectable, and congenial gathering place for the entire community, and the latter having disappeared because it was a much more dangerous place, one for men only into which no respectable woman could venture.

Likewise there has been in the past and still is in the present an enormous difference between a temporary-often one-night-only-travelers stopover and residence hotels in which people, who may have intended it as a temporary stopover, find themselves lingering in for days, weeks, even years. Such a place is regularly depicted in twentieth century fiction as a locus of debilitating existential despair. Such is the case in fiction such as Vicki Baum's *Grand Hotel*, Anita Brookner's *Hotel du Lac*, Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*, John Barth's *The Floating Opera*, Joan Didion's *Book of Common Prayer*, and Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, as well as films such as *Barton Fink*, and *The King of Marvin Gardens*.

These works all demonstrate the powerful emotional implications of the residence hotel as a «home» for those who are physically, communally, familiarly, and emotionally homeless.

Prior to the twentieth century, most hotels or inns described in fiction are places in which a traveler may spend only a night or two, but these hotels are not depicted as the loci of existential

(*) University of Houston, University Park, Department of English, 4800 Calhoun Road, Houston, Texas 77004, USA.

failure or despair. They may, however, have been dangerous places, places where one could easily be murdered, kidnapped, beaten, raped, robbed, or, at least, frightened. In Steven Crane's «The Blue Hotel», the murderous Dutchman appears. And in *Moby Dick*, Ishmael is appropriately frightened by his roommate, who could easily been a murderous savage.

But in twentieth century fiction, hotels in which people spend extended periods of time, whether as permanent residents or long-term vacationers are usually the loci of characters in the throes of existential despair.

Vickie Baum's *Grand Hotel* – made famous by the Greta Garbo line, «I want to be alone» – is a harbinger of such novels. Although most of the characters in *Grand Hotel* are still making existential choices that show them to be making decisions and attempting to control their lives, the character who comments on the hotel and its residents, Dr. Otternschlag, reiterates a litany of existential despair.¹ Dr. Otternschlag's day-to-day existence is one of emptiness, boredom, loneliness, and hence despair. Daily or more often he asks the desk clerk if there are any letters (37) or telegrams or if anyone has asked for him. But, although he has spent a month or two in the hotel «every year for ten years», he is clearly «quite alone» (4). «[N]ot a letter has he ever had and not even a dog has ever asked for. [Nevertheless] there he sits about the same and waits» (4). He lives in «utter loneliness» (8). He accepts without complaint one of the worst rooms in the hotel because «he was too apathetic to demand a better» (13).

Dr. Otternschlag describes life symbolically as a hotel, saying, «The whole of life is a rotten pub» to which one «arrive[s], stay[s] for a while, and go[es] on again» (45). He thinks his fellow residents' lives are as empty and meaningless as his. He says of his existence,

It's ghastly. This is no life. No life at all. But where is there any life? Nothing happens. Nothing goes on. Boring. Old. Dead. Ghastly. Every object around him was a sham. Whatever he took up turned to dust. The world was a crumbling affair not to be grasped or held. You fell from vacancy to vacancy. (8)

Although he reads of typhoons, earthquakes, and wars, he finds everything «boring and utterly meaningless» and repeats, «No, nothing happens, nothing at all» (8). He describes himself as «a suicide before the event» (245).

But in the *Grand Hotel* Dr. Otternschlag is the only person – guest or staff – who is in despair. The others are still very much alive – working, making decisions, doing things, and enjoying themselves. Even the most apparently hopeless, Herr Kringelein, «a ruin of a man» (44), is still very much alive. The fact that he is a «wasted figure in [a]work-a-day suit» which is «shiny in places», a man with «bloodless lips», and a «wasted neck inside [a] wide frayed collar», Kringelein's «blue human eyes» reveal not only «so much yearning expectation, wonder, and curiosity» but also «a hunger for life, and knowledge of death» (47). Kringelein is in fact terminally ill, and his knowledge of immanent death has propelled him, as existential philosophers insist it can, to give up living a societally-programmed death-in-life and to choose to live what days he has left to their fullest. He has abandoned his boring, underpaid clerking job, his dull wife and family, and his tedious, depressing existence, taken his savings, and come from his small town to take up residence in the finest hotel in Berlin to begin to live. Despite having always been a Casper Milquetoast and despite his shabby clothing, «for the first time in his life he summons up the courage to make “a row” and demand a fine rather than a shabby room» (14).

¹ That his name translates as «viper stroke» and that his face is split in half, with one side badly scarred and the other normal, might suggest that Baum intends him as a Satan-figure. But he demonstrates no evil, either actively or passively. He does however proleptize a philosophy of despair, which Baum might consider a corrupting, even evil, force.

Baum's Dr. Otternschlag is the first of many fictional residents in hotels who are portrayed as having sunk into despair.

Anita Brookner's *Hotel du Lac*, in the novel with the same title, is a perfect setting of despair. To the protagonist, Edith Hope, «The place seems to be deserted» (11). What should have been a beautiful view of Swiss mountains and a lake remains through most of the novel merely «a grey measureless expanse» (159). The hotel's «most notable feature is its “air of deadly calm”» (17). «[T]he bar was small and dark, and its austerity did not encourage people to linger», for to do so «was not *comme il faut*» (14). The hotel sounds more like a sanatorium than a hotel, for it «was known as a place which was unlikely to attract favorable attention». Rather «it was a place guaranteed to provide a restorative sojourn for those whom life had mistreated or merely fatigued» (15). Edith calls the residents of the hotel «[i]nmates of [an] institution[]» (106), whose behavior is always «subdued» (107). One woman is exiled there by her son, who once a month «takes her out in the car, brings her back, and forgets her» (70). All there is for Edith to do there is «to sit with other women, and talk of clothes» (100). Coming back to the hotel from a walk, Edith «returned to the melancholy of exile» (52), and in her room she feels that «[d]epression hovered» (65). Edith can blend in: She «could play the social game when she tried» (108), but she is stuck with «the uncanny feeling that this was all for show, that everything was a pretence, that this had been a dinner of masks, that no one was ever, ever going to tell the truth again» (112). And on a walk with another resident, «[I]t seemed to both of them... that only the possession of this day [dull as it has been] held worse days at bay» (149). Such is the mood of depression and despair which permeates not only *Hotel du Lac*, but also many twentieth century novels set in hotels.

The opening paragraph of Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*² demonstrates how the setting of a residence hotel emphasizes despair: «[T]he lobby [of the Hotel Gloriana] was dark, sleepy. French drapes like sails kept out the sun.» The only light comes from «three high, narrow windows» (4). *Seize the Day* demonstrates the increasing despair and hopelessness of Tommy Wilhelm, who is divorced, out of work, and broke, and is now residing in the Gloriana Hotel.³ Other characters in the novel seem similarly depressed, for «[a]fter breakfast» the «old guests» have nothing to do but «[s]it down on the green leather armchairs and sofas in the lobby and beg[i]n to gossip and look into the papers. They [have] nothing do but wait out the day» (4).

Wilhelm lives in sloth and filth. His pockets are filled with cigarette butts (28) and pills (104) – «stimulants..., depressants, anodynes... [, and] analgetics» (33). He comes to breakfast with his hands so dirty that when eating an egg he leaves a «faint grime on the egg white» (36). His car is littered with cigarette butts, not only in the ashtray but also in the floor, and «the upholstery... was filthy with grease and ashes» (33). During the day he lies in his room «in pajamas and stockings», «drink[s] gin from a coffee mug», and watches television. His unmade «bed look[s] kicked to pieces» (36), «[t]he smell of dirty clothes was outrageous», and «a quart bottle and foolish magazines and mystery stories» lie beside his bed (36). Wilhelm is, appropriately, compared to a hippopotamus. He sustains himself with drugs, caffeine, and nicotine. He feels that «the peculiar burden of his existence [lies] on him like an accretion, a load, a lump» (39), but he does nothing to improve his condition. He takes no responsibility for himself, but trusts the last of his savings to a con man – a man even he recognizes to be a fraud – and then begs his wife to go to work and his father for money, and exclaims, «I expect help» (53).

Wilhelm's father correctly diagnoses his son's approach to life when he says, «You make too

² Fielder Cook's 1986 film version, starring Robin Williams, remains remarkably faithful to both the spirit and details of the Bellow's novel.

³ Tommy's father shows that he recognizes the self-destructiveness of Wilhelm's decision to live in this hotel which caters to the elderly when he asks, «Why are you here in a hotel with me and not at home with your wife and two boys?» (27).

much of your problems.... They ought not to be turned into a career». But Wilhelm refuses to take charge of his life. He merely fears that he will «be struck down by suffocation or apoplexy» and whines «It isn't my fault» (53). At the end of the novel, at a stranger's funeral, all Wilhelm can do is «sob | loudly» (117), not for the dead man, but in self-pity. The final sentence of the novel exemplifies his situation, as he «[sinks] deeper than sorrow» (118). Wilhelm, who is the epitome of existential despair in fiction, has found the perfect location for wallowing in misery and self pity – a residence hotel.

If, as some existential philosophers have asserted, to be in despair is not to know one is in despair, Todd Andrews, the protagonist of *The Floating Opera* is the epitome of despair. A bachelor, he has lived for decades «in a single room n the Dorset Hotel, which was built in the early eighteen hundreds, and... looks its best in a subdued light» (8). Furthermore, [m]ost of its fifty-four rooms are empty in the winter. and even with the addition of several all-summer visitors..., there are enough rooms left on an average night to accommodate any traveling circus.... The owners are able to stay in business... because the building [is] paid for...; because overhead costs are low; and because a large number of elderly ladies and gentlemen unfortunate enough to have outlived their welcome in the world are forced by circumstances to make the hotel their last stopover on the road to the next (11-12). Although Andrews is a much younger, he is an appropriate resident. He says,

Although my law practice pays my hotel, I consider it no more my career than a hundred other things: sailing, drinking, walking the streets, writing my Inquiry, staring at walls, hunting ducks and 'coons, reading, playing politics. I am interested in any number of things, enthusiastic about nothing. I wear expensive clothing. I smoke Robert Burns cigars. My drink is Sherbrook rye.... (4)

Clearly nothing in life engages him, except to brag about his expensive purchases, saying, «I live too well to be called a bohemian» (10).

Like Wilhelm's, Andrews's room is a mess: from 1937 until the present «one window was dappled with little rings of dust from dried raindrops; the light-green plaster walls were filigreed with ancient cracks...; [and] an empty beef-stew can, [his] astray, was overflowing butts... onto my writing desk» (10). The floor was covered with «the blueprints of a boat that I was building» (10). One wall is «partially covered... by a Coast and Geodetic Survey map of Dorchester County», which he has annotated over the years (10). On a second wall is a bad oil painting with 14 swans, onto which a friend had drawn «a kind of nude on top... in crayon» (10). The only thing that has changed over the years is that the «three peach baskets and one corrugated box» full of notes for his *inquiry* into the causes of his father's suicide,⁴ has expanded to seven peach baskets full. Unlike Wilhelm, who is aware of his despair but indifferent to his living space, Andrews is unaware of his despair and even brags about his room's «orderliness» (9), insisting that his «room was as orderly as any room can be, even though the order was an unusual one» (10).

Todd admits he has «never really understood personally what love is and feels like» (36), and «scarcely regarded [himself] as involved... at all» (36) in the affair he carries on for years with his best friend's wife. For years he has «greeted [each] new day with a slug of [rye]», then quit doing so «just for the exercise of habit-breaking» (9). His reason for the change and for most of things he does—including his attempt to blow up the showboat—is to make himself sound like an interesting person. Of his attempt to kill himself, his friends, and hundreds of townspeople, he feels neither guilt nor even responsibility. Instead he says. «Possibly I would on some future occasion endeavor once again to blow up the Floating Opera, my good neighbors and associates, and/or my mere self» (251).

⁴ His *Inquiry* seems quite pointless since his father made it clear that he killed himself because of his losses in the stock market crash.

He believes that there is an «absence of absolutes» (252) and is proud of his five-point philosophy which includes, as its first premise, the belief that «Nothing has intrinsic value» (217) and as its conclusion, «There is no final reason for living» (228). He is a man without emotion, without values, without concern for his fellow human beings, a man who has been spending his days for decades doing exactly the same things – without either completing the boat he was building or reaching conclusions about why his father killed himself, and a man who is actually proud of his belief «that nothing makes any final difference» (251) and of his death-in-life existence. Such a man would, of course, choose to live in a run-down residence hotel surrounded by elderly men, who are infirm, bored, but at least recognize the despair of their existence.

Like the Bellow's Gloriana and Barth's Dorset, Dorothy Parker's Hotel Marlowe, in *The Ladies of the Corridor*, is place of despair. It is

... [a]n old hotel with an atmosphere that suggests another and more opulent era. It is not shabby, it is efficiently managed, but there has been no attempt to modernize its decorations, which are considered part of its charm. It has but few transient guests and no commercial trade [, and]... most of the suites and single rooms are occupied by ladies alone. (3)

Its inhabitants, like those of the Gloriana and the Dorset are older and alone. As Parker describes them, «Mostly they are widows...; some less fortunate are divorced; and there's an infrequent nondescript who is only separated» (3). Parker's play makes it clear that their families want to have nothing to do with them. There is little they can do to give meaning to their lives. One shoplifts and steals. Another attempts to buy the attentions of a younger man. One blackmails her son into living with her and taking care of her. And one commits suicide. All of the women left are in despair.

In Joan Didion's *A Book of Common Prayer*, Charlotte Douglas's life is based on «delusion» (11). She deludes herself that sooner or later her daughter will appear in the airport in Boca Grande, even though she knows exactly where her daughter is living in Montreal and that her daughter has no intention of coming to Boca Grande.

Like Dr. Ottersschlag, «she lived for mail» and «sent away for every catalogue, filled out every coupon, wrote many letters» but «received [only] some answers» (13). Daily, she would «walk[] through the casino at the Caribe», the hotel where she lived (24). Then «she would walk out through the lobby», eat dinner at one of two restaurants, and «read[] the classified ads as she read the front page» (25), then walk back to the hotel, ask for messages, but never receive any. For four months, she spent her days standing at the counter of the airport coffee shop, holding her watch in her hand, but never meeting anyone.

She lives in a state of constant depression and is afraid of the dark, but claims not to «believe in being depressed» (46) and insists, «I have never been afraid of the dark» (13). The narrator, who spends the novel trying to understand Charlotte, says of her «I have never known anyone who led quite so unexamined a life» (112). Even when everyone warns her to get out of the country because of an immanent revolution, «Charlotte paid no attention» (194), and spends her day in her usual meaningless activities and refuses to leave. Even when someone tells her that people «don't get any real points for staying», she says in a statement that shows just how unexamined her life is, «I can't seem tell what you do get the real points for.... So I guess I stick around here for awhile» (257). As a result, she is killed.

Living in residence hotels often leads to a character's self-destruction. In Joel Coen's 1991 film, *Barton Fink*, the title character, a playwright, leaves a successful career on Broadway to go to Hollywood and write film scripts. There, he moves into the Hotel Earle, which has a dark, shadowy lounge and reception area, dull orange lamps, and the only light – sunshine through narrow windows – is grayed by the room's pervasive dust. Although people sit in the lounge, they do not move and there is total silence. The hallway to Fink's room is totally silent and dark, with dull, brownish orange wallpaper. Fink's room is dark, worn, and what little sunshine comes in the window is gray with dust. In the course of the film the greenish gray wallpaper in his room repeatedly begins to peel off because of the heat and humidity. Although he wants to write of common men, like fishmongers, he is

assigned to write a wrestling script for Wallace Beery. The only person who befriends him is a glad-handing, gross insurance salesman who, toward the end of the film is identified by LAPD detectives as Carl «Mad Man» Munt, a serial killer who beheads his victims.

The torpor, malaise, and almost tangible heat and humidity of the hotel infects Fink, who gradually writes less and less and, instead, stares at a photograph of a woman in bathing suit, on the sand, staring out to the sea longer and longer. By the end of the film, Mad Man Munt has murdered a woman with whom Barton has just had sex and left the body in Fink's bed and almost certainly murdered Fink's aunt and uncle. Fink can no longer write and submerges himself in the fantasy that he is on a beach talking with the woman in the photograph. He has been reduced to an almost catatonic inactivity, if not, indeed, a complete, psychosis. He hallucinates that a fire sweeps down the hallway outside his bedroom. Certainly the Hotel Earle - with its darkness, its seediness, its silence, and its total lack of normal human interaction has provided the perfect setting for his deterioration.

Some vacation hotels where guests spend extended lengths of time are settings in which protagonists forget the values, that have sustained them for a lifetime and give in to foolish dreams, fantasies, and activities which not only corrupt them but also lead to their deaths. Such hotels in *The King of Marvin Gardens* and *Death in Venice* are the perfect settings for characters to destroy themselves.

Atlantic City's Essex Carlton Hotel, in the film *The King of Marvin Gardens*, which takes place in an almost empty Atlantic City in the dead of winter, is the setting for existential despair and delusion. Most of the inhabitants are pathetic, depressed elderly women enduring a living death there. And the younger main characters, who also reside there, live a life of self-delusion and fantasy. The protagonist, David Stabler, has been living a dull, but responsible life in Philadelphia. He lives with his elderly grandfather and narrates impromptu «autobiographical» stories. There is no excitement in his life, but neither is there any self-deception. But a call from his older ne'er-do-well brother, Jason, persuades him to join Jason and two women in Atlantic City.

Jason's has spent his life lying to and conning other people and simultaneously deluding himself. He wants David to participate in his get-rich-scheme to build «Stablerbia», an expensive casino and resort on a tiny Hawaiian island. Everything about Jason is phony, including the hotel, which he calls «the oldest and finest accommodation on the boardwalk», but in which the plumbing does not work. He pretends to have influence with Lewis, who runs the rackets, but who sums up Jason by repeating, «Jason says, but Lewis knows». Jason is all talk, but no substance. He spends his time drinking and fantasizing about money making schemes and trying, unsuccessfully, to con people, saying «I'm not going to try and con ya'.» No one believes Jason except David, who loves his brother and allows himself to be lured into Jason's fantasies.

All is fantasy with Jason and the two women – from casino plans to the mock Miss America pageant Jason stages for Jessica, who hasn't tap danced since she was nine and whose footwork shows it. Nevertheless, David wants to believe. Although the two women have both been prostitutes and although David finds the two of them and Jason playing dressing-up (or undressing) sex games, David wants to believe that Jessica is falling in love with him.

Even when Lewis tells David, «You're smarter than your brother», David still falls for Jason's fantasies. Only death brings David back to reality. When Sally shoots and kills Jason, David looks back on his participation in these fantasies and recognizes the degree to which he participated in the delusions which led to Jason's death. David says,

No sense in not going along for the ride and not enjoying the games, since that seemed to be what the trip was all about. But in the fun hours, how do you know who's really crazy. How do you know that it's supposed to be you to stop it. The gun was always in there with the water pistols.

At the end of the film, David leaves the hotel, returns to his life in Philadelphia – a life that may seem dull and ordinary, but a life in which he knows exactly who is and what kinds of choices he is making.

In Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, Gustave Oschenbach, who was neither «banal» nor «eccen-

tric», but who had always been «morally valiant» (383), similarly deteriorates and dies as a result of spending an overextended vacation in a hotel in Venice's Lido. Like Atlantic City in winter, Venice in mid-summer becomes in Mann's novel a setting of existential despair and death. Like the grayness surrounding Hotel du Lac, the weather that greets Aschenbach in Venice is ominous.

The sky was gray, the wind humid. Harbour and island dropped behind, all sight of land soon vanished in mist. Flakes of sodden clammy soot fell upon the still undried deck. Before the boat was an hour out a canvas had to be spread as a shelter from the rain. (390)

In «the city [which] had ever given him a brilliant welcome... [the] sky and sea remained leaden, with spurts of fine, mistlike rain» (390-391).

As he approaches Venice, Aschenbach notices someone who foreshadows his own subsequent folly – an older man making a fool of himself by trying to appear youthful among a group of much younger men. To Aschenbach, the «man is a truly repulsive sight» because «[h]e could not carry his wine like them» and «was pitifully drunk» (391). Aschenbach can see how ridiculous it is for the man to try to act youthful and associate with the young, but the old man is a harbinger of what Aschenbach himself is to become. Even before he arrives at the hotel a «spell of indolence was upon him», but he feels that «he had fallen into the clutches of a criminal» and that his brain, «had not the power to rouse him to action» (394).

Like Hotel du Lac, Mann's Hotel des Bains (407) is a place of controlled mundanity, with its «[s]ubdued voices», its «uniform of civilization, the conventional evening dress», and its «ambiance of propriety» (396). Its «solemn stillness» is the epitome of everydayness. Aschenbach recognizes early on that what he is experiencing «a forbidden longing deep within him... a longing for the unarticulated and immeasurable, for eternity, for nothingness» (401). But rather than react with his usual «morally virtuous» way, he begins, just as does David in *The King of Marvin Gardens*, to give himself over to unrealistic and potentially self-destructive fantasies, first, to admiration for «the lovely [Russian] boy» (401), whom Aschenbach claims has a «beauty that breaks hearts» (397) and later to what he mistakenly believes is «love» for the boy.

Giving up his life-long sense of existential responsibility, he allows himself to be a voyeur, a peeping Tom, and finally a stalker as he follows the boy about the Venice streets. He fantasizes about having some kind of relationship with this boy, who can be no more than a third or fourth of Aschenbach's age. Aschenbach even imagines himself as Socrates and the boy as his Phaedrus. Following the boy and his family «he fled into inns and courtyards», «hunted feverishly over bridges and filthy cul-de-sac[s]», because his «[m]ind and heart were drunk with passion, his footsteps guided by the demonic power whose pastime it is to trample on human reason and dignity» (420).

Even as a plague of dreaded cholera overtakes the city, he ignores its signs and even the factual evidence of its presence and stays to pursue his fantasies. He refuses to warn the Russian family, who are ignorant of the plague, that they should leave Venice or risk death—even though he has observed that the boy is frail and «most likely will not live to grow old» (404). He deludes himself «that he could not exist were the lad to pass from his sight» (420)

With his behavior, he obliterates what had been «a life of self-conquest, a life against odds, dour, steadfast, abstinent... even courageous» and gives in to «humiliations, to self-abasements» (422). Once a man of taste, he now drinks in «vulgar and sentimental tunes» (422). He completes his humiliation by going to a barber and having his hair dyed and having makeup applied, including eye liner, rouge of «a delicate carmine», and lipstick «the color of ripe strawberries» (433). Having chosen self-delusion and irresponsibility, he ends up dying among indifferent strangers in a setting of artifice and despair.

Like the novelists and filmmakers who choose hotels as the residences of characters in the throes of despair, the American painter Edward Hopper - a master of portraying the loneliness, hopelessness, and despair of twentieth century men and women - has frequently chosen hotel lobbies or rooms for his settings. «Hotel Room», 1931 exemplifies the loneliness and boredom being experienced by a young woman – probably nightly – in her room in what may be a transient or a residence hotel. The light,

with its implied hopefulness, is behind her. She looks not even at the dark interior but down at a book, which she does not appear to be reading – or, if so, has not gotten very far into the book. In «Hotel Lobby», 1948, three people share the space, but they are isolated. The young woman is a stranger to the couple, and the couple's postures suggest no companionship. Their alienation from each other is suggested by the fact that one stands and the other sits and that each stares out into space looking in different directions. In «Hotel Window», 1955, the older woman, like the girl in «Hotel Room» looks not toward the light but out the window into the darkness. All alone, she seems to be waiting for someone, but her stiff posture suggests that she is attempting to maintain her dignity because, so far, no one has come. She waits. And her gray hair suggests that she has been waiting for her whole life. In «Hotel by a Railroad», the couple demonstrates total despair. Again the man and woman are looking in different directions, assume different postures, and are engaged in separate activities, smoking and reading – both of which suggest boredom. Both are slumped as if they have accepted their hopelessness and alienation. And that Hopper places this hotel by a railroad suggests that this couple is suffering also from financial need. Nothing about them suggests dignity or hope. That the woman sits around in her slip – something that one did not do in the early 1950's – suggests the degree of her despair. Hopper's paintings dramatize meaninglessness, but they reveal people who suffer angst and despair precisely because they so yearn for meaning and human relationships.

In all of these novels, films, and paintings, the residence or long-term vacation hotel is a setting for despair. Despite the fact that in such hotels people are surrounded by other people, such a setting and the mores and manners of such a setting leads to their being isolated – not only from each other but from their own inner selves. They become shells who seem to have had the life sucked out of them. They walk through artificial or self-destructive roles – always «prepar[ing] to meet the faces [they] will meet», but never really making human contact with each other. Why people who day after day sit in close proximity to each in a hotel lobby remain alienated whereas neighbors who may only see each other across a fence (or even not be able to see each other, as is the case in the television series, *Home Improvement*, once or twice a month may become friends is hard to understand. But such is the case in contemporary American culture.

WORKS CITED

- Barth, J. (1967). *The Floating Opera*. New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts.
- Baum, V. (1931). *Grand Hotel*. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co.
- Barton Fink*. Dir. Joel Coen. Rank/Circle, 1991.
- Bellow, S. (1956). *Seize the Day*. New York: Viking.
- Brookner, A. (1984). *Hotel du Lac*. New York: Pantheon.
- Death in Venice*. Dir. Luchino Visconti. Warner, 1971.
- Didion, J. (1977). *A Book of Common Prayer*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Grand Hotel*. Dir. Edmund Guling. MGM, 1932.
- Hotel du Lac*. Dir. Giles Foster. Fox, 1986.
- The King of Marvin Gardens*. Dir. Bob Rafelson. Columbia, 1972.
- Lyons, D., & Weinberg, A. D. (1995). *Edward Hopper and the American Imagination*. Ed. Julie Grau. New York: Norton.
- Mann, T. (1999). *Death in Venice, Tonio Krüger, and Other Writings*. Ed. Frederick A. Lubich. New York: Continuum.
- Parker, D. (1954). *The Ladies of the Corridor*. New York: Viking Press.
- Seize the Day*. Dir. Fielder Cook. Learning in Focus, 1986.

Reading Marius's secret

SCOTT SPRENGER (*)

Although Marcel Pagnol's 1929 play, *Marius*, has traditionally been received as an unproblematic narrative about the trials of love, marriage and family, the eponymous character harbors an unspeakable «secret» that the text never reveals.¹ Because the surface-level plot turns on Marius's inner conflict between his «public» desire (fueled by paternal pressure) to marry his lifelong friend, Fanny, and his «secret» desire to become a sailor, readers/viewers can easily be fooled into believing that by the end of the play Marius's desires have been fully unraveled and his psychological dilemma explained. Doesn't Marius, after all, divulge his secret to Fanny?

Fanny: Tell me your secret and I swear before God that I will never tell anybody!

Marius: Fanny, I don't want to be trapped behind this counter all my life catching the last drop (from the bottles) or calculating the proper proportions of drinks while ships are calling me to sea....

Marius: I have had this desire for a long time.... I was around 17 years old... and one morning, a big sail ship anchored in front of the bar.... It was a tri-mast.... I chatted with the crew when they came to sit at the bar; they told me about their country.... Then one night, they left. I went out to the jetty; I watched the beautiful tri-mast depart.... And it was that day that I was captivated. (556)

Marius, it would seem, could not be more lucid: tri-masted sailing ships and the sea possess a stronger force of attraction than Fanny. His flight from Fanny to the departing ship, «La Malaisie», at the conclusion of the play would only appear to confirm this simple fact. And yet, when Marius is reread in light of psychoanalytic theory, we suspect that Marius is less forthcoming about his desires than we are initially led to believe. Or more precisely, the text suggests a deeper, unconscious level to Marius's nautical fantasy than he is able to communicate at a conscious, discursive level. If we add the subsequent lines to the above confession, we see for example that, despite Marius's best

(*) Center for Modern and Contemporary Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, USA.

¹ Pagnol's work has largely been neglected by academic criticism due no doubt to its popular status and its manifest simplicity. As a film-maker and intellectual, Pagnol also was on the «wrong» side of the debates over the advent of sound film in the 1930s. Pagnol embraced sound wholeheartedly because he saw the cinema as a means to film and disseminate theater whereas «serious» film makers who got their start in the avant-garde cinema of the 1920s saw sound as a threat to innovative film making. At the time, intellectuals and critics tended to side with René Clair against Pagnol on this issue. This intellectual displacement appears to have remained intact throughout the life of Pagnol's works.

intentions, Fanny remains mystified by his explanation for his object-choices.

Fanny: Marius, tell me the truth: was there a woman aboard that ship that you wanted to see?

Marius: No! You see, you cannot understand.

Fanny: Then is it the islands that you want to know?

Marius: *I desire elsewhere*. That's how I shall put it. It's a stupid thing, an idea that cannot be explained. I desire elsewhere. (557, my emphasis)

What precisely is Fanny missing in Marius's explanation? Is she confused because her spurning by Marius has disturbed her rational faculties? Are conventional, heterosexual categories of desire governing her reasoning to such an extent that she can only imagine «another woman» as an alternative to herself? Or is Pagnol's ideal author suggesting through Fanny's question a quite different erotic subtext to Marius's nautical attachment? Though all of the above points are at some level true, this essay will emphasize the latter one because even if, as Marius protests, there is not «another woman» on the boat, Marius's obsession with ships and the sea clearly finds its roots in an erotically-charged imaginary scenario. It is noteworthy, in this connection, that Pagnol has Marius draw the reader's attention to his unusual phrasing («I desire elsewhere. *That's how I shall put it.*»). The author unequivocally signals here that Marius could have put this idea differently; to be more precise, he could have said «I desire *to go* or *to be* elsewhere». The fact that he doesn't leaves in doubt whether Marius is referring here to a geographical «elsewhere» or, as Fanny seems to suggest, a sexual one. The word «elsewhere», in fact, marks a retreat from Marius's earlier specificity and works to *un-name* the «sea» and «tri-mast» as the specific loci of desire. Indeed, if Marius's expression is taken *à la lettre*, his «object» will always lie beyond the reach of conventional linguistic categories since «elsewhere» points necessarily to an «otherness» – the thing that is always *not here*. Marius, himself, declares: it is «*an idea that cannot be explained*». If Marius at one point names the «tri-mast» and the «sea» as his desired objects, these signifiers are merely metonymies of another desire not yet revealed.

But what might that desire be? When and where does it find its origins? Does it begin, as Marius says, at age 17, when he observes the departing ship? Or is this event merely the conscious manifestation of an unconscious desire stemming from an earlier period? A psychoanalytic approach can help us posit possible solutions to this mystery by suggesting cause-effect connections between the family psycho-dynamics of Marius's early childhood, his possible infantile wishes and his subsequent object-desires. Though the play does not directly portray the events of Marius's childhood, nor does it positively establish childhood emotional events as a causality for adult object choices, the reader can hypothesize a cause-effect structure from various textual clues. We know, for example, that Marius's mother died at his birth and that César, Marius's overbearing father, has attempted to keep things as they were, both physically and mentally, since the time of her death. We see evidence of this in César's refusal to remarry despite the passage of over twenty years, in his desire not to move his wife's objects in their bedroom, and, more significantly, in his effort to keep Marius in a semi-childhood state of subservience (César treats the 22-year old Marius like a kid, scolding him for minor infractions and threatening to strike him for his disobedience). According to Freud, the combination of the absence of maternal love and a prolonged infantilization by the father could easily contribute to a fixation on a pre-Oedipal stage, which in turn could account for observable neurotic effects in adult life, such as an unconscious resistance to assuming traditional adult roles as well as to conventional categories of desire.

Marius's vague desire for an «elsewhere» may, in fact, be explained as an unconscious pull toward the maternal object that has always been missing in his affective life. As Freud claims: «There is no love that does not reproduce infantile prototypes.»² Lacking this initial – and,

² Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures*, p. 55.

according to Freud, most crucial – maternal prototype, Marius appears never to have properly established the emotional tie that would serve as a template for subsequent object choices. This would explain why Marius is incapable of returning Fanny’s love, although he consciously avows that he wishes to. Deprived affectively as a child, Marius continues to feel affectively deprived as an adult – a fact that keeps him in a state of eternal longing and searching. In place of this original absence, Pagnol’s text suggests that Marius unconsciously fabricates (and fixates on) a maternal ideal that serves as a model for his (eternally disappointing) object-choices in material reality.

In this light, Marius’s fantasy to go to sea can be read as a «screen story» for an unconscious wish to recapture a state of union with a maternal fantasm such as the one that Freud and Lacan call the «phallic mother». The psychoanalytic concept of the phallic mother, which finds its origins in Plato’s androgyne myth, is the infantile illusion of the mother as a complete, double-sexed being. According to Freud and Lacan, the pre-Oedipal child clings to this illusion until the moment of symbolic castration and the psychical incorporation of conventional categories of perception, such as the binary opposition male/female.³ Textual evidence suggests that Marius’s object desires remain in a state of indifferentiation, which leads to the inference that he has not yet successfully passed through the Oedipal and castration complexes. Thus, while Marius’s desire to become a sailor may appear to the casual observer as a rational «career choice», at a deeper level we can see that it is caused by an irrational and unconscious attachment to an infantile maternal dream.

The double (conscious/unconscious) register of Marius’s desire is strongly suggested at the linguistic level by his manifest object-choice, the «sea». First, the sea is a traditional symbol for life, fertility and rebirth – concepts that can be loosely associated with the concept of motherhood. But more convincing is the fact that the French word for «sea», i.e., *mer*, is a homonym for «mother» (*mère*). Each time that Marius expresses his desire (in French) for the sea, the homonym suggests that he simultaneously expresses his desire for the mother. Other symbolic and thematic details point in this direction as well. First, Marius’s passion to go to sea is presented as pathological; his obsession with boats, the sea, the docks and the sailors works to override his reason and common sense. This is made clear by the unsatisfiable nature of Marius’s desire, his constant state of distraction (the ships’ horns, like the mythological sirens, constantly call him away from his work at the bar) and by the pain and despair that he is willing to cause in César and in Fanny by acting on his dream. Indeed, Pagnol’s explicit pitting of Marius’s «love of sea» against his love for Fanny reveals how perversely eroticized Marius’s desire for the sea really is. Second, we see evidence of Marius’s pre-Oedipal fantasy in his inability to make clear gender distinctions. In both the play and the film, Pagnol visually conveys a blurring of male and female characteristics of Marius’s erotic fantasy by superimposing phallic masts and beacons onto images of the sea/mother. In the cinematic version this feature of Marius’s unconscious desire is rendered unmistakable by full-scale images of beacons, masts and the sea appearing at various moments when Marius contemplates his secret object of desire (i.e., his «mistress»). We should note that neither the text nor the cinematic version ever exposes the exact identity of Marius’s «mistress»; the narrative eye cuts away to the sea, beacons and masts. In a psychoanalytic register, this androgynous superimposition of male and female characteristics confirms that Marius has not yet successfully crossed over into a conventional, post-Oedipal order. Third, Marius is unable to make «adult» choices as they are expected of him by his family or community. And he is unable to do this despite the fact that at a conscious level he wants to comply. In his relation to Fanny, for example, Marius claims on the one hand that he loves her and would like to marry her, but on the other, he claims that not only can he not marry Fanny, he cannot marry *anybody*:

³ Cf. Chapters 1 and 2 of Kari Weil’s *Androgyny and the Denial of Difference* for a recent discussion of the relation between the Platonic myth of the androgyne and psychoanalytic categories and concepts, including the phallic mother.

Marius: I have a lot of affection for you. I just gave you proof of that. But love? No. Oh, naturally, if I had wanted, I could have loved you.... As pretty as you are, it wouldn't have been hard. But I didn't want to because I knew that I couldn't marry you. Neither you nor anybody.

Fanny: Do you want to become a monk?

Marius: No, but I cannot be married. (553, my emphasis)

What does Marius mean when he says that he *cannot* be married? The most obvious answer is that Marius does not want marriage to interfere with his career choice, but that he is (initially) too weak to declare this to Fanny outright. Another (related) answer might be that he accepts to marry Fanny, but then backs out because he is concerned that his long stints at sea will be too difficult for Fanny to endure. Both answers are plausible, but they beg the question of Marius's underlying pathological attachment to the sea. The second answer is also weakened by the fact that Pagnol does not give sufficient evidence of Marius's thoughtfulness or concern for others. He portrays Marius as having childlike impulses – somebody ruled more by passion than by an adult sense of responsibility. We also learn that Fanny is prepared, eager even, to accept being married to a sailor. A more likely hypothesis is that a deep, structural impediment is blocking Marius's desire for marital union – an impediment that Marius himself cannot consciously or willfully remedy. Marius's desire to go to sea, thus, should not be viewed as in tension with a counter-desire to marry Fanny, but as an affirmation of the simple fact that (for reasons unexplained by the text) he cannot engage in marital union.

Let us now turn to an analysis of Marius's «mistress» to find supporting evidence for the above claims. At the most obvious level, Marius's attachment (and scrupulous fidelity) to an illicit and invisible «mistress» (whom he never intends to marry) is *prima facie* evidence of a strategy to avoid marriage. Marius at one point even reveals to César that he cannot marry Fanny because he is afraid of mistress's reaction. More convincing, however, is the fact that Marius's clandestine visits reveal the exaggerated extent to which Marius believes he must circumvent César's paternal authority in order to satisfy his illicit desire. Marius quite obviously feels anxious about revealing his mistress's identity to his father: he invents an elaborate ritual to make César think that he is sleeping while he is out; he pretends that he mistakenly locks his bedroom door so that César cannot check up on him; and instead of using the front door as a means of entering and exiting his father's house, he uses his bedroom window to avoid detection and confrontation. Although César, ironically, is at some level content that his son is expressing his «virility» with a «mistress», and although Marius is aware of César's approval, Marius nevertheless meticulously conceals his object's identity.

On a first reading, we initially assume Marius's mistress must be «another woman» (perhaps Escartefigues's wife) because Fanny, César, and his friends assume that it is another woman. But closer reading/viewing casts doubt on this assumption. Why, for example, does Pagnol keep the mistress's identity a secret from the reader (or viewer) up to the end? He does not gain any particular dramatic tension from this strategy. In fact, adding an active rival to Fanny may have increased this tension. The more plausible explanation, from a psychoanalytic view, is that Pagnol wishes to veil the mistress's identity for strategic theoretical and moral reasons: Marius's incestuous desire must be left unstated in order to reach the wide audience that Pagnol wanted, yet he suggests through symbolic evidence a second-order interpretation with important theoretical stakes. In other words, the textual lack is internally related to an epistemological lack which demands the reader's active interpretation in order to discover the hidden connections between the text's form and content.⁴

⁴ Cf. Shoshona Felman's «Turning the Screw of Interpretation» for a convincing analysis of the relation between textual and epistemological *lack*, the reader's desire to know and the reading/interpretive process as a parallel activity to psychoanalytic investigation.

In any case, Marius's strategic avoidance of direct confrontation with his father, combined with Pagnol's veiling techniques, clearly points to an object either too scandalous or too incomprehensible for Marius to reveal publicly. It also suggests that Marius still thinks of himself in such a childlike way that he neurotically inflates his fear of César's paternal power to a kind of paranoia. That Marius suffers from Oedipal/castration fears may seem implausible to the casual reader since this would mean he has physically achieved adulthood without becoming an adult psychologically. Yet textual evidence shows that Marius is caught between an irrepressible, pre-Oedipal attachment and the awareness that maintaining this attachment will lead to a conflict with his father. Pagnol, as I have tried to show, hints at this Oedipal tension throughout the play, but he makes it unmistakable at the end, when Marius reneges on his proposal to Fanny in order to escape before the «La Malaisie» departs. To avoid both marriage to Fanny and his father's reprobation for destroying Fanny's «honor», Marius attempts to make a run for it. His escape is foiled, however, by his father. When he returns to his room just a few seconds later, Fanny, believes that Marius has come back to her. But as Marius explains: «I can't get through. My father is blocking the way to the boat» (594).

All of the symbolism in this final scene evokes a classical Oedipal conflict: the child's desire for the maternal object (in this case symbolized by the «sea/tri-mast») is impeded by the presence of a father figure, and the child imagines that any attempt to reach for the maternal object will cause rivalry and violence. In this case, however, no confrontation occurs. Instead, Marius once again avoids conflict with César, allowing him to maintain his paternal authority. At the same time, however, he secretly maneuvers behind his father's back in order to maintain access to his prohibited object. To visually reinforce Marius's psycho-drama, Pagnol makes strategic use of the doors and windows of the paternal household: Marius's avoidance of the Oedipal rivalry is portrayed by his turning away from the paternal door (that César is physically blocking) and by sneaking out the window - the very same window he had always used when visiting his secret «mistress». Fanny in fact suggests this strategy to him: «Go through the window of your room as if you were going to meet your love» (594).

