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I hereby confirm that I have written this thesis by myself. I have only quoted concepts and notions from authors who are named in the source register and I have marked all these passages with bracketed references.

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1. Introduction

Throughout cultural history, religious doctrines and legal codices have had the task of channelling violence at the societal level, while preventing it on a personal level and thereby ensuring society's stability. While some forms of violence, like wars, sacrifices or punishment of crimes were institutionalised and thereby sanctioned, violence of individuals or groups that challenged the institutions needed to be discouraged. Since access to clerical and legal doctrines was commonly restricted for the broad populace, artistic forms of information transmission developed, often with the intention to maximise the emotional and moralising impact on the audience. Early epic texts like Homer's *Iliad* (8th century BCE) consequently served as foundation for the development of a great variety of narrative genres, that have continued to discuss the causes and consequences of violence ever since. This ubiquity also encouraged philosophers and cultural theorists to reflect on the topic, which helped establish a vast body of theories attempting to explain the cause of the violent tendencies of both individuals and society.

While the literary and the philosophical discussions of violence differ in their general purpose, the dialogue between them has remained an important source of inspiration for both. Cultural theorists and philosophers offer pieces of literature as evidence for their conceptualisations, since culturally significant texts are often considered to describe relationships and conflicts prototypically. Authors of literature, on the other hand, are provided with new insights into causal patterns of an individual's behaviour and the significance of their societal environment, which allow them to increase the complexity of their narratives. This interrelation between theory and literature thus enriches both fields reciprocally, while at the same time educating the consumers of literature about the theoretical innovations.

Since this thesis' three objects of analysis make the repetitiveness of culturally sanctioned violence and its emotional impact on individuals the subject of discussion, they share a common thematic field. Their genres and cultural backgrounds, however, differ, which will allow to show that particular processes reoccur in pieces of narrative art approaching the topic. The works chosen include a short story, namely "The Lottery" (1948, published in *The New Yorker*) by Shirley Jackson, Seamus Heaney's poem "The Tollund Man" (1973, published in *Wintering Out*) and David Cronenberg's film *A History of Violence* (2005). The gaps of roughly 25 years separating their publication dates serve the purpose of illustrating that cultural artefacts are symptomatic of their

broader historical context. Although contemporary historical events influenced their content, the overall motif, namely the continuity of human violence which motivates attempts of escape, is similar, which suggests a similar mindset throughout the second half of the 20th century and the early 21st century.

In “The Lottery” Shirley Jackson narrates the course of a seemingly harmless annual event in an inconspicuous village, which ends with the collective stoning of the unfortunate winner. The story’s omniscient narrator and the villagers themselves only provide little background information on the settlement’s historical and cultural environment, except that it is likely located in the United States of America. Since the village possesses infrastructure that was modern at the time of the story’s publishing, it is not set in a long gone, uncivilised time. The primitive aspect of the short story, which was published three years after the Second World War ended, therefore needs to be put into context with the harrowing events of the war, like the Holocaust and the atomic bombs detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Seamus Heaney’s poem “The Tollund Man” describes the speaker’s mental journey to Aarhus, Denmark, during which s/he visits the well-preserved mortal remains of the sacrificial victim. Since the poem includes a series of allusions to Heaney’s Northern Irish home and to the centuries-old sectarian and nationalistic conflicts that was re-emerging when the poem was published, it can be considered a comment on the conflict. By making the sacrificial victim the poem’s central motif, the speaker establishes a connection between the violence in his/her Northern Irish home and the Tollund Man’s Iron Age culture, which emphasises the view that the brutality is deeply ingrained into both societies. The manifold themes and the sometimes-contradictory evaluation of the poem’s speaker’s actions make it difficult to discern his/her intentions and consequently the poem’s central message, which makes a thorough analysis necessary.

In David Cronenberg’s *A History of Violence* Tom Stall is confronted with demands for revenge which originate in his violent, criminal past and threaten his small-town family life. After the protagonist violently fends off a robbery in his diner, members of a crime syndicate from Philadelphia suddenly disrupt his close relatives’ peaceful lives, leading to a surge of violent events, also within the family. The Stall consequently experiences profound traumatisation, also because the parents are unwilling or unable to acquire the help of the police. The film is set in the 2000s, the time of its first screening, and makes no reference to this historical context. It therefore

depicts the severe consequences a deviation from societal rules can cause prototypically.

While the protagonists in the objects of analysis are faced with violence that is embedded in different societal and historical contexts, the repetitive nature of the brutality and the characters' rejection of it are common features. Since these factors also take a central position in the conceptualisations of Sigmund Freud, René Girard and Mircea Eliade, the objects of analysis will be interpreted using the theorists' frameworks. This will allow to inquire if the characters' similar behavioural patterns can be ascribed to the same motive forces.

Although all three cultural theorists interpret individuals' and societies' approaches towards violence as indicator for their level of cultural development, they focus on different aspects of culture. In *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930), Freud explains violent behaviour from an individual's perspective and either sees a lack of repression, the rejection of societal norms, or the symptom of neurosis responsible for violent behaviour. Girard's *Violence and the Sacred* (1972) approaches violence from a societal perspective and holds the stability of different cultural institutions responsible for limiting it to a minimum. In Eliade's *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1959) violence of archaic cultures serves the purpose of maintaining the group's stability, while modern societies see the suffering caused by violence as divine incitement to change their behaviour. The differences of the theoretical frameworks' approaches to explaining violence should allow a nuanced evaluation of the events described in the three pieces of narrative art.

The three objects of analysis differ in their narrative genre and portray societies that seemingly vary strongly in their approaches towards violence. By analysing them with the frameworks of Freud, Girard and Eliade I will, however, show that this is not the case and that the protagonists' emotional reactions to the brutality are very similar, if not essentially the same. Still, the characters' readiness to act on these responses differs considerably and allows to distinguish both the protagonists' and their societies' degree of cultural development by using the concepts of the three scholars.

The thesis is divided into three main chapters, each one containing the examination of the three objects of analysis from the perspective of one of the theorists. At the beginning of each chapter, the theorists' most important conceptualisations are briefly introduced, and the chapters end with a conclusion evaluating the analyses'

differences and similarities. The thesis statement's validity will then be discussed in the paper's conclusion.

2. Sigmund Freud – *Civilisation and Its Discontents*

In his book *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, Freud illustrates the deeply rooted connections between personal and societal modes of behaviour. Beside the human body's decay and the dangers of the natural environment, Freud (28) sees the most severe source of discomfort in social life and highlights three events in human history that separate modern culture from "primitive conditions" that were less constrained (44, 45). The introduction of Christianity, which devalued earthly life; the discovery of archaic societies, who lived lives seemingly less restricted by religious and legal doctrines; and the introduction of neuroses as a psychoanalytical concept, which stems from the pressures of society and reifies the inability to return to a more primal social order in the form of a medical symptom (Freud 45-46). Unfolding his psychoanalytical theories, Freud then continues to describe the interplay between the pressures from within and without that members of modern society have to face continuously.

In order to answer the question where the mostly covert feelings of disfavour for cultural life originate, Freud at one point focuses on the development of the family structure in human history. According to him, early hominids, motivated by differentiation of labour, formed groups consisting of their families (Freud 65). Freud argues that males were motivated to stay with their partners by sexual desire, while the mothers needed the males for protection from external harm (Freud 66). When bands of brothers in these primitive families realised that uniting against their fathers rid them of their low social status, larger groups were formed, a developmental stage Freud (67) refers to as the totemic stage of culture. Consequently, the need for measures able to limit violence within the group arose (Freud 67, 68). The author refers to these undesirable forms of behaviour as taboos and closes the abridgment by emphasising that "[t]he life of human beings in common therefore had a twofold foundation, *i.e.* the compulsion to work [...] and the power of love [...]" (Freud 68). Since all objects of analysis thematically approach family and life in larger communities, discerning between work and love centred relationships will allow identifying which motive force maintains the different groups. The need to repress the sexual desires in manifold situations, however, placed considerable stress on group members, making the development of the super-ego necessary.

Within Freud's framework, the interplay between the super-ego and emotions of guilt is a central factor responsible for whether an individual is able to act morally. This capacity then determines if s/he can be considered a member of modern society. The

super-ego constantly needs to suppress urges (Freud 105) originating from eros, the drive responsible for sexual longing (Freud 74) and thanatos, the drive responsible for acts of aggression (Freud 102), resulting in constant unconscious feelings of guilt (Freud 105), affecting behavioural patterns of all members of society. This causal connection, however, is not present in what Freud refers to as savage or primitive individuals, who, when faced with misfortune, do not blame themselves, but blame a fetish, thereby avoiding self-punishment (Freud 111). The author refers to this tendency to avoid displeasure, and instead “create a pure pleasure-ego in contrast to a threatening ‘outside’, not-self” (Freud 12) as the pleasure principle, later adding that “it is simply [this principle] which draws up the programme of life’s purpose” (Freud 27). While this emphasises the pleasure principle’s central importance for an individual’s motivation, the super-ego needs to repress these tendencies following moral rules.

For Freud the repression begins in early childhood, when children start to actively experience their surroundings and purposeful behaviour emerges. Explaining that “[w]hen authority prevented the child from enjoying the first but most important gratifications of all, aggressive impulses of considerable intensity must have been evoked in it” (Freud 115). Freud (115) goes on to state that the child needs to relinquish aggressive wishes for revenge, and internalise the authority’s role, establishing it as super-ego, which now takes the role of the parent and exercises the threat of punishment.

Although Freud makes both love and work responsible for the establishment and maintenance of central social constructs such as family and nations, he attributes more effectiveness to eros (Freud 102). The constant threat of “loss of love” (Freud 107) and the ensuing alienation from the social surroundings serve as potent deterrents from aggressive behaviour. The “renunciation of [instincts]” (Freud 112) therefore relies on the threat of punishment by society, the external authority, and feelings of guilt, created by the super-ego (Freud 111). If an individual’s libidinal desires are denied s/he is forced to repress these urges, as well as the aggression that arises against the denier (Freud 131), in order not to be punished by society. The libidinal desires’ suppression causes neurotic symptoms, while the repression of aggression establishes feelings of guilt (Freud 132), both of which lead to the pathology of the neurosis, which inhibits the affected from ceasing to pursue “substitute-gratifications” (Freud 79). The neurosis is thus a valid indication that an individual’s super-ego is active.

The formation of a super-ego, caused by the internalisation of external authorities, is not restricted to individuals, but can analogously affect larger sets of people, ranging from small communities to whole nations (Freud 133). Although Freud notes that the larger scale increases the level of complexity, many causal relations remain valid. He gives an example when he states that “[t]he development of the individual is ordered according to the programme laid down by the attainment of happiness” (134), while in a community these “egoistic” (Freud 134) aims need to be upstaged in favour of establishing a “single unit out of men and women” (Freud 135). Moreover, the “incorporation of the individual as a member of a community [...] seems like an almost unavoidable condition which has to be fulfilled before he can attain this objective of happiness” (Freud 134). This underlines the interdependent nature of the relationship between group and individual.

Freud then outlines the cultural super-ego’s origin and functions. He maintains that “community [...] develops a super-ego, under whose influence cultural evolution proceeds”, adding that “great leading personalities” (136) often adopt this position. Like the authoritarian figure of the father that is internalised into the personal super-ego during adolescence (Freud 118, 120), ideal personal features of the leading personality additionally contribute to an individual’s super-ego’s development. The cultural super-ego’s demands establish what is subsumed under the term ethics (Freud 138), underlining the personal cost individuals need to muster for the observance of socially desired behaviour. However, Freud adds that individuals who lead their lives according to ethical maxims face considerable disadvantages when interacting with others who do not apply such restrictions on themselves, thereby reinforcing the potential for neuroses (Freud 140). Such neuroses that originate in the constant renunciation of instincts can also affect whole societies, leading to violence and oppression of particular groups (Freud 141). Since the excessive repression that causes neuroses therefore contributes to the maintenance of culture, but also causes behaviour that conflicts with society’s moral demands, identifying the symptom will allow to draw conclusions regarding the protagonist’s motivations in the three objects of analysis.

2.1. “The Lottery”

Since Shirley Jackson’s short story concisely portrays the villager’s reactions as a group, as well as the emotional states of some individuals during the lottery’s tense

proceedings, Freud's notions about the interrelations between psychoanalytical processes on the personal and the cultural level provide a suitable framework for analysing their motivations. In order to ascertain the impact, the event has on the inhabitants' group behaviour, the conduct of the most outspoken individuals will be analysed separately.

The narrator's descriptions of the village initially establish that its society is in a static state. All of its inhabitants are aware of the procedures that take place on June 27th, conservative gender roles are sustained during the initial gathering, as well as during the drawing, and the villagers' occupations are either agricultural or fulfil the basic needs of civilisation, such as coal merchant or postmaster. The strength of both, the bonds between the members of the individual nuclear families, and the fathers' dominance follow the path of development of communal existence Freud (67) describes, in which bands of brothers share the responsibility of protecting their families, while at the same time remaining unfettered heads of their individual families. This coexistence of the primitive stage, in which one male dominates and the totemic stage in which the group exerts power (Freud 67), exemplifies Freud's notion (20) that different developmental stages of inner life can coexist at a certain point of time, in this case, however, on the cultural and not on the personal level.

The uniformity of the village's sociological features and hierarchy also reflects in the devotion to the ritual of the lottery, which at the narrative's beginning is apparently unanimous. This strict adherence to traditional social norms and the ritual can be interpreted as a symptom of what Freud refers to as "sacrifice of their own desires" (60), later called renunciation of desires (111). This becomes evident when the children only play reluctantly, when the men smile rather than laugh at their jokes (Jackson 211) and in the numerous other displays of the villagers' discomfort during the procedure, such as the reluctance to help Mr. Summers at the event's beginning (Jackson 212).

Although contact with other communities is indicated, since there is a post office and Mr. Adams mentions another village's stance towards the event, it seems to be restricted since there is no mention of strangers being present. Taking Freud's possible sources of displeasure into account, namely the human body, the elemental forces and the social world (28), the society's reclusive nature can be interpreted as attempt of reducing negative influences on the tenets of the cultural super-ego. Since Freud (28) identifies threats originating from other people's behaviour as most threatening to one's

happiness, the lack of strong ties with other communities and the absence of any foreign individuals are symptomatic of a collective fear of cultural erosion a more open society might entail. The villagers' inward orientation therefore emphasises the strong cohesive force the lottery exerts on their society.

When Freud's notion of the cultural super-ego is considered, the narrative's three main characters can be interpreted as allegories of psychoanalytic forces. Since Mr. Summers's contrived joviality, his nervousness and his repeated calls for acceleration of the procedures mirror the other villagers' emotional state, his behaviour is affected by the same repression of the unconscious libidinous desire to protect his life, and unconscious feelings of guilt that anticipate the events violent conclusion, as the other villagers. He can therefore be interpreted as an allegory of the village's cultural ego, which finds itself in a neurotic state, caused by this constant suppression of the wish to end the tradition. If the repression would fail and manifest itself in a challenge to the ritual, the society's dominant cultural super-ego would take retaliatory action, which could take the form of expulsion from the group.

Old Man Warner's and Mrs. Hutchinson's outspokenness contrasts with the other villagers' passiveness, rendering them rivalling cultural super-egos of the community at first glance. Except for the sporadic comments on the event provided by the narrative voice, Old Man Warner's brief exchange with Mr. Adams and his comments provide arguably the most distinct pieces of information on its purpose and development. When Mr. Adams tells the village elder about the proposed abandonment of the event in a neighbouring community, the rebuttal sheds light on the lottery's purpose. Except for its ostensible main function, namely securing a plentiful harvest, it establishes a connection with the village's cultural development, when the old man mentions that if the tradition were abolished, the villagers would stop working and regress to living in caves (Jackson 215). When he refers to an abandonment's negative effect on the work ethic, he insinuates that the community's cohesion relies on work rather than love (Freud 68). Old Man Warner's view that the lottery's realisation is responsible for securing the village's crops, is concurrent with what Freud (111) describes as a savage individual, who blames ill fortune on the external world, rather than on him-/herself. His rejection of the abandonment of the lottery underlines his determination to maintain the annual event, since for him harming the lottery would be tantamount with hurting the village's community itself.

While Old Man Warner embodies a conservative stance on the lottery's development, Mrs. Hutchinson's behaviour challenges the event at different points of the narrative and therefore opposes Old Man Warner's position. Although her initial lateness might seem like an ordinary mistake, the punctuality the other villagers display makes it more likely that she unconsciously ignores her civic duty. During the event's first part, however, her behaviour remains unmentioned, and probably resembles the other villagers' unvoiced displeasure. When it becomes apparent that her husband has drawn the marked ticket, her emotional protests begin. At first, she blames Mr. Summers for not giving the proxy of the family enough time, which a friend of her refutes, and her husband rebuts by telling her to shut up (Jackson 216). These rejections of the complaint show that as soon as it becomes clear which family has received the marked ticket, no objections of its members are tolerated. Mrs. Hutchinson's protests therefore are caused by a lack of repression of her libido, which dictates her to protect her life, in order to maintain the fulfilment of her desires, just like when she arrived late.

After these initial signs of displeasure, it becomes apparent that Mrs. Hutchinson's agitated state of mind is not caused by compassionate fear for her close relatives. When Mr. Summers asks if there were any other households in the Hutchinson family, she names her daughter, Eva, although she knows that "[married] [d]aughters draw with their husband's families [...]" (Jackson 216), which Mr. Summers explains to her. Although her desperate protests continue, she hesitantly takes part in the lottery's final drawing, but only reveals her slip of paper after her husband forces her fist open, underlining her ongoing repression of the event's implications. Mrs. Hutchinson therefore can only partly be interpreted as cultural super-ego that opposes the annual killing, since her protests are mainly motivated by her sense of self-preservation and consequently, the pleasure principle. Her initial lateness, however, indicates unconscious repression of her obligation to participate in the event, which suggests an unconscious willingness to leave the group in order to preserve her life.

During the event's final stage, the stoning of Mrs. Hutchinson, all members of the community take part. The nervousness that prevailed earlier has vanished and all inhibitions are shed when Mrs. Delacroix selects a stone almost too large for her to carry and Old Man Warner encourages the crowd, saying "[c]ome on, come on, everybody" (Jackson 218-219). While the threat the drawing posed to their individual pleasure has been averted, the stoning allows them to overrule their super-egos'

repressive force and satisfy their desires originating in thanatos. When interpreting Mrs. Hutchinson and Old Man Warner as opposing cultural super-egos, one sceptical of the ritual, the other strictly conservative, tradition has won over scepticism and rejection of the procedure. However, superficial changes to the procedures have already taken place and more are likely to occur. The villagers' nervousness, the abandonment of the ritual's cultic features (Jackson 213) and Mr. Adams's blatant comment about the neighbouring village support this notion.

Additionally, the continuous nervousness the villagers fail to hide is displayed most distinctly, when a friend of the Hutchinsons's daughter, whispers, "I hope it's not Nancy" (Jackson 218). Unlike the ambiguous, overtly comforting comments the adult villagers contribute during the event's final stage, the girl has either not incorporated the village's collective cultural super-ego into her personal super-ego completely or views the sacrificial practice differently than the other villagers. She is hence either not yet able to repress the memories of previous lotteries' violent conclusions and the subsequent feelings of guilt she experienced, or unwilling to do so. Her utterance is motivated by the pleasure principle, since the possible death of a friend seriously threatens a vital source of libidinous pleasure. Since the girl obviously wants to avoid harming her classmate, her behaviour can be interpreted as being directed by a personal super-ego that is more reflective than the other villagers' and is motivated by impending guilt. While the village's collective super-ego is a source of displeasure for all villagers, since most of them went through a process of gradual indoctrination that established the repression necessary to participate in the collective killing, Nancy's friend seemingly experiences even more displeasure and consequently transgresses the code of conduct by uttering her wish. Old Man Warner's contemptuous comment on the child's plea then shows that verbalising such emotions, at least from people who cannot possibly receive the marked ticket themselves, used to be unthinkable in the village's earlier days, supporting the presumption that the community's handling of the tradition has changed.

In her short story, Jackson describes the realisation of an annual event in a seemingly ordinary village. While typical aspects of the genre like the murderous ending's carefully built up "turning point" (May 1) and the deliberate omission of background information (May 8) on the settlement's historical and geographical context add to the story's effectiveness, the omniscient narrator's mundane tone contrasts the villager's discomfort and the brutal ending. The narrator's calm descriptions and the

brief anecdotes about the lottery's history rather give the text the quality of a pastoral oral narration. Since Sylvia notes that folktales typically feature "the celebration of events, such as harvesting [...]" (49), that they are often passed on orally and that they "[o]ften [...] reflect on the culture and civilization in which [they] were born" (49), "The Lottery" can be allocated to the subgenre. While the narrator's oral tone and the narrative's central event easily match the typical stylistic features, the reflection on the culture of the United States of America of the late 1940s is more difficult to identify. While Bailey mentions "feminist and Marxist interpretations" (38) of the text, Heller (951) adds racial discrimination and compulsory military service as further possible points of criticism. When considering this variety of possible thematic associations, another subgenre of short stories seems to be applicable to the narrative, the parable. Partenheimer confirms this when he states that "the parable is often open for interpretation, it can serve as catalyst for moral and spiritual speculations" (69). He also argues that "[t]he effectiveness of a parable depends on a listener or reader thinking that because the story is real, then the idea it represents must be true" (Partenheimer 69). Several hundred, mostly upset, letters to the author, in which some "[r]eaders wanted to know where such lotteries were held" (*The Lottery*) that entailed the publishing of Jackson's story, hence confirm the narrative's effectiveness. The stylistic aspects of the folktale therefore give "The Lottery" its realistic quality, and consequently increase its moralising effect.

