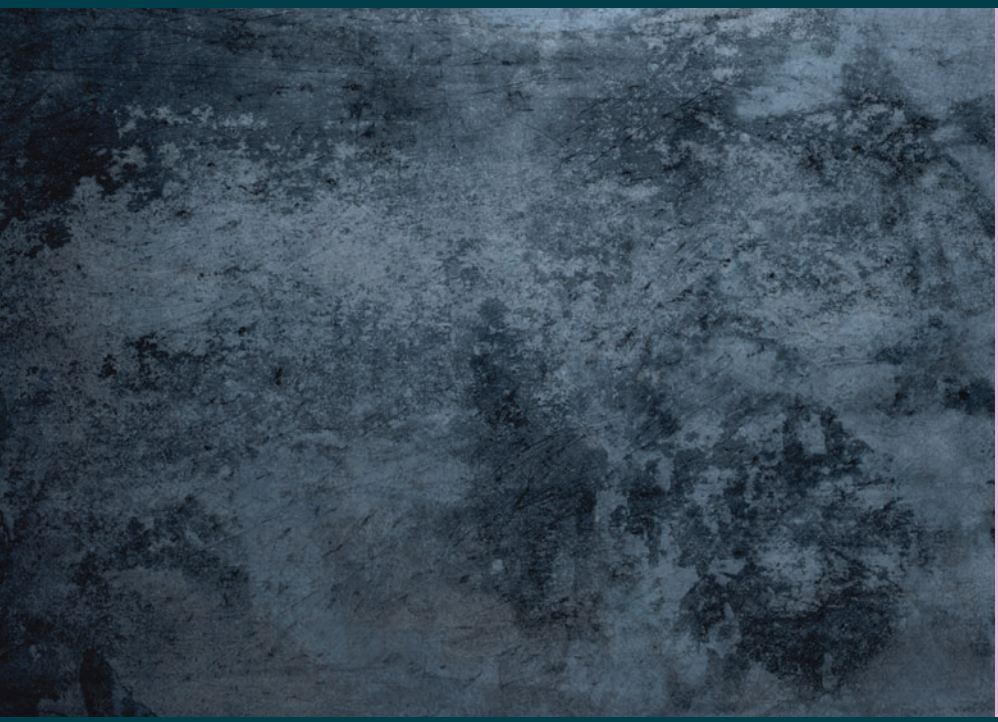
TRACES OF VIOLENCE AND FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



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Traces of Violence and Freedom of Thought

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About the Book

We are all tainted, whether we are actively engaged or not, by violence in its countless and troubling manifestations. Images and fragments of traumatic and violent scenarios are transported from one generation's unconscious to that of another, leading to cycles of repetition and retaliation, restricting one's freedom to imagine alternatives and inhabit alternative positions. This collection of essays focus on the workings of violence and power. All the articles work within a psychosocial framework by unsettling the boundaries between psyche-social. Four themes are addressed: violence of speech, violence and domination, repetition and violence, and the possibility of reparation or renewal. The articles point to the fusion of temporalities and argue that the past persists in the present.

Lene Auestad
Amal Treacher Kabesh

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Traces of Violence and Freedom of Thought

Lene Auestad and Amal Treacher Kabesh

Violence can be subtle; it can be elusive; it can leave human beings devastated; it can lead to domination, compliance and oppression and it can provoke resistance to the dominant socio-political context. It can lead to people's physical disappearance and it can provoke human beings to withdraw by coiling up inside. We are all tainted, whether we are actively engaged or not, by violence in its countless and troubling manifestations. By the phrase 'traces of violence' we intend to indicate a human starting point, following Jean Laplanche (1989), where the child is the recipient of enigmatic messages from an adult, and responds to what it fails to grasp by forming an unconscious, and as a corollary, an 'I'. The adult's message is opaque, not only because it conveys an unknown meaning to the child, but also because it makes manifest the

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parental unconscious; the message lacks transparency to the adult as well (1989: 125–126). Thus images and fragments of traumatic and violent scenarios are transported from one generation's unconscious to that of another, leading to cycles of repetition and retaliation, restricting one's freedom to imagine alternatives and to inhabit alternative positions. Violence and power are interlinked as the reaching out for power can lead to violent domination and, in turn, violence leads inevitably to the wish to dominate and control. Avery Gordon describes power as that

> which can be invisible, it can be fantastic, it can be dull and routine. It can be obvious, it can reach you by the baton of the police, it can speak the language of your thoughts and desires…It is dense and superficial, it can cause bodily injury, and it can harm you without seeming ever to touch you. (2008: 3)

This diverse collection of essays is joined by the aim of addressing the workings of violence and power. The essays draw attention to the inexorable conditions of violence in various geo-political locations (for example, Argentina, China, Germany, Hungary), the reach of violence across time (past, present and future) and the inevitable consequences of violence on human beings. This edited collection is located securely within a psychosocial studies framework and the articles included encompass a range of diverse theoretical frameworks. Four themes in relation to violence and power are addressed: the violence of speech, violence and domination, repetition and violence, and finally, the possibility of reparation or renewal. The authors make use of a diverse range of influences. Some adhere closely to psychoanalytic conceptualisations; others are more ambivalent, or indeed want to push psychoanalysis to claim its capacity to unsettle that which is known. All the articles aim to work within a psychosocial framework by unsettling the boundaries between psyche-social, and the commonplace demarcation between the psyche and the political. A strong theme of this collection is the attention paid to historical contexts, and this focus unsettles a dominant understanding of temporality that separates out the past and the present. Instead, the articles, explicitly or implicitly, point to the

fusion of temporalities and argue that the past persists in the present relentlessly.

In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno outline how violence towards the element of nature in oneself becomes violence towards others who are seen as representatives of this repressed violence. They argue that the retreat from enlightenment into mythology lies not so much in nationalist, pagan and other modern mythologies, 'but in the Enlightenment itself when paralyzed by fear of the truth' (1997: xiv). What people want to learn from nature is to use it so as to dominate it and to dominate others. On the road to modern science, people renounce any claim to meaning; the kind of thinking that only aims to dominate becomes self-destructive. Whatever does not conform to the rule of computation and utility becomes suspect. Thus the Enlightenment has ruthlessly and, in spite of itself, extinguished any trace of its own self-consciousness—'thought becomes illusionary whenever it seeks to deny the divisive function, distancing and objectification' (1997: 39). The authors take the Odyssey as a parable of the process of enlightenment. 'The opposition of enlightenment to myth is expressed in the opposition of the surviving individual ego to multifarious fate. The eventful voyage from Troy to Ithaca is the way taken through the myths by the self—ever physically weak as against the power of nature, and attaining self-realization only in self-consciousness' (46). In discarding the awareness of oneself as nature, all the aims of one's life are nullified as means are enthroned as ends. 'Man's domination over himself, which grounds his selfhood, is almost always the destruction of the subject in whose service it is undertaken' (54). Furthermore the 'subjective spirit which cancels the animation of nature can master a despiritualized nature only by imitating its rigidity and despiritualizing itself in turn' (57). Jonathan Davidoff's chapter, 'Instrumental Subjectivity: père-suasion as père-version' interrogates Nazism as a phenomenon through which individuals renounce subjectivity for certainty of a place in the symbolic order. Davidoff, importantly, argues that the desire for certainty is a temptation for all subjects as we can give ourselves over to the certitude alleged to occur if submission to the machinery takes place.

Horkheimer and Adorno explore how suppression of nature reveals how this violence becomes violence towards an other: 'Those who spasmodically dominate nature see in a tormented nature a provocative image of powerless happiness. The thought of happiness without power is unbearable because it would then be true happiness' (172). With reference to Freud's essay on *Das Unheimliche* it is described how 'What seems repellently alien is in fact all too familiar: the infectious gestures of direct contacts suppressed by civilization, for instance, touch, soothing, snuggling up, coaxing. We are put off by the old-fashioned nature of these impulses' (1997: 182).

> The howling voice of Fascist orators and camp commandants shows the other side of the same social condition. The yell is as cold as business. They both expropriate the sounds of natural complaint and make them elements of their technique. […] The mere existence of the other is a provocation. Every 'other' person who 'doesn't know his place' must be forced back within his proper confines—those of unrestricted terror (183).

Furthermore, all prejudice is characterised as based on a false projection, that is, a form of projective behaviour from which reflection is absent. Drawing on Kant there is a gulf between the true object and the data received by the senses (the thing-in-itself and the thing-for-me) which the subject must bridge at his or her own risk. The subject creates the external world from the traces it leaves in his or her senses, and must return to the thing more than he or she receives from it to reflect the thing as it is. The 'I' is construed retrospectively by granting a synthetic unity to the external impressions and then to the internal ones, gradually separated off from them. 'The real ego is the most recent constant product of projection. […] It is only equivalent to the significance the world of objects for it. The inner depth of the subject consists in nothing other than the delicacy and wealth of the external world of perceptions. If the links are broken, the ego calcifies' (189). How the process of 'false projection' affects both the 'I' and the perceived other is described as follows:

> When the subject is no longer able to return to the object what he has received from it, he becomes poorer rather than richer. He loses the

> reflection in both directions: since he no longer reflects the object, he ceases to reflect upon himself, and loses the ability to differentiate. Instead of the voice of conscience, he hears other voices … it overflows and fades away at one and the same time. It invests the outer world boundlessly with its own content; but it invests it in fact with the void: with an overstatement of mere means, relations, machinations, and dark practice without the perspective of thought. Domination itself, which, even as absolute rule, is only a means, becomes its own purpose and extraneous purpose in uninhibited projection; indeed, it becomes purpose as such (180–190).

This viewpoint of the inexorable effects of violence on the self is taken up and explored by Kathleen Kelley-Lainé. In her chapter, 'From Totalitarian to Democratic Functioning: The Psychic Economy of Infantile Processes', she provides a case study of an individual patient to understand 'totalitarian psychic functioning' and how this infantile state can persist into adulthood, hindering the development of a more mature transitional space between self and other.

This enables us to see the link between violence done to another human being and what we might refer to as epistemic violence —acts of perception and cognition that violently subsumes the other, or object encountered, to a larger category, with no regard for the particularity of the object or person. A troubling aspect of violence is that of repetition. Julia Richter's contribution, 'Intergenerational Layers of Silence: How the Concealed or the Outspoken Remain Undiscussable or Indescribable' traces the consequences on individuals when silence and absence operates inexorably. Richter is troubled by how the past persists in the present and how multiple layers of silence and absence paralyses the working through of that which cannot be discussed, or indeed that which cannot be deciphered. She is concerned with the phenomenon of intergenerational transmission, discussing that which is lived, but is not necessarily available to be known. Shifting geographical location to Argentina, Lucia Corti's essay 'Recovered Identities: The Found Children of the Argentinian Disappeared' focuses on the troubling history of the people who were stolen and appropriated by the Argentinian military between 1976 and 1983. Through this paper, Corti argues for

the importance of truth as a central dimension, exploring the liberating effects of discovering history that has been concealed.

Where rhetoric is the art of persuasion via language, rhetorics of power are attempts to force people to see a situation in a specific way and compel them to act accordingly, importantly, coercive rhetoric is often uttered by a person who is already in a position to oppress others. 'There is no alternative' is the phrase Thatcher often repeated with reference to economic liberalism and this rhetorical trope persists in the discourses that defend and uphold the politics of austerity. 'There is no alternative' forecloses the possibility of different understandings from entering the political sphere securely and it can be taken as symbolic of the language of power, and as an example of the rhetorics of oppressive persuasion. By contrast, the psychoanalytic practice of free association, of speaking unreservedly while remaining attentive to what is being disclosed, has a potential to challenge established political frameworks. The two first chapters in this volume discuss rhetorical practices that produce obedience and inhibit thinking and pose the question: What personal and social conditions are conductive to freedom of thought? From different perspectives, Lene Auestad and Szymon Wróbel examine the role of rhetoric in the public sphere. In 'Speech, Repetition, Renewal' Auestad is concerned with hate speech and injurious speech acts; she traces through how hate speech is performative and displaces unwanted aspects of the self onto others, following cultural patterns of domination. Wróbel's essay, 'Logos, Ethos and Pathos or The Paradigm of Patho-Politics', uses Artistotle's rhetorical triad—logos, ethos, pathos—to discuss the power of rhetoric in contemporary political persuasive communication. Affect is embedded in the narratives and discourses that are spoken, or that which is made absent, because speech is concerned with the human domain, with what could have been different, and where various courses of actions are open and various interpretations are possible (Aristotle 1984: 2161). Violent discourses, to the contrary, act as if no alternative courses of action or interpretation are open to the listener; they are totalitarian in the sense that they aim to present a view of a state of affairs and a definite outcome as the only possible one. In other words, they seek to convey the position that a development, a strategy is necessary based on natural laws or scientific facts,

and thus that people are determined by forces that transcend the realm of human affairs (Arendt 1976). These discourses persuade, or rather compel them, not even telling them that they *ought*, which still leaves a notion of choice behind, but that they *must* do something. *Ought* presupposes that one can act differently, *must* goes beyond the realm of human action and freedom. Ideology, 'the logic of an idea', starts from an axiomatically accepted premise and deduces everything else from it, a process which 'like a mighty tentacle seizes you on all sides as in a vise and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away' (p. 472). Thus the coercive force of logical deduction stifles thinking, which in its freedom represents its very opposite (p. 473). To Arendt, loneliness represents the essence of totalitarian rule, and it is a state which is destructive of thinking: 'In solitude […] I am "by myself", together with my self, and therefore two-in-one, whereas in loneliness I am actually one, deserted by all others' (p. 476).

In this situation, one loses the elementary confidence in the world needed for experience and for thinking, and logical deduction becomes the only (empty) 'truth' to fall back upon. Loneliness, to Arendt, 'is closely connected with the uprootedness and superfluousness which have become the curse of modern masses since the beginning of the industrial revolution […]. To be uprooted means to have no place in the world, recognized and guaranteed by others; to be superfluous means to have no place in the world at all' (p. 475). These conditions pave the way for subtle domination. In 'To Be or Bartleby: Psychoanalysis and the Crisis of Immunity', Werner Prall engages with Herman Melville's short story 'Bartleby The Scrivener'. Prall discusses the different receptions of this story within psychoanalysis and philosophy, and elaborates the divergences in order to focus on a psychoanalytic understanding of the 'foreign body'. He argues that psychoanalysis should remain true to a tradition of continuing to act as a foreign body within the social fabric in order to provoke socio-affective-political change.

Reflecting on related phenomena, Adorno approaches the theme of masses and domination from a different angle, in raising the question of how a mass becomes just that. He credits Freud with having posed such a question, in not having taken the mass formation for granted, and having

come up with an answer. In 'Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda', Adorno argues that modern mass formations cannot, in a straightforward way, be compared with biological phenomena: 'the members of contemporary masses are at least prima facie individuals, the children of a liberal, competitive and individualistic society, and conditioned to maintain themselves as independent, self-sustaining units' (1978, p. 121). Thus one would need to explain why people of today revert to patterns of behaviour which flagrantly contradict their own, as well as their civilization's level of rationality. Psychoanalysis can provide insight into how people participate, actively and affectively, through the powerful emotions of love and hate, and in how they establish their relations with 'otherness,' in reproducing the conditions of their own domination and undermining their own material interests. The agitator performs this feat by artificially creating a libidinal bond, though the element of love must remain unconscious and moulded into obedience. 'It is one of the basic tenets of fascist leadership to keep primary libidinal energy on an unconscious level so as to divert its manifestations in a way suitable to political ends' (1978, p. 121).

A reading of *Group Psychology* leads to the conclusion that the identification involved is of an early, narcissistic kind, rather than relating to a later figure of a father: 'the primitively narcissistic aspect of identification as an act of devouring, of making the beloved object part of oneself, may provide us with a clue to the fact that the modern leader image sometimes seems to be the enlargement of the subject's own personality' (1978, p. 125). The primal father becomes the group ideal, and replaces the ego ideal so as to govern the ego on the basis of an erotic tie. In this, the followers treat the object of the leader as if it were their own ego—the object serving as a substitute for an unattained ego ideal of their own. Through idealization as the partial transfer of narcissistic libido to the object, the leader can absorb and satisfy their strong narcissistic impulses. Thus the leader image is the subject writ large: 'by making the leader his ideal he loves himself as it were, but gets rid of the stains of frustration and discontent which mar his picture of his own empirical self' (p. 126). To allow narcissistic identification, the leader must appear as absolutely narcissistic; the leader himself loves no one, but allows the followers to sustain the illusion that they are equally and justly loved by their leader.

Kinga Göncz's article, 'Rhetorics of Power—Can it Dress up the Naked King? The Emperor Without Clothes'—provides a historical overview of Hungary in order to understand the contemporary political situation. Focusing on the interplay between the place of the leader in people's imaginations and the leader's personality, she argues that the need for a strong leader can be destructive as it hinders working through historical traumas.

In their study of the authoritarian personality, Adorno et al. (1950) found that together with anti-intraception and a tendency to project, and a harsh, punitive super-ego, authoritarian aggression and submission was strongly correlated with a high degree of prejudice. Authoritarian submission represents the masochistic component of authoritarianism while authoritarian aggression represents its sadistic component. In authoritarian aggression, hostility originally aroused by, and directed towards, in-group authorities is displaced on to out-groups. Rather than being intellectually confused with regard to the source of his or her frustration, the authoritarian *must* turn his or her aggression towards out-groups, because of being psychologically unable to attack in-group authorities (Adorno et al. 1950: 233). Because of having projected his or her own unacceptable impulses on to individuals belonging to out-groups, the authoritarian person is driven to see immoral attitudes in others regardless of the facts of the matter. Exaggerated toughness is most apparent in its overemphasis on the motif of power in human relationships, a disposition to view all relations in terms of categories such as strong–weak, dominant–submissive, leader–follower, where it is often difficult to determine which of these roles the subject identifies with. This 'power complex' contains contradictory elements: wanting, but fearing, to seize power; admiring power and being tempted to submit to it, but fearing the weakness this would imply; such that different features will predominate at the surface level at different times. A solution often found to this dilemma is an alignment with power figures, so that the desire for having, and for submitting to, power can be satisfied simultaneously, or by occupying a middle position in a hierarchy (1950, pp. 237–238). The strong–weak dichotomy, furthermore, is made to apply to in-groups and out-groups, 'superior' and 'inferior races'.

> [Freud] defines the realm of psychology by the supremacy of the unconscious and postulates that what is id should become ego. […] Fascism furthers this abolition in the opposite sense through the perpetuation of dependence instead of the realization of potential freedom, through expropriation of the unconscious by social control instead of making the subjects conscious of their unconscious. (Adorno 1978, p. 136)

In object-relational terms, the rhetorics of power can be seen to take on the part-object voice of a persecutory 'over-I'. Melanie Klein described the 'I' as feeling 'oppressed and paralysed by the influences of the super-ego'. No other voice or counter discourse can be heard for the 'I' distrusts 'accepting the influences of real objects, often because they are felt to be in complete opposition to the demands of the super-ego, but more often because they are too closely identified with the dreaded internal ones' (Klein 1931, p. 245). Right-wing populist discourse echoes both the voice of the 'it' and that of the 'over-I',[1] allowing for, and demanding aggression against people posited as 'other' or 'weaker' than those the listener is impelled to identify with. This process is structurally similar to that of identification with the aggressor, leaving behind a mind 'which consists only of the id and super-ego' (Ferenczi 1933, p. 163). In Ferenczi's description: 'at moments of complete exhaustion in the muscle tone […] all hope of outside help or alleviation of the trauma is abandoned. […] Insofar as this psychic being is still accessible to emotions, it turns its interests towards the only feelings left over from the process, that is, the feelings of the attacker' (Ferenczi 1985, p. 104).

We might question whether traumatised societies are more susceptible to such rhetorics of power. Aggregation and massification, in Earl Hopper's terms, is a basic assumption which characterises traumatised groups:

> An aggregate is characterised by a minimal degree of mutual attraction and involvement among three or more people who are neither interdependent nor in sympathy with one another on the basis of shared beliefs, norms and values. In contrast, a mass is characterised by a maximal degree of mutual attraction and involvement among three or more people who are neither interdependent nor in sympathy with one another but

> who share the illusion of solidarity with respect to beliefs, norms and values, usually for a brief period of time.
>
> Although the members of a mass may feel otherwise, a mass is no more a group than an aggregate is. Whereas an aggregate has too much individuality to be a group, a mass has too little. (Hopper 2003, p. 67)

A mass in the description above is very uniform or homogenous; it is characterised by fusion. People are very close together, so much so that they cannot really relate to one another; they are deprived of their individuality. An aggregate is a contrast in the sense that it preserves individuality by withdrawal, though it shares the characteristic of a lack of genuine contact between people. People may alternate between these states, as the one may serve as a defence against the other (2003, p. 66). This resembles Arendt's description of loneliness, induced in totalitarian domination by 'destroying all space between men and pressing men against one another' (1976, p. 478). Amal Treacher Kabesh's essay—Troubling States of Mind: Sacrificing the Other—is concerned with understanding how a problematic state of mind fuelled by anxiety and fear paralyses identification. The summer of 2013 in Egypt (when the Muslim Brotherhood were ousted from power) is the socio-political context from which Treacher Kabesh attempts to analyse the conditions that lead to a worrying indifference towards those who have a different value and belief system. Socio-political conditions can stimulate our anger, including when we happen to expect a contrary result, when someone shows contempt for us in connection with the things we most care about, when someone fails to return our kindnesses, with friends who do not treat us well, with those who are indifferent to the pain they cause us, is followed by an instruction to invoke such judgments and the accompanying affect in the listeners.

Rhetorics of power can become mainstream political discourses and shape people's ideology by totalising and impeding freedom of thought. This is visible in the current economic, religious and ideological fundamentalisms. To echo Thatcher's phrase, we are told that there is no alternative to protecting ourselves against 'others' who are after stealing scarce jobs and welfare goods, or who pose a threat to security. Hence, it

is argued, borders need to be closed, minorities kept at a distance, or in a state of submission, and techniques of surveillance are called for. Fear is stirred up and utilised to produce obedience to these demands, presented as fundamental and thus overriding concerns for human rights. In Moïsi's words 'the culture of fear is reducing the qualitative gap that once existed between democratic and nondemocratic regimes, for fear pushes the countries to violate their own moral principles' (2010, p. x). Think of how fear of terrorism is used to decrease freedom and the validity of the rule of law. An attempted ban on imagining alternatives extends to forgetfulness towards the past.

'We live in an age that pays lip service to history, yet which continually undermines the ties we have to the past', wrote Darian Leader (2013). This statement, which relates to manic depression and the healthcare system's denial and attempted erasure of the meaning of personal history, can be given a wider reading in the context of the present investigation. Undermining history, memory and the ties with the past serves a totalising hegemonic purpose. Historical consciousness, on the other hand, can introduce alternative discourses that challenge the dominating voices of the 'it' and the 'over-I' (Bettelheim 1983). The present, as well as hegemonic historical discourses, can be put into question in the light of the past. Walter Benjamin (1943) calls for a questioning of the pillars of history and culture 'for there is no testimony of culture that it is not also a testimony of barbarism'. The matter of the persistence of history and the consequences of the incapacities to think about what is inherited and perpetuated is explored by Edward Weisband in his article 'Shame Disciplines in the Chinese Cultural Revolution: Lurid and Ludic'. Weisband provides a case study of a different time and political region as he demonstrates how shame dynamics in Chinese Confucian families enabled the violence that took place during the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the rejection of previous cultural traditions and values.

By means of the figure of the 'ragman', Benjamin highlights the importance and unsettling power of what mainstream discourses scorn. He calls for the historian to 'brush history against the grain' (Benjamin 1943, p. 433) as a way of countering the totalising historical discourse by re-introducing what hitherto had been excluded, perhaps feared and deemed abject. Foucault's thinking on 'speaking truth to power', or

parrhesia, is relevant in this respect. It involves: 'the risk of offending or provoking the other person; it is truth subject to risk of violence'. The truth spoken challenges the bond between the speaker and the addressee, at the risk of ending the relationship. Parrhesia means telling all, saying everything, without withholding or concealment. It can be understood in two senses: saying anything 'that comes to mind, anything that serves the cause one is defending, anything that serves the passion or interest driving the person who is speaking'—or in a more positive sense, of 'telling the truth without concealment, reserve, [or] empty manner of speech'. In the positive sense of the term, the truth must be the personal opinion of the speaker—one personally signs the truth stated, binds oneself to it, and is thus bound to and by it (2011, pp. 9–11).

We might ask how the practice of psychoanalysis, and free association, stand in relation to this, and about its political implications. With reference to the protected and confidential space of the clinical setting, Thompson writes: 'Most of us either speak impulsively without awareness of what we say or think through everything we are about to disclose before speaking'. By contrast, 'speaking unreservedly while remaining attentive to what is being disclosed' (2001, p. 75) appears radical, emphasising the significance of the promise to free associate, rather than the activity as such. In Freud's words; 'You must never give in to these criticisms'—which could be conceived of as related to the power of the analyst, figures from one's past, socially more or less conscious restrictions combined with one's own—'indeed, you must say it precisely because you feel an aversion to doing so. […] Finally, never forget that you have promised to be absolutely honest, and never leave anything out because, for some reason or other, it is unpleasant to tell it' (1913, p. 135). What social or political conditions or frameworks are presupposed in, or challenged by, these ideas?

The practice of free association represents a promise of freedom of thought. Where fear is instigated as an attack on thought, memory, curiosity, imagination, creativity—or mental freedom, an internalization of coercion takes place, based on the feeling that some things are too dangerous to be thought about. Thus creativity is severely restrained—one's thoughts can no longer move around freely for fear of what they might encounter (Auestad 2012). Being able to speak to

a listening other who can bear what one is saying; who is not harmed by one's words; and who does not condemn the thoughts they contain, enables a new mental freedom. If someone else can hear and reflect on what one is saying, one may gradually hear oneself without fearing the results of the attention. One's mind can go on a journey to situations far and near, noticing their impressions as they pass by, as in Freud's (1913) simile of looking at the landscape through a train window. Another reason why we have chosen 'freedom of thought' rather than 'freedom of speech' as part of this book's title, is that 'freedom of speech' as we shall see in what follows, is currently often used to defend racist, sexist and other hate speech. 'Freedom of speech' in this context becomes a form of bullying, where the freedom of the speaker is used to undermine the freedom of the intended recipient. Such speech is repetitive, rather than expressive of thought and it does not promote thinking or thoughtfulness. It becomes 'mere talk' which does not illuminate. 'When men are deprived of the public space […] they retreat into their freedom of thought'. (Arendt 1983, p. 9)

This collection of essays ends with two contributions that focus attention on the possibility of repair and renewal: 'Ferenc Merei and the Politics of Psychoanalysis in Hungary' by Ferenc Erős and the contribution by Julia Borossa entitled 'Histories of Violence: Outrage, Identification and Analytic Work'. Erős's chapter focuses on introducing Ferenc Mérei, an important figure in Hungarian psychology. The essay examines Mérei's significant contributions in relation to social and educational psychology, psychodrama and group psychoanalysis, to name but a few of his areas of engagement. Mérei proposed the term 'allusion' to characterise the language of members of groups who share an experience that cannot necessarily be expressed. Borossa is concerned with the psychical effects of violence, arguing that violence reaches inwards and that no one involved is left untouched. Her primary question focuses on what enables the movement from outrage to identification. This troubling inquiry is pursued via a range of texts that include memoirs and novels. Borossa is engaged with how bonds can be remade so that connectedness can take place.

This book is based on a Psychoanalysis and Politics conference entitled 'Rhetorics of Power and Freedom of Thought', held at the Centre

for Advanced Studies, Central European University in Budapest in May 2014. Psychoanalysis and Politics is an international and interdisciplinary conference series, founded in 2010 (www.psa-pol.org). It aims to address how crucial contemporary political issues may be fruitfully analysed through psychoanalytic theory and vice versa—how political phenomena may reflect back on psychoanalytic thinking. The symposium series creates a space where representatives of different perspectives come together and engage with one another's contributions, participating in a community of thought.

We hope that this collection of essays stimulates thought in relation to the various troubling and troublesome themes of, power and (in)visibility—that which is made present or rendered absent. Violence, we argue, can be subtle, covert and overt. It can manifest itself in everyday and elusive interactions, in mental habits and systems of categorization, in the oppressive rule of the State or of markets, and it taints us all. There are, though, possibilities for repair and renewal, through creating spaces for thinking differently, through acting on the public and private spheres that we all inhabit, more effectively, and through claiming the capacities to be and to live otherwise.

Note

1. The use of the terms 'it' and 'over-I' draws on Bettelheim's critique of the standard English translation of Freud in *Freud and Man's Soul*.

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Speech, Repetition, Renewal

Lene Auestad

Performative Utterances

A contributor to the book *Hating in the First Person Plural* opens her article on misogyny in the following way:

> I am a woman trying to write an essay on misogyny. […]In his invitation to contributors, [the editor] introduces the phenomenon of irrational hatreds by […] naming the inflammatory terms with which we hate and hurt the other: 'nigger,' 'faggot,' 'cunt.' I am caught and cut up by this language and I have just tried to pass that effect on to you, the reader. It is impossible not to recoil and feel unsettled. The words will not stay simply symbolic. Primary process leaks out. […] But of course we are supposed to feel these strange affects, these frissons of shame and rage and (alarmingly?) excitement. (Harris 2003, pp. 249–250)

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This description of how the words appear contagious, permeating the flesh of their intended recipient, may serve as an introduction to the theme of hate speech and injurious discourse. I would like to think about the role of language in hate speech as magical, and yet socially constituted, as instances of repetition, and question what it takes for meaning to be renewed. Austin introduces the theme of performative utterances as follows:

> It was for too long the assumption of philosophers that the business of a 'statement' can only be to 'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state some fact', which it must do either truly or falsely. […Yet] Utterances can be found […] that
>
> A. […] do not 'describe' or 'report' […] anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and
>
> B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action […]
>
> Examples:
>
> (E. *a*) 'I do (sc. Take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife)'—as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony.
>
> (E. *b*) 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*'—as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stem.
>
> (Austin 1962/1975, p. 1, 5)

To utter these statements is not to describe something, or even to state that I am doing something, rather, uttering the statement is to perform the action in question; when I state that I name the ship *Queen Elizabeth* in the relevant context, I am doing just that. Austin is concerned with how such performances can misfire and he lists several examples of infelicity, which give rise to the following criteria for the performative's success:

> A.1. There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, [including] the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances.

> A.2. The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked. (Austin 1962/ 1975, p. 26, 34)

In other words, performative statements rely on social rituals and social norms of authority. The examples are not focused on the speaker's thoughts or feelings, but on the ritualistic element: insincere speech-acts are still not void (p. 40). In order to have made a promise, I must have been heard by someone and have been understood by him or her as promising (p. 22); a social framework must be in place for the performative utterance to be effective. This indicates how performative utterances relate to power structures. Austin's mention of 'appropriate persons and circumstances' reminds us that a statement's meaning, if uttered by a person in a different social context, may change completely or may be deprived of meaning. 'The question,' Austin wonders at one point, 'how far can acts be unilateral? Similarly the question arises as to when the act is at an end, what counts as its completion?' (1962/ 1975, p. 37). I shall let these questions provide an entry into Judith Butler's discussion of injurious speech.

Linguistic Injury and Social Conventions

Butler refers to the situation of being addressed injuriously as one in which one suffers from disorientation:

> To be injured by speech is to suffer a loss of context, that is, not to know where you are. […] Exposed at the moment of such a shattering is precisely the volatility of one's 'place' within the community of speakers; one can be 'put in one's place' by such speech, but such a place may be no place. (Butler 1997, p. 4)

To relate her description to Charles Taylor's metaphor of the 'map of the good'—it presents a picture of being pushed off the map of the good from the point of view of the perhaps socially dominant other. As human beings, as actors, we need to operate according to differentials of

worth, to have a 'map of the good', and to be able to place ourselves on this map. To Taylor, the 'fact that we have to place ourselves in a space which is defined by […] qualitative distinctions [of worth] cannot but mean that where we stand in relation to them must matter to us' (1989, p. 42), but this situation is one where we are forcefully being placed in, or thrown off balance in an evaluative social space. Butler's formulation: 'one can be "put in one's place" by such speech, but such a place may be no place' (1997, p. 4) captures very succinctly how the wounding speech act may appear from the point of view of the speaker to put its recipient back into 'the place where he or she belongs'—an inferior social place or category, while the recipient experiences a disorienting blow, spatially a loss of place.

The description of shattering, of 'not having a place' can be seen to point to what I have termed 'enforced splitting' (Auestad 2011). In a situation of being generally blamed, accused and degraded, there would seem to be a scope for either accepting the definition thrust upon one, and maintaining the relationship, or rejecting the definition and consequently withdrawing from the social setting. If one relates to the other as he or she would like to see one as all bad, one is adapted to the social situation, but at a too great loss to oneself; however, to see oneself as good, one must cut off the relationship to the damaging, judgmental other, which may not be socially possible. Splitting is a way of doing both these things: of partially remaining inside and in contact with a social system in which one is devalued while partially also being removed from it—it involves switching back and forth between the two positions, which cannot coexist in consciousness at the same time. As a parallel to Menzies Lyth's (1960/1990) description of 'enforced introjection of the social defence system' I have proposed the term 'enforced splitting' to cover this reaction to environmental pressure, as opposed to the ego's spontaneous splitting of itself.

We describe instances of racist speech, writes Butler, as being 'like receiving a slap in the face' or as a 'verbal assault'. These and similar formulations suggest that linguistic injury acts like physical injury: 'that physical metaphors seize upon nearly every occasion to describe linguistic injury suggests that this somatic dimension may be important to the understanding of linguistic pain. […] there is a strong sense in

which the body is alternately sustained and threatened through modes of address' (Butler 1997, pp. 4–5).

If we think of how the 'I' is described by Freud alternately as 'first and foremost a bodily ego' (1923, p. 26) and as 'altered by identification' (1917/1915, p. 249), we can see how it is threatened by the verbal attack in the latter sense, as lacking in good inner objects or invaded by bad, malevolent ones. These assaults can unconsciously, and at times consciously, be felt as physical attacks. Thus the verbal assault can be understood as an attack on the coherence of the 'I', similar to the loss of a place in a social space.

With reference to the work of Mari Matsuda, Butler describes how hate speech not only acts upon its listener, but contributes to the social constitution of the one who is addressed:

> By virtue of the social position he or she occupies, […], the listener is injured as a consequence of that utterance. […It] does not merely *reflect* a relation of social domination; speech *enacts* domination, becoming the vehicle through which that social structure is reinstated. (Butler 1997, p. 18)

In other words, hate speech constitutes the subject, its recipient, in a subordinate position. Making use of an already existing social relation of domination, and rather than merely reflecting it, it actively aims to reinstate this social structure. It is appropriate at this point to refer to Freud's description of *mana* in *Totem and Taboo*. With taboos, as with obsessional neuroses, people entertain the belief that a logic of contagion is operative; direct or indirect physical contact with the taboo, or forbidden person or thing, is thought to entail a transmission of the dangerous quality, and the same mechanism is thought to be operative in the case of 'ideational contact' by means of associative paths:

> The avoidance of the name of a dead person is as a rule enforced with extreme severity. Thus in some South American tribes it is regarded as a deadly insult to the survivors to mention the name of a dead relative in their presence, and the punishment for it is not less than that laid down for murder. […] Thus the Masai in East Africa resort to the device of

> changing the dead man's name immediately after his death; he may then be mentioned freely under his new name […]. This seems to presuppose that the dead man's ghost does not know and will not get to know his new name. […] The Adelaide and Encounter Bay tribes of South Australia are so consistently careful that after a death everyone bearing the same name as the dead man's, or a very similar one, changes it for another. (Freud 1912–1913, pp. 54–55)

The example of the names of the dead is linked with the idea that the dead bear a grudge against the living and want to return to injure and kill them. Freud cites Westermarck's opinion that we fear the dead because we fear death, and that a person, according to primitive ideas, only dies if he or she is killed. Hence the dead would naturally seek revenge; they are envious of the living and attempt to cause their deaths (p. 59). He proceeds to announce a more comprehensive explanation, stating:

> In almost every case where there is an intense emotional attachment to a particular person we find that behind the tender love there is a concealed hostility in the unconscious. This is the classical example, the prototype, of the ambivalence of human emotions. (Freud 1912–1913, p. 60)

Social practices of magical thinking or 'omnipotence of thought' can be seen to be operative in depositing feelings of shame and guilt, forcefully and collectively, in culturally selected others. 'Everything that is not me is dirt', said one of Karl Abraham's patients (1921, p. 376). In Norwegian, the colloquial expression 'throwing shit', meaning 'to speak badly of someone' is indicative of the action of bombarding another with a disowned part-object. Importantly, like Austin's speech acts and like practices of taboos, the injurious statement works through its appeal to, and reliance on, convention:

> The subject who speaks hate speech is clearly responsible for such speech, but that subject is rarely the originator of that speech. Racist speech works through the invocation of convention; it circulates, and though it requires the subject for its speaking, it neither begins nor ends with the subject who speaks or with the specific name that is being used. (Butler 1997, p. 34)

Repetition and Responsibility

I have argued previously that when psychoanalytic studies focus on prejudice as a feature of the prejudiced person's subjectivity, the extent to which this phenomenon is founded on a silent social consensus remains in the dark. The prejudice that 'works', because it agrees with a social norm, is left untouched (Auestad 2012, 2015). In that context, I used the example of a study of thousands of 11-year old pupils, which concludes that black pupils perform consistently better in external exams—marked anonymously—than in teacher assessment (Asthana et al. 2010). The study does not tell us anything about the teachers' motivation, and is thus compatible with the hypotheses that: (1) the teachers who routinely marked down their black pupils consciously entertained racist beliefs, (2) although they were not consciously racist, they unconsciously held racist beliefs, or (3) the teachers form part of a social system in which unconscious racist beliefs are embedded, hence their judgments are expressive of a bias they contribute to reproducing, but of which they are unaware.

The third possibility is of special interest, as it points to a limitation of some common assumptions about moral and political responsibility. Let us assume that a large number of the teachers meant no harm in marking their pupils down, that they thought they were judging their performance fairly—yet the study shows that their practice is discriminatory. The Kantian-inspired response that 'I did not intend to produce this result, hence I cannot be held responsible', is clearly insufficient. Kant himself would presumably not have approved of such a response, since he argued that our motives are not transparent to us; 'we like to flatter ourselves by falsely attributing to ourselves a nobler motive, whereas in fact we can never, even by the most strenuous self-examination, get entirely behind our covert incentives' (1996/1785, p. 61). Thus the Kantian insistence on the importance of motives to the exclusion of other situational factors appears to lend itself to a disregard for purportedly unintended consequences, although his statement to the effect that our motives are, at bottom, unknowable to us undermines any insistence upon one's own 'good will'. The study of

teachers' assessments points towards the importance of inquiring into what is absent from subjectivity, and often unconscious, individually and socially.

Butler's discussion of injurious speech contains a similar concern with the legal identification of the speaker as the creator of the racist, antisemitic, islamophobic, misogynist or homophobic statement:

> The legal effort to curb injurious speech tends to isolate the 'speaker' as the culpable agent, as if the speaker were at the origin of such speech. The responsibility of the speaker is thus misconstrued. […] Responsibility is […] linked with speech as repetition, not as origination. (Butler 1997, p. 39)

The injurious speaker, writes Butler, cites rather than invents—he or she repeats traditional statements of humiliation, forms of imaginary already present within the cultural tradition. The active bit is the speaker's declaration of support for the evaluatively charged categories: 'The power to "race" and, indeed, the power to gender, precedes the "one" who speaks such power, and yet the one who speaks nevertheless appears to have that power' (p. 49). The speaker has, in what we may think of as a positive affirmation of him or her as a subject, been given a singular name, and has learnt to answer to that name, and has perhaps been subject to name-calling, to a series of humiliating, shaming or guilt-inducing identifications, and probably answers to some of these as well. The quote from Harris in the beginning communicates how we often cannot but identify with these hurtful, inflammatory terms that are, so to say, thrown upon us. The responsibility of the speaker lies precisely in the repetition, in re-using and refreshing traditional terms of abuse, and thus affirming their continued validity. The citational aspect indicates, though, that the responsibility does not end with the speaker. Butler's question; 'If the utterance is to be prosecuted, where and when would that prosecution begin, and where and when would it end?' (1997, p. 50) is not, in my reading, a denial of personal responsibility, but an entry into a more social and critical focus.

Frameworks and Underlying Violence

Not just what is explicitly said, but the underlying frames matter. An illustration is provided by Marianne Gullestad's example of a woman who called up a professor of Nordic languages to ask him about the meaning of the word'immigrant':

> According to the professor, 'she spoke Norwegian well, but not perfectly'. 'Now I have lived in Norway for a long time', she told him, 'I know Norway, and I have become a Norwegian citizen. Therefore I want to know if I am still an immigrant (*innvandrer*)?' 'Yes', answered the professor, on the basis of his lexical understanding of the problem. 'You were born and bred in India, and this makes you an immigrant to Norway'. (Gullestad 2006, p. 174)

His answer was correct according to the dictionary definition. Though this usage of the word is problematic in that neither the length of her stay in Norway nor her Norwegian citizenship is taken into account. The usage may be seen to reflect a privileging of 'origin'—geographical and socio-cultural—over and above what one has done and experienced later in life. What is hurtful about the presumably neutral definition is that she is told: 'You are never going to be one of us'. The employment of the term 'immigrant' singles out and acknowledges one aspect of her identity to the exclusion of other aspects. And although it may not be apparent from the dictionary entry, the meaning, in the sense of ordinary contemporary usage, of the word 'immigrant' is neither evaluatively nor racially neutral. An imaginary dictionary of common usage and associations might have listed: 'suspect person, liar, illegitimate resident, criminal, violent, parasite'. A rhetorical practice of sliding between these senses allows for a declaration that one is not a racist, by using 'immigrant' in the non-racialized sense, when that seems called for, and a playing on the racialized set of associations before the part of the electorate to whom that might appeal, which is what right-wing populist parties are consistently doing. This strategy of addressing multiple audiences with contradictory messages is what Ruth Wodak (2015) has recently termed 'calculated ambivalence'.

In the popular book *Don't Think of an Elephant* (2004), George Lakoff argues that a great rhetorical victory is won when even your opponent accepts your underlying frame, citing Thatcher's statement that her greatest achievement was New Labour. The word, or metaphor 'ethnic cleansing' is one example of how the mainstream has taken over a euphemism, indicating that what is performed is an act of cleaning up, rather than killing people. Similar terms abstract and transform the image conveyed from hatred of, and violence towards, people to intellectual exercises.

