



UNIVERSITETET I AGDER

## **The Shadow in the Mirror**

The Politics and Psychology of the Internalised Double in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* and Jess Walter's *The Zero*

KRISTINE SOMMERSTAD MOLSTAD

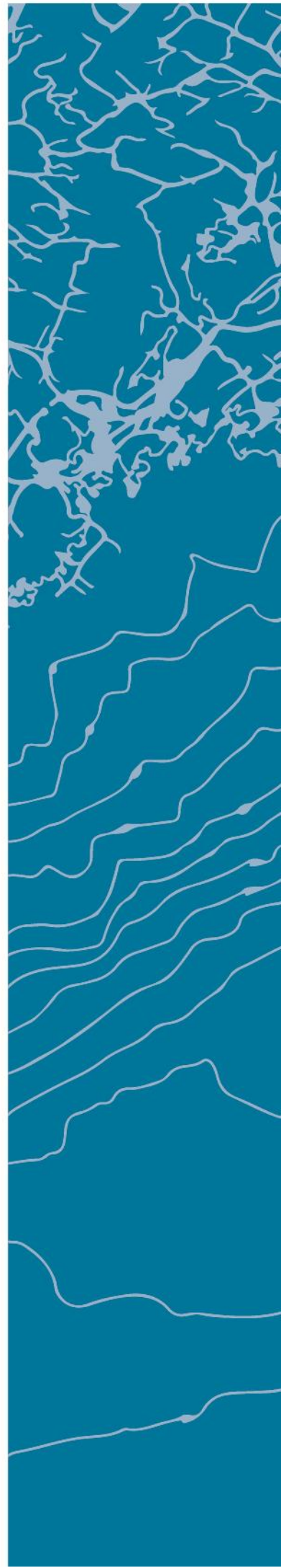
SUPERVISOR

Charles Ivan Armstrong

**University of Agder, 2019**

Faculty of Humanities and Education

Department of Foreign Languages and Translation



## Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been such an elaborate and reflected piece of writing without my supervisor Charley. Thank you so much for continually reading my not so comprehensive texts and ideas and giving me advice on how I can improve my writing.

I am genuinely grateful for my parents and brother, who despite living in another part of the country have given me unconditional love and support throughout my years of studying and taught me never to stop believing in myself and my abilities.

Thank you Sverre, Corin, Kari-Anne, Susanne and Idun. You have all contributed to this thesis in different ways with your friendship. Your guidance and laughter have been an inspiration to work hard and a friendly reminder that there is a life outside of this thesis.

At last, a special thanks to my dearest friend Tanya. Our numerous academic conversations and hours of studying together have formed my mindset and thereby this thesis. Thank you for being the sister I never had.

## Table of Contents:

Acknowledgements .....	2
Introduction.....	5
Thesis statement.....	7
<b>Chapter 1: Theoretical frame work .....</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 The Literary, Historical and Psychological Origins of the Double .....	8
1.2 Sigmund Freud and the Uncanny.....	13
1.3 Carl Gustav Jung and the Shadow .....	15
1.4 The Death of the Postmodern Subject .....	16
1.5 Chapter overview.....	19
<b>Chapter 2: An Analysis of the Double in Chuck Palahniuk’s <i>Fight Club</i>.....</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1 The Persona of the Post-War American Ornamental Culture .....	24
2.2 Tyler Durden: Shadow and Role Model .....	31
2.3 Subversion.....	34
2.4 “There’s nothing left”: Unsuccessful Individuation .....	40
<b>Chapter 3: An Analysis of the Double in Jess Walter’s <i>The Zero</i> .....</b>	<b>46</b>
3.1 The Traumatized Double in a Thriller Noir Novel.....	48
3.2 Remy’s Managed Heart: The New Fragmented American Hero .....	51
3.3 A Battle to Rise Up.....	57
3.4 The Post-Colonial Other .....	62
3.5 “Let’s go somewhere”: Remy’s Unsuccessful Individuation .....	68
<b>Chapter 4: Conclusion.....</b>	<b>71</b>
4.1 Comparing <i>Fight Club</i> and <i>The Zero</i> .....	72
4.2 The Role of the Internalised Double .....	75
Works Cited .....	79

“Why do we place more value now on artless, unmanaged feeling?  
Why, hopelessly and romantically, do we imagine a natural preserve  
of feeling, a place to be kept ‘forever wild’?”

The answer must be that it is becoming scarce.”

- Arlie Russell Hochschild in *The Managed Heart*

## Introduction

What lies at the centre of individuals' lives in contemporary American culture? Postmodernity is the term which has been given to explain the complexities of life in Western societies from the middle of the twentieth century. Postmodern culture is characterised by being progressive-oriented, where material consumption and flows of media images from mass-media have become a considerable part of human beings' daily lives. The integration into American culture and thereby into a postmodern collective happens through a socialising process called internalisation. *The English Oxford Dictionary* defines the verb internalise as a process when a person makes already established "(attitudes or behaviour) part of one's nature by learning or unconscious assimilation" ("Internalize"). This integration into contemporary culture might be experienced as fragmented, confusing and complicated due to the different and external signals one is expected to perceive and conform to in postmodern society. In this complex world of images and impressions, various contemporary American authors have taken a different turn and explore if unmanaged feelings, autonomy, volition and authenticity in human beings endure (Hungerford 1081). In order to scrutinise this enquiry through fictional narratives, authors have adopted a literary feature which has been used to examine human authenticity and self-transcendence for centuries: the double.

The double, also known as the *doppelgänger*, is a literary feature present in contemporary fiction and has throughout the history of Western literature been interpreted as "an ancient sign" (Slethaug 8), a "literary archetype" (Humann 23), a "literal trope" (Schwarz 200), a "perennial motif present in all literary styles" (Živković 121) and even as "a coherent genre of fiction" (Posadas 164). The double is often simplified as being the representation of a mirror-image or a duplicate of a living person. However, the type of double this thesis scrutinises is a literary device and figure utilised to create suspense and dramatise the hidden and darker part of the human mind: the unconscious (Schwarz 199). The primal concern of this thesis will be what might be termed the *internalised double*, which represents an intrinsic conflict between an individual's true self and the norms and values which have been internalised to integrate into contemporary society.

One of the main inspirations for this thesis is Heike Schwarz's *Beware of the Other Side(s): Multiple Personality Disorder and Dissociative Identity Disorder in American*

*Fiction* from 2013. Schwarz points out an apparent link between literary representations of the double and the mental illness Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder). She argues that this mental disorder, often abbreviated to DID, cannot be discussed in terms of psychology and literature separate from each other because it is a cultural phenomenon. This means that literature and other cultural productions have contributed to form the understanding of the disorder (Schwarz 142). Due to this connection with psychology, the literary double arguably points towards an understanding of human beings' mental health and well-being. In other words, the interaction between psychology and literature to create the internalised double illustrates how literature is one way to represent human beings' experience in the real world.

As the individual does not live in complete separation from other people and outer social structures, the double cannot be understood outside or in isolation of social context either. Milica Živković in "The Double as the 'Unseen' of Culture: Toward a Definition of Doppelgänger" presents the double as a relative concept, a "cultural construction" (121), that has changed with the leading views in philosophy, psychology and literary criticism. The way this thesis proposes that the double is a product of the culture and the social context in which it is produced owes much to Živković's discussion. Thereby, to understand the role of the contemporary internalised double, one must analyse it in connection to the socio-political structures which underpin present-day society.

In one of the main influences of the idea of this thesis, Heather Duerre Humann in her recent study *Another Me: The Doppelgänger in 21st Century Fiction, Television and Film* claims that there are some recurring themes and debates the double is concerned with; "identity, individualism, autonomy, agency, and human rights" (8). Like a specific genre in literature or film, stories concerning the double are repetitive (Altman 25). Therefore, in order to comprehend the function of the double in contemporary American literature thoroughly, this thesis suggests that one must look at the double's historical roots because the literary device relies on a long tradition of intertextuality and conventions in fiction and recognised principles in psychology. In short, the double would not have a specific function without these traditions. However, due to the extent of this thesis, the rendering of the double's complex tradition in Chapter 1 is not all-encompassing, and there are many influences and interesting approaches left out of consideration.

## Thesis statement

Even though the contemporary internalised double builds on these older traditions, the novels this thesis will address, depict present-day socio-political concerns. Despite being set approximately five years apart (and published ten years apart from each other), Chuck Palahniuk's novel *Fight Club* (1996) and Jess Walter's *The Zero* (2006) demonstrate disapproval and discontent of dominant values and norms in post-war America. Both novels portray an image of America characterised by consumerism and commercialisation in order to sustain American hegemony through white supremacy and capitalism. In other words, these novels provide a comparable political dimension. Precisely because Palahniuk and Walter's protagonists are unable to find mental wellbeing due to a diminished sense of individuality and uniqueness in contemporary society, the internalised double appears, representing mental illness. Consequently, the novels which will be discussed in this thesis also evoke a psychological dimension.

By making the reader aware of certain aspects of contemporary American culture which have a negative effect on an individual's mental health, *Fight Club* and *The Zero* demonstrate Herbert Grabes' claim that literature "is a possibility of self-reflection by way of presenting a *double* of what is held to be reality" (Grabes 7-8, emphasis added). Comparable to how the internalised doubles in these fictional narratives mirror an unknown and shadow side of the protagonists, this thesis will show how stories on the double also can reflect unpleasant but actual socio-political debates and discussions on mental health.

Through the literary device of the double, irony and exaggeration, Palahniuk and Walter offer a critique on contemporary culture, which make these narratives satirical works of fiction. To underscore how the reader should challenge the late-capitalist social order for the sake of psychological wellbeing, Palahniuk and Walter desire to create a reaction in the reader to make him or her start thinking critically about contemporary culture. Put another way, by examining the political and the psychological aspects of the literary device, the ultimate goal of this thesis is to prove that the internalised double has a socio-critical role in contemporary American literature.

## Chapter 1: Theoretical framework

### 1.1 The Literary, Historical and Psychological Origins of the Double

Literary critics are unanimous in claiming that it is impossible to settle on one fixed definition which expresses the complex dimensions of the double. The lack of a general definition is caused primarily by the double's nature, because it was not originally a feature in literature but based on principles in Western mythology and cultural heritage. Therefore, it is hopeless to trace the concept of the double back to one specific source, which is the reason why there is no systematic way of representing the various shapes the double takes (Rank 7). Nevertheless, in order to find out what characterises the internalised double and examine its function in contemporary American literature, this thesis will proceed to demonstrate the basis of the double's literary, historical and psychological dimension.

The evolution of Gothic literature during the eighteenth and nineteenth century seems like a natural place to start the beginning of a discussion on the literary double in the English-speaking world. This is because an emphasis on psychological forces developed in Gothic literature, which made “doubles, *alter egos*, mirrors and animated representations of the disturbing parts of human identity” (Botting 11) paramount for this literary movement. Doubling has been said to appear for the first time in English fiction in William Godwin's novel *Caleb Williams* from 1794 (Miall 351), but the figure was originally defined as a *doppelgänger*, which frequently appeared in German fiction. The term was famously coined by author Jean Paul (Johann Paul Friedrich Richter) in his novel *Siebenkäs* published in 1796. Jean Paul explained the term only in a short footnote: “So heißen Leute, die sich selber sehen”, meaning “so people who see themselves are called” (Paul qtd. in Schwarz 201). Its literal meaning is ‘double goer’ and refers mainly to an indistinguishable duplicate of a living human being. This is precisely what Jean Paul's novel centres on; the male protagonist Siebenkäs continually interacts with a man that looks identical to himself.

In Gothic literature the duality of man is examined profoundly, the belief that all individuals have both a morally good and an evil side. However, this duality was no longer primarily examined through the supernatural as in earlier literature. Evil became an integral part of human beings (Živković 125). The human subject's alienation and estrangement from the culture he or she lives in were explained by “Darwinian models of evolution” (Botting 12). The demonic became paralleled with a human's loss of control over unaccepted drives



and desires; it reflected the “bestial within the human” (Botting 11). Accordingly, the double became a figure which represents a subject’s criminal and pathological behaviour and blurs the line between what it means to be human and non-human; subverting good and accepted behaviour with excessive manners, generally portrayed as madness (Botting 4).

In *Madness and Civilization, A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1961) Michel Foucault traces the historical origins of the notions of madness. He emphasises how people who suffer from mental diseases have been perceived as something different, something ‘mad’ in opposition to the sane and normal. Foucault suggests this mindset constructs a radical binary between the human and the non-human, a categorisation of whom is accepted in society and not. Foucault gives an account of the “enormous houses of confinement” (38) that were established in Europe in the seventeenth century by “the monarchical and bourgeois order” (40). As a judicial and powerful system to keep order, the houses of confinement were institutions to house, give work to and shelter beggars, prostitutes, the poor and people who were defined as ‘mad’ because other people believed they had voluntarily chosen this particular lifestyle. Foucault claims human beings categorised as “the insane, demented men, individuals of wandering mind and persons who have gone completely mad” (65) were already from this point stigmatised and alienated by the dominant administrative group of people. Houses of confinement are known as the predecessors of Asylums and other medical institutions which have maintained the enormous wall between people taken by ‘madness’ and the remaining part of humankind. In his study, Foucault clearly illustrates how

otherness is the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group (“US,” the Self) constructs one or many dominated out-groups (“Them,” Other) by stigmatizing a difference – real or imagined – presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination (Staszak 1).

Ergo, when one scrutinises what or who is being ‘othered’ in a society, one enlightens fundamental aspects of the dominant cultural discourse, not necessarily the group of people who are alienated. In other words, when looking at who is being othered in one’s own culture, one really learns about what is excluded in the dominant socio-political system and thus oppressed in society. Foucault’s study significantly demonstrates how alienation and the binary between the Self and the Other is a cultural construction and not something naturally given.

The development of the double continued simultaneously with the evolution of the field of psychology which enhanced an understanding of the human psyche. In the 1880s, a

psychological conflict identified as “*dédoublement de la personnalité*” (Luckhurst 39) or double personalities were under examination by French psychiatrists. Neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot, the director of the Salpêtrière asylum in Paris at the end of the nineteenth century, established “The Salpêtrière’s brand of trauma” (Didi-Huberman qtd. in Luckhurst 35), the beginning of the definition of trauma. Charcot apprehended male hysteria as a psychic wound caused by an occupational accident. He argued that men’s hysteric seizures were the outcome of going through such a traumatic experience. As a student of Charcot, Pierre Janet evolved this idea of trauma and claimed that dissociation was a human being’s defence mechanism to avoid re-experiencing a particularly traumatic event. The act of dissociation, Janet explained, is a mental process unknown to the subject’s perception. This process is a fixed idea; a growing chain of memories and associations which will become a system independent of, and therefore unknown to, the subject. Thus, the traumatic event might bring about dissociation of the human psyche, which in extreme cases lead to the construction of a separate personality the subject has no sentient control over (Luckhurst 41-43).

One recognised author who exchanged letters with Pierre Janet when writing his own fictional story on a person’s double personality is Robert Louis Stevenson. Stevenson had a strong interest in the phenomenon: “I had long been trying to write a story on this subject [...] to find a body, a vehicle, for that strong sense of man’s double being which must at times come in upon and overwhelming the mind of every thinking creature (Stevenson qtd. in Schwarz 215). The outcome was Stevenson’s celebrated novella *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, published in 1886. As an internalised *doppelgänger* story, *Jekyll and Hyde* exposes a fundamental conflict in the individual and is an interesting and important predecessor for the two novels which will be addressed later in this thesis.

In Stevenson’s detective story, the lawyer Mr J.G. Utterson looks into the will of his old and highly respected friend Dr Henry Jekyll, who in case of his demise has decided to bequeath his possessions to his enigmatic associate Edward Hyde. When Mr Utterson decides to seek out Mr Hyde, he learns that Hyde is involved in several serious criminal acts, such as injuring a little girl on the street and murder. Utterson remains suspicious and questions Jekyll’s will further. However, the theme of the *doppelgänger* is not revealed until the last chapter where Henry Jekyll recalls from a first-person point of view how he invented a mysterious serum. When intoxicated by the potion, Jekyll looks into his mirror image where he is accustomed to meeting “the large handsome face of Dr Jekyll” (Stevenson 20) but he

now encounters Mr Hyde who is “pale and dwarfish [and gives] an impression of deformity without any namable malfunction [which results in the sense of an] unknown disgust, loathing and fear” (16). Jekyll reflects:

The evil side of my nature, to which I had now transferred the stamping efficacy, was less robust and less developed than the good which I had just deposed [...] even as good shone upon the countenance of the one, evil was written broadly and plainly on the face of the other. Evil besides (which I must still believe to be the lethal side of man) had left on that body an imprint and decay (71-72).

This obvious distinction between the appearance and behaviour of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is conventionally interpreted as a contrast of the reasonable and ethical side of the human psyche and the evil, irrational and animalistic side. With the serum, Jekyll can alter into the external manifestation of his double personality (Schwarz 227).

Since the double is a relative concept, the double in Stevenson’s novella appears in what Myoshi defines “a Victorian wasteland” (367). Mr Utterson and Dr Jekyll belong to a group of respectable men in Victorian London who ought to follow certain codes of conduct to be accepted and respected by their fellow associates. A mutual friend of the two, Mr Lanyon, questions Dr Jekyll’s sudden retreat to his home and admits to Utterson that “it is more than ten years since Henry Jekyll became too fanciful for me. He began to go wrong, wrong in mind; and thought, of course” (11). Mr Utterson too contemplates on Jekyll’s rather peculiar behaviour: “He was wild when he was young; a long while ago to be sure; but in the law of God there is no statute of limitations. Ah, it must be that; the ghost of some old sin, the cancer of some concealed disgrace” (18). There are no explicit examples of Jekyll’s desire for self-transcendence, to expand his personal boundaries and achieve a deeper awareness of his true self by breaking with Victorian norms or laws (except when he takes the shape of Mr Hyde). However, Jekyll’s belief in “that man is not truly one, but truly two” (68), seems to hint at an apparent desire to conceal or separate himself from his intense and uncontrollable lusts. Jekyll reflects:

If each, I told myself, could but be housed in separate identities, life would be relieved of all that was unbearable; the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspiration and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found his pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil (68-69).

Jekyll's desire to create the serum reflects his craving to segregate his non-accepted drifts from his physical being in order to not be sampled as mad and thereby be othered by his close associates. Therefore, when Jekyll is transformed into Hyde, Jekyll feels revealed:

when I looked upon that ugly idol in the glass, I was conscious of no repugnance, rather of a leap of welcome. This, too, was myself. It seemed natural and human. In my eyes it bore a livelier image of the spirit, it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance, I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine (72).

Accordingly, one might argue that Mr Hyde as Jekyll's double reflects an enduring and timeless drift inside human beings; a vocation for self-transcendence which, in Jekyll's case, opposes the strict codes of conduct of Victorian high-class society. Stevenson reaffirmed the function of the double motif by constructing Mr Hyde into a symbol of how norms should be opposed to let human beings live out one's true potential and human nature. Consequently, Stevenson demonstrated Jekyll's inner conflict by constructing his darker side into an independent and external personality embodied as another person.

The first examination of the double with a psychological approach is Otto Rank's pioneering work first published as *Der Doppelgänger* in *Imago: Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften* in 1914.<sup>1</sup> In his rather short book, Rank discusses the conventions of German, English and American fiction which have evolved in connection to the double and how it symbolises a conflict inside the individual. Rank claims that the origins of the idea of the double sprang out from humans' primal narcissism, which makes the "idea of death [...] denied by the duplication of the self incorporated in the shadow or in the reflected image" (83). Significantly, Rank makes a distinction between two types of doubles. The first type is those that are "actual figures of the double who confront each other as real and physical persons of unusual external similarity" (12). In these instances, the double is identical and usually referred to as *doppelgängers*. The second type is the kind of double which this thesis refers to as the internalised double. This double is a reflection, a mirror of the individual's unconscious, as Rank explains: "the representation, by one and the same person, of two distinct beings separated by amnesia" (Rank 20). The internalised double is encountered in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Mr Hyde can be categorised as

---

<sup>1</sup> With some alterations and additions brought to the study in 1925, the English translation of the edition was published in 1971 as *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*.

an internalised double precisely because he is the result of Jekyll's apparent struggle to keep up with Victorian norms which he has internalised and contrast with what he truly desires.

## 1.2 Sigmund Freud and the Uncanny

When one addresses the function of the internalised double, it is vital to examine Sigmund Freud and his terminology of psychoanalysis, because it contributes to a more intricate way of interpreting the literary double. In the process of psychoanalysis, Freud clarifies, "the division of the psychological into what is conscious and what is unconscious is the fundamental premiss" (*The Ego and the Id* 13). The goal of psychoanalysis is to study the interaction between the conscious and the unconscious elements in an individual's psyche, and make what is repressed, perceptible and intelligible to the conscious self. The conscious, Freud explains "is a purely descriptive term, resting on perception of the most immediate and certain character" (*The Ego and the Id* 14). In other words, the conscious consists of mental processes an individual has control over and can directly understand. The unconscious, on the other hand, must be recognised as the "storehouse of those painful experiences and emotions, those wounds, fears, guilty desires, and unresolved conflicts we do not want to know about because we feel overwhelmed by them" (Tyson 12). The unconscious is related to the process of repression. In order to distance his or her conscious mind from the most painful and destructive memories and experiences, these emotions are transmitted outside what is conscious and into the unconscious. These emotions can become preconscious, which means that it is "not dynamically unconscious, but [...] *latent* and hence, capable of becoming conscious" (Freud *The Ego and the Id* 15; emphasis added). The individual who is mentally unbalanced or has a mental illness might experience psychological relief through the cathartic process of psychoanalysis.

