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THESIS

THE ~~SCREAM~~: A VERY PARTICULAR TRAUMATIC CONDITION

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Statement of Intent

A thesis submitted in partial requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or purposes.

Markela Panegyres

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Figure 1. Edvard Munch, *The Scream,* 1893.

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Abstract

A personal experience of explosive, yet repressed psychological ferment that arose in response to severe trauma was the starting point for both the creative work and the dissertation that comprise this thesis. In contrast to other strong emotional conditions, this state is characterised by a violent process in which the impulse to scream is turned back in on itself becoming a self-destructive force. The neologism ~~scream~~ has been coined in order to encapsulate the particular qualities of this traumatic condition and its manifestation in the creative work. The ~~scream~~ is both the compulsion behind my creative practice, and its central affective state. The dissertation draws from my own traumatic experiences in the formulation and development of the ~~scream~~ as a concept, and the elucidation of its broader ontological, psychological and aesthetic implications. Although themes of trauma, suffering and anguish have been widely explored in Western art, literature, philosophy, and psychology, this dissertation advances the ~~scream~~ as a very specific traumatic condition that has, so far, remained largely untheorised. The dissertation aims to define the ~~scream~~ through a series of case studies from literature, philosophy and art, which exemplify the nature of this condition.

The creative work has undertaken a comprehensive exploration of the ~~scream~~ primarily through performance-video. Works have been created through an ongoing and constant studio process comprised of numerous performative acts, that are, in most cases, directly mediated into video format. Eighteen suites of work have been created for this project. These range from raw, visceral performances that focus primarily on the face as the site of expression, to highly stylised and aestheticised works involving the use of masks and costume to a greater extent. Each suite invokes a different aspect, or symptom of the ~~scream~~, which is played out through a number of different personae or alter egos.

Introduction

A particular condition resulting from significant personal trauma led to the contentions of this thesis. I experienced an ineffable inner energy comprised of a mixture of rage, anguish, resentment, despair and self-revulsion. This energy erupted with violent force but was stifled and internalised: turning back in on itself and ravaging me. Through my own reckoning, this emotional state was specific enough to necessitate the coinage of the term ~~scream~~. The strikethrough has a number of functions, which represent some of the constituent qualities of the ~~scream~~. The strikethrough symbolises the violent strike of traumatic events and their devastating consequences. It also functions as a self-cancelling quality that relates to the emotional state expressed as silence: a result of the subject's repression, fear, or anticipation of not being understood. This 'cancelled scream' relates to something so horrifying it cannot be fully expressed or named. One consequence of trauma of this nature is that it causes unwarranted shame and guilt in the subject, leading to self-silencing, self-negation and self-recrimination. Ultimately, the strikethrough represents the agonising contradiction of this condition: the urge to scream is countered by an equally strong suppression of this urge. Accordingly, the ~~scream~~ oscillates between externalised expression and concealed emotion. The ~~scream~~ is the compulsive force propelling both the creative work and theoretical enquiry of this project.

In my creative practice, the expression of the ~~scream~~ is both overt and covert: variously asserted in raw, wild and primal outbursts, or hidden and veiled through masks, artifice and analogy. It is important to note that this is not self- therapy but a rigorous self-analytical and aesthetic process in which the performing subject (myself) assumes a variety of aliases and guises. The theoretical enquiry stems from the hypothesis that there are others who share this condition. One of the paths to an easing of my symptoms has been through the discovery that I am not alone in my experience. The thesis seeks to define the ~~scream~~, and uses a series of case studies to mobilise and elucidate this concept. Each case study has strong affinities with this emotional state as evinced in the studio project.

The ~~scream~~ is distinct from other emotional states of torment and turmoil, such as *angst*, ennui and psychological crisis. Although it is redolent of these states, it is a separate phenomenon that specifically responds to events of a traumatic and violent nature. The singular nature of this condition is also due to a number of key attributes that set it apart from other forms of strong emotion. Unlike other self-destructive emotional states, this is a far more torturous condition that involves self-directed rage and a frenzied drive for self-

annihilation. Moreover, the ~~scream~~ is a persistent abreaction of the horror and suffering that accompanies traumatic events. It particularly recalls the way in which the traumatised individual's ability to physically or vocally resist is quashed and nullified. Nevertheless, the individual's thwarted attempts to cry out remain held in the psyche as a latent force that is sustained as the only possible course of resistance.

The neologism ~~scream~~ borrows from Jacques Derrida's use of strike-through to indicate that the normative meaning of a word is *sous rature* or 'under erasure.' To put a word 'under erasure' demonstrates that, although close, the word does not adequately represent a particular meaning, but it is impossible to find a more precise word or to fully define this meaning.[1] For example, the word 'scream' is incapable of encapsulating the specific condition sought in this project, but it is nevertheless necessary to use it in some form due to its proximity in affective meaning. In its common usage, a scream usually refers to an instinctive, loud and overwhelming cry uttered in response to a life-threatening situation of horror or terror, an experience of extreme physical or emotional pain, or as an expression of intense grief, rage and/or despair.[2] The ~~scream~~ has similarities with the extreme emotional and primal state of a vocal scream, but is distinct. Unlike a literal scream, this condition is mute and involves the suppression of vocal screaming and the containment of explosive emotion. Moreover, the ~~scream~~ is not a speech act or an immediate and reactive outburst; instead it is an ongoing psychic condition.

The ~~scream~~ can be further differentiated from other extreme emotions because it involves a number of different physiological and psychological modalities that are all compelled by the same explosive inner energy, but represent the various moods or states of mind of this condition. Accordingly, the ~~scream~~ features oscillations in intensity and affect. The mercurial nature of this condition is demonstrated in the contrasting personae I assume in my performance-video works. This can also be understood through the analogy to a split self—a result of the dissociation and fragmentation of subjectivity that may occur as a consequence of severe trauma. The moods and states of mind that are inhabited by my personae are expressed through a range of disquieting and irrational behaviours, gestures and vocalizations which are reminiscent of states of frenzied madness, delirium, hysteria, major depression, mania and schizophrenia; as well as forms of non-symbolic communication such as repetitive speech patterns, echolalia and acting-out behaviours that

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[1] Maggie MacLure, "Deconstruction as a method of research," in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, ed. Bridget Somekh and Cathy Lewin, (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 284 and Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), xv. Heidegger first initiated the use of strikethrough.

[2] Peter Schwenger, "Phenomenology of the Scream," *Critical Inquiry*, 40 no. 2 (Winter 2014), 393.

are often attributed to individuals with autism.[3] However, the ~~scream~~ is distinct and separate from any of these states and the artwork does not seek to mimic any of these symptoms. Moreover, there has been a progression in my practice from a savage, raw, raving manifestation of the ~~scream~~, to one that is more nuanced and highly theatricalised. Over the course of the creative project, I have observed that the different modalities of the ~~scream~~ revolve around the following constellation: rage, shame, obscenity, extreme physical and mental suffering, silence, and a state that relates specifically to the perspective of a daughter and woman. These six modalities are reflected in the structure of the thesis, which explores and elucidates the nature of the ~~scream~~ from each of these different perspectives.

The use of the terms trauma and traumatised subject in this thesis relates specifically to recent psychological and psychiatric definitions of psychological trauma and traumatic events or situations. Although the focus of this thesis is the ~~scream~~ in its expressed form in the realm of the aesthetic, and it therefore does not aim to analyse the ~~scream~~ from the perspective of psychology, psychoanalysis or trauma theory, recent psychological understandings of trauma are extremely important to elucidating the concept of the ~~scream~~ and its symptoms. Overall, contemporary psychological understandings of trauma—particularly the delineations of trauma-related disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and complex traumatic stress disorder—corroborate some of the main attributes of the ~~scream~~ and its symptoms experienced and observed in the case studies examined in the thesis. In contemporary psychology trauma is generally defined as a major psychological injury caused by what is called a traumatic stressor: an event, situation or experience that the World Health Organisation describes as 'of an exceptionally threatening or catastrophic nature, which is likely to cause pervasive distress in almost anyone.'[4] According to the American Psychiatric Association, a traumatic stressor usually 'involves a perceived threat to life (either one's own life or that of another person) or

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[3] Martha Snell, "Using dynamic assessment with learners who communicate nonsymbolically," *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 18 no. 3 (2002):163-176.While these symptoms are often linked to children and adolescents with severe learning disabilities, they have also been linked to trauma, and are correspond to some of the ways in which the ~~scream~~ is performed in my performance video works.

[4] World Health Organization, The ICD–10 Version 2016, "F43.1 Post-traumatic stress disorder,*" Classification of Mental and Behavioural Disorders: Clinical Descriptions and Diagnostic Guidelines*, (Geneva: WHO; 2016), http://apps.who.int/classifications/icd10/browse/2016/en#!/F43.1. American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.* 4th edn. (Washington, DC: APA; 1994); Gaskell, *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: The Management of PTSD in Adults and Children in Primary and Secondary Care.* (National Collaborating Center for Mental Health: Leicester, 2005) (NICE Clinical Guidelines, No. 26.) Appendix 13., https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK56506/
Christine A. Courtois, Julian D. Ford, eds, T*reating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders (Adults): Scientific Foundations* (New York: Guilford Press, 2009),15.

physical integrity, and intense fear, helplessness or horror.'[5] Traumatic events and situations can either be one-off or chronic and recurring—for example abuse within the domestic context. Trauma can also occur in response to severe illness or personal loss.[6] Some of the symptoms of trauma that have a particular correspondence to the ~~scream~~ include the re-experiencing and re-living of traumatic events, avoidance, and an oscillation between hyperarousal and emotional numbing and severe dissociation.[7] Other significant symptoms of trauma that are germane to the ~~scream~~ include psychosis, paranoia, depression, self-blame, extreme anger, feelings of disgust and self-disgust, and extreme introspection.[8] However, the notion of trauma is still insufficient in conveying the particularly catastrophic and explosive nature of the ~~scream~~ and its symptoms. It is important to note that the ~~scream~~ is not simply a composite or symptom of PTSD and/or complex traumatic stress disorder. Instead, the ~~scream~~ is a separate entity that runs parallel to these conditions and is imbricated with each of these, but is significantly different with additional and particular qualities that go beyond trauma disorders. The ~~scream~~ is differentiated because of its specific nature as an explosive and convulsive force that turns back inwardly on the individual. The particular energy that constitutes this excruciating movement within the psyche, to the best of my knowledge has not been theorised in current psychological and psychiatric understandings of trauma. The concept of the ~~scream~~ therefore posits a specific response to trauma.

The methodology underpinning this thesis is endogenous, and takes my direct lived experience of trauma as the starting point for the formulation and development the ~~scream~~ as a concept, and the elucidation of its broader ontological, psychological and aesthetic implications. This process does not assume a fixed or fully knowable traumatised subject, but rather one that is radically unknowable because it is in a state of crisis relating to the experience of annihilation, loss of integrity and loss of self. Paradoxically, however, in the context of the ~~scream~~, an assertion of individual subjectivity and autonomy, despite the subject's radical instability and crisis, becomes necessary for the individual's survival in the

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[5] American Psychiatric Association,: Gaskell; Susan Rubin Suleiman, "Judith Herman and Contemporary Trauma Theory, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol 36 no 1/2, Witness (Spring - Summer, 2008), 276.
[6] Christine A. Courtois, Julian D. Ford, *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders (Adults): An Evidence Based Guide: Scientific Foundations*, with a foreword by Judith Herman and afterword by Bessel A. van der Kolk, (New York: Guilford Press, 2009), 13-16.
[7] Ibid.,
[8] American Psychiatric Association ; *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 4th ed.*; Louis Sass, "Relationships between trauma and psychosis: An exploration of cognitive and dissociative factors,"*Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica,* 112, 351-359.

face of forces of violence and abuse that seek to annihilate the sense of self.[9] In this regard, the methodology of this thesis, as well as the concept of the ~~scream~~ itself, does not only intersect with recent psychological understandings of the effect of trauma on the subject, but also has strong links to a lineage of modern Western philosophical and literary approaches running from Saint Augustine, through to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Friedrich Nietzsche and Antonin Artaud, that assert personal volition and mobilise strong inner emotional states—in particular those that involve suffering- as the basis of ontological enquiry and/or creativity. This philosophical and methodological approach is the *fil conducteur* aligning the particular selection of writers, philosophers and artists in this thesis, and to a large extent accounts for the largely Eurocentric focus of this thesis.

Notwithstanding differences in the representation, articulation, or dissolution of subjectivity undertaken, the case studies are linked by two broad themes that relate strongly to this philosophical approach: firstly the demonstration and/or representation of either a struggle to assert subjectivity and autonomy, or an exploration of subjectivity under crisis or destruction, and secondly the imbrication of their life and work. *The Confessions of Saint Augustine of Hippo* is the first text to advance a modern concept of subjectivity -one that is focussed on lived experience and individual will. Moreover, Augustine's depiction of an inner self that is private, tormented, shameful and alienated, as well as the importance he ascribes to personal memory, is an important precedent to the interiority and self-excoriation that is engaged with in this project.[10] In the pre-Romantic period, Augustine's introspection is carried forward by Rousseau, for whom self-excoriation becomes key to philosophical enquiry: subjectivity is in flux, tormented, and the sense of self and autonomy draws upon the sensorial and emotional.[11] This approach was taken to an even greater extreme by Nietzsche, who emphasises the importance of primal instincts, madness, illness and states of intoxication and profound destructive suffering to philosophical thinking and subjectivity.[12] Nietzsche's affirmation of suffering is further advanced by Artaud for whom physical and mental suffering is asserted as necessary for the experience of autonomy and metaphysical subjectivity itself. In the case of *The Iliad*, like most other literary works of antiquity, extreme emotions are not linked to subjective experience of the author, but are typically deployed in an avatar such as an heroic figure or god or goddess. Nevertheless, the

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[9] Nick Mansfield, *Subjectivity: Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway*, (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2000), 8-9, 52; Kim Atkins ed., *Self and Subjectivity*, with a commentary by Kim Atkins, (Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2005), 2.
[10] Atkins, 7: Phillip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self : The Legacy of a Christian Platonist,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1- 5.
[11] Atkins, 7 see also Slavoj Žižek, *The ticklish subject: the Absent Centre of Political Ontology,* (London: Verso Books, 1999), 2.
[12] Atkins, 71.

Iliad is aligned to the other examples, because the primacy given to Achilles' rage as the driving force in the narrative prefigures the modern subjective emphasis on inner states of strong emotion demonstrated in the other texts. Moreover, the themes of Achilles's frustrated will, his desire for autonomy and the assertion of his individuality, and his alienation and exile within the context of the *Iliad*, are aligned with the specific approach to subjectivity underpinning this project.[13]

While the approaches to the subject outlined above reveal the ontological foundation, genesis, standpoint and positioning of the ~~scream~~ and the methodology of this thesis, from which the ~~scream~~ emerges, the ~~scream~~ also engages with feminist, queer and gender philosophical approaches to subjectivity. Although there is a predominantly male focus of the case studies in this thesis, this is because the ~~scream~~ is not a gender-specific condition, and exists as an instinctive emotional state independent of biological sex or sexuality; moreover the examples have been chosen based on their capacity to exemplify the ~~scream~~ irrespective of the sex of their authors. Nevertheless, this project intersects/aligns with feminist, gender and queer philosophy and theory. The artwork, for example, plays with the construction of gender: most of my performance video works feature a slippage, blurring or exaggeration of categories/stereotypes of gender enacted through a variety of masks and personae and masquerade. But in this project the performative 'play' of androgyny, femininity and masculinity is not just about the exploration of identity, gender and sexuality but also enables the theaticalisation and abreaction of past traumas through inhabiting the roles of both the abuser and abused. Moreover this performative role-play is also driven by the condition of the ~~scream~~ itself which features a severe and violent discomfort with the performance of one's prescribed gender and sexuality and a disgust and self-revulsion at the signs, symptoms and physicality of one's own biological sex. This is a significant component of the ~~scream~~ and is another common thread running through the case studies in this thesis. Accordingly, the artwork and the project could be further related in other theoretical directions for example, queer theory, feminist theory, as well as the concepts of the mask, marionette, and the doll; mime and the legacy of the *commedia dell'arte*; drag, cross-dressing, and queer and gendered performance, as well as self-representation in pop culture. These areas were initially embarked upon during the writing and theoretical research of this project, but in the

[13] Ahuvia Kahane, *Homer: A Guide for the Perplexed,* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 117; "Achilles as Vagabond: The Culture of Autonomy in the *Iliad*," *The Classical World,* 90 (1997): 363-464; Gregory Nagy, *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 47.

interests of focus and precision, and because of the strong emotive engagement my work reflects, the principal focus of this project has been the ~~scream~~ as an emotional state.

Due to the extreme affective states and behaviours evinced in the artwork, the ~~scream~~ might have been considered from the perspective of the abject as established in Bulgarian-French philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. There is some resonance between Kristeva's notion of the abject and the ~~scream~~ and its symptoms—particularly in terms of the self-revulsion that is a component part of this condition. However, in *Powers of Horror,* Kristeva establishes the notion of the abject as a feeling of revulsion and horror over what is filthy or nauseating, or what disturbs the boundaries within the body and/or psyche and thus causes a loss of boundary between self and other, and thus a breakdown of meaning.[14] The ~~scream~~, by contrast is a specific response to severe trauma: unlike abjection the ~~scream~~ is not based in revulsion and repudiation of an abject object. As will be revealed in this dissertation, the self-revulsion that is contained within the ~~scream~~ is an explosive response against the traumatic experience and the way in which it lingers in the body and psyche in of the subject leading to self-directed rage and a compulsive drive for self-annihilation. Moreover, self-revulsion is only one component of the ~~scream~~ which also involves resentment, anguish and despair.

There may be variance to the central notion of the ~~scream~~ if it could be called a non-concept: i.e. based on subjective, inner experience that cannot be objectively measured, quantified or verified. To this objection the argument would be that the term ~~scream~~ is a cipher for certain extreme forms of anguish, rage, resentment, despair and self-revulsion that cannot be fully articulated or expressed due to their origin in severe traumatic experiences. Trauma is by definition unable to be fully known or identified, and as such, the ~~scream~~, which is a traumatic condition in itself, is likewise unable to be fully defined. Trauma resides in the subject, and there is a gap between traumatic symptoms and the originary traumatic experiences, which remain unlocatable, unrepresentable and elude full or complete memory. Thus the ~~scream~~ could indeed be regarded as a non-concept—a point that is embraced in this thesis. Moreover, the accusation of a 'non-concept' could be said of any affect. Immanuel Kant's notions of beauty and the contemplation of the sublime—which are famously non-concepts—are a case in point here. It is important to

[14] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of horror: an Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez, (New York: Columbia University Press), 1, 2-4, 141, 148, 208, Hal Foster "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic," *October*, 78 : (1996), 114.

note that in the case of beauty for example, its status as a 'non-concept' does not preclude its value as a topic of philosophical and theoretical enquiry. [15]

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A large body of scholarship exists which examines the expression of strong emotional states related to trauma and suffering in visual art, literature and philosophy. However, the ~~scream~~—to the best of my knowledge—is a distinctive entity that remains largely untheorised. Nevertheless certain theorists and writers explore emotional conditions that approach the intensity of the ~~scream~~ or discuss similarly fraught psychological states resulting from trauma. These studies are across a range of fields and modes of enquiry: from literary and critical theory, to self-analysis, trauma theory and art theory.

Within literary criticism and comparative literature a number of studies focus on strong affective states that have an affinity with the ~~scream~~, and also share a similar methodology to this thesis in their use of close readings of texts in order to elucidate these states. In *Romantic Agony* (1933), Mario Praz identifies what he describes as a particular 'erotic sensibility' within late nineteenth century Romantic literature. This is characterised by morbid obsessions, a sense of beauty and erotic pleasure derived from horror, disease and suffering, and a preoccupation with sadomasochistic and sadistic themes as exemplified by Charles Baudelaire and the Marquis de Sade respectively.[16] While Praz's text is valuable to this study due to way in which it defines a similarly tumultuous state, the co-mingling of death and pleasure or 'delicious death agony' described by Praz diverges considerably from the ~~scream~~, from which no aesthetic or erotic pleasure is derived.[17] Winfried Menninghaus's *Disgust: The Theory and History of a Strong Sensation* (2003) takes a genealogical approach, tracing disgust in relation to philosophy, psychology, literature and art.[18] Mennighaus's study discusses certain types of disgust that have a similarity with the ~~scream~~, such as the profound, existential ennui that came to the fore in nineteenth century French literature. Mennighaus characterises this kind of ennui as an intense 'disgust at one's own existence.'[19] Overall, however, the kinds of disgust that Mennighaus focuses on relate to the principal understanding of disgust established in modern, Western theoretical thought—an individual's revulsion in the face of something/someone considered abject

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[15] Christopher Janaway, "Disinterestedness and objectivity: Nietzsche on Schopenhauer and Kant," *Studia Kantiana*, Vol 4 no. 1 (2002): 28-29.
[16] Mario Praz, *Romantic Agony,* 2nd Edition, trans. Angus Davidson, (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).
[17] Praz, 377,381-382.
[18] Winfried Menninghaus, *Disgust: The Theory and History of a Strong Sensation*, trans. Howard Eiland and Joel Golb, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).
[19] Menninghaus, 119, 147-148, 358.

and disgusting, which paradoxically can also be a source of attraction.[20] This is distinct from the severe self-disgust and self-revulsion that is a component part of the ~~scream~~. Another study of a strong psychological state, but in this case specifically related to modernity is John Farrell's *Paranoia and Modernity: Cervantes to Rousseau*, (2006). Farrell traces paranoia both as an expression of psychological illness and as an intellectual, and philosophical construction in key texts of modernity until the late eighteenth century. Similar to this thesis, Farrell develops his argument through a series of case studies on the lives and writings of Rousseau, Nietzsche, and others. While Farrell does explore paranoia in relation to madness, shame and suffering, his primary purpose is to demonstrate how paranoia became a central theme in modern and post-modern Western culture and thought due to what he views as a loss of agency that occurs with the onset of modernity.[21] Unlike Farrell's study, while this thesis aims to show the ways in which others share the ~~scream~~, it does not argue that it is a ubiquitous or central theme within contemporary Western thought.

In the history of emotions field, a number of authors have undertaken rigorous investigations of emotional states through analyses of historical, literary, philosophical and medical texts.[22] Within this field there is a conflict between theorists who view emotions as products of cultural, historical, and social contexts and power structures, and those who view emotions as innate, natural and universal.[23] This thesis does not claim the ~~scream~~ is universal, but it does consider it to be an instinctive and primal entity that takes on different forms in different historical contexts. A number of studies on emotions in Antiquity are especially relevant, especially those that trace now neglected emotions such as *thumos*, which has a relationship to the ~~scream~~ and is discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. Barbara Koziak's article "Homeric Thumos: The Early History of Gender, Emotion, and Politics," (1999) has been particularly instructive in this regard.[24] *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen* (2004), edited by Susanna Braund and Glenn W. Most,[25] provides a comprehensive overview of the ways in which explosive emotion has been

[20] Menninghaus, 6, 147-148.

[21] John Farrell, *Paranoia and Modernity: Cervantes to Rousseau*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), 6-9.

[22] Peter Goldie, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[23] Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*, trans. Keith Tribe, (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2015), 5-11); Susan J. Matt, Peter N. Stearns eds. *Doing Emotions History* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2014); Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion: Aristotle's Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 4-6.

[24] Barbara Koziak, "Homeric Thumos: The Early History of Gender, Emotion, and Politics, " *The Journal of Politics*, 61 no. 4 (1999), 1068-109.

[25] Susanna Braund, Glenn W. Most eds., *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen*,(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

discussed in antiquity, while William V. Harris's *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (2009) has been valuable in showing the way in which heated emotions such as rage and fury have been subjugated, and suppressed since antiquity—especially as a result of Stoic philosophy.[26] Overall, however studies such as these take ethnographic and historical approaches to emotion through discussing culturally and/or historically specific emotions that are already named—rather than seeking to identify or describe so far untheorised psychological conditions.

The drive to understand my personal experience—which I feel to be unnamed and unsatisfactorily addressed within the literature—led to the self-analysis that underpins this thesis. William Styron's searching self-analysis in *Darkness Visible*: *A Memoir of Madness* (1990) is driven by a similar compulsion to comprehend his severe depressive illness.[27] Although depression is distinct to the ~~scream~~, what is particularly apposite to my project is the importance Styron places in defining and naming his condition in order to overcome what he views as lack of adequate literature on the nature of depression.[28] For Styron the word 'depression' itself is misleading and does not evoke the pain and horror of his experience: it prevents 'by its very insipidity, a general awareness of the horrible intensity of the disease when out of control.'[29] In the 1990s a number of other depression memoirs followed Styron's lead and likewise aimed to enlighten their readers about the illness. Clinical psychologist Kay Redfield Jamison recounts her lifelong manic-depression in *An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness* (1995).[30] Lewis Wolpert's *Malignant Sadness: The Anatomy of Depression,* (1999) proceeds from self-analysis, but broadens his discussion to an appraisal of various psychiatric and psychological approaches to the illness.[31] A major distinction between these depression memoirs and this thesis is that although they are valuable for the way in which they rework and clarify existing definitions and understandings of mental illness, they do not seek to identify or theorise a distinct condition, but instead work within the rubric of established medical and psychiatric conditions.

Walter Benjamin's essays, 'Central Park', 'Baudelaire', and 'The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire' (1938-39), develop a theory of shock and trauma from an analysis of

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[26] William V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009)
[27] William Styron, *Darkness Visible: A memoir of Madness*, (New York: Random House, 1990) Kindle edition.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Kay Redfield Jamison, *An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness,* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995).
[31] Lewis Wolpert, *Malignant Sadness: The Anatomy of Depression*, (London: Faber and Faber,1999).

Charles Baudelaire's poetry. Benjamin's work provides an important precedent for this thesis due to his elucidation of the way in which trauma and shock are embedded in the fabric, content and style of Baudelaire's texts. For Benjamin, Baudelaire's concept of *spleen* (used by Baudelaire to refer to a combination of ennui, depression, disgust, despair, frenzy and melancholy) is caused by a series of shocks that the individual experiences as a result of living within the modern city.[32] Moreover, Benjamin establishes a correspondence between Freud's theory of traumatic shock and the shock Baudelaire evokes in his poetry.[33] In Benjamin's writings, traumatic shock is not limited to warfare, or sexual trauma but it is in fact a paradigm of modernity itself. Baudelaire is the exemplary poet of the modern condition: a 'traumatophile' who 'made it his business to parry the shocks [of modern life]…with his spiritual and physical self.'[34] For Benjamin, Baudelaire's writing exemplifies modern art's struggle to deal with situations of shock and trauma, and leads to what he describes as the deterioration of the aura of art.[35] Overall Benjamin ushers in concepts central to trauma theory, such as the equation of modernity with trauma, and the notion that modernity itself inaugurates a 'crisis of representation.'[36]

Contemporary trauma theory brings together Benjamin's notion of shock as a crisis in representation, Freudian psychoanalysis, and also incorporates strategies of analysis taken from deconstruction. Trauma theory initially grew out of studies on the Holocaust, and the crisis in representation evinced in the fragmentary nature of modernist and avant-garde works of literature and art. More recently, trauma theory has begun to encompass the trauma of non-Western genocides, the trauma of colonisation and slavery, AIDS, as well as other events such as terrorism, political violence, war, and domestic violence and sexual abuse.[37] At this point, it is necessary to establish that within trauma theory, distinctions are drawn between interpersonal trauma, (occurring for example within domestic abuse), historical trauma (which occurs to large groups, for example, war and genocide), and structural or primal trauma (which according to Freudian psychoanalysis is experienced

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[32] Michèle Lowrie, "Spleen and the Monumentum: Memory in Horace and Baudelaire," *Comparative Literature*, 49 no. 1 (Winter 1997), 56; Michael Jennings, introduction to *The Writer of Modern life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire,* by Walter Benjamin (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2006), 15; Walter Benjamin, *The writer of modern life*, 94 184-185, 180.

[33] Ibid.,176-178.

[34] Ibid., 178-180; Seamus O'Malley**,** *Making History New: Modernism and Historical Narrative,* (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 2015), 155-156; Debarati Sanyal, *The Violence of Modernity: Baudelaire, Irony, and the Politics of Form*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins university Press, 2006), 20.

[35] Benjamin, 178.

[36] Sanyal, The Violence of Modernity, 2; Carlo Salzani, "The atrophy of experience" in Essays *on Boredom and Modernity*, edited by Barbara Dalle Pezze and Carlo Salzani (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009**),** 138. Benjamin, *The Writer of Modern Life,* 94, 99, 149, 169, 185.

[37] Gert Buelens, Sam Durrant and Robert Eaglestone eds., *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism,* (London Routledge: 2014), 2-5.

during the normal course of life in an individuals' early developmental stage, and encompasses things such as separation from the mother.) This thesis studies a condition related to interpersonal trauma, however it intersects with some of the theories and methodologies surrounding other forms of trauma.

Trauma has become a ubiquitous theoretical category, but few texts discern or attempt to analyse a specific quality of emotion or traumatic condition that is not melancholic in nature. Within trauma theory, the focus is usually on four main areas: the notion of traumatic memory, the conflict between the unrepresentable nature of trauma and the subject's compulsion to express trauma, melancholic responses to trauma, and processes and practices of mourning and healing. Extended discussions of anger or other explosive emotional states produced by trauma are rare.

Holocaust trauma is only mentioned in passing in this thesis, due to the status of the Holocaust as a specific historical 'limit-event' and genocide, and my ethical imperative not to assume a right to speak about this kind of trauma.[38] Despite this, a number of texts dealing with Holocaust trauma are important to the methodology of this thesis because of their use of psychoanalysis and deconstruction to elucidate the communication of trauma in works of literature, art and film. Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1992) explores the complex relationships between witness testimony and literary texts about the Holocaust, through a combination of clinical psychoanalytical and critical theory perspectives.[39] In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996) Cathy Caruth draws from Freudian and Lacanian understandings of trauma as well as more recent neurobiological studies in order to illuminate the relationship between repressed traumatic memory and repetitive flashbacks that cause the subject to re-live traumatic events.[40] Caruth argues that trauma is an 'unclaimed experience' that the subject is unable to be fully process or comprehend during its occurrence, but returns later to the subject in the form of flashbacks and other intrusive

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[38] As Dominick LaCapra states 'Historical trauma is specific, and not everyone is subject to it or entitled to the subject position associated with it. It is dubious to identify with the victim to the point of making oneself a surrogate victim who has a right to the victim's voice or subject position.' Dominick LaCapra, *Writing history, Writing Trauma*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 63; Within post-second world war historical scholarship, the Holocaust is referred to as a 'limit event' see LaCapra, 63, 73, 138, 161; Simone Gigliotti defines a 'limit event' as an event or practice of such magnitude and profound violence that its effects rupture the otherwise normative foundations of legitimacy and so-called civilising tendencies that underlie the constitution of political and moral community.' Simone Gigliotti,"Unspeakable Pasts as Limit Events: The Holocaust, Genocide, and the Stolen Generations, "*Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 49 no. 2, (2003): 164.

[39] Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, (New York: Routledge, 1992).

[40] Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

memories. For Caruth, this is a 'belatedness' that leads to an aporia—an epistemic dead-end—of representation as the subject struggles to represent what is unprepresentable because it is not fully known.[41] Caruth's notion that trauma is an aporia in representation is one of the pervasive tenets of trauma theory.[42] Caruth's work is valuable to this thesis in terms of understanding the relationship of present experiences to past traumas, and the impossibilities of complete or linear representation.[43] Caruth's methodology is also relevant to this thesis due to her application of techniques of deconstruction derived from Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida to literary and philosophical texts and film, in order to elucidate the way in which the impossibility of representing trauma is inscribed in language.[44] De Man's analyses of allegory and figurative language, which reveal the process of memory and writing as unstable and aporetic, are an important model for Caruth.[45] Deconstruction is used by Caruth in her work to elucidate the way in which trauma, traumatic memory, and the accompanying struggle to comprehend a reality that can't be fully grasped is embedded in the very fabric of the text itself. Caruth develops her argument through extended analyses of case studies such as Sigmund Freud's essay "Moses and Monotheism," and the film *Hiroshima mon amour* (1959) written by Marguerite Duras and directed by Alan Resnais.[46] Caruth's more recent text, *Literature in the Ashes of History* (2013) focuses on literature as a locus for the elucidation of traumatic memory, and the retrieval of repressed, forgotten and disappearing traumatic histories. Caruth develops these ideas through case studies that include Honoré de Balzac's novel *Colonel Chabert*, Ariel Dorfman's play *Death and the Maiden*, and Hannah Arendt's essays on history and politics.[47] This thesis takes an approach that has some similarities to Caruth's methodology: for example de Man and Derrida's work on literary tropes in the work of Rousseau are engaged with in the second chapter. However Caruth's focus is on the aporia of representation itself, and the traumatised subject's struggle to recover and communicate repressed and/or unclear and fragmented memories, rather than the emotional states experienced by the subject as a result of traumatic experience.

In texts such as *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory*, *Trauma*, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* and *Writing history, Writing Trauma* Dominick LaCapra's expands Caruth's

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[41] Ibid., 4-7, 92.
[42] Roger Luckhurst, *The Trauma Question*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 4-12, 81-84, 89.
[43] Caruth.
[44] Caruth, 73-74,90; Luckhurst, 4-6, 82-83.
[45] *Paul de Man, Allegories of reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Luckhurst, 82-83.
[46] Caruth.
[47] Cathy Caruth, *Literature in the Ashes of History,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

approach to trauma theory into a more historiographical framework in order to elucidate canonical historic and literary representations of trauma and their ethical implications. LaCapra is interested not only in the victim and survivor's testimony, but also the vexed issue of perpetrators and bystanders.[48] LaCapra's arguments involve the analysis of case studies such as Albert Camus' *The Fall*, Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoa,* and Art Spiegelman's *Maus*. LaCapra is particularly pertinent to this thesis and creative project because he argues that works such as these do not merely narrate or represent trauma but engage in a process, which in itself is symptomatic of trauma, and reflect the psychological processes of either 'acting out' or 'working-through' trauma.[49] These ideas are derived from Freudian psychoanalysis, however LaCapra extends them to the literary and aesthetic sphere. LaCapra's distinction between 'acting out' and 'working through' is important in terms of the methodology of the creative and theoretical aspects of this PhD project which contains elements of both 'acting out' and 'working through' in the sense LaCapra defines. LaCapra describes 'acting out' as a process which 'involves a compulsive repetition of traumatic symptoms and behaviours' and further that 'the past is performatively regenerated or relived as if it were fully present rather than represented in memory and inscription, and it hauntingly returns as the repressed.'[50] For LaCapra, 'working through' involves processes of 'self-questioning' and reflection such as 'mourning and modes of critical thought and practice.'[51]

The connection between trauma, loss, mourning and melancholia is a pervasive theme within trauma studies. In *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (1989), Julia Kristeva argues that traumatic grief leads to melancholia and depression.[52] Applying psychoanalysis to works of literature and visual art that evoke depression and melancholia, Kristeva aims to show that art has a therapeutic quality.[53] Taking a more global and political perspective is *Panic and Mourning: The Cultural Work of Trauma* edited by Daniela Agostino, Elisa Antz and Cátia Ferreira (2013).[54] Similarly, *Symbolic Loss: The Ambiguity of Mourning and Memory at Century's End* (2000), edited by Peter Homans, contains a collection of essays dealing with the relationship between personal and collective mourning, and the memorial of trauma in

[48] LaCapra, *Writing history, Writing Trauma*, 111-136.
[49] Ibid., 42, 106-110.
[50] Ibid., 58, 106-110.
[51] Ibid., 29.
[52] Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia,* trans. Leon S. Roudiez, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).
[53] Ibid., 22-25.
[54] Daniela Agostino, Elisa Antz, Cátia Ferreira, eds., *Panic and Mourning: The Cultural Work of Trauma* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013).

cultural artefacts such as monuments.[55] Esther Dreifuss-Kattan's *Art and Mourning: The Role of Creativity in Healing Trauma and Loss* (2016), echoes Kristeva in arguing that art is therapeutic due to the way in which it can 'embody' a traumatic loss and assist the process of mourning.[56] Although traumatic loss and grief is a component of the ~~scream~~, this condition does not involve mourning and melancholia. Instead, the case of the ~~scream~~ is a raging and explosive response to personal trauma, pain and loss. This is in contrast to reactions of melancholia and mourning, which are more widely accepted, understood and even tacitly assumed within trauma scholarship.[57] Overall, within the field of trauma theory, relatively little attention is given to more violent emotional states of survivors such as rage, frenzy and desire for revenge.