In Britain, incidents of reported racist, Islamophobic and xenophobic attacks have increased dramatically after the EU referendum. Reports to police increased by 42%, to more than 3,000 allegations of hate crime across the country in the week before and the week after the 23 June vote. Offences were mainly harassment and threats of a racist nature, directed against "visible minorities" and people from Eastern Europe. In Great Yarmouth, by 10 a.m. on Friday morning, just hours after the results, people were slowing down to laugh at multinational staff, wave and mouth 'goodbye'. Sociologist Paul Bagguley pointed to the gleeful tone: 'There is a kind of celebration going on; it's a celebratory racism.' (Khaleeli 2016). People interviewed on TV after Brexit were commenting that they thought they should 'get on with it'. Though they did not specify what 'getting on with it' meant, I believe the implied meaning was that everyone who is not white and English should get out of the country. These eruptions of racism appear as sudden and shocking, although it should be emphasised that they have been preceded by only slightly more subtle expressions by the political elite. For example, then Home Secretary, Theresa May was behind the memorable campaign, piloted in six London boroughs, where billboards on vans, leaflets and posters displayed the message: 'In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest'. The campaign was criticised by Labour, Lib Dem and even The UK Independence Party (UKIP) members. May decided that the campaign would not be repeated, since it had not been effective—it had resulted in the voluntary repatriation of just one person (Wintour 2013). It is interesting to note that freedom of movement across national borders was imagined by the leave campaign as applying one way and not another, as not a two-way affair. At the Conservative

party conference in early October 2016, the new Home Secretary, Amber Rudd set out a wide-ranging tightening of immigration rules to drive down the number of new people coming into the UK. She proposed that businesses would be forced to list the foreign workers they employ, that they may be 'named and shamed' by being forced to publish what proportion of their workforce comes from overseas, and that firms employing from abroad could have to use tests to ensure foreign workers do not take jobs 'British people could do'. Furthermore, in relation to foreign students, she declared that the current system too often 'treated every student and university as equal' and that the Government would look at 'tougher rules for students on low quality courses' (Watts 2016).

Perhaps an example of 'calculated ambivalence', the government declared that there would be 'no immediate change' to the status of EU students, a formulation which leaves open what might happen beyond the immediate future. At the same time, Theresa May has refused to rule out the idea of sending EU nationals who live in the UK out of the country— and has been accused of using them as a bargaining chip in the negotiations (Jones 2016). 'But of course as part of the negotiation we will need to look at this question of people who are here in the UK from the EU', she announced. 'Nobody necessarily stays anywhere forever' (Wintour 2016).

In The Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance's latest monitoring report on the UK, which covers the situation up to 17 March 2016, it was noted that '[t]here continues to be considerable intolerant political discourse focusing on immigration and contributing to an increase in xenophobic sentiments' (Electronic Immigration Network 2016). Terms such as 'invasions' and 'floods' were frequently used to refer to immigrants or refugees, as well as the expression 'benefits tourism', despite the lack of evidence that the motivation of EU citizens to migrate was benefit-related. Even the Prime Minister, when asked about the Calais crisis in July 2015, had spoken in terms of a 'swarm' of people crossing the Mediterranean. ECRI called upon all political parties to take a firm stand against such forms of intolerant discourse, warning that prejudicial comments from well-known politicians have an impact on the public and legitimise intolerance. On hate

speech in the media, the Commission stated: 'ECRI considers that hate speechin some traditional media continues to be a serious problem, notably as concerns tabloid newspapers. […] *The Sun*, for instance, published an article in April 2015 entitled "Rescue boats? I'd use gunships to stop migrants", in which the columnist likened migrants to "cockroaches"' (EIN 2016). In emphasising decades of 'sustained and unrestrained anti-foreigner abuse' in the press, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated that 'vicious verbal assault on migrants and asylum seekers in the UK tabloid press has continued unchallenged under the law for far too long', urging the authorities and media to act to curb such incitement to hatred in accordance with the country's legal obligations nationally and internationally (EIN 2016).

A background for these reflections is that in Norway, post-Breivik, the official belief has been that opening up debates would lead to racist statements being countered by better arguments, and hence lead to more enlightenment. Instead, racist statements have become more widespread and more generally accepted. Endorsement of a laissez-faire conception of freedom of speech has entailed more abuse and less room for nuances, so as not to enhance freedom of thought. Thus hate speech provides a stark contrast to Habermas' theory of communicative action and his ideal speech situation. Ideally, freedom of speech should enhance free thinking, though interpreting it as a right that applies to one person in isolation independently of the rights of others appears to thwart its purpose. As against the official Norwegian standpoint referred to above, according to which freedom of speech is an inviolable right that trumps all so-called 'other concerns', I have previously argued (Auestad 2015) that while Article 19 of the Declaration of Human Rights asserts that 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression', Article 7 asserts that 'All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination' (United Nations 1948). Inflammatory speech of the kind considered in this chapter is precisely speech which violates other people's rights to protection against discrimination. Thus, we are faced with what appears to be a paradox when a human right—to freedom of speech—is being used to violate another human right—to protection against discrimination. This represents a genuine dilemma. There is every reason to suspect

a claim to the effect that 'my right to disrespect other people ought to be respected', and to pose the question, 'why should it be?'

If we think of language as having an expressive pole and a communicative pole, this reading isolates the expressive pole, as well as abstracting the speaker from the community of speakers and listeners. In Wright's words, 'The typical speaker of a racial epithet cannot entirely denature that epithet through tone of voice, facial expression, mood setting, or even express disclaimers' (2000, p. 6). These insults neither seek to inform, nor to invite responsive discourse, though they can be directed towards a third, inviting the third to join in the attack. This testifies, if anything, to the social force of *mana* or contagion.

Change and Counter-Discourse

When a word 'deals with an area of difficulty', writes Valerie Sinason '[…] it is allowed to have a historical life until the painful feelings connected with the word are no longer held by it, but leak' (1989, p. 219). At that point, a new word is introduced, with the hope that it will be free of unpleasant associations, but, she states; 'word changes are symptomatic and as such they do not solve problems' (p. 219). This is the context in which her statement occurs:

> When a word deals with an area of difficulty, for example, the Anglo-Saxon word 'mad', it is allowed to have a historical life until the painful feelings connected with the word are no longer held by it, but leak. What happens then is that a new word is brought in, often from the Greek or Latin. In the fourteenth century the word 'insane' was imported to ease the pain of 'mad', but when that too became burdensome then 'mad' returned. There is a hope that the foreign word will be a blank which will be free of unpleasant associations: chemise for shift, intoxication for drunkenness, perspiration for sweat. Word changes are symptomatic, and as such they do not solve problems. (Sinason 1989, p. 219)

The author's reflections on how words are changed in order to avoid the use of stigmatising terms, and on how the offensive meaning, or associations that later reappear in relation to the neologism, can be recognised

as valid in many cases. To use 'mad' as an example, the current term used in the *Guardian's* Society section is 'mental health problem', which, in its capacity to be mystifying rather than clarifying, appears to qualify as a euphemism. As it does not state what kind of problem, it leaves everything to the reader's imagination, thus the imaginative elaboration may be more frightening or scandalous than concreteness might have been, such as stating that someone hallucinates from time to time. One of Sinason's primary examples comes from her work with mentally handicapped patients, where the term has moved from 'mental deficiency' through 'subnormality' to 'learning difficulties', 'special needs' or 'emotional and behavioural difficulties'. She mentions that her patients choose the word 'stupid' for themselves, a term which, in its concreteness signals that the patients are less inclined to beat about the bush than the professionals are.

To compare this process with the example from *Totem and Taboo*, the dead person's ghost has here recognised its new name, in spite of the change, and has returned to haunt the speaker. An attempt has been made at removing the term from its painful associations, though like in the example of the use of the term 'immigrant', the categories, the underlying framework that guides the 'othering' is kept intact, and the change is temporary or non-existent. Butler, to the contrary, has an interest in how a speech act may fail to achieve its purpose and also, in how it may be counter-acted, or better, counter-spoken; in how a revaluation of words may result from this inter-subjective process. Among her most prominent examples is the word 'queer', the revaluation of which suggests 'that speech can be "returned" to its speaker in a different form, that it can be cited against its originary purposes, and perform a reversal of effects' (1997, p. 14). The change in the word's meaning, in the sense of people's associations to it, illustrates how a popular movement can transform shared meanings through a change of context, of discursive and political frameworks. A recent example of a counter-discourse initiative took place in the summer of 2011. A representative of the Toronto police had declared that 'women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimised'. As a response, a group of activists organised an event called SlutWalk. One was held in Toronto, followed by similar events in Boston, London and other cities worldwide. Women marched

in protest with slogans, dressed in revealing clothes. I was interested in this example of an attempted revaluation of the word 'slut' and the wider issue of demonization of female sexuality and victim-blaming, though a question is whether such purely symbolic display, unaccompanied by demands for legal changes, has transformational power.

Often, challenging the frame appears to bring forth hate speech—as seen when the issue of representation is brought to the fore. Recently, when the actor Lenny Henry campaigned for more black and ethnic minority people on TV, UKIP politician William Henwood tweeted 'If he wants lots of blacks around, go and live in a black country' and later defended his comment stating that the 'real racism' was the 'bullying by the BBC and the political elite of ordinary British people' (BBC 2014). Thus far the outright racism of the UKIP candidate has met with widespread disapproval, while the underlying issue of representation has not yet been properly addressed (Jones 2014).

Where, argues Jô Gondar (2011), the majority of the thinkers of language, including Saussure and Lacan, take the arbitrariness of the sign as their starting point, and the sphere of words and that of things as irreducibly separate, Ferenczi maintains that: 'To speak is to imitate […] objects of the world around. "Ma-ma" is magic of imitation'. In Notes and Fragments, under the heading 'The Language of the Unconscious', he states:

> If the intellectual urge to communicate is completely eliminated and the speech organs are given free rein […] there comes—after senseless vowels and consonants (as in the play of *infants* with lips and tongue) *imitations* of things, animals and people.

The *imitation magic* is here:

> 1. The only way to *abreact* emotional impressions of the external world by one or several repetitions.
>
> 2. To *impart* to another person what happened. (Ferenczi 1932, pp. 265–266)

Based on this, we can state that hate speech acts as a form of magical gesture that abreacts as well as imparts, and it works because, to some

extent, the target cannot but agree—therefore it is painful. In terms of my distinction between two poles of speech, this is mainly expressive. Imparting may be more or less communicative. Here it is communicative in the sense that the act of throwing the infected and infectious words is supported by history, by a frame of conventional meanings. It is not communicative in Gadamer's (1960/2004) sense of seeking a mutual or mutually transformative understanding, which would require openness, mutual vulnerability, and a view of one's own limitations. The speaker of hate speech is indifferent to this hermeneutic aim, but may aim to get a third party to join in the hatred and degradation.

Something unknown, incompletely grasped, has spoken to us before we are confident speakers. We have always already absorbed a language of traditionally oppressive as well as egalitarian values before we can articulate anything. Yet repetition is active, and we play a role in shaping which bits we repeat and what we aim to reformulate.

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Logos, Ethos, Pathos or a Politics of Errors

Szymon Wróbel

Rhetoric and Violence

Every language is originally colonial, for each culture establishes itself by imposing one "politics" of language over another. The exercise of power, as has long been known, begins with the power of naming, or, in other words, the power of imposing and legitimizing names. Despite their differences, theorists such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau and Pierre Bourdieu all recognize in language an instrument of power. They see language as sustaining power relations rather than merely accepting it as a means of communication (Foucault 2001; Derrida 1998; Laclau 2014; Bourdieu 1991, 2001). As far as methodology is concerned, the authors advise studying language in the interactive and structural contexts of its production and its circulation. Such an approach questions the legitimacy of Karl-Otto Apel's and Jürgen

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Habermas' projects of universal pragmatics of speech since it fundamentally rejects the very distinction between instrumental and communicative action (Apel 1994; Habermas 2001a, b). The former see in language relations a jostling of symbolic power relations that effect a relationship of domination between the speakers and users of language. It follows, that so called linguistic competence is not merely a technical skill, but is related to class and status. The illusion of a language community permeating the language of linguistics epitomizes the idea of language as a user friendly environment of unlimited supply where language is comparable to the sun, air or water while, in fact, all of the above resources are scarce. Linguistic competence is, in fact, monopolized and works as a differentiating agent. In other words, just as in the economy, the market of language goods is not infinite and it knows the phenomenon of monopoly very well.

Symbolic violence, as Bourdieu understands it, is a category necessary for the description of such diverse phenomena as class domination in developed societies, international relations marked by violence, cross-cultural relations (especially in the context of imperialism or colonialism), and the domination of men over women (Bourdieu 1991, 2001). Symbolic violence is the form of violence which affects social subjects by means of their participation. In other words, social subjects are subjected to political structures and, as such, even though they are themselves being determined, they also contribute to the practice of domination to the extent that they perpetuate its determinants. To Bourdieu, symbolic violence goes undetected and remains unnoticed, because it is effected precisely where violence, as such, is not suspected to be present, or where one assumes that a state of consensus and peaceful coexistence prevails.

Symbolic violence is thus based on a set of shared pre-reflective assumptions. Social subjects, without questioning its legitimacy, accept the world "as is" and perceive it as the nature of things, or at least as attuned with the natural order of things. Symbolic violence, contrary to what is supposed by Gramsci's theory of hegemony or Foucault's theory of disciplinarity, requires no active inculcation, no persuasive effort, and no intentional influence (Schulzke 2015). Any realistic analysis of how power and politics are effected must begin with the analysis of this initial acceptance of the world, i.e. the apparent consistency between objective structures and cognitive structures. Of all the forms

of subcutaneous persuasion, the most relentless and insidious is that which is disguised as the "order of things" and accepted at face value.

From this point of view, the essence of all cultural activity is the conversion of the balance of power into a legitimate authority or a system of meanings. The inevitable realization of the balance of power is thus the production of a symbolic effect. Objectively, such an operation plays out in-between two opposite and equally unattainable poles—that of pure power and that of pure reason. What follows is that the tendency to resort to direct coercive measures increases alongside diminishing legitimization of meaning maintained by the power of nature or instrumental reason.

The analysis presented in this paper focuses on a fine example of a particular kind of symbolic violence, namely that of political persuasion. Political persuasion is understood as having its characteristic feature of doing things (politics) with words. In this chapter, I also attempt to explore possible ways of resisting symbolic power so conceived. The dominated always partake in the process of their enslavement, even though the dispositions which make them do so are, in fact, the internalized effect of their domination. Thus, the subordination of workers, women and racial minorities is not, in most cases, a result of deliberate or conscious concession to the brutal domination of managers, men and white people. To the contrary, it stems from the apparent consistency between their own structures of thinking and the system they participate in: the undetected and unconscious "somatization of the social relations of domination" (Bourdieu 2004). However, domination is never effected without any form of resistance. Later in this chapter we shall explore resistance in language, resistance that takes the form of the production of new ways of using language for unknown purposes. This is what I refer to as "the politics of errors". But first, let us look at the classical rhetorical tropes of political persuasion.

Three Means of Effecting Persuasion

In the Western tradition, "rhetoric" has frequently been identified with verbalism and an empty, unnatural mode of expression. Rhetoric then becomes the symbol of the most outdated elements in the education of

the old regime, the elements that were the most formal, most useless, and most opposed to the needs of an egalitarian, progressive democracy. However, Aristotle would have disagreed with the conception of rhetoric as an ornamental art bearing the same relation to prose as poetics has to verse. For Aristotle, rhetoric is a practical discipline that aims not at producing a work of art, but at exerting a persuasive action on an audience through speech (Perelman 1979).

The three concepts used in the title of this deliberation, namely—*logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*—are obviously borrowed from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Aristotle was perfectly aware of the fact that rhetoric is the very art of politics. In his work, he defines three modes of persuasion: the first kind depending on the character of the speaker, the second kind where the audience is brought into a certain frame of mind, and only the third kind being that of providing proof, or more precisely, the apparent proof conveyed by the words of the speech itself. Cumulatively, Aristotle says, persuasion is a feat that can be achieved when the speaker's personal character is in accordance with the way the speech is delivered. This, we are told, inclines the audience to grant him credibility (Aristotle 2006).

Yet, in another passage, Aristotle openly acknowledges the political status of rhetoric and provides three prerequisites for effecting persuasion: The speaker needs to be able (1) to reason logically; (2) to understand human character and goodness in their various forms, and, most noteworthy; (3) to understand emotions. The last of these involves not only the ability to name and pronounce emotions, but also an understanding of their causes and how to produce the desired response and excite the audience. "It appears", Aristotle writes, "that rhetoric is an offshoot of dialectic and also of ethical studies. Ethical studies may reasonably be called political. This is the reason why rhetoric masquerades as political science and why its professors masquerade as political experts—sometimes from want of education, sometimes from ostentation, sometimes owing to other human failings" (Aristotle 2006).

Reflecting on the above distinction made by Aristotle, I am far from arguing that rhetoric today is imbedded in politics more deeply, or to a greater extent, than in Aristotle's time. After all, rhetoric has always been tangible and abundant in politics. Moreover, rhetoric has always

been in the service of politics, this "masquerade of political science"—as Aristotle accurately put it. However, what seems to be the main problem in contemporary politics is that it is rhetorical *throughout*, or, in other words, that politics today happens *only* in speech (or in speech acts) and that this speech is primarily concerned with *pathos* and inciting emotions in the audience rather than addressing reason, whereby the art of persuasion inevitably narrows down to inflating bubbles of emotion. In a form of politics where *pathos* is both the means and the ends, rhetoric is not tied to specific institutions and this suggests that a very different concept of subjectivity is in play compared to the concept of subjectivity as it was understood in the classical tradition. The former's paradigmatic expression is to be found in Nietzsche, where rhetoric is no longer conceived as a doctrine governing the production and analysis of texts, but as a practice for creating and interpreting the world (Norval 2007, p. 78).

In today's politics, speech acts are limited to, and excel in, making "empty promises". Today, politics has added a new chapter to John R. Searle's *Speech Acts* (Searle 1969), one entitled, "How to make insincere promises". In the continuing saga which is politics today, the making of insincere promises has rendered null and void the very concept of a political programme (ideology). Contemporary politics has politicians dwelling on emerging issues that allow them to vigorously address a challenge without much ado about the fact that the very circumstances that produce these challenges are beyond their control. In the end, those same unforeseeable circumstances nullify and make void the unenforceable promises made. This explains why a word uttered in politics is disassociated from any tangible act that would allow us to measure its significance. Likewise, it explains why in the course of the making of politics, we have come to identify an utterance as an action, i.e. action as null and void in the making. Politics is now liberated from any action other than that of uttering words and, as such, it resembles a "phantom effect". Formerly, freedom of speech warranted effects because the ultimate expression of freedom of speech was action. What is left of it today when there seems to be no other measure of the significance of words than resorting to wild guessing of a speaker's imperceptible intentions? "Parliamentary democracy", which laid the political foundations

of the modern world and perfected the unity of word and action, today has become the arena of impotent, void chatter and "intimidated acts" that produce an almost total "absence of action".

We need not look far to see that such is the theory of politics today. Politics takes place in language and in the media. Likewise, politics is effected through language and through the media. Is it not the case that the political status and publicity of such a politician as Donald Trump, allowing him to seriously consider himself for the post of president, is to a large extent, the consequence of his "way of doing politics"—his deployment of a "conservative rhetoric" that consists largely of contempt and epithets overflowing with affective content? Is the success of Jarosław Kaczynski in Poland not a reward for his use of rhetoric overflowing with national-socialist promises, including those of building a welfare state and forging one nation? Is the rhetoric of Viktor Orbán in Hungary not all about denouncing and ridiculing the "empty promises" made by the politicians from Brussels as opposed to the "real promises" made by the visionary politicians from Warsaw and Budapest?

The rhetorical nature of contemporary politics is, of course, something many prominent political theorists have commented on. For example, Judith Butler bears witness to speech being subject to political debate (Butler 1997); Ernesto Laclau focuses on the construction of popular identities and how "the people" emerge as a collective actor (Laclau 2005); and Jacques Rancière (2010, 2011) engages in a radical critique of some of his major contemporaries on questions of art and politics, and literature's still vital capacity for reinvention. Even Michel Foucault in his last lectures at the Collège de France (*The Courage of Truth*, Foucault 2011), and in earlier papers published under the title *Fearless Speech* (Foucault 2001), explored the notion of "truth-telling" in politics.

How to Do Things with Words?

Politics has undergone massive changes from the time when the ancient polis fuelled the imagination of Greek philosophers. Similarly, linguistics has changed in recent years. Nonetheless, the bond between

word and action has remained sacrosanct. In fact, the bond between speech and rhetorical effect holds true in today's troubled times. In both ancient and modern times the faculty of rhetoric was, and is brought into effect, by applying the available means of persuasion. Unlike other arts capable of instructing or persuading us about their own particular subject-matter, rhetoric concerns the power to persuade and to exert power through speech and "that is why we say that", to cite Aristotle, "in its technical character, it is not concerned with any special or definite class of subjects" (Aristotle 2006). Aristotle's rhetoric today has its counterpart in the theory of speech acts.

John L. Austin's renowned book, *How to Do Things with Words* (Austin 1962) puts the question of performativity in terms of what it means that things can be done with words. Be it Judith Butler in a very stimulating reading of Austin's theory of speech acts, or Jacques Derrida's approach to repetition and linguistic iterability (Derrida 1978, pp. 278–294), or Louis Althusser's theory of ideology, interpellation and ideological state apparatuses (Althusser 1971, pp. 170–186), all argue that the problem of performativity raised by Austin is immediately bound up with the question of transitivity. Butler in *Excitable Speech* investigates what it means for a word to name and to *perform* what it names. At a first glance it may seem that a word enacts what it names, but can we be certain that this is always the case?

Returning to Aristotle, one could say that the real problem of the modern world is not so much a matter of *pathos's* (policy of affects) domination over *logos* (policy of reason) and/or *ethos* (policy of ethical attitudes), but that language is the only realm where policies emerge at all. Perhaps this revelation relates to our broader philosophical consciousness and perhaps it even transgresses Aristotle's ideas, according to which man is the holder and the guardian of language—*dzoon logon echon*—and the social subject can give itself the illusion of complete sovereignty, allowing it to reign over language and its speech and to exert control over all persuasive effects.

Orations in Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* provide excellent exemplifications of the thesis that a political man is a speaking man. *The Peloponnesian War* cannot be treated other than as a collection of debates (*antilogoi, agon logon, polemious*) which remain in a dialogic

relation (dialectical and polemical). Politics in language is particularly present in Pericles' speeches, reconstructed by Thucydides in fine detail, where Pericles calls for a declaration of war and builds his fellow citizens' courage after their first defeat. This is but one excellent example of making politics both "in" and "through" language (Thucydides 2009).

The starting point for Austin's theory would therefore be the rejection of the unauthorized opposition between speech and doing things. To say something is always to do something. There are no performatives and assertions as such, but instead there is a rather diverse and complex set of conditions governing *what* language expressions do and *how* they do it. Words and expressions satisfy these conditions in three ways: (1) saying something is equivalent of doing it (locutionary speech act); (2) saying something is accompanied by doing otherwise (illocutionary speech act), (3) saying something is doing yet another thing (perlocutionary speech act). Such locutionary speech acts as promise, evaluation, suggestion, advice or instruction have a clear tendency to turn into illocutionary speech acts. Perlocutionary expressions act in a different way: by saying something we do something else. And because an illocutionary speech act is akin to a deed, perlocutionary speech acts depend on the possibility of doing yet something else rather than simply doing otherwise. For example, when we argue we in fact persuade; when we give advice we in fact compel; when we command we in fact coerce and so on. Austin's opening question, namely how to do things with words, suggests a preconception that words are instruments for getting things done.

We act through words not only in their ceremonial use and as a part of formulaic procedure, as in a situation when we utter "I hereby name you Michael", but also when we promise "I swear not to swear" or when we admit "I'm sorry". Respectively, the language in the above situations has the power of naming; it disciplines our motivations, and incites certain affects in people. Therefore, variants of one sentence: "John drinks as if the world is ending" (statement), "Does John drink as if the world is ending?" (question), "Drink John, drink, drink as if the world was ending!" (command), "If only John drank with us as if the world were ending" (wish).

Austin, of course, distinguishes between illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts, that is between actions that are performed by virtue of words and actions that are performed as a consequence of words.

However, this distinction is tricky and it is far from constant. From the perlocutionary point of view, words are instrumental to the accomplishment of actions but they are not themselves the actions which they help to accomplish. This form of performatives requires the words and the things done to be substantially different. The illocutionary speech act, on the other hand, has the word performing itself and thus becoming a "thing done". It is this instance which—is my impression—does not fit Aristotle's initial distinction. The three modes of persuasion—*logos*, *ethos*, *pathos*—are simply perlocutionary speech acts. The illocutionary pronouncement is a speech act that it is, at the same time, the doing of an act. One cannot reasonably ask for a "referent" of such an act since the effect of the act of speech is not to refer beyond itself but to perform itself.

The inspiring, yet enigmatic, title of Austin's book, *How to Do Things With Words* suggests that there is a perlocutionary kind of doing, a domain of things that can be done, and then there is a separate, instrumental territory of "words". Indeed, the suggestion extends beyond that. The assumption Austin makes is that there must also be a kind of deliberation that precedes doing, and that, in some ways, words remain distinct from the things they do. This interpretation, however, does not seem to do enough justice to such an enigmatic title. What happens, for instance, if in construing the above title, we engage heuristics of illocutionary forms of speech, transforming the question to "what does it mean for a thing to be done by a word?" When, in such a case, would such a thing become disentangled from the word by which it is done, and when would the bond between a word and the thing appear indissoluble? If a word in this sense is to "do" a thing, then it appears that such word not only signifies a thing, but also that the process of signification enacts the thing.

Total Speech Situation

Austin proposed that in order to comprehend what makes an utterance effective and what constitutes its performative character, one must first place the utterance within a "total speech situation". There is, however, no consensus on how to best define such a totality.

In politics and rhetoric, the equivalent of the "total speech situation" might be what the author of *Rhetoric* calls types of speeches. According to Aristotle there are three categories of oratory: (1) political, (2) forensic, and (3) the ceremonial oratory of display. Political speaking urges the audience to either do or not to do something. Forensic speaking involves either an attack on or the defence of a person. Finally, the ceremonial oratory of display either praises or censures somebody (Aristotle 2006).

Despite the fact that modern political speeches all too often fall within the logic of attack or defence, bearing a resemblance to judicial speech and court drama, or even ceremonial oratory of display, it seems to me that Aristotle's primary intuition that the essence of political speech is to arouse (excite) in the audience a disposition to do or not to do something, is still worthwhile and accurate. Returning to Austin, one could say that the origin of excitation can essentially take two forms: either "illocutionary" or "perlocutionary".

As we have observed, Austin offers a tentative typology of locutions that are performative in nature. The illocutionary act is the one in which in saying something, one is at the same time doing something. For example, the judge uttering, "I hereby sentence you" does not state his or her intention to do something nor does he describe what he is doing: his utterance is itself a kind of doing. Illocutionary speech acts produce effects. They are supported, Austin tells us, by linguistic and social conventions. Perlocutionary acts, on the other hand, are those utterances that initiate a set of consequences: it is in a perlocutionary speech act that saying something is bound to produce certain consequences. Whereas illocutionary acts proceed by way of convention, perlocutionary acts proceed by way of consequence. Implicit in this distinction is the notion that illocutionary speech acts produce effects without any lapse of time, that saying is, in and of itself, doing. But is this distinction between convention and consequence always and everywhere equally observed? If this be so, may I ask for instance whether announcements made by presidents of great world powers—such as "I hereby declare war against the Axis of Evil" or "We hereby legitimately annex the breakaway province to the motherland"—are more in the nature of perlocutionary speech acts or illocutionary speech acts?

Of course, when analysing specific examples, we may always have certain doubts. Austin's claim, that to ascertain the force of the illocution we need first to identify the "total situation" of the speech act, is challenged by a constitutive difficulty. If the temporality of a linguistic convention exceeds the instance of its utterance, and that excess of meaning is not fully identifiable, then it seems that a part of what constitutes the "total speech situation" nullifies the whole attempt to achieve a totalized form in any of its given instances. Is that fact not the fundamental reason why the author of *How to Do Things With Words* is compelled to remark that "Infelicity is an ill to which all acts are heir which have the general character of ritual or ceremonial, all conventional acts" (Austin 1962, p. 18) and furthermore to add that "There are more ways of outraging speech than contradiction merely" (Austin 1962, p. 48)?

Nowadays: Sophists or a Politics of Discomfort?

Let us try to derive a first, still uncertain conclusion from our considerations thus far. Above all, let us ask: what is the educational value of contrasting Aristotle, Austin and Butler and problematizing the relationship between the sophist, the politician and the philosopher, a relationship so dear to Leo Strauss in his daring interpretations of Plato, Aristotle and Thucydides (Strauss 1987, pp. 33–89)?

It is quite common knowledge that sophists first observed that if there is no such thing as a common good, if the only good is that of a single man, wise men should not commit to the community but instead use this community for their own purposes. The most important instrument for actualizing stated intentions is the art of persuasion, and therefore rhetoric. The outcome of sophist reasoning is that the only art to be taken seriously is rhetoric (Rosen 1987). The sophist's desire is the desire of a tyrant who not only wants to rule over language and through language, but who also wants to rule over desire, substituting it as the sole object of language. Language would therefore be a common good as it is shared by all and is not just a technical instrument for some experts, an idea absent in the reasoning of the sophists. The problem is that a sophist deems himself the sole ruler of language. A sophist

undergoes the illusion of having a language on his own. Following the path of Austin's reasoning, we might say, however, that we do things with language, produce effects with language, yet at the same time we do things to language, and language is the thing that we do. Language is the name for our doing: both "what" we do and that which we effect, the act and its consequences (Butler 1997, p. 8).

In fact, none of us is in complete control of language. We are all born into a language that is not of our own making, and in order to express ourselves to the people around us, we must first learn their language. As it often happens, it is our parents' language into which we are born, to which we can refer in Lacanian terms as the discourse of the Other. But in the process of acquiring this language, it shapes our thoughts as well as our demands and desires (Lacan 2006). We may at times have the feeling that we are unable to find accurate words to express what we mean, or that the words available to us miss the point that we would like to make. Yet, without the words at our disposal, we would have no key to access the realm of meaning at all. Granted, we neurotics succeed, to a greater or lesser extent, in coming to be in language by inhabiting merely a subset of language and, in doing so, we elicit a far more general quality of social subjects, namely that no one can ever inhabit the whole of a language. Alienation is never completely overcome, but at least some part of language is eventually "subjectified" and made one's own. Although language speaks through us more than most of us would care to admit; although at times we seem to be little more than transmitters or relays of the surrounding discourse; and although we sometimes refuse to recognize what comes out of our own mouths (slips, slurred speech, and so on), we nonetheless generally sense that we live in language and that we are not simply lived by it.

In overt opposition to these diagnoses, in a significant fragment of her book Butler writes: "The main concerns of *Excitable Speech* are both rhetorical and political. In the law, 'excitable' utterances are those made under duress, usually confessions that cannot be used in court because they do not reflect the balanced mental state of the utterer. My presumption is that speech is always in some ways out of our control" (Butler 1997, p. 15). Indeed, in some circumstances, although not all of them, speech appears to be out of our control. Now, if we assume

that speech acts are out of our control, then the fundamental distinction made by Aristotle between three modes of effecting persuasion and Austin's distinction between "illocutionary" and "perlocutionary" speech acts are not applicable.

If speech acts are out of our control, what is the politically engaged speech act? What can the speaker hope for when placing her/his speech in a political context, regardless of whether it would take the form of inciting the crowd to "Come with us", or colleagues in the workplace to go on strike, or at a party meeting to organise demonstrations? What kind of control does the speaker exert over the speech and over the consequences of the above utterances? Would, in those situations, the political engagement always be a form of conscious or unconscious risk the speaker takes, and is involved with, unable to predict where the speech acts (action) will lead?

Should therefore the conclusion of our discussion thus far be that if there is political action without final guarantee and without solid foundations, then it is one in which the key terms of its operation are not fully secured in advance, one which assumes a future form for politics that cannot be anticipated? If so, it will also be the premise of a politics of both hope and anxiety, or what Foucault termed "a politics of discomfort". I think fragility is an important recognition that in some sense defines, for Butler, the whole of policy, practice and political action. Political actions in general (not all) are liable, for example, to be taken and performed under duress, or by accident, or owing to this or that mistake that can be non-intentionally made. Such situations allow us to detach the speech act from the subject. Is Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* not about this very separation of speech act from the speaking subject? After all, Freud recognizes the fact that a speech disturbance which manifests with a speech-blunder may, in the first place, be caused by the influence of another component of the same speech—a fore-sound, echo, or another meaning within a sentence or within its context. Such a disturbance would likely subvert what the speaker wishes to utter (Freud 1901).

Perhaps the separation of the speech act from the sovereign subject establishes the basis of an alternative notion of agency. Ultimately—as Butler emphasizes—agency begins where sovereignty wanes. The one

who acts, but who is different from the sovereign subject, nonetheless acts precisely within his/her empowerment to act, hence, operates from the outset in a field of linguistic constraints. In order to understand this new concept of agency and efficacy, Butler invites us to consider the reasons why performative acts perform so well. If a performative act succeeds, it is not simply because the intention successfully guides the action of speech, but rather because this action repeats prior actions and accumulates the force of authority through the repetition of a prior set of practices.

The performative act "works" to the extent that it draws upon, and covers, constitutive conventions by which it is mobilized. In this sense, no term or statement can function performatively without accumulating and dissimulating the force of the past. The racial slur, for example, is always cited, and in the speaking of it, one is producing an imagined relation to a historically transmitted community of racists. In this sense, racist speech does not originate with the subject, even if it requires the subject for its efficacy. Indeed, racist speech could not act as racist speech if it were not a citation; it is only because we already know its force from its prior instances that we know it to be so offensive now.

Butler's conclusion is simple yet paradoxical: the iterability of hate speech is effectively dissimulated by the "subject" who speaks the speech of hate. In similar fashion, and following a similar argument, Jacques Rancière argues that the utterance "we proletarians" appeals to a community which is not yet realized, and which does not yet exist: a subject of enunciation creates an apparatus where a subject is named precisely to expose a particular wrong and to create a community around a particular dispute (Rancière 1994, p. 174).

Catachresis and Iterability

If our diagnosis thus far is accurate, then the key question is whether there exists an enunciation which discontinues the structure of customary rules of behaviour, or one which subverts this structure through its repetition in speech. When I use the word "structure", I mean the existing linguistic rules and social conventions that require obedience in the name of intelligibility of speech and sentences. By these means, we return to the assertions of Aristotle and his definition of political

speech as an encouragement and incentive to do something or not to do something. This is because the repetition of expressions in language is an attempt to do something, not by using the same means of language in a social reality, but rather by the paradoxical and contradictory logic of language itself. Is there a repetition that might unbind the speech act from its supporting conventions such that its repetition confounds, rather than consolidates, its injurious efficacy? Can the improper use of a performative succeed in producing the effect of authority without recourse to a prior authorization? Is the misappropriation of a performative not an excellent occasion to expose the prevailing forms of authority? It is a very difficult set of questions to answer—difficult and confusing, because what ensues is the problem of creating new sources of authority.

Butler has placed much hope in Derrida's notion of performatives. For Derrida, the very possibility of a resignification of a linguistic and social ritual is based on the possibility that an expression (locution) can break with its originary context and assume meanings and functions for which it was never intended. Derrida's idea that the utterance must break with prior contexts if it is to remain a performative offers an important counterpoint to functionalist social theory. One can also see the specific social meaning of Derridean iterability in the context of the discussion of resignification. Inspired by Derrida's ideas, Ernesto Laclau claims that the prototype of a method of political communication is *catachresis*, a figure of speech in which a word or phrase has vastly departed from its traditional, paradigmatic usage (Laclau 2005). The effects of *catachresis* in political discourse can be observed on the condition that a traditionally signified term is misappropriated for other kinds of purposes. Both Laclau and Derrida refer to the very possibility of reinscription. The capacity of some terms to acquire non-ordinary meanings constitutes a promise that can later be used in politics. The insurrectionary potential of some invocations rests precisely in the break that they produce between an ordinary and an extraordinary sense. Following this path, Butler observes that "there are invocations of speech that are insurrectionary acts" (Butler 1997, p. 145).

There are five common classes of *catachresis*: (1) words used in a meaning radically different from their traditional meaning; (2) words that have only metaphoric meaning that cannot be substituted by literal ones; (3) words used outside their paradigmatic context; (4) references

to paradoxical or contradictory logic; (5) the use of illogical, puzzling and complex metaphors. One should bear in mind that Cicero, in his investigation of the sources of rhetorical tropes, imagined a primitive society where more objects exist than there are words in the language (Cicero 2010). *Catachresis* will involve giving a name to something that is essentially "nameless", or "empty". For instance, if I speak of the "wings of an aeroplane" or the "wings of the building", the expression is metaphorical, but in the latter case, fully operates as a figure of speech where there is no proper designation of the referent. I have no permission to speak of a "wing" in any literal way. The same thing applies when we talk about the "*leg* of a chair" (Laclau 2014, p. 78).

Therefore, when I employ such words as "justice", "equality" or "freedom", I need to lend them a catachrestic sense or, in other words, I need to fill their anonymity and semantic emptiness with arbitrarily determined meanings. In doing so, however, my discourse suffers a disadvantage. For example, "freedom" is only the freedom of a given tribe staked against that of yet another tribe; "justice" is the justice of the "poor" who have been unfairly treated by the "rich"; and "equality" is the equality that exists within the context of unequal distribution of competences and powers or other resources, be it material or spiritual.

It seems to me, however, that the sheer reference to the Derridean notion of iterability and resignification is insufficient. It is unclear, why mere repetition of a certain expression with the intention to detach it from the original meaning and original context produces the effect of resignification. The mere expectation of the "resignification event" is akin to waiting for a miracle and has the characteristics of a messianic thinking—which is characteristic of Derrida's work. Thankfully, in the philosophical work of Ludwig Wittgenstein we find a significant and important supplement to Derrida, Laclau and Butler.

Politics of Errors

Ludwig Wittgenstein has made us particularly sensitive to a grammar not confined to a set of formal rules. Wittgenstein suggests that grammar understood narrowly—as a set of explicitly enumerated rules—does

not in itself set out the rules governing action. He goes further to say that action itself cannot be derived from a rule. Grammar alone does not provide us with the answer to how language is designed to perform its task, or how it affects people in a certain way. Grammar, in fact, is a sheer description of the use of language, without providing any sort of explanation (Wittgenstein 1953, p. 176, 186). Significantly, all attempts to subject the practice (theory of performance) to explicitly formulated rules have failed to determine the appropriate time and manner whereby these rules are applied, and have not provided a credible explanation of the practical application of a certain set of recipes and techniques. Somewhat exaggerated, we could say that "playing with the rules", which in itself is a display of perfection and virtuosity, belongs to the same grammar game as "going beyond the rules". This would mean, perhaps, that a politics of errors, which also is a display of true virtuosity, could do without the rules, though it would not be completely liberated from the rules of the game. If such an instance is possible then we ought to reconsider the possibility of going beyond speech involved in a formal grammar, just like Freud sought to rethink a drive beyond the pleasure principle.

What is particularly noteworthy here is the fact that Wittgenstein identifies the moment of novelty expressed in language when spotting something for the first time, often accompanied by expressions such as seeing something "in a flash" or "being struck". How precisely this moment of novelty is understood and how it stands in relation to existing practices and language use is of key importance. While our ability to do new things with words depends on how deeply we are immersed in our language practices, something more than that seems to be at stake in aspect-perception. When established ways of using words have been exhausted, we are able to improvise ways of getting beyond such impasses. Aspect change is one instance of accounting for the ways in which we "get beyond" or break with the established ways of doing things. It goes beyond the normal practice of "projecting" a word since such a projection proceeds naturally, while in the case of aspect-dawning normal directions of projection are broken up.

Wittgenstein interweaves the novel and the given in our existing practices by drawing attention to the fact that language is not fixed and

unalterable, but that it is inherently open to the future. As Wittgenstein argues, "new types of language, new language games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten" (Wittgenstein 1953, p. 9). Both creative language use and aspect change bring subjectivity into play. Finally, given the account of change, aspect-dawning allows one to step "beyond the guidance of grammar" without however, "giving up on intelligibility". This is a key insight, since the introduced change need not be so radical as to no longer make sense. This precise putting together of novelty and tradition, of simultaneous contextualization and de-contextualization, is exactly what facilitates overcoming the abyss between accounts of political subjectivity that are either too historicist or too voluntarist (Norval 2007, p. 123). While I do not know whether Wittgenstein in this way anticipates a new form of *logos* politics, I know that he certainly gives us hope for a non-trivial form of *pathos* politics. Wittgenstein gives us a glimpse of what it might mean for a thing to be done by a word, and how to do things with words with the aim of avoiding the temptation of rhetoric as a "masquerade of political science". Perhaps also in this way linguistic errors, and even to pursue linguistic exceptions and errors to effect political change, will be ennobled and elevated to the rank of the most effective means of political struggle.

Certainly, power which uses symbolic violence—that is, power which manages to impose its meanings and does so in a fashion that makes them seem legitimate—in concealing power systems underlying power, adds to these power systems its own interpretation which masks the stigma of arbitrariness. Accepting this fact should by no means compromise our efforts to defy simple sociological determinism. And so, Wittgenstein, Butler and Derrida manage to build an alternative to the philosophy of Althusser and Bourdieu by recognizing the effect of dominance where Bourdieu and Althusser only see the effect of symbolic violence. In another respect, Bourdieu and Althusser oppose the vision of Wittgenstein, Butler and Derrida, when their objectivity and determinism offset the temptation to recognize in power relations merely systems of influence or domination between individuals and to present different forms of power (political, economic, religious, etc.) as undifferentiated relations of power (*Macht*). Similarly, the above applies to the

theory of Foucault who made considerable efforts to convince us that systems of domination do not dominate dispositions to create and do not prevent the creation of local habitats of resistance.

Doubts remain concerning the method to determine the "effects of subordination". Should it return to the rhetoric of Aristotle and Cicero as an in-depth testing method for publicly used means of persuasion, or remain with the modern theory of discourse, which problematizes the very relationship between what is linguistic and nonlinguistic, explicit and implicit, intentional and non-intentional, perlocutionary and illocutionary, or between simple iterability and innovative redescription? At the end, let me say that this chapter is a modest attempt to return to classical rhetoric considered from the very heart of contemporary disputes concerning the future shape of the theory of discourse and language games. Such a discovery of classical rhetoric within contemporary linguistic and political reflection may release the potential of "weak" and "little" resistance to "big" manifestations of power. Perhaps the time has come to stop asking the question "How to do things with words?" or debating whether or not politics is modelled after *logos*, *ethos*, or *pathos*, and instead start asking questions about how to do politics with the help of small errors which pave the way for "new languages", "other policies" and "open language games".

