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Manipulation of Human Mind in the Works of Charles Brockden Brown

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CONTENTS

Introduction

The eighteenth century may be perceived as an important step to democracy in Europe as well as in America. Democracy was to be established by means of revolutions that took place on both the continents. These revolutions, overthrowing old regimes necessarily caused a new distribution of power, many different forces being at work. With the establishment of democracy the rule of force represented by monarchy and the king that had to be accepted without question, was substituted by a new group that at first had to endeavor to win its supporters. Therefore, it was the art of persuasion that started to prevail together with manipulation.

It is possible to trace a clear line of manipulation in the works of Charles Brockden Brown. By means of extreme situations that cause terror and thus fit in the Gothic literature he emphasized especially the manipulation of human mind as well as the phenomena and tendencies that render this manipulation practicable. His attitude to this theme reflects Brown's evaluation of eighteenth century political situation and democracy being formed at that time. He therefore covers both the psychological and political dimensions of manipulation.

In my thesis I will explore Brown's treatment of human mind as such and the impact of Brown's novels on the readers, and through this analysis I will underscore the universal value of his thoughts. It is also my aim to point out the relationship between manipulation of an individual and political manipulation as presented by Brown. I will focus on the way how Brown evaluated the eighteenth-century democracy and connect his notions with the democracy of the present. I will try to present the works of Brown in detail, and prove that although he is generally considered to be a minor American novelist, he left a message of considerable worth.

I will focus especially on Brown's four major novels, i. e. *Wieland*, *Ormond*, *Edgar Huntly* and *Arthur Mervyn.* I will include his unfinished novel *Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist* in my analysis because its main protagonist appears also in W*ieland* and thus *Memoirs of Carwin* offer an explanation to some questions

introduced in *Wieland.* I will not analyse Brown's novels *Jane Talbot* and *Clara Howard* because they are written more in sentimental than Gothic vein and therefore they are outside the frame of the present study.

The first chapter provides the thesis with historical and literary context of Brown's works. It is especially the relationship of eighteenth-century revolutions in France and America with Gothic genre applied by Brown. I will also introduce William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* where he deals with the mechanism of human mind as such and with the phenomena described by Brown as means of manipulation. Godwin proceeds from analysis of human mind to the analysis of the forms of government. Both the authors focus on similar points from different perspectives, therefore the comparison of Brown's works to that of Godwin serves to fulfill the purpose of this thesis.

The following chapters deal with manipulation itself. As the focus of the second chapter lies in presentation of the reasons why human mind is liable to external influence, it captures the manipulation from victim's point of view. The third chapter presents the opposite view, i. e. that of manipulators and the means that are used in order to control others. Both the chapters end with political implications of Brown's approach to the theme.

Finally, in the last chapter I will point out the impact that the novels of Brown have on the readers because it is closely connected with the notion of manipulation. I will thus try to illustrate how Brown managed to exert his influence outside his novels as well and involve the mind of the reader in the process of manipulation.

1. Brown's Work in Historical and Literary Context

Every work of literary achievement may be perceived either on its own, or in a wider context, according to different critical approaches. For the reader of Brown's novels, many questions arise as to why this author was writing about such phenomena as somnambulism, madness, where his anxieties came from, or why he was dealing with secrets and terror of human mind, writing in the Gothic tone. To answer these questions it is helpful to consider the circumstances in which Brown was writing, with a focus on history and the way it was mirrored in English and American literature of that time. This will also provide the present study with the background for the theme of manipulation in Brown's works.

The eighteenth century paved the way for an event as important as the French Revolution. This century is also connected with the formation of Gothic literature as a new literary form. According to Robert Miles who follows the explanation of Marquis de Sade, in a complex view, Gothic novel with its mystery, ghosts and haunted castles, was "an expression of the historical circumstances that made the French Revolution possible, and even necessary."[1] Gothic with its terror is not only an expression of the anxiety caused by post-revolutionary Jacobin rule, but also of the anxiety felt before the revolution caused by mixture of desire to change the system of feudalism and fear of its consequences, as it was comparable to entering an unknown, mysterious and therefore terrifying region. Leslie Fiedler comments on this explanation in *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960), stating that "some Gothic writers turned to the night side of life, the irrational world of sleep, for themes and symbols appropriate to the terrors bred by the Age of Reason,"[2] the very age that led to the French Revolution.

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[1] Robert Miles, "Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis," *A Companion to the Gothic,* ed. David Punter (Cornwall: MPG Books, 2001) 42.

[2] Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960; New York: Dell Publishing, 1969) 123.

It seems to be a paradox that literature of the era when rationalism dominated is preoccupied with mysteries that resist reason. The explanation lies in the history. The thoughts of the Enlightenment initiated the revolutionary actions and the French Revolution really brought positive changes, such as abolition of privileges of nobility, which meant social equality; secularization of European society because of which the Church lost a great part of its property and political power, but on the other hand its prestige was heightened as a result. The Revolution also meant a step from feudalism to democracy and from monarchy to republic and not only in France; the influence of the French Revolution spread to other countries as well and the conquest of Bastille is even said to be the most important event in the history of England.[3] However, these were the effects that could not be felt immediately after the revolution. Instead, the feelings of danger started to prevail, because of the immediate changes the Revolution brought, i. e. the Jacobin terror and corruption.

Therefore the attitude towards rationalism of the eighteenth century may be positive and negative at the same time; positive, as it enabled the desirable changes and negative, as it also caused the fear. This fear may be perceived from two perspectives, firstly it is the fear from the unknown that must necessarily follow when the old system is shattered, and secondly the real fear of Jacobin terror after the revolution. This double attitude towards Enlightenment is captured by the Gothic. It is expressed in Fiedler's explanation related to the Gothic: He perceived the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth century as "a moment when everywhere rationalism had triumphed and madness reigned in fact," and he assigned "a hunger for the inexplicable, a need of the marvelous which they could neither confess nor escape" to the authors of gothic novels, though they were "followers of Voltaire" and "exponents of the Enlightenment."[4] This theory is reaffirmed in the study of Jerrold E. Hogle who also suggests the third perspective of fear, i. e. the anxiety felt by

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[3] See *André Maurois, Dějiny Francie* (1958; Praha: Lidové noviny, 1994) 305-7.

[4] Fiedler 124-5.

usurpers of power: "Leslie Fiedler was right three decades ago to suggest that 'the memorials to a decaying past' on which the Gothic is based are places where the rising middle class can articulate and mask its anxiety over usurping past aristocratic power."[5] It is thus explained how there could be so many mysteries in literature originated in the Age of Reason.

Gothic literature deals with the past and emphasizes everything that was to be feared in the past. The term "gothic" used by Horace Walpole and his followers is applied to medieval past that is understood as barbarous, "corrupt and detestable"[6] and abounding in superstitions, and it is also associated with the crimes of the medieval Age of Faith (the Inquisition, monks and priests who were rather lustful than religious) as opposed to the rational values of Enlightenment. The fear of the supernatural connected with the medieval times corresponds with the eighteenth-century anxiety caused by the revolutionary tremors:

> The projection of the present onto a Gothic past occurred ... as part of the wider processes of political, economic and social upheaval: emerging at a time of burgeois and industrial revolution, a time of Enlightenment philosophy and increasingly secular views, the eighteenth-century Gothic fascination with a past of chivalry, violence, magical beings and malevolent aristocrats is bound up with the shifts from feudal to commercial practices in which notions of property, government, and society were undergoing massive transformations. ... 'Gothic' thus resonates as much with anxieties and fears concerning the crises and changes in the present as with any terrors of the past.[7]

The perception of the Middle Ages is comparable with the eighteenth-century

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[5] Jerrold E. Hogle, "The Gothic Ghost of the Counterfeit and the Progress of Abjection,"*A Companion to the Gothic,* ed. David Punter (Cornwall: MPG Books, 2001) 301.

[6] Fiedler 124.

[7] Fred Botting, "In Gothic Darkly: Heterotopia, History, Culture," *A Companion to the Gothic,* ed. David Punter (Cornwall: MPG Books, 2001) 3.

perception of the present. This fearful present was not directly admitted by the authors because at present they tried to live by principles of rationalism which would oppose any mystery; instead, they described the fear only as if it was the fear of the past.

When European Gothic reached America, it was applied by American writers as well. But the source for this kind of fiction was already there, deeply grounded in the minds of Americans. Gothic was thus applied not as an attempt to imitate European writers, but as an appropriate way of expression. Looking for the reasons, it is possible to return as far as the seventeenth century, when the Pilgrim Fathers arrived to American shores with the ideal to found a new city upon a hill and leave their past with all the sins on the old continent. However, their present soon changed into a past with sins that were only their own – the massacres of Indians, Salem witchcraft trials, slavery. New generations were unable to change the crimes of their ancestors but they still felt responsible for them. This past therefore lived in the consciousness of the people as their guilt. As it is never too far from guilt to fear and terror, it was Gothic that started to reflect writers' way of thinking.