One exception to this gap in the literature is Susan Derwin's *Rage is the Subtext: Readings in Holocaust Literature in film* (2012), which has a particular resonance with this thesis as it explores repressed and unarticulated forms of rage.[58] Through a psychoanalytic examination of key works by Holocaust survivors including Saul Friedländer, Primo Levi and Imre Kertész, Derwin argues that rage and other volatile emotions are veiled, and held back, whilst other reactions to their experiences are foregrounded. For Derwin, bearing witness to trauma through testimony can be 'understood as a procedure of holding, in a double sense: as a protective holding-back of volatile emotion and as the creation of a holding space within which these emotions are submitted to symbolic transfiguration.'[59] For Derwin the protective holding-back refers to what she sees as 'a shield that protects both the survivor and the community from an upsurge of nonprocessable emotion.'[60] Derwin claims that the act of literary or artistic narrative allows rage and other volatile emotions to be diffused, and moreover that this curtailing of rage is necessary for the survivors' ability to re-adjust to life within a community.[61] While Derwin's text is valuable for its discussion of the concealed rage and other strong emotions of survivors, Derwin's suggestion that explosive emotional states of the survivor need to be restrained is problematic, as it suggests that there is no place for volatile emotion in 'normal' life.

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[55] Peter Homans, ed., *Symbolic Loss: The Ambiguity of Mourning and Memory at the Century's End*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000).
[56] Esther Dreifuss-Kattan, *Art and Mourning: The Role of Creativity in Healing Trauma and Loss,* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 2-5.
[57] Melanie Steiner Sherwood, "Jean Améry and Wolfgang Hildesheimer: *Ressentiments*, Melancholia, and the West German Public Sphere in the 1960s and 1970s," (PhD Diss., Cornell University, 2011).
[58] Susan Derwin, *Rage is the Subtext: Readings in Holocaust Literature and film*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012).
[59] Ibid., 11-12.
[60] Ibid.,,11.
[61] Ibid., 4-9, 11, 15.

Moreover, despite some discussion of Sean Améry's notion of resentment, Derwin does not entertain the possibility that maintaining rage and refusing to forgive in the manner asserted by Améry might have ethical value. In contrast, my thesis argues that the feeling of explosive rage does not necessarily entail destructive violence towards others, but can be maintained internally as a strategy of autonomy and resistance.

By the late 1990s the application of trauma theory specifically to works of visual art became widespread. Most scholarship in this area follows Caruth's argument that trauma represents an aporia in representation and share her focus on issues of traumatic memory. For example, Lisa Saltzman and Eric M. Rosenberg's *Trauma & Visuality in Modernity* (2006) is comprised of a series of essays that focus themes such as the memory of trauma and its transience, and the elusive qualities of trauma as it manifests in artworks, films and monuments.[62] Some scholars do, however, place emotion and affect at the centre of their analysis.

In *Caught by History: Holocaust Effects in Contemporary Art, Literature, and Theory (1997)* Ernst van Alphen coins the term Holocaust 'effects' to describe the way in which viewers of an artwork 'experience directly a certain aspect of the Holocaust or of Nazism… In such moments the Holocaust is not re-presented, but rather presented or re-enacted.'[63] Holocaust 'effects' are conveyed through works of art and literature that do not directly represent traumatic events, but instead re-create or evoke the sensations and emotions experienced during these events.[64] Van Alphen studies the traumatic effects produced the work of artists such as Christian Boltanski, Armando, Charlotte Salomon and Anselm Kiefer. However, although van Alphen's discussion is in the realm of emotion and affect, explosive emotions are not discussed.

Jill Bennett's *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art (2005)* puts forward a similar perspective on trauma and art as van Alphen. In *Empathic Vision*, Bennett posits affect and sensation as central to the way in which traumatic experiences are communicated—and as essential for empathy.[65] Bennett aims to describe:

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[62] Lisa Saltzman, Eric M. Rosenberg eds., *Trauma & Visuality in Modernity*, (New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 2006) ,x.

[63] Ernst van Alphen, *Caught by History: Holocaust Effects in Contemporary Art, Literature, and Theory,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 10.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Jill Bennett, *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005), 4.

> …art that, by virtue of its specific affective capacities, is able to exploit forms of embodied perception in order to promote forms of critical inquiry. This conjunction of affect and critical awareness may be understood to constitute the basis of an empathy grounded not in affinity (*feeling* for another insofar as we can imagine *being* that other) but on a *feeling* for another that entails an encounter with something irreducible and different, often inaccessible.[66]

For Bennett, the sensation of artwork is significant because it leads not only to the sensation of empathy but also to a broader political engagement. In this regard, Bennett's arguments draw from Deleuze's theories on ethics and aesthetics, especially his work in the areas of sensation, and politics. Bennett discusses the intersection of trauma, affect and politics within postcolonial and post 9/11 contexts through a selection of artists who deal with specific events of historical and political trauma and violence in Australia, Columbia, Northern Ireland and South Africa.[67] While there is a similarity in Bennett's focus on affect, and affective states, with the study undertaken in this thesis, Bennett takes a different approach, focusing on the sensorial relationship between the viewer and the artwork which produces a shock which forces the viewer into a cognitive state leading to a political engagement. For Bennett 'visual art presents trauma as a *political* rather than subjective phenomenon.'[68] In contrast, this thesis posits the ~~scream~~ as a subjective condition that intersects more with philosophical, ontological and psychological concerns, rather than the global political realm.

Griselda Pollock shares Bennett's concern with affect, however, unlike Bennett, Pollock takes a specifically feminist and psychoanalytical approach. In *After-affects/After-images: Trauma and Aesthetic Transformation in the Virtual Feminist Museum*, (2013) Pollock uses a series of case studies on predominately female artists revolving around personal and historical trauma including the Holocaust.[69] Pollock also edited *Visual Politics of Psychoanalysis: Art and the Image in Post-traumatic Cultures* in 2013.[70] In this collection, Pollock and other writers study the psychoanalytical notion of affect in the transference and communication of trauma in the aesthetic realm.[71] In contrast to earlier trauma theorists, Pollock does not see contemporary works that deal with trauma as therapeutic or

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[66] Ibid.,10.
[67] Ibid.,16-18.
[68] Ibid., 12.
[69] Griselda Pollock, *After-affects/After-images: Trauma and Aesthetic Transformation in the Virtual Feminist Museum,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).
[70] Griselda Pollock ed., *Visual Politics of Psychoanalysis*, (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013).
[71] Ibid., 9.

testimonial. Instead she argues that 'art in a post-traumatic era is not testimony to the trauma; it becomes an affective process of deconstructive interpretation of its traces, allowing some movement, never a cure.'[72] Pollock's interpretation is echoed in this thesis, which does not view the case studies (or my artwork) as testimonial or as providing a cure for traumatic pain, but rather as manifestations of an explosive traumatic condition.

Kristine Stiles' *Concerning consequences: studies in art, destruction, and trauma* (2016), posits performance art as an exemplary form of traumatic expression.[73] Stiles studies the expression of trauma through destructive and violent forms of performance art and views 'trauma as an underlying condition in almost every artist who used destruction and violence in his or her art.'[74] *Concerning consequences* features a series of essays discussing the various ways in which artists such as Yoko Ono, Franz West, Chris Burden, Orlan and John Duncan 'translated pain into art' through destructive, violent and/or self-harming practices.[75] Stiles develops the concept of 'destruction art,' derived from the destructive performance practices of Gustav Metzger and Rafael Montañez Ortiz, to denote works that foreground the body as a site through which issues relating to trauma—in particular the destruction and survival of human life are confronted.[76] Stiles argues that 'destruction art' not only responds to personal trauma but is also a way of confronting political and historical violence, in contrast to processes of lamentation and melancholy.[77] Stiles' argument has a correlation with my creative work because of her demonstration that actions of destruction and violence within the aesthetic realm can be ethically and personally valuable for the performer. For Stiles, these actions of destruction are paradoxically an assertion of subjectivity and survival amidst the threat of annihilation from external forces.[78] However, while Stiles focuses on destructive art as a reaction against external threats or traumas, my artwork and thesis deal with a different quality of destructive behaviour, which is driven by rage against the self and the desire for self-punishment.

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This thesis is structured as a series of case studies, each of which is used to explicate one of the six different modalities that constitute the ~~scream~~ as a whole. With the

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[72] Griselda Pollock, introduction to *Visual Politics of Psychoanalysis,* 12.
[73] Kristine Stiles *Concerning Consequences: studies in art, destruction, and trauma*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).
[74] Ibid., 20-21.
[75] Ibid., 23.
[76] Ibid., 29-31, Gustav Metzger developed the term 'Auto-Destructive Art' to describe his practice.
[77] Ibid., 22-45.
[78] Ibid., 29-31.

exception of the first chapter, a dialectical pairing of exemplars within each chapter is used to examine the various, and at times divergent, ways this condition may manifest in the aesthetic realm. For the sake of simplicity, the organisation of the chapters roughly follows a chronological order. The rage of Achilles, the hero of Homer's epic poem *The Iliad* is the focus of the first chapter. Achilles' expressions of rage exemplify the dual nature of the ~~scream~~: on the one hand he unleashes uninhibited fury, yet on the other hand, he also demonstrates a seething rage held in abeyance. Chapter Two looks at what happens when this type of explosive rage turns against the self. The particular type of pathological shame and self-disgust that characterises the ~~scream~~ is illustrated through a comparison of *The Confessions of Saint Augustine of Hippo* and *The Confessions* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The obscene ~~scream~~ discussed in Chapter Three is a state beyond self-disgust in which the subject experiences herself or himself as bursting with uncontainable obscenity and horror. An examination of extreme obscenity and excess in a selection of writings by Friedrich Nietzsche and Georges Bataille is used to illuminate this state, whilst at the same time a link between the obscene ~~scream~~ and Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysian is established.

The next chapter discusses the performative expression of traumatic suffering as exemplified in the dream plays of August Strindberg, and the performance and writings of Antonin Artaud. This chapter also highlights the significance of schizophrenia and madness to the communication of suffering in the work of both dramatists. Chapter Five explores the silent dimension of the ~~scream~~. Beginning with reflections on silence in post-holocaust poetry and silence in relation to the post-traumatic subject, the chapter then discusses the ways in which Edvard Munch's *The Scream* and Francis Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* correspond to the ~~scream~~ of silence. The final chapter deals with the ~~scream~~ from a woman's perspective. Sylvia Plath's novel *The Bell Jar* is considered alongside Elfriede Jelinek's novel *The Piano Teacher* in order to elucidate the complexities of this condition as it relates to the physicality and sexuality of the female body, and the fraught roles of daughter, wife and mother.

Each chapter engages with philosophical, aesthetic and literary contours, in order to elucidate a different perspective on the ~~scream~~ and its symptoms, and to show its broader relevance beyond autobiographical concerns. Overall, the thesis attempts to attest to the significance of the ~~scream~~ not only as a psychological condition, but also as an aesthetic phenomenon.

Chapter One: The Raging ~~Scream~~

The ~~scream~~ in its most enraged, savage and raw form is characterised by a violent revolt within the psyche against significant personal trauma. It is a condition of inexorable rage and resentment that involves an overwhelming, yet unattainable, desire to destroy the perpetrator(s) of trauma. The raging ~~scream~~ is therefore a frustrated ~~scream~~ that is experienced as an agonising duality of two opposing inner forces: an outward moving force that seeks external expression in extreme violence, and an inward moving force that disallows physical violence and instead maintains rage as an internalised resistance. The central point of enquiry into this condition is the figure of Achilles, the hero of Homer's *Iliad*. The significance of Achilles to an understanding of the raging ~~scream~~, and its symptoms, which I have experienced myself, is that Achilles is a fictional avatar for the revenge I would like to enact, but cannot. The outward moving force of the raging ~~scream~~ seeks retribution in the most horrific form: the slaughter and complete defilement of the perpetrator's body. It is the wish to tear this person, or persons to pieces. But unlike Achilles, the subject experiencing the condition of the ~~scream~~ cannot enact this savage violence due to a combination of disempowerment and fear. Moreover, their personal experience of violence and its traumatic affects precludes action: as result of their horror of becoming like their abuser(s), their own longing for violence profoundly disturbs them and is thwarted. Although actual physical violence is withheld, the desire for violence remains extreme, causing intense anguish in the subject. Unable to express itself in reality, violence becomes a secret fantasy that is repeatedly rehearsed in the imagination. The raging ~~scream~~ is internalised as a seething inner energy that is maintained as a form of persistent psychological defiance. It is an unseen and private strategy of resistance held by a subject that refuses victimisation. Ultimately, the upholding of rage and resentment in this manner can be of great psychological value because in in the face of severe trauma it may be the only form of resistance and assertion of individual subjectivity possible.

Achilles is widely renowned as a character inhabited by extreme rage and resentment; however, the emphasis of this chapter is not on the obvious demonstrations of Achilles' rage such as his violent prowess in battle or the persistence of his anger throughout the narrative. Instead, the emphasis is on two episodes in the poem in which qualities germane to the raging ~~scream~~ are exhibited in Achilles' behaviour. In these instances, Achilles' emotional state transcends normative understandings of rage and anger and evinces the raging ~~scream~~, which is distinct from other forms of rage. The two

episodes under discussion represent the internalised and externalised forms of the raging ~~scream~~ respectively. They also demonstrate the way in which this condition allows Achilles to preserve his autonomy and express defiance in the face of serious grievance. The internalised raging ~~scream~~ occurs during Achilles' argument with Agamemnon when he is forced to restrain his desire for violence, but does not let go of his rage, instead maintaining it as a seething inner fury. Here, Achilles exhibits the anguish and alienation that accompanies the raging ~~scream~~ when it cannot be externalised, as well as the potential of this condition for passive resistance. The externalised raging ~~scream~~ occurs during Achilles' brutal murder and mutilation of the Trojan hero, Hector. Through his savagery, Achilles enacts the horrific and obscene fantasy of violence that is inherent in the raging ~~scream~~ and usually prohibited. Achilles' treatment of Hector realises the most disquieting potential of the raging ~~scream:~~ the actual release of this uncontrollable, raging force through the horrific defilement of another individual's body.

Rage is necessary

The raging mode of the ~~scream~~ is a necessary and beneficial condition for the traumatised subject. Although the externalised ~~screaming~~ rage demonstrated by Achilles is an impossible mode of expression for most individuals who have experienced severe trauma, the spirit of rage and resentment represented by the figure of Achilles can be harnessed as a positive force. This process is essential for survival during trauma and its aftermath. The raging ~~scream~~ is a complete refusal to forget or to forgive. However, the persistence of rage and resentment particular to the raging ~~scream~~ is a state of mind that is not generally accepted or advocated in contemporary Western culture where rage is discouraged and forgiveness is encouraged. Extremely volatile emotions such as rage and anger have been regarded as harmful and destructive for in Western thought since the confluence of the ideas of Stoic philosophy and Christianity in in the first century AD, and a negative view of these emotions has largely continued into modernity.[79] However, the negative opinion of rage that is pervasive in contemporary times was not the norm in Ancient Greece. The *Iliad,* for example, offers a far more sympathetic perspective on these emotions. This was a sentiment shared by Aristotle who emphasises the merits of anger and rage for individuals within the *polis* and in the context of warfare.[80] He argues that rage

[79] See for example Lucius Annaeus Seneca: "To Novatus on Anger," in *Seneca: Moral and Political Essays*, ed. and trans. John M. Cooper and J.F.Procopé, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 17-116.
[80] Aristotle, *Politics*, Book VII and VIII trans. with commentary, Richard Kraut, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 51.

is in fact a necessary emotion: 'Rage is necessary. Nothing can be achieved without it. Nothing can be achieved when it does not fulfil the soul and animate courage.'[81] The notion that rage provides the essential impetus for courageous action is in evidence in the *Iliad*. At the same time, however, Aristotle qualifies his support of rage by arguing that its benefits are felt only when it is justified and moderated by reason.[82] Subsequent philosophers in antiquity and beyond denigrated Aristotle's affirmative opinion of rage.

German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk has recently advanced an alternate view of rage. In *Rage and Time: A Psychopolitical Investigation*, Sloterdijk argues for the recuperation of rage as a positive force in contemporary personal and political life. The notion that the condition of rage and resentment intrinsic to the raging ~~scream~~ could be a vital force for an individual, rather than a damaging and negative force, runs counter to a now entrenched system of moral and philosophical values that seek to censure and restrain rage. Although Sloterdijk's argument has broader applications for rage as a global political force to be harnessed for progressive change that are beyond the scope of this chapter, his contentions give substantial support to the claim asserted here: that the raging mode of the ~~scream~~ is of positive psychological value.[83] Sloterdijk takes the ancient Greek word, *thumos* as a starting point from which to establish what he views as the positive attributes of rage: spiritedness, assertion of autonomy, and the desire for recognition.[84] In the *Iliad*, *thumos* designates the organ of feeling, spirit and emotion. It is the source of a range of passionate emotions including but not limited to anger.[85] However, the usage of *thumos* has changed over time: Plato and Aristotle viewed it as both the quality of spiritedness and the spirited part of the soul.[86] In contemporary political theory, it has come to be associated primarily with anger, spiritedness and the desire for recognition.[87] It is this modern interpretation of the word *thumos* that Sloterdijk advocates.[88] Sighting Plato and Aristotle, who advocated certain forms of restrained and justified anger as well as *thumos* in political life, Sloterdijk demonstrates that these emotions are likewise beneficial in a contemporary life. According

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[81] From Aristotle's treatise *De Anima (On the soul)*, as quoted in Peter Sloterdijk, *Rage and time: a psychopolitical investigation*, trans Mario Wenning, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 24, and also quoted in Seneca, "To Novatus on Anger," (1.9.2).
[82] Aristotle, "Nicomachean Ethics", 1126a, 1125b32, in Paul M Hughes, "Forgiveness," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/forgiveness/
[83] Mario Wenning, "The Return of Rage," *Parrhesia,* 8 (2009): 93.
[84] Sloterdijk, 15-18.
[85] Barbara Koziak, "Homeric Thumos: The Early History of Gender, Emotion, and Politics," *The Journal of Politics*, 61 (1999): 1072, 1080.
[86] Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. with notes and an interpretive essay by Allan Bloom, (New York: Basic Books), 1968, 440e-441c.
[87] Koziak, 1069-72.
[88]Sloterdijk, 17.

to Sloterdijk, rage is essential for maintaining critical consciousness and the ability to resist oppression. He argues that since Antiquity *thumos* has been suppressed in the Western psyche due to two historical factors. Firstly the growth and institutionalisation of Christian ideology suppressed and discouraged *thumos* and its related emotions such as egoism, rage and pride. Secondly, the pervasive influence of psychoanalysis, which focused on the libido as the primary driving force of individual actions, overlooked the *thumos* as a possible source of motivation.[89] Sloterdijk argues that the loss of *thumos* has caused individuals become disempowered and apathetic in the face of injustice. He urges contemporary individuals 'to regain a psychology of self-confidence and self-assertion' through the acceptance and communication of feelings of resentment and rage.[90] Achilles' rage to a large extent exhibits and exemplifies the positive qualities of rage advanced by Sloterdijk, notwithstanding the destructive affects of the physical actualisation of his feelings.

Drawing from Sloterdijk's positive evaluation of rage and *thumos*, the raging ~~scream~~ can be viewed as a condition of empowerment and strident refutation of the silencing that can be a result of substantial trauma. The two episodes from the *Iliad* to be examined in this chapter support this perspective because they demonstrate how Achilles uses rage to assert his subjectivity in the face of suppression, trauma and grief. The adverse outcomes of Achilles' behaviour are balanced by the intentions of self-preservation and the individual pursuit of justice that lie behind his actions. If Achilles restrained his rage he would endure shame and dishonour at the hands of Agamemnon and Patroclus' death would remain un-avenged. Whatever the cost, he will not compromise his identity or his heroic status. Thus from Achilles' perspective, persistent rage and resentment is the only way to retain self-respect, achieve justice and maintain his honour as a war hero. Achilles' refusal to be silent and submissive not only corresponds to the raging ~~scream~~, but is also the attribute that Homer ascribes to Achilles' exceptional and tragic form of heroism. Achilles' heroic status is a paradox in the context of the *Iliad*: his rage-fuelled behaviour is transgressive and destructive but it is precisely these actions that constitute his very identity as a hero.[91] His tenacious desire for revenge alienates him from the rest of his army, but at the same time warrants him immortality as the ultimate hero of the *Iliad*.[92] Achilles' extreme rage does not preclude, but rather ensures, his immortal glory. Through the causal link established in the

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[89]Ibid, 12-14, 19.
[90] Ibid.,15-18.
[91] Michael Silk, *Homer, The Iliad*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1996.
[92] Dean Hammer, "Achilles as Vagabond: The Culture of Autonomy in the *Iliad*," *The Classical World,* 90 (1997): 363-464, and Gregory Nagy, *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 47.

Iliad between Achilles' particular rage and his heroism, the poem provides an exemplar of the raging ~~scream~~ as an essential attribute of human subjectivity.

The internalised raging ~~scream~~: Achilles' argument with Agamemnon

Achilles' rage is initially provoked by the unjust and demeaning treatment he receives from Agamemnon, the king and leader of the Achaean army, during the campaign against Troy. Agamemnon is forced to give up his war 'trophy', a priest's daughter, in order to avert a curse. Feeling cheated, he takes Briseis, Achilles' war 'trophy' and lover, as recompense, a measure that Achilles sees as a serious humiliation and injustice. Agamemnon's actions represent a violation to Achilles' honour and rights as a war hero within the social context of the *Iliad*. Achilles' emotional state during his confrontation with Agamemnon corresponds to the anguished duality of the raging ~~scream~~ because he experiences the intense desire to physically destroy Agamemnon, but this desire is frustrated:

> …anguish gripped Achilles.
> The heart in his rugged chest was pounding, torn…
> Should he draw the long sharp sword slung at his hip,
> Thrust through the ranks and kill Agamemnon now?
> Or check his rage and beat his fury down?
> As his racing spirit veered back and forth…[93]

This passage illustrates the way in which Achilles' agonising deliberation over whether or not to carry out violence paralyzes his ability to act. The description of his spirit frantically veering 'back and forth' is evocative of the struggle between the two opposing forces operating within the raging ~~scream,~~ and the way in which this struggle torments the subject. Achilles' hesitation here is caused in part by Achilles' social status within the Greek army. Although Achilles is its preeminent hero, he must to a certain extent defer to the other warlords, in particular Agamemnon, whose status as the leader of the Achaean army to a large extent precludes the possibility of violence against him. Achilles and Agamemnon are not equals: Achilles has lower status and is disempowered in the confrontation with Agamemnon. Finally, Achilles begins to draw his sword but is stopped by the intervention of the Goddess Athena who orders Achilles to show restraint and promises him gifts in

[93] Homer, *The Iliad*, trans Robert Fagles, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), (1.188-193).

compensation. Achilles concedes, but only because as a mortal it is not permissible for him to challenge a Goddess. It is extremely difficult for Achilles to hold his rage in abeyance, and he protests to Athena: 'Goddess, a man submits though his heart breaks with fury.'[94] For Achilles, this forced internalisation of rage is not just frustrating; it is a heart-breaking and unbearable feeling. Despite Athena's censure of physical violence, Achilles' fury remains unabated and he continues to verbally express his anger and resistance towards Agamemnon. Homer describes Achilles at this point as 'not relaxing his anger for a moment.'[95] This comment reveals an additional aspect to Achilles' rage: it is maintained at a consistently high level irrespective of his ability to enact physical violence. Achilles' rage, like the condition of the raging ~~scream~~ is not determined by physical externalisation: it is an emotional state that exists even without action.

In situations where the externalised expression of the raging ~~scream~~ is repressed, it is often transmuted into a silent or inactive gesture. This is a form of passive resistance and passive-aggression. Achilles, for example, seeks retribution against Agamemnon by refusing to fight in battle. Achilles knows that Agamemnon's campaign against Troy will be grievously disadvantaged without him because he is their greatest war hero. In order to further prove his indispensability as a fighter, Achilles entreats his mother, the Goddess Thetis, to ask Zeus to bring destruction on the Achaean army while he is not fighting. During his retirement, Achilles is described as 'raging on' privately alone: his extreme rage is maintained as a personal and sequestered intensity:[96]

> …Achilles raged apart….
> …off in his beaked seagoing ships he lay,
> raging away at Atrides Agamemnon, king of armies[97]

This excerpt illustrates the alienating affects of the internalised raging ~~scream~~: through 'raging apart' from the rest of the army, Achilles engages in a self-enforced exile in order to assert an individual and autonomous form of resistance. The consequence of Achilles' passive resistance is disastrous loses suffered by the Greek army including the death of Patroclus, Achilles' best friend and companion. Tragically, Achilles' internalised rage creates the very conditions for the death of Patroclus. Refusing to fight himself, but

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[94] Ibid., (1.213-214).
[95] Ibid.,(1.224).
[96] Ibid., (1.488-493).
[97] Ibid., (2.771-75).

wanting to intimidate the Trojans, Achilles instructs Patroclus to wear his own armour. Patroclus is mistaken for Achilles on the battlefield and subsequently killed by Hector. This event causes Achilles to experience tremendous grief, pain and additional rage. Achilles' rage can no longer be contained, and reaches its apotheosis during his murder and subsequent mutilation of Hector's body.

The externalised raging ~~scream~~: the murder of Hector

Achilles' murder of Hector and subsequent mutilation of his body is the only time the raging ~~scream~~ is fully unleashed and physicalised in the *Iliad*. In contradistinction to Achilles' disempowerment in his confrontation with Agamemnon, Achilles is empowered in the confrontation with Hector. Achilles is the stronger fighter, and this time the Goddess Athena supports Achilles' desire for murder.[98] Furthermore, the context of heroic battle in the *Iliad* allows Achilles to destroy Hector with a degree of impunity, because his actions take place within the greater scene of war in which revenge against an enemy was an expected mode of behaviour.[99] Nevertheless, Achilles' destruction and mutilation of Hector is an enactment of uninhibited and barbaric violence that is extreme even within this context.[100] It is important to note that Achilles' previous demonstrations of rage on the battlefield are distinct to the rage he displays in his treatment of Hector. During battle scenes in the *Iliad*, Achilles is described as a superhuman figure noted for his 'overwhelming fury' and likened to gods, predatory animals and overpowering natural elements such as wind, fire and water.[101] However, these terms are not specific to the depiction of Achilles and are commonly ascribed to the other heroes. Achilles' rage in battle can be accounted for as the behaviour of a war hero doing what is expected of him in his pursuit of immortal glory on the battlefield. Within the *Iliad,* and in Ancient Greek thought more broadly, immortal glory meant everlasting recognition, praise and prestige-including the retelling and celebration of one's heroic acts for eternity.[102] Heroes, such as Achilles, strive for immortal glory through distinction in battle.[103] Achilles' battle violence is a generalised rage that does not have a specific individual as its object. This is in contrast to Achilles' purposeful and single-minded pursuit of Hector. In this case, Achilles literally

[98] Homer, (22. 37-43), (22.210-220).
[99] William V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: the Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity,* (Harvard: The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2001), 134.
[100] Samuel Eliot Bassett, "Achilles' Treatment of Hector's Body," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 64 (1933): 60, and Stephen Fineberg, "Blind Rage and Eccentric Vision in Iliad 6," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 129 (1999): 16, 18, 20.
[101] Homer, (6. 419-421), (2. 759-769), (20. 331-35), (20.488-503).
[102] Nagy, 12, 16, 23.
[103] Homer, (1.491), (3.373-374), (4.223-226)

inflicts his intense feelings of revenge on and through the body of Hector, graphically realising the raging ~~scream's~~ fantasy of violence.

A heightened and obscene desire for violence propels the externalisation of the raging ~~scream~~ and is exhibited in Achilles' overwhelming lust for violence prior to, and during, his duel with Hector. For Achilles, this is an all-consuming passion that eclipses everyday human needs including food and drink. Achilles refuses all food offered to him, exclaiming 'what I really crave is slaughter and blood and the choking groans of men!'[104] His hunger can only be satisfied through violence. Achilles' cannibalistic desire comes to the fore in combat with Hector, when he expresses his wish to devour Hector's raw, live flesh: 'Would to God my rage, my fury would drive me now to hack away and eat you raw-such agonies you have caused me!'[105] This sentence is very important in elucidating the notion of the raging form of the ~~scream~~ that is explored in this chapter. Here Achilles explicitly voices what is at the core of the raging ~~scream:~~ the traumatised subject's wish to hack, maim, bite, devour and tear the flesh of the person(s) who severely damaged and abused them to pieces. This desire is usually kept hidden and unspoken by the subject as a dark secret, but the *Iliad* depicts, through the figure of Achilles, a rare individual who is able to voice and act upon this desire with liberty. The contemporary traumatised subject (myself) absolutely identifies with this forbidden desire for violence expressed by Achilles. This identification of a shared psychological condition, coupled with the way in which Homer does not denigrate Achilles' desire or actions, but shows them to be a valid mode of being in the context of the *Iliad*, offers a significant path to an acceptance and understanding of a post-traumatic state of explosive and internal rage.

It was a convention of the war depicted in the *Iliad,* and in other Ancient Greek texts, that the death of a family member or friend was to be redressed by the murder of the responsible party and the mutilation of their body. If this person was already dead, their closest relations were targeted.[106] However, Achilles transcends these conventions and enters into the realm of the raging ~~scream~~ because the excessive repetition and exceptionally savage quality of his treatment of Hector goes beyond what was normally acceptable as retribution. Hector pleads for Achilles to show mercy on his body, but Achilles refuses.[107] The condition of the raging ~~scream~~ precludes forgiveness or any sense of respect for Hector's body. Murdering Hector is not enough in itself, and Achilles goes

[104] Ibid., (19. 215-217).
[105] Ibid., (22. 346-348).
[106] Bassett, 47-48, 54.
[107] Ibid., (22. 336-343)

on to commit a sacrilegious debasement of Hector's body. After killing Hector and stripping and mutilating his body, Achilles pierces his tendons at the ankle and lashes the corpse to his chariot, dragging the head in the ground, removing the body from Troy. However, Achilles' sense of rage and vengeance is not satisfied, nor does his anger over the death of Patroclus subside. Rather, Hector's corpse provides a canvas for the repeated histrionic and performative expression of rage. For Achilles, revenge requires the repeated desecration and shaming of Hector's body beyond recognition. As a daily act of ritualistic violence, Achilles lashes Hector's dead body behind a chariot and drags it around Patroclus' tomb.[108]Achilles' repeated dragging of Hector's body through the dirt is a particularly potent and symbolic form of humiliation and debasement that aims to literally tear Hector's body apart.[109] Achilles' unrelenting need to defile what he has already destroyed reveals an interminable and inexhaustible quality of rage.

Hector's body becomes a kind of punching bag, from which Achilles gains a degree of sadomasochistic satisfaction. Achilles' abuse of Hector's body is presented as universally abhorrent in the *Iliad*, shocking both gods and mortals. Homer demonstrates that Achilles has overstepped the bounds of acceptable behaviour by reporting that his actions have incensed the gods, including Zeus.[110] The god Apollo, in particular deplores the savagery of Achilles' actions, accusing him of outraging even 'the senseless clay in all his fury!'[111] Achilles' repeated defilement of Hector's body comes to an end only when the Gods decide to intervene. Thus the horror that is contained in Achilles' physical expression of the raging ~~scream~~ is finally prohibited by the symbolic order of Gods and humans in the *Iliad*.

The raging ~~scream~~ is a more complex and savage condition then any normative form of revenge or retribution. As this chapter has demonstrated, it is an incessant desire for extreme and horrific violence against one's adversary that is usually suppressed, restricted and not acted upon. This particular form of rage and resentment seeks destruction, and if destruction is not possible, maintains its rage internally as an indispensible mechanism of resistance and survival. The anguish that is accumulated as a result of internalising this raging form of resistance over a long period of time can be an unbearable burden for the subject. Because Achilles is able to finally unleash its potential, the long-term ramifications of withholding the raging ~~scream~~ are not addressed in the *Iliad*.

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[108] Ibid., (24. 13-18)
[109] However, Apollo intervenes protecting Hector's body so it does not shred to pieces, Ibid., (24. 18-22)
[110] Basset, 60.
[111] Homer, (24. 13-45), (24. 45-57)

The question is whether, in reality, this condition can be sustained without eventual recourse to a violence that is now directed back on the self. Over a long period of time, the repeated internalisation of rage becomes a paralyzing state from which the psyche eventually demands an outlet. The individual experiencing the condition of the raging ~~scream~~ cannot communicate rage and resentment to its object without destroying their object, and in lieu of that, they begin to destroy themselves. Rage then becomes converted into a self-destructive mixture of inordinate shame, anguish and extreme suffering - themes that will be addressed in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Chapter Two: The Shameful ~~Scream~~

The shameful ~~scream~~ is an internalised paroxysm of self-blame and self-disgust, in which the traumatised subject rages against herself or himself in an attempt to expunge an unbearable feeling of shame. In contrast to the raging ~~scream~~, which seeks violent physical revenge on the perpetrator(s) of the trauma, the shameful ~~scream~~ is a condition of internalised aggression in which the subject psychologically tears themselves to pieces from within. Within this state, the subject experiences intense self-revulsion, particularly in regard to their body, which is acutely experienced as a source of shame because the shame, horror and memory of trauma feels impregnated in the skin and entrenched in the psyche. The dialectical pairing of *The Confession of Saint-Augustine of Hippo* and *The Confessions* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau mobilises the concept of the shameful ~~scream~~ by elucidating the complex nature of this condition and its symptoms. Each confession performs an extended paroxysm of self-revolt and shame that corresponds to the shameful ~~scream~~. The significance of Augustine and Rousseau's respective *Confessions* to this enquiry lies in their revelation of profound shame and self-disgust, as well as the projection of rage back onto themselves. Moreover, the comparison of these two works reveals two contrasting ways the shameful ~~scream~~ can be experienced and enacted. Augustine's confession is an impassioned and at times histrionic lamentation of profound shame and self-loathing, which involves the attempt to purge himself from shame through a process of self-torture. This is in contradistinction to Rousseau, who undertakes a veiled expression of shame and self-directed rage through a frequently ironic and humorous process of self-abasement and self-humiliation and the adoption of a symbolic mask as a means to deflect and hide shame.