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To Be or Bartleby—Psychoanalysis and the Crisis of Immunity

Werner Prall

'I Would Prefer not To'

The narrator of Melville's story is the lawyer who will employ Bartleby. He introduces himself as a rather unambitious, yet prudent man whose Wall Street practice enjoys considerable success. Notwithstanding this confident introduction, the description he offers, both of his premises and of his three employees create the impression of an office that has rather claustrophobic aspects and is almost comically dysfunctional at times. When the lawyer seeks to recruit further help, primarily with the copying of legal documents, 'a motionless young man' presents himself: 'pallidly neat, pitiably respectable, uncurably forlorn! It was Bartleby.' On hiring him the lawyer places him near his desk, but behind a screen so he is secluded from view whilst remaining within earshot. Bartleby's desk faces a window that shows nothing but a nearby wall. At first,

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he throws himself into writing 'as if long famished for something to copy, he seems to gorge himself' on work. On the third day, however, being called upon to assist in the checking of some documents, he replies 'in a singularly mild firm voice […] I would prefer not to.'

This is the beginning of the end of Bartleby doing any work in the office, repeating his enigmatic reply over and over again with little variation: 'I would prefer not'. The lawyer is first dumbstruck by this point-blank refusal; subsequently his struggle to make sense of it and to get Bartleby to change his position takes him through a roller-coaster of emotions. He is, by turns, highly excited, perplexed, paralysed; he is outraged, yet 'strangely disarmed' and 'in a wonderful manner touched and disconcerted'. He is full of compassion and charitable intentions, and hopes that a patient and understanding response will help Bartleby to get over his recalcitrance. 'His eccentricities are involuntary' he tells himself, when his pleadings fall on deaf ears, but he is not incapable of shining a critical light on his charitable feelings; it is an opportunity, he tells himself, to 'cheaply purchase a delicious self-approval'. Yet the lawyer is also greatly provoked by Bartleby's 'cadaverously gentlemanly nonchalance'. Irritation builds up to anger leading to further attempts to pressure Bartleby to change his attitude, attempts which end in a kind of moral slump when he finds out that Bartleby has locked him out of his own office one morning. This is how the lawyer finds out that Bartleby is in fact *living* in the office now, sleeping, it is not clear how, and subsisting on next to nothing. Refusing the lawyer entry, Bartleby suggests he take a walk around the block and come back in a little while. 'Incontinently I slunk away from my own door, and did as desired. But not without sundry twinges of impotent rebellions against the mild effrontery of this unaccountable scrivener. Indeed it was his wonderful mildness chiefly, which not only disarmed me, but unmanned me, as it were.' Once or twice Bartleby remarks, rather enigmatically, 'I am not particular.'

The lawyer's compassion draws him to identify with Bartleby—'what miserable friendlessness and loneliness are revealed here'—an identification which induces 'a fraternal melancholy'. But compassion soon becomes too painful and turns into hopelessness and fear, whilst pity turns into revulsion; and 'common sense bid the soul to be rid of it'.

In the meantime, the office is threatened by contagion: everyone's language is infected by Bartleby's strange formula; unusually, they find themselves speaking in terms of what they prefer and what they don't. 'I trembled to think that my contact with the scrivener had already and seriously affected me in a mental way […] I must get rid of the demented man, who already in some degree turned the tongues, if not the heads of myself and clerks.' Yet when he finds Bartleby in what he calls 'his dead-wall revery' he is once again overcome by a picture of absolutely loneliness—Bartleby appears to him like 'a bit of a shipwreck in mid-Atlantic', or, later, 'like the last column of some ruined temple […] standing mute and solitary in the middle of the otherwise deserted room.'

Ultimately it is fear for his reputation that pushes the lawyer to take a rather desperate step. Since he cannot chuck out Bartleby, he moves his office to different premises leaving him behind. And still, when finally departing, 'I tore myself away from him whom I had so longed to be rid of.' The new tenant of his Wall Street office eventually calls the police who consign Bartleby to prison, where the lawyer visits him, still trying to persuade him to accept his help. Of course, Bartleby still 'prefers not to' and dies entirely mute and secluded, curled up on the ground with his head touching the prison's massive stone wall.

In a postscript, the narrator reports a rumour that reached him after Bartleby's death that he had previously worked in a Dead Letter Office in Washington, disposing of letters whose recipients had died. This suggests to him a partial explanation of Bartleby's melancholy; he ends his narrative: 'on errands of life, those letters speed to death. Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!'

Psychoanalysis and Philosophy

I would like to turn now to the reception of Melville's story first within psychoanalytic and then philosophical literature; I will leave aside the extensive commentary within literature criticism and American studies.

Christopher Bollas interprets Bartleby in terms of autism; the protagonist's 'breakdown into negativity is a mimetic representation of a

need to find a nurturing space where he can regress towards the healing of a "basic fault" in the self' (1974, p. 401). The lawyer, in taking Bartleby under his protective wing, appears at first to extend an offer of nurturance to him. However, Bartleby having previously worked only with dead letters, engages in the work of copying in an entirely mechanical manner, leading not 'to an identification with the other (as a child's learning of language sponsors an identification with his parents), but to a truncated isolation from the fruits of grasping the Word' (ibid, p. 404). Subsequently, Bartleby, in what Bollas takes to be a deep regression, uses language entirely negatively, not only to refuse exchanges with the other, but turning language against itself. Bollas, drawing on ideas from Balint, thinks that Bartleby is looking to the lawyer 'to have his pain held' (ibid, p. 408) by him, in order for that regression to take a generative turn towards progression. However, the narrator is confounded and disturbed to the extent that his own defensive organisation is undermined leaving him exposed to the potentially harrowing experience of the loss of his own real self—an experience that ultimately prevents him from being able to help Bartleby. Melville's story is, Bollas seems to suggest, akin to a failed analysis in the Object Relations mode. The lawyer, who showed some promise to be a facilitating maternal object, turned out to be too caught up in his own incapacity to mourn and thereby help Bartleby recover.

Where Bollas diagnoses autism, other analysts see an instance of anorexia or psychosis. For the most part 'Bartleby' gets referenced in passing to provide an example from literature in discussions of one class or another of psychic pathology. Bartleby is unvaryingly the prospective patient who is hard to reach (for further examples, see Meltzer 1975; Kestenbaum 2008).

In another instance of this strand of interpretation, Adam Phillips (2000) uses 'Bartleby' to think through the vexed clinical problem of understanding and treating serious eating disorders. In doing so, he does not shy away from paralleling his own, and other analysts', varied and at times desperate strategies and manoeuvres with those of the mostly kind, but ultimately hapless narrator. The difficulty, clinically, is to sustain the disowned appetite in the face of a Bartleby-type 'personal aesthetic of defiance' (ibid, p. 286), which in the extremity of this

'experiment in living' (ibid, p. 293) seeks to keep its desire pure by foreclosing any possibility of its satisfaction.

Just as Phillips, Stephen Grosz, in his best-selling 'The Examined Life' (2013), discusses 'Bartleby' in the context of the case of an anorexic girl. Grosz's patient was, like Bartleby, in the grip of negativity 'repudiating normal hungers' and threatened to condemn herself to starvation. Grosz reads Melville's story as a manifestation of an inner struggle which is fundamental to human life, roughly akin, although he does not use these terms, to the struggle between Eros and the death drive. 'In each of us there is a lawyer and a Bartleby', he writes (ibid, p. 127). The analyst, like the lawyer, gets unwittingly recruited by the Bartleby-like patient to respond to the unacknowledged pain of the latter. However, in contrast to the lawyer's, 'our weapon against negativity is not persuasion, it's understanding' (ibid, p. 128).

In a similar vein Levy and Inderbitzin discuss Bartleby as a case of 'profound negativism' (Levy and Inderbitzin 1989, p. 7) and also analyse the story through the lens of the patient-analyst pair. Focussing on the countertransference of the analyst with a Bartleby-like patient, their paper is of interest here only because it includes an aspect that is not recognised elsewhere, i.e. 'a surprising if distorted admiration for the patient […]. There was something to the patient's defiance that felt like David taking on Goliath, some incredible victory for self-determination against seemingly insurmountable oppression' (ibid, p.18). The thrill evoked by Bartleby's implacable refusal seems to elude most analysts—and it was in the case discussed only made conscious 'after intense self-scrutiny and supervisory consultation with analytic colleagues' (ibid.).

The one psychoanalytic contribution which does not locate Bartleby on the side of the patient is by the German psychoanalyst Schneider (2003) who uses Bartleby's stance to illustrate what he calls an *atopic* analytic position. *Atopia*, a term central to the methodology of Socratic questioning, refers to a dislocation or placelessness both in relation to established knowledge and vis-a-vis pressures to conform with social norms.[1] Schneider emphasises the particularity of Bartleby's oft-repeated formula: I prefer not to. It is neither a negation nor an affirmation; it is not a refusal, nor does it accede to what is asked; it side-steps the ever-ready polarities of agreeing or disagreeing, obeying or rebelling.

In declining to place himself in such ready-made positions, the *atopic* analyst creates a field of possibility for something radically different and as-yet-unknown to emerge. The analyst's silence—a non-spoken 'I prefer not to answer your question', if you like—can have this unsettling, yet potentially generative effect. Drawing out the potential of the *atopic* Bartleby-like analytic stance should not, however, lead us to lionise the 'melancholic' Bartleby—in contrast to his stark position, the analyst remains committed to life.

The difference between these two kinds of psychoanalytic interpretive strategies is clear to see. It is important, though, to bear in mind that these are not just different ways of understanding the 'clinical material', but that they stem from a different position in relation to socially dominant discourses and might therefore lead to a very different kind of *praxis*. To attempt to cure Bartleby with a view to re-integrating him into society is to take up the position of the lawyer (or the Law), albeit in what we might think of as a 'psychoanalytically enhanced' version of his care. It means, however, to view him purely through the lens of uncritically adopted notions of mental health/illness and could therefore be characterised as an instance of 'epistemic violence' (Spivak 1988). This type of psychoanalysis remains blind to the critical potential manifested in Bartleby's stance and, in doing so, gives up on its own critical potential in relation to both conceptual analysis and clinical practice.

Turning now to the reception of 'Bartleby' within the discourse of continental philosophy, we will see that a very different image emerges. According to Deleuze, Bartleby's devastating formula not only challenges, but undermines and puts out of commission the paternal function as such:

> The formula 'I prefer not to' excludes all alternatives, and devours what it claims to conserve no less than it distances itself from everything else. It implies that Bartleby stop copying, that is, that he stop reproducing words; it hollows out a zone of indetermination that renders words indistinguishable, that creates a vacuum within language. But it also stymies the speech acts that a boss uses to command, that a friend uses to ask questions or a man of faith to make promises. […] The formula stymies all speech acts, and at the same time, it makes Bartleby a pure outsider to whom no social position can be attributed. (1997, p. 73)

Bartleby does not assert his individuality. His repeated 'I am not particular' needs to be read as the 'indispensable complement' (ibid.) of his more often voiced refrain. But if he is not individual, he is certainly not common, in the sense of the everyman. Instead, Deleuze claims, he is an Original.

If we think of him as a madman, his psychosis can only be made sense of in relation to the neurosis of the lawyer, read by Deleuze as the representative of the paternal order that has its own madness at its core.

Deleuze then makes a larger and rather decisive claim. Is this not what Melville intended, indeed what was innovative about the emerging American literature of his time: to 'introduce a bit of psychosis into English neurosis' (ibid, p. 72) and, by the same token, to resist the return of the pervasive paternalism that was betraying the vocation of the American founders, i.e. to create a fraternal community? Via a reading not only of 'Bartleby', but including other works by Melville, Deleuze ventures that it had been Melville's primary concern 'to liberate man from the father function, to give birth to the new man without particularities, to reunite the original and humanity by constituting a society of brothers as a new universality' (ibid, p. 84). And Deleuze concludes: 'even in his catatonic or anorexic state, Bartleby is not the patient, but the doctor of a sick America, the *Medicine Man*, the new Christ or the brother to us all' (ibid, p. 90).

Derrida, who discusses 'Bartleby' somewhat *en passant* in connection with Abraham's sacrifice, writes 'Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" takes on the responsibility of a response without response' (1995, p. 24) Detecting traces of irony, Derrida too links Bartleby to Socrates's technique of speaking without giving voice to his own thoughts in order to interrogate the other, here of course, the lawyer, i.e. the law.

Agamben, in his essay 'Bartleby, or On Contingency', inscribes Melville's anti-hero into the philosophical tradition which uses the figure of the humble scribe to meditate on the relation of pure potentiality of thought to actualised being. Since Aristotle 'all potential to be or to do something is always also potential not to be or to do […], without which potential would always already have passed into actuality and would be indistinguishable from it' (1999, p. 245).

Agamben states, 'In its deepest intention, philosophy is a firm assertion of potentiality, the construction of an experience of the possible as such. Not thought but the potential to think, not writing but the white sheet is what philosophy refuses at all cost to forget' (ibid, p. 249). Bartleby, the scrivener who does not write, embodies this position of radical potentiality and thereby undercuts the presumed supremacy of the categories of capacity and will. It is not just a matter of wanting to write or not wanting to write, nor one of writing or not writing, but Being and Non-being themselves are held in abeyance where one is 'no more than' (ibid, p. 256) the other—as the Sceptics tended to put it in their celebrated form of words.

> In the place of the Prince of Denmark's *boutade*, which reduces every problem to the opposition between to be and not to be, Being and non-Being, the scrivener's formula suggests a third term that transcends both: the 'rather' (or the 'no more than'). This is the lesson to which Bartleby always holds. And, as the man of the law seems to intuit at a certain point, the scrivener's trial is the most extreme trial a creature can undergo. […] To be capable, in pure potentiality, to bear the 'no more than' beyond Being and Nothing, fully experiencing the impotent possibility that exceeds both—this is the trial that Bartleby announces. (ibid, p. 259)

Agamben rejects the lawyer's interpretation of the significance of Bartleby's previous employment in the Dead Letter Office. Rather than reaching for such a psychological explanation—which would amount to pointing to Bartleby's melancholia as the reason for his melancholia—Agamben traces the crucial sentence, 'on errands of life, those letters speed to death', back to St Paul (Romans 7:10): 'And the errand, which was ordained to life, I found to be onto death.' Agamben reads Paul here as opposing 'the oldness of the letter' to the 'newness of the spirit' of Christ (ibid, p. 270). Bartleby, the law-copyist who renounces copying turns away from the old letter of the Law making him a scribe in the evangelical sense of the term. This reading echoes Deleuze's interpretation of Bartleby as a new Christ; however, Agamben adds, 'if Bartleby is a new Messiah, he comes not, like Jesus, to redeem what was, but to save what was not' (ibid.).

In Agamben's view, it is vital to defend the space of pure potentiality where a worker might not work, a writer not write (as Melville himself did for a very long time). To lose this space—the blank page, as it were—is to lose a dimension which constitutes us as human beings. Bartleby, in not making a choice between the binary options pushed on him—work or get out—defends this radical potentiality as such. Walled in as he is in Wall Street, he does not give into the pressure to be, in today's ubiquitous jargon, one of the 'hard working people', nor does he vacate his space to those who are (or pretend to be). The violent reaction he provokes—and, some might think, the self-destructive violence (his hunger strike) which marks his end—corresponds to the violence of the demand: be like us!

If this is what is at stake here: potentiality in its most radical dimension, then what of a 'therapeutic' response which diagnoses this stance as pathological and strives to cure the subject by 'facilitating' his return into the fold of normality? Does psychoanalysis retain its commitment to the 'blank page' on which the subject might write something of their own (their unconscious desire), or does it give itself over to an agenda determined by dominant social norms? At a time when psychological treatments are increasingly subsumed under the umbrella of 'mental health' and, scandalously, a more and more explicit 'back to work' agenda, this question is far from academic (for a discussion of these developments and their effects in the UK, see e.g. Friedli and Stearn 2015).

In saving what is not—but what is perhaps to come—Bartleby holds open the possibility of 'the coming community' (this being the title of one of Agamben's earlier books from Agamben 1993). Read this way, we see the concerns of Agamben and Deleuze dovetailing in the direction of a political reading that raises the question of the possibility of community. In this context, Deines (2006) remarks on the fact that 'Bartleby' 'holds a unique place in a larger discourse on community […]. Indeed, this text has acted as a kind of quilting point for post-structuralist and post-Marxist critics alike—Agamben, Blanchot, Deleuze, Derrida, Hardt and Negri—who want to say something about modern political community's limitations and those of communication generally.'

A Crisis of Immunity

What is certainly striking from this briefest of reviews is the utter difference in the way Melville's story is commented upon within psychoanalysis and philosophy, even if we allow for differences in the often very nuanced readings within those two disciplines. How is one to understand that the man who for psychoanalysis is autistic, anorexic, melancholic or psychotic—i.e. one way or another almost totally shut off from human intercourse—should for philosophy become the harbinger of the coming community? Put crudely, where psychoanalysis sees a crisis of immunity, philosophy sees the possibility of a new community.

Immunity and community are interpretive categories that are fundamental to the thinking of another philosopher, Roberto Esposito, whose ideas I want to briefly introduce before bringing them to bear on our topic. Esposito sees *immunitas* and *communitas* in a relationship that is, on the face of it, essentially oppositional, but on closer inspection dynamic, and indeed dialectical. Both terms have their root in the Latin *munus*, which refers to 'an office—a task, an obligation, a duty (also in the sense of a gift to be repaid)' (Esposito 2011, p. 5). The one who is *immune* is exempt from this shared duty, or the duty of sharing. 'Immunity is a condition of particularity: whether it refers to an individual or a collective, it is always "proper", in the specific sense of "belonging to someone" and therefore "un-common" or "non-communal"' (p. 6).

Whether we think of immunity in the medical or in the legal (or any other) domain, there is always the sense of a self-protective response to a threat concerning the boundary of inside-outside. The perceived danger of some form of 'contagion' or 'flood' leads to the activation of defensive mechanisms that do, of course, presuppose not only the existence of the threat, but a knowledge of what this threat consists of, thus implying that the threatening thing has entered the organism in some form.

Perhaps we only need to mention briefly the current intensification of anxiety around such seemingly diverse topics as immigration, epidemics, computer viruses, surveillance, gated communities, or the ubiquitous threat of terrorism to evoke the 'hypertrophy of the security apparatuses' (ibid, p. 15), centred primarily around the problematic

of immunity. Global exchanges require an openness that pose a risk to the integrity of the respective systems. Conversely, defensive mechanisms can get out of control and end up attacking the organism they are designed to protect. In medicine these reactions are called auto-immune diseases. In a struggle for survival, life stifles life, ultimately turning against itself and risking its own death.

We can now see how psychoanalytic commentators have been reading Bartleby as suffering a kind of auto-immunity crisis. A protective mechanism, the refusal of all ordinary exchanges with others—presumably to avoid the kind of alienation that adaptation to social expectations entails—has gone into overdrive, closing him off almost entirely in relation to the natural and social world thus risking, and ultimately indeed incurring, death. Defensive measures end up destroying what they are meant to protect. Life turns against its own life. To be Bartleby is no way of being. In this reading, which locates him in the position of the patient, help consists in enabling him to re-engage with the exchanges of signification, shared meanings, as well as food, labour, etc., i.e. the whole merry-go-round of the exchange of goods that life as we know it—and 'Wall Street'—tends to thrive on, thus turning him into one of 'us' (the world of the office, as dysfunctional as it may be).

But if Bartleby's way of being manifests an extreme and ultimately self-destructive measure to ward off the internalisation of 'foreign bodies', he himself becomes just such a body for the office, provoking a crisis of immunity, in particular, on the part of the lawyer. The dangers the lawyer experiences are manifold—he is threatened in his authority, his status, his reputation; but also his property, his propriety, his identity and ultimately his sanity appear to be at stake. Bartleby must be integrated (re-introduced into the workings of the office) or else he must be expelled. If he cannot be expelled, the office must move away from him. He has to be separated out and left behind. But even once this is achieved, the lawyer is not rid of him—he cannot forget him, but feels compelled to visit him even in his state of now enforced segregation (walled in and walled off, as it were) and to plead with him to accept his 'help'.

Bartleby brings out the neurosis in the lawyer; unsettled to the core, he made numerous and varied attempts to *assimilate* Bartleby,

in all available senses of the word: he tried to understand him, to integrate him, but also to regard him, or make him, similar to himself. Bartleby does not comply. In the ensuing crisis the lawyer himself is called into question. For him, Bartleby is the foreign body—whether in the sense of the other in me that belongs to me, or the other, i.e. the other person who cannot be reduced to being like me. And where he 'puts' Bartleby—whether he embraces him, identifies with him or expels him as the repulsive or sick other—has crucial implications for who he himself is. To the extent that Bartleby provokes and sustains, through his intransigence, a period of crisis which demands rigorous self-questioning on the part of the lawyer, we can perhaps say that he performs something akin to an analytic function. Even at the end, it is clear that the lawyer is still stuck with Bartleby. Bartleby is inside him and will perhaps continue to cause him a 'fraternal melancholy'; but it feels like a melancholy that, since it has triggered a process of self-questioning, might still lead to mourning and thus to psychic development. I think the lawyer is not who he was at the beginning of this story; he suffered and perhaps continues to suffer a crisis of identity or immunity.

Cure or Plague?

Freud too had what we might call a theory of immunity to account for neurosis. In 'Studies on Hysteria' (1895) he thought about disowned thoughts/wishes as *Fremdkörper*, 'foreign bodies' (p. 290), in the psyche of the hysteric patient. What is one to do with an idea that has turned pathological in the unconscious mind? Cathart?—that is, flush out, and restore the mind to health by ridding oneself of the offending object? That was an early idea, 'chimney sweeping' (ibid, p. 30), or the 'talking out' (ibid, p. 27) of the repressed that causes the blockage. But already in 'Studies on Hysteria' Freud talks about how the repressed thought needs to be reintroduced into the main body of conscious thoughts. What had been ex-communicated needed to be reinstated and brought into communication with other ideas about oneself and the world. To that extent, psychoanalysis was always 'on the side of' the foreign body,

championing its rehabilitation, so to speak. And as a result of this rehabilitation, the main body itself would undergo change.

But what if psychoanalysis itself acted like an alien body? Something that provokes the outbreak of an illness rather than always being wholesomely located on the side of equilibrium, 'well-being', and health? Like Socrates who challenged his interlocutors by calling into question their unexamined beliefs, a critical strand of psychoanalysis aims to have—for the rather too well defended person as well as for the established cultural mainstream—a disturbing, indeed alienating effect. In this version, psychoanalysis seeks to affect us by alienating us from our alienation.

It can be argued of course that psychoanalysis has always acted as something of an alien body within society's established discourses. Freud knew this well, as we can tell from his 'joke' to Jung on their journey to America. When they first caught a glimpse of the Statue of Liberty, Freud is reported to have said: 'they don't realize we are bringing them the plague' (Lacan 2007, p. 336). But if there is a danger of infection, is it so clear just who is infecting whom, and who, in the final analysis (ha!), is having the last laugh? Lacan, who comments on this episode in 'The Freudian Thing' suggests that, if psychoanalysis was infecting America, then America—somewhat of an anathema for both Freud and Lacan—was also infecting psychoanalysis. After all it was in the States that psychoanalysis developed the strand called ego psychology, passionately attacked by Lacan for promoting the American Way of Life.

Psychoanalysis itself is an 'organism' (or system, if we want to follow Luhmann's terminology) in many ways like any other—busily, anxiously even, preoccupied with *autopoeisis*, that is, self-(re)production, self-maintenance, self-defence. Like any subject, psychoanalysis labours to maintain or realise itself as the subject it understands itself to be (adapting here a formulation by Deines 2006). This entails that in order to preserve its 'identity' it is, and has to be, always concerned that what comes from the outside will not corrupt, contaminate what it considers it 'properly is'. In other words, it is caught up in its own problem of immunity. That is the price one pays for propriety, property, identity.

A disease can turn into a cure, a cure into a disease; but a cure can also become diseased.

Ah Freud! Ah psychoanalysis!

Note

1. Socrates said of himself: 'I am utterly disturbing [*atopos*], and I create only perplexity [*aporia*].' Hadot (2002) translates *atopos* as 'strange, extravagant, absurd, unclassifiable, disturbing.' Socrates, of course, famously preferred not to make propositional knowledge claims himself, rather, he used his particular dialogic style to question the presumed knowledge of his interlocutors. Claiming knowledge of nothing but his own ignorance Socrates wanted to provoke new thinking.

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Instrumental Subjectivity: Père-Suasion as Père-Version

Jonathan Davidoff

When one reads some of the accounts of the Nuremberg trials, the well-documented trial of Adolf Eichmann and many autobiographies of Nazi high commanders, it is not uncommon to feel bewildered or disconcerted, for in many cases there are no beasts to be found. We find ordinary people with petty feelings of guilt or petty defences against them. In many of these trials, some of the defendants were individuals who operated or guarded extermination camps, or organised and undertook massive deportations and concomitantly had wives, children and hobbies. Broadly put, what Hannah Arendt (1964) called "the banality of evil" apropos Adolf Eichmann's trial is the flattening out of some of these unthinkable crimes into petty daily occurrences, calling them 'bureaucracy' or considering them alongside other trivial crimes. The very juridical procedure of the trial was banal, insignificant and incommensurable to the severity of the acts that were on trial.

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Arguably, *evil* was in the same measure not a 'beast' and the perpetrators were ordinary, banal and unimportant people. Although this interpretation of Arendt's notion is indeed contestable and can be interpreted otherwise, it is fair to argue that the crimes being trialled were *novums* in history (Fackenheim 1982) whilst the defendants in those trials were ordinary men and women. In this measure, evil in these trials was undisputedly banal.

This is noteworthy. How, we ask, were these people able to commit such crimes if they were ordinary people, people like us, like anyone? Immediately we are tempted to attribute their behaviour to a momentary, war-induced madness, the mechanisms of which would serve to *begin* to understand the perpetrators' motivations and the victims' terror. These defensive mechanisms, however, are drawn upon to distance ourselves and eradicate the possibility of "us" committing such atrocities.

One of the most common explanations and critiques (Calligaris 1987a, 1987b; Hore 2004; Wodak 2009) given to the acts of the perpetrators is the compartmentalisation of information within the machinery of the Third Reich carried out by means of spatial, temporal and indeed bureaucratic strategies. Compartmentalisation prevents the single elements in the 'machinery' to know, understand or foresee the final outcome of their actions. Therefore, according to this contention, many victims, perpetrators, bystanders and enablers of all sorts acted without necessarily understanding or thinking through the possible outcome of their actions.

Compartmentalisation, however, fails to account for the disparity between the evil character of the actions and the ordinariness of the individuals. The flapping of a butterfly's wings may become the hurricane of elsewhere, which is to say the outcome of actions are strictly speaking unforeseeable. Would the butterfly flap its wings anyway if it knew its flapping would have catastrophic outcomes? Of course, we will never know. Moreover, we should not care, because not knowing the final outcome is intrinsic to the act of flapping itself. In other words, not being able to foresee the outcome of actions, for better or worse, for good or evil, is part of the human condition. Therefore, compartmentalisation is a poor argument to establish or reject subjective responsibility. Furthermore, it fails to explain the acts of those who, like Eichmann,

knew the whole machinery from beginning to end and were the supposed *true beasts.* Eichmann's trail, however, epitomises Arendt's notion of banality of evil whereby perpetrators were understood not as beasts but as ordinary and petty men (Arendt 1964).

Compartmentalisation also fails to explain the acts of those whose small part in the grand clockwork machinery was terribly brutal itself, like the guards in charge of the gas chambers, or mass murders in the forests of Eastern Europe. From the argument of the banality of evil follows that they, too, were not beasts. If they were not beasts, then why did the acts of violence and bestiality not shock them? Why did they not rebel against participating in such violence and aggression? How were they not paralysed? What led them to act in such a way?

The question can be posed in terms of how powerful agencies persuade individuals to act in a determined way. World War II, totalitarian regimes, dictatorships of sorts, are examples of the way that governments, or powerful agencies, drive masses of individuals to act, or cast their opinion in ways, which otherwise given different socio-political conditions they would not. We are tempted to attribute these phenomena to the moments of collective madness and confusion that these extreme circumstances usually bring; to the way in which, in hindsight, these overwhelming circumstances seem to have disrupted what we call 'normality'. Yet, we fail to account for the fact that these terrible criminals who committed unspeakable crimes, were only ordinary, petty, and sometimes very well educated men. We fail, therefore, to account for the fact that they were ordinary individuals like most of us, albeit with particular characteristics and historical situatedness, they were not particularly mad. A form of collective madness can be a way to explain the horror, but perhaps there are ways to approach the topic taking into account a more nuanced perspective. Perhaps it is possible to try to understand these phenomena, individuals and the horror that they created, or witnessed, without the gap that the notion of 'collective madness' would introduce between *them* and *us.* Is there something petty, daily, mundane and banal that can account for them being persuaded to act in such ways? Is it something that *they*, like *us*, are all subject to?

The question gains relevance when we extrapolate it from totalitarian regimes and war circumstances to less extreme situations: entire

populations agreeing with certain law projects; when masses of people protest for the most self-destructive of causes or when they are silent in the face of the most pressing issues. Sometimes populations comply with rather puzzling and contradictory policies and perhaps the mechanisms behind this are not all that different from the ones at play in totalitarian regimes. This is not to minimise the *totalitarian* aspect of totalitarian regimes for there are certainly important differences between totalitarian and non-totalitarian situations. Neither does this mean that what may appear like a ludicrous law project or political cause for some may well be a perfectly logical one for a different group with different values. However, we are tempted to ask, regardless of the specific circumstances of each situation, why is persuasion even possible; what are its conditions of possibility? In other words, why can individuals or masses of individuals be persuaded?

Persuasion is at the core of political rhetorical practices. Convincing the individual to act in the way the powerful agency wants is the ultimate goal and the imperative of persuasion is to '*act in the way I want because you want to*'. In other words, a persuaded individual is one that has made the will of the powerful agency, his or her own. It is not enough, for instance, to agree with the government's opinion; an individual is truly persuaded when he or she makes of the persuading agency's will his or her own. In so doing, and to this extent, the individual gives up his or her freedom of thought. This is not meant to be a mitigating circumstance for the responsibility for such acts. It is simply a description of the process whereby an individual *gives in* to a government's, or a persuasive agency's will to the detriment of his, or her, freedom of thought, or otherwise called in psychoanalysis, *subjectivity*.

In the Seminar VII "The ethics of Psychoanalysis" (1959–1960), Jacques Lacan describes the ultimate ethical goal of the subject as *not yielding desire* and he draws upon the example of the Greek tragedy of Antigone in which she performs the traditional burial of her brother Polynices against the will of her uncle Creon. Polynices, lost the battle against Creon, who therefore forbade Polynices' traditional burial. Antigone, according to Lacan, followed not the worldly law of her uncle, but her desire to follow the divine or family law. Antigone is ready to die for her actions and she is described by Judith Butler in

Antigone's Claim as a liminal figure between the family and the state (2002). Arguably, Antigone is *monolithic*, that is, made of one whole single piece and unbreakable in her will. Although in a liminal place, or rather due to being in a liminal place where neither option is completely morally right or wrong, her determination is total. In the tragedy this is evident in that nothing stops Antigone from burying Polynices; not even her sister Ismene, or the certainty that her own death would follow her doing.

The case of an individual who is persuaded to act in a specific way by a government or a persuasive agency strikes us as precisely the opposite of Antigone. Antigone is familial and follows her own determination, and in so doing, she follows the path of the symbolic law. In this sense, she 'surrenders' to the law to guarantee subjectivity in a way best characterised by Butler in 'The Psychic Life of Power' (1997). To surrender to the law means to adopt a desiring subjective position, like Antigone. The opposite of Antigone can be exemplified by the subject who yields desire. Arguably, yielding desire would be to subjectively cease walking along the path that lack opens up and cease posing the symbolic question '*che vuoi*?' (i.e. what am I in the Other's desire?) (Lacan 1960). In other words, yielding desire means to act as if the lost 'object a' *cause* of desire would not be lost. In this sense, yielding desire means to act as if nothing was lacking.

Nevertheless, yielding desire along the lines of persuasion, and therefore making the will of an external entity one's own *involves a subjective position* and not simply yielding desire. Arguably, such a subjective position involves a decision that encompasses the whole of being and certainly is not only conscious. The enunciations of those on trial in Nuremberg and elsewhere are proof of there being indeed subjects to respond to the court's interpellations—*responsible* subjects and not cases of subjects who have simply yielded in their desire. In these instances, arguably, one surrenders *being* to the machinery that is meant to *be* for oneself.

It is not a coincidence that surrendering to the machinery is best enunciated in the third-personal and impersonal pronoun *one*. This is clear given that if I use the pronoun 'I' instead of 'one' and state 'I surrender who I am to the machinery that is meant to be for me' the

sentence becomes oxymoronic for the sentence is at once an affirmation and negation of *subjective agency*. From this perspective, a third-personal relation to being is arguably the condition of possibility for giving into the machinery. However, this very understanding of being risks becoming immediately normative, and paradoxically, a normative first-personal form of being would be, in itself, a form of giving into the *'authentic machinery'*.

Certainty of knowledge, arguably, opposes subjectivity in that it precludes the anxiety immanent to historicity. A total moment of anxiety, Lacan points out, comes precisely when the subject does not know what he or she is in the Other's desire—when the answer to the question *'che vuoi?'* is not given. Lacan powerfully exemplifies such an anxiety moment by depicting a subject standing in front of a giant praying mantis. The subject cannot see his reflection in the praying mantis' eyes. Therefore, he does not know if he is food, a sexual object or if he is even there (Lacan 1962). Not knowing is, therefore, the condition of possibility of anxiety. Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927), in Fackenheim's words, is a work in which 'never before had human historicity been taken so seriously, held fast to so relentlessly, grasped so profoundly' (Fackenheim 1982, p. 152). Incidentally, however, Fackenheim criticises Heidegger in that he failed to *authentically think* the Holocaust and WWII (Fackenheim 1982).

In any case, giving into the machinery implies more than yielding desire and inauthenticity. As argued, a subject who responds is at play in this process, the answers of whom are shaped by *certainty of knowledge*. Walter Benjamin described the moment of certainty as *the moment of danger* (Benjamin 1940). Benjamin suggests in "The Arcades Project" (1927–1940) that strolling through the streets and arcades of the city is akin to tracing with the fingertip the junctures between the fragments that constitute a mosaic. The junctures correspond to the moments of tension between ideas, notions or concepts; each piece of mosaic is in tension, concomitantly divided from and united to the other mosaic by their junctures. In other words, these are the moments of lack of certainty where freedom of thought can be kept, when tension is sustained for one is not quite in *this* or *that* mosaic. The moments of certainty, however, are the moments of danger in which closure of meaning can

occur. Arguably Benjamin's "moment of danger" is at the core of yielding desire, and is a precondition for giving into the machinery and political persuasion. Why then are subjects tempted by certainty?

In his thought provoking paper, "The Totalitarian Seduction" (1987), Brazilian psychoanalyst Contardo Calligaris addresses precisely these questions. He examined the autobiography of Albert Speer (1971) entitled originally in German *Technique and Power* and subsequently translated to English as *Inside the Third Reich* (1979a) and French as *L'immoralité du Puvoir* (1979b). Albert Speer wrote his autobiography whilst waiting for his trial in Nuremberg. He was Hitler's architect and afterwards became the Minister of Arms of the Reich. This leads us to suspect that Speer was well aware of the whole operation of the machinery and was not subject to the Third Reich's compartmentalisation technique. Drawing from his autobiography, we learn that there were opposing voices to Nazism in his near environment. He belonged to an enlightened bourgeois family who thought fascism was rather 'tacky'. So given that Nazism was not fully embraced by those around him, even if only for aesthetic or class reasons, we learn that he made a choice. How did such man become a Nazi? How did so many others like him take up such a subjective position?

In his autobiography, when he explains the reasons for the war, Speer argues that the war was inevitable because the modern technical means for it were available. The appellative 'technician' was widely used in WWII for those in charge of genocide and the idea of 'technocracy' developed shortly after the war. Speer's explanation is problematic to say the least, because it implies that if something can be done, then it must to be done. Calligaris highlights the negative connotation that *technique* has and disagrees with Speer's proposition because technical means do not necessarily imply their exercise (Calligaris 1987a, 1987b). More importantly, Calligaris highlights that technique, in itself, is not truly *alienating* (Calligaris 1987a, 1987b). In other words, Calligaris asserts that the exercise of technique is not necessarily an instance in which the subject cannot, or necessarily will fail to play a role qua subject.

The question is, then, what is it about technique that results in its idolatry, which Speer seems to posit as the reason for war and genocide? In other words, what is it about technique that seems to play the

role (or be the cause) of Benjamin's 'moment of truth' when it comes to understanding WWII? The first implication derived from posing the question thus is that the idolatry of technique, that moment of truth, would not be a non-subjective one; rather it would be one that would indeed imply a form of subjectivity and some desire rather than simply yielding it. This is a different interpretation to subjects yielding desire and therefore simply becoming alienated qua subjects in 'the moment of truth'. It is, in fact, the exact opposite case: an idolatry of the machinery and the desire to function in a clockwork fashion. It is therefore, a case of yielding desire *but in favour of the desire to yield it to something or someone else as such*.

Calligaris calls this desire the 'passion for instrumentalisation', that is, the desire of subjects to become instruments of the machinery. He describes this desire as the neurotic fantasy of overcoming subjective alienation by means of becoming an instrument, alienating thereby subjectivity into pure instrumentalisation. In the case of Speer, this would be evident in his desire to become an instrument of the dominant technique that was in place. But the question is, then, why is this a neurotic passion and why would becoming an instrument be, if anything, a promise for neurotics?

In his 1909 paper *Family Romances*, Freud explains:

> When presently the child comes to know the difference in the parts played by fathers and mothers in their sexual relations, and realizes that 'pater semper incertus est', while the mother is 'semper certa', the family romance undergoes a curious curtailment: it contents itself with exalting the child's father, but no longer casts any doubts on his maternal origin, which is regarded as something unalterable' (Freud 1909, p. 239).

Up until that point, observes Freud, the child had fantasised about being adopted and/or that it had been born from different parents and therefore belongs to another family. Hereafter, however, the mother becomes an object of certainty and the father remains an element to be exalted, with uncertainty as its core. In other words, the father becomes the imaginary object of symbolic uncertainty whilst the mother becomes the imaginary object of symbolic certainty. Knowledge about

motherhood is thereafter a known knowledge, but knowledge about fatherhood is a supposed knowledge. These two types of knowledge about kinship play an important role in subjectivity thereafter. It is of little importance that genetic tests can determine fatherhood with certainty nowadays because the symbolic place of uncertainty remains in the human psyche. It is not of little importance, however, how relevant having certainty about fatherhood is for humans. Were it not for its symbolic uncertainty, it would not be the object of genetic testing and it would not hold importance in human kinship structures, social institutions, such as inheritance, illegitimacy and so on. We can describe under these terms, furthermore, Benjamin's moment of truth as a moment in which that which hitherto was *supposed* becomes *known*.

In this sense, it becomes clear that there is a locus or place of uncertainty in the symbolic order. Symbolic uncertainty hinders the certainty that would link—indisputably and certainly—the subject to a specific kinship structure, that is, to the symbolic order. The place of the subject in the symbolic order (i.e. the answer to the question *'che vuoi?'*), and therefore his or her destiny as an element in the structure of kinship would be certain were the knowledge about fatherhood not just supposed but known. But given that this knowledge is supposed and therefore the locus of uncertainty, the subject does not know entirely who or what he or she is in the symbolic order. He or she does not know exactly what place he or she occupies in the structure of kinship of his or her family, and therefore, what is his or her 'known' destiny. Again, we could counter this viewpoint with the understanding that a specific subject occupies the place of the son or daughter in relation to his or her parents, that of sibling in relation to brothers and sisters and so forth. However, this place is firstly only relative to other symbolic entities, and secondly, these titles (son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, father) are nominatives that only stand for the lack of knowledge of what it means to be father, mother, brother, sister, and so forth. This knowledge is, too, supposed and therefore unknown. Were it known, the subject would know his or her identity, place, destiny and would desire nothing. If any knowledge can be derived from psychoanalysis about neurotic subjects it is, precisely, that they do not know who they are, where they are, what they are, where are they going or what they want.

Lacan calls this lack of identity between the symbolic order and the knowledge that ought to come from it, precisely, the paternal symbolic debt (Lacan 1979). Paying the symbolic debt would imply an identical correspondence between symbolic loci and knowledge (*savoir)*. The symbolic debt, otherwise called the space that *lack* introduces between signifier and signified, is what keeps the symbolic order moving. The belief that one day this knowledge will be known, makes the subject continue speaking and desiring, hoping that one day all things will be said, knowledge will be known, the symbolic debt will be paid and the subject will know who he or she is, what he or she is, what he or she desires—which means the end of desire and may well be a reading of the death drive. A paid symbolic debt means all things resolved. Psychoanalytically, however, it is well-known that every time the subject advances towards what he or she believes he or she wants, there is a sort of anti-climax in which the subject realises that *that* was not *it*. The subject, therefore, must keep on speaking, looking, moving, desiring falling into the trap each time. Calligaris calls this 'an endless race; a race with a direction but without end' (Calligaris 1987a, 12, 1987b).

Known fatherhood, in this sense, implies knowledge about what the subject is and desires, which is precisely what the neurotic subject does not know. From this supposed knowledge, arguably, an important part of the neurotic's banal and petty suffering stems. Not knowing what is one's desire is the neurotic misery and a promise of knowledge about this desire is worth its weight in gold. There are different types of knowledge about desire, one of which I have hinted at is psychoanalysis, albeit not the most visited one. According to Calligaris, an instrumental subjectivity results from another kind of knowledge about this desire. Becoming an instrument means to be given a very specific identity, place, destiny and goal as a subject. Of course the subject is immediately alienated in the machinery that serves as the Other and he or she loses true freedom of desire and of thought. In this sense, the subject does yield desire and ceases to be a subject stricto sensu in an opposite way to Antigone.

