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Psychoanalysis

Lucy Arnold

Abstract

In 2018, trauma has emerged as one of the key preoccupations in the field of psychoanalytic scholarship, not only in terms of its manifestations in the clinic but in the social sphere and the cultural imaginary. This year's review examines six texts which, implicitly and explicitly interrogate the significance and function of trauma from a range of standpoints and is divided into four sections: 1. Introduction; 2. Theorizing Trauma and the Subject (which examines John L. Roberts *Trauma and the Ontology of the Modern Subject* and Rudi Vermont's *Reading Bion*); 3. Memory, History and Trauma (which explores Roger Frie's *History Flows Through Us* and Eric R. Stevenson and David M Goodman's edited collection *Memories and Monsters: Psychology, Trauma and Narrative*); 4. Mothers and (M)others – Trauma and the Family (which considers Jacqueline Rose's *Mothers: An Essay on Love and Cruelty* and Jean Owen and Naomi Segal's edited collection *On Replacement: Cultural, Social and Psychological Representations*).

1. Introduction

The last time I had been in what is now the Freud Museum in London, I was a teenager and had been invited to lunch by Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham. What I had experienced as Anna Freud's home was now a museum, a "part of history." In the exhibition at the London museum there were displays in cases of objects I had seen when they weren't historical artefacts but household items. [. . .] It is really quite a strange experience for me to realize that my past, at least in psychoanalytic terms, has now become "historical," that I knew people who are now remembered in museums and that I had visited places that have now become museums. (p. 166)

So recalls Thomas Kohut in an interview with Roger Frie for the essay collection *History Flows Through Us: Germany, the Holocaust and the Importance of Empathy*. Kohut, son of Austrian-American psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut, is remembering here his childhood acquaintance and then adult friendship with many of the pioneers of European psychoanalysis. Later in the interview he recalls that he was 'swung up in the air by Ernest Jones' (p. 166) and speaks of how he watches a video running in the museum showing numerous other psychoanalysts he had met as a child.

Kohut's recollection, with its emphasis on how personal memory and collective history merge in the spaces of the Freud Museums, whose creation and nature, as last year's review observed, is itself a legacy of the holocaust, points obliquely to a shift in attention in the field of psychoanalysis in 2018. This shift comprises a move away from thinking about the material culture of psychoanalysis and towards exploring what occurs in an immaterial matrix comprised of psychoanalysis, memory, history and trauma. In 2017 one of the key emphases in the field of psychoanalysis fell on the spaces and objects associated with the discipline; the psychoanalytic couch, the fetish object and, of course, the Freud Museums. In this review I examine six texts which are interested in using psychoanalysis to explore less tangible legacies, including the numerous legacies and futures associated with psychoanalysis itself. The books reviewed here are united by their interest, implicit and explicit, in the idea of trauma. The trauma which creates and is created by monsters of all kinds, social and cultural, imagined and real. The trauma of the holocaust and its complex and sinister resonances. Trauma as central to being a subject and subjectivity as emerging from the traumatic crucible of contact with the world. War trauma and its role in shaping, throughout his career, the work of Wilfred Bion. The trauma of loss that drives the search for a replacement while always already rendering such a search futile. And finally the trauma of a motherhood loaded with societal anxieties, expectations and condemnations.

Read together, these six texts deploy psychoanalytic thinking in a variety of ways in order to outline the characteristics and problematics of twenty-first century psychic life. Simultaneously, they articulate an urgent need to recognize and interrogate a number of strands of Western political discourse whose impact upon those subject to it is traumatizing and marginalizing, and whose investment in the devaluing and sidelining of psychoanalytic and psychodynamic therapeutic approaches compounds that trauma. Phillip Cushman's assertion that, in the late 2010s, '[w]e are becoming the kind of persons who are uninterested in, and increasingly incapable of, political nuance and creativity, independent interpretative thinking, tolerating difference or dwelling in a social world of uncertainty' (p. 37) characterizes a timely warning that all of these texts are expressing in one way or another.

I begin section three by considering two works which are concerned, to greater and lesser extents, with psychoanalytic understandings of the relationship between trauma and the subject: John L. Roberts *Trauma and the Ontology of the Modern Subject* and Rudi Vermont's *Reading Bion*. In section four, I turn to two books exploring the intersections of trauma and memory, both individual or collective; Roger Frie's *History Flows Through Us* and Eric R. Stevenson and David M Goodman's edited

collection *Memories and Monsters: Psychology, Trauma and Narrative*. Finally, in section five, I examine Jacqueline Rose's *Mothers: An Essay on Love and Cruelty* and Jean Owen and Naomi Segal's edited collection *On Replacement: Cultural, Social and Psychological Representations*, texts which are both concerned with how the familial unit is constituted in very real ways by experiences of loss and trauma.

