

To all people of goodwill

The Pathological Manifestations of Contemporary Societies:

**a Psychological Study on Immaturity and its
Social Implications.**

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The history of mankind is an endless Greek tragedy. Does it mean that man's soul is as black as Hell, which always leads to massacres when humans are put together and interact? Each generation seems wilder than the one before. The Garden of Eden, this terrestrial peace, is a reality that is out of reach now. The 20th century set foot in Tartarus. Will the future be even worse? Does conscience exist? Is reason a pure speculation of philosophers who dare not look at the human animal anymore? Is not there anyone to hold the mirror of truth so that the narcissistic sorcerer may see his evilness? The mirror must not be broken: it is the only thing that can connect him to reality, and it could cure him, for he is ill.

Human nature cannot be that bad, for mankind sometimes stood on the side of creation. Hence, this human fury could be the result of an accumulation of social dysfunctions that transform good men and women into ogres. Jean Jacques Rousseau would not have made a mistake: nature (man) would be good, whereas culture (society) would be really evil. Actually, when Hannah Arendt tried to understand World War II, she almost shared the latter's opinion: Eichmann was a normal person obeying orders coming from a social hierarchy. She was obviously confused, and she stubbornly refused to take into consideration the harsh reality of pathological normalcy. Normal people put together would engender a social frenzy! What is normalcy? We can easily understand that it is not psychosis, but it is not reason either! Normalcy would be an intermediate state, a kind of unstable average of beliefs, opinions, and individual and social behaviors. Being here and forever the advocate of pure reason, I would easily point out the conceptual imperfections of such a definition. I would even emphasize the barbarity of this view since the cruelty of human organizations would inscribe crime on the marble of normalcy. Hence, normal people, by nature, would logically commit extraordinary massacres exhibiting their bottomless inhumanity.

Other people tried to find a more psychiatric explanation for mankind's curse. In fact, manslaughter was an idea that would only germinate in the mind of some sick people. For instance, Hitler was called a schizophrenic many

times, schizophrenia being the most primitive form of human intelligence. Consequently, the most horrific crimes ever perpetrated had been committed by the maddest kind of person. The idea was not convincing; at least the academics who have studied this disease are dubious about it. Personally, I very much questioned the competence of people who shared this opinion and just let my mind remember Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, more precisely the moment when Hitler walks through perfect lines of perfectly immobile soldiers. The smoothness of his walk contrasts with the rigidity of the men around him. He is almost as light on his feet as a male ballet dancer. At first glance one can understand there is not such a mental illness here: a schizophrenic does not walk, he jumps! Schizophrenia is palpable, silent substantiation, a disease inscribed on the skeleton of mankind and its fearful eyes.

In 1941, Hervey Cleckley, who was a psychiatrist, was less adamant. In his *Mask of sanity* (1), he emphasized the problematic behaviour of borderline patients who were not technically insane, but not sane either. We must notice that the European psychopathic blast of that time had moved some Austrian and German psychoanalysts and psychiatrists to immigrate to the United States. So, it is not a coincidence that the concepts of psychopathic personalities and personality disorders gained ground in the United State: experts, who had observed and understood the phenomenon because of the horror engendered by the connection between unbalanced people and dysfunctional societies, had contributed to scientific progress. In this connection, Cleckley portrayed an individual who looked like a reasonable person, but was not: the psychopath became the gravedigger of humanity. He was dangerous, not only because he could conceal his mental disorders but also because there were lots of people of that kind who were prone to violence. Cleckley was not a sociologist, and, once the danger was identified, he did not really try to find a social mechanism that explained the proliferation of this type of individual or described the conditions that were required to turn his personality traits into harmful weapons to human organizations. The culprit had been discovered, the social solution was clear: the psychopath had to read the *Mask of sanity*, understand that he was insane and undergo psychoanalysis, or be incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital if he did not want to make progress without anybody's help. He did not speak of the link between the level of decompensation and his dangerousness, nor did he say anything about the connection between him and the rest of society. A psychopath was dangerous by nature.