The eighteenth century in America brought the War of Independence and as a result the Americans became free from the dominion of another country. However, the politically concerned individuals were conscious of the danger caused by this freedom, so it was not perceived only with satisfaction but with some uneasiness as well. According to Allan Lloyd-Smith, it was a vision of freedom and prosperity that brought the early settlers to America, and although this vision was supported by Enlightenment thoughts spreading from Europe and affirming a possibility of an ideal society, it soon became clear that it was rather a utopia. Although the Revolutionary War ensured independence, certain pessimism started to resonate as an undertone of the public life – fear that the rule of majority might be dangerous as it is undisciplined, and might change into a rule of the mob, danger that faction would be created in democratic government, and as a result, that the whole new republic

might collapse as a big experiment. This fear came to surface with the most force in the early nineteenth century.[8] The situation in America was therefore comparable to that in France.

The news of terror after the French Revolution spreading from Europe, the post-revolutionary period in America was as well marked by debates about conspiracies. And as every revolution is followed by new distribution of power, various kinds of manipulation (from outside by plotting strangers and from inside by those who were claiming to build up democracy) have its place in this part of American history.

This era has been singled out for its "paranoid sense of secret machinations, and its heated and haunted political imagination" and "a covert world of secret aristocrats and Jacobin conspirators" was created as "Republicans and Federalists sought to define each other in terms of their post-revolutionary relationship to French radicalism and English reaction."[9] Federalists saw the influence of Jacobin subversives behind all threats, such as Whiskey Rebellion or the opposition of Republicans; Jeffersonian Republicans perceived Federalists as trying to subvert the freedoms that the American Revolution brought, assigning the Federalists themselves as the "self-interested plotters craftily manipulating Americans at a time when ... all is otherwise well with the republic."[10] It was the discourse of conspiracy of the aliens against American government that was applied by ruling Federalists as a part of their rhetoric after American Revolution. The figures that were considered to be the most dangerous were not only Jacobin plotters, penetrating from Europe to America, but

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[8] See Allan Lloyd-Smith, "Nineteenth-Century American Gothic," *A Companion to the Gothic,* ed. David Punter (Cornwall: MPG Books, 2001) 111.

[9] Paul Downes, *Democracy, Revolution, and Monarchism in Early American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 115.

[10] Robert S. Levine, *Conspiracy and Romance: Studies in Brockden Brown, Cooper, Hawthorne and Melville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 25.

especially a group of Enlightened intellectuals called Illuminati.[11] Soon anti-Illuminati writings appeared in Europe, such as Abbé Barruel's *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* (1799) and John Robison's *Proof of Conspiracy* (1797). As Robert S. Levine writes, "having fulfilled their aims in Europe by directing the course of destabilizing French Revolution, the conspirational Illuminati, according to Robison and Barruel, now set their sights on overturning government and religion in America."[12] Drawing especially on the texts by Robison and Barruel, the American authors, e. g. Jedidiah Morse and Timothy Dwight started to express the fear of the Illuminati as well.[13]

The effort of the Federalists to find an enemy in plotting strangers was supposed to be an attempt to mask the Federalist pursuit of power and find a justification for the issue of Alien and Sedition Acts. Or, as Levine further notes, "by focusing attention on threatening, self-interested aliens, anti-Illuminati discourse also served to displace Americans' uneasiness about their own self-interested pursuit of money and power."[14] However, the fear caused by conspirational theories was widely spread and

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[11] The Order of Bavarian Illuminati was founded as a secret society by Adam Weishaupt at Bavaria's University of Ingolstadt in 1776 with an aim to resist Jesuits. Weishaupt was a politician and a utopianist of Enlightenment rationalism who came to a conclusion that the Society of Jesus opposed his progress. The group spread its influence in 1780s into Germany, Austria and Italy, gradually gaining more than two thousand members. The revolutionary goal of the group was to become free from all established authority, religious and political, and lead humanity to moral perfection, therefore it was considered dangerous as a group of atheists seeking world dominion. Social conservatives being alarmed, they decided to take countermeasures against the group. As a result, the Illuminati were crushed later in 1780s. However, the spectre of the Illuminati was not defeated so easily. During the revolutionary upheaval in Europe references to Illuminati agency in the French Revolution appeared. Therefore the Illuminati were perceived as a real threat, their effort to subvert existing social order being emphasized. See Levine 18.

[12] Levine 19.

[13] For a more detailed analysis of the works by Barruel, Robison, Morse and Dwight see Levine 18-24; Downes 116.

[14] Levine 22.

it was not easily transcended by the intellectuals of that time, even though some of them were sceptical about conspirational theories.[15]

Charles Brockden Brown, originally studying for a lawyer but later leaving this career, was not untouched by the debates of 1790s. He was familiar with the alarmist political writing, as he is known to read anti-Illuminati works by Robison, Dwight, or Barruel.[16] Brown's attitude to these theories is ambivalent. On one hand, he could not get rid of the fear, which appears in his novels as a political as well as psychological threat, therefore he is most often associated with Federalists vehemently opposing radicalism in form of Illuminati. On the other hand, in his works there is certain scepticism about the fear that the Federalists were spreading, as a countersubversive (Federalist) character sometimes turns out to be the most suspect (see 3.1.). By some critics he is even supposed to share the radical Enlightenment opinions, but he has them expressed by villains in his novels to ensure an alibi and avoid taking a stand, not to make an impression of an anti-Federalist.[17] His writings thus cannot be perceived as mere political statements, therefore it is not possible to classify him clearly as a Federalist or Republican. Instead, as Levine expressed it, his "literary works emerge from and address the tensions of ... the contemporary moment" and they "reflect less a political line than a sensibility – inquiring, capacious, and anxious."[18]

Brown was well aware of the uncertainties of his century. It is underscored by the fact that he was living in Philadelphia, the centre of the political debates. Moreover, an epidemic of yellow fever occured in this city and it also left a mark on Brown's consciousness. It was a new source of fear and Brown could notice how the

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[15] See Levine 23.

[16] See Levine 26.

[17] See Ernest Marchand, Introduction, *Ormond*, by Charles Brockden Brown (1799; New York: America Book Company, 1937) xxix.

[18] Levine 25.

behaviour of people is changed by its influence. Some critics explain the disease that Brown deals with so often, as an infiltration to the body, and point out the parallel of a dangerous disease with any kind of influence or any manipulative force which means an infiltration to the mind.[19]

It was hard to figure out what and whom to believe at the time like this, with all the conspirational theories and secrecy of people who followed their own benefit, claiming that they do everything for general good. There were groups of people mutually trying to usurp control over one another, and at the same time win the opinion of the public, therefore manipulating the public as well. If we add the Gothic memories of things past and the awareness of dark sides of human character that could not be defeated by founding a new community, as Americans intended to do at first, we acquire the testimony of one era and human nature expressed in the attempt to cope with this era. It is all a part of Brown's writing and because Gothic enabled to involve mystery to capture the anxieties of the age, it was chosen as a suitable way of expression.

1.1. William Godwin and *Political Justice*

Written in England during the French Revolution, Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) was drawing much attention because it offered an alternative to contemporary political systems. It is an essential work of anarchism that suggested the change of society caused by the change of all the individuals within the society.

One of the main principles of Godwin's philosophy is a belief in the constant improvement of human mind. The problem is that the human mind is at present spoiled by the system of political government, which Godwin considers to be evil. He perceives the government as a "brute engine which has been the only perennial cause of the vices of mankind."[20] The succes of extensive political government is ensured

[19] See Levine 34.

by instilling faith in it into people, by veiling itself in mysteries and by its complexity. To achieve an ideal society the whole social system must be simplified.[21]

Godwin distinguishes three forms of authority. The first form is represented only by reason – the individual guided by reason makes private judgement and therefore he is the authority for himself. The second form means the authority which arises from reverence for another person respected for his qualities and therefore obeyed by another individual. What follows is the authority of government that is rejected by Godwin because the obedience is no longer based on private judgement but only on force and fear of punishment.[22] Men must endeavor to move from the third form of authority to the first, i. e. abandon the political government in favor of becoming the authority for themselves under the guidance of reason. As men proceed from total ignorance to virtue, the evil of government would be spontaneously abandoned:

> Government cannot proceed but upon confidence, as confidence on the other hand cannot exist without ignorance. The true supporters of government are the weak and uninformed, and not the wise. In proportion as weakness and ignorance shall diminish, the basis of government will also decay. This however is an event which ought not to be contemplated with alarm. A catastrophe of this description would be the true euthanasia of government.[23]

Godwin does not argue in favour of bloody revolution but peaceful process of government dissolution achieved by gradual improvement of human mind.

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[20] William Godwin, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (1793; London: Penguin Books, 1985) 554.

[21] See Godwin 553.

[22] See Godwin 242-3.

[23] Godwin 247-8.

A society should function by means of deployment of sincerity and watchfulness. As every man is obliged to pay attention to the action of all the others, everyone is constantly controlled: "Observe my conduct; you do well."[24] This observation should be widely (and fairly) reported "for the purpose to increase my wisdom and prudence [and] for the purpose of instructing others."[25] Every individual being under constant observation, is therefore trying to avoid undesirable conduct: "The inspection of every man over the conduct of his neighbours, when unstained with caprice, would constitute a censorship of the most irresistible value."[26] At the same time, the individuals are sincere about everything concerning their lives – not only are they holding no secret, but they are reporting all they can see, so that the errors of their neighbours can be corrected. Godwin calls this system "public inspection"[27] founded on freedom, ensuring the general welfare. He praises its benefits compared to the coercive techniques of government.