Freud builds on Rank's idea of the double as a split of the self and explains in his remarkable essay "The Uncanny" (1919) that the double must be seen in connection with a subject's "emotional impulse" (123) of the uncanny. The double, Freud argues, is one of "the most prominent motifs that produce an uncanny effect" (Freud "The Uncanny" 141) and is "undoubtedly related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror [...] it tends to coincide with what excited fear in general" (130). As the English translation of the German word *unheimlich*, which literally means 'unhomely', the uncanny is something unfamiliar and

hidden, not known to one's conscious self. The sense of dread or even fear appears because what is *unheimlich* is in fact *heimlich*; familiar or unconcealed, long known to a psyche. Therefore, what creates a sense of the uncanny is not necessarily something one finds new or unfamiliar, but something which was supposed to remain hidden or repressed but is now revealed and thereby terrifying (Freud "The Uncanny" 148). Similar to Rank, Freud emphasises how the uncanny double is the result of something which happened in an infantile and primal stage. Freud claims that the uncanny being "is a creation that belongs to a primitive phase in our mental development, a phase that we have surmounted, in which it admittedly had a more benign significance" (Freud "The Uncanny" 143).

As an illustration of the uncanny, Freud refers to E.T.A Hoffman's short story "The Sand-Man". The story's main character Nathaniel is being told stories about a creature called Sand-Man in his early childhood years. Sand-Man is a figure who steals the eyes of children and feeds them to his own children. Significantly, the Sand-Man takes the shape of several persons throughout the tale: "a lawyer named Copelius, a repulsive person of whom the children were afraid when he occasionally came to lunch" (Freud "The Uncanny" 137) and Giuseppe Coppola a mad optician. Freud claims that the various shapes the Sand-Man takes make him an uncanny being. Additionally, Nathaniel's fear of Sand-Man might also be the result of some children's "terrible fear of damaging or losing their eyes. Many retain this anxiety into adult life and fear no physical injury so much as one to the eye" (Freud "The Uncanny" 139). Freud suggests that the individual feels the sense of uncanniness when his or her repressed childhood experiences or emotions are made conscious through an uncanny figure, a double, who might look different but truly is a reflection of the unconscious part of one's psyche. In this case, the various representations of the Sand-Man are the latent reflections of Nathaniel's repressed childhood sentiments. Significantly, Freud claims that the fear of losing one's eyes might be the equivalent to the infantile anxiety over losing one's sexual organ (Freud "The Uncanny" 140). However, Freud has often been criticised for his reductive way of interpreting the uncanny as something which only leads back to childhood reminiscences and sexuality.

### 1.3 Carl Gustav Jung and the Shadow

In contrast to Freud's emphasis on infantile sexuality and how experiences from early childhood occupy parts of our unconscious, psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung stresses how an individual's self (both the unconscious and the conscious parts of the psyche) takes form by the individual's relation to, or role(s) in, society. Because the double's shape has altered since it is based on social relations and conditions of society, the societal dimension of the literary device is decisive for the understanding of the contemporary double. Jung's outlook on the conflict between the conscious and the unconscious is, therefore, more applicable to examine the complexities of post-industrial life than the Freudian approach. Hence, this thesis will primarily emphasise Jung's interpretation of the psychological conflict instead of only focusing on the Freudian interpretation of the uncanny double.

Jung's analytical psychology had its origins in the Freudian model of psychoanalysis, which means that Jung utilised basic terminology of psychoanalysis, such as the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. The primary goal of studying the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious, Jung claims, is to reach successful individuation. Individuation involves assimilation of the unconscious aspects of the psyche into the conscious; it is a "process by which a person becomes a psychological 'in-dividual', that is, a separate, indivisible unity or 'whole'" (Jung 275). A considerable issue for an individual's mental balance is that the individual might be deceived by its way of adapting to the world, to fit into the collective, because the attributes of the conscious self might be covered by, or in the worst case, 'possessed' by what Jung calls 'the persona'. Jung explains: "One could say, with a little exaggeration, that the persona is that which in reality one is not, but which oneself as well as others think one is" (123). The persona might take different shapes, but it is intentionally or unintentionally constructed through internalisation and based on the dominant values concerning one's particular role in society, for instance, one's profession. Accordingly, to acquire the "lost depths of the soul, with life and vitality – the superior, the universally human" (Frey-Rohn qtd. in Abrams and Zweig XVII), the individual must become conscious of what lies in the unconscious and perceive it as a part of one's authentic self.

Jung compares the individual's confrontation with its unconscious to when an individual look at one's mirror image. Significantly, Jung claims, the glass "does not flatter, it faithfully shows whatever looks into it; namely, the face we never show to the world" (20). In Jungian psychology, this face an individual refuse to let show is called the *shadow*. The

shadow is the unconscious part of the self which “personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly for instance, inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies” (Jung 284-285). In short, an individual’s shadow consists of personal attributes, repressed feelings and desires which have been excluded from one’s consciousness (Hart 98). The crucial point to keep in mind, Jung emphasises, is when a person’s conscious ego continually represses unpleasant emotions and personality traits to the unconscious (when an individual believes the persona to be one’s authentic self), this darker side eventually emerges and results in the individual’s uncontrollable and improper behaviour. For Jung, the shadow appeared “either in projection on suitable persons, or personified as such in dreams” (284), but the figure has significantly opened up new ways of portraying the internalised double and thereby understanding the different elements of the human psyche through fiction. When an individual represses the unapproved aspects of itself in order to fit in, the individual loses parts of its individuality which leads to psychological misery. Accordingly, the shadow and the internalised double, which will be perceived as interchangeable terms in this thesis, are reflections of the unconscious part of an individual’s psyche and denotes a way to achieve psychological balance.

#### 1.4 The Death of the Postmodern Subject

Political theorist and Marxist Frederic Jameson is one of many philosophers who has endeavoured to examine human individuality and subjectivity in the current postmodern period. Jameson suggests that there is a crisis of individuality in contemporary culture, which he terms “the death of the subject” (195). A key aspect Marxist literary criticism has in common with psychoanalytical criticism is the focus on “human behaviour and motivation” (Tyson 61). In other words, these fields of criticism stress how human beings’ construction of identity and self-awareness is traced back to memories, experiences and interaction with external factors, such as other human beings, culture, ideology and social norms (Macías and Nùñez 265). Jameson suggests that the socio-economic system “in the age of corporate capitalism” (196) has altered individuals’ sense of self, defying liberal individualism. The belief in liberal individualism is “the conception of a unique self and private identity, a unique personality and individuality, which can be expected to generate its own unique vision



of the world and to forge its own unique, unmistakable style” (195). Accordingly, postmodern subjectivity is characterised by an internalisation which drains the subject of individuality or sincerity; an unconscious mental process which constructs the dominant values of late-capitalist society as a part of one’s state of mind and identity. Due to the influence various ideas, social behaviour and customs in American culture have on the individual, the subject seems to lose its autonomy. Generally, in a culture where capitalism thrives as the socio-economic structure, the assumption of a unique self has been eclipsed by consumption and artificiality in a network of global mass-production and complex technologies.

Therefore, how to break away and challenge the leading discourse of contemporary late-capitalist Western society has been subject to a heated discussion in philosophy and cultural criticism in the postmodern period. This debate is interestingly interrelated to the terminology of psychopathology, “the scientific study of mental disorders” (“Psychopathology”). One of the most extensive contributions to this discussion is the theory of schizophrenia as a form of socio-political criticism and a revolutionary act against fascism. The idea was established in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* and the two French academics’ “principal goal [...] was to achieve a theoretical rapprochement between psychoanalysis and Marxism in order to create a new method of critical analysis” (Buchanan 39). The main difference between Deleuze and Guattari’s approach and the classic psychoanalytic view is the Freudian focus on human being’s Oedipus Complex; the belief that human undertakings are based on the son’s affection for his mother and that he therefore sees his father as a rival. Instead of reducing all unconscious drives to metaphors concerning the Oedipus complex, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that one must trace the schizo’s delirium as a process back to cultural and socio-political aspects of an individual’s life. Similar to Jung, they do not emphasise the role of family members and infantile sexuality. However, Deleuze and Guattari claim that: “The schizo is not revolutionary but the schizophrenic process – in terms of which the schizo is merely the interruption, or the continuation in the void – is the potential for revolution” (341). The schizo “is the living instance of the socially unassimilable being” (Buchanan 44), entirely detached from reality it ensures an anti-oedipal subjectivity; the schizo is an ego-less subject. In other words, the schizophrenic’s experience of the world is different and subversive because he or she follows no ideological beliefs and thus transgresses dominant norms of behaviour and what is believed to be rational thinking attributed by the culture the individual inhabits.

In a similar manner, this thesis proposes that the contemporary internalised double takes part in the political discussion on how to break away from contemporary social structures and regain a sense of individuality. What is integral to the understanding of the contemporary literary double is its proximity and ties to real life mental diseases. In order to reapply the motif of the double in a socio-critical manner, Palahniuk and Walter's doubles are both represented as their protagonist's shadow self, a separate personality caused by their Dissociative Identity Disorder. DID is recognised as "the most controversial diagnosis of mental disorder in the United States" (Schwarz 15). *The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR)*, which offers a classification of mental disorders, explains the indispensable symptoms of DID as:

the presence of two or more distinct identities or personality states (each with its own relatively enduring pattern of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and self [and] at least two of these identities or personality states recurrently take control of the person's behaviour (529).

The presence of a double personality leads to an "inability to recall important personal information that is too extensive to be explained by ordinary forgetfulness" (529). This amnesia is brought about by a dissociation of the psyche. Today, dissociation is a term which has no coherent definition, but it primarily refers to "psychic defence" (Luckhurst 41). Significantly, such defensive responses may vary in degree. Dissociation can be experienced as Pierre Janet argued, through the creation of an independent personality, but also as Sigmund Freud proposed, through an individual's repression of unacceptable and painful emotions and ideas (Luckhurst 42, 48).

Generally, Dissociative Identity Disorder is a result of wounding due to physical and psychological experiences (DSM-IV-TR 527) and not caused by "direct physiological effects of a substance or a general medical condition" (DSM-IV-TR 526). Put differently, DID is a mental condition brought about by an individual's relation to external factors such as experiences, memories and processes of internalisation. Consequently, the internalised double can be analysed as a fictional representation of Dissociative Identity Disorder. However, it is of importance to point out that the doubles in *Fight Club* and *The Zero* are fictional representations of the mental disorder. They are not authentic depictions of the illness and are by no means realistic. Palahniuk and Walter employ the illness to reaffirm the role of the literary double and to enlighten the psychological and political issues in exciting and thought-provoking ways.

## 1.5 Chapter overview

The proceeding chapters will build on the theoretical template presented so far. Chapter 2 and 3 of this thesis will give an analysis of the internalised double in two contemporary novels which might be categorised as postmodern works of fiction.

Chapter 2 will discuss Chuck Palahniuk celebrated novel, *Fight Club* which addresses the complexities of the rather conventional life of a middle-aged man at the dawn of the twentieth century. The chapter will examine *Fight Club* primarily as a *doppelgänger* story. It will first demonstrate in which ways the unnamed narrator's sense of dehumanisation and self-alienation is the result of adhering to social norms and thereby his accumulation of commodities. The unnamed narrator's misery is the result of a lopsided relationship between the unconscious and the conscious parts of his psyche. Accordingly, he befriends Tyler Durden, a man who, unknowingly to both the reader and the unnamed narrator until quite late in the novel, is an unknown side of the narrator's personality. By illustrating how Tyler Durden is an internalised double, the chapter will attempt to show how he represents a desire for change in contemporary culture. By introducing the conventional unnamed narrator to a rather radical lifestyle, the double provides a solution to escape the dehumanising aspects of contemporary consumerist culture. In conclusion, the chapter will discuss whether the unnamed narrator has gone through successful individuation or not; if he has been able to gain a sense of individuality.

Chapter 3 examines the double in the post-9/11 novel *The Zero*. The author of this critically acclaimed novel, Jess Walter, "does acknowledge a debt to the aesthetic milieu of [...] *Fight Club*" (Flinn 228) which makes it a fascinating contribution to this thesis' discussion. Jess Walter constructs an instance of an internalised double in his novel by utilising theories on trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. The chapter demonstrates how protagonist Brian Remy's inability to deal with his 9/11 trauma is the result of working as a policeman in New York for several years. Being unable to give words to or understand his feelings, he becomes mentally ill and experiences memory lapses due to dissociation of his psyche. The lack of coherence in Remy's life illustrates the dehumanising and confusing effect of both acts of terror and the commercialisation of human beings. By presenting the relationship between the Self and the Other in post 9/11 America through Brian Remy's

double, Walter demonstrates how this binary is a cultural construction that discriminates a particular group of people. Consequently, Remy's double personality emerges and symbolises a request for transformation of the socio-political structures of twenty-first century America. By examining the novel's ending, the last section of the chapter will question if Remy has gone through effective individuation and if he has regained a sense of autonomy.

In conclusion, the thesis will emphasise some apparent similarities and differences between the two novels and demonstrate how both novels have a rather pessimistic and even nihilist outlook on postmodern society. By illustrating the two protagonists' failure of individuation, the thesis underscores how it might be too late to change these social structures. We are already too deeply immersed in them which make it impossible for individuals to make a distinction between what is a part of one's nature and what is constructed by culture.

## Chapter 2: An Analysis of the Double in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*

“There isn't a me and you anymore, Tyler says, and he pinches the end of my nose. ‘I think you figured that out’. We both use the same body, but at different times” (Palahniuk 164).

Identified as “an American ironist” (Kavadlo 17) analogously to other American authors such as Vladimir Nabokov, Joseph Heller, Don DeLillo and (as the third chapter will illustrate) Jess Walter, Chuck Palahniuk satirises contemporary American society. His most known work is his 1996 novel *Fight Club*. Despite being categorised as satire, the novel can also be analysed as an illustrative fictional vision of 1990s America. In terms of genre, Palahniuk himself refers to *Fight Club* as a romance between two people on the fringe (Kavadlo 17). Read Mercer Schuchardt explains the complexity of the novel and suggests that there are multiple ways of interpreting the text: “[*Fight Club*] is possibly going to be, for them, something in contradiction to what it was for you” (3). As the novel deploys components from several genres in its various contextual layers, it demonstrates the idea of the “modern mixed novel” (Altman 7). *Fight Club* reflects the complexity and inconsistencies of twentieth-century life. Significantly, Palahniuk's narrative has surrealistic and thriller components, asserting it as a psychological thriller where the reader is introduced to a single mind's conflict. Despite addressing a variety of themes, *Fight Club* is what Rick Altman refers to as a “dual-focus text [which sets] cultural values [and] counter-cultural values” (Altman 24) against each other. This type of fiction depends on either dualistic structures or a dual protagonist. Since the protagonist in *Fight Club* exemplifies two opposing sides of the same subject, he asserts the novel as a dual-focus text. Accordingly, through the appearance of the double, Palahniuk puts forward a discussion and critique of the socio-political landscape of 1990s America.

As a narrative *Fight Club* relies heavily on the traditions of the *doppelgänger* motif. In line with the gothic tradition, Palahniuk utilises raw and grotesque language and rebellious actions and proves that the double can be utilised as a literary device in contemporary fiction. Several critics even acknowledge *Fight Club* as a revision, a modernised version of, or even an ode to *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson (Schwarz 317, Stirling 119, Sobral 225). The story is narrated by the unnamed protagonist, who is a homodiegetic narrator, which makes the story told by someone who is supposed to represent an alienated and presumed mentally ill man (Bennett 67). The unnamed narrator offers the

reader a mirror into his deepest thoughts and various undertakings. Similar to *Jekyll and Hyde*, the theme of the *doppelgänger* plot is structured around a late surprise twist; revealing that another character in the narrative is a reflection or manifestation of another character's inner split. Principally, the unnamed narrator fails to understand that he suffers from Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)<sup>2</sup>. However, in a moment of clarity the unnamed narrator realises that his best friend and idol, Tyler Durden, is his double personality: "Oh this is bullshit. This is a dream. Tyler is a projection. He's a dissociative personality disorder. A psychogenic fugue state. Tyler Durden is my hallucination" (168). Since Palahniuk demonstrates DID in his fictional novel by portraying Tyler Durden as an external and separate character with his separate speech and personality traits, the reader might be uncertain of Tyler's origins until the narrator's realisation.

Several literature and film critics have given their account on what they believe Tyler truly represents and what his actions signify. Even though this thesis will exclusively discuss Palahniuk's novel, some of the critical readings mentioned in this thesis discuss David Fincher's film adaptation of *Fight Club* from 1999. The thematic content in both novel and film is similar, but the most prominent difference is how the two sides of one psyche is portrayed by two different actors in the film. Uri Dowbenko compares Tyler to "a cult leader" (111), Chandler and Tallon suggest that he is the head of an anarchist movement (47), Ana Sobral connects Project Mayhem, Tyler's paramilitary organisation, to a Jihad movement (235) and Barry Vacker characterises Tyler's project as his "terrorist organization" (175). By discussing *Fight Club* through the lens of the *doppelgänger* tradition, Tyler's graphic violence and rash undertakings must be seen as an integrated part of his nature as a literary double. One must keep in mind that *Fight Club* is a fictional work which demonstrates literature's "need to dramatize, concentrate, and intensify plot presentation" (Lothe 76). If one fails to take this into account, Palahniuk's excessive and raw interpretation and critique of contemporary culture might only seem like an extreme and distorted perception of reality.

As a story about an internalised *doppelgänger*, the setting of the narrator and Tyler's first encounter is not entirely coincidental. Their meeting place is an obvious reference to the

---

<sup>2</sup> The unnamed narrator's personality disorder has often been misinterpreted as schizophrenia. Schwarz suggests that he actually suffers from DID as Tyler represents a distinct secondary personality which acts independently (318).

psychological dimension of *Fight Club*. The narrator sleeps by the ocean at a nude beach. He wakes up by the sounds of another man dragging and reorganising logs found by the shoreline. The narrator reflects on his new acquaintance: “His name was Tyler Durden, and he was a movie projectionist with the union, and he was a banquet waiter at a hotel, downtown, and he gave me his phone number. And this is how we met” (33). Interestingly, this location implicitly suggests that the protagonist meets Tyler in the unconscious. In several branches of psychology, the ocean is a symbol of the unconscious. Carl Gustav Jung, amongst others, uses this connection. He states that “the sea is the favorite symbol for the unconscious” (Jung 177). Even though Palahniuk does not refer explicitly to Jung’s theory of the shadow in *Fight Club*, Palahniuk displays his awareness of Jung’s theory in his novel *Diary* from 2003:

Maybe the only thing each of us can see is our own shadow. Carl Jung called this his shadow work. He said we never see others. Instead we see only aspects of ourselves that fall over them. Shadows. Projections. Associations [...] The camera obscura. Not the exact image, but everything reversed and upside down (Palahniuk *Diary* 252).

To grasp the role of the internalised *doppelgänger* in *Fight Club*, the first part of this chapter will attempt to answer a vital question; why does Tyler Durden emerge? This chapter suggests that one might find some answers by looking at the relationship between the unnamed narrator and Tyler Durden in the light of Carl Jung’s interpretation of the conflict between the conscious and the unconscious, the persona and the shadow. Furthermore, by explaining Tyler’s existence and actions as a part of his nature as a shadowy double, this chapter will attempt to demonstrate how Tyler’s subversive effect on the narrator can be compared to relevant theories in Marxist criticism. Tyler is constructed by Palahniuk to illustrate how the fundamental norms and values in society are based on fundamental principles of capitalism which result in loss of autonomy and sincerity. Hence, Tyler comes into the unnamed narrator’s life and seeks to undermine free-market capitalism which seems to be constructed to perpetuate the system and exchange it with deeper and more natural human drives, the desire for self-transcendence and non-conformist values. Furthermore, the chapter will examine if Tyler is able to help the narrator towards an improved psychological life. The conclusion of the chapter will demonstrate how *Fight Club* ends with a rather pessimistic view, questioning if human authenticity exists in a postmodern America.

## 2.1 The Persona of the Post-War American Ornamental Culture

*Fight Club* is a fictional narrative about the average American man at the end of the twentieth century. His job requires him to be “in a shirt and tie” (Palahniuk 49) which leads to many complications. The majority of critical work on *Fight Club* centres on an apparent crisis of masculinity in post-war America. Author and feminist Susan Faludi explains in *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the Modern Man* (1999): “as the nation wobbled toward the millennium, its pulse-takers seemed to agree that a domestic apocalypse was under way: American manhood was under siege” (6). The collapse of traditional masculinity was caused by a significant shift from an industrial economy to a service-driven economy because “the majority of workers shifted from manufacturing to white-collar work” (Nye 138). Faludi explains that America’s new economy created a bigger gap between the rich and poor, where “the underemployed, contracted-out, and laid-off men of southern California, and their counterparts in other regions” (42) became victims of corporations’ downsizing and were left with insecure, low-paid jobs, or no jobs at all. This shift also led to the growth of the “ornamental culture” of post-war America, which is “constructed around celebrity and image, glamour and entertainment, marketing and consumerism” (Faludi 35).