2. Theorising Trauma and the Subject

In Jerome A. Miller's contribution to *Memories and Monsters: Psychology, Trauma and Narrative* he proposes that the psychoanalyst sits in unique relation to trauma. He states '[t]oday, it's usually the psychoanalyst who gets closer to [desire's] monstrosity than anyone except the victims and perpetrators of the violence inherent in it. But every one of us has, at some time, in some way, been close enough to monstrosity to be both of these. We'd prefer not to know this – not to learn the truths hidden under the camouflage. But its these very truths that the psychoanalyst invites us to give her. Because monstrosity is unbearable, her receptiveness seems a human impossibility' (p. 106). The seeming impossibility of this receptive figure, capable of containing and processing experience at its most painful and incomprehensible, is central to Wilfred Bion's thinking, as Rudi Vermont observes in his introduction to the clinician's work *Reading Bion* (p. 8). Vermont's book provides a lucid and accessible account of Bion's thinking and is organized along chronological lines, divided into two sections which map Bion's movement from articulating the 'Transformations in Knowledge' which comprise the mind's psychic processes, to a consideration of 'Transformations in O', considerations which re-situated his previous concepts in light of a focus on the unknown and the unknowable. The running text, which gives the central account of Bion's life and work, is supported and enriched by a series of text boxes and separate chapters providing details of the statistical, biographical, artistic and philosophical influences on Bion's work.

This is a timely and much needed publication. Bion's own writing, and his frequent recourse in his early and mid-career to the diagrams and language of mathematics as a mode of articulation for his ideas, render him, initially, an intimidating prospect for the unfamiliar reader. As Vermont maps in the opening chapter of his book, multiple publications offering an account of Bion's thinking exist but while the literature around Bionian psychoanalysis is rich and varied, the complexity and nuance of Bion's work has remained, until now difficult to penetrate, particularly for the reader not already familiar with Bionian thinking. Vermont's text offers a clear-sighted and accessible guide through the development of Bion's thinking, articulating usefully how Bion inherits from, and undertakes an evolution of, Freudian, Kleinian and Lacanian thought while also highlighting, in a way which has hitherto been absent, the way

Bion's language and thinking was shaped by numerous philosophers, including Locke, Hume, and latterly Plato and Kant, and authors including John Keats and John Milton, extracts from whose *Paradise Lost* were quoted at Bion's memorial. (p. 135).

A second key achievement of Vermont's text is its exploration of Bion's biography. Not only does this material offer an empathic and insightful account of a figure who many in the psychoanalytic community in which Bion worked experienced as intensely private and detached (p. 6), it provides a secondary idiom for the reader unfamiliar with Bion to grasp the origins and real-world manifestations of the psychic processes Bion's work outlines. For example, the idea that Bion's time as a tank commander in the First World War shaped his psychoanalytic thinking are commonplace in Bion scholarship. Yet Vermont provides a detailed account of Bion's early experiences of isolation during his time at boarding school as a very young child, sent from India to England at just eight years old and places this episode on a continuum which includes Bion's traumatic experiences at the battle of Amiens in which 'he lay on the frozen ground and fantasized about being held in his mother's arms (Bion 1986)' (p. 7). Vermont's explication of these elements of Bion's biography is positioned in such a way as to allow the reader an alternative way in to understanding Bion's concept of the container-contained relationship: 'Bion gave the mother function a central place in his theory of thinking, but he named the theory containment; a military term' (p. 8).

If Bion's psychoanalytic thinking was shaped by the trauma of his wartime experiences, and went on to offer models for how trauma might be understood, John L. Roberts' intricately argued text, *Trauma and the Ontology of the Modern Subject*, offers an account of how contemporary definitions of trauma came into being, their origins in, and underpinnings by, a wealth of philosophical thought dating from antiquity. Sharing the interdisciplinary approach deployed by a number of the publications in this year's review, Roberts' book questions what the ramifications might be of the myriad positions and significances trauma, with its intrinsic relationship to the functioning of memory, is being asked to take up in the contemporary moment. One of the central propositions of *Trauma* is that trauma, far from being essentially pathological, is in fact profoundly ordinary and originary, a pre-condition of the formation of a subject. Roberts' exploration of this idea meticulously draws out the implications of Freudian psychoanalysis' assertion of 'psychic trauma both psychologically and culturally, and as definitive of the modern, divided subject' (p. 126). Invoking Laplanche and Lacan, whose work is productively placed in a wider context of trauma studies, Roberts argues for an essentially traumatic

subjectivity, whereby 'subjectivity becomes primordially related to Otherness, the subject being written through bits and fragments of an Other consciousness' (p. 131).

This presence of a traumatic subjectivity is obscured in the contemporary moment, Roberts argues, by an adoption and redefinition of trauma by governmental, medical and cultural discourses, frequently for the purposes of constructing and controlling both the contemporary citizen and collective memory. As Roberts puts it: 'trauma – as a clinical discourse and practice – orders or calculates suffering in a fashion that accelerates the speed at which the subject may retain an open futural horizon, and accomplishes this feat through massifying the subject's distress and formulating standardized procedures in address thereof' (p. 199). Roberts notes 'the nomadic movement of trauma out of purely psychiatric and psychological contexts' that sees trauma as '*implicated in problematic discourses on temporality and memory*' (p. 3). This movement becomes central to debates on how technological innovation that produces supplements to human memory might act as a form of reparation for the memorial absences which trauma can produce, and finally as central to the functioning of various kinds of bio-power which characterize 'post-industrial forms of governmentality' (p. 4). Simultaneously, Roberts interrogates the specific ways in which trauma has been taken up by the psy-disciplines in a way which medicalizes and pathologizes it, positioning the traumatized subject as an exceptional – and exceptionally broken – subject who requires fixing, their fragmented subjectivity returned to wholeness through the application of a range of therapeutics aimed at producing 'a figuration of selfhood as a putatively realistic, memorial depiction or narration of lived, linear time' (p. 145).