Godwin's rhetoric in *Political Justice* overlaps with the rhetoric of Brown in his novels. They both deal with the distribution of power in society. Brown suggests what role the very phenomena described by Godwin may have with respect to manipulation and his attitude towards *Political Justice* (Godwin's notion of perfectibility of human mind resulting in spontaneous improvement of social institutions has in common some points of the notion manifested by the Illuminati), makes clearer his attitude towards Enlightenment as such and towards the political situation in America. There are also many points in which Brown disagrees with Godwin in his understanding of human mind, and therefore *Political Justice* serves as a background to Brown's works.

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[24] Godwin 560

[25] Godwin 560.

[26] Godwin 561.

[27] Godwin 663.

2. Predispositions of Human Mind

Manipulation is always founded on a relation of at least two parties, one trying to control, the other being controlled; and it is more successful under certain conditions. Several factors are influential when discussing a question why people are subject to machination of someone else. In his narratives Charles Brockden Brown gives many insights into human mind, and so he presents its predispositions. Thus he is reasoning why people sometimes yield so easily to the powers around them.

2.1. Predispositions to Evil

There are many traces of darkness in Brown's notion of human mind. He created a world of villains from whom nothing good might be expected, as villains they are naturally supposed to be depraved. However, Brown warns about a dark aspect that is inherent not only in a villain's mind, but in fact in every mind. Even the characters that appear to be innocent or are otherwise admirable are not exempt from evil. It goes with them because it lurks in the recesses of their minds as their inherent part. This attitude reflects the American failure of their dream about innocence and their heritage of the impossibility to free themselves from the original sin and the burden of past that all humanity has in common.

To begin with *Wieland* (1798), the characters indeed seem to be governed by evil. Clara Wieland narrates her story and the disaster inflicted on her family by her brother Theodore. Misled by the voice of a skilful ventriloquist which he mistakenly believed to be a voice from heaven, Theodore murdered his wife and children and attempted to kill his sister on the command of a strange voice to prove his faith.

Theodore's father was the first who became involved with evil. While alive, he had always been a contemplative surrounded by the air of a sadness, generally respected by the others. However, sometimes he was called "a fanatic and a

dreamer."[28] There certainly was some element arousing curiosity about his religious belief. His first encounter with religion is connected with a book about the sect of Camisards and its doctrine. His attention being caught by it, he decided to turn to the Bible as well. His perception of the Bible was influenced by the Camisard text and therefore distorted: "Every fact and sentiment in this book were viewed through a medium which the writings of the Camissard apostle had suggested. His constructions of the text were hasty and formed on a narrow scale."[29] Wieland's faith was therefore suspect in a way; some critics even charge Wieland with worshipping Satan emphasizing a disturbing view that is attributed to the sect of Camisards, i. e. that Satan and God are one in the Old Testament.[30] The elder Wieland who was without any additional guidance as to the Scriptures, was thus very close to being misled by his belief to a dangerous path, his inclination to evil appearing at the very beginning. His violent death affirms this aspect again, as it appears to be accompanied by some devilry.

Some time prior to his death, Wieland's sadness deepened in consequence of his failure to perform a duty assigned to him: "A command had been laid upon him, which he had delayed to perform."[31] As this duty is not specified, there is a room for speculation in the narrative – it might be the task to spread religion among North-American Indians, originally the intention that led the elder Wieland from Europe to America. He abandoned this intention many times – at first it was because of the awareness that the missionary work is dangerous, then again when he arrived to Philadelphia, "his fears were revived, and a nearer survey of savage manners once

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[28] Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland; or, The Transformation, Three Gothic Novels* (1798; New York: Kent State University Press, 1998) 11.

[29] Brown, *Wieland* 8.

[30] See Bernard Rosenthal, "The Voices of Wieland," *Critical Essays on Charles Brockden Brown,* ed. Bernard Rosenthal (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981) 105.

[31] Brown, *Wieland* 12.

more shook his resolution."[32] However, although Clara does not clarify this problem, she implies that something more serious than "just" her father's inability to do the missionary work is at the core of things here. Her usage of the words suggests an unknown duty, imposed on her father not by himself, which would be the case of the mission, but by a different authority as a "command." Clara describes her father as showing the marks of much hesitation and reluctance with respect to this unknown duty, therefore a thought of something criminal occurs, her father having a fearful secret to hide. He was unable to confess to anyone, as if he was contemplating a hideous crime.

The case of the elder Wieland is not dissimilar from that of his son Theodore. Both received a command to do something extremely difficult; respecting young Theodore, it turned out to be nothing less than the murder of his family demanded from him by a mysterious voice: "Thy prayers are heard. In proof of thy faith, render me thy wife. This is the victim I chuse. Call her hither and here let her fall."[33] Theodore believes that this voice comes from heaven, but Brown provides the reader also with a hint of a natural explanation as for Theodore's commander, i. e. ventriloquism of Carwin, a stranger who enters the narrative. However, Carwin confesses to Clara to be the originator of all voices but this particular one. I will deal with this problem again (see 2.3.), for now suffice it to say that the reader is again at a loss as for the origin of the voice commanding Theodore to murder, a few possibilities left open.

Like his son, Wieland the father also believed in a supernatural commander. He put his death in connection with this command – failing to fulfill the condition prescribed to him, he had to endure a penalty in form of a violent death, and he finally died in consequence of something that occured in the temple during his prayers. Thus he seemed to be punished by a supernatural power, the origin of the

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[32] Brown, *Wieland* 9.

[33] Brown, *Wieland* 155.

voice. However, as Bernard Rosenthal argues, the possibility of Carwin's agency is joined with manipulating not only younger Wieland, but also his father and even a question is discussed whether Carwin is old enough to be involved in both cases of machination.[34] What this theory suggests is that the agent demanding a duty from both the Wielands is the same, and therefore also the duty is possibly the same. This theory is supported by the fact that Clara uses the same rhetoric when relating the crime of her brother and the unperformed duty of her father, speaking about a command; moreover, she states that the elder Wieland was "no longer permitted to obey. The duty assigned to him was transferred, in consequence of his disobedience, to another"[35] thus implying that "the injunction was passed to the son."[36] The rest is known as the murder of the family that finally turned out to be the content of the command.

Clara's account of her father leaves the reader with an impression of someone who is fighting a constant internal struggle: "He was alternately agitated by fear and by ecstasy. He imagined himself beset by the snares of a spiritual foe, and that his security lay in ceaseless watchfulness and prayer."[37] The question is what he had to fear if he did not feel guilty. The implication is that guilty he felt, and I would promote the opinion that it was because he believed in righteousness of the command, i. e. the righteousness of the homicide during his "ecstasy" at the period of his adherence to his satanic belief and the evil within himself. This was turned again into fear and guilt when his mind was awakened enough to be guided by his morality. He inclined more to his belief, and he adhered to the evil in form of religious faith, but still not enough to commit the crime imposed on him as a duty. The confusion of his thoughts led to his death with a touch of mysterious that is left unexplained by

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[34] See Rosenthal 111.

[35] Brown, *Wieland* 12.

[36] Rosenthal 105.

[37] Brown, *Wieland* 8.

Brown but that is similar to a phenomenon called spontaneous combustion.

Whatever the origin of the manipulative agent, it can be perceived as an impulse that hit the string of evil in the father and his son alike. The effort to resist killed the elder Wieland – he preserved enough sanity to know that he cannot kill his family unless he perpetrates a sin, still his evil side fuelled by his mistaken religion was pushing him into belief that this resistance is sinful; as a result this inner conflict consumed him. In contrast, young Wieland did commit the crime but only after he was seized by madness which helped him not to perceive bad acts as bad, his madness thus sprang from the dark side of his mind to enable him act in accordance with the inner depravity. In both cases an inability to resist the internal evil is apparent.

Clara, pondering on the crime of her brother, considers herself to be wrought of the same material as maniacal Wieland. Therefore she is not safe either from the like madness. She heard the same voice as Wieland and saw a mysterious figure that was seen by Wieland. As these appearances caused the madness of her brother, Clara also feels endangered and expresses her fear by asking: "Whatever supposition I should adopt, had I not equal reason to tremble? What was my security against influences equally terrific and equally irresistable?"[38] She admits that in fact she has turned into the same monster as her brother because she was influenced by the same visions that made him mad:

> I wondered at the change which a moment had effected in my brother's condition. Now was I stupified with tenfold wonder in contemplating myself. Was I not likewise transformed from rational and human into a creature of nameless and fearful attributes? Was I not transported to the brink of the same abyss? Ere a new day should come, my hands might be embrued in blood and my remaining life be consigned to a dungeon and

[38] Brown, *Wieland* 166.

chains.[39]

The transformation Clara speaks about means her awareness of evil. In fact she is the same as she was at the beginning of the novel, with only one difference – now notion of evil has sprung from her unconsciousness to the surface. Having heard the strange voices Clara fears that evil in her might become uncontrollable exactly as in case of her brother. The innocent Clara was thus transformed to a creature capable of crimes, as she herself admits. Taking into account her moral sensibility, the dread that she might possibly commit a crime against her will and the fact that it is no more in her power to restrain herself from such villainous conduct, is more than she can endure. As she further claims, the only remedy, or obstacle to a crime similar to Wieland's homicide, is death: "Death is a cure which nature or ourselves must administer: To this cure I now looked forward with gloomy satisfaction."[40] By this statement she suggests that she cannot in any way dispose of the evil while alive, therefore confirming it is an inseparable part of her personality, as it has always been, only she was not aware of it.