When the narrative's oral quality and moral stance are approached from a Freudian perspective, the cause for the audience's emotional responses can be investigated more thoroughly. While the narrator's mundane tone and the plausible descriptions of the initially well-behaved villagers satisfy the reader's super-ego's urge for social conformity, the increasing level of tension subliminally informs the ego about the hidden horror of the gruesome ending. The stoning of Mrs. Hutchinson then suddenly reveals urges originating in thanatos, and infers that the reader, who a few pages ago identified him-/herself with the villagers, shares this predisposition, and thereby startles him/her. This realisation implements what Sullivan describes as "change from innocence to knowledge" (qtd. in May 9), which he sees as fundamental methodological concept of the short story. The story's oral quality and the village's initially civil portrayal also decreases the seemingly vast temporal distance between the modernising post-war USA and the sacrificial rites of primitive cultures, which adds to the insult the reader experiences when the violent nature of all societies is inferred.

2.2. “The Tollund Man”

Freud's notions on the analogous sources of violent and sociable behaviour on personal and communal levels offer useful concepts to identify the poem's speaker's motivation for undertaking the journey in Seamus Heaney's "The Tollund Man" (see page 88). Since the numerous themes, events and characters incorporated into the poem obfuscate the relationships between them, Freud's theories allow one to infer the poem's central message.

The familiar tone in which the speaker describes the visit to the museum in Aarhus gives the poem's beginning a positive undertone. Both, the statement about "[s]ome day" (Heaney *Wintering* 1) going to Aarhus and the feeling of foreignness in the poem's end suggest that the speaker does not live near Aarhus, while the 2000-year gap between the lifetimes of the speaker and the sacrificial victim contribute to the perceived distance between them. Nevertheless, the poem's speaker's profound sense of familiarity with, and veneration of, the Tollund Man diminish the geographic and temporal distance and establish a notion of imagined intimacy that resembles family ties. Since the Iron Age man is portrayed as passive victim of external circumstances, in the poem's first stanza, it is difficult to interpret him as an allegory of a super-ego of a particular culture at this point. Following Freud's notions about the establishment of the super-ego in human history (67, 120), the relationship between the poem's speaker and the Tollund Man seems to be motivated by similarity rather than authority and therefore reminds more of the rapport between brothers or other family members rather than a dominant father and his offspring. This is confirmed by Heaney, who states that "[t]he Tollund Man seemed to me like an ancestor almost, one of my old uncles, one of those moustached archaic faces you used to meet all over the Irish countryside" (qtd. in Longley 75). The sacrificial victim and the speaker therefore need to be interpreted as equal members of the same group that share a similar fate. Rather than from searching unconscious moral guidance, the poem's speaker's sympathy for the dead man seems to stem from a notion of a shared fate, creating a strong connection, reaching over two millennia and across national borders, if the speaker's home is assumed to be analogous with the author's, that is, Northern Ireland.

After the descriptions of the Tollund Man and the circumstances of his discovery, the sacrificial scene follows. The Iron Age man's hanging and subsequent burial in the swamp's waters are described with metaphors carrying strong sexual connotations. The "[sacrificers]" (Girard 7) themselves remain unmentioned and are

replaced with the goddess, whose sexual desires demand fulfilment by taking a victim's life. The sympathy for the Tollund Man that was initially established is contrasted with the sexualised tension during the marriage's consummation in the bog water, which transforms the victim into a "saint's kept body" (Heaney *Wintering* 16). The feelings of compassion of the first stanzas are hence replaced by an acknowledgement of his elevated position in the speaker's faith. Here the poem's speaker indirectly confesses to being a member of the group responsible for the sacrifice, since s/he refers to the goddess' position within the religion in a matter-of-fact way. Although Freud (102) identifies the death drive as the profoundest threat to social peace, he affirms that acts induced by it also gratify desires established by the libido. By using metaphors of marriage and sexual intercourse to describe the sacrifice, the traveller therefore admits the fulfilment of personal and communal desires, which originate in eros and thanatos. Since both urges need to be repressed during the rest of the year, the ritualistic murder of a fellow member of society allows the two drives to merge into a single sadistic event (Freud 99), in which the sacrificers can fulfil their egos' "oldest omnipotence wishes" (Freud 101). This relieves the aggressive and sexual pressures built up in them throughout the year.

While the killing allows to satisfy unconscious desires, providing an exemption from the cultural need for repression, its perfunctory purpose of making sure that the new, agricultural year will be fertile is also of great importance for the group's cohesion. Since plentiful crops also mean a good chance of surviving the next winter and consequently security for the community, Freud's (135) notion that the needs of a social collective outweigh the right of a single member to pursue happiness, can also be identified as the superficial or conscious justification for the sacrifice maintained by the cultural ego of the group. The fertility goddess can, therefore, be interpreted as cultural super-ego of the Tollund Man's community, which lets the members shed all moral inhibitions once a year in order to satisfy their unconscious urges, thereby allowing peaceful cohabitation during the rest of the year. Since Heaney referred to the Irish national figure Kathleen ni Houlihan as an allegory that facilitates group-based violence and called the parallel between her and the goddess in the poem an "archetypal pattern" (Heaney *Preoccupations* 57), another connection between the death of the Iron Age man and his native land is established. By describing the bog water as the deity's "dark juices" (Heaney *Wintering* 15), the speaker insinuates that the fertility goddess, like Kathleen Ni Houlihan, is an embodiment of the land. Heaney

therefore suggests that two similar allegories of land are the cultural super-egos responsible for the bloodshed in Iron Age Denmark and Northern Ireland of the 1970s, since both demand regular sacrifices to maintain the inhabitants' communities' cohesion.

In the poem's second part the speaker's motivation to undertake the journey becomes evident, while s/he implies further connections between the Iron Age culture and his/her Northern Irish home (Murphy 38). When s/he considers directing a prayer to the Tollund Man, s/he asks the victim to make the casualties of two violent events germinate. The description of the brutal killing of "four young brothers" (Heaney *Wintering* 31) is reminiscent of four Catholic brothers who were killed by unionists (Murphy 38; Vendler 34) and establishes another connection between the sectarian conflicts in Ireland and the sacrificial practice in Iron Age Jutland. The "stockinged corpses" (Heaney *Wintering* 27) of labourers must be placed in a broader historical context. While vividly evoking the sacrificial scene suggested that the speaker is a member of the sacrificers' community, mentioning atrocious events that took place in his/her home nation emphasises the interrelatedness of the violence in communities separated by two millennia. Since the purpose of the Tollund Man's killing was both to ensure the stability of the sacrificers' community and to alleviate unconscious urges, mainly motivated by thanatos (Freud 99), the poem's speaker suggests that the same motivational forces are responsible for the later instances of violence in his/her home country. However, while the sexualised description of the victim's burial suggests that the speaker acknowledges the libidinous dimension of the practice and does not fully oppose it, the atrociousness of the events described in part two implies that they are exclusively motivated by thanatos and that the speaker fundamentally repudiates them. His/her compatriots' inability to end the violence thus needs to be described as neurotic, since the constant repression of eros that is necessary to continue the retaliatory violence manifests itself in the "substitute-gratifications" (Freud 79) of further acts of violence.

When considering the ambiguity between the prayer's blasphemous quality and its consecrating effect, the difference in the speaker's attitude towards the sacrificial scene and the harrowing events mentioned in part two helps to identify the intention behind the prayer and consequently the journey's purpose. Since the speaker reflects on the risk of the blasphemous act (Heaney *Wintering* 21), s/he seems to be consciously aware of the negative implications this alienation from his/her home

community would entail. S/he thereby admits that s/he fears losing the love of his/her compatriots, which Freud (107) identifies as the external motivational force responsible for the prevention of violence, besides the feeling of guilt, exerted by the super-ego (Freud 111). The apprehensiveness the speaker displays at the poem's beginning, stating that s/he will "[s]ome day" (Heaney *Wintering* 1) go to Aarhus, and in part two, are hence motivated by unconscious feelings of guilt s/he feels for contemplating to leave his/her social group by undertaking the journey.

The prayer's consecrating effect, on the other hand, entails a process of growth, that contrasts the killings described. When the speaker states that it would consecrate "[o]ur holy ground" (Heaney, *Wintering* 23), s/he suggests that the fertility goddess would then be sanctified, since s/he earlier insinuated that the deity embodies the soil. When considering that the fertility goddess also is the super-ego of the speaker's home culture, the purpose of consecrating her is likely to change the prevailing religious doctrine. By asking to make the victims germinate, s/he alludes to tufts of barley weeds that marked the graves of defeated Irish fighters after the battle of Vinegar Hill, which Heaney used as motif in the poem "Requiem for the Croppies" (first published in *Door into the Dark* 1969; see page 88) (Murphy 38). While this poem's last line "[a]nd in August the barley grew up out of the grave" (Heaney *Opened* 22) suggests unrelenting defiance against the British suppressors (Murphy 32), the germination in "The Tollund Man" expresses the hope that the prayer to the victim would help the speaker's home culture defy the violent super-ego embodied by the goddess. The speaker hence attempts to end the violence by praying to the Tollund Man in order to establish a new collective super-ego that no longer demands the satisfaction of urges stemming from thanatos.

At the beginning of the poem's final part, the speaker explicitly identifies him-/herself with the victim's emotive state of "sad freedom" (Heaney *Wintering* 33) he supposedly felt when being transported to the sight of his killing. The reason for this approximation is that the speaker is driving through the Jutish countryside, while feeling "[...] lost, / [u]nhappy and at home" (Heaney *Wintering* 43-44), because of his/her inability to understand directions given by the natives. Feeling lost and at home simultaneously can be described as an oxymoron, establishing a connection to the contradictory blasphemous prayer that at the same time has a consecrating effect, in the poem's second part. The traveller experiences this profound sense of inner fragmentation between potential alienation from his/her social group and the wish for

belonging twice, which underlines the profound intensity of the emotive state. S/he is simultaneously motivated and impaired by the unconscious urge to remain in the group, which is exerted by eros, and unconscious feelings of guilt, because his/her super-ego requires him/her to indirectly participate in collective acts of violence and then punishes him/her for wanting to leave the group. The speaker's attempt to establish a new, peaceful cultural super-ego, or at least emancipate him-/herself from the cultural super-ego of his/her compatriots is hence accompanied by contradictory emotions, that Freud would identify as ambivalent, since feelings of love and hate simultaneously guide his/her urges (Laplanche 55). This torn emotional state can consequently be identified as neurotic (Freud 132, 46), since the speaker must suppress his/her libido in order to undertake the blasphemous journey, while s/he is unwilling to yield to the pressures put onto him/her by the society that require him/her to participate. By stating that s/he is unable to communicate with the Jutlanders, who represent his/her compatriots because they are descendants of the Tollund Man's culture, s/he underlines the alienation the differences of their ethical world views have established and insinuates that his/her pleas for change will not be understood. In this group it is not violence that needs to be omitted, but rather not being violent, a perverted state which the poem's speaker possibly wants to emphasise by articulating his/her thoughts. The contemplative journey to Jutland hence is an attempt to establish a new cultural super-ego in his/her group or at least on a smaller scale in him-/herself, which is accompanied by ambivalent emotions that deter the speaker from realising his/her wish.

2.3. *A History of Violence*

David Cronenberg's film's narrative approach to depicting Tom Stall's relapse into violent behavioural patterns lays strong focus on family and social belonging. While the protection of his relationship with his spouse and children is the main character's main goal throughout the movie, the alienation from his brother and the crime syndicate expedite the estrangement from his nuclear family. Since Freud identifies the urge to remain part of an individual's social group as a critical motivational factor for adhering to the group's respective ethical norms, the protagonist's struggle to maintain his new life, but also the ease with which he commits acts of violence, provide suitable starting points for analysis.

In the movie's first section, the contrast between the brutal motel robbery and the Stall family's mundane and idyllic life provides the audience with a first overview of the film's central motifs. Initially, the audience is presented with a group that has rejected, both their super-egos' and society's demands of repressing violent tendencies and is hence mainly motivated by the pleasure principle. The robbers nurture the principle by not suppressing their death-drives, since the power they gain while exerting



Fig. 1 The young robber smiles at girl



Fig. 2 Jack is reluctant to face Bobby directly

violence fulfils their egos' "oldest omnipotence-wishes" (Freud 101). This satisfaction of thanatos manifests itself in the sadistic smile the younger robber displays before shooting the girl (see figure 1). The comforting way in which the Stall family reacts to the nightmare of the family's youngest member can be interpreted as crucial step in deepening Sarah's sense of belonging to her family, in which the male members are portrayed as protectors, since Tom and Jack are the first to respond to her cries, following the role attributed to male family members by Freud (66). The cautious, but simultaneously self-depreciating way in which Jack then reacts to being bullied serves as an example of a developed super-ego (Freud 111), since the high-school student visibly represses the urge to retaliate when he attempts to end the altercation by not facing Bobby (see figure 2), because he experiences unconscious feelings of guilt. He manages to diffuse the situation non-violently, thereby forcibly following the temperate example set by his father. Although this helps him to maintain his group membership in his family, he experiences a neurotic episode, since instead of directing aggression at his classmate, he rather verbally directs it against himself, which constitutes a "[substitute-gratification]" (Freud 79), whereas his opposite exerts power by not repressing his aggressive tendencies (Freud 140). While the Stall family is a member of modern society, since their behaviour is guided by functioning super-egos, the

robbers are solely motivated by the pleasure principle, which puts them on the most primitive societal developmental stage.

After the worlds of the criminals and the Stall family collide during the robbery, Tom's seemingly peaceful disposition is increasingly put under pressure. When John Fogarty, an old acquaintance from Philadelphia he sadistically maimed, shows up after the robbery, the



Fig. 3 Tom shows regret after shooting the robbers

protagonist at first seems truly oblivious when facing the indirect threat of being referred to Joey Cusack, which is his true birth name. However, as soon as Fogarty directly threatens his family by driving towards his home, he chases after him and thereby admits his awareness of the dangerous situation. The denial of his true identity was hence feigned. While this raises the question if the protagonist's new identity, Tom Stall, is a mere cover that lacks a conscience, his facial expression after shooting the two robbers clearly displays guilt (see figure 3). Although this breach of taboo causes this first surge of regret, Tom soon suppresses it and rather worries about his family's safety. The re-emergence of his past propensity to violence that was initiated by his reaction during the robbery has partly replaced the law-abiding super-ego of Tom Stall with Joey Cusack's opportunist moral guidelines that apply any means necessary to survive a dangerous situation. The protagonist, however, is unable to fend off Fogarty's threats violently, since this would mean the loss of love of his family members. While he attempts to maintain his role as moral example for his children, the code of conduct of the Philadelphian crime syndicate he fled is not only superimposed onto him, but onto his social environment as well. This forces him to repress both, Joey's revived thanatos, which likely happens during Fogarty's visit to the diner, and Tom's law-abiding super-ego, which would require him to inform the legal authorities. The repression of the death drive establishes unconscious guilt for homicides he already committed, while the suppression of his super-ego increases the threat to the integrity of his family and causes repressed guilt for putting them in danger. Additionally, he represses his libidinous feelings for his family, since they require him to be honest with them. The protagonist hence finds himself in a profound state of neurosis, that surfaces

when his family is in immediate danger, especially when he chases after the Fogarty's car.

While Edie initially supports Tom's claim of being confused with somebody else during their talk with the sheriff and even after being approached by Fogarty in the mall, she likely unconsciously realises that the accusations are true when Tom calls and asks her to get the gun, because he fears his family to be in danger. She therefore unconsciously joins her husband's attempt of getting through the threatening situation by suppressing her super-ego and ignoring the possibility of involving the police. This would likely entail the arrest of her husband and further threats from members of the crime syndicate and would therefore destroy her family's integrity. Jack, on the other hand, is less successful in repressing emotional responses after experiencing Tom's violent and paranoid behaviour, since he brutally attacks Bobby when he is pushed back after being hindered from retreat during another bullying incident. While his father behaved rejective towards violence throughout his life and thereby helped Jack establish a pacifistic super-ego, Tom's resistance during the robbery introduced violence into Jack's repertoire of actions. Although it is difficult to determine whether it is only a brief loss of control or an actual change in his super-ego at this point, the distraught accusation he confronts his father with after the shootout confirms that he still repudiates violence. Whereas Edie unconsciously participates in her husband's lies, Jack experiences a brief cancellation of his super-ego's repressive force, resulting in an uncompromising attack.

When the increasingly tense atmosphere culminates in the violent confrontation in front of the Stall's home, and Tom agrees to give himself up to Fogarty, his face bears a slight smile (see figure 4). This facial expression is a manifestation of the protagonist's "ambivalent" (Laplanche



Fig. 4 Tom's slight smile

55) relationship to brutality since the violent behaviour originating from thanatos has a libidinous effect. While the spiteful smile is motivated by his instinct of self-preservation, its joyous aspect stems from allowing his thanatos to guide his behaviour (Laplanche 57). Meanwhile the demands of eros and his law-abiding super-ego, which require him to suppress violent behaviour, are nullified (Laplanche 57). Not repressing his violent

capabilities hence not only fulfils his ego's "oldest omnipotence wishes" (Freud 101), but also briefly strips him of the symptoms of his neurosis. Before Jack rescues his father, by killing Fogarty, Tom therefore finally admits his past by stating "I should have killed you back in Philly" (A 56:10), presumably because of the alleviation his super-ego experiences when admitting his deceit. This comment also indicates that in this moment the protagonist has fully regressed into Joey's mentality.

In the hospital, after the violent event, Edie tells her husband that she saw him becoming Joey, asking him if he killed for money or pleasure, to which he stammeringly replies "Joey did, both, I didn't. Tom Stall didn't" (A 59:14), thereby stressing the clear distinction he draws between his old and new self and simultaneously emphasising his belonging to his family. Here his neurosis surfaces, because he attempts to assure Edie that he can repress Joey's violent behaviour, although she has witnessed the loss of his super-ego's restrictive force. Jack later also confronts the protagonist, asking him if he would whack him if he went to the authorities and told them that his father was part of the mafia (A 1:02:42). The son's challenging reaction at this point mirrors the cynical reply he gave to Tom earlier when being scolded for the violent event at school, again testing his father's resolve since Tom hit him in the previous situation. This time, however, Jack paces off angrily before his father can answer, emphasising the strong sense of alienation he has recently experienced. Since the person who helped Jack establish his super-ego was possibly only playing a role and therefore no longer exists, the teenager struggles to maintain his own moral authority, because the cultural super-ego of the family is no longer present.

When the sheriff tries to question Tom about the second incident, Tom seems ridden with guilt, almost ready to come clean about his past when facing the stern look of Sam (see figure 5). Edie, however, disrupts the conversation and continues arguing that the situation was a mix-up, consciously



Fig. 5 The sheriff questions Tom's ignorance

repressing her personal super-ego in order avert the threat of legal punishment and thereby secure the family's integrity (see figure 6, page 22). While the repression of doubts about Tom's story originated from eros that demanded to maintain her loving

relationship with her husband, the unveiling of his deception caused her to question their relationship's sincerity. Tom's desperate justification in the hospital, the readiness to admit his crimes and the threat of the loss of love from her children, however, still enable her to overcome her law-abiding



Fig. 6 Edie continues to support Tom's version

super-ego. In this scene, the sheriff therefore takes the position of the cultural super-ego of the lawful townspeople, while the couple follows the crime syndicate's social code, emphasising the newly established rupture between the Stall family and the social environment they were members of until the violent events unfolded.

The subsequent fight and violent sexual intercourse of the couple, then, needs to be considered as Edie's open challenge to Tom's moral integrity and his status as one of the family's cultural super-egos. Since the pleasure principle dictates that being with her family



Fig. 7 Edie leaves Tom lying on the stairs

promises a much more profound fulfilment of her libido than only being part of the wider society, she represses the feelings of guilt and morality in favour of maintaining the group's cohesion. The unconscious realisation that by continuing to support Tom she has become an accomplice to his deeds leads her super-ego to direct punishment against her ego by establishing guilt, making retaliation in her sphere of influence necessary. She achieves this by initiating intercourse after being held back by her husband and subsequently rejecting Tom's desperate plea for emotional intimacy afterwards (see figure 7), passing on the repudiation she has experienced from the sheriff representing society, as well as gaining dominance in the family's social structure.

During Tom's visit of his brother near Philadelphia, rejection and insult play an important role as well. Although the reunion begins with a long embrace and

reminiscing about their youth, which communicates sincere feelings of familiarity and thereby membership in the same group, Richie's envy of Tom's emotional bond to his family and Tom's motivation to leave Philadelphia become apparent. When the older brother tauntingly asks Tom if he enjoys the country life and continues to ask him about his family, envy likely is his motivation to do so, since Tom's defence of his wife and children possibly caused the slight he experienced when his brother left the syndicate to unconsciously resurface. While Richie's mansion radiates wealth and power, it is seemingly solely inhabited by the head of the crime syndicate and his henchmen, suggesting a lack satisfaction of Richie's eros. The indirect allegation of being rejected by his younger brother is then made explicit in their conversation, outlining the relationship of the brothers and recapitulating the cause of the predicament Tom finds himself in.

RICHIE CUSACK: I'm pretty pissed at you, bro-heem. You could have called. You could have dropped a postcard in the mail. We're brothers, what do you think would have happened?

TOM STALL/JOEY CUSACK: I thought the business would come first.

RICHIE CUSACK: Well, yeah. Yeah, I know. *I know*. What am I gonna do? You bust up a made man's place. You killed some of his guys. You take his eye. Jesus, Joey, you took his eye. Barbed wire, wasn't it? That's disgusting. You always were the crazy one.