In his examination of this trend, Roberts articulates a theme which has emerged across psychoanalytic writing in 2018, that is, a move towards a rejection of psychoanalytic psychotherapy, or else a reconfiguring of psychoanalytic psychotherapy to allow it to resemble, and function in the same way as, its manualized counterparts, however, for Roberts this is a move bound up with an erroneous understanding of trauma as a shattering that can be restored to wholeness, as essentially 'fixable.' Robert's cites Stolorow in this respect, who argues that: 'Trauma recovery' is an oxymoron – human finitude with its traumatizing impact is not an illness from which one can recover. 'Recovery' is a misnomer for the constitution of an expanded emotional world that coexists alongside the absence of the one that has been shattered by trauma (p. 84). Of this cultural and therapeutic insistence on the desirability of 'moving on' Roberts states:

as modern subjects, [. . .] we are admonished, not only by cognitive behavioural therapies but also traditionally psychoanalytic ones, to “move on”, to “work through” our past traumas and struggles, to explain them, account for them in ways that place them firmly in the antimimetic mode of depiction – to avoid living through them, to wash ourselves of the past, to open ourselves to progress, to the future.’ (pp. 172-3)

The notion of being cleansed of historical traumas, personal and collective, of encouraging the subject to orient themselves with regard to the future rather than the past, is one that the following two publications problematize in a multitude of ways.

3. Memory, History and Trauma

In Patrick Ness’s novel *A Monster Calls* (2011), the thirteen-year old protagonist, whose mother is terminally ill, is visited by a monster in the form of an anthropomorphized yew tree. This monster tells the boy three true stories, each of which is concerned with the pain and difficulty inherent in being human. In exchange the boy must then tell the monster his own true story, or the monster will eat him. The story the boy eventually tells is of his ambivalent feelings about his mother’s illness and his desire that her life should end so that her suffering (and his own) will also cease. I invoke Ness’s novel here because it encapsulates the understanding of the monster as simultaneously capable of being a source of terror and a source of comfort, and as inherently narrative bearing, both in terms of bringing with it its own stories and being able to ‘bear’ the stories of others. Ness’s monster stands at the center of the psychology, trauma and narrative triad which Eric R. Severson and David M. Goodman’s essay collection *Memories and Monsters: Psychology, Trauma and Narrative* explores.

Severson and Goodman’s collection seeks to acknowledge the ubiquity and diversity of the figure of the monster, working on the contiguous margin between philosophy and psychology, and engaging with the significant growth of interest in recent years in the intersections between these two disciplines, to establish ‘the ways in which we might best relate to our monsters, about the legacies of ancient anxieties and traumas that continue to reverberate in our stories, memories, and everyday practices’ (pp. 1-2). One of the collection’s key features is its embrace of a vibrantly diverse and interdisciplinary approach, drawing contributors from the fields of psychology, theology, American studies, philosophy, linguistics, neuropsychology and psychoanalysis.

In many ways the collection exemplifies the kinds of lively and unpredictable texts can be produced when a truly interdisciplinary approach is taken, even if the collection’s coherence and focus

become at times a little strained by the wide range of its contributions. A number of the chapters are united by their interest in the interactions between notions of the self, the other and trauma. Amira Simha-Alpern's chapter 'The idealized "other": A reparative fiction' exemplifies this approach, sitting alongside Steven Huett and George Horton's paper on alterity in Nabokov's *Lolita* and Malcolm Owen Slavin's chapter on existential trauma, the trauma of the separation from what Slavin terms 'an earlier, wordless unity with the natural world in which we were unselfconsciously free from the haunting awareness of our own mortality' (p. 273). All three of these papers contemplate the relationship between the self and alterity and the potential for trauma that relationship always incubates. Other contributions are invested in considering the significance of specific monsters drawn from literature and culture. For example Paul Cantz's chapter on 'Apocalyptic exceptionalism and existential particularity: the rise in popularity of dystopian myths and our immortal "other", which posits the zombies of the *Walking Dead* television series as an externalization of anxieties about aging and death, an 'agentic "death"' (p. 18) which can be killed. Likewise, the collection contains a pair of chapters on the figure of the Golem, Phillip Cushman's 'The Golem must live, the Golem must die: on the moral imperative of writing critical cultural histories of psychology' and Joel Rosenberg's 'The Golem and the decline of magic – or why our machines disappoint.' Both use the folkloric figure of the Golem, the monster created to protect the Jewish population of Prague, and its association with the letter *aleph*, and thus the function of interpretation, to think about how twenty-first century subjects – 'a different species from our great grandparents (p. 49) thanks to the advances in technology that have prostheticized our being – are at risk of taking on a 'golem-like' aspect, becoming robots or 'non-interpretative, deadened worker bees or heroic war machines' (p. 32). Interestingly, both chapters relate this crisis in contemporary subjectivity to a crisis in psychoanalytic practice, that is, the increasing manualization and proceduralization of talking therapies and a sidelining of psychoanalysis and psychodynamic therapies in favour of computerized treatments,¹ an approach which increases, rather than decreases the risk of the 'golemization' of the twenty-first century subject for these contributors. As Cushman puts it:

¹ This is a trend also recognized by Jacqueline Rose in her book *Mothers: An Essay on Love and Cruelty* in which she comments on the need for 'an analyst in touch with "his own fear and hatred" [. . .] only such an analyst will be responding to the patient's - as opposed to the analyst's - own needs. CBT, with its questionnaires and instant results, would be therapy designed to protect the therapist, by getting hatred out of the room as fast as it can.'