Brown points out the presence of the evil element in Clara's mind by means of ambiguity. It is evident in Clara's words that she said when approaching the closet in her room: "A sort of belief darted into my mind, that some being was concealed within, whose purposes were evil."[41] Norman S. Grabo emphasizes the double meaning of this sentence – as Clara once heard the mysterious voice coming from the closet, she presumably means that the being with evil purposes is hiding there, but it might also mean that this being is hiding within her own mind.[42] Clara is aware of

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[39] Brown, *Wieland* 167.

[40] Brown, *Wieland* 167.

[41] Brown, *Wieland* 79.

[42] See Norman S. Grabo, *The Coincidental Art of Charles Brockden Brown* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981) 75.

tendencies to evil that may be awakened on the slightest impulse from outside.

Brown works with the idea of evil present in everyone in his other novels too. In *Edgar Huntly* (1799), the main protagonist is driven to extremity. Edgar proves to hide murderous tendecies within himself although as the first person narrator he describes himself above all as benevolent. Urged by necessity, he first kills a panther. It was nothing extraordinary to kill a beast like that, moreover, Edgar had killed many of them before, but the death of the panther is only a forerunner of what happens next – multiple murder of Indians committed by Edgar, especially if we recall Edgar's earlier comment on the voice of a panther, terrifying because of "its resemblance to the human voice."[43] He feels a necessity to justify himself, stating that he could not hesitate to do this when he remembered all the crimes committed by the Indians including the assassination of Edgar's family when he was a boy. Then he demands even more compassion of the reader in the attempt to emphasize his good character by means of the sentence "yet I did hesitate,"[44] in spite of all the evil caused by the Indians. But although Edgar claims to entertain a deep "aversion to bloodshed ... not to be subdued but by the direst necessity" and he denies any "sanguinary and murderous disposition,"[45] only a few pages on in the narrative following these statements he betrays himself by expressing regret not to have slaughtered more Indiands while it was possible.[46] Throughout the whole novel Edgar is trying hard to justify his acts to the reader and it might be generally stated that nobody feels stronger urge to justification than the guilty one.

Edgar is often compared to animals. He even assumes a role of competitor with animals: "I disdained to be out-done in perspicacity by the lynx, in his sure-footed

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[43] Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly; or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker, Three Gothic Novels* (1799; New York, 1998) 748.

[44] Brown, *Edgar* 796.

[45] Brown, *Edgar* 796.

[46] See Brown, *Edgar* 803.

instinct by the roe... I have ever aspired to transcend the rest of animals in all that is common to the rational and brute, as well as in all by which they are distinguished form each other."[47] When he awakened in a dark cave after the fit of somnambulism of which he was not aware, he was considering committing suicide as it was hard to endure the pain caused by hunger and his wounds. Even if he failed in the attempt and did not die immediately after a few strokes of a tomahawk, it would help all the same, as he would make his blood flow and his "pains would be alleviated by swallowing this blood."[48] The image of animal-like Edgar feasting on his own blood recurres again when he devours the carcass of a panther that he slays in the cave. The animal instincts are not detestable per se when respecting animals, but they become not only detestable but evil as soon as they are attributed to a human being.

There is one more character in the same novel that is no less disturbing than Edgar. Clithero Edny, born in Ireland, spent his childhood in the household of Euphemia Lorimer, a rich widow who chose him as a companion for her son. He was indebted to her for all he had, as his parents were very poor, and he adored his patroness as well as her niece Clarice to whom he later got engaged. However, his happiness was thwarted when he in self-defence killed Wiatte, malicious brother of Mrs. Lorimer. He vowed her revenge, as she did not solicit for him when he was banished from his country for his crimes, although she loved him. Clithero believed that Mrs. Lorimer would die the moment she hears the news of her brother's death. This thought was instilled into his mind by Mrs. Lorimer's belief that her fate is interconnected with that of her brother. Therefore Clithero decided to kill her too to spare her the grief. At the very moment with his hand prepared to a deadly stroke, he was interrupted by a shriek – it was only then that he realized he was about to stab Clarice sleeping in her aunt's bed, Mrs. Lorimer standing behind. On hearing about her brother's death, Mrs. Lorimer fainted and Clithero, supposing her to be dead,

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[47] Brown, *Edgar* 825.

[48] Brown, *Edgar* 782.

fled to America where he lived with his guilt, suffering from somnambulism. When we first encounter Clithero, it is night and he is digging under a huge elm where Edgar's friend Waldegrave was murdered.

Although Clithero previously contemplated the murder of Wiatte in order to protect himself, Clarice and his patroness from Wiatte's malicious designs, Brown arranges the actual murder in a way that it is completely justifiable for Clithero. Differently from Edgar, Clithero did not have any time before the murder to consider what he was doing. What is important here, are the consequences of this act – the attempt to kill Mrs. Lorimer and the consequent separation from her and Clarice. At the moment when Clithero decided to kill his patroness, he was not guided by his will, but by something set at work by Wiatte whose intention to inflict the greatest harm on his sister to revenge is well known to all participants. Clithero thus becomes nothing less than an executor of Wiatte's will. Norman S. Grabo emphasizes this fact by claiming that "in killing Wiatte, Clithero loses both Euphemia and Clarice, but in realizing that loss, *he becomes Wiatte himself,* determined to obliterate that richness that he cannot himself enjoy,"[49] once he murdered Mrs. Lorimer's brother. Wiatte may be considered as a representative or a personification of pure evil in the novel, therefore in becoming Wiatte, Clithero turns evil as well. Brown comments on this passage as follows: "As the obstructor of his designs, Wiatte way-liad and assaulted Clithero. He perished in the attempt. Were his designs frustrated? . . . No. It was thus that he secured the gratification of his vengeance... By a refinement of good fortune, the voluntary minister of his malice had entailed upon himself exile without reprieve and misery without end."[50] Brown emphasizes the immortality of evil that is ready to be sacrificed in order to be alive as remorse in somebody else's mind.

Clithero claims that he was controlled by some force at the moment of his

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[49] Grabo 75, my emphasis.

[50] Brown, *Edgar* 720.

intended murder: "Was it I that hurried to the deed? No. It was the dæmon that possessed me. My limbs were guided to the bloody office by a power foreign and superior to mine."[51] But it might as well be said that this force was not external, it just became superior to all the other elements of his personality during the eclipse of his reasoning. There are more moments in his story that make him suspect – the night when he killed Wiatte, he had a possibility of option between two roads and he chose "a dark, crooked and narrow lane."[52] He is equally unable to choose a straight road when wandering through the wilderness during his fits of sleepwalking.

In *Edgar Huntly* Brown plays with good and evil especially in his characterization of Euphemia Lorimer and her twin brother Arthur Wiatte. They were like reverse sides of the same coin. As for their appearance, they were so similar in their infancy and childhood that it was almost impossible to distinguish them, but considering their characters "no two persons were less alike" and "the powers that in one case, were exerted in the cause of virtue, were, in the other, misapplied to sordid and flagitious purposes."[53] Euphemia was an angelic being abounding with such kindness and virtue that it was almost impossible to estimate all her merits, whereas Wiatte "exceeded in depravity all that has been imputed to the arch-foe of mankind," and he "seemed to relish no food but pure and unadulterated evil."[54] All the kindness of Euphemia was repaid only by hatred from her brother and he always made his best to destroy his sister's happiness. Nevertheless, Euphemia has never relinquished the hope that the depravity of her brother may be cured.

What Euphemia believed is that her life was connected to that of her brother. She had received a message about his death but she refused to believe it just because she had a notion that once one of them dies, the other must die too. Grabo writes

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[51] Brown, *Edgar* 711.

[52] Brown, *Edgar* 700.

[53] Brown, *Edgar* 677.

[54] Brown, *Edgar* 677.

about the fates of people in *Edgar Huntly* as mutually interconnected, further stating that "if the values these characters represent are so vitally linked, their denial is too; that is you cannot rid yourself of evil without destroying the good as well... Wiatte's motiveless malevolence is as much a part of Mrs. Lorimer as is her benevolence. You cannot destroy one without fatal hurt to the other."[55] It is possible to draw an association between Euphemia/Wiatte and a human being generally; Euphemia serves as a personification of a good side of one's character, while Wiatte of its reverse side, both being inherent in every individual.

