



Article

Traumatic Doubling: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Katurian and Michal in Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman*

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Abstract: *The Pillowman* (2003) by McDonagh is a dark comedy that resonates with contemporary canons where narrative is enfolded by trauma and narrative is enfolded by violence. This article reads the text through a psychoanalytic angle by arguing that trauma of childhood and hidden and repressed desire haunt the heroes of drama. Centering on Katurian, Michal, Ariel, and Tupolski, the close reading is informed by Freud's theory of repression, the death drive, and the repetition compulsion, and by Lacanian concepts of desire and the symbolic order. The analysis reveals the literary profession as vehicle and screen for mourned and reburied trauma. This article offers a new reading against the critical grain of *The Pillowman* and is an original addition to emerging literary studies of trauma, narrative and mind.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis, Trauma, Repression, *Pillowman*, Death Instinct

1. Introduction

The road taken by the brothers Katurian and Michal, in atavistic Trauma Performed by a Family in Martin McDonagh's "*The Pillowman*," in which they are fed trauma after another in "*The Pillowman*", the one that will ruin you, or the one that will make you stronger, offers a look at the two paths trauma can take under the microscope. An analysis of *The Pillowman* demonstrates how the brothers' isolated and common past is still a factor in escaping past and present trauma. though all of which had been engineered in reaction to their institutionalized childhoods. In 2002 the play in McDonagh's play *The Pillowman* arrived on the London stage in 2003, via the National Theatre, and its stripes were earned as a full-frontal assault on dark comedy, graphic storytelling and strategist complexity. More to the point, it keeps raising the question of what are the moral and emotional consequences of storytelling, as its characters including Katurian, the Kafkaesque writer of gruesomely funny short fiction; his brother Michal; and the two lawmen, the good cop Tupolski and the bad cop Ariel, investigating a batch of child killings, get implicated in the various ways words can be broken and bent out of shape. The novel delves into questions of the moral responsibility of the artist, the enduring wounds of trauma and the blurry sliver where fact and fiction meet.

Whilst the metatheatrical context and the censorship question have been widely examined, much less attention has been paid to the psychoanalytic mechanisms that are used to depict the psychic universe of the characters. The current research is the first to explore how in the characters' behavior, talk and artistic product that traumas, repression and unconscious cravings occur. Central questions: What are the childhood traumas that motivate the behavior of the characters when they are adults? In what sense can storytelling be a mediation of the unconsolated demand... of the repressed impulses? How

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do repetition and the death drive manifest in the story? Demonstrating these responses, this article argues that McDonagh's oeuvre is psychologically more complex than it has previously been acknowledged, and makes a valuable contribution to the scholarship. Beneath the political and social oppression of McDonagh's story, however, churns the dark tangle of gender, violence, love and power, tightened this way and that in a deep meditation on how trauma can quietly leach the spirit. Michel Landau's story can be read as a trauma narrative that climaxes with an onstage act of trauma, with the brothers incarnating, in their differing ways, the psychoanalytic acknowledgment of trauma's double power both to imprison and to generate the psychic energy behind it. The traumatized figures: 'Reformed' and 'deformed' one where Katurian, for though he steals from traumas the power to create, it's a narrative of the post-traumatic flowering – Michal, though, misuses it in a story of stolen identity and psychosis.

So finally, and very much in the spirit of good Freudianism, this article is an attempt to define, engage with, and make sense of the paradoxical "patients" that trauma's various victims are – hence to decipher the enigmatic mechanics of psychoanalysis that help us understand the divergent tracks of these healing episodes, and therefore to do so in a somewhat linear fashion, by beginning with an excursion into both psychodynamic and fiction models of trauma, moving along to a close, comparative analysis of Katurian and Michal's trauma-tales, and finishing up in a consolidation that compresses together thematic, symbolic, cultural, and allegorical strands of interpretation into a kind of ball of twine that illuminates, if not elucidates, Pillowman's diagnosis of the psychoanalytical underpinnings of trauma [1].

2. Materials and Methods

Literature Review

One of them (this exhaustive review) desiring to focus more on the emotional scarring on Katurian and Michal. A first part consolidates the introductory knowledge base by drawing on several articles that concern the psychological potential offered by trauma in papers on the (in/direct) influence of trauma on (the act of) storytelling and the psychic life of a character. The one and only: a psychological response of trauma to the behavior character to be had by unsolved past and emotional disconnection (Listiawan Arifin et al). But the idea is important for understanding Katurian and Michal, whose action are formed by severe trauma. Then, [2] reflected in writing about trauma in literature and some common tropes in the same and why narrativizing the trauma is such a necessity. This corresponds to Katurian's storytelling, which is a record of his torture, but it is also an understanding of it.