[O]n July 21, 2014, Magellan Health Inc. announced that it “will soon offer expanded computerized cognitive behavioral treatment programs.” It will do so in order to “address common concerns in the behavioral health community . . . [such as] lack of access to clinicians” (Magellan, 2014, p. 2). Evidently the way to address the shortage of therapists is to do away with them entirely. Here we see proceduralism, in the form of manuals and computer programming, as a substitute for human meeting, for those precious moments when, together, we make presence and meaning out of absence and grief. (p. 34)

Other chapters move away from the notion of a discrete monster, to think about trauma brought about by the monstrosity associated with crimes against humanity, and the uncanny hauntings and de-humanizations, that such trauma can bring about. Such an approach is taken by Roger FrieFrie in his chapter on the traumatic legacies of perpetration for the children and grandchildren of German civilians who were both participants in a Nazi past and also traumatized by their wartime experiences of Allied bombing campaigns. FrieFrie’s chapter explores an under recognized phenomenon of inherited guilt and trauma at work in the children and grandchildren of perpetrator groups, arguing that an association with the monstrosity of acts of genocide forces second and third generation Germans into a position of disassociation where the grandparent has to be split off from their perpetrator status so that a positive identification with them can be maintained. As FrieFrie puts it, ‘How do you make sense of the fact that your parents, and indeed your grandparents, are capable of morally intolerable beliefs and indefensible actions?’ (p. 119)

Jerome Veith’s chapter ‘Haunting and Historicity’ resonates with Frie’s description of his own intergenerational haunting by the monsters of a past that he did not live through. Through readings of W.G. Sebald’s *Austerlitz* and Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, the chapter turns to the figure of the ghost rather than of the monster to think about how haunting interrupts apparently settled histories reinforced by museums and archives and makes a demand for a different kind of memory: ‘By calling our attention to such occlusions and silences, haunting insists that we *can* remember more (or differently), that we *ought* to remember more (or differently), and that we ought to do so for the sake of an *other* (alive or dead)’ (p. 133). Such a demand for a new ethical approach, and an articulation of the broader implications of both Frie and Veith’s chapters is found in Doris Brothers’ contribution to the collection, ‘Changing social narratives: fighting “crimes against humanity.”’ Brothers, a practicing psychoanalyst, argues that the experience of trauma generates in the self a feeling of inhumanity, of being monstrous, robotic or zombified, emphasizing that this is particularly the case when trauma is a result of systemic

dehumanization, as in the case of the Holocaust. She states: 'If you accept my notion that trauma affects one's sense of being a human among humans, we may all be at risk of losing a sense of being human, especially when trauma involves our being treated inhumanely (p.150).' For *Brothers* it is the creation of several related narratives of the subject that offer a route out of the dehumanized monster-subjectivity associated with being traumatized, stories of 'self', stories of 'us' and stories of 'now'. It is an acknowledging and reworking these stories, which place the subject in relation to their relationships with others and their historical moment, that can offer reparation for the "crimes against humanity" which risk rendering their victims monstrous to themselves.

The emphasis which unites this collection, the urge towards the possibility of learning from monsters, both in terms of what the monsters we create say about us but also the ambivalence with which we must necessarily approach the monster lest we banish or smother it or alternatively nourish it and allow it to grow out of control offers a key site of intersection between *Memories and Monsters* and the second text discussed here, Roger Frie's own collection *History Flows Through Us*. In early 2019 a poll commissioned by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust revealed that five percent of Britons did not believe the Holocaust took place. Twelve percent of those surveyed believed the scale of the Holocaust had been exaggerated and an average of five percent of people had never heard of the Holocaust and knew nothing about it (Hmd.org.uk, 2019). A separate survey conducted in America in 2018 recorded nine percent of millennials stating that they had never heard of the Holocaust. (Sherwood, 2019) Such stark figures offer a compelling argument for the timeliness of Frie's *History Flows Through Us*. The collection shares with *Memories and Monsters* an interdisciplinary approach and is underpinned by a dialogue between historians and psychoanalysts, a dialogue which emerges from an acknowledgement of the significant intersection between the two disciplines. A further key aspect underpinning the collection is the work of historian and psychoanalyst Thomas Kohut, the embodiment of this interdisciplinary approach. Kohut's work on the importance of empathy in understanding German history and the legacies of the Holocaust in many ways provide the impetus for the collection, and the dialogue between Kohut and Frie offers one of the most accessible and productive discussions in the text. In essence, the book is concerned with exploring the nature and manifestations of historical trauma, specifically the trauma of the Holocaust. However, the scope and implications of the text are much broader, as the chapters come together to offer a resonant account of the ways in which history and human subjectivity interact with and constitute each other, of how 'collective memory, and the stories we tell about the past cannot be separated from social and political developments or from the

interests of succeeding generations' (p. 6). Through a range of strategies, Frie and his contributors are attempting to answer such questions as 'How do we make sense of a traumatic past that is not of our making? How do we understand the support that everyday people lent a regime determined to commit genocide? How do we comprehend the perpetration of unthinkable violence or the act of looking away in the face of prejudice and extreme cruelty?' (p. 8) These are questions that resonate powerfully in the context of the proliferation of contemporary ethnic, racial and religious hatreds.