In 1974, something important happened, something that has not had a significant impact yet. Jean Bergeret (2) published *Normal and pathological personality*. For the first time, readers learned what normalcy was and they had a clear vision of the different levels of consciousness and of the limit between reason and madness and mental functioning and decompensation. The borderline cases were very well studied. Bergeret was very meticulous about terminology: he preferred to name them “immature” or “anaclitic” people. All of them were not considered to be dangerous; only “perverts of character”, whom Americans would certainly call psychopaths. They were a threat which he portrayed using Shakespeare’s character Iago. He even went further and depicted Maximilien de Robespierre as a “psychosis of character”, an immature man who was not that stupid, but whose superego was quite ineffective, which would lead him to kill people remorselessly. Later in his career, he very much focused on anaclitic individuals (3), but he did not analyse the link between the intelligence of people and society. He was not a sociologist, and like all his predecessors, he described the pathological manifestations of the “disease” in order to cure the patient; he took care of individuals: sick human organizations did not fall within his competence.

However, thanks to the conceptual analysis of the psychologists, it’s high time that we made progress with this topic, tried to link the facts together and placed the individual in a world of interactions, which is his world, no man being an island! Actually, it’s easy because the observer does not really need to be very knowledgeable about psychiatry in order to achieve this goal. I would even say that history and literature are much more useful. Nevertheless, psychological obviousness obtrudes; I mean that human intelligence must be divided into three groups: psychotics at the bottom, neurotics on top, and immature people between them.

Psychosis is characterized by a loss of contact with reality and by its recreation. It’s easy to recognize it in everyday life since there are numerous hallucinations, the discourse is absurd and in a worst-case scenario there is a lexical chaos. I have always enjoyed watching the handwriting of schizophrenics: it is as weird and beautiful as a medieval Irish manuscript. It is always interesting to see the articles and some words vanish into thin air. The individual plunges into an inner monologue that resembles a linguistic prison. I will not speak a lot of psychotics in this book for a simple reason: the loss of contact with reality implies that they can hardly interact

with it, even when they want to destroy it. Consequently, they are not a real danger to society.

Higher, we find the gigantic group of immature persons (the borderline cases of the Americans, the anaclitic people of the French), which is a problematic lot that perplexed psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. In fact, they used to regard them as psychotics or neurotics and did not define a psychological entity. The mistake is understandable: very immature people have psychotic traits, whereas slightly immature people exhibit neurotic features. The level of intelligence, their inner equilibrium, their socialization process, and their behavioral disorders are not homogeneous at all. Besides, Bergeret worked so much on the issue and for such a long time that he tried to subdivide the group. I will not follow in his footsteps because the information is not reliable enough. Moreover, the most unbalanced immature people, namely the most brutal psychopaths, commit crimes when an external factor moves them to do so. In other words, they are not the only reason why there are dysfunctional societies. One of these conditions is the circumstances; another one is the level of decompensation (the severity of psychiatric disorders): we will analyse this in chapter 9. Hence, I preferred to separate the very immature people from the slightly immature ones. That being said, those people share some features: when they decompensate (lose their grip), they are depressed, they exhibit narcissistic traits and their superego becomes quite inoperative. Hence, it's easy to identify them. Of course, they are the main characters in this book since we will see that they compose the largest part of society and are the most active elements.

The third group, the people with a neurotic personality, advocate reason. They went through the Oedipus complex and did not fail, even though the result was not always brilliant. For instance, people with an obsessional personality have an inner superego that is not as unwavering as that of persons with Hysterical Personality Organization. In this connection, the man with an obsessional personality remains the son of his father because the resolution of the Oedipus complex is incomplete, whereas the man with Hysterical Personality Organization takes the place of his father and easily becomes the father of his own father. From a psychological point of view, this means that the result is quite different: the level of morality, consciousness and reason is much higher. When a person with Hysterical Personality Organization decompensates, reason remains intact and it is the body that goes mad: the mind cannot because it must not. It is rare to

find neurotics, and they have not the amount of influence over society which they should have. They will appear here, especially in chapter 10.

Besides, this study exists because I am a person with Hysterical Personality Organization, which means that I can easily identify more primitive mental structures. For instance, I compared my perception of things with that of people with an obsessional personality and each time the result was the same: I immediately notice what does not fit, the element that renders things illogical, whereas the others put great emphasis on the ideas they share. Moreover, anaclitic individuals and people with an obsessional personality display characteristics which I don't. For instance, the oral and narcissistic features that make them look alike do not affect me, which leads to a strange result: my world and the anaclitic one are so different that it seems that we do not speak the same language. Furthermore, in chapter 10, we will meet another person with Hysterical Personality Organization; we must acknowledge that only people of that kind can recognize such individuals and understand them.