The crucial point that Pagnol communicates through Fanny's line here is that Marius, in fact, lacks a «real» mistress, and he has lacked one from the outset. The «other woman», we finally come to see, has all along been the «sea/mother». If Marius lies about the existence of a rival, it is no doubt in order to better protect his maternal fantasm from Fanny's and César's prying eyes. What is more, the symbolic and linguistic relation between Marius's object (*la mer*) and the mother (*mère*) renders the psychoanalytic explanation of Marius's irrational fear of his father's wrath all the more plausible.⁵

As a final point we should note that at the conclusion of the play Fanny once again provides convincing support for viewing Marius's unconscious desire as incestuous. This evidence comes in her final exchange with Marius, when she draws an explicit analogy between herself and the sea/mother as a potential bride:

Fanny: Since it is the sea that you prefer to me, *go marry the sea* (592).

Marius: Each person leans towards that which he or she loves. You are marrying Panisse's money, and I am free. *I am marrying the sea* (594, my emphasis).

«Marrying the sea», of course, scarcely makes sense at a literal or thematic level. The expression finds its deeper meaning within a psychoanalytic register, i.e., as Marius's unconscious desire to keep his maternal fantasm intact. Though Pagnol has Marius ultimately verbalize his secret desire,

⁵ From a slightly different angle we might say that Marius has, in fact, told the truth all along: he simply did not reveal that this other woman was his mother.

Marius does not seem to grasp the deeper significance of what he is saying. Nor is it clear that Marius is «free» by acting on his fantasy. According to Freud, such an escape from the Oedipal conflict cannot buy freedom; freedom – to the extent that it exists in the psychoanalytic view – must be gained through reconciling fantasy with a reality principle. Such a feat, of course, normally occurs only after a long and arduous process of analyzing and working through deep-seated childhood traumas and fantasies - the very traumas and fantasies that Marius works so studiously to ignore.

When Marius says «I am marrying the sea», psychoanalysis allows us to observe that he is thus still, tragically, under the thrall of his original childhood fantasm. The expression of Marius's desire is *tragic* because it is only with the experience of disenchantment that Marius will gain any insight into his deeper motivations as well as the heavy sacrifice he made in the pursuit of an illusion.

WORKS CITED

- Felman, S. (1977). Turning the screw of interpretation. In S. Felman (Ed.), *Literature and Psychoanalysis. The Question of Reading: Otherwise*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Freud, S. (1989). *New Introductory Lectures*, ed. Peter Gay. New York: Norton.
- Pagnol, M. (1995). *Oeuvres Complètes: I*. Paris: Editions de Fallois.
- Weil, K. (1992). *Androgyny and the Denial of Difference*. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia.

What figure in the carpet?

ROBERT SILHOL (*)

«Have I got to tell *you* after all these years and labours?»

I

We all know the metaphor of the figure in the carpet; we owe the terms to Henry James, in the story of the same title. Obviously, the simile can only warm the heart of the psychoanalytical critic. For once, here is a clever writer who comes and corroborates what we have learnt from Freud. But both James and Freud belonged to the same historical period, and this may well be an argument for the sceptic who will thus easily explain away the concordance between the two before retuning to his or her traditional critical task, whatever that is. It probably would have been wiser to speak of a sign of the time, but we can leave the debate here and turn, rather, to the text itself, which is what a critic should do.

I have chosen to discuss James's famous text today as a way of putting into practise what we have, or rather what we should have, learnt, by now. This may also be a way of pointing out what now characterises our own time.

For indeed, although «The Figure in the carpet» constitutes a remarkable illustration of Freud's theory, there is still the danger – I mean the epistemological danger – that we continue to accept the affirmation that there are literary works which indeed do not need any analysis since they so readily provide the reader with the truth themselves. As psychoanalytical critics, however, it seems we have a method at our disposal which might help us to avoid falling a prey to the illusion I have just described. I am thinking of the two possible approaches we can use when dealing with a text. For we can first consider the text as representation, a representation which as long as it has some realistic value, is a metaphor of an important, of an essentiel even, fact or feature in our human lives. We all know of Oedipus and of Hamlet, we know Molière's *Don Juan* and Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* and Edgar A. Poe's «Purloined letter». Such works, as of course many others, describe characters which

(*) Université Paris 7 – Denis Diderot, UFR d'études anglophones, Institut d'anglais Charles V, 10, rue Charles V, 75004 Paris, France.

can be analysed as if they were real persons. But there is another approach, and I take it to be more fundamental, as will be seen. It is an approach which does not contradict the first one but is in fact complementary to it, and it has the merit of being epistemologically sound. I am referring to the analysis which attempts to go beyond what has been called the characters's psychology and prefers to consider the text as the discourse of a given subject. And indeed, if there is some truth to be drawn from literature it is certainly because a text is always, first and foremost, produced by a given «subject». Ultimately, the logic behind a story, a character, or a style even, proceeds from a real person, and this is so true that whenever we happen to come across what is obviously a lack of logic in a work of literature, some logic somehow is still to be found in the text. You understand, of course, that I am here referring to what was unconscious in the production of the text, from which it obviously follows that this logic we are looking for will not be found in the characters – or in the characters alone, if you like – but rather in the very warp and woof of the writing itself, «*parole*» of a subject. Naturally, many will rise and say that what characterizes a «great» author is the mastery he or she is able to exercise over his or her material. The argument, however, will not work with us – at least I hope it won't – since it has by now more or less come to be admitted that we always say more than we think and even say what we do not know we are saying. For speech, indeed, has the structure of the metaphor, is constructed, that is, exactly like a slip of the tongue or like a dream. And again, that this even more clearly applies to works of literature is obvious to anyone interested in psychoanalysis.

All this, in fact, is brilliantly demonstrated, by James's «Figure in the carpet», and that the demonstration should have been carried out metaphorically does not make it less effective, as we shall see. This adds, besides, to our pleasure as «modern» readers.

The first «approach», then. You remember the story. It is a tale about a secret, a secret which seems to be the condition of literary achievement. Put in plain terms, the question could run thus: what is it that makes a literary work worth while? Or: what is it that denotes «good» or «great» literature? It is of course the question which is at the heart of literary criticism, or the question, rather, which *was* at the heart of literary criticism in James's time. That it should still be a question for most of our «traditional» critics shows what ground our own psychoanalytical theory has yet to gain. But it is true that we are here facing a very difficult problem; for it concerns beauty, and it concerns truth, and also the relationship between the two.

Rapidly, however, in the story we are considering, literary achievement is left aside and the query then becomes more general and amounts to something like this: «What is literature made of?»

If we look at a summary of the tale, what we have is an enquiry into the genius, or success, of a famous writer whose name, very aptly, happens to be Vereker. Chosen by George Corvick, obviously his senior as a literary critic, the narrator is supposed to write a review of Vereker's last novel. His task is to find out... what? Something like the secret of the man's talent, to make explicit, indeed, «the sense of [...] something or other», as Corvick puts it.

«For God's sake try to get at him. Don't let him suffer by our arrangement. Speak of him, you know, if you can, as I should have spoken of him.»

The review is written, and published, and the people at the office declare it «all right», while Corvick, who had to be away in Paris at the time, is dissatisfied and writes that this wasn't «at all what Vereker gave him the sense of».

In the next two episodes – or scenes, or parts, there are eleven of them –, our hero comes to meet the great man at a reception in a country residence where he has also been invited, and eventually they have a long conversation. Before this, however, at dinner, the review is indirectly discussed. At first, the writer's comment is vague, non-committal: «Oh, it's all right – it's the usual twaddle!» «You mean he doesn't do you justice?», a guest asks. «It's a charming article», tosses the great man. «Oh you're so deep!», insists the same lady, and her remark brings about the final stroke:

«As deep as the ocean! All I pretend is, the author doesn't see——»

.....
– Doesn't see what?
Doesn't see anything.»

Later on in the day, in the middle of the night, in fact, writer and critic have a long interview. The author does not want to hurt the young man's feelings and speaks kindly to him; but he nevertheless remains unable to explain why critics always «miss» his «little point». Yes, he doesn't «quite know how to explain» this to the critic.

«You miss it, my dear fellow, with inimitable assurance; the fact of your being awfully clever in your article and your article's being awfully nice doesn't make a hair's breadth of difference. It's quite with you rising young men [...] that I feel most what a failure I am!

.....
– You a failure - heavens! What then may your 'little point' happen to be?
– Have I got to *tell* you after all these years and labours?»

And yet, the writer will try to explain, and here I must quote at length, if only because the details of the writing, *écriture*, are so «telling». (As you can see, I have been presumptuous. James is twisting my arm, almost making me lose sight of my initial plan to neatly distinguish two separate approaches in my analysis of the text, as if he was saying: «It won't work with me».)

«By my little point I mean – what shall I call it? – the particular thing I've written my books most *for*. Isn't there for every writer a particular thing of that sort, the thing that most makes him apply himself, the thing without the effort to achieve which he wouldn't write at all, the very passion of his passion, the part of the business in which, for him, the flame of art burns most intensely. Well, it's that!»

To the young critic, this doesn't seem very clear, not «very distinct» indeed, and yet, today, it seems we can make something of it, bearing Lacan's objet *a* in mind, for instance, or even simply stressing «little point», «thing» and of course this «passion» of the writer's «passion». For doesn't this ring a – psychoanalytical – bell? I think of unconscious desire, or of drive; it helps me in any case to make some sense of the mysterious force at work in writing. Listen to Vereker again when he continues in his explanations: he calls his urge to write «the finest, fullest intention of the lot» and also speaks of «this little trick» of his, something which we may find in «the order, the form, the texture of [his] books». The approach is very «modern», ahead of James's time even, but if it does point out what a critic ought to do it does so in such a vague manner that it is no help, simply repeating that it is «the thing for the critic to look for». I take this for a probable intuition that in 1900* the world of criticism was not properly equipped for the task. That many, even in our day, should fare no better, is a point worthy of consideration.

But shouldn't authors somewhat help the critics in their difficult task? This is what the young man asks: «Don't you think you ought – just a trifle – to assist the critic?» And Vereker's answer is almost indignant: Assist the critic? But this is what he does when he writes. «I've shouted my intention in his great black face!» And here of course we shall note the word «intention», a clue, I think, that even James's writer doesn't know what his own secret, this impulse that makes him write, is. But Vereker wouldn't agree with me, and he persists in his obscure demonstration: critics should be able to see what this is all about; to him, it is *palpable*, «exactly as palpable as the marble of this chimney». This is as much as we shall ever know however, and we should not be surprised since he then proceeds to speak of his «secret». Again, we are given to understand that the «intention» that was mentioned earlier on cannot constitute an explanation sufficient in itself. Today, we would even say that any insistence on «intention» draws us further away from the proper (psychoanalytical) answer. Did James, again, have some intuition about this? His Vereker, in any case, is far from unwise: «If my great affair's a secret, that's only because it's a secret in spite of itself –». In fact, what the reader is very clearly told here is that writing is not a matter of intention. In his next step James makes his character

say so: if he had known in advance what he was to write he could never have written it. This is all quite explicit now, and very Freudian: his work, his secret, it's all the same thing.

Will this satisfy the critic? Not really. On the contrary, he is now «fired» with curiosity. He wants to know more: «Is it a kind of esoteric message?» And at this point we are given to understand that the words a writer produces still remain somewhat mysterious for him. The *thing* is there, yes, on the written page, but it cannot clearly be described:

My whole lucid effort gives [the critic] the clue – every page and line and letter. The thing is as concrete there as a bird in a cage, a bait on a hook, a piece of cheese in a mouse-trap. It's stuck into every volume as your foot is stuck into your shoe. It governs every line, it chooses every word, it dots every i, it places every comma.

It goes on like this for more than a page: «heart and body», «organ of life», «language», «the joy of my soul», but in the end it remains a secret and our young critic can only sum up the discussion with a very general statement: «This extraordinary 'general intention' [...] is then generally a sort of buried treasure?». The writer does vaguely approve, but still leaves us in the dark: «Yes, call it that, though it's perhaps not for me to do so.»

So our young critic has failed to discover what the secret – the «general» intention – was, and he has failed so utterly that he comes to the conclusion that he has «no knowledge» and that perhaps «nobody» ever has.

To Corvick, back from Paris and about to get married to Mrs Erme's daughter (of all this I shall speak later), he confesses his failure. No doubt, «there was more in Vereker than met the eye», but he did not know what it was. Together with Corvick, again, they wonder what the «thing» is, and they decide that, certainly, it is «something to be understood», but go no further. Has Corvick understood something our narrator has failed to see? Probably not, but at this point he seems more eager than ever to go ahead with his search:

He had hold of the tail of something; he would pull hard, pull it right out.

James's vocabulary is no doubt interesting here and we will not fail to make «something» of it. And there are other details worthy of interest. The next, and last, interview between writer and critic shows our young man admit to Vereker that he has told someone his secret:

«I *have* told somebody», I panted, «and I am sure that person will by this time have told somebody else! It's a woman, into the bargain.»

But how could the critic have revealed anything to anyone since he never knew what the writer's secret was? Which leads us to think that the only thing that was in his power to disclose was that Vereker had indeed a secret! And the passage is interesting for another reason too, for it says something about the difference between the sexes. Corvick may be clever, and he may possess a clue – and here the specific word used by James is «the tip» –, but he will never find out more; no, there is no danger here, Vereker seems to think. Because he is in love, though, and about to get married, isn't it possible that he may have access to some knowledge he did not have before? We shall never know what James precisely had in mind at this point, but we can quote him, thus giving him the benefit of the doubt: «He was moreover in love with the young lady: perhaps the two together would puzzle something out.» Is there a secret to be discovered in marriage? No doubt, even if it is only to find out what it means to be married! Once again, «the subject of the tip» is mentioned, and it serves as an introduction to the central metaphor in the tale, the one that gave it its title:

For himself [Vereker], beyond doubt, the thing we were all so blank about was vividly there. It was something, I guessed, in the primal plan, something like the complex figure in a Persian carpet.

In the next episode we learn a little more about Corvick's relationship to his future wife, and no psychoanalyst will fail to see a discreet hint of a primal scene here. For indeed, the way in which

they carry out their search for Vereker's secret is more than ambiguous: «The question would now absorb them, and they would enjoy their fun too much to wish to share it with the crowd.» It is clear, by now, that the «secret» has as much to do with life as with literature: «He called it letters, he called it life – it was all one thing.» What we have is a couple of lovers, and our narrator is of course excluded from the «scene»: «He could say things to her that I could never say to him.» And also: «I felt humiliated at seeing other persons derive a daily joy from an experiment which had brought me only chagrin.» «I doubt whether they should have got so wound up if they had not been in love: poor Vereker's secret gave them endless occasion to put their young heads together.»

But perhaps I should be more specific. That the basic structure here is that of a primal scene is obvious, but I think it also tells us something about the joy of sex, a joy which does seem to amount to a secret, and it is this secret that the narrator has no access to.

The story goes on, however: Vereker leaves Ebgland, and Corvick «who made his living by his pen, contracted a work which imposed on him an absence of some length and a journey of some difficulty.» He goes to India and is thus separated from his beloved Gwendolen, and it is a separation which I interpret as a sign of James's (probably unconscious) insistence on the impossibility of love between man and woman, even though it can also be read as the result of an oedipal wish to separate the parents:

His courage had dropped, his ardour had gone the way of mine – this inference at least he left me to enjoy.

[...] He needn't have been afraid, poor dear, for I had by this time lost all need of triumph. In fact I considered that I showed magnanimity in not reproaching him with his collapse. [...] If Corvick had broken down I should never know; no one would be of any use if *he* wasn't.

And in India, as if by miracle, Corvick is at last successful:

Early in March I had a telegram from [Gwendolen] [...] «He has got it, he has got it!» [...] «His general intention. George has cabled from Bombay.»

She had the missive open there; it was emphatic, but it was brief. «Eureka. Immense.» That was all – he had saved the money of the signature. I shared her emotion, but I was disappointed. «He doesn't say what it is.»

Has the figure in the carpet come out, then, at last? The telegram says so, but we shall not know what it is! But «perhaps it won't go in a letter if it's 'immense'», Gwendolen pleads. The narrator is not convinced: «Perhaps not if it's immense bosh. If he has got something that won't go in a letter he hasn't got *the* thing.» It is almost as if we were on lacanian grounds here: the thing, *das Ding* indeed, cannot be written.

For it is a question of *words* – this is indeed how the eighth scene begins –, of words which are never capable of really saying what *it* is. And thus, to verify that what he has discovered is the right thing, Corvick rushes to Rapallo where Vereker is staying. Gwendolen and our narrator will simply have to wait a little longer. Suspense! The fiancé does write from Rapallo, though, but we learn nothing from the «junction of the discoverer with the discovered». All Corvick has to say, in fact, amounts to the suggestion of what I must call a transaction, or an exchange, for his letter consists «of the remarkable statement that he would tell her when they were married exactly what she wanted to know.» I have already hinted that the «secret» might very likely have something to do with sexuality, and this episode about marriage seems to confirm it: marry me – but I think we should read this as «get married» – and you shall know what the secret is. For Gwendolen, at least, there is no mystery in Corvick's abrupt proposal: «It's tantamount to saying – isn't it? – that I must marry him straight off!»

The letter says more, of course, but never what we want to know: the rule of the game, here, seems to be that the secret will always be alluded to, and somewhat lengthily even, but never revealed:

He found Mr Vereker deliriously interesting and his own possession of the secret a kind of intoxication. The buried treasure was all gold and gems. Now that it was there it seemed to

grow and grow before him; it was in all time, in all tongues, one of the most wonderful flowers of art. [...] When once it came out it came out, was there with a splendour that made you ashamed [...] It was immense, but it was simple – it was simple, but it was immense, and the final knowledge of it was an experience quite apart.

One speaks of «its» qualities, however vaguely, but not of «it». I leave «treasure», «grow and grow», «came out» and «immense», repeated twice, to your psychoanalytic imagination, but surely you already have an idea! (And «gold and gems» should certainly also given some – anal – consideration.)

Marriage then, sexuality and its mystery, and perhaps we understand why it is at this point of the narration that Gwendolen's mother is once more mentioned and again defined as an obstacle to... this particular marriage. This time, however, Gwendolen, is decided to go ahead with the marriage. In a few lines, James has staged the daughter's rebellion – the daughter's not the son's –:

«What the state of things has been is that we felt of course bound to do nothing in mamma's lifetime.

– But now you think you'll just dispense with your mother's consent?

– Ah, it may not come to that! [...] Poor dear, she may swallow the dose. In fact, you know [...], she really *must!*»

In the end, though, James will think of a solution «more prompt than could have been expected and more radical than waiting for the old lady to swallow the dose» and will conveniently have her die of a «sudden death». Corvick and the young lady are «united 'very quietly'», they go to Torquay for their honeymoon, and there, the bridegroom dies in an accident! *Deus ex machina* or not, the book he had planned to write on Vereker and that was supposed to reveal everything will not be written; again we are left in the lurch. He had completed the opening pages, though, but this doesn't help: «they were striking, they were promising, but they didn't unveil the idol.» All is left our narrator is to question the lady: «had she seen the idol unveiled? Had there been a private ceremony for a palpitating audience of one? For what else but that ceremony had the previous ceremony been enacted?» I find the metaphor limpid, and it seems to me it is difficult not to form a very clear idea of what is being implied here in this «idol», but James will never permit the hypothesis to be verified. For his lady – a character of his creation, again, we must keep this in mind – will now keep the secret to herself. To the narrator, anxious to learn what it was that Corvick had found: «Did you hear in those few days of your blighted bliss [...] what we desired so to hear?», her answer leaves no hope: «I heard everything [...] and I mean to keep it to myself!»

The next «scene», the ninth, almost runs like a confession, and can certainly be given a psychoanalytic interpretation. Wounded by the lady's refusal, our narrator still has hopes: «I had at first found a way to believe that I should soon get the better of the reserve formulated the week after the catastrophe in her reply to an appeal as to which I was not unconscious that it might strike her as mistimed.» But he is wrong, of course, and almost comes to realize it. It was not the mistiming that was wrong, but simply unconscious desire. The price to pay may be higher than he expects, and «intimacy» may be the condition, of the secret. At which point he wonders whether he will have to marry the lady in order to discover the secret. Is he prepared to go as far as this? The story does not say, but he does seem to have doubts:

There might be little in it, but there was enough to make me wonder if I should have to marry Mrs Corvick to get what I wanted. Was I prepared to offer her this price for the blessing of her knowledge?

* The end of the episode might help us guess what is to follow. To the young man's question – no, it is not a proposal, just a desperate question –: «Now, at last, what *is* it?», the young widow can only answer «Never!». It is difficult not to interpret this «never» as an answer produced by unconscious desire. For after all, her refusal is prompted by James: his hero, our narrator, cannot, must not, find out

what the secret (of sexuality?) is. This is no doubt the reason why a new character – who of course will marry the widow! – is introduced into the story at this point. Draton Deane is also a literary critic, and *he* has the favour of the lady.

Six months later, when Vereker's last book is published our narrator straight away takes it to Mrs Corvick. And already the title is interesting: *The Right of way*, and that it is a right of way from which our hero is obviously barred makes no doubt to the psychoanalytic critic. At this point, it is simpler to quote James:

«But I have it,» Gwendolen said, «Drayton Deane was so good as to bring it to me yesterday, and I've just finisehd it.

– Yesterday? How did he get it so soon?

– He gets everything soon. He's to review it in *The Middle*.

– He - Drayton Deane - review Vereker?» I couldn't believe my ears.

She knows, then, and so does Drayton Deane, no doubt: «The figure in the carpet might take on another twist or two, but the sentence had virtually been written.» The lady, our narrator thinks, «had got what she wanted», and when, «three weeks after this» the news of Vereker's death reaches him, he knows he will never find out what the secret was. For «before the year was out» he also learns of the death of Vereker's wife whom he had hoped, as a last resort, to approach. But no. We might have thought until now that the secret was only transmissible through women – something like «*le désir de l'Autre (sexe)*» –, but no. The double question: «Did she know it and if she knew would she speak?» will remain unanswered. The only way left to our hero is to renounce: «I felt that renouncement was indeed my appointed lot. I was shut up in my obsession for ever – my goalers had gone off with the key.» Key can easily be analysed, of course, and so can our hero's *renouncement*. For it is indeed the very heart of the tale – you can call it its key, too –, the point of no return James wanted his story to reach, a point where resistance had led him, the very substance of his own unconscious desire.

So we are not surprised when Mrs Corvick becomes Drayton Deane's wife, and perhaps not surprised either when we learn that the critic does not make public what new «knowledge» he may have acquired by his marriage to the lady, what James flamboyantly calls «the splendor of the lady's nuptial gift».

The solution – but by now the psychoanalyst knows this is just an empty word designed to conceal a desire to fail –, the solution might be to observe the husband and find out what he has learnt. «*Didn't* he know, hadn't he come into it as a matter of course?» (And certainly such a sentence deserves a close psychoanalytic scrutiny: «to come» perhaps, and «to come into», and even «course» for which an interesting rhyme can easily be found.) Doubt, in any case, persists: does the husband know? We cannot be sure, and that is the question: «Of course he knew [...] His wife had told him what he wanted, and he was amiably amused at my impotence.» (Here again, no comment is needed.) But did he really know, though? For such matters, indeed, are not so simple, and the new husband may not possess the necessary talent:

He wasn't interested, he didn't care. Yes, it quite comforted me to believe him too stupid to have the joy of the thing I lacked. He was as stupid after as before, and that deepened for me the golden glory in which the mystery was wrapped.

Yes, how pleasant it is to remain thus in the dark! When the lady dies we know we shall never know, and this of course constitutes one of the aesthetic dimensions of the story. For the «information» is not to be obtained from the husband:

«The information –

– Vereker's secret, my dear man – the general intention of his books: the string the pearls were strung on, the buried treasure, the figure in the carpet.»

But he doesn't know:

«Have I been wrong in taking for granted that she admitted you, as one of the highest privileges of the relation in which you stood to her, to the knowledge of which she was after Corvick's death the sole depositary?

.....
– I don't know what you are talking about,» he said.

There is much in the rest of the scene that deserves analysis («mouth», «It isn't *in me!*», «It was used.») but I shall content myself in simply mentioning the obvious desire to remain in the dark, which we have already come across, and then an obscure, but I think secondary, wish to know what the joy of sex is, and also a wish to learn what femininity is.

In the end, as announced, the secret remains untold, and James cleverly concludes his story with the mention of «unappeased desire», unaware, for once, that his actual *unconscious* desire is precisely to remain unappeased himself.

II

What is there to add? I hope it has not been too difficult to follow the analytical comments I made as I went along telling James's story. Some comments, and I hope this also was clear, were designed to analyse the narrator's endeavors, his vain quest for a secret whose very nature he was never to know – it was a way, in fact, of just repeating what James was saying –, while the remainder of my commentary – a fuller psychoanalytical approach, I think – meant to listen to James's discourse with the «floating ear» of the analyst, pointing out what may well have escaped the writer's conscious intention, thus permitting us to discover the fantasy «behind» the writing, what I take to be the actual driving force behind the production of speech. It is true that I started with the firm intention – Ah! the intention! – to draw a clear distinction between what I called the «two approaches»: the narrator's story as metaphor and James's *parole* as a sign of unconscious desire, but remained unable to carry out my project completely. Using both approaches in my commentary at the same time, I ended up trapped in James's discourse – my «patient» and his resistance. No doubt, my failure is a tribute to James's great talent, perhaps a sign of the times too, and this inevitably brings about the question: to what an extent, in this specific case of an extraordinary perceptive writer, can one speak of unconscious desire at work in the production of a work of literature? Haven't we just witnessed a perfect example of the mastery of the great writer over his material? (A mastery I refuse to acknowledge if what is meant here is a complete control of unconscious processes.) We shall never have the answer to the question – this is one of the points made by James –; was it conscious, intended, or was it unconscious? We do not know, it is not possible to tell *with certainty*. The only thing we can do is form an hypothesis; if it succeeds in explaining what was hitherto unexplainable, something like the slight contradictions in the story, or some lack of logic, or the use of a *Deus ex machina*, then we can be reasonably satisfied.

In such a search for traces of unconscious desire the study of vocabulary is generally helpful. I have already pointed out some interesting examples. To the list, «failure» must be added, for it appears several times, as must the idea of «lack», not so frequent, but important, I think, since it is here connected with men. «The thing» is important, too, and I place it by the side of «point» or «my point», of «tip» and even of «tail» and «organ (of life)». The image of the «bird in a cage» and that of the «foot» «stuck into» a «shoe», do not need much commentary, I think. It all makes me think that if the tale can be read as a philosophical apologue about the unspeakable, about what cannot be named, the ultimate lack, it much more likely proceeds from the unconscious fantasy to remain in the «middle» – you remember that this is the name of the newspaper for which our narrator is writing –, which can be interpreted, I think, as a desire not to have to choose one's own sex, a desire to remain undecided between man and woman without having to choose. And if this seems too far fetched, we must at least admit that marriage, and sex, is «the thing» that remains a mystery throughout.

For women die, in this story, and married men too, as if marital bliss could not last – and wasn't «the» solution –, and at this point we will not forget to mention Gwendolen's mother whose permission is so badly needed and almost denied until the end. If a «key» is to be found in the text, a key to the conditions of production of the story, it is certainly in this direction that we must look.

Sometimes, the names chosen by an author for his or her characters help the psychoanalytical critic. Do the names chosen by James confirm our analysis? Unfortunately, I did not find in «The Figure in the Carpet» anything about which one could be certain. But that doesn't mean the names imagined by James for his tale are devoid of interest, and we can certainly try to play with them. To me, *Vereker*, by association, brings about «worker», «painter», «writer» and suggests one dealing in what is «true», one concerned with «veracity», *le vrai*. But the radical «vere» is close enough to «vir», man, and this also prompts me to interpret Vereker as the name of one who knew the secret... of virility. What can we do with *Corvick*? Can we read «body» in it, «*corpus*»? To a patient, yes, this might be something which could be suggested. And in our little game we can of course reconstruct «vir» from the letters in Corvick. I really don't know to what an extent this is convincing; once again, only James could tell. Of Gwendolen and of Drayton Deane, I cannot make anything, but Mrs *Erme* lends itself to all sorts of easy associations and since the character is one of the keys, if not the key, of the story, I will conclude with «her»: «Hear me», of course, which would come from a child, a son, perhaps, and we will not forget, as this was suggested to me, that Erme, finally, is made up of the letters which form mother in French: *mère*.

We all know this, what we find at the end of an analysis can always be expressed in a few words, a few paragraphs at most; it seems trivial and almost sounds uninteresting. But that is because we have reached the end of the psychoanalytic process, a process which took time to develop and whose «working-through» was not always easy or simple. In a way, the pleasure we may have when we read a case study or a piece of psychoanalytical criticism is not unlike literary pleasure, it is not so much the short conclusion that matters – although this matters a great deal for ourselves as patients –, but the time spent with the piece of literature.

Violence and intertextuality: Apollinaire's castration fantasies

ANCA MITROI ()*

Born in Italy to an adventurous Polish noble woman and an unknown father, raised in various countries across Europe, bank teller by day and avant-garde poet by night, Wilhelm Albert de Kostrowitsky or Guillaume Apollinaire looks much like a puzzle that he himself and, of course, literary critics and historians have tried to solve. What makes this puzzle interesting to psychoanalytic critics is the fact that sequences of traumatic childhood experiences, memories about his relationship with his mother, and/or brief bursts of guilt and fear over various sexual practices seem to emerge from Apollinaire's work almost like factual, undigested biographical elements. For instance, most critics agree that the short story «Giovanni Moroni» contains obvious references to Apollinaire's birth and early childhood in Italy, and that the poem «La Chanson du Mal Aimé» depicts the poet's unshared love for Annie Playden. Talking about such elements, Willard Bohn comments: «Apollinaire treats this factual background material in two ways. By filtering it through his personal experience, he incorporates it into a psychological system. At the same time he gives it a mythic dimension» (27).

However, if these elements were truly obvious, if they were a direct and perfectly legible narrative of such traumatic memories, it would be hard to understand the deep divisions among critics over facts that each camp claims are beyond dispute. Francis Steegmuller underlines this question by pointing out that «Apollinaire's irregular childhood has always interested psychologists, and they have written with differences that are sometimes amusing about the nature and the effect of his early experiences» (55).

There are a few examples of such opposite or inconsistent interpretations of elements related to the poet's childhood. One of them has to do with Apollinaire's relationship to his mother and with maternal images in his work. Another one which, as we shall see, is related to the first one, is the frequently recurring image of a slashed throat, or severed limbs.

As far as the maternal imago is concerned, critics and biographers corroborate various elements, from obsessive images that haunt the poet's works (for instance images of violent, murderous women), to autobiographical narratives that depict maternal figures, and to correspondence between the mother and the son. The conclusions to this type of research are rather extreme, as some claim that the mother was a frightening, castrating figure. Others on the contrary, insist on the fact that

(*) California State University at Northridge, Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8247, USA.

Apollinaire's work should be read in the light of his correspondence in which the relationship between mother and son appears as a very affectionate one. Considered from this point of view, the mother was a protective, nurturing person to whom the poet was fondly attached. For instance this is how Willard Bohn explains a passage from the poem «Le Musicien de Saint-Mery»: «For if Apollinaire suffered mightily at the hands of his various loves (and his mother), he was finally able to punish them in this poem as he could never do in real life» (28). But this suffering from the hands of the mother has to be taken with a grain of salt according to Anne Clancier, who underlines the contrast between the «images of phallic, castrating, dangerous women» in Apollinaire's work (19) and the «warm and devoted» character of Angelica de Kostrowitsky, the poet's mother. Therefore, Clancier prefers to examine the ambivalence of the maternal figure in Apollinaire:

Apollinaire's ambivalence toward the parental imagos is important, especially toward the maternal imago. One may think, given his biography, that he should have hated more his father. One knows that children who were abandoned by or who lost a parent are resentful.... However, the paternal imagos are protected and privileged in Apollinaire's texts (17).¹

Anne Clancier then explains this paradox by diametrically opposed conscious and unconscious feelings:

It seems that for Apollinaire, the conscious feelings are exactly the opposite of the unconscious ones. Guillaume consciously loves his mother and must resent his father for having abandoned him, but unconsciously loves the paternal image and hates the maternal image (18).

However, even if this dichotomy between the conscious and the unconscious can shed light on some images of phallic, castrating women in Apollinaire, there are some aspects that still remain unclear in the scenes that contain such images. That is, such scenes often depict very violent combat, severed and scattered limbs, slashed throats, and beheaded corpses. Aside from this outrageous violence (at least provoked if not perpetrated by women) the striking feature of these scenes is the often abrupt transition to the description of grazing cows (sometimes just one cow, or an ox, or a goat). The apparently peaceful image of the herbivores slowly moving across a pasture, calmly eating grass, breaks into the narrative then ends as abruptly as it has appeared, seemingly unrelated to the previous explosion of violent forces. In this case, if the pain and suffering is inflicted by the phallic, castrating mother who appears in that text, it would be difficult to accept the fact that the calm herbivores in the same scene are, additionally, images of the mother. For instance, the poem «Les colchiques» talks about violent pain and poisoning inflicted by a woman symbolized by a flower, the crocus (colchique). The flowers are compared to a mother: «les colchiques.... sont comme des mères.» However, the cows that are being poisoned can be seen as a maternal symbol, since they are nurturing figures. Moreover, one could say that the cows sacrifice themselves by eating the poisonous flowers (and most of the studies of «Les Colchiques» agree on this aspect), in order to leave the field safe for a group of children who follow them. In other words, it is unlikely that both the victim (the cows) and the source of the violence (the flower and the woman) represent the same maternal imago.

As we have shown above, violent acts can be depicted in Apollinaire in even more graphic terms, that is in images of severed head or limbs and gushing blood. Critics agree that Apollinaire was «obsessed with beheading» (Bates, 77) and Catherine Moore notes that the slashed throat is a «permanent presence» throughout poet's work (67).

In the following, I will reexamine these representations of mutilations more closely. An attentive reading of Apollinaire's prose and poetry reveals that the images of severed head limbs or

¹ All translations of French to English are my own.

often appear in identical words. We can notice that there are two basic types: the «sun slashed throat» («soleil cou coupé») and the severed limbs compared with a vegetal form (leaves or flowers). For instance, «sun slashed throat» («soleil cou coupé») is a verse that appears in «Zone» (in an earlier version he wrote «cou tranché»); in «Les fiançailles», Apollinaire writes about male love «Il vit décapité sa tête est le soleil/ Et la lune son cou tranché,» and in «Le brasier» he talks about «têtes coupées». The same thing is true for the chopped off hands («mains coupées») compared to dead leaves («feuilles mortes»), as if Apollinaire were deliberately and repeatedly quoting himself. «Enfant aux mains coupées parmi les roses oriflammes» he writes in the poem «Visée»; in a reversed image in the poem «La tête étoilée», autumn leaves appear to fall like hands:

Comme la neige aux purs pétales
Ou bien tes mains sur mes baisers
Tombaient les feuilles automnales

In «Marie» the woman's hands are again identified with falling leaves: «Et tes mains feuilles de l'automne», while in «Rhénane d'automne» the poet describes a landscape full of severed hands:

L'automne est plein de mains coupées
Non non ce sont des feuilles mortes
Ce sont les mains des chères mortes
Ce sont tes mains tes mains coupées

The same images of slashed throats or severed hands can be found in Apollinaire's prose. For instance, the short story *La Favorite* opens with a twilight scene in which two men carrying a corpse turn back toward the sliced throat of the sun and swear: «Ils se tournaient parfois vers le cou tranché du soleil et l'injuriaient, les yeux presque fermés» (167). In the much discussed story «Que vlo-ve?», the eponymous character cuts off his rival's hand and puts it in his pocket like a flower, and in the *Assassinated Poet*, Croniamantal, the poet-prophet is killed by a mob formed mainly by women, and his mutilated body pierced by knives is once again compared to a vegetal form, that is to the husk of a water chestnut: «Les couteaux se fichèrent dans le ventre, la poitrine, et bientôt il n'y eut plus sur le sol qu'un cadavre hérissé comme une bogue de châtaigne marine» (*Le Poète assassiné*, 124).

For the images of slashed throats, cut off hands, some critics have obviously suggested castration. For instance, in his study of eroticism in Apollinaire's early poetry, after noting the poet's obsession with decapitation, Scott Bates identifies in the «sun slashed throat» an obvious symbolic castration. In her article, «Une lecture de 'Que Vlo-ve?'» Claude Debon also uses the term «castration symbolique» (*Cahiers de Varsovie*, 195) when discussing the slicing up of one of the characters, in a bloody and passionate combat, and Françoise Dininman uses the same terms of «symbolic castration» (61). Françoise Chenet identifies a metaphor of the Lacanian «fragmented body» (corps morcelé) in such images (Chenet, 68), and finds in the bucolic yet violent landscape the presence of Eros and Thanatos (62). For David Berry, «the act of decapitation itself symbolizes the innate brutality of human nature and also the violence of the sexual urge, particularly when it has been thwarted by deceit and treachery» (73).

Of course, references to sexual mutilation, to castration, seem all the more justified since it is well known that Apollinaire loved puns, and the syntagm «vit décapité» from «Les fiançailles» can be interpreted as a pun referring to sexual mutilation. «Il vit décapité» can be translated as «it lives beheaded». «Vit» after the pronoun «il» (it) translates as the verb «lives» but at the same time, «vit» is one of the names for penis, so this sentence may be referring to a mutilated, beheaded penis.

Given the fact that in *Le Poète assassiné* and «Que vlo-ve?», as well as in some Apollinaire's poems, the victim is a male and that the murder is provoked or even accomplished by a woman, it is easy to see in this image the castrating woman and extrapolate from this the image of a castrating mother. However, none of these interpretations takes into account the fact that, like in «Les colchiques» where the violent suffering is associated with the images of the peaceful cows, in almost all

other works by Apollinaire, the images of violence are juxtaposed to images of calm herbivores grazing in the background. Once again, Apollinaire makes this juxtaposition by using exactly the same words. For example, in his short story, «Que vlo-ve?», Apollinaire actually quotes one of his own poems that depicts a wooden Christ endlessly living his Passion at a crossroad, witnessed by a herd calmly grazing the grass at his feet. In the same story, death by dismemberment of one of the characters is anticipated, again, by the silhouettes of the grazing cows contoured against the horizon in the twilight. In «Rhénane d'automne» herbivores mingle with mourning people and start eating the wreaths, while in *La Rose de Hildesheim ou le trésor des rois mages* it is an ox who witnesses the young character's suffering and madness caused by love.

When they do not identify the cow or the goat with a maternal image, critics see in the presence of these animals a background element, «indications réalistes» (Debon, 194), a picturesque part of the landscape. However, we have shown that the juxtaposition of the representations of torture (inflicted by women – possibly phallic, castrating mothers) and of the herbivores is far from being accidental, as it is repeated in nearly every scene that involves violence. It is also difficult to accept the fact that Apollinaire's narrative is «rather like a dream, where sequences follow each other without any logical connection» and that Apollinaire «never bothers about psychological motivations» (*Cahiers de Varsovie*, 194), since we have already seen that the images of the herd appear precisely and deliberately in connection with the violent suffering.

In order to resolve this mysterious juxtaposition, it is necessary to examine again the poet's relationship with his mother, but from a slightly different angle. In her «Amour parental et amour filial dans l'oeuvre de Guillaume Apollinaire» Anne Clancier studies what she designates as «images of parents and images of children, as well as their mutual relationships» (9). She announces that the texts that she is examining are generally considered autobiographical (she refers to *Le Poète assassiné* and *Giovanni Moroni*). As we have previously shown, she affirms that paternal images in Apollinaire tend to be much more positive than the maternal ones, and she expresses her surprise at this. She then explains that, given what we know about Apollinaire's life, it should be the other way round. Like other Apollinaire scholars, she notices that mothers reveal some aggressive characteristics, and mentions Croniamantal's mother, Macarée, in the story *The Assassinated Poet*. Croniamantal is generally considered a metaphoric self-portrait of Apollinaire, and Macarée, his mother, initially wanted to kill her son, like Angelica de Kostrowitsky who apparently wanted to have an abortion. In the same story, it is the male figures who play the caring, nurturing role for the young poet-to-be. In the end, the poet Croniamantal is mutilated and killed by a woman. Anne Clancier tends to base her arguments more on testimonies and correspondence than poetic evidence, and insists on the complex character of maternal figures in Apollinaire: that is, even if they do not fulfill a traditional role in their child's upbringing and education, mothers appear nevertheless as «chaleureuses» (warm, tender) (9) in the autobiographical works. She also repeatedly affirms that, without any doubt, Apollinaire was a good son and loved his mother. Affectionate letters written by Apollinaire to or about his mother are used to support this type of argument. In a different perspective, Françoise Dininman examines the relationships in the story «Que vlo-ve?» and interprets the negative image of the mother as a result of a negative Oedipal complex (62). That is, one of the characters, called «le babo» must be the «baby» who incarnates the poet and hates his mother because he wants to be his father's wife.