However, the subject does follow a desire to *know* and *be certain* about a knowledge that ought to remain supposed. But, can we say that the paternal knowledge really becomes known by the process of

instrumentalisation? Arguably no, the paternal knowledge remains always supposed, and its symbolic correlative—the place of uncertainty—remains operational. However, a sort of symbolic superstructure is placed upon this unknown knowledge. It acts in the place of the first one without truly being it. Lacan calls this a *semblant* (Lacan 1971). The term semblant has two meanings: *semblant* as a noun, which means face or expression; and *semblant* as a verb which retains its similarity with the English verb to 'resemble' (i.e. *semblant* in French means '*the resembling*' or '*that which resembles*', that which seems or looks like something else). In this sense, the known knowledge resembles the supposed knowledge in the stead of which it stands. Calligaris qualifies this semblant as perverse, and to this quality we now turn.

In fact, it is not the case that this particular semblant is a perverse one. It is the other way around, that is any semblant that aims to make the paternal supposed knowledge known is perverse because it aims to 'substitute' the father. This is one of Lacan's understandings of the term perversion, which he *equivocally* breaks in two French words: '*père*' (father) and '*version*' (movement or towardness). Lacan understands perversion (père-version) as a movement towards the father in which the subject aims to usurp the place of the supposed knowledge with his own known knowledge instead. It is a symbolic takeover of the place of the father, which results in the objectification of the subject. It is in this sense that the very well-known Freudian phrase 'perversion is the negative of neurosis' (Freud 1905, p. 155) can be understood according to Lacan. It is not necessarily that the perverse subject can live and pursue a sexual life about which neurotics can only fantasise. In his text 'Fetishism' (1927), for example, Freud describes how the high heel of a shoe can become the object that stands for the penis that the mother lacks. The horrific potential loss of that penis and its lack in the Other is what the neurotic fears. The fetishist's solution is then to 'build a monument' (the fetish) to attest denegation of castration. In other words, the fetish is simultaneously affirmation and denial of castration. According to Lacan, however, this would be a perversion because the subject symbolically supplants the father with an object of his choice. The fetish, the high heel in this case, is an *imaginary offshoot* of the symbolic structure that I just described which enables this imaginary configuration.

It cannot be stressed enough that penises and high heels are imaginary objects, indeed they are invested with a phallic gleam, but they are not the ultimate determinants of the symbolic structure that underpins them.

Calligaris offers a number of ideas to exemplify his views on the reigning perversion of WWII and the senses in which this may be understood. For example, the fake train station that was built in the extermination camp Treblinka in Poland. It reproduced every detail of a train station; indeed, it *resembled* it to the last minute detail. The clock on the tower, however, always gave the same time. The idea behind this fake train station was that prisoners would cooperate at their arrival at the death camp. Calligaris asserts that this confirms the hypothesis about perversion because the aim was that 'the prisoners would arrive to their death taken already by an instrumental logic' (Calligaris 1987a, 1987b,11).

In relation, then, to the original question 'why would a subject be persuaded' we could now assert that giving into persuasion may be understood as a perverse exit route from neurosis. Etymologically, persuasion comes from Latin and can be broken into *per* and *suadere*. The second part, the verb suadere means to induce, give advice or convince, and in turn it comes from the Indo-European linguistic root 'swad' that means 'sweet'. Curiously, the same root 'swad' is at the root of the Greek word *hedone*, which means *pleasure*. Père-suasion can be read, then, *père-sweet or père-pleasure,* which is suitable for our multilingual environment. Indeed, the sweetness, pleasure or bittersweetness of being persuaded, of giving into the machinery and replacing thus the supposed paternal knowledge is most importantly (hence its success) the *promise of successful jouissance*. This *jouissance* is that of knowing something, of acting in a way, being something which, albeit an object is not *supposed* but *known*—the *enjoyment* of being an instrument, of knowing exactly what one is. Furthermore, we can read *persuadere* as *père s'adhère*—'father adheres' or 'to adhere oneself'. Surely there must be more forms of equivocal meanings, in English, French or Latin that would support further these claims and open different ones.

Calligaris gives another example of perversion and instrumentalisation. He paraphrases the voice of 'anyone' who would ask Rudolph Hëss,

the commander of Auschwitz extermination camp "how could you enjoy killing so many people?" The answer to this question can be found in Hëss' memoirs, as well as in Eichmann's statements in his trials. The answers given were along the lines of "I was being an excellent functionary" or "I was following orders". These answers reveal the sense of their enjoyment and perversion. They were perverse not because they sadistically enjoyed killing hundreds of thousands as traditional 'sadistic' perversion theory would have it, but because they enjoyed being exemplary functionaries, instruments of the machinery. This enjoyment is so strong, so precious, worth so much to the neurotic, explains Calligaris, that neurotics are capable of doing anything for it, anything.

This form of understanding of perversion and the promise of *jouissance* that it implies for the neurotic calls into question the extent to which persuasion can be non-perverse altogether. There is a limit, I believe, in making any form of ideology one's own that when crossed, will make of the new conviction, actually, a perverse escape from neurosis. In fact, I believe that giving into persuasion, regardless what it is about, or what it relates to, will always have a perverse quality to it. However, we cannot deny that in the political arena, actions must be taken and consensus must be reached. Otherwise, practical solutions would be impossible to decide and enforce. Persuasion, then, is needed. Other questions, therefore, follow from this and ought to be posed. Assuming that some degree of persuasion is unavoidable in every consensus, is there an alternative way to think about it other than 'giving into the machinery' and 'never giving into it at all' that allows individuals to come to agreement? In other words, are there ways of reaching consensus (i.e. allowing a measure of persuasion) without adopting an instrumental subjective position and under which circumstances is this possible? These questions are, arguably, important ones to answer.

A resulting paradox from this line of thought is that some moral or ethical discourses, sometimes ones that champion truly laudable goals can be nonetheless thought as perverse. In this sense, ethical and psychoanalytic discourses, which are clearly distinct ones, can sometimes yield the most unexpected of contradictory combinations. For example, a morally good cause, such as protecting nature by being vegetarian, may be perverse in that it would be motivated, in fact, by the nugget

of known knowledge about fatherhood acquired by subjects who in fact desire to know what hitherto had been supposed: their role in the world, nature, the food chain or any other name for the symbolic order.

A further paradox is encountered when framing this discussion in terms of neurosis versus perversion and we find ourselves arguing in favour of neurosis and against perversion, that is, in favour of keeping unknown knowledge unknown. Arguably neurosis, to an extent and in the sense we are describing it here, keeps the paternal debt unpaid, makes desire possible, and, although within an absolute fantasmatic deformation, neurotics preserve their freedom of thought. The reason why this is paradoxical is that we would be arguing in favour of neurotic discontent rather than effective, relatively more secure and guaranteed perverse *jouissance*. We have testimony about civilisations' discontents and we know it is no utopia and, still, we may feel inclined to favour neurosis rather than perversion.

Calligaris ends his paper with a short reflection on this particular topic applied to contemporary, neo-liberal times. He explains that in a capitalist society the ideal of man is defined much more heavily by what individuals ought *to have* than by what they ought *to be*. This results from *objects* one ought to possess being more tangible than *personality characteristics* that one ought to be within the neo-liberal discourse. This is not to deny that there are attributes of *being* linked to neo-liberalism. Nevertheless, *having* is arguably the core of neo-liberalism and the attribute against which it can be differentiated from other economic systems: 'being is having'. To be and to have are the two possible outcomes of the Lacanian notion of sexuation and phallic signification (Lacan 1958). Being and having are the possible paths of the subjective vicissitudes around the phallus: one can *be it or not* or *have it or not*. Calligaris argues that Freud's society may have been quite different to ours in that sense, for surely what an 'ideal man' was, back then, had more to do with what a man *should be* than what he *should have*. If granted, it follows that we can agree to Calligaris' contention of us witnessing a rapid transformation of the *social symptom* from neurosis to perversion. Becoming part of the *capitalist* machinery, that is, an instrumentalisation of subjectivity, is much 'easier' when *having* is at stake rather than

being—as *having* is more tangible, far less demanding, more slippery and by far more pervasive.

In sum, Speer, Eichmann and Hëss arguably had to *be* something in order to be part of the machinery (of course, also *do*), whereas the capitalist subject needs not necessarily be, but have. So in fact the same process that enabled Nazis to undertake the unspeakable happens day-to-day, ubiquitously and unstoppably. Then and there it was about being; in the here and now, it is about having. I argue that the difference, the distance that allows positing *them as them* and *us as us,* under this particular light, is no longer. An ascetic attitude towards capitalism seems hopelessly futile and the psychoanalytic alternative, albeit one of the few *true* alternatives, risks seeming more and more derisory as time goes by.

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From Totalitarian to Democratic Functioning: The Psychic Economy of Infantile Processes

Kathleen Kelley-Lainé

I am tormented by two aims: to examine what shape the theory of mental functioning takes if one introduces quantitative considerations, a sort of economics of nerve forces; and second, to peel off from psychopathology a gain for normal psychology.
(writes Freud in his letter to Wilhelm Fliess on 25th of May, 1895 (Letter 24)).

The political term 'totalitarian' may come as a surprise when linked with the word 'psyche'. Inspired by the Freudian notion of the 'economics of nervous force' and Hannah Arendt's understanding of 'totalitariansm' as a 'dynamic' of destructivity rather than a 'regime', I wish to outline my clinical understanding of the 'totalitarian dynamics of infantile psychic processes' as experienced in my work with adult patients.

Before birth, we are all 'totalitarian' in our economic functioning, at one with our mother, we are completely dependent on her in total

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fusion. We need only mention the rich literature on the importance of early childhood rearing, for example, the work of both Selma Fraiberg,[1] and Donald Winnicott (1958) to recognise the indelible effect of this 'totalitarian' state of being at one with the mother and of its lasting influence in adult life. This feeling is prolonged as the newborn immature child ignores the requirements of reality and maintains this former state of omnipotent pleasure through hallucination. Sandor Ferenczi in his article on '*Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality*' states:

> The 'child's megalomania' as to his own omnipotence is thus at least not a *complete* delusion; the child and the obsessional patient demand nothing impossible from reality when they are not to be dissuaded from stubbornly maintaining that their wishes must be fulfilled; they are only demanding the return of a state that once existed, 'those good old days' in which they were all-powerful. (*period of unconditional omnipotence)* (Ferenczi 1913, p. 70)

Birth is the first 'catastrophe'[2] in the maturational process. Ferenczi links this initial upheaval to the psychological development in the human process of growing up, surviving the never ending transformations involved in moving from the omnipotent foetal state to becoming an adult capable of accepting the limits, frustrations and castrating experiences of reality.

It is in his article '*The Problem of Acceptance of Unpleasure (Advances in the Knowledge of the Sense of Reality)*' that Ferenczi (1926) explores the maturational process more deeply. A sense of reality is in sharp contrast with flight from, and the repression of pain, both very much part of psychic life. Using his capacity to identify with the infantile mind, Ferenczi imagines the processes at work in the omnipotent newborn. At this initial stage of life the perception of the world is 'monistic' with no discrimination between 'good' and 'bad', 'inner' or 'outer'. According to Winnicott (1978), the suckling baby is sucking itself, as it has no perception of a separate mother.

What inner processes, particularly those linking drives and rational thinking, accompany the development of the child as it gradually learns to accommodate increasingly complex reality? First of all, there is the

encounter with the instinctual polarity underlining all life, i.e. Eros and Thanatos: Freud's conceptualisation of the life and death drives. The question is how the psyche comes to relinquish the boundless pleasures of 'omnipotence' to espouse the frustrations of reality. Ferenczi refers to Freud's seminal article on '*Negation*':

> Freud has discovered the psychological act of negation of reality to be a transition-phase between *ignoring* and *accepting* reality; the alien and therefore hostile outer world becomes capable of entering consciousness, in spite of 'unpleasure', when it is supplied with the minus prefix of negation, i.e. when it is denied. (Ferenczi 1926, p. 234)

Ignoring the unpleasurable facts of life via negative hallucination is no longer possible, and becomes the subject matter of perception as a negation. The question is whether it is possible to remove all obstacles to the acceptance of reality? This would imply the complete disappearance of the tendency to repression. Here lies the very purpose of psychoanalysis for Ferenczi:

> The process by which recognition or affirmation of something unpleasant is finally reached takes place before our eyes as the result of our therapeutic efforts when we cure a neurosis, and if we pay attention to the details of the curative process, we shall be able to form some idea of the process of acceptance as well. (Ferenczi 1926, p. 235)

The terms 'totalitiarian and democratic psychic processes' may seem far fetched in this context and I will attempt to explain my use of these loaded words. In the beginning, the human infant's world is one of undifferentiated sensations dominated by moments of pleasure and unpleasure based on need. As survival is the dominant factor, 'to be or not to be' is of primary importance, the infant is, therefore, totally dependant and at one with the mother. The development from this 'totalitarian' undifferentiated state towards independence begins very quickly and becomes more obvious with the emergence of language. Selma Fraiberg's book *The Magic Years* outlines the child's path from 'totalitarian to democratic psychic processes:

> These are 'magic' years because the child in his early years is a magician—in the psychological sense. His earliest conception of the world is a magical one; he believes that his actions and his thoughts can bring about events. Later he extends his magic system and finds human attributes in natural phenomena…Gradually during these first years the child acquires knowledge of an objective world and is able to free his observations and his conclusions from the distortions of primitive thought. (Fraiberg 1959, p. ix)

Fraiberg describes how unstable and 'spooky' this 'magical' world is and that the child 'must wrestle with the dangerous creatures of his imagination and the real and imagined dangers of the outer world…Many of the problems presented by the child in these early years are, quite simply, disorders created by a primitive mental system that has not yet been subdued and put into its place by rational thought processes.' (1959, p. x). Parents are essential ramparts against the dangers of this primitive mental system and are seen as omnipotent all-powerful giants whose function is to transform the 'bad' into 'good'. Sometimes they can also become nasty 'witches' who do not conform to the child's needs or fantasies of the moment.

Here we come back to Freud's concept of 'negation' as a transition phase between *ignoring* and *accepting* reality. For Fraiberg, the toddler's discovery of the word 'no' becomes a priceless addition to their vocabulary: 'The chief characteristic of the second year is not negativism but a powerful striving to become a person and to establish permanent bonds with the world of reality' (1959, p. 65).

After many years of clinical practice, I have become increasingly convinced of Freud's initial intuition of a 'quantitative approach' to the human psyche—the psychic economy of infantile processes. I consider the analytical frame to be a 'transitional' space where ignoring and accepting reality can be freely unfolded by the patient without fear of judgement. The role of the psychoanalyst is to lend a professional ear to someone who is striving to become a person, and to establish permanent bonds with the world of reality. Becoming a 'person', subject of one's own desires is a profoundly dynamic process, that we sometimes term as 'growing up' or as 'maturity'.

This dynamic approach, implies constant psychic movement, not only on the part of the patient, but also on the side of the analyst.

I would like to pay tribute here to my mentor and supervisor, André Green (2002), who distinguished 'clinical thinking' from 'clinical theory'. In his book, *Pour Introduire la Pensée Clinique*, he speaks about 'clinical thinking' as a special kind of rationality that is rooted and emerges directly from clinical experience, and gives meaning to movement, developments, transformations without having to immobilise the process through theoretical diagnosis.

The term 'totalitarian' within this context is a metaphor rather than a definition; a metaphor for a state of symbiotic oneness—a whole that functions as one unified interdependant system often under a strict regime of 'all or nothing', 'black or white', 'kill or be killed', 'eat or be eaten'. It is a kind of economy of terror that pertains to the individual as it can apply to a political system or a world view. A survival mode operates also when political systems become totalitarian when threatened (real or imagined) from the outside—'them against us'—just as attacks or threats may also be from inside for both the individual and the political system.

My experience as a psychoanalyst with adult patients illustrates that the 'psychic economy of infantile processes' is always present albeit to a greater or smaller degree. It is not only repressed trauma, or other disturbing childhood experiences that are at play here, but the way the child was able to overcome irrational fears and deal with danger. The role of parents in mediating irrational dangers and omnipotent strategies of the child is very important and determinant in adult life. Totalitarian functioning can be considered as a survival mechanism depending on the archaic, infantile sensations of omnipotence and fusion.

The psyche regresses to totalitiarian functioning when feelings of insecurity arise. The infantile 'totalitarian' psyche is usually the most resistant to change, as it is often well hidden from both analyst and patient. It functions like a 'dictator': not only does it impose an authoritarian regime in relation to the surrounding environment but it also tends to inflict its 'all or nothing' system on itself. The main paradox is that although the results of this dynamic are mostly harmful for the individual, the strength of investment points to the 'pleasure principle.'

It is why one tends to think that this process is an ersatz of an archaic organisation that was once pleasurable and/or necessary, a kind of 'boundless pleasure of omnipotence.' I will now give a clinical example to illustrate my observations.

Jack

Jack, a fifty-one-year-old Anglo-Saxon man, who chose me as his therapist to be able to speak his mother tongue. He had been in therapy, both group and individual, for many years. His family doctor gave him my name when he said he was 'stagnating', and wondered if he should try therapy in English. After our first encounter, it took him 3 years to decide to work with me and simultaneously to continue the group work.

Jack comes from a large family of poor farmers; he is the second of five boys and has one sister. At age 13, he decided that the farm was not for him and that he would have to take his education seriously. It came as a 'revelation' one day on his way home from school—he decided to make something of himself. From then on, he took to studying intensively, was admitted to university, teacher training college and became a teacher. At age 24, he met a French girl and decided to come to France with her. He ended up settling in Paris despite the break-up shortly after their arrival. He is fluent in both spoken and written French and has established a successful career as a consultant working with people. Leisure time is spent alone: he lives and travels alone, and has never lived with a woman. He likes to keep his private time and space 'pure', as he puts it. Before he came to work with me, his main leisure activity was seducing women, having sex as a pragmatic activity and rarely sustaining a relationship. He proudly announced on several occasions that he had never imagined or desired to marry and have children. All his brothers and sister are married with families. He goes home from time to time to 'feel a bit of family' from which he himself feels excluded.

Since our work together, he has stopped seducing women for 'sex', feels more at ease in his work, and is less anxious facing people superior to him hierarchically. He sold his flat and rents a small studio with the idea that he will buy a larger one with an extra room to enable family

visits. His work takes him to all corners of France so he is constantly travelling. I am obliged to adapt to his schedule although we agreed that it would be preferable to have a set contract. Recently, we agreed on a fixed time for one of the sessions and he seems very invested in respecting our agreement. The term 'homeless' person came up in one of the sessions and he seemed moved by it. It is difficult to determine what actually touches him emotionally. He is so savy about psychotherapy after all these years, and claims that psychoanalysis has few 'surprises' for him. He sometimes asks himself (and me) why he continues to come when 'nothing' can really change. He asserts that he still does not know himself.

Despite this seeming distance, he has enabled me to 'see into' his childhood and adolescence: there is the small three-year-old boy sitting in a corner, very sad, watching his mother feeding the new baby brother. He has lost her and all hope of getting her back as three more baby boys are born. Finally a little girl arrives—she is the only one to have birthday parties and this remains unquestioned in the family. Jack and his older brother share the same bed and are in class together in the small country school. Jack is clever and does well and feels very ashamed when his older brother is humiliated. Years later, in his adolescent years, he is able to humiliate his father by lending him money and making him cry.

The mother is the strong one in the family: a woman of few words, she is hardworking, secretly ambitious, lonely and does not mix with the villagers. Sometimes she goes to church elsewhere to avoid meeting people she knows. She tells her son not to mix with those 'cottage people', and gazes proudly at him the day of his graduation. He shows me a picture of himself in graduation robes with his mother and sister on either side. There is no sign or signifier of his father. The father is more light hearted and satisfied with farming the land, while his wife prefers that he work in a factory to earn better wages. Jack has fond memories of his father singing and telling stories on the way to visit his relatives in his broken down truck. They all sang and had a merry time while the mother stayed at home.

Jack began working part-time at age 12 to earn a living. His first job was helping an undertaker, washing and preparing corpses, a task

very unsuited to a boy of his age. He now feels angry about how he was exploited as a child; previously he just felt annoyed without knowing why. He says that no one protected him. Having finished primary school in the village, he managed to get himself into a religious college to receive a good education. Although priests expected students to join the religious order, he knew all along that he would not. He often feels guilty for having exploited the situation. He tried to leave all of this behind when coming to France. He admits being ashamed of his background and tries to mask his past, wanting to fit into French culture. He has kept a very strong accent.

Although his French girlfriend left him soon after his arrival, her parents continued to take care of him, even helping him find work. He spoke about them quite recently, revealing how much they had helped him in the beginning. This was important since he normally presents himself as having no one, of being a complete recluse. From time to time he mentions a party, a dinner, a drink, a football match that he shares with people, but most of the time he prefers his own company—a 'pure space' where he is undisturbed. He continues his group therapy, but it took a few years before he allowed himself to speak to me about what goes on there for him. Is it to keep each space 'pure'? Since he integrated the two therapeutic spaces, he is able to share his experiences in both. He underlines how 'out of character' this is, but how good it feels.

Two years ago he met a woman on one of his business trips. She lives with her estranged husband, but is free to have other relationships. Jack finds her attractive and does not want to 'use her pragmatically', nor does he want to let her 'dirty his pure space.' He keeps her at arms length, but invites her for short holidays, even in his home country, introducing her to his family. He accompanies her on a holiday with her friends; she comes to see him in Paris, joins him at a rugby game where he gives her one of his precious tickets. Each time he is in 'two minds' about being with her. He keeps saying that it will come to nothing—he could never have children with her; it is not certain that she would leave her husband for him, not that he would want her to do that. But she can make him angry, and does provoke him so that he takes off his mask from time to time. On the surface, nothing changes—it is as if

there can be no transformation in the relationship. In the last three sessions, however, there seems to have been a move:

Session 1

J. We spoke about the strength necessary to be 'homeless'—my behaviour is very contrived with other people.
A. Wanting to be with someone without any basic reason?
J. Now I like to see G every few months, I enjoy that but I don't miss anyone, don't need to see people, maybe only 20% of the time. It's very independent living, not being connected, can't promise to change that but have been feeling the void in that. Got rugby tickets and offered one to A and was glad to spend 20 h together. It left a nice feeling and she really appreciated it as well. The only intimacy I have now is with A, not trying to see other women as before. I feel I owe her something.

Session 2

J. Trusting the process, trusting life, even though I need to control. The challenge for me is trusting people, the big issue is with myself. In the group on Sunday I opened up; I told them that I felt ignored, they said: 'We are accompanying you.' Did I feel that my parents didn't support me, that I'm not loveable, do I hate myself?
A. Cutting people out.
J. Not faithful to the negative image. The group thinks that I am '*auto-généré*' I took some notes in a carnet, it was like investing myself, like being intimate with myself. But I felt more comfortable talking to my boss. Fourteen years of therapy, I've learned that we are not in the same starting block. I started off splitting—was with E but slept with other women. With A have not been with other women, something is maturing, the different parts coming together. 'Je me suis rencontré très tard dans la vie!' Blaise Cendrar.

During the school holiday (I was absent the first week) he announces that he will go to X the next day, then to his country to visit family. I happened to

have spent that week in X although he didn't know that. Had he felt abandoned by me? Suddenly he does not feel at ease about going to X and I suggest that he make a choice wherein he respects himself. He decides not to go to X and loses the money he had invested.

Session 3

J. I changed my decision about X—felt stressed about the trip, real need is to slow down, reflect, stay with my feelings. Going home is meaningful right now. Making the decision I feel different about money, able to let it go—capacity to let go, experiencing renouncement, respecting myself, going off doesn't correspond to where I am now. I mean to go and see F (a former girlfriend). I feel I have pure time and contact with people is dirtying it by bringing someone in the time…

A. Dirty children, dirty sex?

J. I identified with the image of purity—school, altarboy.

A. Mother pure? Father's hands dirty with the land?

J. Mother would get hands dirty caring for the animals. I was six when P was born, it was the summer, father was taking care of us, I remember her coming home with a baby. Perhaps my quest is for an ideal that doesn't exist, no woman is good enough, no apartment is good enough. Perhaps I'm living the mission of my mother—go live my desire, see the world, get educated, attain social class. Going to X was 'fleeing from feeling.' Feelings are only with the family.

Session 4 *(He decided to go to the South of France for the sun and asked me for a phone session. This is the first time that we have a phone session when he is on holiday.)*

J. Eventful these days I am taking time for myself—thoughts are overwhelming, lots of anger; finding people intolerable. There is a lot of negativity, defensive negativity, I am a prisoner of that and have a struggle expressing myself. It becomes a challenge as if others were against me, I am a paria de la société. Have great fear and

anxiety of the other and all that is my truth—before I used to camouflage it. I am in W and not seducing women. Before it was a way to validate myself. Yesterday went for a 4-h. walk—why did I never want to become a father? Something fundamental in me, who decided that? I can't control or decide to be with a woman. Is it God? Was it my mother? What is important for me now? What choice do I make? Where did my dreams go? I feel sadness and anger.

A. No desire for love, sharing.

J. First time that I really want to look at it, never lived with anyone, never wanted to. If I let go of X why can't I let go of everything. What the therapy work has done was to change my behaviour with women—it was as if that was my only option against loneliness. I've been living a fantasy, chasing something that doesn't exist. Living mother's dream—how to let go of mother? Fear and guilt; what is guilt? God wanted me to be a priest. As if my vital energy got blocked and doesn't exist.

A. The sad little boy with murderous feelings.

J. Getting recognition; manipulating relationships to not lose the other. Feel hatred and anger for beautiful women; they are a threat, engaging my emotions and getting rejected—I am not good enough, have deep doubts about myself.

A has just come to join me (*when he wanted her to come to X she had said that she did* not *want to spend time with him*) and I didn't want to tell you. I sent her a text last night and she was open to join me. I'm exposing my contradictions.

Session 5

J. A was put off about me having to talk to you on a phone session. (*J. very angry*) 'I invited her on MY time: we went for a walk I was angry and she was angry—said she wanted exclusive attention. We ended up talking. My difficulty is accepting another person.

A. It is about you, me and her. She is complaining about you being with me…

J. Was going to leave early this morning, but decided to change plans for her and lost another ticket.

I propose that we look at this dynamic situation: I am in the role of the 'mother'—he gives up his lonely 'big' pleasure, X for me, to 'respect' himself. He comes to two sessions with me instead (what is good for him). Then chooses another 'small' pleasure and decides to sollicite A. again and she accepts—but he hides her from 'mother-analyst'. But decides to reveal his secret to 'mother'—integrating 'his woman' and 'mother'. Giving up TGV ticket this time is for 'his woman'. (If he was able to do it for 'mother-analyst', he can do it for 'his woman').

J. Trying to be honest with myself and others. The whole universe is my mother, I'm putting her everywhere. Never separated from her—its also about growing up. When I was twelve I lacked parenting, there was a sensitive side to myself that I couldn't tell anybody. Touching corpses at 13 and 14 was not on—they exploited me and no one protected me. I feel the anger and humiliation now.

This reminds me of what he had told me about when he began to work and had a panic attack in front of the pub. Afraid that growing up would mean going into pubs and becoming an alcoholic. He felt so bad that he told his older brother, who related it to their parents. They didn't know what to say and took him to a doctor.

Hypothesis of Unconscious Processes

The 'totalitarian psyche' in Jack's case manifests itself in the area of 'object relations', a highly invested ambivalence of needing other people exclusively as a rational means to an end, and not letting 'desire' or emotions soil his '*lebensraum*'. A kind of solipsism developed wherein he alone became the centre of the universe along with his hallucination of fusion with 'mother.' The 'fixation' on the mother activated in early childhood by the birth of the babies one after the other, while he was in great need for exclusive attention. Anger, hate and depression created intolerable ambivalence,

and his feelings of generalised guilt, that he cannot attach to anything, have their source in this primary relationship with the mother. Love, hate, anger, fear, guilt were all trapped together in a powerful omnipotent libidinal package that required investment and probably provided the fuel for positive action: to study, university, France, a successful job. The guilt part of the package possibly necessitated payment for the 'omnipotent success' through some masochistic investment in 'no woman, no home, no cry.' Therefore all the different emotional elements are in one 'total package' of the totalitarian infantile psyche just as it was when the infant was not aware of anything outside itself and reality was 'one'. Jack thereby excludes himself from the affective and emotional reality of adult life.

Ferenczi, in his article on '*The Problem of Acceptance of Unpleasure (Advances in the Knowledge of the Sense of Reality)*', concludes his chapter on the development of a sense of reality by saying that:

> The ultimate forming of a judgement…resulting from the work of reckoning…represents an inner discharge, a reorientation of our emotional attitude to things and to our representations of them, the direction of this new orientation determining the path taken by action either immediately or some time afterwards. Recognition of the surrounding world, i.e. affirmation of its existence of unpleasure, is, however, only possible after defence against objects which cause 'unpleasure' and denial of them are given up, and their stimuli, incorporated into the ego, transformed into inner impulses. The power that effects this transformation is the Eros that is liberated through diffusion of drives. (Ferenczi 1926, p. v244)

As recounted in the last session, Jack actualised his ambivalent conflict with his mother via the transference onto his analyst: if we assume that leaving his homeland was the only way he could separate from his mother, even though geographical distance is, at the same time, an unconscious strategy to 'never' leave mother by fixing her in time and space. It avoids the aggressive emotions involved in letting go of the infantile attachment linking him to his mother. He later understood that his 'manic' traveling was an ersatz of running away from emotional ties. His willingness to lose money seemingly indicates that he is paying a price, thereby investing in a refusal to repeat the ambivalent cathexis

to his mother. Going for a few days to the South of France and inviting A is a new move away from the 'totalitiarian package', and yet hiding it from 'mother' is a step backwards, a mark of his ambivalence. In the transference, the psychoanalyst has both roles: 'mother' from whom he must hide 'his woman' and analyst to whom he can talk about it for the first time. It is also the first time that he has addressed his 'psychic economy' within the frame of transference and underlined it with financial economy.

Totalitarianism

Are there similarities between the 'functioning of the totalitarian psyche' and a totalitarian regime? According to Hannah Arendt (1958), the main purpose of the totalitarian regime is to realise total domination with a unique omnipotent belief system that promotes a monistic vision of the world and justifies the unique power of the State. Individual freedom is curtailed and citizens' rights abolished in favour of absolute control. Opposition is not tolerated; difference, whether it be of beliefs, ideas, or values about race is to be demolished. The 'purity' of *one* total system must penetrate every aspect of society, including the intimate thoughts and lives of its citizens. The quest for 'purity', of 'ethnic' cleansing expresses the belligerent nature of all totalitarian regimes. Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin are tragic examples of how humanity and industrialised society could be 'totally' mobilised to carry out a world war. The Nazi regime proved that it was possible for a totalitarian system to carry out the mass murder of millions of Jews because they were designated to be the enemies by the ideology of antisemitism.

If 'law' comprises the very core of a constitutional government, terror is the essence of a totalitarian regime, victimising innocent populations. Terror becomes total when no one opposes it and that is the very objective of totalitarianism, that is, to destroy all opposition: everything that is separate, different and combats total power. It is therefore necessary to eliminate human nature with its spontaneous differences. In the concentration camps, 'massification' was how the individuals were broken down and lost their individual identity, by being dissolved into a mass

considered as being 'one'. Isolation is the beginning of terror, then the destruction of private life, the consequences of which are the loss of a sense of belonging, and the abandonment of the self. Totalitarian States embody the 'One'—by imposing uniformity, the communist regime attempted to eliminate 'class differences'; the Nazi regime's purpose was to purify the race by eliminating human diversity in murdering Jews, Gypsies and the mentally disabled.

The undifferentiated 'one' with the mother at the beginning of life, so necessary for the helpless infant, becomes a source of 'terror' if prolonged into later years. The baby's need to merge with the mother in 'total unity' is necessarily an economy of survival. This totalitarian state, imprinted and indelible in the human psyche, evolves as a more 'democratic' functioning when the child develops a 'self' capable of entering into relationships with 'others'. The maladjustment of the environment, wherein there is not the necessary facilitation of the maturational process, brings about an internal distortion that prevents the move from 'totalitarian' to 'democratic' functioning and imposes the economy of fusion, symbiosis and prevents the process of differentiation. Instead of a relationship with the 'other', there is a confusion of the other with 'me', and the authentic 'me' is dissociated as a threatening 'not me', producing a distorted intra-psychic sense of what is 'me' and what is 'not me'.

The maturational process is a complex and difficult dynamic for all human beings. It is potentially engrained from the beginning of life. We could call it the '*economie vitale*', or simply the life process of differentiation, separation and negentropy. The 'psychic economy of infantile processes' is at the very heart of the unconscious. In support of my argument, I wish to draw a few parallels between 'totalitarian functioning of the psyche' and political totalitarianism: a totalitarian State dominates all aspects of society, first of all, by creating a universal myth that replaces existing beliefs, personified by a charismatic leader and a mass of believers. Total devotion of the masses is required to create a unified State ideology; individuality, criticism or opposition are immediately crushed. There is no room for 'difference'. The creation of distrust, perpetual paranoia, and fear are essential to maintain an atmosphere of terror to conserve the State's iron grip of total power.

The clinical vignette illustrates the 'psychic economy of infantile processes' as a regressive state of an adult patient facing fear and insecurity. A parallel can be drawn between this case study and the psychic economy of totalitarian regimes as infantile fantasies and archaic narratives are re-invested with adult libido and tend to take over, and thereby eliminate, adult rationality. Black or white, kill or be killed, eat or be eaten is the order from the past, and at the same time, terrorises the patient and his or her entourage. Opposition from an 'outsider' that is a 'not-me' person is ruled out immediately. In fact the 'other' does not exist; only the other that is an appendix of 'me', with whom a phantasy of total fusion may be maintained.

Jack does not know himself and cannot understand why he is not able to be with 'others' nor sustain a lasting love relationship with a woman. After many years of individual and group therapy, he still has not been able to transform his personal life style. Despite sessions where he seems to find a breakthrough to making changes, he comes back after the weekend complaining of his fears, depression and inability to have a meaningful relationship with others. We explore various hypotheses of why his personal life is so arid and he often speaks about wanting to keep his private space 'pure'. Despite many 'pseudo' theories about the origin of his difficulties, there has been little evidence of 'economic' changes, that is, disinvesting infantile processes to free up adult libido (energy). His first words at the beginning of our work together were: 'I am locked into my mother's coffin.': at 'one' with his mother in life and death? Importantly, neither he, nor I have given up the hope of democratising the 'totalitarian' psyche.

In this paper, I have tried to argue for a quantitative, economic approach to psychoanalysis in the attempt to actualise Freud's initial intuition of the 'economics of nervous force'. Often at international conferences, both the Freudian and French approach to working with '*les pulsions*' (call it libido, or energy) is not welcome these days when neuroscience, cognitive and behavioral therapies are *à la mode*. My many years as a psychoanalyst have essentially taught me that listening to the economic dynamics of psychic processes helps both analyst and patient come into contact with those archaic, infantile fantasies and narratives that are still active but no longer functional, and indeed disruptive for living as adults in the present.

Notes

1. To the infant and the very young child the parents are very powerful beings, magical creatures and divine secret wishes, satisfy the deepest longings, and perform miraculous feats (Fraiberg 1959).
2. The original title of Ferenczi's *Thalassa, A theory of Genitality*, was « *Catastrophe* ».

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Rhetorics of Power—Can it Dress the Naked King, the Emperor Without Clothes?

Kinga Göncz

In the former communist block, Hungary was a model country, having a little bit more freedom and readiness for reforms, as well as a milder form of the totalitarian system—thanks to the revolution in 1956. After the negotiated and peaceful transformation of state socialism to a pluralistic system in 1989, Hungary was expected by the international community to have a smoother, faster and more successful transition to democracy and market economy than the other former communist countries.

For some years, this was true: Hungary was successful in its negotiations with the EU and in adjusting to the pre-accession requirements, although back home the country was also struggling with growing poverty and with the division of society into those who were able to keep up with the new challenges and those who became the losers of the transition. There was a collapse, not just in industry, but also in the

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former structure of agriculture. Alongside the economic and existential difficulties, people also suffered the loss of old identities and roles. Previously successful survival strategies became outdated, and new strategies could not be developed quickly enough. When people have lived in a totalitarian system for decades, the system becomes internalized and this state of mind will not, and cannot be, changed overnight.

As it turned out, Hungarians supported the changes at the time of the transition in the hope of achieving a higher standard of living. Meanwhile the main orientation of their values did not change. Indeed, most people still preferred (and prefer even now) a strong leader over the insecurity of a democratic system. They seek to avoid disputes, open conflict and are unwilling to accept the personal responsibility that goes hand-in-hand with democracy and the market economy. There is a low level of openness and tolerance toward other cultures (Krekó et al. 2011; Tóth et al. 2010).

During the 20 years of Hungary's democracy, democratic checks and balances have been operational, but most of the problems arising at the time of the transition have remained unresolved, such as poverty and a lack of competitiveness. The political class has generally been perceived as corrupt and the fragile democratic system perceived as weak and incapable of solving these problems.

In 2010, voters elected the Fidesz party to government for a second time. The party received a two-thirds parliamentary majority, allowing it to amend the constitution. Fidesz promised strong leadership with centralized power, and not much else. In the four-year term 2010–2014, the Fidesz government turned the democratic system into an electoral authoritarian regime (Schedler 2002). During this term in office, the government was intent on undermining the rule of law, removing checks and balances, occupying all independent institutions, taking control of the media, rewriting the constitution, changing the election system to a one party basis, redistributing ownership to its clients, adding to the number of people living in poverty while also supporting those with higher incomes.

This government was nevertheless re-elected in 2014. There are many political, social and economic factors that account for Fidesz's re-election. I would like to give a short historical overview before analysing the psychoanalytic aspects of these developments.

Hungarian Society

The country experienced three major traumas in the 20th century. The first trauma was the Trianon Peace Treaty after World War I, when Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory. In the aftermath, the remaining population struggled with serious economic difficulties and poverty. Many Hungarians from the ceded territories were expelled and came to the new, smaller country. The problem of anti-Semitism become more acute, as the competition for resources increased. Not having the right to be land-owners, Jews were the motors of modernization, choosing freelance jobs that were unpopular among, and unattractive to, the Christian middle class. Some of these Jews became visibly rich, while the Hungarian Christian middle class, which mostly took positions in the public sector, were impoverished. Some demanded the redistribution of Jewish assets, thereby preparing the way for the deportation of Hungarian Jews during World War II.

The country was unable to accept the territorial losses caused by the Treaty of Trianon and it failed to go through a mourning process. A popular slogan in this period was: 'Truncated Hungary is not a country, Hungary in one piece is heaven'. Such slogans created the basis for the then government's revisionist policies and a longing for the correction of the Trianon Peace Agreement. The First and Second Vienna Awards (in 1939 and 1940) returned a large part of the ceded territories to Hungary, thereby keeping Hungary on the side of Hitler's Germany. After World War II, the country once again lost these territories.

The second trauma was the Holocaust: the deportation and murder of around 450,000 Hungarian Jews, most of whom were assimilated and considered themselves loyal Hungarians. The deportation happened after the German occupation of Hungary (March 19, 1944), but it was carried out 'very effectively and quickly' by the Hungarian authorities (Kádár and Vági 2013). A part of Hungarian society considered it legitimate and right to take away the possessions and property of the deported Jews. The deportations were preceded (and in effect prepared for) by regulations introduced from 1920 onwards, which restricted the number of Jewish university students. Between 1938 and 1941, three anti-Jewish laws were adopted: the introduction of quotas in the economy and in the intellectual professions, and banning mixed marriages.

Meanwhile, violent attacks against Jews by extreme right groups were generally tolerated by the state (Ungváry 2013).

The third traumatic period was during the time Soviet troops were in Hungary. The regime confiscated and nationalized property and land; it controlled all aspects of life, arresting and killing people, maintaining a secret service system of domestic spies and informers, and blackmailing the family members and friends of critics of the regime. Intellectuals and other opponents of the regime were detained or forcibly relocated to other areas of the country. Finally, with Soviet help, the regime ended the revolution in 1956.

In the 20th century, Hungary alternated between two types of authoritarian regime: a right-wing one—the Horthy regime which favoured the Christian middle class and held on to power for 25 years; and the communist regime after World War II, which stayed in power until 1989 and favoured the communist party elite. Both regimes first defeated a revolution and oppressed democratic initiatives. Later on, however, they focussed on consolidating the regime, and thus sought reconciliation with a privileged part of the society, making identification with the aggressor possible (Ferenczi 1988).

If we go back to the 19th century, we see a similar pattern, with Franz Joseph, the Austrian emperor and Hungarian king, who initially defeated the Hungarian revolution in 1848, but then achieved a reconciliation with the upper echelons of Hungarian society in 1867 (the Austro-Hungarian Compromise). This served as the basis for long-term consolidation and stability in the period before World War I. Hungary made rapid economic and social progress during this period; the country almost caught up with Western Europe.

In short, there is a long history of authoritarian regimes, violent at first, and then conciliatory later on. A common feature is mass-traumatisation, with a sustaining sense of victimisation. The political left and right see the various authoritarian regimes from different angles. Those on the right want the left to face up to its guilt, and vice versa. The dichotomy in society is maintained along ideological lines, but it is aggravated and made irresolvable by each side's denial of its own guilt.

The failure to work through (and process) history has prepared the soil for recent developments and has left a society unable to withstand

the influence of a charismatic leader seeking to introduce a regime that is familiar from history. The economic crisis has, in addition, contributed to the receptivity of Hungarian society to the seduction of a 'strong' leader.

Let us look at the developments from a psychoanalytic perspective, discussing the personality of the leader, large group psychology, and the process itself, including the rhetoric of power.

James MacGregor Burns (1978, p. 16) describes two types of leaders: 'transactional' and 'transforming' ones, employing also Max Weber's concepts of a charismatic leader (Weber 1925). Transactional leaders operate within the given framework of a system, while transforming ones seek also to change the political system. Vamik Volkan states that in transitional times, when the group is under stress and large group identity is at risk, transforming leaders may have a reparative function, helping the large group to find and strengthen its identity thereby enabling the group's peaceful coexistence with other groups. Transforming leaders, however, may also be destructive, where they strengthen the large group identity by projecting negative images on to another group, harming and devaluing it (Volkan 2013, p. 271).

In democratic societies the influence of the leader is mitigated by the system of democratic checks and balances. But if these checks and balances are not strong enough, political leaders and their personalities may have a more substantial role. Political leaders and their followers resonate with each other: leaders can play out their narcissism, and their conscious and unconscious wishes and internal conflicts operate powerfully in the political arena. Meanwhile, their followers appreciate the leader whose psychological defences contribute to their identity. The cost does not matter (Volkan 2013, p. 223, 271).