In parallel with Faludi, several postmodern critics have noted how the 1960s brought with it a new cultural ethos built upon an urban lifestyle; acts of consumerism characterised the public role for Americans at the end of the millennium. A post-industrial society identified by consumer culture, David Harvey suggests, has evolved due to capitalism’s need to sustain its markets. In order to do this, human beings’ desires and aspirations have been customised through media and advertisement (63). The problem with the rise of ornamental culture, Faludi argues, is that it is “a ceremonial gateway to nowhere” (34), an “act of selling the self” (35). The postmodern subject loses his or her sense of individuality in favour of the overall socio-political system.

Therefore, when historian David Nye notes how consumerism lies at the heart of contemporary American ideals, he demonstrates how American society can be a representative of a postmodern community. Nye has a slightly condescending tone:

Americans are often accused of being materialistic [...] the American uses property to define himself, to say who he is. More than Europeans, Americans announce who they are through the car they drive, the



clothing they wear, and the house they live in. Their possessions are not highly valued as objects, and indeed quickly lose their use value (241-242).

Accordingly, this thesis suggests that *Fight Club* has remained such a relevant work of fiction, not only because it gives an account of the crisis of traditional conceptions of masculinity, but also because the protagonist more broadly demonstrates Fredric Jameson's idea of the death of the postmodern subject. Palahniuk admitted when he wrote the novel that "there was nothing we could imagine that a million people weren't already doing" (Palahniuk 215) and to emphasise the protagonist's lack of personal identity, he never reveals the middle-aged man's name (Sobral 221). The unnamed narrator works as a "recall campaign coordinator" (31) which make him travel all over America by plane to look for fabrication defects in cars produced by the company where he is employed. The unnamed narrator contemplates: "If a new car built by my company leaves Chicago traveling west at 60 miles per hour, and the rear differential locks up, and the car crashes and burns with everyone trapped inside, does my company initiate a recall?" (30). To decide if the company should have a recall campaign or not, the unnamed narrator applies "simple arithmetic" (30): If it is not profitable for the company, there will be no recall campaign and if it is beneficial, there will be one. In other words, the narrator is not supposed to take the car owner's safety into consideration, stressing the company's focus on economic benefit instead. Due to his monotonous job, the narrator has lost his compass in the world, he has insomnia and is unable to recognise one reason to stay alive: "I was tired and crazy and rushed, and every time I boarded a plane, I wanted the plane to crash. I envied people dying of cancer. I hated my life. I was tired and bored with my job and furniture, and I couldn't see any way to change things" (172).

As one out of millions of individuals trapped in the socio-political structures of the dominant neo-liberal ideology, the narrator is a personification of 1990s ornamental culture. He exemplifies the new role of the American man, as he admits he has become "a slave to my nesting instinct" (43). The narrator lives in "a condominium on the fifteenth floor of a high-rise, a sort of filing cabinet for widows and young professionals" (41). Significantly, he is not the only one who has succumbed to his nesting instinct: "The people I know who used to sit in the bathroom with pornography, now they sit in the bathroom with their IKEA furniture catalogue" (43). The focal point of the unnamed narrator's life is buying consumer goods. When he elaborates on his life, the narrative becomes a list of various mass-produced commodities and globally produced IKEA furniture. The unnamed narrator reflects: "clever Njuranda coffee tables in the shape of a lime green yin and an orange yang that fit together to

make a circle” (43), the “Mommala quilt-cover set” (44) and the refrigerator which contains “fourteen different flavours of fat-free salad dressing, and seven kinds of capers” (45). Slightly depressed, he admits: “it took my whole life to buy this stuff” (44).

As early as in 1867 Karl Marx in *Das Kapital (Capital)* clarified how human beings’ ‘nesting instinct’ is the result of “fetishism of commodities” (Marx 47). Significantly, Marx’s critique of capitalism centres on how the individual’s mental health and contentment truly have nothing to do with the individual’s economic wealth. Marx argued that in “those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails” (27), commodities (objects such as raw materials, clothes and food) are characterised by their “two-fold nature” (30). A commodity has a use value, the object’s material function; it fulfils a human being’s specific need. On the other hand, commodities are also “the material depositories of exchange value” (27). Hence, all commodities are objects that can be exchanged for other commodities. Even more prominent in a modernised society, goods can be traded or exchanged for money. Marx suggests that money has become the “universal equivalent” (46) for all other commodities, which has moved the process of earning money to the centre of human interest, as it is a means of acquiring commodity goods. Even though the production of these objects might differ (there is, for example, a difference between tailoring a coat and weaving linen) all commodities are “the expenditure of human labour power” (Marx 33); they are products of an individual’s sweat, hands, or brain capacity. In contrast to traditional societies where commodities were exchanged personally and products of people’s “own private labour” (50), bourgeois economy is characterised by “the collective labour of society” (50). Commodities are the product of an objective and unknown worker who exchanges his labour power for money. Instead of exchanging objects with personal associates, capitalist society has transformed individualised relationships into an isolated and objective process. Accordingly, as the way human beings acquire commodities is characterised by fetishism, the individual is not capable of distinguishing between the work process and the commodity itself, making individuals believe that acquiring commodities has a more profound value than an economic one. Thus, the nature of people’s relations has altered into an economic process. By using Marx’s theory of fetishism of commodities one might be able to reveal how economic wealth not necessarily leads to spiritual prosperity or self-contentment.

Regardless of how many objects the nameless narrator owns, his way of living provides nothing more than a feeling of depression based on artificiality and loneliness;

I am helpless. I am stupid, and all I do is want and need things. My tiny life. My little shit job. My Swedish furniture. I never, no, never told anyone this, but before I met Tyler, I was planning to buy a dog and name it 'Entourage'. This is how bad your life can get. Kill me (146).

The only enduring emotion which describes the narrator's mentality is remoteness; a sense of self which evokes Marx's idea of alienation (*Entfremdung*). Marx understands alienation as a natural effect on the individual who exists in a capitalist community. While Marx refers to industrial workers of the nineteenth century, *Fight Club* seems to suggest that the post-industrial society affects the individuals who work in the service-industries in a similar way. E.G West summarises three aspects of Marx's idea of alienation<sup>3</sup>: powerlessness, isolation and self-estrangement. The unnamed narrator exemplifies all three features of alienation. As a contributor in his car company and a waiter at the Pressman Hotel, he has no extensive power; he feels powerless because he belongs to a functional group which is supposed to behave in an automated manner. Everything the narrator does in his job is to maximise the profit of the car company, and when he works a waiter, his job is merely to serve and entertain affluent people. The unnamed narrator is also quite isolated and reveals that he has lost contact with family - "Me, I knew my dad for about six years" (50) - and seems to have had no contact with people outside of his job.

Most prominently, the narrator shows a sense of self-estrangement. In this regard, self-estrangement refers to how an individual "becomes alienated from his 'inner self', experiencing a kind of depersonalised detachment rather than an immediate involvement or engrossment in the job tasks" (West 8). The narrator is undeniably experiencing a form of fragmentation and self-detachment about his job. The narrative voice occasionally switches between a first- and second-person singular point of view which emphasises his detachment from himself (Sobral 222). The unnamed narrator struggles to keep track of where he travels, which also illustrates his self-detachment: "You wake up at JFK" (31), "Everywhere I go, there's the burned up wadded-up shell of a car waiting for me" (31) and "You wake up at the beach" (32).

A sense of alienation from oneself, Marx claims, will eventually lead to the individual's misery; a sense of humiliation, pauperisation and dehumanisation (West 6). The pessimistic and ironic tone in the narrator's voice suggests his sense of humiliation, as he

---

<sup>3</sup> Marx's theory of alienation is not given an account for in only one work. West refers to a multitude of various writings, one of the works he includes is Marx and Engels' collected works (*Gesamtausgabe*) from 1910.

realises that the promise of self-realisation and self-content through the accumulation of commodities no longer is valid. His consumer-lifestyle brings him only unfulfillment and loneliness:

You buy furniture. You tell yourself, this is the last sofa I will ever need in my life. Buy the sofa, then for a couple of years you're satisfied that no matter what goes wrong, at least you've got your sofa issue handled. Then the right set of dishes. Then the perfect bed. The drapes. The rug. Then you're trapped in your lovely nest, and the things you used to own, now they own you (44).

The unnamed narrator believes his mental state is the result of insomnia. However, he really suffers from a more severe mental disorder. His mental condition creates a distance between him and the outer world. He has developed an inability to feel anything at all: "The insomnia distance of everything, a copy of a copy of a copy. You can't touch anything, and nothing can touch you" (96-97). The unnamed narrator even compares himself to mass-produced copies of commodities: "Everything, the lamps, the chairs, the rugs were me. The plants were me. The television was me" (111). The narrator's statements echo the controversial theories of postmodern theorist Jean Baudrillard. In Stephen Orr's rendering of some key ideas from Baudrillard, he explains that "human agency is irrelevant in contemporary consumer society because the consumer has conquered the notion of human as citizen, or indeed, even the human as composition of identity characteristics" (41). Accordingly, the underlying goal of consumerism is not to help the individual towards self-realisation, but to sustain the capitalist system. Modern mass-production has replaced individual agency with "consumer choice" (Orr 40-41); reducing an individual's role in society to partake in a "system of commodification" (Orr 40) where objects (signs) have no referent; they only have exchange value. Trapped in a system of commodities, the consumer will therefore never find an authentic sense of self through the accumulation of commodities. Thus, the unnamed narrator has become "the hand-maiden of consumption" (Lizardo 229), he is a hollowed out individual where "all that's left is a concrete shell" (Palahniuk 45).

As the unnamed narrator's feeling of alienation and misery is portrayed as the direct result of thirty years of obedience to free-market capitalism, *Fight Club* puts forward a critique of the ornamental culture of contemporary society. Palahniuk implies that the problem lies in the fact that contemporary culture appears to prioritise maximising profit over human beings' welfare. Therefore, one might put forward the argument that the unnamed narrator suffers from insidious trauma. Insidious trauma is characterised by an individual feeling hopeless, helpless and worthless and is the consequence of dissociation from one's

physical body, due to persistent victimisation and subjugation in one's community or home (Burstow 1296). Significantly, one of the consequences of a mental condition known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is Dissociative Identity Disorder. PTSD is a diagnosis which is the result of going through one or several extremely traumatic event(s), but the definition is criticised because it fails to include insidious trauma and the collective dimension of it (that a group of people can suffer from the same psychological trauma) (Burstow 1296).<sup>4</sup>

The unnamed narrator's feeling of self-alienation seems to square with some of the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder which are given an account in DSM-IV-TR (463). Due to increased arousal, the individual might have "difficulty of falling or staying asleep" (DSM-IV-TR 468). This corresponds to how the narrator struggles with what he believes to be insomnia. Secondly, on various occasions, the narrator seems to overreact at small incidents which makes him burst out in irritation and anger. The narrator admits "it really pissed me off" (63). Consequently, these disturbances cause "significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning" (DSM-IV-TR 468), demonstrated by the unnamed narrator's lack of friends, resulting in many unpleasant situations with his boss at work.

The theory of insidious trauma can in the case of *Fight Club* mainly be applied with a class perspective. The unnamed narrator continually falls victim to contemporary American bourgeois society because at the bottom of the social hierarchy he feels dominated as a service-industry worker who juggles various jobs to maintain his unsatisfactory consumer lifestyle. The narrator acts subordinate to his boss and with envy in his voice he asserts: "Mister Boss with his midlife spread and family photo on his desk and his dreams about early retirement [...] my boss, with his extra-starched shirts and standing appointment for a haircut every Tuesday after lunch" (96). In contrast, the narrator explains his life: "I go to meetings my boss doesn't want to attend. I take notes. I'll get back to you" (30). In contemporary American society, Audre Lorde claims, the group of people which "occupy the place of the dehumanized inferior" (211) consists of black people, women, people from countries which are not categorised as Western, senior citizens and people who belong to the working class (211). The unnamed narrator feels powerless when he goes to work which seems to trigger his insomnia. When he knows he will be doing a recall campaign and spend much time at work,

---

<sup>4</sup> Trauma and PTSD as a mental illness will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

he laments: “the insomnia is back. Insomnia, and now the whole world figures to stop by and take a dump on my grave” (Palahniuk 96). Consequently, his struggle with insomnia seems to be related to insidious trauma caused by belonging to the inferior working class.

The way the narrator is apathetic towards his life suggests, in line with Jungian psychology, that his *persona* has overridden his real personality; his sense of a unique self or ‘wholeness’ has been lost in favour of the fundamental principles of American consumer culture. In Jungian psychology, the way a person adapts to society and the personality the subject decides to reveal to the rest of the world is termed the “mask of the actor, [the] persona” (Jung 20). The persona belongs to the conscious side of a person’s psyche, it is one out of several parts of the ego, and the result of “a civilizing process” (Johnson 5) where a person adapts and conforms to the dominant values in society to be accepted by the people he or she encounters. The persona endeavours to only incorporate one’s ‘best’ qualities to evade alienation and estrangement from the community. Therefore, these attributes are repressed into the unconscious. Jung clarifies the dangers of an individual’s overidentification with the persona:

Then the damage is done; henceforth he lives exclusively against the background of his own biography. . . one could say, with a little exaggeration, that the persona is that which in reality one is not, but which oneself as well as others think one is. In any case the temptation to be what one seems to be is great, because the persona is usually rewarded in cash (122-123).

Put another way, when an individual identifies itself as a particular persona (in this case the archetypal service-worker), the individual is unable to distinguish between himself and what society expects of him. Thus, the unnamed narrator avoids some aspects of his personality in favour of economic and social benefit. Robert A. Johnson argues that “the culture [one lives in] demands that we live out only part of our nature and refuse other parts of our inheritance” (5). Therefore, the persona tends to be drastically different from the psychological actuality of the subject, creating a severe conflict between the conscious and the unconscious sides of one personality (Hart 100). This ultimately leaves the narrator as a prime example of Whyte’s theory of the organization man. The narrator has become a part of the “middle class who have left home, spiritually and physically, to take the vows of the organization life” (Whyte 3). The community which forms the persona leaves the subject psychologically miserable because it results in repression of the unique attributes of the individual and in consequence, the shadow self emerges. Accordingly, it is no coincidence that the unnamed narrator befriends Tyler Durden.

## 2.2 Tyler Durden: Shadow and Role Model

One of the reasons why Palahniuk's novel has obtained such success, Ana Sobral suggests, is due to its "minimalistic" (220) features. Conversational language and repetition of multiple phrases makes the novel legible and has thus attracted a wide range of readers. Palahniuk's narrative structure implicitly implies the presence of the narrator's double personality. Even though it is ambiguous throughout the novel, if Tyler is just a product of the unnamed narrator's delusional mind, Palahniuk consistently gives the reader hints and clear indications that *Fight Club* is a *doppelgänger* story. One example of Palahniuk's indications is through the repetition of specific phrases. For instance, the narrator repeats continually throughout the novel: "I know this because Tyler knows this" (12, 26, 112, 185), signifying either that Tyler has explained it to him beforehand or that he knows it because Tyler is a part of the narrator. As the narrative comes closer to the narrator's epiphany, the speech of the narrator and Tyler become indistinguishable. Phrases Tyler has been saying throughout the novel now become a part of the narrator's speech and *vice versa*. For instance, when the narrator desires to end a conversation, he says the word 'yeah' repeatedly in an annoyed tone: "yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah" (131, 195). Ironically, in the chapter when the narrator recognises Tyler as a part of his psyche, Tyler asserts: "yeah, yeah, yeah, well let's just see who's here at last" (168 emphasis added). Other phrases are also utilised by both Tyler and the narrator, such as "a moment is the most you could ever expect from perfection" (33, 201) and "hitting bottom" (70, 78, 85). Their indistinguishable speech pattern arguably blurs the distinction between the narrator and Tyler, something the narrator observes too: "Tyler's words coming out of my mouth" (98, 114) and even "sometimes, Tyler speaks for me" (52).

Even though portrayed as an exterior character, the most profound indication that Tyler Durden is an internalised double is the fact that his personality and attitude are radically different from the conventional narrator's. Kelly Hurley declares the *doppelgänger* to be a grotesque motif, precisely because it "breaks down the boundary between self and other" (Hurley 139). Grotesque motifs in literature evolved as a part of the Gothic tradition, frequently utilised to create an apparent distinction between what is Othered and not in a society. Tyler is the result of the narrator's mental disease (which is a symbol for otherness), and the difference between the two characters contrasts the Self with the Other. The unnamed narrator observes their differences: "Tyler could only work night jobs [...] I could only work

a day job” (25); instead of owning a condominium, Tyler rents a run-down shack on Paper Street. “Tyler is full of useful information” (65) and appears self-confident in contrast to the unassertive and insecure narrator. Tyler is an archetypally grotesque character, as his behaviour is rather abnormal and bizarre. Durden is manoeuvring two different jobs and he dissents from behavioural norms in society. Tyler works as a movie projectionist where he incorporates “one-sixtieth of a second” (30) frames of pornography at public theatres without anyone noticing and at his job as a “renegade” banquet waiter (Palahniuk 81), he urinates and puts his genitals in the luxury food he serves. The grotesque effect might lead to a feeling of revolt or shock in the reader, precisely because “the grotesque draws its effects from pervasion of an established norm, a disruption or inversion of a moral and social order” (Flinn 228). Tyler appears horrendous and revolting since he continually transgresses fundamental norms of behaviour which the narrator normally follows blindly.

One might believe that Tyler’s behaviour should be comprehended as inappropriate and unreasonable by the conventional narrator. The unnamed narrator however develops an immediate affection for Tyler: “I love everything about Tyler Durden, his courage and his smarts. His nerve. Tyler is funny and charming and forceful and independent, and men look up to him and expect him to change their world. Tyler is capable and free, and I am not” (174). This evokes Freud’s theory of the ego-ideal. In his earlier works, Freud emphasises how the individual, both consciously and unconsciously aspires to become his or her ego ideal throughout adulthood. This is because the individual seeks a replacement for narcissistic self-love experienced during childhood, but in another form; “what he projects before him as his ideal is the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood in which he was his own ideal” (Carr 210). Significantly, the ego-ideal is established through the process of identification; “the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person” (Freud qtd. in Carr 210). In the narrator’s eyes, Tyler is everything he desires but fails to be. The unnamed narrator finds it peculiar that both himself and Tyler were abandoned by their fathers. However, in a rather bizarre manner, Tyler seems to become a father-figure for the narrator. At times the distinction between the unnamed narrator’s father and Tyler blurs because the narrator mentions them in the same context. The narrator contemplates: “I am Joe’s Broken Heart because Tyler’s dumped me. Because my father dumped me. Oh, I could go on and on” (134) and “I am Tyler Durden the Great and Powerful. God and father” (199). Palahniuk implicitly suggests that this exceptional emotional bond was established between the unnamed narrator and his father; explaining the narrator’s instant idolisation of Tyler.



On the other hand, the unnamed narrator's glorification of Tyler might also be due to how Tyler represents emotions and attributes which the unnamed narrator has repressed and attempted to hide from himself and the outer world. Even though some of Tyler's actions are inappropriate (for instance incorporating pornography into films), the unnamed narrator still worships him: "Tyler's standing there, perfectly handsome and an angel in his everything-blond way" (202). Accordingly, the double in *Fight Club* can be read as direct demonstration of the Jungian conflict between the persona and the shadow. In Jungian psychotherapy, an individual who has repressed his or her unconscious profoundly will eventually be confronted with his or her shadow. Due to the sincere take-over of the persona, Tyler Durden can be interpreted as the narrator's shadow, which aches to be known and disrupt the conscious ego; the part of the unnamed narrator's consciousness which causes the narrator's unhappiness and sense of alienation. Tyler Durden, representing the shadow personality must be seen in parallel with the narrator's Dissociative Identity Disorder, even though Jung does not necessarily connect mental disorders with his theory of the shadow.<sup>5</sup> Tyler reflects the unnamed narrator's "failure to integrate various aspects of identity, memory and consciousness" (DSM-IV-TR 526). These aspects are personality traits recognised as the negative side of the personality by the collective. Consequently, the unnamed narrator refuses to let these traits show.

Robert A. Johnson sees the relationship between a subject's conscious and unconscious as a seesaw. Significantly, one of the tasks the individual has to live a meaningful and mentally well life, is to classify his or her characteristics: "the acceptable ones on the right side of the seesaw and the ones that do not conform on the left [...] the seesaw must be balanced if one is to remain in equilibrium" (10-11). By examining the separate parts of the self, one might be able to reclaim an individual's "true nature" (Hart 96) and "to recover some deeply buried existential self" (Bennett 75). This echoes Jung's psychoanalytic goal: to go through a successful process of individuation. Thus, Tyler becomes the unnamed narrator's "door into the unconscious" (Jung 123). To alter the unnamed narrator's state of mind and to make the unnamed narrator aware of the unconscious and deeper parts of his psyche and obtain psychological well-being, Tyler provides a solution: the

---

<sup>5</sup> Jung argues that all human beings to various degree have a shadow personality. However, not all people suffer from personality disorders. If an individual learns to live out his or her shadow character traits and become conscious of these, he or she might be able to avoid mental unbalance and illnesses such as the unnamed narrator's DID.

unnamed narrator must step out of, or even dismantle the societal structures which take part in forming the dominant values in society and thereby his persona.