Within the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~, the contemporary traumatised subject takes on unwarranted responsibility for the trauma that she/he suffered at the hands of another and engages in violent self-punishment. Similarly, in the case of Augustine and Rousseau, their *Confessions* stem from an inordinate burden of guilt. In this state, self-directed blame is a consequence of the severity of the trauma endured: the subject suffers an irrevocable loss of innocence that undermines their sense of subjectivity and causes a very particular form of extreme shame to become ingrained in their psyche. For them, shame is experienced as an innate and inescapable burden, which consequently causes profound self-hatred and self-disgust, and the desire for self-annihilation. As a result of such intense shame and self-disgust, the subject at first attempts to repress the memory of the traumatic events(s): she or he is terrified by the prospect of an unwanted exposure

of shame and engages in a process of self-silencing and self-abnegation. Eventually, however, the burden of guilt compels the subject to try to purge their shame through an open disclosure of their shameful selves. This disclosure is confessional in nature: the act of confession itself is apposite to the shameful ~~scream~~ because it is a process through which a truth is revealed, made or forced, either from personal compulsion, religious ritual or through torture.[112] However, the shameful ~~scream~~ engages in a very particular form of confession that aims not only to extract truth and confirm guilt, but also to publically expose oneself as reprehensible in nature, and engage in self-abuse and self-vilification. Ultimately the aim to purge oneself of shame fails. This extreme form of confession, and its failure, is demonstrated in the *Confessions* of Augustine and Rousseau.

Pathological shame and self-disgust in the *Confessions* of Augustine and Rousseau

The excruciating admixture of pathological shame and self-disgust that pertains to the shameful ~~scream~~ is exhibited by Augustine and Rousseau in their exposure of themselves as sinful, shameful and corrupt. Their expression of self-disgust and self-revulsion has similarities to the state of abjection theorised by Julia Kristeva in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, because it involves a sensation comparable to what Kristeva describes as 'one of those violent, dark revolts of being.'[113] However, in the case of the shameful ~~scream~~, as demonstrated by Augustine and Rousseau, the process of self-revolt works in a different way. Unlike abjection, the shameful ~~scream~~ is not a feeling of hatred and horror over what is filthy or nauseating, or what disturbs the boundaries within the body and/or psyche.[114] The stimulus for the self-revolt inherent in the shameful ~~scream~~ is an unrelenting hatred for traumatic event(s), and the mistaken belief that one is to blame for these events. The traumatic events that Augustine and Rousseau identify as the catalyst for each of their respective *Confessions* cause shame and self-disgust to become entrenched as a negatively transformative force within their psyche. Each writer accepts responsibility for these events and engages in excessive self-blame. Augustine confesses to the theft of some pears, which occurs concurrently with a descent into sexual licentiousness in his sixteenth year. Rousseau confesses to stealing a ribbon and then telling a lie in order to extricate himself from blame. He also confesses to the onset of a humiliating chronic

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[112]Jacques Derrida, "Composing "Circumfession,"" in *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession*, ed. John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2005), 22, Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatalla, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 26, Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I*, trans. Robert Hurley, (London: Penguin Books, 2008), 58-59.
[113] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of horror: an Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez, (New York: Columbia University Press), 1, 148, 208.
[114] Ibid., 2-4., Hal Foster "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic," *October*, 78 : (1996), 114.

illness in his infancy. For Rousseau, ill health is a recurring experience, and the disproportionate shame he expresses over it is commensurate to the ~~scream~~ of shame. As a result of these early traumatic occurrences, pathological shame and self-hatred is imbued within the core of each writer's being and is experienced as innate in the formation of their ego.

In their respective analyses of the *Confessions* of each writer, Jacques Derrida and Paul De Man demonstrate that each confession involves the staging of guilt and culpability. The thefts are allegorical, representing the fall of Adam and each writer's initial loss of innocence and propensity for sin. However, what is most pertinent to the discussion of the shameful ~~scream~~ here, is not the allegorical fall into sin itself, but the agonising shame and self-disgust that emerges from it. Derrida and De Man have provided the insight that shame fuels the recursive reference to the thefts and the repetition, and re-staging of guilt in each act of confession.[115] Derrida and De Man show that shame is not only psychologically transformative but also transforms the very structure and content of each confession. Derrida further argues that the acts of theft in each confession operate structurally and symbolically as 'a determining event, a structuring theft, a wound, a trauma, an endless scarring, the repeated access to the experience of guilt…'[116] Although Derrida's argument is more focussed on the parallel complex structural and figurative linguistic processes at work within each confession, his analysis is important to this investigation because it reveals the way in which the extraordinary guilt each writer expresses over their respective thefts compels them to re-live and sustain the pain of guilt and shame throughout each confession in an attempt for atonement.[117] Each confession enacts the internalised paroxysm of shame inherent in the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~ through repeatedly reliving, referencing and evoking the original trauma.

Augustine conveys shame over a number of subjects, such as his remorse over his delayed conversion to Christianity, his misguided following of Manichaeism, his pride, and what he describes as 'lust of the eyes'—a weakness for sensorial experience. However, it is

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[115] Derrida "Typewriter Ribbon: Limited Ink (2)," in Jacques Derrida, *Without Alibi,* ed., trans. and with an introduction by Peggy Kamuf, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 82, Paul De Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), 278-286. James J. O'Donnell, prolegomena to James J. O'Donnell, ed. *Augustine: Confessions, a text and commentary*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1992), accessed April 20 2015, http://www.stoa.org/hippo/, Philip H. Pfatteicher,"Plashing Pears in Augustine and Bunyan", *Literature and Theology*, 9: (1995), 24-29.

[116] Derrida, "Typewriter ribbon," 71, 82.

[117] Ibid., 71, 82-84, Derrida reinforces the transversal nature of theft in the literary form of confession by confessing to his own theft of grapes. See Derrida "Circumfession," in Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 159-160.

only his sexual concupiscence that causes him the extreme self-revulsion that is germane to the shameful ~~scream~~.[118] Augustine's account of his first sexual experiences and his theft of pears are symbolically conflated in the text: both occur in his sixteenth year and are confessed in Book II of his *Confessions*. He confesses both sins almost simultaneously to form a strong condemnation of what he describes as his 'past foulness' and 'carnal corruptions of his soul.'[119] The act of theft symbolises Augustine's submission to the temptation of sin and the beginning of his carnal concupiscence - the fundamental cause of Augustine's pathological shame and self-hatred.[120] Augustine confesses to engaging in fornication and expresses profound disgust that his enjoyment of this act was enhanced by very knowledge it was sinful in the Christian faith.[121] During his narration of the theft of pears, Augustine uses language that alludes to sexual desire in order to expose his moral depravity and his inability to resist sexual temptation. For example, he confesses that he stole purely because he 'lusted to thieve…' and 'joyed in the theft and sin itself, ' and that he did not even eat the pears, but only tasted them, afterwards 'flinging them to the hogs.'[122] The discarding of the pears in this way is particularly redolent of sexual promiscuity.

Augustine's regards his sexual desire as profoundly revolting. He describes it either as a form of sickness, calling it 'the disease of my soul' or as a form of insanity—describing it as his 'madness of lust.'[123] This corresponds directly to the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~, in which shame feels like a toxin or disease within the body, and also like a madness of the psyche. Moreover, Augustine demonstrates horror and revulsion over the belief that he is infected with shame, and that like a disease or madness, shame is imbued in his very being and is beyond his conscious control. For example, he describes the sensation of being overcome and overwhelmed by sexual desire as a kind of fever or delirium: 'I was tossed about, and wasted, and dissipated, and I boiled over in my fornications.'[124] For Augustine, sexual desire is profoundly revolting because it represents an overflowing of the sinful corporal reality of his existence and an obscene exposure of his shameful desire for the fleshy love which is at odds with the divine nature of God's love.

Augustine believed the sexual act is always sinful in the eyes of God, even if strictly

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[118] Allan Fitzgerald, John C. Cavadini et al., *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* (Michigan: William B Eerdmans, 1999), 260, Augustine of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustine of Hippo*, trans. Edvard Bouverie Pusey, (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1938), Book X, 107.
[119] Augustine, Book II, 13-14.
[120] Ibid., Book II, 13-15.
[121] Ibid., Book II, 14.
[122] Ibid., Book II, 15.
[123] Ibid., Book VI, 57, Book II, 13.
[124] Ibid., Book II, 13, Book III, 19.

for the purposes of procreation, and consequently adopted celibacy after his conversion.[125] Hence, his sexual desire causes him extreme inner torment because it is the singular element within his psyche that is not only anathema to his Christian beliefs, but is the most difficult to control. It is for this reason that Augustine portrays the emergence of his sexuality during his sixteenth year as an insurmountable trauma from which he does not recover, and repeatedly recalls and re-experiences its pain throughout the *Confessions*. This is evident in the unrelenting self- denunciation and anguished lament over his sexuality that occurs throughout Augustine's *Confessions*. He also shamefully recounts his on-going struggles to contain his sexual desires through, for example, circumcision and attempted abstinence.[126] As a whole, Augustine's *Confessions* forms an extended lamentation and cry of contrition to God, but this lament is at its strongest and most anguished in relation to his sexuality. For example, the narration of his sexual indiscretions is punctuated with declamatory cries of contrition and self disgust such as 'Woe is me!', 'Wretched man!', and 'O rottenness'. [127] Cries such as these extend across the narrative of Augustine's Confessions and reveal the persistence and intensity of Augustine's paroxysms of shame.

Whereas Augustine is ashamed and repulsed by his lack of control over his sexual desires, Rousseau is ashamed and disgusted by his sexual inadequacies and perversions. He presents himself as abnormal in terms of both the nature of his sexual desires and his physical functioning. Whereas Augustine experiences his shame symbolically as a disease, Rousseau is ashamed by actual physical illness and a rejects his physical body as a source of constant humiliation and abjection.[128] Thus, in contrast to Augustine, Rousseau's self-revolt occurs on two fronts: he expresses pathological shame and self-disgust over his sexual inadequacy and over his chronic sickness.

Rousseau engages in the recollection of many shameful incidents throughout the his *Confessions*, but the theft of the ribbon and his blame of a servant girl named Marion, is the only event that he describes as a 'terrible deed on my conscience.'[129] Rousseau admits that 'the burden, therefore, has rested till this day on my conscience without any relief' and it 'greatly contributed to' his decision to write the confessions.[130] The enormity of shame and self-blame Rousseau expresses over this incident corresponds to the shameful ~~scream~~ in its conveyance of an overwhelming sense of guilt and horror. Rousseau's theft and its

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[125] William E.Mann, 'Augustine on evil and Original Sin,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, eds. Eleanor Strump and Norman Kretzmann, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 47.
[126] Augustine, Book VI, 57.
[127] Ibid., Book II, 14, 17.
[128] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*, trans. J.M. Cohen, (London: Penguin, 1953), 19.
[129] Ibid., 86-88.
[130] Ibid.

accompanying lie cause a traumatic loss of innocence: Rousseau is horrified by his desire to thieve and his readiness to accuse an innocent girl in order to extricate himself from blame and public shame. The dire consequence of his theft and lie fills Rousseau with a severe guilt that prevents him from speaking about the episode until his *Confessions*. Marion was sacked; thus Rousseau indirectly ruins her reputation and possibility of future employment.[131] Throughout the *Confessions,* Rousseau recounts repeated failures in his pursuit of intimacy—sexual and otherwise—with women. This pattern of behaviour can be ascribed to the episode involving Marion, in which he fails spectacularly in his pursuit of her: he had intended to give her the ribbon as a token of his affection. This originary failure is symbolic of his further relations with women, which account for some of the most profoundly humiliating and painful episodes in the text.

These episodes are characterised by failure and impotence. Rousseau expresses shame and self-disgust that the majority of his sexual experiences are either thwarted or failed encounters, fantasies, or perversions such as masturbation or indecent public exposure.[132] His open disclosure of the sordid details of his sexual inadequacies, dysfunctions and perversions is at times darkly comedic, pervading his *Confessions* with a self-deprecating and scatological humour. It is through his cruel and masochistic humour that Rousseau performs self-revolt through the public exposure of his body and sexuality as shameful. Here, Rousseau engages in tragicomedy; his shame is offset, but also increased in its pathos through his ironic self-ridicule and acerbic humour.[133] This aspect of Rousseau's *Confessions* offers another perspective on the shameful ~~scream~~ by revealing the way in which the self-revulsion inherent to this condition can be expressed through comic means. Rousseau demonstrates the way in which humour can express self-loathing and self-disgust just as powerfully as Augustine's histrionic lamentation and earnest self-torment. Rousseau revels in the comic description of the embarrassing and scandalous nature of his sexual experiences; however, these comic anecdotal episodes have the damning effect of exposing him as sexually perverted and infantile.[134] Rousseau reveals his most secret sexual desire is somewhat ridiculous: a proclivity for spanking that is the result of a childhood punishment.[135] The confession of this desire is comic, but Rousseau is serious about the shame it has caused him: he asserts that he has 'never dared' to confess

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[131] Ibid., 88.
[132] Ibid., 28, 90, 176, 240-241.
[133] Jacques Voisine, "Self-Ridicule in Les Confessions," *Yale French Studies*, (1961):28, 55-63.
[134] Rosanne Terese Kennedy, *Rousseau in Drag: Deconstructing Gender*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 125- 130.
[135]Chloë Taylor, *The Culture of Confession from Augustine to Foucault: A Genealogy of the 'Confessing Animal,'* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 85-86.

this secret desire until the writing of *The Confessions*.[136] Rousseau reveals his masochistic desire for spanking is the catalyst for what he describes as his 'extravagant' practice of exposing his buttocks to women in public.[137] This is recounted in a comedic, absurd episode in which Rousseau is discovered in a state of indecency by some girls and is promptly 'caught and seized' by a 'man with a large sword.' In his embarrassment and shame, Rousseau attempts to extricate himself from punishment by pretending to be a prince.[138] Rousseau's self-loathing is veiled in this comedy, through which he actually exposes himself as sadly ridiculous exhibitionist who shirks taking responsibility for his actions. At the same time, however, there is also a hint of self-adulation, as Rousseau seems to take delight in narrating this misdemeanour.

Even Rousseau's confession of serious moments of intimacy as an adult typically combines a sense of the absurd with the revelation of tragic shame. This occurs, for example, in his description of his intimacy with Mme de Warens, whom he calls 'Mama' and who takes him in under her care as a young man. The absurd and bizarre nature of this situation is that Mme de Warens is a surrogate maternal figure for Rousseau, and she initiates their sexual encounter ostensibly as part of Rousseau's education.[139] The tragic side of this episode is that Rousseau is considerably disturbed by this event: although he experiences pleasure, he is overcome with 'invincible sadness' and declares 'I felt as if I had committed incest.'[140] In linking this experience with an obscene taboo, this statement discloses the deep revulsion Rousseau experiences in regard to his physical body, intimacy and sexuality.

Rousseau divulges that his shameful sexual perversions and failures are exacerbated by his chronic illness, which cause him further discomfort, public humiliation and social alienation. Consequently he experiences extreme bodily self-disgust and enacts a revolt against his body, which persists throughout the narrative.[141] Rousseau reveals symptoms of an extensive range of physical ailments including a weak heart, kidney problems, tinnitus, fatigue, vapours (sudden fits of nervousness or depression), and shortness of breath, bouts of melancholy, lethargy and a chronic urinary condition.[142] Rousseau suffered a malformation or infection of his urinary tract which caused him painful retention of urine,

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136 Rousseau, 25-27.
137 Ibid., 90.
138 Ibid., 90-91, 92.
139 Ibid., 189.
140 Ibid., 189, Derrida, "Typewriter Ribbon," 129.
141 Dennis Porter, *Rousseau's Legacy: Emergence and Eclipse of the Writer in France*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 48.
142 Rousseau, see in particular books V and VI, Matthew Simpson, *Rousseau: A Guide for the Perplexed*, (London: Continuum, 2007), 8-9.

alternating with frequent and urgent need for urination, and incontinence. It also interfered with his sexual functioning.[143] Rousseau's urinary tract condition is his primary ailment, the one he suffers most from, and its effects and symptoms are the most detailed in the text. His depiction of this condition is important to this enquiry because it elucidates an important element of the shameful ~~scream~~: the desire to hide one's shameful secret. Rousseau demonstrates on-going anguish over the containment and maintenance of this condition, and paranoia over the threat of its unwanted exposure in public. For Rousseau, this ailment is a source of abject horror and potential public debasement because it pertains to the ridiculous and obscene: the private and hidden dysfunction of his urogenital system and his inability to control basic functions. In middle age Rousseau's condition worsened and he was compelled to continually carry around his medical equipment and wear Armenian style clothing, consisting of a flowing gown, to facilitate his frequent use of probes and catheters. Unfortunately Rousseau's extraordinary appearance became a public source of ridicule, only exacerbating his experience of shame.[144]

The nature of this disorder often restricted Rousseau to his room and caused significant social anxiety and agoraphobia, as related in the following excerpt:

> This ailment was the principal cause that kept me away from society and prevented me from staying in a room with ladies when the doors were closed. The mere thought of the situation into which my need might put me was capable of producing such an attack of it that I would either faint or make a scene- and I would have rather have died than that. Only people who know this state can understand my horror of running the risk of it.[145]

Here Rousseau conveys extreme fear over his inability to control his bodily functions in public. Rousseau regards his ailment as a source of shame and disgust that must be concealed and carefully maintained in public in order to avoid humiliation and scandal: he is afraid he will lose control and inadvertently expose his hidden physical inadequacy.[146] From the perspective of the shameful ~~scream~~, the accidental physical leaking of body fluids or waste is synonymous with the unwanted exposure of one's secret shame and the disgusting, revolting and nature of the self. The significance of this quote and the point of

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[143] Jean Starobinski, "The Illness of Rousseau," *Yale French Studies*, 28: (1961), 64-74.
[144] Starobinski, 71, Rousseau, 554-555.
[145] Rousseau, 354, See also 554
[146] Starobinski., 71, Rousseau, 336-337.

identification with the contemporary traumatised subject, is that it precisely conveys the way in which the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~ causes the subject to perpetually fear this kind of unwanted public exposure. The potential to physically and symbolically explode must therefore be curtailed at all costs, leading to the self-enforced social alienation and avoidance of intimate situations that is demonstrated so clearly in Rousseau's *Confessions*.

Raging against the self in Augustine and Rousseau

The *Confessions* of Augustine and Rousseau exemplify the way in which the extreme form of shame germane to the shameful ~~scream~~ causes a brutal rage against the self. Overcome with self-hatred and revulsion, the subject engages in behaviours of self-destruction, self-mutilation and self-vilification. These behaviours are evident in the *Confessions* of both writers, however, the way in which they are expressed is very different and reveals that the self-directed rage can take both overt and covert forms. Augustine enacts an overt form of self-directed violence, whereas Rousseau enacts a more covert form of rage against the self; Augustine explicitly and directly rages at himself, whereas Rousseau's rage is implicit and conveyed through allusion and textual detail. These two different modes of violent self-directed rage are significant to this investigation because they reveal the complex and dual nature of internalised rage and self-destruction.

Augustine enacts self-directed rage through recurring cries of self-condemnation. Augustine's cries of rage are violent, symbolic acts of self-harm and self-flagellation: Augustine calls himself 'vile', 'corrupt', 'foul', 'filth,' as well as a range of other terms that enact a violent verbal form of self-punishment. Augustine denounces his soul for its tumultuous and anguished nature, describing it as dirty, offensive, 'wretched' and containing 'dark corners.'[147] He derides himself for his human weaknesses through the use of language of self-negation declaring for example, 'I despise myself and account myself dust and ashes.'[148] Augustine also reproaches himself for the 'carnal corruptions' of his soul, claiming that he 'lost himself,' and 'stank' in God's eyes.[149] The intensity of his self-directed rage is particularly evident in the melodramatic self-punishment he engages in in regards to his youthful concupiscence:

[147] Augustine., Book II, 14-15, 17 and IV, 36-37.
[148] Ibid., Book X, 97.
[149] Ibid., Book I, 12.

> It was foul, and I loved it; I loved to perish, I loved mine own fault, not that for which I was faulty, but my fault itself. Foul soul, falling from Thy firmament to utter destruction; not seeking aught through the shame, but the shame itself! [150]

Augustine's use of language, his phraseology, and repetition of certain words such as 'foul' and 'fault' in this excerpt have a particularly punitive quality. Moreover its declamatory and rhetorical nature gives the impression that Augustine is literally ~~screaming~~ at himself.

In contrast to Augustine, Rousseau does not openly ~~scream~~ at himself. Instead he rages against himself through a process of self-excoriation and self-exposure, in which sordid and abject details of an intimate nature are revealed. He takes a masochistic pleasure in hiding, and then revealing details of his scandalous physical and moral shame. Rousseau's oscillation between hiding and revealing illuminates further characteristics of the shameful ~~scream~~: the alternation between the desire to hide, and the desire to publically expose and punish oneself. It also demonstrates the tension between taking pleasure in self-punishment, and the desire to truly harm oneself. Rousseau's account of his experiences with a prostitute in Venice is exemplary of his masochistic self-excoriation and self-exposure. In recounting his experience after seeing the prostitute, Rousseau performs a brutal form of self-emasculation that is both ridiculous and obscene. Fearing that he has contracted syphilis, Rousseau visits a physician who allays his concerns by explaining to him that a physical malformation or abnormality in his genitalia greatly diminishes his likelihood of infection.[151] What is significant here is that through literally and symbolically exposing his genitalia as abnormal to the reader in the form of a medical examination he enacts a covert form of rage against himself. He publically reveals his most private, degrading and humiliating physical secret: he is physically abnormal, or in his words so 'particularly made' that he struggles with sexual dysfunction and impotence.[152] Through his exposure of a medical verified deformity Rousseau performs a symbolic violence against himself.

Another perspective on this revelation is discussed by Swiss literary theorist Jean Starobinski who suggests that this self-enacted rage aims to in fact deflect public accusations that Rousseau was sexually degenerate and had contracted syphilis. [153] Starobinski states that 'Rather than be suspected of doing wrong, he prefers to mutilate

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[150] Ibid.
[151] Rousseau, 297-298.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Starobinski,70., Rousseau, 584.

himself symbolically and pass himself off as an inadequate lover.' [154] Starobinski's argument is important to an understanding of this aspect of Rousseau's shameful ~~scream~~ because it elucidates the way in which drawing attention to one shameful aspect of oneself through violent self-accusation may actually veil a deeper shame. Rousseau's pubic self-mutilation and abasement of that which is most private—his genitalia—is so earnestly exaggerated that it paradoxically becomes an implicit indictment of what Rousseau will not reveal: the greater horror of sexual degeneracy, immorality and disease. This point is of particular importance to the shameful ~~scream~~ because it elucidates the way in which the violent strike against the self that the subject enacts in this condition can have the unintended result of betraying an even greater shame and horror about which the subject refuses to speak.

The failure of confession

The Confessions of Augustine and Rousseau demonstrate the failure of confession that is symptomatic of the shameful ~~scream~~: both writers fail to alleviate their burden of shame and self-disgust. For the subject experiencing the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~, the act of confession ultimately fails, because, within this condition, shame can never be completely expressed and purged from the subject despite the subject's desperate efforts. Agonisingly, the subject finds her or himself in a perpetual cycle of anguished confession and self-directed rage. Even self-destruction offers no escape or relief from this interminable shame. Both Augustine and Rousseau attempt, and fail, to escape this cycle of shame over the course of their confessions. A comparison of their *Confessions* reveals two very different attempts at overcoming shame, one internalised and one externalised. Augustine undertakes a torturous process of self-interrogation, through which he seeks to overcome his shame by discovering its source. Rousseau, in contrast, attempts to deflect and conceal shame through the adoption of a mask.

An examination of Augustine's fraught self-examination elucidates a characteristic symptom of the shameful ~~scream~~: a self- destructive attempt to purge oneself from shame by completely uncovering it, and thus confronting it. However, Augustine's *Confessions* reveal that it is impossible to uncover, confront or purge shame. Augustine believes that through self-excoriation and self-torture he can find the kernel of his sin. But as he engages in self-interrogation he describes himself as becoming increasingly incapacitated: his vision is increasingly thwarted by what he describes as a 'darkness' that obscures any self-knowledge. He ultimately feels more tormented and ashamed by his failure to understand

[154] Starobinski., 73-74.

himself: revealing that he has 'become a problem' to himself.[155] Augustine's self-interrogation involves an unrelenting series of questions that recur throughout the narrative. Akin to the use of torture to extract confession, Augustine enacts a verbal form of self-torture in an anguished attempt draw out his own shameful truth. He accuses himself of being innately sinful and demands to know why he sins and why he loves sin. For example, reflecting on his theft of the pears, Augustine interrogates himself using repeated phrases such as 'What then did I love in that theft?'[156] and, 'What then was this feeling?…. Who can understand his errors?'[157] Augustine makes desperate attempts to locate the source of evil and sin within himself asking 'Whence is evil? Where is evil then, and whence, and how crept it in hither? What is its root, and what its seed?'[158] Like the victim of torture, Augustine cannot answer these questions despite his anguished attempts. Augustine's symbolic association of evil as a seed that grows in the self, corresponds to the experience inherent to the shameful ~~scream~~ whereby the subject feels that shame and horror has taken root and grown in the psyche, and hence cannot be removed. Augustine's process of self-interrogation also elucidates the painful feeling of being trapped within shame that is symptomatic of this condition. At many points in his confession Augustine expresses anguish over his experience of shame as a darkness that binds him.[159] He seeks to extricate himself from this feeling asking 'Who can disentangle that twisted and intricate knottiness?'[160] Although this sentence is addressed to God, and reveals Augustine's belief in a God who will disentangle him and thus alleviate his suffering, it lucidly evokes what the sensation of extreme traumatic shame feels like: a 'twisted and intricate knottiness' or oppressive net from which there is no escape.

In contradistinction to Augustine, who tortures himself for his sins, Rousseau seeks to overcome shame through the assertion that he is fundamentally an honourable man.[161] Throughout his *Confessions*, moments of inner torment and shame are offset by moments of self-aggrandizement; this oscillation between self-glorification and self-excoriation is often interpreted as ushering in a new Romantic and modern sensibility, however, what is most important to this investigation is the way in which Rousseau takes on a mask or alter-ego in

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155 Augustine, Book X, 110.
156 Ibid., Book II, 17.
157 Ibid.
158 Ibid., Book VII, 60.
159 Ibid., Book X, 97, 99, 110, Book XI, 118, 127.
160 Ibid., Book II, 18.
161 Rousseau, 17.

these moments of self-affirmation.[162] This offers a further insight into the shameful ~~scream~~ by demonstrating the way in which, within this condition, the public adoption of a mask or persona can be used in an attempt to overcome an inner reality of extreme shame and self-disgust. However, Rousseau's *Confessions* also demonstrate the ultimate failure of this mask, because it paradoxically reveals shame, and the desire to hide shame to a greater degree. For example, Rousseau's declarations of his own virtuousness are made in an overstated pontificating tone, on the first page of his *Confessions* he draws on God as his witness in an appeal for fair judgement by his readers:

> I have bared my secret soul as Thou thyself hast seen it, Eternal Being! So let the numberless legion of my fellow men gather round me, and hear my confessions. Let them groan at my depravities, and blush for my misdeeds. But….may any man who dares, say 'I was a better man than he'.[163]

For Rousseau, such statements project an alternate self-image: a mask of overstated respectability to the reader, through which he inadvertently implicates himself as shameful. If he truly felt innocent, he would not need to prove it so vehemently here, and throughout his confessions. Rousseau's assertion of his innocence through the use of a mask is not only an attempt to extricate himself from his personal burden of shame and self-disgust, but is also an important strategy for deflecting public accusations of degeneracy. Rousseau was the victim of public lampooning and harsh criticism, and during the writing of his confessions he becomes convinced that he is the victim of a conspiracy threatening to ruin his reputation and silence his writings.[164] Throughout his *Confessions* Rousseau aims to seek fair judgement from his readers by presenting an alternate and honourable vision of himself, an aim that ultimately fails in his lifetime due to public outrage over his *Confessions*, the censorship of his writings and persecution from the French and Swiss governments.[165]

The shameful ~~scream~~ is a condition in which the subject experiences a form of shame that is beyond the extreme limit of the bearable. It involves a process of tearing oneself apart in a futile attempt to overcome and destroy shame, which, horrifically for the subject, is discovered to be embedded in their very selves. This realisation causes sheer

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[162] Eugene Stelzig, 'Rousseau, Goethe, Wordsworth and the Classic Moment of Romantic Autobiography,' *Neohelicon*, 18 (1991): 247-271.
[163] Rousseau, 17.
[164] Starobinski, 71.
[165] Rousseau, 605, Angela Scholar, Introduction, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. Angela Scholar, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), xx.

panic and an anguished inner revolt: a heightened physical and psychical sensation that feels like a violent painful explosion within the self. The comparative study of the *Confessions* of Augustine and Rousseau undertaken in this chapter has highlighted the explosive inner tumult that occurs within this condition, by revealing their respective agony of shame and rage in relation to sin, sexuality and sickness. One of the significant outcomes of this comparison has been the elucidation that the subject can attempt to express and overcome the symptoms of this condition either through anguished lamentation and self-torture in the case of Augustine, or through detached humour and the use of a mask in the case of Rousseau. For the contemporary traumatised subject, the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~, if experienced over a significant period of time, causes a schizophrenic oscillation between these two modes of articulation. The ultimate failure of either strategy in overcoming the symptoms of inordinate shame, as demonstrated in the *Confessions* of Augustine and Rousseau, is experienced as a devastating reality for the contemporary traumatised subject.

Chapter 3: The obscene ~~scream~~

Unlike the internalisation of extreme self-disgust that occurs in the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~, the obscene ~~scream~~ is an externalised outburst of excessive obscenity. This state is the outward embodiment and physicalisation of an intense feeling of repugnance and horror that is embedded within the subject as a result of a traumatic experience of extreme obscenity, violence and horror. The obscene ~~scream~~ is a condition of total revulsion against, and rejection of, traumatic and obscene experience(s). Ultimately, through the explosive outburst of obscenity, the obscene ~~scream~~ exposes the profound horror of violence and the obscene nature of its effects. The central point of enquiry into this condition is the use of obscenity in the literary and philosophical writings of Nietzsche and Bataille. In a number of writings, Nietzsche and Bataille embrace states of obscenity and excess, a phenomenon that is often interpreted as a strategy that resists rationalist and conventional modes of philosophical thinking.[166] However, this chapter instead focuses on two aspects of the use of obscenity in the work of Nietzsche and Bataille which are particular to the obscene ~~scream~~: firstly, their identification of the wound as an obscene and traumatic orifice, and secondly, their exploration of the destruction and obscenity that occurs as a result of extreme physical and psychological suffering. The term obscene is usually defined as what is indecent, perverse, offensive, immoral, repugnant, disgusting and abject especially pertaining to the scatological and the sexual. It is also associated with an event that takes place off-stage; something which cannot be viewed or represented, and remains out of sight.[167] However, this chapter expands upon standard definitions of this term and posits extreme forms of interpersonal violence and abuse as fundamentally obscene—an interpretation that draws upon my own personal experiences and is supported by the portrayal of violence as obscene in the writings of Nietzsche and Bataille.

In the condition of the obscene ~~scream~~, the traumatised subject experiences her or himself as obscene, and is overwhelmed by a sensation of nauseating inner tumult that seeps or bursts out of their body- a feeling that is analogous to the excretions from a seething, festering wound. They may attempt to contain and hide this seething obscenity, but this is impossible due to the irrepressible nature of this condition. Subsequently, the

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[166] Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille,* trans. Betsy Wing, (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1989), 100.

[167] Rachel Potter, *Obscene Modernism: Literary Censorship and Experiment 1900-1940*, Introduction, 6, (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2013), accessed September 12, 2015, DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199680986.001.0001.

subject either experiences an involuntary failure of her or his body and psyche to contain this inner toxicity and obscenity, or, on the other hand, consciously chooses to purge herself or himself in a violent release which can involve self-harm and self-mutilation. Thus, the obscene outburst inherent to the obscene ~~scream~~ can take two different forms; firstly in the form of a wound or laceration to the subject through which horror is communicated, and secondly through extreme states of physical sickness, psychological suffering and/or madness in which the subject experiences a loss of control which triggers an overflow of obscenity, abjection and horror. In a significant parallel to the obscene ~~scream~~, Nietzsche and Bataille's respective writings demonstrate the way in which inner obscenity and horror erupts either through a wound, or through the physiological breakdown that occurs during physical and/or mental illness.

The particular insights into the obscene ~~scream~~ provided by each writer is to confirm the explosive nature of this condition as necessary to the subject's communication of inner horror and pain, and also to articulate the positive nature of this condition as a process through which the obscenely traumatic experience may be transformed into something of philosophical and spiritual value. Nietzsche attests to a process of self-overcoming and greater health achieved through embracing destructive states of obscene ill health, madness and suffering. Bataille, on the other hand, seeks a state of transcendent ecstasy and self-determination through embracing states of obscene violence, madness and perversion, and engaging in the erotic and scatological obscene. The spirit of the Dionysian, as developed and embodied by Nietzsche and subsequently followed by Bataille, facilitates the outburst of obscenity that is germane to the obscene ~~scream~~ in the work and life of both writers. Both writers adopt the Dionysian spirit in order to access and embrace the excessive and obscene aspects of their being. For Nietzsche, the destructive, explosive and obscene impulse inherent to the Dionysian spirit compels new creation and renewal; whereas Bataille takes the notion of the Dionysian to an extreme in the literal explosion of obscenity and horror in his writings, in particular embracing a state of intoxication in order to enable the sublimation of lived experiences of trauma and violence into obscene and surreal auto-fiction. The raw outburst inherent to the obscene ~~scream~~ is parallel to the savage and wild release that occurs within the Dionysian frenzy.

The obscenity of violence and abuse

Interpersonal violence involving physical, emotional and sexual abuse, is one of most horrific manifestations of obscenity because it is comprised of a reprehensible

mixture of brutal force, inhumanity, perversity, abjection, cruelty and immorality. It also involves an obscene misuse of power to elicit terror and subjugation. Furthermore, extreme forms of violence enact obscenity that is so horrific and unspeakable, that it usually occurs literally off-stage: in private, hidden out of sight, or alternatively, the victim is quickly silenced and any evidence of the event is obfuscated. There is an important distinction to be made between the obscenity of violence that the subject has endured and experienced, and the traumatised subject's subsequent explosive reaction to this experience in an outburst of obscenity. The former is defined here as the fundamental and real obscene. The latter is the obscene ~~scream~~, which is not real obscenity itself; rather, through its obscene nature it exposes the horror and obscenity of the traumatic experience. Nietzsche's texts and Bataille's writings elucidate this phenomenon in the way that they demonstrate how an outburst of obscenity is a vital means of communicating, exposing and resisting the horror of obscene violence.

