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THE LIMITS OF TRAUMA THEORY THROUGH *HIROSHIMA, MON AMOUR*

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My aim in this paper is to question the apparently mutually supportive bond between legal and psychoanalytic discourse in order to refine the methods used in Trauma Studies. I will do this by first reviewing Leys' (2000) critique of Caruth's (1996) work and then follow that by an analysis of *Hiroshima, mon amour* (1958) which, as a film based on a screenplay by Marguerite Duras about the ethical impact of the U.S. bombing of Japan to end WWII, gives us ample opportunity to see to what extent the legal and the psychoanalytic discourses are and are not bound to each other.

Mon but dans cet article est de questionner la connexion entre la liaison apparemment mutuellement solidaire entre le discours légal et psychanalytique afin de raffiner les méthodes utilisées dans les études sur le trauma. Afin de réaliser ce but je réviserai d'abord la critique proposée par Leys de l'œuvre de Caruth et ensuite j'analyserai *Hiroshima mon amour*, un film qui – basé sur le scénario de Marguerite Duras concernant l'impact éthique du bombardement du Japon – nous fournit l'opportunité de considérer jusqu'où les discours légaux et psychanalytiques sont ou ne sont pas solidaires. (Translation: Alireza Taheri)

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Two decades ago, Cathy Caruth's (1996) project *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* initiated a new field in the humanities that has come to be known as Trauma Studies.² There was much excitement among historians and literary scholars, because this method promised to finally grapple with ethical concerns raised by a self-conscious politicization in academic research. Unfortunately, critics found reasons to question the effectiveness of the method Caruth introduced, including most strongly by Ruth Leys (2000). She accused Caruth of ignoring the serious fact that Tancred's murder of his fiancé, Clorinda, made him a perpetrator not, as Caruth's research defined, a victim of trauma. Michael Rothberg's (2014) preface to the recent collection of articles in *The Future of Trauma Theory*, "Beyond Tancred and Clorinda—trauma studies for implicated subjects" frames the new research as addressing Leys' contentious critique. In fact, this collection of articles, Rothberg points out, broadens the terms of trauma research to rethink the binary of victim/perpetrator with a third factor, the witness or, "the notion of the implicated subject" (2014, p. xv). Interestingly, this third factor of the new research does not question Leys' introduction of the term 'perpetrator' in psychoanalysis, but rather makes concrete the legal discourse integral to the witness/perpetrator binary central to Leys' criticism of the method. Why would legal discourse become so central to the psychoanalytic discourse in Trauma Studies?

The fact that trauma has been associated with legal discourse since the term was introduced as a condition relevant to Insurance claims in the nineteenth century (Vermeulin, 2014, p. 147), may explain the bind between legal and psychoanalytic discourse. Perhaps since Trauma Studies has evolved from research with Holocaust survivors, the connection between legal discourse and psychoanalytic discourse has become a necessary bind. What is not recognized is that Leys' criticism of Caruth's work is based on her introducing "perpetrator" as a logical extension from Caruth's use of 'victim' of trauma. In effect, the unconscious conflation of legal and psychoanalytic discourse made Leys' critique stick which is perhaps why it has become so significant for the future of Trauma Studies. I would suggest that humanities scholars would benefit from questioning the assumption that legal discourse is integral to the psychoanalytic discourse on trauma. My aim in this paper is to question the connection between the apparently mutually supportive bind between legal and psychoanalytic discourse in order to refine the methods used in Trauma Studies. I will do this by first reviewing Leys' critique of Caruth's work and then follow that by an analysis of *Hiroshima, mon amour* (Dauman, Halfon & Resnais, 1958) which, as a film based on a screenplay by Marguerite Duras about the ethical impact of the bombing of Japan to end WWII, gives us ample opportunity to see to what extent the legal and the psychoanalytic discourses are and are not bound.

CRIMES AND THE REAL

Holocaust Studies has attracted scholarship from a variety of disciplines, inspiring competing ideas on methods, and even a kind of competition between disciplinary approaches to the trauma;³ no matter their methodological differences, however, the majority of scholars in trauma studies share the same motivation that led Claude Lanzmann, to create his epic-length documentary, *Shoah* (1995): seeking justice on behalf of the victims to identify and condemn the perpetrator. Dori Laub (1995) claims: "The perpetrators, in their attempt to rationalize the unprecedented scope of the destructiveness, brutally imposed upon their victims a delusional ideology whose grandiose coercive pressure totally excluded and eliminated the possibility of an inviolate, unencumbered, and thus sane, point of reference in the witness" (p. 66). In the *Juridical Unconscious*, Shoshana Felman (2002) centers on the role of critical court cases, such as the Eichmann trial, to bear witness to the victim's suffering and to punish the perpetrator for his crimes. What repeats in this scholarship by psychoanalysts treating Holocaust survivors as well as in Trauma Studies research, including Caruth's work, is victimhood language.

² It bears noting that Trauma Studies as initiated by Caruth's work, tends to follow a more Freudian-based approach, and draws on Lacan in small portions. I take a Lacanian approach, which explains my current engagement with Trauma theory research.