But once again, all these explanations are truncated, in the sense that they take separate elements or images from Apollinaire's texts, without taking into account the wider context of his entire work. Such interpretations also do not take into account a form of memory very important to Apollinaire, that is textual memory, and a kind of textual unconscious that needs to be activated by the reader. Seen most of the time as undigested literary influences, quasi-plagiarism, and overt quotations from various works, such elements can actually help establish connections between what appeared as unrelated images and reveal coherent narratives of personal experiences. Moreover, as we know that Apollinaire claimed to be a representative of anti-tradition (for instance, he is the author of several «Anti-tradition» manifestos), the presence of such traditional works deftly hidden

and embedded in his writing as his own, indicate the revival of a literary tradition (formally rejected by Apollinaire) repressed by the avant-garde iconoclasm.

From this perspective, the numerous images of cut and scattered limbs, together with the violent, castrating women, or more precisely the violent, castrating mother can then be identified not just as obsessive self-quotes, but as actual grafts from other texts. It is true that Apollinaire scholars have many times discussed various myths in his works, but this has mainly been done as a study of erudition. My aim is to show how myth – and in particular Ovid's *Metamorphoses* – can actually allow us to better define Apollinaire's relationship with his mother, to understand the images of graphic violence, as well as to explain the connection between these scenes and the grazing cows that accompany them.

I am going to examine the myths of Orpheus and Pentheus, as both of them involve death by dismemberment, severed limbs, and slashed throats. What is more interesting in the context of our discussion is that they involve the presence of herbivores, and the comparison with vegetation (falling leaves). There are numerous overt references to Orpheus in Apollinaire's work (one of his volumes is even entitled *Le Cortège d'Orphée*). If we examine Ovid's version of this myth in his *Metamorphoses*, we find that Orpheus, the poet and prophet is killed by irate women because they are jealous (he rejects them) and because they dislike his poetry: while Orpheus is playing enchanting songs on his lyre, these women prefer the «uproar of the Bercecyntian flutes, mixed with discordant horns, the drums, the breast-beating and the howlings of the Bacchanals» (*«ingens clamor et infracto Bercecyntia tibia cornu/ tympanaque et plausus et Bacchei ululates»* Ovid, Book XI, 15-17). It is interesting to note that in this rendition of the myth, Orpheus is called «Apollineus» (Apollon's poet). As this name was probably at the origin of Wilhelm Albert de Kostrowitsky's *nom de plume*, Apollinaire, we can see how the poet identifies himself with the mythical character. Moreover, before the killing of «Apollineus»-Orpheus, Ovid describes a peaceful procession of oxen: «It chanced that oxen, toiling beneath the yoke, were plowing up the soil; and not far from these, stout peasants were digging the hard earth and sweating at their work» (tr. Humphries, 259) (*«forte boves presso subigebant vomere terram,/ nec procul hinc multo fructum sudore parantes/ dura lacertosi fodiebant arva coloni»* Ovid, Book XI, 31-33). In the end, the mad bacchantes scatter the bard's severed limbs (*«membra iacent diversa locis»* Book XI, 50) while his chopped-off head floats on the river Hebrus. The other myth, less obvious but more literally copied by Apollinaire, is the myth of Pentheus. This character is also killed by wild, mad women because of his refusal to accept the new cult of Bacchus and to see any beauty in the bacchic songs. He is punished for that by women (including his own mother), who cut his hands off and then beheaded him. Exactly like in the so-called auto-biographical story «Que vlo-ve?» where Que-vlo-ve cuts the hand of the «babo», Pentheus' aunt, Autonoe, cuts off the victim's right hand. The mother then slashes off her son's head – a gesture which, of course, has been described in many of the «tête tranchée» or «cou coupé» images in Apollinaire:

«Help me! Autonoe!» he cried, «Remember
What happened to Actaeon!» but the woman
Apparently knew nothing of Actaeon,
Nor cared; she tore his right arm from his shoulder,
And Ino wrenched the left away. He stood there,
With no arms, pleading
With only the manled bleeding stumps. «Look, mother!»

(Book III, verses 720-724, tr. Humphries, 79-80)

After Agave, the mother, violently tears Pentheus' head off and strokes it with her bloody fingers, the other bacchantes rush and tear the body into pieces that fall like autumn leaves: «non citius frondes autumni frigore tactas/ iamque male haerentes alta rapit arbore ventus/ quam sunt membra viri manibus direpta nefandis» (Book III, verses 730-734).

We can therefore see that the image of the peaceful oxen, the sliced throat, and the limbs like

falling autumn leaves have been borrowed from myths that talk not just about phallic, castrating women who kill a man, but about women who kill because they believe in a different form of poetry. This is actually the bone of contention between Apollinaire and his mother: although she may have seemed to be a good and caring mother, all her life she refused the idea that her son wanted to be a poet. Which means that the image of the castrating mother is an oversimplification unless it is applied specifically to Apollinaire *as poet*. Thus it is relevant that in *Le Poète assassiné*, Cronimantal is killed by a phallic woman (who frantically pierces his eye with her umbrella) over a literary dispute: like in Pentheus' and Orpheus' myths, a new form of poetry (or anti-poetry) is preached by Paponat, the new prophet acclaimed by the inconstant mob. Obsessively integrated into Apollinaire's work, these two myths are not just about violence against a male, but about violence against poetry. Basing her arguments on some letters, Anne Clancier advances that though the poet has a good relationship with his mother, what hurts him is to see that she despises his literary work (19). It is interesting that Clancier actually uses the term «blesser» (to hurt, to wound): «la seule chose qui le *blesse* vraiment c'est de voir sa mère mépriser ses activités littéraires» (19, my emphasis), as this term may be associated with the physical wounds (blessures) inflicted by the castrating women in Ovid and Apollinaire.

The presence of these myths proves that the «factual» material critics talked about is not that «factual» (in the sense of identifiable, purely biographical events from Apollinaire's life). At the same time, the presence of such references to the myths of Pentheus and Orpheus should remind us that Apollinaire often alludes to Freud and also uses the myth of Oedipus deliberately (and tongue in cheek, in his *Histoire d'une famille vertueuse, d'une hotte et d'un calcul*) in order to examine family relationships. This means that the two myths could be read as a more personalized, yet archetypal expression of his relationship to his mother and to other women. In this case, Willard Bohn's affirmation about myth and psychology in Apollinaire's work should be read backwards, that is Apollinaire is not filtering factual elements through his personal experience and incorporating them in a psychological system, thus giving them a mythic dimension. The poet is actually giving the myth a psychological dimension through literary works that are revived through what appears like encoded repressed autobiographical data.

REFERENCES

- Apollinaire, G. (1965). *Oeuvres Poétiques*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Apollinaire, G. (1977). *Le Poète Assassiné*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Berry, D. (1982). *The Creative Vision of Guillaume Apollinaire. A Study of Imagination*. Stanford French and Italian Studies. Anma Libri.
- Bohn, W. (1991). *Apollinaire and the Faceless Man. The Creation and Evolution of a Modern Motif*. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses.
- Chenet, F. (1991). De Hugo à Apollinaire. Le paysage rhénan. Une symbolique et une poétique de la mort. In Michel Décaudin (Ed.), *Du paysage apollinarien. Actes du quinzième colloque de Stavelot*. Paris: Lettres Modernes.
- Clancier, A. (1987). Amour parental et amour filial dans l'oeuvre de Guillaume Apollinaire. In Michel Décaudin (Eds.), *Guillaume Apollinaire 17*. Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard.
- Debon, C. (1984). *Lecture de Que vlo-ve. Cahiers de Varsovie*. Varsovie: Editions de l'Université de Varsovie.
- Dininman, F. (1987). Blessures et mutilations symboliques dans l'oeuvre d'Apollinaire. In Michel Décaudin (Ed.), *Guillaume Apollinaire 17*. Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard.
- Moore, C. (1995). *Apollinaire en 1908. La poétique de l'enchantement. Une lecture d'«Onirocritique»*. Paris: Lettres Modernes.
- Ovid (1958). *The Metamorphoses*. Tr. Rolfe Humphries. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Ovid (1966). *Metamorphoseon*. Dublin, Zurich: Weidmann.
- Steegmuller, F. (1963). *Apollinaire. Poet among the Painters*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Company.

Enter Achilles – An exploration of toxic narcissism

MARCIA LANDAU (*)

JENNIFER PREDOCK-LINNELL (**)

The myth of Achilles involves the adventures of a Greek hero whose mother sacrificed five sons to create a son who would be impervious to any injury. She almost succeeded as Achilles was impenetrable with the exception of his famous heel. Turn this now to ‘men are heels’, deriving from Achilles’ arrogant acts embodied in an air of narcissism. In the work we will discuss, DV-8’s *Enter Achilles*, men reflect a similar sense of self. They, too, are insolent and propelled by reactive aggression. These men appear to have fragmented and inauthentic selves. This is disclosed in their inability to deal with each other with clear emotional boundaries. The rough-and-tumble choreography moves from one confrontation to another and the men interlace the dance with perverted lonely sexual activities. They consistently choose power plays and avoid any possibility of friendship or intimacy. In this group there is no real hero, only the bullies and the bullied who respond as if they are lacking in a defined sense of self. In exploring the darker side of heterosexual and homosexual relationships, these men exhibit no internal consistency with which to deal with each other.

Enter Achilles is an intricate ballet that reveals many secrets of perversion. The psychodynamics of this ballet can be found in Freud’s essays on sexuality (135-170). In this work Freud describes first the gradual evolution of sexual development from phase to phase - as we know, the sequence moves from oral to anal to phallic and genital locations. He describes several general areas of sexual dysfunction in relation to this process. There is the perversion when the final stage of genital sex (that focuses on genital interaction) is superceded by a focus on some other area of the body. The anus and the mouth become the site of sexual pleasure, not the genitals. Secondly, he describes perversions and regressions where activities of early childhood become more the focus of pleasure than interactive genital sex. Finally, he describes fetishism where objects or parts of people replace the whole person and are a source of sexual stimulation.

The brilliance of the ballet lies in its simple setting and the use of a simple plot to illustrate

(*) 300 San Mateo N.E., Suite 805, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108, USA.

(**) RR9 Box 856, Lagunitas SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105, USA.

highly complex and covert relationships between men. Choreographer Llyod Newson has carefully chosen the characters, each with his own psychological spin (expressed by his head and feet). The plot Newson created slowly erases the defenses of the men. The costumes mirror the psychodynamic styles right down to the choice of underwear for each dancer. The music punched in on the jukebox also coordinates the general message of aggression winning over male and female intimacy. Newson even picked the props the men use to have double meaning and special power.

Since the late 1970s and 1980s, European and American choreographers have sought to undermine the dominant ways in which gender has been and still goes on being represented in the massive and repressive order of traditional mainstream dance companies. Working outside the constraining obligations of tradition allows the radical choreographer to respond to changing norms of gendered behavior with a certain freedom (Burt 162). «All dance, because it uses gendered bodies, can be read in terms of sexual politics. There are ways of dancing, contact improvisation being one example, which attempt to work through gender demarcation and ultimately to transcend the socio/sexual definitions of (bodily) experience. The implicit aim in DV-8's work, and one from which the company's name is derived, is to question and subvert the current conventional thought. They do not... attempt this by transcending gender definitions but by dramatizing, in and through the body, the effects of gender ideologies on personal relationships» (Winter). The governing logic of DV-8's work is affective and not pictorial. Central to the ethos of DV-8 is that dance is motivated by emotional/ /psychological imperatives which create a 'physical theatre'. Unlike the traditional definition of dance, movement has a clearly psychological function. DV-8's notion pushes dancers emotionally and physically to extremes resulting in a final product bearing little resemblance to main-stream contemporary dance in which the conventions and mannerisms of standardized dance techniques are shunned in favor of a new form of emotional and dangerous movement. DV-8's deconstructive practice of creating dances is a «new politics of the body which radically challenges the traditional ways in which dance movement creates meanings. New representations of masculinity assert the physicality of the masculine body in ways that have the potential to make visible repressed aspects of the construction of masculine identity» (Burt 163).

Enter Achilles probes under the surface of contemporary life in a relentless pursuit of truth. It asks the dancers to deal with a complex emotional narrative. Questions about what men expect from other men, what men talk about and what does it mean to be conditioned as a man were explored by the dancers through contact improvisation. What is acceptable male contact? Old photographs of men wrestling also stimulated Newson's imagination. «I thought, are they embracing or are they fighting? So we counterbalance positions, where two men lean into one another, and they are mutually dependent on one another not to fall, but if you look at it, you can't tell – is it erotic? Or is it violent?» (Johnson 1998). Movement is reduced to a narrative function.

Enter Achilles continues DV-8's investigation into the loneliness and hollowness that results when men are unable to form meaningful relationships. Its lens draws attention to the abrasive conflict inherent in intimacy for men which arises from the gulf between the stipulations of masculinity and men's real experiences and needs. The movement is informed by content and evolves through rigorous self-examination, the acknowledgment of life experiences, and testing one's limits to the full. It asks us to question our own forms of conformity and conditioning, how much of ourselves is a result of conditioning; it is about how people (men in particular) use and abuse power. It questions how much we can trust other people, let alone ourselves. Its query forces us to ask how we hold onto ideas and truths of power. It questions how much we can trust other people, let alone who and what we are.

Movements through the ballet are dangerous, expressive, quick and unexpectedly off-balance/ /off-center, twisted, rapidly changing. They are executed in duets or solos, or a solo with a chorus of male characters. Movement metaphors describe the emotional states of each individual. A flirtatious poke becomes a provoking shove to a rough-and-tumble spiraling duet of male-to-male prowess. For instance, the dancers «... hurl their bodies through space, hang from ropes from the

ceiling, leap at or harangue each other, and expose their rawest emotional wounds» (Rubidge 204). Violence is an important theme in *Enter Achilles* and it is used to portray how men police one another's behavior; how violence is used by men to oppress one another and as a way to make them conform to expected codes of behavior.

The movements for this piece were developed through the process of structured improvisations, the study of rope techniques, contact improvisation, Irish step-dance, and soccer. The dance sequences of the ballet are constructed around solos, duets, and group interplay, creating a pastiche of rapidly changing emotional and physical states. The dancers move in and out of sync with one another, instantly forming and dissolving intimate or abrasive partnerships. Or they collectively follow the gestures of another. The choreography makes full use of the strength and dynamism male dancers possess as they catch others who jump or dive into their arms. Their movements carry an immediacy of «act and react» as they boomerang off of each other's bodies, off walls, floors and space itself. These images are used to convey the intense and dangerous nature of male-male relationships. The brevity of their physical contact exaggerates the temporality and disquieting of men touching men. The daredevil physicality of the men demands trust at one moment and implied denial at another (Thom 69-70). Vigorous, swift dance sequences in which men hurl themselves into the air, towards each other as they twist around each other's bodies momentarily, always mutually dependent upon each other to be there, grabbing, pushing, poking, dropping to the floor ensuring the viewer that we are never allowed to settle, to rest or to become complacent about the beauty of the images. The rapidity of the images stresses the inevitability of the tie between the two characters exposed. «Many of the movement scenes are organized around the idea of gaming with the men engaging in straightforward 'childish behaviour'.» (Sanchez-Colbert 52). The generalized overall structure of the movement sections are antithetical to the balanced, symmetrical groupings found in traditional ballets. Instead the choreographic form appears to be created through the distribution of movements and gestures that are not centrally focused. Movement is projected to every possible viewing position framed by the performance arena. The dance text avoids any sense of development or climax through its almost minimalist uniformity of happening and through its continuous, fast, muscular but free pace.

The dynamic ballet confronts the audience with a seemingly superficial picture of a British neighborhood pub. It is populated with a familiar group of male visitors who listen to the jukebox, drink beer, watch soccer on TV, hoot at the ladies as they stroll by the window, and energetically tease each other with games of «who has the beer glass» and «if you want it, come and get it». The men at the bar move around each other with ease and depend on each other to catch a glass without spilling any beer or wrestling in the spirit of a mannish playful struggle. When a Stranger enters who does not fit in, the macho teasing group alliances are altered and the dynamics become chaotic and eventually disintegrate. This however, is not the whole story, nor is it what this ballet communicates. There are deeper sexual issues that determine the way the men in the bar move around each other and how they deal with the impact of the Stranger.

The action of the ballet is dominated by the behaviors of five men, who we will address. They are all present in the bar. These men actively and overtly denigrate women. Throughout the ballet, there occurs dozens of anti-feminine acts against women. Some of these acts include:

- 1) A man ignoring a phone call from a real woman to choose instead a blow-up doll. The doll receives his affection and sexual energy.
- 2) The men leave their activities to yell out the bar window at passing women. They use obscene language and gestures that are demeaning to the imagined passerby and the audience.
- 3) The men make fun of women's voices in songs and mimic the presence of women's breasts.
- 4) The men imitate women's dance movement in an air of mockery.

The most important is the rageful attack on a female blow-up doll that includes violent abuse and sexual exploitation.

The men all choose male company over female company although none of them appears effeminate. If we look carefully, we see the four major players are far from ordinary in their dynamics. Each of these men has a way of channeling sexual energy that avoids intimacy and tenderness. This is the core of a psychodynamic perversion. The pervert is unable to separate sexual energy from aggressive energy. The pervert can get gratification if the sexual object is removed in some way from the sexual act. The gratification comes from an object that can be of the same sex or inanimate, victimized or aggressive, or from a part of the person himself (autoerotic). The men narcissistically primp before a mirror as they each enter the bar. They mirror the women they deride. They primp for themselves.

The music that is played throughout the bar scene has either fast aggressive song lyrics or has over sentimentalized feminine love lyrics that are ridiculed by the men in the bar. The 'masculine' attitude towards the body and sex are present in the songs through-out the dance that act as literal landscapes of the men's internal drives and emotional states. The action of the bar never stops. Rest and conversation are not part of the scene. The individual movements of the men are continuous and energetic. Why are they all together at the bar? The hypotheses of our paper is that all of the men have failed in the developmental task of becoming mature, genital sexual adults who have mutual sexual relationships with a woman. Neither do they have a mutual intimate sexual relationship with a man. They are doomed to remain in the superficial but intense delicate eggshell tension of the pub.

Although there are eight male performers, five main characters become the lens through which we witness the ballet and on which we will focus. Each man wears a different colored shirt. Of the major players, four are a solid color and one is patterned. We shall refer to them as Blue Shirt, Red Shirt, White Shirt, Patterned Shirt, and Stranger/Superman.

Our first character is Blue Shirt who is shown at the beginning of the ballet in bed with a blond blow-up doll wearing a charm bracelet perhaps to show she is special. Blue Shirt is asleep with the fantasy doll lying on top of his bare chest covered by his blue shirt. Erotic behavior is ahead. A frightening dream sequence is presented that informs the audience that Blue Shirt fears that the group will discover his perversion. The audience watches his dream, cleverly shown with flashes of light and dark that stop suddenly when he wakes up in fear. In the dream the men from bar, all initially wearing blue shirts, are all grouped together watching him. One man kisses the ear of another. In the distance, there is the sound of a man laughing, a roar of a crowd as if they are witnessing a macho athletic event. A voice yells out, «Please, don't!» Suddenly, the men are bare chested. Before us stands the classic perfection of the Greek male athlete, as semi-nude dancers in a darkened space perform a series of angry poses while uttering silent screams. We see that they are focused on the sleeping Blue Shirt with his doll as seen through his window. He awakens and we can only guess that it is his wish or fear that he is discovered by these angry men. Ironically, this brief drama sequence foretells the finale of the story.

The Blue Shirt passionately makes love with the doll and then his phone rings, a woman leaves a message of distress that she is waiting for him at a movie theater and does not know what to do. Blue Shirt responds by not answering the call, turning on the radio to the song, «It's Only Make Believe», and turning back to his blond blow-up love relationship. He dresses and joins the group without showing a sign of his perverted relationship. Blue Shirt is one of the leaders of the group with aggressive gymnastic and wrestling skills that set the pattern of male play during the ballet. He is also the one who has the most intense emotional experience of the group.

Next we have Patterned Shirt. The Patterned Shirt implies forced and noisy casualness. We meet him alone in a bathroom below Blue Shirt's room. He is anxious and irritated. He joins the group but we see somehow he doesn't fit. Just as his shirt is different from the others, his neediness for their attentions is obvious. He lip syncs, «It's Only Make Believe» on the karioke screen until

another man plays a louder song on the jukebox to cover up the karioke. Patterned Shirt curses and leaves his microphone belligerently. He tries to nuzzle in on the play of the men and manages to keep up with them, but we sense he is the outsider. He always has to work too hard. When the men go to watch some soccer on TV, Patterned Shirt does not join them. Instead, he stays behind at the bar and when they cheer an athletic play, he screams intensely into a glass at the same moment, as the lyrics of the song are heard singing, «Don't run away. Be strong.» He appears desperate and isolated. There is no perverted action on his part but there is regressed action. He is some kind of social outcast that will prefer to remain with these men rather than go out and find a woman or a real friend.

Then there is Red Shirt who looks like a stereotype of a lumberjack or a bouncer. He, too, joins into the action appearing to fit right into the pack. However, as the story unfolds and the Stranger appears, Red Shirt separates. He watches the Stranger rather than hooting at a girl out the window with the other men. He is transfixed by the Stranger and later when alone in the bar pours a glass of beer on the floor. He rolls in the beer and gets his body and shirt wet with a urine-like liquid. He seems to be in ecstasy when he finishes this isolated autoerotic dance.

Finally, we are introduced to White Shirt who is the most brutal and super-macho member of the bar scene. When the Stranger arrives and he is clearly threatening to White Shirt, White Shirt doesn't ignore him or beat him up. He perceives the Stranger's femininity and is instantly on the offensive. He pretends to be interested in him by seductively kissing his hand, puckering his lips to invite a mutual kiss, and nestling his head in his shirt. He follows this by suddenly grabbing the Stranger's genitals in an aggressive and shocking fashion. He has a need to get involved in a perverse way and literally touch his genitals, perhaps to check if they are really there. He has to almost seduce the Stranger before he will leave him alone and move back to his Blue Shirt friend. Later in the ballet, he invites the Stranger to dance with him, only to again confront him with aggression and attack. We also watch White Shirt go through a highly seductive and aggressive activity with Red Shirt when he tries to separate his crossed legs after he has noticed that Red shirt is fascinated by the Stranger. He moves swiftly, commands the plays and creates competition for the men to prove his strength. The most obvious contests are the push-up contest and the beer-drinking contest. White Shirt is the most complex and conflicted character in every action he takes. He must prove his phallic dominance or he is in danger of feeling castrated around others.

The perversion of Blue Shirt and White Shirt speaks to us in what their actions omit as well as in what they actually do. None of them leave the bar. They all choose the male companionship over any other alternative. The Blue Shirt's use of a blow-up doll instead of a real person is a reflection of fetishism. The perversion replaces the opportunity of affection and sexuality with a real person, with sexuality and affection with an inanimate object. The opportunity to control interaction is present with an inanimate object. Red Shirt chooses orgasmic behavior with spilled beer. This is perverse because his sexuality is not consummated with a live person but with an imitation of a self-made substance that has its dynamic hey day in the anal period of development. Both Blue Shirt and Red Shirt have not progressed to genital sexual activity. Patterned Shirt is not perverse but is still caught in the dilemmas of latency age conflicts of wanting to belong to the crowd. The need to be accepted is dominant in his functioning just as it would be for any elementary school-age child with children of the same sex. He will go any length to fit in and to be noticed. For instance, when the action in the bar begins to unfold, White Shirt enters and immediately begins to scuffle with Blue Shirt in a rough-and-tumble, boyish-like dance sequence. Patterned Shirt tries several times to enter into the fast-paced pas de deux only to be ignored and pushed aside as quickly as he tries to belong. So he goes to do the same dance with another partner.

But what about the Stranger? The major players at the bar have intense reactions to him. Is he also perverted? He is different from the other men. He looks different, dresses differently, and when he does speak, it is in a strange language. His movements are feminine and sensuous. He enters the barroom and changes the music on the jukebox. Perhaps he is the feminine, hidden side

of all the men. The moment the music changes we hear a European folk-like song that mesmerizes the men into a slow rhythmic ritualized dance. They lock together in a close group, hunched over, looking down. They move in unison one calculated step after another, puffing a cigarette, evocatively slipping their jackets off one shoulder and yelling «HURRAH!» into the air. The Stranger fascinates them with his twisting, spiraling, carnal play as he moves, caresses, and manipulates a glass of beer around his body as if it is a magic ball, a love object. While performing this solitary dance, the entire group of men stalk him, squeezing into his space while casually pretending not to notice him. They move again in two-step unison. They corner him, he slips out from under them and continues his erotic movement play with the glass of beer. Provoked by his actions and ignorance of their presences, the men proceed to mock him with feminine-like gestures. The Blue Shirt and White Shirt are the most aggressive with the attack on his feminine sexuality. When attacked, the Stranger swirls into a spin and turns into Superman. His pants and shirt come flying off and a Superman costume appears. He has mysterious letters on his shirt. He is perpetually able to evade the men's attack with his superior athletic and acrobatic skills.

Later in the ballet, he seduces the Red Shirt into similar autoerotic play with a soccer ball, and interests the isolated Patterned Shirt with a long massive rope on which they both climb, torque, and suspend. He is filled with surprises. In one scene he exits by climbing a wall, adjusting his cape as if preparing to fly, and jumps off backwards. He seems to fall from the sky as would a comic Superman. He can change the mood of the bar scene by dancing to a tune in his own special sensual fashion. When he begins to dance to the tune, «Staying Alive», all the other men join him in the frolic by pulling down their pants and placing their shirts like a woman's mantilla over their heads. Superman seems to be able to manipulate them into doing anything. He drinks wine when they drink beer. He always faces the commotion around him with a flat expression-less gaze.

Is he the famed Achilles of Greek history? Is he the unusual warrior who cannot be injured because he has been dipped in safe waters? Or is his name the embodiment of weakness, the Achilles heel, that is vulnerable because it has no protection? As the story progresses, it appears that he is not that different from the other men. When one man attempts to take the sexualized soccer ball away from the Stranger, the Stranger pulls out a razor and shaving cream. He gets the man who has challenged ownership of the ball to remove his shirt and pants. He sprays him with shaving cream and shaves him with the razor applied to his chest, legs, and his backside. He is clearly not averse to making violent threats. He does not rescue the men being brutally bullied by Blue Shirt after the dance episode that he has initiated. When the story moves to the last scene when all the men attack the beloved blow-up doll of the Blue Shirt, the Stranger participates along with the others. In fact, he initiates the bashing of the blow-up doll. He also leaves before the end of the attack of the blow-up doll by exiting through a hole in a gate. So the Stranger does seem to have perverse issues too. He prefers dancing alone with objects to dancing with real people. He also threatens a member of the group sadistically about the blow-up doll. He shows signs of being a voyeur as he watches the group through the window of the bar before entering and continues to watch throughout much of his stay with the men at the bar. At the end of the ballet, we find the Stranger on the rooftop, the conquering voyeur of the embattled bar.

The actual dynamic of the ballet as plot has a perverse edge. The two macho men, Blue Shirt and White Shirt, join against anything that upsets their defense of homophobia. The Stranger presents an abundance of homosexual stimulation. The men in the bar are fascinated and entranced. The two macho men see the feminine dancing and, like a dynamic duo, they attack the men in the bar. The Patterned Shirt gets his head smashed into another man's head and is forced to kiss the other man. Earlier in the ballet while doing a rope trick with the Stranger, Pattern Shirt discovered Blue Shirt in bed with the doll again. After he has been humiliated publicly by the tough Blue Shirt during the dancing scene, he seeks revenge. He sneaks up to the Blue Shirt's room and gets the blow-up doll. He throws it to the group of men in the alley. A frenzy of woman-hatred begins with the doll having her hair removed, being sodomized, and being positioned to pretend to do oral sex

on the men, as they men toss her around. The Blue Shirt is emotionally crushed and he falls apart. He threatens the group with a broken bottle. Non-verbally, his terror affirms his ownership of the perverted toy. The White Shirt, in fury and disgust, sees his buddy has betrayed him with his love of the plastic blond and he stabs the doll. It deflates and pours out blood. The Blue Shirt crashes on the sidewalk in grief hanging on to the remains of his doll. The men sing a soccer song, while exiting, and Blue Shirt screams at them to leave.

The Stranger's arrival has exposed the weakness of all the men. The Achilles heel of Blue Shirt is exposed. His perverted love object is destroyed. The Achilles heel of the Patterned Shirt is exposed. As an outsider, he is shamed in the dance hall and gets his childish revenge by destroying another man. White Shirt loses his ally in his homophobic macho defense. Red Shirt stills keeps the secret of his urinary sexuality. After being pinned down by the aggressive group of «out-of-control» men and raped by the fantasy doll, the Stranger figure sneaks out. Shame and devastation end the happy night at the bar. Hostile play and autoeroticism win within the group, between two men and with themselves. Intimacy does not win.

The secret needs of the major participants have been exposed. With humiliation, *Enter Achilles* gives the viewer a look at the internal dynamics of five men. Carefully selected props such as: *toys*: a ball, glasses, a rope, a razor, and shaving cream, a knife, and a doll; *costumes*: all the men wearing colored jockey shorts and solid shirts except for the patterned shirted man who has polka-dotted boxer shorts; *music*: a wide array of misogynous themes in the jukebox such as «You don't have to be beautiful to turn me on», «It's only make-believe», «So you think you can love me and leave me to die»; and in the *choreography*: fast-paced, sexually suggestive, temporarily co-dependent, and gymnastic dances all combine to provide the audience with a powerful experience.

The inability to be intimate and close to either a woman or a man pervades this story. As soon as each man's defense is ripped away we see only a group of lonely and isolated men seeking identity in each other and finding only false fronts available at this little pub.

In this ballet we see many primitive sexual behaviors. We see narcissism (as illustrated by men primping for themselves in the mirror). We see exhibitionism (illustrated by the joy of the men dancing around without pants), and voyeurism (illustrated by the men gazing illicitly at each other). We see fetishism (when a dancer makes love with a blow-up doll). We see anal sexual pleasure (when the dancer rolls in a urine-like substance). We see childhood sexual stimulation through wrestling (as we watch the men in the bar rolling around intertwined). We see early developmental exploration (when we watch men sniff at each other like animals and spit at each other to express disdain). We see teasing and sadistic activity throughout. We see magic with balls and ropes replacing interpersonal interaction. We see violent sadism in the relationships of the Stranger with the Red Shirt and the attack of the blow-up doll. The dance is a perverted feast. The choreographer interjects the humor and surprise of the Stranger's Superman-like skills to make the pain of the ballet bearable. Likewise we are excited and regressed as we watch the amazing acrobatics. The story is, however, filled with pain and sexual loneliness.

The story closes with the Blue Shirt lying on the cement in a pool of water, blood, and dirt with his deflated blow-up doll on top of him. This is suggestive of the abandonment of a man who is really a little boy. The men have destroyed the perverted love of his blow-up doll and killed her. The camera moves to the top of a wall where a small new blow-up head of a doll appears. Does this imply that the story will repeat itself? Perhaps so, as the last scene shows us the Stranger walking on the roof of the tenement above the bar as the sun rises. It also implies that perhaps he will search for another place to do his tricks. One imagines him watching for a new scene to enter. The music in the background is «Dream the Impossible Dream». The dishonesty continues.

Finally, it is interesting to think about the analytic dynamics of hatred and rage. Kernberg writes about rage as the by-product of a failed early relationship with a mother. To paraphrase his profound words, a boy becomes the container for both his own victimization by his mother and his mother's aggression. Kernberg posits that the boy goes out to repeat the aggression on a new object

to re-experience the victim and the aggressor in a new sequence (19-38). Perhaps the ballet should be called «Twenty Ways to Hate Your Mother as Performed by Eight Men».

REFERENCES

- Bremser, M. (1999). *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers*. London: Routledge Press.
- Burt, R. (1995). *The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexualities*. London & New York: Routledge Press.
- Constanti, S. (1990). Dance Scene: DV8. *Dancing Times*, Oct. 1990, 37. London.
- Daines, A. (1987). The place Spring loaded season. *New Dance*, 40, 27.
- De Marinis, M. (1993). *The Semiotics of Performance*. Bloomington: Indianapolis University Press.
- Freud, S. (1953). Three Essays on Sexuality. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. J. Strachey (Vol. 7, pp. 135-170). London: Hogarth.
- Graves, R. (1955). *The Greek Myths: 1*. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Jackson, P. (1995). Becoming Llody. *Dance Now*, 4 (3), 65-67.
- Jaeger, W. (1943). *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, R. (1998). *DV8 Dancers Question Your Manhood*. The Bay Area Reporter printed in the program notes from the performance at UCLA.
- Kernberg, O. (1987). *Internal World and External Reality*. New Jersey: Aronson.
- Rose, H. J. (1965). *A Handbook of Greek Mythology*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.
- Rouse, W. H. D. (1950). *Homer The Iliad*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Rubidge, S. (1993). DV8 Physical Theatre on television. In Stephane Jordan, & Dave Allen (Eds.), *Parallel Lines* (pp. 204-207). London: Arts Council of Great Britain.
- Sayers, L. (1988). Dance Theatre at Dance Umbrella. *Dance Theatre Journal*, 6 (4), 28-30.
- Snape, L. (1999). Lloyd on love. *Dance Theatre Journal*, 15 (2), 8-12.

Bertolt Brecht's Puntila: The dynamics of duality or the monsters in the garden of the imagination

DAVID LANDAU (*)

JIM LINNELL (**)

INTRODUCTION

The history of the theatre is replete with dramas of masters and servants from Plautus to Shakespeare to Molière and Goldoni. Servants smart in the ways of humanity, i.e. the ways of love, lust and fortunes and foolish masters, foolish in the ways of the world and especially of love. The history of the theatre is also marked by great figures with divided souls, Faust, Lear, Jekyll and Hyde and Brecht's own Shen Te/Shui Ta from *The Good Person of Setzuan*, and great appetites Falstaff, Don Juan, Don Quixote. Bertolt Brecht while in exile in Finland in the early 1940's finds in his host's, playwright Hella Wuolijoki's play *The Sawdust Princess*, the basis of his *Mr. Puntila and his Man Matti*. In Wuolijoki's story Brecht finds the model for his man of great appetites and divided soul, his Puntila. Puntila when drunk melts all resistance to his needs by the force of his vitality, his reckless generosity and feelings for pleasure, nature and his shame at having failed his more human self. Puntila when sober measures all things by his account ledger and a cold self interest treating others with disdain and contempt if they threaten his purposes. Brecht crafts a folk comedy out of the comic differences between the behavior of these 'two' Puntilas.

In describing his task to convert the folk play written by Wuolijoki, *The Sawdust Princess*, into *Mr. Puntila and his Man Matti*, Brecht wrote,

What I have to do is elaborate the underlying farce, suppress the psychologizing speeches, making room for anecdotes about Finnish folk-life and for opinions, to realize the opposition of «master» and «servant» dramatically at the same time as restoring to the subject its poetry and comedy. (Brecht xi)

(*) 300 San Mateo Blvd., NE, Suite 805, Albuquerque, NM 87108, USA.

(**) University of New Mexico, Department of Theatre & Dance, Albuquerque, NM 87131, USA.

In John Willett's, the *Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*, a fundamental component to Brecht's concept of theatre is his being, «determinedly rationalistic and anti-emotional». Thus from Brecht's approach, «it is the actors business not to express feeling but to 'show attitudes' or "Gesten"». Because he believed that, «all feeling must be externalised», in this attitude, he believed this approach would exclude the 'subconscious' unless it can be conveyed in concrete terms (172-3). Content is secondary to process.

Although Brecht suggests that he has «suppressed the psychologizing speeches», it is our contention that he has not been able to suppress the psychologizing process in the structure and attitudes of the characters of this play. In *The Analytic Attitude*, Roy Schafer presents a way in which the content of the analysand can be understood in the more meaningful construct of process. When the analysand's «story» unfolds in this analytic attitude he can begin to appreciate the underlying process that gave rise to that 'story' (14-33). Similarly, we view Brecht's presentation of the 'story' i.e. the actors, staging, music, etc. as neutral 'gesten' or attitudes as a way of allowing the underlying process of the author's dialectic to show through.

The story of the play begins when the divided Puntila after a three day drunk at a bar tries to befriend his new servant, his chauffeur Matti. Puntila is overdue at the estate of the aunt of his daughter's fiance to be, Eino Silakka, a diplomatic attaché, a silly and spinless dishrag who will make a good social match but a boring and neutered mate.

Matti drives Puntila and his drinking pal the Judge to the estate where Eva admits no proposal has happened yet with the Attaché. Puntila disgusted tells her to marry the chauffeur. When Eva refuses to give him anything more to drink he drives off to Kurgela the nearest town to find «legal alcohol». There he crashes his Studebaker into a telephone pole, browbeats the local chemist into giving him alcohol, and rapidly proposes to three women, inviting them all to his farm for the engagement party.

The next day as Matti drives the sober Puntila back to his farm they stop at a hiring fair where Puntila proceeds to get drunk, pick a fight with another farmer and over Matti's objections brings laborers back to his farm without giving them any contract or earnest money.

The following day Matti trying to help Eva with her wish to end her engagement with the Attaché acts out a pretend liason in the bath house that fails to frighten him off. That night Eva shows up in the kitchen to invite Matti to row out to an island to net crayfish. Matti tries to get her to make the sexual invitation more obvious. She leaves only to immediately come back asking him to help her take the train to Brussels. She's fleeing her engagement. Matti refuses. Eva storms out.

On the day of Eva's engagement, Puntila's three Kurgela fiances arrive for the party. The sober Puntila sees them and sends them packing. They return home telling stories about the disasters caused by encounters between masters and servants.

At Eva's engagement party Puntila gets drunk and throws the Attaché out of his house. He demands his guests celebrate Eva's engagement to Matti. Eva says she is willing to be his wife. Matti proceeds to put Eva through a test of being the wife of a Chauffeur. She fails this test.

The morning after the failed engagement party the sober Puntila patches things up with the Attaché and vows to destroy all his liquor. He tastes the assembled bottles and gets drunk again. He fires a worker his friends pressure him to let go as he's a «Red». Puntila decides he will show Matti the view of his country from Mt. Hatelma and challenges him to build the mountain out of the furniture in his study. Matti smashes up the furniture. Standing on top of their mountain, Puntila draws Matti into his lyrical vision of the land and the works of man. The play ends the next morning when Matti leaves Puntila's estate.

There are three characters with significant narrative standing in the play - Puntila, Matti and Eva. In the traditional world of comedy Puntila's divided soul, one side alternately creating havoc for the other, would be enough of a dramatic device to create the comic world and the complications and incidents as it was for the Finnish writer Woulijoki. However, Brecht subverts the comic tale of the folk character Puntila who must decide how to marry off his daughter Eva with the coldly

sober, class conscious Matti whose only lens on the world is the arrangements of power between masters and servants.

The manner and meaning of this subversion is the focus of our paper. Is the addition of the character of Matti simply a device to raise rather hackneyed views of the social ills attendant on the division of labor represented by masters and servants? If not, then does the character of Matti represent a psychological reality about the relations between masters and servants. In Brecht's play there is a cruel dialectic between boundless need, and boundless weakness.

THE PSYCHIC GESTS OF ALCOHOLISM

Puntila, the landowner, spends a great deal of time in this play in various degrees of inebriation. Indeed, in 80% of his appearance on stage he is drunk, becoming drunk or becoming sober. Since so much of this character occurs in this condition, it would seem relevant to review what are believed to be the factors that could contribute to the origins of becoming an alcoholic.

In *The History of Psychiatry*, Alexander and Selesnick divide the factors that could cause someone to become an alcoholic into three areas: biological, psychological, and sociological. We will focus on the psychological of those three. The literature identifies three phases of alcoholic behavior, the first indicates the disinhibiting effects of alcohol which reduces repression and permits the free expression of ego-alien, mostly infantile cravings which may include oral-dependency and oral-incorporative urges. The second phase, results in ataxias and feeling of depression. The third phase is the sobering up with the return of the original stressor and the new stressors associated with feelings of guilt and shame correlated with the drinking excess (341). In Vaillant's, *The Natural History of Alcoholism*, he suggest that alcohol abuse may lead to sociopathic behavior, but he indicates that the reverse may also be true, i.e. sociopathic behavior may use alcohol abuse as one of a wide array of acting out behaviors (45-106).

PUNTILA'S WORLD

The play begins with a drunken Puntila. Consistent with a model of alcoholism which focuses on regressive oral-dependent needs and oral-incorporative urges, the first scene shows Puntila challenging his friend the Judge to a drinking match in a childish competition which he has already won and whining that he is the only one of this threesome who is able to communicate.

«Puntila: ... and there you are already packing up and acting tired. Just as I was looking forward to an aquavit and a bit of a chat about me and how lonely I get...» (Brecht 4).

Fed up with waiting, Matti goes into the bar to fetch Puntila. Matti is angry, fumes that he's been waiting in the car for two days, «I'm fed up to the bloody teeth. You can't treat human beings like that». Puntila replies, «What d'you mean human beings? You a human being» (Brecht 5)? Puntila goes on to demand Matti prove that he's his chauffeur since anyone can say that. Puntila benignly ignores his anger and invites him to sit and drink with him. He does.