Brown, revealing the dark reverse aspects of the characters who are not actual villains in his novels, turns the attention to the nature of human mind in general, including all his readers. There always exists a possibility that anyone may be led astray, no matter how excellent they appear to be. This notion is expressed in Edgar's comment on Clithero after hearing his whole story:

> How imperfect are the grounds for all our decisions! Was it of no use to superintend his childhood, to select his instructors and examples, to mark the operations of his principles, to see him emerging into youth, to follow him through various scenes and trying vicissitudes, and mark the uniformity of his integrity? Who would have predicted his future conduct? Who would not have affirmed the impossibility of an action like this?[56]

Similarly, who would think Wieland ever becomes the destroyer of his beloved family? Brown emphasizes the fallibility of every human mind, connecting this basic problem with different phenomena – sometimes it is caused by madness, sometimes by incorrect religious principles or fault of education. The danger is that every manipulator to evil only needs to find an evil aspect in the mind of the victim, which is there for sure, and trigger it for his purpose.

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[55] Grabo 73.

[56] Brown, *Edgar* 720.

I have emphasized that evil is always connected with any person, as it is obvious from the variety of Brown's characters. He deals with this problem from many points of view, making the same conclusion in all cases – evil is with us. However, this is not to say that the evil side is dominant in human nature. What I want to underscore is that the degree of evil is in proportion to the degree of good, therefore the deeper men may fall because of their inherent vice, the higher they may be elevated thanks to their virtue which is also inherent. Or in other words, if it is possible to descend as deep as Hell, it is also possible to go as far as Heaven in the opposite direction. Brown just warns us to be careful once evil is a part of us.

This approach is expressed in *Political Justice* as well. William Godwin emphasizes both aspects, good and evil, when he writes: "Pure malevolence is the counterpart of disinterested virtue; and almost all the considerations that prove the existence of the one are of equal avail to prove the existence of the other."[57] Brown confirms it especially by his notion of good and evil in the characters of Euphemia Lorimer and Arthur Wiatte in *Wieland.* The difference between Brown's and Godwin's point of view is that while Godwin is optimistic and emphasizes the positive phenomena in human mind, Brown deals more with its negative sides. While Godwin writes about perfectibility of human mind, Brown writes more about its fallibility and the consequences.

2.2. Self-preservation and Self–interest

Constantia Dudley from the novel *Ormond* (1799) turns murderous as well as Clithero when threatened with rape. Constantia is a girl who soon undergoes a change from a happy child brought up by loving parents to a judicious half-orphan with all the responsibility for her blind father during a yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia. Her self-sacrificing behaviour when she takes care for the people affected by fever arouses admiration of her character, she acts like a person ready to

[57] Godwin 384.

die for someone else. Or in other words, she is ready to sacrifice herself. However, not in all cases without exception. When she is threatened by an Illuminati-like rapist Ormond, she has only three possibilities – to submit to him, kill him, or to commit suicide. The first possibility is unacceptable for Constantia, therefore she considers the remaining two. The murder does not seem to match with the image of Constantia created by previous passages of the novel. Yet murder is exactly what Constantia does in the end, unable to overcome the impulse she is not even conscious of in usual circumstances.

This deed is described by Sophia Courtland who narrates the novel as justifiable and praiseworthy, as it was Constantia's duty to "find safety for her honor, even in blood of her assailant." [58] However, this comment expresses Sophia's, not Constantia's opinion because Sophia enters the story in the later part of the novel and is therefore partly divested of omniscience as the third person narrator. The murder is not the result of Constantia's rational thinking but of necessity as it is expressed by Constantia: "My deed was scarcely the fruit of intention. It was suggested by momentary frenzy."[59] It is obvious that Constantia does not perceive her act as a prescription of duty. In extreme situations people are most likely to show their true character. In Constantia's case, self-preservation proved to be the strongest tendency even at the expense of the life of someone else, contrary to the expectations supported by the knowledge of murderess's mild character.

She was considering murder of Ormond but then turned to suicide when she realized that he is much stronger. She killed him after all as a direct result of being flattered by him: "Thou wilt kill thyself; put an end to thy activity in virtue's cause; rob thy friend of her solace, the world of thy beneficence, thyself of being and

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[58] Charles Brockden Brown, *Ormond; or, The Secret Witness* (1799; New York: America Book Company, 1937) 234.

[59] Brown, *Ormond* 240.

pleasure?"[60] It reminds us of a Godwinian thought emphasizing that it is criminal to relieve one's grief or melancholy at the expense of depriving the society of the benefit which the person would be capable of.[61] Brown chose an extreme situation again, giving only a choice of murder against suicide, but he clearly contradicts Godwin in this point by expressing Constantia's feelings after the murder – when Sophia expressed the hope that her friend is not haunted by the feeling of guilt or shame, Constantia can only answer: "Alas! I know not."[62] She is desperate, leaving a final impression of a person who feels guilty for a crime although in fact from Godwinian perspective she helped the society when she decided to save herself, a great benefit for the others.

Considering both Brown's murderers acting in self-defence, Constantia and Clithero, it is not possible to say about either of them that they were manipulated into murder, as they were not thinking about their deeds in advance. Their example therefore serves only to emphasize self-preservation as an irresistible instinct. The guilt that both Constantia and Clithero feel afterwards may be caused either because of the consciousness that murder of any kind is primarily wrong (much underscored in case of Clithero because murder, although committed in self-defence, has an additional symbolic meaning of revealing an evil element in human mind), or because of the effort to preserve oneself at any expense may reveal selfishness that leads to guilt, on supposition that morality has not been wholly abandoned by the person concerned. Viewing self-preservation, primarily an instinct not easy to overcome, as an extreme form of self-interest, we have another quality of human mind which makes people more likely to be easily manipulated.

Self-interest is an aspect that influences people in making decisions. In *Arthur Mervyn* (1800), the main protagonist of the same name is penniless and forlorn by his

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[60] Brown, *Ormond* 235.

[61] See Godwin 178.

[62] Brown, *Ormond* 240.

father. He is vulnerable to the machinations of a plotter who at first appears to be interested in the welfare of the boy. Indeed, Welbeck offers Arthur an employment as well as accommodation. However, from the beginning there is something about Welbeck that arouses Arthur's suspicions. Arthur has a choice of leaving his patron, which would cause his fall back into poverty or following Welbeck. He decides for the latter in spite of his suspicions, and feeling guilty all the time, he constantly needs to justify his behaviour before the reader as well as before himself and emphasizes his inexperience. It is only later, after Welbeck's confession about his old crimes and Arthur's witnessing a new one, that he definitely decides to leave Welbeck.

Carwin, who is without the protection of his family as well as Arthur, follows his patron Ludloe who offers him the means of his subsistence until Carwin is able to care for himslef. Ludloe by means of his charismatic personality managed to gain Carwin's admiration – although he was superior in age, rank and knowledge, he behaved towards Carwin as to an equal. It is no wonder that the inexperienced young man, being impressed and in need of money, easily yielded to the charm of his new patron. However, similarly to Arthur's patron who turns to be villainous, there is a mystery around Ludloe, as he carefully avoids any mention about his income, which gives rise to Carwin's doubts. Although Ludloe is rather a utopianist than a villain, Carwin is in similar situation as Arthur – though entertaining doubts about their benefactors, they both follow them either out of their self-interest.

Arthur then continues in this vein when he decides to marry mother-like Achsa Fielding who is very well off, though older than Arthur. He finally prefers her to his former love, Eliza Hadwin. Arthur appears to aim at the property of Achsa, when he realizes that no such gain would flow from Eliza, a poor orphan, deprived of her heritage after the death of her father. It is in accord with the instinct of self-preservation, emphasized in the behaviour of Constantia and developed as pursuit of their own interests by Carwin and Arthur Mervyn.

It is worth noting that Arthur and Carwin are under the influence only up to a

certain point, i. e. only when their own interests are not endangered. Ludloe succeeds in arousing a desire in young Carwin to join his secret fellowhip. However, there are some conditions that a new member must accept. Carwin refuses one of them – to share all his secrets with Ludloe, as he would have to give up his secret of having ventriloquist abilities, usable only if they remain unknown to anybody else. He is well aware that these abilities may serve him in manipulation of others. Thus he considers refusing the authority of Ludloe. In his unfinished *Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist* (1803-5), Brown lets us know only this part of Carwin's history, but as Carwin appears again in *Wieland* where he becomes a manipulator himself, it is obvious that he parted with Ludloe at last. He proved to have enough strength to resist Ludloe when he felt the danger that his patron starts to influence him too much by forcing him to share all his secrets, in other words, intruding into the sphere of Carwin's self-interest.

Arthur, giving an account of his own history to doctor Stevens who saved him from death of the yellow fever, appears to be honest at first. However, the doctor later learns another version of the story, in which Arthur is not portrayed in such a positive light. Arthur then seems to be lying to the doctor and his wife, following his own purpose. This is reminiscent of Carwin, who became a plotter, though at first he was a victim of another's plotting. Constantia was much faster in this transformation – at one moment she was a victim, at another a murderess. All three thus proceed from being vulnerable to being dangerous as they are yielding to the impulse of self-interest.