The Leader

Viktor Orbán, leader of Fidesz and Hungary's prime minister at the time of writing, is a strong personality. He comes from an authoritarian family, appreciating a particular hard masculinity, physical strength, and endurance. He was an impulsive, aggressive and rebellious teenager, who sought conflicts and tried to push limits. He chose football

for himself as a sport. His father, he and his brother are all called Viktor (two of them having the Hungarian version of Viktor, namely Győző), prescribing for them victory in their lives (Pünkösti 2005, pp. 128, 132, and Debreczeni 2009, pp. 13–24). He was physically punished by his father and sometimes also by his mother. Beaten children sometimes displace their anger and aggression as a means of coping with the aggression and in order to retain the strong father as an identification figure. They can identify with the aggressor—we see the same process in Orbán's political character.

In 1989, Orbán had a somewhat heroic but controversial role at the time of the reburial of Imre Nagy (prime minister of the defeated 1956 revolution) when he was the first to openly call for the Soviet troops to leave Hungary. He said aloud what everyone else was thinking in silence. Indeed, he was the child saying that the 'king is naked' or the 'emperor is without clothes'. He had the courage to do this, but many accused him of putting at risk political negotiations on the same issue, which were already underway.

He started his political career as a young liberal and slowly became an authoritarian leader—the rebellious youngster took his authoritarian father's role in the domestic political arena, keeping the rebellious youngster's role on the international stage, fooling both the EU and the IMF, as well as constantly testing the limits outside the country. He finally chose the Horthy regime as his model, renaming streets, erecting statues to its heroes, and incorporating its writers in the school curricula.

The Start of Regression: Externalization, Projection

A dramatic change happened in 2002, when Fidesz lost the election after its first term in government. In the run-up to the election, Orbán had hoped—based on opinion polls—to be re-elected. Orbán declared that 'the patria can't be in opposition', especially '… in a situation when it is under foreign influence, and when Turks and Tatars are ruining the country'. (Turks and Tatars are the symbols of barbarians, having caused national tragedies in Hungary in the 13th and 16–17th centuries) (Orbán's speech of May 7, 2002.)

He then identified the winning parties as the enemies of Hungary, but his followers and himself as the 'patria'. Indeed, he said: 'We are strong enough and are closer to each other than ever before, and we will move together if necessary', sending a message of both victimization and glorification (Orbán's same speech of May 7, 2002).

In normal times, individuals belonging to a large group consider their individual identity more important than their group identity (Volkan calls the large group identity 'a metaphorical gigantic tent' covering the whole group). When the members of a large group feel threatened by others, they give up their normal individual identity, and the 'metaphorical gigantic tent'—their shared large group identity—becomes more important (Volkan 2013, p. 156).

Orbán here, feeling 'beaten' by political opponents, split his anger and projected it on to the opposition, seeing them as pursuers (going beyond the normal political interpretation of a political fight and winning or losing an election). He asked his followers to strengthen their large group identity and thereby mobilized them successfully. Since then, they have organized huge rallies to protect him, government policies and the 'patria' seen as being under attack from its enemies. These marches are called 'peace marches' (suggesting that the 'others' are creating a war—like situation, and they have to protect the peaceful coexistence).

Deepening the Split, Using Military-Style Language and the Language of a Revolution and Fights

Adults, even if they have integrated personalities, tend to regress in times of crisis, externalizing their helplessness and insecurity. Large group processes strengthen even more this externalization.

In Orbán's interpretation, the 2002 election was not a normal event in a democracy; it was a question of life or death. He said that if '…once we have said clearly what we think… every spear will be pegged to us, first of all to me…we will be attacked…our family, our children, our human dignity, freedom, belief and patria. And now we have to protect all of these' (Orbán's speech of April 9, 2002). In 2010 he described Fidesz's electoral

success as 'a revolution in the polling booth', sending the message that all the previous revolutions were defeated, but this time it was successful. He often uses military-style language to mobilize his followers, provoking even more externalization and calling on his followers to be ready to '…finish what has been started in 1956'. He speaks of the necessity of 'deploying our troops' (Orbán's speech of October 23, 2013), and has also termed a reduction in the price of public utilities a 'battle of the bills'.

Strengthening the We-Ness, Broadening the Concept of 'Us'

Volkan refers to a 'tribe, a clan, a class, an ethnic group, a race, nationality, religion, political ideology' when speaking about shared large group identity (Volkan 2013, p. 77), but his examples are mostly national and ethnic conflicts (Volkan 1998, 2013). The specificity of the Hungarian situation is that the same nation is split, and the large groups cannot be identified based on language or bodily characteristics. It was an important moment when Fidesz made this internal difference visible: the cockade (with the colours of the national flag) was chosen as a campaign symbol. The cockade became a symbol of national unity and independence in the 1848 revolution, but it was also a symbol, a silent sign of the wish for freedom under communism. In 2002 it was used by Fidesz to identify its followers, automatically excluding 'others' from the nation, labelling them as enemies who are on the 'bad' side.

But the large group was also broadened: the first measures of the second Orbán government included adopting legislation on a commemoration day for Trianon, the Day of National Unity, and providing Hungarian citizenship to Hungarians living abroad. Symbolically, such measures unified the nation once again, while recalling the Trianon trauma as a chosen trauma. The largest and 'dearest' of the lost territories is Transylvania (now a part of Romania), populated (partly) by Szeklers (Hungarians living there). A Szekler flag was distributed and blessed in many settlements in Hungary.

Volkan introduces the concept of chosen trauma in *Bloodlines* (Volkan 1998, p. 48) and elaborates later (Volkan 2013, p. 158) as

follows: 'Chosen trauma is a shared mental double of a historic event, where the group suffered a catastrophic loss, a humiliation and helplessness…' A sense of victimisation and a sense of glorification mostly go hand-in-hand in chosen trauma.

When recalled by a political leader, the memory of historical traumas also mobilizes the emotions related to them. These emotions then strengthen the people's sense of belonging to their large group and the leader-follower interaction. In a chosen trauma, emotions attached to a past event are merged with a recent event, and the image of the past enemy with the image of the present devalued group (Volkan 2013).

By recalling the Trianon trauma, Orbán symbolically pulled into his followers' camp all ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries, broadening the concept of 'us' and contributing to the sense of unity and power through the emotions attached to it.

Generalizing the Projection: Criminalizing and Dehumanizing the Opposition

Not just Orbán, but also the right-wing media and some of Orbán's closest allies contributed to this process of dehumanizing the opposition, repeating the various negative labels. The 'epitheton ornans' of the left wing parties were the 'mafia left wing' and the 'fallen left wing'. By way of illustration, many public figures in the opposition were detained by the police on an almost daily basis and right-wing TV stations showed them in fetters. László Kövér, the speaker of the Parliament in the second term, and one of Orbán's closest friends and allies, characterized the opposition several times as criminals and agents of foreign interests. He added that high treason is a tradition among the left-wing parties. Gyurcsány, the former prime minister was called by Kövér 'a purulent wound on the body of the democracy' (Interview with László Kövér by Echo TV, December 28, 2013). Kövér also said that 'he and his gang is like an HIV-infection of the nation' (Kövér at a press conference on February 20, 2009).

Generalizing the negative projection on to intellectuals and those who do not agree with the Fidesz-government, it was said that: 'The left wing intellectuals try to undermine those values which stick society

together, the trust in each other, the togetherness, the hope in the future' (Kövér interview on Hir TV, March 8 2013).

Poverty has been criminalized too. Ethnic groups like the Roma are dehumanized: 'Gypsies are not able to live together with others, to live among people. This part of the Gypsy population are animals, they behave like animals…violence is the only thing they understand. They have to disappear. We have to solve it—immediately. It does not matter how' (Bayer 2013). These were the words of Zsolt Bayer, a right-wing journalist and founding member of Fidesz. Several social groups were accused of being 'parasites': people with disabilities, the unemployed, pensioners, and even leading intellectuals. Homelessness was also criminalized by Fidesz's legislation.

Recently, independent civil organizations have been labelled as agents of foreign interests. International organizations, including the IMF, the EU, foreign banks, and multi-national companies, were among those identified as enemies. After a verdict that displeased Fidesz, the judges of the European Court of Human Rights were called 'those idiots in Strasbourg'. Once again this was said by Kövér speaking in an interview (November 4, 2011).

Although Orbán himself has never made any openly anti-Semitic statements, many of his vehement attacks on communists and bankers, whom he accused of destroying the nation, have been decoded by many people as if he was speaking about Jews—because of the historical anti-Semitic stereotypes.

The Other Side of the Defence Mechanism: Idealization, Omnipotence and Religious Symbols

One of Orbán's important messages has been that Hungary would be immediately occupied and plundered in the absence of a strong government. This provides an opportunity for people to identify with a strong and protective leader, a saviour. Indeed, a government slogan in the last election campaign was: 'Hungary is performing better'.

Hungarians—under the leadership of Fidesz—were able 'to join the battle successfully against the Goliaths of the monetary institutions, the military forces of the imperial bureaucrats in Brussels, and the country was also able to cope with the flood on the Danube' (where Orbán personally directed the works) (Orbán's speech of March 29, 2014).

In addition to this omnipotent, idealized and grandiose picture, we see more and more, the use of religious symbols. For instance the new constitution was adopted on Easter Monday 2011, a day symbolising revival. The preamble to the Constitution refers to the Hungarian Holy Crown, which was given to the Hungarians—as a chosen nation—by the Virgin Mary herself. On Easter Monday, a football stadium was inaugurated, right next to Orbán's house in his native village. Priests were also in attendance and blessed the stadium. The former president of Hungary said that 'not just a church…can be a presbytery, but also a football stadium', thereby emphasising the cult of physical strength (Pál Schmitt's speech of April 21, 2014).

Ever since the lost election in 2002, Orbán has only spoken to his followers; he has ignored anyone outside his 'camp', also refusing to participate in prime-ministerial candidate debates. In this way, he has put himself above others, seeking idealization as an authoritarian father who is not one among equals. He increasingly sees politics—and this is his message—as an apocalyptic struggle between 'good' and 'evil'. All this is beyond rational argument and postulation. Whatever differs from his beliefs is a deviation from the only truthful way.

Despite strong civil resistance, a statue was erected commemorating the 1944 German occupation (in the Holocaust commemoration year). It shows the Archangel Gabriel attacked by the German imperial eagle. Gabriel is the messenger of God and a symbol of innocence—projecting all responsibility for the deportation of Hungarian Jews on to German forces. This falsifies history and prevents people from facing up to historical reality. It is a strong expression of splitting, projection and introjection: all good parts of the self and objects are retained and introjected, while the bad parts are projected outwards and materialized in this statue.

Projective Identification, Contributing to Isolation, Depression and Escape from the Situation

If one of the groups is much more powerful than the other, and the projection or externalization of the split unacceptable bad elements nonetheless remain strong, then they evolve as constant markers of the less powerful group, creating a 'stain' on the large group tent (Volkan 1998, p. 97). In this case, Orbán gives the impression that he himself and his group are extremely powerful, and the 'stain' is growing on the other tent. Any emerging leaders on the other side are immediately attacked, labelled and pulled under the large group tent with the stain, warding off all those potential politicians who are not willing to live with this 'stigma'. The negative labelling (and thus also the growing 'stain') makes it difficult to identify with—or even merely avoid rejecting—any kind of commonality with this 'evil' group.

If people do not want to internalize the image of this 'dirty' and 'evil' group, they have to join the group of followers, stay isolated or choose an internal or external 'emigration'. We see this more and more: passivity, lack of solidarity, the low level of public trust. Many people have left the country, and even more say that they intend to do so. A general view among non-followers before the 2014 election was that there is no reason to participate; each actor is equally bad. Fidesz has also helped to make non-followers invisible and non-existent, to disappear by denial, as it were. Fidesz speaks of the government's 'System of National Cooperation'. After the 2014 election with a low turn-out and with only 25% of the population actually voting for Fidesz, Orbán said that the country has never been so unified. Indeed, he claimed that Hungary is now the most unified nation in the world.

Towards a Conclusion

As we see, a personal history and a national history can resonate and strengthen each other: Orbán suffered from the violence of his father, the country from authoritarian regimes. All this has led to reduced

self-esteem, weak self-confidence, as well as a desire to receive the same kind of protection once given, from a leader whom people are then willing to obey. The price—paid for the illusion of being protected—is splitting off and externalizing aggression. This process initiates a vicious circle: the leader is seen as all good, enemies as all bad and reality is more and more distorted.

Despite the strong messages given by Orbán, Hungary is not performing better. On the contrary, it is lagging behind other countries in the region. This large group process is not motivating people to face reality and to make appropriate efforts. Rather, it creates more regression.

Once again the learning point is that loyalty to the leader is rewarded, rather than personal achievements and autonomous thinking. This attitude has made it difficult to overcome inherited problems, and now the worst problem-solving methods are reinforced, aggravating the situation, providing an imaginary world for those who are frustrated, envious, or quick to identify scapegoats responsible for their misfortune. It has also given rise to a passive-depressive attitude among those who see this discrepancy.

The king clearly has no clothes; he is naked. The question is: who will be the one to say this in a sufficiently credible way that will be heard by the whole of Hungarian society—in preparation for a more integrated position and reconciliation?

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Shame Disciplines in the Chinese Cultural Revolution: Lurid and Ludic

Edward Weisband

From Confucian Traditions of Filial Piety to Revolutionary Shame Rage

Methodological problems arise whenever psychosocial frameworks are applied to the study of genocide and mass atrocity. Individual, group and collective behaviours operate simultaneously; each according to various psychic economies and social psychological influences, and as the reflections of historical cultural dynamics as well as socio-economic and political factors, case to case. The ever-present risk in psychosocial interpretation is to treat groups as if they were individuals and to consider groups, small and large, as if they were persons. The analysis below focuses on the 1958–1961 Great Leap Forward pursued by the Chinese Communist Party and its subsequent 1966–1976 campaign referred to as the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Together these murderous efforts

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at social transformation demonstrate the theoretical relevance of traditional Confucian values and child-rearing practices to psychosocial explanations of *how* mass atrocities were perpetrated. The methodological trap to be avoided is to conflate how violence occurred with why. The reason inheres in levels of analysis. To show how such atrocious crimes were influenced by cultural traditions and influences is not to impute causality to such factors. Confucian traditions may be implicated in how violence was perpetrated; but such factors alone do not explain why such massive abuse unfolded. The Great Leap Forward, modelled after Stalinist collectivisation of the Russian and Crimean agricultural peasantry, was designed to transform an agrarian economy into a socialist order. The consequence was the Great Chinese Famine leading to an estimated number of deaths between 18 and 45 million persons. The subsequent Chinese Cultural Revolution propelled by Mao Zedong represented itself ideologically as a reaction against bourgeois revisionism and a drive to return to the 'purity' of Maoist 'thought.' Largely executed by Red Guard groups comprised of mainly urban youth responsive to Mao's call and personality cult, the campaign resulted in genocide and mass atrocity. The question here becomes, how and in what ways, did long-standing Chinese Confucian values and family traditions play a role in Maoist cultural revolutionary violence. One dimension appears salient, the utter opprobrium and destructive contempt aimed at anything considered 'old' or traditional. The Maoist Cultural Revolution ideologically rejected Confucian familial sensibilities and concepts of seniority. Vengeful campaigns on the part of galvanised Red Guard youth exacted retribution against all those deemed old or representative of Confucian family traditions. These had employed food/ingestive or oral/shame punishments as standard disciplines. The psychosocial analysis below suggests that introjected Confucian oral/shame traditions now became projected outward as a rejection of the filial dependency inculcated within the cultural core of Confucian family life and relations. When the 'sons' of China revolted, they defied the very norms that linked infantile oral disciplines and food intake with shame discipline and parental authority. Maoist revolutionary ageism turned internalised infantile shame into externalised shaming vengeance. Its means was 're-education;' its weapon of choice was

public punishment and violent transgression as performance; its consequences were mass atrocity and massive starvation.

The Maoist Cultural Revolution was political. It was also socio-economic in its means and objectives and thus essentially about food, its production and distribution. Maoist implementations of collectivised farming entailed lurid or sadistic displays of performative transgression aimed against those labelled as enemies of the revolution who became the victims subjected to shame disciplines. Perversely transgressive ludic performances served as retributions against the elderly or whomever or whatever was deemed to be old and/or obsolescent. These shame disciplines provoking publically displayed punishments reflected renunciation of the ingestive/digestive cultural traditions nurtured by Confucian values. These had been designed to instil expectations of obedience and obeisance, fealty and filial loyalty. Once challenged, the ensuing Oedipal shame rage ravaged Chinese peasant society. The Maoist Cultural Revolution may be considered to reveal elements of a profound identificatory crisis. It was permeated by a kind of pervasive ego-ideal perfectionism gripped by perverse sets of shame psychodynamics. Such shame rage demonstrated a kind of 'relief' from the elements of self-contempt experienced across generations of mobilised Red Guard youth set ablaze by Maoist rejections of the humiliations of the past, including the traditions of filial piety. These were typified by the intense role and emotionality associated with maternal care and presence lingering into the adult lives of countless Chinese families in accordance with Confucian traditions. Fervent rejection of familial interdependencies and ensuing shame rage against the old help explain the combination of sadistic infantilism and superegotistical moralism leading to ideological extremism and performative, or ludic transgression, throughout the Maoist Cultural Revolution. These psychodynamics thus also explain the perverse efforts of Red Guards to throw off the shackles of Confucian tradition symbolised by the old and the elderly by engaging in macabre dramaturgies of cultural re-education. In this, the orality that Kleinian perspectives, for example, tend to associate with infantile sadism became transformed into the perverse kinds of oral aggression that rejected the oral symbiosis often present in the psychodynamics of shame.

Honour Codes and Shame Disciplines

How was it that cadres of Red Guard youth, as they fomented horrific violence, often across local and regional jurisdictions, particularly in rural China, demonstrated capacities for extreme retribution as the other side of their capacity for honour-bound obligations within the frames of shame and performative violence? Honour adheres to bonds of belonging grounded in commonalities of blood, family, kinship, ancestry, segmented lineage; aristocratic, chivalric or noble orders; exclusivist sectarian, confessional or devotional organisations; military and paramilitary brigades and 'companies;' as well as throughout the many multiples of secret or clandestine, extremist or fundamentalist, radical or ideological groupings that exist within, and across, national and regional borders. Honour arises whenever risk, danger or death, especially by means of stealth, murder or killings appears likely or near. It galvanises modes of discipline over entire communities wherever they confront structural forms of scarcity, most especially food. Honour clings to shared perceptions rather than inner voices. It emphasises exterior practices and outward performances in contrast to interior conscience. It enacts what Austinian performative language theory classifies as *instructional rules,* such as saving face and reciprocal forms of retribution, such as an 'eye for an eye' rather than adherence to the forms of law that require formal jurisprudence and rules of juridical procedure. It eschews rule of law based on *commitment rules* governing voluntary behaviours grounded in notions of independent individuality, market relationships, and liberal values of freedom or liberty. On the contrary, honour-bound regimes establish obligations among its adherents to defy social prescriptions based on rule of law, juridical legality or political/economic justice. Honour obligations often are seen by those beholden to them to transcend personal conscience, ethical or legal normative restraints, in favour of utter conformity to whatever undergirds 'faith' and 'faithfulness' to the code of honour incarnated by the social order. Betrayal and treason represent cardinal sins. Such social psychological dynamics imbued by honour obligations suffuse the specific or localised cultures based on 'patron-client' relations. Thus honour disciplines

tend to be grounded in the 'natural' ties of kinship and clan, as well as on familial and blood ties and cultural traditions. Disciplinary codes of honour often reveal patriarchal, fraternal or nepotistic beliefs. These, in turn, sometimes become embedded in rivalries over territory or control over distribution systems. Such codes of honour disciplines tend to reveal deeply valued social constructions based on: ideological convictions; social etiquette or fealty; and/or attitudes regarding class, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. Honour codes and shame disciplines, moreover, tend to be patriarchal to their core. Honour codes and disciplines fall heavily on women and girls everywhere since they tend overwhelmingly to glorify male dominance and in ways that serve to justify female subservience often in brutal ways to underscore the righteousness of female servility.

Shame and its affects serve to anchor honour codes attached to the disciplines of self-imaginaries and existential judgement. By many psychoanalytic accounts, shame as a psychodynamic, straddles ego-ideal and superego formations that provoke pulsations and influences in polar tensions meted out in metrics of excess or inadequacy (Wurmser 1981, pp. 72–79). Shame refers to either the conscious and/or unconscious sense of chronic personal failure drafted onto the self in relation to sets of self-ideals. But such frailties also promote various kinds of psychic and emotional alignments that appear as their very opposite. Heinz Kohut, for example, theorised shame as a narcissism (1971, 1977, 1987) manifested by 'grandiosity' that assumed various developmental forms including perfectionism and authoritarian identifications with groups or leaders. Shame thus includes narcissist elements, but it arises in the crucibles of personal self-rejection. It tends to be corrosive. In shame, the self becomes a rival to itself, a kind of rival self-other. Thus shame affects include integers of self-condemnation, not so much for reasons of actions taken, as in guilt, but on account of who one or 'what' one is, for example: defective; dirty; disgusting; disgraceful; damaged; degraded, etc. Responses to shame include psychic and emotional efforts at disavowal (Wurmser 1981, pp. 27–28). As Wurmser suggests, shame can be powerful in its affects (and effects) since it serves as a 'screen' for deeper anxieties over castration and separation, as in

the case depicted here. Shame is especially compelling when it arises in relation to parents and families (Wurmser 1981, p. 46). The dynamics of familial symbiosis, that is, of separation and self-individuation, are especially prone to shame affects (Wurmser 1981, p. 64). As Wurmser comments, 'It is my impression that shame emerges particularly in family relationships that are involved in mutual power struggles and degradations' (1981, p. 76). Similarly, Pentii Ikonen and Eero Rechardt theorise shame as a 'Thanatos reaction, which is directed to the failure of the pursuit of approving reciprocity' (Ikonen and Rechardt 1993). They indicate, the shame bound 'Thanatos-matrix' burrows in against the self and acts as 'the most unbearable of all emotions' (Ikonen and Rechardt 1993, p. 107). They observe, 'Accentuated deficiencies in the reciprocity-interaction of early childhood create circumstances which emphasise the destructive power of shame.' The consequence is that 'the destructive forms of the Thanatos take over and shame imprisons the person' (Ikonen and Rechardt 1993). For such reasons, shame provokes a variety of reactions aimed against it but all designed to somehow expel its insidious effects. Shame introjected and experienced internally often becomes transmuted into sets of affects projected outwardly. As Andrew P. Morrison suggests '*Contempt* represents … an attempt to "relocate" the shame experience from within the self into another person, and, thus like rage, it may be an attempt to rid the self of shame … through relocation of shame into contempt for others.' Morrison (1989; emphasis in the original) describes this as a form of '*projective identification*.' This psychodynamic was manifested by the Red Guards during the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

Shame and Punishments Against the Old

Once political power and dystopian ideology congealed into a fixed and frozen imaginary, 'newness' was readily fetishized as all good, 'oldness' as all bad. A pervasive sense emerged among youth all too willing to become radicalised, that they had been betrayed on account of the obsolescence of the 'old.' What was identified as old became reified as objects of disgust and vituperation, despised for what they represented,

the obstacles to vitality, renewal, reform, revolutionary transformation, etc. 'Things' old included persons of mature age of any note or quality. They now appeared as rivals whose presence impeded release of new generational desire to imbibe from the sources that promised liberation from a demeaning and retrogressive past. It was the young that most wanted to drink from the ideological fountains of youth held out by the cups of Maoist ideology and communist party militancy. Numerous Chinese cultural specialists recount the story. Jonathan D. Spence depicts the call issued by the Cultural Revolution 'for a comprehensive attack on the "four old" elements within Chinese society—old customs, old habits, old culture, and old thinking' (1990, p. 606). He observes, 'Red Guards eager to prove their revolutionary integrity turned on anyone who tried to hold them in check, anyone…who could be charged with "feudal" or "reactionary" modes of thinking.' Spence explains, 'For years the young had been called on to lead lives of revolutionary sacrifice, sexual restraint, and absolute obedience to the state, all under conditions of perpetual supervision. They were repressed, angry, and aware of their powerlessness' (Spence 1990, p. 606). Ideological militancy and lurid and ludic forms of transgression were the revolutionary chalices that held the psychic and thus the psychosocial waters of desire channelling what Lacan calls *jouissance,* including libidinal yearnings charged with the aura of forbidden ecstasy, into violent action. The fateful consequence resulted in shame punishments ideologically constructed as the grand Maoist project of cultural re-education. 'Enemy-making' became associated with Confucian and/or capitalist 'thinking' that had to be 'corrected' by means of public shaming. This process was often implemented by means of communal trial and through the ludic performance of victims made to 'confess' their 'crimes.' Victimage became transformed into the opportunities for transgressive performance. Trial by communal jury descended into a process of arbitrary, but staged, expurgation in horrific sequences of shaming, ostracism, beatings and death. Purges went on ceaselessly during the phases of the Great Famine, Great Terror, Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution. Lurid forms of shame punishments ludically performed on hapless victims assumed Oedipalised oral and ingestive forms of symbolism, including poisoning, strangling and starvation, as well as anal/fecal symbolism,

such as persons buried alive while smeared in excrement, bodies decomposed in heaps of fertilizer compost, or, in some cases, cannibalised after being pulverised.

Re-education as Performative Torment in the Name of Saving Face

Objectified, reified obsolescent classes were made to suffer through public shame punishments. Shame cruelty has to be displayed, that is, performed before audiences comprised, not only of perpetrators, but also of communal witnesses; otherwise victims would not be given 'the shame lessons' they 'deserved'. Communal desire for vengeance over whatever was dramatized as the shameful past, and attached to those reified as the shame filled elderly, provoked a yearning for the external projection of introjected shame by means of displayed violation, performativity in transgression, that is, the ludic in lurid executions and sadistic shame punishments. The symbolic and verbal manifestations of sadistic shame cruelty and performative transgression cohere around the mechanisms of what the philosopher of language, J.L. Austin (1965), has featured as instructional speech acts: speech acts that are illocutionary and performative. Shame punishments in genocide and mass atrocity provide examples of such speech acts. These 'instruct' through words intended as actions. Spence, for example, describes the performative aesthetics of lurid public shame during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. 'The techniques of public humiliation grew more and more complex and painful as the identified victims were forced to parade through the streets in dunce caps or with self-incriminatory placards around their necks, to declaim their public self-criticisms before great jeering crowds, and to stand for hours on end with backs agonisingly bent and arms outstretched in what was called "the airplane" position' (Spence 1990, p. 606). What are we to make of instructional speech acts in the context of the public shame punishments exerted during the Maoist Cultural Revolution? The pain and torment exacted by sadistic behaviours, in ludic or performed shame punishments, were shaped by the macabre

aesthetics designed to teach victims 'lessons.' Such aestheticized performative transgressions in mass atrocity meet the psychic and emotional demands of perpetrators to dominate victim *desire*, to devour it, and thus to devastate the personality of victims by making them the very incarnation of the shame that perpetrators are seeking to expel or exude. Perpetrators force victims to experience sadistic forms of shame punishments by means of violent and transgressive performativity in order to dispel their own shame anxiety. Collective self-deceptions play a role, furthermore, since shaming by means of sadistic performativity lends itself to the empty speech of racist and/or essentialized reifications. This is essential to the core of ideological 'enemy-making.' Collective shame punishments in genocide and mass atrocity are not only wrapped up in acts of killing as such, but adhere to the macabre aesthetics of cruel 'instructional' speech act performativity. Empty speech, ironic laughter, disdain, contemptuous jokes, profanations of all kinds, as well as physical violation and abuse, denote the mechanisms of 'instructional' shame cruelties. And the process feeds on itself. As Spence indicates, 'With the euphoria, fear, excitement and tension that gripped the country, violence grew apace.' Massive relocations to re-education labour camps for purposes of 'purification' became commonplace (Spence 1990, p. 606). Re-education camps allow for the spatialization of shaming where performative transgression becomes sadistically pervasive, all in the name of instructional rules. For such reasons, applications of torture to exact meaningless confessions from victims who have nothing to confess combine shame punishments with ludic performances as devices of instruction

Instructional speech act performativity tends to be embedded in cultures beholden in varying degrees to honour codes, disciplines and traditions. Honour and the dynamics of 'saving face' represent critical components of communal standing and values. Betrayal of honour amounts to more than a violation between one person and another; rather, betrayal of honour is a stain against the community as a whole, or segments within it. Shame disciplines in cases of honour betrayal thus represent a form of communal 'faciality.' It is a 'face' imposed or 'made to be worn' on those deemed to violate honour and who, as a

result, are required to suffer communal retribution through public forms of humiliation and punishment. For this reason, shame in psychoanalytic theory is often treated as a 'mask' (Wurmser 1981). The core dimension of the Maoist revolutionary project, then, was to link 'emancipatory' ideologies of youth-driven collective egalitarianism onto the traditions of instructional speech act disciplines of honour and shame. The violence was ideologically constructed as a form of saving collective face. Ideology became instructional, but not merely in ways cognitive or even rational. Instructional pedagogy became sadistic because the lessons that had to be learned by countless minions could only occur if entire regional or district populations located in communities suffered shame and were made to endure shame in ways that staged transgressive performativity so that youth could teach the old the lessons Mao wanted them to learn.

Fealty and Filiality in Confucian Family Life

The selective outline below of Confucian family values and traditions grounds the analysis of the psychosocial dimensions of shame punishments and sadistic forms of mass atrocity during the Cultural Revolution. Emphasis on family traditions reveals the psychodynamics of primordial formations of ego-ideal relative to sadistic aggression and identificatory narcissism in shame relative to inter-group violence. Confucian order was traditionally infused by notions of the centrality of extended family as the core formation of society. Submission and acquiescence to parents and family elders served as the paradigmatic configuration around which the legitimacy of governance was modelled. In this cultural schematic, filial piety represented the primary virtue, one that was transferable to the successive echelons of feudal, later regional rulership that had long predominated over Chinese political structures and traditions. Lifelong dependency and fealty, obedience and obeisance, represented consummate values; sons and daughters acceded to the legitimacies of parental authority, to their demands for commitments of succor and support, to their needs for security throughout their lifetime and into the late adulthood of successive generations of children.

Robert H. Solomon provides an exposition of Chinese Confucian cultural values, including those involving child-raising practices, relative to Chinese political culture that complements Spence's analysis of the cult of youthfulness in Red Guard fanaticism and the drive to sadistic shame punishments by means of 're-educational' or instructional performativity.[1] Solomon describes the Confucian life cycle as a reciprocated pattern of exchange, obedience toward elders and a lifetime of self-denial especially during adulthood as a price paid for the same in reverse during one's elderly years. He writes, 'In childhood one depends on one's parents, and in old age on one's children; this for the filial individual, life comes full circle.' Solomon stresses the pathos that such renunciations bring. He writes, 'The filial son in this sense remains a "son" as long as he lives; he never breaks out of his original social matrix to establish an independent life. But he bears the pain and injustice which tradition tells him is an unavoidable part of childhood because he knows in time he will become a father while remaining a son' (1971, p. 37). Accordingly, personal identity became a function of subservience to family identity and to an acceptance of the demands for a 'life-long prolongation' of 'dependency' on parental authority and largess especially on the part of male children who were forever embedded in, and bound by, such Oedipal obligations. Herein lie the origins of the revolutionary shame rage released by Maoist ideological doctrine.

Severe Paternal Authority and Weak Influence, Submissive Maternal Dependency and Dominant Influence: Consequences for Development of Ego-ideal and Superego

Solomon makes the case that the Oedipal dynamic defined in Western cultural terms as a process of separation, self-individuation and eventual self-definition as part of the quest for individuated identity through the artifacts of symbolic achievement, did not exist, as such, in traditional Confucian culture. The primordial Oedipal process of distantiation between the subject and maternal allures occurred but in paradoxical

ways, that is, strident but also weak. This was the consequence of removed and restrained paternal influences. Phallic or paternal intrusions in the psychic development of sons, in particular, tended to be experienced in ways distant but severe. This concatenation of emotional absence and authoritarian disciplinary postures inculcated the presumed virtue of deferential filial submissiveness to authority. (Solomon 1971, p. 52) outlines this by suggesting, 'Chinese parents developed in their children considerable anxiety about disobeying their instructions, and indeed fear of direct contact with a stern father.' In psychodynamic terms, the influences of paternal prohibitions or processes of phallic separation from the fantasies of maternalized incestuous ecstasy functioned. But they operated in ways that fostered severe narcissistic tendencies of self-glorification and perfectionism. The consequence, in terms of Freudian and post-Freudian theory, was the cultural development of a generational sense among many males of an ego-ideal that strived for perfection. But such perfectionism was constructed by, and through, outright dependency on family, and in particular, maternal care and, most especially, on maternal *caring* well into adulthood Furthermore, if one is to treat superego as a distinct topological formation separate from ego-ideal, cultural traditions embodied in familial piety promoted cruel psychic superegotistical formations at once submissive to authority, but relatively unable to assert autonomous ethical or normative authority in ways tantamount to independent moral judgement. The severity of superegotistical self-condemnation among many Chinese males in pre-revolutionary China appears to have been a function of the introjections of parental authority and not the manifestations of autonomous or critical judgement. As Solomon (1971, p. 52) observes, 'The legacy of this pattern of childhood punishments and anxiety in the face of family authority which it developed was that the child acquired an attitude of passivity toward those with power over him. He tended to follow their guidance *rather than to internalise their standards of behavior* so that he might act independently of their control.'[2] Solomon concludes that these patterns of psychic passivity and emotional acquiescence fostered authoritarian personality. He states, 'From such a childhood pattern of relations with family authority seems to grow the adult concern

for the presence of a strict, personalised, and unambiguous source of (political) authority who will impose order on potentially unruly peers and provide a clear source of guidance for all' (Solomon 1971, p. 52). A cruel superego and weakness of ethical or normative will seem to function together. But the result was shame both introjected but eventually projected in ways that allow us to establish the linkages between Confucian traditions of family life and shame punishments during the Cultural Revolution.

Oedipus the Son, Oedipus the Daughter

Stated simply, the Oedipal separation project from the magnetic holds of the desire to be, and to remain, the desire of maternal desire appears fragile at best and perhaps never fully developed in Confucian traditions. Solomon (1971, p. 37) states, 'Put in more direct terms, there was no "Oedipus complex" in traditional Chinese culture in the sense that this tradition explicitly told a son that it was both proper and morally virtuous for him to love his mother. This was not love in its sexual sense, of course, but love in the same form of *oral nurturing* by which the mother had loved the son as a child.'[3] Nurturing orality relative to the psychic economies of the breast of the m(Other) represented the primordial denominator in a culture that featured dependency and fealty and honoured these above the values of personal autonomy and individual self-definition. The role of the mother as mediator between the father and the son, and as consoler throughout life, remained paramount. This presented certain cultural 'spaces' or what might be regarded as opportunities for female children; but these also brought fateful dangers during later adult or married life. Solomon suggests that in several important ways daughters were the true 'Oedipus' of the traditional Chinese family and observes, 'Indeed, in several respects a Chinese daughter was the "Oedipus" of her family' (1971, p. 36). But a feminised Oedipus condemned to servitude was unable to scale the heights of freedom or political power before the fall into tragedy. Daughters were often sold or abandoned, given the low esteem

bestowed on them, particularly on the part of poverty stricken peasant families. Solomon draws a parallel, on the one hand, between the swollen foot leading to the name of Oedipus in the Sophocles drama, and on the other, with female foot-binding practices done in accordance with traditional Confucian conceptions of beauty. As in many peasant cultures, females once married in Confucian China were forced to live and to serve the needs of the parents of their husbands. Daughters thus feared what Solomon describes as the 'dreaded harshness of the mother-in-law.' Maternalised authority remained predominant in relation to the daughter-in-law since the affinal mother maintained the 'affection' with her son(s) 'which filiality said was her due' (Solomon 1971, p. 37).

Mouths to Feed in Metrics of Jen-K'ou

The ligatures of consummate obligation and filial bonds of all-consuming loyalty to parents were benchmarked by levels of consumption and intake that were, in turn, regulated by oral forms of dispensation and discipline. Solomon (1971, p. 42) states, 'The considerable indulgence accorded a male child in infancy and early childhood, affection expressed above all through the giving of food, seems to be the basis of an "oral" calculus in the way that Chinese approach interpersonal relations throughout life.' He continues, 'The reckoning of their family or population size in terms of "mouths" (*jen-k'ou*) rather than "heads" … are only part of a view of life in which oral forms of pleasure and pain predominate' (Solomon 1971, p. 42). Orality meant mealtime discipline. But kindness and loving care quickly, often, abruptly, turned into instructional forms of deprivation. In due course, the familial love expressed during infancy by the giving of food soon turned into a device for teaching abstinence. Orality became a mechanism for learning the importance of abstemious disavowal of anything excessive, not only in material forms, but also with respect to emotional expressivity. Thus orality and shame became culturally and psycho-dynamically fused.

‘Drowning’ a Child with Love or Ni-Ai

What guided shame rage and performative cruelty during the Maoist Cultural Revolution? Confucian practices of parenting centered on the disciplines associated with eating food. A prescriptive orality with respect to the taking in of food became an instrumentality, not only of loving care, but also of parental shame discipline widely shared among peasant families and communities. Oedipal dependency retained its hold throughout adult life coded by the amounts of food given or supplied at any moment. Food restriction was a weapon of choice in teaching, not only physical abstinence and fortitude in the face of deprivations, but also emotional control to the point of self-abnegation. Such self-denial was considered as a positive virtue amenable to the kinds of perfect fealty recognised as among the highest virtues. Solomon describes the way food acted as an instrumentality of personality development by referring to ‘taking in’ as a disciplinary pattern adopted by traditional families. He writes, ‘For China’s peasant millions, however, concern with “taking in” was developed through the most basic discipline of all, an adequate food supply’ (Solomon 1971, p. 48). Taking in represents a cultural metaphor designed to convey emphasis in traditional Chinese culture on emotional restraint. Solomon states, ‘Also, the child learns from observing the ways in which adults handle their own feelings that reserve and emotional impassiveness are appropriate ways to discipline these inner urges’ (1971, p. 62). But ‘taking in’ related first and foremost to intake of food that thereby tended to become infused by overlays of shame and anxiety. Solomon observes, ‘The handling and consuming of food thus, for Chinese of all economic levels, becomes an activity associated with considerable anxiety’ (1971, p. 48). Solomon infers from this a pattern of dependency and passivity toward authority. ‘The growing child soon learns that emotional expressiveness is dangerous because he lays himself open to manipulation by adults or older siblings.’ He continues, ‘If avoidance of contact with these offending family elders is not possible, then at least a *holding in* of the feelings by which they seek to use him becomes the most effective way to prevent

humiliation or the pain of a rage' (Solomon 1971, p. 62).[4] Herein originates the psychodynamics of shame as a fundamental disciplinary code of conduct in Confucian China. Restrained emotionality and shame discipline represented twin components of efforts to ensure the children never became 'spoiled,' that they would be never become self-indulgent, that they would never threaten to eat so much *that elders would be deprived*. This fear prevailed in Chinese peasant families since excessive consumption on the part of younger generations presented the possibilities of eventual chronic malnutrition on the part of the elderly. Cultural mores developed admonishing against the 'spoiling' (*ni-ai*) of children; but also warned against were efforts 'to drown them in love.' As Solomon comments, 'Drowning is an "oral" kind of death; suffocation by taking too much in through the mouth' (1971, p. 65). Food/oral generosity was the currency of love during infancy, but inexorably the coin of oral disciplines in family relationships later in life. Food/oral discipline within the Confucian Chinese family thus had a double aim: to teach self-restraint to insure food/oral frugality during adulthood; but also to insure that food/oral generosity would be offered to elders, especially once they were no longer in a position to provide for themselves. Such cultural traditions adhered to shame disciplines and punishments.

Eating Bitterness (Ch'ih-K'u)

In due course, the Maoist Revolution would give license for the release of contempt and hatred against the old. Traditional emotional impassiveness among cadres of youth turned into a kind of inter-generational shame rage; once this occurred, the ravages of shaming knew no bounds and recognised no conventional boundaries. Such sadistic release came on top of shame traditions that not only reinforced emotional passivity and self-restraint, but patterns of self-abnegation that required outward expressions of frustration, anger, hurt and pain to be held within. In the Confucian cultural environment, infantile tantrums did occur and were deemed permissible during early childhood. But emotional expressions of hurt, pain, anger, passion, indignation, or resentment, as well as of all affective forms of feeling in general, were regarded as

profound failings once a person reached adolescence or early adulthood. This norm applied especially in relation to authority figures and became identified as 'eating bitterness,' perhaps similar in connotations to the phrase, 'sucking it in.' Within the Confucian cultural modes of expression, what was deemed emotionally unpleasant or disagreeable was associated metaphorically as bitter things held 'in the stomach' (Solomon 1971, p. 70).