[1] placed the issue of violence more precisely within McDonagh's play, considering the power play between Katurian and the cops. This wards, it makes it useful to us because what if humanity is the trauma and this story's the rhetorical question being what if trauma is a choice or what have you. This is also confirmed by Kajdiž that by highlighting the narrative-psychological complexity as well as the internal strife of characters and in general of social group, situated in a larger social-political contradiction, that is between a wiping off the state-oriented violence and oppression.

[3] as well provided a psychoanalytical approach in relation to Caruth's PTSD, that accommodates to our reading of the characters' mental life. The cycle of trauma is so clear in Katurian and Michal, and how their identity gets wound up in the traumas that they've endured. This theoretical support stimulates our analysis on mention of the characters' trauma at a larger psychological level.

Other psychoanalytic readings of Katurian and Michal have drawn attention to the ambivalence of their trauma as a metaphor for the plays they stage being both a reflection of their own torments and the allegorical indictment of an audience complicit in their pain; the cold horror of these interpretations adds to the emotional weight of the plays, to boot. Trauma — of story and psyche — is, in fact, crucial for understanding the ways that McDonagh includes contemporary human endeavor in his work. The Pillowman provides

narratives that reconfigure violence and its consequences; it takes a more pragmatic approach to violence in that it serves not just Katurian's grisly catalogue of murders; he forces Michal to slaughter numerous people [1].

Katurian's perspective on the torturing of others is, itself, hardened (he decides to smother Michal to death with a pillow). What you're seeing is a kind of verbiage of protest, in depth, in contrast to the swiftness of savagery that earlier generations flatly refused to tolerate. But Katurian's surrender, not just of himself and the guilt he himself is atoning for, but of everything Michal's guilt stands in for, of the whole guilt reality of him as that climbing up the rungs of punishment, for Katurian to be there as an opposition, the inviolable, unrequiring redemption, unredeemable and so, with an eye cocked on shifts in public opinion about punishment, the play is casting a vote on the collective conscience.

3. Results and Discussion

Psychoanalytic Theory

Trauma-based analytical models of conceptualizing—originally formulated by Freud and subsequently by fellow followers and more recently by second-generation and third-generation followers—have given us both the data and the constructs that still guide us in the clinic with syndromes of traumatic origin and in their treatment via psychotherapy. Part IV of Freud's classic essay, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, provided the framework for the theory of war trauma, along with still stimulating theoretical addenda. Traumatic material is, for Freud, that which is hard to incorporate and bind with existing (pre) representations and functioning in the apparatus of the mind. He interprets the phenomenon in the light of naturalism and highlights corporatization, phycho-physic repetition and an abdication to trauma – rejecting working through.

The post-traumatic type sustains the scope of explanation that the classical psychoanalytic paradigm possessed, but narrates how the agencies active in the trauma response can now be re-organized such that they are directed towards the creation of a proto-life-world. The core – a metaphorical traumatic image about penetration of classifying barriers at displaced stress or injury – also is a building brick to semantic oriented therapy and essential to the minimalistic (as to the theory) theory of brief traumatic stress therapy that here is presented.

1. Freudian Concepts of Trauma

Trauma, as Sigmund Freud defined it, is the psychic injury sustained when an external shock is so powerful that it cannot be fully assimilated and remains a life-threatening shock at the level of the inner world. Example: witnessing the death of a hospitalized family member. Trauma, at its most elementary, is simply shock: a strike to the brain that topples the mind and leaves it physically unsteady or off-balance. The world is forever changed. Trauma, for Freud, is a sudden, unexpected, terrible event that stimulates feelings that are too injured to be born, beyond the capacity for transformation or defense. It's that there's a relationship out of whack between cause and effect, and that's what makes something traumatic. It could be argued that like with trauma being a qualifying identical sign, you'd see like trauma were a given phenomenon like childhood sexual abuse or something, and he generalize his wonderfully sensed idea of "It's that there's something out of proportion between effect and cause, and that's what makes something traumatizing." The value of the occurrence, then, would appear to be not so much the occurrence itself as the reading of that occurrence, a reading informed by one's fantasy or by encounters encountered at a later period.

Trauma as Psychic Wound Trauma is not only a psychological issue stemming from a hurt emotion, it is a psychic wound. Freud was not the only one to acknowledge the destruction of a trauma: other theoreticians believe too that something can be good for trauma. They say trauma builds adult bonds, a stronger existential muscle and the chance for something new. There is, with trauma, reconfiguring, rebuilding of self-presentation and selves as experienced by others. It undermines such basic assumptions about the self and the world that the survivor is left with no consistent system of belief, but a series of vacillations between different ways of thinking, feeling and behaving about themselves and the world. Trauma changes you: Your own body turns strange you make the self still

more of another for the self again. That's why so many of us want to be able to process shit that will at least give our lives meaning. These too are part of the family of narrative therapy.