³ Where the psychoanalyst, Laub, (1995) distinguishes himself for listening in a way the historian does not (p. 224), the historian, LaCapra, (2001) suggests 'historiography' is one "way to come to terms with the wounds and scars of the past" (*Writing history, Writing Trauma*, p. 42).

Perhaps because the victim role was so central to the first wave of Trauma Studies, scholars such as Wendy Brown (1993) and Dominick La Capra (2001) have voiced their concern with this method as scholarship. Brown makes the point that this emphasis on the victim serves “a politics of recrimination that seeks to avenge the hurt even while it reaffirms it” (1993, p. 406). LaCapra uses the figure to emphasize a serious concern with trauma as a method in historical research: “As a consequence one encounters the dubious ideas that everyone (including perpetrators or collaborators) is a victim, that all history is trauma, or that we all share a pathological public sphere or ‘wound culture’” (2001, p. 64). LaCapra’s ‘wound culture’ here seems to iterate Leys’ (2000) critique of Caruth’s *Unclaimed Experience*, through Caruth’s (1996) notion that the voice in literature is a psychic wound denoting trauma: “... trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available” (p. 4). In company with Felman’s and Laub’s turn to Freud in their research on Holocaust testimonies, Caruth’s project engages in the ethical dimension of trauma research, politically motivated to address the ‘poststructuralist criticism [which] ... lead to political and ethical paralysis’ (p. 10). If the intent of Trauma Studies is to bear witness to the victim’s suffering, to make an ethical stance to victims of crimes, I can see LaCapra’s wish for caution especially in his use of the term ‘dubious’. Interestingly, his caution highlights the problematic conflation of legal and psychoanalytic discourse primarily because, as with Leys’, he privileges trauma as an ethical project relying on legal discourse.

LaCapra references Ruth Leys (2000) *Trauma: A Genealogy* as a source for more discussion on the “uses and abuses” of the concept of trauma, as a footnote, suggesting his essential disagreement with Leys’ harsh reaction to Caruth’s work. Leys is a historian of psychoanalysis, and on Freud’s contribution in particular which is why she can say that Caruth’s project shamefully misapplies and misinterprets Freud’s theory of ‘traumatic neurosis’ in “The Wound and the Voice”. In this chapter, Caruth uses Freud’s (2003) study of Tasso’s *Gerusalemme Liberata* in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle” to introduce the voice as trauma. Leys’ (2000) critique of Caruth’s analysis is so textually centered that I shall quote fully from Caruth’s quote of Freud’s story before reviewing points raised by Leys against Caruth:

Its hero, Tancred, unwittingly kills his beloved Clorinda in a duel while she is disguised in the armour of an enemy knight. After her burial he makes his way into a strange magic forest, which strikes the Crusader’s army with terror. He slashes with his sword at a tall tree; but blood streams from the cut and the voice of Clorinda, whose soul is imprisoned in the tree, is heard complaining that he has wounded his beloved again. (1996, p. 4)

Caruth proceeds to explore how the trauma of the “killing” (‘encounter with the real’) is missed by Tancred, and recognized only in its return as a haunting voice which, Caruth claims, is the wound inviting an ‘encounter with another’ (1996, p. 8).

Leys (2000) lists Caruth’s fallacies thus: “It is not true that Tancred’s killing of Clorinda is ‘unavailable to consciousness’, until it imposes itself again in the form of a murderous repetition. Neither Tasso nor Freud makes the claim that Tancred is unconscious or unaware of having killed his beloved the first time. He ‘unwittingly’ murders Clorinda (Freud uses the term ‘unknowingly’) in the sense that he does not intend to kill Clorinda, even if he does intend to kill the enemy she pretends to be” (p. 294). The statement initially seems to be coherent until the use of the verb tense, ‘having killed’ is properly considered. Caruth does not claim that Tancred did not know he had killed Clorinda once he had taken the mask from her dying/dead body. That was the point when he was ‘conscious’ of his crime. Before that point, the body he duelled with and killed was his enemy. This detail reflects for Freud the ‘unconscious’, or missed quality, of the trauma that explains why it returns. Do we see in Tancred’s killing of his fiancé an unconscious impulse equivalent to Hamlet’s hate for Ophelia? That is something that I think would warrant considering. What we should remember in both situations is that we are dealing with fictions.

Leys entirely misses the nature of trauma and its failed representation in the symbolic. It is a condition of ‘shock’ or ‘fright’ (Freud, 2003, p. 51) or in Lacan’s terms, an ‘encounter with the real’. The trauma in Tasso’s story was not the act of killing Clorinda; the trauma was the shock of a reality that was inconceivable; that is the trauma Freud was talking about which Lacan defines as ‘missed’. It is possible that the reason Freud

resisted analyzing Tasso's story as reflecting a psychic condition was because it was a fiction, and not a case history, though the precedent for analyzing a literary text as a case study of trauma, was set by Freud's research and significantly so in *Moses and Monotheism* (1967). In any case, the fictional Tancred buries Clorinda, "overwhelmed with grief, self-reproach, and guilt..." clearly cognizant of his crime; the killing of her metaphorically a second time in the forest retroactively signifies the trauma as a shock that could not be undone; the shock of being a 'passive victim' in Freud's terms, of that which returns differently in the exact same way: in disguise.⁴ I would propose that Clorinda's "disguise" as a tree points to what is 'inassimilable', the indivisible remainder which Lacan defines as the *objet a*, of Tancred's trauma; the trauma is not the question, "Why did Tancred kill her?" but "Why was she in disguise?" That question is unanswerable for Tancred because Clorinda cannot answer, being dead. Thus we see clearly what is meant by the symptom of repetition that signals trauma: even when it recurs, and no matter how many times it returns, the original trauma remains inaccessible as a kind of impossible to answer question.