The notion that extreme violence and abuse is obscene can be elucidated with reference to Italian film director Pier Paolo Passolini's film *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* (1975), based on the novel by the Marquis de Sade. Set in Mussolini's Italy, the film is an allegory of violence and its profound obscenity. Four fascist captors kidnap a group of youths and subject them to on-going physical, mental and sexual abuse including ritualised rapes and enforced coprophagia (eating faeces). A scene of particular obscenity involves one of the captors defecating on the floor, and then forcing one of the young women to strip naked and eat his shit. The film culminates in an orgy of barbaric violence and torture which involves the burning of genitals, cutting out of tongues and murder. In *Salò*, the violence of fascism, and the violent execution of its ideology are exposed as the ultimate obscenity. For example *Salò* is pertinent to this enquiry because it reveals the interdependence of obscenity, horror and violence, and the inability to disentangle one from the other. The obscenity of violence itself, as portrayed in *Salò* is, *mutatis mutandis,* what the obscene ~~scream~~ resists and exposes. Moreover, *Salò* demonstrates that it is only through the performance and dramatisation of obscenity and horror, that the utterly repugnant and obscene nature of real violence itself, as it occurs in life, can be communicated. Bataille and Nietzsche similarly use of the tropes of the obscene, including the embrace of obscene personae in the case of Nietzsche, and the pornographic and the scatological in the case of Bataille to expose external forces of violence as obscene and horrific.

In *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections,* contemporary Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek differentiates three major forms of violence: 'symbolic violence' which is imbued in language and its use, 'systemic violence' which occurs in the large scale abuses of power that occur through political and economic structures, and 'subjective violence' which is 'performed by a clearly identifiable agent' and includes interpersonal violence and abuse.[168] While the obscene ~~scream~~ reacts primarily to interpersonal violence and abuse, Nietzsche and Bataille demonstrate that other forms of violence can elicit a similarly explosive and obscene reaction. This point suggests the broader significance of this condition, beyond the personal traumatic experience, as an important method of exposing violence as obscene in a larger, societal context.

Nietzsche's obscene ~~scream~~ is primarily voiced through the mad and obscene personae of Dionysus and Zarathustra- a strategy that will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter. Nietzsche aims to expose and overcome the obscenity in the form of symbolic and systemic violence he experiences in his external environment, as well as the obscenity he feels lies at the core of humanity itself. Organised religions, such as Catholicism, Lutheranism and Protestantism for example, are for Nietzsche the pre-eminent systems of cruelty and violence.[169] For Nietzsche, Dionysus and Zarathustra represent the destructive and obscene force necessary to destroy these forms of violence, facilitating new creation, and a renewal of culture can be gained. Nietzsche viewed the forces of church and state in Germany as powers of brutal domination and repression of the subject through the dumbing-down and suppression of genuine thought. [170] For example he regarded Martin Luther as enforcing conformity and the suppression of reason and critique.[171] Nietzsche decried this process as cultural degeneration and his use of obscenity in his writings aims to expose this phenomenon as obscene and violent. German nationalism and anti-Semitism are symptomatic of this cultural degeneracy, and representative of a brutal violence that stultified and suppressed the individual: the antithesis of what is represented by the figures of Zarathustra and Dionysus.[172] At the same time, Nietzsche views humanity as essentially obscene and expresses, through Zarathustra,

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[168] Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*, (New York: Picador, 2008), 1-3.
[169] Freidrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson, trans. Carol Diethe, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 38.
[170] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, (New York: Continuum, 1983), 108-109, 134 and Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: prelude to a philosophy of the future*, ed. and trans. Marion Faber, (Oxford University Press: Oxford 1998), 87-91.
[171] Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 164, 343, 352.
[172] Georges Bataille, "Nietzsche and the Fascists", in *Visions of excess,* trans. and ed. Allan Stoekl, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 182, 184-185.

a 'great disgust' over the 'all too human' and 'small' nature of 'even the greatest man.'[173] In the *Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche laments:

> Alas for this crazy, pathetic beast man! What ideas he has, what perversity, what hysterical nonsense, what bestiality of thought immediately erupts, the moment he is prevented, if only gently, from being a beast in deed!... There is so much in man that is horrifying!'[174]

Nietzsche aims through his own outbursts of obscenity and madness, to communicate the truth of the horror and violence that constitutes humanity.[175]

In contrast to Nietzsche's work, the obscene ~~scream~~ in Bataille's literary writings is not facilitated through the use of masks or personae, but is openly expressed through a proliferation of obscene imagery pertaining to, for example, the scatological, the pornographic and the sexually violent. Bataille's explosive outbursts of obscenity expose and resist the systemic, symbolic and subjective violence in the form of fascism, and the subjective violence he endured in his personal life. Writing from his own experiences of the rise of fascism and Nazism, Bataille describes fascism as a force of 'brutality that destroys with rage everything it lacks the power to captivate.'[176] Bataille makes use of graphic depictions of the obscene wound and obscene, destructive forms of suffering because, for Bataille, it is precisely this kind of violent imagery that which resists repression and abuse due to its explosive nature and transgressive potential.[177] Bataille's use of obscene imagery and graphic violence in his literary work, exposes fascism as truly obscene and violent, and aims to symbolically destroy the kind of thinking that promotes and reinforces the violence of fascism and fascist thinking. In response to the subjective violence that Bataille himself endured and its subsequent psychological symptoms he experiences, Bataille unleashes obscene outbursts that correspond to the obscene ~~scream~~ predominantly in the form of shocking allegorical narratives. These expose his personal experiences of violent personal trauma and suffering as fundamentally obscene.

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[173] Nietzsche, *Thus spake Zarathustra*, trans. Thomas Common, (New York: Modern Library, 1917), 224-225, and Gudrun von Tevenar, "Zarathustra: that Malicious Dionysian," in *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, ed. John Richardson and Ken Gemes, (Oxford: Oxford Handbooks Online, 2013), 277, accessed August 10 2015, DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199534647.013.0013.
[174] Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 64.
[175] Tevenar, 277.
[176] Bataille, "Nietzsche and the Fascists", 204.
[177] Bataille, "Eye" in *Visions of excess*, notes to page 19.

The relationship of the Dionysian spirit to the expression of the obscene ~~scream~~ in Nietzsche and Bataille

The attributes of Dionysus are not only adopted by Nietzsche to facilitate his obscene ~~scream~~, but are also appropriated by Bataille in his own recourse to obscenity. Two major aspects of Nietzsche and Bataille's use of obscenity are germane to the obscene ~~scream~~: the identification of the wound as traumatic orifice from which obscenity erupts, and the exploration of the explosion of obscenity in states of extreme suffering and destruction are underscored by what is characterised here as the Dionysian spirit or attitude. The significance of the Dionysian spirit to the obscene ~~scream~~ is that many of its constituent elements correspond to the obscene ~~scream~~ and its symptoms. The Dionysian spirit, as developed and advocated by Nietzsche, embraces suffering, immorality, formlessness, destruction and excess. This is in contrast to Apollonian order, rationality and morality. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche describes the Dionysian as a 'drive' of intoxication, associated with the 'imageless art of music' in contrast to its opposing drive, the Apollonian- associated with the 'art of the image-maker or sculptor' and which represents form, beauty and harmony.[178] Ancient Greek tragedy emerges from the conflict and eventual balance of Dionysian and the Apollonian forces: the Apollonian tames and tempers the wild obscenity of the Dionysian in order to create art.[179] The focus here is not, however, on the conflict of these two drives and their relationship to the development of art and culture as set out in *The Birth of Tragedy,* but is on the relationship of the Dionysian spirit to the expression and release of horror and obscenity. The notion of obscene ~~scream~~ is an extrapolation of these savage impulses explored by Nietzsche and Bataille in a mad, sick and explosive release of obscenity in reaction to trauma.

The obscene ~~scream~~ can be understood as an emotional state that not only corresponds with the Dionysian spirit or drive, but also emerges from an individual who has either capitulated to, or embraced, the uninhibited obscenity inherent to the savage and mad Dionysian flux.[180] This uninhibited and excessive state is most evident in the rituals carried out by an ancient people Nietzsche names the Dionysiac Barbarians. According to Nietzsche, these rituals represent a 'grotesque manifestation of the Dionysiac:' an unbridled and raw Dionysian impulse untempered by Apollonian restraint, in contrast to the more

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[178] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and other writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Spiers, trans. Ronald Spiers, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 14.
[179] Ibid, 14-15 and Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 129-130.
[180] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy,* 19-21, Walter H. Sokel, "On the Dionysian in Nietzsche," *New Literary History* 36 (2005): 504, and Charles Huenemann, "Nietzsche's Illness," in in *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, ed. John Richardson and Ken Gemes, (Oxford: Oxford Handbooks Online, 2013), 71, accessed August 10 2015, DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199534647.013.0004.

restrained rituals of the Dionysian Greeks.[181] Nietzsche explains that the rituals of the Dionysiac Barbarians involve the release of innermost primal, destructive and savage instincts, eventuating in explosive outbursts of obscene behaviour in the form of spiritual and physical frenzy, sexual debauchery and orgiastic excess, as well as an embrace of the unconscious and a rejection of form and order.[182] The release of raw, wild, savage, horrifying and obscene elements from within the psyche that occurs during uninhibited Dionysian ritual and intoxication is particularly germane to the obscene ~~scream~~ and its explosion of obscenity and filth.

Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysian is foundational to Bataille's philosophical thought and literary works, in particular his expression of obscenity and his development of the concept of eroticism.[183] While Nietzsche writes about the Dionysian as a phenomenon and expresses it through the masks of Dionysus and Zarathustra, Bataille directly adopts and performs its obscene spirit. It is through inhabiting the barbaric, wild form of Dionysian spirit and taking its obscene and savage impulse to its extreme, that Bataille is able to voice his obscene ~~scream~~. The elements of Bataille's writing that are considered obscene such as the exploration of sexual violence, the embrace of the scatological and pornographic, the depiction of horror and as well as his interest in states of madness, intoxication, ecstasy and religious sacrifice can be attributed to his adoption of the Dionysian spirit. However, it is Bataille's particularly intense expression of the most obscene, explosive and destructive elements of barbaric form of the Dionysian spirit, as symbolised in his use of visual imagery of destructive and horrific wounds from which obscenity is excreted, the explosions of obscenity that erupt in moments of physical and/or sexual violence and the traumatic loss of bodily control leading to an outburst of excrement or other bodily filth that is inherent to the condition of obscene ~~scream~~ and is a literary manifestation of its obscene and horrifying character.

Bataille's use of the Dionysian spirit extends the ritualistic orgiastic and sexual debauchery of Nietzsche's interpretation to an extreme level—horror, sensuality, violence, death, ecstasy and the erotic are all linked in one explosive, convulsive experience, which he describes as eroticism.[184] Bataille's concept of eroticism has some important correspondences with the obscene ~~scream~~ as well as to the Dionysian spirit. Through his

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[181] In contrast to the more restrained rituals of the Dionysian Greeks, Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 20.
[182] Ibid, xi, 4, 20 and Kaufmann, 128-129.
[183] Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience,* trans. and with an introduction by Leslie Anne Boldt, (New York: State University of New York, 1988), 26. See also Bataille's chapter titled "Dionysos or Antiquity" in *The Tears of Eros*, trans. Peter Connor, (San Francisco: City Light Books, 1989), 57-77.
[184]Hollier, 82-83.

concept of eroticism Bataille explores the interconnection of violence, obscenity and desire—defined by Bataille as the intangible yet powerful connection 'between excreta, decay and sexuality.'[185] Bataille's notion of eroticism can be understood as an extension of the savage orgiastic frenzy and wild intoxication of the barbaric Dionysian ritual and is of significance to this chapter because it underpins particular elements in his writings that are germane to the obscene ~~scream~~ and its symptoms. The explosive intensity and combination of perversity and horror inherent to Bataille's notion of eroticism is in many ways redolent of the obscenity and horror conveyed by the obscene ~~scream~~, and also suggests that inhabiting this condition of excess and obscenity may offer an unexpected perverse pleasure or *jouissance* for the subject.[186]

Bataille views an immersion in states of mind and obscenity comparable to the Dionysian flux as revealing something deeper within the psyche; a deeper horror and a deeper reality. For Bataille, the exposure, through the obscene and erotic outburst reveals the horrific force of the reality and horror of death, which is, for Bataille, an ecstatic revelation, just as much as it is traumatic.[187] The parallel with the condition of the obscene ~~scream~~ here is that through obscene outbursts, the traumatised subject-often inadvertently exposes the horror and sensation of festering revulsion lying within themselves. This is a physical manifestation of the reality and horror of a severe traumatic event, or series of events, which for the traumatised subject may not be an ecstatic revelation, but it is a revelation that attests to their experience and most importantly, asserts and affirms their survival.

Communication through the wound- the wound as conduit for the obscene ~~scream~~ in Nietzsche and Bataille

Central to the condition of the obscene ~~scream~~ is the explosive release of obscenity and horror. An important insight into this is provided in the writings of Nietzsche and Bataille who demonstrate that one of the primary ways that this explosive release occurs is through a physical and/or psychological wound, which allows the subject to communicate pain and horror. This concept resonates particularly with the experience of the contemporary traumatised subject, who experiences a profound physical and psychological wound that occurs initially during the moment/act of trauma or violence.

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[185] Bataille, *Death and Sensuality: A Study of Eroticism and the Taboo*, (New York: Walker and Company, 1962), 57-58.
[186] Ibid., 57.
[187] Ibid, 57, and Bataille, "Eye," in *Visions of Excess*, notes to page 19.

This wound lingers as a festering, perpetually excreting entity, which finds a variety of outlets in the form of orifices in the subjects body which form symbolic/visualised manifestations of the hidden wound of the initial trauma and enable the communication of revulsion and horror. For example, a spontaneous and raw reaction to trauma and horror may take the form of a panicked, uncontrollable outburst of excrement or vomit, in which the orifice of the mouth or anus becomes the literal site of the traumatic wound (or the unwanted phsycialisation of the psychological event); or, a literal scream and/or vocalization of obscenity and frenzied non-linguistic utterances in which the mouth, in its over-extended and fraught state itself becomes a symbolic wound through which something pertaining to the horror of traumatic experience is communicated.[188] The wound can also take the form of self inflicted cuts, or mutilation, through which the subject's own blood is let in a desperate attempt to purge the obscenity felt inside. This kind of wound relates strongly to the strike-through in the term ~~scream~~: the self-inflicted strike on the subject in the horrified and revolted aftermath of trauma creates a wound that reveals something so horrifying and obscene that it cannot be communicated in any other way by the subject.

The foundation for the explosive release of obscenity through the wound or self-inflicted strike on the subject, as developed in the writings of Nietzsche and Bataille is the myth of the laceration of the god Dionysus.[189] In this myth, the child Dionysus is brutally torn into pieces by the Titans, who lacerate his heart and then proceed to cook him and eat him. However, the Goddess Athena preserves Dionysus's heart, and he is later resurrected.[190] The laceration and dismemberment of Dionysus, and his subsequent re-birth not only influences the important process of destruction through traumatic destruction and wounding and its potential for renewal that is explored in the work of Nietzsche and Bataille, but it is also germane to the obscene ~~scream~~ and implies the possibility of overcoming the violence of the traumatic event, through a process of the subjects complete breakdown and re-creation.

Nietzsche draws upon this myth in his advocacy of an explosive process of breaking apart and complete annihilation, akin to the tearing apart of Dionysus. This is described by Nietzsche as 'Dionysiac *suffering'* and involves 'the breaking-asunder of the

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[188] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 67, 80.
[189] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 53 and Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* 30.
[190] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 52 and Fritz Graf, Sarah Iles Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife: Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 80-84.

individual and its becoming one with the primal being itself.'[191] Nietzsche views the suffering that occurs during this process of rupture and destruction, as a life-affirming experience for the subject that is accompanied by states of ecstasy, exuberance and renewed creativity.[192] The 'primal being' Nietzsche refers to is a primal, instinctive flux: a primordial unity at the core of existence characterised by contradiction, suffering and pain. Entering this state offers an opportunity for renewal and re-creation.[193] For Nietzsche, Dionysian laceration and suffering is opposed to other forms of suffering, such as that found in Christianity and the conventional psychology of his day.[194] Dionysian suffering does not involve any resolution or false justification of pain and suffering that may be offered by Christianity or psychology, instead, the release of obscenity and savagery that occurs as a result of the subject's destruction is, paradoxically, an embrace of pain and a joyful affirmation of life in the face of death. Akin to Dionysus' own rebirth, joyful re-creation is the outcome of Dionysian suffering.[195] For the contemporary traumatized subject, a similar loss and destruction of subjectivity and a sensation of tearing apart is experienced, however, rather then becoming 'one with the primal being', primal, wild, raw and obscene reactions against the experience of horror and trauma are released. The importance of Nietzsche's conception of Dionysian suffering for the obscene ~~scream~~ is that it outlines a process of the subject's self-affirmation and renewal through the wounding. Moreover, Nietzsche's insight into suffering indicates that the subject has a choice of how to suffer from the traumatic experience: either the subject self-destructs in violent obscenity and wallows in this horror, or on the other hand, the subject can adopt a Dionysian approach to suffering in which horror is sublimated into an affirmative embrace of obscenity through the communication of pain in the explosive phenomenon of the obscene ~~scream~~.

The explosive and destructive nature of the Dionysian laceration and suffering as formulated by Nietzsche underpins the use of the recurring allegorical image of the explosive and obscene wound in Batailles' fictional and philosophical works such as *Mouth, The Solar Anus, The Pineal Eye, The Jesuve, The Story of the Eye, and Sacrifices*. In these works, Bataille's obscene wound appears as the literary visualisation of the obscene ~~scream~~ in the form of lacerated, dismembered and exploding bodies; the rupturing and swelling of orifices such as mouths and genitals; the explosive excretion of faeces, urine, blood,

[191]Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 44, 52.
[192] Ibid., 81.
[193] Ibid., 152.
[194] Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 16.
[195] Deleuze,13, 172; Sokel, 507.

excrement, semen and other bodily fluids; and the complete annihilation of the body though catastrophic trauma.[196] For Bataille, the uninhibited exposure and outburst of filth and pain that occurs during the subject's wounding necessitates the release of what he designates the 'scream of lacerated existence.'[197] The mouth is often depicted as a wound and obscene orifice through which Bataille's scream erupts, 'as if explosive impulses were to spurt directly out of the body through the mouth, in the form of screams.'[198] Bataille's description of 'explosive impulses' that spurt from the mouth corresponds to the obscene ~~scream~~, as it depicts a pscyho-somatic impulse that causes a bursting of obscenity through the orifice of the mouth.[199] Bataille's 'scream of lacerated existence' is a significant point of identification with my concept of the obscene ~~scream~~ because it provides a vivid literary image of this condition and its symptoms in the form of an obscene and horrific rupture through which obscene horror is expressed. For Bataille, the 'scream of lacerated existence' occurs when filth and an excess of obscenity is violently ejected from the self at the very moment when the subject is on the verge of the total catastrophic rupture constituted by violent death.[200] For Bataille, this rupture provides an insight into what he describes as the abyss of death: an infinite void of obscenity, horror, and extreme violence.[201] Although this seemingly differs from the obscene ~~scream,~~ in which what is revealed in the subjects rupture is not death itself, but the horror and obscenity of an experience of trauma and its aftermath, the profoundly devastating and repugnant nature of what is revealed is akin to the admixture of obscenity, horror and extreme violence that characterises Bataille's abyss.

The communication of profound pain, horror and obscenity through the obscene wound and its accompanying ~~scream~~ is most strikingly articulated by Bataille in his discussion of photographs of a form of Chinese torture known as 'the hundred pieces.' In these photographs a young man's body is literally exploding, subjected to violent obscenity in the form of a horrific dismemberment.[202] Bataille describes the defilement of the young man's body as follows: 'his chest flayed, arms and legs cut off at the elbows and at the knees.'[203] This scene of torture has a striking parallel to the laceration of Dionysus: it represents an actual embodiment of the obscene horror of bodily dissolution at the core of this myth. This reference cannot be overlooked in the part it plays the significance of these

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196 Bataille, *Death and Sensuality*, 9, and *Visions of Excess*, 9, 73-77. See also Bataille, *The Story of the Eye*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel, (New York: Urizen Books, 1977).
197 Bataille, "Sacrifices," in *Visions of Excess*, 134
198 Bataille, "Mouth," in *Visions of Excess*, 59; Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 67, 80.
199 Bataille, "Mouth,"
200 Georges Bataille, "The Solar Anus," in *Visions of Excess*, 9.
201 Hollier, 131.
202 Bataille, *Tears of Eros,* 205-207.
203 Bataille, *Inner Experience,* 119.

images for Bataille: the photographs of this tortured Chinese man are a visualisation of his own 'scream of lacerated existence.' Bataille explains that one of the most important and influential elements of this image on his philosophy is the way in which the victim 'communicated his pain to me or perhaps the excessive nature of his pain, and it was precisely that which I was seeking…'[204] The literal wounding of the torture victim's body is identified as the conduit for the profound communication of an extremity of pain and horror theorised in Bataille's writing, particularly through the concept of the 'scream of lacerated existence.'[205]

The horrific wound that these photographs depict is emblematic of Bataille's notion of eroticism.[206] For Bataille, the catastrophically wounded or exploding subject, at the moment before death both communicates and experiences an erotic intoxication; not only horror and obscenity of death is communicated, but also a sensation of ecstasy caused by a paradoxical affirmation of life through an acceptance of pain and suffering.[207] Bataille notes that he was moved by the victim's communication of pain to a state beyond horror and pain: he is moved to the point of ecstasy. This aspect of Bataille's thought provides an insight into another important aspect of the obscene ~~scream~~: its relationship to the death of the subject. The obscene ~~scream~~ responds to a traumatic event or event(s) in which the subject felt terrifyingly close to annihilation and death, and believed that they were going to die. The obscene excretions from the literal or symbolic wound of the traumatised subject that occurs during these terrifying moments are confirmation of the living tissue that suffered and is still suffering, and as such asserts the materiality of the subject in resistance to the negation and suffocation of life which occurs during the event of trauma. Moreover, during the eruption of the obscene ~~scream~~ itself, the subject fears that they will literally explode and be destroyed through the overwhelming intensity and power of this outburst. In my own experience of this phenomenon, due to this feeling of being on the edge of death, I felt an element of extreme terror, combined with a surreal displacement from reality and a feeling of a heightened state of arousal and intensity of being. Although painful, the complex mixture of these feelings has similarities to the heightened state of anguish and ecstasy discussed by Bataille. Whilst this is not a state of pleasurable ecstasy, it is an overwhelming and unspeakable feeling redolent of the state of ecstasy Bataille describes.

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[204] Ibid., 120.
[205] Benjamin Noys, *Georges Bataille: A Critical Introduction*, (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 51.
[206] Bataille, *Tears of Eros*, 205-7.
[207] Bataille, "Sacrifices," in *Visions of Excess*, 132.

The obscene ~~scream~~ as sickness and madness in Bataille and Nietzsche

The outpouring of obscenity and horror inherent to the obscene ~~scream~~ does not only occur through a traumatic symbolic or literal wound. For the traumatised subject, this outburst also occurs through profound psychological suffering and physical and mental illness, including madness and/or the fear of madness. The physical and psychological sickness that may occur as a result of severe trauma represents the involuntary form of the obscene ~~scream~~ due to the subject's loss of control over their physical and psychological boundaries. Unlike Rousseau, who attempts to hide his sickness from others and maintain his illness through medical devices, the sickness of the obscene ~~scream~~ cannot be contained or veiled. This leads to the subsequent explosive emission of obscenity in the form of bodily excretions of waste and toxins such as vomit, shit, pus or mad, insane and offensive verbal utterances, expressions, or performative actions which are of an obscene nature. The subject experiences self-revulsion over their loss of control as well as horror at the devastating nature of what this state reveals about the obscenity of violence experienced. Nietzsche and Bataille endure sickness, psychological illness and in the case of Nietzsche eventual madness. Their respective conditions are a constant source of suffering and deliver a real, lived experience of physical and psychological obscenity that is germane to the obscene ~~scream~~ in its involuntary form. However, Nietzsche and Bataille embrace their own experiences of suffering physical and psychological obscenity from a Dionysian perspective, viewing the destruction and obscenity that occurs within the condition of infirmity as equivalent to the intoxicated and destructive nature of the Dionysian spirit and hence a stimulus for creativity.[208] As such, Nietzsche and Bataille consciously harness and engage the loss of control and obscenity that occurs within physical and mental suffering for philosophical and creative gains. Nietzsche argues that the destructive nature of illness and madness must be harnessed for the survival of the subject and their subsequent renewal.[209] He claims that extreme suffering causes a profound breakdown of the subject which necessitates symbolic rebirth. This rebirth is essential for the creativity of the thinker and the artist. [210]

Bataille holds a similar attitude. For Bataille, destructive and obscene forms of suffering push the subject to what he describes as the 'extreme limit' of pain, and it is only

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[208] Kaufmann, 130.
[209] Huenemann, 72.
[210] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, preface to the second edition, ed. Bernard Williams, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3-4, and Kaufmann, 130.

at this point of crisis when the subject is on the verge of irrevocable annihilation that, paradoxically, the individual's subjectivity and autonomy is confirmed.[211] The positive relationship to suffering ascribed to in the work of Nietzsche and Bataille is significant to the notion of the obscene ~~scream,~~ because it provides the important insight that a choice of response to physical and psychological illness, and its subsequent obscene outburst(s) is possible. The subject can either succumb to sickness or madness, and be annihilated and overwhelmed by the unrestrained excretion of obscenity, or, as Nietzsche and Bataille demonstrate, the subject can seek to overcome this suffering through exploiting the obscene and violent power of their condition as a compulsion for creative expression. For the contemporary traumatised subject this may lead to an overcoming of the obscenity and horror that lurks within the painful mass of traumatic memory, as well as a form of empowerment that occurs as a result of taking control of, and using their condition for some form of intellectual or creative advantage. It has been my own personal experience that at times I have been able to sublimate obscene and unspeakable suffering and the overwhelming force of the obscene ~~scream~~ into the creation of artworks.

For Nietzsche, the overcoming of suffering and pain is an imperative he lives by. The urgency with which he endeavours to transform the experience of suffering into something of value is revealed a letter written after a traumatic series of events that culminated in the breakdown in his relationships with the Russian-born writer Lou Andreas-Salomé and German philosopher Paul Reé. Nietzsche states, 'If I do not discover the alchemists' trick of turning even this—filth into *gold*, I am lost.'[212] The resolution to 'turn filth into gold' characterises Nietzsche's overall approach to his own suffering. Nietzsche suffered from severe chronic illness and mental instability, and was accustomed to enduring almost unbearable levels of pain as well as obscenity in the form of the humiliation and degradation of physical and mental breakdown and a loss of control. He describes recurring episodes in which he is completely incapacitated, spending 'about thirty-six hours in bed, in real torment' every two or three weeks.[213] Nietzsche experienced a range of serious ailments including severe migraine headaches, recurring blindness, symptoms of bi-polar disorder or mania, severe digestive problems, and episodes of madness that culminated in his final breakdown in 1889.[214] It is particularly significant to

[211] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 39.
[212] Nietzsche, letter to Overbeck quoted in Kaufmann, 59.
[213] Huenemann, 67.
[214] Although diagnosed with syphilis upon his early madness and death, this diagnosis has been now discredited, with his symptoms being interpreted as a tumour growing on the surface of his brain, which

the experience of the obscene ~~scream~~, that Nietzsche not only describes symptoms germane to the involuntary physical and psychologically destabilised form of this condition, but also labels them using terms of such as 'filth', 'torment' and an 'excess of suffering' which indicate he regards his experiences of suffering as a form of obscenity.

Nietzsche's experiences of mental instability and madness are channelled into the personae of Dionysus and Zarathustra. These ciphers are obscene figures in the context of his contemporary cultural and societal context. Dionysus and Zarathustra are used by Nietzsche to repudiate what he views as the moral and cultural degeneracy of late nineteenth-century German culture and Christianity. They are intended to shock the Christian reader of Nietzsche's time with their obscenity and immorality in order to expose Christian moral values as a dangerous force of decay.[215] For Nietzsche Dionysus, the Ancient Greek God who inspired intoxication, destruction and madness and obscenity in wild, ritualistic states of being represented an antithesis to the stultifying attitude to life inherent in Christianity.[216] Within Nietzsche's Christian context, Dionysus is fundamentally obscene because in Nietzsche's writing he represents the antichrist.[217] The cipher of Dionysus pervades Nietzsche's thought, for example in *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche states 'I obey my Dionysian nature… I am the first immoralist, and in this sense I am essentially the annihilator.'[218] The immorality and annihilation represented by Dionysus is adopted by Nietzsche as a cipher in his life and pervades his thought fostering his use of obscenity. Zarathustra, on the other hand is a wondering philosopher – a godlike and spiritual figure who embraces states of madness and speaks in allegory and parable.[219] The embrace of extreme states of madness and obscenity and advocacy of suffering represented by Zarathustra/Nietzsche in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* is a persistent trope throughout Nietzsche's wirings. Zarathustra is obscene in the context of Christian morality because he represents, like Dionysus an overcoming of morality itself in the form of allegorical madness and immorality. [220]

Nietzsche relates that it is through the horror of existence experienced during extreme suffering that profound insights into his own existence are communicated to

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would have also caused the severe migraine headaches and eye problems he experienced throughout his life. Huenemann, 65. Kaufman, 67.

[215] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 9 and Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, (Portland, Maine: Smith & Sale, 1911), 51.

[216] Sokel, 502-503, 507.

[217] Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 60.

[218] Ibid., 51.

[219] Heunemann, 74-76.

[220] Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 52.

him.[221] Through states of physical and mental incapacitation, Nietzsche experiences what he describes as the revelation of his inner, 'entombed' self.[222] Nietzsche describes the way in which

> That nethermost self, which was, as it were, entombed, and which had grown dumb…slowly awakened; …at last it spoke again. Never have I rejoiced more over my condition than during the sickest and most painful moments of my life...this "return to myself"…in itself was the highest kind of recovery.[223]

The re-awakening and emergence of the hidden depths of the psyche, and the reclamation of its previously silenced inner voice is redolent of the repressed, shameful, hidden and obscene self that is finally awakened, exposed and voiced through the obscene ~~scream~~ in its condition of sickness and madness. This state can communicate the repressed horror and memory of traumatic experience to the subject, and provide an unwarranted insight into one's own psychology. Nietzsche's discussion of a similar process suggests that this repressed and silenced inner self, can only be exposed and voiced through the obscene process of destruction that occurs in physical and/or mental breakdown, hence the ultimately positive value of this condition. For Nietzsche, this awakening is not, however, a traumatic awakening involving the devastating knowledge and full comprehension of experiences of horror, which is often the case for the contemporary traumatised subject. Rather, it is an awakening that ultimately facilitates the subject's clarity and freedom of thinking.[224]

Drawing from his own experiences, Nietzsche argues that destructive suffering facilitates philosophical and artistic creation and what he describes as human 'greatness.'[225] For example, he attests that 'In the midst of the agony of a headache which lasted three days, accompanied by violent nausea, I was possessed of most singular dialectical clearness…'[226] This account of intellectual clarity emerging from a state of sickness and deterioration is typical of Nietzsche's life which was dominated by a repetitive cycle of periods of extreme sickness followed by prolific episodes of creation.[227] For Nietzsche, the renewed clarity that accompanied his episodes of illness and incapacitation is the very

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221 Ibid., 10.
222 Ibid., 23.
223 Ibid., 24.
224 Ibid., 23.
225 Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: prelude to a philosophy of the future*, trans. and ed. Marion Faber, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 117.
226 Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 10.
227 Huenemann, 65, Kaufmann, 129-133.

compulsion for his philosophical work, and his self-proclaimed greatness. According to Nietzsche, intellectual and creative greatness can only be achieved after the experience of extreme suffering and psychological torment, and he provides examples such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Ludwig van Beethoven and William Shakespeare to support his claims. At the same time, Nietzsche views all human beings as essentially obscene and filthy in nature, but credits individuals with the ability to overcome their human condition, and re-create themselves through embracing suffering, and, if necessary, engaging in brutal self-destruction.[228]Although many commentators discuss the concept of destruction as the force of creation and self-renewal in Nietzsche's work, it is has been largely overlooked that the particular type of suffering and destruction he identifies as necessary for creation is an obscene, monstrous and violent force he identifies as '*great* suffering' and 'great destruction.'[229] It is this particular overwhelming and monstrous type of suffering and destruction that is relevant to the obscene ~~scream~~ and its symptoms, and is also later advocated by Bataille.

Nietzsche elucidates the horrific force of this kind of suffering and destruction, and its necessity for the subject, in the following excerpt:

> The tension of the soul in unhappiness, which cultivates its strength; its horror at the sight of the great destruction; its inventiveness and bravery in bearing, enduring interpreting, exploiting unhappiness, and whatever in the way of depth, mystery, mask, spirit, cleverness, greatness the heart has been granted- has it not been granted them through suffering..? [the human being must be] formed, broken, forged, torn, burned, annealed, purified- that which necessarily has to *suffer* and *should* suffer? [230]

'Great destruction' and suffering is described as an overwhelming and torturous force; nevertheless, the subject only acquires greatness and strength through enduring horror, unhappiness, and the violent and obscene defilement enacted on the body and psyche in the form of being literally and symbolically 'broken', 'torn' and 'burned'. This process is parallel to the long-term destruction of the psyche that occurs on a number of psychological and physiological levels as a result of severe forms of trauma, and which necessitates and compels the obscene ~~scream~~ and its destructive and explosive outburst(s).

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[228] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* 117 and Kauffman 130.
[229] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 117, emphasis in the original.
[230] Ibid., 117.

It is through the complete dissolution of the subject that occurs when enduring the horror and destruction of traumatic events and the intense psychological and physical suffering that ensues, that the subject enters into a state of being equivalent to the 'great destruction' and 'great suffering' that Nietzsche describes. Nietzsche argues that it is only through enduring and overcoming intensely painful experiences, which cause a critical dissolution or breakdown of subjectivity that the subject is purified and can be symbolically re-born in a stronger, healthier, and greater form.[231] Without advocating the traumatic experience for the contemporary subject, what can be drawn from Nietzsche's advocacy of great destruction and suffering, is that the subject can only survive and overcome the effects of trauma by at first enduring and then as soon as possible finding a way to move through their experience of suffering psychological and physical obscenity. In a manner similar to that encouraged by Nietzsche, this involves confronting and expressing suffering, rather then repressing its symptoms. Consequently, the subject may eventually overcome the effects of trauma and in doing so become stronger and positively changed; a process that can feel like a painful, yet rewarding rebirth.

