

Psychoanalytic theory in times of terror

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Abstract: Recent events have underlined in the most tragic and dramatic way the need for depth psychology to turn its attention to the psychology of terror. The present paper attempts to distinguish between the psychological modes of horror and terror and explores the different theoretical approaches of Burke, Freud, Kristeva and Jung to this problem in order to cast light on the individual and collective functions that horror and terror play. While all these authors stress that terror and horror play a role in structuring the sense of identity and in strengthening community bonds, Freud and Kristeva believe that the experience of horror works to increase the exclusion of otherness through mechanisms of repression or foreclosure while Burke and Jung see in the encounter with the Negative Sublime or with the Shadow the possibility of widening the boundaries of ego consciousness and of integration of 'otherness'. The paper then uses the analysis of two horror movies and of a particular socio-cultural context to illustrate these different functions of horror and terror and to delineate possible solutions to the problems facing society.

Key words: abjection, horror films, Jung, shadow, the Sublime, terror, the uncanny.

Living in times of terror is no easy matter as we can see from the words of Nadezhda Mandelstam, wife of the poet Osip Mandelstam who died in one of Stalin's gulags:

When I used to read about the French Revolution as a child, I often wondered whether it was possible to survive during a reign of terror. I now know beyond doubt that it is impossible. Anybody who breathes the air of terror is doomed, even if nominally he manages to save his life. Everybody is a victim – not only those who die, but also all the killers, ideologists, accomplices and sycophants who close their eyes and wash their hands – even if they are secretly consumed with remorse at night. Every section of the population has been through the terrible sickness caused by terror, and none has so far recovered, or become normal again for normal civic life. It is an illness that is passed on to the next generation, so that the sons pay for the sins of the fathers and perhaps only the grandchildren begin to get over it – or at least it takes on a different form with them.

(Mandelstam 1999)

My work as a Jungian analyst in post-Soviet Russia has amply confirmed to me the truth of Mandelstam's words. Living through times of terror leaves

indelible traces, traumatic blanks and distortions in the individual and collective unconscious, that are passed from generation to generation in an unending spiral that can only be interrupted by an individual and collective act of consciousness. Today however, it is we in the West that find ourselves faced with the problem of living with terror, a problem that we are ill-equipped to face. This difficulty can be attributed in part to the failure of analytical theory to recognize and reflect on terror. As Christopher Bollas noted in 1992 in *Being a Character*, 'Like many Europeans of his time, Freud deferred recognition of a deeply troubling factor in human culture, an element which preoccupies us now with its haunting reference: the related issues of terror and genocide'. The events since 1992, culminating in the 11th September 2001, have made it even more urgent that we as psychologists of the unconscious, both individual and collective, turn our attention to the problem posed by Bollas. To do this we can approach the problem in two different ways. We can look at the 'how' of terror and here we already know a great deal about the psychological mechanisms such as dehumanization and splitting that produce the terrorist, and the psychological effects that living with terror produce in the individual. The second possibility is to look at the 'why' and it is when we begin to look at the 'why' that we run into a paradox: if terror produces a 'sickness of the soul', nevertheless individuals seem to actually take pleasure in terrifying themselves. One of the problems that have puzzled cultural critics, for example, is why horror movies and horror literature have become such an important feature in popular modern culture. The purpose of the present paper is to explore the hypothesis that, under certain conditions, terror may actually have a positive function for individuals and cultures. First however, it is necessary to distinguish between horror and terror. These terms are often used indiscriminately but there are subtle and important semantic differences between these two psychological modes. Terror, from the Latin root *terrere* – to frighten – is defined as extreme fear, while horror, from the Latin root *horrere* – to bristle or to shudder – is defined as terrified shuddering, intense dislike. Thus, while terror refers to the mental state associated with fear, horror refers more to its physical effects and has semantic overtones of disgust and repugnance. This distinction suggests that at both an individual and a cultural and collective level, these two psychological modes may play different roles. As Susan Rowland (2002) states in *Jung: A Feminist Revision*, 'Whereas "terror" signifies the expansion of the conscious self under sublime pressures, for example, in the erosion of borders between natural and supernatural in a ghost story, "horror" means a reverse direction of recoil and even self-fragmentation'.

To further elucidate the roles of terror and horror, I will first be examining the various approaches authors as different as Burke, Freud, Jung and Kristeva have made to this problem. I will then use the analysis of two classic horror films and a description of the social and cultural role terror played in a particular socio-cultural context, the Weimar Republic, to illustrate these different functions. Before this however it is necessary to look briefly at why the

theories of culture produced by depth psychology tend to be generally unsatisfactory.

Depth psychology and culture

Part of the general crisis of psychoanalytical thought (Freudian and Jungian) can be attributed to the failure to take into account the historical, cultural and political dimensions of human individuality. D.N. Rodowick (1991), in *The Difficulty of Difference*, has criticized the psychoanalytical vision of the individual as 'a singular category whose divisions and complexities are bounded by the interiorized space of an actual or imagined body'. For this author, the attempts to create a psychoanalytical theory of culture (Freud's genetic unconscious and Jung's theories of myth and the collective unconscious) have failed because they take the individual out of history and culture. In fact Jung's theories of culture are rather more complex and ambiguous than Rodowick realizes. If it is undeniable that Jung yielded to the seductions of a *psychologia perennis* when he subtracted man from the relativity of history and the inevitable drift of culture through his idea that the collective unconscious is composed solely of timeless and unchanging structures, it is also true that Jung is, and here I quote Mario Trevi, philosopher and analytical psychologist, 'the revolutionary and original theoretician of the historical nature of every psychology, of the inevitability of the inclusion of the subject in every observation and construction elaborated by that subject' (Trevi 1993, my translation). For Trevi, following on from Jung, individuation is:

The process – always fallible and uncertain – by which the human subject frees himself from the tyranny of the stereotypes of culture, operating at both a conscious and unconscious level, and, far from making them vain in an impossible and abstract cultural void, critically takes them into himself and subordinates them to a unifying instance that it suits us to imagine as in part given and in part fruit of an experience that is specific and unique to that subject.

(Trevi 1993)

It is exactly this kind of way of conceptualizing individuation that is potentially fruitful for the construction of a theory of the relationship between man and culture. Modern Jungian theory has tended to see the archetypes in a much more restrictive way than before. Jean Knox, for example, in a paper of 2001 uses a minimalist model which likens archetypes to image schemes, 'primitive conceptual structures that exist in a form that can never be experienced directly or indirectly'. From a different perspective, Vannoy Adams in *The Multicultural Imagination* has criticized the tendency of Jungian analysis to ignore the importance of cultural factors and has suggested that 'many, if not most, collective factors are quite specifically cultural, or stereotypical' (Vannoy Adams 1996). He has applied his method of cultural analysis to the study of racism, but his ideas are equally applicable to the study of terror and

its functions as they open the way to the idea that the Jungian concept of the shadow cannot be limited only to the individual sphere. Shadow is also a collective phenomenon and different cultures and societies will have different shadows, different ways of dealing with limits, differences, evil and death.