The work is organized into four sections. The first coalesces around how the concepts of history and memory, and their relationship with each other has shifted in the decades following the Holocaust and asks *how* we remember the past. For example, Alon Confino's contribution to this section, 'From psychohistory to memory studies: Or, how some Germans became Jews and some Jews Nazis', demonstrates that remembrances of the past are temporally and methodologically determined, shifting with the passage of time and with disciplinary approaches. Dorothee Wierling, in a move which echoes Brothers' emphasis on the narratives that combine to offer an account of the self (stories of us, self and now), advocates for a move away from a focus on cultural memory and instead a privileging of ideas of narrative and story-telling as ways into how an individual subject might produce a relationship to the past which is coherent and meaningful to them, and which can help them orientate themselves with regards to a possible future. As Wierling puts it: '[o]nly on the surface is memory directed towards the past; instead, remembering helps to assure individuals of their present and to imagine a future' (p. 36). The second section of the book addresses how we respond to what Frie terms traumatic history constituted by discrimination and genocide. The chapters in this section offer a refreshingly practical approach to understanding the patterns of thinking, behaviour, governance and discourse which give rise to the conditions in which crimes on the scale of the Holocaust are able to take place, and all three place an emphasis on futurity, thinking about how such explorations have the power to prevent such traumatic histories from repeating themselves. This is particularly apparent in Jöse Borg's chapter 'Transmitting hate: On the process of hating and being hated' which refutes an understanding of the capacity for hate as an innate element of the human condition and instead offers 'an alternative and ultimately more hopeful perspective', deploying ideas of projection, disassociation and narcissism to conceptualize hate 'as resulting from the fragility of human identity and the instability of the sense of self when the essential other is unavailable or hostile' (p. 74). Crucially, Borg links this model of hate to current political situations when he points out how 'the recent resurfacing of racial tension and hatred of Muslims in the United States, kindled in the minds of vulnerable, disaffected individuals by a political demagogue, painfully supports Bollas' observation that the fascist state of mind can easily come into

being' (p. 78). This awareness of the collection as contributing not only to discourse around the Holocaust and history, but to urgent current debates around how prejudice remains powerfully at work within political, economic and social systems and retains its potential for destruction is present in Donna M. Orange's situating of her bid for an experiential history within a continuum that takes in not only the Holocaust but settler colonialism and a growth, in the West, of anti-refugee sentiment and policy. She warns that:

Shouted down once again by demagogues who want to eliminate those different from the ruling white male class from among us; unable, out of fear, to welcome the stranger, shelter the refugee; continuously blind to inherited privilege created by historical crimes of settler colonialism and chattel slavery; and thus paralysed in the face of scientific demands for radical change in our way of life to cope with climate crisis and to protect the world's most vulnerable people, we are once again endangered as were Europeans, and all of us, in the 1930s. (p. 56)

Certainly, when read together, Orange's warning combines with Bose's understanding of how and why hate manifests, to offer a text which is as concerned with how we move forward as how we remember.

The third section of the collection examines how confrontation with traumatic histories frequently results in strategies of withdrawal, distancing and denial. Robert Prince's compelling chapter, 'Reality, the Holocaust and the historical unconscious' provides perhaps one of the most striking illustrations of these strategies. Prince relays his experience of proposing, researching and completing his PhD on inherited trauma in the children of holocaust survivors. Prince, himself the child of a holocaust survivor, speaks about his experience of colleagues who had previously been supportive of his project becoming antagonistic or withdrawn when their support was required to make itself manifest. In a bizarre incident an academic who had previously been enthusiastic about being involved in the project hid in her darkened office rather than meet with Prince (p. 94). Peers who had volunteered to sit in on Prince's thesis defense expressed last minute reluctance (p. 95). The defense itself was 'harshly confrontational' yet resulted in only one five-word long correction (p. 94). In his chapter Prince argues that what was being enacted in this sequence of strange encounters was an evasion and distancing of the individuals involved from the demands of witnessing and remembrance made by the holocaust related material in the thesis, a 'sullen, defensive silence' (p. 101) which actually articulates the demand 'stop afflicting us with this story' (p. 96). It was, in short, a demonstration of how 'the reality of the past acts on us in surprising ways. History sneaks up on us as an unexpected intervention in our consciousness' (p.95).

In the final section of the collection the intersection of psychoanalysis and history which has implicitly underpinned the preceding materials is explicitly drawn out through two chapters relating to German history and the dialogue between Kohut and Frie with which this review opened. Ute Daniel's chapter on the interaction of psychological, social and political factors which set the stage for the First World War and, in so doing, Nazism. Relatedly, Geoffrey Cocks looks at precisely how Thomas Kohut developed his hybrid methodological approach, relating Kohut's recognition of the intersections between history and psychoanalysis to his relationship with his father, Heinz, through an analysis of the men's correspondence.