Bataille, following Nietzsche, also attests to the value of an extreme form of suffering and destruction, crying out to his reader that there is 'not enough! Not enough anguish, suffering!'[232] For Bataille, the level of suffering, anguish and destruction must always be increased until its absolute limit-death. Bataille conceives of an infinite form of suffering redolent of the great suffering and great destruction advanced by Nietzsche. However, it is described in even more violent and catastrophic terms, and is more noticeably obscene in nature. While Nietzsche saw great suffering and destruction as a cause of human greatness, Bataille views it as a gift, albeit a disastrous and obscene gift:

> I imagine the gift of an infinite suffering, of blood and open bodies, in the image of an ejaculation cutting down the one it jolts and abandoning him to an exhaustion charged with nausea. I imagine the earth projected in space, like a woman screaming, her head in flames.[233]

The imagery used here of graphic violence and trauma, 'blood and open bodies,' a fatal, violent ejaculation and an apocalyptic vision of a woman screaming with her head in flames is parallel to the intensity and obscenity of suffering that is experienced by the

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[231] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 6-7.
[232] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 59.
[233] Bataille, "The practice of Joy before death," in *Visions of Excess*, 239.

traumatised subject in sickness and mad form. It is an externalised and symbolic literary manifestation of the explosive symptoms of the obscene ~~scream~~ and its inherent unbearable and obscene pain. From Bataille's perspective, this 'infinite suffering' is brought about by the trauma of war, torture and/or human sacrifice: events which either lead to the subject's actual death, or states of physical and psychological suffering and pain very close to death.[234]

The notion that this kind of horrific suffering and trauma can be a gift seems contrdictory. However, Bataille argues that the very proximity to death that occurs during extreme states of suffering is a gift, because at this moment the subject reaches what he describes as 'extreme limit:' a state of being he believed could bring about an form of ecstasy and freedom.[235] Bataille embraces his own states of heightened suffering, anguish, abjection, and pain, and seeks to propagate these states within himself in order to lead to what he describes as the 'extreme limit' of existence, which for Bataille is the very moment approaching death or the point at which pain can no longer be endured.[236] This is also a moment of overwhelming and bursting obscenity akin to the feeling of the traumatised subject at the moment when their body and/or mind breaks the boundaries of physical control or rational thought.[237] For Bataille this moment offers a valuable, yet intangible and impossible state of being that he defines in *Inner Experience* as an inner autonomous state of 'ecstasy, of rapture, at least of mediated emotion.'[238] Bataille notes that although this state of being is similar to mystical experience, it is not an experience inspired or induced by religious belief or ritual, but is brought upon by extreme physical and/or psychological suffering and despair.[239] It is through this state of being and through embracing the state of destruction and dissolution that the subject gains a sensation similar to freedom within her or himself.[240] Suffering to the extreme limit not only allows the individual to achieve a state of ecstasy, but it allows them to experience an elusive state of freedom in which they are not subjected or submissive to any restraints.[241] Bataille's argument that a kind of freedom is experienced during an extremity of suffering offers a significant insight into the obscene ~~scream~~, and one that is commensurate to my own experience. In the moment of the obscene outburst of physical excretion or psychological loss of control there is a

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234 Ibid, 239.
235 Ibid, 239.
236 Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 59 and Amy Hollywood, "'Beautiful as a Wasp': Angela of Foligno and Georges Bataille," *The Harvard Theological Review*, 92 (1999): 221.
237 Bataille, "The practice of Joy before death," in *Visions of Excess*,, 236
238 Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 3.
239 Ibid.
240 Ibid., 38-39.
241 Bataille, *Death and Sensuality*, 167, Noys, 60, 66, 81.

sensation of something horrific being freed or released from the previously silenced and repressed traumatised psyche. Whilst this does not mean that the traumatised subject is necessarily freer in this moment, Bataille suggests that a form of empowerment may be achieved if the subject can learn to embrace and control her or his outbursts of suffering. He writes, 'To experience the slow pleasure, the decisive rigor of firm despair, to be hard, and guarantor of death rather than victim.'[242] Whilst it may seem difficult for the traumatised subject to find any pleasure and control in the outburst of sickness and madness which feel uncontrollable, involuntarily, and terrifying, Bataille demonstrates that an element of control, pleasure and consciousness in suffering can be achieved and must be strived for. For Bataille, this is the critical point at which ecstatic insight and an overcoming of pain is achieved; for the traumatised subject it is an important way in which she or he can seek to reverse the disempowering status of victimisation and powerlessness that occurs as a result of severe trauma.

Unlike Nietzsche, who experiences enhanced creativity and clarity as a kind of release after and through episodes of severe illness and/or psychological suffering, Bataille experiences a more sustained form of suffering that compels him to write and permeates the content and the intensity of many of his works. Bataille experienced on-going psychological anguish, episodes of depression and fear of madness, symptoms that can be attributed to a number of traumatic experiences in his childhood and adolescence.[243] He suffered from severe obsessive tendencies and emotional hyper-reactivity and at one stage undertook psychoanalysis as treatment.[244] He states that his on-going psychological torment necessitates his anguished and obscene writing.[245]

The obscene violence personally endured, and the profound psychological suffering it caused him is most explicitly disclosed in his short story *Dream*, where he reveals he suffered sexual abuse at the hands of his syphilitic father. In this story, this abuse is identified as the fundamental violent and obscene experience: 'I see him spread his obscene hands over me with a bitter and blind smile. This memory seems to be the most terrible of all.'[246] The terror and horror and obscenity that Bataille recalls is parallel to the horror and obscenity experienced by the traumatised subject. For Bataille, this originary and 'most terrible' memory of all is repeatedly expressed and exposed in more oblique ways throughout his oeuvre. This process is germane to the obscene ~~scream~~, particularly in the

[242] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, 38.
[243] Bataille, "The Dream" in *Visions of Excess*, Noys, 12.
[244] Noys, 6.
[245] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, xxxii- xxxiii.
[246] Bataille, "The Dream" in *Visions of Excess*, 4.

way in which Bataille converts memories pertaining to this and other traumatic episodes in his life into literary outbursts of graphic obscenity and violence. As such, aside from *Dream,* the link between the use of obscenity in Bataille's work and his lived experience of real horror, obscenity and violence is complex and indirect. In 'Coincidences,' the epilogue to *The Story of the Eye,* Bataille attests to an indirect and problematic relationship that is germane to the obscene ~~scream~~ and resonates with my own experiences of this condition. Bataille states that it was only after the completion of *The Story of the Eye* that some of the personal experiences and events that propelled the text and its obscenity become evident:

> I never linger over such memories, for they have long since lost any emotional significance for me. There was no way I could restore them to life except by transforming them unrecognizable, at first glance, to my eyes, solely because during that deformation they acquired the lewdest of meanings.[247]

Bataille describes the unconscious transformation of actual memory into something new, different and obscene, which nevertheless, retrospectively and indirectly recalls the event itself. The involuntary and indirect revelation of a real experience of horror and obscenity through the artistic expression of obscenity that Bataille identifies here is akin to the involuntary outpouring of filth that occurs within the obscene ~~scream~~, and strongly corresponds to my own experience. In particular it corresponds to this condition as a state in which the repression and deformation of the exact or intact memory of traumatic events induces the outburst of the obscene feelings associated with these events instead. For example, a number of artworks I have created for this project involve outpourings of obscenity and horror, but it was only after I had made them that I realised they related to a real experience that I had not consciously attempted to evoke during the time of making.

Bataille writes in a nearly perpetual state of anguish, torment and obscene degradation, claiming for example he is a 'pig in the eyes of Christians.'[248] At the same time, however, he sought to maintain a state of suffering and obscenity, and also to openly accept, engage and express it. He exploits and perpetuates his propensity for anguish and suffering in order to reach his own, desired, 'extreme limit.'[249] In Bataille's striving for his 'extreme limit,' inner anguish, suffering and obscenity literary bursts out in the form of

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[247] Bataille, *The Story of the Eye*, 44, Bataille later confesses to the therapeutic use of The Story of the Eye in an interview with Madeleine Chapsal see Jean Dragon "The Work of Alterity: Bataille and Lacan" in *Diacritics*, 26 (1996): 33, Rachel Potter, 7-8.
[248] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, xxxi, Hollywood, 221.
[249] Bataille, *Inner Experience*, xxxii-xxxiii.

scatological, anguished and at times seemingly schizophrenic or fragmentary texts. This creative and literary outburst corresponds to the obscene ~~scream~~ in that they are a literary manifestation of obscenity and horror and share the unstructured and formless nature of this release. Within the condition of the obscene ~~scream~~ the building of an inner sensation of obscenity and horror becomes an unbearably painful tension which ultimately fuels mad or mentally unstable outbursts. Bataille's anguished writing, demonstrates that this kind of outburst can alternatively find release in formless and seemingly obscene forms of literature and art.

Bataille notes that it is not only the experience of something bursting inside, or a building intensity that compels him to write, but it is also a paranoid fear of madness and insanity. He states, 'I write, I suppose, out of fear of going mad. I suffer from a fiery, painful yearning, which persists, like desire unslaked, within me. My tension is, in a sense, like that of a mad impulse to laughter…'[250] The fear of madness and its accompanying tension is also symptomatic with the obscene ~~scream~~, in which the explosive feeling of inner obscenity and horror, can seem so surreal and destabilising that the subject genuinely fears that they are going mad. One of the compulsions behind the obscene ~~scream~~ is the necessity to purge and express one's inner obscenity and horror in order to avoid madness. There is a terrifying feeling that if the sensation of inner obscenity and horror lingers inside, one's whole being will be devoured by insanity. Fundamental to the condition of the obscene ~~scream~~ is the frequently-arriving need and desire to explode, to self-immolate in order to get all the filth inside out. There is a feeling, also shared by Bataille that unless one gets all the shit out, one will go mad, numb or loose one's subjectivity in complete oblivion.

An exploration of certain aspects of obscenity in the work of Nietzsche and Bataille has elucidated the obscene ~~scream~~ as a powerful and volatile condition, in which an inner revulsion and horror, caused by a traumatic event or series of events bursts out from the subject's entire being in the form of ~~screaming~~ obscenity. Nietzsche and Bataille's development of the tropes of the catastrophic wound and great, destructive sickness and suffering in relation to obscenity and violence are to a large extent commensurate with the condition of the obscene ~~scream~~ and its symptoms. Nietzsche and Bataille demonstrate that raw and uninhibited eruption of revulsion and horror has a value and meaning far beyond being merely a reactive outburst to abuse, or a cathartic outpouring of emotion. On the contrary, these outbursts, if embraced and harnessed by the subject have the potential to assist the subject in overcoming the symptoms of trauma in a number of ways. The

[250] Georges Bataille and Annette Michelson, "On Nietzsche: The Will to Chance," *October*, 36 (1986): 46.

obscene ~~scream~~ can provide the subject with an opportunity to experience a sensation of resistance and autonomy. It can also facilitate the profound and meaningful communication of inner obscenity, pain and horror.

Chapter 4: The ~~Scream~~ of Suffering

The ~~scream~~ of suffering is the fraught communication of extreme physical and psychological pain. It is characterised by a struggle to overcome the forces of abuse and violence that silence the communication of suffering. This state is distinguished from other forms of distress discussed in this thesis because it specifically refers to an externalised embodiment of pain in performative action. Pain is conveyed to others through a range of disquieting behaviours including self-harm. This condition can be elucidated through an examination of the performance of suffering in the theatrical and literary works of August Strindberg and Antonin Artaud. Extreme suffering is a dominant trope in the work of each writer, and the intensity and compulsion with which it is evoked corresponds to the ~~scream~~ of suffering. This is particularly evident in two attributes that are common to both Strindberg and Artaud: the performance of madness as an expression of suffering, and the self-perpetuation of suffering through self-punishment. Strindberg's suffering is staged primarily through the use of masks and alter egos. In his theatrical works, madness and self-punishment are projected onto characters that are often veiled ciphers for Strindberg himself. Artaud, on the other hand, attempts a more direct presentation of himself as a suffering individual in crisis. He does this through engaging in two interrelated processes: the performative embodiment of the schizophrenic illness he suffers from, and the theatrical incarnation of the savage and self-destructive Dionysian frenzy discussed in chapter three. For Strindberg, the locus of suffering is primarily the domestic sphere, which is portrayed as a hell on earth that drives the individual to madness and self-punishment. This is in contrast to Artaud, for whom suffering is predominantly focused within the body of the performer, and thus in a more decontextualised space. These contrasts provide the insight that the ~~scream~~ of suffering can be embodied both through masks and overt theatricalisation, and also through an unmediated outburst enacted through the performer's body. At the same time, a significant overlap and tension between these two strategies is revealed.

Madness, schizophrenia and the expression of suffering

Postwar German philosopher and critic Theodor W. Adorno argues in *Aesthetic Theory* that extreme suffering precludes direct communication in language, realism or rational form, and that any attempt to conceptualise suffering ultimately fails. For Adorno, suffering can only be fully addressed through irrationality, madness, ugliness and

formlessness.[251] The trauma, horror and repression of Fascist Germany, for example, has its logical expression in forms of modernist art which reject conventional structure, language, beauty and logic.[252] According to Adorno, suffering is communicated by artworks that are mimetic of the catastrophic experience of suffering and horror itself.[253] *Mutatis mutandis* a similar formula applies to the ~~scream~~ of suffering in which ineffable suffering finds expression in actions, gestures and vocalizations that are seemingly mad or irrational. In my performance-video works, for example, a desire to communicate suffering leads to the embodiment of extreme behaviours that are redolent of madness. These are theatricalised versions of inner symptoms and states of mind that can only be safely enacted in the context of a performative art practice. A corresponding phenomenon is evident in the theatrical works of Strindberg and Artaud in which suffering compels the performance of madness. For each dramatist, madness is the primary outlet for his pain. Moreover as their respective experiences of suffering are caused primarily by the condition of schizophrenia, the madness staged in their work is a mimetic exposure of their symptoms.

Although Adorno assists in illuminating the causal link between suffering and madness as it occurs in Artaud and Strindberg, their theatrical work shares distinctive qualities that are not encompassed by his theory. For example, both dramatists engage in perpetuating their own suffering through staging self-punishment. The duality of an outward expression of suffering that at the same time inflicts self–punishment in their work is characteristic of the convulsive state inherent to the ~~scream~~ of suffering—hence the particular significance of Strindberg and Artaud to the elucidation of this condition. Furthermore, it is important to emphasise the significance of the performance of schizophrenia that is staged in the works of both Strindberg and Artaud as distinct from any generalised or non-specific madness or irrationality. Although the ~~scream~~ is distinct from schizophrenia, there are two major points of correspondence with this disorder that are evident in the works and writings of Strindberg and Artaud. Firstly, the experience of a deep and agonising rupture that fragments the self, and secondly, a conflicting sensation of numbness or loss of feeling. The paradoxical oscillation between the states of extreme pain and numbness is particularly germane to the condition of the ~~scream~~ in which the

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[251]Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* ed. Gretel Adorno & Rolf Tiedemann, trans. & ed. Robert Hullot-Kentor, (London: Continuum, 2004), 24-25, Margherita Tonon, "Adorno's response to Kierkegaard: The Ethical Validity of the Aesthetic," in *The Marriage of Aesthetics and Ethics*, ed. Stéphane Symons, (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 194-195.
[252] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, 25.
[253] Adorno, 24-25; Tonon, 'Adorno's response to Kierkegaard,' 194-195.

experience of agonising suffering is countered by forces that numb, silence and repress pain.

French philosopher Gilles Deleuze's reading of Artaud in *The Logic of Sense* focuses on the distorting effects of schizophrenia on the sufferer's experience of their body and mind. Schizophrenia causes an irrevocable and traumatic rupture of self: a painful dissolution of the subject's experience of selfhood.[254] In *The Logic of Sense,* Deleuze expands upon psychological understandings of this rupture, through his identification and examination of what he terms a deep *Spaltung* (rupture, deep fissure, or crack) of extreme suffering that is exemplified in the schizophrenic experience of Artaud.[255] The deep *Spaltung* posited by Deleuze is analogous to the quality of suffering experienced by the severely traumatised individual, for whom traumatic events have had a catastrophic effect on their subjectivity leading them to feel ruptured and torn asunder. According to Deleuze, the schizophrenic experiences their entire being as ruptured to the extent that 'there is no longer any surface…the entire body is no longer anything but depth.'[256] Consequently, they experience their body as divided and permeable, as a 'body sieve, fragmented body, and dissociated body.'[257] Suffering experienced in this specific way—as a profound rupture of the self which precludes any sense of surface or wholeness—parallels the condition of the ~~scream~~ in which the subject experiences herself or himself both as an uncontained wound and as a disintegrated entity.

Deleuze also demonstrates the way in which the deep *Spaltung* of schizophrenia transforms Artaud's use of language and speech in his poetry and other writings. Deleuze explains that from the horrific depths of his *Spaltung*, Artaud introduced a new form of embodied language, in the form of glossolalia and other non-linguistic speech. According to Deleuze, this is the 'language of schizophrenia,' which is 'carved into the depths of bodies.'[258] Deleuze argues that Artaud's use of glossolalia, and other non-linguistic utterances that he terms 'howls-breaths *(cris-soufflés),*' 'breath-words *(mots-soufflés)*' and 'howl-words *(mots-cris)*' are the physical manifestation of the catastrophic rupture or *Spaltung* of

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[254] Sue E. Estroff, "Self, Identity, and Subjective Experiences of Schizophrenia: In Search of the Subject," *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 15, no. 2: (1989) (2): 189, 193, doi: 10.1093/schbul/15.2.189. Louis Arnorsson Sass, "Splitting: Self and World in Schizophrenia: Three Classic Approaches," *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology*, 8, no 4: (2001)251-270. Doi: 10.1353/ppp.2002.0026, Robert A. Berezin, *Psychotherapy of Character: The Play of Consciousness in the Theater of the Brain*, (Arizona: Wheatmark, 2013)
[255] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale and ed. Constantin V. Boundas, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 91.
[256] Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 86-87.
[257] Ibid.
[258] Ibid., 84.

Artaud's schizophrenic condition.[259] This phenomenon parallels the way in which the ~~scream~~ of suffering is not only a primal expression that emerges from a traumatic rupture, but is also a physical embodiment and symptom of that rupture. I have explored the ~~scream~~ as symptom within the vocal component of my performance-video works through frenetic, distorted forms of speech and song as well as cries, grunts and other non-linguistic vocalisations that emerge as both expression and symptom of inner pain.

Although the *Spaltung* of schizophrenia is primarily evident in Artaud's schizophrenic appropriation of speech, it can also manifest in other ways; conveyed not by the physical disintegration of language, but by the form and content of the writing. For example, Deleuze has observed a similar *Spaltung* or crack of suffering permeating the text of English novelist Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* and American novelist Scott F. Fitzgerald's *The Crack Up,* a phenomenon he attributes to their chronic intoxication and manic depression.[260] Following Deleuze's line of thinking, the concept of *Spaltung* can also be extended to the plays of Strindberg, in which avatars and alter egos are deployed in order to perform the deep *Spaltung* of Strindberg's own schizophrenic condition. Strindberg creates characters whose speech and actions embody the traumatic suffering and horror Strindberg himself experienced. This is a more detached version of the process described by Deleuze whereby Strindberg, in direct contrast to Artaud, veils and obfuscates the physicality of his own suffering.

Alongside *Spaltung,* both Strindberg and Artaud attest to a feeling of profound numbness and detachment. Strindberg articulates this paradox as follows; 'I am as hard as ice, and yet so full of feeling that I am almost sentimental.'[261] He also refers to a sense of surreality, and the loss of awareness of what is real; 'It seems to me as if I'm walking in my sleep; as if my life and writing have got all jumbled up…. I no longer feel as if I am walking the earth but floating weightless in an atmosphere not of air but darkness.'[262] For Artaud on the other hand, intense pain constitutes his experience of himself; statements such as "I am there, there means pain' recur throughout his writings.[263] Yet at the same time, Artaud constantly makes reference to an internal paralysis and void – he expresses a 'fundamental

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[259] Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 84, 87-88, 93, 193. Piotrek Świątkowski, *Deleuze and Desire: Analysis of The Logic of Sense*, (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015), 171

[260] Deleuze,*The Logic of Sense*, 154-161.

[261] Strindberg quoted in Louis A. Sass, *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 75.

[262] Michael Robinson introduction to *Miss Julie and other plays*, by August Strindberg, trans. and with an introduction and notes by Michael Robinson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), vii.

[263] Lorenzo Chiesa, "Lacan with Artaud: j'ouïs-sens, jouis-sens, jouis-sans," in *Lacan: The Silent Partner*s, ed., Slavoj Žižek, (London: Verso, 2006), 348.

despair' at the 'sensation of my flesh… abandoned by all possible human feeling.'[264] This paradoxical state can be elucidated with reference to the US based clinical psychologist Louis A. Sass's study of schizophrenia in *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought.* [265] Sass demonstrates that one of the most significant and defining features of Schizophrenia is 'a heightening rather than dimming of conscious awareness, and an alienation not from reason but from the emotions, instincts and body.'[266] This alienation from emotions, instincts and the body constitutes a sensation of extreme detachment, numbness, loss of self, and the feeling that one is living dead.[267] Sass also notes that the schizophrenic condition is characterised by dualities and contradictions, especially between extreme detachment and excessive sensitivity. In particular, Sass refers to a symptom known as *schizothymia,* which is described as 'the propensity to shift between hypersensitivity and insensitivity or coldness in one's reactions to the world.'[268] This inner discord corresponds to the contradictory condition of the ~~scream~~: for example in my own experience, overwhelming pain and anguish has alternated with sensations of shock, numbness and a sense of detachment from outside reality. Moreover, Sass argues that the Dionysiac expression of ecstatic highs and horrifying lows that characterises much of Artaud's oeuvre, for example, does not only represent an excess of passion, but can also be understood as a struggle to overcome what Artaud describes as a 'disembodiment of reality' and an 'inability to feel.'[269] Consequently, the savage impulses Artaud invokes in the theatre 'may be better understood not as expressions of a naturally overflowing vitality but as defences against the devitalization and derealisation that pervaded his being.'[270] This point corresponds with the traumatised individual's struggle to overcome the repression of suffering, as well as the numbness and dissociation that occurs as a result of significant trauma. In the case of Strindberg, in contrast to Artaud, the sensation of a loss of feeling is not overcome through the outburst of emotion on stage; it is instead exhibited in the ghost-like and dream-like state of many of his characters.

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[264] Antonin Artaud, "The Umbilicus of Limbo," in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, ed. and with an introduction Susan Sontag, trans. Helen Weaver, notes by Susan Sontag and Don Eric Levine, (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1976), 72; Antonin Artaud "Fragments of a Diary from Hell," in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings* ,42, 93.
[265] Louis A. Sass, *Madness and Modernism,* 5.
[266] Ibid., 4,10.
[267] Ibid., 238-239, 310.
[268] Ibid., 77-80.
[269] Ibid., 238-239.
[270] Ibid., 238.

The performance of schizophrenia as an expression of suffering in Strindberg and Artaud

Despite the pervasive effect of schizophrenia on the oeuvres of Strindberg and Artaud, it is important to note that a cleavage exists between the condition of schizophrenia itself and the theatrical works created.[271] Although these works feature the performance of schizophrenia, they are not demonstrations of schizophrenic illness nor are they therapy. Instead, Strindberg and Artaud consciously aim to develop new forms of theatrical expression in order to facilitate the communication of the ineffable pain of their conditions. For both dramatists, albeit in contrasting ways, the compulsion to express the specific qualities of their suffering necessitates a break with the existing conventions of theatrical performance that were prevalent during their respective milieus. Strindberg's innovation in this area was influential on Artaud, who looked to Strindberg's plays as exemplars of the kind of non-conventional theatre he wanted to create and staged a production of Strindberg's *A Dream Play* in 1928.[272]

Between 1895-1897, Strindberg suffered a series of major psychological breakdowns and schizophrenic episodes that are commonly referred to as his 'Inferno crisis.' [273] In his autobiographical novel *The Inferno* (1897), Strindberg depicts the psychological and physical torments he endured during his Inferno crisis, including paranoia, anxiety, persecution mania, psychotic attacks, dissociation and hallucinations of vampires, 'unseen powers' and electrical currents. His symptoms were exacerbated by a number of other problems including depression, extreme poverty, alcoholism and his recent marital breakdown. [274] While Artaud's diagnosis of schizophrenia is well established, there is some debate within Strindberg scholarship as to whether or not Strindberg can be conclusively diagnosed as schizophrenic. Nevertheless there is a general consensus that many of his symptoms are at least characteristic of schizophrenia or schizoaffective illness. [275] Overall, Strindberg's psychological experiences are largely analogous to the Schizophrenic condition and its devastating effects.[276]

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[271] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 287.

[272] Antonin Artaud, 'Strindberg's Dream Play', *On the Alfred Jarry Theater* in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings,*163-164.

[273] Michael Robinson ed. *The Cambridge Companion to August Strindberg,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) xxv-xxvi, Strindberg's account of his illness forms the basis of his autobiographical novel *The Inferno*. See August Strindberg, *The Inferno* trans. Claude Field, (London: William Rider and Son, 1912).

[274]Strindberg, *The Inferno* 89, 97-98, 138,161.

[275] Karl Jaspers in *Strindberg and Van Gogh*,1922 conclusively diagnoses Strindberg as a schizophrenic however others such as Gunnar Brandell *Strindberg in Inferno* (1974) diagnose Strindberg with only periodic, or borderline schizophrenia; Louis Sass argues that Strindberg had a 'schizoid personality' which eventuated in Schizophrenia itself and Sven Hedenberg contests the schizophrenic diagnosis, Sven Hedenberg, "August

Strindberg's Inferno crisis precipitated a stylistic change from Naturalism to Expressionism in his plays, as well as a significant departure from the traditional rational and linear narrative that was predominant in late nineteenth century Swedish drama.[277] Most pertinent to this enquiry is Strindberg's development of a new, proto-modernist style of theatre termed dream play, in which the illogical associations, hallucinatory effects and the non-linear course of the dream state provide the underlying structure.[278] Strindberg's dream plays not only invoke the surreality, and dream-like symptoms of his schizophrenic condition, but also facilitate the performance of schizophrenia and its accompanying suffering within the allegorical and phantasmagorical context of the dream.[279]

In Strindberg's dream plays such as *To Damascus* (1898), *A Dream Play (1901)*, and *The Ghost Sonata (1907)* the experiences of his Inferno crisis are mirrored and transposed onto his theatrical characters in an extended process of self-dramatisation.[280] However, the staging of Strindberg's schizophrenic condition is most exemplary of the ~~scream~~ of suffering in *The Ghost Sonata* in which the horror of Strindberg's suffering, as well as its detached, dream-like quality is palpable. In this play, Strindberg's madness is performed within the domestic setting of a contemporary bourgeois Swedish house. The characters such as The Girl, The Student, The Colonel and The Cook broadly represent the stock characters of everyday domestic life.[281] In this regard, *The Ghost Sonata* combines the Naturalistic setting of domestic strife in Strindberg's pre-Inferno plays such as *Miss Julie* and *The Father* with the dream play style.[282] However, in *The Ghost Sonata*, the domestic setting becomes the site where a deep of rupture of suffering and horror, redolent of Strindberg's schizophrenic condition is exposed. The ostensibly respectable domestic sphere is unveiled as 'this madhouse, this prison, this charnel-house,' and is analogous to

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Strindberg. Opinions of German Psychiatrists," *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 34, no. 136: (1959), 325. doi:10.1111/j.1600-0447.1959.tb07815.x, Ulf Olsson, "Going Crazy: Strindberg and the Construction of Literary Madness," in *August Strindberg and the Other: New Critical Approaches*, Poul Houe, Sven Hakon Rossel, Göran Stockenström, eds, (Amsterdam: Rodophi, 2002), 117-119. Louis A. Sass, *Madness and Modernism,* 78.

[276] Strindberg, *The Inferno*, 132, 139.

[277]Eszter Szalczer, "A modernist dramaturgy," in *The Cambridge Companion to August Strindberg*, ed. Robinson, 83; Linda Haverty Rugg, "The art and science of self-dramatization," in *The Cambridge Companion to August Strindberg*, ed. Robinson 14; August Strindberg, author's note to *A Dream Play,* in *Twelve Plays*, trans. and with an introduction by Elizabeth Sprigge, (London: Constable, 1963), 520.

[278]Eszter Szalczer, "A modernist dramaturgy,"520.

[279] Szalczer, "A modernist dramaturgy," 83; Rugg, "The art and science of self-dramatization," 14-16.

[280]Christopher Innes, *Avant Garde Theatre 1892-1992*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 29; Per Stounbjerg, "Between realism and modernism: the modernity of Strindberg's autobiographical writings," in *August Strindberg*, ed. Robinson, 47.

[281] August Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata,* in *Twelve Plays*, 59; Michael Robinson introduction to *Miss Julie and other plays*, viii.

[282] Elizabeth Sprigge, introduction to *The Ghost Sonata*, in Strindberg, *Twelve Plays*, 593; Robinson, introduction to *Miss Julie and other plays*, xxxiii.

the hellish torments that Strindberg portrays in *The Inferno*.[283] Over the course of the play, this horrifying reality is slowly revealed to the central protagonist, The Student, Arkenholtz, whose illusions about love, beauty and domestic happiness are finally destroyed.

All characters in *The Ghost Sonata* display elements of the schizophrenic condition and act and behave in ways that are implicitly, or explicitly mad and irrational. Moreover, most of the characters act like automatons or ghosts existing in a dream-like state. They are described as looking 'like ghosts,' and attend a 'ghost supper' at a key point in the play—hence the title of the work.[284] Strindberg's emphasis on the supernatural in *The Ghost Sonata* is influenced by the visions of evil spirits and portents of death he experienced during his Inferno crisis, as well as his study of the occult and the mystical theology of Emmanuel Swedenborg.[285] The terrifying forces such as vampires, furies and demons that torment Strindberg during the worst episodes of his schizophrenia are actualised on stage where they are personified by characters such as Hummel and The Cook.[286] Hummel and The Cook are demonic figures who unleash forces of suffering and horror, causing other characters to succumb to madness, sickness and death. During the course of the play both Hummel and The Cook are exposed and denounced as vampires in human form. The significance of these vampiric figures to Strindberg's ~~scream~~ of suffering is that they represent a deep rupture of horror at the core of the domestic setting.

Hummel and The Cook enact a particular kind of psychical violence that Strindberg terms soul murder. Soul murder describes a process in which one individual uses psychological abuse to reduce another individual to madness, sickness, paralysis and suicide or death.[287] During his Inferno crisis, Strindberg believed he was the victim of attempted soul murder by his enemies- a fear that was a major component of his persecution mania.[288] Soul murder is an important theme in many of Strindberg's works including his pre-Inferno Naturalistic plays such as *The Father* and *Miss Julie,* but its portrayal in *The Ghost Sonata* has a stronger relationship with the ~~scream~~ of suffering and its symptoms.[289] For example, in *The Ghost Sonata,* the character of The Mummy is the victim of soul murder

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[283] Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata*, 631.
[284] Ibid., 612.
[285] Strindberg,*The Inferno*, 13-14,157-158; Sprigge, introduction to *The Ghost Sonata* 593; Rugg, "The art and science of self-dramatization,"13.
[286] Strindberg,*The Inferno*, 92, 97.
[287] August Strindberg, "Soul Murder: Apropos *Rosmersholm*," Politiken, May 30, 1887, in *Strindberg on drama and theatre: a source book*, Selected, translated, and edited by Egil Törnqvist and Birgitta Steene, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 54-55; Robinson, Michael Robinson, introduction to *Miss Julie and other plays,* vii.
[288] C. A. Falgas-Ravry, "The Riddle of Inferno: Strindberg, Madness, and the Problem of Interpretation," *The Modern Language Review*, 106, no. 4 (2011): 999; Strindberg, *The Inferno*, 56-57, 80, 154.
[289] Michael Robinson, introduction to *Miss Julie and other plays*, vii.

enacted on her by Hummel. It is revealed to the audience that prior to the events staged in the play, Hummel seduced and manipulated The Mummy (while she was married to another man) only to abandon her after making her fall pregnant. As a result of the suffering and shame she endured, The Mummy descends into a form of madness that is both absurd and tragic. The Mummy allows her appearance to degenerate to the extent that she looks like an Egyptian 'mummy.' Finally she assumes the characteristics of a parrot and locks herself in a cupboard for forty years.[290] The Mummy cannot speak in a human voice, but instead babbles and whistles like a parrot.[291] The Mummy's overt and highly theatricalised demonstration of madness is germane to the ~~scream~~ of suffering because it is presented as the only way she has been able to communicate her suffering and grief, as well as to enact repentance for what she describes as her sinful infidelity.[292]

At the same time, however, The Mummy's madness is also revealed to be a source of insight and truth. At a crucial point in *The Ghost Sonata*, The Mummy suddenly speaks in a normal, human voice and unmasks Hummel, revealing him to be a murderer, a usurer and 'a thief of human souls.'[293] It is a characteristic of Strindberg's dream plays that the most overtly mad characters have the ability to reveal truth in moments of lucidity. In this regard, Strindberg stages another element of his own experiences of madness and suffering. During his Inferno crisis, Strindberg believed that his condition would lead him to revelations of truth in the manner of a *voyant*—a kind of seer and poet that was popular in French literary circles in the late nineteenth century. Like The Mummy, the *voyant* has the ability to see past external appearances, in order to uncover the reality lying beneath.[294] The way in which Strindberg posits madness as a potentially insightful, revelatory condition offers a new perspective on the condition of the ~~scream~~ of suffering by demonstrating that the performance of madness may facilitate the revelation of truth, and the un-masking of the source(s) of horror and suffering.

In contrast to The Mummy, the character of The Girl exhibits a very different kind of madness that exemplifies the loss of feeling that Strindberg also experienced as a result of his schizophrenic condition. The Girl exists in a dreamlike, melancholy state and suffers from an undisclosed, invisible and ultimately fatal illness. She attributes her sufferings to the exhaustion of domestic labour and the actions of the vampire Cook, who she describes

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[290] Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata*, 612-613.
[291] Ibid., 613.
[292] Ibid., 615, 621.
[293] Ibid., 621-623.
[294] Ann Charlotte Gavel Adams, "Strindberg and Paris 1894-98: Barbarian, Initiate and Self," in *August Strindberg and the Other: New Critical Approaches,* eds. Poul Houe, Sven Hakon Rossel, Göran Stockenström, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 98; Strindberg,

as 'the one who devours me…. It's as if she sucked with her eyes.'[295] The Cook is portrayed as a parasitic and fearsome entity that sucks out all the nourishment from The Girl's food and also drains her psychological vitality and health.[296] As The Girl's condition deteriorates, suffering, horror and disease are exposed as her inner reality. The Student, for example, who was enchanted by The Girl's beauty at the beginning of the play, realises with horror that her beauty was only a mask for the pain and terminal sickness beneath the surface.[297] At the moment of her death, The Girl does not express any emotion or pain, instead she orders the servant to bring a Japanese-style 'death screen' which is arranged in front of her, obscuring the audience's view of her death.[298] Finally, she just 'droops,' emitting only 'faint moaning,' and dies slowly on stage.[299] The significance of the suppressed suffering and melancholia represented by The Girl to this enquiry is that it also communicates a deep rupture of sickness and anguish, but in an internalised, suppressed form that is in direct opposition to the externalised madness of the Mummy.[300] The Girl represents the ~~scream~~ of suffering as it occurs literally underneath the skin—embodied in a subterranean form of sickness and horror which is muted and ultimately obscured from view.