Terror and Burke: the Sublime

Oddly enough, it is to a work of the 18th century, Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, that we must turn for one of the most complete expositions of the psychological implications of terror. For Burke, terror is 'an apprehension of pain or death' and linked to the strongest of all the passions, that of self-preservation (Burke 1757/1990). The difference between pain and terror lies in the fact that: 'things which cause pain operate on the mind, by the intervention of the body; whereas things that cause terror generally affect the bodily organs by the operation of the mind suggesting the danger' (ibid.). Thus, as Lyotard says in *The Sublime and the Avant-Garde*, terror for Burke is an 'entirely spiritual passion' and its cause is privation:

privation of light, terror of darkness; privation of others, terror of solitude; privation of language, terror of silence; privation of objects, terror of emptiness; privation of life, terror of death.

(Lyotard 1984)

For Burke, however, it is exactly this terror linked to privation that is capable of producing a particular kind of negative pleasure that he terms 'delight':

when danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful.

(Burke 1757/1990)

It is this paradoxical quality of terror, its capacity to produce both pain and delight, that makes it, for Burke, the 'ruling principle of the Sublime'. The aesthetics of the Sublime is the aesthetics of indeterminacy and uncertainty. As Lyotard writes, the Sublime occurs at the moment when, 'the faculty of presentation, the imagination, fails to a representation corresponding to an Idea (of Reason)', and thus it is a testimonial to both the failure of the imagination (pain) and its refusal to accept this limit, its striving to go beyond and to provide expressive witness to the inexpressible (delight). The sublime moment attests to the infinite possibilities of the human subject and its struggle against the limits of human knowledge.

Thus, for Burke, 'a mode of terror is the exercise of the finer parts of the system', a kind of psychological 'workout' for the imagination, an idea that is very close to some of Jung's thoughts on the Shadow, on the individuation

process and on the functions of terror, as we shall see. First, however, I will turn to Freud's one and only excursion into the realm of aesthetics of the Sublime

Terror and Freud: the uncanny

The first psychoanalytical analysis of terror is Freud's 1919 paper, 'The uncanny'. For Freud, the uncanny is related to what is frightening, to what arouses dread and horror, but it has certain characteristics that allow him to distinguish it from the larger field of the frightening. He begins by discussing Jentsch's idea that the uncanny is linked to intellectual uncertainty about the status of an object, animate or inanimate, alive or dead; he then goes on to use an etymological analysis of the words *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich*, Schelling's definition of the uncanny as 'that which ought to have remained secret and hidden but which has come to light' and a psychoanalytical interpretation of E.T.A. Hoffman's tale *The Sandman*, to support his hypothesis that the uncanny is related both to the return of the repressed, the revival of infantile complexes and of primitive superstitious beliefs that have been suppressed, which in the last analysis are again reducible to infantile complexes. In a passing remark, however, Freud opens the door to doubts about the value of his thesis that the uncanny proceeds from something familiar which has been repressed, when he admits that: 'We must be prepared to admit that there are other elements besides those we have so far laid down as determining the production of uncanny feelings'. Again, in another passage, he returns to Jentsch's idea and asks himself, 'And are we after all justified in entirely ignoring intellectual uncertainty as a factor ...?' Freud's doubts have remained unanswered until the seventies when critics began to take a closer look at 'The uncanny' and to pay attention to the many distortions and omissions of the text (Freud 1919).

The first distortion that strikes the wary reader is Freud's attempt to distance himself from his material, his guilty plea to 'a special obtuseness in the matter', a plea that rings somewhat false if we remember Freud's obsessive fear of a premature death, his obsession with the *doppelgänger* and with the duplication of his thought. Throughout his life Freud was haunted by his obsessive fears of the *doppelgänger*, that 'uncanny harbinger of death', fears that lead him to react strongly against any threats to his originality and anteriority, as we can see in the Tausk affair. We know from Roazen that any duplication of his thought in external reality was liable to provoke in him strong reactions of fear as in the episode when his followers presented him with a medallion with a motto from Oedipus Rex, the same motto that he had fantasized many years before, for his own bust at the University of Vienna (Roazen 1992). Is there therefore something in the theme of the uncanny that produces in Freud exactly those feelings he is attempting to analyse? At the very beginning of the text, Freud insists that aesthetics deals only 'with feelings of a positive nature',

with something that, as Harold Bloom points out in *Agon*, is so ‘flatly untrue and so blandly ignores the long philosophical tradition of the negative Sublime, that an alert reader ought to become very wary’ (Bloom 1983). At this point, we must ask ourselves what is at stake, what is Freud trying to achieve in this attempt to separate the uncanny from the negative Sublime? Bearing in mind that for Burke the Sublime is an experience of ‘terrible uncertainty’ and of the limits of human knowledge, we can begin to see that, as Derrida concludes in *Specters of Marx*, the alternative between ‘heimlich’ and ‘unheimlich’, as Freud himself is only too aware, is, ultimately, undecidable (Derrida 1994). Lacoue-Labarthe, another post-modern philosopher, stresses the same point in *Typographies* when he states:

in its undecidability, the Unheimlich has to do not only with castration (this can also be read in Freud), the return of the repressed or infantile anxiety; it is also that which causes the most basic narcissistic assurance (the obsessional ‘I am not dead’ or ‘I will survive’) to vacillate, in that the differentiation between the imaginary and the real, the fictive and the non-fictive, comes to be effaced.

(Lacoue-Labarthe 1989)

Rand and Torok too in *The Sandman looks at ‘The uncanny’* have questioned the accuracy of Freud’s interpretation of the uncanny and the use he makes of The Sandman to support his thesis that the uncanny is produced by the return of the repressed. According to these authors:

the uncanny owes its upsetting and frightful effect to a thoroughly paradoxical simultaneousness. What we consider to be the closest and most intimate part of our lives – our own family, our own home – is in fact at the furthest possible remove and the least familiar to us.

(Rand & Torok 1994)

In other words once again the uncanny cannot be reduced only to the return of the repressed although this is undoubtedly one factor in the production of such feelings and despite Freud’s best efforts intellectual uncertainty, the capacity to determine the status of an object, comes to the fore. At this point however we still have to explain Freud’s uneasiness in the face of the idea that the uncanny is also linked to intellectual uncertainty in the face of death and the unknown. Another curiosity about the text is Freud’s choice of Hoffman’s *The Sandman*. We know that Freud was interested in Hoffman as far back as 1885 when he mentions his ‘*mad, fantastic stuff*’ in a letter to Martha Bernays, and we know that in 1909 Jung writes to Freud that he has discovered much of his ‘theology’ (his interest in psychosynthesis, in the prospective tendencies of the psyche) in Hoffman’s *The Devil’s Elixir*. Freud mentions this text in his work, only to reject it as too obscure and intricate, but perhaps this rejection is linked more to Jung than to any imagined imperfections of the text. In fact, Freud’s reading of *The Sandman* must be understood against the backdrop of Jung’s reading of *The Devil’s Elixir* in which he finds prefigured many

of his later concepts, the collective aspect of the psyche, its prospective tendencies, the shadow as '*a sinister and frightful brother*'. As John Kerr remarks in an article that examines the relationship of Jung and Freud to Hoffman's text:

What is striking about Freud's (1919) treatment of the subject is how strongly he emphasizes the element of the past. To be sure, Freud's theoretical inclinations had always been to emphasize the significance of the personal past, but in 'The Uncanny' this inclination hardens into a new theoretical principle. For it is here that Freud introduces his 'death instinct' as an instinctive compulsion to repeat earlier events. The past is thus armed with its own terrible power in this revamping of Freud's system; the future is ignored. This makes the strongest possible contrast to Jung's future-orientated views.