2. Post-Traumatic Growth

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) Trauma may have a silver lining, a positive side when viewed in a therapist's frame, and it comes in the form of post-traumatic growth (PTG). [4] defined PTG as "positive psychological change experienced as a result of adversity and other challenges in order to rise to a higher level of functioning" than was present prior to the trauma. It has also found a way for people with post-traumatic stress disorder to grow, and he said the qualitative analysis, including the use of psychological testing and interviews, have shown improvement. Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman* is a harrowing examination of mental anguish in the form of brothers Katurian and Michal.

[5] explained that Trauma is an array of events, actions, or experiences that leave us emotionally disturbed outside the realm of what human beings need to deal with to be able to preserve our physical or mental health on a moment by moment basis. In doing so, trauma also creates a crisis of incomprehensibility with diathesis in psychoanalysis to process the trauma. This must be woven into some manufactured, fabricated, comprehended story which makes sense, and gives sense to, the event." This preparatory material paves the way for the narrative reconstruction of traumatic events, a pre-requisite for healing. Worthy of salvation with Genitive with Salvation orienting narrative strategies disclose stories of salvation that attempt to set free the pain in the lives. Katurian's positive experience focusing on the atrocities he suffered can be seen in terms of a form of night think.

Character Analysis:

1. Katurian: Trauma, Creativity and It's Sublimation 20th century psychoanalytic critical on the subject has not been unthinkable.

A product of a harrowing birth and an abusive childhood, Katurian literally traps his family when he escapes the communally dyed hellhole of an apartment block (its residents' children were burned to death in it when Katurian was a boy, an image so traumatic that it stunted his mental development). His response is to inscribe those moments in the form of contorted short stories. His appetite for darkness also seems drawn from his prizefighting surroundings; he is surrounded, as are the political oppression and dainty regimes and social violence he covers. These factors are confluent and culminate in the premature psychological splitting with the acting-out of essentially similar stories [6]. Between being arrested and being in prison with Michal and the officers Tupolski and Ariel, Katurian continues to write and in the process employs his own stories as a coping mechanism to try and rid his mind of his abused conscience [1].

For Katurian, the protagonist of the play, love and art comes from a poisoned well. He considers the abuse Michal endured from his parents, "Things were done to us by our mum and dad. They did things to you and me, and then I did things to you as well, and now you've done things to them" [7]. This is a trauma and the return of the repressed a kick in the bulbs idea. Strange, violent and hallucinatory as Katurian's stories (whose recitation to the audience becomes a recurrent motif) frequently are, they are the sublimation, the Freudian exhalation, by which base impulses were transformed (or at least purified) in the service of creativity. For example, his story "The Little Jesus Story" allegorizes the martyrdom and suffering contained in both personal and universal traumatic events.

Inverting this logic, Katurian in a fictional world where he is not in control of the real stories also has been given the power to create his own reality. But when Michal begins murdering people in scenes cribbed from Katurian's tales, the line between storytelling and real-life massacre starts smugly blurring, and we are not so subtly invited to grimace and cringe and make some sort of obvious mental leap. This connection, one of Freud's formulations, namely, that repression comes back in a "radically transformed" but destructive form: it is here that we find art and trauma so closely, even if not inseparably, tied together.

2. Michal: Submission, and the Compulsion to Repeat

Katurian's retarded brother, Michal, reenacted traumas of other characters. He interacting with Katurian's tale in a live, physical sense, demonstrating of what is taught in psych "repetition compulsion", a psychoanalytic subject that encompasses the theory that when trauma isn't process it emerges from jewel like, hidden caskets of the heart. Michal remarks that "your stories are nice." The dark side of the story is reenacted when he describes "I chopped off his toes And he didn't even scream." [7].

Katurian can be symbolically make artistically use of his dementia and be artist and therefore dangerous and tragic (this proof the absurdity to kill him, because we know he is nothing else but an abstract person played by clever sophomoric simulator called fictional figure, on basing upon a simulated crime, to), but Michal can't. and is so intensified in and through his obedience and his innocence. and it also partially explains the adverse influence of parental assault. What Michal does is entirely Freud's "introjected trauma," looped obsessively., where the repressed returns.

3. Ariel and Tupolski: Sadistic Surrogate and the Trauma Law

Melancholia and the death drive, it's as if they waft off the detectives, Ariel especially, like cigarette smoke. Ariel embodies the sadism of interrogation, which he had suffered, himself, as a child abuse victim: "My father burnt cigarettes at my body. "And I was 6 years old" [7]. This displaced repetition is in the repetition which Ariel repeats a violence that was done to him. Tupolski, the more subtly violent of the two, says when and where the play is happening, and demonstrates how every kind of institution will eventually repeat the same traumas, repressions and self-thwarting. That is the relationship among power, history and psychic history in the play, anyway.