TOM STALL/JOEY CUSACK: Not anymore.

RICHIE CUSACK: Yeah, I heard. You're living the American dream. You really bought into it, didn't you? You've been this other guy almost as long as you been yourself. Hey, when you dream, are you still Joey?

TOM STALL/JOEY CUSACK: Joey's been dead for a long time.

(A 1:20:28 - 1:21:55)

Tom's rebuttal of Richie's provoking reproach emphasises the brothers' relationship's embeddedness in the crime syndicate, a group they were both part of. By stating that business would come first (A 1:20:57) Tom covertly criticises the strictly commercial nature of their relationship and consequently the lack of love, hinting at the reason for his departure. When Richie's economical mindset resurfaces as he complains about his brother's excessive use of violence and the monetary losses this caused him, his brother states that he has changed, arguing that Joey has been dead for a long time (A 1:21:36). While this is only partly true since the recent events have re-established Joey's lack of repression of his thanatos, the rejection of violence he has shown during his life in Millbrook and his constant attempts to maintain his family's cohesion after the robbery indicate that his change in character is sincere. During the conversation, however, the tense facial expressions that indicated Tom's ambivalent

stance towards violence while in Millbrook (see figure 8) are replaced with a sardonic smile after Richie tauntingly reminds him of their brotherhood (see figure 9). The self-assertive spitefulness the smile communicates is the clearest evidence for the protagonist's libidinous relationship with violence that gratifies his ego by allowing to act out urges originating in thanatos.



Fig. 8 Tom shows regret after shooting the two robbers



Fig. 9 Tom smiles during the conversation with Richie

While leaving Philadelphia became necessary because Joey brutally attacked Fogarty and thereby infringed the crime syndicate's code of conduct, the motivation of this deed likely was the lack of satisfaction of his libido, and the necessity of nurturing his death-drive in order to ensure his survival in the hazardous social environment. When the older brother later mentions that he tried to strangle Joey when he was an infant, for which he received a severe beating from his mother (A 1:23:16 – 1:23:32), it becomes evident that Tom grew up in a family in which violence was a frequently used as means of communication. There was likely no father present to help the brothers establish a functioning super-ego, the Oedipal conflict for the mother's favour hence did not arise between son and father, but between the brothers. Instead of developing a law-abiding super-ego, Joey's inner authority was at first influenced by the role model of his violent, criminal brother, but because of the lack of intimate relationships regressed to rely on the guidance of the pleasure principle. This caused Joey to search gratification by not restricting his death drive, and thereby fulfilling his wish for omnipotence (Freud 101), which explains the similarity between Joey's grin (see figure 9) and the young robber's sardonic smile (see figure 1 , already discussed on p. 18).

Richie, on the other hand, was mostly satisfied with the moral guidance and the gratification of his libido and death-drive the crime syndicate offered. The paramount goal within this sociotope is to maximise wealth and influence, which requires constant

repression of the love drive, because violence directed against members, but especially against non-members, is a common phenomenon. Since Freud argues that repression of one's libidinal desires causes neuroses (132), Richie's tenacious commitment to take revenge on his brother, therefore likely is a "[substitute-gratification]" (Freud 79), made necessary by his neurosis. Although murder is not a taboo in the crime syndicate, excessive and unmotivated violence among members, "made men" (A 1:21:15), needs to be repressed in most situations, in order to avoid retaliatory violence and maintain a stable market. This requires the establishment of a super-ego, in which money and power exercise the gratification love and emotional intimacy usually are responsible for, while rejection of violence becomes a taboo. Joey's refusal to participate in this system can hence be explained by the Oedipal conflict with his brother, the lack of proper moral guidance within the crime syndicate that would enable him to become a member of law-abiding society and the consequential lack of love he indirectly criticises in the conversation. The maiming of Fogarty is hence a substitutive formation of the unconscious Oedipal aggression against Richie (Laplanche 146), who takes the authoritative position of the father and a "[substitute-gratification]" (Freud 79) for the neurosis Joey acquired because of his membership of the group. While the attack on Fogarty made the fulfilment of Joey's unconscious wish to leave the crime syndicate's neurotic, love-less environment necessary and enabled him to find happiness in another group, it motivated Fogarty and Richie's demand for revenge.

Although killing his brother ultimately ends the Oedipal rivalry and fulfils Joey's unconscious desire, Tom's super-ego must live with the consequences, since repression of them is no longer possible because his libido demands his return to his family, who now know about his criminal past. He feels the full weight of his past affecting him as he washes his face in the lake, a scene mirroring the solitude he experienced in the hospital room after the robbery. Although killing his brother has severed the last physical connection to his past, the deed presses on Tom's reappeared super-ego, which now establishes feelings of guilt. A similar process presumably took place when Joey left Philadelphia and developed a super-ego out of necessity to become part of a new group. This time, however, the contact between his violent past and his family has rendered his wife and son accomplices to his deeds. Since his family has partly acquired his propensity to violence, ignoring it is no longer possible, and they now share the guilt he had successfully repressed for years. This

condition is expressed in the movie's last scene, in which he joins his wife and children, while their faces show profound despair and pity (see figures 10 & 11). The series of violent incidents has ended, and the Stall family has remained defiant against the threats originating from two societal groups, Tom's former inherently violent acquaintances and the general, non-violent population, which has profoundly traumatised them.



Fig. 10 Edie looks at Tom



Fig. 11 Tom looks at Edie

2.4. Conclusion

Although the protagonists of the objects of analysis find themselves in situations differing considerably from one another, the implementation of Freud's theories, which stress the importance of group belonging for both an individual's contentment and discontentment, allows arguing that similar motive forces are responsible for the characters' behaviour. The protagonists' perpetration of or complicity to acts of violence evoke repressive behaviour and consequently feelings of guilt, establishing a shared causal relation among the objects of analysis. The presence of these conditions in the narratives, as well as the characters' reaction to them is therefore decisive for identifying the developmental stage of the portrayed individuals and groups.

While most social groups portrayed possess a cultural super-ego, which is often represented by an individual, its demands regarding the suppression of different instincts, and consequently the effects it has on the ego differ strongly. In "The Lottery" the collective super-ego responsible for the event's realisation is personified by Old Man Warner, since he is the only villager who voices approval of the practice and does not show any signs of nervousness. While Mrs. Hutchinson only challenges the practice because of egoistic motives, Mr. Adam's indirect critique and the girl's wish show that some villagers have begun to question the annual killing and therefore

challenge it verbally. In Heaney's poem, the libidinous description of the Tollund Man's hanging recognises the goddess' ability to regulate the satisfaction of urges established by eros and thanatos and thereby acknowledges her role as cultural super-ego of the poem's speaker's home community. S/he, however, considers disrupting the deity's demands for further acts of violence by praying to the sacrificial victim, thereby establishing a new, peaceful cultural super-ego. In the *A History of Violence*, the reactivation of Joey's libidinous relationship to violence jeopardises the integrity of Tom's law-abiding super-ego and consequently causes him to lose his status as cultural super-ego of the family. His brother Richie and Fogarty, on the other hand, represent the profit oriented super-ego of the crime syndicate that fosters violence. Facing the retaliatory threat of Fogarty partly replaces the Stall's law-abiding super-egos with the crime syndicate's moral code that does not allow interference of the legal authorities. Whereas Nancy's friend's wish is voiced unconsciously and Mr. Adams's indirect critique constitutes a subliminal challenge to the dominant cultural super-ego, the poem's speaker's plan to end the violence by praying to the sacrificial victim is made with full awareness of the implications and therefore seems more likely to induce change. However, the speaker indicates that s/he is alone with her wish and consequently has little hope for success, while the nervousness displayed by most villager's indicates that many of them unconsciously reject the event. Joey's emancipation from his home community's cultural super-ego and the establishment of a peaceful super-ego requires him to leave his home community, like it does the poem's speaker. The spreading of violent behaviour within the family that follows Tom's relapse then, however, shows the difficulty to maintain a law-abiding collective super-ego when being threatened by individuals not restricted by the moral code.

Although identifying the conflicting cultural super-egos present in the objects of analysis allows to group individuals into those who accept the violent status quo and those who oppose it, the interplay between emotions of love and guilt that the super-ego represses and evokes are responsible for initiating the protagonists' actions against violence. In the short story the villager's nervousness and especially Mrs. Hutchinson's supplications originate in the pleasure principle, since they fear to lose their ability to nurture their libidos, should they die. The girl's wish, on the other hand, is motivated by affection for her friend, and the prominent time at which she voices it increases its emotional impact on both the villagers and the readers. When considering Heaney's comment about the Tollund Man reminding him of his uncle, the poem's

speaker's emotional proximity to the sacrificial victim can be regarded as the origin of his/her wish to visit Denmark. Unconscious guilt for indirectly participating in the continuation of the millennia-old violent practices likely followed the realisation that the victim resembled a relative, which thus motivate him/her to seek emancipation. Further feelings of guilt for rejecting his/her home community's violence and for wanting to leave are responsible for the speaker's disillusioned state at the end. In the film, a lack of love causes Joey's excessive violence, which forces him to leave his home. Later, the libidinous gratification their family bond provides maintains the Stall's cohesion, even after experiencing severe deviations from their moral code. While the Tom usually quickly represses emotions of guilt after committing acts of violence, the traumatising of him, Edie and Jack at the film's end shows that they are unable to follow this example, because of the recent experiences and that in order to remain together they will need to work through them. The lack of love that motivates Joey to leave Philadelphia also induces the poem's speaker's vow to visit the sacrificial victim, since the continuous violence s/he faces in his/her home causes strong feelings of alienation. Similarly, Nancy's friend's wish challenges her society's lack of empathy, and immediately elicits a brisk reprimand from the personification of her cultural super-ego, likely causing feelings of guilt in her. All objects of analysis therefore contain situations in which a lack of love in an individual's home community causes him/her to oppose his/her group's moral values. While the girl's wish is an example of unconscious rejection of her society's institutionalisation of violence in an early developmental stage, the poem's speaker's plan is accompanied by conscious feelings of guilt for considering to leave his/her community. Joey actually leaves his violent home in pursuit of affection and manages to start a new life, because he successfully represses the guilt that ensued his acts of violence. While the guilt impairs the poem's speaker and keeps him/her from undertaking his journey, Joey's departure is initially successful.

While feelings of love and guilt motivate the protagonists' attempts to emancipate themselves from their communities, the repression of these emotions can affect their egos' balance. Individuals who repress their libido excessively experience neuroses, whereas those who lack the super-ego's repressive force are solely motivated by the pleasure principle. While the characters in the objects of analysis often experience neuroses while being confronted with their home community's violence, the violence itself is often the symptom of neuroses that affect the group's cultural ego, since it is a "[substitute-gratification]", necessary because of the

repression of the libido. Since neuroses thus are often concomitant with their wish to emancipate themselves from the culture they perceive as barbaric, the different manifestations of the syndrome will be compared to establish who rejects his/her home community most vehemently. While neuroses hence are often a sign of developing morality, acts guided by the pleasure principle are examples for the most primitive behaviour. The principle is responsible for the villagers' uninhibited savagery during the stoning, the sexualised choking of the Tollund Man by the goddess, as well as the robbers' and Joey's libidinous relationship to brutality. It therefore initiates the wish for change, some characters of the three objects of analysis share. In "The Lottery" Nancy's friend's comment is caused by an unconscious cancellation of her super-egos' suppression of her libido, which lets the neurosis that inhibits the other villagers from voicing critique surface in the form of the village elder's rebuttal. Similarly, the poem's speaker's wish to undertake the journey is motivated by a neurosis that prevents his/her compatriots from ending the violence and that has persisted in his/her home since the Iron Age. Since realising this plan would, however, alienate him/her from his group, the speaker consciously represses the still existing libidinous feelings for his home culture, which induces a neurosis that impedes him/her from realising the plan. In the film Joey's departure from Philadelphia is caused by him unconsciously rejecting the crime syndicate's neurotic repression of the libido, which causes him to seek "substitute-gratifications" (Freud 79) in acts of excessive violence. In Millbrook, the robbery unveils Tom's neurosis, since he stoically represses the aggression caused by Fogarty's presence, his super-ego's demand to acquire the sheriff's help, and his libido's urge to be honest to his family until it is no longer possible. This profound neurosis surfaces when Edie confronts him with the truth, which evokes similar neurotic symptoms in her and Jack, since their libidinous relationship with Tom has been challenged by the recent events, which forces them to repress their affection for, and the aggression towards him. Although all characters described above reject their home society's neurotic pursuit of "substitute-gratifications" (Freud 79) that take the form of acts of violence against particular individuals or groups (Freud 141), Nancy's friend only unconsciously speaks out against it. The poem's speaker, on the other hand, is fully aware of the alienation his/her journey will cause, and thus consciously accepts the resulting neurosis, favouring the affection s/he feels for the victim. Since Joey actually leaves his home community, while the poem's speaker reflects on the consequences, the movie's protagonist appears to be more motivated to realise his

wish for belonging to a non-neurotic group. He is initially successful in establishing a functioning super-ego and starting a family because he represses the guilt his acts of violence caused, which later evoke his neurosis. This suppression, however, ultimately causes the traumatising of his whole family. The poem's speaker's careful assessment of what consequences his/her leaving would entail thus constitutes a higher degree of cultural development, since s/he consciously confronts the ensuing neurosis.

3. René Girard – *Violence and the Sacred*

In his book *Violence and the Sacred* the anthropological philosopher René Girard establishes a connection between sacrificial rites and the violent potential inherent to societies of all historical epochs. To support this, he reinterprets different cultures' religious and literary texts, as well as ritualistic practices, identifying a relationship between sacrificial and criminal violence, since the sacrificers' societies usually either perceive the ritualistic killings as "sacred obligation" (Girard 1) or as criminal acts. Girard (2) furthermore states that aggression is an emotion familiar to all members of a community, and continues to argue that "it should not be regarded as a simple reflex that ceases with the removal of the initial stimulus" (Girard 2), but that "violence [instead] seeks and always finds a surrogate victim" (Girard 2). By identifying the ambiguous evaluation of violence, its uniformity and the difficulty to stop it from spreading, Girard provides an overview of the central aspects of his theories.

Girard then elaborates on a sacrifice's purpose and the mechanisms necessary for its efficiency. The author argues that the substitution that takes place when violent impulses are directed at a surrogate victim lets the "object originally singled out for violence [fade] from view" (Girard 6). This incorporates a degree of misunderstanding into the process that can be found in the tale of Odysseus and Polyphemus (Homer, *Odyssey* 8th cent. BCE). In the narrative, the protagonist is the target of violence, but replaces himself with a substitution in the form of an animal and thereby fools the potential aggressor, which Girard (6) interprets as the devious quality inherent in the sacrificial misunderstanding. For the community the sacrifice represents a necessary offering to a deity, a theological justification that Girard (7) argues is necessary for the misunderstanding. However, in the narrative mentioned, the deity remains passive, which Girard notes is vital to maintain the "pervasive aura of dread" (7) the narrative evokes. The divine recipient of the sacrifice hence helps to obscure both the actual target and purpose of the ritual from the sacrificers, which maintains the practice's appeasing effect (Girard 7, 8). Girard, however, also notes that the sacrifice's purpose is not to divert violent impulses of a single member of the community onto a victim, but that "it is a substitute for all the members of the community, offered up by the members themselves. The sacrifice serves to protect the entire community from *its own* violence; it prompts the entire community to choose victims outside itself" (Girard 8). Both, substitution and misunderstanding are therefore necessary to secure a sacrifice's appeasing effect.

Girard then focuses on characteristics a potential victim needs to possess, in order to fulfil its purpose. He claims that the principle of substitution requires “*physical resemblance* between the vicarious victim and its prototypes” (Girard 11). While this resemblance is necessary to ascertain the appeasing effect of the sacrifice, “it must not be carried to the extreme of complete assimilation, or it would lead to disastrous confusion” (Girard 12). After examining typical sociological features of human victims in different societies, Girard (12, 13) concludes that victims are generally non-members of the sacrificers’ communities and that their death is unlikely to cause reprisal from members of the society. This lets them fulfil their purpose of providing a valve for the violent urges within a social group, which would otherwise “accumulate until [they overflow]” (Girard 10). Possessing the necessary degree of resemblance with the sacrificers, while at the same time being a non-member of their community thus are required properties of the victim.

After investigating the sacrifice’s purpose and naming factors necessary for its effectiveness, Girard discusses other methods of limiting violence within social groups. He argues that societal cohesion in communities which have terminated their sacrificial practices is often threatened by “interfamily vendettas or blood feuds” (15), which are fuelled by the wish to avenge a previous infringement. While this establishes a “vicious circle” (Girard 16) in primitive communities, modern societies rely on the judicial system to exert a single, “final word of vengeance” (Girard 16-17). “[P]rivate vengeance” (Girard 17) by aggrieved party’s relatives hence poses a threat to the community, while “public vengeance” (Girard 17) of the judicial system allows to avoid further acts of retribution. Girard sums up three categories of strategies responsible for limiting vicious circles of vengeance:

(1) *preventive measures* in which sacrificial rites divert the spirit of revenge into other channels; (2) the harnessing or hobbling of vengeance by means of *compensatory measures*, trials by combat, etc., whose curative effects remain precarious; (3) the establishment of a *judicial system*-the most efficient of all curative procedures. (22; emphasis added)

Girard stresses that the judicial system fulfils its purpose more directly, because it “conforms more strictly to the principle of vengeance” (24), since the actual culprit is punished, instead of a neutral victim. The judicial system shares its proximity to violent practices with religion, establishing a correspondence between “the transcendental effectiveness of a violence that is holy, legal, and legitimate successfully opposed to a violence that is unjust, illegal and illegitimate” (25). Societies in all cultural

developmental stages therefore rely on an authority responsible for administering legitimate violence in order to maintain social peace.

While modern societies utterly rely on the responsible party's direct punishment, primitive societies often avoid inflicting violence upon the culprit directly, since vicious circles of revenge pose a serious threat (Girard 29-30). Because of this potential surge of increasingly erratic violent behaviour, these communities view violence as contagious, and hence impure (Girard 30). The author interprets "sacrificial catharsis" (Girard 33) as effective method to thwart further infections and concludes that violence, therefore, persists in the non-threatening form of the ritual. Girard refers to the contaminating effect of both, purifying and polluting violence as "*mimetic*" (33), and states that "[t]he more men strive to curb their violent impulses, the more these impulses seem to prosper" (33). While some form of violence thus always accompanies human cohabitation, Girard stresses that "[b]eneficial violence must be carefully distinguished from harmful violence" (40), and that the former needs to be continually exercised in the form of a ritual. The author closes by stating "[a]s long as purity and impurity remain distinct, even the worst pollution can be washed away; but once they are allowed to mingle, purification is no longer possible" (Girard 41). Although Girard consequently argues that modern society's judicial system is more effective in limiting violence, the author attributes a similar degree of efficiency to the sacrificial practices of primitive cultures.

Girard argues that when a society's religious beliefs and sacrificial practices are no longer upheld diligently, a community's ability to discern between purifying violence and impure violence is jeopardised (47). He refers to this state as "*sacrificial crisis*" (54), and provides examples stemming from Greek tragedy, which he argues were written in a "period of transition between the dominance of an archaic theocracy and the emergence of a new, 'modern' order based on statism and laws" (Girard 47). In Euripides's *Heracles* (c. 416 BCE), the protagonist's irrational fit of rage he directs against his family after returning from his labours needs to be interpreted as "the sacrificial celebration that has gone wrong" (Girard 46), which according to Girard underlines the "contagious nature of the violence encountered by the warrior" (47) and the necessity of "ritual purification" (Girard 47). He thereby acknowledges the appeasing effect of religious rituals and the danger inherent to disruptions of established believe systems. Girard then sums up that "sacrificial distinction, [...] between the pure and the impure, cannot be obliterated without obliterating all other

differences as well, [including] differences among individuals” (54) that form cultural order. Before the gradual abandonment of sacrificial rites culminates in vicious circles of violence, the “cultural foundation” (Girard 54), as well as previously respected institutions falter, until society is threatened by dissolution. Sacrificial crises that occur when rituals and rules that limit violence within a group begin to become ineffective thus constitute a profound threat to societies of all stages of cultural development.

3.1. “The Lottery”

Since Girard’s book offers interpretations of sacrificial rites’ functions in societies, it provides an appropriate framework to analyse the events in Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery”. Features like the village’s sociologically homogenous community that initially seems civilised, the process of selection and the violent conclusion’s savageness hence allow one to deduce the covert purpose of the narrative’s central event and explain the shift in behaviour the villagers show over the course of the lottery.

While the description of the picturesque village and its respectful inhabitants makes it seem like an ideal community, the steadily increasing level of tension and the story’s violent conclusion contrast the positive connotations the first paragraphs evoke. However, the narrative voice does not mention a police station, church or town hall on the main square next to the bank and post office (Jackson 211), which would seem appropriate, if not obligatory in a small rural community. While this hardly attracts the reader’s attention right away, it insinuates that the village lacks some basic communal institutions, especially those that maintain social order, which indicates that conflicts among the inhabitants are rare. When Bailey states that the ritual “fulfils the need of a religion” (41), he asserts that the absence of these facilities is the main indicator for the efficacy of the sacrificial process’ pacifying effect described by Girard (8). Bailey, therefore, successfully locates the event’s purpose in the narrative’s first paragraph. While the absence of typical elements of social infrastructure is early evidence for the settlement’s culture’s primitive aspect, this is concealed by the villagers’ civilised demeanour and the existence of a school and other elements of infrastructure, like the bank and post office.

