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Image:

Caveman Holding A Tray With Fast Food

Banksy, Graffito At Noverly Cinema, Los Angeles, CA, 2008

Source: http://www.artofthestate.co.uk/Banksy/banksy_la_caveman.htm

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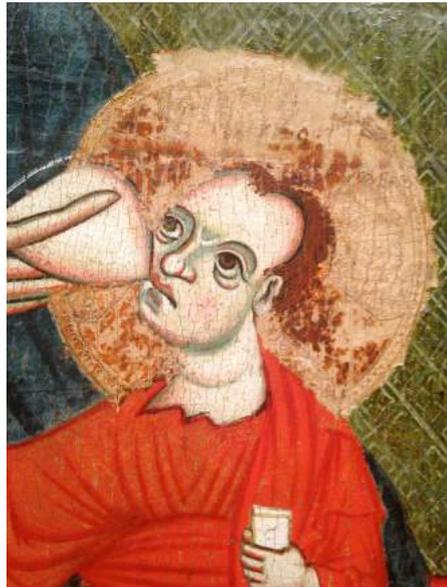
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Editor's note

Oral Pleasure

In Freudian psychoanalysis, the psychosexual oral stage of development denotes the mouth as the major erogenous zone. This stage includes the period from birth to 1 year of age, in which the infant's primary interaction with the world is through the mouth. The mouth is vital for eating, and the infant derives pleasure from oral stimulation through gratifying activities such as tasting and sucking his mother's breast and other objects that get his attention. This behavior will also help the growth of his immune system. As development evolves, the infant will move to the following stages such as the anal, phallic, latent and genital. However, for a mature person, a regression to oral behaviors can certainly be helpful in the relief of anxiety states. Smoking a cigarette, chewing gum, thumb sucking, fingernail biting and overeating have been pointed out as different kinds of regression to an oral stage of development.

For our particular attention is this issue of the overeating response to stress. Since prehistoric times, scarcity of food has been a major cause of anxiety. In fact, we know now that orexin, a protein that modulates hunger, also plays a significant role in anxiety. In addition, a cortisol response from our adrenal glands under stress will invite us to take a bite of the most available food. On a personal note, I remember, being on call as an intern in Cleveland, and grabbing a bite of whatever cookie I could find in the nurse's station every time I was getting paged in the middle of the night. Food is also helpful for the population of the bacterial flora in our intestines, which indirectly affects the levels of GABA and serotonin in our brain, making an impact in our mood. This all has been referred to as the mind-gut theory.



In this detail of the Nursing Madonna we can appreciate the importance given to the oral developmental stage in the Middle Ages. Magdalen Master circa 1280, Florence, Italy. Now at the Yale Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.

Photo by Fernando Espi Forcen

In parallel to Freud's psychosexual stages of development, both in romantic love and sexual intercourse, the mouth is also a major erogenous zone. For instance, in general, a person may never know if his romantic interests are reciprocated unless confirmed by putting his mouth together with the other person's mouth, something popularly known as "a kiss." In sexual intercourse, the lover, similarly to the infant, will approach with his mouth every object he finds of interest in the anatomy of the other lover.

Oral pleasure is our most primary source of satisfaction, and is present in everyday life when eating, drinking, loving and in our vices. A lack of good resolution of the oral stage of development can result in a psychosexual developmental arrest known as oral fixation. In that case, the individual may show a tendency to alcohol or drug abuse, obesity, dependency or aggression. In these clinical scenarios, psychoanalytic therapy and other kinds of psychiatric treatment can certainly be helpful.

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D.

Icons of Psychiatry

Banksy's Caveman Holding A Tray With Fast Food

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York, NY

Over the last few decades, sophisticated and skillful graffiti with messages of social protest have mysteriously appeared in the streets of London, Bristol, Liverpool, New York, La Reina de Los Angeles, Berlin and Barcelona, to mention some examples. These graffiti have been attributed to a person often referred to as "Banksy," a pseudonym for an artist whose



identity is yet to be known.

Psychologically, the success of Banksy's graffiti – especially among younger people – could be explained by a cathartic relief with the frustration from the limitations of current societal values imposed by the authority, which generates an antisystemic destruction phantasy attempting to attain a more fairly-distributed world. As such, the themes depicted in Banksy's graffiti commonly involve anti-war, pro-environmental, and political themes. Some examples of his popular graffiti have representations of police men kissing or holding guns with smiley faces and angelical wings, unfaithfulness, an escorted doughnut van, Mickey Mouse and the McDonald's clown holding a famelic girl, Death on a boat in highly contaminated waters, an antisystem person throwing flowers, and a child losing a balloon. Nevertheless, Banksy's success has rendered him a significant amount of wealth and he has become a popular artist for wealthy collectors. An argument, therefore, has been made that Banksy forms part of what he himself criticizes in his graffiti.

Banksy's graffiti of a caveman holding a tray with fast food has been understood as a critique of the degenerative future of the human species unless action is taken to change our current dietary habits. The graffiti originally appeared at a wall of the Noverly Cineman in Los Angeles. On the wall, the figure of a caveman frowning while holding a bone in his left hand and a tray with burger, french fries, and soda in his right hand. The man, however, seems to be healthy and in good shape. Another possible message, therefore, could be that fast food is after all not that bad if consumed with moderation.