Leys (2000) executes what I would define as an inverted 'anamorphosis' in her analysis of Caruth's text; she has introduced the concept of 'perpetrator' to the discourse on trauma in response to Caruth's use of the term 'victim' to describe Tancred's experience. Leys moves the term 'victim' from Tancred to define Clorinda who, as the victim of a crime, 'is not capable of witnessing or representing anything of what she has experienced' (2000, p. 295). According to Leys, this is a dilemma which Caruth resolves with literary tricks: "Caruth's highly ingenious answer is to suggest that Clorinda's voice is not exactly her own voice but that of Tancred in the sense that hers is the voice of the traumatized Tancred's desecrated second-self" (2000, p. 295). Interpretation is tricky but literature is also a trick of fantasy and in missing this, interpretation is impossible.

Rothberg eloquently makes the point in *Multidirectional Memory*, that "[t]he dead are not traumatized, they are dead" (2009, p. 90). In order to show that Clorinda is a victim who has suffered the 'wound' of a trauma at the hands of Tancred, the perpetrator, Leys gives the living capacity to feel to a dead person. Leys' interpretation does not follow the hermeneutic Caruth is tracing in literature, and the quality of metaphors to do the trick of being two things at the same time. As Caruth emphasizes, the wounded speaking tree is not the dead Clorinda; it is the vocal return of Tancred's trauma in symbolic terms. This story is not about Clorinda, it is about Tancred and Leys misses that. She wants to bring restitution to a 'literary' crime that she has identified in this story by Tancred, perhaps identifying the wrong perpetrator of the crime: technically, it would be Tasso, the one who created this 'fantasy', that is to blame for this misogynistic tale. Even then, reading Tasso's story as reflecting Tasso's 'encounter with the real' is another project. What was the trauma that inspired Tasso's poignant, misogynistic tale? I do not know and I would suppose, Leys does not either.

All the trouble Leys has in confusing fiction with the 'real' exemplifies the absurdity of her conflating Tancred the character with Nazis: "But her discussion of Tasso's epic has even more chilling implications. For if, according to her analysis, the murderer Tancred can become the victim of the trauma and the voice of Clorinda's testimony to his wound, then Caruth's logic would turn other perpetrators into victims too—for example, it would turn the executioners of the Jews into victims and the 'cries' of the Jews into testimony to the trauma suffered by the Nazis" (2000, p. 297). Equating Tancred with the Nazis outlines the troubling collapse of the distinctions between literature and reality, and the even more problematic subjugation of psychoanalytic discourse to legal concerns: Tancred is a character and the Nazis were living executioners. Perhaps the trouble with the different discourses begins with Caruth's giving Tancred the status of 'victim'; even so, that does not explain how Leys' misuses the symbolic significance of the tragedy of Tancred's trauma which inadvertently trivializes the actual crimes of the Nazis. What is clear in Leys analysis is her privileging of the victim as the one enduring trauma. The fact is, even Frantz Fanon had to address the problem in seeing perpetrators as suffering traumas when treating the French men who came to him to confess their psychic troubles in beating their wives. Trauma is a 'human' condition and perhaps in that sense, is a 'real' universal principle.

⁴ In *Seminar XI*, Lacan references Kierkegaard's article, "Repetition," with respect to the return of trauma, noting that "repetition demands the new" (p. 61).

There is no fair correlation between Leys' obvious relish in levying her distasteful and misapplied accusation against Caruth's work and La Capra's respectful anxiety about 'wound culture', but their repeated reflection on the perpetrator in Holocaust trauma narrative overlooks what is implicit in trauma theory and meant to be defined in Tancred's story, as proposed by Freud and then used by Caruth; trauma has a subject whose first experience of the wound is 'missed'. This does not mean that someone such as Tancred who suffers trauma may not also be a perpetrator of a crime: Tancred's killing of his fiancé may be considered a crime (though at the time, there was no crime in winning a chivalric battle) and so Clorinda would be considered the victim.⁵ On the other hand, there is no question that the Holocaust involved countless crimes. By crimes, I am referencing what the Nazis did to the inmates, both old and young, firm and infirm, men and women, children and aged, which includes but is not limited to the diabolical acts of murder in the gas chamber, by execution en masse or individually, or brutal murder by any blunt instrument at hand, including those used for working in the camps, such as shovels; the physical abuse of those kept alive until they succumbed to the *Muselmann* syndrome; the psychological abuse of those who were still capable of functioning; as well as the crimes of inmates against their colleagues, *paisane*, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, or best friends, because the camp was the place of a crime that meant everyone who entered was complicit in one crime or another, even the most blameless and guilt-ridden crime of surviving. Most memoirs attest to that guilt. This does not mean that a trauma was not suffered by each and every individual 'associated'⁶ with the Holocaust, but it is to say that conflating trauma and crime misunderstands the principle of trauma and overlooks the legal significance of trying and convicting an alleged perpetrator.