2.3. Force of Imagination

What plays an important role is imagination. It is in the centre of one periphery episode of *Ormond* concerning Mr. Baxter, a man who so strongly believed what was only a product of his imagination that it eventually led to his death. One night, at the height of the yellow fever epidemic that had struck Philadelphia, Baxter witnessed his French neighbour Monrose being buried by his daughter. Baxter, formerly a

grenadier fighting against the French, was highly prejudiced against this nation and he had considered them to be immune to the yellow fever. Nevertheless, he immediately made a conclusion that the cause of Monrose's death was the fever. Brown thus presents a character who is ready to believe contradictory things without thinking about them. There was no evidence proving that Monrose really died of fever. Quite the opposite – although there was only a fence between Baxter and the corpse, "his senses had not been assailed by any noisome effluvia. This was no unplausible ground for imagining that this death had some other cause than the yellow fever. This circumstance did not occur to Baxter."[63] He had been very sensitive about the disasters of the disease and it made him uneasy, his apprehension was close to horror. Although he was familiar with the spectacle of death as a soldier, the calamity of pestilence was new to him, and so everything respecting this disease made him timid. He had carefully avoided every risk of contagion. But finally, not being cautious enough, he rushed too near to the source of infection. Or it is what he imagined to be true. His fate was sealed at the very moment the conjecture that Monrose died of yellow fever was formed in Baxter's head: "His case may be quoted as an example of the force of imagination. He had probably already received, through the medium of the air, or by contact of which he was not conscious, the seeds of this disease. They might perhaps have lain dormant, had not this panic occured to endow them with activity."[64] The cause of Baxter's death was the belief that he has become infected, rather than the infection itself. As he further believed that once someone gets the fever, it is impossible to be cured, nothing but death was left to Baxter, being mortally poisoned only by the fear in his mind.

Imagination plays an important role in *Wieland* as well. As I have already written above, there is no evidence that the voice commanding Wieland to murder his family did not exist only in his imagination. Brown does not clearly explain this problem – it

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[63] Brown, *Ormond* 57.

[64] Brown, *Ormond* 58.

is true that Carwin confesses to be the originator of the voices, however, he does not clarify all of them. The occasion left ambiguous is just the one when Wieland receives the command to murder. Carwin does not confess to this particular occasion when the voice was heard, it is quite the opposite – he denies being involved in this family disaster. When Clara accuses him of inducing Wieland to kill all the members of his family, Carwin shows the marks of innocence: "Carwin's eyes glared, and his limbs were petrified at this intelligence. No words were requisite to prove him guiltless of these enormities."[65] The reader might question Carwin's veracity, as he proved to be a skilful pretender earlier in the novel. However, if we suppose that Carwin is lying, all that remains is to give credit to mad Wieland who assures the jury in his confession that he really heard the voices. Therefore the reader can choose to believe either a madman or a villainous plotter. Supposing that Carwin tells the truth, the force of imagination with respect to Wieland is undeniable.

The elder Wieland might have been likewise haunted only by an illusion. As Clara restrospectively narrates the story of her father, she does not express any doubts about her father's presentation of his fears and his duty. However, as her father's mind appears to be constantly thrown out of balance, his testimony about a foreign commander is unreliable. Thus the reader is apt to dismiss the elder Wieland's notion of the command which made him so nervous as existing only in his fancy.

2.4. Influence of Past and Fear

Some Brown's characters are occupied with the memories of events that happened in the past in relation to themselves. These memories are always connected to an uncertain fear or guilt, illness, madness, or an unexplained mystery which they believe and allow it to haunt them. The behaviour of the characters is influenced by the shadows of the past. Thus it is enough for any manipulator to know any event of

[65] Brown, *Ormond* 183.

their victim's past – under the influence of fear they would act according to the plotter's wishes.

Brown links Wieland's slip into madness with the unexplained death of his father. Because of the fact that he was conscious of the mystery in his family, it was much easier for Carwin to influence him. When their father died, Clara and Theodore were small children, but still old enough to remember the event. Although they were detached from their father and his religion in most possible degree – from the temple that he had built to worship his Deity they made a summerhouse and they enjoyed sophisticated conversations there, his memory filled them with an uncertain fear. The Gothic fear of the past is projected as the fear of the Wielands – in spite of all their effort to keep distance from their past they clung to its mystery. It was easier for Wieland to commit a crime, supposing that a persuasion of having inherited his father's guilt was present in his mind – young Theodore was guilty anyway, so it does not really matter whether he commits another crime or not. This notion might be widened to the sin or guilt inherited by humanity in general.

Clara keeps returning to the death of her father quite often as well. Every midnight had a special meaning for Clara as her father received the deadly stroke in his temple at this particular time of the night. Any gloomy thoughts seldom fail to conjure up the image of her father in Clara's mind. On one stormy evening, the first time she heard the voices coming out of her closet and contemplating the best way of her murder, her mind had been occupied with the thoughts about death and she even had a premonition of her brother's fate; immediately after that she heard twelve strokes of the clock that had belonged to her father and thus she was reminded of him. Her second experience with the mysterious voice was in the summerhouse where she fell asleep. It might have been about midnight again, and on that occasion she was reminded of her father directly by the voice, menacing her to share the end of her father unless she avoids that spot and keeps it secret that she heard the voice again. On a different occasion she was trying to guess the reason why Pleyel did not

come that day contrary to his promise; again she was led to the opinion that his absence was caused by some accident that must have befallen him. She was uneasy, and as a result she was reminded of her father: "The state of my mind naturally introduced a train of reflections upon the dangers and cares which inevitably beset an human being. By no violent transition was I led to ponder on the turbulent life and mysterious end of my father."[66] Immediately after this thought occured to her, Clara started to wonder whether it was before or past midnight. And then, she heard the voice again.

The memory of her father's death is always connected with a perturbation of Clara's mind. Although she speaks about her father with veneration, the thought of him seldom fails to arouse fear in Clara. As Carwin was admitted to the family circle of Wielands, it is highly probable that he was acquainted with the whole family history, as well as their uneasiness because of what happened to their father. It only depended upon him how to use this fear and past that was haunting the Wielands to his own advantage. The consciousness of one's past in combination with fear that this past brings about makes people vulnerable to an external influence.

The influence of past is stretched to present by means of belief that what happened to our ancestors is going to happen to us. Such a belief, or generally a belief of any kind, as it is demonstrated by Wieland the father and son, may be destructive in certain circumstances. Arthur Mervyn is willing to risk his life by rushing in the centre of yellow fever epidemic because of the belief that he is going to die young all the same. This opinion is based on the fact that his mother died young and all his brothers lived only up to the twentieth year of age. Arthur is still under twenty at the time of his narrative, but because he believes that "the seeds of an early and lingering death are sown in [his] constitution,"[67] he expects the same fate as his brothers. It

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[66] Brown, *Wieland* 78.

[67] Charles Brockden Brown, *Arthur Mervyn; or, Memoirs of the Year 1793, Three Gothic*

would not be possible to raise objections against this, if Arthur described himself as weak and unable to work. It is true that he used to perform only light duties at home, but during his narrative, his health does not seem to be declining in any considerable degree. Quite the opposite, when he decided to go the city polluted by disease, his strength was at height if we take into consideration that Arthur was employed on a farm and was performing the duties connected with farming without any difficulty. Thus Arthur's behaviour based on his belief to die young could easily lead him to danger, which proved to be the case when he really fell ill in the city and survived only because of the benevolence of doctor Stevens whom he met by accident.

Similar example of a belief leading to destruction forms a part of the history of Clara's ancestors. Her grandfather was much affected by the death of his brother. From some reason he started to entertain a "belief that his own death would be inevitably consequent on that of his brother."[68] As a result he threw himself down from a steep cliff after claiming that he has just obtained a summons of his deceased brother. Whether he really heard his brother talking to him, or this voice existed only in his imagination, is not of much importance, as it was primarily the belief in the possibility of this that made him act so hastily. Clara's grandfather poisoned his mind himself. If we imagine that someone like Carwin, possessing the knowledge of this destructive disposition would be close to such a person, we can only shudder exactly as in case of Wieland.

Wieland and Clara also fell into trouble because they believed what they wanted to believe. They might have been saved, paradoxically, by Carwin who explained the disturbing voices as nothing unusual, connecting it with human agency and drawing many examples when similar voices were heard. However, no matter how plausible the explanation, Clara as well as Wieland still persisted in belief in supernatural. In the final effect, this particular belief proved fatal for Wieland, his wife and children.

Novels (Part I 1799, Part II 1800; New York: America Book Company, 1937) 351.

[68] Brown, *Wieland* 165.

Carwin was just an agent who set their imagination into motion. He could control them because of the knowledge of their fear, originating in the belief that could not be shaken.