Puntila, in a trusting alcoholic manner, quickly befriends and gives Matti his wallet to hold and to use to pay the bill. While this behavior has a trusting component, Puntila's dependence on his chauffeur to take care of him, is also evident. The play continues to make a connection between Puntila's oral dependence and his dependence on Matti through Puntila's continued use/abuse of Matti to do his bidding whenever he is drunk. Vaillant suggests that the orally dependent are more «inhibited about expressing aggression» (49). In scene 1, Puntila in trying to win Matti's friendship tells him, «Puntila: I've got a kind heart and I'm not ashamed of it. Once I picked up a stag beetle in the road and put it in the bushes so it couldn't get runover, that as far as I'd go» (Brecht 6).

Puntila in this first meeting presses himself on Matti confessing the curse of his twin nature and describing his conflict over his daughter's wedding. He can't decide if he should give up one of his forests as a dowry or marry the fiance's aunt thus keeping the dowry in the family. These two conflicts are necessary to the standard plot of the folk comedy of Puntila. Brecht's Puntila goes further. Puntila, following his incorporative urges, invades the social boundaries between them casting their relationship in seemingly intimate terms. Puntila creates a kind of atmospheric pressure of undeniable seduction.

First he shows sympathy for leaving him waiting,

Puntila: Did I really leave you sitting out in the road? I don't think much of that, it's very bad of me, and I'll ask you next time I do it to take the jack handle and belt me one. Matti, you my friend?

Matti: No.

Puntila: Thank you I knew you were. (7)

As they get ready to wake the Judge and leave, Puntila asks Matti a question that closes his seduction.

Puntila: I want to be sure there's no gulf between us any longer. Tell me there's no gulf.

Matti: I take that as an order, Mr. Puntila: there's no gulf. (10)

Matti entered the bar seething at his treatment and exits carrying not only the Judge, but also Puntila's precious wallet, the badge or proof of his person. Puntila gives him the wallet saying, «Here, take my wallet and pay for the drinks, and put it in your pocket, I'd only lose it. I'm always losing things. I wish I had nothing, that's what I'd like best. Money stinks, remember. That's my ideal, to have nothing, just you and me hiking across Finland on foot...» (11).

WHO CONTROLS THE GARDEN

A darker reading of the play leads us to a reading of the master/servant relationship that is something more than class commentary or economic necessity, but is also the expression of psychological necessity. Such a reading partly comes from Brecht's own relationships with those close to him. One of the works of recent Brechtian scholarship, John Fuegi's, *Brecht and Company*, describes in exhaustive detail the working relationships Brecht established throughout his life with talented individuals, primarily women writers, who became part of his circle and who surpressed their own individuality and claims to authorship of work that was published under Brecht's name. Foreshadowing the psychic divisions of Puntila, Fuegi writes, «Brecht's relationships existed in a dramatic balance of desire and repulsion, magnetism and distance, passion and coldness, commitment and aversion» (Fuegi 180).

That Brecht was drawn to the primitive, protean and transgressive behavior of characters cut loose from the bounds of bourgeois morality and sexuality can be found in the character of Baal in the play by the same name that ignited his fame in the early twenties. The thuggish poet Baal sings, fornicates, and murders his way to an isolated death in an eternal forest that inspires his poetry and his urges. Baal treats all who come into his orbit as objects to serve his pleasure and to be discarded when he says it's done. Puntila when drunk possess Baal's earthiness, his cunning, and his instinct to possess those he wants regardless of the consequences. But unlike Baal who flees and trashes the social order, Puntila makes use of it to serve his needs.

What if we take Puntila's behaviors and view them through the DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition of the American Psychiatric Association)? Although we do not have the fictional Puntila's childhood or adolescent history to arrive at a clinical diagnosis, we can

observe that of the seven specific behaviors for an Anti-social Personality Disorder, or values listed in the DSM IV the alcoholic Puntila demonstrates six:

- 1) fails to conform to social norms... performing antisocial acts that are grounds for arrest e.g. destroying property: Scene 3: «... In the middle of the square stands a telephone pole. Puntila, having run his studebaker into the pole, is cursing it» (Brecht 17);
- 2) Has no regard for the truth: Scene 3: again noting his triple proposals of marriage also in this scene is the quest for «legal alcohol» which he obtains by inventing a story about having 70-90 cows with «scarlet fever» (18);
- 3) Impulsive: Scene 1: the play begins with Puntila taking two friends on an alcoholic binge for several days; Scene 3: He proposes marriage to three women nearly, simultaneously; Scene 9: after throwing his daughter's fiance out of his house he announces to his daughter friends that he is now promising her to his chauffeur;
- 4) Is irritable and aggressive: as indicated by assaults: Scene 5: Puntila and Matti describe the altercation Puntila precipitated with the «fat man» at the hiring fair; Scene 9: Puntila literally throws the Attaché out of his home after deciding to terminate his daughter's engagement to him;
- 5) Is reckless regarding his own or other's personal safety as indicated by driving while intoxicated: Scene 3: although he has learned he does have, Matti, as a chauffeur, he goes off by himself in his quest for «legal alcohol»;
- 6) Consistently irresponsible – repeatedly fails to honor financial obligations: Scene 4: Despite Matti repeatedly (five times) asking Puntila to write a contract or give earnest money to his potential laborers, he refuses.

According to the modern diagnostic manual of the APA, only three of the above six criteria are needed to achieve the diagnosis of an Antisocial Personality Disorder. Puntila's reactions and remorselessness is apparent with nearly every other character in the story especially, his man Matti. Regardless of his seemingly warm, «friendly», humanitarian motivation in his alcoholic state, these seemingly positive qualities are related to a psychopathic «charm».

Brecht's two Puntilas are masters of others whether in an aggressive, sober, phallic driven, creaturely manner of a Baal or through the aggressive pleasure driven and cunning sentimentality of the drunken Puntila. They hold sway as storms of feeling altering the behavior of all in their path. Brecht's dramatic strategy puts in the path of his Puntila the dispassionate and cautious Matti and seems to ask the question who is stronger and is their strength any good to anyone?

MATTI MEETS EVE

Through Puntila's daughter Eva the play appears to turn to a comic and sexual struggle between her and the cool and careful Matti. Once she meets Matti, Eva becomes entangled in her desire and her ambivalence over who to marry.

The trouble starts when Matti and Eva, fully clothed in their pretend liason, are playing cards waiting in the bath house for the Attaché to pass by. Sexual tension is ignited by Matti who keeps up a banter about making love in the heat of the day. Eva, schooled in a convent, wonders how anyone can have dirty thoughts about them in the middle of the morning. Matti thinks otherwise, «D'you imagine the cows always wait till night-time? It's summer now, you feel in the mood, so in you pop to the bath hut. Phew, it's hot. *Takes off his jacket*. Why don't you take something off? My seeing won't hurt» (41).

The next time we see Eva with Matti he is reading his newspaper. She suggests they row together to an island to catch crayfish for her engagement party the next day. Then begins a verbal tug of war between pretense and stating her real desire. Eva insists they take nets to catch them. Matti

refuses saying they'll use their bare hands denying her any euphemistic fig leaf to clothe her purpose in rowing out to the island at night. She says, «But it's easier with the nets». Matti counters, «The other day Cook and I and the parlourmaid were over on the island and we did it with our hands and it was very nice, you ask them» (47). He keeps on in this vein until defeated she leaves.

Suddenly she returns asking him to help take her to the station to catch a train to Brussels. Matti tries to argue against her plan. Eva states flatly she's not marrying the Attaché and says she'll have him instead. Matti counters with a story of how such a marriage, mistress to servant, fails because the master servant relationship is not altered by marriage. Eva storms out rejected for a second time. «No, you'd want to be the master. I can picture how you'd treat a woman... I just can't stand the sight of you any longer, and I hate egoists, I hate them» (51)!

The question is, has he refused her advances out of a goodness that recognizes their mutual vulnerability and prevents her from doing something that will hurt her or is he paralyzed with fear and thus cold to her flirtation and shy playfulness, resisting her power as a woman? Matti's rejection of Eva in this scene has a chauvinistic defensive quality. He suggests she would fail to accept his breaking the social strata ceiling, but also implied is his belief that his awareness of the differences is greater than hers and therefore she is actually beneath his contempt.

TRAMPLING EVE IN THE GARDEN

Within the play's 12 scenes, this issue comes to a head in scene 9, titled «Puntila Betrothes his Daughter to a Human Being». At the engagement party Puntila proceeds to get drunk and slowly becomes furious at the insipid character of the Attaché. The last straw for Puntila shows no particular consideration for his daughter but his disgust at Eino the Attaché who does not get an anti-Semitic joke told by the Judge. The judge says, «You know the one about the Jew who left his coat hanging in the café. The pessimist said 'He's bound to get it back.' Whereas the optimist said 'Not a hope in hell of his getting it back.'» The men all laugh as Eino asks, «And did he get it back?» Puntila chases him out of the house, the party clears out and Puntila announces, «It has long been my ambition to betroth my daughter to a first-rate human being, Matti Altonen...» (68). The scene that follows this announcement is one of the most famous scenes from Brecht's play. This scene raises the question of whether Matti will break loose from his servile role with the daddy/Puntila finding the ability to change and reshape his condition or whether in fact he can't change the terms by which he sees the world despite his outward appearance of resisting Puntila. As the scene progresses, the world around Eva becomes increasingly corrupted and vulgar. Puntila begins his celebration of the betrothal by asking,

Puntila: Matti, can you fuck decently?

Matti: I'm told so.

Puntila: That's nothing can you do it indecently?

Eva, taking a drink, now makes her declaration to Matti, «Dear Matti, I beseech you make me your wife so I may have a husband like other girls do, and if you like we can go straight off to catch crayfish without nets. I don't consider myself anything special despite what you think, and I can live with you even if we have to go short» (70).

Matti's answer is to give Eva a test. She has to pretend they are married. She has to see if she can act appropriately according to Matti as a chauffeur's wife in a series of situations. There are several test situations: How to act when Matti has a hole in his sock; How to greet Matti when he arrives home from work; How to respond when Matti is called in the middle of the night to drive his master. In each of the test situations, Eva behaves according to her feeling for Matti. She responds with affection running to kiss him when he comes home, she animatedly talks to him

when he is reading his newspaper, she tells off the Master telling him he can stuff it, she won't wake up her husband after a hard day's work. She fails the test. The correct behavior is to cut out any «intimacies and lovey-dovey» when he comes home, to immediately hand him a towel so he can wash, to pull his boots off, to give him his paper without talking to him, and to wake him up without any fuss when the master calls. She is to mirror his servility to his master by adopting a servility to her husband. At the end of the test, after Eva tells the pretend master to screw off, Matti says she'll win his mother's heart with such talk but he'll lose his job.

The next moment is a surprise and undercuts the darkly comic sequence we've just seen.

Matti laughing over her feisty refusal to wake him to drive the master, slaps Eva on the ass causing the following exchange.

Eva: speechless, then furious: Stop that at once.

Matti: What's the matter?

Eva: How dare you hit me there?

The Judge has stood up, touches Eva on the shoulder:

I'm afraid you failed your test after all Eva....

Eva: And I now see my education was all wrong. I think I'll go upstairs.

Puntila: I shall assert myself. Sit down at once Eva.

Eva: Daddy, I'd better go, I'm sorry, but your engagement party's off, good night. *Exit.*

(77)

Eva, after this exit is never seen again in the play.

In typical comic dramaturgy Eva has just been taught a lesson that overthrows her old beliefs about men and women that purports to show how love works in the working classes. However, unlike traditional comic learning that transforms and expands her ability to relate and deepens love, this knowledge is cynical and just the opposite occurs. Eva is the one who brings the flexibility to the situation and instead of overthrowing an old rigidity, she is perversely forced to accept a new rigidity that requires her to deny feeling and create as much distance and subservience with a working class mate as she would with the limp Attaché. Matti, in order to protect the shame that is associated with his low self-esteem, cannot bluster and rage like his master, he must more quietly project his shame outward as in this test of Eva and brutally embarrass his potential fiance.

SEEING DOUBLE: TWO MONSTERS IN THE GARDEN

The play reveals two controlling fantasies – Puntila's fantasy of shame and dependence and Matti's fantasy of weakness. The drunken Puntila's attachment to what he calls the human being Matti Altonen is filled with regrets and shame over the behavior of his sober persona. What the sober persona regards as pathetic weakness: any concern for others; speaking truthfully; acknowledging equality and fellow feeling; is the source of the drunken Puntila's gestures of atonement and speeches of justification and shame at the unfortunate position of his wealth and power.

When he meets Altonen, Puntila seeks to attach to himself all Matti's attributes which he calls human which are the very attributes that inspire his sober side's shame. Since the sober Puntila is still alive in the drunken Puntila he works to defeat any decisions and actions that might be costly when he is attached to being human.

Matti is controlled by a fantasy of weakness. The most powerful example of this is his avoidance of feelings for Eva and the test he administers to her at the engagement party. Matti's fantasy is one of serving not in the Christian sense, humbling oneself for the good of the world, but in the sense of servility, humbling oneself before power. In the room watching Matti at the moment

Puntila tries to give him his daughter is the Judge, the Parson, the Parson's wife, and the maid Fina. The church, the court and the landed gentry stare at Puntila's human being to see what he'll do. By watching and listening these bear witness to the shame that follows.

When Brecht writes this play in 1940, he already knows Stalin's NKVD is wrecking the promise of Communism through slavish obedience to his leadership, paranoia, and the murder of all dissent. What his character Matti does in the engagement scene is to report on himself to the authorities like a sycophantic party spy to save his skin. See I am really not a human being because what I am is the very embodiment of weakness the very thing you hate, a creature so servile he can not allow feeling to alter his servility. In giving Eva the test Matti is simultaneously teaching Puntila what he, Matti, really is, a creature of fear. The Judge should smile in a congratulatory way when he pats Eva on the shoulder saying, «I'm afraid you failed your test after all Eva» (76). Eva's fury and despair at being slapped on the bottom comes from her recognition that Matti has just erased himself and she recoils at being touched by this dead hand. Puntila sees this in Eva's reaction to the slap which unleashes his own shamed fury, «Any milkmaid could tell her why the Lord God made her a bottom in the sweat of his brow. That she might lie with a man and slaver for him every time she catches sight of one» (78).

Puntila's fantasy of shame is part comic device when he backpedals from his sober meanness and part psychological device when he wraps himself in ever greater fantasies of oneness. This oneness looks not so different from a tool of fascism or what became the scythe of the master race. For Brecht, who fled Germany as the Nazis took control, it was not hard to see in Puntila's seductive joviality the laughing round face of a Herman Goring.

THE LESSON OF IMAGINATION

The next day after the engagement party the sobering Puntila apoligizes to the Attaché, fires his worker Surkkala, the communist, for his political beliefs, saying, «What am I to say to the National Militia? My honour is at stake. Once this gets around I'll be blacklisted. They'll stop buying my milk» (82). He then resolves to smash his liquor supply, proceeds to get drunk by tasting each bottle before breaking it, blames Matti, for all his troubles, and tries to advise Surkkala's children before they leave.

Indicating Matti: That fellow keeps dragging me down, but you lot want me to rot away here till I'm so bored I start biting my toenails. What sort of life am I leading here? Nothing but having to nag people and tote up the cattle feed day after day. Get out you pygmies!... *To Surkkala's children:* Rob, steal, become Reds, but don't grow up to be pygmies, that is Puntila's advice to you. (86)

Here in full view is the grandiose, aggressive charm of Puntila the great baby suckling at his liquor bottle screaming that he's bored and yowling to get his way. We laugh with Puntila here, having our own fits of boredom and grandiosity, banging our little fists to get our way, but see where Puntila goes next with the pliant Matti. With Puntila's fear of offending the National Militia still echoing in our ears from earlier in the scene, Puntila now dreamily raises Matti's salary, «Because I'm particularly pleased with you». He wants to climb Mt. Hatelma with Matti, «... so I can show you what a splendid country you live in, you'll kick yourself for not realizing it earlier». Puntila says they can still do it right that moment and asks Matti if he wants to climb Mt. Hatelma saying, «We could do it in spirit». They could pile up some chairs. Matti answers, «I'll do whatever you fancy, any day of the week» (88).

Puntila answers Matti's willingness to climb the mountain with, «I wonder if you have the imagination». Matti is silent. This is the question for Matti. Does he have the imagination to see

himself outside the embrace of Puntila, free of the heel of obedience and silence? «*Puntila bursts out: Make me a mountain*» (88).

Like Matti gave Eva a test, Puntila now administers a test to Matti. At first the test seems a simple game of play. Can Matti play at building Mt. Hatelma in Puntila's library. Matti starts by kicking apart, as the script says, a gun locker and a grandfather clock and putting the debris together with some chairs on top of Puntila's billiard table to build their mountain. While Matti builds, Puntila carps at him to do it right, that is, make a comfortable path for Puntila. It's done. They climb. So Matti passes the first part of the test. He can build a pretend Mt. Hatelma and climb it. Is there another part of the test?

As they reach the summit, Puntila declares, «Leaving behind us buildings and structures put up by human hands we enter the pure realm of nature, which adopts a more austere countenance. Shake off all your petty cares and abandon yourself to the mighty sensation, Matti». Matti immediately has to return to fetch a bottle for Puntila who needs, «One more pull at the bottle, that we may see the full extent of thy beauty» (89). Standing at the top of their pile of furniture Puntila starts an ecstatic recitation of the beauties he can see stopping at the break in each stanza of his panegyric he asks Matti if he too can see. He rhapsodizes about the smells. He compares the summer haze to the haze of love adding, «I don't think you get that kind of love outside Tavastland either» (90).

At this juncture Matti who has been huh huhing in response to the rhapsodizing Puntila joins in, «Where I was born we used to have caves with rocks outside them round as cannon balls polished all over» (90). Now together they imagine cows swimming across the lake. Matti first sees fifty and Puntila says he sees sixty. Puntila then adds to the picture the view of the women's prison, a fancy hotel and steam mills before returning to his fields and his closing coda which he asks Matti and the maids who've come in to join him saying,

And the waves on the beautiful Roina
Are kissing the milky-white sand. (91)

What is Puntila's test? Can Matti enter the unironic, uncunning expression of feeling Puntila embraces at the top of Mt. Hatelma, taking pleasure in nature and love? Matti seems to open up to that test when for the first time in the play he joins Puntila with his memory of the caves of his boyhood by sharing something from his past that has no other purpose than it was something he felt or experienced. It is from a new position of imaginative equality that Matti listens to Puntila survey the works of man the prison, the fancy hotel, the steam works. Matti can now look on the world and see that to be an actor in the world he is shown from Mt. Hatelma he can not be attached to Puntila or any master. In Ericksonian terms they are expressing a healthy initiative in imagination, moving from autonomy versus shame into initiative versus guilt. This vision of the world is after all itself a fantasy constructed on a billiard table.

Puntila has shown him that to enter the world he must own his own feelings and imagine a sphere of action as inclusive as Puntila's. Matti doesn't participate with Puntila as he rapturously choruses with the maids. Puntila asks, «Doesn't your heart swell at the sight of it all?» There are two layers of meaning in Matti's answer, «My heart swells at the sight of your forests, Mr. Puntila». First is the ironic, the rejection of the whole package of feeling and sentiment that wells in his master's breast suggesting a version of a famous Brecht saying, 'first a pocket full of money then fine feelings.' And second the deeper realization that it is not the Milky-white sands that Matti needs but something to sell beside himself.

The larger implications here are that relational and self-esteem deficits are evident in both Puntila and his man Matti. They are more intense in the former than in the latter. The shame that derives from their low self-esteem takes different pathways. Puntila goes from alcohol to sobriety. We see him move from charm to hate and with little effort we can envision hate move to evil and fascism. Matti's path is quieter with more seething but still shame dominated. In his case the

smoldering defense gives the impression that he is not able to do anything differently. All the uses of his imagination basically tinker with the dynamic of the relationship of master and servant and do not rearrange it in anyway. It is in the master with his dangerous potential that we see real imagination.

The last we see of Matti is his departure from Puntila's estate. He fears Puntila's familiarities will get him in trouble, if not in jail. He expects the sober Puntila to accuse him of some theft of goods the drunken Puntila thrust upon him. Matti speaks a rhyme that closes the play. In this rhyme he states,

And if it's sad to find out in the end
That oil and water cannot ever blend
Let's waste no tears, there's nothing we can do:
It's time your servants turned their backs on you.
They'll find they have a master really cares
Once they're the master of their own affairs. (93)

His claim to be offended over the treatment of Red Surkkala raises again the contradiction in his own behavior since during Surkkala's dismissal he did nothing to defend Surkkala or raise any objection. He continues the contradiction in his nature with the little rhyme urging others to leave Puntila and become their own masters. Is this surface swagger, like his come-on to Eva in the bath hut that came to nothing, or is this the result of his lesson on top of Mt. Hatelma? His final call for change is itself couched as a contradiction saying first that oil and water cannot mix, that is, masters and servants will never change, «there's nothing we can do». Does he know how to change or is he merely proclaiming a truth as he has so many times before, but cannot actually cause the change. When we see him set off down the road, the audience is left with the question.

Is he off to find a master who really cares,
One who's master of their own affairs,
Or is he off to find a new one
One who is better at seeing
The line between master and servant
And not think him a human being?

WORKS CITED

- Alexander, F. G., & Selesnick, S. T. (1995). *The History of Psychiatry*. New Jersey: Jason Aronson.
- American Psychiatric Association (1994). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 3rd. Edition. Washington, D. C..
- Brecht, B. (1997). *Mr. Puntila and His Man Matti*. Eds. John Willett & Ralph Manheim. Trans. John Willett. New York: Arcade.
- Fuegi, J. (1994). *Brecht and Company: Sex, Politics, and the Making of the Modern Drama*. New York: Grove.
- Schafer, R. (1983). *The Analytic Attitude*. New York: Basic Books.
- Vaillant, G. E. (1983). *The Natural History of Alcoholism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Willett, J. (1968). *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht: A Study from Eight Aspects*. New York: New Directions.

Anality, masculinity, and *South Park*, or Why the Devil is Gay

JUDITH KEGAN GARDINER (*)

This essay takes as its originating question the popularity of the television program and movie *South Park* and my effort to understand what these entertainments tell us, first, about the meanings of anality for the construction of contemporary masculinity and, second, about the connections among masculinity, male heterosexuality, misogyny, homophobia, homoeroticism, sadism, and consumer culture.¹

In 1998 I first saw the «South Park» television program at the urging of my young adult nephews. I was perplexed about their enthusiasm for this cartoon show, which seemed to me crude and unpleasant in comparison to my own favorite animated television program, «The Simpsons». The «South Park» program featured four eight-year-old boys, including two central friends, the Christian Stan Marsh and the Jewish Kyle Brosloski; a fat bully-scapegoat named Eric Cartman; and Kenny McCormick, an unintelligible child in a parka who kept getting killed, though he reappeared in later episodes. Numerous jokes featured farting or getting things stuck up or blown out one's ass. *South Park: Bigger, Longer, and Uncut* is now also an exuberant feature-length cartoon musical, which features the same main characters and repeats some of the situations of the television program. The movie's premise is that the boys learn outrageous swearing from watching a cartoon movie called *Asses of Fire*, in which two Canadian boys, Terence and Philip, so identical that they must be labeled by initials on their tee shirts, repeatedly lift their legs, fart at one another, swear, and laugh. They also light farts, and one of them is badly burned as a result. The South Park teachers and parents, led by Kyle's mother Sheila Brosloski, punish their children for swearing in imitation of Terence and Philip. They campaign against their children's infection of «potty mouth», and their campaign ultimately leads to the arrest and impending execution of Terence and Philip and to the United States' declaration of war against Canada. Meanwhile, the South Park child Kenny is burned to death in a fart-lighting episode in which he attempts to imitate Terence and Philip. Kenny's soul then goes straight to hell. There he observes the large but insecure Satan, the

(*) University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of English (MC 162), 601 South Morgan Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607-7120.

¹ This essay overlaps my essay in *Men and Masculinities* (2000), written before the *South Park* movie appeared, and develops its argument in a new direction.

traditional bright red figure with horns and tail, being manipulated by his callous, anal-intrusive lover Saddam Hussein. (The date of the movie's supposed action is unclear). With help from a few surprisingly sophisticated children and the ghost of Kenny, the boys plan a daring rescue of Terence and Philip. They succeed at first but are again foiled. War destroys the U.S. and Canada, but Kenny's intervention to help Satan throw off Saddam's shackles persuades Satan to undo the effects of his war on earth. The ending is a happy one: the South Park children give speeches on the importance of free speech; their parents realize that devastating warfare is worse than swearing; and Satan regains his manhood, all to a bouncy musical score.

My thoughts about the meaning of anality in this movie were aided when I also saw «Tubes», or Blue Man Group, a high-priced live entertainment that has been performed for several years at a Chicago theater.² To cheerful loud music, three men with blue-painted heads and faces, wearing full-body workmen's uniforms, splattered paint and spit up marshmallows and blew through plumbing pipes in a manic display of comic vaudeville. They ejected goop from their bodies, both from their mouths and from a new orifice in the chest of their uniforms. A large part of the fun of the show came from their making messes, playing with messes, and using their bodies as instruments of art and pleasure, banging them rhythmically to make music. The three blue men didn't speak, although the audience heard projected voices, which ostensibly belonged to videos that were displayed on a large screen on stage. In addition, the blue men riffled through flipboards filled with writing, and they bopped one another across their bodies and drummed LED displays on which messages to the audience scrolled. It was a thoroughly enjoyable show, entertaining, inventive, and energetic, which culminated with the audience reeling reams of toilet paper that scrolled out from multiple spindles on the back wall, over our collective heads, and onto a white snarly mass on the stage.³

The link that connected these two performances for me appeared in a video screened during the Blue Man Group show.⁴ Its cartoonish, diagrammatic format and authoritative voiceover imitated the kind of educational videos used in schools and museums. First it showed a plug-like form, then many such forms being connected by lines between them. The system became more complex until the screen looked like a wiring diagram or computerboard. Still the connections proliferated. Then an authoritative voiceover announced, «We are all connected». Technology, computerization, the internet, just as we expected. But the voice continued, «by plumbing». The lines turned to sewage pipes, the connectors to arrows, and all the arrows were marked, «away». «Sometimes there are blockages», said the voice, as the diagram pictured a bleeping red stoppage point on a pipeline, and arrows pointed up from the sketched outlines of a sink and a toilet. Everyone laughed.

Thus a familiar diagram of circuit wizardry metamorphosed into a picture of plumbing embarrassments. Mind swerved into body; the endlessly hyped iconography of new age technology was shown resisting, going backward, regressing into the irrefutable, funny materiality of intractable human waste. Anality, then, was not merely an incidental childish throwback in these entertainments. Rather, I saw it as connected with, shaping, and shaped by contemporary masculinity and consumer capitalism. These cultural events, the *South Park* movie and television program and the Blue Man Group entertainment, exhibited anality in their raucous delight in noise, mess, evacuation, and expulsion. However, this was not the anality of the familiar Freudian compulsive character, retentive and controlling. Instead, it is an expulsive anality that I think is related to the ambiguities of men's roles in consumer society and also to current restructurings in the psychological valences of

² Reviews posted on the internet include those by Bowen, Koren, Narciso, and Richards.

³ According to its press releases, Blue Man Group was founded in New York by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink in 1991 and currently performs in several cities with different actors. For information about Blue Man Group I thank Marni Kamber, Associate Company Manager of Blue Man Group Chicago, 1998.

⁴ This film was produced by the Blue Man Group.

homosexuality and homophobia. This anality is connected less with the breadwinner masculinity of the post-World War II era than specifically with the market masculinity of our media age. I think it takes its shape from men's attempts to maintain personal autonomy both against the impersonal, overarching authority of the Law of the Father and against the more seductive, amorphous, and relentless power of corporate advertising, which I call the Market of the Mother.

THEORIES OF ANALITY

Freud's analyses of anality are rich and perverse. In Freud's theories of infantile sexuality, a stage of oral pleasure at the mother's breast is followed by anal erotism. Freud saw the anal character as a specific kind of neurotic who had compensated for a strong childhood anal erotism by becoming overcontrolled, hence «*orderly, parsimonious, and obstinate*», (Freud 1908, 169). Freud also connected anal erotism with both sadism and money: he believed the child unconsciously perceived feces as a gift to the mother that could be given or withheld, an ambivalence later transferred to money and also to the child's fantasy of a detachable penis, hence to fears of its loss. Thus «anal defiance» was particularly male, a component and concomitant of «the castration complex» through which Freud believed boys are socialized into mature heterosexual masculinity in civilized societies (Freud, 1917, 133; Freud, 1918, 122).

Erik Erikson and other ego psychologists popularized this Freudian theory for the postwar United States. Erikson rationalized and harmonized Freud's stages into a psychology that charts the normal child's development as a fully social being in a typically middle-class, heterosexual nuclear family. Following Freud, Erikson's second stage is the anal one, stimulated by adults' efforts to get the child to control its bowels and bladder and be socialized into cleanliness. This stage is built on contradictions and ambivalence, since the child is being trained both to retain its bodily products and to eliminate them, depending on the time, place, and situation. Erikson says, «the anal zone lends itself more than any other to the display of stubborn adherence to contradictory impulses...» (77). The child at this stage will alternately hoard and discard things, people, and bodily products, alternately «letting go» and «holding on» (78). Success in this stage would show the child developing its willpower as well as its sense of propriety (76). Because Erikson's generically male child feels «powerless in his own body», frightened of his own waste products, and powerless against the outside world, he may also experience shame at his lack of control and his exposure before others. On the other hand, he may assert such control with inflexible firmness. The anal child may also have messy fantasies and «violently hostile wishes of total elimination», in which he controls or destroys other people (55). When this stage goes wrong, Freud and Erikson speak of obsessional neuroses, aggressive evacuation (or constipation), profanity, scatology, and paranoia, especially paranoid fantasies of evil substances within one's own body. Citing both Freud and Chasseguet-Smirgel, Jessica Benjamin has recently connected anality with the repetition compulsion and with sadism, seeing the sadist's «core fantasy» as «the reduction of the maternal body to shit» (187). Benjamin claims that anality connotes «the turning of passive into active, inner into outer» with the goal of differentiating the self from the maternal other and so freeing oneself from the fear of being assimilated by the other (188). Many of these descriptions find obvious analogues in the compulsive repetitions, comic scatology, masculine misogyny, and paranoid certainty of being attacked or invaded seen in *South Park*.

A more positive view of anality than Freud's, one that stresses its subversive potential, is found in Mikhail Bakhtin's glorification of the grotesque body as it appears in medieval and Renaissance European carnival and popular culture. For Bakhtin, the democratic spirit of folk humor contests authority and turns established hierarchies on their heads by using imagery from what he calls the «material body lower stratum» (368). Such popular humor includes the «slinging of excrement» that signifies destruction and debasement, but that also connotes «the area of the genital organs, the

fertilizing and generating stratum. Therefore, in the images of urine and excrement is preserved the essential link with birth, fertility, renewal, welfare» (148). Folk anality is thus inseparable from ideas of the open and communal rather than the closed and individual body. Even the aggression, beatings, mock-murders, and deaths found in folk ritual, in this view, serve to dethrone authority. Insisting on their rights to pleasure and abundance, the common people ultimately recognize themselves in the grotesque body as «the historical, progressing body of mankind» (367). Bakhtin thus emphasizes the «popular festive and utopian aspect» of this pre-capitalist anality (19).

Like Freud and Bakhtin, Erikson sees the repression of infantile anal erotism as a matter of «middle-class mores» (77). Some contemporary theorists of masculinity continue this line of reasoning. For example, Calvin Thomas deploys Lacanian theories to describe men's typical «scatological anxiety» and «generalized anxiety of expenditure» as fears connected with the social prohibition against children receiving pleasure from anal activities (84, 85). Such anxieties are allayed as the boy develops his identification with the father and the established social system of male mastery and production. Since men fear recognizing female subjectivity, both in women and in themselves, they are susceptible to the «capitalist deployment of masculinity through rationalized commodity formalism», as they try to avoid the «self-abjection by which the masculine subject becomes the turd of his own fantasy», a fantasy imbued with homophobic repulsion toward gay men and the practice of anal intercourse (96).

In these psychoanalytic schema, the adult middle-class man's psychology typically develops within a system of family relations that make him anxious and misogynistic, heterosexual and homophobic, perhaps compulsive and retentive, eager to identify with authority, and competitive with other men. Like orthodox Marxist analyses of class relations, Freudian and Lacanian psychological systems assume a static division between work and family and so between male and female gender roles. These systems assign both domination and resistance to active men and consumption, dependence, and nurturing to passive women.⁵

MARKET MASCULINITY AND CONSUMER RESISTANCE

Now, I suggest, we are seeing realigned configurations of gender and psychology. Young men's masculinity, especially, appears reshaped in contemporary representations in the directions of increased passivity, self-indulgence, and sexual objectification, and also in resistance to these traits (see Beneke, Pfeil). Young men in front of television sets and computer consoles are being passified – that is, made more passive, not more peaceful – by a consumer culture that positions everyone as passive and receptive, ready to absorb all «messages». This culture subjects everyone to constant intrusion and emotional manipulation by advertising. In *South Park* both adults and children are typically ineffectual or humiliated when they attempt to act. Efforts to save Kenny from death, to rescue Terence and Philip, to prevent children from swearing, or to stop the war against Canada all fail until the Devil becomes the perverse *deus ex machina* who suddenly brings about a happy ending that reverses the rest of the plot.

Like many entertainments, *South Park* both reflects the passivity of contemporary culture and attempts to offset it by positioning its spectators as actively making individual choices – one of which is to attend this spectacle – not as workers or family members, then, but as consumers. More immediate than official authority is the constant pressure of advertising, of the Market of the Mother as an ever present, seductive, and intrusive imperative to buy and consume, echoed by the saccharine insistence of *South Park*'s Mrs. Cartman that her obese son consume more commercial snacks, like the big orange bags of «Cheesy Poofs» he eats while watching television. The other

⁵ For a materialist feminist review of some feminist responses to Freud, see Gardiner 1992.

end of this process is indicated by the fact that she appears in a pornographic video being defecated upon, a video that both repulses and excites the boys who watch it (TV program of July 2000). A more traditional figure of maternal censorship and repression is played by Sheila Brosloski, the caricatured bossy, busybody Jewish mother as social activist, obsessed with stopping the children's swearing, oblivious concerning their true welfare, and bigoted herself, in this case against Canadians. The children show their hostility against her simply and openly by singing that she's a «big fat bitch», a term that reinforces the misogynist construction of women as animals.

In each day's listening to commercial radio and television, which are ubiquitous throughout our culture, Americans hear repeated and insistent messages telling us what to buy, while the authority of these «messages» is enforced through the audience's familiarity with the celebrity voices that impersonate them. According to Freud and Erikson, orality precedes anality in the infant's developing sense of self. Americans from childhood on have access to ready-prepared food and even drugs and are constantly enticed to consume them, gradually getting fatter and exercising less, even as they watch endless images of thin beautiful athletes, a combination that can create self-loathing and eating disorders. «Just Saying No» is the road to autonomy for the two-year-old being toilet trained and the strategy being mobilized to prevent teens from passively succumbing to drugs.⁶ Yet simply inveighing against the passivity of consumer culture ignores its ambivalences. Many people feel that they are constantly monitoring everything they eat or drink, perpetually on a diet and exercising heroic self control as they pass the vending machine without taking a snack, even if their weight gradually increases from occasional small indulgences.

Advertising does create its own resistances, however. Its repetitions attempt to induce dependencies on its products at the same time that these repetitions raise the consumers' level of tolerance against them. People now are exposed to barrages of repeated, seductively beautiful, well-made, and intrusive messages that are designed to get into our heads and make us buy things. It therefore seems likely that various forms of repetition compulsion and anal defiance will appear in the defenses against such onslaughts. The toilet break is so intimately connected with commercials that marketers can supposedly gauge programs' popularity by the changes in municipal water levels induced by simultaneous mass flushing, a resistance to passively receiving ads that operates by simple avoidance, even as it metaphorically mimes the active expulsion of indigestible matter.

Gender is related to the consumer culture in complex ways. Insofar as selfishness in boys is figured as perfectly appropriate, whereas women are always supposed to be nurturant and self-sacrificing, desires to consume can be supportive of masculinity. Current advertising also sexually objectifies men, subjecting their bodies to the scrutiny of others (see Bordo). Men, as well as women, now see beautiful young specimens of their sex constantly displayed as sexual objects, a display that can provoke homophobic anxieties as well as envious identifications. Satan in the *South Park* movie is apparently happily homosexual, yet he comically complains of Saddam's treatment of him as merely a sexual object and reads self-help books associated with women. He is annoyed when Saddam throws his detachable, and apparently renewable, penises at him, and he feels compromised by Saddam's persistence in sexually penetrating him from the rear.

Boys' and men's resistance to the commercial forces of advertising, I contend, that is, their resistance to being positioned as passive, sexually objectified consumers, may take several forms in which the psychology of anality plays a part. These forms of resistance may be figured in terms of a realigned anality that is neither the obsessive, hoarding anality of the bourgeoisie nor the polymorphously sensual anality of the Bakhtinian folk. Instead, this new masculine psychology takes on a new configuration that has many qualities at once – an apparently childish, homoerotic yet sometimes homophobic, cynical, and paranoid form of anal erotism. This masculine anality is

⁶ The «Just Say No» campaign also collaborates with the tendency to discursive magic in our culture of representations, where saying something often substitutes for doing it.

dedicated to fighting against taking things in by pushing things out, not merely expelling them but even exploding them. The inputs it expels are not exclusively food products and sexual threats but also advertising, adults, and their authority.

Masculinity theorist Timothy Beneke argues that «boys and even men feel superior to women and other men through their greater capacity to handle ‘grossness,’ unpleasant sounds and smells, insects and rodents, dirt, and so on» (39). This aggressive delight in «grossness» fits the expulsive anality I’m describing here, an anality that also constructs masculinity as explicitly childish – before responsibility or adult sexuality, male-bonded rather than relating to women, profligate, sadistic, and violent. The deliberate childishness and masculine anal passive aggression of *South Park* and Blue Man group also recall the recent campus legend of fraternity men watching the Superbowl on television while drinking beer and wearing diapers so that they would not have to leave the room for even a moment. I think that the young male media viewer may also reinforce his sense of active masculinity by spitting out epithets, so identifying with the verbal aggressivity of continual cursing that has made the «South Park» television program anathema to parents and that forms the thematic core of the *South Park* movie. In fact, cursing and farting are the kinds of activities possible even to the passive boy or adult couch potato to make him feel more rebellious, tough, and assertive as he sits before the movie or television set – a situation itself ridiculed in other cartoons, like «Beavis and Butthead». Similarly, such male-focused media personalities as Howard Stern and «Love Line’s» Adam Corolla entertain their male audiences, and distance themselves from nice female sensibilities – when they boast of farting over the broadcast air.⁷

Although the Freudian version of anal erotism makes much of feces as hard objects, products, or gifts, *South Park*, especially its cartoon within a cartoon, *Asses of Fire*, features symphonies of ethereal flatulence, pure performance without product, which may be taken as signs of the children’s simultaneous abjection before, defiance of, and exclusion from adult producer culture and their cynical incorporation into the endless hot air of the information society.

Thus a rebellious, expulsive, and apparently childish anality, I argue, works to shore up male autonomy in our consumer society by resisting the masculinity-undermining effects of consumer passivity, advertising objectifications, and other cultural manipulations. This kind of anality may have both positive and negative potentials, psychologically and politically. Its positive potential is most manifest in the creativity and play based on making the body into matter and in the political possibilities of resisting and ejecting intrusive matter and so of contesting established authority and convention. Blue Man Group create music from their bodies, revel in the rhythms of bodily functions, and describe themselves as daring rebels against an art establishment. The *South Park* movie, too, constantly breaks into joyful sound with such iconoclastic lyrics as the homosexually incestuous paean to the «Uncle Fucker». On the other hand, this kind of anality affirms some men’s freedom and autonomy at the expense of women and abjected categories of men. It is narrowly defensive, resisting the *status quo* rather than articulating alternatives to it. It contests consumer capitalism’s specific incursions on the masculine self, but not its continued allure for the young men who participate in it. Fundamentally, it does not contest consumer capitalism’s monopoly of social power.