In psychoanalytic terms, what the original encounter was, was missed; it happened elsewhere, "another locality, another space, another scene, *the between perception and consciousness*" Lacan (1998, p. 56) says, quoting Freud. Thus, what is apprehended about the original 'real' event is "only my representation that I recover possession of", Lacan stresses (p. 57). Through Lacan's rendering of Freud's trauma, we see the condition of trauma is erased of its pathological nature, naturalized, so to speak, as part of the formative and ongoing lived experience of the Oedipalized subject, through fantasy formation. That is, we live experiencing the real in various ways, which includes both catastrophic events of natural as well as human-made horrors, or even personal private crises, great and small, devastating or even wonderful.⁷ What is consistent in the notion of trauma is that the subject's organizing impulse points to the unknowable real 'event' and the indivisible remainder, or *objet a*, of that event becomes the catalyst for the fantasy. As exemplified in the Tancred story, the only access to his trauma is through the compulsive repetition of killing, which can only be understood in the metaphorical recreation of the subject's fantasy response to the original 'missed' crisis expressed in Clorinda's voice in the tree where her voice is the *objet a*. Even then, this story about Tancred is, itself, merely a symbolic representation of something real.

Interestingly, although Caruth does not reference Lacan often, her work bears witness to this sophisticated approach to trauma, and particularly in her analysis of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* as a retelling (fantasy) that reflects a historical trauma: "Through the notion of trauma, I will argue, we can understand that a rethinking of reference is aimed not at eliminating history but at resituating it in our understanding, that is, at precisely permitting history to arise where 'immediate understanding' may not"

⁵ LaCapra makes this point elsewhere that sympathizing with the perpetrator may be a problem in Trauma Studies: "With respect to perpetrators, who may also be traumatized by their experience, I would argue that the historian should attempt to understand and explain such behavior and experience as far as possible... but obviously attempt to counteract the realization of even its reduced analogues", (*Writing History, Writing Trauma*, p. 41).

⁶ I use the term to reference anyone who has encountered the Holocaust, from the dead, survivors, perpetrators, those who colluded, those who resisted, those who study it, and even those who know about it only in vague terms. I hope the reader sees that, as one traces the connections, what stands out is not that there has been some monolithic thing affecting mankind, but that we are a community made up of individual psychic lives which explains why there is so much difference and repetition.

⁷ What I mean by the multiplicity of trauma has been touched on in part in my monograph, *Secular Messiahs and the Return of Paul's Real: A Lacanian Approach* (2015).

(1996, p. 11). In letting history 'arise', Caruth's hermeneutic relies on the metonymic value of the particular language used by Freud in his work: specifically, 'leaving' or 'departure' as the terms she highlights are reflected in the Biblical Exodus, repeated in the child's *Fort-da* game, all pointing to Freud's personal experience of being compelled by the Nazi aggression to leave Austria. In this repetitive pattern of 'leaving', Caruth lets the trauma of Freud's historical period arise as the 'Exodus'. In fact, Caruth makes an interpretive move that appears to extrapolate from Lacan's self-reflexive representation: rather than assume Freud's reading in *Moses* as biblical history, she reads it as Freud's fantasy of deliverance from persecution by the Nazis. Considering Freud was not alone in his need to escape, his trauma comes to stand for a shared trauma, or history. "If history is to be understood as the history of a trauma, it is a history that is experienced as the endless attempt to assume one's survival as one's own" (Caruth, 1996, p. 64). Caruth's theory works when highlighting the self-reflexive quality of all history: Freud's work on *Moses* is not about the ancient historical event, but about his response, as a Jew, to the contemporary persecution of the Jewish people that reaches back for centuries to some amorphous first 'crime', the murder of the first Moses, which Freud posits as the first trauma of the Jewish people. Notice the echo here in Freud's theory about the formation of Judaism in Tancred's first accidental murder of Clorinda. Is it possible that the bind of legal discourse to the psychoanalytic that I have previously associated with Holocaust Studies actually originates with Freud? Interestingly, Lacan's introduction of the 'real' disconnects the experience of trauma from crimes, which makes possible a more nuanced understanding of trauma.

HIROSHIMA, MON AMOUR

If Caruth (1996) can have executed such subtle and valuable inroads into the method of trauma theory in her chapter on Freud's *Moses*, she loses as much in her failure to carry through with that method in her hermeneutic approach to Resnais's film *Hiroshima, mon amour* (Dauman, Halfon & Resnais, 1958). My contention is that in her interpretive approach, she fails to find a subjective centre in the work, that which is usually associated with the author, and instead cedes to a variety of positions, from the director, actors, to Roosevelt, Miss Sasaki and John Hersey, and only periodically references the writer of the screenplay, Marguerite Duras. By reading this film as Duras' work, we can actually get at the history that arises there, and the link between the personal trauma as a shared trauma and the juridical debt being played out in this reflection on the devastation of Hiroshima.