Storytelling, Death Drive, and the Unconscious

Freud's death drive One reoccurring theme of dead children in Katurian's stories is the epiphany of Freud's death drive, an unconscious desire to stop, the body-isation of suffering. All through the above we have this--to me--paradoxical motive: The Pillowman figure who gets children to die rather than live in the sorrow is one example: "He leans in, he whispers to the boy that what he's going to endure is intolerable ... and he helps the boy die"[7].

The viciousness of Katurian's tales is a way to form an experience of trauma: it allows him and us to confront death as symbol. In this respect, the storytelling functions as a kind of sublimation, as in that which cannot come into consciousness from the unconscious by virtue it can build on a compromise between the unconscious and consciousness as such, whereby the irresolvable conflict between vital (Eros) demands and the death instinct (Thanatos) is mirrored.

Background and Motivation

The story's brothers, twins, are Katurian and Michal, who have been born on a hard mattress in Dog Knows Where in Eastern Europe, but whose equally torturous lives — and they are gloriously awful and awfully glorious — they have shared. The shared trauma growing up brought them together, both on the road into what the psychologists doing research on trauma have described as the "twin faces of trauma." Trauma can be defined as a psychological wound sustained when the body and the mind react to physical pain and mental shock, where the mental shock is converted into long term damage, damaging the body and the mind, which can occur long after the actual stressful event and can disappear or become very hall in time [1].

This essay will look at the dual traumas undergone by Katurian and Michal, using psychoanalytical theory as its basis. Katurian's fragmented identity makes him who he is, he is defined by the stories, where the atrocities ruined people are being the terror they were subjected to writing becomes the testimony to horror-abuse in creative writing as his story becomes integrated of the fabrics he writes, that is his point of buffer his pain. It's Michal's trauma that disrupts the continuity of his proper self and propels him into a depthless abyss of the psyche, a glacial cold from which no man easily awakens.". He wants to be death, he want to be the hell of his trauma, so he can leave the world, and the land of the living. An analysis of the two traumas experienced by Katurian and Michal will

help to shed light upon the complexity of the inter-generational carrying of trauma and its psycho-social impact.

1. Creative Expression as Coping

Summary The Pillowman takes place in an unidentified dictatorship in the late 20th century (though written in 2003), most probably around 1995 in the nameless country where children and adults are tortured and executed for crimes by being nailed to a cross. The ambitious writer Katurian and his brother, Michal, are being questioned at the police station about child murders bearing a resemblance to the gruesome stories Katurian writes. Questioned stories of major figures (like the hero of the title play) who in a story of Katurian's actually slay little children by suffocating them to spare them the abomination of the world, and of his and his family's tragic story. As the series continues, we begin to catch glimpses of both brothers' childhood traumas. Michal is eventually all but totally unconscious when Katurian smothers him with a pillow, putting him out of his misery, and Katurian demands that he alone be indicted for the killings.

Katurian and Michal are the ghosts of either side of trauma. Katurian's abuse is behind him, indicative of the dark and gory fables he writes. As opposed to when Michal is alive, the trauma that is the son of the future deconstructs and unshadows him and makes him susceptible to control from outside himself. Upon hearing this, Katurian channels his own anguish into the child-friendly stories he has composed: "This quavering craftsman, he hammers every tale such dread and suffering. The issue with Michal, of course, is that without this creative outlet, his words fail him and he is helpless to the state of his brain: Babbling incoherently. These figures are — to act as epitomes for ways of trauma that are also traumatic theories of trauma and its 'twin faces' and thus unveil the protagonists' characters and thematic significance [1].

2. Background and Relationship with Katurian

Michal: Katurian's 20-year-old brother. He is the polar opposite of Katurian, who is an extraverted raconteur, and of Michal, who cannot speak and is mentally and physically handicapped. He's just emerged from a coma after Katurian slaughtered his parents in a rage. Michal comes from a dark past filled with unpleasant memories of his parents, and while he doesn't elaborate much on his atrocious past, he has had his fair share of pain - sexually and physically abused by his parents. Oh did I mention the repressed childhood memories of being molested that he has to deal with now that he's been falsely imprisoned as a child murderer. On the other hand, "Michal lost half his mind", twice-harmed – this state made Michal half-conscious, for his 'sound mind' is shattered into pieces therefore he is bereft of unity of reason in his thoughts for he is without a shelter of stable self-concept [1]. Although he cannot express so, he attempts to have Katurian's stories say what is right and true and has made them a safety valve for his burning outrage at the Turkish soldiers and heartless world he knows.