MASCULINITY, HOMOSEXUALITY, ANALITY

But why is Satan gay, and why does the *South Park* movie run in gay neighborhoods for appreciative gay audiences? Is this just a reflection of the personal tastes and psychological identifications of the filmmaker, Trey Parker? Satan and Saddam are a dysfunctional gay couple: Satan, the more

⁷ I received this information second hand from friends who heard about my project. The Corolla broadcast was January 7, 1999. No date was reported for the Howard Stern reference.

feminine of the two, reads popular psychology texts and seeks cuddling and better communication, while macho Saddam is mean and manipulative. He does not meet Satan's needs. The child Kenny tells Satan to get rid of Saddam not because gay relationships are bad but because this one is. A Hawaiian-shirted performer named «Big Gay Al» entertains the American troops waiting to make war on Canada with a patriotic production number that includes the lines, «Uncle Sam is super» and «Everything is super when you're gay». Presumably, then, Uncle Sam, representative of American imperialism, is gay as well as patriotic, and his dancers are male-bonded in homoerotic union. On the other hand, the tough and blasphemous existentialist boy who helps the South Park children's plan to rescue Terence and Philip dies bitterly asking, «Where is your faggot God now?». If this is indeed a gay film, it is a strikingly effective cross-over one, attracting many young heterosexual male viewers who would not be likely to attend, for instance, a romantic gay coming-of-age movie. What I think the heterosexual and homosexual viewers share is a certain common psychology. Currently, homophobia in the United States seems to be connected with a fascination and repulsion with anality, especially with anal sexual practices. The boys of *South Park* are gleeful in using such terms as «shitfaced cockmaster», «shit-eater», «pig-fucker», and «ass-ramming uncle fucker», the latter term rating a whole jolly song, and many of these terms denote bestial and incestuous as well as same-sex sexual practices.⁸

Freud demurely says that «an invitation to a caress of the anal zone is still used today, as it was in ancient times, to express defiance or defiant scorn, and thus in reality signifies an act of tenderness that has been overtaken by repression» (1908, p. 173). He believed some of his disturbed male patients had experienced such tenderness toward men, based on identifications with their mothers as their fathers' sexual partners, and so developed and repressed fantasies of passive anal receptivity to other men (1918, p. 72). Thus, classical psychoanalysis connects anality with male passivity. When Erikson writes, «any anal fixation... is especially apt to prepare for a homosexual attitude with the implied idea of gaining love and control forever through anal incorporation» (80), he assumes that an «anal fixation» will be receptive and incorporative rather than expulsive, though his own description of the anal stage of infantile sexuality describes both possibilities. Furthermore, Erikson localizes this mechanism to boys, who, he claims, are unlike women in that they can grasp or hoard only in this manner. Discussing the fantasies of anal rape held by one of Freud's patients, Peter Middleton adds his surmise that men's homophobia springs from their fear of other's men's penetrative violence against themselves, a violence he sees as constitutive of dominant masculinity (98). Thus anal preoccupations are intrinsic to the stability of contemporary heterosexual masculinity insofar as it defines itself in opposition to homosexual passivity and receptive effeminacy.

As we have seen, one way the *South Park* film displays resistance to feminizing intrusions into a masculine self is to resist penetrations of the male body. This resistance to penetration seems also to extend to empathy, in which the emotions of others resonate feelingly within the self. Boys' training in masculinity is explicitly anti-empathic, as Carolyn Eder found in her study of boys' teasing in middle school, and as we see in the *South Park* children's easy acceptance of the death of their friend Kenny and their relative calm in scenes of battle holocaust. Feminist psychologist Nancy Chodorow connects men's lack of empathy with their violence and with their complicity in masculine cycles of humiliation and shaming. She rejects the Freudian theory that aggression is an innate human drive and instead defines it «as a defense against an endangered self» that is particularly tied to feelings of «humiliation and shame» (29, 32). Other theorists connect such feelings of humiliation and shame with infantile drives for individual autonomy and with anality as

⁸ «Big Gay Al's Big Gay Animal Farm» is featured in a «South Park» episode about tolerance and a homosexual dog (Sept. 3, 1997). Cartman, Kyle, and Santa call each other variants on «buttfucker» in the 1995 «Spirit of Christmas» program, and the term «buttmunch», apparently acceptable for cable television, is heard, for example, on the Sept. 17, 1997 episode. I've heard these terms, as well as «buttfucker», «buttmunch», and «fudgepacker», used among teenaged boys from the U. S. midwest and west coast.

well as aggression. Using the language of Kleinian object relations psychology, Chodorow explains that humiliated people who respond with extreme aggression to collective injury cannot empathize with others as persons «but as bad part objects» who must be expelled from the self and destroyed (32, citing Fonagy). The humiliators of others who produce this lethal response are often adult men, including fathers. «For some men, and in some cultures», she says, «masculinity is cast as an adult-child dichotomy: being an adult man versus being a little boy; being humiliated by other men» (35). This dynamic of «being humiliated by other men» may have something to do with the homophobic homoeroticism of *South Park*, as well, where the mere utterance of anally-themed swearing seems to reinforce the masculinity of the speakers who liberally and reciprocally insult one another in shameful and humiliating, even sadistic, terms. The triumph of the film is the overthrow of its most sadistic character, Saddam Hussein, whose name echoes Sade's, and in a circularly sadistic and anal manner, as he is impaled from the rear.

In contemporary queer studies, anality is repeatedly connected with abjection, shame, humiliation, even death. «Is the rectum a grave?» Leo Bersani asks in an essay that traces homophobic hatred of gay men to a repulsion toward and fascination with anal eroticism that reveals men's unconscious fear of passivity and vulnerability, of a death of the masterful male self. As male homosexuality in popular culture is now chiefly ridiculed through homophobic jokes concerning anality, fantasies of anality color the perception of homosexuals by heterosexuals. However, the expulsive, market-resisting, childish, and passive-aggressive anality I have been describing here cannot simply be reduced to homophobia. Instead, I conjecture that while the consumer culture connotes a receptive passivity that especially threatens masculine activity, mastery, and dominance, boys and men can reinforce their masculinity both through proud resistance to anal intrusion and through scatological anal expulsion. Moreover, these theories leave the masculinity of the anal penetrator, the «uncle fucker», ambiguous. If Jesus is a passive «faggot», Satan by the end of the film has regained his masculine mastery over Saddam, even if there is no indication that he has changed his erotic preferences. Thus this film may mainstream at least some forms of male homosexuality as masculine at the same time that it allows heterosexual male viewers the pleasures of an aggressively dirty or nasty sexual imaginary, one that retains the erotic bounce of the transgressive through ambiguous identification with both anally-obsessed homophobia and homosexuality.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adequate Design (1997-98). South Park Episode Guide. www.adequate.com/south_park.
- Anonymous (1998). Blue Man Group. *Stagebill*, Oct., 9-19.
- Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. H. Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Beneke, T. (1997). *Proving Manhood: Reflections on Men and Sexism*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Benjamin, J. (1995). *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Bersani, L. (1995). Loving men. In M. Berger, B. Wallis, & S. Watson (Eds.), *Constructing Masculinity* (pp. 115-123). New York and London: Routledge.
- Bersani, L. (1988). Is the rectum a grave? In D. Crimp (Ed.), *AIDS: Cultural Analysis/ Cultural Activism* (pp. 197-222). Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Bordo, S. (1999). *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Bowen, J. (1998). Blue Man Group, Centerstage (Chicago). centerstage.net/chicago.
- Brenkman, J. (1993). *Straight Male Modern: A Cultural Critique of Psychoanalysis*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Chodorow, N. (1998). The enemy outside: Thoughts on the psychodynamics of extreme violence with special attention to men and masculinity. *JPCS: Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society*, 3 (1), 25-38.
- Eder, D. et al. (1995). *School Talk: Gender and Adolescent Culture*. New Brunswick: Rutgers.
- Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton.

- Freud, S. (1908). Character and Anal Erotism. In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (Vol. 9, pp. 167-176). Trans. J. Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1953-74.
- Freud, S. (1917). Of Transformations of Instinct as Exemplified in Anal Erotism. In *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (Vol. 17, pp. 125-134). Trans. J. Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1953-74.
- Freud, S. (1918). From the History of an Infantile Neurosis. In *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (Vol. 17, pp. 3-122). Trans. J. Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1953-74.
- Freud, S. (1933). New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis. Lecture XXXIII: Femininity. In *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (Vol. 22, pp. 112-135). Trans. J. Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1953-74.
- Gardiner, J. (1992). Psychoanalysis and feminism: An American humanist's view. *Signs*, 17 (2), 437-454.
- Gardiner, J. (1998). Feminism and the future of fathering. In Tom Digby (Ed.), *Men Doing Feminism* (pp. 255-273). New York: Routledge.
- Gardiner, J. (2000). «South Park», Blue Men, Anality, and Market Masculinity. *Men and Masculinities*, 2 (3), 251-271.
- Koren, Y. (1997). Blue Man Group. *Theatre Review (Boston)*, 117 (53), 6.
- McDonald, S. (1998). 25 Shocking Secrets You Need to Know About *South Park*. *TV Guide*, March 28-April 3, 22-27.
- Narciso, A. (1998). Blue Man Group. *Theatre Review*. (New York). cogsum.com/review2.html.
- Pfeil, F. (1995). *White Guys: Studies in Postmodern Domination and Difference*. London and New York: Verso.
- Prosep5 (1998). Mr. Hanky the Christmas Poo Ate My Balls. embers.aol.com/prosep5/hankybal.htm.
- Richards, D. (1998). *Broadway Theater Online*. www.Broadwaytheater.com.
- «South Park» (1992-2000). Writers T. Parker and M. Stone. Television series on Comedy Central channel.
- South Park: Bigger, Longer, and Uncut* (1992-2000). Animated film by T. Parker. Comedy Central and Paramount.
- Thomas, C. (1996). *Male Matters: Masculinity, Anxiety, and the Male Body on the Line*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Van Meter, J. (1998). Stupid Inc. *New York Times Magazine*, July 26, 15-17.
- Yahoo (1998). Internet search engine. «South Park» material listed at yahoo.com/new_ad_media/television/shows/cartoons/south_park.

The gender wheel, concerning gender and sexual identification issues within popular culture arenas: An essay

CHARLOTTE ANN FRICK (*)

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

By way of literary introduction, the following poem (reprinted from *Love Air, Book I*, of my own *Love Poem Trilogy* published in May of 2000) will attempt to serve as an epigram and metaphoric model for aspects of identity as well to include gender and sexual identification issues within this paper. There are myriad pathways into recent popular culture venues within these noted arenas of interest, and this essay will attempt to continue the discussion/discourse concerning a few of these complex issues and paradigms. The emerging literature and scientific reports (including evidence from medical reports, within the creative arts, and from biographical material and autobiographical reports) suggest the subtle undercurrents of a beginning, yet strong, paradigm shift into a burgeoning, multi-variant gender and sexual identification mode from our present and more narrowly defined ones.

We Are

Who are we, you and I
in the vast sea of
possibilities
zoological and mathematical
equations stirred by winsomeness

(*) The City University of New York, The Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016-4309, USA.

or opprobrium's chance notions
 often like plants photosynthesizing,
 tending toward the light?
 Who are we, glancing gender
 benders/blenders squaring off
 with fates and other potential
 offenders, descending from the
 trees, ascending through the
 skies, pulsating, directed to other
 planets and beyond with our
 optical and fantasy delights,
 flights in ships once thought
 destined only for salt seas?
 We are the puzzle, a prize, the paradox
 of difference and similarity
 genetically, hormonal, and environmentally
 contrived and determined to be
 genders of individual choice, with
 the voice of love as our guide,
 like Virgil arising from the infernally-bound
 dead, with a Dante in our arms,
 dialogisms, stars afire, aglow, above
 in his eyes and our own; we look to be know
 to feel comfortable in an embrace
 although we may feel chimaera-like or like shadows
 of a god's or Hamlet's dumb or complex show.
 We are each an encoded mystery, not always understood
 nor always alone-lent a vision of an unraveling
 eternity: loving, collaborating, and with hope, alive.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GENDER/SEXUAL IDENTIFICATION STORY

In writing the story of our lives as Simone De Beauvois would have encouraged; from the room of our own that Virginia Woolf helped us to mentally construct and to build; as the minority of one whom we individually are, as Henry David Thoreau taught us to recognize to be within the individual self or psyche, we must be wise about the ways of human nature and physiology in relation to gender. As well, we must be as wise to the need for human nurture (writ large) for all individuals born, knowing that distinguishing among the differences in nature and nurture will be crucial to understanding our similarities and any special needs that we may have after being born and learning of as we grow older. Parenthetically, nurture within this paper will be symbolic for environmental, familial and general supports for the development of the self in terms of gender and any and all other ways. Nature within this paper will stand for biological imperatives and precedents established for the child which are related to intra-uterine, post-coital conception and development.

We must be inclined to see that we are all creatures of nature, not necessarily able to control our biological destinies as completely as we might like to think that we can or would like to be able to do. Thus, for instance, individuals having been born as intersexual, a common phenomenon believed to be about one person per 1,000 persons or about two percent of the population, with genital variations and ambiguities (or challenges) will need specific guidance as we all seem to

need throughout our gender development. Within this paper, the word intersexual will represent a life experience formerly referred to as hermaphroditism a word, originally formed from the Classical god/goddess pantheon names for Hermes and Aphrodite. Some researchers and individuals (including some activists) continue to use the word hermaphroditism – most notably the biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling in her book *Sexing the Body* (Basic Books, 2000) and her articles on *The Five Sexes* (in *The Sciences Journal*, 1993 and 2000).

In fact, all of us, no matter where on the gender wheel that one places one's self in terms of identification, ultimately, one may realize that those neat gender identifications assigned at birth do not always convey an adequate final reckoning in reality when all the genetic gender and internal hormonal forces are played out within being in the inter-uterine state and when the later out-of-womb nurture phases are completed. Any one identity may devolve in large part from the pre-natal, procreative formations and mixtures sprung through the union of one's parents within the reaches of the parents' own genetic codes. Such matters that seem so random as the positioning during coitus can also affect outcomes for the child for later development into adulthood no matter how subtle and impossible they may seem on the face of matters, evidence from nature and scientific research inform us with new information on a daily basis. For instance, one form of intersexuality is evidenced as a predisposition (not in every instance) for the children of parents carrying a particular recessive gene, another random possibility, creating a treatable syndrome called hormonal hyperplasia.

After every procreative moment in which genetic material is fused, it is speculated that each womb-child (not only those predisposed as indicated above) will further be subject to inter-uterine hormonal baths and bombardments. In a similar vein, scientific evidence has suggested that even the stress level of the mother during the gestation period of the child can affect the level of testosterone within the child, creating high-testosterone laden babies.

Any and all of the prenatal happenings will help to determine one's ultimate gender identity and may later influence one's sexual partner identification choices, but not always. The inter-uterine hormonal baths can even affect and effect physiological developments, including the inner ear development of lesbian and bi-sexual women (which determines how one hears and sorts sound information). As reported in the March 3, 2000 issue of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the inner ears of lesbian and bi-sexual women function more like the inner ears of men than like those of heterosexual women, also considered to be caused by prenatal intra-uterine exposure to adrenals.

In other studies among homosexual and heterosexual men, noted differences in the sizes of the hypothalamus have been systematically discovered, first noted in autopsy reports which led to further research. Since heterosexual and homosexual males have testosterone levels and secretions within the same range (in an April, 2000, report in *The New York Times*, *The He Hormone* by Andrew Sullivan), the size of the hypothalamus and its inner workings, therefore, may play a significant biological roles in later gender and sexual identification development. This information is yet to be concretely determined within the sciences, perhaps speculating ultimately as to any hows and whys which may be potentially illuminating.

The variations need not be seen as either *aberrations* or *defects* but as part of the spectrum of Nature's widest reproductive facility and possibility. Putting a negative spin on conditions does not bring insight. Nature happens; we all represent the myriad biological, psychological and spiritual instruments of Nature's music. In trying to learn adequate and useful harmonies among and within individuals, so that we all may more adequately and constructively communicate, societies may simultaneously potentially eliminate more useless hatred from the world's store of the same.

Recently, in the same article *The He Hormone*, as noted above, Andrew Sullivan intensifies the level of the discourse concerning testosterone levels and their effects for both genders to a new level. His article documents a wide array of affects because of the effects of testosterone levels within men and women, even among those using synthetic testosterone injections for a variety of

conditions (like the author Andrew Sullivan himself) across class, gender and racial lines. Sullivan's research and reviews of other relevant research indicate associations of high testosterone levels with acts of violence among specific populations, including prison populations wherein high levels of testosterone are evidenced. Continuing his review, he notes that if female rats are injected with large levels of testosterone, they begin to exhibit the sexual mounting behaviors of male rats, with other female rats.

To Sullivan, monitoring and stabilizing testosterone levels indicates new possibilities for grappling with societal problems related to hormone levels (particularly those related to an overabundance of testosterone), posing potential hypothetical individual hormonal beginnings and more positive, harmonious societal outcomes. For instance, and indeed, Sullivan even goes so far as to postulate and hypothesize that at a future historical time there may be a need to artificially redistribute levels of testosterone within individuals who harbor high-load testosterone levels when these are determined in the inter-uterine state. He supposes and proposes that by using prenatal injections of other adrenals (e. g. estrogen), possible future societal violence in general, and against women in particular, may be potentially limited and confined.

Indeed, generally, rape against women (as a specific gender crime) has been decreased by 13% within the United States within the last four years while all other forms of crime have decreased simultaneously by as much as 50%. Why this seemingly rather small decrease in rapes in comparison to crime in general? Although a 13% decline in rape statistics (against females, and males) seems minimal in terms of the other crime decreases, it seems miraculous when realizing how societally difficult it seems to be to reduce levels of this particular crime in general. With thorough educational promotions and programs similar to those against the use of drugs and spousal abuse, coupled with psychological guidance programs and treatments made available, these figures could continue to decline with an appropriate societal commitment.

Furthermore, in their spring 2000 report, entitled *Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls*, UNICEF indicates that up to 50% of all women world-wide (depending on country of origin, but with the highest percentiles in developing nations) face some sort of domestic violence (including the possibility of rape) by someone close to them. Indeed, it is still a world-wide phenomenon that when the inter-uterine gender identification of female has been determined by early detection or at birth, these females are surgically or medically aborted (or killed at birth) world-wide.

All are womb products and cannot escape the physiological and genetically – coded being determined to be within nature, because of our biological and inter-uterine hormonal and genetic pre-history, as it were. Later nurture within family and society in general will either support or attempt to defy earlier pre-birth codes. Some individuals use synthetic hormone injections as a choice to address a condition or life predisposition that would indicate valid use. Unfortunately, on the other hand, some individuals have been coerced or conditioned into taking hormone treatments as reports and longitudinal life studies indicate, in relation to some widely reported intersexual cases. One could hypothetically postulate that all factors being as equal as possible, an individual might be allowed to choose their own gender direction as one's gender identity was clearly burgeoning and blossoming, or when one felt at a reasonably mature age to make a valid determination of personal need. Indeed, slowly as reports indicate, some young individuals are being given this very important opportunity to make their own choices. Some intersexuals have chosen to live without hormone injections of any kind. As Anne Fausto-Sterling reports in her article *The Five Sexes, Revisited*, the activist intersexual Cheryl Chase from The Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) has been making inroads to physician specialists in children's hormones and in dealing with sexual ambiguity. Chase advocates for the Patient Centered approach.

A DIFFICULT CASE IN POINT: LEARNING TO CHANGE THE MIND'S GUARD

The extraordinary story (among other useful ones) of the life of David Reimer (formerly known as Bruce Reimer, his birth name, and Brenda Reimer, his name as a girl until he was fourteen years of age) which was researched (using interviews as a tool) and compiled by John Calipinto in his book *As Nature Made Him: The Boy who was Raised as a Girl* explores one young man's difficult journey to discover his identity as a heterosexual male, after having spent thirteen-and-one-half years being raised as a girl. David's is perhaps one of the most well-known nature versus nurture cases within the gender identification literature. This book brilliantly explores one child's sojourn from boy to girl, and back to boy as a young teenager, definitely a riveting gender identification and sexual choice true-life story based on issues related to a botched circumcision at the age of seven months, which resulted in a castration.

Within this particular text beginning historically in 1966, the retelling of the Reimer family history is recreated, identifying a full cast of real characters, explaining the circumstances related to what was seen as a simple circumcision which led to the castration of a baby boy, one of a set of twins, named Bruce Reimer. The reader feels struck dumb at the reading for more than the reason of the castration. Fourteen not so many happy years later, in 1980, Bruce would re-name himself as David Reimer after his model choice of David and Goliath to honor the struggles and challenges as they had emerged in his life.

At the age of fourteen, David was enlightened with the truth of his existence and was able to focus on the monster of what the nurture model of gender was as the nightmare of his life and the individual lives of his other family members. His birth nature as a male child had been totally ignored after this botched circumcision, partially and primarily because of the lack of knowledge within the nineteen-sixties related to innate imprintings and physiological pre-determined intra-uterine developments (among others) that are now known, because of encoding variables, to affect potential future outcomes of gender and sexual identification for the individual, although environment can impact to some degree, either for or against one's own personal reality and sensibility through the historical and physiologically emerging sense of self.

In David's case, this little boy was raised to be a girl because of the failed circumcision formally described, partially because of his parents' despair and worry about what kind of life their boy child might have if they continued to raise him as a boy since phalloplasty was not yet a viable successful surgery within medicine. Their worries and concerns led them into the medical world of a gender-identity psychologist named Dr. John Money, of Johns Hopkins University, who would convince the Reimer parents that the ideal for them was to raise this little boy as a girl because the nurture model was the doctor's and the medical community's preferred understanding of gender development; a «make-her-into-what-passes-on-the-surface as a girl, and she will become one» kind of thinking. Indeed, the surgery that would have been the most viable at the time was in its infancy, and was phalloplasty. At the time, the chief underpinning of the decision in Bruce's case was to be more reductive with the remnants of genitalia (the testes), and these were removed.

Through the nurture model of the period, as (Money saw it), Brenda would have a normal female existence without a care in the world! Bruce's newly determined life role was to be as Brenda (the henceforth girl child) after his gonads were removed. It was determined that later Brenda would be given estrogen injections after she had reached a specific age. However, there was one tenacious care that clung to Brenda and that was «her» sense of a biological identity as a male. That sense of identity lived within David (as he would eventually allow himself to become) as every ounce of his psychic being, cellular mentation and personal anecdotal sensibility revolted against this artificially constructed female identity assignment with each advancing day of his life after his pre-school years. As Brenda, too, she had to fight the urge to urinate standing up which was her natural instinctual urge.

However, because of the attempt at nurturing Bruce into Brenda, the boy would try consciously

to be «the girl» that he felt his family wanted him to be and as he assumed himself to be, dressed in girl's clothing with all the accouterments of girlhood, including long hair. Intra-psychically, he felt that he was a boy, living his life in torment. His feelings would then become his guide, and when the intelligence of the facts were made known to him of the castration, he could go into actions for his own self determination of perceived gender identity.

For the reader, Calipinto recreates the aspects and issues within the living of David's life, as Brenda, a child here-to-fore described as being forced into gender «prescription» to female, with his distraught parents' consent. Interestingly enough, in going over the reports prepared concerning Brenda's development, Calipinto discovers that Dr. John Money (the leading gender icon specialist of his day out of the 1950s) had a doctoral dissertation which traced the life fortunes of 250 intersexuals whose lives seemed to have fared so much the better for not having been forced into gender models using the prescriptive nurture model and codes by outside functionaries.

Indeed, Money was astonished that so many intersexuals fared so well emotionally and psychologically without having had life transforming and altering surgeries or gender sculpting formulas foisted upon them. Nonetheless, despite the evidence of his own research, Money for most of his career always advised gender changes from male to female for boys with any specific condition that leant itself easily to this change. He would continue this prescriptive gender prognostication even after David's case had proved the nurture model so much an absolute failure, as he so much wanted it to prove the success of his career. Years later, David would take his own destiny in hand, even having phalloplasty surgery that allowed him to marry a young woman who already had children from a former marriage. She indicated satisfaction with their sexual lives because of the surgery.

Earlier, when as Brenda, David's fourteen-year-old fantasy of his idealized self dressed as he was as a young teenage girl was to be a twenty-one year old young male, with a mustache, with his own car, able to date women. After discovering Brenda's burgeoning fantasy life to be male, Dr. Money asked David's parents how they would feel having a lesbian as a daughter. Imagine the irony of such a statement when the facts would be known to David. Is this just one doctor's failing within a social context to deal with the reality or an instance of where the historical, medical world was at the time? Perhaps the reality was a combination of the two. Clearly, things would have to begin to change historically as so many doctors began to investigate this case, as it was always used as the successful «test case» for the nurture model.

At the time, however, Dr. Money believed his own fantasies about gender by which he could as a psychologist prolong his own avoidance of the «nature» within nurture model that was seeming to emerge from David's case; the irony of his own error seemed to miss him since he was trying to convince Brenda to be the girl he wanted her to be, and convincing himself that he, John, was correct in his own understanding of the nurture model. As nature would have it, Brenda who experiences herself as a boy, trying to be a girl, is actually displaying himself as the heterosexual that he actually was within the context of an artificially created performance, of which he was totally unaware at the time. How difficult for his family to hear Bruce as Brenda being referred to as an emerging lesbian as well, given the circumstances of Brenda's life, and because they knew the full reality of the situation which had caused them such angst and depression.

In the 1970's, Dr. Money's theories about gender identification became dramatically reversed and contested with competition from other theorists and physicians, in this case Dr. Milton Diamond and Dr. Keith Sigmundson along with other practitioners on David's behalf. These other practitioners do not favor early childhood intervention for heterosexuals with conditions like David's or for intersexuals with vestiges or fused forms of genitalia, which were perceived to be minuscule and/or overdeveloped sexual organs depending on the case.

How difficult it has been to live one's own life with all of the confusions and constraints that the poor educational background that we all share concerning gender and sexual identification have wrought upon and within all. The educational system in the United States and world-wide will

improve in terms of early and advanced educational insight and presentation of the topics, emerging as they slowly are out of the medical knowledge, social anecdotal exposure and revelation. Hopefully, programs will be developed to promote the new material emerging on gender and sexual identification issues just as easily as is done with other campaigns to begin to get clarity on the high-riding emotions related to the topics. Ultimately, this kind of promotion will help to lower hate crimes which carry a gender bias.

Unless David's scenario had happened to any knowing of, or reading relevant or related other articles or texts, the full realization is that it would be difficult to imagine the living of his life to be forced because of an accident of one's early childhood to have had major surgery performed; to have an opposite gender and sexual identity assigned; all without one's own understanding or consent; and to try to live with the consequences many years later. Not so easy a thought.

OPENING THE MIND TO NEW POSSIBILITIES

Indeed, no matter how gender identity will become deployed within the burgeoning psyche of an individual within the home landscape or personal and social experience; no matter what one's sexual identification or choices that will be as reasonably made as possible as one grows into adulthood to be able to make consensual choices with other adults; and no matter how resistive to change and education of mind that any may be, our societies must continue to throw off the gender and sexual retrograde fixed mantle of an outmoded belief system similar to the Medieval, Ptolemaic system in which the societies around the world often seem to be mired, within a mind fix of rigidity. Within the United States on a more and more regular basis, rigid and fixed notions related to these two areas are slowly, ever so slowly, beginning to budge partially because of legislation being created to fight hate crimes to include gender, in general, but also because more and more medical and anecdotal evidence emerges because of the sympathy and empathy being accorded to the victims. In the Freudian psychological model, it is as if a very rigid superego that seems to be governing aspects and ideas related to gender and sexual identification within the body politic is finally being loosened for the sake of the development of healthier ego and id constructs.

Within the Kleinian psychological model, it is as if the organizing aspect of consciousness (of the body politic and individuals within it) is being reconstituted. In the Lacanian psychological model, it is as if the «other» (that healthier other) of the individual mirror stage of consciousness finds itself in the midst of a vast woods breathing more easily, no longer lost in the cracked mirror phase of misidentification, experiencing a lack of constructive love, or feeling lost within terrifying forms of psychic chaos.

Individuals across what once seemed like demarcation zones are daily more and more open to one another with such testimonies to this closing of the gender and sexual identification gaps being seen within areas such as the following: in the United States in the recent Vermont Senate vote legalizing same-sex Civil Unions (even though there are plenty of nay-sayers to the liberalizing legislation); in New York State's adding protections against gender and sexual orientation bias into its Hate Crimes Law; and the Federal government's development of its Hate Crimes Law to include gender; and within the states of Oregon, Hawaii and Illinois there are continuing efforts to develop statewide systematically useful laws to guard and protect one's individual gender rights. Increasingly, what at one historical time may have seemed the ideal (or normal) for one group of people or individual, may in fact harbor actual opposites within the presumed ideal that can help lead to more constructive reality for all, since many may have long since stopped believing that we had an absolute ability to create perfections on the planet. Other hate crimes such as the holocausts of the twentieth-century have already informed. Thus, all those interested may realize that gender bias in the minds of some is based and constructed upon outdated notions and models of just what it means to be female and male.

WHAT THE FUTURE MAY HOLD

What may finally be necessary is to develop the ideas of the new emerging paradigms with and through television promotions and continuing the education of the population through journalism, magazines, books and films pertaining to the viability of a revised vision of gender and sexual identification code that is more humane and vital. Individuals need not be blamed, shamed, tortured or accused of moral laxity and ineptitude because of their gender feelings and sexual choices, particularly if these are same sex choices or choices stemming from biological, physiological formation such as intersexuality, homosexuality, or bi-sexuality. Heterosexuality is not an end-all, be-all sexual identification code.

Since trouble concerning these issues within the United States military still brews, the military venues may pose challenges to guidance for the newest models of identification and understandings of the emerging scientific models, as these seem certain to arbitrate and liberate new ideas. Indeed, ours could be a brave, new world on so many fronts if we continue to have the courage to speak out. A case in point demonstrates the brewing trouble: on March 25th, *The New York Times* reported on a just released study within the military concerning a venue at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, wherein eighty to eight-five percent of the members of the military at that post reported back in the affirmative on questions posed to them regarding a specific case of a homosexual hate crime that had occurred on base. After a perceived-to-be-gay soldier had been beaten to death there, these individuals felt that gay bias was too alive and too well within the confines of the base. Further, these same individuals felt that they had personally heard excessive derogatory names, jokes and hostile remarks about gays. Additionally, eighty-five percent reported that such comments were tolerated to some extent. How can these attitudes be helped to change except through educational development programs and guidance using the most recent explications of gender difference materials, with the most scientific revelations? Indeed, these are simply outcomes with nature being the major guide and final arbiter of choices. Nurture may try to inhibit real feelings and realities, but nature will win out over nurture even as positive as nurture may be ultimately.

After all, what would drive a soldier (or soldiers) to be driven into a hostile and mad rage of such a proportion so as to kill another human being based on that other's sexual identification choice or an acceptance of one's mandated, biological disposition? It sounds like a major case of defensiveness about one's own choice, and a pure lack of understanding of the perceived «other» based on one's own lack of understanding of one's own personal identity and sexual partner choices.

Playing the devil's advocate, one could pose the following speculation to show a counterfactual situation as a metaphor within reality, through the presentation of an opposite. That is, what if the majority of individuals on the planet happened to be biologically homosexual? What if within the popular mores it was seen that heterosexuality was perceived as being immoral, unnatural, and detestable? How would heterosexuals fare under such a model? They would fare much like David Reiner did being raised as a girl, no doubt, with extreme difficulty, shame and pain. Could heterosexuals be other than what their individual nature allowed them to be?

GENDER WHEEL CONSCIOUSNESS ON A MASS LEVEL

To explore the potential use of a new paradigm shift, one could coin the use of a metaphoric WHEEL of possible gender and sexual identities that might also be useful. In terms of how individuals define themselves within their own psyches is vaster by far and probably more divergent than previously assumed. Some men feel ultra male, and some women feel ultra female, with variations within all levels of consciousness on feeling male and female. These feelings may or may not impact on sexual partner choices depending on all of the other variables, some of which may not be that obvious externally but were determined by inter-uterine forces and genetic outcomes. *Perhaps*

ultimately, it is within the genes and biology that «God's dice game» that Einstein rued to see or experience within the realm of physics, is actually played out. It would seem that nature through the sciences exposes new realities of understanding; and if it is a revelation *that can lead further from hatreds, perhaps it is within conscious wisdom for the new reality to be embraced.* Furthermore, gender and sexual identifications are not finally set within fixed and unequivocal formats, limited to two linear ideations of reality no matter how any might like to believe so.

Continuing with the gender wheel metaphor, it is clear that some men may feel like female-males (as anecdotal materials constantly reveal) and some females feel like male-females, with other variations on the metaphorical and literal levels to be identified. Potentially, then, we may have four or more metaphoric genders as opposed to two to include female; female-male; male; and male-female with no bar codes necessary to distinguish difference. These will be imagined, felt and voiced as the experiences of the possibilities will continue to be revealed individually over time, and if one chooses to discuss the topic with the germane seriousness that it deserves.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND COOPERATION

There are so many potential and possible ways to expand consciousness on this topic. Gay and lesbian pride accompanied with legal oversight and acceptance; with protections for same-sex unions; and coupled with the continuing development of acceptance of same-sex parents with their own family cohorts for all proclaimed genders and sexes will lead to a less tense overall climate and attitude on the topics, leading to more joy in the world for the variant and diverse gender and sexual identity constructs among the population. The elements that will lead to greater acceptance and openness are the same elements that will finally make the family of the heart's country extremely inclusive as opposed to exclusive. Since we are all citizens of the same universe, and since the heart is the common country of us all, we may ultimately feel more peace with gender in general.

Our planet's very life may depend upon our cooperation of understanding in terms of gender and within any and all other areas wherein mass hatreds and confusions may continue to develop and be expressed. Individual hominids and cohorts cannot afford to be rigidly fixed against understanding nature's gender and sexual identification variations, any more than one can afford to be rigidly fixed against the environment; the variations within the world's religious models; within race or ethnicity; or within any other kind of defensive hatreds of psychic possibility. Are we not still amazed that three of the world's largest religious cultures, each presumably identifying with and worshiping the same kind of monolithic God, continue death-defying hatreds, like siblings, symbolic Cains and Abels, in an endless war of rivalry, animosity and destruction? In spite of hatred's seeming power, positive thinking, meditation, self-actualization and/or prayer must be encouraged for the end of hatreds that can and do lead to genocides. The imperative, internal and external call is to work for positive, humane outcomes for the planet in general.

ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS

All have experienced hatred, however, and perhaps at times all may have felt and projected hatred, even if held only angrily within mind and not verbally expressed in instantaneous moments of rage against perceived and/or real injustices. As brutal as it may seem, too, all have probably at one time or another experienced being hated or hostilely rejected for whatever reason. Therefore, all must probably have incorporated a sense of the self as «other» in an intra-psychic way within the mind's eye as a part of metaphoric and real psychic development. If one can be individually accepting of this «other» internally, one may be able to incorporate a wider acceptance through the process of projecting a greater, more healthy sense of self acceptance into the world at large. If one

is not individually sociopathic, as some will be, individuals will realize as rational creatures how powerful a weapon love can be, constructive love, along with appreciation of variation. The imperative will become the desire to struggle against hatred and hate crimes in constructive ways, hopefully trying to change hatred into its opposite in as many realms as possible.

Imagine David Reimer's experiences of rage, anger and hatred when he discovered that he was born as a boy, accidentally castrated, and forced to live life as a girl when every ounce of life was screaming within him, «I am a boy!» David upon learning of his infancy botched circumcision wanted to kill the doctor who was in charge of his circumcision. He managed not to kill the doctor, although he was prepared to do so, but chose to confront, instead, and to passionately ask the doctor if he knew what kind of life he had been forced to live as a result of the castration? The doctor broke into tears, begging David to stay and to talk with him. David could not talk after his various expressions of personal rage and pain, and ran out of the hospital. The pistol that he had brought to the hospital was still snuggled away into his jacket pocket, unused. He allowed himself his expression and not the murder of another human being. How heroic this child became in that moment, as he had been all along throughout the tortured experiences of his young life.

OTHER VENUES WITH EXPRESSIONS OF GENDER BEING: FILMS

Within the artistic films, the fictive *Ma Vie En Rose (My Life in Pink)* and the biographical drama *Boys Don't Cry* audiences are given other gender models and lessons in gender-identity, with distress and stress as underpinnings to the gender themes of both movies. In the fictive model of *My Vie En Rose*, potential psychic understanding in relationship to gender is expressed within the plot and character structure, with both films attempting to metaphorically speak to society at large. In the journalistic and biographical *Boys Don't Cry*, physical violence and gender confusions, related to gender identity, rape and murder are shared. Of the two films, *Ma Vie En Rose* is the lighter one, but as with anything having gender as its main theme, the painful confusions within society on the topic abound.

Within the plot and narrative of the story of *Ma Vie En Rose*, the child Ludovic (at the age of seven) ponders his gender identity after realizing that he does not seem to be like the other boys around him. He prefers to be like his mother: to dress like her, to wear make up like her, and to even dance and stretch as she does while she is playful and exercising. He determines at that time in his life that he is a girl/boy, who will one day grow up to marry his best friend, Jerome, at which time Ludovic will become a full-fledged girl. In his pretend world of growing up, the transition from girl/boy to girl is made easily within his consciousness, as with magical thinking. Through his own imagination, he attempts to describe his best sense of understanding of his inner psychological workings to reveal his best sense of understanding of the self of Ludovic, child of seven. Later, after being exposed to educational attempts with gender, he ruminates further and explains to himself and to others that God had dropped off his extra X chromosome down the chimney of Ludovic's home at the time of his birth, mistakenly leaving a Y one in its place. As well, Ludovic determines in trying to define his gender identity that he is «a scientific error» after gathering and pondering the information that he has gathered within the scope of his child view.

Ludovic's chum, Jerome, was happy with the possibility that one day he would marry Ludovic, within the innocent expressions of love, until someone informed him that to marry Ludovic would lead him to hell. The imaginary hell to the child Jerome is like the yawning chasm of despair that holocaust is to the mind of the rational and often spiritual adult.

Thus, Jerome's indoctrination on hell leads him to reject Ludovic, as do all of Jerome's family members, friends and school chums. Indeed, even Ludovic's parents reject him when all of their local and social cohort seem to reject the whole family because of Ludovic's displays of what may be seen as mainstream female gender identification, and even at his joy in his predisposed

femininity. The family then casts all of the blame for their misfortunes (which quickly befall them) onto Ludovic's blossoming gender wonder.

Indeed, after Ludovic's father loses his job with Jerome's father, whom was his employer, Ludovic goes to live with his grandmother. This occurs after the reality of the necessity of a major move for the family is settled; for, in order to find new employment for the father, the family is forced into a new social order of another community far in miles from the one that they were to leave because of the ostracism. After settling into their new home, Ludovic is called from his grandmother's back to his parents' sides. Ultimately, Ludovic's mother forces him to get his long hair cut short, and instructs him that he must be the «boy» that they all know him to be, more closely aligned, that is, to the gender identity that might cause them less social rejection. With his newly shorn hair, and within this new community, more accepting ways of Ludovic were expressed. His own family's original desire to love and to protect their son eventually returned, no matter how he would define himself later in his life, or how he would grow into adulthood with his own sense of his female-gender identity that might continue to develop.

The acceptance of Ludovic's parents was hard won because it meant that Ludovic would have to go through another initiation period with his parents. Their acceptance grew out of and occurred literally and symbolically within the plot structure when a very vital female child, who displayed rugged territorialism (in the mode of what has chronically been colloquially deemed as *tomboyish* in the United States) at her own birthday-costume party. She forces Ludovic into changing costumes with her. She wants to dress in his «manly» costume, and he is deemed by her to wear her own satiny dress costume. He formerly enjoyed wearing dresses; but he was forced to abandon that mode and to develop into a «better male» child at his parents' command.

When Ludovic's mother finds him and despairs at his being in a dress again, she berates him. He runs off from the party and the family, and turns to his fantasy goddess for nurturing. Finally, when the mother of the young girl who had forced Ludovic out of his manly costume notices the chastisement and rejection, she asks Ludovic's mother, «What is wrong with this? It is *just a costume*». The parents because of this confrontation are forced to see gender in a perspective that allows life be lived one moment at a time. That is, they see that this new social cohort is not as rigid in their judgments about gender as the one that they had left behind, and they could themselves see Ludovic within a new perspective. In this case, nurture and nature were happily combined for balance and harmony. Ludovic is not a scientific error, after all; Ludovic is Ludovic no matter where his experiences of his life will or may eventually lead him.

BRANDON TEENA: BEING WITHIN A RIGID GENDER-CONSCIOUS MILIEU

Unlike Ludovic who gains a form of gender reprieve and momentary freedom for himself within his local social cohort, Brandon Teena within the biographical rendering of the life story of Teena Brandon in the film *Boys Don't Cry*, Brandon as he/she knows himself/herself to be prefers to be identified as a male. The audience is introduced to the burgeoning gender and sexual identity struggles of the protagonist of his/her story. Brandon felt herself to be masculine and played her life role to its *nth* degree as a male, with as much joy as she could muster within the preferred gender and sexual identification roles. Brandon did not accept that she was a lesbian; in fact, all of Brandon's girlfriends deemed Brandon to be the best «boyfriend» that any of them had ever had. Indeed, some of them had difficulty believing that Brandon was Teena when they discovered the details of Teena Brandon's/Brandon Teena's life story.