(Kerr 1988, p. 23)

And his ideas that the unconscious is both radically unknowable and prospective. This brings us on to Jung and his own particular way of conceptualizing the experience of terror and of the Sublime.

Terror and Jung: the Shadow

In Jung, the experience of the uncanny and terror are linked to the encounter with the dark, unknown part of the personality that lies in the unconscious, a part that he calls the Shadow, 'the sinister and frightful brother, our own flesh-and-blood counterpart', who Brother Medardus encounters in *The Devil's Elixir*. The term Shadow runs like a thread right through Jung's work from 1903 onwards when he calls the subconscious, 'the psychic shadow side'. The Jungian Shadow is a very far-reaching concept which encompasses within itself all Jung's reflections and theorizations on the subject of evil. According to Francesco Pieri in his *Dizionario Jungiano*, the Shadow is an operative empirical concept (Pieri 1998). Jung uses the term Shadow to refer to: 1) the dark, inferior and undifferentiated part of the personality, roughly equivalent to the Freudian or personal unconscious; 2) all those tendencies that run counter to the dominant cultural canons of a given society; 3) ethical negativity or moral evil; 4) the experience of natural or radical evil. Jung insists, in opposition to the Augustinian doctrine of the *privatio boni*, that evil is something very real, or as Murray Stein puts it in *Jung on Evil*, 'a genuine force to be reckoned with in the world' (1995). Jung however is equally opposed to granting evil the status of an independent and integral part of nature, a move that would have dualistic overtones and for this reason, as Stein says, 'Evil is not quite, or not always, archetypal for Jung' (*ibid.*). Jung does insist however that the Shadow is an archetype and as such it encloses within itself not only man's experience of moral and radical evil but also his experience of difference and otherness. For Jung, both from an individual and a collective point of view, the universal tendency to project onto the other our own shadow plays a vital

role in the way in which we experience difference and otherness. As he states in ‘The transcendent function’:

to the degree that he does not admit the validity of the other person, he denies the ‘other’ within himself the right to exist—and vice versa. The capacity for inner dialogue is a touchstone for outer objectivity.

(Jung 1916/1957, para. 187)

It is this aspect of the Shadow that explains why Jung insists that in the last analysis judgements of evil depend on consciousness, individual and collective, or in other words that judgements of value, of what constitutes good and evil are not fixed in stone, but are exquisitely variable and they will differ from individual to individual and from culture to culture. Jung, however, also uses the term shadow in another, more poetic way, as a pregnant metaphor that is potentially much more generative for any discussion of culture and terror. According to Mario Trevi, in his book *Metafore del Simbolo*, of the various metaphors that modern psychology has taken from everyday language and endowed with a fictitious and labile substantiality, only the Jungian metaphor of the Shadow has retained its usefulness in practice and in theory:

Less hoary than the metaphor of the ego – concretization of a pronoun whose original character is purely functional, less diffuse and fashionable than the metaphor of the super-ego, the Shadow remains – with rare exceptions – in the theoretical domain in which it was conceived (or co-opted) and where it continues to play a central role for its capacity to evoke images, for the almost sensual flexibility of its use and for that certain indefinite multiplicity of meaning that every respectable psychological concept should retain.

(Trevi 1986; my translation)

The shadow is a metaphor that translates an experience that we have every day of our lives, the knowledge that we have a ‘twilight zone’, an obscure part of ourselves in which many presences reveal themselves. Within the multiplicity of meaning enclosed within this metaphor, Trevi discerns various strands of linguistic ambiguity: shadow as the opposite of light, shadow as absolute darkness, shadow as that part of the body that gives us corporeality and depth, shadow as the outlines that we see in the dark, as that which gives definition, and shadow as the realm of death. To reduce the shadow to any one of these contents, the shadow as evil for example, means, as Trevi says, ‘an impoverishment of this emotive experience, of this imaginal and affective mass’ (ibid.). If the shadow implies the experience of evil, that which I do and that which is done to me, it is also the experience of limits, of difference, of destiny and of death. It is both what we are and do not wish to be and what we are not and wish to be, endless font of horror, shame and guilt, but we cannot do without it for my shadow is that which defines me as a unique individual. As Trevi says, ‘I become myself exactly there, in that place where I encounter my shadow and I take it upon myself as that which differentiates and defines

me' (ibid.). The Shadow for Jung is as much a collective phenomenon as an individual one, and just as the shadow of a person defines him or her as individual, so too the capacity of a culture or society to encounter and assume its shadow plays a role in the passage from limits to definition. In this vision of the shadow we can see how much the Jungian Shadow is related to the aesthetics of the Sublime and to the literature of the Gothic, a tradition with which Jung was very familiar. According to Christopher Hauke for example, Jung theorizes the Sublime in the concept of the transcendent function, of the tension of opposites that gives rise to the symbol as an attempt to represent and resolve difference and opposition in a non-rational and perspective way (Hauke 1997). All this is potentially useful for any discussion on the role of the Shadow as a collective phenomenon in terror and in the horror film.

Kristeva and terror: the abject

In *The Powers of Horror*, Julia Kristeva attempts to explore the different ways that abjection works to structure subjectivity and the symbolic order. For Kristeva, the abject is 'what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite' (Kristeva 1982). The abject has both biological and cultural dimensions. As Martin Jay puts it in *Cultural Semantics*:

... it encompasses all of those body wastes... that anticipate the culminating moment when the total body becomes waste through its transformation into a corpse. It is also manifest culturally in tabooed food, 'perverse' or incestuous sexuality, violent crime, and religious notions of abomination and sacrilege – in anything in fact that threatens rigid boundaries and evokes powerful fears of filth, pollution, contamination and defilement.