Impact of Trauma on Identity

[8] explains that Literature does not simply entertain; instead it makes an effort to tackle human condition; pain (p.38). It does not produce the typical trauma-fugue that rendering such a play provokes from me, but instead summons its twin Quality of trauma - in that it invokes psychoanalytic theory and a history of (post)colonial trauma knowledge built to support real interventions and representational argument. And trauma is trauma; trauma gets in the way of trauma. This quality of light also reveals 2 dichotomies of trauma, which are explored by the two brothers as twins. The play displaces this idea of trauma as lived psychological trauma created by traumatic events superfluous to the subject, and onto forms of trauma that pass through the subject *sui generis* — the psychoanalytic mystery actually goes very deep.

Plot The Pillowman focuses on a writer, Katurian, and his brother, Michal. The father of the elder Katurian, you see, had somehow already worked through his own trauma and externalized it by writing imaginative and creepy stories and fantasies. Michal, though, who takes the trauma in (and is thus presumably just as inevitable), cannot. Katurian and Michal's own trauma unfolds as their trauma-ridden mother is killed, Katurian becomes a writer, Michal "grows" into a schizophrenic. [9] reported that these figures are established

for presenting the doubled dimension of trauma, wound and functioning, where the putative dimension of cure may be viewed as a kind of its own wound).

1. Psychological Breakdown

[9]pointed out that the effects of early trauma can be chronic and pervasive lasting a person's entire life. Early childhood trauma as pre-Oedipal trauma caused by an affective arrest in psychosexual development. In the case of Michal in *The Pillowman* a history of trauma had you could say pretreated an openness personality to break-up or the intrusion of psychosis that was beyond what might have been due to sadness or loss; a "unfathomable" dimension of the syndrome was evident as the inability to "work it though" neither with restorative dream, nor by arranging for pseudo hallucinations in the hypnogogic super-states of arousal, nor during the days before the decompensating. As if, like his traumatic flashbacks, which get played over and over, but leave only less and less of a possibility of psychic recovery, forces have been put in place to shepherd Michal toward a total collapse.

Michael collapsed in 1991. He is listed in prison records as suffering from schizophrenia. If that may smack of over analysis in your eye – an over-encumbered attempt to pin the tail on the moral donkey in the menagerie of *The Pillowman's* various trauma themes – that Michal's crime and victimhood as a boy is liberally spread all over the script either in performed action or barely-alluded to states. The fact is that for Michal, it's inevitable that his traumatic experience by 1989 had begun to manifest itself, but repair-engines unchained are still more than well-functioning [10]. It could, indeed Michal has been somewhat persecuted in its earlier traumatic episodes to this point. The life split off will become either the initial traumatic event and the chronic result, or else will exacerbate a persecutory vicious circle. This swinging of the pendulum between entire disillusionment and excess of passion for the object, which we meet with in all probability, starts to cripple the discriminating action of the ego.

Thematic Exploration

Characters in *The Pillowman Evil*: This is an important theme in the pillowman and the way people deal with tragedy. Cruelty and death are the head-butting themes in Katurian and Michal's lives; neither has been as a matter of fact but a vertical drop away from the explosiveness of their traumas. Yet, though his abuse is the same as his as the author, Katurian eventually looks as though he is pulling out of it while Michal seems to sink more deeply into it as well as to live in fear of having to re-act that traumatizing episode. Trauma as normality 'For these two to be able to experience trauma is a deformity of life' The lives of these two and the society and their place in it are formed through the imposition of trauma [11]. Their tragic tales thus intersect with a meditation on the double aspect of the vantage-point of trauma, which endorses the different and competing ways through which we deal with a common ontological catastrophe. Among the other big ideas encoded in the play, which circles around Katurian and Michal, is a powerfully disturbing point about the nature of and the price for trauma.

And again, the isolation comes as part and parcel of the trauma. In *Pillowman*, for the first time, we see that the isolation that Katurian experiences is less a defense against life and more an opening to space-life after traumatic cataclysm; and that as he ceases to connect with the vulnerable, he preserves what he has and thereby solidifies his firmament [12]. Here, however, isolation emphasizes Michal's divided self (which is one kind of division among others that is helpful from Žižek's perspective, in order to understand what different species of "the death of the Other" that he suffers and at the sight of which he is always reminded of the fact of his killed sibling as a traumatic fact of his own).

The play expends a lot of dramatic elbow grease on a concept of storytelling-as-therapy for the mentally ill. However much Truth is a place where you cannot live for long. Story tells us Story may be what enables, and let alone enhances, what Truth would despoil. So story seems to act as a crucial mediator in the process of psychically externalising trauma, in moving the traumatised self beyond the blank end-point of experience. [1]. Accordingly, narrative is a relevant dimension for the psychoanalytic portrait profile of drama, and should now be resumed, after trauma in the didactic parts has already been handled, and once more it should be treated in more detail.