From the psychological perspectives gleaned from within Brandon's early life were included the parameters and feelings related to feeling trapped within a lower-class setting of poverty, abandonment and sexual abuse. When did Teena begin to want to be or feel herself to be Brandon? Sensing a lack of understanding, and in striving for release of her perceived gender understanding

of herself as a male which her mother could not accept, Brandon emerged with a roaring desire to be Brandon, come hellish treatment or high water, both of which would metaphorically come his/her way. Psychologically, was Brandon trying to be a better male than those males whom had abused him/ her? Was her portrayal as Brandon a way to shield herself further from males by being a male herself in disguise? Could a classic analysis have helped Brenda/Brandon to answer the difficult questions? Clearly, no one knew or knows.

Brandon's mother tried to break up Brandon's relationships with the females with whom he/she was involved, branding them as «lesbian» relationships to the parents of his paramours. However, Brandon did not feel that he/she was a lesbian; he/she felt that he was a heterosexual. Was this a delusion or his experience of reality? Psychologists had informed Teena Brandon that she was having a sexual identity crisis (or words to that effect) earlier when she had sought treatment. Brandon's audience cannot really answer the question of what gender Brandon Teena/Teena Brandon actually was, even though some individual audience members might have struggled with similar issues. Is it that the audience ponders and cannot truly answer the question, «Is it what individuals feel themselves to be the ultimate encompassment of reality for them?» Clearly at some level, one could say «yes» to that question in terms of empathy for the character. Biographical evidence from the life of Teena Brandon indicated that she was considering a sex change operation that would have allowed her to more easily adapt to the perceived personal sense of identity as Brandon Teena. Then she would have been able to be more closely identified and accepted as her preferred human end-product as male. Would that have provided a final gender sexual-identification answer for Brandon/Teena?

When the actress Hilry Swank won the Oscar award for playing Brandon, she noted that she admired «his» (Brandon's) courage; this statement angered Brandon's mother that Hilry spoke of her daughter as a male. JoAnne Brandon could not accept her child's sense of male identity, neither when Teena was alive nor after her death. Does it really matter ultimately whether any of us can or cannot accept who Teena Brandon was or was not; it would seem that hers was a life interrupted in the greatest and most violated of ways, interrupted before she could make her ultimate goal of becoming a male through surgical phalloplasty. She was raped and murdered by two low-life criminals of the Nebraska heartland, and the film spares no sense of the ultimate violation, as other innocents died along with her, those who more readily accepted her with her gender identity contradictions, complexities and perhaps her confusions.

Marvin T. Nissen and John L. Lotter raped and sodomized Teena Brandon when they discovered that she had female genitalia, their ultimate determination about her gender identity. Because she had been posing as a male with them for several months, and because she was so successful with her male identity, they felt enraged. With their rage and brutality, they turned on her in a way that was an ultimate violation for any sexual being. In truth, they killed Brandon/Teena because he/she had reported them to the local authorities for their raping and sodomizing violence, charges that the sadistic duo vehemently denied. However one accepts Brandon Teena or Teena Brandon, that persona in final attempts to develop a final personality (as a person in general) determined NOT to be a victim, a powerful and final reminder of strength and heritage for all victims of rape whether they be male or female.

RECKONINGS

Hope lives for those who struggle with gender and sexual identification issues (whether they be heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual or intersexual) despite other brutal murders of gays, including the murder at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, of Barry Winchell, a non-traditional gay mentioned earlier. Barry Winchell had fallen in love with a pre-operational trans-sexual named Calpernia Addams and presumably Barry was killed by two heterosexuals because of his sexual-partner choice of Calpernia and for being «supposedly» gay.

After the brutal murder of another young gay man, Matthew Shepard of Laramie, Wyoming, a journalistic, theatrical drama to his honor (*The Laramie Project*) opened off-Broadway in New York City in the Spring of 2000, produced at The Union Square Theater, in the chic upper East Village. More dramatically perhaps, at the sentencing of one of Matthew's convicted murderers, Matthew's father read a wrenching and intensely moving statement *against* the death penalty for the tried convicts. Mr. Shepard wanted the murderers of his beloved son to have to live each day of incarcerated life with the memory that every day of jailed but «alive» life was owed to his beloved and gentle son Matthew. Mr. Shepard felt that his own judgment was an appropriate honoring of Matthew's memory and a reminder to the criminals (and to any contemplating such actions) of the awful reality of the crime committed.

In summary, these films – any other and all art forms, or research tools and outcomes (medical or otherwise) extending from any mentioned within the body of this essay or elsewhere – may one day assist members of the population-at-large in grappling in earnest, and realistically with the cognitive realities related to the variety of gender identification modes and sexual partner choices to be known within the general population. Ultimately, an educational requirement may be necessarily established related to the reality, complexity, and diversity of knowledge on these topics of gender and sexual identification issues. As it turns out, nurture does not account for a full answer to nature's genetic renderings, and nurture cannot twist the realities of experience and need to fit more rigidly constructed possibilities.

Various religious leaders, synods and congregations of all faiths are also reaching out to embrace new legislation on behalf of gays and lesbians. Since the human heart is the country of us all, perhaps one day there will be a reckoning wherein diversity within all tapestries of being will surprisingly be accepted with the broader understanding of the fuller demography of nature's complexities. Thus, this earth could eventually be made that safer and more humane ship of planetary wonder that many hope for, and have hoped for all along. The earth's gender wheel may be inclusive, not reductive, helping all to feel welcome. Indeed, law makers in The Netherlands, on September 12, 2000, reported from The Hague that their bill «to convert the country's registered same-sex partnerships into full – fledged marriages, complete with divorce guidelines and wider adoption rights for gays» had passed in its Parliament. This turn of the wheel of justice in that land was greeted with applause and embraces of the witnesses to the passing of that legislation. Thus, the gender wheel itself metaphorically turns with a greater volition and hum.

The Gender Wheel

He felt that he was a she
and she felt that she was a he,
while the others considered themselves
within a combination of between or
the usual mixture of things, stated
in their birth colors of pink and blue:
the ritual of iconography. Life does
not change much, just turning around
on a ground of letters and misapprehen-
sions. Any questions. One cannot stop
this wheel to get off the world's by-ways;
let all stay, therefore, while learning Love's
most mysterious understandings, together.

Poems of Reflection, Book II: Love Poem Trilogy

The madness of the word-lover Dr. William Chester Minor: Madman and «Amateur» lexicographer

MAX DAY ()*

When madness and creativity co-exist, how do they inter-relate? In his book, «The Professor and the Madman», Simon Winchester (1999) elaborates an excellent example of this phenomenon.

How do we understand the story of Dr. Minor, the madman of the title, his growth, development, misfortune and creative work despite his illness. He came to official attention on Saturday morning at 2 AM of February 17, 1872 in the slum area of Lambeth Marsh, when he shot and killed George Merrett.

Merrett, had moved with his wife from Wiltshire two hours from London to Lambeth, where they were raising six children, while he worked in a nearby brewery. His wife was expecting a seventh child. Lambeth was a marshy, swampy area with pathways, neglected by London, an area of shacks, warehouses and brothels, where plays not acceptable in London were performed. He was awakened at 2 AM to go to work stoking coal. He was shot by William Minor, who chased and killed him. Dr. Minor acknowledged he had done it, said he was chasing someone who had rifled his room and conceded he had shot the wrong man. This fear of intruders turned out to be a typical delusion of his. He also showed some humor in saying of course he would not shoot a woman and teasing the policeman for not searching him then and there, since he might be carrying another gun or knife.

William Minor was thirty-seven years old, a surgeon and a former U. S. army officer from New Haven Connecticut. He had retired from the American Army because of ill-health. He had been in an asylum in the United States. He had come to England to paint in order to quiet his «inflamed mind». He was described as «a gentleman of fine education and ability, but with eccentric and dissolute habits». Although he could afford better living quarters, he moved to Lambeth, which offered easy access to women. He had done the same in New York. As a result he

(*) 108 Lake Avenue, Newton Centre, Massachusetts 02459-2108, USA.

had had venereal diseases and now suffered from gonorrhea, for which he treated himself by injecting his urethra with white Rhine wine. He would disappear for days at a time and on his return ostentatiously leave bills from the best hotels lying around. He was constantly afraid people might break in. Dr. Minor had the floor covered with a sheet of zinc to prevent men coming through the timbers at night. He also kept a bowl of water beside each door of whatever room he was in, «because evil spirits would not dare cross the water to get to» him. Once airplanes were invented, he complained that men would break into his room at night, transport him to Constantinople and force him to perform lewd acts with cheap women and small girls.

He was especially afraid of the Irish and had complained several times to Scotland Yard that especially Irish men, were trying to break into his rooms at night to poison him. A «Bethlem watcher», who had been assigned to watch him for twenty-four nights testified that Dr. Minor would accuse him of having been paid by someone to molest him while he slept. Then he would spit many times to remove something from his mouth and search under the bed for men planted there to annoy him. Because lower class Irish men molested him in unspeakable ways at night, he began to sleep with his revolver under his pillow. In fact, his room contained money, bullets for his gun and a commission from the U. S. Army. On the night of the murder, he woke to find a man at the foot of his bed. So he reached for his gun and pursued him but shot the wrong man. The patient felt he was being pursued for an act he had been forced to commit while in the U. S. Army and therefore had gone to Europe to escape his demons and to live as a gentleman and paint. According to the thirty year old McNaughton rule he was declared innocent by reason of insanity and was «to be detained in safe custody until her Majesty's Pleasure be known», that is, for the rest of his life.

William Minor was born in June 1834 in a missionary hospital to a family of pious Congregationalist missionaries in Ceylon. His father was a printer by trade. His parents arrived in Ceylon in March 1834. Minor was born three months later. His sister was born when he was two. His mother died of consumption when he was three years old. In his childhood he broke a collarbone in a fall from a horse, was knocked unconscious after a fall from a tree and had malaria and blackwater fever. Many physical and emotional traumata were packed into those early years. In 1837, when he was three his father left his two-year old daughter behind with some missionaries in Ceylon, while he and William traveled to the Malay Peninsula so his father could find a second wife in the missionary communities there. In general, early marriage was encouraged in those days. Especially missionaries were encouraged to go to foreign countries already married and to remarry quickly, should the spouse die, in order to prevent the missionary man from going native (Bert Wyatt-Brown, 2000). He found an orphaned woman, courted her and married her in Ceylon the following Christmas in 1839, when William was five. She was an energetic woman, who learned Singhalese and taught it in a local school, to William and to the six children she bore. One half-brother died at the age of one and another at five. A half-sister died at eight. How old William was at the time of these deaths we do not know. He was certainly surrounded by sickness and death from before the age of three on.

Although the family's accommodations were poor, the school was excellent. His father's printing work gave William access to newspapers and literature. When his parents traveled by horse and buggy they took him along and encouraged him to learn as many of the local languages as possible. By the age of twelve, he spoke good Singhalese, fairly good Burmese, some Hindi and Tamil and a smattering of various Chinese dialects. He later told his doctors that by the time he was thirteen he developed «lascivious thoughts» about the beautiful Ceylonese girls, who ran naked on the beach. Perhaps in response to these pubescent longings, his parents sent him back to the United States, when he was fourteen, to live with uncle Alfred in New Haven. The ship journey took four weeks. Having been torn away from the temptations of the tropics he felt fiercely attracted to a young English girl aboard ship. He later told his doctors that he did not consummate his desires nor «gratify himself in an unnatural way» regarding her nor the Ceylonese girls. Perhaps being sent away repeated the loss of his mother. His feelings about sex were always filled with feelings of

guilt and shame. He embarked on studies, which led to training in medicine. His parents returned to the United States when he was twenty. He graduated from Yale Medical School, when he was twenty-nine and then enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War.

Four days after he enlisted the Battle of Gettysburg took place. At first he was in New Haven, safely away from the extreme bloodshed. Soon he was transferred to Virginia, much closer to the scene of action with two men dying from infections for every one wounded. He was described as a sensitive man, courteous to a fault, somewhat academic, too gentle for soldiering, a man who read, painted watercolors and played the flute.

General Grant began his all-out campaign to extirpate the Confederacy. It was first fought in a swampy area where neither cavalry nor artillery could be used. Instead there was man-to-man fighting with muskets and minie balls, which expanded explosively on hitting the individual. In addition, the Union Army had 150,000 Irishmen, who had been drafted or had voluntarily enlisted to fight against the South, to whom the British were allied. They hoped that they might learn how to fight, so they could return to Ireland and expel the hated British from there. With Emancipation, they lost their economic advantage over the blacks and so their sympathy for the Union's cause waned. They began to desert in larger numbers after the Battle of the Wilderness at the rate of five thousand men a month. Nominally the punishment for desertion was to be shot. In practice, the army used other techniques. Many were thrown into prison, locked into solitary confinement, flogged or fined heavily. Some were humiliated by having to wear boards reading «Coward». Still others were «bucked» for days; their hands were tied at the wrists over the knees, with a stick tied under the knees so they suffered excruciatingly. Some might be gagged with a bayonet tied across the open mouth. Others could be suspended by their thumbs, made to carry a yard of rail across the shoulders, be drummed out of town, be forced to ride a wooden horse, be forced to walk around in a barrel shirt with no other clothes on and in one case be crucified. The acme of humiliation was being branded with a capital D on the buttock, hip or cheek. It was a letter one and one half inches high burned on with a hot iron or cut with a razor and filled with black powder to cause irritation and indelibility. One Irishman, who had deserted, was given fifty lashes and then Dr. Minor was forced to brand him with a D. The soldier would be seen as a deserter in the United states but a bit of a hero back home. Dr. Minor feared he would spread the word of Dr. Minor's cruelty and he, in turn, would become a justifiable butt for Fenian revenge. His guilt turned into subsequent fear of retaliation.

He worked very hard at being a surgeon and was among the few, who were promoted to the upper ranks of regular army officers. He was regarded as a skillful physician, an excellent operator and efficient scholar but also of «unexceptional» moral character. Two years later he worked at Governor's Island in New York, caring for people sick with cholera, said to have been brought in by Irish immigrants. He began to carry his revolver when off duty. He began to frequent bars and brothels in the Lower East Side and Brooklyn, often roistering through the night, to the alarm of his colleagues. He also had frequent venereal infections.

In 1867, when he was thirty-four, his father died and he suddenly announced his engagement to a young woman. Again we see a turning to a woman, on the occasion of a loss. Her mother forced the woman to break the engagement. This embittered him. Dismayed by his behavior, the army sent him to a minor post in Florida, in effect demoting him. He became furious with the army and took to painting. He missed his debauches. He began to feel that the soldiers were looking at him suspiciously, were muttering about him. His best friend began to tease and persecute him in ways he would not discuss. He even challenged his friend to a duel. They tried reasoning, naturally, to no avail. That summer he complained of headaches and vertigo. He was sent back to New York, where he was examined intensively. By fall it was clear to them his mind was beginning to falter. At thirty-four he was diagnosed as suffering from a monomania, or partial insanity. He was deemed to be suicidal and homicidal. Yet, when he was ashamed for it to be public knowledge that he was being sent to the Government Office for the Insane in Washington, now Saint Elizabeth's Hospital,

he had enough influence to be allowed to travel there by himself. He remained there for eighteen months, was allowed to wander about freely, even past the White House, and to collect his monthly paycheck. The following spring an Army board declared him to be retired from the Army, because of «the disturbance of his cerebral functions», brought on by exposure to the Florida sun or the horrors of the war. He retired from the American Army because of ill-health, because of «a lesion on the brain». In February of 1871, he left to stay with a friend and then with his half-brother in New Haven. In the fall of the year he left for London «to paint».

In April 1872, Dr. Minor had come to Broadmoor, newly built since the Hospital of Saint Mary of Bethlehem was overfilled. He was judged to be neither suicidal, epileptic nor a danger to others and was put into a comfortable block kept for parole patients. Because he was well-born, well-educated and had a U. S. Army pension, he was given two connecting cells, while other prisoners were given only one cell. In the daytime the doors were open and he could take his ease in the garden. The American consul got permission to send him his clothes, a prayer book, a box of photographs, four pipes, cigarette papers, a bag of tobacco, a map of London, a diary and a watch. He was also given his drawing materials, so he could occupy himself constructively. He had his books sent from New Haven and bought more from London. Then he had bookshelves installed floor to ceiling and converted one room into a library. He kept his easel and painting materials in the other room along with a selection of wine and bourbon. He took up the flute again and gave lessons. He even paid some prisoners to clean his rooms.

His delusions became more fixed and more bizarre over the years. He believed that small boys were put in the rafters over his room to come down at night, chloroform him and force him to perform indecent acts. It is not clear whether it was with the boys or with women. He would claim he woke with abrasions around his mouth and nose, where the gas bottle had been clamped. He would barricade his room with furniture not to be surprised by anyone trying to enter. Later he felt intruders came in from under the floor or through the window and poured poison into his mouth. He insisted on being weighed every morning to see if the poison had made him heavier. One wonders what his fantasy was about what he was «forced to swallow». Later he even asked another patient to cut his throat. Even later he felt that his spinal marrow was pierced and his heart was operated on with instruments of torture. Still later he felt electric currents were being passed through his body. He felt that he was being transported to as far as Constantinople to perform lewd acts like a pimp. Yet by day he talked coherently and intelligently, worked in the garden and at times was cheerful.

At the same time he became regretful about his crime and wrote to the widow Merrett, some seven years after the murder, to express his remorse and to ask if he could help her with money. She said she forgave him. She even got permission to visit him. The first meeting was tense at first and then grew relaxed. Soon she was visiting him once a month. She also agreed to bring him parcels of books from antiquarian dealers in London. In one of these parcels, he stumbled across Dr. James Murray's appeal for volunteers to read and find the earliest uses of words with example sentences with changes in meanings and example sentences. He volunteered to be a reader for the proposed Oxford English Dictionary in 1881 or 1882 and was accepted by Dr. Murray.

For the next twenty years he was busy with this detailed intellectual task, carefully going over books from the seventeenth century. He developed his own master lists like a rolodex for scrupulously investigating each word. He would write to the dictionary and ask what letter or word was being worked on and then send in the appropriate citations. At first he sent in small packets every month and after a while large packets every week. The first fascicle of the dictionary was published after four years of work and it took another forty years for the first edition to be completed. When Dr. Murray had trouble with finding examples of the word «art», other readers sent in one or two quotations, while Dr. Minor sent in twenty-seven sentences. This was the beginning of a relationship between Dr. Murray and Dr. Minor, that combined scholarship, fierce tragedy, reserve, deep gratitude, mutual respect and a growing amity. It was seven years before they were to meet. Dr.

Murray had been told that Dr. Minor was living in an insane asylum by Mr. Winsor, the Librarian of Harvard College. Another American had urged Dr. Murray to visit Dr. Minor and, with the encouragement of the governor, he did so. The two ate together with the governor. Dr. Minor was a favorite of the governor's children. Dr. Murray found him to be «cultivated, scholarly, with artistic tastes and of fine Christian character». The two men knew each other personally and saw each other regularly for twenty years. They dined together frequently. Their passionate love of words was the bond between them. Dr. Murray would visit Dr. Minor, when the latter was in a low mood and wanting comfort but not if he was angry. He kept sending a hundred new slips a week or even twenty a day. The nature of the relationship, mostly by mail, was between obsequious and detached, dignified and yet almost toadying to get recognition for what he was doing.

There had been some improvement in the early eighties, perhaps as he got involved in this work. When he reached fifty in 1884, his step-mother visited him after his father's death. He grew more paranoid, complaining that someone was defacing his books and abusing them. Again delusions increased after a loss. The complaints about some beings stealing into his rooms at night from the rafters continued. The fact that many fires occurring between ceilings in buildings in the United States had led insurance companies to refuse to insure buildings with such spaces, bolstered his feelings about beings hiding in the rafters to do him harm after dark. Yet his work continued. He was more likely to complain in the summertime but as fall approached he worked more intensively. He may have contributed ten thousand slips, including book, page number, first use and quotations.

The superintendent was notified that two of Dr. Minor's relatives had committed suicide and, in case this was a hereditary condition, to keep an eye on him. Yet no restrictions were placed on him. Despite the fact that the new superintendent was a martinet, Dr. Minor was allowed to keep a pocket knife to trim uncut pages in his books, as well as his wine bottles. A year after the disclosure of his relatives' suicides, he started to walk outside in all weathers, saying it was his business if he wanted to catch a cold. He refused to see some army friends, saying he did not know them. He began to eat fitfully, lots of porridge, sago and custard every Tuesday but bacon and other meat only occasionally. Was his change in diet related to his regressing?

His step-mother died in 1900. At the age of sixty-six in 1901 he began to show signs of decline and they began to feel he should spend his remaining years in the United States, close to his family. By then he had been in Broadmoor for thirty years. Sadness was enveloping him. His closest colleague among the patients, an artist who had stabbed his father to death, had died. The circle of people who were close to him was narrowing. He decided to amputate his penis. The author suggests there was also the possibility that he did this out of guilt over what he had done to Mrs. Merrett by murdering her husband. Since he may have been attracted to her during her frequent visits, he decided to pay the price. It may also have stemmed from a religious re-awakening that had begun two years earlier. He had abandoned the Congregationalist Christianity he had been raised in while at Yale Medical School and by the time he was in the army called himself an atheist. Dr. Murray, a frequent visitor, had discussed with him the comfort he might get from accepting a superior divinity. He began to see himself as a deist. He stopped seeing his illness as a treatable sadness and saw it, instead, as a state of sin, that needed purging and punishment. His prodigious sexual appetites and compulsive masturbation had led to an enlargement of his penis. It had to come off. Then on December 3, 1902, he tied a ligature around the base of the penis, waited for ten minutes or so for the arteries and veins to compress and then amputated the penis. He threw the offending member into the fire, lay down for a while to ensure there was no hemorrhaging and then called an attendant. He was taken to an infirmary, where he remained for a month. The stump of the penis healed and he was able to urinate. The Deity could be satisfied that there would be no more sexual romps.

A year later in 1903, when he was sixty-six years old, his brother Alfred raised the possibility of Dr. Minor being allowed to move back to the United States. Dr. Minor had lost his vitality, now

that he had no more work to do on the dictionary. When he was seventy, he showed more signs of infirmity, falling in his bath, hurting his leg and suffering chills. Despite this increasing weakness, he continued to paint and wanted to send one of his better paintings to the Princess of Wales, Queen Mary-to-be. The laws of the land forbade this, since some patients felt they were related to royalty. His several appeals to higher authorities were to no avail. To make matters worse, when he asked for his painting back it had been lost permanently. To add more insults to these injuries, in 1910, when he was seventy-six years old, all his privileges were taken away. He was given one day's notice to move from his two-room suite of thirty-seven years to the infirmary and leave behind his books, his flute, his writing desk and his sketchpads. Through the intervention of now Sir James and Lady Murray and the good graces of Winston Churchill, it was arranged that Dr. Minor be delivered to his brother, who took him home to the United States to live in Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington.

After five more years, he began to lose his temper and hit people but with little ability to hurt them. He was seventy-five years old but was slender, his spine was bowed, he shuffled as he walked, he had lost his teeth and he was bald. The paranoia lived on, so that he dreamt of the appalling acts the little girls made him perform in his nightly excursions. His delusions grew worse. He complained that his eyes were regularly pecked by birds, people force-fed him through a funnel and then hammered on his fingernails. Pygmies hid under the floor boards of his room. He was occasionally irritable but mostly read and wrote alone in his room. In 1918, he was finally formally declared to be suffering from dementia praecox of the paranoid type, now called delusional psychosis. In 1915 he donated his books to the Bodleian Library through the agency of Lady Murray, since her husband was now dead.

By 1918 he began to show signs of dementia and senility superimposed on the schizophrenia. He began to stumble, injure himself, get lost, lose his temper, grow dizzy, tire easily, lose his eyesight and forget things. In 1919 he was transferred to the Hartford Retreat at the request of his nephew, since he no longer seemed dangerous in any way. In 1920 at the age of eighty-six, he caught a cold, developed bronchopneumonia and died.

What do we see from his developmental history? We see the story of a man, who was born into a close knit family, where his mother got sick from tuberculosis, a killer disease in those days, and died when he was only three. How long she had been sick would tell us at what age he began to lose her. Certainly he lost some of her, when he was two years old and his sister was born but he may have been losing her piecemeal while she was growing sick. Almost at once his father showed him she could be replaced. There were several severe illnesses and breaking of bones. Who had taught him how to deal with his aggression? Fortunately the replacement two years later was an energetic woman, who along with the father encouraged his intellectual tendencies in the study of several languages. So intellectual interest in languages could be used to deal with loss and sadness. By thirteen he was obsessed with the naked Ceylonese girls on the beach and these lay in the tangle of sexual fantasies that he suffered from for the rest of his life. There were many more separations again at thirteen, when he was sent back to New Haven to his uncle. Again he immersed himself in intellectual pursuits, which led to his going to medical school.

As fate had it, the Civil War was on, when he graduated from medical school. One would surmise that one reason for his going into the field of medicine was a wish to do reparation for the loss of his mother. Instead here he was exposed to massacres of men and was forced to brand an Irish deserter from the army with a D. Thereafter his guilt made him expect retaliation for this act and he feared the Irish. This delusion grew fixed, so he slept with a revolver. One night he went after an «intruder» and shot George Merrett. He was recognized as delusional and was sent to Broadmoor for life. Because of his continuing interest in books he found out about the makings of the O. E. D. His intellectual background led to a relationship with the editor, so that for twenty years, using his talent for language and his relationship with Dr. Murray, he worked assiduously at supplying the dictionary with first usage, examples of usage and changes in meaning with example

sentences for over ten thousand words. The relationship with Dr. Murray, who was also interested in languages, strengthened his use of his intellectual defenses in this work. Along with this effort his sexual delusions continued. One wonders if they served the purpose of fending off the sadness of his whole life. Along with these fantasies and earlier actings out came his guilt over them, so that he blamed beings, hidden in the rafters for his nightly fantasies. They also satisfied his guilt for his contradictory wishes. As long as he had Dr. Murray, who was interested in supporting and using one of his favorite defenses in its intellectual form of the study of language, he did well despite his daily and nightly sexual fantasies and delusions. When the work was done with, he was at a loss for creative work. He even had to amputate his penis out of guilt for his sexual fantasies or murder. The murder was merely part of the need to defend himself from retaliation for his aggression expended on a deserter. When his useful work for the Oxford English Dictionary was finished, he grew more paranoid, as after the death of his step-mother.

What does it mean to be paranoid? The word is misused nowadays to mean worried or even legitimately suspicious. Therefore the name of the diagnosis has been changed to delusional psychosis. In 1911, Freud (1958) united the four clinical pictures of paranoia as contradictions of the feared state «I, a man, love him, a man». Delusions of persecution deny this feared state by saying «I do not love. I hate him. So he hates me.» In erotomania, the contradiction says «I do not love him. I love her.» In delusions of jealousy, the picture says «I do not love him. She loves him.» In megalomania, the statement is «I do not love anyone. I hate all.» The essence of these defenses was not projection, which can be found in normal people but rather contradiction (Rycroft, 1959). In each of these pictures can be found deep early sadness, which is dealt with by one of these forms of contradiction. Concentrating on that sadness in psychotherapy (Day & Semrad, 1978) will allow the delusions to diminish and disappear.

Is this an unusual case? Not as much as we would like to think. This particular example of creativity in the midst of madness is very striking but can be found in many instances.

One of the earliest examples I met with was at Boston State Hospital. Whenever there was a fire, they first called the superintendent and then the fire department. If they called the fire department first, the firemen would arrive first and smash the doors and windows to get in and let the smoke escape. Since the superintendent was the first to be notified, he would be there with an unlocked door to welcome them and they would not have to be as freely destructive as they would otherwise have been. When the fire was put out, who knew how to turn off the water sprinkler system? A paranoid schizophrenic, who knew where all the pipes and valves were located in nineteen buildings. He was valued for this. He was also a house painter and although he saw hues in the paint, which the rest of us could not, he did his work very well. He had these talents. I do not know whom he had a relationship with but the hospital staff certainly valued his abilities.

In one therapy group I had a paranoid schizophrenic, who was abandoned by his parents for two months, when he was four months old. His mother had not recovered from the death of her first husband. He got sick at the age of twelve, when his father had a major depression. His mother danced in her nightgown in his bedroom for him at night. When he left for college he grew paranoid. Later in my group, when he got angry at me, he had to go home and hide under the bed for fear the atom bombs would be falling on him. Using the same paranoid fantasy and the good offices of an individual therapist who saw him three times a week, he was able to do the ground work for the plans to dispose of toxic waste sites in Massachusetts. Here we have a man with talents, undoubtedly also related to the splendor of his delusional life, who was valued for his ability to put them to work. He also had a relationship with an individual therapist he saw three times a week, as well as with my therapy group twice a week, a social worker, a psychopharmacologist, a work therapist and three other therapists.

In the same therapy group, I had another paranoid schizophrenic, who had been sick since his teens. He was so paranoid he would not tell me details of his delusions for twelve years. Nevertheless he went to work as a volunteer in a radiology library, where he was exploited for four years. When

he wanted also to see an individual therapist, he finally asked to be paid so as to earn the money to pay for that therapy. He had all along been afraid of all medication, since he got tardive dyskinesia from medication during an earlier hospitalization. For ten years he refused all medication. Yet he researched every drug mentioned by any other group member, told them the required dosage and told them the advantages and side-effects of every drug. He would also research the background and training of every physician mentioned by other group members. He similarly did very good research work in the radiology library. His suspiciousness also made him a good researcher. Finally he was rewarded with a paying job, when he felt the need for money.

I treated the husband of a paranoid woman, who was being trained as a psycho-analyst. She had a deep relationship with her therapist, who was of the savior type during her whole life and had indeed saved over one hundred Jewish children during the Holocaust. His wife seemed productive despite her paranoia.

In each of these four cases, not as romantic and dramatic as the Madman of the presentation, each person had a talent. When he had a relationship in which he was valued for this talent and felt the need for such activity, he could do productive or creative work. Some of the time, the very work was intimately related to his delusional system, which he used to deal with his personal pain. Some of the time it was not.

Dr. Minor was unusual in that he had been educated enough so as to be highly useful in an endeavor, which we intellectuals value so much.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Day, M., & Semrad, E. (1978). Paranoia and paranoid states. In A. Nicholi (Ed.), *The Harvard Guide to Modern Psychiatry* (pp. 243-252). Cambridge: Belknap Press.
- Freud, S. (1911). Psycho-analytic Notes on an Auto-biographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides). In *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (Vol. 12, pp. 1-82). Trans. J. Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1958.
- Rycroft, C. (1959). Miss Y: the analysis of a paranoid personality. In *Psycho-analysis and Beyond*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Winchester, S. (1999). *The Professor and the Madman*. New York: Harper-Collins.
- Wyatt-Brown, B. (2000). Personal communication. (See Houghton Library for American Board of Commission for Foreign Missionaries).

Oedipal triangles and regression in Polanski's *Knife in the Water* (1962), *Cul-de-Sac* (1966) and *Death and the Maiden* (1995)

GEORGIANA M. M. COLVILE (*)

«... La mémoire n'est pas en nous, c'est nous qui nous mouvons dans une mémoire-Etre, dans une mémoire-monde.»

Gilles Deleuze¹

Roman Polanski does not suffer fools gladly, as became apparent during a recent BBC interview², and why should he? Like most artists, he works through the traumas of his past by creating films but doesn't relish having his nose rubbed in it. The programme nevertheless proved quite useful, as material on Polanski is scant at the moment, so I'll come back to it on and off.

Like the so-called «midget» he plays in *Chinatown* (1974), «Polanski is first a fighter endowed with an energetic life-drive in reverse proportion with his size (5'4")»³. Precisely because he has experienced several terrible traumas since he was eight, emerging each time with the resilience of a true survivor, critics, interviewers etc... find it almost impossible to separate his work from his life. I will not attempt to do so but will try to probe further and show how experience has produced a

(*) Université François Rabelais, Tours, U. F. R. Anglais et Langues Étrangères Appliquées, 3, rue des Tanneurs, 37041 Tours Cedex, France.

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *L'Image-Temps*, Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1985: pp. 130-131. Reference: «Deleuze».

«Memory is not within us but we ourselves move within a Being of memory, a world of memory». My translation.

² BBC 2, May 27, 2000, 11.30 pm, Roman Polanski was interviewed by Mark Cousins for that week's *Scene by Scene* programme.

³ Dominique Avron, *Roman Polanski*, Paris: Rivages/Cinéma, 1987: p. 19. My translation. Reference: «Avron».

kind of unconscious patterning throughout the corpus of his films, by examining three of them in detail.

First some biographical facts: Roman Polanski was born in Paris in 1933. Unfortunately his parents returned to Krakow in 1936 and in 1939, as Jews, they were forced to live in the ghetto. His mother was sent to Auschwitz and murdered in 1941, his father survived Mathausen and remarried after the war. Young Roman escaped, living a hand-to-mouth existence, hiding in Krakow families, witnessing unspeakable Nazi horrors. His mother's death and the holocaust years constituted his first and primal trauma.

Polanski obtained a Fine Arts degree and studied acting in Krakow, in addition to graduating from the Lodz film school in Poland, one of the best in the world, where he produced several shorts before his only Polish feature film *Knife in the Water* (1962), which remains a classic today. In Poland he worked with Wajda, Munk and Skolimowski. From 1957 on, Polanski led a semi-nomadic existence, travelling and working in Paris, Brussels, Rome, Amsterdam, London, Los Angeles. His first brief marriage broke up in 1960, the year he left Poland for the West. He stayed awhile in Britain, where he made *Repulsion* (1965) and *Cul-de-sac* (1966). *The fearless Vampire Killers* (1967) was shot in Italy. In 1968 he married actress Sharon Tate in London, shot *Rosemary's Baby* in Hollywood and settled in the Los Angeles area. 1969 brought the second major trauma, the savage, grizzly murder of the then pregnant Sharon Tate and some of the couple's friends in Bel Air by Charles Manson's gang of satanists, during a period Polanski still describes as a peak of personal and professional happiness. In the early 70s, Polanski went to Switzerland and lived four years in Rome, made two of his bloodiest films, *MacBeth* (1971) shot in England and *Chinatown* (1974) made in Hollywood. He shot the comedy *What?* (1973) in Rome and a brilliant adaptation of Topor's *The Tenant* (1976) in Paris. After more travelling, Polanski was arrested in Los Angeles under charges of having sex with a 14-year-old girl, allegedly a prostitute: trauma number three. After forty-two days in jail, he jumped bail and left the USA for ever. He settled in France, spent almost a year shooting *Tess* (1979), explored the Himalayas, then worked in the theatre during the early 80s, directing and acting in Schaffer's *Amadeus* in Warsaw and Paris. He wrote his autobiography *Roman*⁴ (the title plays on his first name and the French word for novel) and published it in France in 1984. He shot *Pirates* (1986) in Tunisia and the American-produced thriller *Frantic* (1987) in Paris. The later years have finally brought Polanski a more settled existence in Paris, where he is married to French actress Emmanuelle Seigner⁵ and has children. Two strong films were produced in the 1990s: *Bitter Moon* (1992) and *Death and the Maiden* (1995). His latest film, *The Ninth Gate* (1999), reverts to the demonology theme of *Rosemary's Baby* in a lighter vein. He has produced fourteen feature films over twenty-eight years. The 1960s and 70s were especially prolific.

I've noticed a strong tendency toward triangular patterns in Polanski's work and it seems logical to relate it to the primal family threesome and its cruel break-up as well as to the three aforementioned traumas. His feature films can all be categorized into three genres (A, B & C), occasionally combining two of these. The A. films stage dramatic Oedipal configurations, usually two men and a woman, often confined within a limited prison-like space: *Knife in the Water*, *Cul-de-sac* (also C.), *Chinatown* (also B.), *The Tenant* (also B.), *Tess*, *Bitter Moon*, *Death and the Maiden*. The B. type films are horror movies, psychological thrillers and include fantastic, supernatural elements: *Repulsion*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *MacBeth*, *Chinatown* (also A.), *The Tenant* (also A.), *Frantic* and *The Ninth Gate* (also C.). The C. films are outrageous black comedies, somewhat baroque and theatrical, often spoofs, with a profusion of characters: *Cul-de-sac* (also A.), *The Fearless Vampire Killers*, *What?*, *Pirates* and *The Ninth Gate* (also B.) The less numerous C. films provide occasional comic relief from the dramatic tension and violence of the A. & B. films.

⁴ Roman Polanski. *Roman*. Paris: Robert Laffont, 1984.

⁵ Seigner stars in both *Frantic* and *The Ninth Gate*.

Here I will be dealing with three A films, *Knife in the Water* and *Cul-de-sac* from the 60s and the recent *Death and the Maiden*. Film work, like Dreamwork, can be latent or manifest. Polanski remarked in the interview that his long repressed war memories were far more in his mind now that he has children and can imagine those events seen through their eyes or those of his late parents. He refused to direct *Schindler's List* because the topic was both too close to him (the Krakow ghetto during WWII) and too far removed (the specific story of Schindler). He now plans to make his next film about the Holocaust and the Warsaw ghetto. He told the interviewer that the scene in *MacBeth*, where brutish soldiers invade MacDuff's home, was taken straight from his memory of a Gestapo raid of his parents' house in Krakow. They had made off with his beloved teddy bear; in the film MacBeth's men take a little wooden horse; furthermore, in *Cul-de-sac*, the delirious, dying Albert cries out for a lost little bear. A lost toy can become a fetish for a lost childhood with a subsequent nostalgia drive and a tendency towards regression.

The three films I've chosen all point to the past and express nostalgia for a pre-lapsarian, pre-war family life in some way. *Knife in the Water* (1962) is the only feature film Polanski has ever made in and about his mother country. Its stark style and beautiful black and white photography are typical of the period, comparable, for example to Antonioni's *L'Aventura* (1960) or Godard's *Breathless* (1959-60). Its theatrical precision – unity of time, place and tone – reflects the Lodz school. Very little happens in the main narrative: Andrej and Krystyna, a couple of about forty, who have made good, pick up a student hitchhiker of twenty or so, on their way to a lake and invite him for a twenty-four-hour sailing trip on their yacht. Like the «angel» in Pasolini's *Teorema* (1968), the boy disrupts the couple's stagnant routine. The competitive bickering between the two men and their macho showing-off in front of Krystyna create a tense atmosphere reflecting a brewing storm; they relax during occasional sunny spots and over whiskey and a game of spillikins at night. The makeshift oedipal triangle composed of a childless couple and a boy whose divorced parents have remarried and moved away is crystal clear. Andrej's super-ego authoritarian stance and the young man's insolent resistance evoke both 40s-50s education and Freud's analysis of father-son oedipal conflicts. Andrej surrounds himself with phallic toys such as his car and boat (also signs of an improving Polish economy) and his pipe, but he covets and fears the boy's one and only treasure: a large knife. Both play games with it but the father figure ends up appropriating it and using it as a castration threat, first nicking the boy with it (such wounds, like little cuts from shaving appear in most of Polanski's films), then semi-deliberately throwing it overboard, prefiguring the student's fall into the water during their subsequent fight. The young man gets his revenge by pretending to drown and hides behind a buoy, till Andrej leaves the boat supposedly to go to the police, at which point the student joins Krystyna on board. She is depicted as an ideal woman and potential mother. More intelligent and kinder than her husband, she talks little but with tact and humour, acts as a peace-maker, shows concern for others, seems to be good at everything she does, sailing, swimming, cooking, packing; she looks sexy and youthful, a natural, uncoquettish object of desire for both men. She ties in with Polanski's oedipal memories of his mother as expressed in the interview: he recalls her songs, her make-up, her smile: «she was a great mother», he concluded. The camera follows Krystyna, shooting close-ups of her face and body, from the men's, especially the student's point of view. Their ephemeral love-making during Andrej's absence, which remains off-screen except for preliminary kisses, reads like an oedipal phantasy, pinpointing the boy's obvious longing for a mother; she tells him that Andrej was just like him at his age and that they too were once destitute students, which adds conviction to the family romance pattern.

The film is so subtly structured visually, through camera angles, high and low angle shots of the young man at the top of the mast, fragmented framing of the threesome and of their individual bodies, a clever use of black and white clothes pairing the characters off in different configurations as well as the recurring of triangular shapes throughout, that the crucial importance of the script (written in collaboration with Skolimowski) may evade the spectator. No other character is ever seen and few are referred to. All three express their innermost feelings and personalities

metaphorically, probably unconsciously, through an interpolated text or *mise-en-abyme*. Krystyna and the boy get forfeits at spillikins, so she sings a song of love gone sour and he recites a nostalgic poem addressed to a lost mother. Andrej intermittently tells a story about a boy showing off by walking on broken glass and cutting himself horribly, Krystyna significantly asks him to finish it at the end, once he has finally admitted his fear at the boy's apparent drowning. The male roles are reversed when Andrej, after trying to make it «an instructive trip» for the student and wanting to prove the superiority of sailing over hiking, ends up learning a badly needed lesson in humility. The sterile, static final image of the childless couple stuck in their car on the deserted road where they started, is contrasted with the boy's preceding nimble flight and swift disappearance. Having completed his studies and his first feature film, Polanski was undoubtedly in a similar hurry to leave his devastated mother-country, where his mother had died and his remarried father couldn't cater to his ambitions. The spectator is left with a bleak view of post WWII Poland, and a vision of family life as a hopeless illusion.