(Jay 1998)

Provoking as it does contradictory emotions of horror and fascination, the abject can be seen in relationship to both the uncanny and the Sublime, although it cannot be subsumed into either category. It is essentially different from the Freudian uncanny, for in abjection, as Kristeva (1982) says, 'nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of a memory'. It is closer to the sublime, 'the abject is lined with the sublime', as both have no object, but whereas the abject works through the psychological mode of horror and is 'the place where meaning collapses', the sublime works through terror and is linked to the 'unlimiting of the imagination', as Lyotard (1984) suggests. Thus abjection is essentially linked to a conservative manoeuvre of closure (the ritual contact with abjection and the subsequent collapse of boundaries that separate self and other is temporary and its function is the final and more radical exclusion of the other and the strengthening of boundaries and the symbolic order). In the sublime experience on the other hand, collapse of boundaries and the terror linked to the encounter with the Other and with the unknown and the

un-representable, brings about a re-negotiation of boundaries and an expansion of the self linked to the integration of the other. To explore these ideas further, I want to take into consideration some of the ideas of René Girard and Georges Bataille on the role of difference, terror and sacrifice in the formation of community.

Girard, Bataille and terror: the Sacrifice

For René Girard, as Christopher Sharrett states,

all interchange, all language, all systems of belief spring from the imitative desire to possess what the Other has, to become a double to the Other, to destroy the other as mimetic desire inevitably degenerates into rivalry and violence.

(1993)

In Girard's thought, sacrifice is essentially the expulsion of 'otherness' through the use of the scapegoat and this sacrifice is essential for social cohesion and civilization. Bataille on the other hand sees sacrifice not as a way of expelling alterity but as a way of coming into contact with 'otherness' and death. Following on from the theories of Durkheim on the role of effervescence in primitive societies, he suggests that communities are founded not on work but on transgression. As Bataille remarks in *Eroticism*, in primitive societies 'man's time is divided into profane time and sacred time, profane time being ordinary time, the time of work and the respect of taboos, and sacred time being that of celebrations, that is, in essence the time of transgressing taboos' (Bataille 1962). The purpose of sacred time is to 'substitute for the individual isolated discontinuity a feeling of profound continuity', and this is achieved at a collective level through sacrifice, the transgression of the taboo against murder. Religious sacrifice is 'the revelation of continuity through the death of a discontinuous being to those who watch it as a solemn rite'. While for Girard, the sacrificer and the witness are not lost along with the victim, for Bataille it is exactly the opposite, as Jean-Luc Nancy (1991) has pointed out. In Bataille's thought, sacrificer and witness participate in the victim's terror and loss and it is this participation that serves to overcome the opposition between subject and object and to increase acceptance of alterity. For Durkheim and for Bataille, societies are distinguished by the different forms through which the collectivity sustains and transmits its relation to the sacred and in the context of modern society, it is above all through the work of art, poetry and literature that modern man comes into contact with the sacred, with sacrifice, with the return to continuity and with loss. From these considerations we can hypothesize that terror works to increase social cohesion in two different ways: a conservative way in which the terror serves to increase fear of difference, leading to expulsion of the 'other', as for example in the witch panics that infected Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries; and a progressive way in which the terror serves

to cancel the differentiation between subject and object, thus increasing our awareness of our own negativity, limits and finitude, and decreasing fear of difference. We can see these two different mechanisms at work in a peculiarly modern ritual, the contemporary horror film.

Terror and popular culture: the horror film

Horror films are 'at once the personal dreams of their makers and the collective dreams of their audience _ the fusion made possible by the shared structure of a common ideology', as Robin Wood puts it in his 1978 paper. For Stephen Neale (1980), the horror film is 'centrally concerned with the fact and the effects of difference' and this makes it particularly relevant to any discussion about the function of terror. While traditional, psychoanalytically-orientated readings of horror texts such as those of James Twitchell (1985), focus on the personal element, interpreting the horror only in terms of an unconscious 'I' and its repressed desires, that is in terms of the Freudian uncanny, recent critics have preferred to concentrate their attention on the collective nature of such films. Film viewing after all is primarily a social experience and horror films reflect the ideology of society as much as they reflect the psychopathology of their creators. As Prince states,

by collapsing the social into the psychic life of the individual, Freud risked losing the social, and a similar problem exists with regard to our theoretical understanding of horror films.

(Prince 1988)

Contemporary critics have challenged the universalizing tendencies of psychoanalytically influenced readings of horror by attempting to link cycles of horror and the novels and films that are representative of such cycles to specific social and historical contexts. Mark Jancovich, in *Horror*, has shown how, while the fiction of Poe mirrors the anxieties of the failed or failing aristocracy, late 19th century horror texts, such as *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, 'work in relation to crises in bourgeois distinctions between the public and the private spheres of life' (Jancovich 1992). He has also underlined that the profound social and cultural changes that have taken place since the late sixties are responsible both for the explosion of horror literature and films and for the way in which horror films have broken with previous textual codes. Our present day society, variously categorized as 'post-modernity' or 'the culture of narcissism', is characterized by savage urbanization and loss of contact with natural spaces, increasing systems of rational control over private spaces, extending as far as the body and its desires (with a corresponding weakening and breakdown in the individual sense of self), loss of collective ties and rituals leading to loss of identification with the collective and to what Fredric Jameson (1992), one of the founders of the

post-modern, describes as the displacement of the alienation of the subject (modernity) by the fragmentation of the subject (post-modernity). This loss of contact with nature has brought about a parallel and contemporaneous loss of contact with the sublime which suggests that it is exactly the modern horror film that provides this experience, as we can see if we take into consideration certain fundamental changes in the structure of the horror movie and the monster itself, in its origins and in its destiny.

From 1960 onwards, the monster is no longer represented as external to the society within which the text was produced but as springing directly from that society and its contradictions, conflicts and tensions. The function of the horror film can no longer be seen only in terms of the individual and of repression but it must also be interpreted in terms of the society that produces it. In the social context, horror can be seen to have two different and opposing functions: either horror serves to redefine and strengthen collective identity by defining all that society defines as 'other', which can then be expelled through a process of scapegoating; or, horror functions by forcing us to become aware of, and to come to terms with, all that the ideological structure of our society construes as different. Barbara Creed, starting out from the work of Julia Kristeva on abjection, has suggested that the horror film is 'a form of modern defilement rite' in which the horror functions to preserve the symbolic order and the patriarchal society by bringing about a confrontation with the abject in order to finally eject it and redraw the boundaries that separate the human from the non-human, the subject from the 'other', life from death (Creed 1986). According to her the horror film illustrates the work of the abject in the socio-cultural arena in three ways. Firstly, viewing a horror film signifies both the desire to participate in perverse pleasure and the desire to subsequently eject the abject which has given us this pleasure. Secondly the function of the monster is to represent the threat to boundaries, the encounter that threatens the stability of the dominant ideology. Finally the horror film acts to construct a representation of the feminine and maternal as monstrous. The monster in this reading represents not repressed desire but the return of the Real. The Lacanian Real is that which lies outside the symbolic order or the ideological structure of society, that which is not yet symbolized or that which resists symbolization. Whereas the imaginary and the symbolic can be repressed into the unconscious, the Real can only be foreclosed, banished into reality from hence it returns in the form of psychosis, individual or collective.