2.5. Passion, Superstitions and Unreliability of Senses

Brown deals with other factors that make people liable to manipulation. One of them is superstitious belief. Young Carwin, making use of his abilities of ventriloqiusm and imitation, wants to convince his father to let him live with his aunt, where he would have more freedom. It helps a lot that Carwin's father is superstitious – the only thing Carwin must do is to make him believe what would serve Carwin's purpose. Speaking as if from heaven, imitating the voice of his dead mother, it would be easy for Carwin to make his father enable him what was otherwise vehemently refused. What makes Carwin's father extremely endangered are his superstitions.

Although Carwin does not employ his ventriloquist abilities to deceive his father, he is again tempted to do it after the death of his aunt, when her servant Dorothy became by some fraud the heiress to the whole property instead of him. Carwin finally abandons the intention to deceive the servant, but the conditions for his success are ideal. Dorothy, "unlettered and superstitious" woman with a lively faith in "spells and apparitions"[69] would be an easy prey for Carwin if he imitated the voice of his aunt speaking from the grave.

The respective factors that make people vulnerable never operate alone but in combination, and thus the effect is multiplied. As in case of Wieland, another thing Carwin relies on is that the senses of his victims can be deceived. The voice of the ventriloquist, or any external power, must penetrate to the mind of a chosen victim; it always happens by means of senses. Thus a superstitious person relying on his or her senses is likely to be subject to any machination:

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[69] Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist,* ed. Jay Fliegelman (1799, 1803-1805; New York: Viking Penguin, 1991) 302.

> Men, ... believed in the existence and energy of invisible powers, and in the duty of discovering and conforming to their will. This will was supposed to be sometimes made known to them through the medium of their senses. A voice coming from a quarter where no attendant form could be seen would, in most cases, be ascribed to supernal agency, and a command imposed on them, in this manner, would be obeyed with religious scrupulousness. Thus men might be imperiously directed in the disposal of their industry, their property, and even of their lives.[70]

Brown thus implies that it is dangerous to believe one's senses without exception. This proves true about Wieland as well.

Brown includes every person, whether superstitious or not, into the pattern of vulnerability because of senses. It is most evident with respect to Pleyel, a family friend of the Wielands. He appears to be the most immune against any external influence because his behaviour is directed above all by rational principles. Moreover, he lacks the destructive family background of Wielands that causes their tendency to believe strange voices. However, he too is deceived by Carwin who tries to destroy Pleyel's good opinion about Clara by means of ventriloquism and succeeds in making Pleyel believe that Clara's reputation has been damaged. Pleyel believes this just because of what he has heard (Carwin's voice imitating the voice of Clara and her imaginative lover) and seen (a few words of Clara's writing that he mistakenly explained to himself as an accusation of Clara from a secret meeting with her criminal lover in a summerhouse at midnight). Pleyel, though he knew Clara very well and held her in great esteem, drew a false conclusion from these implications, starting to regard Clara as guilty. The irony is that it was Pleyel who dismissed the mysterious voice when heard by Wieland for the first time as "a deception of senses"[71] because

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[70] Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs* 300-1.

[71] Brown, *Wieland* 32.

he was not able to find a rational explanation. He was deceived even though he harboured an opinion that human senses are unreliable. He did not even try to look for an evidence as to the veracity of the voice he himself heard, although there was some mystery concerning the voices going on at that time. All that was good in Clara as he knew her availed nothing in comparison to a mere voice.

In pointing out the unreliability of human senses Brown deals a hard blow on the rationalist theory and proves "its failure to take sufficiently into account that all human beings, no matter how rational, possess fallible minds and powerful passions"[72] and emphasizes the need not to make judgements just on grounds of a sensual evidence, as it is easy for anyone to manipulate us even against our best friends.

William Godwin does not leave this issue untouched. He admits that men, when overpowered by some impulse that makes them wholly forget the considerations according to which their opinions are usually formed, are capable of a conduct which they themselves cannot later understand nor approve. However, he claims that people should strive to approach a condition in which they would be able to ascribe reason to every action, the majority of their actions being voluntary, and that they are capable of achieving this condition. It is because every perception that people receive through their senses is brought to the understanding, and as truth is omnipotent, people do not fail to adopt a proper judgement and base their action on this judgement. Man is a rational being and the actions of mankind are determined by reason and conviction as proper instruments.[73] By these arguments Godwin opposes the opinion of those who claim that reason and sensation as two powers that determine the actions of men "are in perpetual hostility; and as reason will in some cases subdue all the allurements of sense, so there are others in which the headlong

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[72] Donald A. Ringe, *Charles Brockden Brown* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991) 17.

[73] See Godwin 123, 127-9.

impulses of sense will for ever defeat the tardy decisions of judgement."[74] Introducing Pleyel as a character guided by reason Brown directly reacts to Godwin's opposition of similar statements, challenging this opposition as lacking validity.

When discussing the delusions that render us more vulnerable to the influence of another, I cannot omit human passions, and among them love. Brown also deals with this aspect in his works. The most explicit on this theme is one of his villains. Ormond, being in the role of seducer, is well aware of its dangers, therefore he is trying hard to beware of this passion. Although he is doing his best to win Constantia for himself, he would not allow her to exert her influence over him as it would put him into position of one deluded by love. Sophia, the narrator, gives a description of how Ormond perceived this passion:

> Love, in itself, was, in his opinion, of little worth, and only of importance as the source of the most terrible of intellectual maladies. Sexual sensations associating themselves, in a certain way, with our ideas, beget a disease which ... is a case of more entire subversion and confusion of mind than any other. The victim is callous to the sentiments of honor and shame, insensible to the most palpable distinctions of right and wrong, a systematic opponent of testimony and obstinate perverter of truth.[75]

This comment about love is quite harsh, but it must be so if Brown wanted to emphasize the danger of being manipulated. He works with this notion also with relation to the father of Arthur Mervyn and his father's new wife, formerly a servant in their house. She used all her charm to delude Arthur's father and was aware of her power over him. She did not hesitate to use it against his son, as Arthur complains: "My father would easily be moulded to her purpose and that act easily extorted from

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[74] Godwin 117.

[75] Brown, *Ormond* 132.

him which should reduce me to beggary."[76] Arthur's father became no more than just a puppet in her hands.

2.6. Political Implications I

The fact presented by Brown that every human mind is fallible has a wider impact. As every society consists of individuals controlled by various forces, it is not possible for any society to be wholly ideal.

Godwin advocates just the opposite idea in his *Political Justice.* Contrary to Brown, he claims that human mind is capable of constant improvement: "If my ideas of virtue, benevolence and justice, or whatever it is that ought to restrain me from an improper leaning to the pleasures of sense, be now less definite and precise, they may be gradually and unlimitedly improved."[77] Once it is true about respective members of society, it is true also about the whole society: "What has been done by individuals cannot be impossible, in a widely different state of society, to be done by the whole species."[78] Godwin expresses the belief that the people will one day achieve this ideal condition though there is a long way ahead of them.

Brown rejects this utopia. In his works it is possible to trace the notion expressing that as long something seems to be ideal, it is doomed to failure and destruction. An example of utopia is the family circle of the Wielands, enjoying the company of one another. They try to become detached from the mysteries of their father changing the temple devoted to prayers and worhip, which he built by his own hands to this purpose, into a summerhouse; they even add a bust of Cicero (as a symbol of rationality) and spend time deeply engaged in sophisticated conversations, singing and reading.[79] This is close to a notion of an ideal society on a wider scale as well.

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[76] Brown, *Arthur* 247.

[77] Godwin 134.

[78] Godwin 132.

[79] See Ringe 14.

However, Brown destroys this image by introducing Carwin, a villainous character, who throws everything off balance. According to Levine, "*Wieland*'s innocent temple community is imaged as a synecdochic model of the American community."[80] By emphasizing the vulnerability of human mind, Brown implies the vulnerability of the new republic as well.

He is as sceptical about society and civilization as such. Norman S. Grabo gives a nice demonstration of this scepticism by describing Edgar's return back to society from the wilderness of Norwalk. It is his progress from a cave without a single ray of light, through Deb's hut, a solitary wooden cottage inhabited by an Indian woman and her three wolves, later through larger houses that are better lighted, suggesting an approach to civilization. However, still there can be no hope for human civility as "each of these buildings reveals its poverty, fear, drunkennes, violence and death."[81] To support this idea Grabo uses also the thought of James Madison expressed in *Federalist 10,* that "of course restraint of fiery passions and irrationality can be imposed on destructive elements in society, but only at the tyrannous expense of liberty."[82] It is not possible to destroy the evil element without destroying the good one at the same time and it is true not only with respect to individuals but also with respect to the whole society and all its political institutions.

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[80] Levine 29.

[81] Norman S. Grabo, Introduction, *Edgar Huntly, or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker,* by Charles Brockden Brown (1799; New York: Viking Penguin, 1988) xxii.

[82] Grabo, Introduction xviii.

3. Means of Manipulation

Supposing there are certain predispositions that make people susceptible to manipulation, it is possible to move to the methods by which it is performed. The means of manipulation used by Brown's characters recur in his novels and they are always associated with the power given to their performer over the victim. The most significant methods that enable the control of others are secrecy related to knowledge, duplicity and the art of deceit as the reverse of sincerity, and seeming benevolence as connected to gratitude.