Speaking Bitterness (Su-K'u)

Orality is denoted not only by taking in, but also speaking out and speaking bitterness became a rallying call among the cadres once the Cultural Revolution challenged traditional Confucian order. Solomon emphasises the role of '*speaking bitterness*' or *su-k'u* during the Maoist Revolution. Speaking bitterness represented a kind of collective shibboleth that mobilised mostly aggrieved youth by encouraging them to vent their frustrations and hostility in public before audiences comprised of village communities. Speaking bitterness led to 'enemy-making' in the exercise of shame. Labelling became a revolutionary tool meant to teach shame lessons about the indelible fault of some, and the possibilities of ontological perfectionism for others. Mao's political effectiveness stemmed, in part, from his success at transforming personal bitterness into a political slogan designed to release shame rage against all those labelled or reified as class enemies. Solomon recounts Mao's appreciation of anger and frustration in galvanising rural peasantry. He writes, 'Combining ridicule of formal education with a recital of the power of slogans to focus peasant anger, Mao revealed that he had grasped what is perhaps his most basic insight into the process of politicising peasants' (Solomon 1971, p. 194). Solomon continues, 'Mao perceived that *the anxiety before authority which underlay the millennial political passivity of China's peasants could be overcome if it were transformed into anger and directed outward through the force of ideology expressed in a political slogan*' (1971, pp. 194–195; emphasis in the original). Solomon specifically cites Mao's revelations given to Andre Malraux in which Mao indicated that the 'momentum' for the Cultural Revolution came from the

pervasive sense of bitterness across a wide swath of the rural peasantry. Mao once informed Malraux, '"You know I've proclaimed for a long time: we must teach the masses *clearly* what we have received from them *confusedly*. What was it that won over most villages to us? The expositions of bitterness [*su-k'u*]….We organised these expositions in every village…but we didn't invent them."'[5] Loss and bitterness consolidated what Solomon describes as the 'power to mobilise.' What Solomon insufficiently emphasises is the role played by shame punishments and disciplines in the process. Psychic recompense for loss over bitterness are the very motivations that give way to the powers of shame to galvanise the actions of cadres of youth intent on overcoming the affects of shame within themselves. As Solomon states, 'Ideology thus had the power to fuse passion and political purpose' (1971, p. 195). The critical component was repressed emotion over shame experienced among those now bold enough and sufficiently inspired to transform haphazard or sporadic resentment into a unified political movement. But the motivating force or element was neither land nor economic wealth in itself. Greed may have served as an influence, but it was resentment over the perceived humiliation imposed by the elders and the cultural modalities of the 'old' way of life, a life permeated by Confucian abstemious and submissive family traditions combined with a sense of powerlessness, that eventually triggered the projection of shame and the prodigious violence featuring shame punishments. The Maoist Cultural Revolution harnessed the energies of shame rage by ideologically associating class warfare with a reified enemy defined as 'old' and by linking these associations to systems of food production and distribution connected to Confucian family traditions within agrarian or rural village life. Solomon describes this consolidated process of ideological mobilisation anchored to shame rage as a pathway to genocide. He states, 'This combination of ideological study and organised class struggle makes people politically "conscious" in the sense of bringing together the perception of mistreatment and injustice with the repressed emotion' (Solomon 1971, p. 196). What Mao succeeded in doing was to sanction the grafting of unconscious emotionality that stemmed from Confucian disciplines of oral shame onto the self-conscious awareness of the consequent

bitterness it caused. Solomon (1971, p. 196) indicates, 'In developing this form of political mobilisation, Mao began with the belief that simply redistributing land to poor peasants was insufficient… *The peasants could sustain their commitment to the revolution only if they participated directly in the humiliation of those who represented the traditional system of authority.'* And the cadres of revolutionary youth who brought about the Cultural Revolution were motivated by desires beyond the materiality of land redistribution. What they wanted was lurid and ludic shame punishments in metrics of indescribable torments and cruelty. This led to the devastation of much of what had been known as traditional Chinese Confucian culture.

Beatings Until All the Water Comes Out: Mass Atrocity During the Great Famine

Brutal instructional designs were built into Maoist programs of re-education. Re-education in the name of cultural reform was more an exercise in revolutionary genocide than that of reformist change. 'Correct thinking' was inscribed on hapless legions by means of didactic learning implemented through torments and justified by notions of class-enemy. Frank Dikötter (2013), for example, examines the distinct modalities of the 1940s re-education process: dystopian dreams; cultural and political polarities; communal dynamics of 'speaking bitterness'; spatialised concentrations of victims; ideological reifications manifested by class categories; instructional speech act performativity in formats of confession; and public humiliations through various forms of physical/spiritual transgression to induce shame. Dikötter (2013, p. 66–67) describes the scene: 'After months of patient work, the communists managed to turn the poor against the village leaders. A once closely knit community was polarised into two extremes. The communists armed the poor, sometimes with guns, more often with pikes, sticks and hoes. The victims were denounced as "landlords", "tyrants", and "traitors", rounded up and held in cowsheds. Armed militia sealed off the village; nobody was allowed to leave.' The poor and the young gained a sense of personal

meaning, significance or power through missionary commitment and sacrifice. Dikötter (2013, p. 66) observes, 'Weeks of indoctrination also produced true believers who no longer needed prodding along from the work team.' A combination of self-elevation and a sense of self-sacrifice to a greater cause took hold. 'Some people were transformed into revolutionary zealots, ready to break the bonds of family and friendship for the cause…They no longer felt themselves mere farmers plodding along in a forlorn village, at the mercy of the seasons, but instead believed they were part of something new that endowed their lives with meaning.' Victims became marked physically and paraded across hellish landscapes of community humiliation and public shame. 'Everybody had to wear a strip of cloth identifying their class background.' A colour code was applied according to class category. 'The landlords had a white strip, rich peasants a pink one while middle peasants wore yellow. The poor proudly displayed red' (Dikötter 2013, p. 67). Dikötter describes how humiliation and public shaming in peasant communities were performed on village platforms. He writes, 'One by one the class enemies were dragged out on to a stage where they were denounced by the crowd, assembled in their hundreds, screaming for blood, demanding that accounts be settled in an atmosphere charged with hatred. Victims were mercilessly denounced, mocked, humiliated, beaten and killed in these "struggle sessions"'(Dikötter 2013, p. 67). And so transgression during the time of the Great Terror 1945–1951 proceeded through phases: from 'speaking bitterness' to 'struggle sessions'; and from ideological re-education to a living theatre of the condemned. Dikötter has also described the unfolding violence of 'Mao's Great Famine' during the years 1958–1962 to underscore the brutalities, mostly beatings by sticks and burials alive, performed on peasant victims *in addition* to their starvation. Death by chronic malnutrition was too slow to meet the demands of Maoist social transformation. Dikötter indicates that the cadres of communist party members preferred beatings above all and that the stick or baton was their 'weapon of choice.' Here is a sample depiction: 'As famished villagers often suffered from oedema, liquid seeped through their pores with every stroke of the stick. It was a common expression that someone "was beaten until all the water came out"' Dikötter (2010, p. 293). Dikötter cites the advice given 'new recruits,'

'"If you want to be a party member you must know how to beat people"' (2010, p. 294). Dikötter indicates, 'Overall, across the country, maybe as many as half of all cadres regularly pummelled or caned the people they were meant to serve' (2010, p. 294). In certain provinces throughout Hunan, an estimated ten percent of the already starving were buried alive, or locked in basements or cellars and 'left to die in eerie silence' (Dikötter 2010, p. 296). The methods used to torment and murder over and above starvation attests to the vile nature of the violence: widespread mutilations; deaths by means of live burials; by drowning; by being stripped naked to freeze; by means of boiling water or by oil and fire or by branding. Many were buried in heaps of excrement or made to eat manure or drink urine. Dikötter (2010, pp. 294–297) adds, 'The worst form of desecration was to chop up the body and use it as fertilizer.' Re-education in the name of cultural reform had entered a decompositive phase in which the integrity of revolution depended upon decay.

In a similar perspective, Yang Su (2011) reveals how cultural perceptions and formats of identity became transformed in ways that finally destroyed the clan identities legitimated by Confucian traditions. Su writes, for example, 'To explain the Chinese collective killings, I trace the long history of south-bound immigration to southern provinces and highlight the group identities based on surname lineage or family clan' (Su 2011, p. 14). He further indicates, 'Group boundaries were drawn within the Han ethnic population rather than between ethnic or subethnic groups.' Su emphasises the role of 'blood relations' and clan-based conflicts fuelled by competition for resources in shaping the dynamics 'for imagining out-group members as potential targets of violence.' He also stresses the importance of the role played by local leaders 'motivated by their fear of being deemed politically lapse or by their ambition for career advancement' (Su 2011, pp. 14–15). Another critical factor was what Su describes as 'the demobilisation of moral constraints by framing war in a peacetime community' (2011, p. 16). In the cases of the provinces most affected by community killings, two other factors were present as well: The first was 'immigration history' that resulted in the fact that the inhabitants were 'more immersed in the culture of clan identities and competition;' the second underscores what Su

describes as 'the depth and salience of the war-framing' (2011, p. 18). In the end, millions died from starvation mostly in accordance with Maoist dystopian design to collectivise peasant agriculture and thereby destroy the kinship and honour traditions of Chinese Confucian culture.

Maternalised Ego-Ideal and Group Fanaticism: A Psychosocial Perspective

The specific features of mass atrocity during the Chinese Cultural Revolution underscore the particularities of culture and ideology as mobilised by revolutionary forces. These features include the psychodynamics of oral aggression and food disciplines, on the one hand, and rejection of Confucian notions of filial piety and everything 'old' on the other. How, then, to elaborate a methodologically informed psychosocial perspective focused on perpetrators as they engaged in mass atrocity. Of particular relevance is the strategic role played by Mao and of the Chinese Communist Party in galvanising the energies generated by mass resentment and fanatic opportunism among rural/agrarian youth. Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel presented a psychosocial interpretation of fanaticism that emphasised how group ego-ideal develops in dysfunctional ways to promote conformity to authoritarian demands in tandem with debilitated superego capacities relative to autonomous self-individuation. Chasseguet-Smirgel's explorations of the concept of group ego-ideal stressed how impaired castration or debilitated exercises in Oedipal separation predicted for collective forms of narcissism and ego-ideal perfectionism. This, she argued, would foster fantasised yearning for ecstatic embodiment within the folds of maternal reincorporation. Such adherence to group ego-ideals would be bound by fantasies of return to maternalised magic and mystery. Chasseguet-Smirgel thus associates the perfectionist narcissism of group ego-ideals with the inadequacies of phallic 'castration' to promote personality development amenable to autonomy. This perspective parallels Ikonen and Rechardt's emphasis on the Thanatos-matrix in cases of personality development in which reciprocity fails to promote what they describe

as the Libido-matrix. Chasseguet-Smirguel confronted shame in similar ways by theorising a 'triple regression' in groups. She states, 'Temporally the group has a tendency to regress to primary narcissism; topographically, the ego and the superego and can no longer exercise their control' (Chasseguet-Smirgel 1985, p. 114). The group ideal-ego with its fantasies of psychic holism takes hold. She continues, 'The id takes possession of the psychic apparatus with the ideal ego which seeks fusion with the introjective restorations of the omnipotent mother the lost primary object' (Chasseguet-Smirgel 1985, p. 114). According to this psychosocial perspective, Mao becomes fantasmatically transformed as the very incarnation of the future China in imagistic formats of a maternal imago substituting for the traditions of Confucian maternalism. Mao's role was, in part, akin to that of a presiding mother-figure in the iconography of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. As Chasseguet-Smirgel comments, 'Models, in so far as there are any, would be distant and abstract. When they are personified, it would not be in someone representing an idealised father substitute but in someone, precisely, who had himself succeeded in avoiding introjective conflicts and conferring upon himself a magic, autonomous phallus or someone who promises this to his followers whilst sparing them the painful process of development.' Chasseguet-Smirgel states unequivocally, 'Therefore the ruler partakes more of the omnipotent mother than of the father' (1985, p. 83). In this, Chasseguet-Smirgel is suggestive of Mao's 'motherly' role as the unsullied model, the 'magus' of the 'ideological' leader. Chasseguet-Smirgel states, in cases of primary fusion, leaders do arise but they 'cannot, to my mind, be equated with the father. In this instance the leader is the person who activates the primitive wish for the union of ego and ideal.' She continues, 'He is the promoter of illusion, he who makes it shimmer before men's dazzled eyes, he who will bring it to fruition.' She further adds, 'The group thirsts less for a leader than for illusions. And it will choose as leader whomsoever promises the union of ego and ego ideal' (Chasseguet-Smirgel 1985, p. 82). Chasseguet-Smirgel hypothesises, 'It is as if the group formation represented of itself the hallucinatory realisation of the wish to take possession of the mother by the sibship, through a very regressive mode, that of primary fusion' (1985, p. 83). Revolutionary dystopian hatred thus demonstrates a kind of primary

narcissism borne in, and by, yearnings for return to the omnipotence of the lost 'Thing,' a form of 'thing-enjoyment' in ideological perfectionism that is fascistic, violent and violative. It is as if the shift from infantile sadism to sadistic infantilism gathers rage and ends by demanding revenge in alignment with the good breast (orality) of the Maoist imago as omnipotent mother. The hallucinatory desire is to take possession of the group, to eliminate the phallic barrier to *jouissance* so as to permit taking possession of the group by the group as a whole acting as mother. Chasseguet-Smirgel indicates, 'In groups based upon the "the Illusion", the leader fulfils, in relation to the members of the group, the role that the mother of the future pervert plays in relation to her child when she gives him to believe that he has no need either to grow up, or to identify himself with his father, thus causing his incomplete maturation to coincide with his ego ideal.' This describes the series of psychic illusions that Chasseguet-Smirgel contends is perpetuated by group ego-ideal to the effect that: mourning can be delayed; castration does not exist; renunciation is not part of maturation; false knowledge can protect and resist the risks of self-development. Chasseguet-Smirgel comments, 'As I see it, the pervert's "creation" achieves this end: it represents his own glorified phallus which for want of an adequate identification with the father, cannot but be factitious, that is, a fetish' (1985, p. 105). This underscores the fetishistic behaviours of the Red Guard perpetrators.

Chassequet-Smirgel posits the fetish as a social fantasy in the midst of intergenerational violence at its worst. 'The pervert, and those with a related structure, will always be trying in one way or another to bring about a realisation of the phantasy that lies behind the infantile sexual theory of sexual phallic monism, that is, the dual negation of the difference between the sexes and between the generations. The theory of sexual phallic monism is the infantile prototype of their adult ideologies. It is an attempt on their part to spare themselves the process of development' (Chasseguet-Smirgel 1985, p. 114). Chasseguet-Smirgel's reference to inhibited genitality and perverse sexuality as the consequence of repressed maturation points toward the ambiguous family relationships triangulated but centred around the maternal figure in traditional Confucian family life and roles. Throughout the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the weapon of choice of the stick was used in thousands

upon thousands of instances to beat, pulverise and cannibalise victims. The stick stands as the symbolic emblem of the Cultural Revolution. The stick is precisely what Chasseguet-Smirgel appears to have meant by the fetish used by a generation determined to destroy everything good and decent of the past. In the end, the Maoist revolution with its stress on youth over the elderly, collective agriculture over peasant farming, the community law over the legality of the community, fostered the narcissist illusions of new birth in dystopic omnipotence beholden to a new mother, Mao, the revolutionary mother figure building on Confucian traditions. As Chasseguet-Smirgel declared, 'There is no absolute ruler who is not the bearer of an ideology. He is in fact the intermediary between the masses and the ideological illusion and behind the ideology there is always a phantasy of narcissistic assumption' (1985, p. 82). And the costs paid by the Chinese nation on the altars of this didactic revolutionary absolutism will forever defy moral measure.

Notes

1. See Solomon (1971). Esp. Chap. II, "Confucianism and the Chinese Life-Cycle," pp. 28–39; Chap. IV, "Emotional Control," pp. 61–81 and Chap. V, "The Pain and Rewards of Education," 82–93.
2. Emphasis added.
3. Emphasis added.
4. Emphasis added.
5. This statement is cited as it appears in Solomon (1971: 195); emphasis in the original.

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Intergenerational Layers of Silence: How the Concealed or the Outspoken Remain Undiscussable or Indescribable

Julia Richter

Massive trauma and genocide, such as the Holocaust, leave traces for following generations and create multiple layers of silence. The conspiracy of silence (Danieli 1984) has become a common term to describe the phenomenon of remaining silent about atrocities. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, an unwritten code seemed to form, such that no one in the survivors' society, neither victims, nor perpetrators, nor bystanders, talked openly about events in their entirety or even certain aspects of these events. Silenced facts or events that are openly addressed, but contain controlled messages, may cause controversial discourses and the inhibition of real working through by remaining undiscussable or indescribable through generations (Bar-On 1999). Silence overshadows familial relationships and continuity between generations, as the absence of discussion leaves a broad space for imagination and is often

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perpetuated by feelings of guilt and shame. Identity itself is tainted by these profound silences.

In this chapter, I will be exploring how silence is connected to the phenomenon of intergenerational transmission of the Holocaust trauma, and will also trace through how our psychological understanding of this delicate, sensitive and complex issue may contain some indescribable qualities that are still controversial to address openly. For example, it is usually difficult and questionable to openly depict survivors as potential perpetrators even though we know that severe traumatisation may create a vicarious circle of violence across generations. I will also argue that breaking the silence is not a unidirectional process, as certain elements may become re-silenced in interpersonal, intergenerational, cultural and political discourses. There are multiple sources of impediments that interfere with opening up discussions about the traumas of the past, such as political agendas or the illusion that the next generation would be protected through silence and supposed absence of knowledge.

The Indescribable and Undiscussable

Taboos consist of multiple layers of intentional, conscious choices of silencing and simultaneously unconscious dynamics of shame, guilt, denial and/or repression. According to Dan Bar-On (1999), *indescribable* are facts that can be discussed but that do not have external criteria to validate them. These are the 'soft' impediments that occur around known facts in a discourse as we construct or reconstruct the experiences of the past. Different frames of mind, interpretations and attitudes, alongside social and cultural differences may be sources of soft impediments. Bar-On (1999) uses the phenomenon of intergenerational trauma as an example. He states that regardless of the fact that the wide range of physical, emotional and behavioural impacts of man-made violence on the descendants of the survivors has already been acknowledged, it is still unclear how future generations may deal with the hurtful emotions that have not been processed by the previous generation. The trauma may be discussed but remain indescribable,

inexpressible or too burdensome to clearly address, creating ambiguity and the profound difficulty of shedding light on the truth. These soft impediments may be identified and clarified in the course of a constructive dialogue, i.e. a discussion in which dissenting representations meet and people are able to express their knowledge and understanding, while also being prepared to learn parts of the truth that had not been available to them previously. The difficulty, however, is that these soft impediments can be so deeply embedded in our minds that it is often extremely complicated to identify and overcome them.

Undiscussable are the intentionally or unintentionally silenced facts that form severe impediments and cannot not be known. In the aftermath of a massive trauma '…the intentional undiscussability of the first generation is transformed and transmitted, intergenerationally, through unintentional silencing by the following generations' Bar-On (1999, p. 17). The offspring of victims and perpetrators both suffer from the violent atrocities that were inflicted on, or carried out by, their parents and both use normalised discourses—a constructed version of the truth with silenced elements that are characterised by suppression, avoidance and deception—in order to hide them (Bar-On 1999). Normalised discourses are also marked by contradictions and the lack of effort to acknowledge, or to resolve them. Silenced facts create the undiscussable and the consequences of the undiscussable may become indescribable. For example, in Hungary the active collaboration with the Nazis in the deportation and executions of Hungarian Jews was undiscussable for a long time. By now, although it is actively addressed, there is still a need to depict the country as a victim of the Nazi invasion as opposed to facing the problematic past.

One of the questions that Bar-On raises is how do we relate to silenced facts in a context that uses a language that is based on discussable matters. Our open discussions contain only conscious elements, so when we are faced with the silenced counterparts, unconscious processes—avoidance, repression, denial—must be used in order to make sense of the narrative. These dynamics may cause emotional or logical discrepancies that sooner or later may raise questions or concerns that can provide one possible way for the undiscussable to become indescribable.

Silenced facts are not framed in our mind in a meaningful way because usually their structure—the links between certain events and feelings—is deleted from the discourse. In order to make sense of these fragments, a new coherent structure has to be created that has rigid rules and a strict logic. In the experience of the following generation, these rules may still exist, but the reasons behind them remain unknown as the missing components are silenced and cannot be symbolised or put into words. Even when the silence is broken and the concealed somehow becomes spoken, traces of these elements might remain undiscussable, as their connections to the original trauma were lost a long time ago.

In an interview the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor told me that when she first moved out of the family home she had an argument with her new room-mates because she insisted on using a separate saucepan for heating milk. As far as she was concerned, this was the only way the milk would not stick. Her family was not kosher and had not been religious for generations; indeed, they never talked about their Jewish heritage. In fact, she only got to know about it when she was in high school. Her parents thought at the age of 16 she was old enough to know the family secret. Regardless of their assimilation, as a rule, she learned from her mother and grandmother that in a good household one must have dishes only for milk. So the original reason became silenced and undiscussable and was deleted from the family narrative as it was connected to the family secret of pain, losses and discrimination. It was replaced by a new logic, a rigid rule, and was passed down in the family completely split from the original religious tradition or the trauma.

Intergenerational Transmission of the Holocaust Trauma

Findings concerning the specific symptoms of the transgenerational impact of the Holocaust have been contradictory. As Arnold Wilson (1985) summarises, psychoanalysts identify several possible dynamics as mechanisms of transmission. One observed phenomenon was the ‘principle of repetition’, in which images, fantasies and experiences of

the Holocaust are recreated and promoted by the children of survivors, in order to make sense of their parents' shattered history (Auerhan and Prelinger 1983, as cited in Wilson 1985). Wilson and Fromm (1982), outlined how offspring might be used as 'restitutive self-objects' by parents. Restitutive self-objects represent the essence of the dissociated memories and, at the same time, they also represent an opportunity to undo the horror. In the parent-child relationship, isolated Holocaust-related themes appear and are enacted. The child, as the object, identifies with the parents' ambitions, and struggles to fulfil the role projected onto them (as cited in Wilson 1985). Others write about transmitted global mistrust, overprotectiveness, fear and parents' inability to take in children's aggression (Barocas and Barocas 1973; Kestenberg 1972; Wardi 1992).

Children born immediately after the war were often named after a lost person. They became symbols of a new life, of moving on and of the attempt to re-establish lost social bonds, as well as substitutes for the people lost. Dina Wardi (1992) calls them 'memorial candles'. They were supposed to save their parents, fill the void after the perished loved ones, and carry on stories and legacies. Once they failed to accomplish their messianic missions to substitute the lost and idolised family members, they became scapegoats and at the same time, overprotected, precious treasures of the family.

The most frequent problems attributed to the intergenerational transmission of the Holocaust trauma, particularly on the basis of studies of second-generation survivors, include depression, distrust, higher levels of anxiety, difficulty expressing hostile feelings, aggression-regulating disorders, higher levels of guilt and self-criticism, the stalling of the separation-individuation process, and a greater frequency of psychosomatic symptoms (Danieli 1998; Chaitin 2000; Bar-On et al. 1998; Wardi 1992; Felsen and Erlich 1990; Nadler et al. 1985; Sigal and Weinfeld 1989; Van Izendoorn et al. 2003). Studies of clinical and non-clinical samples yielded different results and an ongoing debate began among professionals, who were commonly survivors or children of survivors themselves, about the intergenerational transmission of trauma (Ornstein 2001).

Studies concentrating on vulnerabilities are accused of pathologising survivor families and stigmatising survivors and their offspring, and are even sometimes interpreted as the ultimate victory of the Nazis, since they managed to destroy not only their victims, but also the lives of their offspring. They also contradict the narratives of survivors, who showed great resilience, or the narratives especially supported in Israel about a resilient, young nation that has been fighting for itself and has founded a new, strong, thriving country. On the other hand, not attributing enough relevance to post-traumatic conditions and the characteristics of trauma handed down by parents to their children and grandchildren perpetuates the silence and inhibits the working through of the trauma (Bar-On 1999).

Yael Danieli conceptualises the consequences of massive trauma from a psychoanalytical background through a multidimensional, multidisciplinary framework (Danieli 1998). She states that identity is a complex interplay of multiple systems (biological, intra-psychic; interpersonal, social, cultural, spiritual, political) that, throughout our past, present and future, create a continuum. Ideally there is free access and flow between these systems. Exposure to massive trauma may cause a rupture in these systems of identity and block the freedom of their flow. She calls this phenomenon "fixity". Fixity may be strengthened by the conspiracy of silence and may increase the survivors' sense of isolation and mistrust. To address the fact that survivors were heterogeneous in terms of their backgrounds, personal characteristics, losses, subsequent lives and aspirations, she developed a typology of different family adaptational styles and reparative adaptational impacts (Danieli et al. 2014).

Silence and Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma

Silenced traumatic events in families, communities or on a larger social level contribute to the intergenerational transmission of trauma. Traumatic memories are often fragmented and very difficult to share due to psychological reactions to the event. There is often an inability to find appropriate words to describe the indescribable alongside a limited

holding capacity of the listeners (i.e. family members or members of society). In the aftermath of a massive trauma, a deep but unspoken agreement of not talking about certain aspects of suffering seems to emerge and, thereby, there is limited ability to empathise, accept and imagine the unimaginable.

The experiences of the second generation of Holocaust survivors are usually connected to silence, as it was difficult for them to understand the ineffable anguish in the family and the origin of their own sense of guilt. The humiliation of their parents, which left its mark on their development and separation processes, rendered them unable to inflict any more pain on their parents (Krell et al. 2004), imposing on the younger generation the task of offering emotional compensation for persons lost. The trauma became undiscussable and appeared in the form of indescribable emotions, for example, guilt for not having to live through that horror, for not being able to substitute the losses, or for desiring to live an independent life.

Studies about family communication of the Holocaust show that there were different patterns in which survivors talked or kept silent about their experiences. The different patterns are attributed to various factors, such as the Holocaust experiences (Jucovy 1985), extent of losses, post trauma adaptational styles (Danieli 1998), and the social and political context. For example, survivors who had the chance to actively participate in resistance (i.e. ghetto uprisings, partisan groups) talked more about the war with their offspring compared to the ones who did not have the opportunity to participate in such activities (Jucovy 1985). Survivors also differed in how much detail they provided about their Holocaust experience. The missing components of the stories were often unconsciously completed by fantasy elements by the offspring, contributing to a pseudo-reality in which normalised discourses develop and combine discussable and undiscussable facts. Ilany Kogan calls this a 'psychic hole' (Kogan 2007a, p. 94) in the offspring's emotional understanding: a gap between unconscious knowledge and the conscious or intentional ignorance of the Holocaust as a topic.

The second generation of Nazi perpetrators also suffered from the silence of their parents and experienced the split notion of knowing and not knowing at the same time. While most children knew about

everyday life during the war, and studied what happened in the war, their ancestors' role, duties and actions in the Holocaust were not clear to them (Bar-On 1991; Rosenthal 2002; Hardtmann 1998). A normalised discourse was created within those families that made it impossible for the next generation to identify the pieces that had been made intentionally undiscussable.

Psychotherapists also participated in the conspiracy of silence by failing to listen to, and properly explore, the Holocaust stories of their survivor patients (Danieli 1984). Research about intergenerational and psycho-social consequences of the Holocaust on the second generation started almost two decades after the end of World War II, (Jucovy 1985) as neither societies, nor the survivors, nor the professionals (i.e. psychotherapists) were ready to explore the indescribable and the undiscussable (Bar-On 1999). There were specific patterns of countertransference identified in connection with the Holocaust (Danielli 1980). One of the most common underlying factors among psychotherapists living in the United States contributing to keeping the silence was 'bystanders guilt'; the guilt of being safe and of not having to live through the suffering. It paralysed these therapists; they avoided asking questions in order not to cause more pain to the survivors and failed to recognise connections between their patient's symptoms and trauma. In addition to countertransference, Wieland-Burston (2005) and Harold Blum (1995) talk about further underlying issues that influenced Holocaust research in the world of psychology and psychoanalysis. Blum argues that through silence, German analysts avoided acknowledging their own guilt and shame. He calls attention in his article to the 'paradoxical legacy of an attempt to Ayranise psychoanalysis followed by a subsequent attempt to join and identify with what had been devalued as a Jewish science' (Blum 1995, p. 284). This paradoxical legacy, along with the delayed apprehension of symptoms, the difficulties in countertransference, and the debate on how to tackle the multigenerational nature of the impacts of the Holocaust, together point out the possibility that the field of intergenerational trauma research might also be impacted by the former silences and might also contain indescribable elements in contemporary understandings.

Is the Intergenerational Transmission of the Holocaust Trauma Indescribable?

The silence about intergenerational transmission was broken in the early seventies, when Judith Kestenberg's systematic study of symptoms of the trauma of surviving parents and children raised in survivor families was published (as cited in Jucovy 1985). Intergenerational transmission of trauma has been the focus of both qualitative and quantitative research on clinical and non-clinical samples. Numerous case studies have been published about the various ways trauma may be inherited, absorbed by the second, third or even fourth generations. However, traces of the dispute mentioned above—about under, or over-estimating the impact of the parents' Holocaust trauma on their offspring—still emerge (Bar-On et al. 1998). Furthermore, among psychoanalysts there are also disputes about how much emphasis should be given to the atrocities of the parents' past in psychotherapy (e.g. Kogan 2007b). The disagreement may be the consequence of remainders of the silence and different normalised discourses developed in certain communities. These are the 'soft' impediments around intergenerational transmission of trauma that are defined by various conscious or unconscious motivations.

Rachel Lev-Wiesel's article (1998) 'Abused children of holocaust survivors, as an unspoken issue' provides an example of how silence may impact the discourse about intergenerational trauma. She says the Holocaust trauma awakens so much sympathy and empathy for the survivors that it impairs therapists' ability to view them as abusers; the personal embarrassment surrounding the family secret, as well as the pity and forgiveness the children feel towards survivors' suffering, have created a situation in which even therapists find it hard to cope. There is an attempt to understand, and even justify, negative parenting behaviours by explaining it as a result of the traumatic experiences the survivors had gone through (Lev-Wiesel 1998, p. 44).

She argues that the second generation, not only gave the survivors a reason to live, they also became a symbol of victory over the Nazis and substitutes for the perished loved ones. Parents expect to regain their

lost narcissistic appreciation from their children. As the children became older and more independent, these needs were not fulfilled. Traumatic separation experiences might be relived and repeated in the parent-child relationship causing difficulties in the separation-individuation process. An ambivalent relationship focused on the dilemma of staying or leaving, alongside parents' ambivalence about letting go and wanting to hang on to their offspring, is often analysed as resembling the relationship between victims and perpetrators. Lev-Wiesel found examples of all kinds of abuse in survivor parent–child relationships, including physical maltreatment, emotional insults, degradation, rejection and emotional abuse.

Interestingly, compared to the vast amount of studies on the transmission of trauma, there are very few articles that write about survivors as perpetrators even though the processes explained are basically another aspect of vicarious trauma (Starman 2006). The same phenomenon is mentioned as the experience of the second generation by various authors (Krell et al. 2004; Wardi 1992; Danieli 1998; Sigal and Weinfeld 1989) but it is not usually addressed as abuse. I believe this is an example of the indescribable, since a certain aspect that is the abusive behaviour, has been normalised in our discourse. The abuse became indescribable as it has already surfaced, is often known, however still, almost as a rule, is not directly addressed, in order to avoid attributing blame or being disrespectful to the survivors.

Inflicted Silence

Silenced facts and normalised discourses often have a political agenda. What may or may not be said out loud is influenced by the social-political context of a certain time and era. Totalitarian regimes, left or right extremists, manipulated facts and propaganda are usually our first thoughts when addressing the silence inflicted upon people.

Addressing that point, Bar-On (1999), in his book, *The Indescribable and the Undiscussable: Reconstructing Human Discourse after Trauma,* emphasises the importance of the political change from totalitarianism into a 'quasi democracy' in making what has been silenced sayable. He describes this change, using Slavoj Žižek's (1989) terminology, as a

transformation from a 'pure' ideological context, into an 'impure' one (as cited in Bar-On 1999). This gradual process involved not only intellectual, but also emotional and behavioural components. Most importantly, it involved regaining the ability to ask questions about facts, the re-legitimisation of doubt and open dialogue and acknowledgement of the facts that had been intentionally silenced. Subjective psychological impediments may come to surface and become part of discussions only if basic needs and legal rights have been addressed. 'Hungry or frightened people will never be partners to a discussion on these impediments' (Bar-On 1999 p. 9). They will continue to prefer a pure ideological context that provides clear frames of interpretation and reduces the responsibility for thinking and acting critically. He compares pure ideologies to pure, basic desires that we learn how to sublimate according to social considerations as we grow up. Pure desires become impure by this process as we learn to understand, control, delay and direct their energy into socially acceptable activities. The initial determination for the satisfaction of pure desires may however make it easier for pure ideological contexts to be accepted.

It is the process that we have been experiencing in Hungary since the political change in 1989. A democracy was formed in a context where atrocities of the past have not been worked through at all, and where actual political interests are built on the indescribable, on the remainders of the inflicted silence that lasted for such a long time. Instead of being worked through, the traumata of the last centuries are being encapsulated, handed down through generations, and used to create false nationalistic identities based on victimhood. These narratives provide pure ideological contexts which, along with financial difficulties and overall disappointment in capitalism, push morale to the extreme and thus provide a perfect ground for the rise of a leadership that openly turns its back on democratic values. Hungary became a 'quasi democracy' in the 1990s but, partly due to its inability to work through intergenerational trauma on a societal level, the process was diverted and allowed for an 'illiberal'[1] system to gain power, one that thrives on secrets and silence.

In today's Hungary, we experience how indescribable facts influence and inhibit working through and moving on. On the one hand, historical

facts are available, thus we cannot say that they are completely silenced. On the other hand, certain aspects are on their way to being concealed again, which may strengthen a rigid and pure discourse. As Kinga Göncz notes in Chap. 6 of this collection, in 2014, a new monument was built and inaugurated featuring the Archangel Gabriel as a symbol of Hungary's innocence during World War II, pounced upon by the German imperial eagle from above. The statue implies that Hungary was a victim of the evil Nazi eagle and had no responsibility in deporting and killing hundreds of thousands of people. Apart from altering the past in a way that that favours the ruling political ideologies, installing a monument such as this one sends the message that it is acceptable to know and not know at the same time; to view ourselves as victims instead of facing and starting to work thorough the past. Vamik Volkan defines chosen trauma as the 'shared mental representation of a large group's massive trauma experienced by its ancestors at the hands of an enemy group' (Volkan 2004, p. 2). Instead of trying to face the violence of the past openly, and using a unifying tone such as 'we'—together as a country—this statue attempts to shift the mental representation of the Hungarian Holocaust, by choosing the Nazis as the whole nation's victimisers and silencing the facts about active collaboration of the Hungarian regime at the time.

The social-political context shaped the extent and the content of the silence differently in each country after the Holocaust. In Hungary, in many cases, not only involved the erasure of memories of the violence, but ignored the Jewish origin of many citizens too, and thus their identity (Erős 1992). Numerous members of the second and third generation found out about their Jewish origin only as adults and, even then, were encouraged to continue keeping it a secret. Among those whose Jewish identity was known, this was mainly characterised by the Holocaust, at least in the 1980s. This meant that the main reason members of the second generation identified themselves as Jewish was connected to the fact that their parents had survived the Shoah (Erős 1992). The forceful inauguration of a statue that symbolises the denial, the indescribability of the past, creates a context where victimhood on both sides will continue to remain a major identity-forming factor.

Bar-On (1999) emphasises the role of bystanders as equally important contributors to an inflicted silence: 'The bystanders, together with

the survivors and the perpetrators, developed a normalised discourse which helped all parties avoid acknowledging the psychologically and morally painful parts of their respective biographies' (Bar-On 1999, p. 4). Bystanders represent the majority and through their indifference, they perpetuate the silenced atrocities into the present socio-political environment.

In the context of the Holocaust remembrance year (2014) and tense public discussions against the aforementioned statue, a short incident drew my attention to better understand bystanders and how their indifference may maintain silence. It was the day of the March of the Living—an annual event aimed at bringing together people from all religions, backgrounds and communities to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to promote social solidarity and acceptance. I was on my way to meet a friend by bicycle and had to cross the route of the event that was to be held later that afternoon. There was a huge traffic jam, roadblocks and policemen redirecting the traffic. I stopped and asked a policeman if there was something to be concerned about. He answered with a very indifferent tone, that there was nothing special going on, except for the fact that the Jews were demonstrating again. Was he a particularly xenophobic or anti-Semitic person? Maybe, but let's assume he was not. In the middle of the road, with me holding up the traffic, it is unlikely he wanted to share his core discriminative and disrespectful beliefs with me. Most certainly, he wanted to give the briefest possible explanation that would make me continue on my way and not cause him any more trouble. Without any rage or any particular emotion, he just gave a short answer that was based on the most common attitude of our present social context—the one that I was most likely to acknowledge and ask no further questions about. To me, he represented the bystander, who may unintentionally confirm the normalised discourse and transmit repressed violence to the next generation by not questioning or reflecting on the dominant discourse or the actions and events of the past.

In this chapter, I have collected a few examples of how concealed or outspoken facts about the atrocities of the past, the Holocaust in particular, remain undiscussable or indescribable on multiple layers and continue to shadow generations of survivors, perpetrators and even

bystanders. I argued that the field of intergenerational trauma might also have some indescribable qualities, silenced aspects and that the breaking of silence is not a unidirectional process. Without careful preventive actions, silenced facts can partially or entirely surface only to become indescribable again, influenced by certain psychological, cultural, or political dynamics of power.

Note

1. In July 2014, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán openly declared that he is building an "illiberal democracy", a form of leadership that resembles the one in China, Turkey, or India.

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Recovered Identities: The Found Children of the Argentinian Disappeared

Lucia Corti

In March 1976, Argentina's constitutional government was overthrown by a military coup. Seven dark years of a civil-military dictatorship followed, during which approximately 30,000 civilians disappeared. The enforced disappearances of suspected left-wing opponents by the infamous Process of National Reorganisation generally entailed kidnapping, confinement in secret detention centres, torture, execution and disposal of the bodies. The military called the victims of this systematic practice: The Disappeared. Their murder was denied and, by the same token, their lives. The Disappeared were neither dead nor alive.

Hundreds of children were kidnapped alongside their parents, or were born in the clandestine detention camps where young pregnant mothers were taken and kept until giving birth. Approximately four to five hundred children were stolen and appropriated by the military as their own, or were abandoned, killed, sold or left in institutions as

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babies with no name. The appropriation of babies by the repressive forces was not a random practice, but a systematic plan carried out with a political and social purpose. The rationale was to bring up these children within families who represented the ideological and moral enemy of their disappeared parents, with the aim of eradicating that generation's legacy. The children were to be brought up by 'good catholic families', members of the military or supporters of the regime. It was in the child's 'interest' to erase their origins. To this purpose, children were illegally registered under a new identity, their date and place of birth forged, and their names and filiation falsified. In response to these circumstances, the non-governmental organisation Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo was founded in 1977 with the aim of searching for and locating disappeared children to return them to their legitimate families. Interdisciplinary teams of professionals from the judicial, medical, genetic and psychological fields joined to support the work of the organisation. Confronted with the utter limitations of freedom imposed by the military on the Argentinian people during the last dictatorship, the Grandmothers' actions constituted a refusal of totalitarian discourse. Their resistance made the military totalitarian power less complete, opening up the space for truth and its liberating force. Among the Grandmothers' many achievements was the creation of a National Genetic Bank of DNA samples from relatives of the disappeared children, intended to guarantee the possibility that the children, and future generations, would be able to recover their origins. To date, 115 children, now men and women in their late thirties, have recovered their identities.

This chapter explores the notion of early childhood memories, which bear the mark of the silence, secrets and lies of others. It also attempts to examine the potential effects of the deliberate concealment and falsification of a child's early history upon subjectivity. Would the recovery of a subject's stolen past enable the integration of foreclosed memory traces into the symbolic order? I am taking a conceptual leap in the way I employ the term foreclosure. My purpose is to examine the notion of memory traces that have remained unassimilated/repudiated from a subject's symbolic order, and the return of which escapes the dynamics of repression. I am by no means equating this repudiation with psychosis.

Strictly speaking, the term foreclosure makes reference to 'that which has not been admitted to symbolic expression and reappears in reality in the form of a hallucination' (Laplanche and Pontalis 1968, fn 16, p. 8). Foreclosure or repudiation from the symbolic order affects a specific signifier that Lacan designates as the signifier of the Name of the Father. The foreclosure of this signifier results in a different form of organization of language and defines the structure of psychosis. The French '*nom du père*' is much more appropriate than its translation in English to designate what is at stake, as it can be understood as both the name of the father and the 'no' of the father (*'non du père'*). It could be thought of in terms of the double prohibition that Freud assigns to the function of the father in the Oedipus complex. The father says to the child: you shall not sleep with your mother, she is mine; to the mother he says: you shall not re-integrate your own product, thus separating the symbiotic unity between mother and child.

The great majority of the recovered Grandchildren, as they are called, (that is, the children of disappeared parents) claim retrospectively, that they choose 'the truth'. This includes those who for years avoided all clues that would have put them on the tracks of their origins, as well as those who were forced to have a DNA test despite their refusal. The following question can thus be raised: Is the trauma of confronting such harrowing truth liberating?

I will address these questions from a psychoanalytic perspective in the attempt to argue for the subjectifying effects of truth.

History, Truth and Fiction

Truth is an essential dimension of psychoanalytic experience. In 'Analysis Terminable and Interminable' Freud (1937a) speaks of the analytic relationship as being based on 'a love of truth—that is, on a recognition of reality'. But what is the nature of this truth and of this reality? In 'Constructions in Analysis' (Freud 1937b) (another text written by Freud in the same year) elaborates on the difference between material and historical truth. Historical truth refers to a fragment of lost experience that is only accessible by way of a reconstruction. It concerns

the return of very early past impressions, which have been repressed and submitted to distortion and which produce effects of a repetitive character. The analyst's task is 'to make out what has been forgotten from the traces it has left behind or, more precisely, to construct it' (Freud 1937b, pp. 258–259). Therefore, constructions are built following the internal coherence of a sequence. Freud extends this method of psychoanalytic investigation to the history of civilisation, as developed in his paper 'Moses and Monotheism' (Freud 1939). Historical truth can be understood as a kernel of truth in formations as diverse as phantasies, legends, myths, religions or delusions. All of these are the products of constructions. Historical truth is therefore a construction built according to the internal logic established between heterogeneous elements. It does not coincide with material or factual reality/truth, even though Freud's early theory of trauma assumed it did. Historical truth is not on a par with the past. This echoes Lacan's thinking in *Seminar I* where he says: 'History is the past in so far as it is historicised in the present—historicised in the present because it was lived in the past' (Lacan 1991, p. 12). In other words, what was experienced in the past becomes the past through a process of historicisation. Historical truth, as it is constructed through speech, writes and re-writes the subject's past; hence, its power to bring about subjective change. Freud foresaw this re-writing of history as early as 1896 in his 'Letter 52'. In this letter, Freud talks about the rearrangement or re-transcription of the material present in memory traces according to fresh circumstances. 'A failure of translation—this is what is known clinically as repression'. The motive Freud gives for this failure is that a fresh translation or re-transcription should cause the release of unpleasure (Freud 1896, pp. 233–235). Incidentally, we know all too well that subjective change, which involves a repositioning of the subject (partly in relation to his/her history), does not come about without a fair share of anxiety.

Subjective truth cannot therefore be put on the same plane as other forms of truth, and has to be differentiated in its singularity from material reality. By placing truth and reality on the same plane (as Freud does in the quote mentioned above), it becomes apparent that the reality that concerns psychoanalytic investigation is not the same as factual reality. Freud formulates the notion of 'psychical reality', which he equates to

the reality of unconscious thoughts, phantasies and desires. 'The phantasies possess psychical as contrasted with material reality, and we gradually learn to understand that in the world of the neuroses it is psychical reality which is the decisive kind' (Freud 1916–1917, p. 368). To put it simply, the truth that counts is unconscious truth.