The initial, favourable social encounters occur between villagers of the same age or gender and are guided by the village’s patriarchal hierarchy. While at first the narrative voice states that the children play amongst themselves, a division soon

becomes evident when the boys begin to compete about who is able to collect the largest stones, while “[t]he girls [stand] aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys” (Jackson 211). The village’s adults behave similarly, since the men arrive before their women and remain separated, until all inhabitants have arrived (Jackson 211-212). Bailey (41) attributes this voluntary adherence to the community’s social guidelines to the existence of implicit “mimetic desires” (Girard 167), which can occur as contaminating violence or as behaviour that follows religious doctrine and thereby establishes cultural order. He argues that Mr. Adams’s comment about the neighbouring village proposing to cease the practice, Old Man Warner’s irritated rebuttal of this, as well as the unwillingness to replace the lottery’s aged paraphernalia constitute expressions of mimetic desires (Bailey 41). The collective stance on preserving the black box and refusing to abandon the practice strengthens the village’s social cohesion by replicating the behaviour of co-inhabitants, which maintains stability. Mr. Adam’s desire, however, stems from another community, and threatens the society’s integrity. Implicit mimetic desires are therefore responsible for the maintenance of the village’s relatively consistent variety of occupations, its patriarchal society and the annual repelling of a sacrificial crisis via the realisation of the ritual, but also for attitudes that threaten these institutions.

These implicit mimetic desires allow the villagers to procure modest wealth in their mostly agricultural labour, and thereby further reduce potential sources of conflict like exploitation or theft. The villagers’ nervousness that increases throughout the narrative, however, implies a collective aversion towards the event. This suppressed rejection of the procedure seems strange, since the ritual’s overt purpose - securing a plentiful crop - benefits the whole settlement. Bailey correctly identifies Mrs. Hutchinson as what Girard would call a surrogate victim (41), since she is a member of the community and not a ritual victim from outside. He attributes the readiness to overcome the inhibitions that therefore arise to the “effectiveness of the lottery’s rules” (41), which guarantee fair conditions for all families and establish “unanimity-minus-one” (Bailey 41, Girard 278). Some important effects of the drawing procedure, however, remain unmentioned by Bailey. The selective process not only fulfils the villagers’ mimetic desire for equal odds, but also reduces the likelihood of violent retaliation to a minimum. This is indicated when the abjuration of any acts of vengeance is given by Mr. Hutchinson as he rebukes his wife’s attempts to question the lottery’s result (Jackson 217). The mimetic desire for retribution, which Girard (33) describes

as highly potent, hence remains subdued by the strict adherence to the procedure's traditional rules and what Lamerson describes as the "release [of] pent aggression" (26). Although the villagers' collective compliance to the rules ensures a successful execution of the procedure, their nervousness prevails. Girard provides an explanation for this, too, when he states that sacrificial acts are interpreted as both, "sacred obligation[s] to be neglected at great peril, at other times as a sort of criminal activity entailing perils of equal gravity" (1) by the communities that practice them. The awareness that the imminent ritual bears strong resemblance to criminal acts hence causes the villagers' uneasiness. When Girard later states that not mentioning the deity during the escape from Polyphemus' cave maintained "the pervasive aura of dread, along with the firmly structured economy of violence" (7), he provides an explanation for both, the nervousness and the absence of a divine figure in the short story. In Jackson's story, this absence becomes apparent when Old Man Warner recites the proverb "[l]ottery in June, corn be heavy soon" (Jackson 215), which leaves a grateful deity unmentioned and when the abandonment of the ritual chant and salute (Jackson 213) is mentioned, which indicates that religious aspects of the ritual have disappeared. The absence of an addressee, to whom the sacrifice is dedicated therefore increases the ritual's emotional impact on both, the villagers and the reader, since the community carries full responsibility for the practice. When Girard states that the victim "is a substitute for all the members of the community, offered up by the members themselves" (8), it becomes clear that any sacrificial ritual indirectly exerts violence on the sacrificers while channelling it onto the ritual victim. Since the drawing process of the lottery renders all villager's possible victims, this effect becomes even more intense. The criminal aspect of the ritualistic killing and the violence that intensifies because of the absence of a deity hence explain the villagers' nervousness.

Although Bailey correctly identifies the event's purpose, namely, to provide a valve to release aggression (39) via a strictly regulated ritual that fulfils the need for a religion (41), his brief argumentation focuses on the lottery's function as substitute for religion that maintains social order. He consequently omits central aspects of Girard's framework like the purpose of sacrificial catharsis and the distinction between pure and impure violence. The villagers' determination to overcome their inhibitions cannot only be attributed to the satisfaction of their mimetic desires during the collective murder, but also indicates that they have effectively internalised the difference between pure and impure violence, the "sacrificial distinction" (Girard 54). Since the pervasive need

for pure violence is satisfied annually during the drawing of the tickets and the conclusive stoning, violent incidents among the villagers are avoided. Girard holds the “sacrificial catharsis” (33) the villagers’ experience as they approach their victim responsible for limiting the violence. The formalised collective murder and its rewarding effect therefore are the main differences between the pure violence of the ritual and other, impure forms of violence. The promise of sacrificial catharsis hence shares the responsibility for the sacrificers’ indifference towards their victim’s frantic protests with the implicit mimetic desire to adhere to the event’s rules. Since Girard holds “impure, contagious, reciprocal violence” (54) responsible for the loss of cultural distinctions and sacrificial crises, Mrs. Hutchinson’s protests constitute a form of impure violence. While the victim’s reaction to the lottery’s result are a stark contrast to the villagers’ forced calmness and therefore seem out of place, it is not unlikely that emotional protests of the lottery’s unfortunate winner regularly occur. Were the villagers to suspend the stoning because of this, the next year’s victim would likely protest successfully as well, rendering the denial of the lottery’s result a contagious behavioural pattern that would ultimately end the sacrificial practice. When Old Man Warner angrily refutes Mr. Adams’s comment, stating “[n]ext thing you know, they’ll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live *that* way for a while” (Jackson 215), he expresses his fear of the cultural decline that would ensue the lottery’s termination. The village elder directly mentions, here, what Girard describes as sacrificial crisis and warns a member of a younger generation who is influenced by another group’s behaviour by mimetic desire.

While Bailey holds implicit mimetic desire responsible for the maintenance of the lottery’s rules, as well as the for the origin of Mr. Adam’s statement, the motivation of Mrs. Hutchinson’s protests and the comment of a friend of the Hutchinsons’ daughter can be investigated more thoroughly. Although Mrs. Hutchinson’s protests are a form of contagious and consequently mimetic violence, they are more than a simple imitation of a predecessor. While Bailey’s (40) assertion that the collective stoning of a fellow group member is possible because of the perceived fairness of the selective process is correct, the villagers’ indifference towards the victim’s appeal to repeat the drawing can be explained much more effectively by assuming that the lottery excludes her from the village’s community. While mimetic adherence to the ritual’s rules and the promise of sacrificial catharsis already help the villagers to overcome their inhibitions, perceiving her as an outsider would further help them to do so. Her exclusion would

also explain her emotional reaction to the lottery's result, since if she is no longer a member of the community, neither the overt purpose of securing the villagers' harvest, nor its covert pacifying effect promise personal relief in her situation. The institution that maintains the other villagers' calmness, consequently, no longer appeases her. Her mimetic desire for violence that has accumulated since the last lottery thus surfaces in the form of a personal sacrificial crisis. The accusations that the drawing was not fair (Jackson 216, 217, 218) are hence directed at the community and the process, and emphasise the amoral, criminal aspect that Girard (1) ascribes to the practice. The personal sacrificial crisis that causes her emotional appeal enables her to voice the discontent with the ritual. Since the violence of her desperation threatens to contaminate the other villagers, it is ignored by the others in order to contain it.

While Mrs. Hutchinson utters her supplication in a death struggle, Nancy's unnamed friend expresses her hope that the Hutchinsons' daughter does not receive the marked ticket at the peak of suspense, right after the father of the family has taken the last ticket and thereby completed the final drawing. As the proximity to the event's violent conclusion increases the "the pervasive aura of dread" (Girard 7) to its maximum, solemn silence is likely the socially desirable way to behave. The girl's brief whisper, stating, "I hope it's not Nancy" (Jackson 218), hence constitutes an infringement of the procedure's unwritten rules and, consequently, a form of mimetic violence that, if it were to spread, would endanger the ritual's realisation. While this likens the wish to Mrs. Hutchinson's appeal, it is not ignored, but briskly rejected by Old Man Warner, who states "[i]t's not the way it used to be. [...] People ain't the way they used to be" (Jackson 218). This comment not only indicates that the girl's wish is more threatening than the victim's complaints, but it also shows that the most conservative villager perceives a decline in the other villagers' attitude towards the ritual. While Mrs. Hutchinson's behaviour can be explained by a personal sacrificial crisis, caused by her exclusion from the group, it is more difficult to deduce the girl's motivation for enunciating her wish. Although compassion likely encourages her, the mimetic desire to end the ritual, again, evokes this emotional response. Instead of stemming from proposed plans of a neighbouring village, the girl's wish verbalises an aversion towards the stoning of children, which all villagers display when there is a "general sigh" (Jackson 218) as the Hutchinson's infant's ticket is revealed to be unmarked. Since expressing this attitude still constitutes a considerable transgression, and the girl, who is twelve years old, knows this, the quietly uttered wish cannot be

solely explained by the mimetic desire to spare children from the ritual. Girard offers an explanation when he states that

[m]odern society aspires to equality among men [i.e. humans, G.J.O.] and tends instinctively to regard all differences, even those unrelated to the economic or social status [...], as obstacles in the path of human happiness. [...] When differences come unhinged they are generally identified as the cause of those rivalries for which they also furnish the stakes. This has not always been their role. As in the case of sacrificial rites, when they no longer serve as a dam against violence, they serve to swell the flood. (Girard 55)

While the girl's statement mimics the other villagers' aversion to killing of children, it constitutes a new form of behaviour that actively demands Nancy's exclusion from the ritual, since the threat to her friend's life establishes a lack of equality between the two, which consequently threatens her personal happiness. Girard argues that this modern perspective increases the danger of societal conflicts, which would likely be the case if other villagers would support the girl's wish. Groups who support the practice would clash with those who oppose its violence and retribution for the stoning of relatives during previous lotteries would become possible, which would cause a sacrificial crisis. The equality between her friend and herself the girl misses can be attributed to the resemblance between the two classmates.

While Mrs. Hutchinson's supplication and Mr. Adam's comment must be interpreted as indirect challenges to the practice, the only clear comment of disapproval of the annual sacrifice is voiced by the girl. Girard's interpretations of sacrificial practices and their gradual abandonment do not thematise clemency towards the victim, instead he holds the repetitiveness of the sacrificial act, the fixed type of victim and "the inability to adapt to new conditions" (Girard 43) of religions responsible for detrimental changes to the rituals. While the mimetic desire to maintain the practice is responsible for ignoring Mr. Summers's annual suggestion to replace the black box (Jackson 212), other changes to the procedure have already been made. Cultic elements like the "tuneless chant" (Jackson 213) vanished and were replaced with the joking and mundanely dressed Mr. Summers (Jackson 213), indicating that the sacrificial crisis, caused by the loss of distinctions, has already begun. Although the uneasiness the villagers exhibit throughout most of the event also indicates that the practice is quietly put under scrutiny, Old Man Warner's standpoint persists, which is demonstrated when all villagers close in on their victim. Nevertheless, the sign of affection uttered by Nancy's friend indicates that the necessary process of the victim's expulsion from the community, at least in the view of some, is no longer effective. Since

eliminating this dissociation might lead to acts of vengeance, the distinction between pure and impure violence has begun to erode (Girard 43-44). The sacrificial crisis has consequently begun.

3.2. “The Tollund Man”

Since regular eruptions of violence are the reason for the speaker’s visit of the sacrificial victim’s remains in Seamus Heaney’s poem “The Tollund Man” (see page 88), Girard’s discussions on the interrelationship between sacrificial rites and the maintenance of social peace offer an appropriate set of concepts to examine the speaker’s intent and consequently the poem’s central message. While the speaker’s visit to the museum in Aarhus and his/her prayer evoke religious connotations, other issues like alienation and hopelessness need to be taken into consideration as well, in order to deduce the speaker’s motivations.

Both the initial determination to visit Aarhus and the favourable description of the corpse establish a devout ambiance and thereby suggest that a specific task or hope motivates the speaker to travel to Denmark. Stating “[s]omeday I will go to Aarhus (Heaney, *Wintering* 1; emphasis added) indicates that the speaker has not yet visited the city, however, the high level of detail with which s/he describes the sacrificial victim’s facial expression communicates profound knowledge of the matter. This impression is confirmed when the poem’s speaker visits the swamp where the body was found, again mentioning a series of details about the victim. Closing with the words “I will stand a long time” (Heaney, *Wintering* 11), suggests that s/he will find him-/herself in a state of solemn contemplation. Although the religious undertones remain subliminal up to this point, the following sacrificial scene confirms that the speaker’s wish to go on the journey is religiously motivated. The initial announcement to do so thus can be interpreted as vow, which makes him/her identifiable as member of a religion. This presumption is further supported by Heaney’s explication that seeing the pictures of the Tollund Man’s corpse in Glob’s book *The Bog People* (first published in 1965) lead him to “vow to go on pilgrimage” (*Preoccupations* 58). While the contemplative scenes of the poem’s beginning only offer few thematical overlaps with Girard’s theories, the religious aspect of the journey allows one to establish a connection. Girard states that “[r]eligion invariably strives to subdue violence [...]. Paradoxically, the religious and moral authorities in a community attempt to instill [sic]

nonviolence, as an active force into daily life and as a mediating force into ritual life, through the application of violence" (22). The peaceful atmosphere that dominates the poem's first stanzas, hence indicates that the pilgrimage is a part of the speaker's ritual life, the violent motivation of which, remains obscure at this point.

While the poem's first three stanzas evoke a contemplative atmosphere, avoiding explicit references to religion, the subsequent description of the sacrificial victim's death uses agitating metaphors, including religious, violent and sexual imagery. The contrast this thematic change establishes, shifts the focus from the speaker onto the sacrificial victim and the unnamed goddess, attributing a prominent position to them. When the Tollund Man is referred to as "[b]ridegroom to the goddess" (Heaney, *Wintering* 12), the speaker retells the sacrificers' religious narrative suggested by Glob (168 *The Bog*). This mythical perspective on the practice implements "a certain degree of *misunderstanding*" (Girard 7), which is crucial, since it veils the ritual's true purpose from the community, and thereby ensures its pacifying effect. Although the motivation to evoke the sacrificial scene with the metaphors underlying the rite is unclear at this point, the speaker indicates that s/he stands in an unspecified relationship with the ritual, since evoking it is clearly a part of the pilgrimage, which is a great personal concern to him/her. While Glob (168) interprets the sacrifice as marriage to the fertility goddess, the poem's speaker describes her tightening the torc around the victim's neck, and thereby acknowledges the "*ambivalence*" (1) between the sacred and criminal quality Girard associates with sacrificial practices. Since in the poem the deity actively chokes her victim, the speaker equates her with the sacrificers, and consequently contradicts the general view that the divine addressees of sacrificial offerings remain passive recipients. By recognising the sacrifice's criminal quality and putting the worshippers and the deity on the same level, the poem's speaker subtly attests one of Girard's central claims.

The victim is not a substitute for some particularly endangered individual, nor is it offered up to some individual of particularly bloodthirsty temperament. Rather, it is a substitute for all the members of the community, offered up by the members themselves. (Girard 8)

Since Girard argues that no particular individual - such as a priest or chief - but *all* members of the community are responsible for the practice, the goddess in Heaney's poem can be interpreted as an allegory of the sacrificers' community. When the speaker simultaneously acknowledges the criminal aspect of the ritualistic killing, s/he indirectly accuses the sacrificers of immoral behaviour. Girard, however, also argues

that if deities intervene during sacrificial processes, narratives lose the “pervasive aura of dread” (7) they would evoke in a modern reader if the divine figure were absent. By describing the goddess choking her victim the poem’s speaker recognises the sacrificers’ collective responsibility for the immoral practice, while simultaneously establishing the degree of “*misunderstanding*” (Girard 7) necessary to veil the sacrifice’s actual purpose and thereby limits the understandability of the allusions.

A similar relationship between religious obligation and moral transgression can be found in the subsequent sexual act between goddess and victim. The description of the goddess’ “open[ing] her fen” (Heaney, *Wintering* 14) and her “dark juices working / [h]im into a saint’s kept body” (Heaney, *Wintering* 15-16) indicate that the commencing sexual intercourse and the deity’s bodily fluids exert a purifying effect on the victim. Although Girard states that sexuality needs to be seen as impure since it “has to do with violence” (37), he acknowledges the sanctifying effect, when he suggests that “the same substance can stain or cleanse” (40). He also argues that a victim “inevitably appears as a being who submits to violence without provoking a reprisal; [...] a mysterious saviour who visits affliction on mankind in order subsequently to restore it to good health” (Girard 97). The goddess’ dark juices elevate the victim’s status in the speaker’s faith, which is possible because the ritual diverts violent impulses from within sacrificers’ society onto the victim, while his/her religious perspective on the sacrifice establishes the necessary level of misunderstanding to maintain its effectivity.

The sexual aspect of the Tollund Man’s ritualistic death coincides with the sacrifice’s overt purpose, namely, to secure a good crop in the upcoming year by offering a spouse to the fertility goddess (Glob 138, 168), and is therefore mainly responsible for establishing the misunderstanding. The poem’s speaker’s description of the goddess choking her victim, on the other hand, indicates the above-mentioned awareness of the ritual’s criminal aspect, which needs to remain mostly obscured from the broad public of the sacrificers. Since Girard (26) argues that illicit violence needs to remain separated from legitimate religious violence, the poetic voice’s mention of the Tollund Man being murdered, however, indicates a view on the ritual that deviates from the other sacrificers’. The speaker therefore portrays the goddess, and consequently the sacrificers, as murderous criminals, and thereby acknowledges Girard’s claim that “the criminal in the [Greek tragedies] sees himself not so much as a righter-of-wrongs as a performer-of-sacrifices” (48). S/he thereby subliminally

insinuates the sacrificers' inability to distinguish between pure and impure violence, which Girard (54) argues is the cause of sacrificial crises.

While the turfcutters are only mentioned briefly, as they unearth the corpse, their role in the poem exceeds that of finders. Since Heaney reflects on his grandfather digging peat in his Northern Irish home in the poem "Digging" (Heaney, *Poems* 3; see page 87), the anonymous Jutlanders establish a connection between the author's family history and the Tollund Man's discovery. Besides this allusion, Heaney also stated in an interview that the facial features of the well-preserved sacrificial victim (see figure 12) reminded him of his uncle (qtd. in Longley 75). Since "resemblance" (Girard 12) between a sacrificial victim



Fig. 12 The Tollund Man after being discovered

and the actual target of aggression is necessary to divert violence towards the victim, the author's apparent familiarity with the Iron Age man and the turfcutters allows one to make inferences regarding the perceived societal affiliation of the individuals. Heaney explicitly mentions this in the same interview when he states:

[...] the sacrificial element, the territorial religious element, the whole mythological field surrounding these images was very potent. So I tried, not explicitly, to make a connection between the sacrificial, ritual, religious element in the violence of contemporary Ireland and this terrible sacrificial religious thing in *the Bog People*. (qtd. in O'Neill 92)

Since many scholars (O'Neill 93; Murphy 39; Vendler 35) interpret Heaney's description of sacrificial practices in Iron Age Denmark as exemplary for a general proneness to violence many Northern European cultures share due to their common cultural heritage, both the sacrificial victim and the peat diggers are members of the speaker's culture and share a religion. The peaceful atmosphere in verses 1-3 originates from the sense of familiarity, which maintains a level of resemblance, while the temporal and geographical distance that separates the Tollund Man and the poem's speaker veils the connectedness of them, and thereby ensures a degree of misunderstanding in the reader.

While the poem's first part provides the readers with the frame narrative and implicit information on the shared cultural and religious background of the persons mentioned, the prayer the speaker considers saying in the second part clarifies the

journey's purpose. Since recounting the Iron Age Man's sacrifice with a slightly altered recitation of its dogmatic meaning indicates that the poem's speaker is a believer in the sacrificers' religion, stating that "I could risk blasphemy" (Heaney, *Wintering* 21) by saying the prayer shows that s/he considers rejecting the religious doctrine. Girard (54) argues that when religious beliefs, which are responsible for the maintenance of a stable degree of proximity between victim and sacrificer (Girard 43), are called into question, a sacrificial crisis occurs. Among other causes, he holds "too much continuity" (43) between community and victim responsible for this lack of differentiation between "impure" (43) and "sacred" (43) violence, which consequently contaminates the ritual, and thereby incapacitates religion's ability to stop vengeful aggression from spreading. The profound degree of resemblance between the well preserved victim and the poet's uncle has therefore made it difficult to distinguish between the victim and the speaker's fellow group members, and motivates the dismissive attitude towards his/her religion, s/he implies by mentioning the criminal aspect of the marriage. When the speaker states that the prayer to the sacrificial victim would "[c]onsecrate the cauldron bog" (Heaney, *Wintering* 22) s/he, however, substitutes the goddess with the passive victim and thereby acknowledges the importance of religious belief. By referring to the sacrificial site as "[o]ur holy ground" (Heaney, *Wintering* 23), s/he articulates the shared group membership of all individuals mentioned in the poem, also including the reader. The speaker's central wish, to "make germinate" (Heaney, *Wintering* 24) the mortal remains of the victims of two violent incidents, one of which took place during the Irish struggle for independence (Murphy 38; Vendler 34), emphasises Girard's (54) assertion that it is paramount to discern between pure and impure violence, in order to halt vicious circles of vengeful violence. By affiliating the goddess with the impure act of murder, s/he indirectly rejects following the faith responsible for the continuous, impure violence. The sacrificial victim, who was transformed into "a mysterious saviour" (Girard 97), however, seems to be able to purify the marks the victims have left on the soil by letting them overgrow and thereby end the repetitive violence. By praying to the Tollund Man, the poem's speaker hence attempts to establish a new religion, which renders the victims' mortal remains pure and thereby ends the vicious circle of violence.