The collection is remarkable in a number of ways, not least the manner in which it recognizes the significance of inherited trauma for second and third generation Germans, a significance which has largely been excluded from intergenerational trauma studies which have focused predominantly on the children of Holocaust survivors. Perhaps one of the most significant contributions the collection makes, however, is not in its thinking about the interplay between the disciplines of psychoanalysis and history but the occluded histories of psychoanalysis. Emily Kuriloff's chapter 'Not as one would like to imagine: Psychoanalysis during and after the Third Reich' offers a powerful account of the activities of German psychoanalysts during the Third Reich and the legacies of co-operation and capitulation for Jewish and German psychoanalysts in the present day. This chapter is rendered all the more compelling when read alongside the letter written by Heinz Kohut, cited in Cocks's chapter, which recalls watching Sigmund Freud board the train that would take him out of Vienna towards the safety of England in 1938. Kuriloff's chapter resonates with Phillip Cushman's invocation of the 2014 letter written by Nadine Kaslow, President of the American Psychological Association, responding to reports that the association collaborated with the Department of Defence's program of torture. In the letter Cushman states that Kaslow 'seems surprised by the degree and nature of the APA's involvement of the planning of torture practices, its protection and defense of the psychologists who carried them out, and the subsequent cover-up of its own complicity. But any of us who followed the progression of events as they occurred knew what was happening' (p. 38). Cushman's comment echoes Kohut's idea that 'In order to look away, one needs to know what it is that one does not wish to see' (Kohut, 2012, p. 167). Clearly the kinds of 'knowing and not knowing' that defined the responses of the bystander Germans interviewed by Thomas Kohut in *A German Generation: An Experiential History of the Twentieth Century* is far from being obsolete in the present moment. Both of the texts under discussion here, in numerous ways,

highlight occulted elements of the history of psychoanalysis which are only now exerting pressure on the dominant disciplinary narrative.

4. Mothers and (M)others – Trauma and the Family

‘Being a replacement child means to receive messages from women bearing the same first name and family name as your own, and to ask them which murdered relative they are named after.’

(Miriam Fleischman cited in Anthony Rudolf, ‘Replacement or ever present: Jerzyk, Irit and Miriam’, p. 226)

Mothers and daughters cannot tell each other everything, because they do not know – nobody knows – everything about themselves: not about their own lives, or the secrets of their families, or that part of history weighing on their shoulders which is too hard to communicate. (Rose, p. 198)

The first of these arresting statements is made by Miriam Neiger Fleischman. Fleischman’s father lost both his wife and first daughter in Auschwitz in 1944. Fleischman, his daughter from his second marriage, is named for the murdered half-sister she never met, an example of a so-called ‘replacement child.’ Fleischman is cited in Anthony Rudolf’s chapter ‘Replacement or ever present: Jerzyk, Irit and Miriam’ which features in Jean Owen and Naomi Segal’s *On Replacement: Cultural, Social and Psychological Representations*. The second is taken from the conclusion of Jacqueline Rose’s *Mothers: An Essay on Love and Cruelty*. Read together, these two statements point to a constellation of raw emotional experiences, fenced about by occluded or missing elements of family history that find their focus in the process of reproduction, a process that always carries with it a double aspect of life and death. In this section I move to examine two books which are invested in how the interpersonal relationships which define the family unit are, and have always been, available to be co-opted and destabilized.

To begin with Jacqueline Rose’s *Mothers*, this monograph is built upon a simple premise; ‘that motherhood is, in Western discourse, the place in our culture where we lodge, or rather bury, the reality of our own conflicts, of what it means to be fully human. It is the ultimate scapegoat for our personal and political failings, for everything that is wrong with the world, which it becomes the task – unrealizable of course – of mothers to repair’ (p. 1). Rose goes on ‘Running through the book is a central contention: that by making mothers the objects of licensed cruelty, we blind ourselves to the world’s inequities and shut down the portals of the heart’ (pp. 1-2). This contention is chased down through the

text with an unrelenting focus, combining psychoanalytic thinking on motherhood with literary and sociological analysis of a rich and varied range of sources to demonstrate the damage being done to mothers, and in thus in Rose's view, to the world, through a demand that the figure of the mother be capable of containing 'everything that is hardest to contemplate about society and ourselves?' of being 'the cause of everything that doesn't work in who we are' (PG).