Historical truth has therefore no other foundation than speech. Lacan famously claimed that truth has the structure of fiction (Lacan 1992, p. 12). We can only access unconscious truth by means of the articulation of the signifying chain. Granting privilege to the chain of signifiers above signification means that for psychoanalysis, truth does not reside in a correspondence between the word and the thing.

Hence, how can we account for the seemingly liberating effects brought about by the revelation of a subject's factual history when we say that the truth that matters for psychoanalysis is historical and does not necessarily coincide with material truth?

At this stage, we can respond by saying that a subject's truth and identity cannot be given; they are products of a process of self-discovery and construction. However, to initiate the journey of this discovery, a human being needs access to that which should be verifiable.

Who Am I?

As human beings we are often haunted by questions about who we are. The anxiety brought by these questions can at times border on the unbearable. 'To be or not to be' is no doubt a fundamental question. But if questions of being and not being are foundational in the building of subjectivity, this foundation resides in the relation of the subject to others. We address these questions to those we assume can give us a response about who we are. What happens when these formative questions are addressed to an Other who has deliberately erased and falsified the marks that link us to our ancestors, not only in terms of heredity, but in terms of filiation? As speaking beings, a term used by Lacan (2006) to refer to humans, we are rooted in a discourse that precedes us. Spoken before we speak, loved before we love, desired before we desire and nominated before we can say I, we are the natural offspring of our

bonds with others. A distinction should thus be made between heredity and filiation. Biological heredity refers to the passing of genetic traits to offspring from parents and ancestors. Filiation, however, relates to the passing of traits acquired through the bonds with others: the parents in the first place, but also previous generations and, more widely, the social group to which the family belongs. These bonds are inextricably linked to the symbolic fabric constituted by language and constitutive of human subjectivity. This symbolic heritage lodges the child into the world well before his actual birth. To deprive a child of this heritage, falsifying the symbolic instances underpinning his conception, is likely to have devastating effects. In 'Function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis' Lacan says: 'Indeed, we know the damage a falsified filiation can do, going as far as dissociation of the subject's personality, when those around him conspire to sustain the lie' (Lacan 2006/1953, p. 230).

Clearly, there is a paramount difference between an act of adoption carried out within a legal frame and an act of appropriation of a child who has not been given away but stolen. A falsified filiation implies that the bonds developed with the appropriators have been built upon lies. A web of secrets and lies constructed by the appropriators as a narrative that enunciates the opposite of what they (the appropriators) effectively know or consciously think (Bianchedi et al. 1997, p. 299). There is not only deliberate concealment of specific facts, but also the production of 'pseudo-facts' via the articulation of a narrative that attempts to appear credible, coherent and real (Bianchedi et al. 1997, p. 299). This narrative puts into play mechanisms of disavowal, which fundamentally reject the murder of the parents as well as the crime of appropriation. The disavowal, both in the discourse of the appropriators and the environment that conspires to maintain the lies, often functions as an unconscious command not to know (Bianchedi et al. 1997). Abraham and Torok's theory of the phantom talks of the devastating gaps that the secrets of others leave in the psyche. 'What haunts are not the Dead, but the gaps left within us by the secrets of others'…'What comes back to haunt are the tombs of others' (1994/1975, pp. 171–172). In the case of the children of the Disappeared, this last quote evokes the silencing of real murders and the crime of appropriation.

Many of the Grandchildren of the Disappeared have claimed that despite plenty of pieces of their history not fitting the puzzle, they still did not know the secret in their history. What it is possible to know becomes impossible (Bianchedi et al. 1997). Incoherences and gaps in the narrative constructed as a myth of origins, the incongruous ages of those claiming to be their parents, their lack of physical resemblance, and the absence of photographs (for example, related to the mother's pregnancy) have often been referred to by the Grandchildren as points of knowing and yet not knowing. However, in a considerable number of cases these incongruities planted the seed of doubt launching some of these subjects into a search for the truth about their origins (Bravo 2007; El Angel de la Medianoche 2013).

Unchained Memories

How can we think about the subjective implications of the function of an Other who usurps the place of a murdered father or mother and takes their child as their own whilst making sure the skeletons are safely kept in the closet? To take a child as one's property and bring him up on the basis of the falsification and concealment of his generational origins clearly represents a rejection of the order of the symbolic law and is therefore likely to have devastating consequences (Díaz 2005, p. 123).

The inscription of the function of the law is, according to Freud, our entry into civilisation. Freud called it the prohibition of incest, referring to the loss of a limitless form of satisfaction; in other words, the loss of an imaginary form of omnipotence. The myth of the murder of the primal father is Freud's attempt to account for the structuring of subjective and collective life based on the recognition of a symbolic death. The recognition of the murder of the father who had access to a limitless jouissance (enjoyment) establishes an unconscious sense of guilt, thus making possible the inscription of the law. The law prohibits the right to a limitless jouissance among the community of brothers thus founding collective life (Freud 1913; Royer de García Reinoso 1984).

With reference to the work of Piera Aulagnier, child psychoanalyst Marisa Rodulfo (1997) says that a subject in those circumstances suffers

from the constant threat of suddenly discovering that who he was (for the parents who conceived him) radically denies who he thinks he is. Early experiences are central in the structuring of the child, however. 'The strange memory he possesses of these first moments, is characterised by a peculiar form of inscription that becomes a body mark, a scar, a wound, all of which he will carry without being able to account at what time or space they appeared' (Rodulfo 1997, p. 335, my translation).

There are plenty of testimonies from recovered Grandchildren that poignantly bring these amputated memories back to life. Many are related to the Grandchildren's proper names. Juan Cabandié 'found himself'. He was 20 days old when he was taken away from his mother. He was born at the Navy School of Mechanics, a secret detention centre in Buenos Aires, now the Museum of Memory. He grew up in the family of a member of the police force and a repressor. Cabandié recounts that at the age of 25 he started experiencing serious doubts about his true origins. Due to the lack of family memories in relation to his birth, and to the ill treatment he received from his appropriator, he started to suspect that he could be the son of disappeared parents. He went to the organisation of Grandmothers and asked for a DNA test. Six months later, he got a phone call from a woman working at the organisation to confirm the results as positive. He was the son of disappeared parents. She told him who his parents were, and that his mother had called him Juan. He was puzzled. 'Juan?!', he said, 'I always wanted to be called Juan' (Bravo 2007). Cabandié has often told the story that during his childhood and teenage years he had chosen to call himself Juan. He even recounts having dreams about being fed by his mother and rocked in her arms and being called Juan. 'If one day I have a son I want to call him Juan', he said (Bravo 2007; Kabakian 2007). Cabandié attributes these experiences to memories from the 20 days he spent with his mother. In the public speech he gave after finding out his true identity, he declared that the dictatorship could not erase the memory that runs through his veins. The memory of these dreams is likely to be the work of a construction, however the hallucinatory nature of the voice that returns in the dream has the quality of the Real of perception and demands another type of

explanation. The sound of his first name returns as the unchained remnant of who he was for the desire of the Other that once conceived him.

Interestingly, when Freud first started to sketch his theory of phantasy he emphasised the role of auditory perceptions. In 'Draft L' he wrote that phantasies 'are made up from things that are heard, and made use of subsequently; thus they combine things that have been experienced and things that have been heard, past events, from the history of parents and ancestors and from oneself. They are related to things heard, as dreams are related to things seen' (Freud 1897a, p. 248). And in 'Draft M', 'Phantasies arise from an unconscious combination of things experienced and heard' (Freud 1897b, p. 252).

With reference to this early Freudian elaboration, Laplanche and Pontalis (1968) argue that 'hearing, when it occurs, breaks the continuity of an undifferentiated perceptual field. To this extent the prototype of the signifier lies in the aural sphere'. They go on to say that hearing also alludes to the history of parents, grandparents and ancestors; to the 'family sounds or sayings', to the spoken and secret discourse taking place prior to the subject's arrival and 'within which he must find his way' (Laplanche and Pontalis 1968, pp. 10–11).

As discussed earlier, a child needs access to the history that precedes him and the circumstances of his birth via the narrative of others. These stories allow the construction of the child's ego and subjectivity. When this Other intentionally dis-possesses the child from his early history, offering himself as the absolute master of the child's memory, the choice of dissociation might be an option to survive. Referring to the work of Piera Auglanier, Rodulfo (1997) says that the child might appear to accept that the adult possesses the first chapters of his history, and that this particular chapter is constituted as a true secret, as a hole, but that this acceptance has a high cost. 'These children', Rodulfo writes, 'are threatened by the constant pressure to kill the little child they were and of having to eliminate from their psyche any vestiges that would remind their appropriators of the insufficiency of their being. The risk of death that permanently threatens them is that of having "not to be", so that the adults that raise them can sustain themselves' (Rodulfo 1997, p. 118, my translation).

A similar theory is elaborated by Abraham and Torok in their book *The Shell and the Kernel*:

> 'The special difficulty of these analyses lies in the patient's horror of violating a parent's or a family's guarded secret, even though the secret's text and content are inscribed in the subject's unconscious. The horror of transgression, in the strict sense of the term, is compounded by the risk of undermining the fictitious yet necessary integrity of the parental figure in question'. (Abraham and Torok 1994/1975, p. 174)

Why Don't They Go Mad?

It is not difficult to imagine that such a perverse concealment of the truth and its shocking revelation could trigger a subject's mental breakdown. Such a shift in someone's history and identity demands an appeal to symbolic instances that undoubtedly defies psychic stability. However, judging by the large number of public testimonies given by many of the Grandchildren (plenty are available on YouTube), regardless of whether their restitution took place when they were still children or later as adults, it is extraordinary to find that they do not seem to have gone mad. That the majority of these subjects managed to survive the sinister secrets constructed around their origins and were later able to take on board the truth and rebuild their lives with seeming strength and confidence is rather intriguing, to say the least. This is particularly curious in the case of adults whose verification of biological origins results in the confiscation of their IDs and the reissuing of a new ID with their biological parents' family name. In the case of babies born in captivity, the new ID used to be issued with the first name as known to be given by the mother whilst in captivity, as in the case of Juan Cabandié. A study of this peculiarity alone would deserve a much more in-depth exploration beyond the scope of this chapter. I understand that this practice has been reviewed and the recovered Grandchild can now choose to preserve the first name he grew up with alongside the original name given by his biological mother.

A group of professionals involved in the process of children's restitution when the Grandchildren were still young, argued that the messages transmitted by the appropriating families had a messianic tone

and sustained a double desire for the child: that of being and of not being (Bianchedi et al. 1997). 'You shall not be that which made you be born', i.e. the parents' original desire; and 'you shall be what I want you to be according to my messianic values'. They claimed that the message 'you shall be what I want you to be' is not implicitly a bad message for the child, unlike the message 'I want you not to be' which implies 'the death of the parents that gave birth to children like you' (Bianchedi et al. 1997, p. 303). Alongside these double messages, an unconscious prohibition on finding out the truth about their origins was in play. The revelation of the truth of their history, which came to light through the act of restitution, was understood as a rectifying form of trauma for the child's psychical life. It was understood that a moment of intense psychical pain characterised by a temporary disorganisation and reorganisation of the judgements of attribution and existence would take place. In his paper 'On Negation', Freud explains the function of judgement as being concerned with two types of decisions: 'It affirms or disaffirms the possession by a thing of a particular attribute; and it asserts or disputes that a presentation has an existence in reality' (Freud 1925, p. 439). This traumatic instance however, would enable the child to regain access and re-signify their first identification models with the consequent fall or suspension of previous identifications (Bianchedi et al. 1997, p. 304–305).

Psychoanalyst Silvia Bleichmar (1997) has also discussed restitution as a form of trauma that favours psychical development. This has to be differentiated from the traumas that fracture or de-structure the psyche, such as those involved in the act of appropriation (Bleichmar 1997, p. 313). This is indeed an interesting differentiation that can be cross-referenced to Freud's own developments on the structuring function of trauma as different from the trauma caused by something such as war.

Bianchedi et al. (1997) argue that, if restituted as children, the individuals concerned showed a remarkable intensification of their epistemophilic drive. They posed detailed questions about their first months of life, their parents' personality and looks and their physical resemblance to them. They showed interest and enjoyment in looking at pictures and objects that had belonged to them. Moreover, against all prediction and presumptions, they soon integrated within their families of origin, and adapted to new schools, new clothes and new social groups. Obviously, this is an intriguing matter that deserves careful

consideration. We know through the dozens of testimonies given by the recovered Grandchildren that in the case of adults, the response was less uniform and that in some cases they took a long period to make contact with their families of origin.

Regarding the rapid adaptation children showed to their new lives, one of the hypotheses put forward by the restitution team, was that part of the 'true' history (as opposed to the falsified history) was known by the child but had remained encapsulated or split off, yet it had not been destroyed. Along similar lines Abraham and Torok (1994/1975) formulate the theory of the phantom. 'The phantom is a formation of the unconscious that has never been conscious—for good reasons. It passes—in a way yet to be determined—from the parents' unconscious to the child's' (1994/1975, p. 173). The phantom concerns the interpersonal and transgenerational transmission of shameful family secrets and its effects on a subject, or even on a community. It represents the consequences of a transmitted silence, the 'unwitting reception of someone else's secret' (Rand 1994, p. 168). The phantom does not refer to parental speech, but to the unspeakable, consequently, it proceeds 'like a ventriloquist, like a stranger within the subject's mental topography'. Its form of return escapes the dynamics of repression and the formations of symptoms. In its periodic and compulsive return, the phantom fully concurs with Freud's death drive: 'It has no energy of its own; it cannot be 'abreacted' merely designated […] (and) it pursues its work of disarray in silence' (Abraham and Torok 1994/1975, pp. 173–175).

We can thus identify at least two clinical forms of the return. The return of what has been repressed and comes back by way of the symptom is within the sphere of the symbolic order. The other form of return is linked to the 'death drive' and the failure of the defence and is therefore within the sphere of the Real. From the Lacanian perspective, the symptom involves a localised and limited modality of jouissance (enjoyment), whilst the ravage (pertaining to a family secret or a falsified filiation) points to a de-localisation of jouissance, with devastating effects for the subject (Riquelme 2005, p. 66).

From this perspective, the restitution of a deliberately truncated part of a subject's history would make it possible to bridge the gap, to bridge

the hole embodied as a memory trace. How the restitution of this truth is carried out is a key factor. In the case of the Grandchildren, this process has been carefully thought through and always legally mediated by a number of institutions including the judicial system.

The Beauty of Truth

The Biographical File is one of the types of work carried out by the Grandmothers and it is put together for the search of every Grandchild. This file contains life accounts of the disappeared parent's friends, family and fellow militants, as well as photographs, including portraits of people interviewed, and other historical documents and objects. The file is made of oral, written and photographic records and it has been conceived 'as a way of "introducing" the disappeared parent to the recovered Grandchild' (Fina 2013). When a Grandchild is found, he/she receives such a file from the Grandmothers. Fina, a psychoanalyst and a member of the Grandmothers organisation considers the biographical file as instrumental in the possibility of working through the trauma of 'the truth' and of carrying out subjective reconstruction work. Fina's research considers the positive aspects of this trauma, emphasising 'the work that these men and women carry out to regain something that belongs to them by right: their historical origins, their identity, their relation to the memory of those who were their true parents and the world of desire that contained them before they were born' (Fina 2013, pp. 2–3, my translation).

According to Fina, the Grandmothers maintain that 'the truth makes the Grandchildren more beautiful'. 'This is not old granny's nonsense', he argues, 'I've witnessed this change every time. Not sure handsome is the right word, but they definitely undergo a transformation; their presence becomes stronger, they move differently, their voices change. The Grandmothers have a unique position to be able to articulate certain truths', he says and half smiles partly entertained by the staggering truth contained in what could be thought a banality (Interview with Fina, unpublished). Fina understands that the trauma of knowing entails a form of freedom.

A quote from Lacan's *Seminar RSI* might help us elaborate on Fina's claim. Contrary to the emphasis Lacan had placed on the symbolic order in the 1950s, in 1975 he says: 'The imaginary is the place where every truth is enunciated' (Lacan 1974–1975). This beauty, pointed out by the Grandmothers, is a transformation suffered in the imaginary of the body. This transformation is arguably linked to a re-ordering of the symbolic domain and a re-positioning of the subject in relation to the Real, including the Real of his/her history. Hence, the process of historical reconstruction would open up the path to a process of subjective historisation with notable changes on the level of narcissism (Riquelme 2005, p. 65).

As we know, the imaginary refers to Lacan's mirror stage, i.e. to narcissistic identification and the constitution of the ego in its relation to others. Lacan refers to this identification with the other of the mirror as the source of both love and aggression. Imaginary identification does not take place, however, without the symbolic frame offered by the big Other. Lacan argues that without the Other of language, without the signifiers of the Other, the subject cannot sustain himself in the 'position of a Narcissus' (Soler 2009, p. 31, my translation). His ideal-ego, what we call narcissism, is dependent on the signifiers that come from the Other. Lacan talks of the baby who turns his head towards the mother who is holding him in front of the mirror as if he was searching for a symbolic witness to sanction, to confirm this image as himself.

A moving testimony took place at the Argentinian Court of Justice during the restitution of a girl of eight who had been kidnapped when she was two or three. Having refused to respond to another name, this young girl had managed to retain her original name. In meeting her grandmother for the first time, she behaved defensively and refused to engage. At some point the grandmother called the nickname with which, as a little girl, she used to call her father. The sound of this name (as discussed earlier) appeared to resonate in her and she agreed to look at the family photographs. She looked at the pictures at the same time as looking at herself in the mirror and asked the grandmother: 'What colour were my mother's eyes?' A true Lacanian young girl! The analyst recounts that from the moment she moved into her grandparents' house, her bodily movements and gestures went through

a transformation as she became familiar with the environment in which she had spent the first years of her life. Her grandmother recognised the same pirouette she used to do as a little girl when going down a step. She entered her old room and said emphatically: 'this is my room!' (Conte 1995, pp. 98–100).

In 'The Mirror Stage' Lacan (2006/1949) describes the moment the child recognises his image in the mirror indicated by the 'illuminative mimicry' of a sudden insight of the situational apperception. Confronted with his reflection in the mirror, the child animates his image with 'a series of gestures in which he playfully experiences the relationship between the movements made in the image and the reflected environment, and between this virtual complex and the reality it duplicates—namely, the child's own body, and the persons and even things around him' (Lacan 2006/1949, p. 94). In the case of the young Argentinian girl, the encounter with the familiar, albeit long-forgotten, environment shows its transformational effects upon her movements and gestures.

Being Mad and Going Mad

There is a fundamental difference between being and going mad (Leader 2012). Lacan maintained that unless there is an underlying psychotic structure, madness is not a choice. As discussed earlier, for Lacan, madness has to do with foreclosure; with the rejection of a signifier he called the signifier of the Name of the Father. The rejection of this signifier leaves a hole in the structure that will have implications for the relation of the subject with the symbolic order. The paternal metaphor, as he called it, is fundamentally about the inscription of a loss of symbiosis with the mother and access to a life of desire. This inscription is what fails in psychosis, leaving a hole in its place. Life contingencies often confront a subject with the necessity to re-accommodate their place in the world or re-formulate their relation to a symbolic Other and this conjuncture does sometimes precipitate a subject into a breakdown.

As mentioned earlier, what is puzzling about the recovered Grandchildren, is that despite the perverse structure underpinning the

act of their appropriation and in some cases, their upbringing, they have repeatedly demonstrated a remarkable symbolic resourcefulness. Lacan's notion of the phantasy might help us find some avenues to think beyond madness. If as other analysts (Bleichmar 1997; Rodulfo 1997) have said, the trauma of restitution is a rectifying form of trauma, what does this trauma rectify?

Taking on board ideas introduced by Freud in his 'Letter 52' (1896) about the inscription of memory traces, I would like to propose the hypothesis that the recovery of a past that has been amputated from a subject's history might enable a process of re-inscription of memory and a re-organisation of the symbolic domain, with effects upon the subject's relation to the Real of their history. To put it more simply, the encounter with the truth of origins and all which that entails, might demand a re-writing of history and a reconfiguration of what Lacan called phantasy.

There are many ways to define phantasy. A simple way would be to define it as the singular response a subject gives to the question concerning the enigmatic desire of the Other. For a child to be able to formulate the question 'what does the Other want from me?' he has to feel legitimised to do so (Amigo 2012). Moreover, even when the question has been articulated, it is not easy or always possible to find an answer (Amigo 2012, p. 16). The aspect of legitimisation comes from the Other and is key to thinking about the problematics of the appropriated children. The vast majority of these children were not legally adopted, but unlawfully taken and registered as one might register property. This does not mean that the question about the desire of the Other, murky as it was, did not proceed.

An encounter of this nature is no doubt likely to shake the frame through which someone has organised their vision about who they are. Many of the testimonies given by the Grandchildren suggest, however, that this frame, this phantasy was somehow in place. If this was so, the encounter with the truth of the origins would demand, as it does in the course of an analysis, a deconstruction and a reformulation of the phantasy.

The truth of origins is not the truth of the subject. This has to be constructed rather than given. To deny this dimension would constitute

an act of violence. But to accept it is to accept that beyond the social discourse that sees every recovery of a Grandchild as a triumph over the horror of the past, these subjects are also the product of the bonds developed with those who brought them up. The appropriated children became the passive actors of the social and political conjunctures that so distinctly marked their lives. However, listening to these subjects' testimonies, one can only but feel the tremendous weight of their singularity, which brings into question any preconceptions regarding the deterministic nature of such a history of origins.

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Troubling States of Mind: Sacrificing the Other

Amal Treacher Kabesh

Arendt argues in *Men in Dark Times* that evil deeds are not what constitutes the darkness, but rather the darkness is the disorder: the injustice, the socio-political forces that are not easy to perceive and the 'double-talk of nearly all official representatives who, without interruption and in many ingenious variations, explained away unpleasant facts and justified concerns' (1968, p. viii). Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, elaborating on Arendt's conceptualisation of darkness writes, darkness is 'what comes when the open, light spaces between people, the public spaces where people can reveal themselves are shunned or avoided; the darkness is a hateful attitude toward the public realm, toward politics' (2006, p. 6). Totalitarian governments ensure the disappearance of politics and I am using this depiction for the authoritarian regimes that have governed Egypt recently—this form of government destroys politics by attacking the humanity that should mark human societies (Young-Bruehl 2006, p. 39). In Egypt, the attack on humanity involves the grip of the State on the Egyptian people in relation to the repression

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of diverse opinions that are in opposition to the dominant ideologies. In too many cases, opposition can lead to imprisonment for long periods, the use of torture and the subtle, but nevertheless powerful, coercion of opinions and perceptions through the use of the media. It is the internalisation of attacking humanity that is a worrying feature of Egyptian contemporary society. Attacking humanity takes many forms: from the onslaught of everyday acts of humiliation, exploitation and contempt towards the poor to the emotions of hatred, contempt and fear towards people who are perceived as 'other' by which I mean people of another faith, or those who adhere to a different ideological schema built up from a different value system—for example, secularism, feminism, or Islamic ideology. It is the central contention of this essay that the need to belong, to feel secure and to inhabit a space and place that is already known, leads to troubling socio-emotional responses and processes.

In the summer of 2013, the Egyptian people were in a state of high alert and dominated by the political events that occurred following the ousting of President Morsi and the imprisonment of many leading, and ordinary, members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Following the persistent protests and demonstrations that occurred during January/February 2011, the then President—Hosni Mubarak—was overthrown. The Supreme Council of Armed Forces governed as an interim measure while a new constitution was re-written and while adequate strictures were institutionalized so that fair parliamentary and presidential elections could take place. In July 2012, the Muslim Brotherhood won the majority of seats in Parliament and Mohammed Morsi was elected President. These political gains were won by a narrow majority and the Muslim Brotherhood were in power for one year during which the majority of the Egyptian population became increasingly angry, disaffected and disappointed with their incompetent governance, especially in relation to economic stability. There was, then, an increasing amount of demonstrations with a growing number of people joining the protests (and these included previous supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood). A petition was organised by the organisation Tamarod (Rebel) against the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood and it is estimated that this petition was signed by about 24 million people.

What happened next is complex and Kandil describes it thus: 'General Commander Sisi offered to broker an agreement, but the

Brothers flexed their muscles, deploying armed supporters to clear the anti-Islamist sit-in around the presidential palace in December 2012, killing and torturing dozens in the process' (2014, p. 15). Tensions mounted as did the number of demonstrators. In fact, the 'popular outburst was historically unprecedented. Millions took to the streets, not once, but three times in the space of a month: to rebel against Morsi on 30 June, to celebrate his overthrow on 3 July, and to express their defiance of Islamist violence on 26 July' (Kandil 2014, p. 15). The political situation degenerated further and the Muslim Brotherhood was ousted from power on July 3rd 2013, with many of its members, leading and ordinary, imprisoned. In response, the Muslim Brotherhood instituted two main occupations in two areas of Cairo: one outside Cairo University, and the other an infamous occupation in Midan Al-Rabaa, which lasted for 7 weeks (Kandil 2014).

Everyday life became impossible as individuals were dominated by overwhelming anxiety and fear: ordinary living became freighted with emotion. The atmosphere was laden with affect and, as someone living in Cairo, it was obvious we were all on high-alert for any sign, although, frankly, I am not clear what we were looking for, and what it was that we wanted and needed. In any case, before going out, I would stand on the balcony scanning the skies for any sign of smoke and listen carefully to discern whether sounds were different from the usual noise of everyday life. Like most people I know, I was over-attentive and over-alert to my environment; caution and hyper-vigilance meant that nothing could be taken for granted and paranoia dominated. For example, one morning I was walking down my street and a man pulled up in his car to buy bread from the cart. As he turned, I imagined, with visceral panic, that he had reached for a gun and was going to shoot me. I am not prone to these moments of paranoid imagination, but during that particular summer, I had internalised profoundly a sense of danger that was all too pervasive and overwhelming. This particular state of mind was commonplace and it was partly formed through endless conversations with others and reinforced by the media, especially the TV that was full of emotive footage.

A primitive anxiety that we would be obliterated dominated public consciousness. Egyptian TV showed endless footage purporting to be violence undertaken by members of the Muslim Brotherhood. One

scene of a young man being thrown off the roof of a building apparently by members of the Muslim Brotherhood, was shown repeatedly. I was, and remain, very affected by this image and I cannot slough it off—it remains with me. This footage represents the horror of violence, the needless murder of a young man; and captures a prevalent fantasy that we, as a people, were going to fall into an abyss. Falling, as Claire Kahane writes, is the ultimate signifier of loss of control, loss of agency and loss of boundaries (Kahane 2003). Most of us did not fall during that summer. We clung on, fearful and discombobulated, but the fear of falling as Eleanor Kaufman points out is the fear of '*losing ground, having the rug pulled out from under you, being pushed over the edge, catch me I'm falling*' (in Kahane 2003, p. 110). The footage of this young man falling signifies and represents a profound fear as we experienced the

> enactment of a multidimensional set of primal fears uncannily become history; the invasion of our invulnerable boundaries, the failure of the law of civilization and the collapse of social guarantees that are enforced by its prohibitions, and an apprehension that we too could be pulled from civilization with all its discontents into a dark hole. (Kahane 2003, p. 115)

During this time of profound fear and anxiety, a problematic state of mind was evoked that was dominated by emotions, which led to an absence of thinking and identification. This state of mind, I argue, was driven by the need for safety alongside the desire to belong and to remain attached to family, friends, community and Egypt as a particular nation. These needs are historically, socially, politically and emotionally laden and burdened with fantasies and narratives. They lead, however, to a state of mind which is unthinking, is based on exclusion and a profound unwillingness to engage in complex identificatory processes. I started writing this chapter during the summer of 2014 and, re-writing it now in early 2016, it is difficult for me to understand the heightened terror of that summer? From the safety of temporal and physical distance I am at a loss.

Susannah Radstone writes 'an event may prove traumatic, indeed not because of its inherently shocking nature but due to the unbearable or forbidden fantasies that it prompts. Or *puncturing* of a fantasy that has

previously sustained a sense of identity—national as well as individual' (Radstone 2003, p. 120). Fantasies were punctured—fantasies that individuals held close of maturity and integrity, fantasies of a myth of Egypt as a nation that does not turn on its own. The Muslim Brotherhood were represented, perceived and believed to be an ontological threat to the nation, to one's family and community. It was represented by the State media and perceived by Egyptian citizens as putting the international organization of the Muslim Brotherhood over and above Egypt itself. A powerful narrative that Egyptian citizens adhere to strongly is that Egypt is independent of all outside influences, whether from other Arab nations, or from Western societies. Alongside this narrative, there is another myth: that Egyptian peoples are united (whether Christian or Muslim, poor or rich, educated or not) and that splits and divisions that exist elsewhere will not occur in Egypt. These powerful myths, that belie all nations, were punctured.

In this troubling and troublesome socio-political-affective context, the issue of identification, or not, is fundamental to developing an understanding of one aspect of the psychic process that occurred. Kaja Silverman provides a useful distinction between idiopathic and heteropathic identification (1996): Heteropathic identification requires an identification with a person or experience that is perceived as foreign, even alien. Heteropathic identification requires the empathetic pull towards the person who is perceived as other, and the experience that is outside of what we know and have experienced. Idiopathic identification, however, is grounded on an imagined shared identity and maintains a sense of 'people like us'. During the summer of 2013 and beyond, there seems to have been little identification, by many Egyptian people, with the Muslim Brotherhood, or a wish to engage with their belief systems and to understand what led them to occupy the squares. The discourses of the State media and those in private conversation tended towards outright dismissal of the Brotherhood's values and ideology. Idiopathic identification dominated.

At the risk of repetition, and it cannot be stressed enough that during the summer of 2013, there was a dehumanisation of the other—especially members of the Muslim Brotherhood—as an atmosphere of cruelty dominated throughout conversations and media representations.

This 'practice of cruelty' had the function of squeezing out humanity and preventing human understanding from any modification (Bollas 2011, p. 82). There was an attack on complexity, on different values and belief systems (something also perpetrated by members of the Muslim Brotherhood while they were in power). A particular way of maintaining certainty occurred (and persists), which was through eliminating doubt and uncertainty. As Christopher Bollas argues in his essay 'The Fascist State of Mind', any mental processes that questioned the prevailing and dominant narratives became quickly equated with weakness and had to be expelled (Bollas 2011, p. 83). One cruel way that the other human being was dismissed (and here I mean members of the Muslim Brotherhood) was to define the Brotherhood's views as absurd and thereby render them less intelligible. Declarations from members of the Muslim Brotherhood that the Prophet Mohammed had visited them in their dreams and declared his support for their cause facilitated this ridicule and dismissal.

The issue here, as it always is, concerns thinking and how to understand the position of the other in a way that is not laden with cruelty and hatred. This is what we could not do. We were unable to picture the physical state of the camps and refused to engage in an act of the imagination that would have facilitated envisaging what it must have been like to live in intolerable conditions for over seven weeks (it was high summer with temperatures frequently reaching 42–45 °C; humidity was high and there was no sanitation and so on). Instead, we turned our identification and aligned ourselves to the people who lived in the neighbourhoods—people like us—and what was happening to them. For example, my brother-in-law and his family live on Midan Al-Rabaa and we identified with them, too easily understanding the absolute disruption to their daily life. On reflection, it was too painful and too challenging to identify with the living conditions of the Muslim Brotherhood as identification in this instance would require identification with the body as physical and as visceral. We could not imagine, because we could not even engage in the first stage of identification, which involves the act of being a witness. As Silverman suggests, 'a capacity to locate oneself within the body of another is fundamental to the ability to witness—literally, to *see*—the pain of another.' She

describes 'a "specular pain" that arises when a subject is forced to witness the presence of a body' (quoted in Bennett 2003, p. 135). We turn away from a body, or bodies, that cannot claim to be inhabiting conditions that facilitate the body to pass as civilised.

There are many ways to be violent and while the majority of the Egyptian population did not take to arms, we were violent in our contempt, dismissal and in our relentless projection that it is only members of the Muslim Brotherhood that are violent. As Jacqueline Rose points out, we can 'rarely bear our own violence and are far too ready to declare—I am never evil/ aggressive/ hateful/contemptuous—you are. No one wants to wear these negative emotions' (Rose 2013, p. 141). I found it difficult; to be more honest, I found it impossible, to use the word 'massacre' when talking about what happened when the Military and the Police cleared the camps. I still find it hard because in using the word—massacre—it confronts me with what I was complicit with, threatens me with the knowledge of what I witnessed yet ignored, and my own cruel and thoughtless indifference. I made numb the experience by 'refusing to name the act of killing, finding instead many alternative words' (Bollas 2011, p. 83).

Empathy did not take place, and the turmoil that thinking and feeling can bring was shunned. Elisabeth Young Bruehl (1998) overturns the usual understanding of empathy and argues that empathy 'involves, rather, putting another *in yourself*, becoming another person's habitat, as it were, but without dissolving the person, without digesting the person' (1998, p. 22). Radstone has explored how witnessing trauma and atrocity can 'evoke an empathetic affect that, in moving the spectator, might also prompt re-imaginings of our relationships with each other within the bounds of nations and beyond' (Radstone 2014). The difficulty, as Rose points out is, that 'identification relies on spots of blindness—one link recognized, another immediately put back beyond memory, pushed underground. No less than personal memory, political memory is highly selective and tendentious' (Rose 1998, p. 52). Identification frequently involves dis-identification that is an active giving up of other possible identifications and understandings.

Those of us who do not align ourselves with the Muslim Brotherhood persisted in positioning members of the Muslim Brotherhood as beyond

identification and as outside of empathetic responses. The dominant narrative aligned those who were complicit with the dominant ideology as mature human beings and those in opposition, no matter how mild the disagreement, as alien and to be repudiated. As Sara Ahmed writes, hatred creates and enforces boundaries between self and other, and between communities (2004). The other is represented as a threat to our very existence. Hatred is intense, visceral, and is a negative attachment to others as it creates the 'I', the 'we' and the 'them' in problematic alignments (Ahmed 2004, p. 51).

Indifference can have different meanings that are attached to various states of mind. Indifference can be healthy as it can allow self and other to exist as distinct human beings, but linked in a shared humanity. Indifference can also allow the other person to exist without scrutiny from others. In this way, indifference can be valuable as it allows another human to exist without being overly freighted with projections, fantasies and affect. Indifference, however, can also be ruthless, aggressive and oddly devoid of emotion—marked by an emptiness and coldness. Indifference is a multifaceted state of mind as it can be emotionless, while it can also be a cover-up for hatred. Indifference, paradoxically, can lead to hate and overloaded affect and it can work the other way round as hatred can, and does, unleash indifference.

A benign interpretation of indifference would perhaps explore how indifference is a defence against aggression and connection, but I want to point to another aspect of indifference that is as a violent refutation of responsibility, care and thought for other human beings who stand in a different place to oneself in relation to religious faith and political beliefs. Aggression is embedded in indifference of this kind, which can lead to the unthinking wish, and need, to sacrifice the other. One problem I faced while working on this chapter was that I persistently faced the problem of the empty page, which was more than the usual challenge of collecting and cohering my thoughts. I think the bare page reflects accurately one aspect of indifference, which is that indifference is empty. Indifference can empty out the self and other human beings as nothing happens and nothing is allowed to take place. There is, moreover, a profound lack of concern in relation to that vacant space within the self and between

self and other. If anything, there is a commitment to maintaining the indifference. The problem with perceiving indifference as violence, as hate, as contempt, or whatever is loaded with emotion, albeit negative emotion, is that it bypasses an important, and frequently denied, experience that I think of as a void. To understand indifference just as a defence against negative and hateful emotions can reassure us that we are still human—that, paradoxically, we still have a humanity. While negative emotions of hate, anger, fury were evoked and experienced in the summer of 2013, there was also a ruthless coldness and a deadness of feeling which was vacant. I am not proud of this aspect of myself as it worries me and can wake me up in a cold sweat when I am feeling more thoughtful and connected. While, I hate and feel contemptuous towards that part of me; it exists, persists and cannot be wished away. This state of mind is always at risk of return.

The violence enacted by ordinary Egyptian citizens, in the attempt to save our illusion of humanity was that we wanted (still want) some events, emotions and fantasies to remain unseen and unknown (Bollas 2011, p. 145). Indifference here is loaded with motivation and with psychic activity because we did not want to know about our violence, complicities and aggressions. Furthermore, violence is never more deadly than when it believes itself justified (Bollas 2011, p. 146). One way that we reassured ourselves of our humanity was through turning hate into love—so we spoke of our love for our families, friends, community and Egypt and denied, if not actively refuted, our hatred. This is a commonplace manoeuvre through which we persuade ourselves that we feel negative emotions, not because we hate, but precisely because we love (Ahmed 2004). There are many psychic manoeuvres and another justification goes along the following lines: 'if *they* were not like this *I* would not hate them'. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood were repeatedly represented as violent by the State media. For example, there was much footage of al-Qaeda flags flying in Midan Al-Rabaa, which was perceived and represented as proof of the Brotherhood's violent intent. The difficulty here is that the occupied squares did have arms and, as Kandil describes it, we 'heard that the Al-Qaeda leader, the Egyptian medic Ayman al-Zawahri, was making terrorist threats on the Brotherhood's behalf; and listened to speeches rallying militants from

around the globe, encouraging them to blow themselves up in public squares' (Kandil 2014, p. 16). The tag line of 'Egypt Against Terrorism' was shown continually on TV screens, especially the news, reminding us continually of the apparently imminent danger of terrorism. The murder of over 40 border guards in the summers of 2012 and 2014 during Ramadan and at the beginning of Iftar reinforced these perceptions.

Phantasies dictated actions on both sides and were reinforced by the media, political rhetoric and competing socio-political ideologies, whether those of the government and the state, or of the Muslim Brotherhood. The leadership of the Brotherhood could not grasp the depth of dissatisfaction with its rule and persistently represented itself as a victim of the Egyptian media, the police and the military. The government positioned itself as the institution that would ensure the safety of citizens and guarantee that terrorism would be wiped out in Egypt: that civil strife would not escalate and that Egypt would escape the fate of its neighbours—Libya and Syria. Part of the need for unity and to belong may lead us to pay a considerable price, but under duress, there is nothing we will not do to ensure our continuing existence and the existence of those who we are attached to and love.

We inhabit, perhaps far too frequently and not necessarily when we are under duress, a state of mind that is full of identification with the aggressor. As Rose puts it, 'in the throes of identification—with victim or executioner—there is no limit to how far people are willing to go' (2013, p. 145). Judith Butler and Rose provide an in-depth and differentiated analysis as to how human beings are enthralled with, and compelled to submit to, the law. Butler explores how subjectivity is based on submission to the law. We turn towards the law and authority 'because it promises identity' (Butler 1997, p. 108). Ideology, problematic for diverse reasons, is particularly troubling, as it constitutes subjectivity itself. Human beings are seduced into the law and we are beholden to the law for our very existence. Perhaps, if we can only assure our existence 'in terms of the law, and the law requires subjection, subjectification, then perversely, one may (always already) yield to the law in order to continue to assure one's own existence' (Butler 1997, p. 112). Fearful for our identity, our very existence, we are beholden to authority, problematic or not. Fear, as Rose points out, is the 'driving force of social

life' (2013, p. 151). Fearful, already hailed by the Law and by authority, we are hideously complicit with aggressive authority. We may declare otherwise but we are already captivated and complicit.

During the summer of 2013, there was perpetual repetition of news coverage from the 1950s (specifically following the Suez Crisis of 1956) showing Gamal Abdul Nasser delivering speeches full of popular appeal and nationalist rhetoric. These images reminded the Egyptian people of a time of national unity and hope, and the short period of history when it appeared that Egypt would become a society based on social equality and free from the interference of imperial powers. The links, spurious or actual, between Gamal Abdul Nasser and Abdul Fatah Al-Sisi were made persistently, and photographs of the two of them were shown side by side, and these photographs were shown both on TV and on countless banners at demonstrations that were held in support of the military. The 'links' between Nasser and Sisi became more pronounced especially during the presidential campaign when Sisi was standing as a candidate. Nasser and Sisi were represented as powerful leaders that Egypt, as a nation, requires for stability and security. These representations, however, slid seamlessly into the need for the patriarchal father. It was as if a war was taking place between the good and powerful father (Nasser and Sisi) against the malignant and yet weak father (Morsi). The conflict, if not battle, took place between the sons of two fathers: 'the powerful "good" patriarchal father and those who represent the "bad" father of the "primal horde"' (Radstone 2003, p. 121). At the risk of banality, Nasser and Sisi were represented as necessarily authoritative, strong patriarchal fathers. It was their perceived capacities to be authoritarian, strong and powerful that seemed to captivate so many Egyptian people.

Part of the web of exploration has to focus, even if reluctantly, on the willingness of human beings to capitulate to authority in order for the self and known/loved others to survive. There is no escape as subjectivity is formed through, and within, authority, law and power relations. Captivated (as in seduced and imprisoned) by the law and authority, we are all embroiled and embedded in power that is exploitative, repressive and subordinates us all. As Freud points out, the law is not the antithesis of violence 'on the contrary, law *is* violence.' At the level of the state, it is the president, army, and police who are terrorists: legal violence is

deadlier, if sometimes less spectacular, than lawless violence (in Ellman 2005, p. x). The power of the State cannot be dismissed as its grip rests precisely on how, following Althusser and Butler, we internalise, perpetuate and are seduced by power and the wish for power. How else can we begin to edge towards answering a troublesome question posed by Jacqueline Rose: 'what might lead someone, in a state of real potential danger, to identify with, stretch out—yearn—towards the aggressor? What might lead someone to seem passionately to covet what they most fear?' (Rose 2003, p. 13). We turn towards the law willingly, because we are already seduced and embroiled in and through the law, no matter what consoling narratives of resistance and agency we tell ourselves. The longing, if not yearning, for authority leads to troubling states of mind.

Multiple and nuanced identifications did not take place during the summer of 2013, and indeed beyond, and by this, I mean the necessary psychic manoeuvres required to think through the moral quagmires that are frequently an aspect of being in the world. To argue, as I have done in this chapter, that troubling states of mind confront us as complicated human beings, is not to argue that one gives up on judgement and becomes indifferent to effective political action and thought. Anything but, as it is still incumbent to identify, and imagine, the value and belief systems of other human beings who are perceived as alien to the self; in short, to find our emotional, thinking and ethical bearings no matter the challenges.

Radstone explores how there is a world of difference between being a witness who is full of triumph and distance over other human beings as opposed to being a witness based on identification (2014). This identification is based on knowledge of the vulnerability and frailty of human beings (Butler 2004). What needs to be foregrounded is 'the translation of unremembered wounds *into* narrative memory's present, leaving the way open for their eventual consignment to the past, reparative remembering constitutes the next step, transforming the "presentness" of these memories into a publicly acknowledged and pragmatically agreed "past"' (Radstone 2014).