In his essay "Violence and the Sacred in Seamus Heaney's *North*" (1996) Charles L. O'Neill discusses corresponding thematic fields between Girard's and Heaney's works. Although O'Neill focuses on poems contained in *North* (first published

in 1975), many of the interrelations the author uncovers first occur in “The Tollund Man” and thereby highlight the poem’s prominent position in the poet’s oeuvre. While O’Neill provides an overview of similarities between Heaney’s and Girard’s world views, he leaves some central concepts of Girard, such as the distinction between pure and impure violence and the sacrificial crisis, unmentioned. When O’Neill states that for both “archaic processes of the past return to dominate the present” (100), he infers that the violence that motivates the poem’s speaker to undertake his/her journey is essentially the same as the sacrificial violence responsible for the Tollund Man’s death. However, Girard would argue that the victim’s sacrifice constituted a pre-emptive measure, containing the potential spreading of violence by institutionalising the sacrificial catharsis (22, 33), while the recurring violent events in Ireland lack a definite ritualistic framework and are mainly motivated by partisan longing for revenge. Since religious affiliation was a major factor separating the opposing groups during the Northern Irish conflict, the institution lost the ability to help distinguishing between pure and impure violence and thus became one of the justifications for continuing the reciprocal aggression. While Heaney himself referred to the parallels he perceived between the conflict in his home and the rituals described in Glob’s *The Bog People* as the central inspiration for his poem (qtd. in O’Neill 92), discerning between pure violence that remains contained in the religious rituals and overflowing violence that establishes vicious circles of revenge is an essential aspect of Girard’s framework. Although Girard’s (2) names the difficulty to curb violence as one of its central properties, and therefore offers evidence supporting Heaney’s and O’Neil’s view that the sectarian conflict continues the violence of the Iron Age ritual, it is necessary to mention that the poem’s speaker interprets the sacrificial rite as impure. The criminal aspect of the hanging s/he insinuates stems from the speaker’s personal interpretation of the ritual, while the ritual itself was a preventive measure against violence. While O’Neil’s interpretation of Heaney’s poetic reflections on the Iron Age religious practice correctly identify the continuous aspect of violence, it is necessary to explicitly point out that this connection originates in the poem’s speaker’s subjective perspective, which stems from his/her ability to distinguish between pure and impure violence.

In the poem’s final part, the speaker reflects on the journey’s emotional impact while driving through rural Jutland. When s/he states “[s]omething of his sad freedom / [a]s he rode the tumbril / [s]hould come to me” (Heaney, *Wintering* 33-35), the speaker suspects that the Tollund Man felt relieved while being driven through the sacrificers’

villages and indicates that s/he expects to feel similarly while driving through the same landscape. The last part of pilgrimage hence is an imitation of the Tollund Man's final journey, motivated by the mimetic desire to find relieve from the guilt s/he experiences because of her co-liability for the existence of the vicious circle of violence the shared culture maintains. Instead of participating in the reciprocal acts of violence, fuelled by the mimetic desire for revenge, the poem's speaker therefore attempts to establish a new religious doctrine, which focuses on eliminating the marks responsible for incentivising the continuation of violence, which acknowledges Girard's assertion that "religion invariably strives to subdue violence" (22). The relief, however, remains denied, since the speaker's attempts to communicate with the local inhabitants remain unsuccessful, which consequently means that his/her prayer is unintelligible for his/her fellow group members as well. By aligning him-/herself with the sacrificial victim's position, the poem's speaker indicates that s/he thinks that his/her pilgrimage and the blasphemous prayer would also render him/her an outcast, as the Tollund Man was before his death. The sense of personal defeat is reflected when the speaker states that "[i]n the old man-killing parishes / I will feel lost, / [u]nhappy and at home" (Heaney, *Wintering* 42-44). The term "old man-killing parishes" (Heaney, *Wintering* 44) supports O'Neill's (93) interpretation of Heaney viewing the ongoing sectarian conflict in his home as extension of the sacrificial violence in Iron Age Jutland. It is, however, crucial to take Girard's differentiation between sacred and non-sacred violence into account. Only because the speaker is unable to discern between the victim and a relative, s/he becomes aware that the ritual perpetuates impure violence, and therefore sees it as an extension of the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland.

3.3. *A History of Violence*

In David Cronenberg's *A History of Violence* (2005), the protagonist faces a series of threats to his peaceful, small-town family life that originate in his criminal past. Since the movie's narrative brings several social groups, which profoundly differ in their proneness to violence, into contact, Girard's assessments of how societies separated by different levels of cultural development limit violent behaviour allow comparisons between the groups' approaches and make it possible to explain shifts in behaviour of different characters.

Although the first scene of the movie's initial sequence depicts the mundane process of two men leaving their motel room, the bright sunlight and the chirping of crickets establish a hot summer day's brooding tension, which foreshadows the sequence's tense conclusion. While the older man behaves irritably, the younger one is indifferent at first. When he finds a young girl in the ravaged lobby, he shoots her with a facial expression indicating amusement. His sadistic smile (see figure 1, already discussed on p. 18) implies that the act entails a satisfying emotional response resembling "sacrificial catharsis" (33) which, according to Girard, is usually contained in a religious ritual. Both perpetrators grew up in a society in which the judicial system has the duty to quell violence by exerting revenge on individuals responsible for spreading it (Girard 24), which makes it impossible to argue that they are unaware of the rules of conduct in force around them. Instead, their homicidal lifestyle is symptomatic of a rejection of this system and the establishment of a personal cult that requires periodic realisations of "sacrificial catharsis" (Girard 33), in the form of violent acts of revenge taken upon law-abiding citizens. This vengeful repetitiveness, as well as the indistinguishability between pure and impure acts of violence constitute a sacrificial crisis in the Girardian sense. The cause for this refusal to accept social and judicial norms is possibly the criminals' impression that society as a whole – even before their involvement - is in a state of sacrificial crisis, since the legal system's efficiency has begun to erode. Although this attitude is not addressed in the movie, Girard offers an explanation when he discusses the development of the judicial system. He states that the shift away from preventive and compensatory measures against violence occurs when "the intervention of an independent legal authority becomes *constraining*" (23). Since the robbers were not effectively impeded from committing their atrocious acts at the beginning of their criminal careers, they have embraced the notion of the sacrificial crisis' lawlessness and made it their cult, which encourages them to commit further criminal acts to maintain their belief in their life choices.

Whereas the movie's initial sequence depicts uninhibited, seemingly casual brutality, violence is merely a peripheral phenomenon in the following scenes that show the Stall family's mostly peaceful daily routines. Their relationships are depicted as loving, since pleasantries and friendly advice are exchanged during their communal breakfast, and the marriage of Tom and Edie is portrayed as romantically and sexually healthy. When Sarah wakes up screaming, she is immediately comforted by Jack telling her "[t]here's no such thing as monsters" (A 7:12). By stating this, her brother

encourages her to think rationally, which is the Stall family's life philosophy. The family's moral beliefs are depicted as being guided by the "judicial system-the most efficient of all curative procedures" (Girard 22). When Jack avoids a physical conflict with a schoolmate by agreeing with the insults that provoke him, he confirms this interpretation. The teenager conveys that he sees respecting the law as more important than protecting his personal pride, an attitude he likely acquired from his parents.

In the film's first two sequences, violence exclusively takes place in dimly lit or dark rooms, an association that continues to occur throughout the movie. The establishing shot's bright sunlight amplifies the robbers' irritability and indifference (see figure 13), while dim backlight from a curtained window lights the young robber when he murders the child, which partly conceals his excited facial expression (see figure 1, already discussed on page 18). In the following scene Sarah wakes up screaming in a sparsely lit room, but instead of being backlit, the characters' faces are clearly visible in the indirect fill light coming from the hall (Monaco 217) (see figure 14). When Jack states that "[shadow monsters] are scared of the light" (A 6:57) while consoling his sister, he verbalises this cinematic device. While



Fig. 13 Robbers leave Motel



Fig. 14 Tom comforts Sarah



Fig. 15 Jack gets harassed by Bobby

what Girard (54) would refer to as impure, contagious violence often takes place in dimly lit surroundings, like the motel lobby (see figure 1, already discussed on p. 18), Sarah's bedroom (see figure 14) and the locker room, in which Jack is harassed (see figure 15), pleasant scenes like the Stall's breakfast (see figure 16, page 49) or the

scene in which Tom opens his diner (see figure 17) are evenly lit. The confrontations between Tom and Fogarty first in the diner and later in front of the Stall's home constitute an exception, since they take place during daytime. This can be interpreted as reference to the uncovering of the protagonist's true identity, since the violence that has contaminated him in during his life in Philadelphia finally becomes visible to his relatives. Later scenes that portray violence, like the couples fight in the staircase and the final confrontation with Richie, again, take place in sparsely lit surroundings. The profoundly different atmosphere during the Stall's initial breakfast and their dinner at the film's end is the most prominent example of this cinematic device. While the evenly lit breakfast scene (see figure 16) depicts



Fig. 16 The Stall's breakfast



Fig. 17 Tom opens his diner



Fig. 18 The Stall's dinner

a family emotionally balanced, typical family, the dinner table in the dark kitchen (see figure 18) reflects the family's trauma and contamination with violence.

During the robbery at Tom's diner, the value systems of the two social groups collide and the infectious or mimetic nature of impure violence described by Girard becomes visible. As Tom faces the criminals' aggressive behaviour, his strength of character is emphasised, since he initially attempts to resolve the situation by calmly responding to the crude demands. His merciless reaction to the robbers' ensuing brutality, however, vehemently contrasts with his identity as a mild-mannered father and average citizen. When Girard discusses the contagious nature of violence that is not part of religious rituals, he states, "[c]ontamination is a terrible thing, and only those who are already contaminated would wilfully expose themselves to it" (30). While

Tom's violent past therefore facilitates his abrupt change, the traumatising effect of his violent eruption becomes apparent when the protagonist quietly reflects on his actions in the dimly lit hospital room after the robbery. Although he has managed to evade violence in the peaceful community, in which he has spent the last decades, the robbers have awakened his old propensity to violence and thereby re-contaminated him. This is also reflected in Tom's dismissive attitude towards admiration for his behaviour in the following scenes. While it is overtly motivated by his fear of being recognised, the violent incident has evoked the rewarding feeling of sacrificial catharsis, and simultaneously rendered him impure, which he attempts to deny.

The protagonist's apprehension substantiates when his old acquaintances show up and thereby introduce the social codes he fled into his new centre of life, his diner. While Fogarty makes his wish for revenge explicit later, when he tells Edie about her husband's past, the men's presence in Tom's diner, unambiguously communicates the necessity of retaliation. Instead of relying on the judicial system, the crime syndicate needs to employ "compensatory measures" (Girard 22), since legal prosecution of violent acts would threaten the group's means of acquisition. While Tom feigns ignorance while being taunted by Fogarty, Edie responds to the threat by calling the town's sheriff, thereby evoking state's promise of protection. When the sheriff informs the couple about the visitors' identity after the encounter, Tom states that he does not know them, and thereby denies his proximity to violence again. By continuing to hide his true identity, he therefore attempts to avert a sacrificial crisis in the value system of his family, because if they learnt about the acts of excessive violence he committed, it would render him impure and consequently challenge the other family members' belief in him being able to distinguish between pure and impure violence. Denying his past, however, simultaneously inadvertently protects his old acquaintances, and he thus actively re-introduces the crime syndicate's system of compensatory violence (Girard 22) in his personal environment.

While the protagonist hopes that his old acquaintances leave, they continue to seek revenge and thereby put a strain on the family's integrity. Edie's resolve to believe her spouse is put under pressure when Fogarty tells her about Tom's violent past. The most

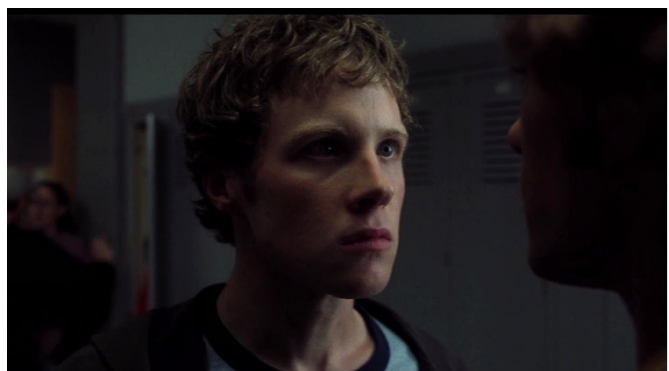


Fig. 19 Jack refuses to back down

profound change in behaviour, however, occurs when Jack violently responds to being harassed again in school. Although the son of the family was not present during the robbery, his father's brutality has drastically increased the teenager's proximity to violence and thereby contaminated him (see figures 15, already discussed on page 48 and figure 19, page 50). Although Tom rejected his son's praise for thwarting the robbery, and thereby attempted to discourage Jack from following his example, Girard's notion that "only those who are already contaminated would wilfully expose themselves to it" (30), is confirmed again. After the fight, Tom firmly asserts: "In this family we don't solve our problems by hitting people", to which Jack replies "[n]o, in this family we shoot them" (A 50:22). Jack's firm belief in avoiding violence, and thereby acknowledging society's implicit rules of conduct and explicit laws has faltered, since his father's behaviour and the tension it introduced to the family, have established a personal sacrificial crisis in him. His rejection of his father's statement consequently insinuates both, the infectiousness of Tom's violence and the consequential scepticism towards the law. The father, however, contradicts his own assertion by answering the accusation by slapping his son, thereby introducing physical violence into the family.

When Fogarty and his companions arrive in front of the Stall's home, Tom's attempts of ignoring the criminals' request for revenge, and thereby containing the violence have failed. By agreeing to take his son's place, Tom submits to his adversaries' system of compensation. Although the father faces his judgement, his face expresses mocking self-assuredness (see figure 20), since he seemingly enjoys the prospect of a violent resolution of the reignited blood feud that has exerted considerable



Fig. 20 Tom looks at Fogarty, who has abducted Jack



Fig. 21 Fogarty relishes having the upper hand

pressure on him. While his proneness to violence allows him to overpower two of the criminals, he soon faces Fogarty's gun, seemingly willing to accept his fate. Although Fogarty has refrained from explicitly threatening the protagonist's family members,

thus expressed his adherence to the crime syndicate's code of conduct and the readiness to limit violence as much as possible, his facial expression indicates the pleasure of sacrificial catharsis (Girard 33) (see figure 21, page 51). When Jack shoots Fogarty, the threatening situation ends, however, vindictive violence has become an integral aspect of the Stalls' lives and thereby contaminated the family.

After the immediate danger from the members of the crime syndicate has disappeared, Eddie and Jack re-evaluate their relationships with Tom. In the hospital the protagonist continues to stress that he and his violent alter ego Joey are separate individuals and thereby attempts to maintain the family's believe system. When Edie confronts her husband with his violent past, he reluctantly admits that it took him a lot of effort to cope with it. By stating "I wasn't really born again till I met you. I was nothing." (A 1:00:19) he concedes that the social system of which he was a member in Philadelphia did not provide him with personal fulfilment and that the violence that dominated his life was a symptom of the lack of a sense of social belonging. Girard states that the purpose of reconciliatory measures is to "cut violence short" (23) via a single act of revenge of the harmed party. Since the maiming of Fogarty that established the threat to Joey's life was likely motivated by an urge to take revenge for a previous infringement, but exceeded the limitations, the protagonist's disregard for the social code made it necessary to leave its sphere of influence. By acquiring another man's identity, Joey then exploited a stranger's death, which substituted the retaliatory death he would have faced had he remained in Philadelphia. This substitutive process resembles the disguise that helps Odysseus and his men escape from the cyclops' cave, which Girard (6,7) views as prototypical for the misunderstanding that accompanies all sacrificial processes. Two symbolic sacrifices therefore allow the formation of Joey's new persona the abandonment of his identity that constitutes a symbolic suicide, and the death of the real Tom Stall, both of which enable the start of a new life and temporarily end the vicious circle of violence.

Since Girard (7) emphasises that a certain degree of misunderstanding is required to make a sacrificial process effective, Edie's knowledge about her husband's past cancels out the replacement's appeasing effect. Although Tom has averted the threat the revealing of his true identity posed so far, his true identity has been exposed and now challenges his wife's believe in her husband's moral integrity, and consequentially her own, which establishes a personal sacrificial crisis. The lack of trust in Tom's moral values becomes even more obvious when Jack confronts his

father, stating: “If I talk to Sam about you, will you have me whacked?” (A 1:02:43). By implying that his father is unable to distinguish between him and a traitor, Jack insinuates that Tom is in a state of personal sacrificial crisis, since he has lost the ability to discriminate between what Girard (54) describes as pure from impure violence, and thereby fittingly summarises the protagonist’s inner struggle. While foiling the robbery at the diner has already challenged the teenager’s belief in the effectiveness of the judicial system and contaminated him with violence, witnessing his father’s brutality eliminated a main source of personal and moral guidance, which leaves him in the same state of personal sacrificial crisis as his mother.

Although Edie and Jack express utter frustration after discovering Tom’s past, the family stays together, indicating that while the trust that formed the foundation of their relationships has almost vanished, solidarity between them still exists. Whereas Jack’s initial reluctance to use violence is quickly replaced by his father’s lack of inhibition, it takes Edie more time to consciously accept the drastic changes in the family’s moral standards. When the sheriff visits the Stalls after Fogarty’s failed act of vengeance and, again, expresses doubts about the state of ignorance Tom continues to feign, Edie continues to support her husband’s version, although much more apathetically than before. Since Edie is a lawyer at the communal court, she is aware that if she does not give a false testimony her husband will likely face legal prosecution, which would severely affect the family’s cohesion and consequently her children’s psychological well-being. While it can therefore be argued that she feels obliged to maintain the narrative she supported before, it seems likely that she has uncsciously accepted the “compensatory measures” (Girard 22) as only strategy that can possibly resolve her predicament. During the fight that ensues the sheriff’s leaving, Edie verbally takes revenge upon her husband by shouting “[f]uck you, Joey” (A 1:07:37) and Tom comes close to raping her after she falls, but attempts to get away, when he seemingly comes to his senses. She, however, draws him onto her, initiating sexual intercourse and then pushes him away afterwards. In this scene, Girard’s notion that “[s]exuality is impure because it has to do with violence” (37) therefore is confirmed. By animating Tom to carry out the act of sexual violence against her and then rejecting him, she becomes a market participant in the family’s recently established “economy of violence” (Girard 7), and demonstrates to her spouse that he is no longer able to distinguish between pure and impure violence (Girard 54). By deliberately rejecting the sheriff’s offer to help the family, the need to avenge the moral decline she experiences

arises, which implements the crime syndicate's compensatory system of limiting violence within the family. Edie's and Jack's rejection of Tom's attempts to reconcile therefore direct violence back at Tom and thereby satisfy the need to take revenge for the emotional turmoil they have experienced because of him. The unprecedented exposition to violence has contaminated the family members and established a "violent mimesis" (Girard 52) since reciprocal violence between Tom and the other family members occurs repeatedly. While the uncovering of the protagonist's true identity has evoked personal sacrificial crises in Edie, Jack and Tom, which is reflected in a sequence that depicts the mother sitting upright in bed, unable to sleep, the protagonist remains in the family and continues to protect it when his brother calls, asking him to return to Philadelphia.

During the conversation of the two Cusack brothers, the cause for their conflict becomes apparent. It is clear that the purpose of Tom's journey is to satisfy Richie's desire to take revenge for the difficulties Tom had caused, which makes it part of the crime syndicate's "compensatory measures" (Girard 22). The original source of Joey's excessive aggression has remained vague so far. Girard sees "fraternal resemblances" (67) as responsible for the recurring mythical motif of conflict between brothers, since "it obviously constitutes a vulnerable point in a system structured on differences, a point dangerously exposed to the onset of a sacrificial crisis" (69). Girard then argues that the fraternal conflict commonly arises because of "something they both ardently desire and which they will not or cannot share" (69). During their conversation, the brothers' differing aims in life become apparent. While Richie belittles his brother's small-town family life, Tom reproaches his elder brother, for his mentality that "[...] business would come first" (A 1:20:57), indicating that the siblings possess fundamentally different philosophies of life. When Richie mentions that he attempted to strangle Joey when he was an infant (A 1:23:16), the root of the conflict that lies in the "fraternal resemblance" (Girard 67) becomes evident. Richie suddenly had to share their parents' attention, which he attempted to stop by fratricide, which was averted by their mother's intervention. As the brothers became members of the crime syndicate, fraternal conflicts likely continued. Although this is not shown in the movie, the brothers' violent childhood, their tense conversation and their youth in the highly competitive social structure make this seem plausible, since both siblings were in pursuit of more wealth and prestige, which probably led to intense altercations between them. Since Joey was likely unwilling to accept his brother's superior position, the lack of difference

between their goals and hierarchical positions then caused a sacrificial crisis between them. Girard argues that after a conflict between almost identical opponents “[e]ither a degree of difference survives and we remain within the framework of a cultural order, [...] [or] all differences have indeed been effaced, but the nondifference immediately appears as a new and outlandish difference [...]” (70-71). The “nondifference” (Girard 71) takes the form of the excessive brutality Joey directs at Fogarty. Although he likely wants to kill his older brother, in order to take his position, he instead attacks Fogarty, rendering him a “surrogate victim” (Girard 2, 90), or “scapegoat” (Girard 90), onto whom the aggression converges. While this redirection of aggression onto a target that closely resembles his brother allows Joey to avoid fratricide, maiming Fogarty forces him to leave his social circle and begin a new life. When Tom then manages to overwhelm his brother’s henchmen and ultimately commits fratricide, both conflicts are resolved. Richie can no longer collect Joey’s debt and the old fraternal rivalry that likely motivated Richie’s excessive brutality has ended at last.