The book is divided into three key chapters. The first, 'Social Punishment' explores the various ways in which mothers are relentlessly scapegoated, and, conversely, the strategies which co-opt maternal suffering to 'deflect from our awareness of human responsibility for the world.' (p. 12) As Rose puts it 'What the pain of mothers must never expose is a viciously unjust world in a complete mess' (p. 12). The chapter begins by a counterpointing of the tabloid press' treatment of pregnant asylum seekers or immigrants as so-called 'health tourists' (and the related actions of some NHS trusts who had begun demanding ID or proof of asylum from these mothers, and demanding fees in excess of £5000.00 for their maternity care) and the absent mothers of the unaccompanied minors being held in the Calais Jungle, mothers who, as Rose points out, are erased from that narrative. The chapter then goes on to examine a number of cultural representations of mothers, from Euripides *Medea* to Gillian Slovo's 2016 play *Another World: Losing our Children to Islamic State*, placing these in conversation with social and historical narratives of motherhood on the receiving end of punitive social punishment, narratives of single motherhood, unmarried motherhood, and of discrimination against mothers in the workplace. The second chapter, 'Psychic Blindness' is orientated around the profound ambivalence at the heart of the emotional maternal experience, the oscillation between loving and hating, indeed these two experiences provide the titles for the two sub-sections. 'Loving' is driven by the question 'what is being asked of mothers when they are expected to pour undiluted love and devotion into their child?' (p. 77) a question which frequently results in the sociological assertion that 'a mother must live only for her child, a mother is a mother and nothing else,' (p. 78) an assertion which, Rose argues, has dire ramifications for the mother's psychological life. 'Hating' by contrast, explores the phenomenon that this relentless cultural and social insistence on the all-and-only-loving mother exists to defend against, the reality that hatred holds a key place in the maternal experience. Here Rose invokes W.D. Winnicott's seminal text 'Hate in the Countertransference' as a tool for rebutting Bruno Bettelheim's position that mothers need to be kept in guilty apprehension of their capacity for hate, in order to keep their infants safe, describing Winnicott's article as 'a weapon to be wielded on behalf of maternal ambivalence struggling to be recognised' (p. 113). Rose again invokes creative artists and writers – Sylvia Plath, Alison Bechdel and Adrienne Rich – to structure her exploration of how psychoanalysis, here figured not only in the work of

Bettleheim and Winnicott but also Wilfred Bion and Melanie Klein, has offered up numerous ways of thinking maternal hatred and its intrinsic relationship to maternal love.

The book's final chapter, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, explores the representation of motherhood in the work of Italian novelist Elena Ferrante, with particular emphasis on her Neopolitan trilogy. Ferrante is the only author featured in *Mothers* to have a dedicated chapter and in many ways Rose's readings of the novels positions them as a rebuttal to the limiting, reductive and punitive motherhood narratives the book rejects. As Rose puts it, 'Elena Ferrante's literary portrayal of motherhood is as about far from manuals and guidebooks as you could possibly hope to get', (p. 152) as the novels articulate the central dilemma of so many mothers in the contemporary moment, a dilemma Ferrante herself describes in the question: 'can I, a woman of today, succeed in being loved by my daughters, in loving them, without having of necessity to sacrifice myself and therefore hate myself' (p. 152).

Mothers concludes with a chapter which states that it is not merely the impossible idealization of motherhood (and the subsequent and inevitable punishment of all who fail to achieve the ideal) that characterizes our cruelty towards mothers. Rather this is compounded by a demand that the mother '[nullify] the vast reach of historical, political and social anguish. [. . .] to trample over the past and lift us out of the vast sweep of historical time' (p. 188). Importantly, in the closing chapter of the book, and its coda, Rose invokes the experience of non-biological motherhood and motherhood outside of a heteronormative context, through her accounts of adopting her own daughter and through her reference to Susan Stryker's experience of motherhood as a transgender woman. These final movements of the book radically open up the conversation Rose begins here, crucially acknowledging that motherhood is not defined by the bodily and the biological.

Throughout the book, Rose links the denigration and policing of motherhood to current political discourses which reject the vulnerable and the 'other', arguing '[w]e are living in an increasingly fortified world, with walls, concrete and imaginary being erected across national boundaries, reinforcing the distinctions between peoples.' (pp. 6-7) Indeed, one of the most striking and most productive features of the book is its energy and unashamed anger at the situation it describes. *Mothers* constitutes a furious demand to shoulder our own ethical responsibilities rather than using mothers of all kinds as receptacles for them. Rose states:

Historically, 'women and children first' has been accepted practice in moments of high risk. But it is one thing to declare this as a principle, quite another to act on it by letting into the country

fragile human beings whose glaring vulnerability will stand as a reminder of the utter nonsense, not to speak of the inhumanity, of pretending we can save ourselves at the cost of everyone else. (p. 10)

Ultimately, Rose's book offers up another way of using the figure of the mother and ideas of motherhood to help us think and cope with the challenges of the contemporary moment. Building on de Beauvoir's thinking, and following de Beauvoir, Kristeva's thinking, on motherhood, Rose identifies how '[t]o be a mother, to give birth, is to welcome a foreigner, which makes mothering simply "the most intense form of contact with the strangeness of one close to us and to ourselves" (which is why mothers are perhaps less likely to be fazed by the psychoanalytic belief that we are all radically strangers to ourselves.)' (p. 139). Such an identification flags up broader possibilities, it enjoins, not just on mothers, but on us all, 'a very specific ethical task, that of envisaging [ourselves] as the person [we] would most hate to be' (p. 130). Rose's analysis of the figure of the mother exhorts us all: 'Never turn away – being socially inclusive follows from a willingness inside the heart to hold on, however painful, to everything. No mother is alien' (p. 139). It is not ideas of foreignness or the alien which concerns Jean Owen and Naomi Segal in their 2018 collection *On Replacement: Cultural, Social and Psychological Representations* but rather the desire for, and potential impossibility of, sameness. Writing nine years after the death of his daughter Sophie, in a letter to a friend who had recently suffered a similarly acute loss, Sigmund Freud spoke of how 'we will remain inconsolable, and will never find a substitute. No matter what may come to take its place, even should it fill that place completely, it remains something else. And that is how it should be. It is the only way of perpetuating a love that we do not want to abandon' (Freud-Binswanger Correspondence, p. 196). The 'something else' that is always the fate of the replacement, called into being almost invariably through a painful desire to 'perpetuate' love, is what concerns Segal and Owen, and their contributors here, who seek to interrogate '[t]he triangular relationship between the replacee [. . .] the replacer [. . .] and the person who unites the two (Freud's seeker of endless surrogates.' (p. 10).