1. The Nature of Evil

McDonagh's *The Pillowman* uproots typical literary models of authorship to allow for what was previously 'thinkable' within politically 'radical' literature. Katurian's macabre and violent short stories force readers to confront horror and in so doing the play exaggerates the reparative aspects of imagination and story-telling in trauma [13]. Reading the *Pillowman* between Psychoanalysis Psychoanalytic incursion into the story of the drama foregrounds the split of trauma, something that recurs among other characters at a distance, Katurian and Michal, have suffered the same trauma but have done so in dissimilar ways. The development of the play illustrates how long one can be held captive by trauma, in both keeping it and telling about it.

Katurian's sad back story, like the play's, finally emerges in explosive revelations in "The Pillowman," placing Katurian's tragic biography as a continuation of his upbringing and the play itself as a broader conversation about the price of family, of the state, but also of our humanity — its psychic violence, in particular. *Worry Dolls* The show emphasizes the weight of trauma, and the notion that psychological wounds can be imponderable — "unspeakable. The story is one of school 'policing' and, 'interrogation', and so of violence that is revealed here as an institutional and circular practice [14]. Trauma is inked in variously—Michal as merely an injured character/audience surrogate (and as Gabriel Mizrahi I shouldn't need to tell you the guy's got story-legerdemain juggling to do himself.

2. Isolation and Connection

As human beings, Katurian and Michal require access to the inner lives of others, and that's the part of the play both fully concede, in anguish, when the latter is shut out. The Other is what the decentered mind can think itself (as a remedy to the isolation and separation from holes in human body) fundamentally the experience of them behave of Other cause one lose his/her sense of belongingness. I don't know if I'd feel at least some degree of loneliness- although I guess that's where emotional contact comes into play. So the brothers' relationship becomes a contradiction: alienated by Katurian but also desiring closer ones with his brother. Because, as human beings, they can't stand the pain and emptiness, Michal is lonely. Sadism is one way of closing the emotion distance, and paradoxically it creates more loneliness.

It's better to simmer than to stoop to retaliation, to bow to brutality. If Michal already detests his superstitious person, which enables him to suffer pain equally of body and of mind, he cannot consciously do so much as realize not to say defy his fears by a rational effort, and he therefore tries to act them off senselessly. The need to run polls that reach into our nightmares, press in on our fear in a way that makes fear melt into pure fear at a lever-brain level. Rogue brains just convert our recapitated fright into gut-wrenching bodily pain [15]. At least when it comes to Michal, affectional needs are so powerful that they override elements of self-regulative processes. "All vertebrates have the possibility in the play of every kind of emotional connection, but none of them is the case at the end," he said. The stories Katurian tells are about his own loneliness, even though he's estranged from Michal as well. Both of the characters struggle to close it: Katurian hopes to guide the emotional development of Michal, whom Michal views as total emotional freedom. The pillowman that Katurian and Michal create in their mind, represents the desire to protect oneself from psychological pain, and the longing for love.

3. The Role of Storytelling

But for Katurian and Michal in Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman*, storytelling mayhem, perversity, and agony be ubiquitous to all trauma and healing. Here are two of the two fictional twins I'm left with, both survivors of near-nonstop child abuse in a fictional dictatorship, very much testing the limits of the paradoxical devastation and power of trauma to annihilate and to heal. Through the psychoanalytic mode of the narrative therapy, the opposite and divergent paths of the brothers reveal the real and mirrored configurations of the traumas.

Katurian and Michal are both tortured endlessly by a literal monster of a father. Shalom, 2015 The older twin, Katurian, excretes his trauma in his black creative writings. So when the state is investigating a wave of child killings that seem inspired by one of Katurian's stories, he writes one last story, in which Michal is turned into the *Pillowman*, a

boogeyman of sorts with more than a dash of a macabre Santa Claus about him. The younger of these twins appears to slit his throat and kill ... to lure early memories with that Pillowman function taking on yet another, post-life, dimension. Throughout the play, the brothers are savagely, lethally tormented by the state.

There are two distinct interpretations of Katurian and Michal from the Freudian and the post-traumatic schools on how the tradition in such a fashion actually operates. The older brother does creative writing to work through his traumas, and it saves him in that it allows him to put a lid on things and carry the events around in a kind of container without them leaking. The younger takes as a skin the anguish, takes it and turns it into an active identity, an object one could pierce with a finger, a body no longer a body, a force one will never crawl up out of, a force of annihilation that leaves no one a moth eaten scrap of a chance. However, as the practice of narrative therapy attests, the performance of changing through narrative (indeed, the act of conjuring up story on one's own) is a much more focused act than that of simply creating a story: one must simultaneously mirror and craft in the moment [16] to revise the past. McDonagh's twin, twins Paj and Med adds to narrative therapy in this manner, and not just describes it more aptly, they demonstrate how trauma takes shape in diametric, interlocking, unfinished forms.