This is in contradistinction to the performances of Artaud in which the viewer is confronted with the presentation of the body in an externalised crisis of suffering on stage. In order to facilitate this kind of expression, Artaud develops a new concept of theatrical performance termed the theatre of cruelty. Artaud's theatre of cruelty is significant to this enquiry, because it is a methodology that enables the catastrophic rupture of Artaud's schizophrenic condition to be staged. Moreover, the theatre of cruelty aims to harnesses this kind of suffering as the fundamental force of theatrical expression. Unlike Strindberg, whose most extreme schizophrenic episodes were concentrated around the time of his Inferno crisis, Artaud's schizophrenia was acute throughout most of his life.[301] Artaud's symptoms included physical attacks of rage, hallucinations, delusions, severe self-detachment and alienation, chronic delirium, religious fanaticism, anxiety, paranoia, persecution mania, graphomania and compulsively uttering gibberish, which he was able to utilise in his poetry, writing and performance.[302] In conjunction with his schizophrenia

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[295] Ibid., 626-628.
[296] Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata*, 626.
[297] Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata*, 631.
[298] Ibid., 632.
[299] Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata*, 631-632.
[300] Strindberg, *The Ghost Sonata*, 631.
[301] Clayton Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams: Works from the Final Period* by Antonin Artaud, ed. and trans. Clayton Eshleman with Bernard Bador, (Boston: Exact Change, 1995), 1-37.
[302] Sylvère Lotringer, *Mad Like Artaud*, trans. Joanna Spinks, (Minneapolis: Univocal, 2015), 35, 40; Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 24.

Artaud also suffered chronic migraines, gastrointestinal complaints, meningitis and hereditary syphilis, which all led to an addiction to opiates.[303] In 1937 Artaud's condition degenerated significantly and he spent a period of eight years and eight months in insane asylums. During this time he was subjected to poor living conditions, maltreatment, severe malnourishment, straightjacketing, and electroshock therapy.[304] Artaud's experience of an almost perpetual state of agony is articulated across his oeuvre in his literary works, letters and drawings. However, in contrast to Strindberg who attempted the theatrical performance of his madness a number of times, Artaud's efforts are primarily theoretical and are predominantly developed within his writings on the theatre of cruelty. For Artaud, the actual theatrical staging of madness is limited to a series of three performance lectures in 1933, 1937 and 1947, and a radio play *To Have Done With the Judgement of God (1947).* These performances intend to realise the aims of the theatre of cruelty.[305]

In the *Theatre and its Double*, Artaud sets out the main tenets of the theatre of cruelty.[306] Overall, the theatre of cruelty entails a decisive rejection of many Western traditional theatrical conventions, for example what Artaud regards as an over-dependence on text and language, and a preoccupation with Western philosophical and psychological concerns.[307] In this chapter, however, the focus will be only on those elements that pertain to the ~~scream~~ of suffering and reveal the performance of madness as an integral part of Artaud's project. The theatre of cruelty, described by Artaud as a 'theatre of blood,' was not intended to literally be a theatre of blood, violence and cruelty.[308] Rather, the terms blood and cruelty are to be understood symbolically.[309] For Artaud, the theatre of cruelty does not present torture or carnage on stage, it is instead created in 'the image of this carnage…' in order to unleash, through destruction, the 'dark powers' and 'forces' that Artaud views as the essence of life.[310] Within Artaud's theoretical framework, these forces are equivalent to the plague; hence, for Artaud, the theatre of cruelty must invoke the plague. As Artaud states: 'first of all we must recognize that the theatre like the plague, is a

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303 Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 1-5; Lotringer, *Mad Like Artaud,* 33; Helga Finter, "Antonin Artaud and the Impossible Theatre: the Legacy of the Theatre of Cruelty," *TDR (1988-)* 41 (Winter 1997): 18.
304 Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 19, 21, 25-26; Lotringer, *Mad like Artaud*,18.
305 Edward Sheer, "Introduction: on Antonin Artuad. A Beginner's guide to cruelty," in *Antonin Artaud: a critical reader*, ed. Edward Sheer, (London: Routledge, 2004), 4.
306 Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, , trans. Mary Caroline Richards, (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 36.
307 Ibid.
308 Antonin Artaud letter to Paule Thévenin, 24 February 1948, in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, 585.
309 Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 31-32; Antonin Artaud letter to J.P., Paris, 13 September 1932, in *The Theatre and its Double,* 101.
310 Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 3.

delirium and is communicative.'[311] Artaud's concept of the plague is highly significant to this study because he defines the plague as analogous to madness—and even more specifically to a kinds of madness like his schizophrenia.[312] For the purposes of this investigation, the plague can be understood as a metaphor for the profound rupture and fragmentation caused by Artaud's schizophrenic condition. Accordingly, the performance of madness in Artaud's theatre of cruelty is realised through the embodiment of the plague on stage.

Artaud describes the plague as a 'streaming aberration of the mind' that causes frenzy and hallucination, as well as horrific violence and obscenity.[313] In the following excerpt, Artaud demonstrates how the plague causes madness, unleashing apocalyptic conditions:

> Then the houses open and the delirious victims, their minds crowded with hideous visions, spread howling through the streets. The disease that ferments in their viscera and circulates throughout their entire organism discharges itself in tremendous cerebral explosions ….The last of the living are in a frenzy: the obedient and virtuous son kills his father; the chaste man performs sodomy upon his neighbors. The lecher becomes pure.[314]

This passage reveals some of the correspondences between Artaud's concept of the plague and his schizophrenic illness. Artaud's description of the plague as a disease that ravages both the body and mind - what he terms the 'entire organism' - is consonant with his own experience of overwhelming physical and mental suffering.[315] Similarly, the endemic lechery, disintegration of sexual taboos and sexual violence that Artaud views as symptomatic of the plague are paralleled in his own frenetic, and at times obsessive efflux of sexual and excremental obscenities in his writing. Furthermore, the raging violence associated with the plague corresponds to Artaud's inner tumult and rage, which he describes in similarly apocalyptic terms 'as the devastating force of all the fires…'[316]

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311 Ibid., 27
312 Allen S. Weiss, "Mouths of Disquietude: Valere Novarina between the Theatre of Cruelty and Ecrits Bruts," *TDR (1988-)* 37 (Summer, 1993), 82; David Whitton, *Stage Directors in Modern France*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 112.
313 Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 19.
314 Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 23-24.
315 Ataud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 17-18
316 Antonin Artaud, letter to Andre Breton 30 July 1937 quoted in Sylvère Lotringer, "The Art of the Crack-up," *100 Years of Cruelty: Essays on Artaud*, ed. Edward Sheer, (Sydney: Power Publications and Artspace,

Artaud's incessant, burning anger is counterpart to the fiery and catastrophic scenes he associates with the plague.

According to Artaud, the plague also unleashes the destructive and evil energies of the Ancient of Dionysian rituals of the Mysteries of Eleusis. One of the tasks of the theatre of cruelty is to recover and release these Ancient energies.[317] Drawing strongly from Nietzsche's depiction of the savage forces of Dionysius in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Artaud advances an equivalent state of violent suffering and laceration as necessary to the theatre of cruelty.[318] However, Artaud's invocation of Dionysian laceration is distinct from Nietzsche's conception, because for Artaud this state does not stimulate renewal, re-creation, or a state of heightened creativity. Neither does it lead to the transgression, ecstasy and transcendence that Bataille attributed to this state. Instead, for Artaud, Dionysian laceration is a constant condition of unbearable suffering and destruction.[319] Artaud explains that the theatre of cruelty should 'manifest and unforgettably root within us the idea of a perpetual conflict, a spasm in which life is continually lacerated…'[320] As such, the performers' presence on stage must embody the pain and terror of this laceration and transmit this sensation to the audience in order to inspire an equivalent paroxysm.[321]

Unlike Nietzsche, who seeks renewal and rebirth through the process of Dionysian laceration and destruction, for Artaud the suffering of the lacerated body is affirmed for its own sake. As Artaud states: 'Suffer in order to affirm yourself,/establish your own body all alone, without thinking of taking anything away from/that of anyone else/above all not through *jouissance*.'[322] For Artaud, the suffering he experiences does not affirm life itself, nor does it lead to any form of sublimation, creative renewal or *jouissance.* In fact, he dismisses the very notion of *jouissance* as naiveté.[323] Instead, through the staging and abreaction of his suffering, Artaud can realize the full sensorial horror of his suffering and assert himself as a fully sensate, suffering being. By affirming his body as a suffering body, Artaud directly counters the loss of feeling and numbness caused by his schizophrenic condition.

2000),177-178, see also Artaud's discussion of the painting *Lot and his daughters*, for a description of the apocalyptic scenes in this painting as a model for the theatre of cruelty in *The Theatre and its Double* 33-37.

[317] Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 30

[318] Martin Esslin, *Antonin Artaud: The Man and His Work*, (London: John Calder, 1999), 80; Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 31-31, 92-93.

[319] Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 24-26, 97.

[320] Ibid., 92-93.

[321] Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 24-26, 97.

[322] Chiesa, "Lacan with Artaud: j'ouïs-sens, jouis-sens, jouis-sans," 351.

[323] Umberto Artioli, "Production of reality or hunger for the impossible," in *Antonin Artaud: a critical reader*, ed. Edward Sheer, (London: Routledge, 2004),144.

For Artaud, the perpetual laceration generated by the plague is favoured as an example of authentic existence and fully embodied presence. Through the theatre of cruelty, Artaud aimed for a recuperation of what he terms a metaphysical sensation constituted by full presence, authenticity, identity, embodiment and essence.[324] For Artaud, this metaphysical sensation can only be accessed through the embodied experience of the perpetual laceration and crisis signified by the plague. As such, Artaud's theatre of cruelty provides a methodology through which both the performer and audience might acquire the full metaphysical sensation that Artaud desires and lacks. The audience was to be shocked into sharing this embodied feeling through the manifestation of the plague on stage. Consequently, the effects of the plague should be directly transferrable to the audience, arousing corresponding feelings of fear, delirium and intoxication. As a result the audience will be awakened to what Artuad describes as the dark horrors of real being—a painful, yet fully conscious awareness of selfhood as suffering.[325]

During a performance soirée titled 'Tête-à-tête par Antonin Artaud,' held at the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier in Paris in January 1947, Artaud performed a number of his poems including *The Return of Artaud the Mômo* (1947).[326] Artaud's performance of *The Return of Artaud the Mômo* epitomises the theatrical manifestation of the plague. It is also exemplary of the ~~scream~~ of suffering because of the way in which Artaud uses text, voice and body in order to unleash madness and embody a state of constant laceration. Of particular import is the fact that *The Return of Artaud the Mômo* was the first work Artaud presented after his long incarceration in asylums, and thus particularly corresponds to the condition of the ~~scream~~ of suffering as an expression of agony that has been silenced and repressed. In *The Return of Artaud the Mômo* Artaud ironically assumes the alter ego of Artaud the Mômo or madman—thus consciously inhabiting the role of madness that he is publically accused of. From Artaud's point of view, it is due to the false medical and public perception of his madness that he has been unfairly ostracised and incarcerated for nearly

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[324] Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 44-46, 99; Jacques Derrida*, Writing and Difference*, trans. and with an introduction and additional notes Alan Bass, (London: Routledge, 2005), 243-244, Laura Cull, *Theatres of Immanence: Deleuze and the Ethics of Performance*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 79.

[325] Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 17-18, 25-26, 30 -31; Weiss, "Mouths of Disquietude: Valere Novarina between the Theatre of Cruelty and Ecrits Bruts," 80-94; David Whitton, *Stage Directors in Modern France*,112.

[326] The translation of Mômo into English is very close too, but not exactly 'madman' as Eshleman explains: ""Mômo" is Marseilles slang for 'simpleton or village idiot…One must also take into consideration this word's relation to the Greek god of mockery and raillery, Momus." notes to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams,* 336*;* Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 32. On this occasion he also performed *Centre Mere et Patron Minet*, *La Culture Indienne* and *L'Insulte a l'Inconditionne*; *Le Retour d'Artaud Le Mômo* was later published as the first part of a larger poem *Artaud le Mômo* (1947).

nine years in asylums.[327] Mômo is an alterego who exhibits the delirium and frenzy of the plague, and engages in a histrionic and hysterical diatribe against God, his parents, 'respectable' society, the medical profession, and the electroshock therapy he endured at the Rodez asylum.[328] Moreover, the Mômo allows Artaud to voice and expose the suffering he experienced during his treatment, which was disavowed by his doctors.[329] In the role of Artaud the Mômo, Artaud affirms the genuine suffering and authenticity of his condition, by acting out his own symptoms.[330] For example, Artaud communicates through nonsensical forms of speech such as glossolalia and other non-linguistic primal vocalizations.[331] According to those in the audience, Artaud's performance of this poem alternated between declamatory speech and 'trembling, screaming, humming, singing, chanting.'[332]

The following excerpt from *The Return of Artaud the Mômo* illustrates the way in which Artaud assumes the persona of Artaud the Mômo in order to stage the horror and suffering inherent to his schizophrenic condition:

> But what then in the end, you, the madman ?
>
> Me ?
> This tongue between four gums,
> this meat between two knees,
> this piece of hole
> for madmen.[333]

Artaud addresses himself accusingly as 'the madman,' and replies as Artaud the madman, a process that underscores the entire poem. Artaud's self-accusations of madness, followed by the brutal disclosure of his madness, is a rhetorical form of self-interrogation which exposes the pain and horror of his condition, whilst at the same time asserting his identity

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[327] Antonin Artaud, *Le Retour d'Artaud Le Mômo* in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, ed. Eshleman, 93-109; Antonin Artaud, letter to Jacques Latrémolière March 25 1943, in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings,* 423.
[328] Artaud, *Le Retour d'Artaud Le Mômo*, 93-109; Allen S. Weiss, *Perverse Desire and the Ambiguous Icon*, (Albany: State University of New York, 1994), 45.
[329] For example, Artaud's repeated pleas for electroshock therapy to stop were not heeded, see Antonin Artaud letter to Jacques Latrémolière January 6 1945 in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, 437.
[330] Chiesa, "Lacan with Artaud: j'ouïs-sens, jouis-sens, jouis-sans," 341-342; Antonin Artaud, *Van Gogh, the man suicided by society*, in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings,* 485, 487, 492-3.
[331] Artaud, *Artaud Le Mômo*, Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 88-89, 193.
[332] Susan Sontag and Don Eric Levine, notes to *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, 654.
[333] Artaud, *Le Retour d'Artaud Le Mômo*, 95-97.

as the madman. The horror revealed in this excerpt is Artaud's depiction of himself as an obscene rupture or hole equivalent to dismembered and lacerated genitalia: 'this meat between two knees, /this piece of hole for madmen.' This imagery of a dismembered body consisting of obscene orifices is a manifestation of the gruesome effects of the plague's laceration on the body. It is also an image of the obscene ravaging of his body that Artaud experiences as a result of his schizophrenic condition.[334] Artaud's self-identification as this particularly obscene, punctured and penetrated body is emphasised throughout the poem.

The self-perpetuation of suffering through self-punishment

For the traumatised individual, the communication of suffering involves self-punishment in conjunction with the performance of madness. The body is harmed and/or mutilated so that an extreme pain that has been internalised and repressed can be re-experienced and exposed through the external reality of physical suffering. The ~~scream~~ of suffering is therefore literally inscribed onto the body. A corresponding process occurs in the theatrical works of Strindberg and Artaud, for whom self-punishment serves to externalise endogenous suffering. Although neither Strindberg nor Artaud enact actual physical self-mutilation on stage, they do, albeit in contrasting ways, perform symbolic and psychological mutilation. Strindberg stages a sublimated form of self-punishment upon a variety of ciphers and alter egos; whereas in the case of Artaud, self-punishment is enacted directly on his own person. Within the emotional state of the ~~scream~~ of suffering, guilt is an additional trigger for actions of self-punishment and self-harm. Moreover, retributive rage at the perpetrator of the trauma is repressed and imposed on the self. As such, the ~~scream~~ of suffering has a strong correlation with the condition of the shameful ~~scream~~ in which self-inflicted rage is used to purge shame from within the self. However, the ~~scream~~ of suffering is distinct because self-punishment is not performed in order to purge shame, rather it is an attempt to communicate and prolong the condition of suffering itself. For Strindberg this is a process of penitence and repentance whereas for Artaud it is an extended performance of martyrdom.

Strindberg's staging of self-punishment shares some similarities with that of Rousseau or Augustine. However, what distinguishes Strindberg's guilt and self-punishment is that Strindberg does not express feelings of profound shame and self-disgust. Rather than exposing himself as inherently reprehensible, Strindberg expresses guilt over what he regards as his previous sins and wrongdoings but believes that suffering

[334] Antonin Artaud, *Artaud Le Mômo.*

and punishment are a necessary part of life, through which the individual must pass to achieve redemption and atonement.[335] Strindberg's views on guilt, self-punishment and redemption were crystallised through his study of the pseudo-mystic philosophy of Swedenborg. Strindberg was particularly influenced by Swedenborg's concept that hell is experienced during earthly life, and is a state that must be undergone in order to achieve redemption.[336] Swedenborg claims that disciplinary spirits, acting on behalf of a divine being, punish and torment individuals so that they can atone for their sins and consequently achieve spiritual salvation.[337] Following these ideas, Strindberg concludes that his hallucinatory visions and torments represent God's punishment, and that he must accept his suffering as penitence.[338] He likens himself to the biblical figures of Job and Jeremiah, believing that God has singled him out for a special trial as an 'example of a righteous man enduring unjust sufferings.'[339] Overall, the influence of Swedenborg precipitates a process of conversion for Strindberg, who abandons his previous atheism and converts to a personal, syncretic version of spirituality, which serves to ameliorate his experiences of psychological tumult.[340]

These ideas are dramatised in *To Damascus*, *Part I*, particularly through the characterisation of the central protagonist, The Stranger, who is an avatar for Strindberg himself.[341] The Stranger undergoes a painful journey of spiritual conversion that not only corresponds to Strindberg's own experiences during his Inferno crisis, but also reflects his spiritual beliefs. Self-punishment in *To Damascus* is affirmed for its value within Strindberg's spiritual framework, through the reference to a number of biblical and heroic figures such as Christ, Job, Jeremiah and Hercules.[342] The title, *To Damascus* refers to the New Testament figure Saul of Tarsus' journey to Damascus, during which he had a vision of

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335 Strindberg, *The Inferno*, 33, 175-80; Michael Meyer, introduction to *To Damascus* in *August Strindberg, The Plays*, vol. 2, trans. and with an introduction Michael Meyer, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975), 14-15; Stockenström, "Crisis and change: Strindberg the unconscious modernist," 82.

336 Rugg, "The art and science of self-dramatization,"13; Gören Stockenström, "Crisis and change: Strindberg the unconscious modernist," in *The Cambridge Companion to August Strindberg*, 82; Prideaux, *Strindberg: A Life*.

337 Göran Stockenström, "The World that Strindberg Found: Deciphering the Palimpsest of Nature," in *August Strindberg and the Other: New Critical Approaches*, 28; Stockenström, "Crisis and change: Strindberg the unconscious modernist," in *The Cambridge Companion to August Strindberg,* 82.

338 Strindberg, *The Inferno*, 175.

339 Ibid., 126; Stockenström, "Crisis and change: Strindberg the unconscious modernist," 82.

340 Stockenström, "Crisis and change: Strindberg the unconscious modernist," 89.

341 The focus of this argument is on *To Damascus Part 1*, written in 1898 directly after Strindberg's Inferno crisis. *To Damascus Part II* was written in1898, and *To Damascus Part III* 1901. Sue Prideaux, *Out of Inferno* in *Strindberg: A Life*, (Yale: Yale University Press, 2012) http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vm2t2.18 The three part structure echoes the tripartite structure of Dante's Divine Comedy: Part I representing *Inferno* Parts 2, *Purgatorio* and Part 3, *Paradiso*.

342 Harry Gilbert Carlson, *Strindberg and the Poetry of Myth*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 93-94; Eszter Szalczer, "A modernist dramaturgy," 98-99; Prideaux, *Out of Inferno*.

Christ and converted to Christianity.[343] This creates an allegorical backdrop according to which the suffering and punishment of the Stranger is celebrated as parallel to the necessity of suffering as a rite of passage within mythological and biblical narratives.[344] In *To Damascus*, Strindberg enacts an extended form of self-punishment and symbolic mutilation by subjecting The Stranger to a series of torments, humiliations and punishments that echo those endured during his Inferno crisis. Through the trials of The Stranger, Strindberg exposes his own guilt and seeks atonement. For example, he enacts a process of self-accusation through the denunciation of The Stranger as a writer of irresponsible books and plays, a madman who is pursued by 'unknown powers', and a man who deserted his wife and child. During his Inferno crisis Strindberg felt misunderstood and vilified for his writings, experienced significant remorse over his role in the failure of his marriage to Frida Uhl, and due to his hallucinatory experiences, was terrified of the real possibility of madness.[345]

Strindberg's theatrical self-punishment is most explicitly performed in the central scene in the play, titled *The asylum*. This scene functions as a courtroom trial scenario: The Stranger, who finds himself in what appears to be a lunatic asylum after an episode of delirium, is accused of madness and sin by a crowd of uncanny characters. Furthermore, a character named The Confessor curses him with a reading from Deuteronomy.[346] Overall, however, Strindberg's process of self-punishment is not straightforward. As Diane Filby Gillepsie observes, The Stranger 'vacillates between self-condemnation and self-justification.'[347] The Stranger's episodes of self-excoriation, in which he confesses to guilt and expresses his desire for suffering and further punishment, are tempered with statements in which he excuses his behavior, for example by claiming that he is cursed and has been unjustifiably punished since his childhood.[348]

It is important to note that in *To Damascus*, the minor characters who accuse and punish the Stranger are not individualistic characters in the traditional theatrical sense, but represent different aspects of The Stranger, and by extension Strindberg himself.[349] Moreover the punishments and sufferings endured by the other characters represent

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[343] Diane Filby Gillespie, "Strindberg's To Damascus: Archetypal Autobiography," *Modern Drama* 26 (Fall 1983): 299-300.
[344] Gillespie, "Strindberg's To Damascus: Archetypal Autobiography,"297-298; Carlson, *Strindberg and the Poetry of Myth*, 93-94.
[345] Strindberg, *The Inferno*, 8,10,12, 161, Sue Prideaux, *Out of Inferno*.
[346] August Strindberg, *To Damascus*, in *August Strindberg, The Plays*, vol. 2, trans. and with an introduction Michael Meyer, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975), 82- 85.
[347] Gillespie, "Strindberg's To Damascus: Archetypal Autobiography," 297.
[348] Strindberg, *To Damascus*, 57,101.
[349] Innes, *Avant Garde Theatre*, 29.

different facets of Strindberg's own suffering.[350] Eszter Szalczer has demonstrated that attributes of The Stranger are split amongst the more minor characters, a process that is evident on stage through the way in which The Stranger recognises aspects of himself reflected back from the other characters.[351] For example, characters such as The Beggar and The Madman torment The Stranger, but at the same time The Stranger is disturbed and aware of the uncanny resemblance they have to himself.[352] It is also pertinent to note that during his Inferno crisis, Strindberg identified himself as an outcast, a beggar and a madman.[353] Accordingly, Szalczer argues that *To Damascus* can be understood as a monodrama 'since the diverse characters seem to embody fragments of a single subjectivity: that of the dreamer, the author or the central character.'[354] Szalczer's point is important because it elucidates how Strindberg's presentation of an ensemble of seemingly diverse characters who accuse, punish and torment The Stranger is actually an extended form of self-punishment. This offers an important insight into the ~~scream~~ of suffering as a form of self-punishment that is enacted via multiple personae. For example, I undertake a corresponding process in my video-performance works by inhabiting a range of alteregos who represent fragmented aspects of my own psyche and enact various forms of self-punishment.

In Artaud's theatrical works and writings, the staging of self-punishment is not divided across a number of different characters, but is instead enacted primarily through Artaud's performance as a martyr. Artaud's martyrdom has a strong correspondence to Strindberg's presentation of himself as a martyr in *To Damascus*, however in the case of Artaud, the martyrdom he performs is violent, visceral and obscene. Like Strindberg, Artaud's self-identification as a martyr is influenced by religious and spiritual practices that he explores in an attempt to comprehend his extreme suffering. Artaud engages with Gnosticism, Buddhism, the spiritual practices of the Tarahumara Mexican tribe and also develops a fervent identification with Christ.[355] However, unlike Strindberg, whose Inferno crisis results in a conversion to a belief in a divine being, for Artaud, his most severe crisis, experienced during his electroshock treatment at Rodez leads to a furious rejection and

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350 Christopher Innes, "Strindberg's Radical Aesthetics," *Scandinavian Studies* 84 no.3 (2012): 366-367; Innes, *Avant Garde Theatre*, 30.
351 Prideaux, *Out of Inferno*; Szalczer, "A modernist dramaturgy," 98.
352 Eszter Szalczer, "Nature's Dream Play: Modes of Vision and August Strindberg's Re-Definition of the Theatre," in "Theatre and Visual Culture," special issue, *Theatre Journal* 53, no. 1 (2001): 45-46.
353 Strindberg, *The Inferno*,19.
354 Szalczer, "A modernist dramaturgy,"98
355 Susan Sontag introduction to *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, x1, x1v, x1vii; Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*,18.

denunciation of God, Christ and organised religion.[356] During this time Artaud develops what has been described by France-based literary theorist Adrian Morfee as 'a rapidly mutating, fantastical theoretical framework' to account for his suffering.[357] Artaud blames his suffering on a host of parasitic and destructive entities that penetrate his body and mind; demon spirits that cannibalize and possess him, corrupt society, his parents, language and its structures, the affects of electroshock and ultimately God.[358] Paradoxically, despite his eventual rejection of Christianity, Artaud strongly identifies with a Christ-like persona who undergoes ineffable suffering that is equivalent to Christ's Passion. In a number of poems and writings such as *Ci-Gît* and *Interjections* he describes himself as crucified and speaks of 'the crucifying of Artaud on Golgotha.'[359] Referring to his Electroshock treatment, Artaud describes the doctor who administered his treatment as 'Judas Iscariot himself in the olive grove.'[360] In *The Return of Artaud the Mômo,* Artaud claims to have died during his electroshock therapy. He announces that 'the old Artaud is buried' and 'assassinated in the other life' and that he has returned reincarnated as Artaud the Mômo.[361]

Artaud's anger at his suffering reaches its height after his release from the Rodez asylum; the writings, drawings and theatrical performances he created during this time represent an unleashing of his raging frenzy against the entities that had tortured him during his incarceration.[362] In his theatrical performances, Artaud takes on the role of a martyr whose raging frenzy precipitates his own Christ-like self-sacrifice and self-punishment. Artaud effectively stages his own Passion.[363] A new insight into the ~~scream~~ of suffering can be drawn from Artaud's appropriation of Christ's Passion and sacrifice. Artaud exemplifies the way in which the performance of self-punishment often incorporates a desire to present a spectacle of suffering with equivalent spiritual resonance, horror and power as that of a martyr on a sacrificial pyre. This is a form of self-immolation in which, in the words of Artaud, individuals are 'like victims burnt at the stake, signalling

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356 Antonin Artaud, letter to Gaston Ferdière, March 29 1943 in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, 427-430; Artaud, *Le Retour d'Artaud Le Mômo*; Weiss, *Perverse Desire and the Ambiguous Icon*, 45.
357 Adrian Morfee, *Antonin Artaud's Writing Bodies*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 71.
358 Antonin Artaud, *Aliénation et Magie Noire* in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 161-167; Morfee, *Antonin Artaud's Writing Bodies*, 71; Lotringer, *Mad Like Artaud,* 55.
359 Antonin Artaud, *Ci-Gît* in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 227; Artaud, *Interjections* in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams, 243;* Lotringer, *Mad Like Artaud*, 28.
360 Lotringer, *Mad Like Artaud*, 28.
361 Antonin Artaud, *Artaud Le Mômo*, in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*,105, 157; Eshleman, notes to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams,* 336.
362 Paule Thévenin, "The Search for a Lost World," in *The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud* by Jacques Derrida and Paule Thévenin trans. and with a preface by Mary Ann Caws (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1998), 41.
363 Artaud, *Artaud Le Mômo*, 243; Artaud, *Interjections*, in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, 263,266; Lotringer, *Mad Like Artaud*, 201; Susan Sontag introduction to *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings,*1iii.

through the flames.'[364] However, in contrast to the Passion of Christ, the passion of Artaud involves extreme obscenity, particularly of a sexual and excremental nature.

Artaud stages martyrdom and self-punishment in two major ways: firstly through engaging in self-vilification, and secondly though the violent projection of his voice. Artaud's self-vilification involves the punitive disclosure of obscene and humiliating physical details, in particular exposing his anogenital region as a site of revulsion, filth and impotence. Artaud's explosive outbursts of obscenity relate to the obscene ~~scream~~, but in the case of Artaud, obscenity is more clearly staged as a form of self-punishment that involves the severe castigation of his own body. This is particularly evident in *The Return of Artaud the Mômo.* Throughout this work Artaud refers viciously to his balls, his sperm, his 'cunt hole,' 'that bone/located between anus and sex,' and reveals that his adversaries 'suck on his clenched ass,/and that Artaud's ass is good/for pimps in Miserere.'[365] The following excerpt epitomises the obscene form of martyrdom that is staged in this work:

> raped, clipped, completely sucked off
> by all the insolent riff-raff
> of all the turd-buggered
> who had no other grub
> in order to live
> than to gobble
> Artaud
> mômo
> there, where one can fuck sooner
> than me
> and the other get hard higher
> than me[366]

Here, Artaud re-enacts what he believes to be the obscene penetration, cannibalisation and abuse he suffers at the hands of his enemies. What is particularly germane to the ~~scream~~ of suffering in this excerpt is that the rage he feels over his maltreatment emerges as a savage form of self-emasculation. Artaud reduces himself to a passive Mômo; a martyr figure who

[364] Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, 13.
[365]Artaud, *Le Retour d'Artaud Le Mômo*, 99, 103-105, 107.
[366] Ibid.,103.

is not glorious or ecstatic in his suffering, but is instead 'raped, clipped, completely sucked off', dispossessed, mad and stripped of volition and potency.

Nevertheless, in the performance of works such as *The Return of Artaud the Mômo,* Artaud's voice is not that of a passive victim; it is instead an embodiment of a furious energy. Artaud's actual vocal performance is preserved in the radiophonic recording of *To Have Done with the Judgement of God.*[367] In this radio play, Artaud's rage against God and what he views a God's parasitic domination is expressed through a symbolic process of self-flagellation in which his voice is literally hurled and thrown in an attempt to purge himself of God.[368] Artaud's raving, declamatory style makes violent use of his vocal tract and throat from which sounds are produced in a guttural, percussive, and bestial manner. The straining of his vocal chords and the exertion of his lungs, throat and breath is evident in the recording. Artaud's vocal production is erratic; he pushes his voice to the extremes of his pitch range and alternates between speech, screams, song, *sprechstimme*, glossolalia, shrieking, and spitting out words. At times his voice is redolent of fanatical religious preaching, and at other times of a child or a madman or madwoman. The polyphony of voices evokes a multiple or split self through which he enacts further self-punishment: for example he variously emasculates himself with a high pitched shrieking falsetto, and infantilizes himself with the voice of an infant.[369] Artaud also makes farting and roaring sounds and lets out a particularly piercing, high-pitched scream around fifteen minutes into the recording. Altogether, these vocal techniques comprise a histrionic and theatrical staging of self-directed rage.

French philosopher Jacques Derrida's analysis of Artaud's post-Rodez drawings assists in further understanding the way in which Artaud performs self-punishment and martyrdom through the very action of his speech. Derrida's argument provides the important insight that the ~~scream~~ of suffering is a form of expression that is inherently self-destructive through its own furious articulation. Derrida draws attention to the way in which Artaud attacks the surface (or using Artaud's terminology, the *subjectile*) of the paper.

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[367] Antonin Artaud, *To Have Done with the Judgement of God* (1947), performed by Antonin Artaud et al. Broadcast: KPFA, 15 Oct. 1968. In French.(41 min.) BB2075 Pacifica Radio Archives, https://archive.org/details/ToHaveDoneWithTheJudgmentOfGodWrittenAndReadByAntoninArtaud. I refer primarily to the first and final sections that are performed by Artaud himself; however, the three other sections performed by Maria Casarès, Roger Blin and Paule Thévenin, are also performed with a similarly violent articulation. The work also contains xylophone and percussion sounds performed by Artuad and Blin, as well as other sound affects; Antonin Artaud, letter to Fernand Pouey, January 16 1948, in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, 577; Eshleman, introduction to *Watchfiends & Rack Screams,* 36.

[368]Allen S. Weiss, "K", in *Antonin Artaud: A Critical Reader*, ed. Edward Sheer,153; Antonin Artaud letter to Henri Parisot, September 7 1945, in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings*, 443.

[369] Laura Cull, *Theatres of Immanence*, 102.

According to Derrida, this attacking style of mark making embodies Artaud's schizophrenic condition and rage—a process Derrida terms 'maddening the *subjectile*.'[370] Derrida uses the word *jeteé* to describe the way in which Artaud 'hurls' or 'throws' himself on the paper.[371] He explains that Artaud's mark making represents an externalised form of self-mutilation and self-destruction that seeks to overcome the resistance of the paper itself. Accordingly, Artaud's rage is inscribed onto and into the paper.[372] The violent *jeteé* evident in Artaud's post-Rodez drawings is equivalent to what occurs during his recitation of *To Have Done with the Judgement of God* where his voice is hurled against itself, in a vocal embodiment of rage that seeks the destruction of speech, voice and body.[373]

Artaud's rage also seeks the destruction of language itself, which he rejects as a manifestation of God's domination. This is evident particularly through Artaud's use of passages of glossolalia instead of French. In *To Have Done with the Judgement of God* Artaud's glossolalia not only embodies madness, as previously discussed, but also embodies a state of destructive spiritual frenzy and ecstasy that supports Artaud's adoption of the role of martyr. Allen S. Weiss has noted that Artaud's use of glossolalia is redolent of the gnostic practice of speaking in tongues and argues that in *To Have Done with the Judgement of God* glossolalia is used in its religious and mystical sense as a 'mode of exorcism' whereby Artaud aims to purge himself not of sin, but of God.[374] Indeed, the virulent way glossolalia is spat out by Artaud is expressive of a compulsive need for purgation. This point is important for elucidating Artaud's ~~scream~~ of suffering as a performance of a violent exorcism enacted upon himself. In *To have done with the Judgement of God*, Artaud's self-punishment also entails a desire to violently detach himself from his physical body. For Artaud, the very experience of having a body equates to suffering, hence he rejects and rages against his body as a source of what he describes as 'menacing, never tiring' pain.[375] From Artaud's perspective, it is God's influence and dominion, manifested within the internal structure of his body's organs that is the ultimate cause of this pain. *To have done with the Judgement of God* expresses Artaud's rage that he is contaminated by God's presence which has infected his voice and body, and from which he desires to be completely free. In

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[370] Jacques Derrida, "Maddening the Subjectile," trans. Mary Ann Caws, in "Boundaries: Writing & Drawing," special issue *Yale French Studies* 84 (1994): 154-171.
[371]Ibid., 167-169.
[372] Ibid.,168-169.
[373] James L Penner, review of *The Screaming Body*, by Stephen Barber/ *The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud*, by Jacques Derrida and Paule Thévenin trans. Mary Ann Caws/ *Antonin Artaud: The Man and His Work*, by Martin Esslin, *Theatre Survey* 42, no.1 (2001): 106; Derrida, "Maddening the Subjectile," 154-171.
[374] Weiss, "K,"153.
[375] Antonin Artuad, *To Have Done With the Judgement of God* in *Antonin Artaud Selected Writings,* 566.

order to be completely rid of God's contamination, he must rid himself of his own body.[376] Artaud's attempt to exorcise his own physical body exemplifies the ~~scream~~ of suffering as a condition in which self-directed punishment and harm is ultimately an attempt to expunge all aspects of the psyche and/or body that are in pain, and thus represent the traumatic effects of abuse.