On Replacement shares the interdisciplinary approach which characterizes all but one of the publications reviewed here, cross-pollinating psychoanalytical approaches with contributions from the fields of politics, law, cultural studies and information studies in order to interrogate 'the drama of replacement in human relations' (p.2). The chapters which make up the collection are productively diverse, ranging from the implications of ideas of replacement for European human rights law (Sarah Trotter) and political debates around surrogacy (Samantha Ashenden) through posthumanist discussions

of replacement and the synthetic human (Georgia Panteli) and discussions of historical and political atrocities whose aftermath has powerfully called into action the ambivalent logic of replacement (Anthony Rudolf and Alison Ribiero de Menezes). These contributions sit alongside a wealth of analyses of cultural outputs with a diverse investment in replacement, from *Medea* to Sarah Polley's documentary film *Stories We Tell*.

This varied collection is united by a shared investment in the psychology of replacement, how it functions in the cultural, legal and social imaginary. Indeed, a psychoanalytic approach to thinking replacement underpins, implicitly or explicitly the majority of the chapters in the collection, from Segal and Owen's opening invocation of Freud's account of the irreplaceable, written ten years before the loss of his daughter, in which every 'surrogate' for an irreplaceable thing fails, repeatedly, to fulfill its role. Indeed, Segal's invocation of Didier Anzieu's poignant account of what led him to undertake a psychoanalytic training poses a question which resonates throughout the collection, the question of to what extent our actions may be understood as attempts to replace, or rather 'replay', a relationship now ended and through that replacement make reparations. Anzieu's mother was conceived as a replacement child after the death of a sibling who was burned alive in a household accident and she suffered from mental health problems throughout her life, as Anzieu put it, spending her life 'finding ways to escape the flames of hell.' (p. 19) Of his career as a psychoanalyst Anzieu stated 'I might put it this way – it sounds banal, but in my case it seems true: I became a psychoanalyst to care for my mother. Not so much care for her in reality, even though I did succeed in helping her, in the last quarter of her life, to find a relatively happy, balanced life. What I mean is, to care for my mother in myself and other people. To care, in other people, for this threatening and threatened mother' (p. 19).

One of the key achievements of *On Replacement* is the way in which the collection draws out replacement as being at the heart of human intersubjectivity. This is most strikingly underscored in the multiple explorations of the phenomenon of the 'replacement child', a phenomenon that explicitly rejects the status of the child 'as an individual who has never lived before and will never live again' as Peter Shabbad puts it in his contribution to *Memories and Monsters* (p. 66). Segal points out: 'a penumbra of cases that seem similar enough to merit the term: a daughter expected to "replace" a war hero uncle; babies conceived while barely older siblings lie dying in hospital, forcing an impossible choice on the pregnant mother; Phillip K. Dick who survived his baby twin sister but had to see his small grave waiting beside hers. And what of pregnancies that follow miscarriages or the IVF attempts that precede a final success? Who, in the final analysis, is not a replacement child?' (pp. 19-20). Yet the

ubiquity of being a 'replacement child' sits alongside a plethora of other potential replacements. The sibling who acts as '*par excellence* someone who threatens [our] uniqueness' (Juliet Mitchell, p. 10), the employee, robot or piece of software with the capacity to step into our professional role, ex-lovers whose place we have taken and future lovers who may come to take our place, the therapist who comes to stand in for a wealth of the analysand's attachments. Ultimately, this collection excavates the inherent potential for substitution, both traumatizing and arising from trauma, present in all human interactions.

Books Reviewed

Frie, Roger (ed), *History Flows Through Us: Germany, the Holocaust, and the Importance of Empathy* (London: Routledge, 2018). ISBN: 978-1138289376

Owen, Jean and Naomi Segal (eds), *On Replacement: Cultural, Social and Psychological Representations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). ISBN: 978-3-319-76010-0

Roberts, John L., *Trauma and the Ontology of the Modern Subject* (London: Routledge, 2018). ISBN: 978-1-13882673-1

Rose, Jacqueline, *Mothers: An Essay on Love and Cruelty* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018). ISBN: 978-0-374-21379-4

Severson Eric R. and David M. Goodman, *Memories and Monsters: Psychology, Trauma and Narrative* (London: Routledge, 2018). ISBN: 978-1138065451

Vermont, Rudi, *Reading Bion (New Library of Psychoanalysis Teaching Series)* (London, Routledge, 2018). ISBN: 978-0-415-41333-6

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