The aim of this book is to shed light on a huge problem so that the future of mankind may be less awful: awareness is the only path to peace and pure reason, which are the essential requirements for man's survival. The function of any serious academic research, whatever the subject, is to achieve this objective. So that this study may be understandable, I have chosen not to invent causalities. Hence, the chapters are structured in such a way that they do not exhibit the definitive determinism that might lead us to believe that each one is the logical consequence of what was said before. However, the organization of the chapters shows that barbarity spreads. In fact, I did not enjoy writing this book, which is why it took me many years to do so. On the other hand, new elements, dreadful ones, compelled me to act and write it. I chose to lay out the most sordid facts in the last two chapters in order to ease the pain felt by the readers. Although I did not describe the most barbaric ones, everybody will be able to understand what happened.

Is there a thesis here? At least one can say that there is an obsession: to redefine madness in order to include a part of normalcy. We will see that very immature people are quite insane and that some of them don't know what death means. Madness cannot only be characterized by hallucinations. The psychiatric definition does not really accord with psychiatric reality and its social consequences. The second point, the most

important one, is aimed at explaining the role played by the anaclitic nebula in the high level of social dysfunctions. In fact, I want and need to know whether madness kills itself, impotent reason hides itself and normalcy devours itself and the whole universe.

(1) Cleckley, Hervey, *The mask of sanity. An attempt to reinterpret some issues about the so-called psychopathic personality*, St Louis, 1941.

(2) Bergeret, Jean, *La personnalité normale et pathologique*, Paris, 1974.

(3) Bergeret, Jean, *La depression et les états limites*, Paris, 1975. Bergeret, Jean, *L'érotisme narcissique. Homosexualité et homoérotisme*, Paris, 1999.

Chapter 1

The weaknesses of the French intellectuals.

Philosophers and then psychiatrists and psychologists have been trying to perceive and define reason for the last 2500 years. Whatever their ideologies, they all failed because they did not put emphasis on the different levels of consciousness. The only one who understood that and who systematized the approach is Jean Bergeret, a French psychiatrist and psychoanalyst.

His work is immense; he had the strength to study and identify the missing link between reason (neuroticism) and madness (psychoticism): what he calls the anaclitic organizations and what we will call immaturity. According to him, most societies are mainly immature since between 33 to 50% of the population (1) can be regarded as immature. These statistics must be questioned because the mental health of populations varies a lot and cannot be reduced to numbers which are only partial inquiries. In a sense, qualitative approaches relying on cultural and political manifestations with a psychological meaning are to be analyzed and used in order to define personality traits en psychological features.

However, it is clear that he subtly described the anaclitic world, trying to build a kind of hierarchy that ranged from mild psychological disorders to pure reason. Actually, according to him, perverts, who do not acknowledge the existence of the female sexual organs, are almost mad, whereas the “perverts of character (the psychopaths)” (2) are not. Then there are the

“psychotics and neurotics of character”: the former are quite immature, whereas the latter are not that immature. We must not take this for granted, for we may have doubts about the place of pervers in the mental pyramid: they are already in the process of identifying with the phallic mother (3), whereas the pervers of character, especially the unbalanced psychopaths, are not and fight against their instincts and nervous breakdown. Hence, I will only refer to very immature people, putting great emphasis on the role of the superego in a problematic approach to the Oedipus complex.

The sources are silent about sexuality, which does not enable us to recognize the pervers. This difficulty can be overcome only if the writer speaks of his mother in laudatory terms. That's not the case here, which means that neither Michel Foucault, nor Jean-Paul Sartre, nor Albert Camus were pervers, which is already an important piece of information. Moreover, I was very cautious about the Oedipal characteristics because immature people went through that process; even though it was not completed, the incomplete Oedipal psychological features give much information about the level of consciousness.

Many things have been written and said about the Oedipus complex, but ordinary people do not really know what this means. Let us dot the i's and cross the t's: when, in a symbolic way, the boy is about to kill his father in order to make love to his mother, he suddenly understands that his behaviour would condemn him to insanity. Actually, he cannot destroy the image of his father because he is also his ego ideal, a role model he needs to protect: if a man with a neurotic personality decompensates (goes mad) and brakes the mirror, he will destroy a part of himself and almost prevent any return to the reassuring origin of his superego. The superego opens the eyes of the child: the understanding of the difference between good and evil is what will enable the individual to control his or her instincts, which gives birth to the kingdom of peace, grace, life and acute perception of reality. On the other hand, improbable sexual intercourse with the mother looks like a Greek drama, for it would lead to psychosis. In fact, it would be an awkward attempt to recreate the umbilical impulsive connection between them, and the child would not be a distinct person anymore.