After the brothers’ confrontation, the protagonist washes himself in the lake and then returns to his family, who wordlessly welcomes him to the dinner table bearing facial expressions suggesting both traumatising and alleviation. While the imminent threat of further acts of retaliation has finally ceased, the family must now come to terms with the violence that has found its way into their midst. The constant necessity to defend themselves against the “compensatory measures” of revenge (Girard 22) and persecution of the “judicial system” (Girard 22) has forced them to apply physical violence, like when Jack shoots Fogarty to save his father, and in less direct form, when Edie supports her husband’s lies to the sheriff. These actions “contaminate[d]” (Girard 30) the family members and caused acts of violence among them, which forces them to experience their inherent proneness to violence that was previously held in check by their law-abiding disposition. While Tom’s personal past therefore is the source of the sacrificial crisis that threatens the Stall family’s integrity, his readiness to risk his life for them and face the adversaries keeps it together. Both, Tom’s readiness to take Jack’s place during the standoff in front of the family’s home and his willingness to face Richie’s demand for retaliation are reminiscent of a self-sacrifice that matches Girard’s concept of the “surrogate victim” (90). Girard argues that

“[t]o escape from the circle it is first necessary to remove from the scene all those forms of violence that tend to become self-propagating and to spawn new, imitative forms. When a community succeeds in convincing itself that one alone

of its number is responsible for the violent mimesis besetting it; [...] then the belief becomes a reality [...]" (92).

Edie's and Jack's accusations that hold Tom responsible for the family's predicament, therefore covertly urge him to resolve the situation and give him the role of the surrogate victim. Hence both, the protagonist's determination to leave behind his close relatives and thereby remove the potential root of further retaliation, in order to sacrifice himself for their security, and the collective blame he is faced with fulfil Girard's criteria of the surrogate victim (90).

Whereas Tom's willingness to sacrifice himself for his family appeases the sacrificial crisis he caused, he commits further acts of violence during his visit to Philadelphia, including fratricide. Instead of denying him the right to return, his wife and children welcome him to the dinner table and thereby end the appointment of blame that urged him to face Richie. When discussing the Oedipus myth, Girard states, "[p]arricide and incest provide the community with exactly what it needs to represent and exorcise the effects of the sacrificial crisis" (94). Since the fratricide Tom commits constitutes a taboo of similar severity as Oedipus' parricide, the protagonist's deed not only averts the threat, but also serves the function of ending the vicious circle of violence within the family. The inner strife the faces of Edie and Jack display can hence be attributed to the contradictory role Tom plays in ending the family's sacrificial crisis. When Girard states that "the same substance can [...] contaminate or purify" (40), while discussing the properties of blood, he provides an explanation for the reconciliatory effect of the fratricide. While the series of violent events has profoundly altered the once loving relationships between the family members, the reconciliatory effect of one of the most tabooed forms of violence, has the opposite impact. Girard elaborates on this when he describes the surrogate victim as "a supernatural being who sows violence to reap peace; a mysterious saviour who visits affliction on mankind in order subsequently to restore it to good health" (97). While Girard bases his description of the surrogate victim mechanism on the Oedipus myth, it describes the Christian saviour, Jesus Christ, fittingly as well. Although the number of religious symbols in *A History of Violence* remains very limited, Tom is depicted wearing a cross on a necklace three times. The scenes in which it is shown, once during foreplay with Edie in the beginning of the movie (see figure 22, page 57) and another time when he washes himself in the lake on Richie's property (see figure 23, page 57) underline the protagonist's proximity to both love and suffering, which Girard (97) mentions when

describing the properties of a saviour. The depiction of the relationship between Tom and the Christian redeemer goes even deeper, since before Tom shoots Richie, the elder brother states “Jesus, Joey” (A 1:26:45), making the covert allusions explicit. While the protagonist of the movie manages to survive the series of violent events, killing his brother severs the last living connection to his old self Joey, and ends the fraternal conflict. Although his wife and son seemed ready to end their relationship before his journey to Philadelphia, Tom’s readiness to sacrifice himself for his family and the willingness to commit the taboo of fratricide has enabled him to return.



Fig. 22 Tom’s cross visible during foreplay



Fig. 23 Tom’s cross after killing Richie

3.4. Conclusion

While the protagonists and social groups portrayed in the three objects of analysis are confronted with different forms of violence, all of them feature factors and processes described by Girard. The sacrificial ritual performed by the villagers in “The Lottery” is a “preventive measure” (Girard 22) against violence. The poem’s speaker in “The Tollund Man”, however, seeks to end the retaliatory violence, s/he views as vicious circle, in his/her home community by making a pilgrimage to Jutland. In *A History of Violence*, the protagonist leaves behind the fraternal rivalry and the criminal violence in his home community, but the consequences of his deeds catch up with him and contaminate his new social context. Although the stages of cultural development of the protagonists’ home communities thus differ considerably, the same mechanisms Girard holds responsible for both, the dissemination and containment of conflicts, can be identified in all of them. A comparison of the works will, in the following, provide a means to determine how different the societies portrayed actually are.

A common factor present in the three objects of analysis is a degree of misunderstanding, in the Girardian sense, that often comes in the form of a religious

framework, which masks the replacement of the actual targets of violence with a surrogate victim and thereby ensures a sacrifice's appeasing effect. Since the ritual described in "The Lottery" has lost all its cultic features, and no deity is named as recipient of the sacrifice, the villagers have become aware that they are responsible for the yearly stoning, which causes their nervousness. In the poem this type of misunderstanding occurs in two different forms. When the poem's speaker holds the goddess responsible for the victim's murder s/he lifts the misunderstanding present in his/her community by accusing her fellow group members of using religious justifications for their perpetual, reciprocal violence. By considering to perform the prayer, s/he then attempts to end the violence by establishing a new religion, but eventually admits defeat. In *A History of Violence*, Joey Cusack is able to start a new life as Tom Stall by adopting a dead stranger's identity, but must live with the possibility that the replacement is discovered. When comparing the function of the Girardian misunderstanding in these three objects of analysis, it becomes apparent that whenever the superimposed narrative is threatened the stability of the respective system responsible for administering violence is in danger. Such threats can take the form of changes in procedure or worshippers who are ready to reject their faith, as in the short story and poem, and members of the community who become aware of the replacement as in the poem and the movie.

All three objects of analysis contain instances of decreasing levels of misunderstanding, which threaten societal peace. An increasing proximity between the protagonists and the victims is a symptom of this. While Mrs. Hutchinson is a member of the sacrificers' community, the villagers do not hesitate to kill her, indicating that the selective process' function of establishing a distinction between victim and sacrificer is still working. However, when a girl states "I hope its not Nancy" (Jackson 218) she involuntarily admits that her emotional connection to the friend is stronger than the distinction the lottery establishes, which might cause a sacrificial crisis. Since the poem's speaker's vow to go on the journey is motivated by the strong sense of familiarity the author felt when seeing a photograph of the Tollund Man, close emotional proximity to the victim, again, is responsible for the rejection of the protagonist's religion. When Joey Cusack redirects the pent-up anger against Fogarty instead of his brother, he chooses a surrogate victim that resembles the actual target too closely and thereby breaches the crime syndicate's code of conduct. This makes it necessary to leave his home community and enables him to begin a new life, but

threatens his new social circle. By accepting the demands for revenge, instead of procuring the help of the judicial system, he offers himself as a surrogate victim that closely resembles his family members and fends off the threat. While all three objects of analysis contain instances of close proximity between sacrificer and victim, the girl in short story and the speaker in the poem challenge the systems responsible for distributing violence in their home communities because of it. By maiming a fellow group member, the movie's protagonist, becomes able to leave his home community, but needs to offer himself as victim in order to end the retaliatory violence. Although the cultural frameworks of the three narratives differ considerably, "*too much* continuity" (Girard 44) between victim and community commonly motivates members to question their society's beliefs and thereby fosters sacrificial crises.

While the lack of the necessary degree of misunderstanding and the increasing proximity between sacrificer and victim are factors that undermine social institution's ability to maintain status quo, mimetic behaviour like vicious circles of violence and collective indifference serve as both, impulses for change and safeguards of the established system. The sacrificial ritual in "The Lottery" still successfully fulfils its function of restraining violent impulses, however, the villagers' nervousness indicates that the mimetic desire to behave like one's peers is beginning to erode. The institutionally contained violent mimesis of the conclusive stoning evokes both, the sacrificial catharsis necessary for the practice's continuation and the sense of inequality that motivates the girl to enunciate her wish. The poem's speaker is confronted with a long history of mimetic violence, and since his/her fellow group members accept this condition, s/he considers making the pilgrimage. Although s/he hopes that the prayer can end the violence, s/he expects not to be understood, but accepts that this means that s/he is no longer a part of the reciprocal violence and the apathetic attitude that allows it to continue. In the movie, mimetic violence and indifference fulfils similar functions as in the short story and poem. The fraternal rivalry that motivates Joey's violent transgression forces him to leave Philadelphia. The violent mimesis that later besets his family after the robbery forces Tom to leave and face his brother. His wife and son, however, ultimately maintain their solidarity with him, and Edie ignores the possibility of acquiring the legal system's help. Their acceptance of the "compensatory measures" (Girard 22) of limiting violence is hence the result of imitating Tom's negative stance towards the sheriff's offer to help them. In all three objects of analysis the vicious circle of mimetic violence continues until one

group member attempts to end it, either by objecting to it, as in the short story, or by leaving the group to find a solution, as in the poem and movie. Mimetic indifference, on the other hand is the main force inhibiting such interventions and is most commonly overcome when the proximity between victim and sacrificer decreases, as in “The Lottery” and “The Tollund Man”.

When comparing the levels of cultural development of the societies, it seems that the least developed stage can be found in “The Lottery”, since sacrificial practices are still maintained. Since the sacrificial crises occurring in “The Tollund Man” and *A History of Violence* both root in “compensatory measures” (Girard 22), the societies resemble each other in their development. Although the mimetic crises profoundly differ in their societal scale, the despondency the speaker experiences at the poem’s end resembles Joey’s forlornness after he leaves Philadelphia. While the poem’s speaker has managed to leave his/her home community, s/he still is in a place reminding him/her of his home. The movie’s protagonist, on the other hand, succeeds in starting a new life, but is also caught up by demands for vengeance he provoked in his past. Both pieces of narrative fiction hence exemplify Girard’s claim that “[t]he more men strive to curb their violent impulses, the more these impulses seem to prosper” (22). When Girard states that “we can indeed consider the absence or presence of [sacrificial rites and a judicial system] as a basis for distinguishing primitive societies from ‘civilized’ ones” (21), the society in “The Lottery” appears as much more stable than those in the other works, because the sacrificial crisis is in its initial phase. Since the abolition of the sacrificial practice seems imminent, it is, however, difficult to argue that the villagers’ system is inherently superior. While there is no legislative power at all present in the village, the societies in the poem and the movie have regressed into systems that rely on vengeance and survival of the fittest. From this perspective, the Stall family’s implied return to a lawful life after Tom returns constitutes the highest level of cultural development in the objects of analysis. All pieces of narrative art, however, contain characters experiencing deep frustration because of the absence of a just system responsible for distributing violence, showing that although the differences between them at first seem profound, their actual stages of development are much closer to each other.

4. Mircea Eliade - *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*

In his book *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, the historian Mircea Eliade argues that archaic cultures strictly discriminate between meaningful and unmeaningful aspects of life. Objects and acts only receive meaning if they can be traced back to an object or act that either bore meaning to a deity or was exercised by an exemplary religious figure, while any other act is devoid of meaning and therefore insignificant or profane (Eliade 4-5).

Eliade begins his argumentation by stating that archaic cities derived their structural layout from divine prototypes. By relying on “archetypes in the constellations” (Eliade 7-8) as models for the arrangement of roads and buildings, the spatial planning was an attempt to “revive the age of gold, to make a perfect reign a present reality” (Eliade 9). Since barren land is considered to be without intrinsic meaning or in the “modality pre-Creation” (Eliade 9), it needs to be “cosmicized” (Eliade 10) by performing rites, which “symbolically repeat the act of Creation” (Eliade 10), thereby transforming chaos into cosmos (Eliade 11). Imitating a divine model therefore allowed archaic cultures to seize control over their environment.

This interdependence between the physical world and religious meaning is not restricted to planned settlements and architecture. It also resonates in divinities’ archetypical acts of creation, which Eliade refers to as “cosmogonic act[s]” (18). Eliade states that “nothing can endure if it is not ‘animated’, if it is not, through a sacrifice, endowed with a ‘soul’; the prototype of the construction rite is the sacrifice that took place at the time of the foundation of the world” (20). By making a sacrifice, the author stipulates, people then repeat this cosmogonic act, and thereby re-establish the mythical time for the duration of the act (Eliade 20), stressing the necessity of repetition in order to create meaning. Similarly, acts of violence derive their meaning from conflicts carried out between divinities, which “[commemorate] an episode of the divine and cosmic drama” (Eliade 29). Since repeating such celestial moments abolishes profane time and reinstates the “primordial mythical moment” (Eliade 35), Eliade argues that monarchs of later periods “consider themselves imitators of the primordial hero” (35). The periodic realisation of archetypical acts is thus an integral feature of archaic cultures.

Eliade then continues to argue that the popular memory of pre-modern societies shares an aversion towards history. This “ahistorical character” (46) is only able to “retain historical events and individuals insofar as it transforms them into archetypes –

that is, insofar as it annuls all their historical and personal peculiarities [...]" (Eliade 46). He thereby draws a parallel between the "importance of archetypes for the consciousness of archaic man, and the inability of popular memory to retain anything but archetypes" (Eliade 46), which is indicative of the way "archaic humanity [...] defended itself, [...] against all the novelty and irreversibility which history entails" (Eliade 48). For Eliade, rejecting the existence of history helped archaic societies to "regenerate themselves periodically through expulsion of 'evils' and confession of sins" (74-75), which left them in what he refers to as a "paradise of archetypes" (Eliade 76). This unwillingness to attribute any meaning to "unusual events" (Eliade 85) can be interpreted as "the will to devalue time" (Eliade 85), which therefore meant exclusively attributing value to modes of behaviour that corresponded with archetypical acts. Consequently, this ascribed importance of particular modes of behaviour made them the law of the respective archaic society (Eliade 95). This led to the assumption that suffering of any sort cannot occur unprovoked, but needs to originate from personal wrongdoing, or a neighbour's malice, a causal relationship that is not restricted to the thinking patterns of archaic societies alone (Eliade 97-98). Being able to provide reasons for the suffering of an individual rendered the emotive state "morally [...] *not absurd*" (Eliade 98), and allowed to implement countermeasures, described in religious doctrines that promised relief (Eliade 98). Since memories of personal moments that did not correspond with archetypical acts were considered meaningless (Eliade 47), interest in an "irreversible" (Eliade 48) history is a recent development. Distinguishing between meaningful events that resemble archetypical acts and negligible events that do not correspond with the religious doctrine thus is an important characteristic of archaic worldviews.

Eliade identifies the establishment the first monotheistic religion, Judaism, as the first deviation from this simplistic cause-and-effect relationship. Although calamities that threatened the people's existence were also interpreted as punishment for infringements of the religious laws (Eliade 102), the negative consequences were utilised "so that the Jewish people should not contravene its true destiny [...]" (Eliade 109). By not only establishing meaning, but also manifesting the "divine will" (Eliade 104), such punishments helped to place value on history for the first time, since the miseries they caused were seen as necessary warnings on the people's path to redemption. Whereas Christianity also implemented the concept of a divine plan into its doctrine (104), Eliade observes that "[t]he great majority of so-called Christian

populations continue [...] to preserve themselves from history by ignoring it and by tolerating it, rather than by giving it the meaning of a negative or positive theophany” (111). Many actions of contemporary times, including acts of violence, therefore still have the function of repeating archetypical actions of divine or heroic figures, and thereby re-establish the primordial moment, deny time and history and consequently alleviate suffering.

4.1. “The Lottery”

Although the narrator and the villagers in Shirley Jackson’s short story do not use religious terms when discussing the lottery, its annual realisation as well as the reverence the participants show in some of their comments and behaviour suggests that the event serves a function analogous to religious rites of various cultures. Eliade’s analytical framework therefore provides a fitting set of notions that help to illustrate the procedure’s purpose and the impact it consequently has on the settlement’s inhabitants.

Since the narrator states that the first lottery was held when the village was founded (Jackson 212), repetitiveness, one of Eliade’s central criteria for identifying an action as archetypical (Eliade 20), is fulfilled. The repetition of both the lottery that determines the victim and the collective stoning of this person qualifies the procedures as behavioural archetypes of a prototypical entity. Although the information on the roots of the event is scarce, the narrative voice mentions that a “tuneless chant” and a “ritual salute” (both Jackson 213) are no longer implemented in the event. The inhabitants have therefore already begun to forget about these details, indicating a loss of perceived importance of the ritualistic features and hence the lore that lead to the implementation of the archetypical event.

The narrative voice mentions that other settlements near the village also regularly conduct lotteries (Jackson 211). The village’s national environment, although unmentioned, seems to be the United States of America, because a “Halloween program” (Jackson 212), which at the time of the story’s publication was a celebration hardly found outside the United States, is held annually. Eliade (20) argues that in order to produce meaning, any initialisation process or “construction ritual” (Eliade 30) requires a sacrifice, which is an imitation of the primordial sacrifice that lead to the creation of the world. The lottery and its violent conclusion are hence a recreation of

the primordial event, represented in the initial sacrifices the first immigrants made when founding their new settlements. This renders these sacrifices measures to provide meaning to the formerly meaningless soil, which represented chaos (Eliade 9). Its true purpose therefore deviates from the overt justification for conducting the lottery Old Man Warner mentions when he recites the proverb “[l]ottery in June, corn be heavy soon” (Jackson 215). Rather than securing the crops of the village’s farmers, the procedure’s effect is to recreate the village’s founding, and thereby abolish profane and therefore potentially historical events that did not correspond with any archetypes and took place since the previous lottery. In this process, the village rejuvenates itself and ensures the continued existence of its culture. This purpose is also echoed in the village elder’s assessment that if the lottery were abolished, the village’s inhabitants would return to live in caves (Jackson 215).

Old Man Warner takes on a special role in the village because his old age indicates that he survived many iterations of the lottery, which implies that he either enjoys above-average luck in a group of less than 300 members or is favoured by fate. By stating that the lottery’s implementation is necessary for a plentiful harvest and consequently good fortune, the village elder insinuates that he believes in the practice’s efficacy. Since Eliade argues that archaic individuals hold personal wrongdoing responsible for their suffering (97-98), the old man interprets his longevity as acknowledgment of his virtuous way of life. This view makes him a proponent of the practice and the continuous abolition of history it entails, while the other villagers display signs of nervousness and those who openly challenge the lottery share a reflective stance on the repercussions the violent stoning has.

It is difficult to distinguish whether Mr. Adams’s comment on the other settlements’ abolition of the tradition is meant as a challenge to Old Man Warner’s conservative stance or as a warning of a dangerous societal development. However, by acknowledging another community’s rejection of the event he recognises an “unusual event” (Eliade 85) that does not correspond with an archetype. The brief conversation with the village elder is hence an introduction of historicity into the village elder’s ahistorical worldview, which explains the swift rejection.

Mrs. Hutchinson’s initial lateness consequently needs to be read as more pronounced rejection of the repetitiveness of the event, since ignoring her duty as member of the village’s society infers utter repudiation of the necessity to reinstate the archetypal moment. However, since she justifies her protests during the event’s final

stage by claiming that Mr. Summers did not give her husband enough time (Jackson 216), she holds what Eliade might consider a neighbour's malice (98) responsible for her suffering, rather than a divine plan. She therefore does not challenge the necessity to annually repeat the lottery or its archetypical effect, but only rejects becoming an instrument necessary to perform the archetypical act. It can hence be argued that her historical worldview that causes the rejective attitude towards the cultural practice has not solidified enough to demand an abolition of the event.

The villagers' nervousness likely is a manifestation of their unvoiced wish to abandon the practice, which is indicated when the narrator mentions that they are relieved that the Hutchinson's infant is not the victim (Jackson 218). Since they are unwilling to accept the suffering that followed the last stoning of an infant, the event's ability to abolish past events is no longer fully effective and the aversion towards particular aspects of the event has become a basis for critique. However, hardly anyone voices this view and all inhabitants take part in the conclusive stoning, showing no signs of inhibition. When they are confronted with Mrs. Hutchinson's protests, the villagers seemingly ignore her pleading, or offer tepid consolations. They have already shed their nervousness, since the final stage has begun, as it has become clear that one of the Hutchinsons will play the passive role at the event's end, while they and their immediate family are out of danger. Instead they are about to participate in the recreation of the archetypical, first sacrifice that was made when their village was founded. Since both, the event described in the short story and the first lottery reconstitute "cosmogonic act[s]" (Eliade 18) in which the villagers take the role of the divine progenitor, anticipatory excitement replaces their nervousness.