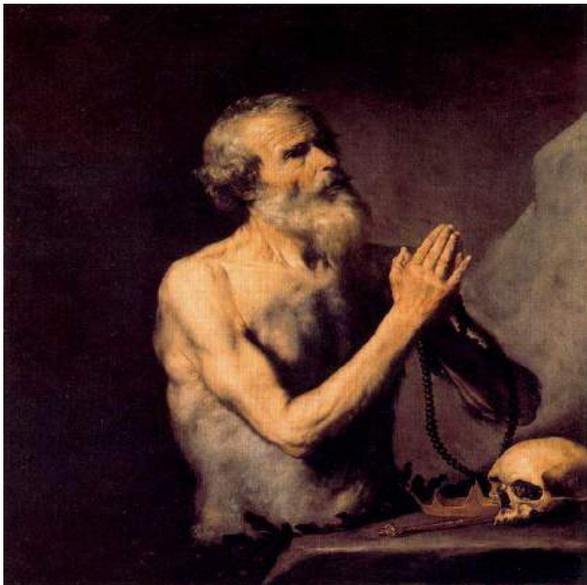
The Paleo diet, a diet that emphasizes the use of unprocessed products, similar to what the cave men ate has recently enjoyed success in the United States as a healthier alternative to our current diet. At the same time, it has also received a good amount of criticism in other circles. Banksy's graffiti leaves space for subjective interpretation from the observer, a cave man holding a tray with fast food reflects on ambivalent feelings between holding on, letting go, and moving forward.

San Onofre By José De Ribera (1637)

Erina Alushi, M.D., University of Turin, Italy

San Onofre, the reason for this picture, was a hermit and *lonely penitent* who lived in the late fourth century in the Egyptian desert near the city of Thebes. In Ribera's painting, there are obvious signs of malnutrition. José de Ribera captures the suffering and pain, pulling out all

the beauty in a perfectly drawn face. The importance of eating disorders in the elderly go beyond simple aesthetics. This refers to a pathology related problem and aspects of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. Food and nutrition are not synonymous terms; changes in nutrition in the elderly, if appropriate involves changes in nutritional parameters and even the resolution of pathologies, in some cases completely (vitamin deficits) and others partial. But, mostly they will intervene in preventing diseases and improving functional capacity. There are studies which, after a longitudinal follow-up, elders who performed above or below the recommended intakes experienced greater disability and even higher mortality. For instance, a recent study comparing a geriatric sample between 1995 and 2005, reported that prevalence of binge-eating increased from 1.7% to 7.4% among those 55–64 years old and from 2.3% to 6.2% among those 65 years of age or older; furthermore prevalence of purging increased from 5.2% to 20.1% among those 65 years or older.¹



San Onofre
Material: Oil on Canvas.
Dimensions: 130 x 104 cm.
Museum: Hermitage. St. Petersburg

Reference

1. Ackdar, DM, Richter, S., Egan, A., et al. Poor Outcome and Death among Youth, Young Adults, and Midlife Adults with Eating Disorders: An Investigation of Risk Factors by Age at Assessment. *Int J Eat Disord.* 2014 Nov;47(7):825-35. doi: 10.1002/eat.22346. Epub 2014 Aug 11.

Günther, *Il Gallo Immaginario* By Erina Alushi (2015)

Carolina Teworte, M.A., Art History, University of Jena, Germany

In Günther, Erina expresses a dualism between Naïf painting and poetry, between modern and folklore, fantasy and reality. A symbolism that goes through his prose, becomes music via the poetry and takes shape in his paintings.

A revelation of the deepest emotions, perceptions and torments of the soul is stripped from his poetry and caressed by the explosion of vibrant colors through her brush strokes. In the border between folk and poetic subtlety, between the size of the real colored by surreal, traveling in parallel with the vibrancy of colors.

Colors become part of the existential, capturing on canvas a precise experience of joy or pain. As the history of her own country who carries on his shoulders the strong emotions, defeats and victories, tragedies and joys, the invasions and the 'independence, the dictatorship and the rebirth of the old wings about to take flight again in freedom, as fair "shqipe" (eagle), the symbol of her country, Albania.



Günther, *Il Gallo Immaginario*

Oil in Canvas

Dimensions: 50x45 cm

Erina Alushi, 2015

Published with the kind permission of the artist

Artist's Comments On Günther, *Il Gallo Immaginario*

Medicine is the art of life with where you begin to paint a picture starting from the cell, the basic unit and structure of life, the most simple, yet at the same time, most complicated. And, over the years that picture is enriched with details where the physiological and pathological travel together, intersecting and challenging each other, painting that life. Painting recreates the colors, internal human perceptions and sensations. What psychotherapy aims to do with the soul is focus the light into the dark side of the psyche. The art of painting does so through brush strokes, penetrating the darkness of the soul and elevating it to the light with color.

“Günther” proudly stretches his head towards the sun and has shimmering feathers flooded with vibrant light. Although roosters are basically domestic animals, they have traditionally been linked to virility, vigilance and lust for battle. In various cultures and religions, the rooster has the symbolic function of a gatekeeper, symbolizing the beginning of something new: the victory of the day over the darkness, the good over the evil, the wakefulness over the dream or the consciousness over the subconscious.

Erina Alushi, M.D.

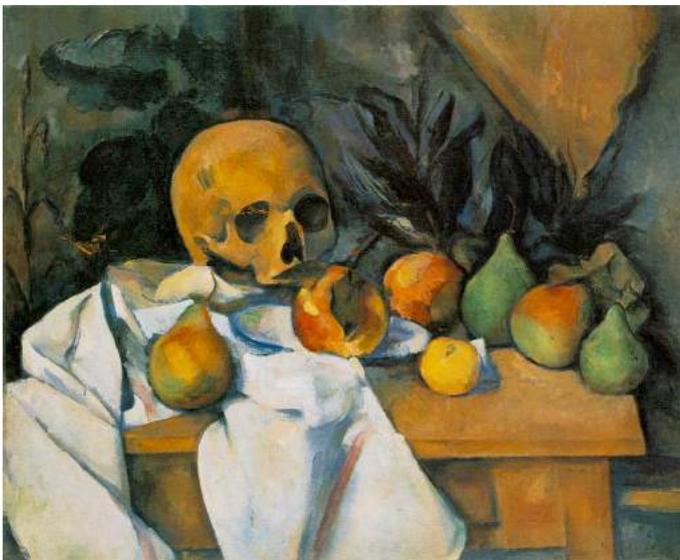
Essays

Food For Thought

Aviram Mizrachi, M.D., Department of Surgery, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York, NY

The tactility of the texture, the intensity of the taste, the comfort feeling that floods the entire body. These are some of the different sensations that we experience when we eat. Is food a necessity or an indulgent? Probably a little bit of both, depending on the objective and the circumstances. Some would say that eating is a part of our existence and others would also classify food as a way of socializing which is true for almost all cultures and peoples.