In other respects, it has to be borne in mind that post-war France is a sick country. The Second World War and the Military Administration in France were a kind of psychopathic

earthquake. This apocalypse engendered incomprehension, all the more so because the French did not do what the Germans did: a kind of *mea culpa*, which led them to put on trial and punish the culprits and to redefine the meanings of good and evil. The French purged many institutions and punished some Nazi collaborators, but it was a meaningless, inadequate response. Most criminals were not penalized, namely the French police officers who persecuted and deported so many Jews. After the war, the monsters remained in the same place and occupied the same positions. Some victims returned and tried to forget their journey to Hell, even though the scars kept reminded them of the fact that they had been treated like flesh, the flesh on which psychopathy lives and which enables it to survive and destroy everything. We will see that in the last chapter.

Is post-war France a psychotic country? No, but the war acted as a trauma. Hence, French society was quite psychopathic, and the “committed intellectuals” (*intellectuels engagés*) played the part of the lost consciousness of a society that was completely unable to think well, understand the problems, and address them. However, many of these intellectuals were not persons with neurotic personalities, but immature men who misjudged situations. This chapter is aimed at showing the level of understanding of three famous “philosophers”, their adaptability to reality and their ability to give an appropriate answer to a disabled society looking for the truth.

A- Paul-Michel Foucault.

Paul-Michel Foucault did not leave us an autobiography in order to help us to know the genesis of his “self”. However, we must not glorify that sort of document, since the author usually tries to conceal many things, often forgets others, or explains in a certain way a behaviour, although he or she does not understand it very well. Such a distorted testimony is less useful than an intelligent description by a friend or an acquaintance. In this connection, in 1989, Didier Eribon (3) published a book in which he portrayed him thanks to some of his friends and schoolmates, whom he did not name, which prevents us from checking the information. Nevertheless, the vividness of Didier Eribon’s description allows us to perceive Foucault’s personality.

The young Paul-Michel Foucault had a high conflict personality and behaved in a strange manner. First of all, he hated his father: later he preferred to be called Michel, not Paul-Michel, since Paul was also the first name of his father. At school, he had great difficulty making friends and worked a lot, probably in order to fight against depression and suicide. He was a megalomaniac who was so antisocial that he kept on fighting and quarreling with the others; he could hardly bear living with them: he preferred to stay in the sickbay, where a physician looked after him so that he might not commit suicide, which he had already done in 1948.

In spite of this, one day a teacher found him lying on the floor; his body showed signs of laceration. Another day, he ran after a schoolmate holding a knife in his hand. This behaviour was so dangerous and unusual at the *Ecole normale supérieure* that the students thought that he was quite unbalanced; they all hated him. An acquaintance of his stated that he fought against madness his whole life. According to Didier Eribon's book, Foucault must be a psychopath, but let us crosscheck the data.

The first information of quality we have is the way he used to think and write.

He wrote essays in philosophy and history using the same philosophical jargon. It may work in philosophy, but it is completely inappropriate in history. Actually, it is clear that his mind needed this psychological crutch to work. In history, the understanding of facts comes from the document itself. Most of the time, and even all the time, historians just verify that it is reliable; then they cite it providing almost no additional information, which makes the historic discourse rather flat, quite inexpressive and very monotonous because of these endless lists of events. It is very effective and the readers can always understand the facts, read the documents and form their own opinions if necessary. Foucault distorted reality by means of a lot of empty rhetoric. But why did he express himself in that fashion? Actually, his level of consciousness and his ability to perceive the outer world did not allow him to accept reality and its logic as they were. Very immature people don't really like plain speaking: there is always a double meaning, a kind of ugly, threatening explanation behind the beautiful façade. This led Ernst Kretschmer to classify this level of intelligence into the paranoid delusions (4) because, according to him, there was already a paralogical discourse. Even though this is not absolutely true, we notice that Foucault's primitive mind is full of preconceived ideas. In *Mental illness*

and personality (5), lunatics are the victims of psychiatrists' omnipotence (6). In *History of madness during the classical age* (7), his view is less extreme: physicians are but jailers. Of course, he does not deny the reality of insanity: he knows it too well and he is fighting against it. Nonetheless, one could argue that he might have told the truth, for the "general hospital" looked like a prison, not a place where scientists used to cure and help patients. In fact, there are very few documents that can support his argument, and the more he expresses his opinion, the less he gives evidence on the subject. Besides, in these two books, and some others, there are many strange opinions, especially about the image of the father and the anacletic group.