In comparison to Mr. Adams's indirect challenge of the tradition and Mrs. Hutchinson's lateness and protests, Nancy's friend's wish is the most distinct refutation of the tradition. Since she voices it during the decisive moments of the event's last stage, expressing the hope that a possible victim will not receive the marked ticket directly questions the imminent archetypical act's validity. Although the girl has certainly been educated about the proper rules of conduct during the lottery, the violent conclusion of the event in the year before has imprinted itself on her memory profoundly enough to elicit the verbal response. Her inability or unwillingness to repress the violent aspect of the event can hence be interpreted as motivated by a developing historical understanding of her environment. She does not interpret the suffering that the potential loss of a friend would cause as self-inflicted or malevolence of a neighbour

(Eliade 98), but rather sees it as an unacceptable situation that cannot correspond with the will of a divinity she would worship. Nancy's friend therefore opposes the conservative stance of most of the other villagers, who remain uncritical of the necessity to re-establish the primordial moment annually.

4.2. "The Tollund Man"

The contemplative journey described in Seamus Heaney's poem (see page 88) is motivated by the speaker's urge to reflect upon a series of historical events, which, although separated by millennia, appear to be related to each other. Since the most striking similarity between the events is their violent nature, repetition, a central element in Eliade's conceptualisations, is of great importance in Heaney's poem as well. Eliade's framework therefore provides an appropriate set of concepts to analyse the text.

Since the poem's speaker's initial idea to undertake a journey to Jutland entails a series of emotive states, the decision to go through with it seems to be difficult to make. The speaker's reluctance therefore suggests that leaving his/her home country in order to visit the remains of the Tollund Man does not correspond with the archetypical acts of his/her culture, which makes the journey a breach of law (Eliade 95). The detailed descriptions of the Tollund Man's appearance and the bog, however, generate a sense of close familiarity between the lyrical I and the journey's stations. Since the gravitas with which the speaker describes his/her voyage suggests that s/he has not yet been to Aarhus, this familiarity indicates repeated engagement with the matter, which might be indicative of an archetypical pursuit. As it was stated before, Heaney's comment confirms that the wish to go on the journey is a religious vow (Preoccupations 58), which explains the solemn tone, and makes the journey an archetypical pursuit. To which religion it can be ascribed to, however, remains unmentioned at this point.

In the subsequent sacrificial scene, an even more profound insight into the Tollund Man's home culture is indicated, since the speaker is fully aware of the ritual's religious significance. By choosing to recount the event as violent sexual intercourse of the sacrificial victim and the goddess instead of a marriage ceremony, the archetypical act is recreated in its most primordial form. When considering Eliade's (18) notion that any construction process in an archaic culture requires a sacrifice, the

poem's speaker's evocation of the event can be interpreted as acknowledgement of his/her membership in the sacrificers' culture and consequently his/her approval of the event and the regenerative effect it has on the group (Eliade 75). This seems likely because a direct connection with the author's family background is established when the speaker concludes the passage by mentioning the peat diggers discovering the Iron Age man's body.

The marshy soil of Northern Ireland and the way it shapes the life of the inhabitants is a frequently recurring motif in Heaney's poetry (Deane 27). In the first text of his first collection of poems, "Digging" (first published in *Death of a Naturalist* 1966; see page 87), he recounts his father and grandfather digging for potatoes and peat. He finishes stating "[b]etween my finger and my thumb / [m]y snug pen rests. / I'll dig with it" (Heaney *Opened* 4), and thereby implies that he interprets his poetic work as excavation of concealed societal issues. Besides the ground's use as resource that provides nourishment and fuel, Heaney repeatedly addresses its capacity to conserve organic material, which lets it function as a chronicler of historical epochs. In a series of "bog-poems" (Reece 96), including "The Tollund Man", "Bog Queen" (first published in *North* 1975) or "The Grauballe Man" (first published in *North* 1975) that were inspired by Glob's *The Bog People*, Heaney reflects on the fates of sacrificial victims that were found in Danish swamps. In "The Tollund Man" the peat digger's work establishes a connection between the swamps of Jutland and Northern Ireland, since Heaney draws parallels between the sacrificial cult in Iron Age Denmark and the sectarian conflict in his home.

While Heaney regularly incorporates associations the soil evokes in him into his poetry, some scholars also interpret aspects of the texts' lyrical form as influenced by the theme. This notion is applicable to "The Tollund Man", the poetic structure of which is established by eleven stanzas, each containing four lines. The regular use of enjambments limits the number of syllables per line to four to eight, which keeps the lines relatively short and thereby maintains a uniform structure. Heaney comments on this outward appearance, which all of the bog-poems share, stating "those thin small quatrain poems, they're kind of drills or augers for turning in and they are narrow and long and deep" (qtd. in O'Neill 94). While the uniform poetic structure therefore establishes connections to other poems, Deane characterises Heaney's poetry as possessing "a highly complex sonar architecture in which vowels and consonants dispute between themselves for an equilibrium that will allow to each its separate

function and yet acknowledge for both their interdependence" (27). While a cluster of alliterations on the /n/- and /t/-sounds can be found when the speaker states "[n]ot knowing their tongue" (Heaney *Wintering* 40), assonances of the /o/- and /aʊ/-sounds occur in the poem's second part when the speaker states "[c]onsecrate the cauldron bog / [o]ur holy ground" (Heaney *Wintering* 23) (Obermeier 10). Deane affirms Heaney's preference for the /o/-sound, which he refers to as "open ground [vowel]" (28), thereby connecting it to the recurring motif of earth. Since Heaney compares the poem's lyrical form with an auger, a drill used for digging wells, and Deane associates the assonances with the ground, the significance of the soil in Heaney's poetic work is not only reflected in the motif's recurrence, but also in the uniform lyrical structure and the stylistic devices used. Eliade's (4, 10) assessment that actions of exemplary figures constitute archetypal acts that need to be repeated in order to create meaning, thus corresponds with Heaney's literary continuation of the earthbound labour his father and grandfather pursued. Instead of excavating potatoes and peat, the poet, however, attempts to retrieve aspects of the past that have been forgotten, in order to reflect upon them, while maintaining the connection to their finding place. This directly contradicts Eliade's view that the repetition of archetypal acts abolishes history, because the poet explicitly acknowledges the historicity of the events mentioned in "The Tollund Man". Heaney's poetic work therefore transforms the repetitive, archetypal labour of his ancestors into a critical form of art that valorises the task by reflecting it in the text's poetic structure.

The prayer the speaker considers to say in the poem's second part then affirms the assumption that the motivation for undertaking the journey is to reflect upon the implications of violent historical events. By describing it as potentially blasphemous (Heaney *Wintering* 21), s/he indicates that the prayer does not correspond with the archetypal rites of his/her culture, and therefore represents a breach of law (Eliade 95). Since this contradicts the recognition of his/her membership of his/her home nation's group that was indicated in the previous part, the prayer is probably intended as an alternative to the violent ritual. When asking the sacrificial victim to "make germinate" (Heaney *Wintering* 24) the casualties of two instances of violence that were part of a larger conflict, the speaker seeks to induce a process that is not part of his/her culture's ritualistic archetypes. If the goddess of the previous part is considered to be a placeholder for the Irish national figure Kathleen ni Houlihan, whom Heaney holds responsible for the "archetypal patterns" (*Preoccupations* 57) of violence, the poem's

speaker's prayer deliberately challenges the nationalistic tendencies causing the periodical eruptions of violence. S/he therefore considers rejecting his/her culture's archetypical violence by introducing a new rite, which focuses on the victim rather than a divinity demanding an offering. By associating the suffering the prospect of death causes for the victim with historical instances of violence, instead of focusing on the repetitiveness that is inherent to the re-establishment of the growth period, which the sacrifice is said to induce, a more historical approach to dealing with the atrocious events is proposed. Since the prayer therefore questions the necessity of the repetitive violence that constitutes the archetype, because of the traumatising effect it has on the traveller, historicity is introduced to the communities of the speaker and the Tollund Man.

Although the casualties of the sectarian conflicts of Ireland did not die as sacrificial victims of pagan rituals, the speaker interprets their deaths as culturally desired sacrifices the repetition of which should secure the maintenance of his/her group and national identity. Since the justification that ritualistic violence is necessary to sustain a society's culture and cohesion can be found in the Tollund Man's sacrificial culture as well, both forms of sacrifice possess the repetitive nature Eliade (4) ascribes to archetypical acts. The germination the poem's speaker hopes to induce by saying the prayer can therefore be interpreted as attempt to heal the scars the victims of the sectarian conflicts have left, which serve as a justification for the continuation of violence. While covering up the traces of violence might be interpreted as attempt to make his/her group forget about them and thus end the conflicts, this seems unlikely when considering the motivation to undertake the journey. By choosing to worship the sacrificial victim, the traveller rather endorses the necessity to establish a historical understanding of past events in Eliade's sense. The suffering the regular eruptions of violence continue to cause manifests itself in the scars the poem's speaker wants to make germinate. This growth of vegetation can then be interpreted as changing the deads' role from being the incentive for vengeful violence into an impulse for rejecting further brutality, breaking its repetitiveness. By considering to ask the Tollund Man to induce this process of growth, the traveller attempts to introduce a new deity that does not demand regular suffering in order to re-establish the primordial moment, but instead sees such punishments as reasons for change, which Eliade describes as "negative theopanies" (104) that express the divine will, and therefore historicity. Eliade's (111) notion that many contemporary Christian cultures attempt to ignore the

historicity of particular events, rather than understanding them as divine intervention that should induce change and instead maintain pre-Christian archetypes, can therefore be seen as central motivational factor of the poem's speaker for considering to go on his/her journey.

In the poem's final part, the traveller empathises with the sacrificial victim's emotive state, because s/he feels alienated by the strange place names and the inability to communicate with the locals. The speaker thereby suggests that the Tollund Man, too, felt alienated by his role in the archetypal event, while simultaneously experiencing a "sad freedom" (Heaney *Wintering* 33). Although the Iron Age Man is aware that the sacrifice reinstates the celestial moment and thereby helps to maintain his social group, he can no longer take part in the celebrations. The victim is therefore expelled from his group, which leads to feelings of alienation. Being the only member of the community not to experience the celestial moment, for him, disrupts the event's repetitiveness, which is necessary for the abolition of history, and hence forces the victim to view his final moments out of the context of his people's belief system. No longer being part of the repetitive violence necessary to maintain the group establishes a historical view of the world in him, since for him the event is terminal, and therefore frees him from the seemingly endless cycle of rebirth.

The poem's speaker emulates the Tollund Man's suffering because s/he also wants to leave his/her group by making the journey to Jutland, in order to disrupt the repetitiveness of the violence or at least prevent further participation in the violent maintenance of his/her home culture. The unlikelihood of actually contributing to a shift in the way his/her compatriots' approach the maintenance of his/her culture, is indicated when the speaker is unable to understand the Jutlanders, while feeling "at home" (Heaney *Wintering* 44). This leaves the him/her in the same desperate emotional state s/he found him-/herself in at the poem's beginning. The speaker therefore deems undertaking the journey to Denmark futile, as even after saying the prayer the society has remained uncomprehending of his/her concerns.

4.3. A History of Violence

Although the theoretical framework provided by Eliade approaches cultural development from a societal perspective, illustrating the motivations for different practices in culturally coherent groups, the conclusions the author draws from these

examples are merged into general assertions that provide a cross-cultural explanation of similar modes of behaviour on a personal level. Since many of the events depicted in David Cronenberg's film result from differences in worldviews between coherent groups of people, Eliade's conceptualisations offer a useful set of observations that allow retracing the culturally determined roots of the characters' motivations.

In the movie's first section, the brute violence of the robbers is contrasted with the mostly peaceful family life of the Stalls. The two criminals have abandoned their civilian lives altogether and solely rely on crime to survive, and therefore follow the archetype of the outlaw, a frequently recurring and often romanticised *topos* of American popular culture. Although it is difficult to establish a direct connection between this criminal way of life and a religious doctrine, the repetitiveness of their criminal acts (Eliade 6) and the emotional excitement the commitment of murder arouses in the two support this assumption. The habitus of the robbers is mainly characterised by indifference and irritability, emotional states that only disappear when power is exerted over others in the form of violence. Eliade's assessment that in archaic cultures this brutal mode of behaviour is one of the few means to re-establish the celestial moment and thereby construct meaning (20) therefore offers a fitting explanation for the criminals' behaviour. Additionally, the aimlessness of their journey emphasises this notion, since they seem to have lost all interest in the implications their deeds are likely to entail in the future, and therefore defend themselves against any sense of historicity by repeating the archetypical act of violence (Eliade 48).

While the peaceful life of the Stall family establishes a stark contrast to the senseless brutality of the criminals, some aspects of their lives need to be considered archetypical. The compassionate way in which Tom and Jack console Sarah after she awakens from a nightmare shows an unwillingness to consider the suffering the dream evokes as self-inflicted and unavoidable, and therefore rejects an archetypical quality archaic cultures might ascribe to it. Similarly, Jack's refusal to retaliate the bullying violently originates from the necessity to avoid actions that might pose a threat to his future self. Instead of interpreting the suffering it causes as self-imposed retaliation for a transgression, he views it as typical part of his high school life, similar to a divine plan (Eliade 104), that is a test of character. This confirms his foresighted, historical life perspective. Nevertheless, particular moments in the family's lives are archetypical in the sense that they regularly occur and are necessary to maintain the group's cohesion. The joint breakfast in the morning as well as the romantic and sexual

relationship of Tom and Edie can be interpreted as archetypical, and happy family life in itself is a prolific archetype in the culture of the United States of America. Both acts are repeated periodically in order to renew the family's communion and "echo mythical prototypes" (Eliade 4, 35). This confirms the author's assertion that archetypical behaviour still occurs in Christian societies (Eliade 111).

The members of the Philadelphian crime syndicate, who need to be considered the third prominent group of the movie, also display more modern modes of behaviour than the robbers, but archetypical acts play a similarly important role as in the Stall family. Both leading figures of the organisation, Carl Fogarty and Richie Cusack, do not quietly accept the suffering Joey has caused them and therefore do not interpret it as archetypical punishment they have brought about themselves. Instead, they seek revenge for the economical and physical damage the protagonist has caused, since their greatest concerns are to maximise their capital wealth and to maintain it by punishing all acts that impede their acquisitive operations. This economical worldview shared by the members of the crime syndicate therefore takes the place of what Eliade (104) describes as divine will. The position of the deity, however, is adopted by themselves, and their goal is to reach the most powerful position in the syndicate's hierarchy that they possibly can. The suffering caused by a potential threat to their acquisitive power and hierarchical position is hence viewed as a test of their willingness to avert the danger. However, the necessity to use violence as a deterrent regularly, but not unfoundedly, transforms the behaviour into a specific archetype of the group, since its repetitiveness and its purpose to regenerate the perpetrator's belief system are congruent with Eliade's (35, 75) definition of archetypical acts. While the will to climb the hierarchical ladder and threats to this goal, which lead to suffering, require the members of the criminal family to view their lives as historical, the violent retribution that regularly needs to take place can be interpreted as archetypical.

Although Joey's propensity to violence has its historical and therefore archetypical roots in the first crime syndicates of immigrants who came to the United States, which in turn were presumably motivated by historical inequalities in European societies, a more personal explanation of the main character's inclination is given in the conversation between Joey and Richie. When the older brother recalls his attempt to strangle Joey when first seeing him as a new-born and the severe beating he received when his mother noticed this (A 1:23:16 – 1:23:32), he mentions the origin of the protagonist's violent tendency. While Joey certainly is not consciously aware of this

first fraternal attempt on his life, other conflicts with his brother likely occurred during his upbringing, resulting in Joey's proneness to disproportionate use of violence. Instead of following his brother's example and submitting to the archetypes of the world of organised crime, in which a certain degree of moderation is necessary, Joey's violent eruptions are the re-establishment of the archetypical fight with his "enemy brother" (Eliade 43). The protagonist seems to avoid directly attacking his brother because this would cut the still existing brotherly bond, which is shown in their embrace at the beginning of the scene (A 1:18:26), and leave him alone in the crime syndicate's group, the belief system of which he rejects. Instead he recreates the archetypical fight with his brother by directing his aggression at substitute targets, including Fogarty, which forces him to leave his home.

After leaving Philadelphia the protagonist is able to incorporate the archetypes of lawful, civic life into his belief system, since the fraternal rivalry that dominated his life so far no longer affects him. Honest work and life in the social structure of the family become his new pursuit. Although he mentions that he suffered when he "spent three years becoming Tom Stall" (A 1:00:10) after leaving, he thereby involuntarily admits that he began to ignore the violence that had shaped his life so far. By acquiring a new identity, he therefore attempts to abolish historicity and replace it with the new archetypes of common life. When Tom's nervousness after the robbery and the confrontation with Fogarty reveal this deception, the Stall family's worldview drastically changes, since the violent events they are confronted with call into question the archetypes of family life, as well as the optimistic outlook they had for their future. Edie attempts to maintain her habitual philosophy of life as long as possible, while Jack more readily acquires features of Tom's behaviour. The archetype constituted by his father's rejection of violence, which Jack emulated so far, comes under scrutiny, because Tom's increasingly violent behaviour establishes a rivalling archetype. When Jack finds himself in a threatening situation, he follows his father's example and resolves it violently, repeating the archetype.

While Jack emulates Tom's aggressive behaviour out of necessity, Edie is initially unable to challenge the authenticity of her life with Tom altogether, since that would imply severing the emotional bond the archetypical act of marriage has established, which Eliade sees as "a ritual imitating [the] divine [gesture]" (27). Edie's inability to accept that her husband is lying, even after Tom behaves increasingly suspicious and Fogarty calmly tells her about the protagonist's violent past, is therefore

motivated by her unwillingness to acknowledge historicity. Instead of forcibly demanding answers right away, she maintains the archetype of marriage by continuing to support her husband's position. However, when Tom is forced to admit the existence of his alter ego Joey, the physical fight and violent sexual intercourse that follows the confrontation shows that she, too, has implemented her husband's archetypical violence into her behavioural patterns. While her encouragement of the sexual intercourse mimics the satisfaction Tom gains from violence, the following rejection of his attempt to propitiate repeats the slight she experienced when she found out that he lied to her for approximately twenty years. The re-emergence of Tom's old behavioural patterns, in which uninhibited violence constitutes an archetype tantamount with pleasure, therefore becomes a part of the family's belief system.

When Tom returns to his family, who sits at the dinner table, in the movie's last scene, their traumatised facial expressions indicate that the re-emergence of the protagonist's past and the series of violent events this entailed had a severe emotional impact on them. Eliade's assertion that "archaic humanity [...] defended itself, [...] against all the novelty and irreversibility which history entails" (48) therefore explains why Tom attempted to keep his personal history hidden from his relatives. The tortured looks the three family members exchange are a consequence of the realisation that the violent tendencies have become part of their personal histories. The family members, however, are aware that in order to maintain the family life they used to enjoy before the crisis, they need to continue to uphold the archetypes of a respectful parent-child relationship and a functioning marriage. The optimistic outlook on their future, however, has been gravely impeded by the confrontation with the violent potential the robbery awakened in all of them. When Sarah puts Tom's plate on the table and thereby invites Tom to join them, the archetypical act of the communal meal that maintains the group's cohesion is repeated (see figure 18, already discussed on page 49). While this mirrors the archetypical quality of the joint breakfast table at the movie's beginning (see figure 16, already discussed on page 49), the suffering they have endured will accompany them, serving as a reminder only to re-establish archetypes that do not threaten their peaceful lives, and thereby fulfil the function Eliade (104) describes as divine will.

4.4. Conclusion

Within Eliade's framework the degree of societal development depends on a community's readiness to accept events that do not correspond with its mythical and religious beliefs as meaningful and historical. The characters and groups that appear in the objects of analysis differ strongly in this regard, a comparison of their civilisational development therefore promises substantial findings. Since Eliade identifies the performance of archetypical acts in periodical intervals and the way individuals deal with suffering as characteristic for the developmental stage of a society, and these factors represent the most prominent similarities between the narratives, they are of central importance in the following comparison.

While all objects of analysis feature examples of archetypical violence, the way in which particular characters and groups evaluate them differ strongly. Although Nancy's friend's comment reflects the other villager's mostly implicit rejection of the lottery's realisation in the short story, which manifests itself in their nervousness and the omission of the ritual's cultic aspects, the archetypical act still fulfils its function of maintaining the group's cohesion. In "The Tollund Man", the continuous retaliatory violence in the poem's speaker's home culture serves the same purpose, and motivates him/her to attempt to replace the archetypical acts of violence, reflected in the sacrifice and the atrocious events, by praying to the Tollund Man. While the Stall family members view their lives historically, the maintenance of the group is facilitated by archetypical acts and bonds like the communal meals and the marriage of the parents. The resurgence of Tom's affinity to archetypical violence after the robbery introduces the archetype into the family. While the robbers' archetypical violence gratifies the perpetrators by exerting power over others, the archetypical violence of the crime syndicate adds a retaliatory function to it, which becomes part of the Stall's behaviour. Although the archetypical acts the groups regularly perform vary considerably in form, their purpose, the maintenance of the social groups' stability, is the same in all of them. The violent archetypes in the three objects of analysis also constitute the constraining factors the protagonists attempt to escape or change. While the will to challenge the lottery's annual realisation remains mostly unvoiced, the poem's speaker reflects upon establishing a new, non-violent religion that could end the violence. The effectiveness of the non-violent archetypical acts that maintain the Stall's family bond, on the other hand, are challenged by the violent archetypes of the robbers and the crime syndicate.