In his article, "Beyond Eurocentrism: trauma theory in the global age" Stef Craps (2014) critiques trauma theory for focusing on a single catastrophic event, inspired by the experience of the Holocaust, that does not work when applying that method to a non-European, postcolonial, environment. He makes his case by analyzing Aminatta Forna's novel, *The Memory of Love* (2011) which is set in Sierra Leone in 2001, after the 11-year civil war had ended. The main character and British expatriate psychoanalyst, Adrian Lockheart, fails to attract clients because he does not understand that the traumatic conditions of living through war means that residents are not struggling with a single traumatic event but with ongoing and multiple traumatic moments of war. The quality of Craps' analysis falters on the same interpretive fallacy I identified in Leys' analysis of Tasso's story: characters are analyzed as if they were living breathing individuals overlooking their function in the fantasy which logically points to the author. I think a more effective analysis of Forna's novel would be to ask: what trauma has compelled her to create a fantasy of a British expat psychoanalyst in Sierra Leone? Caruth's strong analyses of Freud's focus on the exodus in *Moses* opens up how the text can be read as the author's fantasy which situates the work in a specific time and place.⁸ Unfortunately, Caruth does not

⁸ Caruth sets up an interesting comparison of the value of Freud's *Moses* and the *Tancred* story for trauma theory: the former expresses the trauma of the political climate in which Freud was writing and the latter articulates "a parable of psychoanalytic theory itself as it listens to a voice that it cannot fully know..." (p. 9). The slippage of an inconsistency in her methodological practice is evident in her seeing one project as a product of trauma and the other project as a story that can be used to define a theory. Whether *Tancred*'s story can or cannot represent psychoanalytic theory and whether or not psychoanalytic theory is a project of listening to the wound (in whole or in part) is I think up for debate. I would suggest that what Caruth does not pay attention to and what psychoanalytic theory of trauma would concede to, is that the *Tancred*

to take up this approach in her analysis of *Hiroshima*: in fact, the only time she reflects on the fact the screenplay was written by Marguerite Duras, is when she acknowledges that the story is essentially told by a French woman who is engaging in cross-cultural exchange. I think that reads a little flat, especially since this film is a puzzling fusion of the bombing of Hiroshima and a love story.

The opening scenes of *Hiroshima, mon amour* (Dauman, Halfon & Resnais, 1958) seem to intentionally obscure the love story: the first images of hands caressing skin burnt by radiation, known as keloid, are followed by two bodies caressing in the act of sex. As the film progresses, and we meet the 'lovers', a French woman acting as a nurse in a documentary about Hiroshima and a Japanese architect, we recognize that the terms of some kind of 'affair' define their interactions but love seems so weighted down by the general tone of sadness throughout the film. In fact, as the film continues, it is revealed that the centre of emotion in the film is historical: her story of her first love, a German soldier who died the day her town was liberated at the end of WWII. The Japanese man, in listening, comes to stand in for that dead soldier or, even in terms of trauma theory, his return. The only sincere emotional moment in the present is perhaps when she confesses to betraying her first love by telling their story leading to this confession: "I'm beginning to remember you less clearly", speaking to the Japanese man. There is a very satisfying doubling of the German soldier and the Japanese man in this confession.

If this sense of betrayal is in the love story, how Hiroshima is a part of this love story? The fact is, the only way we can see the love story being applicable to the Japanese city is to draw the relations on the political map and see political betrayals. For example, the Japanese man is having an affair with the French woman who, only fifteen years before, was his political enemy. They are having an affair in a city where his sister and mother died because her political allies (the Americans) killed them with a nuclear bomb. Going into the backstory, we see even more political intrigue: the French woman retells the story of her first love with a German soldier. Resnais claims that this young man's sympathies were probably not strictly Nazi (1996, p 127, ft. 20), which, I will draw your attention to, reads as a defensive and unspoken acknowledgement of coming too close to the troubling subject of Nazi perpetrators we see in Leys and LaCapra's work. In short, Resnais's effort to neutralize this legal discourse aims to protect the French woman (character) from censure. Noteworthy is that Resnais' defense does not tell us what Duras meant by this detail. In the context of this complicated crossing of political differences as if a modern interpretation of Romeo and Juliet, we face the unconscious prejudice of legal judgment, which Duras provocatively brings into view in this film about WWII.

Casablanca is the name of the bar that the French woman arrives at in the middle of the night, and as a reference to the American film of that title, is another provocative national WWII signifier: who can avoid the bitter irony in this reference to America's cultural claim to victory in 1941, just years before bombing Japan with nuclear war heads to end that war, here in the city it destroyed with the bomb named 'Fat Boy' after Humphry Bogart's term in *The Maltese Falcon*? Yet, as I will explain later, the significance of the *Casablanca* reference is more personal than this political irony conveys, especially in the film's triangulated love structure of the French woman's affair with a Japanese man, betraying her German soldier lover. With a Japanese man (her enemy) who is the transference of the Nazi (her enemy), she relives lost love. This nationalization of the story reflects conscious choices in the script's plot. There is a thinking mind behind these choices that intentionally puts in our path questions of political integrity, as well as personal and national fidelities.