According to Didier Eribon, Foucault hated his father. This is an enormous problem because a boy needs to like his father so that he may try to identify with him and build up his superego in that way. Foucault's failure is very visible in his 1954 essay on madness. He is 28 when he publishes it and adolescence is already ancient history, but his hatred of the father figure is tangible.

In the first pages (8), the physician, the father figure, is compared not only with an omnipotent creature but also with God himself. Actually, he refers to the famous psychiatrist Babinski, whom he regards as a man who controls the mind of his hysterical patients: poor insane people who just have to "rise and walk" if Babinski asks them to do so.

His hatred of psychiatry was even more visible when he tried to explain Freud's little Hans's case (9). Here he understood nothing. For instance, he did have very little Oedipal mental material and transformed the Freudian explanation of the Oedipus complex into something very different.

According to him, Hans is fighting against his fear and the phobic symptom is therefore considered as the child's desire to see his father die; in this way, he destroys the fence between him and his mother. Freud and his followers immediately explained the ambiguity of the phobic symptom: they stated that Hans's father was a sexual rival and also a model he liked, all the more so because he was close to his son and sometimes acted as a friend when he played with the little boy. Foucault's point of view is twisted, whereas the Freudians' is not; he adds (10): "... without doubt, he fears that he is going to be bitten by the horse, which proves that he fears castration: this symbolizes the paternal prohibition on intercourse. ...". We may say that there are not many Oedipal characteristics here

because, according to him, the father prohibits his son from having sex with his mother in order to avoid incest. So Foucault's idea about castration is not a vague Oedipal anxiety, but something more primitive, excessive and anaclitic: he believes that the father does not forbid the expression of the desire to have sex with the image of the mother, but that in fact he forbids any sexual intercourse. Besides, nothing is said about his role in the psychological identification. Hence, the father becomes an archenemy.

In this connection, Foucault does not understand the role played by morality because his superego is inoperative. Consequently, any social responsibility or restraint is viewed as a punishment. For instance, in his *History of madness* (11), the General Hospital is but a prison where patients are compelled to work for an institution whose aim is to impose its morality on amoral people. The physicians are transformed into the accomplices of such morals. Must we think that this echoes his visit to Doctor Delay (Sainte Anne Hospital, in Paris) after his suicide attempt? Is he blaming his father, who was the man – the physician should I say since he was a doctor by profession – who asked one of his colleagues to cure his son of his mental disorders? Maybe, but here, more than a short episode in a young adult's life, there is psychological resistance, which shows that his father was not a role model for his son and that he did not enable him to achieve a higher level of consciousness.

In the case of such personalities, some circumstances can improve things; in other words, did Foucault find a reassuring father figure around him, which enabled him to start building a superego? It is not that easy to answer this question, but, at the end of his life, in *The use of pleasure* (12), he defined morality with less anger, even though there was no trace whatsoever of morals! Hence, Foucault's personality had changed, but, of course, it was not organized at the neurotic level yet.

On the other hand, in his work, we also find the classical anaclitic argument about the exclusion from the group. In his 1954 *Mental illness and personality* (13), the insane are separated from the group in order to be sent to a mental asylum. There is no information about the threat they represent to themselves and the others. In 1964 (14), he still shares this opinion. So we must admit that even though his personality had slightly improved, at the end of his life, he remained an immature person: what Bergeret would have called a "pervert of character with a psychopathic character".

B- Jean-Paul Sartre.

Sartre was less unbalanced since he was not a person with antisocial personality disorder. Nevertheless, it is clear that, at least when he was young, he used to fight against depression. In his almost autobiographical novel *Nausea*, Antoine Roquentin, the main character, divides his personality into two entities; the sane and objective part looks at the inner one and describes it (15) as follows: "... He says he is afraid of going mad... he says he is disgusted with existence... He runs in order to flee and to throw himself into the lake...". Is it already a psychotic scission of the self? Maybe, because very immature people can use the weapons used by psychotics; they can even experience hallucinations and reshape reality. However, these depressive episodes do not last that long and Roquentin comes to his senses. That being said, he lives in a parallel universe and strives hard to unite his mind and his body and perceive reality (16).

So that we may apprehend this low level of consciousness, we must read very carefully *The words* (17), which is a genuine autobiography.

He published it in 1964: he was 59. It is a well-written book, and the French is absolutely tip-top. It is so well-written that we understand that what he says can be really artificial, but it remains a good source of information.