But, what is most interesting about food is its ability to become addictive. This is reflected by the fact that while in some parts of the world people are dying of starvation, in other parts of the world people are dying from excess eating and obesity associated diseases. And so, for some people food is a deprived necessity and for others a lethal drug. Perhaps this contradiction represents the culture of abundance in the most striking way. At its early beginning back in the 1950s, it was a welcomed change in the way society had consumed. However it created a whole new sub-culture of “more is more” and “bigger is better”. These values are deeply embedded in the western culture and are difficult to change. The hope is that people will be able to find the balance between the necessity and the enjoyment of food without the dependency in artificial flavor intensifiers that lead to unnecessary and uncontrolled eating.



Still life with fruit
and skull, Paul
Cezanne, 1898

Source: wikiart.org

Eli's Gefilte Fish

Simon Wein, M.D., Pain and Palliative Services, Davidoff Cancer Center, Petach Tikva, Israel

Eli is my dentist. He is also a radio-commentator for the national soccer league. Eli was born in Israel but was brought up between the generations. That is, his parents survived the German concentration camps but he grew up in a free and sunny country. So his diet as a child consisted of war stories and food from the shtetl*.

Eli has an open dental practice in a residential building. By this I mean that the door to the waiting room remains open while he works on the patient in the chair. This way he can see who comes in next and if he needs to, do a quick consult. If his phone rings and someone wants to know his opinion about the next soccer game (probably with financial interest) he will obligingly take a break and spout forth.

We often discuss the state of the nation - the Jewish content of modern Israel and the old-new anti-Semitism. He is not religious but is rather traditional. And so one day we got to discussing traditions and he told me about how he makes gefilte fish – the Polish way. The first time I heard of his cooking exploits I thought this sounds too difficult. Then one time as I was lying in the dentist's chair contemplating the meaning of fear, I decided I would give it a go. So then and there I jotted down the recipe (he gave me a piece of paper) as the nurse kindly put the suction aside and we waited for the local anesthetic to take effect.

I have since made the fish a couple of times with resounding success. The main critique came from the wife who hails from Sweden. You see the fish used in Israel is the common carp. In Sweden (and America), carp is considered a 'rubbish fish' not to be compared with the royal salmon or court trout. She has a point.

But once the carp is minced, spiced and slow-cooked it is, if not a delicacy, a wonderful metaphor of culture, yester-year and survival.

The Recipe

Makes about 20 cutlets

Traditional Polish style: quite firm with a sweet and peppery mélange

Ingredients

Whole carp fish 1.5 kg

2 large onions

2 large carrots

Sugar: 4 heaped tablespoons x 2 portions

Black pepper: half tablespoon x 2 portions

Salt: half to third tablespoon x 2 portions

Matzoh meal: 2 heaped tablespoons

3 medium eggs

A stalk of celery

Preparation

Buy the fresh fish in the market and ask the fishmonger to sacrifice (some shops have live carp in tanks), behead, gut, be-tail, scale, de-fin and cut the body into thick cutlets for mincing (or ask the fishmonger to mince it for you).

Take the head of the fish home separately.

Finely mince the fish cutlets, including skin and bones.

Similarly mince one large onion and one large carrot.

In a large bowl place the following ingredients: minced fish; 1 carrot minced; 1 onion minced; three eggs; one portion each of salt, pepper and sugar; the matzoh* meal. Mix very well by hand using a fork. Place into the fridge for one hour (or overnight) to settle.

In a large pot half-filled with water, add: celery; one onion quartered; one carrot halved; one portion each of sugar, salt, and pepper, and the head of the carp. Cover and cook vigorously for 1 hour, then remove fish head.

To the large pot with the vegetables and fish bouillon add fish-mixture cutlets in layers, waiting for each cutlet to seal before adding the next layer, and then reduce to smallest flame and cook

for 4 hours. In order to ensure the cutlets are covered by water, place the vegetables on top of the cutlets so the cutlets do not float above the water-line.

After 4 hours remove the cutlets, place in a flat dish and pour the cooking liquid over the cutlets; place a slice of carrot on each cutlet, let cool, then refrigerate. The liquid will become jelly.

Eating

Can be eaten cold though probably best at room-temperature, with chrain* or mayonnaise-schug* mixture or mustard condiments.

* Shtetl were small towns with large Jewish populations in Central and Eastern Europe before the Holocaust

* Matzoh is the flat dry biscuit eaten instead of bread during the Jewish Passover. Matzoh meal is the biscuits minced into crumbs. One could use finely minced bread crumbs instead.

*Chrain is a horse-radish/beetroot condiment that can be very sharp and eye-watering. The beetroot gives the red colour and tends to take the edge off the fiery horse-radish.

* Schug is a spicy sauce originating in Yemen. Its main ingredients are fresh hot peppers crushed, coriander, garlic and cumin.



Gefilte fish at the 2nd Avenue Deli, Upper East Side, New York, NY

Photo by Fernando Espi Forcen

Toilet Philosophy

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York, NY

The last stage of digestion of food takes place at the toilet. The bathroom has historically been an important place for creative thinking. During our time in the restroom, our body goes through several changes that involve the movement of our intestines to expel undigestible food products together with our bacterial flora. These changes together with environmental factors could have an effect in our minds allowing creativity to flourish. Perhaps, contrary to popular belief, Arquimedes was actually at the toilet instead of the bathtub when he uttered his legendary “Eureka!”

While some people spend very little time in the bathroom, others extend their time in the toilet to engage in peaceful, good quality time with the purpose of reading, studying, philosophizing and writing. With the more recent advances in technology –iPads and iPhones-, bathroom time



Rodin’s Thinker at the toilet

Source:
<https://designiswhatyoucangetawaywith.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/5937020-the-thinker-statue-by-the-french-sculptor-rodin-copy.jpg>

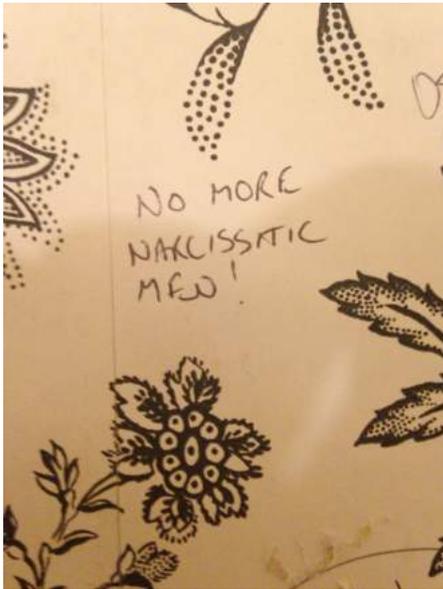
has become a perfect opportunity to read and respond to emails, send text messages, check the paper online, or update social and dating profiles on the web.



This person reflects on the theory of mind at the toilet

Photo by Fernando Espi Forcen

In public bathrooms, people enjoy writing on the walls and doors spontaneous thoughts about their perception of earthly life such as the name of the person one loves, pejorative comments about an ex-partner, resentful feelings about the opposite gender, which often relieve their anxieties. Writing emotional and philosophical thoughts in the public bathroom is so powerful that some cafeterias and bars in New York City have concocted chalk board walls for the joy of people’s creative



This person cathartically releases his/her frustrations with men at the unisex bathroom of the Little Cupcake. Photo by Fernando Espi Forcen



The bathroom of the Cakeshop is a living example punk art

Photo by Fernando Espi Forcen



The legendary bathroom of the former CBGB

Source: <http://photos1.blogger.com/blogger/2284/3999/1600/07-3727MensRm800tn.jpg>

writing. Bathroom walls have generated true artistic pieces. For instance, a recreation of the bathroom of the legendary punk concert venue CBGB was displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Today, the Cakeshop and The Library Bar on the Lower East Side are living examples of this kind of bathroom art.

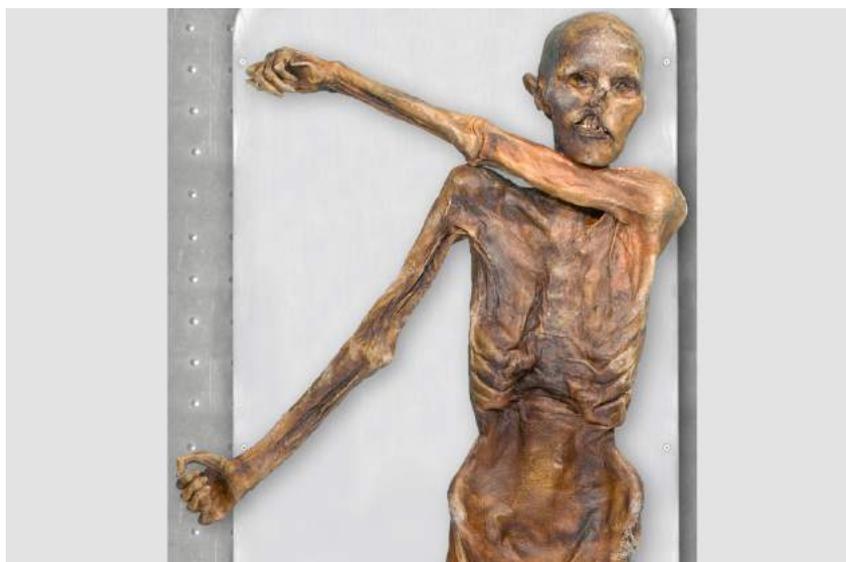
A person at the toilet can face encounters with several inanimate objects such as the towels, the shampoo bottles, the curtains, the floor, the spider webs in the ceiling and so on. These encounters with neutral objects allow for an opportunity for psychoanalytic and existential reflection about one's life. Lastly, a person in the bathroom will have no choice but to deal with his true self isolated from other human beings. Perhaps there is no more meaningful encounter, than an encounter with one's self at the toilet.

Articles

The Last Supper Of Ötzi The Mummy

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York, NY

In the summer of 1991, two German alpinists found the body of a person in the Alps. Initially, they thought the body belonged to a recently deceased tourist or alpinist. After its extraction and careful study at the Forensic Institute of Innsbruck in Austria, however, it was found that the body was, in fact, the mummy of a person who lived approximately 3300 B.C. The person was named Ötzi to honor the location of its discovery (1).



Ötzi the Iceman.

Source: <http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/d-brief/files/2013/10/iceman.jpg>

Soon, scientific analytical studies showed that the body was in good state of conservation, which led to a significant amount of knowledge and findings about the humans that inhabited Europe five thousand years ago. It was estimated that Ötzi was about 1.65 meter height, weighed 50 kilograms, and was approximately 45 years of age at the time of his death. In his skin, Ötzi had several tattoos of parallel vertical lines on his spine and a cross-sign in his knee. The meaning and purpose of these tattoos are still unknown (2).

Ötzi's last supper

Analysis of the mummy's intestines shows that Ötzi had eaten meat of red deer with einkorn wheat grain, possibly in the form of bread, eight hours prior to his death. The tooth



Red deer

Source: wikipedia.org

enamel showed several cavities, which indicate he had a diet rich in carbohydrates. Further genetic study showed that he was intolerant to lactose, something probably more common at the time. It is also thought that his intestine was infested with whipworm (*Trichuris Trichiura*).

Ötzi's death

It is believed that Ötzi died of accidental causes. Examination of his body shows that he had an arrowhead in his left shoulder and a blow injury to his head. Blood from two other people was found on his knife. Though there are several speculations about the circumstances surrounding his death, it is reasonable to believe that Ötzi had killed two men prior to being hit by an arrow in his shoulder and by another object (maybe a stone) on his head, which

ultimately caused his death. Perhaps Ötzi was a warrior fighting in a battle against another local tribe. The body was found in unnatural posture, bent on his belly, which originated the hypothesis that Ötzi died alone as a result of cold weather and blood loss (2,3).

Ötzi's legacy

Examination of Ötzi's body has led to a number of scientific articles providing a good deal of knowledge about our ancestors in the Ice Age. His red blood cells are the oldest human blood cells preserved. His DNA resembles more that of the Neanderthals. His tattoos have led to speculations about the use of acupuncture and other therapeutic treatments for degenerative arthritis at that time. The examination of his enamel and the food he ate during the months prior to his death via analysis of his hair has shown that his diet was rich in red meat and carbohydrates. After all, it seems our bad dietary habits have not changed that much over the millennia. Speculations exist that, with the advances of technology, Ötzi's DNA could be used to fecund a woman to bear his child. In fact, dozens of women have already made a request to have a baby with Ötzi (2-4).



Einkorn bread and seeds



Interpretation of Ötzi

Source: hoanvyciceman.blogspot.com

For the last few months, I have been thinking often about Ötzi while walking through the streets of New York City. I wonder what he would have made of knowing that his body would be found five thousand years later and of becoming a celebrity posthumously. I wonder if he would have given consent to study his body and expose it in a museum, or if he would give permission to use his DNA. While analysis of his DNA shows he had genes associated with low fertility, something that could have gone against his social status, paradoxically, today he may have a chance of fatherhood. I wonder what were his last thoughts prior to his traumatic and solitary death, and how he would have reacted if, somehow, he had had the knowledge of what would happen to his body five thousand years into the future.

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Cinema and Psychiatry

A Psychiatric Approach To The Film *Dragonwyck*

by J.L. Mankiewicz

Juana María Hernández Conesa, Ph.D., University of Murcia, Murcia, Spain

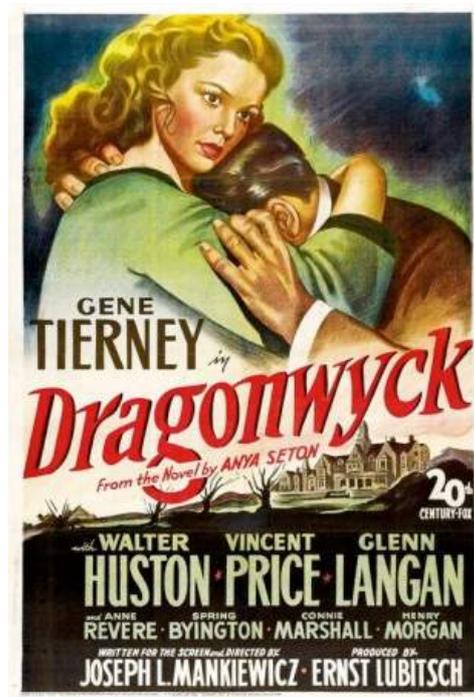
Joaquín Nieto Munuera, M.D., Ph.D., Department of Psychiatry and Social Psychology, University of Murcia, Spain

The aim of this study is to analyze and explain the content of the film “Dragonwyck” using the Gadamer method. (1,2). The analysis of the film has been categorized into six different sections: scientific analysis; the doctor patient relationship; medical practice; medical ethics; psychiatry and medicine; and the social aspects of medicine.

Mankiewicz’s film introduces us to psychoanalytic themes, which often resurfaced in his later films. Mankiewicz himself says “I have studied psychoanalysis, the emotions and the mental processes. Since I was very young I always had a passion for human behavior and its causes” (3). The film is congruent with others

such as Hitchcock’s *Rebecca* and melodramatic romances with a Baroque and Victorian style (4).

The narrative takes place in Connecticut. The main character, young Miranda Wells is the daughter of two farmers and is invited to spend some time with his cousin Nicholas Van Ryn at the Castle of Dragonwyck. Nicholas lives with his sick bulimic wife and his spoiled daughter. His wife dies in mysterious circumstances. Afterwards, Miranda falls for Nicholas and marries him. But, he soon becomes hostile and violent. She later discovers Nicholas killed his wife and justice is made the with the help of Dr. Turner and some peasants. After that, Miranda leaves Dragowyc (5).



In the film, Mankiewicz shows fascination for the character interpreted by Vincent Price (6). The film portrays a range of dysfunctional behaviors such as a dependent personality with depressive traits and symptoms of eating disorders in Nicholas' wife. She only finds pleasure in food and ignores her own daughter's needs for attention. Unable to behave in a mature way and with low self esteem she perpetuates this kind of dependent behaviors with a paradoxical poor adherence to treatment (7).

Katrina, Nicholas's daughter is a sick child with a depressive character and knows her parents don't love her. Additionally, she has hallucinations (8). Mankiewicz suggest a genetic component to her problems. Nicholas's greatgrandmother had a depressive episode that resulted in suicide. He anticipates that these hallucinations will be the prelude to his greatgrandmother's fate. In fact, her husband, the first Van Ryn had a similar characteristics to Nicholas. The family has a background of psychotic and psychopathic traits.

Nicholas Van Ryn shows psychopathic and narcissistic traits (9), he is unable to love and let others love him. He belittles and manipulates others including his family, employees and ultimately Miranda. He kills his own wife with whom he could not have a male child and marries Miranda to see if he can have a child with her. He attempts to kill her after her newborn dies. Suppression is his defense mechanism (10). He fires Dr. Turner and his disease hatches over his psychic structure. He gradually isolates himself in his room, neglects himself and starts using narcotics. He soon develops auditory hallucinations. He provokes his own suicide when found by Dr. Turner and dies when attempting to shoot at his employees who try to stop him.

The presence of medicine is constant through the film. Not only the psychiatric aspects previously mentioned but other pertinent for the doctor-patient relationship (Dr. Turner and Miranda and Nicholas' wife). In both cases, a paternalistic model is taken. The professional relationship between two physicians is also portrayed.

The film also relates to ethical aspects in medicine. Dr. Turner acknowledges he has not been able to diagnose the disease of Ms. Van Ryn: "It is a shame to not know the disease of a patient who has died." Though he will later discover the cause of her death was the poison from the plants in her room and prevents Miranda from intoxication.

Lastly psychosocial aspects are depicted when Nicholas talks about his employees as his property, the debate around land property and the peasants fight for social justice.

Conclusions:

In the category of scientific analysis, the film provides scientific explanations for the medical themes. Mankiewicz's view is holistic and includes a biopsychosocial approach. The doctor patient relationship is paternalistic and stresses the importance of humanitarianism. The medical practice takes place in a private outpatient setting. The relevance of ethics in medical

practice is emphasized. Psychiatrically, several psychopathological symptoms are portrayed: complex auditory hallucinations, mental disorders (depression, psychosis, eating disorder and substance abuse), personality disorders (dependent, narcissistic and antisocial) and psychodynamically several defense mechanisms are depicted. Socially, aspects of violence, criminal behavior and domestic abuse are also represented.

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Source of movies poster: IMD

Dreams From My Father: A Story Of Flesh Eaters And Inheritance

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It was the end of the summer of 1989 at our house near the major square of the small town of La Torre de la Horadada in Alicante, Spain. The town has the name of its 16th century, still standing watchtower –

La Torre- that alerted the locals of the arrivals of pirates, enemies and other threats and in particular erosions –de la Horadada- made by the wind in the sandstone of the cliffs off its beaches. In my childhood we used to rent the same house on Galicia Street every year to spend the month of August. My



The watchtower at La Torre de la Horadada, Alicante, Spain

Source: <http://www.masainternational.com/pblog/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/torre1.jpg>

grandfather who was from Galicia –A Spanish Region North of Portugal- had arrived to the area in the 1950s and had named the street. Like I said, we were nearing the end of the summer, I was still a kid. That night the temperature had fallen a few degrees –a climate change that signals some rainy days to come- and we had just eaten a *bocadillo de jamon con tomate* (serrano ham panini with tomato and olive oil). My cousins were visiting from Madrid and my father was about to tell us a scary story on the porch of the house while looking at the stars: He was about to narrate the story of *The Night of the Living Dead*, a film made by George Romero in 1968 that he had seen in the theater as an adolescent. My father told us that to this day, that film had been the scariest movie he had ever seen. Invaded by excitement and fear, my cousins, my brothers and I were about to hear the tale of the best zombie film ever made.

The Night of the Living Dead tells the story Barbra and her brother Tommy who visit their mother's grave in the cemetery of Evans City and are unexpectedly attacked by a wandering ghoulish person who engages Tommy. Barbra escapes in her car and takes refuge in a farm house in which she meets Ben who is trying to secure the doors to prevent the flesh eaters from entering the house. The news reports are grim however, with creatures returning to life everywhere. Later they discover 5 people hiding out in the basement: Harry, Helen, their

daughter Judy Cooper, that has been bitten by one of these creatures; and a young couple, Tom and Judy. A rivalry between Ben and Harry starts to see who will take charge. Survival becomes harder and harder as tension arises between the occupants and the number of hungry flesh eaters attempting to enter the house.



A few years later, in 1993 I was able to see the film with my father after buying a videocassette coinciding with the 25th

Barbra and Tommy go to the cemetery to visit the tomb of their mother, the chapel can be seen on the background.

Source: http://i.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2011/11/30/article-2067928-0EFE953200000578-917_634x463.jpg

anniversary of the masterpiece. Three years ago, I was still living in Cleveland finishing my psychiatry residency at the County Hospital. During the spring of 2012 my father came visit. One those days I took him to Pittsburgh and Evans City. Initially, he did not know where we were but when we were about to enter the ramp of cemetery where Barbra managed to escape, he gave the first yelps of recognizing the place. As we entered the cemetery, we saw the chapel and some of the tombs and other sights filmed in the movie. My father and I were alone in the cemetery, sitting, enjoying the sunset on the grass. There was no need for many words. I was touched to see my father dissociating. *The Night of the Living Dead* had been his favorite horror film and I could see how all his memories from childhood and adolescence were

overwhelmingly coming to his mind. We took a tiny piece of wood that had fallen from the door of the deteriorating chapel and kept it as a relic of our experience together. If I ever have a son, I would love to share with him my experiences of *the Night of the living Dead* and in the same way, take him one day to the cemetery in Evans City.



With my Dad in Evans City, A sight of *The Night of The Living Dead*, 2012

Poetry

Juana La Loca



The Beautiful
Juana La Loca,
circa 1470

Source: wikimedia
commons

I am immersed in insanity
A woman
Of passion and beauty.
A woman of dark eyes
and wild hair.
The taste of Madrid
is still in my mouth.
The jamon, the tortilla,
The Reina Sofia museum,
La Latina.
I am in love with a woman
Not Dora Maar,
but with the same eyes
We stare at each other
across the table.
The tapas plates are piled high.
She is insane to love me.
I am a jealous man.
I cannot leave her.
Juana la Loca

William Breitbart



Tosta de Jamon and Pintxo de Tortilla at
Juana La Loca Restaurant, Madrid, Spain

Source: juanalaloca.com

Free Text

At Home in Shabazi's Restaurant

Part-way through the *botz* coffee and sweet *bachlawa* chaser, we heard a loud crash and clatter from the kitchen which was just behind us. Through the server, all the contents and activities of the kitchen were open for inspection by the diners. Shabazi, the restaurant in Rosh Ha'ayin has been here since the 1950s when the Jews from *Teiman* (Yemen) arrived in Israel on their Magic Carpet*. Home cooking, homely service, without pretensions sums it up.



A happy customer at his favorite restaurant

There has been an ongoing family debate about which is the best eatery in our part of Israel. The children have rejected Shabazi, in part because their father enthuses excessively over the food, the ethics, and atmosphere. My intuition about Shabazi from the first time I ate here a little over seven years ago has not faded one iota, and in fact has been strengthened by alternate eating experiences. One hopes that in the fullness of time the children will understand the modest and humble values that Shabazi represents. And I hope that Shabazi will attain its centenary and they will bring their children and their children here for the sake of their stubborn forbears.

One of the regular pleasures of life is to go out to restaurants. A time to partake of this most animalistic of behaviors, when we devour with relish and gusto the flesh, fat and juices of dead mammals. However the image of the cow with its sweet bulbous eyes and long eyelashes is kept separate from the anticipatory salivation, delicious mastication, dopamine and serotonin generated 'highs' as the stomach fills and purrs.

One is in awe of the ability of the human mind to split, deny and live simultaneously in independent parallel universes. A surgeon suspends empathy as he slices the flesh of a patient.

A person dying of metastatic cancer, who is yet able to laugh and live. A Nazi, who tears a limb off a child's torso, and takes his wife passionately a few hours later.

Yet we have incisors to tear meat, and intrinsic factor in our stomach to capture the vitamin B12 vital to health and prevalent in meat. There is limited justification for righteous sentimentality of vegetarians. Yet in Israel today there are some 300,000 vegans which in a population of 8,000,000 is one of the highest proportions of any Western society.

Once enough calories, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals have been imbibed, the taste buds, the brainstem and their receptors are saturated and food tends to lose its appeal. This is so with all appetites, including smell and arousal, and must obviously be the case. If this were not the case, we would succumb to the gluttony of un-satiated desire and expire in a frenzy of unrequited pleasure. We would not be motivated to set aside time, to plough and sow the land, east of Eden. We would be like zombies in an Opium Den.

Notwithstanding satiation, it is true that the quality of the animal and vegetable matter can influence the culinary experience. Savvy restaurateurs know that people go to eateries, not only to fill their stomachs, but also for a social experience. Whether that adds to the olfactory and oral sensation, or overall sensuality I do not know. The cash register may well tell. Therefore businessmen use all sorts of social ploys and ulterior designs. I shall list some I have experienced in order to exculpate the deep offence caused by these techniques during the most intimate of acts, namely eating: dim lights; blazing lights; large video screens; mirrors; loud music; muzac and waitresses or waiters who are sophisticated, but neither comely nor homely.

We have moved many times in our life and when picking the new schools for the children we were once sagely advised to choose the school based on the parents. In other words go to the school at pick-up time, observe, meet and speak with the parents and then choose the school. So it should be with a restaurant. The people who go to Shabazi are workers, builders, young families, locals and older couples. Wealth is inconspicuous. They are middle to working class. In sum, it is a place to be, not to come to be seen.

The point I am getting to is that Shabazi carries a moral and ethical message. Studying the customer's time and again confirms the observation – there is not a pretentious hair or freckle amongst the eaters or the servers. One man, fairly rotund, a builder comes in at 6 pm having finished work. Washes his hands. Says little. Serves himself salads. Chooses a bottle of water from the fridge. Communicates invisibly and the food is served. He is tired. Exhausted. Famished. Ravenous. One can see him gradually relax as he gets through the food, and the pace of eating slows, and he leans back a little, and the tension falls away from his face and torso.

Sometimes he has a beer. Some of them eat too much and are overweight. But as the saying goes – it is better to be fit and fat than lean and lazy. You live longer.

The food is as one would expect wholesome and fresh. Several salads, interesting and varied are served *de rigueur*, and you can choose between ordinary *pitot* or *Teimani (saluf)** ones. I recommend the latter, roasted on the fire. One can get humus and eggplant salad, but neither is home-made and both have too much added oil and preservatives, and wastefully satiate the appetite.

The spicy tomato-bean soup with cumin and a boiled potato is stunning. When served hot the mouth savours both heats - and the cumin soothes and resolves the difference. It is recommended (as an acquired taste I might add) to add the *chilba**. As a separate side dish, the rice with tomato-bean sauce – the same cumin base as the soup – with some spicy green *schug** is most gratifying. The meat-soup is half-way between a first course and the main meal. The half-chicken boiled with cumin and rice is also popular. The chicken is often de-fleshed with fingers, to emphasize the homely atmosphere. Similarly one often sees the owners or family members seated at a table eating – which is always reassuring.