Robin Wood on the other hand in his 1979 groundbreaking monograph, *An Introduction to the American Horror Film*, suggests that the horror film may have a progressive, revolutionary function when the genre raises questions about the social construction of 'evil' in western society. If as Girard suggests, sacrifice and scapegoating are relevant to the construction of society, for Wood the way in which the horror film depicts the monster may actually tend to undermine the association between evil and the 'Other', and by revealing the mechanisms of sacrifice and scapegoating, contrast false consciousness and

provoke reflection. McLarty (1991) has noted that contemporary horror tends to collapse the categories of normal bodies and monstrous bodies and to resist the portrayal of the monster as a completely alien 'Other', typical of earlier horror.

In the introduction I remarked on the fact that terror and horror are different psychological modes with different functions at an individual and collective level. All these considerations lead us to the conclusion that the horror film, far from being a unitary and unified category, encloses within itself three different sub-categories: uncanny horror, abject horror and sublime terror. In the first two categories I use the term horror to mark the fact that the fear and dread produced by the return of the repressed or the return of the abject or the Real act to produce a movement of recoil and rejection in the face of the monstrosity of the 'Other', a movement which reinforces mechanisms of repression and foreclosure and brings about narrative closure whereas in sublime terror the erosion of boundaries and the encounter with the abject 'Other' brings about an 'unlimiting' of the imagination, an increase in consciousness and a capacity to accept ethical guilt about our abject desires. In this way our lives become a narrative open to the possibilities of our own darkness. Let us look more closely now at these three categories.

In uncanny horror, the monster represents the return of the repressed, that which was once familiar and is now long forgotten, ejected from consciousness under the combined pressures of the reality principle and the superego, castration, the archaic maternal body, bisexual desires and fantasies, unlawful sexual and aggressive desires. The monster is interstitial, it represents the combination of the human (consciousness) and the inhuman (the animal or the dead), but at the same time it is always subjectivized and stimulates identification, exactly because it represents our own repressed desires and deep down we know it does. Here we can include monsters such as the werewolf, the vampire and the mummy. If the horror is produced by the return of all that consciousness refuses in itself, the pleasure is two-fold. On the one hand uncanny horror offers the spectator the possibility of an unconscious participation in guilty pleasures through the identification with the monster and its subjectivity, on the other it offers the spectator the super-egoical pleasure of control over and repression of the monster as the dark shadow double of the ego consciousness. Although in the end, closure is achieved through the expulsion of otherness, nevertheless, it is as though in the last analysis a little bit of the monster is integrated into the human hero or heroine and he or she, and hopefully we the viewers emerge from the encounter with an increase in consciousness and in self-knowledge.

In abject horror the monster represents the return of the Real (Lacan) or the Abject (Kristeva), all that lies outside the symbolic order. In abject horror the monster is no longer even vaguely familiar but appears absolutely alien and devoid of all subjectivity, the corpse without a soul (the zombie), the creature from another world (the devil or the alien), the subject without subjectivization

(the psychotic). Here there is no attempt at subjectivization, the motives for the creature's behaviour are meaningless and unintelligible, it is devoid of any psychic reality. It is faceless, speechless and possesses a kind of mechanical quality that identifies it as utterly inhuman. Thus there can be no process of identification, no integration is possible and the monster can only be foreclosed, expelled into the Real from whence it will return with frightening regularity. If the abject horror represents a ritual, it is like the perverse rituals it mirrors, incapable of producing any change in psychic structure or in the dominant cultural ideology and condemned to returning in any endless spectacle of destruction and meaninglessness.

In sublime terror on the other hand, the monster is both abject and subjectivized. It is portrayed as absolutely alien and 'other', but at the same time it is presented as possessing fears and desires even if they are perverse or psychotic ones. It may behave in an inhuman way and yet it is a product of human agency and possesses some remnant of humanity that prevents us from seeing it as utterly abject. Thus it becomes impossible to decide the status of the monster, conscious or radically unconscious, known or unknown, abject or uncanny, alive or dead, and it is truly a sublime representation of the tension of opposites. In this kind of terror the monster can be neither repressed nor foreclosed. The only solution is an act of consciousness, the realization that the perverse and psychotic desires of the monster are a mirror image of our own perverse desires and the perversity of our own community and culture, based as they are on mechanisms of sacrifice and of scapegoating. As Žižek writes in *Enjoy Your Symptom*, perhaps the greatest ethical revolution in the history of man is that depicted in the *Book of Job*, the moment when 'the social perspective of sacrificing the scapegoat is confronted with the perspective of the victim itself' (Žižek 2001). The moment in which we recognize the other in ourselves and ourselves in the other is a sublime moment of 'unlimiting of the imagination'. To illustrate these different types of horror I am going to refer to two classic contemporary horror films: Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* and George Romero's *The Night of the Living Dead*.

Terror and Hitchcock: the psychotic killer

This film of 1960, which Hitchcock himself conceived of as his emergence into the making of 'pure cinema' (Monaco 2001), has probably attracted more critical attention than any other horror film before and after. It is considered by many the first to break with traditional structures of horror and is a landmark in the history of the cinema. For the first time the monster is no longer represented as external to the society within which the text was produced and for the first time the monster has a fully human face. According to Robin Wood (1978), *Psycho* is a radical and innovative film which directly criticizes the key institution of patriarchal society, the family. Feminist critics such as Creed and Linda Williams on the other hand have criticized the film for the way in which

it depicts the feminine and the maternal as monstrous and abject. For Williams (1996), *Psycho* depicts woman as both monster and victim, going so far as to imply that the real killer in patriarchal society is not the man, but the woman in the man. Creed (1986) suggests that it is not the patriarchal family that is depicted as the source of the monster but an abnormal, matriarchal family in which the father is absent and the mother dominates. In fact as Jancovich (1992) points out, the attribution of responsibility is complex and ambiguous and the film plays with the identification of the viewer like no other horror film. In the first third of the film we identify with Marion and her perspective. Marion is, as Žižek (2001) tells us *In His Bold Gaze My Ruin is Writ Large*, a representation of all that is alienating in American society in the late Fifties: 'American alienation – financial insecurity, fear of the police, desperate pursuit of a piece of happiness – in short, the hysteria of everyday capitalistic life'. Marion finds herself in the wrong place at the wrong time, because of her sexuality which leads her to transgress boundaries and places her outside the symbolic order. Once outside, she finds herself confronted with the psychotic reverse of the symbolic order, 'the nightmarish world of pathological crime' and the pre-symbolic world of the archaic maternal. As Žižek points out, Hitchcock uses the horizontal lines of the motel and the vertical lines of the Gothic house to represent the opposition between tradition and modernity but it can equally be said to represent the opposition between the masculine and the archaic maternal. In this 'other world' Marion meets Norman, her 'mirror image' as we can see by the choice of the names (Hitchcock changes the name of the heroine in Robert Bloch's original story, from Mary to Marion to achieve this very effect), and through Norman she comes into contact with her other double, the terrible, knife-wielding mother who (apparently) will destroy her in the famous shower scene. From the shower scene on, the moment of greatest intensity and horror, the audience find themselves searching anxiously for someone with whom to identify, a point of orientation. In fact, Hitchcock forces the viewer's eye to become aligned with three different gazes, Norman's anxious gaze as he obsessively clears away all traces of Mother's crime and watches Marion's car sink slowly in the swamp, Arbogast's and Lilah's investigative gaze as they attempt to penetrate into the mystery of the Mother and to attach her disembodied voice to a body, and the Mother's murderous gaze as the knife moves in its downward trajectory in the staircase scene of the second murder, destroying finally with the hapless Arbogast any hope the viewer had for a 'normal' standpoint. At that moment Hitchcock forces the audience to recognize the pathological 'real' of its desire, the desire, as Žižek says, to 'transgress the Law in the name of the Law'. This is Hitchcock's elementary strategy, 'by means of a reflexive inclusion of his/her own gaze, the viewer becomes aware of this gaze of his/hers as always-already partial, ideological, stigmatized by a pathological desire'. This moment in which we are forced to acknowledge that what binds together our community is the scapegoating and sacrifice of the 'other', is a moment of sublime terror which could potentially open the