## 2.3 Subversion

First, Tyler suggests, one must escape the dominant American cultural ethos that accumulation of commodities will generate a sense of self-fulfilment and individuality. By propagating his extremist-capitalist stance, Tyler seeks to demonstrate that the ethos is deceptive. He declares: “It’s only after you’ve lost everything [...] that you’re free to do anything” (70). When the narrator returns from his business trip and holiday where he encountered Tyler for the first time, he finds his “floor-to-ceiling windows in their aluminium frames” (45) and “the sofas and the lamps and dishes and sheets” (45) in flames. The fire is caused by “a bomb, a big bomb” (43). Tyler continually feeds the narrator alluring statements: “Tyler whispered [...] I’m breaking my attachment to physical power and possessions . . . the liberator who destroys my property [...] is fighting to save my spirit. The teacher who clears all possessions from my path will set me free” (110). Later, it is revealed that the narrator’s condominium was demolished by homemade explosives created by himself. This is arguably his first step to break away from his materialistic lifestyle and towards Tyler Durden’s somewhat unorthodox way of living.

Second, Tyler makes the unnamed narrator show resistance to the dominant ornamental culture by committing mischievous acts of vandalism as a banquet waiter. Tyler introduces the narrator to these rather childish games; “Tyler’s been doing this for years, but he says everything is more fun as a shared activity” (84). With the narrator’s comical and boyish humour, he explains how Tyler puts his genitals in a bowl of soup which “looks in a really funny way like a tall elephant in a waiter’s white shirt and bow tie drinking soup through its little trunk” (79). Significantly, these actions are not simply comical elements but illustrate a general critique of class differences and the absurdity of luxury ornamental culture. To emphasise the difference between those who work as “minimum wage” (84) waiters and the people dining, Palahniuk constructs a dichotomy: Tyler and the narrator are described being at “cockroach level” (80), people who “run around” (80) for the hosts of the banquet and their guests, who are described as “titans and their gigantic wives [who] drink barrels of champagne and bellow at each other wearing diamonds bigger than I feel” (80). Thus,

demonstrating Marx's idea of the fetishism of commodities, Tyler decides to leave a note to the hostess of the banquet: "I have passed an amount of urine into at least one of your many elegant fragrances" (82). The host's superficiality is demonstrated when she storms into the kitchen demanding to know the author of the note, lamenting over the incident as she refuses to face her guests until she knows who did it. Later, she destroys all her luxury perfume bottles to figure out which bottle consisted of Tyler's urine. It turns out they all are;

loud and fast, Tyler says how they kill whales, Tyler says, to make that perfume that costs more than gold per ounce. Most people have never seen a whale. Leslie has two kids in an apartment next to the freeway and Madam hostess has more bucks than we'll ever make in a year in bottles on her bathroom counter (83).

When the hostess lies on the floor in broken glass with remains of urine on it, Tyler asserts: "all those dead whales in the cuts in her hands, it stings" (84). By exchanging the content in the perfume bottles with urine, Tyler emphasises that the content in luxury perfume bottles are the *product* of real human beings, and in this case, even the lives of animals. The rather primitive and extreme way Tyler makes his point is the consequence of his nature as a shadowy double, which expresses the more primitive side of man.

Third, the establishment of fight club also emphasises Durden's nature as a grotesque *doppelgänger* and is a part of the shadow's resistance to the formalities of the persona. In short, all the attributes the narrator's consciousness denies as a part of him prevail in Tyler's great vitality and energy. The idea of founding a fight club springs from Tyler's belief that self-destruction is the remedy to regain a sense of unique sense of self. In a culture that avoids everything violent and imperfect, the narrator admits when he first encounters Tyler, change is needed: "May I never be complete. May I never be content. May I never be perfect. Deliver me, Tyler, from being perfect and complete" (46). Therefore, fight club is built on the premise that "maybe we have to break everything to make something better out of ourselves" (52) which results in Tyler's demand to the unnamed narrator: "hit me as hard as you can" (46). Eventually, what began as an awkward play-fight between the two personalities, evolves into an underground club for men who, comparable to the narrator, suffer from a sense of misery and self-alienation. Through consensual and brutal brawling, the attendants are left beaten up. The narrator explains one of his fights:

This guy must've had a bad week, got both my arms behind my head in a full nelson and rammed my face into the concrete floor until my teeth bit open the inside of my cheek and my eye was swollen shut and was bleeding, and after I said, stop, I could look down and there was a print of half my face in blood on the floor (51).

Due to the strict codes of conduct and the faultless commodities the narrator has built his life around, Kirsten Stirling insists that the brutal fighting at fight club “relieves him from the pressure to conform to society’s expectations” (Stirling 124). Since he started to attend fight club, the narrator sighs in relief:

you aren’t alive anywhere like you’re alive at fight club [...] there’s grunting and noise at fight club like at the gym, but fight club isn’t about looking good. There’s hysterical shouting in tongues like at church, and when you wake up Sunday afternoon you feel saved (51).

Fight club has become his safe-haven and sanctuary, his refuge where he can express anger, frustration and restlessness. All the emotions of the unnamed narrator that are shunned in contemporary ornamental culture, but ironically are an integral part of what it means to be human can be voiced at fight club. The narrator expresses a relief of being able to step out of the formalities of society and live out some of his more profound drifts; “as long as you’re at fight club, you’re not how much money you’ve got in the bank. You’re not your job. You’re not your family, and you’re not who you tell yourself” (143).

Even though several critics stress the liberating effect of the ferocity of fight club, the importance of fight club lies not only in expressing individuality through violence but also in creating a community where human beings can regularly come together and meet like-minded people outside their workplace. Fight club has not only an appealing effect on the narrator but eventually, he encounters other service industry workers with bruised faces and with blue bruises around their eyes indicating a collective need to break away from their normal lives. Significantly, Marx argued that “only in association with others” (Marx qtd. in West 4) is the individual able to cultivate *personal freedom* (emphasis added). Of course, this idea has been further scrutinised by social-scientists after Marx. For instance, Abraham Maslow points out how the need for “belongingness” (Maslow qtd. in Naravaez 4), to have a friendly and affectionate relationship to other human beings, is one of the individual’s primal psychological needs.

The unnamed narrator’s need for community is also demonstrated by the various support groups he attends, which seem to be his only social activity besides work before fight club. Even though the narrator does not suffer from any of the conditions which the other members do (for instance testicle cancer and brain parasites), the narrator never feels so relieved and pleased as he does at support groups, precisely due to the connection with other people at these meetings. For example, when Bob embraces him, the narrator reflects; “this is the only place I ever really relax and give up. This is my vacation” (18). In contrast to

isolation and escapism through material artefacts that dominate many public spaces and communities in contemporary culture, fight club and the support groups are places for authentic human communication. One is *supposed to* express one's most hurtful and unaccepted feelings here. These places are ideal spaces for cultivating one's authentic self and seems to be the only remedy for the narrator's self-detachment. The narrator reflects after attending fight club: "I felt finally I could get my hands on everything in the world that didn't work" (53).

Subsequent to attending fight club over a long period of time, the unnamed narrator has a surprisingly optimistic tone. One of the haikus he sends "to everyone" (61) arguably illustrates that his unconscious desire to leave his work as a recall campaign coordinator has become a conscious desire:

Worker bees can leave  
Even drones can fly away  
The queen is their slave (63).

His haiku evokes the metaphor of how worker bees leave their hive to collect pollen in contrast to the queen bee who is unavailable to leave the hive before her death. The unnamed narrator has realised that he, as a worker, can escape his unfulfilling, monotonous workplace and life. At this point in the narrative, the narrator appears to have become conscious of the dehumanising effect contemporary society has on him and that he indeed might be able to find a way to live a meaningful life.

After being in numerous fights at fight club, the narrator looks so repulsive that his boss at The Pressman Hotel fires him due to his unpleasant appearance. With his "punched-out cheekbones" (114), "fight club lips [...] still split into ten segments" (115) and the hole through his cheek (which the narrator puts two fingers over when he drinks coffee to stop it from leaking), the narrator stands in the manager's office, pretending to be shocked: "You don't like the idea of *this*?" (116). His appearance has altered drastically, which illustrates the impact the double has on the unnamed narrator who now disobeys dominant norms in order to break out of his dehumanising workplace. To stress this, the narrator decides to make his own appearance even worse. He starts punching himself, throwing himself over the manager. At this point in the narrative, the narrator is unable to distinguish between himself and Tyler and additionally, he describes himself as "the monster [which] crawls across the carpet, hot and picking up the lint and dust sticking to the blood on its claws" (117). The unnamed narrator emerges into the symbol of the monstrous Other (Procter and Smith 97). He looks like the

very opposite of what people expect to greet them when arriving at a banquet; an obliging and tidy-looking waiter.

Palahniuk makes *Fight Club* a work of satire by utilising both irony and exaggeration in the narrative. To make Tyler challenge the hierarchical structure of society, irony is used as a “counter-discourse” (Hutcheon 30), a mode of political opposition. Therefore, one might question the ambiguous morality of Palahniuk, when he makes Tyler develop his own capitalist business; The Paper Street Soap Company. Palahniuk emphasises this fact by making Marla, the unnamed narrator’s love interest, calling him a “monster two-faced capitalist suck-ass bastard” (94). Significantly, as James Corbet observes in his reading of *Fight Club*, the decision to make soap is not random, because “personal hygiene, [is] closely linked with the idea of beauty, [and] is a social construction that regulates the behaviour of a society” (54). Tyler’s mass-production of soap must be understood as a part of Tyler’s way of adapting the language of the established and dominant socio-political discourse. This intimacy with the political discourse a person contest is crucial because it makes irony “an effective strategy of oppositionality” (Hutcheon 30). Tyler’s main idea is to take men like the unnamed narrator (who continually refers to his own emotions and organs and emotions as “Joe’s” (58)), and let them undergo the same liberating process as him to partake in a rebellion against capitalism. Several “Joe[s] on the street” (119) become the members of fight club as numerous clerks, bookkeepers, assistant account reps and messengers) move into their house on Paper Street (121). By transforming the old shack into a huge soap factory, Tyler eventually makes “real bucks” (82) which exemplifies Paper Street Soap Company as a capitalist business.

In that case, how is Tyler’s ironic adaptation of the capitalist mode of business an effective way of challenging the dominant discourse? It permits the reader to acknowledge the workings of the discourse and take advantage of its power in order to think critically about it (Hutcheon 30). Ironically, it explicitly demonstrates how the respective workers at Tyler’s business do not acquire a more unique or separate sense of self; but rather the opposite. They become identity-less workers for Tyler. When the applicants arrive at Paper Street, they must bring rather anonymous, black and white clothes, some equipment and shave their heads. In order to emphasise the workers loss of autonomy, the unnamed narrator refers to them as “Space Monkeys” (12) who are assigned “brainless little honor[s] (131), such as dishwashing and rice boiling. To make clear the double standard of morality in capitalism’s promise of

self-realisation through corporate employment, the unnamed narrator wonders: “Has Tyler promised Big Bob enlightenment if he spends sixteen hours a day wrapping bars of soap?” (131). In short, Tyler’s project demonstrates the dehumanising effect capitalism might have on individuals and how jobs in the service sector might leave the individual traumatised.

In order to underscore how Tyler desires to work against the leading discourse, Tyler’s soap business eventually evolves into an organization he calls Project Mayhem; “Organized Chaos. The Bureaucracy of Anarchy. You figure it out. Support Groups. Sort of” (119). To forward the fundamental ideas of his organisation, Tyler writes notes where he utilises phrases which might usually be associated with the promise of self-reliance through free-market capitalism. However, Tyler inverts them to reveal the bitter truth. One of the space monkeys reads Tyler’s words on a piece of paper aloud:

You are not a beautiful and unique snowflake. You are the same decaying organic matter as everyone else, and we are all part of the same compost pile [...] Our culture has made us all the same. No one is truly white or black or rich, anymore. We all want the same. Individually we are nothing (134).

Furthermore, as statements like these develop into the trademark of Project Mayhem, Tyler becomes the group’s visionary for a classless world. This arguably calls to mind the rather obsolete Marxist belief in a socialist revolution which will overthrow capitalism. Karl Marx and Frederic Engels put forward this idea in *The Communist Manifesto* from 1848. They divided the population of a post-industrial society into the proletariat: the majority of the population who work blue-collar jobs and have low income, and the bourgeoisie: those in control of the society’s resources and usually with high-income jobs, on top of the social hierarchy (Tyson 52). Marx and Engels’ idealistic thought was that the proletariat would eventually rise against their oppressor to improve their condition. On the other hand, in Palahniuk’s postmodern novel, the proletariat consists mostly of white-collar workers; and Tyler desires to raise collective awareness of capitalist dehumanisation of service-industry workers. Project Mayhem will, argues Tyler, “like fight club does with clerks and box boys [...] break up civilization so we can make something better out of the world” (125). He desires to leave civilization defenceless and to create chaos. Eventually, Project Mayhem evolves into an organized army which carries out acts of unrestrained vandalism. At the Hein Tower they set fire to parts of the building and paint a face whose “empty eyes seemed to watch everyone in the street but at the same time were dead” (118). Later, without the approval of the narrator (or rather without the narrator’s realisation), Project Mayhem sets fire to his work department, which presumably murders the unnamed narrator’s boss.

Additionally, Tyler shoots and murders Patrick Madden, “the mayor’s special envoy on recycling” (196), which underscores how Tyler’s project is doomed to get out of hand, because Durden truly represents the unnamed narrator’s uncontrollable drives.

Therefore, in order to comprehend Tyler’s careless idea which gradually gets out of control, it is of importance to keep in mind that this is an integral part of his nature as an internalised double. These radical actions evoke the cornerstone of the shadowy double; Tyler shows an uncontrollable vitality, radicalism and violence as a result of the unnamed narrator’s repression of his emotions and adhering to social conventions. The double tends to evoke fear precisely because, as Živković explains; “the double points to the basis upon which cultural order rests, for it focuses on the possibility of disorder, that which lies outside the law, that which is outside the dominant value system” (126). With Tyler’s grotesque and brutal nature, he appears both frightful and fearless, solely because he violates the dominant values and behaviour people are accustomed to in contemporary America. Therefore, one should not understand Tyler as something evil, but he is stigmatised as such, due to his disobedience and attack on the leading ideology.

Along these lines, Tyler evokes a sense of the uncanny. Since the narrator's double represents aspects of the narrator that were supposed to remain hidden but has been brought into the light and revealed to the external world, Tyler is *Unheimlich*. Tyler’s ideas have always been familiar to the narrator but repressed. In other words, the Jungian idea of the shadow evokes the uncanny, because the shadow represents sentiments deeply repressed by the narrator. As the unconscious aspect of the psyche always tries to manifest itself to the conscious, Tyler’s being and ideas seem alluring at first, but gradually become more frightening, when showing themselves to the conscious self. The narrator acts in a way which is intimidating, not only because Project Mayhem’s agenda is illegal and contrasts with everything which categorises as civilised and conventional behaviour, but also because this way of behaving reflects what has been resisted and prohibited throughout the narrator’s life.

## 2.4 “There’s nothing left”: Unsuccessful Individuation

As a consequence, the unnamed narrator suddenly appears sceptical to this radical change, and the tone of his voice has become slightly more pessimistic and scared again. When Project Mayhem sets fire to his work department, the narrator is once again unable to realise



the dehumanising effect his work has on him: “The world is going crazy. My boss is dead. My home is gone. My job is gone. And I’m responsible for it all. There’s nothing left” (193). Tyler’s actions gradually become more radical and intimidating; especially when the unnamed narrator realises that he himself is becoming Tyler. He laments: “Tyler’s words coming out of my mouth. And I used to be such a nice person” (114).

Due to the frightening idea that Tyler has taken over his life, the unnamed narrator realises he must stop Tyler at all costs. This “impulse to rid oneself of the uncanny opponent in a violent manner”, Otto Rank claims, is one of the “essential features of the motif” (Rank 16-17) of the double. A desire to violently dismantle one’s double is prevalent in many of the classic tales of the fictional double. In the end, Jekyll decides to murder Hyde, Mary Shelley’s Victor Frankenstein in *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* pursues his self-created monster to the north-pole and William Wilson in Edgar Allan Poe’s tale with the same name cannot handle the presence of his identical *doppelgänger* any more. Predictably, Palahniuk’s *doppelgänger* story ends with a final and violent showdown between the two parts of the subject, as the narrator has decided to go through with Tyler’s idea of “the martyrdom thing” (203). At this point in the novel, the narrator is aware of his two-sided personality; “To God, this looks like one man alone, holding a gun in his mouth, but it’s Tyler holding the gun and it’s my life” (203-204). The narrator has realised that Tyler must be stopped because he has become too dangerous and terrifying as he dismantles everything the narrator knows and previously believed he loved. The narrator’s overidentification with his persona leads to his desire to commit suicide to prevent these changes. On top of the Parker-Morris Building which is about to be blown up by Project Mayhem, the narrator must demolish his double in order to end the out-of-control actions of the project and escape his miserable life.

Miraculously, the confused unnamed narrator survives his attempt at committing suicide. He wakes up in a place he first believes to be heaven. However, his dream of a happy hereafter is quickly exchanged for a health institution. Through the narrator’s very fragmented and delusional worldview, it is hard to tell if the narrator successfully destroyed his double or not. He seems confused, speaking to himself; “Of course when I pulled the trigger, I died. Liar. And Tyler died” (206). Various critics have interpreted the ending of *Fight Club* in different ways. For instance, David McNutt believes that “the narrator is not free from his delusions about Tyler” (100). Schwarz seems to agree with McNutt, claiming that the narrator is unable to “evade Tyler Durden” (332) even after shooting himself. On the other hand, Jesse

Kavadlo suggests that “though wounded and institutionalized in the book’s final pages, he – and Marla – survive. Tyler does not” (19). These various approaches to the ending illustrate the apparent difficulty in identifying the narrator’s state of mind.

Wolfgang Iser explains the reason why readers might create different meanings in the same literary work in *The Act of Reading*. Iser puts forward his view that through “a reader-oriented perspective” (23) literary criticism will always be “a form of uncontrolled subjectivism” (23). Thus, the reading of *Fight Club* might change based on the reader’s subjective emotions and understanding of the text because it is created through the reader’s interaction with it. However, Iser also constructed the idea of the implied reader, whose function is to structure and lead the reader to understand the arbitrary or uncertain aspects of a text in a work of fiction in a specific way. The implied reader makes the reader comprehend or create a desirable meaning of the text. The implied reader differs from a physical reader because it is a hypothetical one, constructed by the author. In this way, the author has control over how a reader might understand the arbitrariness of the text, because the way a person reads is based on conventions learned through reading (Lothe 19).

Therefore, to come closer to an understanding of the narrator’s mental condition and the meaning of the ending of the novel, this thesis suggests that one can look to the conventions found in other internalised double stories. In the case of these narratives there is “an interrelated set of conventions of both form and content” (Baldick 70), because as outlined in Chapter 1, they build on the same literary tradition. Some of these conventions are easily recognised and might form the expectations the reader has of the text, especially when it is revealed that Tyler is the unnamed narrator’s double.

One of these conventions is, as previously illustrated, how the earlier works of the double incorporate the confrontation between the two personalities. Significantly, these fictional works also provide a model for the outcome of the showdown between the protagonist and his double. Otto Rank proposes that this model makes it “clear that the life of the double is linked quite closely to that of the individual himself” (17). In other words, this confrontation consistently ends with the survival or destruction of them both.

For instance, in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the story ends with the demolition of both the leading characters. In *Frankenstein*, after Victor dies of exhaustion, the monster admits he has no reason to live and commits suicide; “Farewell, Frankenstein! If thou wert yet alive, and yet cherished a desire for revenge against me, it would be better satiated in

my life than in my destruction” (Shelley 187). Similarly, when William Wilson succeeds in murdering his *doppelgänger* in Poe’s *William Wilson*, he has in reality murdered himself as well. His double asserts: “In me didst thou exist; and in my death see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself!” (Poe qtd. in Rank 27). One must keep in mind that the ego and the shadow both are a part of the same subject, the same source; the same psyche. One cannot have darkness without light or *vice versa*. Accordingly, instead of murdering Tyler and himself, the bullet does not murder but tears the narrator’s face apart, making him look “like an angry Halloween pumpkin. Japanese demon. Dragon of Avarice” (207). Thus, as the narrator fails to murder himself, Tyler as the internalised double still lurks in the shadows.

Arguably, the narrator is still delusional, which demonstrates his unsuccessful individuation. Instead of gaining a sense of psychological wholeness and acquiring a sense of individuality, the unnamed narrator desires to demolish and prohibit a healthy dialogue between the complexities of the shadow and the persona. This reflects the power of the persona and how it refuses to accept and incorporate the characteristics of the shadow in favour of adaptation of collective culture. The unnamed narrator refuses to partake in society as long as Tyler is a recognisable part of himself and Project Mayhem exists. The narrator laments: “But I don’t want to go back. Not Yet. Just because. Because every once in a while, somebody brings me my lunch tray and my meds and he has a black eye or his forehead is swollen with stitches, and he says: We Miss you Mr. Durden” (208).