The ~~scream~~ of suffering is both a cry of suffering, and the performative embodiment of suffering itself. The comparative study of a selection of theatrical works by Strindberg and Artaud undertaken in this chapter has demonstrated that the expression of suffering in performance is achieved primarily through the staging of self-punishment and madness, in particular the condition of schizophrenia. One of the most significant outcomes of this study is the insight that both dramatists require the adoption of masks or alter egos in order to express their suffering. While Strindberg's use of masks and ciphers as conduits for his suffering is more overt, Artaud inhabits the personae of a madman and martyr in order to do this. Moreover, a strong correlation between madness and martyrdom is revealed in the works of both dramatists, which reveals a new perspective on the ~~scream~~ of suffering as a condition that is performed primarily through an oscillation between these two archetypes.

[376] Weiss, "K,"155. Artaud's desire to be completely free of God's influence also impels his desire to re-make his body as a new 'body without organs.' Artaud's concept of the 'body without organs' is beyond the parameters of this investigation.

Chapter Five: The ~~scream~~ of silence

From Adorno's writings after Auschwitz through to contemporary trauma theory, the aesthetic representation of trauma is often associated with silence.[377] Although this chapter acknowledges and draws from these ideas, its focus is on an embodied state of profound psychological silence that occurs as a consequence of trauma. In this condition, the subject is stripped of their humanity and agency. The ~~scream~~ of silence is elucidated through a discussion of Adorno's commentary on silence in the post-Holocaust, hermetic poetry of Paul Celan. Adorno's notion that Celan's poems 'reconstruct… the trajectory from horror to silence' and 'want to speak of the most extreme horror through silence' is used as the starting point for this enquiry.[378] Celan's poetry evokes a metaphysical silence beyond death, a kind of loss of being. A similar state of un-being is demonstrated in the contemporary paradigm of the post-traumatic subject: a zombie-like figure of silence and stasis. The dehumanised post-traumatic subject has its visual counterparts in Edvard Munch's *Scream* and Francis Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. A comparison of these paintings reveals that each artist, albeit in contrasting ways, portrays a subject who embodies the symptoms of the ~~scream~~ of silence.

The trajectory from horror to silence

In *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno argues that Celan's hermetic poems 'reconstruct' what he describes as 'the trajectory from horror to silence.'[379] For Adorno, poems such as *Engführung* (1958) speak of horror through silence due to their symbolist, obscure and cryptic hermetic elements, and purposefully elliptical language.[380] The opening lines of *Engführung* typify Celan's use of language: 'Driven into the/ terrain/ with the infallible trace: / Grass, written asunder. The stones, white, / with the shadows of grassblades.'[381] According to Adorno, Celan's non-representational, and non-expressive use of language

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[377] De Capra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 65; Cathy Caruth, "Introduction to Section II-Recapturing the Past" in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 152-153.
[378] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* 405.
[379] Adorno, *Aethetic theory*, 405-406.
[380] Adorno, *Aethetic theory*, 405-406; Peter Szondi, "Reading "Engführung": An Essay on the Poetry of Paul Celan," in "The Criticism of Peter Szondi," trans. D. Caldwell and S. Esh, special issue, *boundary 2* 11 (Spring 1983), 231-264, 279. *Engführung* is the German musical term for stretto and refers to an overlap of statements in a fugue.
[381] Paul Celan, *Engführung* quoted in Peter Szondi, "Reading "Engführung": An Essay on the Poetry of Paul Celan," 231-232, 259.

such as this mirrors the affective silence that occurs as a result of extreme horror and suffering:

> His poetry is permeated by the shame of art in the face of suffering that escapes both experience and sublimation. Celan's poems want to speak of the most extreme horror through silence. Their truth content itself becomes negative. They imitate a language beneath the helpless language of human beings, indeed beneath all organic language: It is that of the dead speaking of stones and stars…The language of the lifeless becomes the last possible comfort for a death that is deprived of its meaning. The passage into the inorganic is to be followed not only in thematic motifs; rather, the trajectory from horror to silence is to be reconstructed in the hermetic works. Celan transposes into linguistic processes the increasing abstraction of landscape, progressively approximating it to the inorganic.[382]

Although Adorno's argument is specifically related to the ethical dilemma of art and poetry after the Holocaust, it nevertheless assists this argument by illuminating the movement from an experience of severe trauma and horror to a condition of silence, stasis or deathliness and loss of subjectivity. This movement from horror to silence occurs both psychologically, and also in the realm of linguistic and aesthetic expression. According to Adorno, Celan's poems embody silence through the mimesis of the 'language of the lifeless:' the silence inherent what is inorganic, non-living and dead.[383] As explained by American philosopher J.M. Bernstein, Celan's 'language of the lifeless' operates on two levels: it is 'thematic in the disintegration of organic nature into inorganic nature; formal in the disintegration of 'organic" language, language infused with intended meaning into linguistic remnants- the latter accomplished through syntactic and semantic decomposition.'[384] Celan's silence thus takes on a poetic form that is not only evocative of the silent victims' inability to speak due to its fractured sounds and imagery, but also renounces any artistic aspiration to meaning or sublimation by providing the reader with fragments and traces of suffering.[385] The symbolism of the stones/inorganic nature also corresponds to the dehumanised nature of the ~~scream~~ of silence.

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[382] Adorno, *Aethetic theory*, 405-406.
[383] Ulrich Plass, *Language and History in Adorno's Notes to Literature*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 178.
[384] J.M. Bernstein, ""The dead speaking of stones and stars": Adorno's Aesthetic theory" in *The Cambridge Companion to Critical Theory*, edited by Fred Rush, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 156.
[385] JM Bernstein, ""The dead speaking of stones and stars": Adorno's Aesthetic theory," 156; Eric Kligerman,

Adorno argues that to directly represent, to create aesthetically beautiful artworks about, and/or to ascribe meaning to the Holocaust is obscene—claiming that 'poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric'[386] and that the 'name of the catastrophe is to be spoken only in silence.'[387] For Adorno, it is not the case that no art or poetry, or expression is possible after Auschwitz, but rather that it cannot exist as it did prior to Auschwitz, and its very existence is called into question.[388] Any art that transforms suffering into beauty or meaning would create pleasure in the viewer, and thus be a further violation of the victim.[389] Moreover, because art and language is not autonomous from the very culture that produced such horror and oppression, it is in danger of becoming complicit in, or perpetuating this very process.[390] However, at the same time, Adorno asserts the importance of remembering the victims and survivors: 'extreme suffering tolerates no forgetting. This suffering demands the continued existence of the very art it forbids. It scarcely finds a voice anywhere else.'[391] For Adorno, poetry such as Celan's can appropriately deal with these events because instead of speaking directly of the horror, it expresses the very inability to speak of such horror. Following Adorno, French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard encapsulates this point in his discussion on art after Auschwitz. Lyotard states that such art 'does not say the unsayable, but says it cannot say it.'[392] This theme is pertinent to many of my performance-video works in which my mouth is symbolically gagged and I act out scenarios which draw attention to my inability to speak.

In the case of the traumatised subject, a 'trajectory from horror to silence,' is experienced in the aftermath of the traumatic event(s). Furthermore, there is an even more immediate silencing that occurs during a traumatic event itself. In parallel with Celan's poetic silence, the ~~scream~~ of silence says that 'it cannot say,' and draws attention to the

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"Celan's Cinematic: Anxiety of the Gaze," in *Visualizing the Holocaust: Documents, Aesthetics, Memory* ed. David Bathrick, Brad Prager, Michael David Richardson, (New York: Camden House, 2008), 207-208.

[386] Theodor W. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber, (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1997), 34; Elaine Martin, "The Poetics of Silence: Nelly Sachs," in *German and European Poetics After the Holocaust: Crisis and Creativity,* ed. Gert Hofmann et al., (New York: Camden House, 2011), 19-21.

[387] Theodor W. Adorno 'Trying to Understand Endgame' in *Notes to Literature* , trans Schierry Weber Nicholsen, Volume 1, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 249; Gene Ray, *Terror and the Sublime in Art and Critical Theory: From Auschwitz to Hiroshima to September 11*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 148.

[388] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B.Ashton, (London: Routledge, 2004), 362-363.

[389] Ray, *Terror and the Sublime in Art and Critical Theory*, 148.

[390] Adorno, *Prisms,* 34*;* Martin, "The Poetics of Silence: Nelly Sachs,"19-20.

[391] Adorno, *Notes to Literature* , trans Schierry Weber Nicholsen, Volume 2 . (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991),88; Martin,"The Poetics of Silence," 19- 20.

[392] Jean-François Lyotard, *Heidegger and "the jews",* trans. Andreas Michel and Mark Roberts with an introduction by David Carroll, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 47; Paul Hegarty, "Supposing the impossibility of silence and of sound, of voice: Bataille, Agamben and the Holocaust" in *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer* ,ed. Andrew Norris, (Duke University Press, Durham: 2005), 222.

unspeakable through an embodiment of silence, inaction and disengagement. However, the ~~scream~~ of silence differs from what is described by Adorno because in Celan's case, the poet has incorporated the horror of the Holocaust into himself and his writing, whereas in the case of the ~~scream~~ of silence, silence is also caused by the subject's personal shame, and self-disgust in relation to traumatic events, and their strong fear of retribution if they speak out.

Silence and the post-traumatic subject

The ~~scream~~ of silence also involves the self-denial of the psyche's drive for life. This particular condition is a state beyond major depression, and as such, has a strong correspondence to the recent paradigm of the post-traumatic subject. Post-traumatic subjects, described by French philosopher Catherine Malabou as the 'new wounded,' are emblematic of the silent mode of the ~~scream~~. In *The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage*, Malabou argues that psychoanalysis does not properly account for a range of 'psychic wounds' that have only more recently begun to be understood by psychology, psychiatry and neurology: for example individuals suffering from PTSD and other trauma disorders, victims of natural disasters, and those with brain diseases such as Alzheimer's.[393] According to Freud and Lacan, external traumas and shocks activate the subject's latent, endogenous sexual disturbances. It is the awakening of what is already latent in the subject that causes the subject's suffering.[394] However Malabou shows that the suffering of the post-traumatic subject is not attributable to any pre-existing psychic disposition.[395] Following Malabou, Žižek likewise notes that a psychoanalytical approach can even be considered perverse in the face of events such as the holocaust: [396]

> It would obviously be obscene to link, say, the psychic devastation of a "Muselmann" in a Nazi camp to his masochistic tendencies, death drive or guilt feelings. He (like the victim of multiple rape, torture and so on) is not devastated by unconscious anxieties, but by a "meaningless" external shock which can in no way be hermeneutically appropriated or integrated…[397]

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[393] Catherine Malabou, *The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage*, trans. Steven Miller, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), xiv, xviii, 6, 9-11, 155. See also Catherine Malabou, "Post-Trauma: Towards a New Definition, " *Alleys of Your Mind: Augmented Intelligence and Its Traumas*, ed. Matteo Pasquinelli, (Lüneburg: Meson Press, 2015), 187 -198.
[394] Malabou,6-7; Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, (London: Verso, 2010), 292-292.
[395] Malabou, 53.
[396] Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 292, 310.
[397] Ibid.,310.

For Malabou, the way in which these traumatic experiences elude hermeneutic and psychoanalytical explanation, as well as meaning, necessitates a new approach to trauma that recognises that trauma of all kinds – endogenous, exogenous, psychological etc. – causes radical and destructive changes to the brain and 'impacts neuronal organisation, particularly the sites of emotional inductors.'[398] Malabou observes 'striking resemblances' between the state of profound disengagement and loss of humanity demonstrated by victims of interpersonal violence, war trauma victims, victims of disasters and accidents, and those suffering from brain lesions, brain diseases and disorders such as autism.[399] In all cases, while the causes may differ a similar effect of complete psychic devastation or severe damage to the psyche is the outcome.[400] Of particular significance to this investigation is that the damages caused by both psychic and physical traumas lead to a mode of existence equivalent to the ~~scream~~ of silence: Malabou describes a destructive metamorphosis of the self that leads to a living-dead state characterised by indifference, disaffection, dehumanisation, and a lack of drive—symptoms which correspond to the silent mode of the ~~scream~~.[401]

For Žižek, the dehumanisation of the post-traumatic subject is epitomised in the figure of the *Muselmann*.[402] Italian Holocaust survivor and writer Primo Levi describes the *Muselmann* as existing in zombie-like state beyond any comprehensible pain and horror: as 'drowned,' 'non-men' who have lost their human subjectivity.[403] Žižek argues that a similar state of living-death is shared by victims of both 'exogenous violence-related trauma', and the 'endogenous trauma' of the 'autistic and disengaged subject'.[404] Žižek notes that the effect of these kinds of traumas is not something that can be either repressed, or recovered from, but leads to a situation in which the individual becomes a 'persistently traumatised subject,' who is 'irrevocably changed.'[405] This kind of victim, whose subjectivity is completely shattered, is left in a zombie-like state and 'survives its own death, the death (or erasure) of its symbolic identity.'[406] What is particularly significant to this investigation is that the irrevocable change Žižek identifies involves a kind of silencing (described by Žižek

[398] Malabou, *The New Wounded,* 10-11.
[399] Ibid., 10-11.
[400] Ibid., xviii, 10-11.
[401] Ibid., xv, xvii, 6, 14-15
[402] Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 294-295.
[403] Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: the Nazi Assault on Humanity*, trans. Stuart Woolf, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 88; Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 295-298.
[404] Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 313.
[405] Ibid., 293.
[406] Ibid., 294.

as 'death') of the subject's psyche and individual volition, and its replacement with an absence:

> In the new form of subjectivity (autistic, indifferent, deprived of affective engagement), the old personality is not "sublated" or replaced by a compensatory formation, but thoroughly destroyed- destruction itself acquires a form, becomes a (relatively stable) "form of life"- what we have is not simply the absence of form, but the form of (the) absence (of the erasure of the previous personality). More precisely, the new form is less a form of life than a form of death- not an expression of the Freudian death drive, but, more directly, the *death of the drive*.[407]

Žižek argues that this erasure of the contents of self and identity does not result in nothingness; rather, destruction reveals 'the pure form of subjectivity, a form which must have already been there.' For the purposes of this investigation, this 'death of the drive' elucidates the ~~scream~~ of silence as a catastrophic silencing of the subject- a reduction of life to a state of silent, un-dead being. However, for Žižek, this 'pure form of subjectivity' has further philosophical implications for the Cartesian subject. According to Žižek, the post-traumatic subject represents the cogito at its 'degree zero'—a form of existence which he likens to that of 'an autistic "monster."'[408] While the silent form of the ~~scream~~ relates strongly to Žižek's 'degree zero' of subjectivity—in that it also involves a suppression of the subjective 'I' and personal volition—it differs somewhat because an awareness of pain still exists despite psychic devastation. Moreover, in the case of the ~~scream~~ of silence, silence is maintained as a covert embodiment of pain. This silent holding of pain is an attempt to resist the total numbness and psychic annihilation that accompanies severe trauma.

In contrast to Žižek who relates the post-traumatic subject to Descartes, Malabou offers an alternative version of this post-traumatised subject, which acknowledges the possibility of a communication of pain, paradoxically through the very destruction and silencing of the subject. Malabou writes in relation to neurological studies on the plasticity of the brain, and argues that although the brain is susceptible to destructive forces of trauma which can devastate, maim and annihilate, this devastation involves the creation of a new form which may be capable of communicating suffering:

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[407] Ibid., 296, emphasis in the original.
[408] Ibid., 314.

> We have to think of a form created by destruction, the form of a new person, which is not the transcendental subject, but what undermines it, as the threat of its explosion. The plasticity of contingency has the power to bestow its own form on the subjects that it shocks. A subject that burns, and which urges us to see, at long last, that it is *really* burning.[409]

Significant to the ~~scream~~ of silence here, is that this new 'form created by destruction,' this 'subject that burns,' expresses profound pain through its very destruction and subsequent re-formation as a subject of silence and stasis.[410] Moreover, Malabou's notion of the creation of a new subject capable of expressing and communicating suffering following catastrophic destruction is incipient in the writings of Nietzsche and Artaud respectively (as discussed in chapters three and four of this thesis). A further point to be mentioned here in regard to Malabou's argument is that if the brain and psyche is plastic, and can be destroyed and re-formed, there might also be the possibility of a movement in the other direction: from a state of silence and devastation, to a state of functionality and recuperation. This suggests the potential for survival and recuperation of victims of psychological traumas. Rather then the 'trajectory from horror to silence,' being the endpoint of a traumatised subject, there might be the possibility of a trajectory not just from horror to silence, but from horror, through silence, to re-construction and re-formation.[411]

Silence and the painted ~~screams~~ of Munch and Bacon

In the realm of visual art, the ~~scream~~ of silence is epitomised in Edvard Munch's *Scream* c.1893, and Francis Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, 1953. The general consensus among theorists and art historians is that both paintings represent silent, muted screams. This is not because painting is in itself silent, but because these paintings are considered to be visually representative of psychological states in which the scream is inaudible.[412] However, each painting has more specific correspondences to the

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[409] Malabou, *The New Wounded*, xii; Malabou, "Post-Trauma: Towards a New Definition," 187, 191-193, 195, 202. Malabou's 'subject that burns' here is a reference to Freud's analysis, in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* of a father's dream in which his dead child cries out 'father don't you see I'm burning?' Freud's analysis of this as possible wish fulfillment is later discussed by Lacan.
[410] Malabou, "Post-Trauma: Towards a New Definition," 187, 195.
[411] Ibid.,179-184.
[412] Robert Hughes, "Francis Bacon: Horrible!" *The Guardian*, August 2008, https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2008/aug/30/bacon.art, Muriel Julius, "The compulsive subjectivity of Edvard Munch," *Contemporary Review*, 262 no. 1524, (1993): 40., John Jervis *Sensational Subjects:*

particular emotional condition discussed in this chapter. What is particularly germane to the ~~scream~~ of silence is that both paintings evoke an emotional state of profound and unspeakable psychic horror, yet remain silent about the cause or meaning of this horror, which remains unrepresentable. Moreover, both Munch and Bacon alike depict screaming subjects who do not seem fully human: these de-humanised figures are representative of the zombie-like nature of the post-traumatic subject.

In Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, a spectral pope is seated rigidly on a chair with his jaw wide open emitting a powerful, yet silent scream. Deleuze's analysis of Bacon's series screaming pope paintings in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, offers further insights into the silence of the traumatised subject and their inability to name or represent the horror. For Deleuze, the effective communication of horror is strengthened through the artist's refusal to name or depict horror. Bacon's paintings successfully convey the emotional state of horror due to the very fact of their silence on the source of that horror. Deleuze argues that Bacon paints the 'scream more than the horror,' or, in other words, that Bacon depicts the violent emotional sensation of horror, but not the violence that causes the scream.[413] According to Deleuze, any attempt to portray the horror will fail and cancel out the emotional and sensory power of the image. Horrific events cannot be described, but may be evoked through the visual representation of the subject's sensation of horror. Moreover, for Deleuze, 'the horror is multiplied because it is inferred from the scream, and not the reverse.'[414] Deleuze's point here to a certain extent corresponds to Adorno's proscription of the direct representation of horrific events, however Deleuze is more concerned with the affective power of the work, rather than its ethical dimension. For Deleuze, as soon as a narrative, or cause of the scream is made known to the viewer, the intensity and horror of the scream subsides.[415] Bacon's screaming pope paintings reveal the way in which a portrayal of the 'violence of sensation' has a far more powerful affect on the viewer than the 'representation of violence.'[416] Drawing from Deleuze's argument, the insight here in terms of the scream of ~~silence~~ is that works of art that silently embody the psychological sensation of horror, have an enhanced capacity to reveal and demonstrate the destructive and violent effects of that horror on the individual. As Deleuze notes, Bacon's embodiment of the 'violence of sensation' reveals

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The Dramatization of Experience in the Modern World, (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 80. 'Bacon's grotesque mouths remain open, caught in a strangled, interminable, eternal silence.' 80; Slavoj Žižek, *Enjoy your symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out,* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 133.

[413] Ibid., 38-39.

[414] Ibid.

[415] Ibid.,38

[416] Ibid., x, 38-39.

the cruel and destructive forces of horror on the body and psyche.[417]

Bacon's screaming pope also pertains to the ~~scream~~ of silence in another way. For the traumatised subject, the concealment of suffering and horror through social isolation and the literal refusal to allow oneself to be visible is a further strategy of self-silencing. In Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, the pope screams silently behind a curtain, which is suggestive of a private, hidden space, and forms a barrier between the pope's pain and horror and the external world. Deleuze however, interprets this curtain in a different way, which provides a new perspective on this condition of silence. For Deleuze, the curtain represents not only the pope's refusal to let himself be seen, but also his inability to see. Deleuze demonstrates that the causes of the horror are not only unspeakable, but are also invisible. For Deleuze, the traumatic and violent events that cause a scream lie beyond sense and cognition, and are in themselves invisible to the subject: 'If we scream, it is always as victims of invisible and insensible forces that scramble every spectacle, and that even lie beyond pain and feeling.'[418] This is why, for Deleuze, the horrific events that cause Bacon's pope to scream remain invisible to the viewer. For the purposes of this argument, the invisibility of horror in Bacon's painting is equivalent to a verbal silence about horror. Deleuze argues that the pope 'screams behind the curtain not only as someone who can no longer be seen, but as someone who cannot see, who has nothing left to see, whose only remaining function is to render visible these invisible forces that are making him scream, these powers of the future.'[419] What Deleuze suggests here is that unlike blindness, this is an inability and unwillingness to see caused by fear and horror. The sensation of overwhelming horror that precludes sight is germane to the ~~scream~~ of silence. However, for Deleuze, the invisible horror that causes a scream is not so much related to overwhelming past or present traumatic events that cannot be cognitively processed, visualised or represented, but to the unseen 'powers' that lie in the future. This type of fear or horror related to the unseen and unknown future is a kind of existential dread or angst. Although this sensation of horror at the future differs from that of traumatised individual in the sense that it is not caused by specific event/series of events, it is relatable in its psychological content. This is because, in the condition of the ~~scream~~ of silence, horror is not only caused by prior experiences, but also by the individual's fear that traumatic events could recur in the future.

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[417] Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, 45. Deleuze refers here to Artuad's notion of cruelty and finds a parallel with Bacon's focus on the violence of sensation in his paintings.
[418] Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith, (London: Continuum 2003), 60.
[419] Ibid., 61.

In contrast to Bacon's painting, in which the figure of the pope is static, in Munch's *Scream* the unspeakable nature of horror, and the silence of the subject, is embodied through the figure's convulsed and bent posture. As Žižek's analysis of this painting demonstrates, it is the very repression of sound that generates the distortion of the figure. Žižek argues that the suppressed scream in Munch's painting 'finds an outlet…in the anamorphic distortion of the body in its unnatural serpentine windings…'[420] Thus although Munch's screaming figure is mute, its contorted body registers the explosive and overwhelming experience of horror and terror. This corresponds to the plight of the traumatised subject, whose silenced ~~scream~~ takes an embodied, physical form: frozen into distortion due to unbearable psychic tension and pain. Žižek provides a further insight into this condition of silence in Munch's *Scream*, by demonstrating that the painting's muted scream pertains to Lacan's understanding of anxiety as something which cannot enter into subjectivity. Žižek establishes that the extreme anguish of the screaming figure in Munch's painting, like Lacanian anxiety, is literally 'stuck in the throat' and cannot be embodied in sound.[421] According to Žižek, this causes a situation of paralysis in which the voice cannot 'burst out and enter subjectivity.'[422] The paralysis and failure of the voice of the anxious subject as elucidated by Žižek, strongly corresponds to the paralysis and gagging of the voice that is experienced by the traumatised subject.

In a further parallel to the ~~scream~~ of silence, Munch's and Bacon's respective screaming figures have a strong resonance with the zombie-like qualities of the post-traumatic subject. Munch's *Scream* prefigures the destructive metamorphosis of the post-traumatic subject discussed by Malabou, through its depiction of a figure that is atrophied and stripped of most identifiable human characteristics. Munch's screaming figure is defaced and almost completely reduced to a formless mass. Moreover, the figure's physiognomy is completely absent of any defining features – including any that signify gender – and is instead dominated by the gaping hole of the mouth and the sunken white circles place of eyes. The figure has no hair, lacks a proper nose, and has a strange and anatomically impossible skull structure that is appropriately described by Žižek as a 'desperate homunculus' head.'[423] Munch's erasure of any identifiable subjectivity and the transformation of the figure into a strange uncanny amorphous shape suggests a catastrophic loss of identity, selfhood and humanity that is reminiscent of the figure of the

[420] Žižek, *Enjoy your symptom!*,133.
[421] Ibid., 133.
[422] Ibid., 49-50.
[423] Ibid.,130.

Muselmann, for example. In contrast to Munch's fleshy, amorphous entity, Bacon's screaming pope evokes a state of living death in a different way. Bacon's pope is a spectral figure: transparent, ghostlike, skeletal and seemingly lacking of flesh and blood. Deleuze has described this aspect of the scream in Bacon's work as demonstrating the way in which 'the entire body escapes the through the screaming mouth.'[424] For Deleuze, the scream in Bacon's work is like a portal for the subject to exit, leaving an empty shell where existence was. This is point is particularly apposite to the ~~scream~~ of silence, which is experienced as a devastating loss of subjectivity.

[424] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, 16.

Chapter Six: A Woman's ~~Scream~~

A woman's ~~scream~~ is a woman's revolt against her body, sexuality and expected feminine gender roles. It is a response to severe trauma occurring in interpersonal and domestic situations in which a woman and/or girl develops a fraught and violent attitude towards her female body. This condition is not simply a violent fury turned inward due to the suppression that may occur as a result of abuse. Instead, it is a very specific drive to annihilate and erase attributes that are representative of the female sex. Masochism is a prevalent theme throughout both Sylvia Plath and Elfriede Jelinek's oeuvres respectively and has been discussed at length in the scholarship on these writers. However, the particular type of female self-harm and masochism that is portrayed at certain points in their works is beyond normative psychoanalytical, literary and popular understandings of masochism. In these moments each writer depicts a woman's drive to destroy, negate, mutilate, and/or quash the signs and symptoms of their own female biology, femininity and sexuality. These actions/depictions exemplify the condition of the ~~scream~~ in relation to a woman's suffering and experience of trauma. This condition is most evident in Plath's autobiographical novel *The Bell Jar* (1963) and Jelinek's novel *The Piano Teacher* (1983). Although other works by Plath, in particular the poems *Daddy* and *Lady Lazarus* (1965) resonate with the women's ~~scream~~ and famously express rage and masochism, the particular condition focused on in this chapter is more clearly demonstrated in *The Bell Jar*. Similarly, Jelinek also deals with themes of masochism and violence in her other novels such as *Lust* (1989), and *Greed* (2000), but in the interests of clarity *The Piano Teacher* will be the focus of this chapter. Plath and Jelinek respectively provide further insights into a woman's ~~scream~~ by showing that gender roles further the entrapment and suffering of the female subject in situations of familial trauma. Moreover they reveal these domestic and interpersonal situations as symptomatic of patriarchal, (potentially) fascist and capitalist power structures.

Masochism and a woman's ~~scream~~

It is necessary to give a brief overview of masochism in order to understand how a woman's ~~scream,~~ as it is expressed in the works of Jelinek and Plath, is a particularly intense form of masochism that is related to—but also departs from—psychoanalytical understandings of masochism, in particular those established by Sigmund Freud. Freudian understandings of masochism, as well as psychoanalysis more broadly, permeate their texts.

In *The Bell Jar* this is done in earnest as Plath tries to make sense of her condition, while in the case of Jelinek her adoption of Freudian (and also Lacanian) ideas on masochism is satiric.[425]

The concept of masochism was initially described as a sexual perversion by nineteenth century psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who named the condition after Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. Sacher-Masoch's autobiographical novel *Venus in Furs* (1870) famously portrays the erotic pleasure the male protagonist derives from being dominated, whipped and humiliated by women.[426] Krafft-Ebing conceived of masochism as a perverse sexual practice involving a male's submission to a dominant, cruel female other who would inflict a predetermined series of actions: 'receiving pain; relinquishing control through bondage, rules, commands or other means' and 'embarrassment or humiliation' for sexual stimulation and pleasure.[427] In regard to female masochism, Krafft-Ebing considered the desire for submission, self-denial of subjectivity and pain as natural in women, and a perversion in men (i.e. a male masochist is 'feminine' and not natural).[428] After Krafft-Ebing, Freud developed Krafft-Ebing's theories further. Freud extended the understanding of masochism beyond the sexual, and defined three major categories of masochism: erotogenic, moral and feminine.[429] Erotogenic masochism is the fundamental desire for 'pleasure in pain', moral masochism 'where the subject, as a result of unconscious guilt, seeks out the position of victim without any sexual pleasure being directly involved,' and feminine masochism which 'constitutes the masochistic perversion in men who fantasize being placed in a female situation' such as 'of being castrated, being copulated with, or giving birth...'[430] All three of these Freudian categories of masochism are mined in *The Bell Jar* and *The Piano Teacher* respectively.

From the late nineteenth century onwards, masochism was associated with femininity.[431] Like Krafft-Ebing, Freud also linked masochism with femininity and females however he is careful to note the prevalence of masochism in males.[432]

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425 Plath and Jelinek are both well acquainted with Freud. Jill Scott, *Electra After Freud: Myth and Culture*, (Ithaca: Cornell Universty Press, 2005), 150; Beatrice Hanssen, "Elfriede Jelinek's Language of Violence," *New German Critique*, 68, Special Issue on Literature, Spring – Summer (1996): 82, 99.
426 Roy F. Baumeister, *Masochism and the Self*, (New York: Psychology Press, 2014), x-3; Leopold von Sacher-Masoch , *Venus in Furs* in *Masochism:* Gilles Deleuze, Sacher-Masoch, (New York: Zone Books, 1991).
427 Baumeister, *Masochism and the Self* x-4, Rita Felski, "Redescriptions of Female Masochism," *The Minnesota Review*, no 63-64 (2005): 127-139.
428 Barbara Mennel, *The Representation of Masochism and Queer Desire in Film and Literature*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 1, 28- 32-33.
429 Mennel, 35; See also Sigmund Freud, "The economic problem of masochism," in Margaret Ann Hanly (Ed.), *Essential Papers on Masochism*, (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 274-285.
430 Freud, "The economic problem of masochism,"279-280.
431 Mennel, 35.

> The suppression of women's aggressiveness which is prescribed for them constitutionally and imposed on them socially favours the development of powerful masochistic impulses, which succeed, as we know in binding erotically the destructive trends that have been diverted inwards. Thus masochism, as people say, is truly feminine. But if, as happens so often, you meet with masochism in men, what is left to you but to say that these men exhibit very feminine traits.[433]

What is important here is the idea of masochism being suppressed aggression turned inward, becomes pervasive in psychoanalysis and theory, and due to the repressed nature of the ~~scream~~ has a particular link to this thesis.[434] However, it is important to reiterate that the aggression turned in on itself described by Freud is distinct from the ~~scream~~, which is comprised of rage, resentment and self–revulsion, violently and explosively directed back onto the subject with the aim of complete self-annihilation and erasure.

For Freud, masochism posed a problem to his theory of the pleasure principle, and eventually became important to his theory of the death drive.[435] According to Freud, the human is divided between *eros*—the desire to reproduce—and *thanatos* which is the desire for self-destruction and entails not so much a desire for death itself, but a desire for a return to an original state of formless, undefined matter which is a state of decomposition even beyond simply dying.[436] What is pertinent here, particularly to *The Bell Jar,* is the way in which this state is similar to the detached, formless, pre-birth state that Plath's protagonist seeks to return to.

More recently, psychoanalysts have theorised that masochism occurs as a result of dissociation in response to traumatic experience: in particular abuse, abandonment and/or rejection of children by their primary caregivers.[437] New York based psychologist Peter Lessem argues that when a child is confronted with trauma enacted by a caregiver they

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[432] For Freud masochism highlights flimsiness of the concepts of femininity and masculinity as attributed to passive/active and female/male, because men often exhibit the 'feminine' characteristic of masochism. Sigmund Freud "Femininity" from "New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis," (1933) in *The Women and Language Debate: A sourcebook*, ed , Camille Roman, Suzanne Juhasz, Cristanne Miller, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994),22; Georgina Paul, *Perspectives on Gender in Post-1945 German Literature*, (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 165.
[433] Freud, "Femininity," 165.
[434] Ibid., 165.
[435] Freud, "The Economic Problem of Masochism."
[436] Alison M. Moore, *Sexual Myths of Modernity: Sadism, Masochism, and Historical Teleology*, (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015), 71-72.
[437] Lessem,"Masochistic relating, dissociation,"120.

dissociate as a survival mechanism.[438]As attachment to a primary caregiver is necessary for a child's development and survival, the child must dissociate in order to maintain this bond. Lessem explains that the consequence of this is that:

> the masochist's painful sense of self as rejected and/or abused and/or abandoned stemming from the original experience of rejection or abuse is dissociated along with his reactive angry-healthily entitled sense of self. These self states are dissociated in the service of maintaining a crucial attachment. Usually, what becomes the masochistic person's dominant self state is a devalued, self-blaming one… [439]

This leads to a 'masochistic pattern' repeated by the victim in which the apparent desire to suffer is in fact, according to Post-Freudian theorist Bernard Berliner, 'motivated primarily by the need to cling to a vitally needed love object, to keep intact a crucial attachment.'[440] The maintenance of the crucial love bond attachment with the abusive/abandoning or rejecting parent Lessem mentions also ties in with the type of masochism presented in Plath and Jelinek's novels, which portray characters with these characteristics.

Zizek also articulates an important aspect of the masochism that is relevant here in relation to the woman's ~~scream~~ in *The Bell Jar* and *The Piano Teacher* respectively.