way to acknowledgement of collective guilt. In the end however, Hitchcock lets the viewer off the hook. In the last scene when the voice finally becomes embodied, it is becomes attached to the wrong body, so what we get, according to Žižek, is a 'true zombie', a personification of 'absolute Otherness', a truly abject creature with whom all identification fails. Thus the film becomes once again a ritual of abjection which provides society with a convenient scapegoat onto which we can project the collective guilt for our cultural psychosis... the fault lies, not in ourselves, not in the society we have created but in that uncanny other that is Mother, 'the abyss beyond identification'. At the end of the film, Norman as subject disappears, split into the voice of the objective expert, the psychiatrist-analyst who explains that it was the mother half of Norman that killed, and the empty and soulless gaze of Mother into the camera as she puts forward her psychotic truth. As Žižek says,

the ultimate social-ideological lesson of *Psycho* is therefore the collapse of the very field of intersubjectivity as a medium of Truth in late capitalism, its disintegration into the two poles of expert knowledge and a psychotic 'private truth'

(Žižek 1982)

Once again, narrative closure is achieved and guilt avoided. The Real is expelled into reality, and the encounter with the Sublime fails. This state of affairs is reversed in the next film I wish to discuss.

Terror and Romero: the zombie

George Romero's 1968 *Night of the Living Dead* is probably one of the most successful horror films ever made, both for its commercial achievements and for the critical attention it has received over the years. This film is generally regarded as the turning point between modern and post-modern horror. For the first time there is not the slightest attempt at narrative closure as the film ends with the absurd death of the black hero, Ben, and with the zombies undefeated. If the horror genre has always been remarkable for its tendency to undermine the hierarchical binary oppositions, order and disorder, rationality and irrationality, good and evil, used for the construction of the self in Western society, in *Night* these oppositions are collapsed to the point that there is almost a complete reversal, a true enantiodromia. The source of evil lies not so much in the monstrous and alien 'other', as in the social order which had caused the process of zombification (the zombies are animated by radiation from a military satellite and in the crisis of subjectivity produced in the individual by the mechanisms of rational control. As Romero himself says of the zombies in a 1979 interview with Dan Yakir, 'you have to be sympathetic with the creatures, because they ain't doin' nothin'. They're like sharks: they can't help behaving the way they do'. The zombie is Romero's metaphor for the crisis of the subjectivity in capitalistic society and the mindlessness and the

repetitive and compulsive behaviour of the zombies mirror precisely the lack of reflectivity, the unconsciousness and the stereotyped and ineffectual behaviour of the group of persons that find themselves besieged by the zombies in the isolated farmhouse. In the face of the threat posed by the zombies their first reaction is to turn to the television for information and instructions and when social order collapses and they are left to their own devices, it is their own incapacity and stupidity that bring about their deaths. In fact, the zombies taken singly are pathetic rather than menacing creatures and they only become dangerous when they mass together under the pressure of their need for human flesh. Necrophagy is, as Angela Carter (1979) tells us in *The Sadeian Woman*, 'the most elementary act of exploitation, that of turning the other directly into a comestible, of seeing the other in the most primitive terms of use'. Thus the horde of cannibalistic zombies are also a metaphor for a community which feeds on the 'Other' to hide its own lack of any true sense of social bonding or of identity, a society in which the only rule is consume or be consumed. The mass of zombies recalls to mind Baudrillard's metaphor of the 'mass' which, as McLarty (1991) says, is 'both the victim of invasive media images and a monstrous "black hole" that destroys the social'. The breakdown of the community is further underlined by the fact that the only response the community is capable of making to the threat is the posse, which as Jancovitch points out is 'at least as callous, brutal, unthinking and threatening as the zombies from which they are supposed to save the social order'. Not by chance, in the film's notorious final scenes, Ben the black hero, the only survivor of the siege of the farmhouse and the only character to demonstrate any individuality and any sense of human solidarity, is gunned down and burned by the posse who mistake him for a zombie. Many critics have commented on the pessimism and the negativity of the finale (Dillard for example accuses Romero of nihilism and of denying human dignity), but in fact the message of the film is exactly the opposite. We can only save ourselves from zombification (loss of subjectivity) or from being reduced into meat (turned into a commodity) through our capacity to resist the social order, even if this means running the risk of being destroyed by this same social order. Only when we recognize that we are the zombie, 'We're them and they're us' to quote a character from the 1990 remake, only when we admit that the 'other' is in us and that if we sacrifice him or her we are sacrificing ourselves, is there any hope for us and our society. As Romero says in the afterword to his 1978 novelization of Martin, 'Have we conjured up creatures and given them mystical properties so as not to admit that they are actually of our own race?'. No matter how objectionable the post-modern horror classics like *The Night of the Living Dead*, *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Halloween* may appear on an aesthetic level, they show a remarkable capacity to provoke social consciousness, and by bringing together oppositions that are traditionally dissociated and kept apart, by blurring the boundaries that separate self from other, life from death, good from evil, such films actually work to weaken the projection of evil onto the 'Other' and thus

provoke reflections on guilt, both collective and individual. In other words they offer one of the few opportunities available in our society for an encounter with the Sublime. Of course the analysis of the role of terror in leading us to reflect on culture has so far been limited to theoretical and aesthetic reflections that may seem somewhat remote from any literal social reality but we can trace similar mechanisms at work in an actual socio-cultural context.

Terror and society: the Weimar Republic

Maria Tatar in *Lustmord*, has noted that the many of the transgressive avant-garde cultural productions of the Weimar Republic were characterized by an obsessive preoccupation with images of mutilated female corpses (Tatar 1995). Whether in Otto Dix's paintings of disembowelled prostitutes, George Grosz's drawings of sexual mutilations or Lulu's murder at the hands of Jack the Ripper in Wedekind's play, *Pandora's Box*, these artistic representations function, according to Tatar as 'an aesthetic strategy for managing certain kinds of sexual, social and political anxieties and for constituting an artistic and social identity'. In all these representations, despite the elevated aesthetic quality of the works, women are presented as provocative, complicitous, or deserving targets of violence, that is, they function as scapegoats, as an 'Other' onto whom the artist can discharge his own violence and tension. Thus instead of providing society with a opportunity to reflect on the social and collective pathologies that produced the war and on collective guilt and responsibility, such artists fed into collective fantasies of victimization. As Tatar notes,

The notion of the war effort as one great act of martyrdom was so pervasive that it easily effaced the reality of agency, turning the German soldier into a man prepared to sacrifice himself, but also a man who, in defeat, quickly slides into the role of victim – a victim of enemy force, of incompetent military authorities, or of civilians at home.