Rather than constituting an oedipal triangle, the trio in *Cul-de-sac* turns out to be part of a collective manifestation of regression, also extending to secondary characters.

Freud first introduced the concept of regression in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900)⁶. Regression indicates a move backwards in logic, time or space; it also means reverting to earlier forms of thought development, object relations or behavioral patterns. Freud identifies three types of regression: *topical*, applying to the structure of the psychic apparatus, *temporal*, reverting to earlier psychic formations and *formal*, when modes of expression are replaced by «primitive» forms. According to Laplanche and Pontalis: «Freud a souvent insisté que le passé infantile – de l'individu, voire de l'humanité demeure toujours en nous».⁷ Regression frequently occurs in dreams. In Freud's words: «We call it regression if the *idea* in the dream is changed back into the visual image from which it once originated»⁸. Freud's definition of regression as the transformation of thoughts and ideas into visual images resurfaces in Christian Metz's psychoanalytic essay on film, «Le Signifiant imaginaire»⁹, in which he establishes a comparison between the psychic and the cinematic apparatus. The art of film, which consists in projecting mainly fictions onto a screen in image-sequences, essentially belongs to the register Lacan calls the Imaginary and therefore, according to Metz: «bears an indelible trace of the pre-oedipal and of the subterranean or unconscious persistence of an exclusive bond with the mother, of desire and lack as endless pursuit – i.e. the core of the unconscious and original repression»¹⁰. Such traces can be projected onto the screen by the spectator or into the film by the psyche behind the camera.

Cul-de-sac (1966) is one of Polanski's most carefully crafted and theatrical films. The opening is a take-off on Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, with two absurd small-time gangsters, Dickie and Albie, one American (Lionel Stander) and the other Irish (Jack MacGowran), in a close-knit, probably homosexual relationship, arguing over their broken-down car on a Northumberland beach as the tide comes in, and waiting for an absent boss named Katelbach. Dickie goes for help, leaving the sick Albie in the car. He finds a strange fortress, cut off at high tide, inhabited by an unlikely couple: George (Donald Pleasance) an effeminate, impotent and hysterical British former businessman, now a Sunday painter, and his unfaithful French wife Teresa (Françoise Dorléac), a self-centered gold-digger, whom Dickie sees frolicking in the dunes with a young neighbour. Equally

⁶ See Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, New York: Avon Books, 1965, pp. 571-588.

⁷ Jean Laplanche & J. B. Pontalis, *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, Paris: P.U.F., 1967 & 1976, pp. 400-403, article on «Regression».

⁸ *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, Ed. by Dr. A. A. Brill, New York: Random House, The Modern Library, 1938 & 1966, p. 493.

⁹ Christian Metz, *Le signifiant imaginaire psychanalyse et cinéma*, Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 10/18, 1977. The title essay was first published in *Communications* 23, 1975: pp. 3-55.

¹⁰ Christian Metz, *op. cit.*, p. 10. My translation.

ruled by an irrepressible «Id», Dickie terrorizes them into cooperating with him. The rescued Albie soon dies, leaving an infernal threesome, isolated in the cliff house, with countless squawking chickens underfoot and only eggs to eat. Dickie struggles to reach Katelbach by phone only to be sent packing for bungling a job. He nevertheless expects every passing car, boat or plane to be Katelbach, so he keeps holding his hosts as hostages, drinking their liquor and making George dig Albie's grave. George semi-successfully tries to bond with the vulgar Dickie. A long carnivalesque sequence follows, when instead of Katelbach, an idiotic group of George's old acquaintances turn up with an insufferable little boy. Teresa passes Dickie off as their butler cum gardner, making him serve drinks and the inevitable omelette. Polanski gradually scatters the gathering, filming them singly or in sub-groups, visually indicating their disharmony. After deliberately ruining several of Teresa's records, the brat finds a gun and tries to shoot everyone. The young neighbor returns for more sex with Teresa, who ignores him and flirts with Cecil, the owner of the gun. Finally, exasperated by the guests' chit-chat, the child's antics and Teresa's behavior, George throws everyone out and the original trio is reconstituted. The pace then escalates: Teresa sets fire to the sleeping Dickie's feet, he beats her, she tells George he tried to kiss her, George has hysterics and shoots Dickie. Cecil reappears to claim his gun, Teresa runs away with him, leaving George alone, crouching on a rock crying and watching the incoming tide, calling «Agnes!» (his mother or first wife no doubt) in a back-to-the-womb death-drive.

Nobody acts like an adult in the film and the characters' selfish irrational behavior becomes a comic device, especially when a real child's naughtiness merely reflects the grown-ups' attitudes. The Dickie-George-Teresa triangle is not oedipal, since they all three play the child's part. Contrary to *Knife in the Water*, the film is misogynous: Teresa is portrayed as self-serving, destructive and venal, the whore, as opposed to the mother, represented by Marion the child's mother, a stupid, gushing, reactionary socialite. Furthermore, the script had been written four years earlier in French, and smacks of Proustian decadence with the rise of a new vulgar middle class like the Verdurins of *La Recherche* and was easily adapted to the English equivalent (George and his friends). Here Deleuze's concept of sheets or geological layers of time connected with memory¹¹ points back to lingering post-WWII disillusion, as well as forward to the causes of the anti-materialistic hippy movement of the 60s. Here the group of people «gone mad», regressing to childish games played with guns, knives and fire, bears memory traces of the destructive, murderous Nazis in Poland and uncannily prefigures the Manson tribe. The Theatre of the Absurd aspect of the film relegates these interpretations to an unconscious level, whereas its «Noir» side, more obvious at the end, brings them closer to the surface.

While *Cul-de-sac* presented some comic relief and a baroque structure, thirty years later *Death and the Maiden* (1995) reverted to the sober economy of *Knife in the Water*, reducing the cast to yet another threesome. Based on a play by Chilean writer Ariel Dorfman, who co-wrote the script and co-produced the film, *Death and the Maiden* is a powerful political statement against torture, particularly the sexual torture of women. The initial protective caption: «A country in South America after the fall of the dictatorship», hardly disguises Dorfman's Chile, in 1989, when a compromise Christian Democrat government had just been voted in, finally putting an end to Pinochet's fascist dictatorship, while attempting to co-exist in peace with its murderers and torturers. The film functions like Freud's dreamwork, condensing and displacing the Nazis', the Manson «family»'s and Pinochet's Junta's crimes. The film revolves around three characters. First a couple in their prime, Paulina & Gerardo Escobar (Sigourney Weaver and Stuart Wilson), who like Andrej and Krystena in *Knife...* have achieved material well-being; he is a liberal lawyer and politician and she a housewife, having had to give up her medical studies after being tortured by the military, fifteen years earlier. The third protagonist, Doctor Roberto Miranda (Ben Kingsley), turns out to have been Paulina's worst victimizer.

¹¹ See Deleuze, op.cit., in note 1.

Like *Knife*, *DM* has a circular structure. This primarily verbal film's narrative unfolds as a flashback, covering a twenty-four-hour span, within the limited space of the Escobar's isolated beach house, with two or three scenes by a cliff or in a car between the two locations, framed by the narrating present, set in a concert hall. There, during the credits sequence, the focalization is established by the narrating camera as Paulina's, sitting in the audience clasping Gerardo's hand, her eyes wide with terror, as the quartet on stage plays Schubert's «Death and the Maiden». Her vision colors most of the film, which like *Repulsion*, *Rosemary's Baby* and *Tess* is female-oriented, recalling that Polanski's past traumas all concerned female victims: his mother, Sharon Tate and the girl he was accused of raping. After the concert sequence and a single shot of the stormy sea, the camera zooms in on the house at night and Paulina inside framed by the window, filmed from the outside with the camera watching her watch the road. The film falls into three acts between the concert prologue and epilogue. Act I stages Paulina alone in the house, awaiting her husband's return, filmed from inside in point of view shots, after the initial takes. The camera follows her, making her anger, anxiety and fear palpable in close-ups and medium shots of her tense facial expressions and body language. The direct address of her intense gaze establishes her point of view, beneath the narrating camera's. A storm cuts off the electricity and phone. Paulina sets a candle-lit table for two and ends up eating alone, as the radio announces Gerardo's probable chairmanship of the new government's human rights commission to investigate torture crimes committed between 1975 and 1980. Her anger turns to near hysterical war-trauma terror as an unknown car drives up.

Act II introduces the other two characters, Doctor Miranda appears as the kind stranger who has given Gerardo a lift after a break-down. They exchange names and the doctor leaves. A tense exchange between husband and wife follows over his appointment, she accuses him of «whitewashing and betrayal», since only dead victims are to be investigated. He promises her justice and they make it up in bed. Her tormented discourse voices her desire to achieve pre-lapsarian (i.e. pre-Pinochet) happiness: «to live like suburban idiots» (Andrej and Krystyna come to mind) and adopt a child (we realize later that the torture must have made her sterile).

The third act begins with the same car driving up a second time around midnight and Paulina rushing upstairs in another fit of terror. Gerardo lets in the doctor who has brought back the repaired spare-tire and wants to make friends. Gerardo offers him a drink. Unseen, Paulina watches the men in fear, as they share a friendly chat. She feigns fatigue to avoid joining them. The threesome remains fragmented: Paulina packs upstairs, creeps out and drives off in Miranda's car, while the two men comiserate over wife trouble and get very drunk in the living-room, creating a scene of comic relief akin to one in *Cul-de-sac*, when the enebriated George whines to Dickie about his marital problems. Paulina then appears outside the house, driving the car, salvaging a tape of Schubert's «Death and the Maiden» from the glove-compartment before pushing the vehicle over a cliff. She returns with a gun and claims the doctor as her prisoner, tying him up and gagging him. She recognizes him as her torturer from his voice, expressions, smell and the tape, since she had been blindfolded at the time. To convince Gerardo, Paulina at last reveals the real role of the Junta's doctors and the extent of Miranda's sadism, which included tying her up with wires and raping her fourteen times after a series of genitally applied electric shocks, to the tune of «Death and the Maiden». She now plays Miranda the Schubert and demands a video-taped confession, the alternative being death. The spectator learns how her silence had saved Gerardo's life. True to his lawyer's ethics, the latter obtains confirmation by phone of the Doctor's Barcelona alibi. Paulina then evokes the military's system of false alibis. Pressed for time by a government phone call and dissatisfied with a half-hearted confession, the couple lead Miranda to the cliff. Close to death and unrecorded he suddenly launches into a genuine, unremorseful avowal of his crimes, emphasizing his sadistic pleasure at dominating & torturing women and his regret when it ended. The contrast between the puny, cowardly man Ben Kingsley interprets so well and his monstrous past, points to a neurotic fear of women and castration as a symptom of fascism, bringing Hitler and Manson to

mind again. Gerardo and Paulina are unable to kill Miranda, so they let him go, without even obtaining any plausible proof of his guilt.

Typically, Polanski leaves both protagonists and spectators dangling at the end. Like Andrej and Krystina, Paulina and Gerardo may stand a better chance of relative happiness, having come clean with one another, and yet Paulina in the final concert shot still looks petrified, as she shares a *Night Porter*-like¹² eye contact, with the Doctor, who is sitting in an upper-circle box with his family. Just as Jean-Paul Sartre made clear in his play *Les Morts sans sépulture* (1946) that torture creates an insurmountable obstacle to existential freedom, in *DM*, Polanski and Dorfman demonstrate its destructive effect on a psyche and fascist victimizers' ability to promote an image of women as hysterical maniacs, after sexually molesting and maiming them.

In conclusion, consciously or not, Polanski's films work with the obsessive time sheets pertaining to war or other traumas, occasioned by some form of physical or psychological violence. The third character intruding on a couple's routine existence plays a part comparable to an analyst's, inciting them to talk about themselves and react genuinely to unexpected crises. At the end of *Knife* Andrej has had to remove his invincible tough-guy mask, which might save his marriage. In *Cul-de-sac*, George is made to accept that he is neither an artist, a wealthy land-owner or a romantic lover, so he finally lets Teresa go and may or may not commit suicide. When in *DM*, Miranda complains that Paulina is crazy and needs therapy, Gerardo retorts: «But *you* are her therapy!», thus ironically making him assume the official function of doctors fifteen years earlier. Thus Polanski's perpetual circular return to a traumatic past in an attempt to erase it, is achieved once more.

¹² *Night Porter*: 1974 film by Italian director Liliana Cavani, about a sado-masochistic relationship between an SS officer and a woman deportee, which is willingly resumed after WWII.

The mother complex of Bai Xianyong's persona

CHAPMAN CHEN (*)

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the mother complex of Bai Xianyong's¹ (1937-) persona by applying the psychoanalytic theories of Melanie Klein and Sigmund Freud; and the personality of Wu Hanhun, the hero of Bai's story, «Zijiage Zhisi (Death in Chicago)», will be focused upon. According to C. Hugh Holman's *A Handbook to Literature*, the persona is a public mask created by the writer or his «alter ego», whose voice is not necessarily equal to the writer; the writer just speaks through this voice (327-328). As far as this paper is concerned, Bai's persona covers its manifestations in Bai's fiction, essays, speeches, which were published between the fifties of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century.

The writer of this paper thinks that Bai Xianyong's persona had strong oral- and anal-sadistic phantasies against the mother during infancy, sowing the seed of his mother complex. Soon after Bai went to the United States to study, pathological mourning in relation to the mother complex was triggered off by the death of the actual mother and the endangering of the mother culture². The representative of Bai's persona then was Wu Hanhun, the hero of Bai's story, «Death in Chicago», which was written in the same period. Wu's mother complex was expressed in the form of phantasies about the mother's corpse, her feces, her womb, and in the form of identification with the mother, of a

(*) Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Hong Kong.

¹ Bai Xianyong (Kenneth Pai) was born in Guangxi, China in 1937. He graduated from the Foreign Languages Department of The National University of Taiwan in 1957. His father was a great general in the Early Republican Period of China. He went to study in the United States in 1963 and received a Master degree in creative writing in 1965. He had taught Chinese at Santa Barbara, University of California for more than 25 years before his retirement. He has published a lot of important short stories and one novel. His fiction draws upon the transience of life and the predicaments of the Chinese people in the 20th century. Most of his works have been translated into English.

² In the human unconscious, the mother country usually represents the mother (Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation*, 333).

homosexual tendency, and of a suicidal impulse. Phantasies about the mother's womb (claustrophobia), identification with the mother, and the homosexual tendency were also manifested by the persona of Bai in other periods. On the other hand, the mother complex of Bai's persona has been counterbalanced by a strong reparative tendency.

The psychoanalytic theories used in this paper include Sigmund Freud's theories about infantile sexuality and the mental apparatus; Melanie Klein's theories about unconscious phantasies, paranoid and depressive positions, good and bad mother imagos, claustrophobia, reparation; Marie Bonaparte's theory about *vagina dentata*; Freud's and Klein's theories about mourning; Ernest Jones' and Bonaparte's theories about necrophilia and coprophilia; Freud's and Klein's theories about homosexuality; Klein's theory about suicide, etc.

1.1. *Categorization of the mental apparatus*

Freud categorizes the mental apparatus into id, ego and superego. The id is completely unconscious. It is the reservoir of all primitive and irrational instincts. The ego is derived from a portion of the id. The periphery of the ego is conscious and perceptual while the inside of the ego consists of pre-conscious and unconscious processes and ideas. Receiving stimuli from the external world and from the id, the ego performs the function of self-preservation (Freud 15: 376-77). During the lengthy period of childhood, starting from the age of about five, one portion of the ego becomes differentiated into the super-ego. The super-ego is an internalization of parental influence, school education and societal morality. A large part of it is unconscious, and the remaining, cognizant part is what people call «conscience». Sense of guilt, or unconscious need for self-punishment, is a result of the tension between the ego and the super-ego (Freud 15: 324, 377-378, 441).

2. INFANTILE SEXUALITY

Infants are sexual beings instead of «innocent creatures» as is commonly believed. Infantile sexuality is divided into three stages by Freud. The first one is the oral stage (under one year old): the infant derives insurmountable pleasure from sucking at the mother's breast and chewing other objects. The second one is the anal stage (one to two years old): the baby takes an immense interest in defecation and develops a sadistic tendency. The third one is the phallic stage, which is predominated by the phallus (7: 9-100, 15: 385).

2.1. *Unconscious Phantasies*

In Melanie Klein's view, we perceive everything through unconscious «phantasies», as opposed to conscious fantasies (Julia Segal 29). Phantasy comprises the processes of projection and introjection. To project means to attribute to people and even objects other than ourselves feelings of our own. Driven by the life instinct, the ego projects outward a good portion of self-destructiveness as well as libido. To introject means to take into the self or to interiorize exterior situations, people, objects and the force of their impression on, subliminally feeling that they concretely exist inside us, that they are our inner objects (Klein, *Envy and Gratitude* 312).

2.2. *Paranoid Position*

Melanie Klein delineates two infantile positions or states – the paranoid position and the depressive position. Throughout life, whenever under pressure, we tend to regress to them (Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 276n, *Psycho-Analysis of Children* xi-ii). The paranoid position predominates during the first three months of life, when the mother's breast (and the father's penis) is split into a good one and a bad one. Whenever the infant feels frustration, it tends to launch a lot of phantasies

attacks on the bad breast or bad penis, and fears retaliation in kind (Segal, *Introduction to the Work of Melanie Klein* 24-28; Klein, «Some Theoretical Conclusions» 198-210).

2.3. *The Depressive Position*

In the second quarter of the first year (up to the second year), with the ego growing more integrated, the infant discovers that the good mother (and father) and the bad mother are one person, and it begins to be worried that its attacks on the bad mother (father) has harmed the good mother (father). It thus feels extremely guilty and enters the depressive position (Klein, «Some Theoretical Conclusions» 210-211, *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 264, 266, 269, 348).

3. THE EARLY OEDIPUS COMPLEX

As early as the end of the first and the beginning of the second year of life, at about the time the child enters the manic-depressive position, the Oedipus complex makes its first appearance (Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 70; Hanna Segal, *Introduction to the Work of Melanie Klein* 103). During this period, especially when the child is orally frustrated, it would phantasize that the parents are «combined» in the sense that the mother's inside contains the father's penis (Klein, *Psycho-analysis of Children* 219), and that the parents are engaged in uninterrupted coitus, obtaining oral, anal and genital gratification from each other at the child's expense (Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 208-09). Full of envy, it launches phantasied sadistic attacks on the combined parents with the primitive weapons available to it, namely, teeth, nails, urine, feces and flatus. Based on the principle of talion, it fears being attacked and conspired against by a monstrous parental couple (Klein, *Psycho-analysis of Children* 129-31, 253-54).

3.1. *Femininity Phase*

The Oedipus complex can in turn be divided into the direct Oedipus complex and the inverted Oedipus complex. The latter begins in the «femininity phase». To quote Klein,

The analysis of the very small child shows that in its earliest stages the boy's sexual development runs on the same lines as that of the girl. In the boy, the oral frustration he experiences reinforces his destructive trends against his mother's breast. As in the girl, too, the period when sadism is at its height, introduced by the oral-sadistic impulses, sets in with the withdrawal of the mother's breast – a phase in which the aim is to attack the inside of her body.

The Feminine Phase

In this phase the boy has an oral-sucking fixation on his father's penis, just as the girl has. This fixation is, I consider, the basis of true homosexuality in him. This view would agree with what Freud has said in *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood*, where he comes to the conclusion that Leonardo's homosexuality goes back to an excessive fixation upon his mother – ultimately upon her breast – and thinks that this fixation became displaced on to the penis as an object of satisfaction. In my experience every boy moves on from an oral-sucking fixation upon his mother's breast to an oral-sucking fixation upon his father's penis. It is this which forms the basis of homosexuality. (*Psycho-analysis of Children* 240)

Very soon, however, the boy's genital impulses, initially covered by his pre-genital ones, lead him to covet his mother's body and genitals as an erotic object and to hate intensely as a rival his father's penis, supposedly inside her. This is the direct Oedipus complex. It reaches its climax in the third year of life (Klein, *Psycho-analysis of Children* 241-42; *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 189-92).

3.2. *Reparation*

The working through of the depressive position spreads over the first few years of life. In the course of this process, the infant integrates its love and hate for the same object (mother/father), and repairs, both in phantasy and in reality, the injured good objects, good mother and good father (Klein, «Some Theoretical Conclusions» 213-214, *Selected Melanie Klein* 189).

3.3. *Art*

Art for Klein is a particular form of reparative sublimation and symbol formation. In communicating and sharing his or her phantasies and angst, the artist resolves them like a good mourner in that he or she makes reparation to the interior world that he or she has ruined in sadistic phantasies, as well as to the outside world (Segal, «A Psycho-analytical Approach to Aesthetics» 397-400).

3.4. *Claustrophobia*

According to Klein, it has been confirmed that the angst due to phantasied assaults on the mother's body and the father's penis supposedly contained inside forms the root of claustrophobia, which includes the dread of being confined or buried inside the mother. The link of this kind of angst with castration dread can be discerned in the phantasy of losing the male member inside the maternal parent – phantasy which could lead to sexual impotence (Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 50, 186).

3.5. *Vagina dentata*

According to Marie Bonaparte, a lot of psychoanalytic cases show that the males in their unconscious would phantasize that the vagina of women are furnished with sharp teeth and may bite and castrate at any time. This notion of the vagina dentata and its resultant threat is, in fact, derived from a downward displacement of the infantile oral sadism (218). Karl Abraham discovered that when the infant cut its first teeth, it would try to bite off the nurturing breast of the mother. Later, however, it would learn from experience the principle of an eye for an eye, thus fearing that the mother would devour it in retaliation for its cannibalistic impulses (see Bonaparte 218-219).

3.6. *Mourning*

According to Freud, mourning is the response to losing one's beloved persons, or country, or ideal. The symptoms of pathological mourning, like those of melancholia, include painful depression, loss of interest in the external world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activities, self-debasement and self-blaming, and expectation to be penalized. In pathological mourning, due to ambivalence towards the lost love object, object love regresses to identification with the lost object; the ego treats itself as the lost object and then vents upon itself the hate originally relating to the lost object. In extreme cases, this kind of psychology could lead to suicide (Freud 11: 252, 260-261). Freud also thinks that proper work of mourning includes summoning all intimate memories about the lost object in the mind, hyper-cathecting each of them and then detaching from them (11: 253).

Klein also points out that death of a beloved person would re-activate the mourner's depressive position, and a mourner who has never completely worked through his or her infantile depressive position is especially prone to developing pathological mourning. The death of a close relative realizes the mourner's death wish towards that person during infancy and thus lead to a strong sense of guilt on the part of the mourner. Coming to the fore in the mourner's heart, hate not only transforms the lost beloved person into a victimizer, but also shakes the mourner's confidence in his/her good internal objects. Failing to rescue or reinstate the beloved internal object, the pathological mourner denies loving it (Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 156-158, 173-174).

3.7. *Necrophilia and Coprophilia*

Jones thinks that the most normal form of necrophilia seems to be no more than extending the role played by love in mourning; the mourner is persistent and unwilling to be separated from the beloved dead person for ever (see Bonaparte 693).

As for sado-necrophilia, Bonaparte thinks that the sufferer witnesses parental intercourse between the anal and the phallic stages (about two years old) and mistakes the father to be attacking the mother with his phallus/weapon. Due to some reason, the sufferer remains fixated to this stage. The sado-necrophilist or the person with such phantasies identifies with the killer-father and wants to repeat the father's atrocious deed on the mother, but, being not bold enough to assault living women, can only catch hold of a mother who has already been laid waste by the father (Bonaparte 683, 693). Jones thinks that the idea of communicating with the dead may ignite sadistic impulses towards the dead, partly because the dead lover is so helpless, partly because the dead lover can bear caress to an infinite extent and remain faithful for ever (Jones, *Essays in Applied Psycho-Analysis* 100-101).

In the unconscious, corpse, feces, food, rubbish, books can symbolize and displace each other. It must be borne in mind that feces and food are originally the same. Feces are food which have been chewed and torn by the teeth in the mouth, disintegrated in the stomach and intestines, and forced out by the sphincter muscle. And food comes from living creatures. So the whole process of fecal formation resembles the process of killing a living being, burying it inside the body, and then dismembering it (Jones, *Paper on Psycho-analysis* 420-421, 425; Bonaparte 424-425).

In addition, corpse, feces, and garbage are all prone to decaying and emitting bad smell. As for books, their being sheets of paper which have been pressed and printed tends to be associated with the fact that feces can easily be moulded and they readily stain (Jones, *Paper on Psycho-analysis* 424-425).

3.8. *Homosexuality/sexual inversion*

According to Freud, all homosexuals are profoundly in love with a woman (usually their mother) during their childhood; later they give up this kind of frantic love for some reason, identify with the mother instead, and look for men like themselves, whom they may love in the same way their mother loves them. Some of the causes of homosexuality are constitutional and some accidental. The most salient characteristics seem to be a narcissistic object choice and the retention of the erotic significance of the anal zone (7: 56-57).

Freud also points out that extrapolating from himself, the little boy usually would think that all human beings, including women, especially the mother, possess a penis. Some boys still cannot accept a penis-less sexual partner when grown up; they therefore become homosexuals (7: 56-57).

As aforementioned, Klein thinks that the frustration of oral desires during infancy may shift the libido from the mother's breast to the father's penis, thereby forming the foundation of homosexuality.

3.9. *Suicide*

Freud's analysis of melancholia shows that the ego loves itself so much that it would only destroy itself in the following situation – the ego takes itself as an object and turn against itself the hate and aggression originally directed against another person or object (11: 261). Klein thinks that the ego commits suicide for the sake of eradicating bad internal objects and salvaging good one (*Selected Melanie Klein* 131).

After briefly introducing the theories used, this paper is going to explicate the mother complex of Bai's persona in detail.

4. THE ORIGIN OF THE MOTHER COMPLEX

The mother complex of Bai Xianyong's persona could be traced back to his infantile oral- and anal-sadistic phantasies about the mother. In «Heihong (The Black Rainbow)», there is a scene in which a woman's disgust about suckling her own baby is depicted most vividly:

She remembered the first time she... suckled – she opened her clothes... only felt a warm mouth eating at her flesh and dragging her breasts for all it is worth.... The breasts were bitten until they became bruised and reddened, sometimes the nipples were torn... and inflamed... fiercely waving little hands and bloodily red mouths gripped, gnawed, and pulled her breasts until they almost drooped to the belly. (Bai Xianyong, «The Lonely Seventeen» 138, my translation)

This woman's breast being torn through her own baby's biting might represent Bai's persona beginning to cut his teeth during the oral stage and trying to snap at the mother's breasts in order to satisfy his oral desire. The woman's breasts being pulled by fiercely waving little hands might represent Bai's persona using his muscles, which had just begun to develop, to vent sadistic impulses (cf. Bonaparte 681). Due to the fear of revenge, a cannibalistic bad mother had resulted in the unconscious of Bai's persona.

4.1. *Loss of the Mother*

According to Bai Xianyong's essay, «Moran Huishou (Suddenly Looking Back)», just before Bai left Taiwan for the States, his mother fell ill and died. After walking around his mother's tomb for forty-one days in accordance with the Muslim ritual, Bai left his country for Iowa to study creative writing. Although Bai did not study in Chicago, his first Christmas in the States was spent alone in the city of Chicago. Back to Iowa, Bai wrote «Death in Chicago» («Suddenly Looking Back» 337-338).

Wu Hanhun, the hero of «Death in Chicago», is the major representative of Bai Xianyong's persona during this period. Wu was a Taiwanese who went alone to the University of Chicago to study English Literature. He had worked part-time and studied full-time for six years before he was awarded his doctoral degree. When preparing for his doctoral exam, he received the news of his mother's death, but ignored it. He did not learn the cause of his mother's death until the evening of his graduation³.

4.2. *Loss of the Mother Culture*

What Wu lost was not only his actual mother but his mother culture (cf. Liu Shauming 7; Liu Jun 202-215). Although what he studied was Western literature, «he felt Chicago to be as strange to him as a pure geographical term... he could feel Chicago trembling under his feet with a kind of surging rhythm while he staggered and stumbled, failing to keep pace with its metre» («Death in Chicago» 228-229). Meanwhile, neither did America understand Wu Hanhun, for instance, the white woman regarded him as Japanese and called him «Tokyo» in the bar. As pointed out by Liu Shauming, «From the point of view of a Chinese who shoulders the Chinese soul (Hanhun), probably no name was more ridiculous than «Tokyo» (7).

Similarly, according to Bai Xianyong's «Suddenly Looking Back»:

³ The subsequent plot that may be summarized as follows: Feeling that the books in his underground cubicle emitting the bad smell of decaying corpses, he dashed out into the streets and ventured into a bar in town, where he had a one night stand with a white woman known as Nora. Unexpectedly, he felt even more dejected and empty after that, and finally jumped into Lake Michigan to put an end to his wretched life.

Having left my country, I was immediately shocked by the foreign culture and I experienced a so-called identity crisis. I had to re-assess all my own values and beliefs. Although what I studied at school was Western literature... I suffered from cultural hunger; I picked up those books of Chinese history and literature and began to read them voraciously. One day in New York during the summer vacation... I saw a documentary of Chinese history shot by a westerner. More than a half-century's China, covering the death of the Empress Dowager, the 1911 Revolution, the Northern Expedition, the War of Defense against Japan, and the fight of the Nationalist Party against the Communist Party, appeared before me at the same time. Events like the Nanjing massacre, the bombardment of Chongqing, are no longer historical terms, but ravaged, insulted, maimed, and burned corpses of the Chinese, lying on the Chinese soil which had been navigated by the blood and tears of suffering until it blackened. That was the first time I deeply felt the helplessness of being deprived of one's home and country after coming to America. (339-340, my translation)

From the psychoanalytic perspective, one hundred years of domestic troubles and foreign invasion had turned China into a dangerous womb ravaged by the bad father's penis in the unconscious of the Chinese people. In renewal of infantile situations of deprivation like weaning, the persona of Bai might have unconsciously identified with the bad father⁴ in sadistically attacking the mother country. And he was afraid of retribution by the internalized mother and of losing his penis inside her body (cf. Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 377, *Selected Melanie Klein* 50).

4.3. *Pathological Mourning*

During the early period of the stay of Bai's persona in the States, the loss of the mother and the mother country reawakened his infantile depressive position such that his internal world became a mess and verged on collapse. For example, as pointed out by «Suddenly Looking Back», Bai's persona then left «perturbed and bewildered. During the first year of my stay in America, I was in a bleak mood because my mother's death shocked my soul most powerfully» (337, my translation). Similarly, in «Death in Chicago», «standing at the cross junction between Munroe Street and Clark, Wu was at a loss as to where to go and whence to start; he had lost his sense of directions; he had lost his center of gravity» (228-229, my translation). Bai's persona lost interest in the external world. For example, Wu «did not want to see the daylight again, did not want to see anybody again»; though big as the world was, he actually could not find a place to settle down comfortably (237). At that time, the activities of Bai's persona were also inhibited, for instance, according to «Suddenly Looking Back», «Having just arrived at America, [he] could not write at all» (338).

Probably because the good internal objects were not so stable in the first place, Bai's persona could not complete in good time the work of mourning as delineated by Klein and Freud (Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 146-147, 173-174; Freud 11: 252-253). For instance, in «Death in Chicago», Wu Hanhun did not dispel sadness and eject bad feelings and bad objects through shedding tears (in the unconscious, tears are usually equated with excrements) (cf. Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 162).

Upon receiving the news of his mother's death, Wu was indifferent on the surface; he just continued to work hard for the exam without shedding a single tear. And according to Bai's «Suddenly Looking Back», «Sometimes even the anniversary of my mother's death would be forgotten» (338). The death of the beloved actualizing the mourner's infantile death wish regarding her, Bai's persona

⁴ In «Death in Chicago», what symbolizes the bad father is the dark night which «was like a dying old man avariciously embracing tight the breasts of the earth with two withered arms and just would not let it go» (236, my translation).

«felt a profound sense of guilt about [the] mother's death» («Suddenly Looking Back» 338; cf. Klein, *Selected Melanie Klein* 157).

Love being suppressed, hate came to the front, not only turning the deceased mother into a victimizer, but also shaking the confidence of Bai's persona in the good internal objects. Precisely because of this, Wu dreamt of his mother's corpse staring at him, seeming to ask him to go home («Death in Chicago» 224). Likewise, Bai's persona in «Suddenly Looking Back», when dreaming, also sometimes saw the mother's «sad and helpless facial expression» immediately before she passed away (338). In his pathological mourning, Bai's persona treated his ego as the lost mother, and directed against himself the aggression which related to the mother (cf. Freud 11: 252, 260-261). For example, Wu Hanhun was filled with anxiety, as if «thousands of moths were nibbing at his lungs and liver» («Death in Chicago» 236, my translation). The cannibalistic moths actually symbolize the infantile oral sadism of Bai's persona against the mother. This kind of sadism having been projected onto the mother's body, she was transformed into a bad mother. Having been internalized, the bad mother became the superego of Bai's persona, and this superego was torturing the ego, venting the aggressive impulses towards the deceased mother, on the one hand; and punishing the ego for being unfilial and easing the sense of guilt, on the other hand (cf. Freud 2: 141-143).

As aforesaid, the mother complex of Bai's persona was reactivated by the loss of the mother and the mother country, and its manifestations may be subdivided into phantasies about the mother's corpse, coprophilic phantasies, phantasies about the mother's womb, a homosexuality tendency, and suicidal impulses.

4.4. *Necrophilic Phantasies*

Apparently, Wu Hanhun was at the same time attached to his mother and aggressive towards her. Having learnt that his mother died of kidney hemorrhage, he dreamt of the nude and snow-white corpse of his mother lying on the coffin lid, staring at him as if in a trance. He was so frightened as to hurriedly and forcefully push the cold and heavy corpse into the coffin. On the evening of his graduation, he suddenly felt that «all those closely packed books on the bookshelves, in an instant, seemed to become a heap of colorful decaying corpses» (Bai Xianyong, «Death in Chicago» 227, my translation) and smelt awfully, just like the formalin in a dissection lab. After having sex with Nora, Wu ran about wildly in the streets of Chicago and saw «some headless, handless models standing behind the deadly silent show-windows». When he reached the shore of Lake Michigan, the wet and warm air there, «upon mixing with the alcoholic scent on his clothing and with the fragrance left behind by Nora, became a current of nauseating stench» (Bai Xianyong, «Death in Chicago» 236, my translation).

I think that Wu's dreaming of the nude corpse of his mother probably represents his subconscious sexual attachment to his mother; the nauseating smell of his books and of the air above the lakeshore should also have originated from the supposedly terrible smell emitted by the decaying corpse of Wu's mother, which both attracted and repelled Wu. For following the Kleinian scenario, what most repels us is very often what most attracts us in our unconscious (Glassman). As for «the formalin in a dissection lab» and «the headless, handless models», they must symbolize Wu's secret sadistic desire to dismember the mother's dead body.

4.5. *Coprophilic Phantasies*

Probably because Wu harbored unconscious anal-sadistic impulses towards the mother, the mother's corpse also pressed him in the form of bad feces. The greasy, dirty dishes emerging from the water basin in the underground cubicle of Wu; the dirty underwear and stockings with which the neck of the laundry bag was bulging behind the door; the three coffee cups stained with yellow juice and buried in the paper heap on the study-desk; and the large heaps of milk boxes, beer bottles, and eggshells thrown up by the big bursting garbage-bins in front of the apartment houses, are all symbols of

the bad mother's corpse and feces. The bad smell of the books in the underground cubicle and the nauseating air above the lake also represent the smell of feces.

4.6. *Womb Phantasies/Claustrophobia*

Wu Hanhun seemed to be typically ambivalent towards the mother's womb. Before suffering the loss of the mother, he had studied ascetically in his underground cubicle for six years. Isolated from the world, he had felt very safe, especially when the heavy snow of winter completely sealed up his cubicle. I think that to Wu, that underground cubicle had been a secure uterine, that living inside felt like having intercourse with the mother (Bonaparte 591).

Nonetheless, the news of the mother's death disturbed this pathological organization⁵. The most obvious and direct evidence is Wu's reciting lines from T. S. Elliot's *Wasteland* after receiving the telegram about his mother's decease, including «breeding lilacs out of the dead land» and «stirring dull roots with spring rains». Following that, Wu developed an unknown fear of his underground cubicle, so much so that he had to dash out on the spot. Finally, he felt that «Chicago was an ancient Egyptian tomb, in which millions of people, both the living and the dead, were imprisoned, corroding together, decaying together», that he could not find in the whole world a single inch's ground settle down upon.

In the phantasies of Wu, the underground cubicle and the city of Chicago/the ancient tomb probably represented his infantile phantasies of sadistically attacking the mother's inside or womb. In order to fend away the enormous grief caused by losing the mother, Wu had probably regressed from the depressive position to the paranoid position. Based on the principle of an eye for an eye, he feared that he/his penis would be buried or devoured by the mother or her womb or its substitutes. As aforementioned, Klein called this kind of fear claustrophobia (*Selected Melanie Klein* 50, 186).

Although in Wu's mind, his underground cubicle and the entire city of Chicago had become a terrifying ancient tomb or the bad mother's womb, still, he urgently needed a refuge-womb, «a secluded place where he could close his eyes, forget the past, the present and the future, and sleep deeply» (Bai Xianyon, «Death in Chicago», my translation). The lake of Michigan into which Wu eventually jumped is precisely a shelter provided by the mother's body. For in the unconscious of human beings, water is the most persistent and fundamental symbol of the mother's body, representing the amniotic fluid inside the uterine, which not only provides a paradisaical living for the human embryo but is also the fountain of all forms of life (cf. Bonaparte 290).

4.7. *Vagina Dentata and the Fear of Women*

Probably due to claustrophobia and phantasies about the *vagina dentata*, Bai's persona is repelled by women. For instance, Wu Hanhun seemed always to be running away from women. This had already been manifested before his mother's death. Despite his mother's repeatedly requesting him to go back to Taiwan to visit her, Wu never returned home throughout his six years' stay in America. On the eve before he left Taipei, his gentle girl-friend, Qin Ying Fen voluntarily offered herself sexually to him, but he put away her hands and walked silently out of the botanical garden with her. Qin frequently sent letters to him afterwards, but he seldom replied. At the beginning of the fourth year, Wu finally received a wedding card from Qin. He had joined once or twice the Annual Overseas

⁵ «Pathological organization» is a kind of complex and rigid defense system of the borderline patient, which is somewhere between the paranoid position and the depressive position, and is used to defend against the splitting involved in the former and guilty feelings involved in the latter. The pathological organization forms certain fixed object relations, which, however, are predominated by bad portions of the ego. And the personality of the patient is particularly fragile (Hinshelwood 381-87).

Chinese Students Ball. On each occasion, he was so nervous that in the end, he could only secretly implore his friends to invite his partner to a dance. I think that why Wu Hanhun feared women in the same way he feared his underground cubicle and the city of Chicago is because he unconsciously feared being buried inside the mother's body or losing his penis therein.

Wu's castration complex was fully manifested when he Nora closely encountered him. After Wu followed Nora into her apartment, Nora at once began to «gnaw a chicken leg greedily. Wu blankly watched her sucking and licking the sauce on her fingers with her mouth and her tongue». Nora suddenly grinned at Wu, showing her teeth. Then she took off her dress and fake hair, exposing her wrinkly skin and a layer of thin, sparse, real hair. «At that instant, Nora suddenly turned into an old woman of forty to fifty... her teeth exposed through her red lips were particularly white and bright. Wu helplessly felt an alcoholic wave surging up within his stomach, the tendons of his head straining his brain so hard that they seemed to be splitting it» (Bai Xianyong, «Death in Chicago» 234-235, my translation).

From the point of view of psychoanalysis, the aged and loose Nora represents the bad genital mother (cf. Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 377, 379, 395). The pulling down of the fake hair and the exposing of the sparse hair underneath symbolize that she was in lack of a penis, that she was an ugly, castrated creature (cf. Freud 4: 474). Her white and bright teeth and the greedy way in which she gnawed and sucked the chicken leg allude to the penis-devouring *vagina dentata* of the female. When the persona of Bai Xianyong cut his teeth in infancy, he might have tried to gnaw and devour his own mother's breasts, but later he learnt the principle of an eye for an eye from experience and therefore feared that his mother would devour himself in return for his cannibalistic impulses towards her (cf. Bonaparte 218-219).

The phantasy about the *vagina dentata* or the image of the castrated and castrating mother image can also be seen in other stories by Bai Xianyong, e.g., «Qingchun (Youth)», «Yuemeng (A Dream of the Moon)», «Jimo de Shiqi Sui (The Lonely Seventeen)», «Yuqing Sao (Lady Yuqing)».