The portrayal of the place the narrator finds himself in the last chapter of the novel seems to be a modernised “house of confinement” (Foucault 38). The place is a public space for institutionalised social control which sustains the boundary between those categorised as mad and normal. By isolating the mad, they become the Other. By making the unnamed narrator mistake his doctor for God, Palahniuk stresses the unreliability of the unnamed narrator. At the same time, the narrator’s misconception demonstrates the power of and how these institutions contribute to sustaining the dominant and underlying neo-liberal policies of contemporary society:

I’ve met God across his long walnut desk with his diplomas hanging on the wall behind him, and God asks me, “Why?” Why did I cause so much pain? Didn’t I realize that each of us is a sacred, unique snowflake of special unique specialness? Can’t I see how we’re all manifestations of love? I look at God behind his desk, taking notes on a pad, but God’s got this all wrong. We are not special. We are not

crap or trash either. We just are. We just are, and what happens just happens. And God says, "No that's not right". Yeah. Well. Whatever. You can't teach God anything (207).

The unnamed narrator's life and statement indicate that individual human beings are not in charge of their own lives. Demonstrating the fact that one is unable to alter collective beliefs and norms for which God's statements are an allegory, the conclusion of *Fight Club* echoes a nihilist worldview; the belief that life is meaningless. The narrator who is left helpless in the institution illustrates Jameson's idea of the death of the postmodern subject. The liberal individual has ceased to exist in postmodern culture, ironically illustrated by how the unnamed narrator fails to plan and carry out his death. Accordingly, because the unnamed narrator has no control of his destiny and actions, Palahniuk puts forward the pessimistic idea that a service worker's life is reduced a vicious circle of unfulfillment which leads to self-alienation.

Through immersion in a society's language and culture, there is an "alienation of the psyche" (Madan 31) which will continue throughout one's adulthood. The narrator in *Fight Club* finds himself not only lost in the ideological framework of the institution and society, but he is indeed unable to change it because he does not recognise its power over him. Demonstrating the narrator's overidentification with the persona, the conscious part of his psyche which is possessed by the persona, he is unable to and refuses to accept the deeper parts of his nature. Because his sense of self is constructed through the dominant beliefs, desires, dislikes and practices of society, these aspects are what the unnamed narrator believes to be the result of his unique self. Indeed, one cannot "teach God anything" (207); one cannot change the collective and dominant values.

In short, Palahniuk's novel illustrates how the contemporary internalised *doppelgänger* endeavours to bring a change, to underscore that there is an aspect of the human psyche outside the persona; something more profound in human beings which might help the individual to escape the cultural constraints of contemporary American society. However, the narrator's apparent failure of individuation and as a *doppelgänger* story suggests the ever-lasting presence of Tyler Durden. The ending of the novel demonstrates that individuals are the product of authoritarian figures and their ideologies; leaving the subject unable to recognise its repressed and authentic side. This leads to the appearance of the shadow, a double personality, a sure sign that one is not living a fulfilling and healthy psychological life. *Fight Club* suggests that there is a profound dilemma for the individual in

contemporary American culture; an apparent struggle to find psychological satisfaction as the societal structures of capitalism and the domination of ornamental culture leaves the subject with a sense of self-alienation and lack of personal identity.

Tyler seems to appear too late. As Tyler points attention to this process of self-alienation and desires to demolish these structures, the narrator is perceived as mentally ill and thus put into a psychiatric ward. When not adhering to the dominant norms and ideologies, the subject is automatically the Other; it cannot fit in and is shunned by society. In this way, the double points to how there should be a profound change in American culture and class structure, in order to impart psychological well-being and a sense of individuality to human beings. Even though *Fight Club* is a work of fiction and the unnamed narrator's inner conflict might be perceived as unrealistic, comical and grotesque, the worldview created by Palahniuk through the two personalities seems to demonstrate a lesson worthy of contemplation.

### Chapter 3: An Analysis of the Double in Jess Walter's *The Zero*

“You switches sides indiscriminately . . . arm your enemies and wonder why you get shot with your own guns” (Walter 291).

Since the publication of *Fight Club* in 1996 there has been a major shift in cultural anxieties affecting how millions of Americans live their lives. As a fictional narrative published in 2006, Jess Walter's *The Zero* addresses dilemmas and fears which Heather Duerre Humann claims reflect “a set of concerns that were not present in earlier historical periods” (10). As the term globalization has become one of the most appropriate words to describe the twenty-first century, *The Zero* has an international dimension. Walter's *doppelgänger* story addresses the complexity of the trauma and shock which affected America after the terror attacks on September 11, 2001. On this infamous day, individuals connected to the terror organization Al Qaeda hijacked four American aircraft where two of them crashed into the World Trade Center in New York. Demolishing the Twin Towers, the attacks led to the death of approximately 3,200 people, including passengers on the aircraft, people in the buildings and firefighters and police officers on the ground (Boyer 133-134). One of the many events which are the result of an increasingly globalised and complex world, 9/11 stands out, because it produced a national trauma; a collective trauma imposed on an entire nation that “unite[s] around the re-experiencing of their woundedness” (Luckhurst 2). Thereby, a new-found interest in trauma and its effect on people's inner life escalated in the Western world (Langås 152).

Trauma studies, a field with an interdisciplinary approach associated with both psychology and literature, was already established prior to this. Subsequently, as literature is one way to mirror the complexity of life, authors of 9/11 fiction utilise many of the dominating principles in the trauma paradigm to depict the horrific situation and demonstrate the psychological effect traumatic events might have on individuals (Gibbs 2). An abundance of writers have tried to artistically retell and demonstrate the destructive power of the terrorist attacks through fiction. Some of the most acclaimed works of 9/11 fiction are Claire Bessud's *The Emperor's Children* (2006), Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* (2005) and Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007). Nominated for the National Book Award the same year as its publication, *The Zero* is categorised as an “undervalued text” (Duvall and Marzec 388) but, offers an interesting and different take on the 9/11 trauma novel. Even

though Kristine A. Miller declares that *The Zero* has “no sustained scholarship” (30), several critics note how the protagonist Brian Remy’s state of mind is “identified with” (Flinn 221) and that Remy’s “personal traumata” (Schwarz 376) mirrors the collective trauma experienced in the aftermath of the attacks.

In reality, the focus on the traumatising effect the attacks had on human beings ceased collectively due to the commercialisation of life stories through the “well-defined grand strategy” (Callinicos 57) of the war on terror. By commodifying life stories in, for instance, *The Times*’ series Portraits of Grief, “grief and anger became competitive sports” (Walter 36). Individuals’ suffering was constructed into commodities to extend liberal capitalism and American hegemony, concealed as American nationalism. Walter seeks to demonstrate this process and explains that the novel is “satire about us, about the collective post-traumatic stress that we’ve suffered and the way we’ve retreated into a cocoon lined with real estate listings and 401 (k) updates while truly frightening measures are undertaken on our behalf” (Walter qtd. in Loyd 4).

As a “9/12 novel” (Walter qtd. in Loyd 4) *The Zero* does not focus primarily on the tragic events of 9/11, but rather on the difficult time after the incident. Instead of emphasising the many characters in *The Zero* and their struggle with grief after 9/11, this analysis will have protagonist Brian Remy, a middle-aged, depressed, divorced American police officer as its focal point.<sup>6</sup> This chapter will scrutinise Remy’s individual search for meaning and self-identity in a situation of horror and extreme pain primarily as a story about an internalised double. Remy’s double can be perceived in the light of the literary device’s psychological tradition. By paralleling the psychological dimension with an aspect of literary criticism, namely post-colonial criticism, this chapter will display how Walter proposes a more comprehensive critique of American socio-political structures at the beginning of the twenty-first century, not only after 9/11. Put differently, the chapter will interpret Remy’s double’s behaviour and actions mainly as a consequence of his nature as an internalised double.

This chapter will attempt to display how Jess Walter constructs a fictional double through elements of the trauma paradigm which demonstrates how the literary motif changes simultaneously with leading views in psychology. By applying Hochschild’s theory of the

---

<sup>6</sup> Critical readings on *The Zero*, such as these of Dodge, and Duvall and Marzec focus on the collective trauma and how many different characters in the novel cope with grief.

dehumanising aspect of emotional labour to understand Remy's sense of self and his persona, the chapter will show that the reason for Remy's apparent difficulty in regaining a sense of autonomy and access his most hurtful and genuine emotions is the continual repression of his emotions and struggle with post 9/11 trauma. This makes Remy unable to identify the sole reason for his confusion. Additionally, by examining how Jess Walter utilises genre conventions to construct Brian Remy's internalised double, the chapter demonstrates how his double forges into the archetypal image of the twenty-first century other; the terrorist. Thereby, the chapter will show how the double in *The Zero* makes the reader reassess a culturally oppressive discourse which symbolises a desire for change in order to obtain equality and well-being for *all* human beings in contemporary America. In conclusion, the thesis will emphasise the ending of the novel because it signifies a difficulty of finding an authentic sense of self and the impossibility to go through a successful process of individuation in a society which is defined by emotional labour and marketing of human grief.

### 3.1 The Traumatized Double in a Thriller Noir Novel

Only days after the terror attacks, Brian Remy finds himself in the middle of a secret investigation concerning one of the people missing after 9/11. Remy's task is to find March Selios, "a second-generation immigrant" (Walter 60) woman who is believed to have left the World Trade Center only minutes before the attacks. Thus, *The Zero* evolves into a thriller noir novel, as Remy sets out for a suspenseful and confusing search for March. By doing detective work, such as questioning and seeking out people who have been involved with March, Remy and other people who take part in the investigation are eventually entangled in a complex operation involving a federal agency, the government and an external bureau. At the novel's climax, the complexities of the operation are revealed; various men from the Middle East who throughout the novel have provided Remy with information about March have been set up by Remy's boss to look like members of a presumed terrorist cell and to stage a terrorist attack.

The narrative is characterised by classic crime novel components, where Remy investigates and questions the motives of various' people involvement with March. However, instead of a primary focus on rational detective work as in crime novels, *The Zero* places its emphasis on "violence, treachery, and moral confusion" (Baldick 231) which makes



it a traditional thriller noir novel. Through the third-person omniscient narrator's point of view, Brian Remy's inquiry after March turns into a quest for autonomy and individuality. Eventually, it is displayed that Remy, who is incapable of remembering his actions, has been the mastermind of the operation, in addition to providing money for a suicide bomb which detonates at the very end of the novel. Thus, Remy is revealed to be a dualistic protagonist; he has a double personality. Consequently, Brian Remy does not only represent accepted and dominant values, but his double personality symbolises counter-cultural values which make him break down the partition between classic noir hero and the villain, exemplifying one of the key aspects of thriller noir fiction (Baldick 231-232).

*The Zero* exemplifies the internalised double as a contemporary literary motif that follows the development of the field of trauma studies and the recognition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a severe and widespread mental disorder. Walter utilises the trauma paradigm to construct a psychological dimension in *The Zero*. In 1980, trauma studies developed simultaneously as the official recognition of PTSD as a new illness. *The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the same manual addressed in Chapter 1, defines the essential feature of PTSD as

the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to the physical integrity; or witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate (463).

Remy undoubtedly has symptoms DSM-IV-TR associates with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: "In rare instances the person experiences dissociative states that last from a few seconds to several hours, or even days, during which components of the event are relived and the person behaves as though experiencing the event at that moment" (464). An individual's response to a traumatic experience is characterised by intense anxiety, stress and arousal, which might lead to disrupted memory and dissociation of mental processes. Similar to the unnamed narrator in *Fight Club*, Remy also seems to suffer from Dissociative Identity Disorder, as he is unable to "recall important personal information that is too extensive to be explained by ordinary forgetfulness" (DSM-IV-TR 529). These moments of forgetfulness are the consequence of dissociation of Remy's mental processes and one might argue that he experiences both ways of dissociation discussed in Chapter 1; a split of his personality and repression of his hurtful emotions. In short, Remy's mental health is characterised by

dissociation which makes it quite difficult for him to feel as one complete being and understand the reason of his confusion (Schwarz 387).

The opening passage of the novel introduces the reader to Remy, who seemingly just failed his attempt at committing suicide. Remy wakes up on his floor, his hair sticky with blood and “muffled ringing in his ears” and he is “trying once again to find the loose string between cause and effect – long day, drink, sorrow, gunshot, fatigue. Or some order” (Walter 4). He thinks he sees numerous agitated white birds in the sky, but as they fly closer to the ground, Remy realises that the birds are in fact “burning scraps of paper” (3) which uncannily resemble the infamous images of the dispersal of paper around the World Trade Center. It seems like the incident has left Remy in the long shadow of 9/11. He seems confused and dejected as he reexperiences parts of the traumatic event he witnessed when he assisted the other officers on 9/11. Remy’s main struggle, which is repeatedly explained throughout the novel, is his trouble with “focusing” (65) and “connecting things” (64). His difficulty to grasp and understand his life is also represented by his reduced eye health due to “macular degeneration and vitreous detachment” (Walter 65). Throughout the novel, as Remy’s life gets even more complicated and twisted, his eyesight deteriorates too; continually seeing “flashers and floaters” (65). The narrative voice in *The Zero* attempts to explain Remy’s struggle with disrupted memory: “These were the most common gaps that Remy had been suffering, holes not so much in his memory but in the string of events, the causes of certain effects. He found himself wet but didn’t remember rain. He felt full but couldn’t recall eating” (43).

Brian Remy’s traumatised and fragmented state of mind is displayed through the novel’s narrative structure (Miller 35). Most of the sections in the novel start *in medias res*, which leads to the reader’s and Remy’s bewilderment, as Remy suddenly finds himself in an entirely new situation and is unable to remember how he got there. Walter’s novel does not consist of clear separate chapters, but many of the different sections in the novel end in the middle of a sentence with a hyphen, a mark for division which emphasises the split, the dissociation in Brian Remy’s personality and identity (Schwarz 376). Remy’s gaps are exemplified quite early in the novel when he attempts to explain his confusing situation to his ophthalmologist: “Honestly, I’m kind of having trouble remembering some things. There are these . . . gaps. They’re coming faster now . . . . Could that be a side effect of the medication?” (77) When Dr Huld asks about Remy’s gaps, Remy starts to explain, but he is

unable to finish his sentence as the section ends and he experiences dissociation: “Well, sometimes –“ (77). The next section begins with Remy finding himself in an unknown woman’s bathroom, unable to remember how the woman looks like or even her name. He is clearly disoriented: “I find myself in these situations. I don’t know how I got there, or what I’m doing. I don’t know what’s going to happen until after it happens. I do things that I don’t understand and I wish I hadn’t done them” (128).

This narrative structure, or “destroying of narrative” (Morris 17) continues throughout the novel, which makes *The Zero* differ from a conventional and linear narrative. The novel feels fragmented and is at times hard to comprehend since huge parts of Brian’s activities and life are not present. This narrative disruption through Remy’s gaps can be regarded as representative of an archetypal “trauma aesthetic” (Luckhurst 88); a small number of tropes and motifs that are identified as characteristic for trauma narratives. One of these characteristics, Vickoroy suggests, is trauma narratives’ ability to represent trauma not only as a subject matter, but also to “incorporate the rhythms, processes, and uncertainties of trauma within the consciousness and structures of these works” (Vickoroy qtd. in Luckhurst 88). By incorporating these gaps in the narrative, the narrative structure of the novel manages to demonstrate what suffering from trauma might be like: “a state of being out of place, out of context, out of history” (Langås 158). Accordingly, Remy continually fails to connect the events of his life which leads to his utter confusion.

### 3.2 Remy’s Managed Heart: The New Fragmented American Hero

Jess Walter claims that Brian Remy’s sense of self illustrates the outcome of America’s “perverse desire to create a triumphant myth out of pure tragedy” (Walter qtd. in Loyd 6). Jason J Dodge names this process the “commercialization” (154) of Ground Zero and the life stories of the human beings who were involved in the attacks. *The English Oxford Dictionary* defines commercialisation as “the process of managing or running something principally for financial gain” (“Commercialization”), leaving other human qualities such as benevolence and grief out of consideration. One component of the novel critics seems to dismiss, is the fact that the commercialisation of human beings’ lives does not start after 9/11 but is an integral part of contemporary service-society and is therefore merely aggravated rather than initiated after the attacks. Remy’s teenage son, Edgar, looks back on his father’s character before 9/11

in a school-play where children affected by the terrorist attacks take part: “it always seemed like my dad had something important on the tip of his tongue, something he was just getting around to saying” (109). Edgar also reminisces back to a day when he was nine, playing chess with his father: “I think he’d been drinking that day. He drank some, my dad” (107). Remy’s ex-wife Carla also expresses a frustration concerning Remy’s “inability to commit emotionally” (33). Therefore, one might argue that Remy’s disorientation and emotional restraint started before the incident but has drastically deteriorated after 9/11.

Why does Remy suffer from dissociation and why is he unable to identify it? To maximise efficiency and to “create a publicly observable display” (Martin 112) in a variety of occupations, individual workers who desire to do a sufficient job are required to act in certain ways. Remy and his colleagues are performing what Arlie Russel Hochschild in *The Managed Heart* terms emotional labour. Emotional labour is a form of labour which “requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others” (7). Hochschild mentions that roughly one-third of American workers in the 1980s have jobs in the service sector which “subject them to substantial demands for emotional labor” (11). As the service-sector has continued to grow the last thirty years, the number of people who are carrying out emotional labour is likely bigger at the beginning of the new millennium (Haksever). Significantly, Hochschild explains, jobs that require the individual to commercialise his or her emotions have three traits in common:

First, they require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public. Second, they require the worker to produce an emotional state in another person – gratitude or fear, for example. Third, they allow the employer, through training and supervision, to exercise a degree of control over the emotional activities of employees (Hochschild 147).

Remy works as a policeman and is persistently involved in social situations where he is expected to act according to policies set by a law enforcement academy. Consequently, an internal dilemma arises; how can he adapt to his role in a way that allows him to keep traits of his unique identity and emotions, but also minimises the stress which this role might lead to? (Hochschild 188). The complex ways in which the individual decides to handle this dilemma are significant because they are a huge part of life in a post-industrial community. It is arguably this internal dilemma Remy faces. With the example of flight attendants, Hochschild stresses how emotional labour leads to “periods of emotional deadness” (187) a “sense of emotional numbness [and] dimming and numbing of inner signals” (188) which results in “a loss to the access to feeling [...] a central means of interpreting the world around us” (188). Susan Ehrlich Martin claims that police trainees (from as early as at academy level) are taught

how to manage the various emotions and feelings they might experience while working in the police. Martin emphasises “that professional behavior and demeanor include the repression of emotional displays” (121) which “reinforce the wider norms that men must hide fear in frightening situations and take action or face humiliation for failure to ‘act like a man’” (122). After a tragic event, such as 9/11, police officers’ main task is to minimise “the disruption of normal life” (115) and they must therefore, at all costs “avoid the impression of vulnerability and lessen the harshness of the tragic event” (123). Consequently, Remy’s way to solve his internal dilemma leads to his repression of traits which might be considered as part of his unique self; for instance, his anxiety and shock concerning what happened on 9/11. In order to relieve stress as a policeman, Remy’s emotions are subjugated by the dominant norms and rules of his profession which are internalised in his pattern of behaviour. This leads to reduced, or even lack of, emotiveness.

The days after 9/11, Remy works for the fictional bureau OLR (Office of Liberty and Recovery) that collects all the scraps of paper and other remains that flew out of the two towers when they collapsed on 9/11. At the grounds, Remy and the other workers are confronted with grotesque and horrifying discoveries, such as “jigsawed bits of people . . . some mismatched fingers, parts of a foot” (44). One of these jigsaw pieces is a “six-inch piece of a forehead and singed hairline” (12) which Remy puts in a body bag, where “it sat like a frog in a sleeping bag, a slick black bump on the empty floor” (13). Remy’s police partner, Paul Guterak, is clearly affected by the traumatic findings and keep asking: “whose scalp did Remy think it was?” (13) and picks up the bag “at least five times a day” (13).

Despite all the shocking objects they find and what they witnessed at Ground Zero, Remy and his colleagues are forced to be part of “a new breed of American heroes” (Heller qtd. in Schwarz 379). This is a huge and important role in the “political momentum” (Dodge 153) of the War on Terror which began after the 9/11 attacks. Remy is continually confronted with the images of the idealised brave, cop-hero through his work, various media images, advertisement and public events. Remy and Paul Guterak’s job eventually consists of giving tours to celebrity football players and New York Senators who wish to see the remains of Ground Zero and must constantly retell their experiences during the terror attacks. Additionally, when Remy and Guterak stop at a coffeeshop to buy coffee, the cashier insists, to the two police officers’ surprise, that “heroes drink free” (11). Some people applaud them in the streets, patting them on the back asserting: “God Bless” (11). Paul, who seems utterly

satisfied with being treated like a celebrity admits: “You can’t tell me that ain’t the best feeling, them people treating us so good like that” (11). Guterak signs up to be one out of two frontmen for the First Responder cereal “the breakfast of heroes” (284) and attends a monster truck show where they turn Veterans Arena into “a giant mud pit to honour our dead heroes” (176). Even though Guterak takes part in the show, he is not allowed to talk about the horrors he experienced. The organiser insists: “No. There’s no talking [...] honestly, I don’t think people want any more talking. For a while they did. But I think they’ve had enough of that kind of thing” (176-177). The organiser’s statement reflects the collective role of the cop-hero; he should not appear vulnerable, but strong and brave.