(Tatar 1995)

Of course, here we are dealing with imaginary crimes, but these artistic works both reflected and influenced the actual social reality, as we can see if we look at the social role real serial killers played in Weimar Germany. As Zizek notes in *Enjoy Your Symptom*,

Today in our universe of mass culture, the figure which comes closest to this role of the scapegoat embodying sacred violence is the 'serial killer', the madman who, with no 'rational ground,' compulsively repeats murderous acts.

(Zizek 2001)

The 1920s saw a series of sensational sexual murders which were remarkable not so much for the murders in themselves as for the reaction they produced in the collective. Killers such as the notorious Fritz Haarmann, the Butcher of Hanover, and Peter Kurten, the Dusseldorf Ripper, created states of generalized

horror in the public, fuelled by the popular press with its references to ‘state of hysteria’ and ‘overwhelming sense of alarm’ and even ‘psychotic fears’. As Theodor Lessing wrote about the Haarman case:

You became convinced that you were seeing a psychotic population, a hideous epidemic that had previously broken out here and there during the war years.

(Lessing 1925)

In this way, attention was focused not on the victims, but on the killers themselves, on an utterly alien ‘Other’, a beast or a vampire, capable of infecting the whole population, of transforming it into a collective victim. If for Kurten himself murder was the only way to take his revenge on society for his ‘martyrdom and travail’, for society the only way to deal with the evil represented by Kurten was through his physical elimination. This reaction cannot be explained only in terms of the killers themselves and the horror their crimes produced, for as Tatar states,

the discursive strategies developed for reflecting on killers like Kurten and Haarmann did not have to be invented by the press. Looking at Friedrich Murnau’s film *Nosferatu* makes it clear that the tropes for representing the ‘pathology’ of otherness had already been installed by 1922. . . . the vampire *Nosferatu* eerily sets the terms for the double threat of the serial killer. . . . not only does he suck the lifeblood of the individual victims, he also, through his noxious presence in a community, unleashes a disease of epidemic proportions.

(Tatar 1995)

Thus reality and collective unconscious fantasies mutually influenced and fed one another in a vicious spiral. The metaphor of the vampire and of contagion, of the evil of ‘otherness’ and the need to eliminate it through mechanisms of scapegoating, would shortly find an even more sinister use in the hands of the Nazis who fed into popular fears and popular fantasies of victimization to deadly effect. Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich (1984), in a discussion on the collective denial of guilt and the mechanisms of victimization in Germany after the Holocaust, have noted that ‘identification with the innocent victim is frequently substituted for mourning’, a mechanism that allows a society to deny the real victims that it has produced and its own guilt, but as Tatar points out, this culture of scapegoating and of denial of guilt was already at work long before in Weimar, and in the use it made of collective terror.

Solutions

Faced with the problem of evil and the horrors of war, Freud in the 1932 paper ‘Why war?’ and in the 1929 paper *Civilization and its Discontents*, can only propose a tragic solution: the re-location of aggressive instincts from the individual to the community (but such a community will conserve within itself both violence and power and will need another onto whom it can divert the

manifestations of these aggressive instincts); the re-direction of instincts into character traits and sublimation; and the renunciation of instinct through repression, suppression or 'some other means?'. In *Metafore del Simbolo*, Trevi (1986) has pointed out the fundamentally gnostic nature of Freud's tragic and pessimistic solution:

Even at the cost of scandalizing those who are still animated by a positivistic and generous faith in science, we must still advance the suspicion that Freud is subtly fuelled by the Gnostic idea of the irreparable fall of man from his pre-cosmic and primordial condition.

(my translation)

In this sense Trevi reads in *Civilization and its Discontents* the traces of a lacerating contradiction: the Id is at one and the same time the uncontaminated truth of man, the only place where he is authentically true and where the ego and its pseudo-reason is merely the veil that covers and in part hides this truth, and the insupportable burden that man must shoulder in his wanderings and the obstacle that blocks the path to any true salvation. As Trevi remarks, however, alongside the gnosis of the fall and of the exile into an alien and hostile world, there exists the gnosis that tends towards the future and the not-yet, the gnosis of hope, traces of which can be found in the Kabbalistic writings of Mosé Cordovero and Luria, in the restrained splendour of Polish Hassidism and in the writings of Buber, Bloch and Benjamin. For Trevi, whereas the gnosis of the fall and the exile are orientated towards the traces of past fullness and the symbols of Eros,

the gnosis of the fullness of the future and of tension is oriented towards the discovery of the Eros of the symbol, the symbol as carrier of Eros and generator of the world to come, the symbol not as simulacrum and appearance but as anticipation and project.

(ibid.)

At the same time, Freud's pessimism about civilization can also be linked to the profound influence the ideas of Le Bon and Tarde on crowd psychology had on his work. For Le Bon and Tarde, the crowd, and by analogy the group in general, is always morally and intellectually inferior to the individual and thus salvation can come only from the individual. Durkheim on the other hand sees civilization as coming from the group and believes that certain transformations can only come about in group situations. It is in this Jungian idea of symbol as anticipation and project and in the ideas of Durkheim on the possibilities of the group to create new forms of culture, that we can begin to read a possible solution to the problem of evil and the terror that this encounter implies

In *After the Catastrophe* (1945) and in *The Fight with the Shadow* (1946) Jung turns his attention towards the problem of evil and the tragedy of the Holocaust. Leaving aside the problem of Jung's own shadow which has been amply debated in recent years, Jung discusses evil in terms of collective guilt.

He states clearly that the psychopathology of the masses is rooted in the psychology of the individual, a daring statement indeed unless we remember that in the context of the idea of individuation, equally the psychopathology of the individual is rooted in the psychology of the society and culture from which he comes. For Jung, it is only from a legal, moral and intellectual point of view that guilt can be restricted to the individual; from a psychological point of view it is always both individual and collective. As he states,

When evil breaks at any point into the order of things, our whole circle of psychic protection is disrupted. Action inevitable calls up reaction, and in the matter of destructiveness, this turns out to be just as bad as the crime, and possibly even worse, because the evil must be exterminated root and branch. In order to escape the contaminating touch of evil we need a proper 'rite de sortie', a solemn admission of guilt by judge, hangman, and public, followed by an act of expiation.

(Jung 1946 para. 411)

For Jung, strategies of punishment, of extirpation of evil and of purification of the collective are inevitably bound to fail and serve only to increase evil, based as they are on splitting of the opposites, dissociation, projection of the Shadow and scapegoating. The only solution in the face of evil is the conscious recognition of our own guilt and our own evil, acceptance of our personal shadow and that of our society.