The old painter in «Youth» twice quietly called his beloved model-boy «the nude Adonis». In the Greek mythology, Adonis was a beautiful boy. Venus proposed love to him quite a few times but he was only interested in hunting. Finally, he was killed by a wild boar, which loved him, with its long teeth (cf. Xia Ziqing 10). I think that the wild boar symbolizes the *vagina dentata* of the female.

The old doctor in «A Dream about the Moon» was disgusted at any sexual encounter with the opposite sex, equating it with sex with wild dogs. As pointed by Xia Ziqing, the boy Yang Yunfeng in «The Lonely Seventeen», was more psychologically traumatized when sexually assault by a female classmate than when assaulted by a male stranger in a park (10). Even Lady Yuqing, who has gained a lot of empathy from readers, is not exceptional. As put by Xia Ziqing, «she fell desperately in love with Qingsheng, who was much younger than herself, but when she found that... she could not hold his heart... she turned herself into a wild boar, killed him and then killed herself» (17). Under the peeping gaze of the young master Rong, the scene in which Lady Yuqing had sex with Qingsheng, to use the words of Xia Ziqing, was «no different from a picture of an old eagle springing on a rabbit»:

Qingsheng was «a gravely injured rabbit», he could only «tremble», «struggle», «roll», «crawl», and «groan». Lady Yuqing was absolutely in the position of the invader. She «bit» and «tore» with her teeth, «scratched», «clutched», «pressed», «pulled», and «plugged» with her hands, which closely resembled two claws of an eagle... she attacked the various bodily parts of the victim, the corners of her mouth stained with a trace of blood. (Xia Ziqing 17, my translation)

In my analysis, the aggressive actions of Lady Yuqing are projections of the oral-, anal-, and muscular sadistic impulses on the part of Bai's persona towards the mother during his infancy; both Rong and Qingsheng are incarnations of Bai's persona.

4.8. *Homosexuality*

Partly because of constitutional factors, partly because of the mother complex – the castrated and castrating mother imago – Bai's persona has shifted from attachment to the mother's breasts to attachment to the father's or the brother's penis, thus developing a homosexual tendency. In «Death in Chicago», the homosexual tendency of the hero is manifested very obscurely and symbolized by a couple dance show at the bar:

The male was as long and as slender as a bamboo pole, he was wearing a bright red shirt, his hair was dyed pale gold, while deep brown brows were painted on his fully wrinkled face. The female was wholly clothed in black, she was dressed as a man, a white silk tie fluttering in front of her chest, and she resembled a shrunken little old man. (Bai Xianyong, «Death in Chicago» 233, my translation)

As pointed out by Nora to Wu, the male dancer was the famous «Miss Red Magnolia», and the female was «Mr. Magnolia». Is this not «sexual inversion» in the true sense of the term? From the perspective of psychoanalysis, Miss Red Magnolia, a male dressed as a female and «as soft as a viper», symbolizes the phallic mother in the unconscious of Wu. Wu had found it very difficult to accept women without a penis as sexual partners and was therefore a repressed homosexual.

Since the Bai's persona cannot accept the fact that the mother and women in general do not have a penis, he can only identify with the mother and love handsome boys in the same way he would like his mother to love himself, so as to maintain his loyalty to her for life (cf. Freud 14: 191-193). When interviewed by Cai Kejian in the eighties, Bai Xianyong admitted that he was a homosexual and pointed out that homosexuality is more or less narcissism (88). When interviewed by Wu Chengbang at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Bai Xianyong firmly said, «Ever since I came into possession of cognitive power, I have been aware of my sexual inclination; to me, homosexual love is beautiful and to be proud of» (E3).

There are quite a few homosexual works among Bai's writings. For example, the novel «Niezi (The Bad Sons)» elaborately describes the sad history of a group of homosexual gigolos, who wander in the streets of Taipei and earn their living by selling their bodies in the dark. Another example. In the essay, «Shu Yiu Ruci (Even the Tree is Like That)», Bai's persona uses a withered cypress tree in his garden in Saint Barbara to allude to/mourn his life-long love-partner, Wang Guoxiang, who has died of illness.

4.9. *Identification with the Mother*

As a result of identification with the mother, loving other males in the same way he would like his mother to love himself, Bai's persona understands women particularly well, and manages to describe them with meticulous care and flawless industry. Nonetheless, as his good mother imago has been disturbed by the bad mother imago, the major heroines created by him are mostly *femmes fatales*, charming but destructive women, e.g., Lady Yuqing who loves desperately and frantically; the «permanent Yun Xueyan», who often indirectly causes the death of her lovers in a mystic way; the staunch but degenerate Taiwanese student Li Tong who studied abroad in the States («Zhhexian Ji [An Account of the Banished Immortal]», «Zhhexian Yuan [The Sorrows of the Banished Immortal]»).

4.10. *Suicidal Impulses*

The pathological mourning and mother complex of Wu Hanhun finally drove him to suicide. The bad mother images disturbing him immediately before his death included the moths nibbling at his lungs and liver (bad maternal superego), the snake-like dancers in Red Magnolia (phallic mother), Nora with her wrinkled back (bad genital mother), and the mother's corpse calling him to return to her. In my analysis, after his mother's death, Wu, due to his hidden hostility towards his mother, might

have blamed himself for causing the loss of the mother. Moreover, after making love with Nora, Wu might have felt that he had been devoured by the bad genital mother⁶ and/or Western culture. In order to rescue the good mother imago and to destroy the bad mother imago (including the crude aspects of American culture; the troubled mainland China; and Taiwan, which was content to exercise sovereignty over a part of the country), Wu could only kill himself (Liu Jun 202-215).

4.11. *Mother Complex and the Personality as a Whole*

Due to the limitation of space, this paper can only concentrate on the discussion of the mother complex of Bai Xianyong's persona, without involving his father and siblings in detail. The structural relation of the mother complex to the personality as a whole may be summarized as follows. As aforementioned, the mother imago of Bai's persona is split into good and bad. Due to the fear of castration by the bad mother, Bai's persona tends to love the father and the brothers and other men. His good images include the Old Mr. Fu in «Niezi (Bad Sons)», who takes cares of many boy gigolos. On the other hand, Bai's persona still harbors an ideal mother image deep in his bosom. But due to fear and awe of the father, he has not dared to touch his father's women and can only be homosexual⁷. His stern father images include the father of the young hero in «The Lonely Seventeen». That father often scolds and beats his son and never tries to understand his pubertal sorrows.

4.12. *Reparation*

Although Wu Hanhun committed suicide by jumping into the lake, the persona of Bai Xianyong as a whole eventually accomplished the task of mourning. According to Bai Xianyong's «Suddenly Looking Back», in the first Christmas since his arrival at America, he lodged alone in a small hotel by the shore of Lake Michigan. One evening, he stood on the shore, «looking back suddenly... he felt completely reborn». Back to Iowa, he recovered his creativity, and the first work he wrote was «Death in Chicago» (338), after which he published many other outstanding works. In my opinion, in «Death in Chicago» and other works, Bai Xianyong's persona, through harmonious literary forms, fully expresses the anxiety and depression caused by the mother complex, thereby reinstating his shattered inner world (cf. Segal, «A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics» 400).

5. CONCLUSION

In «Shiji Mo de Wenhua Guanca (Cultural Observations towards the End of the Century)», one of his speeches delivered and published in the nineties, Bai Xianyong said:

From the May Fourth Movement in 1911 to the Cultural Revolution, for almost half a century, the Chinese ruined their own culture so radically that they seemed to surpass any other nation in hating one's own traditional culture.... The root of the Chinese culture seems to have been lost somewhere... we need a new May Fourth Movement... a renaissance... to rediscover the fountain of our own culture, and to connect it with the world culture. (21, 23, 24, my translation)

⁶ It was only when Wu Hanhun had close sexual encounter with Nora that he discovered her hair was sparse and her back had many wrinkles. Wu had ignored and neglected his mother in order to study in the States. But now he discovered that he had sexually known the resurrected bad mother. The shock must be comparable to King Oedipus discovering that he had married his mother Jocasta. No wonder Wu had to commit suicide by jumping into the lake, just as King Oedipus had to blind himself at the end of the day.

⁷ Cf. Freud, *Pelican Freud Library*, Vol. 10, 206.

In my analysis, China, having gone through numerous domestic troubles and foreign invasions in the 20th century, was transformed into «an endangered and dangerous place» (cf. Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 376-377). And the Chinese's attitude towards their mother country has become categorically ambivalent. As aforementioned, in «Death in Chicago», Wu Hanhun might have unconsciously identified with the bad father in sadistically attacking the mother's body and the mother country, and therefore feared the mother's revenge. Yet, just as Bai Xianyong's persona is able to repair his injured internal mother through artistic creation and patriotism, we have good reason to believe that the Chinese race is resilient enough to eventually reinstate the internalized ravaged mother and to build up in the future, slowly and painstakingly, a healthy, bountiful and benevolent mother country (cf. Chen Chapman 201).

CHINESE REFERENCES

- Bai, Xianyong (1976). *Niuyue Ke* (Sojourners in New York). Hong Kong: Wenxue Shuwu.
- Bai, Xianyong (1984). *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* (The Lonely Seventeen). Taipei: Yuanjing.
- Bai, Xianyong (1984). Zhijie zhi Si (Death in Chicago). In Bai Xianyong, *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* (The Lonely Seventeen) (pp. 221-239). Taipei: Yuanjing.
- Bai, Xianyong, B. (1984). *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* (The Lonely Seventeen). In Bai Xianyong, *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* (The Lonely Seventeen) (pp. 175-206). Taipei: Yuanjing.
- Bai, Xianyong (1984). Moran Huishou - *Jimo de Shiqi Sui Houji* (Suddenly Looking Back - A Postscript to *The Lonely Seventeen*). In Bai Xianyong, *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* (pp. 329-340). Taipei: Yuanjing.
- Bai, Xianyong (1988). *Diliu Zhi Shouzhǐ* (The Sixth Finger). Hong Kong: Huahan Wenhua.
- Bai, Xianyong (1999). Shiji Mo de Wenhua Guancha (Cultural Observations towards the end of the Century). *Mingpao Monthly*, 5, 20-24.
- Bai, Xianyong (1999). Shuyou Ruci (Even the Tree is Like That). *Shijie Huawen Wenxue* (World Chinese Literature), 64 (4), 4-11.
- Bai, Xianyong (2000). Wo de Chuangzuo Jingyan (My Experience of Creative Writing). *Mingpao Monthly*, 3, 17-23.
- Cai, Kejian (1988). An Interview of Bai Xianyong. In Bai Xianyong, *Diliu Zhi Shouzhǐ* (The Sixth Finger) (pp. 268-290).
- Chen, Chapman (1999). *Dafu Xinjing* (A Psychobiography of Yu Dafu). Hong Kong: Xiangjiang Chubanshe.
- Liu, Shaoming (1976). Taipei Ren yu Niuyue Ke [Xu] (Taipei People and Sojourners in New York [Preface]). In Bai Xianyong, *Niuyue Ke* (pp. 1-11).
- Liu, Jun (1995). *Beimim Qinghuai - Bai Xianyong Pingzhuān* (A Compassionate Mind - A Critical Biography of Bai Xianyong). Taipei: Erya Chubanshe.
- Wu, Chenbang (2000). Bai Xianyong: Hexu Qishi Tongxing Ai (Why should Homosexual Love be Discriminated Against). *Mingpao Daily*, 24 Jan., E3.
- Xia, Zhiqing (1984). Bai Xianyong Zaoqi de Duanpian Xiaoshuo - *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* - Daixu (The Early Short Stories of Bai Xianyong - *The Lonely Seventeen* - in lieu of Preface). In Bai Xianyong, *Jimo de Shiqi Sui* (pp. 1-21). Taipei: Yuanjing.

ENGLISH REFERENCES

- Bonaparte, M. (1949). *The Life and Works of Edgar Allan Poe. A Psycho-Analytic Interpretation*. London: Imago.
- Freud, S. (1979-1986). *Pelican Freud Library*, 15 vols. Trans. James Strachey. Ed. Angela Richards. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Glassman, P. (1984). About 'Civilization and its Discontents'. Lecture. English Department, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, 27 Mar.
- Hinshelwood, R. D. (1995). *A Dictionary of Kleinian Thought*. London: Free Association.
- Holman, C. H. (1980). *A Handbook to Literature*, 4th Ed. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Jones, E. (1923). *Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis*. London: International Psychoanalytical Press.
- Jones, E. (1950). *Papers on Psychoanalysis*. London: Bailliere, Tindall & Co..
- Klein, M. (1932). *Psycho-Analysis of Children*. Trans. Alix Strachey. London: Virago, 1989.

- Klein, M. (1952). Some theoretical conclusions regarding the emotional life of the infant. In M. Klein et al. (Eds.), *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* (pp. 198-236). New York: Da Capo, 1983.
- Klein, M. (1975). *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946-1963*. London: Hogarth. Introd. Hanna Segal. London: Virago, 1988.
- Klein, M. (1975). *Love, Guilt and Reparation and other works 1921-1945*. London: Virago, 1991.
- Klein, M. (1991). *Selected Melanie Klein*. Ed. Juliet Mitchell. London: Penguin.
- Klein, M., Heimann, P., Isaacs, S., & Riviere, J. (Eds.) (1952). *Developments in Psycho-Analysis*. New York: Da Capo, 1983.
- Klein, M., Heimann, P., & Money-Kyrle, R. E. (Eds.) (1955). *New Directions in Psycho-Analysis*. London: Maresfield, 1977.
- Segal, H. (1955). A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics. In M. Klein et al. (Eds.), *New Directions in Psycho-Analysis* (pp. 384-405). London: Maresfield, 1977.
- Segal, H. (1978). *Introduction to the Work of Melanie Klein*. London: Hogarth.
- Segal, J. (1992). *Melanie Klein*. London: Sage.

TEN MAIN POINTS OF THE PAPER

1. Applying the psychoanalytical theories of Freud and Klein, the writer of this paper thinks that Bai Xianyong's persona had strong oral- and anal-sadistic phantasies against the mother during infancy, sowing the seed of his mother complex.
2. Soon after Bai went to the United States to study, pathological mourning in relation to the mother complex was triggered off by the death of the actual mother and the endangering of the mother culture.
3. In pathological mourning, Bai's persona took himself as the lost mother and directed against himself the hidden hate and aggression originally relating to the mother.
4. The representative of Bai's persona then was Wu Hanhun, the hero of Bai's story, «Death in Chicago». Wu's mother complex was expressed in the form of phantasies about the mother's corpse, her feces, her womb; and in the form of identification with the mother, of a homosexual tendency, and of a suicidal impulse.
5. In order to rescue the good mother imago and to destroy the bad mother imago comprising of the crude aspects of American culture; the troubled mainland China; and Taiwan (which was content to exercise sovereignty over a part of the country), Wu could only kill himself.
6. Phantasies about the mother's womb (claustrophobia), identification with the mother, and the homosexuality tendency were also manifested by Bai's persona in other periods.
7. Partly because of constitutional factors, partly because of the mother complex – the castrated and castrating mother imago – Bai's persona has shifted from attachment to the mother's breasts to attachment to the father's or the brother's penis, thus developing a homosexual tendency.
8. As a result of identification with the mother, loving other males in the same way he would like his mother to love himself, Bai's persona understands women particularly well, and manages to describe them with meticulous care and flawless industry.
9. Nonetheless, as his good mother imago has been disturbed by the bad mother imago, the major heroes created by Bai are mostly *femmes fatales*, charming but destructive women.
10. Yet, just as Bai Xianyong's persona is able to repair his injured internal mother through artistic creation and patriotism, we have good reason to believe that the Chinese race is resilient enough to eventually reinstate the internalized ravaged mother and to build up in the future, slowly and painstakingly, a healthy, bountiful and benevolent mother country.

Age, memory, and the Holocaust: Three case studies

ANNE M. WYATT-BROWN (*)

Age has affected the survivors of the World War II and the stories they tell. In the years immediately following World War II most participants were too preoccupied with putting their lives back together to tell much of their experiences, either true or false. Most important, few listeners or readers seemed eager to read what did appear. Both Primo Levi (1947) and Elie Wiesel (1986), whose description of concentration camp life we now regard as classics, struggled to find publishers and readers. Peter Novick reports that initially few read *The Diary of Anne Frank* when it appeared in 1947 (1999). For a variety of reasons few in private life talked of their experiences. During the 1940s and 50s, Novick claims, «talk of the Holocaust was something of an embarrassment in American public life» (p. 85). Some learned this lesson the hard way. One young survivor, Martin S. recalls telling his schoolmates in the years immediately after the war about the camps. He stopped, however, when one day a boy expressed disbelief. He said, «Why don't you tell us one of your bullshit stories?» After that incident Martin S. said little or nothing about the camps until a few years before he was interviewed by the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University (Greene and Kumar, 2000, p. 224).¹

Aging has also increased the suffering of many, as psychoanalyst Henry Krystal (1995) has discovered in his thirty years of interviewing survivors. On the other hand, the careers of those Jews who have created novels, stories, and memoirs to recapture their wartime misery illustrate the importance of being able to write about trauma. Not only have many of these memorialists married and had children, in common with Henry Krystal's unhappy patients, but by composing novels and first-hand recollections they have exorcized at least some of their pain. Krystal himself acknowledges that exceptional individuals, «especially endowed with literary or artistic talents» have been able «to develop or reconstruct damaged functions» (1990, p. 97). Writing, however, cannot cure

(*) University of Florida, Program in Linguistics, PO Box 115454, USA.

¹ Gizella Abramson (Presentation to Dupont Seminar: Constructing America, June 22, 2000) reports that immediately after the war her American aunt and uncle did not want her to talk about her experiences. When she attended Sarah Lawrence, the students had no idea what she meant by being in a «camp». They asked if it were a drama or music camp.

damaged psyches. For some it has provided a temporary outlet, but not a permanent reconciliation. To make matters worse, some who have borne witness to the ordeal have invented all or part of their story. Indeed the drama of the Holocaust has operated like a magnet for a few damaged souls, and for others who can best be described as confidence men.

Holocaust invention stories – that is allegedly autobiographical descriptions of concentration camp experiences – present some of the same problems as fictitious sexual abuse stories. The first step is to attempt to determine what part, if any, of the narrative is true. The second is to raise the questions that Janice Haaken highlighted in her examination of sexual abuse narratives. She explored «the range of meanings and partial truth that lie between these two polarized, absolute categories» of truth and fiction. She wonders what cultural or historical forces lie behind a person's need, desire, or compulsion to embellish or invent the past. Why, she asks, do some people and their doctors frame their stories as involving «trauma and dissociation» rather than in terms of «internal conflict»? (Haaken, 1998, p. 4). The narratives I am discussing, those written or told by Martin Gray (Gray & Gallo, 1971), Benjamin Wilkomirski (1995), and Martin Zaidenstadt (Ryback, 1999), suggest the power of Haaken's insight. Each of these works sheds new light on the effect of trauma and aging on the testimony of survivors, both genuine and exaggerated. What these stories suggest is that bitter life experiences often seem inexplicable. If, however, they are attached to a cultural tragedy of enormous dimensions, then personal misery can be more easily contained. In each case the individuals suffered some trauma in their lives, enough pain that they became incapable of examining their inner conflicts. These writers had some connection to World War II but felt driven by personal misery to exaggerate their claims. They fell back upon a ready-made narrative of the past, the horror of the Holocaust, as a displacement of present misery. These Holocaust invention stories demonstrate how permeable the barrier between truth and falsehood can be and how politicized the event still is. When investigating other personal accounts, researchers have learned to avoid feeling totally betrayed when prevarications are exposed. Instead those who interview older people, such as Jay Gubrium (1993), warn that their recollections reflect their feelings in the present rather than the truth about the past.

The works I am discussing today, however, present a particular problem. At the time they were published critics and readers alike believed the stories. Only later were telling discrepancies exposed. Once they were denounced as inaccurate, most of the stories dropped from sight. Several were left at the mercy of Revisionist historians who insist that Holocaust never happened (Hoffman, 1999). Others had their books withdrawn from circulation amid negative publicity (1999). It makes no sense, however, to relegate these books to Holocaust deniers or to the dustbin. Each of them represents another kind of truth, what I call «felt truth». Upon investigation it became apparent that these composers of fictional accounts of their past were attempting to come to terms with genuine trauma. It just so happens that the trauma was not the trauma they described, but something more personal. Their passionate commitment to their stories explains why they were for a time successful in creating what Geoffrey Hartman calls «an 'affective community» (1996c). Once their stories were exposed, that community vanished.

The time has come to investigate the motives of those who have invented all or part of their stories of suffering. What traumas did these people experience that caused them to turn to the Holocaust as the explanation of their troubles? What was the source of their apparent authenticity, their convincing «felt truth»? By answering such questions we can better understand why on occasions our powers of logic are overwhelmed by strong emotions aroused by these texts. Such an examination will help us create a more enlightened «affective community». From these stories we learn not always to believe a speaker or writer when she says, «I was there, believe me» (see Hartman, 1996a, p. 124).

Martin Gray was in his middle forties in October 1970 when he first spoke of his Holocaust life. His acknowledged purpose was to raise money for a foundation to warn families of the danger of fire, his own wife and children having perished in an inferno. In contrast, Benjamin Wilkomirski

describes himself as the archetypal victim. In his middle fifties he «recalls» a childhood of constant bereavement and abandonment. Martin Zaidenstadt in his eighties embellishes his stay in Dachau, claiming against all available evidence that the gas chambers were used to exterminate prisoners. Timothy Ryback, in his sympathetic examination of Zaidenstadt's wartime experiences, is not able to find evidence to back Zaidenstadt's story. The experts he consults, however, are untroubled by the lack of written evidence that Zaidenstadt was even in Dachau. Moreover, Ryback's investigations turned up a story of loss and anguish much grimmer than the memories that Zaidenstadt had recounted.

The first fictitious narrative to appear is Martin Gray's *For Those I Loved* (Gray & Gallo, 1971). Until his forties none of his neighbors knew that he was part Jewish and had grown up in Poland. What caused him to begin pouring out his story was a devastating forest fire in Tanneron, the site of his mountain retreat. In it his wife and four children perished leaving Gray alone in his «empty paradise» (Duncan, 1979, p. 11). A neighbor published some striking photographs of Gray striding across the hills of his mountain home, looking like a figure from Greek drama. According to the neighbor (1979), when publishers learned that he had lost his family in the fire of Tanneron and earlier lost his parents and brothers during the Holocaust, they urged him to write of his early life. He told his story to Max Gallo, a French historian journalist, who composed the account. Gray used the money to start a foundation to warn families of the dangers of forest fires.

The book was enormously popular, but in 1979 a journalist named Gitta Sereny pointed out several telling inaccuracies in the section devoted to Gray's time in Treblinka. The difficulty for readers of this volume is now somewhat the same dilemma faced by reviews of Edmund Morris' new biography of Ronald Reagan, *Dutch* (Hertzberg, 1999). After being inundated with «fake scenes, fake letters, and fake documents, all scrupulously documented by fake footnotes», one reviewer complains, «one begins to wonder about the 'true' passages as well» (pp. 101-102). Reading Gray's memoir had much the same effect on me. Gitta Sereny's denunciation of inaccuracies in the Treblinka section apparently led Gray and Max Gallo to confess that Gallo had embellished Gray's story, to make it more effective. Gray was never in concentration camp, although his mother and brothers probably were. As a result, it is difficult to determine what parts of this account actually happened. One begins to doubt the truth of all that is written. The excessive denunciations of the book by Holocaust deniers on the Internet, however, lends new credibility to the text. Portions of *For Those I Loved* has the ring of truth, but one should read it with a skeptical eye. Surely Gray exaggerated many of his claims. One can compare his account to authenticated ones, such as Simha Rotem's (1994) *Memoirs of a Warsaw Ghetto Fighter*, and see that in important respects Gray's account lacks the details that one would expect from a person who had actually lived through the Warsaw uprising.

The story goes as follows. Martin Gray says he «was born with the war» (Gray & Gallo, 1971, p. 7) and has no memory of his earlier life. It makes no sense to take this statement literally. No doubt he had a fairly typical childhood for the time but after the excitement of war found his childhood less than thrilling to recall. At the age of fifteen, he claims, his life began. His family was incarcerated in the Warsaw ghetto, and his father had to go underground to save his life. Gray, the eldest of his siblings, felt responsible for their welfare. In short order he learned how to escape from the ghetto on a streetcar by bribing conductors and Polish officers. He became friendly with street gangs outside the ghetto walls and created an enormous operation to smuggle food into the ghetto. He claims to have brought food to feed «all my people, the whole ghetto» (1971, p. 44). The boy found himself behaving like a resourceful man. He no longer had to obey his parents, who understandably wanted him to avoid risking his life. This section of the book is full of vivid details, which explains why Gray felt his life began only at fifteen. It has much in common with Roman Frister's (1993) celebration of trickster behavior in the years when his parents were in hiding and he had no schooling. It is a story of high adventure during which Gray was often captured. Many times he managed to escape. His looks helped him in his quest. He was half Gentile and half Jewish

with looks that allowed him to pass as Polish. Being young was a great advantage. He found it much easier to make friends with street gangs of young men than an adult would have.

Parts of this section are undoubtedly exaggerated. He was not the only person finding food for «his people». Kazik's (Rotem, 1994) account of life in the Warsaw Ghetto before the uprising describes the group activities that allowed young men to cooperate with Gentiles outside the gates. Gizella Abramson (Abramson, 2000), a survivor herself, remembers that many of the children squeezed through chinks in the ghetto walls in order to barter for food at the farmers market. Gray, however, rewrites the story to make himself a lone hero. In fact the really effective activities involved group organization. Moreover, all of Gray's escapes from the clutches of Polish policemen and Germans are hard to believe. Be that as it may, the story certainly reveals something important about Gray's psychology and the exigencies of war. In wartime normal social relations tend to be pushed aside. Young people can sometimes be more resourceful than their parents, who may be weighed down by an understandable depression. According to Gray, he took every opportunity to fight the Nazis. Unlike the leaders of the community who systematically chose which member of the community would be transported to concentration camp (Arendt, 1963, p. 102), he refused to cooperate with the Germans at any point. Gray's father, the son reports, continued to fight the Nazis, but he was too prominent a figure to sneak in and out of the ghetto. Once a young person has experienced such freedom from adult authority, it was almost impossible to become a docile member of the community. No wonder Gray thought that the beginning of the war marked his real birth. Like the children in England who were evacuated to the countryside and according to psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott (1984) «forgot» their families and played out their fantasies in war games, Gray created a real war game with genuine consequences.

The middle sections, however, seem much less vivid and convincing, largely because they were invented by Gallo. The tone of this part does not match the excited air of the earlier part, nor does Gray give the specific details which make one inclined to believe part of his story of life in the Warsaw Ghetto. At one point he says that «I need another voice» to tell of the shame Treblinka represented (p. 126), a statement which surely can be read more than one way. After supposedly escaping from the worst section of Treblinka, Grey returned to Warsaw to be part of the uprising. He went back, he says, in order to join his father in fighting the Nazis. Once again the feelings Gray expresses seem genuine, in particular his affection and respect for his father. During the uprising the young man managed to escape from the inferno largely because his earlier activities had taught him every possible escape route. Kazik's (Rotem, 1994), memoirs also explain how some fortunate rebels managed to use the sewers to leave the ghetto. Grey, however, tells an adventure tale in which he is the chief hero. He sees his father die bravely in battle and then is willing to leave. At the moment when it becomes apparent that the Germans are sealing up the ghetto, he crawls out through the sewers and on the Aryan side finds one of his old companions in crime.

In the postwar period the story regains its vitality. Whatever the truth of Gray's wartime experiences, his trickster role gave him a method of surviving by fighting authority. In New York he joined his maternal grandmother, one of his few surviving relatives. He promptly went to work as a peddler without a license. He risked being put in jail. He refused a job offered by an uncle because he did not wish to obey orders. Eventually he went into the antique business, which caused him to travel to Europe on buying trips. After a while the antique supply diminished, so he «improved» some damaged goods. He made money but shortly after meeting and marrying Dina, his Dutch wife, he moved to France. My guess is that he was just ahead of the law on that occasion. Selling phony antiques no doubt would have meant a prison term.

Clearly, Gray's wartime adolescence had shaped the adult man. Most of the time he behaved as if he were entitled to earn a fortune and to marry an outstandingly lovely wife. After Dina perished, his new Belgian wife imitated his first by producing babies and joining him in his hideaway. No doubt Gray exaggerated his wartime heroism out of a sense of guilt. Had he only

insisted, his wife and children would have stayed in their stone house where they would have escaped the fire. Unable to face the shame that he felt from not protecting his family, he fell back upon his familiar posturing and boasting. Surviving the war and postwar poverty turned Gray into a confidence man, a role which ultimately led to his being forced to leave the United States and being denounced by those who specialize in denying the truth of the Holocaust.

The next book, Benjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments* (1995) presents an entirely different problem, as well as a new tone. Gray's besetting sin is boasting, whereas Wilkomirski's «memoir» consists of a long complaint. He tells the tale of a young Jewish boy, born in 1939, who is separated from his family, and ends up in a concentration camp. His theme is of repeated desertions and confusion on his part, as well as loss of language. He starts his memoir by complaining that he has «no mother tongue, nor a father tongue either». His language, he asserts, sprung from Yiddish, «overlaid with the Babel-babble of an assortment of children's barracks in the Nazis' death camps in Poland». Later on, he continues, «speech left me altogether and it was a long time before I found it again». As a result, he was not sad when he «more or less forgot this gibberish», which had no further use after the war (Wilkomirski, 1995, p. 3).

The confusion and loss of language are not unexpected in view of his youth. He alleges to remember fragments from his third and fourth years. He survives miraculously, especially when one considers that most young children were killed as soon as they entered Auschwitz. The odds of a three or four-year-old being kept alive when the Germans were determined to leave few of them alive were extremely slim if not nonexistent (Lengyel, 1947). After the war he is taken to a Swiss orphanage where he is placed in the foster care of an elderly bourgeois Swiss couple, the Dössekkers. (The wife was nearly fifty and the husband even older (Lappin, 1999, p. 9). Eventually the boy was adopted, when he was about fifteen (Gourevitch, 1999, p. 51; see also Wilkomirski, 1995, p. 139). Unfortunately, foster care did not solve his problems. Wilkomirski says he was mistreated in his new home and in school. His parents and teachers urged him to stop talking of the war. Moreover, he complained, no one told him the war was over, until a senior class in high school when he saw a documentary of a camp being liberated (1995, p. 149).

The book is filled with genuine emotions, which helps explain why reviewers and prize givers initially read it uncritically. The language is simple, direct, and powerful. Readers are encouraged to read very fast and not to consider how unlikely some of the incidents are. Even though I had already read Elena Lappin's insightful essay in *Granta* (1999), I also overlooked inconsistencies. In the face of strong emotions, it is all too easy to suppress one's rational mind and simply be swept along. Many readers were. Indeed one went so far as to «recognize» Benjamin as her dead sister's son (Gourevitch, 1999). As it happens, however, most of Wilkomirski's facts turned out to be entirely inaccurate. According to a newspaper article, a Swiss historian investigated his past and concluded that he never left Switzerland (Carvajal, 1999). He was born Bruno Grosjean in 1941, too late to remember some of the chronicled events. Supposedly this historian also tracked down Wilkomirski's living father, but that statement has not been corroborated. Two reporters who have written essays on the writer have mentioned a maternal uncle. He said that he and Wilkomirski's mother were *Verdingkinder*, earning children. The Swiss, rather than designing a system of welfare for unmarried mothers, leased the children out to peasant families. The peasants fed and housed them in return for their labor (Lappin, 1999, p. 63), a miserable existence at best.

The origin of Wilkomirski's writing therefore has much in common with the origin of Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* (1965, 1976). Both writers experienced familial trauma as young children during the war. In Kosinski's case his newly-adopted brother broke up his cozy relationship with an adoring mother (Wyatt-Brown, in press). Wilkomirski was born the illegitimate son of a woman who suffered from depression. According to her brother she had shock treatment for partial paralysis (Lappin, 1999, p. 62), a condition which sounds like an hysterical conversion reaction. He spent time in an orphanage before he was taken into a foster home. To make matters worse, his new foster family did not adopt him for many years. He was forced to spend vacations in a

Children's Home, the place where he met a survivor girl (Wilkomirski, 1995, pp. 139-145). No doubt he heard stories of concentration camp life there, which chameleon-like he adopted as his own (see also Hartman, 1996b). He had enough anger and guilt to be able to tell a credible story. Even under the best of circumstances many adopted children have a hard time psychologically. They often feel that their birth parents rejected them, and when they are uncomfortable in their new home, they can develop mental difficulties. In Wilkomirski's case his mother's history suggested potential trouble, and the adoption exacerbated his inherited tendencies. Like the American poet Sylvia Plath who identified with Jews in her poignant poem «Daddy» (Plath, 1965), Wilkomirski did the same. The biggest difference, however, was that he had no firm sense of identity. In time he began to believe the stories he had fabricated and could no longer separate the truth from the fiction. Even today his lack of identity puts him at risk. Very quickly both the German and the American publishers had withdrawn *Fragments* from circulation (1999; Carvajal, 1999). For this man born too late to remember the war, the horror of the Holocaust had become a false memory with more power than the reality of his actual early life. One wonders what he will now put in its place.

Gray and Wilkomirski drew upon their recollections of the war for the basis of their accounts. What they wrote was initially greeted with great enthusiasm, but in time exaggerations and discrepancies were noted. Timothy Ryback (1999), who recorded the final invention story, was born after the war. He became intrigued by an old man he met on a visit to Dachau, one of the earliest camps. Martin Zaidenstadt, who was eighty-seven when Ryback knew him, claims to have traveled daily to the concentration camp for fifty years. There he buttonholes tourists and tells them what the lager was like. He insists that the gas chambers were used, even though historians and officials alike agree that they were not (Ryback, 1999, p. 17).² Ryback, the director of the Salzburg Seminar, set out to try to find a record of Zaidenstadt's wartime experience, one which would verify his testimony, but could confirm only a part of his story.

No matter how hard he tried, he could find only one trace of Zaidenstadt. No record of the old man appeared in the list of names compiled from the Nazi's registration cards. Barbara Distel, who knew the records well, told Ryback that she had seen Zaidenstadt occasionally at «commemoration events» until the last four years when he began to appear more regularly (1999, p. 119). This statement contradicts the survivor's assertion that he had been going to the lager regularly for fifty years (Ryback, 1999, pp. 15-16). At the same time she reassured Ryback that some of the names were not recorded, nor were the prisoners tattooed (1999, p. 120). She, like so many he talked to, refused to refute the old man's story. Most withheld judgment, given his advanced age and the possible failure of his memory. On the other hand, they reject stories that contradict what is known about Dachau or Nazi officials (Ryback, 1999, pp. 144-145).

Ryback's sleuthing found one piece of new evidence to confirm part of Zaidenstadt's story. He discovered a record of the family in Jedwabne, the place of a horrible massacre (1999, pp. 164-165). The Poles had rounded up the Jews. They forced them into a barn, which they set on fire. Jerzy Ramatowski, a teacher and local history expert, reported that the Jews had given names of Polish intellectuals to the Russians, who carried them off to Russia and executed them. He denied that the Poles had taken vengeance, insisting that the Germans had committed that atrocity. The locals in a neighboring town named the Poles as the victimizers (1999, pp. 153-155). Moreover, a

² Some residents of Munich believed that the gas chambers were constructed by the American army after the war (Linde Katritsky, personal communication, Feb 12, 2000). Geoffrey Giles, a UF professor (personal communication, February 14, 2000), reports that the gas chamber at Auschwitz I went through several incarnations. It was used to gas prisoners and then converted to a bomb shelter when Birkenau's more extensive gas chambers were built. After the war, the bomb shelter was rebuilt as a gas chamber to memorialize its original use. Perhaps that reconstruction was the source of the rumor that the Americans had «built» the Dachau gas chambers.

director of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw told Ryback that the Polish atrocity at Jedwabne was one of the two confirmed cases in which Poles had burned Jews alive, the other being the burning of the synagogue of Bialystok. To make matters worse when they killed the Jews they destroyed most of the records. No birth certificate of Martin Zaidenstadt nor property deed survived the burning to bear witness to his presence (1999, pp. 166-167).

When Ryback returned to Dachau and shared the fruits of his labor with Zaidenstadt, for the first time the old man spoke of a wife and young daughter, whom the Poles had burned (1999, pp. 187-188). Zaidenstadt's emotion was so obviously genuine that the younger man believed him. In an eloquent statement he concludes that the older man comes daily in old age to the gas chamber to exorcize ghosts he had not actually experienced but knew to be true in the lives of others. These phantoms also include «the cries of a wife he once loved, and possibly still does, the screams of a daughter whose age he cannot speak, whose name he cannot utter, whom out of sheer horror for what she must have suffered, he can only describe with an extended arm and an open palm» (Ryback, 1999, pp. 192-193). The authenticity of Zaidenstadt's feelings made it possible for the young man to accept at least part of his story despite its ambiguity and indeterminacy.

All three of these men to different degrees have embellished their narratives. They did so to staunch the pain of trauma and to enhance their sense of identity. As Bernard Paris has pointed out in his work on Dickens, they have invented a life story of the past to explain their current misery (1997, p. 273). The unvarnished truth, alas, was not strong enough to satisfy their desire for self-knowledge. Their stories were not literally true. Instead they suggest the lengths to which individuals will go when they feel overwhelmed by suffering. Narratives of heroism or victimization in youth can apparently help the afflicted middle-aged and elderly sufferers survive the pain of remembrance. We should be skeptical readers but not judge them too harshly.

REFERENCES

- Abramson, G. (2000). *The Aftermath of Concentration Camp*. A paper delivered at the Dupont Seminar: Constructing America: Cross-Cultural Passages to a New Life, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, June 22.
- Arendt, H. (1963). *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. New York: The Viking Press.
- Carvajal, D. (1999). *A Disputed Holocaust Book is Withdrawn*. *The New York Times*, October 14, 1999, B1, B13.
- Duncan, D. D. (1979). *The Fragile Miracle of Martin Gray*. New York: Abbeville Press.
- Frister, R. (1993). *The Cap: The Price of a Life*. Translated by Hillel Halkin. New York: Grove Press, 1999.
- Gourevitch, P. (1999). The Memory Thief. *The New Yorker*, June 14, 1999, 48-68.
- Gray, M., & Gallo, M. (1971). *For Those I Loved*. Translated by Anthony White. New York: A Signet Book, 1974.
- Greene, J. M., & Kumar, S. (Eds.) (2000). *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust*. New York: The Free Press.
- Gubrium, J. F. (1993). *Speaking of Life: Horizons of Meaning for Nursing Home Residents*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Haaken, J. (1998). *Pillar of Salt: Gender, Memory, and the Perils of Looking Back*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Hartman, G. H. (1996a). The Book of the Destruction. In *The Longest Shadow: In the Aftermath of the Holocaust* (pp. 116-132). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hartman, G. H. (1996b). Learning from Survivors: The Yale Testimony Project. In *The Longest Shadow: In the Aftermath of the Holocaust* (pp. 133-150). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hartman, G. H. (1996c). *The Longest Shadow: In the Aftermath of the Holocaust*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hertzberg, H. (1999). Tangled Web: Review of Edmund Morris's *Dutch*. *The New Yorker*, October 11, 1999, 94-102.
- Hoffman, M. (1999). *The Campaign for Radical Truth in History: The Prop-Masters*. October 31, 1999. Accessed October 31, 1999. Home Page. Available from <http://www.hoffman-info.com/communist.html>.
- Krystal, H. (1990). Trauma and aging: A thirty-year follow up. In Cathy Caruth (Ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (pp. 76-99). Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

- Lappin, E. (1999). The man with two heads. *Granta*, Summer, 7-65.
- Lengyel, O. (1947). *Five Chimneys*. Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1995.
- Levi, P. (1947). *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*. Translated by Stuart Woolf. New York: A Touchstone Book, 1996.
- Novick, P. (1999). *The Holocaust in American Life*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Paris, B. J. (1997). *Imagined Human Beings: A Psychological Approach to Character and Conflict in Literature*. New York: New York University Press.
- Plath, S. (1965). *Ariel*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Publisher Drops Holocaust Book. *The New York Times (National Edition)*, November 3, 1999, B4.
- Rotem, S. (Kazik) (1994). *Memoirs of a Warsaw Ghetto Fighter: The Past Within Me*. Translated by Barbara Harshav. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Ryback, T. W. (1999). *The Last Survivor: In Search of Martin Zaidenstadt*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Wiesel, E. (1986). *Night*. Translated by Stella Rodway. New York: Bantam Books.
- Wilkomirski, B. (1995). *Fragments: Memories of a Wartime Childhood*. Translated by Carol Brown Janeway. New York: Schocken, 1997.
- Winnicott, D. W. (1984). *Deprivation and Delinquency*. ed. Clare Winnicott, Ray Shepherd, and Madeleine Davis. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Wyatt-Brown, A. M. (in press). The Rise and Fall of Jerzy Kosinski. In Frederico Pereira (Ed.), *Literature and Psychoanalysis: Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis*. Lisbon: Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada.