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**I, Abolfazl Mohamadi, hereby certify that this paper is not sent elsewhere for publication.**

**The illustration of the Two Sides of Lacanian Real in Art, Philosophy, Lacanian Psychoanalysis and the character of Winston Churchill in Joe Wright’s *Darkest Hour* (2017)**

Abstract

Unlike Derrida’s ‘there is no outside text, Lacan approaches the Real, that which lies beyond language, from two sides: the imaginary and the symbolic. In the first part of this work, by drawing upon the imaginary side of Lacanian Real, which is *object petit a* and by considering some literary and philosophical definitions of the pre-symbolic abyss, it is attempted to illustrate the non-representation artworks’ illustration of the pre-linguistic bodily urges and sensations. Next, by drawing upon symbolic side of the Lacanian Real, which is *sinthome*, it will be shown how some artists create their own symbolic order and the New by approximating a point of idiomaticty just like what Lacan did with his mathemes. In the second part of the paper, Joe Weight’s *Darkest Hour* (2017) is analyzed to show how Winston Churchill first turns into an *object petit a*, and plugs the gap of the symbolic order by being elected as a prime minister; however, the impending fall of England by Nazi attacks strip Churchill of his self-confidence, then he resorts to people and by their hands, he rewrites himself anew turning himself into a *sinthome* and like Joyce and Lacan, who have created their own symbolic order, Churchill temporarily turns England into his own symbolic order to win the war.

**Keywords:** the Real, pre-symbolic abyss, object petit a, sinthome, symbolic order

Introduction

Derrida’s deconstructive thesis convincingly views man as the creature of language, and his/her identity as deeply grounded in socio-symbolic elements that are forged by nothing but the differential play of signfiers (Derrida 15-16). If one’s identity and desires is constantly caught by the language, how does transformative change happen to create the New? One of the transformative changes, which is the center of this discussion is how the New is deemed to be conjured by the artists from the pre-symbolic abyss to claw its way up and rip the fabric of the language and stage its presence as undifferentiated and self-related. Yet, what deconstruction has aimed to prove is that which is supposed to be the conjured-up pre-verbal new cannot dwell under the shadow of anonymity, and the illumining fingers of language have already coiled themselves around it and turned themselves into the prison of all that is deemed to be the New.

Not only does deconstruction demonstrate that such pre-linguistic or non-linguistic concepts are myth, but it shows they are ‘a retroactive projection on the part of beings who were always already immersed in language as a system of differential significations, and whose very entrapment within this infinity caused them to project something beyond its horizon’ (Lewis 82).

This paper does not simply give into Derridean deconstruction which claims that the possibility of creating the New is but an illusion. By picking up the sharp scalpel of the Lacanian Psychoanalysis, this study aims to cut through the fabric of language and show that something of the pre-symbolic abyss lurks within language.

The outside of language or what Lacan terms as the Real, which is one of the elements that builds the triad of psyche defined by Lacan, comes to be the opposite of what Lacan terms as the symbolic order, the realm of culture, religion and rules in general. However, such oppositional understanding of the Real which makes Lacan susceptible to deconstruction dates back to structuralist period of Lacan in 1950s (16). Yet, what differentiates Lacan from Derrida is the third element of his thought, the imaginary which undermines the relation between the symbolic and the Real.

Unlike Derrida, Lacan builds his approach on natural sciences which involve with the processes of non and pre-human real to demonstrate that the loop of the network of the symbolic order is not completely sealed and there is always a signifier missing, thus the subject’s self-relation is not complete and the Real is both determined by the symbolic as well as the imaginary which binds us back to the pre-human origin. Lacan finds the symbolic order as porous, i.e. full of holes and what bestows the symbolic with totality is not a transcendental signifier, but an image which is called fantasy rooted in the imaginary the animal within us. Through his neologisms such as the phallus as the name of this image, works as a signifier without being one, proto signifier, etc. Lacan opens up a chronological path to account for the genesis of the signifier.

The first part of this study shows the traces of the engagements with the illustration of the pre-symbolic abyss or pre-human void in literature, cinema and some movies as well as some paintings by Pollock, Dali, Magritte and Francis Bacon. Ideas such as the definition of ‘art’ by Heidegger, the ‘unforeseeable nothing’ by Henri Bergson, the concept of ‘event’ by Derrida, Badiou, Deleuze, Heidegger and Zizek will be discussed as they are the emblematic of the engagements with pre-symbolic void, e.g. By drawing on the Lacanian Real which is of double nature: *object petit a* (real of the imaginary) whose incarnation can be viewed in the creation of the undifferentiated new image and *sinthome* (real of the symbolic) which inheres language and makes intersubjective communication possible, we will discuss how the selected paintings and some movies and cinema itself in general are the attempts for the illustration of the pre-symbolic abyss and the creation the New beginnings unfettered by the givens as well as making inter-subjective communication possible by creating new symbolic orders.

The creator of the pre-symbolic new selected by this paper is Winston Churchill whose historic improvisatory acts are beautifully portrayed in *Darkest Hour* (2017) directed by Joe Wright*.* A significant question raised in this paper is ‘from where should an artist or a performer, or a politician like Churchill, draw the originary force?’It will be shown how Wright resurrects Churchill and cruelly carves up his mind and infiltrates into it, letting his private fears and doubts surge into light to portray how rigidly they are interweaved with the pre-symbolic abyss and how he is mentally paralyzed when his grip on power becomes tenuous upon turning into prime minister (Master-Signifier) and his acts and words completely meaningless to those around him, thus becoming a fantasmatic spectre and an impossible and meaningless Real which is the opposite of the symbolic and in Derridean sense.

What we further endeavor to show is how some cinematic effects like the position and the movement of camera, its zooming in and the lighting contribute to the illustration of a pre-linguistic locus inside which Churchill seems to be hiding and then from which emerging like the force of the Real to create himself as *sinthome* (real of the symbolic) so as to be inscribed back into the symbolic order, be meaningful and destabilize the imposing force of the Hilter that is going to annihilate the symbolic order of England.

The Two Sides of Lacanian Real in Art and Philosophy, Lacanian Psychoanalysis

Art, when considered flowing out of a great and infinite network of signifiers, leaves no room for illustration of the New, except an illusion of it, like the illusion of the undifferentiated real outside language which is but a symbolic fiction. To improvise and make an artist of oneself has been the unquenchable thirst for those who have desired to shake off the yoke of the established orders and concepts that have built the power defining what, and how, art should be. Yet, the question is, “where does this unfamiliar sphere, where one can forge an autonomous piece of himself unstained by any debris of the site of the old, lie?” To create a piece of art is like coming out of a womb as a new self. In his *The Origin of the Work of Art,* Heidegger mentions that for an artist, to create an autonomous art means to create himself:

On the usual view, the work arises out of and by means of the activity of the artist. But by what and whence is the artist what he is? By the work; for to say that the work does credit to the master means that it is the work that first lets the artist emerge as a master of his art. The artist is the origin of the work. The work is the origin of the artist. Neither is without the other. Nevertheless, neither is the sole support of the other. In themselves and in their interrelations artist and work are each of them by virtue of a third thing which is prior to both, namely that which also gives artist and work of art their names—art. (Cited in Preziosi 284)

A foreignness is ascribed to art by Heidegger, for an artist to create the New, it seems that he/she should be entirely novel and let himself/herself and the artwork be born in the process and touched by what seems to be near to the definition of Lacanian Real as lying outside language and is unthought and is the “unforeseebale nothing” by Henri Bergson (370). That which is irreducible to the order of being has been the obsession of great many thinkers and artists, specially painters to whose painters we point out in this paper.

Elkins (2000) questions whether painting itself makes possible for painting to create its own meta-language when he asks, “what is thinking in painting, as opposed to thinking about painting?” (2-3). Besides, he mentions how the intersubjective communication between artist and the beholder is forged through sharing the comprehension of an ‘unspoken idea’.

Yet, the unthought like the Heidegger’s definition of art and as a piece of the real, and a moment of full presence prior to the conditions of differentially of the language is shown by Deconstruction to be impossible and conditioned by the language itself and “Presences are mere effects of prior differences; signifiers acquire their identity only by being differentiated from all other signifiers in the same system. This means that no signifier can be defined solely on the basis of and with reference to itself. It must refer to others.” (Lewis 85-86)

The reason we draw upon Lacan is his distinct concept of the imaginary as the animal within us which cuts an alleyway for us out of our firmly-enmeshed-into-symbolic identity. When it comes to Derrida and structuralist phase of Lacan, the boundary between nature and culture is considered to be firmly established and envisaging any transcendental signified, an indivisible unity or a moment of full presence, toward which all signifiers stream and suture themselves to, is nothing more than a signifier and retrospective act of a subject of language. Yet, the imaginary phase of Lacan, which was held in abeyance in his early phases, contributed to the distinctness of his work. For Lacan, the loop of the signifiers is not fully tied into one single knot and it is not the signifier which totalizes the meaning, but an image, a remnant of the imaginary phase and that image is the fantasy, a pure appearance:

The signifier does not complete the determination of meaning which would be the proximity to itself of the subject’s consciousness. It is this gap in self-relation that the fantasy can cover over. The signifier is totalised by an *image*, and fantasy has a necessary place in the signifying *structure*: ‘fantasy [. . .] is structural’ (186).

As the imaginary for human subject is the pre-symbolic phase when baby has one to one relationship with its body without symbolic detour, the painting for some painters and thinkers is considered to be the space on which body is presented not represented. Milner’s the ‘concentration of the body’ in *The Suppressed Madness of Sane Men* (1987)contributes to the idea of painting as ‘body presentation (240).

By drawing upon Zizek’s distinction between symbolic fiction (master signifier) and fantasmatic specter (*object petit a,* irreducible object of desire), it can be said that the purpose of non-representational paintings is not to portray the real as the symbolic fiction that lies outside language, thus falling prey to Derridean deconstruction by falling into inside/outside binary, but to show the specter, the *object petit a* which is the guise of the real that constitutes language:

To put it simply, reality is never directly ‘itself’, it presents itself only via its incomplete-failed symbolization, and spectral apparitions emerge in this very gap that forever separates reality from the real, and on account of which reality has the character of a (symbolic) fiction: the spectre gives body to that which escapes (the symbolically structured) reality (Žižek and Butler230).

In stark contrast with such dark reality where every single act of human being is engineered and the loop of the signifers that generate the language creature that we are is closed that leaves no old image of autonomous human unscathed, we can witness that the anti-symbolic depiction of the specter in art and paintings, like those of Francis Bacon’s, Salvador Dali’s, Rene Magritte’s, etc. is similar to the belief of the classical science in some ultimate ambiguity like the holes in the symbolic inside which the real exists by not allowing the symbolic to become perfect whole. Such ambiguity gives in to no intrusion of positive science which has great affinity with deconstructve view of the nature language as the system of infinite signifiers which give birth to a semblance of meaning through nothing but differences between other signifiers. As Ponty notes, “classical science held unto the feeling of opaqueness of the world, and through its constructions it intended to join back up with the world’ (Ponty et al. 351).

With Ponty’s phenomenology of art as well as Deleuze and Bergson’s exploration of the non-human virtual in art, the order of perception was reversed and instead, the logic of sensation gained prominence. For instance, in Jackson Pollock’s “all-over” paintings, space is not deemed as chaotic but as chaosmosis or machinic heterogeneity. Pollock’s paintings are neither confined externally by frame nor internally by reference points. “All-over” canvases like *Summertime* (Number 9) (1948), *Lavender Mist* (Number 1) (1950), and *Blue Poles* (Number 11) (1952) defy contour, express matter and, by executing an optical catastrophe, give birth to a pure appearance, a form of expression without any representational image—Event (Purdon, 135). Thus, the emergence of the event means the emergence of spectral non-being prior to the being or the symbolic order, which causes the pseudo-wholeness of being (e.g. appearance of normality in a society) to break apart and its inconsistency be revealed. Besides, it can be said that these paintings in their non-representational form resist any differential definition from the signifier, and by blurring the boundary that runs between inside and outside, they fall into no binary to become a thing of language; they are the undifferentiated image of fantasmatic specter, a pure appearance without being operated into meaning or being by the differential process of the symbolic.

Yes, the portrayal of spectral presence is the portrayal of the lack and the inconsistency that inheres the symbolic order and this specter is named Event and considered as irreducible to the order of being by some philosophers, however, what we already mentioned is also the stitch that this specter is in providing consistency to the porous symbolic order.

The seeds of art, having been condemned to and buried under the soil of secondariness and mere appearance by the hands of giants like Plato who ascribed to art the quality of being deceitful, counterfeiting and artificial (Denham 31), fed on and took roots in voiceless darkness of the depths of non-being. Under the shadow of the imposing edifices of the grand narratives, the seeds of art grew, crawled up their way blindly like tendrils of a vine and staged autonomies and became defined by their own appearances.

Not only has appearance been given primacy within the confines of anti-representational modern art, but it has also been considered as the only frame circumscribing and bringing into vision those which are deemed as originals not vice versa.

Badiou (2006) argues that being as the order of situation is a pure multiplicity that finds its consistency through an operation he calls “count-as-one”. Thus, being does not precede its presentation and, in fact, it is the presentation (*appearance* in itself) that provides it with consistency. However, the excluded or unrepresented nature haunts the situation with the danger of exploding the axioms that are the conditions of appearance (Being and Event 89-95).

In literature, the concealment of a profound reality under the mask of appearance is epitomized and heart wrenchingly rendered in Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* (2007). Philip, a twenty-year old boy, falls desperately in love with a woman who is almost 20 years older than him, only to find her and her company repellent upon seeing her naked body which is “wrinkled, haggard, made-up, in those frocks which were too showy for her position and too young for her years” (174).

If in the 19th century, appearance was considered a “lower” reality, in the 20th century it was rehabilitated, as can be seen in concept-defying abstract and surrealistic paintings and the concept of Event which is named as *unnameable* by Derrida (Spivak and Derrida14) and discussed by various philosophers. Through Zizek in *Parallax View* (we come to understand the three perspectives toward the concept of the Event by Heidegger, Deleuze, Badiou:

in Heidegger, it is the Event as the epochal disclosure of a configuration of Being; in Deleuze, it is the Event as the desubstantialized pure becoming of Sense; in Badiou, it is the Event reference to which grounds a Truth-process. For all three, Event is irreducible to the order of being (in the sense of positive reality), to the set of its material (pre)conditions (165).

When it comes to cinema, we would say that he role of cinema is to open a path for the event to emerge by incorporating other arts and stripping them of their aristocratic values and also by weakening the representational grammar of the dominant class so as to bring forth a new truth, a New World. According to Badiou “cinema explores the border between art and which is not art. It stands on this frontier. It incorporates the New forms of existence, be they art or non-art, and it makes a certain selection, albeit a selection which is never complete” (cited in Ling and Mondon).

By being half-way between being and appearance, cinema is illustrative of the incompleteness of meaning by the signifiers. To get back to the discussion of Lacan vs. Derrida, it should be noted that what distinguishes Lacan from Derrida is Lacan’s genetic and materialist approach to signifier. For Lacan, meaning cannot be totalized and fully determined by the symbolic and the gap that was opened up by the alienation of the mirror image can only be sealed by an *image,* by fantasy which is a thing of the imaginary order. Painting, cinema and other artworks are near to the Lacan’s definition of Phallus as it is of double nature by being non-verbal and also functioning as a signifier, as Lewis (2008) mentions:

The phallus is an image of every single signifier as such, defined oppositionally as either present in its place or absent from its place. Thus the symbolic is totalised by the imaginary, by a certain *image like* resemblance among all signifiers. The existence of the phallus and its imaginary resemblance to the signifier is precisely what replaces the lack of a *signifier* of the signifier (185).

By moving further toward the paintings of Francis Bacon, Rene Magritte and Salvador Dali as well as some cinematic examples, it can be seen these works as the creation of a phallic images that stand half way between being and appearance.

With Francis Bacon’s portraits of his friends—George Dyer, David Sylvester, Michel Leiris, Isabel Rawsthorne, we witness how the wholeness of the representational being is festered and distorted into naked multiplicity. In his analysis of Francis Bacon’s paintings, Deleuze’s distinction between face and head corresponds with Badiou’s “count-as-one” and “void”. Deleuze defines face as some distinguishing features such as ears, eyes, nose, old, young, woman, student, etc. that are production of society while he finds in Bacon’s fleshy and meaty head or head in general as non-signifying, a horror story and catastrophic as Pollock’s “all-over” paintings. Further, in his Cinema 1, Deleuze views the function of montage as collision of independent shots similar to Bacon’s haphazard diagrams and graphs created by throwing color onto canvases where colors collide (Purdon 242).

Another example of a non-signifying face would be Rene Magritte’s *Rape* (1945) which is the best example of a painting that vigorously features a non-signifying face composed of the torso and the pelvis of a woman. Susan Gubar mentions that this surrealistic painting illustrates how the image of woman is humiliated, dehumanized and produced by hidden ideological structures for male sexual pleasure (Gubar 215).

In the same anti-symbolic vein illustrating an ideologically-wrought woman is Dali's *My Wife Nude Contemplating Her Own Flesh Becoming Stairs, Three Vertebra of a Column, Sky and Architecture* which illustrates a picture of a woman sitting in a desert watching the structured reflection of herself—a mirage of who she is forged by masculine whims, imaginations and misperceptions. This is what Dali names concrete irrationality: ‘images which provisionally are neither explicable nor reducible by the systems of logical intuition or by the rational mechanisms’ (Mcmahon and Dali12).

For Bacon, the purpose of distorting the appearance is to bring distortion back to the recording of appearance (243).13To put it in Badiou’s term, in Bacon’s paintings, what is not-counted-as-one is to haunt the face, the expressed one. Therefore, dismantling face, shocking portraits and bringing distortion to a recording of appearance is a “foregrounding of the ‘abjection of the flesh and disintegration of subjective wholeness’ by the violation and destruction of the body” (243)14 and it can be said that this is what Zizek names as “Alien:

The first association that this tension between presymbolic depth and the surface of events gives rise to in the domain of popular culture is, of course, the ‘Alien’ from the film of the same name. Our first response is to conceive of it as a creature of the chaotic depth of the maternal body, as the primordial Thing. However, the ‘Alien’s’ incessant changing of its form, the utter ‘plasticity’ of its being, does it not point also in the very opposite direction: are we not dealing with a being whose entire consistency resides in the fantasmatic surface, with a series of pure events-effects devoid of any substantial support? (Zizek and Butler 157).

It is not surprising that for creating the alien, the pre-symbolic creature, Ridley Scott was inspired by Bacon’s horrific paintings: “We looked at various painters’ works, and the one that caught us was by Francis Bacon, the three fleshy necks with the jaws on the end. The primality, if there is such a word, was what interested me.” (Scott 14)

Of course, contrary to Pollock’s Abstract Expressionistic paintings which are considered by the Pollock himself to be the production of his unconscious as the unmediated source, the mentioned surrealistic paintings reach out to the pre-symbolic source and also ‘privilege a specific symbolic language as the authentic expression of this consciousness’ (Rampley, 84-85).

To put it in Lacanian terms, it can be said that whereas symptom is the emblematic of the failure of desire, Lacan’s definition of *sinthome* is illustrative of the subject’s singularity in language. Lacan’s style of writing, his being half way between communicability and meaningfulness, and the use of his own mathemes were his way of staging his singularity to give us ‘a bit of real’ (Lewis 211). Lacan’s pointing out to James Joyce shows how Joyce’s writings hover between meaninglessness and meaningfulness to turn his name into *sinthome,* thus into *letter* and further to create the symbolic order of his own.

To conclude, to hover between the pre-symbolic real and the symbolic order in art and philosophy is to shatter pre-concepts, thus to create new symbolic orders.

Churchill as *Object Petit a*

In this section what we try to show is how Churchill is illustrative and embodiment of what is unthought, and how the movement of the camera and lighting capture his emergence from the aforementioned unvarnished darkness or pre-symbolic locus as a force of the Real to improvise and make novel decisions when the society of England is falling down and the authorities in the government seem to have abandoned all hope.

In this movie, the historical version of Churchill has turned into an artist creating beginnings, a new portrayal of himself. His emergence from the dark womb like an artist can be seen in different scenes: first when he is sparked for the first time out of darkness into the light of our vision by the light of the match he strikes to light his cigar; the second time when he faces the ‘gravest odds’ and is in doubt whether to agree with negotiating with Germans or not and in this moment of great self-doubt, we see a ponderous darkness engulfing the scene pushing and creeping on him from behind the glass of a closed door; the third moment when he is alone at home sunk in his thought in utter darkness and is illuminated when his wife turns the light on; and finally, the fourth moment when he is in the lift descending down into void and finally at the end of the movie in Parliament and after he has made his last decision for not negotiating peace terms with Hitler, he walks right into us, into a dark scene and the movie finishes. Dan Jolin points out to this motif as remarkable in his review of this movie: “Britain’s halls of power are lit in a gorgeously noirish style, while one remarkable motif sees Churchill repeatedly boxed in by literal ink-black darkness, whether in a void-ascending lift or framed by the leaded glass of a closed door (Jolin).

What these scenes add to the uniqueness of this movie is in showing how each time Churchill heaves from the pre-symbolic darkness into light, he makes the most important decision of his life one of which is to save thousands of soldiers trapped in Dunkirk however the impossible it seems. The grave decisions he comes forth with in the face of every disaster defy predictions and presuppositions making him a true force of the Real. Such is the echo of the anti-representational artistry in this movie in portraying the pang of the ultimate horizon of meaning weighing so much on Churchill’s mind every time he emerges from darkness to give meaning and hope to the lives of people who are a step from total annihilation.

It can be said that the title of this movie, ‘Darkest Hour*’* symbolizes the moment of the unforeseeable nothing, the moment when he retreats back into the void before he emerges as a new person, as an alien to face ‘an ordeal of the most grievous kind’ (Wright). Therefore, the Churchill we witness in this movie is near in definition to what Zizek defines as the Alien in being a being whose entire consistency resides in the fantasmatic surface, with a series of pure events-effects devoid of any substantial support. In other words, when Churchill becomes the prime minister with the full support of King George, he is deaubstantialized and loses the core of his being by turning into a fantasmatic specter or the phallus that plugs the gap of the symbolic order and by being narrowed down into a mask, his sole redemptive act is to regulate social machine and drive people into an unwavering singularity. The following lines by Zizek will clarify the argument:

When the subject is endowed with symbolic authority, he acts as an appendix of his symbolic title, i.e., it is the big Other who acts through him: suffice it to recall a judge who may be a miserable and corrupted person, yet the moment he puts on his robe and other insignia, his words are the words of Law itself. In the case of spectral presence, on the other hand, the power I exert relies on something ‘in me more than myself’ that is best exemplified by numerous science fiction thrillers from Alien to Hidden: an indestructible foreign body that stands for the presymbolic life substance, a nauseous mucous parasite that invades my interior and dominates me (Zizek and Butler 228).

Churchill is all alone and he is undergoing the pain of being the last god faced with an inevitable annihilation as his forces are trapped in Dunkirk and his grip on power becoming tenuous. We see it time and again when Churchill pretends that the English are victorious against Germany, say, by flashing a V-sign to cameras, though the victory of the Germans is imminent and such pretension from Churchill’s side is deemed to give spirits to the English soldiers so they could stand with all their hearts against the enemy.

As signifier whose presence gains significance by the absence of what it is not, Churchill's absence introduces him as his seat is empty in the House of Commons in the beginning of the movie and is occupied by a hat. Being elected as a prime minister is the strike that cuts the umbilical cord that ties him to the infinite network of signifiers that build up the British symbolic order and turns him into an undifferentiated and singular master signifier, a fantasmatic specter, thus a force of the Real. Not even the king George is the master signifier behind the curtains pulling the strings. In a scene when King George meets Churchill to urge him to continue the war, he confesses how he is scared of Churchill’s unexpected decisions:

Churchill: and I no longer scare you?

King George: A little. But I can cope.

Churchill as the *sinthome or* the Real of the Symbolic

Churchill’s solitary bestows him a remedy so he could not be bound by the articulations of time and place, every time he is born out of pre-symbolic locus, he makes us wash our eyes and see him anew the way he appears to us at those crucial moments, thereby helping viewers not be bound by mere representations by trying retreat into a dark-engulfed alcove with no intrusion of the shiny fingers of structuration.

Still, in this movie, the pang and the uncertainty of Churchill’s solitary-produced originality undergoes an initiatory odyssey which gives birth to the significance of public gaze. Thus, Churchill has his last decision made with people when he sneaks off to London subway with no pre plan because his actions seem completely meaningless and delusion as he does not even accept the fact that the Battle of France is one the verge failure.

Unlike Chamberlain (as Lord President of the Council) and Halifax’s (as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) coercion to negotiate with Germany, Churchill continues his acts which seem entirely meaningless to those who know what the reality is and in being like an impossible and meaningless Real he is similar to eponymous White Fang in Jack London’s *White Fang* (1988) whose presence inside the Indian’s camp was like the presence of pre-symbolic Real inside the symbolic order:

All he had to do, when the strange dogs came ashore, was to show himself. When they saw him they rushed for him. It was their instinct. He was the Wild—the unknown, the terrible, the ever-menacing, the thing that prowled in the darkness around the fires of the primeval world… (120).

Churchill’s being on the edge of incomprehensibility brings him nearer to what Zizek defines as the Real in its most terrifying imaginary dimension, the primordial abyss which swallows up everything, dissolving all identities-a figure well known in literature in multiple guises, from Edgar Allan Poe's maelstrom and Kurtz's "horror" at the end of Conrad's *Heart of* Darkness to Pip from Melville's Moby Dick who, cast to the bottom of the ocean, experiences the demon God (Less than Nothing 61-62). The last lines of Poe’s *Ms. Found in a Bottle* beautifully pictures the swallowing Real: “we are plunging madly within the grasp of the whirlpool—and amid a roaring, and bellowing, and thundering of ocean and of tempest, the ship is quivering, oh God! and—going down” (22).

In *Darkest Hour (2017)*, there is no hope in all the givens of the situation, every step toward defending the country can be a grievous misstep and the highest question is not if England will be victorious against Nazis, the question is: on what basis can the old values, rules and strategies be placed upon when all the old bases are being annihilated? Or if as Derrida’s thesis deems the outside of text as human’s retrospective illusion from the standpoint of language, how does New emerge and turns into a fully-fledged symbolic order? The answer is that according to Lacan, the Real inheres language and as already mentioned it is named *sinthome* by Lacan and, this newness in this movie is created by Churchill meeting Londoners in the subway and have people inscribe the Real (himself) in the big Other of intersubjective public space.

Following the fall of France, the War Cabinet sticks with the idea of negotiating peace terms with Germany. Churchill receives an unexpected visit from George VI who asks him to continue the war. The biggest moment of uncertainty comes to Churchill when by King George’s advice, but with no preplan decides to ride London subway and ask the passengers’ opinion about continuing the war and resist Nazi invasion. The civilians want the war to be continued and they do not want Britain to capitulate to Hitler. Even though this fictional scene is propped by pure melodrama like Wright’s *Anna Karenina* (2012), it still creates an impact in portraying the significance of creation of the real of the symbolic which is ‘letter’.

*Darkest Hour* (2017) can be seen as satiric in that it shows how the ultimate power holder's fantasmagoric mask is painted by the hands of people to whom Churchill refers when he is on the verge of fall. He is mostly anxious and under the barrage of self-doubts and the mystical mask of authority has lost its meaning to him because he is too near to empty core of himself, the real. Zizek mentions” “Lacan’s standard notion of anxiety is that, as the only affect that does not lie, it bears witness to the proximity of the Real, to the inexistence of the big Other” (Defense of Causes 36).

Churchill is one with the real, he is a fantasmtaic specter, a ghost, and is not far from madness and to return himself back to sanity by escaping ‘absolute indifference’, he must turn into a *sinthome*, a *letter* and be inscribed in the symbolic order and find the unbroken image of the master signifier that he is among people. To put it in another way, people bestow him a temple inside which his divine power is still intact and he becomes so suffused with a new confidence that he makes his last heroic decision unlike Halifax and Chamberlain’s expectations. Therefore, his resorting to people is similar to what Zizek points out as the God’s creation of man and the arrival of the Word for saving himself from madness:

Divine life prior to the birth of the Son was a tension that descended into madness. It was – to put it in analytic terms – a world without an opening, before the arrival of the symbolic, a sealed world without distance, a world in which the real God, in his “terrible loneliness,” was constantly choking on his own rage, a world that was psychotic in the full sense of the term (Most Sublime Hysteric173).

Conclusion

Through Lacanian Psychoanalysis, it was shown that Real or non-being, which is described by Derrida as outside of text and a retroactive projection on the part of beings who were always already immersed in language, both inheres language, named *sinthome*, and is also rooted in the imaginary side of human psyche, named *object petit a*, which is the animal in us remaining partly in us after being immersed in the symbolic order. This paper threw some light on the attempts behind some artworks, philosophical, psychoanalytical texts to paint our eyes with a color to help us behold all that lie halfway between being and non-being.

In the second part of the paper, by analyzing Joe Wright’s *Darkest Hour,* Churchill was shown to be a non-linguistic Real in Derridean way by being elected as a prime minister, just like some of the artworks we pointed out which defy concepts. However, to win, it was shown how the Churchill as the impossible and meaningless Real turns himself into *sinthome* like James Joyce and Lacan himself to be partly meaningful by inscribing himself into the symbolic order of the Londoners.

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