Stef Craps (2014) critiques Caruth's interpretation of the film's cross-cultural exchange as being blind to how Eurocentric the film is. For example, there is no representation of the Japanese people in the film: "Caruth notes in passing that the film 'does not tell the story of Hiroshima in 1945' but rather uses the rebuilt Hiroshima as the setting for the telling of another story, the French woman's story of Nevers (Caruth, 1996, p. 27); but the asymmetry of the exchange and the appropriation and instrumentalization of Japanese suffering in the service of articulating a European trauma do not stop her from building up the interaction between the French woman and the Japanese man as an exemplary model of cross-cultural witnessing" (p.

story and the Moses' analysis are equally fantasies, workings of trauma. Their differences in form explain the difference in author/time.

48). Thus, Craps points out, Caruth's analysis does not show the trauma of Hiroshima since the film represents a European trauma and Hiroshima is a non-European traumatic event. I think this judgement is not quite substantiated here; it overlooks some very salient point Caruth makes about this film which is that it is from the perspective of a French woman whose trauma returns in this film as something that was 'missed (I saw everything/you saw nothing). Is Craps misreading the trouble with articulating trauma as Caruth's faulty analysis of the trauma? The fact is, it seems unfair to say that the failure to articulate the trauma of Hiroshima is the fault of the interpretation since, as Caruth observes, the film is about a French woman. Craps dissatisfaction is actually with the film and the fact he does not see that and that Caruth also does not clearly observe the Eurocentric quality of the film are two examples of how trauma theory continues to be used haphazardly in analysis. The problem with the haphazard approach is the failure to recognize that trauma in cultural projects requires a recognition of limitations in analyzing cultural works as opposed to living subjects.

In interpreting *Hamlet* in his seminar on desire (Seminar VI), Lacan (1959) states clearly that cultural works are artifacts: their value is in reflecting the unconscious to the audience. He outlines the point at which interpretation of a cultural project begins to take shape: "If [the work] is in consciousness... we must all the same ask ourselves what corresponds with the unconscious to the conscious structure?" (1959, p. 164). For example, when Caruth considers 'departure' as the impulse driving Freud's revision of the exodus narrative to articulate his trauma of leaving Europe for survival, we are listening to the 'unconscious' element of the Freud's conscious restructuring of the biblical story. I would suggest that the cross-cultural project Caruth seems so focused on in *Hiroshima* mistakes the conscious structure for the unconscious impulse. The fact is, Caruth's passing comment on the French woman's recollection of her past love points to the unconscious impulse in the film: specifically, when she becomes hysterical with her remembrances and the Japanese man tries to bring her back to the present with a slap: "The slap indeed interrupts the pathos and the ahistorical sense of 'firstness' in the cry—'He was my first love'—and this interrupts the isolated self-enclosure of the narrative of firsts: a narrative that, incidentally, would include Hiroshima as the place in which the first atomic bomb was dropped" (p. 42). What is so insightful in Caruth's observation here is this: it addresses a question central to the film and which I introduced earlier as the conundrum about how this love story does not seem relevant to Hiroshima, at all. The conundrum of love is addressed, irrationally, as the notion of 'first': in the metonymic value of 'first', (first love and first nuclear bomb), we not only find the unconscious element driving the film structure, we see that this structure is binding a historical first event, the first dropping of the A-bomb, and a fictional (Nevers's first) love story.

If Caruth's notion of 'first' is, as I will now consider, the trauma motivating the film, then Caruth's interpretation of nationalism in the film misses the opportunity to move from the general to the specific. In fact, one might suppose there is a kind of national blindness that interferes with Caruth's analysis: "For the French, Hiroshima did not signify the beginning of the suffering of the Japanese people, but rather precisely the end of their own suffering" (p. 29). Positioning an inverse relation between the Japanese and French on the matter of the bombing of Hiroshima is, ostensibly, viable, until we consider the more salient fact that France did not drop the bomb on Hiroshima: it was France's ally, America, that did and it did to end the last front of WWII which was being played out in the Pacific Ocean and was a confrontation between Japan and America. The war in Europe had already ended: Duras, as a French woman, knew it had ended. The bombing of Hiroshima was an event that the French people discovered the morning after, in the news headlines. Caruth's analysis has misidentified the 'end of suffering' as French when in fact, it was an American sentiment. This apparently minor issue explains how the analysis fails to grip at the particularities of this film.

As already expressed, I agree with Caruth's assessment that a moral betrayal is implicit in this film. The moral anguish of having committed the crime of Hiroshima returns in this film in countless ways, but in conscious ways. This is a film that clearly recognizes betrayal. The question is, what are the unconscious signifiers here that point to the trauma? I would suggest that maintaining focus on the protagonist, the French woman from Nevers, will open up possibilities for analysis. It is from her position that we can see where the moral judgment in the film informs the structure of the film: or, in Lacanian terms, we can see what real has cut a person's life to inspire this fantasy of a devastating loss. Since this film was written by Duras, it would

seem that the analysis brings us to face the issue of analyzing the film as an expression of her trauma.