My wife always gets the *shawarma* on the plate with a choice of three side dishes (green salad, rice and beans). It is superior. The advantage of having *shawarma* on the plate and not drowned in the too-many-condiments added to a take-away pita or *laffa (saluf)* rolled up), is that one can actually taste the braised meat and its delectable spicing. It is rarely a bit dry, which depends on the turnover of customers and the time of day. One can also order kebabs, chicken breast and veal braised over on open flame. They do not serve steaks.

For vegetarians you can have traditional *malawach** or *jachnun** with hard-boiled egg and tomato dip. (Alternatively vegetarians and vegans could go to a different eatery.) Curiously olives are not served at Shabazi.

There are no fancy deserts – this is a place for quenching serious appetites. As a touch of class the *botz** coffee (one can have mint tea if one must) and *bachlawa** are 'on the house'. The bitter strong coffee and the sickly sweet are a perfect combination of textures and tastes, to wrap up the meal.

The service is charming. The girls (rarely boys) are locals (and everyone knows that *Teimani* girls are the prettiest in Israel). Pleasant, smiling and efficient. Little banter, they do their job. If they are flirting on the phone and I want something they jump up apologetically with a charmingly guilty smile and serve. I always give at least a 20 per cent tip. They deserve it, and it serves to remind me of the humorless, impersonal and slovenly service I received at one of Tel Aviv's up-market meat eateries. I tipped appropriately, only to be brazenly

challenged: why so little? Her sense of entitlement overcame any sense at all, so that she could only complain and exhibited an unacceptably elevated sense of expectation – a good working definition of spoiled.

Thus we learn values at Shabazi – gentleness, silence, repose for a day's hard work, modesty, directness, gratitude, appreciation and an ability to smile from the heart. It surely recalls the restaurant's namesake 'the poet laureate of Yemen' a.k.a 'the Shakespeare of Yemen', Shalom Shabazi, who lived in 17th century Yemen. Here is an example of his poetry, called 'Graceful Doe':

A graceful doe supports me in exile
And here in her bosom she'll lodge me.
To drink from her cup I am always prepared,
She mingles her wine with my lees.
Before me, my friends, drink and be drunk,
Rouse the reason that's sleeping within me.....
God, hasten to bring unto thine people salvation,
And may my tongue be made pure within me....

I hope Shabazi continues serving their customers for many years to come and I would not be in the least surprised if the Messiah, when he returns to the Holy Land, stops here first , to slake his thirst and appetite, may it happen speedily in our days, without delay, Amen.

Shabazi Restaurant, 47 Shabazi Street, Rosh Ha'ayin. Kosher, open late every day, except Shabbat and Festivals; closes 2pm on the eve of Sabbath and Festivals. It has wheelchair access and can be hired out for functions for about 100 people. Catering can be arranged. Tel: 03-9388845. Meat restaurant, traditional Teimani (Yemenite) food.

Glossary

Botz: also known as Turkish coffee. This is coffee grounds spooned into a cup with hot water and the grounds settle as they 'cook'. After drinking the coffee, the bottom of the cup and look like mud – and *botz* in Hebrew means mud

Bachlawa: this is a sweet found in countries around the eastern Mediterranean Sea. A pastry with various combinations of nuts soaked in treacle.

Operation Magic Carpet: Between 1949 and 1950, some 49,000 Jews were secretly spirited out of Yemen to escape the growing antagonism and murderous violence against Jews, following the establishment of the State of Israel.

Saluf: traditional Yemenite flatbread

Malawach: A traditional Jewish Yemenite flat bread consisting of thin layers of puff pastry fried in oil. It is traditionally served with hummus, crushed or grated fresh tomato sauce, hard-boiled egg and schug; or for a sweet taste, may be served with honey.

Jachnun: A traditional Jewish Yemenite pastry cooked overnight and served on the Sabbath morning with crushed fresh tomato, hard-boiled egg and schug.

Schug: is a spicy sauce originating in Yemen. Made from crushed fresh hot peppers, coriander, garlic, cumin and various spices.

Chilba: Fenugreek seeds with added water, blended until the consistency of yoghurt.

Simon Wein (Photo by Lena Wein)

Walking Up The Existential Stairs Of Life

Last Sunday evening, my friend Marianna, my twin brother Carlos, and I, decided to go to Lincoln Plaza Cinemas in the Upper West Side of Manhattan to see the Argentinian film *Wild Tales*. As we arrived to the theater an hour earlier, we went to the the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts for appreciation of its beautiful architecture. Of all the precious buildings, plazas and fountains, what particularly got caught my attention were the stairs in the exterior of the Alice Tully Hall.

Whether the architects designed the stairs with that purpose or not, for me, the stairs provoked a reflection about the allegory of life from an existentialist point of view. The stairs are wide at the base and narrow as one starts to climb them up. The stairs shape and width also symbolizes our dreams in life, which are many when we are young at –the bottom,- but narrow as we age. The stairs also represent the losses: the more we live, the more we deal with them. Once one ascends to the top, there



Walking up the exterior stairs of the Alice Tully Hall

he finds the nothingness at the sharp point of nonexistence. No one knows what comes after life, the answer is agnostic but the reward is there. As Konstantinos Kavafis pointed out eloquently in his poem *Ithaca*, life is a journey, and once we get to the Island, Ithaca has nothing to offer but the wisdom one acquires during the journey. Let's make our journey exciting, rich, fulfilling and worth it.

Fernando Espi Forcen (Photo by Marianna Freudzon)

Future Issues

- Summer Issue 2015: Shame and Guilt
- Autumn Issue 2015: Dreams, Consciousness

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