The young Jean-Paul has no father, for he died during the First World War. He is raised by his mother, who is an immature girl, at least it is how Sartre sees her; he regards her as his older sister. He spent the first part of his childhood with her, in the house of his maternal grand-parents. His grandfather venerates his grand-son, whereas his grand-mother immediately knows that he is but a grinning little monkey. However, Jean-Paul is the typical spoiled brat. Nonetheless, many years after the facts and his childhood, he is aware that his family was dysfunctional, which had psychological repercussions for his personality, especially his superego. One could even regard this book as a kind of deliberate attempt to analyse his childhood, which obsesses him, so that he may acknowledge the most important problems, solve them and act.

The 59-year-old Sartre knows that the most important factor is his dead father. A child needs to identify with a real person whom he admires, or at least likes. He cannot identify with a ghost; life cannot look like death, or else you go crazy,

insanity being death, mental death in the midst of life. It is self-evident that he showed a reckless disregard for the role played by the father in a family, but one does wonder where such an opinion comes from since he never knew his own father. Is it an opinion he formed after having seen his uncles interact with his grand-father? It is impossible to give an answer. Does he reproach in this manner his father for being dead? It may not be the correct answer either, for he thinks that his absence made him a free little boy who did not have to obey a cumbersome father. However, his situation was quite difficult because he lived with an immature woman who used to tell all her problems to her son; his grand-father used to consider him as a marvelous creature; his grand-mother might have been quite critical of that situation: Sartre says that she was the "spirit" that always said no. He had an unhappy childhood, which moved him to think and write that he hated it.

Furthermore, he is aware that he has a problem with his superego. He even writes that, according to a famous psychiatrist, he has no superego, and he accepts this opinion, which is not completely true. Actually, he did have a superego, even though it was not his main trait. First of all, we must say that the popular novels he read had an influence on him (17). He often spoke of this kind of literature and stated that the books he used to read were really decent since the good guys always killed the bad ones.

Besides, his teachers usually said that the young Sartre was a moderately intelligent child but a righteous one. I think that sometimes he might have considered his grand-father as a father figure: we must note that he obeyed his grand-father, especially when he was speaking of literature. Aged 59, he even said that he had probably chosen to become a writer in order to please him.

To corroborate the presence of a superego, we can even refer to his essay entitled *Reflections on the Jewish problem* (18). In this book, he is preoccupied with good and evil, and he does fashion the image of a bad anti-Semite facing an innocent Jew. Hence, Jean-Paul Sartre, without a doubt, is a bit more reasonable than Foucault.

C- Albert Camus.

As for Albert Camus, fortunately, he left an autobiographical novel, *The first man* (19), which was published many years after his death. Some people could argue that *Wedding* (20) has some biographical data, which is true,

but it is not as introspective as *The first man*. Actually, both *The stranger* (21) and *The rebel* (22) are much more helpful than *Wedding* (23); they enable us to discover Camus's self and state of mind.

Like Sartre, Camus lost his father in World War One, but unlike him, he looked for a father figure, at least during his childhood. His book, *The first man*, is dedicated to him, a ghost haunting the pages of this novel. I even think that most of his work, which deals with insanity, destruction and rebellion against massacres, has a lot to do with the understanding of the disaster that turned his father into an ever-present shadow, a distressing absence. Of course, this search has many connections with the history of a blood-stained century, but his personal history and the general evolution of humanity during the 20th century are strictly mingled, which prevents us sometimes from separating easily what comes from a state of mind from what relies on a fair reaction to a historical apocalypse.

However, in *The first man*, Jacques – Albert in reality, who is the main character – tries to find information about his father. For instance, one day he asks his uncle whether his father was intelligent or not. Nevertheless, very few people can give him the information he needs so that he may imagine or even fashion a consistent father image. Fortunately, the main character considers his primary school teacher as a helpful substitute. One must realize that a boy who lives with a stupid woman who has poor interpersonal skills can regard Monsieur Bernard as a very important man. Jacques even considered that his teacher was a wise man, the only man who schooled him and helped him to become a man. It is very touching to see a famous writer, the winner of the Nobel prize of literature, reveal so many years later what he owes to the teacher who taught the little “Jacques-Albert” not only to be a human and a man but also to think clearly by means of a good understanding of the language (French here) and the way one must read a problem in order to get information and solve it more easily.

Logically, the superego of Camus is stronger; it is not as strong or operative as those of people with an obsessional personality (which is the personality organization that follows his), but it allows the individual to perceive reality much better and to interact more easily with people. This Oedipal characteristic enabled him to be quite stable and to strengthen his personality organization his whole life long. Furthermore, without undergoing psychoanalysis, sometimes people can