TRAUMA RETURNS

Using the ‘author’ to analyze a written fantasy is a move most clinicians resist. What is missing in analyzing a text as fantasy, they argue, is the effect of transference: without transference, the analyst cannot enact the compulsive repetition symptomatic of trauma. This prejudice has informed a general distrust of psychoanalytic applications in cultural or even political analysis and some have argued, that distrust was encouraged by Lacan (1959) who, in *Seminar VI*, stated that the author’s part in creating the literary project “does not interest us in a major way” (p. 189). Lacan makes the point with *Hamlet*: it was written on the heels of Shakespeare’s loss of his father, making the theme of mortality and inherited obligation central to the circumstances around which Hamlet worked through this quandary by creating a story about fulfilling a father’s demand for revenge. The value of Hamlet is not his humanity, since, as Lacan (1959) points out, “Hamlet is not a real person” (p. 186); rather, the circumstances of his articulation (the play) engenders a structure, a fantasy, that inspires the audience members with an unconscious recognition of their own troubled relation to the father, law and desire. It is this effect of the play on the audience that leads Lacan to claim that Shakespeare’s autobiographical details are unimportant for analysis.

Several issues are raised about Lacan’s analysis. On the one hand, we must always keep in mind, as Lacan here stresses, that a cultural project only represents people. To assign living subjectivity to a character is problematic, especially in applying Lacanian psychoanalytic hermeneutic. On the other hand, I would suggest that Lacan’s refusal to put Shakespeare’s life circumstances into play in the analysis of *Hamlet* perpetuates a certain prejudice of literature exemplified in the canon of great works of art. As feminists mobilizing the canon wars in the 1980s made clear, the traditional notion of great art uses structural excellence and the universal representation of mankind as the criterion that disguises prejudices for the work of rich white men. Much has changed about criteria for determining artistic qualities of works as a result of the feminist intervention, including recognizing the value of the work of art as a historical and political project. If we rethink Lacan’s resistance to authorial relevance through the canon wars, we can see that the interpretive opportunities afforded by exploring the ideological underpinnings of any work of production through the creator, is great. In fact, Caruth (1996) accomplished this in her analysis of Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*: the ‘departure’ that Freud focuses on is not the ancient event of the Exodus but his own departure, which, in context of the Nazi treatment of the German Jews in Europe, put into perspective the necessity to leave in order to survive. The biblical narrative was understood, by Freud, as a ‘return’ of a trauma which Caruth used as a fantasy representing his own trauma. The connection between the writer’s trauma and his/her context, informs us of the personal struggles endured by the individual subject in the dominant politics of a time and place and that is the value of Caruth’s research for Trauma Theory. So far, we have confronted several issues that have come up in this method, and one is this problem LaCapra identifies as the ‘wound culture’ which I have suggested is actually not a problem with the method, but a problem with the conflation of two discourses in the method. By staying focused on the author, we can perhaps get at how legal discourse is not synonymous with psychoanalytic discourse, but contiguous to it.

In exploring the role Duras’ personal experience plays in the film, I will start with the question: how does the love betrayal get caught up in the political betrayal of Hiroshima? In order to approach that question, I will cross-reference elements of Duras’ screenplay with an entry about Hiroshima in her work, *The War: A Memoir* (1986). This memoir is the accumulated writings of her experiences during the latter part of the war, triggered by the arrest of her husband, Robert Antelme, for his part in the French Resistance. In June 1944, he was deported to Auschwitz and then was sent to work in Gandersheim. Duras’ emotional and psychological turmoil throughout the period of his incarceration was alleviated only slightly by being with her lover, Dionys Mascolo, who she defines in her memoir as Antelme’s best friend (p. 64). At the end of the war, it was Mascolo who travelled to Dachau where Antelme was dying of Typhus in the spring of 1945 in the American’s makeshift quarantine facility. Disguised as a Colonel, Mascolo bypassed officials, found Antelme and brought him back to Duras and their Paris apartment to be healed.

Duras' memoir is a publication of her journal entries that reveals a kind of self-absorbed anguish and anxiety about the war generally and her fear for Antelme, in particular. On his return, she is unselfconsciously explicit about her disgust with Antelme's complete destitution. She documents his physical recovery, which was slow and also his psychic recovery, which took much longer. In the summer of 1945, Duras recounts: "He's hidden. He's dark. Then by the side of the road one morning that huge headline: Hiroshima. It's as if he'd like to lash out, as if he's blinded by a rage through which he has to pass before he can live again. After Hiroshima I think he talks to D. D. is his best friend, Hiroshima is perhaps the first thing outside his own life that he sees or reads about" (p. 64). Notice Duras' use of 'first': indirectly, but significantly, this term supports Caruth's interpretation of the value of 'first' in *Hiroshima*, but as is apparent here, Hiroshima and its horror is tied to the death camps. Notice also how Duras has framed her husband from a distance. He isolates himself; he is crippled by a 'darkness'. In her framing, she expresses compassion and love for him and also an emotional distance: his suffering is an unknown quantity for her but its effect on him is so obvious it overwhelms her with grief. Hiroshima is the 'first' world event that returns him to the social order. It is a critical moment in Antelme's healing. It brings him to D. who is Mascolo: Antelme's best friend and the man she took as a lover in her husband's absence and also the man she wants to marry and have a child with, as soon as Antelme, her 'first' husband, agrees to divorce her. Those emotions that Antelme's suffering stirred up in her, emotions I can only guess at, become fused with his reaction to Hiroshima. Why does the event suddenly inspire Antelme's rage?