Guterak and Remy’s viewpoints about how they should confront their trauma and experiences from 9/11 are very different. Instead of taking part in the commercialisation of the cop-hero symbol which Guterak does, Brian prefers to avoid these situations, close his eyes and hide “behind his coffee” (12). To clean out the grounds at the World Trade Center, Remy takes part in a bucket brigade. Passing different items in buckets from one person to the next, Remy is called forth of the line because he works in the police. Remy is feels doubtful about his new role and admits: “it was a strange feeling – humbling and horrifying” (49). He refuses to talk and deal thoroughly with his trauma precisely because it is in direct contrast to his presumed role as cop and 9/11-hero (Schwarz 379). He repeatedly asserts to Guterak: “I’m not sure we should be talking about this stuff” (154) which illustrates Remy’s emotional restraint and problems with confronting his feelings.

By carrying out emotional labour in such a traumatic situation, Remy and the other cops’ capacity to listen to others has also seemingly evolved into an inability to feel (Hochschild 21). In order to criticise the ways in which the socio-political structures form humans’ ability to express and access their deeper feelings, Walter utilises ironic ignorance, or in other words, “pretense” (Kreuz and Roberts 101). Linda Hutcheon explains how irony is created through an “ironic relation” (11), a “weighted mode of discourse, in the sense that it is asymmetrical, unbalanced in favor of the silent and the unsaid” (37). In short, when utilising irony, what is stated is often a straightforward humorous announcement, but that which remains unsaid, due to its particular context, often provides a serious and critical comment. It is difficult to tell if Remy himself, his colleagues, boss and doctors consciously leave each other’s wounding out of consideration due to ignorance, or if they simply decide to disregard it. By utilising irony, Walter enlightens a lack of emotiveness in individuals, arguably a

consequence of emotional labour. Therefore, in several occasions when Remy finally decides to confide in someone, people do not take him seriously. Significantly, the reader should be able to see through this manoeuvre and be capable of identifying a defect in societal structures.

Walter uses ironic ignorance continually throughout *The Zero*. While discussing a colleague's death with Guterak, Remy takes off his cap and rubs the stitches he got after he attempted to commit suicide. Instead of asking what happened to his head, Guterak wonders why Remy decided to get a haircut. When Remy answers "I shot myself in the head last night" (15), Paul ignores Remy's sincere answer, drives quietly for a moment and simply replies: "Well [...] It looks good" (15). Additionally, to make Remy able to partake in the Selios investigation full time, Remy's boss creates a fake medical record which establishes that Remy suffers from chronic back pain. As a result, his colleagues host a goodbye dinner for him. Remy feels bewildered at the party. He is unable to remember any of the stories his co-workers tell about him and even which glass on the table is his. When he holds a speech, he attempts to give words to his feelings. Remy declares: "I . . . I don't really know what to say. Honestly, I'm not entirely sure what's happening to me. Or why [...] I can see that I'm leaving. Am I retiring? I'm supposed to be taking disability right? [...] I mean . . . I am not dying or anything, am I? Is it my eyes?" (95) Simply ignoring Remy's sole reason to take disability, the group of men bursts out in laughter, even though some seem to be struck by his description of "the infinite emptiness of the last weeks" (95). Even Remy's psychiatrist depreciates his severe mental issues. Remy admits to his psychiatrist that his chronic back pain is a cover story and the psychiatrist agrees that Remy suffers from "textbook PTSD" (194). Despite this, Remy's psychiatrist concludes that what he is going through is "pretty standard stuff" (195) for a man of Remy's age; "some kind of midlife crisis" (195). Continually throughout the narrative, Remy's different doctors make this mistake, and Dr. Rioux even gives him a prescription on medicine for backpain.

Through funny stories and off-colour humour, the police men voice their intricate feelings and attempt to decrease the brutality of 9/11; a coping mechanism which displaces emotional energy (Martin 123). Walter illustrates how the group's difficulties and feelings in relation to 9/11 are overshadowed by the collective's focus on maintaining their professional role. Remy's colleagues are all ignoring the obvious reason why he needs to take disability; his struggle with trauma after 9/11. Evidently, Remy's doctors seem to have succumbed to the

dominant view of the hero-cop too, because they refuse to take Remy's mental state seriously. Thus, Remy is unable to sort out his emotions and deal with his trauma. He does not feel like a hero, rather as somebody who desperately needs saving:

Life would be much easier if we all had a coach watching us, looking for any sign of fatigue or confusion, specialists waiting just down the foul line to stride in and save our work, to salvage what we've done so far, make sure we don't waste the end of the well-lived life. A good reliever might've saved his career, his marriage – what else? That's all Remy wanted: someone to save him (27).

Therefore, the title of the novel, *The Zero*, mirrors just not the remains of the World Trade Center after 9/11, but also Remy's sense of self. The two images of devastation and emptiness are parallels; Ground Zero becomes a metaphor for Remy's mental life (Duvall and Marzec 387). When Remy stands by the fence at Ground Zero, he observes the empty construction site:

feeling incomplete, cheated in some way, as if they'd taken away his memory along with the dirt and debris. Maybe his mind was a hole like this – the evidence and reason scraped away. If you can't trust the ground beneath your feet, what can you trust? If you take away the very ground, what could possibly be left? (307).

Repeatedly when Remy is asked about what happened during the terror attacks, he is incapable of remembering anything: "Remy searched his memory, but there was nothing" (306). Due to Remy's memory loss, seemingly caused by repression of these feelings and distressing memories, "he had expected to feel something. But what can you feel about a place when that place has been scraped away? What was beneath all those piles? Nothing? No one?" (308). The only person Remy truly confides in is an unknown man who meets up with him occasionally throughout the novel. The man is eventually codenamed Jaguar by Remy's collaborators in the Selios investigation. Standing next to Remy at the construction site, Jaguar clarifies why he finds the nickname of the site, Ground Zero, apt: "Zero. The absence of all magnitude or quantity. A person or thing with no discernible qualities or even existence. The point of departure in a reckoning. Zero hour – that sort of thing. A state or condition of total absence" (309). Significantly, this description is just as fitting for Brian's self-estrangement and confusion, and arguably echoes Jameson's idea that the postmodern subject is not autonomous but drained of individuality.

However, the comparison of Remy and Ground Zero is not the only comment by Jaguar which seems to mirror Remy's life. Jaguar explains:



I have always believed that there are two kinds of people: those whose every day is a battle to rise up, and those whose every day is a battle to fit in. There are no other kinds of people. No races or religions or professions – you are either trying to rise, or trying to fit. That is the only war between the risers and the fitters. That's all (74).

One might claim that the latter type of people reflects Remy's consciousness, which seems to be under the possession of the persona; the external mask Remy both consciously and unconsciously puts on primarily *to fit into* the role he is expected to fill. Jung elaborates on his idea of the persona: "Every calling or profession, for example, has its own characteristic persona. It is easy to study these things nowadays, when the photographs of public personalities so frequently appear in the press" (122-123). Significantly, after 9/11, in essence, the persona represses characteristics which are not fitting to Remy's self-image as cop-hero to fit into the collective. Edgar, Remy's son, hints at Remy's apparent discontent and unfulfillment due to his role as a policeman: "my father was a police officer, but he always wanted to be more, so he went to law school at night. But he dropped out before he could finish . . . that's how I thought of my dad. As someone who only got halfway to the places he wanted to go" (108). This leads to Remy's inner conflict. Instead of expressing emotions such as shame, grief, confusion, rage, regret and desire for a different life, Remy represses these sensibilities because they do not fit into the behavioural pattern of a cop. This contradicts the ways in which Remy should behave in order to attain mental comfort and well-being. Therefore, these deeper and unexplored feelings develop into a part of Remy's personal shadow, his double personality.

### 3.3 A Battle to Rise Up

Similar to *Fight Club*, the fact that *The Zero* is a *doppelgänger* story is not clearly displayed at the beginning of the novel. The narrative is exclusively focalised through Remy's ego, his conscious personality, and since his double is the result of his dissociation, the double's actions are, as already mentioned, left out of the narrative structure. In this regard, the implicit portrayal of the double in *The Zero* makes it differ from the other internalised doubles mentioned before, such as Frankenstein's monster, William Wilson's double and Tyler Durden. Brian Remy's double is not a separate character with a distinct name and appearance. He is what might be called a muted double; as his existence is not explicitly explained. Heike Schwarz compares Remy's double to Mr. Hyde, as Mr. Hyde's radical

actions and crimes are only retold by other characters in the story. Thus, Dr Jekyll and Remy's psychological doubles are both "a silenced other side" (Schwarz 388). Therefore, it might take some time for the reader to comprehend what Remy realises quite late in the novel: "It's almost like there are two of me" (282).

Throughout the narrative, Brian suffers from his gaps more rapidly as his "shadow is growing in the streetlight before him" (306). When Remy experiences the gaps, he is really in a state of dissociation, which signals the presence of his double personality. Instead of using ellipses when a section ends, the hyphen signals a switch from Remy's conscious side to the unconscious side of his personality. Remy's gaps are indeed what Wolfgang Iser refers to as "the gaps in the text" (169); spaces in the novel which lack determinacy. Therefore, Remy's life can be read as "an enigmatic gap between knowing and not knowing" (Caruth qtd in Langås 151) which arguably reflects the difficulty of apprehending the nature of one's personal shadow, simply because it lurks in the hidden corners of the unconscious. As referred to in the discussion about the ending in *Fight Club* in chapter 2.4, it is of importance to notice that indeterminacy not necessarily means ambiguity but invites the reader to create the meaning of the text. To make the reader fill the gaps of indeterminacy in the intended way, Walter hints at how Remy's inner conflict can be understood as one between himself and his double.

For instance, Edgar's remark on Brian's life proves to become strikingly relevant: "The unfinished half of his life. Maybe that's the life of an adult: You reach a certain age and your life is defined more by the things you don't do than by the things you do" (108). Quite literally, Remy's life becomes defined by his unexpressed aspirations and potentials. This is demonstrated when Remy's other side emerges, because he shows a vitality non-existent in the conscious Remy. Remy himself observes the difference between himself and his double: "there might be another way to consider this problem, that there might, in some way, be two Remy's, one he knew and the other he didn't, and that these two men might be as different as-" (213). Hence, Walter implies that Remy's inner conflict can be understood as one involving his conscious persona and his shadowy double, implied by the contrast between the two personalities. Therefore, the reader might not be surprised to realise that Remy's double is the personification of the other personality type Jaguar identifies: one of "those whose every day is a battle to rise up" (74).

The analysis of Remy's double will illustrate how Walter uses irony as a "rhetorical device" (Kreuz and Roberts 97) to create gaps of indeterminacy and ambiguity. Through humour and exaggeration, the reader understands how the other characters mistake Remy's literal statements for sarcasm or ironic declarations. For instance, people Remy interacts with in connection to the Selios investigation, mistake Remy's confusion and thereby his inability to communicate appropriately with people for his technique to baffle his opponents. Many characters are unable to realise this because they believe Remy is purposeful, stern and self-assured. In other words, his double's attributes are formed by how the reader combines other characters' descriptions of Remy's personality and actions. Therefore, the double's personality is revealed to both the reader and Remy mainly through Remy's interaction with other people.

The first allusion to the double's existence and his attributes comes when Remy figures he has agreed to be a part of the Selios investigation without remembering. Remy's boss describes Remy's "unique [...] skill set" (296) when he assures Remy that he is suitable for a brutal, secret side-job:

First of all, I want to thank you for agreeing to this. When I heard what they were looking for, in my mind, there was only one choice. Your combination of expertise and willingness to sacrifice, to do what needs to be done . . . I wanted to meet face to face, to make sure you haven't had any second thoughts (53).

"Baby faced Markham" (21), an agent who works for an unknown federal agency and becomes Remy's closest partner in the Selios case also gives the impression that Remy is suitable for this job. At the beginning of their partnership, Markham assures Brian: "I trust you haven't told anyone about your negotiation with us to this point" (56). Laughing nervously, being unable to even remember which agency Markham works for and how they came in contact, Remy admits: "Well, I don't think that's going to be a problem . . . hell I don't even know who you are" (56). Markham seems impressed: "Wow. Yeah. That's good. You could be in one of our training videos" (56). Markham believes Remy's statement to be an ironic declaration; that he really means the opposite of what he is saying and remembers Markham. As the reader may be aware of, Remy does not recall him, which means Remy truly is bewildered. Markham's comments continually form the reader's perception of Remy's double. For instance, when Markham and Remy find themselves in the destroyed parking lot under Ground Zero, Markham is thinking out loud about the way he would prefer to die: "Fire or flood or poison. Burn or drown or choke on your own vomit. I guess I'd take drowning, you know, if I had to pick. How about you, Brian? You seem like a burn guy . . . like you'd

want to go out in as much glory as possible” (89). Ironically, the reader knows of Remy’s earlier attempt at committing suicide and understands that the conscious Remy would prefer to do the opposite to what Markham suggests.

As the investigation scales new heights and more people get involved, Remy is also described as a “calm, cool motherfucker” (194), a “tough-guy” (194) who is a “pro [because] every once in a while he just pops off with that deadpan material” (131). On board a ship in international waters, Markham and Remy are supposed to interrogate Assan, a “young Middle Eastern man” (133). Assan is suspected to be involved with organising a terrorist cell because his “name shows up on checks to Bishir Mandain” (134) a man who is raising money for “Islamic studies” (135). Assan is held hostage on the ship, where he has been brutally perched as a trophy “hanging forward, his arms tied behind his back and slung on the bar” (133). Brian feels terribly sorry for Assan and decides to help him flee from the boat. Due to Brian’s apparent kindness, Assan confides in him, giving Remy helpful information to further the investigation. When Remy believes Assan and he have been able to escape, the ship with Markham and the others who held Assan hostage approaches. The pilot of the cabin cruiser is impressed by Remy’s slyness: “You’re right . . . this guy is good . . . scary good” (140). He looks at “Remy with something between respect and fear” (140). Additionally, Markham assures this was the plan all along and make a bow in front of Remy, admitting: “I was dubious, but damn if that didn’t go just like you said it would” (140). Why would these characters mistake Remy’s kindness for cunning investigative work? These comments significantly demonstrate how Remy’s behaviour alters drastically when he experiences amnesia. In moments he cannot recall he seems to transform into a determinate and self-contained Remy.

After the Assan incident, Remy seems more conscious of his double’s pattern of behaviour and tries to figure out his progress in the investigation. In the same manner as Leonard Shelby in Christopher Nolan’s thriller noir film *Memento* (2001), Remy leaves notes to himself, giving himself instructions and warnings such as “Don’t Hurt Anyone/Grow Up” (213). However, these notes do not seem to help, because Remy has lost absolute control. He cannot even control the words which comes out of his mouth: “had he said martini out loud?” (57), “Jesus. Was he still saying aloud what he was thinking?” (62). To Remy’s great despair, this leads to the realisation that he has been involved in various criminal acts. One night, Remy regains consciousness only to realise “there was a mark, a stain of some kind, on one of

his shoes . . . the stain was reddish brown, kind of glossy” (189-190). The mark is later revealed to be blood from the deceased Bobby al-Zamil, who is suspected for being involved with planning terrorism. When Remy talks to one of the informants, Buff, he shows Remy a picture of Al-Zamil “lying crumpled on a sidewalk [...] facing sideways, his legs cocked as if he’d just fallen off a bike. A slick of blood spilled out from his neck and head” (193). When Buff mentions Al-Zamil’s name, Remy cannot recall his name “but he did remember the blood on his shoes” (193).

Remy’s uncontrollable and outrageous behaviour continues, which results in him being unfaithful to his girlfriend April. April is also revealed to be Remy’s double’s “subject A” (180); not just a love interest, but an important part of the investigation since she is March Selios’ sister. Once, Remy regains consciousness while kissing April’s boss, Nicole. Remy is astonished and admits: “this is not a good idea . . . I haven’t been myself lately” (188). Later, he wakes up in an unknown apartment naked and figures out he had sexual intercourse with Nicole. Attempting to explain himself, Remy asserts: “I shouldn’t have . . . I’m not entirely in control” (201). Nicole laughs; “isn’t that . . . kind of the point?” (201). Accordingly, being out of control of his sexual urges and actions, Remy asks Nicole: “So . . . if I try to . . . sleep with you again . . . I would really appreciate if you just ignored me” (201).

Even though an explicit explanation of the actions Remy’s double conducts is left out of the narrative, the double’s personality takes form, emerging into the image of the traditional, grotesque internalised double. The actions that Remy’s double conducts demonstrates the “refused and unaccepted characteristics” (Johnson 4) of civilised human beings; those that are neither accepted by society and thereby the individual. Consequently, the conscious Remy perceives his double as childish or that he acts in a primitive way, since he tries to make himself “Grow Up” (213) by leaving written notes.

Interestingly, several critical readings of *The Zero* have noted that the act of terrorism conducted in the novel (not the 9/11 attacks, but the suicide bomb at the end of the novel) is the result of an intrinsic urge; “a force that originates from within” (Schwarz 389) or “an internal impulse, perhaps outside of our conscious control” (DeRosa 176). Along these lines, Remy’s boss seems to know the sole reason for Remy’s involvement in the Selios investigation: “You want to know what caused this, Brian? All of this? I tell you . . . ask yourself this’: What causes hunger?’ He didn’t wait for an answer. Hunger” (298). Accordingly, when Jaguar questions Remy’s reason for being involved in the Selios’ case

“quietly, without bitterness” (321), Remy does not know for sure, but it seems like the only applicable explanation is “hunger” (321). Thus, the only justification for Remy’s behaviour provided in the novel seems to demonstrate Robert A. Johnson statement about human beings’ shadow. The shadow will not be satisfied, and thus becomes uncontrollable if the subject’s deeper emotions are not properly lived out:

To refuse the dark side of one’s nature is to store up or accumulate the darkness. This is later expressed as a black mood, psychosomatic illness, or unconsciously inspired accidents. We are presently dealing with the accumulation of a whole society that has worshiped its light side and refused the dark, and this residue appears as war, economic chaos, strikes, racial intolerance (Johnson 26).

Significantly, the attributes of Remy’s double are traits archetypal for the shadow in Jungian psychology. As Remy’s shadow side, the double illustrates how “rage, jealousy, shame, lying, resentment, lust, greed, suicidal and murderous tendencies” (Abrams and Zweig XVI) are a natural part of human beings and lie just beneath the surface. As these characteristics are shunned in Remy’s community, individuals are unable to live out their authentic selves, which leads to unruly behaviour and may even mental illness.

When Remy becomes aware of his double’s uncontrollable actions, he is incapable of staying composed. Since Remy’s double is the result of his memory gaps, Remy is unable to have an ‘explicit’ confrontation with his double. Therefore, Remy demands other people to stop his double’s operation: “This is insane! (313) “You need to stop this!” (315). Principally because the double’s behaviour transgresses norms (disloyalty and lying), and even American laws (apparent corruption and excessive violence) Remy has strived to hide this side of himself. Consequently, Remy is scared of his double since he is out of control, but also, because he evokes an uncanny feeling. Remy is frightened when his double personality is brought into the light, since his shadow side represents repressed memories, trauma and characteristics. Put differently, the double acts in ways perceived as primitive to civilised human beings, and this kind of behaviour is not acceptable for an acknowledged cop.

### 3.4 The Post-Colonial Other

Walter deploys Remy’s double as an allegory for what might be termed the twenty-first century cultural Other: the stereotypical Middle-Eastern terrorist. This argument is enabled due to the act of terror which takes place at the ending of the novel. In *Face of the*

*Enemy: Arab-American Writing Post-9/11*, Maha Said claims that “the attack that brought down the World Trade Center, constructed a higher wall that separates the self from the other” (3). Put differently, one of the effects of 9/11 was the creation of an even more explicit and brutal binary of “innocent victim and violent aggressor” (Derosa 158). In the socio-political setting of the novel, white American characters believe Americans with a Middle-Eastern background to be the “face of the enemy” (Said 3), “the axis of evil” (Barber 17), the animalistic monster, in contrast to the innocent, white, American citizen. *The Zero* continually demonstrates Maha Said’s claim and more profoundly, the destructive effect of this oppressive mentality.

Accordingly, Walter revises the traditional depiction of the post-colonial Other through the *doppelgänger* motif, making Remy’s double excessive by nature. One way of perceiving the Other in post-colonial terms is as the non-human monstrosity in opposition to the human. This binary is typically transgressed in post-colonial writing in order to criticise the means of colonising another ethnic group (Procter and Smith 97). Edward Said in *Orientalism* discusses how the construction of this binary is a result of a “western style for dominating, reconstructing, and having authority over the Orient” (1868). Said claims the Orient is a collective noun describing the countries of the East, which is characterised by attributes unknown to or hidden in Westerners. Consequently, the Orient is not only analysed as the West’s “cultural contestant” (1866) but could be apprehended as a representation of the repressed side of the Western self (1871). In other words, those attributes which were (and still are) not socially accepted in Western civilisation can be found in the fictional representations of the Orient; eroticism, robustness and vivacity. These are qualities clearly ascribed to Remy’s double.