Whenever a group's archetype is challenged, some members of the group either openly reject this or attempt to ignore the provocation, and thereby avert the introduction of historical events to their culture. While Old Man Warner is the only outspoken proponent of the ritual, who quickly refutes any statements that question it, and even explicitly mentions the procedure's purpose of maintaining the village's culture, the other villagers do not comment on Mr. Adams's and Nancy's friend's challenges to the practice and barely do so on Mrs. Hutchinson's supplications. The old man also supports the archaic belief that suffering is self-inflicted (Eliade 97), when he states that the lottery's abandonment would mean cultural regression and views his long life as reward for his acknowledgment of the practice. The village elder's conservative stance and the villagers' indifference is therefore responsible for maintaining the village's current social order. Since in the poem, the speaker attempts to end the violence and thereby acknowledges its historicity, the inhibition that seems to keep him/her from realising the plan likely roots in the fear of rejection by his/her compatriots, which s/he would face if s/he undertook the journey. This notion of alienation is also implied in the text's end, when s/he mentions that s/he is unable to understand the Jutlanders, while at the same time feeling "lost, / [u]nhappy and at home" (Heaney *Wintering* 44). When Joey challenges the crime syndicate's archetype of favouring economical gain over violence by viciously attacking Fogarty, in *A History of Violence*, he is forced to leave the group because of the archetype of retaliatory violence. Although the Stall family views their lives historically, when being confronted with the protagonist's violent past Tom and Edie initially attempt to fend off the threat to their group's integrity, by denying it. While Old Man Warner's repulsions of the covert challenges to the lottery are successful, since they are not followed by any discussions, the poem's speaker's fear of being expelled from his/her group is enough to keep him/her from undertaking the journey. In the movie, Tom's and Edie's attempts to deny the protagonist's past ultimately fail, showing that the maintenance of a non-violent archetype that relies on the denial of historical events is difficult during an incursion of violent archetypes. When comparing their denial to the villagers' rejections of Mrs. Hutchinson's protests, it also becomes apparent that the greater number of the villagers helps them to enforce the procedure and thereby maintain their archetype, while the Stalls face the crime syndicate's superior number of members. Group size hence also is an important factor that secures the maintenance of archetypical acts.

While the individuals, who reject the protagonists' historic actions, see them as responsible for their own suffering, the characters who want to end their home communities' violent archetypes interpret their distress as consequence of a divine will (Eliade 104), which urges them to change the situation. In the short story, Nancy's friend's comment is the most pronounced challenge to the practice, but Mrs. Hutchinson's lateness, the villagers' nervousness and Mr. Adams's comment about the neighbouring village also covertly display rejection of the murderous event's realisation. Since the poem's speaker is seemingly inhibited by his compatriots' support of the archetypal violence, s/he perceives him-/herself to be alone in his/her rejection of the continuous acts of retaliation. Joey's rejection of the crime syndicate's economical archetype manifests itself in his personal, ahistorical archetype of excessive violence, which forces him to leave. After suffering because of his violent acts, he conceals his past in order to start a new life that acknowledges historicity. The profound suffering Tom, Edie and Jack experience because of this, then is the film's most prominent example of historically caused suffering. It requires the characters to reject the violent archetypes that have been introduced into their lives and return to their lawful, future oriented life in order to continue remain together. When comparing the roots of the protagonists' desire to reject their groups' violent archetypes, all of them refuse to accept their suffering as self-inflicted and consequently interpret it as what Eliade describes as "divine will" (104), which allows one to argue that all of them share a modern, historical perspective on life. While the teenage girl is the only one who verbally expresses her challenge to the lottery, most other villagers seem to share her stance but remain passive and willingly participate in the conclusive stoning. Although the poem's speaker's reflections on establishing a historical view in his/her group, or at least leave it, are more deliberate than the girl's unconscious comment, they make the speaker feel isolated. This implies that s/he sees him-/herself as the only group member who feels this way and consequently has little hope that the prayer would have the desired effect. The village's society therefore seems to be more inclined to reject the violent archetype than the poem's speaker's community. The speaker's explicit awareness of the necessity to value historical events, however, shows a deeper understanding of historicity's significance for ending the violence. Although by leaving Philadelphia Joey rejects both, his personal archetypal violence that roots in the conflict with his brother and the crime syndicate's economical archetype, by not mentioning his past to Edie and denying his personal history when

being confronted by Fogarty, he causes the family's state of traumatisation at the movie's end. While Joey therefore realises the poem's speaker's wish to leave, he does not continue to acknowledge his deeds in Philadelphia historically. The poem's speaker's careful considerations thus indicate more awareness of historicity's purpose and therefore more developed than Joey's necessary escape and subsequent denial of the past. At the movie's end the Stalls, however, have rejected the violent archetypes that established themselves in the family and have realised the necessity to view their lives historically. The Stall family is therefore more culturally developed than the poem's speaker.

5. Conclusion

Although using the theoretical frameworks of Freud, Girard and Eliade to evaluate the different forms of violence depicted in the three objects of analysis leads to different conclusions regarding the protagonists' cultural development, similarities between the analytic approaches' assessments of the cultures and events also emerge. Before determining how the societies' and protagonists' relationships to violence affect their degree of cultural development, the three theoretical frameworks' explanatory approaches to the phenomenon were compared in the following paragraphs.

While Freud, Girard and Eliade derive some of their arguments from behavioural patterns, which they attribute to humans living in times of less cultural development, only Girard and Eliade focus on ritualistic features and religious narratives of such societies. Freud interprets early hominids' formation of stable social groups as the origin of forces in the psyche that also guide a modern individual's behaviour and then discusses the ways these inner authorities affect individuals' emotional well-being. For him the origin of violent behaviour lies in the interplay of an individual's pursuit of gratification of desires originating in eros and thanatos and the need to repress them, in order to remain part of the social collective. Girard interprets humanity's propensity to violence as cause for the development of culture (36), since it established the need for institutions able to contain it, either by implementing religious rituals or by different forms of retaliatory violence. Girard holds the failure of such systems and the mimetic quality of violence responsible for outbreaks of brutality, while for Freud uncontrolled violence can also be a symptom of the repressive forces that usually maintain societal peace. Eliade differentiates between archaic cultures' dependence on periodical realisations of archetypical acts, including acts of violence, which serve as a basis for legal doctrines and maintain the culture by abolishing history, and modern cultures that interpret suffering they experience as divine stimulus to change their behaviour. While all three authors consequently interpret violence as concomitant to human cohabitation, Girard and Eliade mainly see the group's belief system as responsible for the maintenance of societal peace, while Freud focuses on the individual's obligation to conform with societal norms.

Although Freud, Girard and Eliade approach humanity's propensity to violence from different perspectives, they hold the external authority (Freud 111) of the social collective responsible for sustaining social peace. The processes the theorists blame for these systems' failure also resemble each other, which allows one to compare the

analytical frameworks' effectiveness by showing how they explain both the emergence of violence, and the protagonists' rejection of this in the three objects of analysis. This comparison of the frameworks simultaneously allows one to evaluate the societies' level of cultural development. The characters either support or challenge the cultural practices and code of conduct in place and consequently embody this authority. Whereas Freud sees them as personifications of dominant and defiant cultural super-egos, who take this position because of the exemplary quality of their personal super-egos' values, Girard provides four possible cultural conditions they can support, namely the three institutionalised measures to contain violence and the sacrificial crisis. Eliade's binary framework allows to distinguish between archaic individuals that rely on archetypal acts and modern individuals acknowledging historicity.

When comparing the embodiments of the cultural authorities in the three objects of analysis Old Man Warner appears to be the least developed of them. Freud would refer to him as a savage individual, who blames his ill fortune on a fetish (111), in this case the non-compliance with the ritual. Girard's framework, too, puts him on the lowest stage of cultural development, since he supports the preventive measure the sacrifice constitutes (22). The villagers' nervousness, meanwhile, is a sign of their collective neurosis, since they have to repress both their libido and feelings of guilt, which indicates that a new cultural super-ego that rejects the violent practice is developing. This neurotic state corresponds with early stages of the sacrificial crisis described in Girard's framework, since the villagers have begun to question the ritual's effectivity. Drawing on Eliade's theories, the village elder can be described as an archaic individual, since he fully supports the archetypal act, while the villagers' nervousness suggests that they have not forgotten about the event's brutality. Its function of abolishing historicity is hence no longer effective, and the village's society has begun to view their environment historically, which constitutes a cultural shift similar to Girard's sacrificial crisis. The goddess in Heaney's poem, who represents the cause for the sectarian conflict in Ireland, and the crime syndicate's authority figures in the film are more difficult to classify. While they perpetuate compensatory measures against violence in Girard's framework (22), Eliade's argumentation makes it possible to interpret their violence as archetypal, since it maintains the groups' cohesion. In Freud's framework the purpose of the goddess' violence is the release of built-up aggressions originating in thanatos, which also gratifies libidinous desires and unites the group because of the possibility to nurture these desires. In Cronenberg's

film the crime syndicate's violence is a "[substitute-gratification]" (Freud 79) made necessary by the neurosis that originates in the constant repression of libidinous desires. Although the goddess' culture in Heaney's poem seems less developed because of the ritualistic aspect of the Tollund Man's killing, both groups lack the appropriate amount of repression to be described as members of modern society. They are similar in their reliance on periodical acts of violence to relief the built-up aggressions and therefore need to be regarded as non-modern. The explanation for the groups' violence offered by Freud's framework thus is closer to what Girard describes as preventive measure and what Eliade views as archetypical act. This means that all three violent cultural super-egos in the objects of analysis need to be interpreted as similarly un-developed, since only Girard's framework allows to argue that the goddess and the crime syndicate represent more developed cultural authorities. However, Girard's differentiation between preventive and compensatory measures against violence offers a more nuanced view on the groups' developmental stages and helps to explain the system's proneness to cause sacrificial crises, since they often entail further acts of retribution, which makes the measure precarious (22). While the social groups depicted in the three objects seem to vary considerably in their degree of cultural development, the analysis with the three theorists' frameworks shows that their handling of violence puts them on similar stages of development, since all rely on periodical violence to maintain societal peace. While all objects of analysis also feature characters that oppose these authority figures, it is more expedient to compare them regarding their motivations.

Whereas Freud's approach again sees psychoanalytical processes responsible for the repulsion some characters experience when being confronted with their group's violent behaviour, Girard and Eliade interpret these rejective emotions as symptoms of changes to the authority systems. However, the theorists' explanations, again, share a series of commonalities. When drawing on Freud's framework, feelings of affection and guilt evoked by the personal super-ego regularly motivate characters to challenge their culture's violent practices. Among other factors, Girard holds "too much continuity" (43), or resemblance, between sacrificer and victim responsible for the curative systems' erosion. For Eliade the emergence of an individual's historical perspective on his/her environment, which is accompanied by the realisation that suffering is rather a stimulus to change his/her behaviour than a punishment for an infringement, is tantamount to rejecting the archetypical acts' validity.

When analysing “The Lottery” with Freud’s theories, Nancy’s friend’s comment is caused by her libidinous desire to maintain her friendship and by the feelings of guilt she expects to experience if she were to participate in her stoning. In Girard’s framework the strong resemblance between victim and sacrificer is responsible for Nancy’s friend’s comment, while Eliade’s framework interprets the girl’s historical perspective and her unwillingness to accept her suffering as self-imposed as cause. Heaney’s poem’s speaker is also motivated by the affection s/he feels for the prehistoric victim and feelings of guilt for indirectly participating in his/her group’s violence. S/he, however, infers that s/he experiences additional guilt for wanting to leave her group, which confirms his/her awareness of the plan’s implications. This awareness shows that s/he is the most culturally developed individual in the Freudian perspective. S/he also rejects her home community’s violence because s/he refuses to recognise it as necessary archetype. When applying Girard’s framework, it becomes clear that the speaker is also motivated by the resemblance the victim has with his/her relatives, which evokes the wish to end the conflict. While in *A History of Violence* Joey’s departure from Philadelphia is motivated by the crime syndicate’s neurotic cultural super-ego, his return is too motivated by feelings of guilt for endangering his family and the affection he feels for them. The “fraternal resemblance” (Girard 67) does not evoke feelings of regret or compassion, but causes the conflict that requires him to leave his home community. At the same time, the resemblance between Tom and his relatives enables him to end the conflict by facing the demand for revenge. In Eliade’s framework, Joey’s excessive violence is caused by his inability to detach himself from the archetypal fraternal conflict, which he needs to recreate periodically. The historical perspective he develops in order to start a family then requires him to deal with the ramifications of his past instead of leaving again. By comparing the societal conditions and relationships in the objects of analysis, which are responsible for the protagonists’ challenges to the authority systems, I have shown that the same processes cause the rejection of violence in the three objects of analysis and that the theorists’ concepts ascribe important roles to them as well. The libidinous desires described by Freud often have the same effect as Girard’s concept of resemblance and Eliade’s emergence of a historical understanding of an individual’s environment. As soon as a character is unwilling to accept their cultural authority’s demand to harm a person with whom they share an emotional bond, he/she is inclined to challenge this authority.

While the comparison of the protagonists' home cultures' relationships to violence showed that all of them rely on periodic implementations of violence, confirming Girard's and Eliade's argumentation, the Freudian approach determined that the cultural super-egos' violence often caused neurotic symptoms in the group members. The groups' cultural development thus can be interpreted as quite similar, although Girard's approach allows to distinguish between the less developed, preventive measure against violence in "The Lottery" and the retaliatory violence that takes place in the other two objects of analysis. The protagonists' rejection of the violence in all three objects of analysis is caused by their realisation that they are unwilling to accept the violent systems' negative effects on their emotional well-being. While in the short story the villagers' nervousness shows that most of them question the ritual, the direct challenges constituted by Mrs. Hutchinson's lateness, Mr. Adam's comment and Nancy's friend's wish indicates that the sacrifice's function has come under scrutiny. Similarly, Heaney's poem's speaker is no longer willing to accept the continuous, reciprocal violence that for him/her has the same cultural roots as the sacrifice of the Tollund Man. The speaker's reflections establish a notion of forlornness in him/her, since s/he realises that the desire to change his/her group's violent practices is futile. Joey's unconscious wish to leave his emotionless environment, however, manifests itself in his excessive violence, which requires him to leave. Split The dissociation from his old social environment, however, is only completed after he kills his brother at the movie's end. Although the traumatisation of the protagonist and his relatives in the last scene, therefore, are similar to the neurotic state in which Heaney's poem's speaker finds him-/herself in, the family in *A History of Violence* has managed to sever its connection to the violent group. While the village in the short story finds itself in the early stages of the abolishment of the violent practice and consequently is the least developed group, the poem's speaker is preparing him-/herself for the emotional impact of the departure from his/her group. This indicates a higher degree of cultural development. At the movie's end, the Stall family has completed their separation from the group and is therefore the most developed group, but consequently has to face the emotional repercussions. The three objects of analysis can therefore be regarded as portrayal of different stages of social dissociation, which is motivated by similar cultural deficiencies. This process, which can also be referred to as search for exile or redemption, however, is always accompanied by emotional turmoil, as the three theoretical frameworks have shown.

An individual's readiness to leave a violent group can hence be regarded an example of his/her degree of cultural development.

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7. Appendix - Poems

Seamus Heaney – Digging

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked,
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God the old man could handle a spade.
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods

Over his shoulder, going down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.

(Heaney *Opened* 3-4)

Seamus Heaney – Requiem for the Croppies

The pockets of our greatcoats full of barley –
No kitchens on the run, no striking camp –
We moved quick and sudden in our own country.
The priest lay behind ditches with the tramp.
A people, hardly marching – on the hike –
We found new tactics happening each day:
We'd cut through reins and rider with the pike
And stampede cattle into infantry,
Then retreat through hedges where cavalry must be thrown.
Until, on Vinegar Hill, the fatal conclave.
Terraced thousands died, shaking scythes at cannon.
The hillside blushed, soaked in our broken wave.
They buried us without shroud or coffin
And in August the barley grew up out of the grave.

(Heaney *Opened* 22)

Seamus Heaney – The Tollund Man

I
Some day I will go to Aarhus
To see his peat-brown head,
The mild pods of his eye-lids,
His pointed skin cap.

In the flat country nearby
Where they dug him out,
His last gruel of winter seeds
Caked in his stomach,

Naked except for
The cap, noose and girdle,
I will stand a long time.
Bridegroom to the goddess,

She tightened her torc on him
And opened her fen,
Those dark juices working
Him to a saint's kept body,

Trove of the turfcutters'
Honeycombed workings.
Now his stained face
Reposes at Aarhus.

II

I could risk blasphemy,
Consecrate the cauldron bog
Our holy ground and pray
Him to make germinate

The scattered, ambushed
Flesh of labourers,
Stockinged corpses
Laid out in the farmyards,

Tell-tale skin and teeth
Flecking the sleepers
Of four young brothers, trailed
For miles along the lines.

III

Something of his sad freedom
As he rode the tumbril
Should come to me, driving,
Saying the names

Tollund, Grauballe, Nebelgard,
Watching the pointing hands
Of country people,
Not knowing their tongue.

Out here in Jutland
In the old man-killing parishes
I will feel lost,
Unhappy and at home.

(Heaney *Wintering* 47-48)

8. Abstracts

8.1. English Abstract

Ever since the early epic poems of Homer, authors have discussed the various forms of violence that accompany human cohabitation. In works of literature, violent acts of individuals were often considered breaches of the law, whereas violence performed by the societal collective like war or punishment of criminals was more likely to be described as necessary measure needed for the community's stability. While the distinction between the criminal individual and the well-intended collective is the typical distribution of roles in classical literature, this thesis will investigate works of narrative art in which these ascribed roles are reversed. Instead of portraying individuals that violently challenge their peaceful societies' code of conduct, the three objects of analysis focus on protagonists, who are confronted with their communities' continuous violence and the processes that motivate them to challenge the violent aspects of their home culture.

Although the protagonists in Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery" (1948), Seamus Heaney's poem "The Tollund Man" (1972) and David Cronenberg's film *A History of Violence* (2005) are situated in different socio-cultural contexts, they share an unwillingness to participate in their communities' institutionalisation of violence. The individuals' willingness to emancipate themselves from their groups, however, differs considerably. While some characters' rejection of violence can only be assumed because of their nervousness, others consider leaving their social environment in order to find peace. By examining the objects of analysis with conceptualisations found in Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930), René Girard's *Violence and the Sacred* (1972) and Mircea Eliade's *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1949), I compare the different forms of violence depicted in the objects of analysis. I also illustrate that the processes that motivate the individuals to challenge the violence are similar and that the readiness to leave their groups is indicative of their degree of cultural development.

Key words: libido / thanatos / cultural super-ego / resemblance / misunderstanding / sacrificial crisis / archetype / archetypical violence / historicity

8.2. German abstract

Seit Homers frühen Epen thematisieren Autoren die verschiedenen Formen von Gewalt, die Gemeinschaften von Menschen seit jeher begleiten. In literarischen Werken wurde die vom Einzelnen ausgeübte Gewalt oft als Gesetzesbruch dargestellt, während kollektive Gewaltformen, wie Krieg oder die Bestrafung von Verbrechern, eher als für die gesellschaftliche Stabilität notwendige Maßnahme wahrgenommen wurde. Derweil die Unterscheidung zwischen dem kriminellen Individuum und der wohlmeinenden Gruppe die typische Rollenverteilung in der klassischen Literatur ist, werden in dieser Diplomarbeit Werke untersucht, in denen diese Rollenzuschreibung umgekehrt ist. Anstatt Individuen, welche die Verhaltensregeln ihrer friedlichen Gruppen gewaltvoll herausfordern darzustellen, beschreiben die drei Werke der Primärliteratur Protagonisten, die mit kontinuierlich gewalttätigen Gesellschaften konfrontiert sind und die Prozesse, die sie dazu motivieren die Gesellschaftliche Gewalt ihrer Heimatkultur zu hinterfragen.

Obwohl die Protagonisten der Kurzgeschichte „Die Lotterie“ (1948) von Shirley Jackson, des Gedichts „The Tollund Man“ von Seamus Heaney (1972) und des Films *A History of Violence* (2005), von David Cronenberg, sich in unterschiedlichen sozio-kulturellen Kontexten befinden, teilen sie den Unwillen an den institutionalisierten Formen der Gewalt ihrer Gruppen teilzunehmen. Die Bereitschaft sich von ihren Gemeinschaften zu emanzipieren, ist allerdings unterschiedlich stark ausgeprägt. Während die Ablehnung gegenüber der Gewalt mancher Charaktere durch ihre Nervosität nur angedeutet wird, ziehen andere in Betracht ihre Gruppe zu verlassen, um Frieden zu finden. Durch das Heranziehen von Konzepten aus Sigmund Freuds *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* (1930), René Girards *Das Heilige und die Gewalt* (1972) und Mircea Eliades *Kosmos und Geschichte: der Mythos der ewigen Wiederkehr* (1949), vergleiche ich die unterschiedlichen Ausprägungsformen von Gewalt, die in der Primärliteratur dargestellt werden. Außerdem zeige ich, dass sich die Vorgänge die die Charaktere zu ihrem Aufbegehren motivieren ähneln, und dass ihre Bereitschaft ihre gewalttätige Gemeinschaft zu verlassen einen Rückschluss auf ihren kulturellen Entwicklungsgrad zulässt.

Schlagworte: Libido / Thanatos / Kulturelles-Über-Ich / Ähnlichkeit / Verknennung / Krise des Opferkults / Archetyp / archetypische Gewalt / historisches Ereignis