Duras' personal trauma is outlined clearly in the love triangle in which she is torn between her first love (Antelme) and her new love (Mascolo). This autobiographical love triangle is doubled in *Hiroshima, mon amour* (Dauman, Halfon & Resnais, 1958): there is the primary one being the French woman's two lovers (Duras' two husbands) and the secondary, allusive one, being the love triangle in *Casablanca* (Ilsa's affair with Rick while her husband is an inmate in the Nazi camps). This film story seems closer to Duras' personal love triangle whereas the French woman's love story, centered on a Japanese lover and a German soldier, presents entirely different terms. You could say these terms are the conscious terms. While we might argue that there is absolutely no correspondence between Duras' relation to the Nazis and the French woman's first love, the moral issues raised by the French woman's story suggests otherwise. Resnais alludes to the inappropriateness of Nevers' tryst with the German soldier. In an allusive way, there is some kind of equivalence between Duras' betrayal of her husband by loving his best friend while he was in the death camps and the Nazis that crippled him. This would explain how Hiroshima, the event, is initially just a screen through which two love triangles weave, but in this analysis, proves, in ferocious cruelty, equivalent to the Nazi death camp that Antelme survived. In that sense, Craps' condemnation of Caruth's Eurocentric analysis of the film is unfair, since the film is not about Hiroshima, but is representative of a French woman's perspective on Hiroshima through her husband's rage, (I saw everything/you saw nothing) of the Nazi death camps. In Lacanian terms, Hiroshima is the objet a: that which reflects the remainder of the 'real' and indicates the desire. In this case, the desire, associated with her husband's trauma which is triggered (returns) with the news of Hiroshima, is not Antelme's desire: it is Duras's desire which is positioned in the film as equivalent to the Japanese man's trauma: he also missed seeing the bomb: all he experienced was its effect which is the death of his mother and sister. Had he been in Hiroshima and not out fighting the war, he could have died with them. Ironically, he was doing the right thing. His culpability, however, does not change. His mother and sister died because he was at war with the Americans.

I would like to suggest that the betrayal that drives Hiroshima works to speak about America's bombing of Japan, because it allows the audience to identify with how betrayal happens, especially if one is moved by love. One can betray one's country by loving the enemy; one can betray the future by inventing a bomb that kills the future; one can betray the person one loves in the cruelest terms, unintentionally by taking his best friend as a lover. None of these acts are 'crimes' in legal terms nor do these acts deny that killing is a crime; assisting in killing is also a crime. None of these legal or non-legal crimes, however, changes the fact there was a trauma. The trauma itself is embodied antithetically in "I saw everything/you saw nothing", which encapsulates the horror of the unknown 'real', both in the camps and at Hiroshima: trauma does not erase

the crime, and more importantly, it does not absolve the perpetrators. You would say that the two issues, trauma and crime, must be distinguished in analytic work in order to give fair due to the trauma and to properly and symbolically identify the crime so that the legal apparatus can fulfill its obligations to justice.

CONCLUSION

In analyzing *Hiroshima* as Duras' project, the organization of the remainder that points to the trauma (I saw everything/you saw nothing), reveals a series of repetitive links between the unconscious and the conscious structures in her screenplay which we have opened up by reading the film through her memoir. One series of links of the conscious structure points to sites of political betrayal, both manifest and latent, and another points to betrayal in more personal terms. As we pull on the threads of the multiple sites of betrayal, an interesting issue around our pursuit of trauma arises: the thing that was missed, the trauma, comes into focus as the desire at the heart of the film. This perception is possible because of our precise entry into the fantasy through the author. It is through that precision that the lacuna that is trauma can be seen. It is also this lacuna that exemplifies why crime and trauma must be treated separately so that there is never the specious move to privilege some traumas over other traumas.

The secondary issue I raised in this project is a reconsideration of the role of the author in literary hermeneutics. Caruth took up Freud's invitation to consider trauma as located in a time and place and so analyzed Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* as trauma writing. This issue of time and place was central to analyses of Holocaust survivors: it may have happened that the survivors' function as witnesses of the crimes committed in the Nazi death camps to bring criminals to justice resulted in a slippage of two relevant discourses in Trauma Studies, the psychoanalytic and the legal. Perhaps recognizing the localized nature of Trauma Studies discourse is what led some scholars to recoil from the method out of fear of aggravating a condition or, as one scholar suggested, giving the perpetrators a way out. As it turns out, the trouble was not trauma, but the obscuring of the only 'real' limit of trauma, which is trauma itself. From here, we go with Rothberg in moving beyond Tancred and Clorinda.

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