Similarly, the American Gothic tradition engaged in portraying race segregation and biases in American society, often depicting people with another skin tone than white with an intense vitality and at times as ghastly spectres or monsters (Goddu 63-64). For instance, Edgar Allan Poe depicts African-Americans as savages in his only novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* from 1838. Accordingly, non-white Americans are often interpreted as the cultural other, in opposition to the white American. To evoke this post-colonial context in an American twenty-first-century setting, Walter emphasises terrorism as a severe threat that causes anxiety in contemporary America. Despite multiple existing ways of defining a terrorist, James D. Kiras attempts to find a generalised definition of terrorism and

generally attempts to explain the term. A fixed point of the various definitions, Kiras claims, is that terrorism is an act of violence to create fear. Through violence, the aggressor seeks “immediate impact to demonstrate the weakness of their opponent and to extend the group’s power and reach by generating fear through media coverage” (Kiras 404).

Accordingly, Walter breaks down the binary between terrorism’s victim and aggressor by making the two personalities of Remy contrast each other. As already illustrated, the conscious Remy represents the innocent, white American victim. On the other side, his double who obtains the attributes which is associated with the Orient and the Other, evokes the typical image of a violent Middle-Eastern terrorist.

At the culmination of the novel, Remy figures out he has been providing money to Jaguar for a suicide bomb. When he realises this, he refuses to be a part of the operation and decides to run away with his girlfriend April, who is about to leave the city by train. However, Remy mistakenly exposes himself to Jaguar when he runs towards the train-platform. Jaguar follows Remy, because he has realised that he has only been a simple pawn in Remy’s double’s corrupt operation. Consequently, Jaguar detonates the bomb at the train-platform where April is waiting. The news report on a television set announces the event as a “recent victory over a terrorist cell, in which four of the five members were killed and only one bomb was detonated . . . on a mostly empty train platform . . . killing only six . . . including the bomber . . . and severely wounding a retired police officer” (325). Thus, the media coverage of the attack is supposed to result in a re-established faith in America’s security. American citizens will believe this to be the first defeat of the external threat, the cultural other. The television coverage is a part of sustaining the border between the American victim and the Middle-Eastern terrorist, a desired effect for the white American administration. This illustrates how one group’s power exists at the expense of another’s and legitimises violence against a particular group of people.

How racism still is prominent in American society is exemplified early in the novel when Remy looks at the front window of a chain restaurant which has physically been made into a “makeshift bulletin board” (72) where pictures of missing people are attached. On one of the pictures is March Selios. Even though Remy does not know if Selios is dead or not, he foreshadows the discovery of her death, as Remy admits: “these weren’t missing people anymore; they were dead people now” (72). Consequently, these pictures and their descriptions might be perceived as obituaries, which are divided “into three strata” (73) on the



window. The first stratum illustrates the stereotypical white professions, rather well-paid positions: “bankers, lawyers, brokers, executives and their assistants” (73). In contrast, Remy observes the third strata: “the workers who had been mostly *invisible* before, faces on the subway or at a bus stop: black and Hispanic, or foreign-borns” (74 emphasis added). The fact that human beings who belong to the third stratum are perceived as non-existent, arguably reflects Judith Butler’s argument in *Precarious Life*. She claims that obituaries are

the instrument by which grievability is publicly distributed. It is the means by which a life becomes, or fails to become a publicly grievable life, an icon for national self-recognition, the means by which a life becomes note-worthy [...] if a life is not grievable, it is not quite a life (34).

Even though the third stratum people’s photos are attached on the window, the way in which they are arranged explicitly demonstrates how the value of a human’s life is categorised and ranked by race.

The bulletin board legitimises how some people’s lives seem to be worth more than others in post-9/11 America. Butler criticises the us/them binary, or the oppression of the cultural other, as it has established a “limit to discourse that establishes the limits of human intelligibility” (Butler 35). In a way that casts light on the third stratum in *The Zero*, Butler emphasises that people who are dehumanised through the binary of us and them, are people with origins outside the United States, fixating on people from Middle-Eastern or Arab countries. Subsequently, she proposes that “violence against those who are already not quite living . . . leaves a mark that is no mark” (36). This legitimises violence against a particular group of people, something which Remy realises when he looks at the bulletin-board: He “had read once that America was a classless society, but the walls of missing and dead disproved this” (73). Markham continually demonstrates how this racialised binary has been internalised and naturalised in people’s mindset. Remy makes Markham aware of the fact that all the members with a Middle-Eastern background in the terrorist cell “all work for us” (314). Despite knowing this, Markham seems convinced that all of them have malevolent intentions. When Remy questions Markham’s reason for murdering the remaining members of the supposed terror cell, Markham is persuaded: “Well . . . yeah . . . They were making suicide videos. They were holding a machine gun, Brian” (319). Demonstrating how the traditional image of the terrorist is internalised and naturalised in Americans at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Markham has no apparent problem with murdering four innocent people without giving it a second thought. Markham’s actions arguably demonstrate the power of cultural constructions over the individual’s consciousness.

Jess Walter underscores that Remy is not the only one who transgresses the us/them binary. Jaguar, who is the one who detonates the suicide bomb, ironically “identifies as American and displays none of the radicalism experienced by the terrorist other” (DeRosa 175). Interestingly, Chloe Tazartez suggests that “the reader could in fact consider Jaguar as Remy’s double, the hidden part of Remy” (6). However, it would be far more accurate to perceive both Jaguar and Remy as human beings that blur the line between the cultural other and the Western self, as none of them identifies primarily as the typical image of either. Jaguar and Brian’s meetings take place only when the two of them are present. If it had not been for Remy’s repeated description of him as an “middle Eastern-man in his sixties” (74), Jaguar would not have been an obvious terrorist. When Brian meets Jaguar for the first time, he observes that Jaguar wears “a beautiful wool coat, with razor-short hair, round glasses, and several days’ growth on his craggy face” (74), which certainly contrasts with Remy who realises his hands have “calluses on the pads and palms, gray dust in the creases of his nails” (75). When Remy tells him that ‘Jaguar’ is the codename some people at the agency assigned him, Jaguar is frustrated: “But *come on – Jaguar?* How could you let them do that to me? [...] What about Iceman. Or something that reflects my education – Doc, for example? Tell them I find Jaguar culturally and racially offensive. Tell them you’re worried that I’ll file a civil rights complaint” (290).

Evidently, Jaguar cannot be read as Brian Remy’s double, but as another individual trapped in the dominant discourse. He is perceived as the cultural other; the presumed evil terrorist, when he in reality is nothing like this. Therefore, Jaguar’s reason for denoting the bomb is ambiguous. It can be interpreted as his vengeance upon Remy for setting him up, a reasonable choice and act of political protest due to the prejudicial treatment of Middle-Eastern Americans, or simply his way of acting out his shadow self (DeRosa 174, Duvall and Marzec 88).

Due to the fact that Brian Remy, a white American police officer, can be an accomplice in a terror attack, the double in *The Zero* emphasises the inaccuracy of the suppressive and erroneous link between people from the Middle East and acts of terrorism. The appearance of Remy’s double arguably proposes that conducting acts of terror is not a mode of thought exclusively for one specific part of humanity but is an intrinsic force which resides within all of us. This makes the reader reassess a culturally oppressive discourse and illuminates how the binary presented by political leaders and media (in real life and *The Zero*)

might not be as straightforward as presumed. Remy's double-life satirises the stereotypical association between the terrorist and Middle-Eastern people by illustrating the fragile line between what it means to be a victim and what it means to be the aggressor.

Fundamentally, Walter's conflation of the aggressor and victim binary in Remy (and Jaguar) demonstrates what Živković claims to be one of the most significant functions of the literary double; namely, to reveal a need and desire for "transformation and difference" (Živković 121). When asked about the reason for the 9/11 attacks, Jess Walter admits: "As for complicity, I don't personally subscribe to the belief that we were in any way to blame for the attacks of 9/11, that American policy somehow led to a terrorist response. I think that's insane. These were irrational and criminal attacks, entirely unprovoked" (Walter qtd. in Loyd 6). However, one might argue that *The Zero* indicates that there is something fundamentally wrong in contemporary American society because of no matter what race, occupation and age a person is, they might be capable of conducting crimes and violent acts such as terrorism. The absurdity of a police officer being involved in a staged terrorist attack seems to signal a need for a change in how individuals are treated in contemporary social structure, as all types of people are capable of carrying out such destructive acts.

By analysing Remy's actions within the Jungian framework of the shadow, one might put forward the argument that *The Zero* demonstrates that America's enemy is its own contemporary culture and socio-economic structures. Walter proposes this by displaying that dominant values and social structures in contemporary America have a certain impact on the individual and might lead to destructive behaviour such as Remy's. As Aaron DeRosa appropriately puts it; "the threat may be better understood through the symbol of the amphisbaena, the snake with its tail curled into its mouth" (178), because if even a cop can conduct such awful deeds, *The Zero* suggests that we all are potential terrorists. Therefore, before detonating the bomb on the train platform, Jaguar asks Remy: "Does a man ever realize that he has been the villain of his own story?" (321). In other words, to find the real threat in contemporary society one must critically examine what make human beings' cast these shadows. Walter seems to suggest that it is the socio-political structures which causes this, because they underpin individual's lives and lead to self-destructive behaviour and mentally unbalanced individuals.

### 3.5 “Let’s go somewhere”: Remy’s Unsuccessful Individuation

Has Remy’s intense journey made him able to go through a successful process of individuation? Has his latent confrontation with his double taught him anything about his repressed sensibilities? At times Remy seems to see through the commercialisation of people’s trauma and grief, because at several occasions, he refuses to take part in this process of maximising various companies’ profit on people’s painful stories. Throughout the novel, Remy becomes more aware of the uncontrollable actions and urges of his second self, eventually feeling “ahead of events” (293). In a meeting with several informants, Remy is shown a card, feeling not “terribly surprised to recognize the handwriting as his own” (272). Once, when he confides in Jaguar about his attempt at committing suicide, Remy asserts: “Isn’t it odd that I just told you I tried to kill myself and you asked *when* and *how*, but not *why*?” (128-129). Jaguar eventually asks why he attempted, but Remy still seems disoriented: “I don’t really know. At first I thought it was an accident. Or a joke. But I’m starting to think [...] that I was afraid of what I might do if I didn’t” (129). However, instead of becoming aware that there might be some underlying causes for his behaviour, Remy suddenly

felt powerful enough to simply decide to throw off this strange jerking life, whatever it was – hallucinations, or an illness or just the way life was lived now. A life is made up of actions, and if he wanted the world to be different, then he only needed to *act* differently. Every minute of every day was an opportunity to do the right things (212).

Remy’s difficulty seems to be his preoccupation with *how* he acts instead of confronting *why* he acts the way he does. He is unable to come closer to an understanding of what lies behind his radical actions. This arguably reflects Remy’s inability to become conscious of what lies in his unconscious. Instead of becoming aware of the root of his sufferings, Remy decides to outrun them: “if there was nothing else, he thought, perhaps there was escape” (322). He attempts to leave behind his shadow and flee from the operation with April. Remy’s process of psychological healing has, in consequence, remained stagnant because he fails to establish a dialogue between the conscious ego and the unconscious shadow. Remy’s shadow will eventually catch up with him as he continues to repress the most hurtful feelings and inappropriate attributes of himself.

Consequently, at the end of the novel, Remy awakens in a hospital bed, severely wounded by the bomb Jaguar detonated. Remy’s sense of self is analogous with the changing channels on the television set in his room. He is unable to distinguish between what is

happening on the television, in real life and in his dreams. His life has become “televised dreams” (325) “[which] were especially clever the way they could skip away from anything unpleasant, go from death to music videos, and pass on information without informing” (325). “Remy recognised that this had been his condition. This was what life felt like” (325); The way the television set skips death is comparable to how the most hurtful aspects of Remy’s life are concealed and forgotten by repression. Additionally, he has unknowingly been a messenger between the agency, the bureau and his boss.

As the internalised double in *The Zero* relies on a tradition which is heavily influenced by conventions, there is every indication that Remy’s double still endures, simply because Remy survived the suicide bomb. As displayed in the discussion on the ending of *Fight Club*, earlier works of the double provide a model for the outcome of this type of stories. When Remy lays in his hospital bed, he listens to

a television that turned its own channels – slipping insanely from one reality to another, so that just as he got interested in the sounds of strong men lifting kegs of beer *a gap would interrupt things* and he would find himself on *the other side* listening to an argument about gay adoption between a minister and a transvestite (325, emphasis added).

The fact that Remy still recognises and experiences memory gaps, indicates the presence of his shadowy double. He still suffers from dissociation of his psyche. In order to put forward a critique on postmodern American society, Walter demonstrates how Remy still is mentally unbalanced, suggesting his unsuccessful individuation, as he has failed to find a unique sense of self and a meaningful life. After going through several operations at the hospital to regain his eyesight after the incident, the nurse finally asks Remy quietly: “Do you want to open your eyes now?” (326). Determinate to not return back to his miserable life, Remy shuts his eyes and “squeezed them as tight as he could” (Walter 326). Accordingly, the conclusion of *The Zero* reflects how Remy still manifests the death of the postmodern individual. Due to his internalisation of the dominant and collective image of the insuperable 9/11 hero, Remy unconsciously constructs ulterior emotions, “an instrumental stance toward feeling” (Hochschild 22), the very opposite of his authentic emotions. Consequently, Remy experiences an emotional impasse and the conflict between his consciousness (characterised by the persona) and his unconscious shadow side results in a vicious circle of striving to fit in. Thus, Remy fails to obtain a sense of autonomy and wholeness because he is unable to become conscious of his most hurtful feelings due to his struggle with trauma and dissociation.

In an interview, Anthony Flinn asks if Jess Walter believes in a change in America's post-9/11 commercialised culture and if there is redemption for "what was done in our name over the past decade" (Flinn 237). Referring to the last section in *The Zero*, Walter admits: "So- a way out? I guess I don't believe there is one, ultimately" (Walter qtd. in Flinn 237). Put differently, Remy's state of mind demonstrates Luckhurst's declaration that disrupted memory which results in a fragmented identity comes "to pervade the understanding of subjectivity and experience in the advanced industrial world" (1). The result, as illustrated by Remy's involvement in the act of terrorism, is Remy's "hunger" (298), a desire to regain a sense of individuality instead of being reduced to a pawn in a powerplay, as world-power and maximise profit seem to override the focus on individual human's mental health in contemporary America.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

Even though the stories of the double addressed in this thesis take place in different contexts, they deploy many of the same conventions, reworking the same literary tradition to prove a point, as the preceding chapters have attempted to prove. In this way, *Fight Club* and *The Zero* might be related to Harold Bloom's theory of literary influence. In *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) Bloom claims that "the largest truth of literary influence is that it is an irresistible anxiety: Shakespeare will not allow you to bury him, or escape him, or replace him (xviii). However, in double stories, there is nothing such as "anxiety of influence" (Bloom 6), a poet's or author's fear of showing how he or she is influenced by other authors, since writers of double texts in general seem to intentionally return to conventions of predecessors.

Significantly, there is not only repetition of the double figure in the texts addressed in this thesis, but also a doubling of the literary text, a rereading of the *doppelgänger* story. In other words, in the light of Bloom's theory, one might argue that *The Zero* is Jess Walter's way to show appreciation of Palahniuk's text and by rewriting it, he creates the "poetic vision as his own" (Kolodny 451). As a consequence, readers who have previously read *Fight Club* might feel a sense of uncanniness when reading *The Zero*. Even though the respective novels might take place in a different setting and thus seems *unheimlich*, the reader might find the story to be surprisingly *heimlich*, due to *The Zero*'s repetition of components found in *Fight Club* and both of these narratives' deliberate repetition of older and maybe even forgotten stories.

In conclusion this thesis will, therefore, attempt to underscore certain similarities and differences between *Fight Club* and *The Zero* and to clarify the double's function in these novels. As the thesis has tried to prove in the two preceding chapters, both novels evince a profound interest in the individual's misery and sense of isolation in contemporary America. Correspondingly, the texts question if the individual can find a sense of authenticity and thereby true individuality in contemporary American society. The novels suggest how one might be able to find something genuine and a sense of individuality by looking at the shadow in the mirror, the unconscious, and hidden part of self. However, due to the novels' rather pessimistic endings, the presence of the internalised double illustrates a continual desire to transform socio-political structures in favour of the individual's self-realisation and well-being.

#### 4.1 Comparing *Fight Club* and *The Zero*

Interestingly, Walter does not seem to feel an “anxiety of influence” (Bloom 6) nor does he attempt to conceal that *Fight Club* was one of the inspirations of *The Zero*. There are some definite parallels between the two novels which may have been deliberately created by Jess Walter. Walter seems to pay homage to *Fight Club* by including some details which are remarkably similar to Palahniuk’s novel. One absurd example of this is how both novels include something which looks like Australia. The unnamed narrator realises that Tyler is a part of his personality when one of the few unique features of the unnamed narrator Tyler is unaware of turns out to be a feature shared by Tyler too. The narrator makes it clear that when he goes to the beach (the place he met Tyler), he sits with one of his feet tucked under him, hiding his birthmark which resembles Australia. When the unnamed narrator tries to explain to an unknown bartender that his name is not Tyler Durden, the bartender reveals the truth: “You have a birthmark, Mr Durden [...] on your foot. It’s shaped like a dark red Australia with New Zealand next to it” (Palahniuk *Fight Club* 159). Simultaneously, Brian Remy once receives a random document from Markham who writes: “Isn’t this uncanny? Doesn’t it look like Australia?” (Walter 177). Remy reflects: “the document looked just like Australia; in fact, in a way it was Australia, its edges burned into a perfect representation of the coastline” (177). However, the document does not really have any significance, because when Remy asks Markham what he is supposed to do with it he answers: “No, I just wanted you to see it, that’s all” (179).

Another apparent and more profound similarity in the novels is how the two protagonists seem equally numb and pessimistic. Both the unnamed narrator’s and Remy’s confusion is portrayed as a consequence of living in a complex postmodern society. They arguably demonstrate the death of the liberal individual, a lost sense of unique identity and autonomy. One of the examples both Palahniuk and Walter bring up to underscore the bewilderment of living in contemporary America is the two protagonists’ relation to travel by plane; an invention that has rapidly changed the lifestyle of millions of Americans the past century. The protagonists’ constant desire for a different life is demonstrated through their wish to be somewhere else, or even become someone else. The unnamed narrator wonders: “If I could wake up in a different place, at a different time, could I wake up as a different person?” (33). Likewise, Remy closes his eyes, “wondering if he could induce a gap, open his eyes and find himself somewhere else” (29). Being unable to recognise a way to improve or



even alter their way of living, they both contemplate death in a plane crash as a means of escaping the unfulfilling life. The unnamed narrator reflects: “Every takeoff and landing, when the plane barked too much to one side, I prayed for a crash. That moment cures my insomnia with narcolepsy when we might die helpless and packed human tobacco in the fuselage” (25). Similarly, Brian Remy continually endangers his life by travelling by flight even though it can worsen his eye-condition. Remy daydreams about his escape as he “had heard stories of flights in which the ventilation failed and everyone passed out and the plane crashed. Honestly, he wouldn’t mind; just going back to sleep” (130).

The protagonists’ mental deadlocks demonstrate how the subject might be caught in the pitfalls of contemporary culture. As I hope chapters 2 and 3 have demonstrated, the unnamed protagonist and Remy have both succumbed to the persona at the expense of their original character. Therefore, they live a life characterised by keeping with the persona’s ambitions and are left with a sense of self-estrangement and depression. As Jung warns, when a person is too preoccupied with keeping up with the social norms and values in connection to his or her persona, the individual might feel artificial and lose its sense of unique identity (Jung 162). The protagonists’ struggles can be read as a result of the socio-political structures they find themselves in; an obvious affinity between the two novels (Schwarz 418). The unnamed narrator of *Fight Club* seems to be aware of the dehumanising effect of his consumerist lifestyle: “I felt trapped. I was too complete. I was too perfect. I wanted a way out of my tiny life. Single-serving butter and cramped airline seat role in the world. Swedish furniture. Clever art” (173). Remy, on the other hand, is portrayed as an innocent victim of terrorism. Left with a traumatised mind after 9/11, he develops an inability to express his most hurtful feelings adequately, since he has been carrying out emotional labour as a policeman for years. In a gradually more complex world, it seems like human beings and their way of living have become more superficial.

This thesis has emphasised how these fictional characters’ mental conditions can be understood through real-life mental diseases. Dissociative Identity Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are disorders which, despite being topics of much controversy, have become dominant perspectives of understanding the human subject in post-industrial and postmodern society. Even though *Fight Club* and *The Zero* are fictional representations of the mental disorders but is not realistic depictions of the DID or PTSD, Palahniuk and Walter suggest that a confusing and divided self characterises the postmodern individual. They

suggest a fundamental problem in the contemporary American and maybe even Western world, which are underpinned by similar socio-political structures. A fragmented and identity-less sense of self seems to be a common denominator for human beings in contemporary Western society.