Without guilt, unfortunately, there can be no psychic maturation and no widening of the spiritual horizon . . . if collective guilt could only be understood and accepted, a great step forward would have been taken. But this alone is no cure, just as no neurotic is cured by mere understanding. The question remains: How am I to live with this shadow? What attitude is required if I am to be able to live in spite of evil? In order to find valid answers a complete spiritual renewal is needed. And this cannot be given gratis, each man must strive to achieve it for himself.

(Jung 1946)

Evil and spiritual renewal cannot however only be relegated to the sphere of the individual; they also have collective and cultural dimensions and it may well be that it is exactly at a collective level that the solution lies.

All too often however, psychoanalysis and analytical psychology have chosen to turn their backs on terror and on collective evil, preferring to remain in the relative safety of the consulting room where evil can be reduced to manageable proportions, to a matter of infantile desires and drives, of childhood and of mummies and daddies. As the anthropologist Vincent Crapanzaro states in *Hermes' Dilemma and Hamlet's Desire*, discussing the example of an Argentinian analyst who during the military dictatorship attempted to reduce the fear of male authority expressed by a political victim of torture to castration anxiety resulting from an unresolved Oedipus conflict,

What I find objectionable is giving infantile fantasies governing priority over political reality and thus facilitating a complacency before, if not an actual denial of, such

a political reality. So long as psychoanalysis fails to question its own praxis, so long as it does not attempt to integrate social and political reality into its theoretical perspective (and not simply incorporate it), it lends itself to the political and social misuse of the sort that was seen in Argentina and Brazil.

(Crapanzano 1992)

In the face of the collective terror, it is important that analysts too, as individuals and as societies, show ourselves capable of reflecting on our responsibilities and our omissions and of elaborating our guilt. In this effort we have important lessons to learn from the post-modern theorists and artists and their reflections on the social implications and functions of terror.

TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT

Les événements récents font ressortir de manière tragique et dramatique la nécessité pour la psychologie des profondeurs de s'intéresser à la psychologie de la terreur. Cet article tente de dégager des éléments de différenciation parmi les modes de terreur et d'horreur, et explore les différentes approches théoriques de ce problème par Burke, Freud, Kristeva et Jung, afin de rendre plus claire la compréhension des fonctions individuelles et collectives de la terreur et de l'horreur. Tous ces auteurs mettent l'accent sur le fait que terreur et horreur jouent un rôle dans la structuration du sentiment d'identité et le renforcement des liens de communauté. Mais, alors que Freud et Kristeva pensent que le vécu d'horreur amène à l'accentuation du mouvement de refus de l'altérité par des mécanismes de répression ou de forclusion, Burke et Jung par contre voient dans la rencontre avec le Sublime Négatif ou avec l'Ombre l'occasion d'une ouverture des frontières de la conscience du moi et d'une intégration de la réalité de l'altérité. L'article s'appuie sur l'analyse de deux films d'horreur et d'un contexte socio-culturel spécifique pour donner une illustration de ces différentes fonctions de la terreur et de l'horreur et dessiner les contours de solutions possibles aux problèmes auxquels est confrontée la société.

Kürzliche Ereignisse haben in höchst tragischer und dramatischer Weise die Notwendigkeit für die Tiefenpsychologie unterstrichen, ihre Aufmerksamkeit der Psychologie des Terrors zuzuwenden. Die vorliegende Arbeit versucht eine Unterscheidung zwischen den psychologischen Modi des Schreckens und des Terror und erforscht die verschiedenen theoretischen Ansätze von Burke, Freud, Kristeva und Jung zu diesem Problem, um ein Licht zu werfen auf die individuellen und kollektiven Funktionen, welche Schrecken und Terror innehaben. Während all diese Autoren betonen, daß Terror und Schrecken eine Rolle bei der Strukturierung des Sinns von Identität und bei der Verstärkung von Verbindung innerhalb der Gemeinschaft, glauben Freud und Kristeva, daß die Erfahrung von Schrecken den Ausschluß von Anderssein verstärkt über den Mechanismus der Verdrängung oder Ausschluß, während Burke und Jung in der Begegnung mit dem Negativ Sublimen oder mit dem Schatten die Möglichkeit sehen, die Grenzen des Ich-Bewußtseins zu erweitern und „Andersheit“ zu integrieren. Die Arbeit verwendet dann die Analyse zweier Horror-Filme und eines bestimmten soziokulturellen

Kontextes, um diese verschiedenen Funktionen von Schrecken und Terror zu illustrieren und mögliche Lösungen darzustellen für die Probleme, denen sich die Gesellschaft gegenüber sieht.

Eventi recenti hanno sottolineato nel modo più tragico e drammatico la necessità per la psicologia analitica di rivolgere la sua attenzione alla psicologia del terrore. Il lavoro presente tenta di operare una distinzione fra i modi dell'orrore e del terrore ed esamina i differenti approcci teorici di Burke, Freud, Kristeva e Jung relativamente a questo problema così da far luce sulle funzioni individuali e collettive svolte dall'orrore e dal terrore. Mentre tutti questi autori sottolineano che terrore e orrore svolgono un ruolo nella strutturazione del senso di identità e nel rafforzamento dei legami di comunanza, Freud e Kristeva pensano che l'esperienza dell'orrore lavori ad aumentare l'esclusione dell'alterità attraverso meccanismi di repressione o di preclusione, mentre Burke e Jung vedono nell'incontro con il Sublime Negativo o con l'Ombra, la possibilità di ampliamento dei legami della coscienza egoica e di integrazione dell' "alterità". Questo scritto utilizza l'analisi di due film dell'orrore e di un particolare contesto socio-culturale per illustrare queste differenti funzioni dell'orrore e del terrore e per delineare possibili soluzioni ai problemi che la società si trova di fronte.

Los eventos recientes han destacado en la forma mas dramática y trágica, la necesidad para que la psicología profunda vuelva su atención hacia psicología del terror. El presente trabajo intenta distinguir las formas psicológicas del horror y del terror y explora las diferentes aproximaciones de Burke, Freud, Kristeva y Jung a este problema, para poder iluminar sobre las influencias que el horror y el terror juegan sobre lo individual y lo colectivo. Mientras todos estos autores dicen que el horror y el terror juegan un papel en la estructuración del sentido de identidad y fortalecen los lazos comunitarios, Freud y Kristeva creen que la experiencia del horror trabaja incrementando la exclusión de la alteridad por medio del de mecanismos de represión o extinción, entre tanto Burke y Jung ven en el encuentro con lo Negativo Sublime la Sombra, la posibilidad de ensanchar los límites de la conciencia del ego e integración con la alteridad. Este trabajo utiliza el análisis de dos películas de horror y de un contexto socio cultural particular para ilustrar estas diferentes funciones del terror y del horror para así delinear posibles soluciones a los problemas que enfrenta la sociedad.

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