> … masochism is the necessary first step toward liberation. When we are subjected to a power mechanism, this subjection is always and by definition sustained by some libidinal investment: the subjection itself generates a surplus enjoyment of its own. This subjection is embodied in a network of "material" bodily practices, and, for this reason, we cannot get rid of our subjection through a merely intellectual reflection—our liberation has to be staged in some kind of bodily performance, and furthermore, this performance has to be of an apparently "masochistic" nature, it has to stage the painful process of hitting back at oneself.…This hysterical knot of libidinal investment of one's own victimization can never be undone…The reason this "untying of the knot" doesn't work is that *the only true awareness of our subjection is the awareness of the obscene excessive pleasure (surplus enjoyment) we get from it.* This is why the first gesture of liberation is not to get rid of this excessive pleasure,

[438] Ibid.,120.
[439] Ibid., 120.
[440] Ibid.,118.

> but to assume it actively……violence should primarily be conceived as self-violence, as a violent reformation of the very substance of a subject's being.'[441]

Zizek's analysis lucidly articulates the psychological workings that underlie the self-harming, self-violent acts of Plath and Jelinek's personae, through which they try to achieve 'liberation' through assuming acts of violence towards themselves. The particular nature of what they have suffered as it pertains to their female bodies and gender roles is reflected in the kinds of violence they enact upon themselves (for example Erika's cutting). However, neither Plath's Ester Greenwood or Jelinek's Erika Kohut 'escape' their victimisation, and both 'return' symbolically to abusive environments and show that liberation, and 'violent reformation' although attempted and desired is not possible. Moreover the violence of the woman's ~~scream~~ towards herself goes beyond what Zizek describes—it is not of the liberating kind, but instead is a furious self-mutilating violence involving a compulsion for suicide and death that is obscene, almost inhuman and at times grotesque. Thus the liberation suggested by Zizek in this psychoanalytical schema is not achievable in the scenarios depicted in either *The Bell Jar* or *The Piano Teacher*.

Self-destruction of the female and the feminine in *The Bell Jar* and *The Piano Teacher*

The Bell Jar is pervaded by recurring imagery of self-harm, self-destruction and suicide. However, what is germane to the woman's ~~scream~~ is its heroine's intense drive to extinguish herself as a woman, daughter and potential mother. This compulsion for erasure of her female body, as well as the depictions of suicide attempts and self-harm reflects Plath's real life self-harm and series of suicide attempts. Plath suffered severe manic depression with schizoid characteristics, which finally lead to her suicide in 1963.[442] Her precarious mental health was exacerbated by traumatic family events and difficult interpersonal relationships: the death of her oppressive father whom she nevertheless idolised when she was eight, a difficult relationship with her domineering mother, and an abusive marriage to poet Ted Hughes, who had an affair.[443]

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[441] Slavoj Žižek, "The Ambiguity of the Masochist Social link' in Molly Anne Rothenberg, Dennis A Foster, Slavoj Žižek (Eds), *Perversion and the Social Relation: Sic IV*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003),118-119.
[442] Frederick Feirstein, "A psychoanalytic study of Sylvia Plath," *The Psychoanalytic Review,* 103 no. 1 (2016): 103-104.
[443] Recent documents have come to light showing that Hughes was physically abusive toward Plath. Danuta Kean, "Unseen Sylvia Plath Letters Claim Domestic Abuse by Ted Hughes,' Guardian 12 April 2017 https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/apr/11/unseen-sylvia-plath-letters-claim-domestic-abuse-by-ted-hughes

The Bell Jar is loosely based on the events leading to Plath's major breakdown and recovery when she was twenty. The novel's protagonist, Esther Greenwood, is a thinly veiled avatar for Plath herself.[444] *The Bell Jar* traces Esther Greenwood's psychological deterioration as she explores, with growing unhappiness and disgust, her burgeoning sexuality and sense of womanhood, and the conflict between her intellectual ambitions and the social and cultural expectations placed upon white, middle-class women like herself in 1950s United States. Esther's increasing inner turmoil coincides with her growing awareness and fear of womanhood and female desire, which in turn corresponds with her series of attempted suicides and self-harm. Her most serious suicide attempt leads to hospitalisation and Electric Shock Therapy. This is followed by her symbolic rebirth: treatment, recovery, and newfound self-determination.[445]

Plath's desire to achieve annihilation through death and then purified rebirth is linked to strong feelings of self-disgust and self-revulsion over her female body as well as the accoutrements of femininity in the 1950s. *The Bell Jar* for example features pervasive themes of disgust and extreme *ennui* which are announced in the very first pages of the novel in which she expresses her disgust and obsessional preoccupation with the well-publicised executions of the Rosenbergs and her self-disgust at her extravagant spending on clothes.[446]

> The idea of being electrocuted makes me sick…I knew something was wrong with me that summer, because all I could think about was the Rosenbergs and how stupid I'd been to buy all those uncomfortable, expensive clothes, hanging limp as fish in my closet…' [447]

Esther/Sylvia's form of disgust encompasses not only self-disgust but a disgust at her cultural and social milieu- a litany of external sources are described in terms of disgust, as things that 'make me sick': wealthy, materialistic, fashionable girls her own age, 'dirty'

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[444] *The Bell Jar* was first published in 1963 under the pseudonym Victoria Lucas. The novel was re-published in 1966 under Sylvia Plath.

[445] Teresa de Lauretis, "Rebirth in the Bell Jar," *Women's Studies,* (1976),:173-83 in *Sylvia Plath*, by Linda Wagner-Martin, (London: Routledge, 1997), 124-134; Mary Evans "Extending Autobiography" in Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury, Penny Summerfield eds., *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods,* (London: Routledge,2000) 76-80, 81.

[446] Howard Moss, "Howard Moss on Illness and Disclosure in the Novel in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*," in Harold Bloom, ed. and with an introduction by Harold Bloom, *Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar* (New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2009) 59-63; Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*, with a biographical note by Louis Ames,(New York: Harper and Row, 1971)3-4

[447] Plath, *The Bell Jar*, 3-4.

New York, men, men's bodies, doctors, nurses, other patients, children, her mother, the suburbs.[448] These external sources of disgust, however are, over the course of the novel, gradually more and more internalised into a disgust over her own female body, genitalia and sexuality, which she tries to rid of contamination from the outside world first through purification and purgation rituals (bathing, water, cutting herself) and then through her series of suicide attempts (drowning, strangling, taking pills).[449] What is pertinent to the woman's ~~scream~~ here, is this is not just any generalised revulsion and desire for purgation, but one especially equated with the need to expel her female biology (themes that are shared in Jelinek's work). American literary critic John Romano similarly argues that Plath's work demonstrates 'The recurring desire for cleanliness and purity…[which] is really the desire not to have a body at all, and manifests itself in disgust with all bodily functions, especially sex.'[450] In *The Bell Jar*, for example, Esther bathes to ease feelings of disgust over seeing her friend Doreen kissing and fondling a guy:

> I lay in that tub on the seventeenth floor of this hotel for-women-only, high up over the jazz and push of New York, for near onto an hour, and I felt myself growing pure again. I don't believe in baptism or the waters of Jordan or anything like that, but I guess I feel about a hot bath the way those religious people feel about holy water. I said to myself: "Doreen is dissolving, Lenny Shepherd is dissolving, Frankie is dissolving, New York is dissolving, they are all dissolving away and none of them matter any more. I don't know them, I have never known them and I am very pure. All that liquor and those sticky kisses I saw and the dirt that settled on my skin on the way back is turning into something pure." The longer I lay there in the clear hot water the purer I felt, and when I stepped out at last and wrapped myself in one of the big, soft white hotel bath towels I felt pure and sweet as a new baby.[451]

Here water is seen as ritual purification, linked to religious ritual, and becoming innocent like a baby again. These themes of self-disgust and the desire to be 'pure as a baby,'[452] and the threat to her purity by the outside world and especially sexual contact are continued in

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448 Ibid.,, 5, 134, 78.
449 Teresa de Lauretis, "Rebirth in the Bell Jar",126.
450 John Romano quoted in Deborah Suiter Gentry, *The Art of Dying: Suicide in the Works of Kate Chopin and Sylvia Plath*, (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 83.
451 Plath, T*he Bell Jar*, 16-17.
452 Plath , "Getting There," in *Ariel*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1965),37.

Ariel poems such as *Fever 103°*. For example: 'Water, water make me retch./I am too pure for you or anyone. …'[453] It is symbolic that Esther's first sexual intercourse is discussed in terms of abjection, and trauma, and the actions of a careless male. Esther experiences a rare haemorrhage requiring surgery, and whilst it is dealt with in the novel with an element of detachment humour, it underscores the symbolic and metaphoric association of fear, pain and horror and danger ascribed to her female genitals and the sexual act. [454]

The narrative structure of *The Bell Jar* is arranged on this theme: a belief in the possibility regeneration through what she articulates as a ritual of rebirth following self-annihilation. The trope of ritualised death and rebirth – in particular a woman's ritualised death/return to the womb and rebirth recurs throughout her work.[455] This is a theme that recalls Nietzsche's notion of creation through destruction (whom Plath read). Whilst skiing with a boyfriend (who has given her poor skiing instruction) Esther indulges in an almost ecstatic impulse for destruction as she pushes herself down the hill:

> …into a flight I knew I couldn't stop by skill or any belated access of will…People and trees receded on either hand like the dark sides of a tunnel as I hurtled on to the still, bright point at the end of it, the pebble at the bottom of the well, the white sweet baby cradled in its mother's belly.[456]

Unlike Nietzschean renewal however, Esther's rebirth is not to a greater sense of life, but to the darkness and stillness of a baby in a womb.

Plath describes Esther's subsequent attempt to overdose on pills and hide herself in the cellar, as a peaceful self-annihilation, resembling a withdrawal to a state reminiscent of a mother's womb: 'The silence drew off, baring the pebbles and shells and all the tatty wreckage of my life. Then, at the rim of vision, it gathered itself, and in one sweeping tide, rushed me to sleep.' [457] After Esther is discovered, Plath describes her return to consciousness in hospital with imagery symbolic of birth as she moves from 'the thick, warm, furry dark' into light: 'a ragged gap of light appeared, like the hole in a wall.'[458] Her emergence from the bell jar of the work's title, which symbolises the constricting, stifling and oppressive entrapment of her illness, and her final release from hospital is described as

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[453] Plath, 'Fever 103°" in *Ariel*, 53.
[454] Plath, *The Bell Jar* , 151-152-154, prior to this she is victim of an attempted rape.
[455] Judith Kroll, *Chapters in a Mythology: The poetry of Sylvia Plath*, (New York : Harper & Row, c1976).,
[456] *The Bell Jar*, 67.
[457]*The Bell Jar,* 113.
[458] Plath, *The Bell Jar* ,114.

a rebirth: 'There ought…to a be a ritual for being born twice -- patched, retreaded and approved for the road.'[459]

In *The Bell Jar*, the desire to return to the mother is countered by her strong feelings of rejection of, and rage directed at the mother figure.[460] Self-annihilation is posited as an attempt to return to the mythical, ideal and nurturing mother and womb; Plath uses symbols such as the ocean, earth, womb to express this: for example the suicides in the Bell Jar, where she hides under the house, dark like a womb, when she attempts to drown herself in water, first in the bath tub, and second in the ocean.

Like Plath, Jelinek suffered from mental illness and experienced her first breakdown at the similarly young age of eighteen. Jelinek also suffered from agoraphobia, anxiety, and has admitted to her masochistic behaviour. In a parallel with Plath, Jelinek's father was absent (he was sent to an mental asylum) and her mother was also overbearing and controlling. *The Piano Teacher* centres on the masochistic practices and sexual perversions of Erika Kohut, the piano teacher of the novel's title, who, despite been in her late thirties still lives with, and shares a bed with her mother. Jelinek's choice of name 'Kohut' foregrounds the theme of masochism in the text because it refers to the Austrian psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut, who specialised in masochistic trauma.[461] Erika has self-harmed since adolescence, and in the novel these practices continue, but are exacerbated by her growing frustration with her situation and thwarted desires for sexual intimacy and escape. She begins a romantic liaison with one of her piano students, Walter Klemmer but he transpires to be a violent and abusive misogynist who does her further harm. After she expresses her masochistic desires, he rapes and beats her. She then stabs herself with a knife originally meant for Klemmer, only to return home to her mother's web. Through this horrific, yet melodramatic narrative, Jelinek elucidates some particular qualities of masochism, which are germane to the woman's ~~scream~~ and its symptoms.

In *The Piano Teacher*, in contrast to *The Bell Jar* shame and disgust are more explicitly linked to Erika's female genitalia and sexual function.[462] Her genital region is described in imagery of decay, filth and disease and contamination:

> Rot between her legs, an unfeeling soft mass. Decay, putrescent lumps of organic material…

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[459] Plath, *The Bell Jar*, 60.
[460] Isabelle Travis, "'I Have Always Been Scared of You': Sylvia Plath, perpetrator trauma and threatening victims," *European Journal of American Culture*, 28 no 3 (2009): 280.
[461] Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence," 98.
[462]Ibid., 80.

> Striding along, Erika hates that porous, rancid fruit that marks the bottom of her abdomen. Only art promises endless sweetness. Soon the decay will progress, encroaching upon larger parts of her body. Then she will die in torment. Dismayed, Erika pictures herself as a numb hole, six feet of space, disintegrating in the earth. The hole that she despised and neglected has now taken full possession of her. She is nothing. And there is nothing left for her. [463]

For Erika, the disgust and shame felt over her genitals is combined with her fear that she is not in control of this part of her body, and it will eventually cause her destruction.

One of the most disturbing images/scenarios of this desire for female annihilation depicted in *The Piano Teacher* is the scene in which Erika mutilates her vagina with a razor blade.[464] Unlike Plath's almost detached and cold, aestheticised, descriptions of self-harm, Jelinek's depiction of female self- mutilation in this text is abject, graphic and very difficult to read. Cutting and self-harm is often considered by psychologists and theorists as a desire for control, a desire to feel and bring oneself into reality from a dissociated/numb state, an expression of suffering, and/or a form of silent scream. [465] While these psychological explanations of self-harm are at play in this scene, it contains some specific qualities, which differentiate it other forms of self-harm. For the purposes of this chapter, this scene is a literal and horrific embodiment of the women's ~~scream~~ because the part of the body targeted is specifically the female genitalia, and the way in which this is done in the text: using her father's razor blade, is symbolic of male violence against women. Moreover Erika enacts a form of the female circumcision and/or castration, which suggests the desire to annihilate, and thus escape, her female biology, but also punish herself by destroying that which might give her pleasure. In particularly targeting her genitals, she also wants to purge herself of all that reminds her of, links her with, and what she shares biologically with her mother—namely her female sex. Here Jelinek reveals Erika's form of masochism is also derived from a relationship of antipathy to the mother. This compounds Erika's own self-hatred of the female/feminine within her.[466]

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[463] *The Piano Teacher*, Elfriede Jelinek, *The Piano Teacher*, trans, Joachim Neugroshel, (London: - 5-Star Edition, 1999), 105.
[464] Ibid.,
[465] Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View,* (Mass: MIT Press, 2004) 354-355; Andrea Bandhauer, "Michael Haneke's La Pianiste: An Adaptation of Elfriede Jelinek's The Piano Teacher,"
Literature & Aesthetics 16 no 2 (2006) : 275.
[466] Barbara Kosta, "Inscribing Erika: Mother-Daughter Bond/age in Elfriede Jelinek's "Die Klavierspielerin"" *Monatshefte*, 86 no 2, (1994):, 219.

Erika also ~~screams~~ against her inability to separate herself from the oppressive domination of her mother. Similarly to Esther, Erika struggles to separate psychological ties from the mother, and on a more literal level, as she is shown to be basically housebound by her mother aside from her music teaching and concerts.[467] As Barbara Kosta argues, 'Erika…finds few avenues of exploration outside of the maternal realm. As a result, she cuts or gouges herself in reaction to her inability to separate and as an expression of wishing to penetrate the cast that encases her. …Erika consequently punishes and negates herself as daughter and symbolically severs the umbilical cord in an effort to control her life…..[468] However, this effort to control her life is seen to be futile. In another echo of Esther Greenwood, Erika also exhibits an ambivalent desire to both escape from her mother and return to the womb. Erika cannot break the bond with her mother. Even at the very end of the novel after she stabs herself, she is compelled to return home to her mother: 'Erika knows the direction she has to take. She heads home...'[469]

The woman's ~~scream~~ against patriarchal, fascist and capitalist power structures

In *The Bell Jar* and *The Piano Teacher* respectively, the woman's ~~scream~~ not only exposes interpersonal violence, but also implicates patriarchal, capitalist and fascist and power structures. Plath is particularly concerned with the restrictions and expectations upon females in the rigid, conservative and consumerist environment of predominantly white, upper middle class United States of the 1950s. Jelinek, on the other hand, aims to elucidate the intertwined mechanics of patriarchy, capitalism and fascism and their detrimental effects on women's psychology and women's bodies and sexuality. Jelinek exposes disturbing residues of Nazism and fascism in contemporary Viennese society, and reveals abusive familial and interpersonal relationships such as those suffered by Erika Kohut to be the result of patriarchal and fascist power relations played out in the domestic sphere.[470]

In *The Bell Jar*, the central metaphor of the eponymous bell jar is used to encapsulate both Esther's mental illness and the stultifying conditions experienced by women in 1950s America:

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[467] Ibid.,227.
[468] Ibid., 227.
[469] Elfriede Jelinek, *The Piano Teacher*, 150.
[470] Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence."

> To the person in the bell jar, blank and stopped as a dead baby, the world itself is the bad dream….
>
> What was there about us, in Belsize, so different from the girls playing bridge and gossiping and studying in the college to which I would return? Those girls, too, sat under bell jars of a sort.[471]

For Esther the bell jar of her illness is a source of dissociation, paralysis, the desire to negate herself as a woman, and what she describes as 'stifling distortions.'[472] However, what Plath slowly reveals in the text here, is that these characteristics are not just personal symptoms, but in fact exemplify the female condition itself in 1950's America. *The Bell Jar* makes it clear that Esther struggles against the very restrictive social roles ascribed to women of her time. The novel discusses the painful realities for women during this time: for example that even educated women such as Plath were expected to rescind the notion of a career and take up the role of housewife. Meanwhile women were subjected to a plethora of expectations about how they should look, dress, eat and act which Esther also struggles with in the text. Moreover although contraception was becoming more widely available for women, women's sexuality was largely disregarded.[473] The implication here is that while Esther may medically recover from her illness, she will still have to combat the bell jar of her constraining environment—for Esther the subjectivity and autonomy lost during her illness is just a more extreme and debilitating version restrictions placed upon women within her patriarchal society. Hence Esther's desire for female self-annihilation, her disgust at her female sexuality and her rejection of aspects of femininity (for example in the scene where she throws all her expensive clothes out of the window) are all reactions to her fears of restrictive implications her female biology will have on her future.[474] For example, she is told that when she is married she would not write poems anymore. Having to give up writing would be devastating for Esther (and Plath):

> I also remembered Buddy Willard saying in a sinister, knowing way that after I had children I would feel differently, I wouldn't want to write poems any more. So I began to think maybe it was true that when you were married and had children it

[471] Plath, *The Bell Jar*, 155. Belsize is name of the asylum in The Bell Jar.
[472] Ibid., 155.
[473] Mary Evans, "Extending Autobiography," 83-84.
[474] Plath, *The Bell Jar,* 74-75.

> was like being brainwashed, and afterward you went about numb as a slave in some private, totalitarian state.[475]

Thus Esther describes the situation of married women as a similarly controlling, 'numb' and restrictive condition as her illness. The English feminist literary critic Mary Evans has argued that *The Bell Jar* represents a woman's struggle to articulate an autonomous self: 'What *The Bell Jar* thus offers to us is a thesis about the virtual impossibility—for women—of articulating a self which is not formed, affected and distorted by immensely influential pressures.'[476] Indeed the woman's ~~scream~~ in Plath's *The Bell Jar* can be seen as an attempt to forge and express an autonomous self in spite of these pressures and restrictions of 1950s society. Esther attempts to achieve an autonomous self through suicidal self-destruction and rebirth, due to the lack of any other less drastic methods available.

In *The Piano Teacher*, Jelinek echoes Plath in comparing the stifling mother-daughter relationship in the domestic sphere to a bell jar:

> They are enclosed together in a bell jar: Erika, her fine protective hulls her mama. The jar can be lifted only if an outsider grabs the glass knob on top and pulls it up. Erika is an insect encased in amber, timeless ageless.[477]

However, unlike Plath, Jelinek makes it overt that both mother and daughter are confined in the bell jar. Moreover, Erika's paralysis and inability to grow and develop in the bell jar is made even more clear and disquieting in the image of Erika 'encased in amber.' In *The Piano Teacher*, the bell jar is revealed as place of violence, torture, rape and obscenity, hence the image of Erika literally stuck in this environment is chilling. Again mirroring Plath, Jelinek's bell jar in *The Piano Teacher* is symbolic of a larger, social violence. Jelinek shows that Erika's masochistic attacks on her body and genitalia are not only related to the abuse and domination she receives from her mother, but are emblematic of the systemic violence of the patriarchal, capitalist and fascist culture of contemporary Austria, where women's sexuality and agency is denied and women's bodies are violated.[478]

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[475] Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*, 58.
[476] Mary Evans, "Extending Autobiography,"
[477] Jelinek, *The Piano Teacher*, 14. This is not the only reference to Plath in Jelinek's work. The last installment of her dramatic suite *Princess Dramas: Death and the Maiden 1-V* (2002), titled "The Wall" features Plath as one of the central characters along with Ingeborg Bachmann.
[478] Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence."

For Jelinek, as with a number of German and Austrian feminist writers working after WW2, violence against women is symptomatic of fascism, whilst gender inequality itself is seen to perpetuate fascism in covert form.[479] Jelinek in particular follows the ideas of Post World War II Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann who saw fascism and warfare at the core of interpersonal, heterosexual relationships.[480] As Jelinek writes in her essay "Der Krieg mit anderen Mitteln" (War by other means), intimate relationships, and marriage between men and women result in a woman's annihilation and loss of subjectivity:

> [On love's] battlefield takes place the bloody, sometimes blood-less annihilation of the feminine, which can never become a subject, but forever must remain an object, subjugated to employment contracts not recognized by society, called marriage. [481]

Marriage is seen as a form of fascist victimisation as well as unpaid employment that is not recognised or valued by capitalist power structures. At the same time, the institution of motherhood is revealed to be an active agent in perpetuating this violence against daughters. Jelinek depicts the complicity of mothers through satire, melodrama and dark humour. For example, Erika's mother is portrayed as a monstrous feminine persona who devours Erika. A number of critics such as Barabara Kosta argue that Erika and her mother are depicted by Jelinek as excessive caricatures that transgress the 'boundaries of realism.'[482] However, rather than this being fantasy or hypperealism, Jelinek in fact exposes the reality of violence, obscenity and horror in the domestic space, especially in the context of what Jelinek regards as contemporary Austria's unacknowledged and obscene relationship with its fascist history.[483] As Žižek argues, 'mercilessly, she has brought to light obscene fantasies that underlie the Middle European respectability….[484] The institution of motherhood itself is literally raged against in Jelinek's text: Erika's mother is seen as colluding in this obscene violence against women.[485] Thus Erika's disturbing self-mutilation is linked to her mother's own complicity. Jelinek shows that for Erika, it is both male

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[479] Ibid., 79
[480] Matthias Konzett, Margarete Lamb-Faffelberger, eds., *Elfriede Jelinek: Writing Woman, Nation, and Identity: a Critical Anthology*, (New Jersey: Associated University Press, 2007), 35; Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence," 81.
[481] Elfriede Jelinek, "Der Krieg mit anderen Mitteln," quoted in Hanssen, 81.
[482] Kosta, "Inscribing Erika,"230 .
[483] Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence."
[484] SLavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 316.
[485] Kosta, 231:

violence and her mother's perpetuation of this violence that causes the shame and disgust she feels over her body, and leads to her masochistic behaviours and desire for annihilation of her female sex.[486]

In particular, Erika's self-revulsion of her female sex is seen to be directly linked to her mother—who during Erika's childhood and development censured Erika from sexuality, set it off-limits, and regarded her body as shameful:[487]

> The adolescent girl lives in a sanctuary, where no one is allowed to bother her. She is shielded from influences, and never exposed to temptations. This hands-off policy applies only to pleasure, not work. Mother and grandmother, the female brigade, stand guard, rifle in hand, to protect Erika against the male hunter lurking outside.[488]

Thus in *The Piano Teacher*, mother figures are seen to be a further source of oppression of female sexuality, and are complicit in actively imparting misogynistic prohibitions and body shame. Erika's sexuality and body is considered impure in contrast to the purported purity of music: 'If Mother is not beckoning with the ladder of success, which goes upward, then she depicts the horror of the primrose path, which leads downward. Better the peak of art than the slough of sex.'[489]

American literary scholar and activist Tobe Levin has insightfully demonstrated the particular horror of this type of violence, perpetuated by mothers on daughters when it is turned back onto the self:

> … For although the hyperbole can be read as satire, the nothingness to which women is consigned both reflects and enacts a gynocidal threat turned in against the female self….Jelinek, therefore, unveils the quisling mother, the one who colludes in her daughter's mutilation in millions of literal cases each year. But…excision is a shared oppression, for in Jelinek's texts, a clitoris or a vagina, when literally and metonymically erased, snuffs out and thereby paradoxically creates a female caste based on somatophobia and misogyny. Those identified as

[486] Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence," 99-101.
[487] Maria-Regina Kecht, ""In the Name of Obedience, Reason, and Fear": Mother-Daughter Relations in W. A. Mitgutsch and E. Jelinek," *The German Quarterly*, 62 no 3, Focus: Literature since 1945, (1989): 361-364
[488] Jelinek, *The Piano Teacher*,18.
[489] Jelinek, The Piano Teacher, 105; Kecht, ""In the Name of Obedience, Reason, and Fear,"272

> women, wherever they inhabit patriarchal space, have been divided even unto our most intimate bonds.'[490]

Levin here identifies the horrific violence Erika enacts on her female body as symptomatic of the broader issue of the oppression of women and women's bodies by other women, as well as men. Patriarchal violence against women when taken to its horrific conclusion is the erasure, mutilation and destruction of the female genitalia either symbolically or literally. And, as Levin demonstrates, and is shown in the Jelinek's *The Piano Teacher*, this violence is intergenerational. Erika's particular form of masochistic behaviour, by literally embodying this violence is the only way she can achieve some sort of agency and control in the context of being trapped in a web of violence transmitted from mother to daughter. This is shown in the disturbing scene where Erika cuts at her genitals:

> She is entirely at her own mercy, which is still better than being at someone else's mercy. It's still in her hands, and a hand has feelings too. She knows precisely how often and how deep.[491]

Erika's acts of self-harm not only embody the violence and disgust of the abuser upon herself, but enacts a further violence—i.e. one that is not only mirroring the violence of the male/abuser, but is also of her own devising. For example, she can control 'how often and how deep.' This is a form of appropriating violence or enacting counter-violence, that rather than being directed outwardly, is enacted on the self.[492]

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[490] Tobe Levin, "Feminist (and "Womanist") as Public Intellectuals: Elfriede Jelinek and Alice Walker," in Ethan Goffman, Daniel Morris (eds.), *The New York Public Intellectuals and Beyond: Exploring Liberal Humanism* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2009), 253-255.
[491] Jelinek, *The Piano Teacher*, 47.
[492] Hanssen, "Jelinek's Language of Violence," 100-104.

Conclusion

> The fact would seem to be, if in my situation one may speak of facts, not only that I shall have to speak of things of which I cannot speak, but also, which is even more interesting, but also that I, which is if possible even more interesting, that I shall have to, I forget, no matter. And at the same time I am obliged to speak. I shall never be silent. Never.
>
> —Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable*

The above excerpt from Samuel Beckett's novel *The Unnamable* (1953) encapsulates some of the key qualities of the ~~scream~~ and reflects the struggles faced in writing this thesis. The ~~scream~~ relates to traumatic events about which I cannot speak. Yet, like Beckett's narrator in *The Unnamable,* I am compelled to speak about them, and refuse to be silent. The quote also captures the way in which the ~~scream~~ is repressed, and yet constantly rises up, seeking expression. A further point of connection is that in *The Unnamable,* the latent rage and distress of Beckett's narrator results from an undisclosed horror and trauma, which constantly torments him, and which he repeatedly struggles to comprehend.[493] This scenario is shared in the condition of the ~~scream~~ and demonstrated in the case studies discussed in this thesis.

For a long time I was unable to verbalise any aspects of my traumatic experiences. However, I sought out other forms of expression that resonated with my tumultuous inner state. For example, prior to the undertaking of this PhD and my focus on visual art, I studied the cello. As a child I identified with this instrument because of the melancholy and grief it is capable of expressing. As a child I also took to drawing and painting, through which I unconsciously expressed aspects of the ~~scream~~ and its symptoms. More recently—particularly in the performance video artworks created as part of this PhD project—I have found stronger ways to express this condition. One of the outcomes this project is that I have begun to be able to speak and write about the events that I experienced and my resulting psychological state.

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[493] A number of theorists have discussed trauma in relation to Beckett's trilogy *Molloy, Malone* and the *Unnamable*. See Angela Moorjani, "Molloy, Molone Dies, The Unnamable: The Novel Reshaped," in Dirk van Hulle, Ed., *The New Cambridge Companion to Samuel Beckett*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 23-25.

This thesis has established the ~~scream~~ as a very specific psychological condition resulting from severe trauma. It is characterised by an explosive and violent energy comprised of rage, anguish, resentment, despair and self-revulsion that wells up, but is suppressed and turns back in on the traumatised individual, causing further psychic devastation. The thesis has demonstrated the symbiotic link between this condition and the way in which it is expressed in the aesthetic realm: the case studies discussed are not only expressive of the ~~scream~~, but are also symptomatic of this condition. Each writer or artist discussed here shares a compulsion to express something that cannot be fully articulated because it is too horrific, painful or shameful, and this difficulty is imbued in the very fabric of their works. At the same time, the self-destructive aspect of the ~~scream~~ is evident in works that enact or perform the author's own self-directed rage, self-punishment and self-mutilation.

Each of the case studies examined in this thesis shares in the essential characteristics of the ~~scream~~ while at the same time providing varied perspectives on this condition. The interdisciplinary approach of this thesis has assisted in elucidating the specific nuances and contrasts of the ~~scream~~: the six chapters are symbolic of the different existential states or moods that co-exist within this condition, and the contrasting ways in which it can be expressed in literary, dramatic, philosophical and artistic works. An important outcome of this research has been to show that this condition is not limited any one particular type of trauma, but can emerge from a broad range of traumatic experiences. For example the ~~scream~~ may be a response to interpersonal violence, catastrophic events, and even endogenous causes such as severe physical or psychological illness. At the same time the case studies reveal the ~~scream~~ to have a broader aesthetic, philosophical and psychological significance beyond individual pathography or autobiography.

One of the insights provided by this investigation is that the ~~scream~~ is both transversal—in the sense that it is found in cultural works ranging from Antiquity to the contemporary era—yet at the same time highly dependent on its specific historical context in terms of the aesthetic form it takes, and its relationship to the writer's or artist's milieu. In fact, for the majority of case studies discussed the expression of the ~~scream~~ is not only personal but is also used allegorically to address social and/or political concerns. For example, Bataille's obscene ~~scream~~ is also a rage against Fascism, and Jelinek's ~~scream~~ functions as a strident critique of patriarchal and capitalist power structures. Although the ~~scream~~ is a very personal experience, it is not isolated from the subject's cultural and historical context, and can be used as a way in which to articulate resistance and critique.

In contrast to many existing studies on trauma—which are typically based on themes of memory, mourning and melancholy—this thesis examines a particular condition of trauma that is violent, disquieting and at times obscene. The ~~scream~~ also involves elements that are at odds with commonplace notions of forgiveness and healing, such as implacable rage, madness, the desire for violent revenge, self-punishment and the desire for self-annihilation. Furthermore, one of the insights provided by the case studies (most clearly demonstrated in the works of Artaud) is that the kind of severe trauma that generates the ~~scream~~ precludes catharsis or resolution.

This PhD project has been a personal and troubled exploration. It has not achieved catharsis, purgation or redemption. However, like a camera slowly coming into focus, many things about this condition are clearer. This is not full clarification or enlightenment, but I now have greater perspective on what I am dealing with, and have gathered strength to go on.

The intensity of the artwork provides a benchmark I intend to develop further in mime, vaudeville, *grand guignol*, and the doll. The performative abreaction and displacement of personal traumatic experiences into scenarios that recall but do not re-enact these experiences lends itself particularly to further exploration in these areas that are broadly grouped together under the rubric of the mask. Moreover, as the condition of the ~~scream~~ entails an explosive, yet repressed, state—and thus a significant dissonance between inner experience and outside appearances—the theme of the mask seems particularly apt for future creative investigation. A further area of interest lies in the relationship of both the physical and symbolic mask to the expression of extreme emotion and the subjectivity of the artist within the aesthetic realm. The concept of the mask includes not only the face mask or makeup worn by the performer, but the costume, mise-en-scène and the entire aesthetic artifice set up by the artist/performer. This expanded concept of the mask is aligned with the work Artaud and Strindberg who demonstrate that the consciously constructed artificiality of the entire mise-en-scène is essential to the communicative power and successful affect of any performative-based artwork. The mask allows the artist to stage, objectify and formalise the work. It also allows the artist to explore and inhabit multiple personae and perform actions that are not normally accessible, including the violent, obscene and irrational. The mask is therefore an important strategy for performative-based visual art practices such as my own that aim to explore inner, hidden or taboo psychological states and tensions. The displacement of outward identity allows the subject to inhabit alternative and often transgressive modes of behaviour, for example as

manifest in the ~~scream~~. Future theoretical research will explore the ways in which allegorical, highly artificial and stylized modes of expression can be paradoxically more revealing of these inner states of being than realistic or naturalistic forms of expression.

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Figure 1: Edvard Munch, *The Scream*, 1893, tempera and crayon on cardboard, 91x73.5 cm.

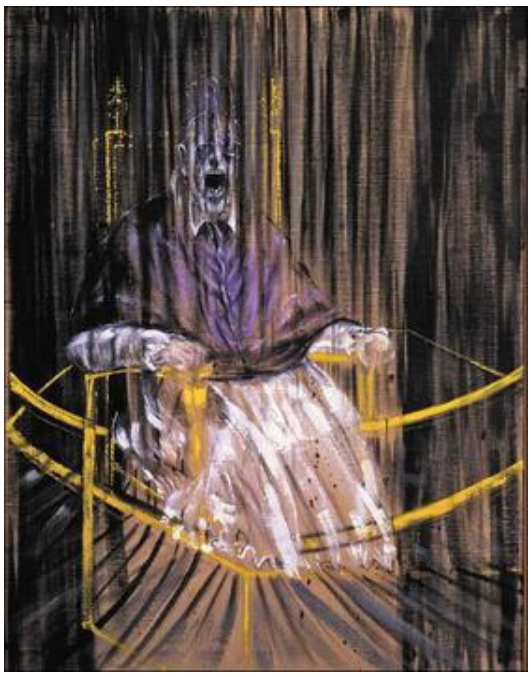

Figure Two: Francis Bacon, *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X,* 1953, Oil on Canvas, 153x118 cm.