Writing in 2016, the task ahead for Egyptian citizens looks complex, emotionally fraught and in need of much careful thinking and judgement. Without this care, entrenchment and repetition will entrap us

all. We experienced our most primal fears become history; we witnessed our own fall and the fall of others; we were uncannily terrified with all of the resonances evoked by profound fear. Our worst nightmares were realised during the summer of 2013 and all of this has to be acknowledged and known. But history cannot stall there as the necessary next steps based on thought need to be undertaken. The passive tense needs to be noted, as Lene Auestad pointed out pertinently (personal communication) and it should be of concern. It is tempting to re-write the sentence to obscure my wish that someone else does the thinking for me and that I am rid of the responsibility, indeed the burden of thinking. It is unclear quite where this thinking should take place, and whether it should be with others as a communal undertaking, or whether it should be personal reflection. Wherever, however, thinking takes place, it is clear that this troubling endeavour needs to occur, otherwise further oppression, resistance and absence of thinking will recur with devastating consequences for all, whatever our identifications.

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Ferenc Mérei and the Politics of Psychoanalysis in Hungary

Ferenc Erős

A connection between politics and psychoanalysis, a strange 'love affair', as Eszter Salgó called it in her book *Psychoanalytic Reflections on Politics* (Salgó 2014), was firmly established in Hungary as early as the 1900s. Its first manifestation was the work of the psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi. Ferenczi's theoretical and therapeutic contributions opened new ways for understanding psychic repression and trauma from a psychosocial, as well as from a socio-political, point of view. In his early socio-political writings he advocated a direction that he called 'individual socialism', 'liberal socialism', or 'individual collectivism'.[1] In *Clinical Diary* (written in 1932, shortly before his death, published first in 1988), he added a utopian dimension to his ideas on individual or liberal socialism. As he writes:

> If one were not ashamed to indulge in prophecies, then one would expect from the future neither the triumph of one sided ruthless capitalism nor that of fanciful egalitarianism, but rather a full recognition of the

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> existence of purely selfish drives, which remain under control but must be partly satisfied in reality; the elimination of a great deal of neurotic, still passionate, one might even say violently excessive goodness (eat-bird-or-die policy), and, finally, perhaps the gradual unfolding of a naïve good-heartedness. (Ferenczi 1988, 152)

Ferenczi died on May 22, 1933, a few months after the Nazi takeover in Germany. With his death, the 'love affair' between psychoanalysis and politics came to an abrupt end in Central Europe. The idea of a 'liberal socialism' has remained hopelessly utopian, at least in his native country, Hungary. After the second world war, those psychoanalysts, mostly Ferenczi's pupils, who had remained in the country during the second world war and, by chance, survived the Holocaust (among them, Imre Hermann, István Hollós, and Lilly Hajdu), though they were committed socialists, were exposed to more and more intensive pressures from the political and ideological authorities of the new regime. In particular, they were under pressure to give up their profession, and to abandon their commitment to the teaching of Freud. 'Freudianism' as a 'bourgeois ideology' became a major ideological enemy for the Soviet type of Marxism predominant in Eastern Europe in that period. The condemnation of psychoanalysis started in the Soviet Union already in the 1920s, and resulted in its full expulsion by the early 1930s (Erős 2012a).

It is this context in which Ferenc Mérei, a Hungarian psychologist (1909–1986) deserves attention. I am certain that Mérei deserves to be remembered in a collection of essays that deals with politics and psychoanalysis, even if his relation to psychoanalysis was far from being a pure 'love affair'. On the contrary, it was a complex relationship which can be understood only through a contextual interpretation.

Though Mérei's activities flourished several decades ago, his achievements are not only worthy of historical remembrance but have implications for the present situation. More than 25 years after the breakdown of bureaucratic state socialism, the Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán's conception of 'illiberal democracy' seems to prevail in the social and political life of the country. Among the most striking features of this 'illiberal democracy' are the growing authoritarianism, nationalism and centralization present in all fields of social and political life—the

suppression of autonomous civil communities that were ideals for Mérei in his time.[2]

Hungary's history is full of 'transition periods', from dictatorship into democracies, and vice versa. Each transition represses earlier traumas and introduces new ones—a never ending circulation of births, burials, forgetting and remembering. Ferenc Mérei was an active participant in one such dramatic transition, one that occurred almost seventy years ago, between 1945 and 1949. This transition saw Hungary change from a Fascist dictatorship into a pluralistic democracy and, following this short and fragile democratic period, into dictatorship again. Thus the country moved from one type of totalitarian system, fascism, into another form, Stalinism.

Mérei was an 'archetype' of the Hungarian Jewish intelligentsia of the twentieth century. In the 1920s he became a committed left socialist at a very young age. Since he had practically no chance of making a university career in Hungary, where a law on *numerus clausus* substantially restricted access to higher education for young Jewish people, in 1928 he went to study at the Sorbonne (in Paris). Here he undertook courses in economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology and in other social science subjects. One of his Parisian masters was Henri Wallon, the famous developmental psychologist and Marxist thinker, who first described the 'mirror stage', which became the central idea of Jacques Lacan's conceptual framework. After his return to Hungary, in the mid-1930s, he started to work as a psychologist and educator, mostly in the field of professional guidance and counselling. For a time, he became a pupil and an enthusiastic follower of Lipót (Leopold) Szondi (1893−1986), a charismatic doctor and psychologist. Szondi was the founder of so called 'instinctual diagnostics' and 'fate analysis', and developed a special projective diagnostic test procedure, the Szondi test (still in use by some clinical psychologists at the present time).[3]

During the Second World War, Mérei was drafted into the Hungarian Army as a Jewish serviceman in the non-arms bearing labour service. His unit was sent to the Russian front, where survival chances were much smaller than for a soldier in an ordinary armed unit. Occasionally, he was able to send to, and receive letters from, his wife who at that time lived in Budapest with their daughters. These letters

demonstrate his exceptional will to cope with, and survive, the hardest and most humiliating circumstances. Eventually, he managed to escape from his squadron and, in 1944, joined the Soviet forces as a volunteer, returning to Hungary a year later in a Soviet officer's uniform. He worked, for a short time, as an editor of *Igaz Szó*, the Hungarian version of a Red Army newspaper. Between 1945 and 1949, he held various key positions in the management of the public education system. One of his main assignments was to organise the modernization and reorganization of Hungary's educational system, e.g. to establish a unified primary school system. At the same time, he became one of the spiritual and ideological leaders of a radical leftist avant-garde youth movement called *NÉKOSZ*: the movement of 'people's colleges', which aimed to recruit and educate a new elite, a new generation of intelligentsia, coming mostly from poor families of industrial and agricultural workers. He directed a psychological section of the municipal pedagogical institute in Budapest, and besides counselling work, he conducted laboratory and survey research in the fields of pedagogical, educational, developmental and social psychology. He advocated a discipline called 'pedology', which is the complex (biological, psychological, sociological and anthropological) study of the child, which was very popular in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s.[4]

In 1950, following a Communist party resolution against pedology which had been condemned as a 'bourgeois pseudo-science' (duplicating exactly the Soviet excommunication of pedology in 1936), Mérei was dismissed from all positions in public service. NÉKOSZ, the aforementioned youth organization had already been banned the previous year. A few years later, in the summer of 1956, he participated actively in the events, movements, and public discussions preceding the October Hungarian revolution against the Stalinist regime. During the uprising, he was one of the leaders of the students' revolutionary committee. He was arrested in 1958, and was condemned to a long imprisonment for his activities during the revolution and also for his participation in an alleged 'conspiracy' against the repressive regime of the party leader János Kádár. During his prison term, he wrote a series of notes, containing his ideas, reflections, and observations. He analyzed, for example, the appearance of social relationships in the manifest content of his

own dreams (Mérei 1994). The notes had been secretly smuggled out from prison, and were published much later under the title *Psychological Diary,* which gave a summary of his main ideas (Mérei 1998).

He received amnesty in 1963, and after his release, he worked as clinical psychologist in the psycho-diagnostic unit of the National Institute for Psychiatry and Neurology in Budapest. Alongside his clinical and diagnostic activities, he resumed his work in social psychology. He developed a special version of Jacob Moreno's socio-metric method, the main objective of which was to assess what he called a 'hidden network' of social groups and communities (Mérei 2001). He also pioneered and introduced psychodrama methods and group psychotherapy in Hungary. In his late period, in the 1970s and 1980s, still under surveillance by the secret police, he became an informal 'guru' of Hungarian psychology, attracting and inspiring a great number of pupils and followers.

I am afraid that this brief biographical sketch does not adequately reflect Mérei's manifold activities and involvements. Any static picture of him is at risk of being misleading as he was a *figure of transitions* politically and psychologically: transitions from one political regime to another one, and transitions from one identity to another one. He represents a continuous movement from the internal to the external; from the centre to the periphery and vice versa, and from the formal to the informal and back again. The unifying force of this fragmented life history was a particularly strong resilience in face of traumata, and an uncompromising opposition to any formal, coercive, and bureaucratic power. In this sense, he was a true follower of Ferenczi's utopian ideas on 'liberal socialism'.

Mérei, though not a professional psychoanalyst, played an important role in the history of psychoanalysis in Hungary.[5] His relation to psychoanalysis is, as I mentioned before, a complex matter that can be interpreted from different viewpoints. He was, in the beginning, an ardent critic of psychoanalysis *at the wrong time and in the wrong place*. His ideologically conceived criticism became part and parcel of the attacks against the Hungarian psychoanalytic movement which led to its dissolution, practically its banishment, in 1949. On the other hand, his activities in the psychodrama movement in the 1970s and 1980s created

a transitional space for new possibilities and directions for a younger generation of Hungarian psychoanalysts. In what follows, I will focus on his early works that were *both anti-psychoanalytical and psychoanalytical* simultaneously.

His most important early work, published originally in 1947,[6] was, in fact, a simple experiment with kindergarten children. The experiment can be summarized as follows: after a period of togetherness among a group of children who had been playing in their own customary way, the experimenter introduced to the group a somewhat older child, a 'leader' with strong social dominance and pervasiveness. It was observed that the 'leader', who attempted to change the group's already established customs and traditions, failed to achieve this aim by direct 'dictatorial' means. Instead, he had to rely on a *detour*, an 'indirect way'. This detour involved slowly changing the customary forms of play of his fellow children, first conforming to the established norms and customs, and then changing them gradually, almost imperceptibly. For Mérei, the experiment proved the prevalence of a 'jointly lived communality of experience' and the potential for resistance by the group which, as a whole, is stronger than each of its individual members. The experiment was a variation of the classical experiments on leadership styles undertaken by the German-American Gestalt psychologist, Kurt Lewin in the 1930s. Mérei's starting point was explicitly 'anti-psychoanalytical', inasmuch as he emphasized in a Marxist spirit—the primary social *determination* of individual behaviour, and argued against instinctual theories, advocated by his earlier master Lipót Szondi. In his way, he was working against some influential understandings of psychoanalysis during that period.

On the other hand, Mérei's interpretation of his experiment was far from being an objective description of the results, as is the case with most social psychological works. Inspired by the psycho-dramatist Jacob Moreno, he supposed that in the small group—or, as he called it, on *the micro-sociological level*—the 'social' and the 'psychological' inseparably mould together. On this phenomenological level, the group has its own subjectivity, and is held together through a *jointly lived and shared subjective experience* that is mostly unconscious, or remains preconscious, settling down on the periphery of consciousness. The social unconscious

finds its expression through shared fantasies, images, dreams, and primarily through *allusions* that, according to Mérei, is the 'mother tongue' of shared experiences.

He elaborated this concept to describe the effects of *togetherness*, jointly lived experiences in small children's groups that occur when a fragment, a single gesture or a signal may elicit the emotional vividness and depth of the original experience. Allusion, for Mérei, is a semiotic way to remind us of our group belongingness, a form of the relationship between the *signifier* and the *signified*, in which the signified represents the joint experience of a group and the signifier is a detail of that experience. This detail substitutes and evokes the whole, including in its full affective-emotional intensity, *without naming the unspeakable*.

Later Mérei extended this concept of allusion to a variety of social psychological phenomena, as well as to his understanding of some artistic works of his time (Mérei 1997). For Mérei, the language of *allusion* characterized the language of those groups whose members share some kind of common, but more or less unspeakable, experience. In both verbal and non-verbal communication, allusion, according to Mérei, tends to develop into a kind of 'mother tongue'. One function of allusive language is to keep alive, or revive the traces of, trauma and thematise identity problems and crises, for instance, those affecting people who grew up in the wake of the *Shoah*. Artistic works not only expressed the feelings and attitudes of this generation, but also provided the frames of reference and a powerful language for interpreting their fundamental experiences of 'secrets' and 'absences'. For example, quite a few Hungarian films were made in the 1960s and 1970s that dealt with the fate and experiences of Jewish people, but these films hardly *ever* uttered the words 'Jew' or 'Jewish'.

This 'strategy of silence' and the predominant forms of allusive communication helped Hungarian Jews to cope with social challenges and to find a place that defended them from open anti-Semitism. This problematic adaptation, however, was an 'exchange' that came at the price of abandoning public manifestations of Jewish identity: denial in the public sphere; identity crisis at the private level. Allusive ways of communication thus became a kind of 'mother tongue' for the generations after the Shoah. The main function of allusive language was to keep alive, or to revive, the

traces of the trauma and to thematise the identity problems and crises threatening primarily those Jews and 'non-Jewish Jews' who grew up after the Shoah. Artistic works not only expressed feelings and attitudes of this generation, but they provided frames of references, a powerful language for interpreting their fundamental experiences of 'secrets' and 'absences'.[7]

These speculations on allusive communication and its functions lead us to the theories of trauma proposed by Sándor Ferenczi and his fellow Hungarian psychoanalyst, Michael Bálint. Especially relevant is Bálint's 'three phase trauma theory', which claims that the full reality of the group's experiences is considerably lessened by massive denial at the social level.[8] In light of these conceptions I think that Mérei's theorization exposes the situation where elaboration of trauma was severely blocked and exiled to the margins of consciousness (Erős 2005).

In other words, Hungarian society was not ready to face the traumas of the twentieth century, including world wars, dictatorship and the *Shoah*. On the contrary, allusive ways of communication, even if they had creative moments, keep the original pain and wounds alive without them being worked through and without mastering the past. This claim is similar to the views of Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich who described in their book, *Inability to Mourn* (1975) that German society was deficient in its ability to elaborate collective trauma for both victims and perpetrators of the Nazi era.

For Mérei, however, experiments were themselves a detour to deal with the trauma of the *Shoah*. As he explicitly states, his experimental study was intended to be a 'model experiment', that is, a simple, reduced and transparent setting, which could be a 'model' of the complicated and obscure social processes behind the rise of totalitarian movements and powers. The question that he addressed in his work was the following: 'How did it become possible to influence millions of people to support human massacres at the heart of Europe'? In other words: what made Auschwitz possible? Yet Mérei, in common with many of his East European contemporaries, avoided the use of terms like 'Auschwitz', 'Nazis', 'Jewish', 'concentration camp'. Instead, he used such expressions as: 'the psychological infections of the recent past'. Similarly, the psychoanalyst, Imre Hermann published a book immediately after the war entitled *The Psychology of Anti-Semitism* (1945), in which he avoided

mentioning the events of the recent past, including the concentration camps. Rather, he dealt with the historical and psychological roots of judeophobia. The only notable exception to this trend was István Bibó, the renowned Hungarian historian and social thinker (after 1956, a fellow prisoner with Mérei), whose essay 'The Jewish Question in Hungary after 1944' is one of the early attempts in the European context to explore the causes of, and responsibilities for, the *Shoah* (Bibó 1986).

The answer Mérei took from his experiments was restricted to a general statement: massacres can neither be explained by the mind of the leaders nor as a deep-seated striving of the masses. The leader could be stronger than the individuals comprising the social configuration, but is weaker than the totality of its members, weaker than the collective entity or the social configuration itself. The 'all pervasive' or charismatic leader can thus impose his will upon the masses, but only as a *detour,* only if he is able to exploit and build on existing traditions, roles and customs.

As Daniel Pick showed in his book *The Nazi Mind* (2012), in Britain and in the United States, psychoanalysis and psychoanalytically oriented psychopathology played an important role in exploring the fascist and Nazi mind during, and after, the Second World War. In this manner, psychoanalysis crucially impacted on the discourse through which Nazism came to be understood. However, there was another trend: to 'de-nazify' Nazism and put it into a general socio-psychological or group psychological framework. Mérei's study, based on Kurt Lewin's earlier group experiments, anticipates later social psychological explorations of conformism and obedience by American researchers, such as Solomon Asch, Stanley Milgram, and Philip Zimbardo. Yet Mérei's study remains isolated, part of an abrupt East European effort to understand what occurred during the Second World War. Its strength and weakness lie in the *concept of allusion*, which seeks to explain how traumatic experiences are kept *vivid* and, at the same time, are *detoured* away from their original societal reality.

Allusion is the concept, as I have shown, that connects Mérei's social psychological endeavours to psychoanalysis, especially to the problem of the *social unconscious*.[9] In the last decades of the Communist system, Mérei's psychodrama groups became a sort of experimental laboratory for

testing new ideas, including psychoanalysis, interactive communication, creativity and play (Winnicott's 'symbolic teddy bear'), free from the pressure of the external society. Psychodrama was, in this respect, a substitute for civil society, strictly exiled into private and informal life: a utopian space. Since then several 'transitions' have taken place in Hungary. In the present situation, when there is a realistic and serious threat that a 'post-totalitarian', but no less dictatorial mind is being inculcated in Hungarian society, the force of allusion should be replaced by the strength of protest.

Notes

1. See a detailed analysis of Ferenczi's political views in Erős (2012b, 2014).
2. See a detailed politico-psychoanalytical interpretation of the Hungarian situation in Salgó (2014).
3. The Szondi test, developed in the 1930s, consists of 48 photographic images depicting criminals and psychiatric patients. The subject is asked to make a series of choices between these pictures on the basis of their relative attractiveness. According to Szondi's highly controversial theory, the personal choices signify the person's main deep-seated instinctual tendencies.
4. On the Soviet discussions on pedology see Etkind (1997, 259–285).
5. On Mérei's life work see Borgos, Erős, and Litván (eds.), (2006).
6. An English version was also published: Mérei (1949).
7. On Hungarian Jewish identity see Erős, Kovács, and Lévai (1987).
8. On the significance of Bálint's theory for understanding denial on the societal level see Auestad (2015).
9. On social unconscious see, e.g., Hopper and Weinberg (eds.), (2011).

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Histories of Violence: Outrage, Identification and Analytic Work

Julia Borossa

Violence and the Human Universal

In these pages, I will be addressing a theoretical question linked to violence, one concerning the psychic processes which govern the unmaking and remaking of human bonds under extreme conditions. What is also involved here, is an ethical wager, in that the potential for a movement from outrage to identification to being alongside will be affirmed, this having definite implications for therapeutic work. As will become apparent, this does not involve a flattened decontextualisation of the positions of the victim, perpetrator and witness to violence, but does posit them in terms of a human universal. In addition to case material, I will be drawing on examples from literature and memoirs in order to explore the limits and possibilities of connectedness under duress.

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James Gilligan, who spent most of his working life as a psychiatrist in the American prison system, articulates his classic study of violence to the tragic dimension of human life and sees psychoanalysis as the most apt approach to understand this dimension, while arguing that he is taking it 'into a place it has not gone before' (Gilligan 2000, p. 259). Strikingly, Gilligan defines violence in the broadest possible terms, arguing, centrally, that poverty stands as its most pernicious form. Undeniably, the world in which analysts live and work is saturated by histories of violence, but it is all too easy to locate it in the other and elsewhere. Whilst the field of forensic psychotherapy has become well established in the UK and elsewhere (Cox and Cordess 1996; Yakely 2010), actual perpetrators of violent acts are the exceptions rather than the rule in the average consulting room. Peter Wilson in an article on conducting group analysis in a prison setting argues that what needs to be taken into account is 'not only the psychopathology of the criminal but our own reluctance to accept the malevolent feelings we would rather banish behind the high walls of a prison' (Wilson 2005, p. 359). For him, and for other forensic therapists, the prison stands as a concretisation of splitting at the level of the social, a condition of his working life which he astutely examines. However, Gilligan's study poses, from the outset, a bold challenge, not to splitting as an internal strategy of the psyche, but rather to the material consequences of a social disavowal that keeps the perceived monstrous firmly elsewhere, locked up, in a kind of 'beyond the pale' from which the law abiding citizen is kept separate.

Gilligan opens his remarkable book, *Violence: Reflections on our Deadliest Epidemic*, with an account of intergenerational and cross-cultural violence that took place in the 19th century American Midwest. The account tells the tragic story of an abusive immigrant Irish rancher—a man who had escaped a famine to find himself in a harsh lonely land, a man 'who knew only to talk with his fists'—and his 'half-breed' wife, the abandoned daughter of a French Canadian fur trapper and a young Native woman. The wife disappeared, so the story goes, after she killed her youngest, favourite child, a boy who she did not know how else to protect from his father's violence. What is also implied is that this act of murder was the only way she knew to hurt her

husband (Gilligan 2000, pp. 1–4). After presenting the reader with this story of the multiple effects of violence—full of layers of situated significance whose causes and effects are intrapsychic, interpersonal, cultural and socio-political (Blackwell 2005) and touch upon gender, race and colonialism—Gilligan reveals that it is not mere hearsay unconnected to him, but a family story. He writes: 'For a psychiatrist to begin a book on violence by telling a story from his own family's history is to say, as plainly as I can, that violence, like charity, begins at home. The use of violence as a means of resolving conflict between persons, groups and nations is a strategy we first learn at home' (Gilligan 2000, p. 5).

What is clearly implied here is the inextricable and transgenerational linking of the individual and the social. Moreover, Gilligan's statement is also a refusal of any safe partition when it comes to violence. Whether we recoil from violence, resort to it or confront it, it touches upon the fabric of human subjectivity.

But what is violence? This may appear, at first, a deceptively simple question—especially if it is approached in terms of its physical effects, that is to say, in terms of a breeching of the body, of harm done. We can think of an ever expanding escalation: from an overwrought parent thoughtlessly slapping a child, to altercations that turn physical, to the random inflicting of pain, to systematic cruelties that culminate in torture. In much of the literature published by practitioners of The Portman Clinic, the venerable London institution which, as their mission statement puts it, 'offers specialised long-term psychoanalytic psychotherapeutic help to people who suffer from problems arising from delinquent, criminal or violent behaviour', violence is distinguished from aggression by the presence of 'an actual assault on the body' (Yakely 2010, p. 10). Likewise, many authors assembled in the classic Cordess and Cox handbook, *Forensic Psychotherapy*, are preoccupied with 'the central position of the act' for their discipline (Cordess and Cox 1996, p. 67). However, it is of course not so simple since the question of *location*, and implicitly aetiology, is problematised from the outset by the editors who state that 'this book is concerned with events in the inner world which destructively influence events in the outer world which in turn, impinge on the inner world of both assailant and victim' (p. 1). But what is it that enables (and also prevents) the passage from

fantasy to the act? And is the act a point of no return? Is the point of origin always the inner rather than the outer, even though, according to psychoanalysis, we have all committed murder in our unconscious? Accordingly, the next section will review key psychoanalytic texts in an attempt to understand the breech involved in the passage from fantasy to the reality of the act, its contexts as well as its consequences; arguing that the question of aetiology, is, in fact, not an uncontested matter. A related question pertains to what may enable clinical work to be possible, and to continue, when confronted with violence, and violence here can be understood as both/either situated in the past or the future.

Contextualising Violence with Aggression and Trauma

As psychoanalytic theory so adeptly shows, violence reaches inwards at the same time as it reaches outwards. In fact, it is instructive to read Freud's changing theorisation of the aggressive drive as bound up with the development of psychoanalysis in a direction that would lead us to see self-other negotiations as constitutive of the psyche. In other words it leads us in the direction of object relations, the dominant strand in post-war British psychoanalysis, the context which also informs the development of group analysis, which takes as its starting point the interconnectedness of the social and the individual. However, in the early psychoanalytic literature, violence is linked with attempts to theorise aggression and trauma, rendering these terms difficult to separate out. Moreover, the problematic relationship between what is inside and outside is also at play. Already in his 1915 essay 'Instincts and Their Vicissitudes', Freud poses the problem of the subject's relation to the drives as a question touching on the impingements of the outside world. After discussing the dialectical reversal at work in the sadistic and masochistic as well as the scopophiliac and exhibitionist subject positions of enjoyment, a reversal which hinges on identification, Freud turns to the question of hate as an affect. 'Hate as a relation to objects', he writes,

> is older than love. It derives from the narcissistic ego's primordial repudiation of the external world with its outpouring of stimuli. As an expression of the reaction of unpleasure evoked by objects, it always remains in an intimate relation with the self-preservative instincts; so that sexual and ego-instincts can readily develop an antithesis which repeats that of love and hate. (Freud 1915, p. 138)

However, it is in the near contemporaneous 'Mourning and Melancholia', that Freud illuminatingly elaborates the struggle between love and hate with respect to the lost object. In this text, he shows how the melancholic's persistent attacks on their own ego are, in fact, a displacement from attacks on the disappointing object which has become internalised. 'We find the key to the clinical picture: we perceive that the self-reproaches are reproaches against a loved object which have been shifted away from it on to the patient's own ego' (Freud 1917/1915, p. 248). There is no question as to the violent nature of these self-reproaches which, as Freud reminds us, can culminate in suicide. Freud presents mourning as a gradual process of detachment from the lost object in order for love to become possible again. What is deadly in melancholia, as opposed to mourning, is a fixation in a position of hate. Here hate turned inwards, but also potentially turned outwards, towards a perpetrator, an enemy, as will be discussed more fully below. It is useful to be reminded that, for psychoanalysis, the civilisational process itself cohered around a violent act—the murder of the primal father, and the subsequent internalisation of guilt, relevant to the formation of that sometimes violent, torturing internal legislator, the superego, which Freud had already started elaborating in nascent form in 'Mourning and Melancholia'.

It is in the later 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' that Freud develops his dual theory of the drives, in opposition to aggressive and life-preserving instincts, which, it is to be noted, do not map neatly onto love and hate. However, the problem of the effects of the impingements of the outside world remain salient in this text and Freud's grappling with trauma is precisely bound up with this question of location that we have been attempting to approach. This is apparent in his description of the traumatic as 'any excitations from the outside which are powerful

enough to break through the protective shield [of the psyche]' (Freud 1920, p. 29). Trauma for him is connected to a breach, rendered all the more poignant as Freud discusses this graphically in terms of the psyche's painful difficulties in processing what it has already experienced internally as unbearable, that is to say, a fundamental anxiety surrounding the very fact of survival (Borossa 2013, p. 122).

In terms of the role of the analyst within the context of a discussion of violence and trauma, it is also useful to consider the transitional figure of Sandor Ferenczi, particularly his essay 'Confusion of Tongues Between Adults and the Child (The Language of Tenderness and of Passion)' (Ferenczi 1949) and his posthumous *Clinical Diary* (Ferenczi 1985). 'Confusion of Tongues' is a paper which caused particular controversy at the time of its public delivery as it was widely perceived as returning psychoanalysis to an earlier theoretical and clinical stage. This perception was provoked by Ferenczi's call to consider anew trauma as a pathogenic factor, the 'tender' world of childhood impinged upon by the, as yet misunderstood, 'passion' of the world of adults, often manifesting as acts of actual sexualised violence. However on closer reading, a more complex text is revealed, one which invites the reader to consider the importance of intersubjective factors such as the child's identification with the aggressor and its introjection of the adult's unconscious guilt and shame, 'which makes hitherto harmless play appear as a punishable offence' (Ferenczi 1949, p. 228). Here too, the location and aetiology of violence and the nature of its effects are not quite so easy to determine.

What is also of great value in this text, as well as in the *Clinical Diary*, Ferenczi's personal theoretical and clinical reflections arising from his practice in the late 1920s and early 1930s, is his willingness to unflinchingly examine the authority and responsibility of the psychoanalyst. Ferenczi, as a practitioner, was known for his technical innovations conducted for the advancement of the treatment, such as his active technique, and his later espousing of relaxation. In these texts, however, he 'draws parallels among the child traumatised by the hypocrisy of adults, the mentally ill person traumatized by the hypocrisy of society, and the patient, whose trauma is revived and exacerbated by the professional hypocrisy and rigidity of the analyst' (Dupont 1985, p. xviii).

What strongly emerges from a reading of Ferenczi's *Clinical Diary*, is the extent to which he attempted to be alongside his patients and his own most primitive, regressed murderous affects, whilst also attempting to consider their aetiology in the cruelty of the outside world. As will be explored in the next section, it is precisely an imaginative, creative capacity within therapeutic work which allows for the possibility of survival and change in the wake of violence.

Outrage, Identification and Analytic Work—a Working Through in Literature and the Clinic

I would like to offer first a literary example, from the work of the Lebanese author Rawi Hage who, as a child and young man, lived through years of the civil war in Beirut before emigrating to Canada. Although I have written about this author more extensively elsewhere (Borossa 2013), it will be useful to proceed by re-examining a particular passage from *De Niro's Game*, as particularly apt in offering an imaginative engagement with the effects of violence with respect to the possibilities and impasses of reconnection. The book concerns two young men, Bassam and George, close friends, who follow two different trajectories with respect to the social violence that surrounds them. Whilst Bassam enters a space of increasing dissociation, George joins the phalangist militia, and betrays those close to him, including Bassam, whom he allows to be tortured for a crime that he, himself had committed. The scene that I wish to discuss takes place afterwards, and is inaugurated by the following dialogue between Bassam and George:

> So, why did you drive in this direction? I asked him. The torture chambers are on the other side.
>
> No, Bassam, the torture chambers are inside us. (Hage 2006, p. 179)

This quote stands as a graphic illustration of the dilemma of location, touched upon in the previous section, and is inflected by the exchange that follows. George stops the car and tells his friend of his

participation in a massacre, historically perpetrated in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. 'Blood turned into dark stains, green flies were feeding, bulldozers dug, and shoved cadavers in ground holes. It was all like a movie. All like a movie. Dead people everywhere. Do you still want to hear?' (Hage 2006, p. 180). Hage's prose, detached, surrealistic, leaves the reader and Bassam with whom s/he is invited to identify, little space for engagement until the following jarring exchange between the characters:

> I killed my mother, I killed her, he said and burst into tears.
>
> Your mother died in the hospital from cancer, I said to him. (Hage 2006, p. 181)

But as the account unfolds further, we are brought towards an explanation which horrifies:

> I entered a house and found a woman on the floor surrounded by her dead daughters. She looked me in the face. I said, you want to join your family, don't you? She said, you might as well finish what you started, my son. My son! My son, George said and laughed. I hit her with the butt of my rifle, many times, many times, like this (and he punched the air with his gun). (Hage 2006, pp. 181–182)

How can one explain or process this juxtaposition of George's mother and the woman he kills, this impossible identification? The narrative unfolds in a way that offers suicide as the only possible option. Indeed, George goes on to invite Bassam to play a game of Russian roulette, before turning the gun on himself and killing himself. This references a key scene from Michael Cimino's anti-Vietnam war film, *The Deer Hunter*, which also explains the book's title and points to a universal quality of violent traumatising excess in war.

George's impasse—the torture chambers forever lodged within him—recalls a clinical vignette that Fanon offers us in 'Colonial War and Mental Disorders', the last chapter of *Wretched of the Earth*, derived from his work with victims and perpetrators during the Algerian war of independence. He recounts the case of a patient, a French soldier, who

remains haunted by the ghost of the Arab woman he killed during a raid on a village:

> But as far as I was concerned, when I looked at that woman I thought of my mother. She was sitting in an armchair and her thoughts seemed to be elsewhere. I wondered why we didn't kill her; then all of a sudden she noticed I was looking at her. She flung herself upon me screaming "Please, please don't kill me …I have children." A moment after she was dead; I'd killed her with my knife. […] And then I started vomiting after every meal, and I slept badly. After that this woman started coming every night and asking for my blood. But my mother's blood—where's that? (Fanon 1990, p. 263)

Here too, the identification of the killer's own naturally deceased mother and the woman he kills remains as a tormenting, persecuting image that does not leave him.

Fanon recalls this case and others, to make a point about the dialectic between victim and perpetrator, the desubjectification of both, in the context of an evocation of the broader aspects and effects of violence, the violence of racism and colonialism, whereby violence may be a necessary step in a process of resubjectification. But what is not immediately apparent is how he was able to listen and stay alongside his patients.

Fanon's earlier *Black Skin White Masks* (1986) stands as a foundational text on the psychic effects of social violence, which arguably both psychoanalysis and group analysis have yet to adequately take into consideration (Dalal 2002; Blackwell 2003; Treacher 2005). Significantly, Fanon sees black and white, coloniser and colonised, as intersubjectively linked in a 'dual narcissism' (Fanon 1986, p. 12), both oppositional and sealed off from any possibility of relationality at the level of the human, and both standing to gain from his avowed project of psychic decolonisation. A famous passage I wish to briefly consider involves a moment when Fanon describes himself as deeply affected by the gaze of another, a French child whom he encounters in a park, who tells his mother, 'Mama, see the negro, I am frightened!'. The adult man is undone, desubjectified by the weight of the violence of socio-cultural

fantasies, which the frightened child also bears, albeit differently. 'On that day', Fanon writes, 'completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object' (Fanon 1986, p. 112). Fanon's life work, his writings, his clinical work in the context of the violent Algerian struggle for independence, as well as his revolutionary activism in that struggle, stand as a trajectory towards an attempt for reconnection, in a lineage of a non-Eurocentric humanist thinkers amongst which, like Said, he can be said to belong (Said 2001).

I will now turn to a specific clinical response and working through, one from the American relational psychoanalytic tradition, which I will consider in some detail. Sue Grand's essay 'Combat Speaks' (Grand 2010) is a case study of her work with a Vietnam veteran who had ordered Napalm bombings of Vietnamese villages. The patient is now a man in his sixties, a married businessman and father of two, consulting a psychoanalyst in order to deal with problems that have recently surfaced in his marriage. He was an officer during the Vietnam War, and as Grand presents him to us:

> Peter has an unquestioned identity as a war hero (….) Each morning in the mirror, a golden warrior awakens to look upon himself. And then a good officer moves out among men. A year after arriving in Vietnam, he ordered the firebombing of a village. His orders set mothers and infants on fire. While he watched. While he, himself, shot the elderly and the unarmed. But his soldiering is always told with a quiet, prideful gravitas to a civilian who knows nothing, who was protesting the war when he was fighting it. (Grand 2010, p. 223)

This quotation sets the scene for what she experiences as an initial impossibility to work with this man. She presents him as incapable of insight, incapable of moving beyond the image of the golden soldier that is reflected in the mirror; she presents herself incapable of moving beyond her revulsion at the image of the burning babies which crystallised her own anti-Vietnam activism.

It is a gradual process of mutual identification that allows for a shift. A turning point occurs when Peter, arriving early for his session, defends his analyst from an intruder. This eventually leads to a breakthrough as she identifies with his 'masculine' aggression at that moment and subsequently allows herself to reflect on her own aggressive capacities. He then identifies with a 'feminine' passivity, producing a series of connected dreams in which a veiled woman figures, whom his associations reveal that he may wish to be. Male and female, active and passive, perpetrator and victim can now be seen in a dialectical relation to one another. Significantly, this breakthrough, as the unconscious becomes conscious, involves Peter's reintegration into history, a connectedness not only with his analyst, but also with his wife and his sons and with the wider social world.

> Once I thought I could never do what Peter had done. (…) My eyes fill with wounded soldiers. His fill with innocents dying. I realise that these soldiers could be me. He realises that Vietnamese children are his. In his sessions, Peter's past and present are becoming inseparable in grief. She knows about him, he says, and she's been protecting the kids from him. I don't know if he is referring to his wife. Or to the phantasm in the veil. Or to real mothers who once cowered before him. (…) Finally I am made to understand his arrival now, in my office. There has been the war in Iraq, the atrocity at Haditha. Iraq reignited Vietnam; Haditha made his wife see him as 'the beast'. I ask if his sons know. He thinks so, he is sobbing. 'How can they touch me?' (Grand 2010, p. 239)

It is a resolution found in an analytic interaction which collapses space and time, allows for a reparative identification with the other, but is predicated on the analyst's own capacity to be alongside the perpetrator in order to allow him to be alongside the victim. Strikingly, politics, a history of human rights violations, Vietnam, Iraq enter the consulting room. This story indicates that without the space for such an acknowledgement, there would have been no possibility of working through.

In thinking further about the question of the effects of violence and its relation to the unmaking and remaking of human bonds, I was

drawn to a series of related texts concerning the troubling figure of the soldier who is also a child, and fusing, in his or her body, the figures of victim and perpetrator. Some of it is provided by General Romeo Dallaire, a lifelong professional soldier and commander of the UN forces during the Rwandan massacre, which he recalls in detail in his book *Shake Hands with the Devil*. Having left the army, he tells us that he is now a researcher and campaigner on behalf of child soldiers. In his memoir, his encounter with this troubling figure stands as pivotal (Dallaire 2003). Dallaire fictionalises this meeting in a second book, *They Fight Like Soldiers, They Die Like Children* (Dallaire 2010). This latter volume is partly a campaigning text explicitly aimed at awakening the activism, and sense of wider connectedness of young people. It is also partly a memoir of Dallaire's own childhood, which he presents as affording him a space of creative play. The general's childhood memories are cross cut with the account of the childhood of a fictionalised African girl whose childhood, in a very different setting, also affords her this same space of creative play.

However, the girl's connection to her own life is brutally interrupted when she is abducted from her village. She is made into a soldier, instrumentalised as a weapon by means of a systematic violence that severs her from all that connected her to her past. A key, and particularly striking, passage in this fictionalised account is the encounter between an adult soldier, like the author a member of an international peacekeeping force, and the child soldier that Dallaire has invented to stand as a representative of all children faced with this fate. The man is portrayed as shooting in self-defence at this figure whom he sees at that point as a violent threat. But then a moment of tragic reconnection occurs:

> I was paralysed by what I was seeing and by what I had done (…) I was witnessing the opposite of a miracle. I was witnessing the grossest of human indecencies. I was, for probably only a few seconds, but for what felt as long as my whole life up to that point, observing the transformation of a warrior back into a child and that child was dying of wounds I had inflicted on her child body. (Dallaire 2010)

The child, in turn, is depicted as reaching out to the soldier in her moment of agony, and re-entering a space of imagination and creativity which had formed part of earlier phases of her life. However, this occurs only *in extremis*.

Dallaire's narrative stands indeed as deeply tragic, for it depicts the remaking of human bonds as occurring at the very moment when death unmakes them again. It is possible to imagine the story continuing with the adult soldier remaking them in somebody's consulting room, as Grand's patient has done, or as Dallaire himself tells us he has. It is also possible to imagine the adult soldier remaking them through activist work on behalf of child soldiers. But the child herself, of course, remains dead.

Whilst this kind of tragic story, and even more appalling ones where this moment of recognition does not even occur, is most certainly the most common one, I would now like to turn briefly to two narratives written by former child soldiers, which in quite different ways tell a very similar story, albeit one with the possibility of reconnection in survival at its heart. Emmanuel Jal, a rap musician, whose book *War Child* centres on his experience of being a child soldier during the Sudanese Civil War, starts his narrative with a moment of transformation occurring as he was about to step on stage for a major concert. 'It is time for me to tell the story using the music and lyrics that are my weapons now. I have laid down the guns and machetes forever. I think of my mother and the songs we once sang in a village far away. For a moment I speak to her. "Now we are in a better place". I start to sing' (Jal 2008). The story that follows is one of great violence experienced and perpetrated, then of a partial remaking of bonds, via a connection he makes in a camp with a British woman who helps him. This reconnection is first with a childhood and family thought to have been long lost, and through this, a difficult return to a creative space of living. The above quote suggests that unlike Hage's George, and Fanon's patient, the dead mother seems not to haunt Jal anymore.

The second account, Ishmael Beah's *Long Way Gone*, starts with a place of struggle. Having found a new adoptive family in the US, the author portrays himself in the introductory pages of his book as being

asked about the war, the civil war in Sierra Leone in his case, by students at his new school. The American young people in their naivete, ask him whether he has witnessed killing and seem to think this may be somehow admirable, or impressive. Beah stays silent, but the book he starts to write stands as a response. The memory of family and boyhood games, interrupted, form the focus of the first chapters, followed by graphic accounts of the violence, both experienced and inflicted, which severs his connection to those bonds; and then by the precarious, slow reconnection to life, to himself and the other, here centrally, through the professional, but real, gestures of a nurse he encountered in a rehabilitation camp for child soldiers. Having discovered his love of music, she offers him a Walkman and buys him tapes. She listens to him, stays alongside him despite his anger and desperate unruly behaviour (Beah 2007).

The Work of Mourning

What is at stake in all of these accounts is, I believe, the difficult process of mourning in the face of violence, as opposed to the fixations of melancholia, which so easily turn to hate, whether turned against the self or the other. Mourning may stand as a means to recognise the ambivalence in relation to the injuring other, both loved and hated, and a means of reclaiming one's self, thus allowing for a creative movement from death back to life. In the case of George, Rawi Hage's character, this is depicted as an impossibility and the outcome can only be death; for the soldiers, adult and children, the case material and memoirs discussed above have shown it to be a long, precarious and arduous process.

Mourning also has a social, unifying potential and the Lebanese psychoanalyst Chawki Azouri eloquently invokes its importance in his writings and in the recent documentary film *White Flags* (Rooney and Sakr 2014) in the terms of a potential remaking of trust in his divided country. Following Freud, Azouri reminds us of the complexity of the mourning process, whereby hate for the lost object needs to be experienced in order for a painful love for it to be regained. Azouri highlights the importance of acknowledgement of their act on the part of the

perpetrators of violence, lest the hatred of those who have experienced loss, gets fixated outwards on a perpetrator, an enemy in a foreclosure of the work of mourning and of relational possibilities.

Furthermore, he writes:

> When citizens find themselves confronted with death and mourning, no title, no class or clan marker of belonging, no difference in age or sexual identity can distinguish them. They are equal in front of death and co-citizens in mourning. It is precisely a community of mourning that can turn them into co-citizens. Mourning is, par excellence, a universal phenomenon. Despite its cultural variants, it is a foundational ordeal of humanity. (Azouri 2012-my translation)

In terms of what has been unfolding in the above pages, entering the community of the bereaved may be seen as an essential humanising response to violence, that which in the end enables a remaking of human bonds.

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