Symbolism in The Pillowman : The Role of the Stories

The stories in *The Pillowman* do double, and triple duty. Most importantly, though these three tales, "The Little Apple Men," "The Writer and the Writer" and "The Pillowman", are knitted together with the trio of committed murders, two clearly of children, plus another arguably of a pair of little girls as opposed to a singular little girl, none of these three tales is presented anyway literally in the book, nor in any strictly literal sense in the play. The stories are how Katurian starts to work through the trauma of his own abuse and its poisonous influence of punitive parenting. In "The Little Apple Men," for instance, the story's driving action is a father's brutality. The stories are instruments in the text to handle this sort of extreme trauma – you make up stories about things, and that enables you both to hang on to and to some extent tame the uncanny; if stories let you gain access to trauma, the act of storytelling holds out the world as a place where surviving the unbearable is possible. The three stories prefigure to a metaphorical reading of the play's ending: When Katurian begins recounting the story of the man of pillows and cloth, he's, in a sense, lovingly tucking his brother still deeper into the warm, pillow-lined cocoon that protects from the world's ills. All in all, the narratives constitute a literary account of the mental architecture that supports the existence of the subjects in order to demonstrate the enduring power of the psychoanalytic knowledge.

1. Imagery and Motifs

The Pillowman and Use of Settings and Imagery Settings and imagery have been used in plays for ages. The overlapping narratives of the play converge around family violence and around the vulnerable position of children. For example, "The Little Apple Men" is about angry little apple men who "surround a small girl, while she is killing her mother," and "The Little Green Pig", where an apple pig sowed and growing up seven times more than the other pigs "destroy his family and his neighbors, and at the last he is doing hallock". It is images like this that interrupt the play and are the stories that Katurian is forced to tell his interrogators and over and over again in prison.

These stories and the images they stir are other strata in the text's unhealthy relationship with stories and writing. Since the play takes place in an unnamed totalitarian police state that all sounds suspiciously like East European in the '70s or '80s, (thanks in part to being let out all over Ireland in its Troubles heyday) Martin McDonagh gets us to hear about the Holocaust. Here, they zero in on violent family dynamics and the child's fragility. But the telling, and retelling, of stories is a means of working through and perhaps, bodybuilding, trauma: a way not for one but for both of the characters, Katurian and Michal, to come to terms with, and maybe even transcend, the horrors they have either experienced or witnessed.

2. The Significance of the Pillowman

This messianic figure, who seems to want and tries to save children from the horrors of adult life is Michal's vision of the Pillowman. (And the confessions are for graphic courtesy

child killings, all performed on command, "Because you told me to." This is also very much an experience of recognition, of Michal's parents' torturing remarks turning out to be not true and a dead young boy's body being found in Michal's room. Michal has a tale that he believes is better than, that he believes out-trumps anything that Katurian's ever penned; and Katurian deems it a happy ending because Michal has "done" what Katurian and Michal share, what Katurian and Michal want, a writer's success, an artist's success, while Michal believes it to be utterly tragic because he is dead at the end. Told about what he had in his hand when he died, the story outdoes all of his other work. How, "It's just if you're dead or alive now. It's not the art, it's what you leave behind," and while that a person's soul persists in stories, is spoken by Katurian, Michal still can't wrap his head around it, at least not literally. In order to spare Michal from any more pain and embarrassment, Katurian smothers Michal with a pillow, says he has committed the murders so that his brother can have a "name". That drama is this: That instead of just punishment, the society takes stock of legacy, it's about sacrifice and changing of the guard of what is socially valuable.

Psychoanalytic Interpretation

Freudian terms, in a way, make psychic formations in characters understandable – Lacanian terms like the Symbolic, for example, or the name-of-the-father enable us to go that little bit further with subjects who are in danger of being unravelled by their quest for identity. If the idiom of trauma underwrites the theoretical impulse, *The Pillowman* reveals how pervasive the concept of trauma seems in current psychical writing. A trauma for Ferenczi adultery is a two-interactions: trauma -event and repression - deficiency, trauma -repetition is crime by repetition of the event and its repression, that crime by repetition represses according to him.

In this light we can re-read the stories of Katurian and Michal. Their parents had been viciously murdered; as children, they were mercilessly taunted. As Katurian represses his, Michal enjoys photographic memory and recalls with crackling eagerness to hear about the "giant" on the other side of the door to his cell. So Katurian is a proxy for the neurotic writer, who feels he masters his created act but who forgets half the stimuli behind it half as a child. Michal as the insane is a form that has not yet been determined for another as a kernelized. If in such a case the object's essential, it is always endangered and in its material there in its cribbed cabined doleful frequent multiform reiteration menaced always, then that's up, what is there to do but then to then to then the then there again? Every man, including us, testifies to a shattered subjectivity alongside his "twin" trauma, but from opposite psychological corners.