Because the conscious ego in civilised man excludes specific attributes of his or her personality to appear progressive and professional and be a part of the collective, the double appears in order to coerce the conscious and the unconscious side of the self into dialogue. This process, referred to as individuation, should have a cathartic effect on the individual according to Jung. As literary representations of the protagonists' mental illness, the subject's shadow, the parts of the self which have been repressed into the unconscious, both Tyler Durden and Remy's double emerge with an apparent solution. The individual must step out of the dominant ideology to be genuinely free from the cultural constraints of contemporary culture. If the conscious side of the self can become conscious of and accept the unconscious as a part of itself, one might be able to become aware of how contemporary culture dehumanises the individual. In short, the double is utilised by Palahniuk and Walter to establish an awareness of how human beings are affected by their immersion into contemporary cultural structures.

On the other hand, one of the most significant dissimilarities between the two novels is how the internalised double is portrayed or incorporated into the narrative. The inner conflict in *Fight Club* is represented through two characters who are separated from each other and seem (up to a certain point) unaware of the fact that their existence is due to a divided psyche. The unnamed narrator and Tyler Durden are portrayed as two separate bodies in the novel, equivalent to Jekyll and Hyde. However, even though the narrator becomes aware of the fact that Tyler is his *alter ego*; his double personality, Tyler is still portrayed as another character with whom the narrator interacts. This is because the unnamed narrator tells the story from the first-person point of view and is unable to perceive Tyler differently because he is delusional. However, since the narrator is aware of Tyler's nature, he can only imagine how others perceive the situation: "Everyone in fight club and Project Mayhem knew me as Tyler Durden" (174).

The representation of the double in *The Zero* is slightly different. The ways in which the double can be represented seem to have altered simultaneously with the change of the definition of Multiple Personality Disorder to Dissociative Identity Disorder at the beginning

of the twenty-first century. By redefining the illness, the definition emphasises how the illness is experienced as an inner fragmentation due to dissociation instead of the existence of several personalities within one body (Schwarz 143-144). Additionally, due to the advanced interest in the literal representation of an individual's struggle with trauma, Walter attempts to integrate this confusion in the narrative structure. There is no ambiguity, Remy's double is the result of his dissociation; the double comes forth when Remy fails to recall what he has been doing, illustrated by his gaps, the cuts in the narrative.

#### 4.2 The Role of the Internalised Double

Even though the representation of the doubles is dissimilar, the behaviour of the respective doubles is comparable; the double in both *Fight Club* and *The Zero* does not adhere to social norms. The doubles do not act in a civilised way because they represent the uncontrollable parts of the subject's unconscious. They are uncanny beings which evoke fear because the repressed parts of the protagonists are brought to the spotlight by the appearance of the doubles. The double is the reverse of civilised man, he does what he wants; he is free from cultural restraints. Tyler Durden acts in a primitive way, and his violent tendencies call attention to and clarify how the narrator's superficial lifestyle leads to his subsequent isolation and alienation, which drains him of contentment. The unnamed narrator gradually starts to behave similarly and alters from being an obedient gentleman in a suit and tie to a liberated thug. Brian Remy's double is much more latent than Tyler Durden. Walter constructs Remy's double through Remy's memory gaps and portrays him as an integral part of Remy, while Palahniuk portrays Tyler as a separate and external character independent of the unnamed narrator. Attempting to remember and figure out what he has been doing during his gaps, Remy eventually realises that his unruly behaviour resembles the behaviour of a criminal instead of a policeman's. Remy's double takes part in corruption, violent blackmailing and is involved in an act of terrorism. In other words, the double in *The Zero's* behaviour is analogous to Tyler Durden's.

It is not this thesis' intention to romanticise and favour the internalised double's violent, irrational and primitive behaviour. These tendencies are a part of the doubles' nature as a literary instrument in satirical works of fiction which rely on a sophisticated literary tradition. The double is there to shock the reader; to emphasise the non-conventional.

Accordingly, this thesis suggests that both protagonists and their doubles are two sides of one psyche that represent the relationship between the Self and the cultural Other; the good versus evil in man, the culturally accepted and the shunned. Therefore, the reversal of the protagonists' behaviour symbolises a desire for a change to something which has been rejected by the dominant social order. These social structures are sustained through the individual's contribution and are opposed and challenged through the behaviour of the double.

Palahniuk and Walter construct their doubles so as to represent the opposite of dominant culture and make them frightening by connecting their unruly behaviour to acts of terrorism. Tyler Durden's goal with Project Mayhem is quite explicit; "It's Project Mayhem that's going to save the world. A cultural ice age. A prematurely induced dark age. Project Mayhem will force humanity to go dormant or into remission long enough for the Earth to recover" (125). Brian Remy's double is similarly behind the creation of a suicide-bomb, which goes off and murders several people in the heart of New York. From a post-colonial perspective, Remy's action demonstrates, not only how a post-industrial society dehumanises the individual through professional work, but also that all human beings share the same inner drives. Both Tyler Durden's violent actions in Project Mayhem and Remy's double's involvement in terrorism symbolise a desire to change the leading dominant social-order which is built on capitalism, white supremacy and American hegemony which Vacker claims is "fueled by counterfeit individualism and simulated authenticity" (189). As international terrorism is associated with a wish for both spiritual genuineness, to destroy Western secularism and diminish modern technologies (Serafim 67-68), the double seems to desire the return to a premodern world, a simpler world where social structures did not strictly define human nature.

Even though this thesis suggests that the double has a socio-critical role in these novels, both Palahniuk and Walter depict the opposite of a bright and enlightened future for their protagonists. The endings of the novels correlate with each other and seem to suggest that the double is not able to make a profound change in the respective protagonists after all. Interestingly, Schwarz compares the protagonists' breakdown at the end of the novels. She argues that they both attempt at escapism, simply avoiding life by deciding to stay at the health institutions at the end of the novels (388). Significantly, the main reason for their choice to not leave the psychiatric ward and the hospital seems to be to their failure to find a

solution to their problems. As demonstrated by the earliest psychoanalytical study of the literary double, Otto Rank underscores that the protagonist and his double's life are interconnected; if one of them lives, the other will as well. In other words, the fact that the double still exists at the end of both novels demonstrates a failure of individuation; the conscious and unconscious are not brought into balance. The protagonists' self-destructive choice to remain at the health institutions illustrates one of the cornerstones of satire which is to criticise contemporary society. This is shown in how Palahniuk and Walter make the protagonists quest to find autonomy and authenticity a failure because it results merely in the sense of meaninglessness.

By referring to Jung's idea of the persona and combining it with how internalisation is the basis of the construction of the postmodern self, one might argue that the dehumanising values of society have become what the protagonists believe to be their true selves. What Remy and the unnamed narrator consciously believe to be their authentic selves are merely identities determined by dominant cultural values and social practices. Internalisation is not necessarily a negative phenomenon; the main problem is that the social practices internalised by these two protagonists might gradually lead to an artificially and mentally destructive life. As Jung warned, the most insufferable life would be if a person failed to understand his or her unconscious, precisely because life would be experienced as meaningless. Accordingly, the protagonists remain "unconscious of their unconscious" (Hart 103). Even though they both have recognised their doubles as an aspect of themselves, they are unable to and refuse to accept the actions of their doubles as their own. This is because the doubles' behaviour opposes what they believe to be their true selves. The protagonists are unable to acknowledge the cultural ideology's power over them and thereby unable to change it. Therefore, both Remy and the unnamed narrator refuse to go back to the life they know, because they cannot find a solution to their misery.

What makes the double such an interesting and current literary device two hundred years after it started to appear in gothic literature? Why is it still relevant to utilise this figure in fiction? The double continues to appear in literature precisely due to its nature as a cultural construction, which can reaffirm itself in various settings. One cannot perceive the double in isolation from reality since the double changes according to leading academic views and significantly, social structures. As touched upon in Chapter 1, Robert Louis Stevenson was provoked when French psychiatrists scrutinised people with a double personality for the very

first time at the end of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, Stevenson adapted the idea in his novella *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Approximately hundred years later, Chuck Palahniuk utilised recognised aspects of psychoanalysis and Multiple Personality Disorder to understand the human psyche and to construct Tyler Durden, a literary manifestation of the Jungian conflict between the conscious and unconscious parts of the self. Jess Walter's double in *The Zero*, on the other hand, is constructed through principles of the trauma paradigm which have been utilised to reflect traumatised minds in literature — illustrating a severe problem of coming to terms with one's repressed emotions in a situation of extreme psychological wounding. Even though these narratives portray the double in different ways, they reflect a fundamental conflict in human beings; the protagonist does not allow his true self to show.

All in all, the appearance of the internalised double in these literary works signals a need for a societal change in favour of the mental wellbeing of the individual. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, Herbert Grabes notes how literature can function as a double, a mirror reflection of society. Comparable to how Jung suggests that “the mirror lies behind the mask and shows the true face” (20) of the individual, the internalised double in *Fight Club* and *The Zero* reveals a shadow, a haunting truth about contemporary American culture. There is an apparent superficiality, a loathing of everything which is identified as different and unruly, which ironically is a part of human nature. This exclusion of human authenticity results in a wan and melancholic existence, which also sustains an anti-humanitarian culture that conceals the fact that all human beings are alike and have the same intrinsic drives.

The unnamed narrator and Remy's inability to recognise the reason for their divided self forward the argument that one must attempt to look critically at and question contemporary culture. If we do not, Palahniuk and Walter suggest, the future seems rather distressing. The failure of the respective protagonists in *Fight Club* and *The Zero* seems to evoke a rather pessimistic stance: it might be too late to alter these social structures since human beings are too deeply entangled in them and cannot make a distinction between what is natural and what is culturally constructed. As a consequence, as long as individuals refuse to acknowledge the shadow in the mirror, the internalised double will possibly continue to appear in literary works in the future.

## Works Cited

- Abrams, Jeremiah, and Connie Zweig. "Introduction: The Shadow Side of Everyday Life." *Meeting The Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*, edited by Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams, Tarcher/Penguin, 1991, pp. XVI-XXV.
- Altman, Rick. *Film/Genre*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth ed., American Psychiatric Association, 2000.
- Baldick, Chris. *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Barber, Benjamin. "Benjamin Barber." *Hijacking Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear and the Selling of American Empire*, edited by Sut Jhally and Jeremy Earp, Arris Books, 2004, pp. 13–26.
- Bennett, Robert. "The Death of Sisyphus: Existentialist Literature and the Cultural Logic of Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*." *Stirrings Still: The International Journal of Existential Literature*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2005, pp. 65–80. *Academia*.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 1973.
- Botting, Fred. *Gothic*. Routledge, 1996.
- Boyer, S. Paul. *American History: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Buchanan, Ian. *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: A Reader's Guide*. Bloomsbury Publishing PCC, 2008.
- Burstow, Bonnie. "Toward a Radical Understanding of Trauma and Trauma Work." *VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*, vol. 9, no. 11, Nov. 2003.
- Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. Verso, 2004.
- Callinicos, Alex. *The New Mandarins of American Power. The Bush Administration's Plans for the World*. polity, 2003.
- Carr, Adrian. "For Self or Others?: The Quest for Narcissism and the Ego-Ideal in Work Organizations." *Administrative Theory Praxis*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1994, pp. 208–222. *JSTOR*.

- Chandler, Christopher N, and Tallon, Philip. "Poverty and Anarchy in *Fight Club*." *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 35-52.
- "Commercialization". Oxford Dictionary, *English Oxford Dictionaries*.  
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/commercialization> Accessed 17 April 2019.
- Corbet, James. "Soap and Anarchy: A Barthesian Reading of *Fight Club*." *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 53–61.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Derosa, Aaron. "Alterity and the Radical Other in Post-9/11 Fiction: De Lillo's *Falling Man* and Walter's *The Zero*". *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory*, vol. 69, no. 3, Autumn 2013, pp. 157-183. *Project Muse*.
- Dodge, Jason J. "September and Public Grief: Grieving Otherwise in Jess Walter's *The Zero*". *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, vol 55, no 2, 2014, pp. 152-165.
- Duvall, John N, and Robert P Marzec. "Narrating 9/11." *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, vol. 57, no. 3, 2011, pp. 381–400. *Project Muse*.
- Dowbenko, Uri. "Fight Club: The Movie Reveals Secrets of Janus Mind Control Programming." *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 13–34.
- Faludi, Susan. *Stiffed: The Betrayal of The Modern Man*. Vintage, 2000.
- Flinn, Anthony. "The New Grotesque in Jess Walter's *The Zero*: A Commentary and Interview". *Transatlantic Literature and Culture After 9/11: The Wrong Side of Paradise*, edited by Kristine A. Miller, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Freud, Sigmund "The Ego and The Id." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Nineteen, The Hogarth Press, 1999, pp. 19–66.
- . "The Uncanny" *The Uncanny*. Penguin Classics, 2003, pp. 123-162.



- Gibbs, Alan. *Contemporary American Trauma Narratives*. Edinburgh University Press, 2014.
- Grabes, Herbert. "Literature in Society / Society and Its Literature." *Literature in Society*, edited by Regina Rudaityte, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2012, pp. 1–17. *EBSCOhost*.
- Goddu, Theresea A. "The American Gothic". *Routledge Companion to Gothic*. Edited by Spooner, Catherine and Emma McEvoy, Routledge, 2007, pp. 63-72.
- Haksever, Cengiz, and Barry Render. "The Important Role Services Play in an Economy." *Informit*, Pearson Education, 25 July 2013, [www.informit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=2095734&seqNum=3](http://www.informit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=2095734&seqNum=3).
- Hart, David. "The Classical Jungian School". *The Cambridge Companion to Jung*, edited by, Polly Young-Eisendrath and Terence Dawson, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 95-106.
- Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Basil Blackwell Ltd. 1992
- Hochschild, Arlie Russell. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Twentieth Anniversary ed., University of California Press, 2003.
- Humann Duerre, Heather. *Another Me: The Doppelganger in 21st Century Fiction, Television and Film*. McFarland & Company Inc, 2018.
- Hungerford, Amy. "American Literature since 1945." *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Robert S Levine, Shorter 9th edition ed., vol. 2, W.W Norton & Company, Inc, 2017, pp. 1068–1091.
- Hurley, Kelly. "Abject and Grotesque". *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*. Edited by Spooner, Catherine and McEvoy, Emma. Routledge, 2007, pp. 137-146.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony*. Routledge, 1995.
- "Internalized". Oxford Dictionary, *English Oxford Dictionaries*.  
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/internalize>. Accessed 10 April 2019.
- Iser, Wolfgang. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

- Jameson, Fredric. "Postmodernism and Consumer Society." *Film Theory: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*, edited by Philip Simpson et al., IV, Routledge, 2004, pp. 192–207.
- Johnson, Robert A. *Owning Your Own Shadow: Understanding the Dark Side of the Psyche*. HarperOne, 1991.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. *The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious*. Edited by Sir Herbert Read et al. 9 Part 1, Routledge, 1990.
- Kavadlo, Jesse. "The Fiction of Self-Destruction: Chuck Palahniuk, Closet Moralist." *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 13–34.
- Kiras, James D, et al. "Terror and Globalization." *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 402–418.
- Kolodny, Annette. "A Map for Rereading: Or, Gender and the Interpretation of Literary Texts." *New Literary History*, vol. 11, no. 3, 1980, pp. 451–467. *JSTOR*.
- Kreuz, Roger J, and Richard M Roberts. "On Satire and Parody: The Importance of Being Ironic." *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1993, pp. 97–109. *EBSCOhost*.
- Langås, Unni. "Literary Studies and the Challenge of Trauma." *The Future of Literary Studies*, edited by Jakob Lothe, NOVUS PRESS, 2017, pp. 149–160.
- Lizardo, Omar. "Fight Club, or the Cultural Contradictions of Late Capitalism." *Journal for Cultural Research*, vol. 11, no. 3, July 2007, pp. 221–243. *Taylor & Francis Online*.
- Lorde, Audre. "America's Outsiders." *Meeting the Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*, edited by Jeremiah Abrams and Connie Zweig, Tarcher/Penguin, 1991, pp. 211-213.
- Lothe, Jakob. *Narrative in Fiction and Film: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Loyd, Amy Grace. "A Conversation with Jess Walter." *The Zero*, by Jess Walter, Harper Perennial, 2006.
- Luckhurst, Roger. *The Trauma Question*. Routledge, 2008.

- Macías, Javier Saveedra, and Rafael Velez Núñez. "The Other Self: Psychopathology and Literature." *Journal of Medical Humanities*, vol 32, no 4, 2011, pp. 257-67. *SpringerLink*.
- Martin, Enrich Susan. "Police Force or Police Service? Gender and Emotional Labor." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 561, 1999, pp. 111-126. *JSTOR*.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy Volume 1*. Progress Publishers, 1887.
- McNutt, David. "I am Jack's Happy Ending: *Fight Club* and Tolkien's *Eucatastrophe*." *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 85-106.
- Miall, David S. "Gothic Fiction". *A Companion to Romanticism*. Edited by Duncan Wu. Blackwell Publishing, 2009, pp. 345-354.
- Miller, A, Kristine. "Reading and Writing the Post-9/11 Cop: Trauma, Personal Testimony, and Jess Walter's *The Zero*." *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory*, vol. 70, no. 1, 2014, pp. 29-52. *Project Muse*.
- Morris, David J. *The Evil Hours: A Biography of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*. Mariner Books, 2015.
- Myoshi, Masao. "Dr Jekyll and the Emergence of Mr Hyde." *Gothic Literature: A Gale Critical Companion*, edited by Jessica Bomarito, vol. 3, Thomson Gale, 2006, pp. 365-370.
- Naravaez, Darcia. *Basic Needs, Wellbeing and Morality: Fulfilling Human Potential*. Palgrave, 2018. *SpringerLink*.
- Nye, David. *Contemporary American Society*. Academic Press Copenhagen, 1993.
- Orr, Stephen. "Beyond Content: The Emergence of Video Games and Their Diverse Effects on Legal Normativity As Seen Through the Lens of Jean Baudrillard." *Canadian Journal of Law and Technology*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2006, pp. 39-52.
- Palahniuk, Chuck. *Fight Club*. Vintage, 2006.
- . *Diary A Novel*. Vintage, 2004.

- Posadas, Baryon Tensor. "Rampo's Repetitions: The Doppelganger in Edogawa Rampo and Tsukamoto Shin'ya." *Japan Forum*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2010, pp. 161–182. *EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete*.
- Procter, James and Smith, Angela. "Gothic and Empire". *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*. Edited by Spooner, Catherine and McEvoy, Emma. Routledge, 2007, pp. 95-104.
- "Psychopathology". Oxford Dictionary, *English Oxford Dictionaries*.  
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/psychopathology> Accessed 22 April 2019.
- Rank, Otto. *The Double A Psychoanalytical Study*. Edited by Harry Tucker, The University of North Carolina Press, 1971.
- Said, Edward. "Orientalism." *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, edited by Vincent B Leitch, 2nd ed., W.W Norton & Company, Inc, 2010, pp. 1866–1888.
- Said, Maha. "The Face of the Enemy: Arab-American Writing Post-9/11." *Studies in the Humanities*, vol 30, no, 1-2, 2003, pp. 200-217.
- Sarup, Madan. *An Introductory Guide to Post-structuralism and Postmodernism*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988.
- Schuchardt, Read M. "Chuck Palahniuk, Existentialist Paramedic". *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 1–6.
- Schwarz, Heike. *Beware of the other side(s): Multiple Personality Disorder and Dissociative Identity Disorder in American Fiction*. transcript Verlag, 2013.
- Serafim, Ana. "Terrorism - a Cultural Phenomenon?" *Connections*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2005, pp. 61–74. *JSTOR*.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein or, The Modern Prometheus: Annotated for scientists, engineers, and creators of all kinds*. The MIT Press, 2017.
- Slethaug, Gordon. *The Play of the Double in postmodern American Fiction*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1993.
- Sobral, Ana. *Opting Out: Deviance and Generational Identities in American Post-War Cult Fiction*. Rodopi, 2012.

- Staszak, Jean-Francois. «Other/Otherness.» *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography: A 12-Volume Set*, 2009, pp: Elsevier Science. *Archive ouverte UNIGE*.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Penguin Books, 1995.
- Stirling, Kirsten. “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Jackass: Fight Club's Echoes of The Nineteenth-Century Doppelgänger.” *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 119–132.
- Tazartez, Chloe. “Terrorist or Victim? Comparative Analysis of the Characters in Jess Walter’s *The Zero* and Khaled Khalifa’s *In Praise of Hatred*”. *9/11, Subjectivity, and Otherness: Comparative Readings in Literature and Film*, 09 September 2011, Steward Center 310.
- Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A user-friendly guide*. Routledge, 2015.
- Vacker, Barry. “Slugging Nothing.” *You Do Not Talk About Fight Club: I Am Jack's Completely Unauthorized Essay Collection*, Benbella Books, INC, 2008, pp. 175–207.
- Walter, Jess. *The Zero*. Harper Perennial, 2006.
- West, E.G. “The Political Economy of Alienation: Karl Marx and Adam Smith.” *Oxford Economic Papers*, vol. 21, no. 1, Mar. 1969, pp. 1–23. *JSTOR*.
- Whyte, William. *The Organization Man*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Živković, Milica. “The Double as the ‘Unseen’ of Culture: Toward a Definition of Doppelgänger.” *Facta Universitatis*, vol. 2, no. 7, 2000, pp. 121–128. *Linguistics and Literature*.