Furthermore, the psychoanalytic approach posits trauma at the locus of life and death. Katurian and Michal emerge from their ordeals, but find themselves stranded in a limbo, severed from family, from worldly existence, from social respect, from the ordinary markers of time and place. Applying the dream-thought material of the latter to the dream-work, the invitation to dream-analysis thus hinders the traumatic subject to bending back to the traumatic site, waking up and not worked through the trauma. Sure, the predicament of this man is a dramatic center, a cog of new action within a wheel. Alternatively, it's that the redundancy provides a counterpoint aesthetic to foreshadow the characters' eternal nightmare of complete and endless desolation.

1. Defense Mechanisms

The defenses operate in concert to defend the person from a conflict and affect while shielding off unmanageable anxiety. [17] observed that the operation of defenses serves to reduce the damage of aggression and works mostly at level of stereotypes/symptoms, character and the more they kill, well, deform personality development, the more adaptive are correspondent - as well more flexible - personality element; all mechanisms are at bottom of these truths. The pacifying defenses and the defenses of withdrawal and intellectualization, which are not commonly used by children, emerge as the preferred system of defense when the pacifying ones prove ineffective. Healing from trauma, that is, is deemed to be a double-edged sword in these discussions and, in a sense, to be able simply to recapitulate trauma: working through and recovering from (and over again feeling) the original trauma. The trauma is damage to and it is more than the initial wound

of it the injury psychic operation of the individual, it is not a simple memory for a later experience; it is a fact irruptive that further interference can worsen. Katurian and Michal's own defenses help block out what does and does not happen, and when it is finally disclosed it doesn't come at all pleasantly; least of all to the ego, which has suffered trauma.

2. Cultural Context

The play is in a prison camp, just about the most obvious setting for us to go to in extending this exploration of trauma. [18] stated that trauma excels at sticking people to the things that hurt them. And when the individual doesn't have the resource or impetus to work through or dismiss the extra baggage, they continue to be metaphorically enslaved to the disturbing event. Physical chains – big, clanking, metal chains and manacles – in which the Katurian and his brother Michal are both bound in the production. It can also paradoxically kindle creativity in broader terms as well. The Real presses in upon the ego as its urgency; the ego grasps for, opens up a fold for the Fantasy to be carried out with in this synthesis; and the trauma is born, it "becomes that which it was not. It brought us into a more hyper, conscious, organized state of mind. Through storytelling, Katurian gains some power, however, they are largely repressed by the authorities.

Katurian's psychological upheaval plays out against a stand-as-if-proudly-not-specified) geographical canvas for the action but one that looks suspiciously like the cultural topography of Ireland. The modern Irish psyche has been so steeped in an understanding of nationhood curated through centuries of confrontation, not least during "The Troubles," a time into which entire generations were sucked down the whirlpool of violence on a hitherto untold scale in this country. In many ways the Irish are psychologically bound to inherit this savage civilization – a fact that McDonagh harshly confronts in his plays of modern-day tragedy.

4. Conclusion

The *Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh is a deep dive into trauma, oppression and the unconscious. Katurian's tales, Michal's imitations, and Ariel's torture illustrate the lasting impact of childhood trauma, the cycle of violence, and the curative power of narratives. Drawing on such theories as Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis and trauma theory, this study foregrounds the psychological richness of McDonagh's contemporary drama and offers a fresh, character-based approach. Finally, *The Pillowman* illustrates that creativity, morality, and pain are hopelessly linked with one another and that there is nothing for it but to accept that contradictory relationship as the price for being a part of the collective psychic community of humanity.

The review has recorded the twin faces of trauma that are besetting Katurian and Michal, a pair of warped brothers with a warped childhood who balance in the razor's edge between sanity. The former is an eternal struggle to keep one's imaginings untapped and alive despite being locked for years, while the latter is a disentanglement via physical imprisonment. All respond uniquely and yet so closely exposed to trauma. As Katurian retreats into his writing, Michal's faith in the ability of stories to make sense of chaos is shattered and the end is terribly devastating.

What two perspectives on trauma do the play stage which unlock its ambiguity. In most instances trauma is perceived as an insuperably alienating event, yet it also presents the possibility of a new and revitalized subject. The pivotal emblem is a series of snapshots of the instant when a man is dispatched by being sewn up through the neck with needle and thread. At first, the images testify to an atrocity that breaks the world. "It is terrible, but in its other face it is hopeful," Lodenkarks added with a small smile. And thus do the two brothers become archetypes of the trauma folded into the play. Katurian comes to embody a sterile functionality that closes off any prospect of rehabilitation. His writing has the vacantness and emotional deadness that allows no space to any engagement with the world. In contrast, Michal embodies the opposing response – that trauma enables resilience and open-endedness. Then, finally, there is the pillowman, who is something in between these two extremes: is both more complex and more opaque, a fabler who presents the cohabitation of a trauma gone terribly wrong and a new beginning whose possibility is still to be tested date of the citadel.

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