3.1. Secrecy and Knowledge

What all Brown's manipulators have in common is a secret. It makes them impenetrable and therefore their motives and intentions remain hidden from their victims. At the same time some plotters force their victims to share with them all their secrets. It is therefore possible to look at this from many perspectives: those who have secrets are uncontrollable, those who know secrets of others (or possess any relevant knowledge) are powerful, and those who give up their secrets by telling them to another become very vulnerable, giving up their secrets as means of protection.

To begin with *Wieland*, it is apparent on the character of Carwin. When he joined the family circle of the Wielands, nobody knew anything about him but for Pleyel who had met him in Spain during his travels. At that time Carwin grew familiar with Pleyel up to a certain level, so that Pleyel obtained some information about Carwin's intention not to leave Spain. The meeting with the same person in America gave rise to suspicions of Pleyel at first because Carwin seemed to act contrary to his intentions made known to Pleyel. Moreover, Carwin assumed the looks and behavior of a country person, which also did not match the image of him as known to Pleyel from Spain. Later all the others began to embrace these suspicions, equally eager to know something about Carwin's past. However, he was careful to keep them

in ignorance in this respect. When he was questioned about it, he avoided direct answers. Clara and her friends were at last willing to be satisfied with the indirect answers and they abandoned more direct questioning because they started to believe that "the secrecy that was observed appeared not designed to provoke or baffle the inquisitive but was prompted by the shame, or by the prudence of guilt."[83] Thus Carwin won the trust of his future victims, keeping his own secret as a weapon that enabled him to avoid being controlled by the family.

By using ventriloquism, he wanted to find out whether he would be able to exert his influence over people who try to live by the principles of morality and reason. He wanted to prove the validity of what Ludloe, Carwin's benefactor from *Memoirs of Carwin* used to teach him, i. e. that an ability like this would be very useful if properly employed: "No more powerful engine, he said, could be conceived, by which the ignorant and credulous might be moulded to our purposes; managed by a man of ordinary talents, it would open for him the straightest and surest avenues to wealth and power."[84] The key word here is "ignorant" (see 1.1.) – Carwin is well aware that he can use his extraordinary ability only if it remains hidden from all others, and that "to confide the secret to one, was to put an end to [his] privilege."[85] If the Wielands knew that they are meeting someone who can imitate various voices, they would not be so vulnerable even though the influence of mysterious death of the elder Wieland would be still present. Again it is this secret of Carwin that gives him power.

Secrecy is employed also by Ludloe, a member of a utopianist sect that is reminiscent of Illuminati. He tries to mould Carwin for his purpose as he wants the boy to join this group. Ludloe is completely silent as for his person, past life and present employment. By means of this secrecy he manages to arouse curiosity in Carwin who therefore follows Ludloe because it is not only in his interest but because

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[83] Brown, *Wieland* 68.

[84] Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs* 300.

[85] Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs* 325.

he wants to know more. By keeping him in ignorance, Ludloe also causes his confusion which makes Carwin liable to the influence of Ludloe. On supposition that Ludloe would first tell the secret about the sect to Carwin and then give him a possibility of free choice to join, it would be Carwin who would have Ludloe in his power. This situation is exemplary in demonstrating how the power is shifted together with the exchange of secrets.

There are two conditions for Carwin as a would-be member of Ludloe's fellowship – firstly, that he would give up all his secrets and tell them to Ludloe, and secondly, he would keep all the proceedings of the sect secret from anyone who does not belong to this sect, both the conditions necessary to be fulfilled under the punishment of death. The confrontation of Ludloe and Carwin is therefore the confrontation of two men having their secrets, both of them longing to know the secret of the other to gain the power, while keeping their own secret not to lose the power. Though Carwin is an inexperienced youth that could be classified rather as a victim than a manipulator at first, he is well aware that if he gave up his secret to Ludloe, he would irreparably fall under his influence and there would be no way back, as he would risk that Ludloe tells Carwin's secret to even more people. Though *Memoirs* are unfinished, it is obvious from Carwin's appearance in *Wieland* that he did not become controlled by Ludloe. Carwin was such a good pupil that he started to think about Ludloe's lessons on secrecy and instead of a puppet owned by his mentor, he became a skilful manipulator as it is proved in *Wieland* – he kept his ventriloquism, i. e. his secret and his power, for himself, managing to escape Ludloe's influence.

Secrecy plays an important role also in *Arthur Mervyn*. It is apparent from the relationship of Arthur to his benefactor Welbeck. Arthur does not know whence the income of opulent Welbeck flows, and he does not know anything concerning Welbeck's past either. However, he has certain benefits while serving to Welbeck, so he does not ask too much. The fact that Arthur *does not know* the secret thus enables

Welbeck to control him. What is more, Arthur is made to promise not to relate to anyone the truth about his past. The person who would become powerful because of these new secrets, is not Arthur but Welbeck. It is because Arthur would serve his master as a mysterious person with unknown past and would therefore be usable to Welbeck's machinations. This possibility is however left undeveloped by Brown. Arthur soon experiences the inconvenience of this promise. He realizes that he will fall into suspicion as well as his master if he continues to obey his orders. As Welbeck proved to be a criminal at last, guilty of forgery and other deceptions, later a murderer as well, he dragged Arthur to the same crime leaving him unable to defend himself as Arthur was forced into secrecy. Because he still felt loyal to Welbeck and because he was still under his influence, Arthur helped Welbeck to bury the corpse of his adversary, and escaped with him, although they were divided while crossing the river, Welbeck falling into water. However, the suspicions that fell on Arthur because of his escape with Welbeck were not so easily dissolved. It is therefore possible to classify Arthur as a victim who fell into Welbeck's tenets, having only a choice of betraying him when his crimes come to light or being destroyed together with him because of his former influence on Arthur. The reason why Arthur was easily manipulated to Welbeck's purposes beside gratitude as the direct result of Welbeck's benevolence (see 3.2.), was the fact that Arthur was kept in dark, or in other words, controlled by the secret of his master.

The confession of a secret is significant in the distribution of power between Edgar and Clithero in *Edgar Huntly*. Clithero, trying to hide all about his past, is persecuted by Edgar, at first because he is suspected of murder of Edgar's friend Waldegrave. Edgar driven by revenge is after Clithero. To quiet Edgar's suspicions as for Waldegrave's murder, Clithero must confess another crime, the murder of Wiatte. When Edgar hears the confession, he begins to follow Clithero out of pure pity in the effort to help him. However, prior to the confession Edgar does not have any power over Clithero because he has no information about him. He also lacks

evidence proving that Clithero is guilty of Waldegrave's murder. When Clithero tells Edgar the story about his past, the murder of Wiatte and the guilt for the supposed death of his patroness, he provides Edgar with a piece of knowledge. Because of this he is no longer free from the influence of Edgar. In this instance, Clithero's secret is rather a burden for him, not something he would use to control others. However, it shields him from the influence of Edgar and it is only after his confession that he becomes so vulnerable. Therefore this example is more a demonstration of how the knowledge of a secret provides an adversary with power over the one whom a confession of secret makes susceptible to the influence.

Clara Wieland has a secret the protective effect of which is comparable to that of Clithero's secret. It is related to the occasion when she heard the mysterious voice in the summerhouse. She is warned away from the summerhouse by the voice that at the same time promises her to be safe on all other places if she does not talk to anyone about what has just befallen her. Secrecy is one of the conditions of her safety: If she tells, she will be punished. It is exactly what happened to Clithero in different circumstances. Both Clara and Clithero believe to be safe because of secrecy.

To return to *Edgar Huntly*, the relationship of Edgar and Clithero and the exchange of the secret acquires a new dimension if the point that Clithero is Edgar's other self is taken into consideration. This is hinted by Norman S. Grabo in his comment about Edgar: "Prying into Clithero's savage guilt, he discovers his own,"[86] and more explicitly pointed out by Donald A. Ringe who writes that both of them are sleepwalkers descending into undergound caves during their somnambulist walks having otherwise many things in common, and therefore it is suggested by Brown that "Huntly's is a divided psyche in conflict with itself and that, in following Clithero into the labyrinth of Norwalk, he is in pursuit of a self that he perceives as other."[87] Edgar, hearing Clithero's secret thus only gets to know a secret about himself. His

[86] Grabo, Introduction xvii.

[87] Ringe 86.

benevolence towards Clithero may be perceived as a desperate effort to lead an irrational part of himself back to a correct path; or in other words, to control Clithero means to control himself. The secret enables him to do it. However, Brown lets Clithero die at the end after his attempt to kill Mrs. Lorimer in a fit of madness, implying that Edgar is guilty of his death because it was Edgar who related the news of her arrival to America to Clithero along with the information that she did not die as it was believed by Clithero. What Brown suggests is that any effort to improve through the control of one's other, irrational self is destined to failure, and he does so by employing an exchange of secret between two somnambulists that possibly turn out to be one. Taken from this point of view, the secret does not seem to have the absolute power, as Edgar failed to save Clithero; it only serves as an impulse bringing the two men together. However, viewed from another perspective, the destruction of Clithero as a part of Edgar's personality that is a burden for him was in fact desired by Edgar. Therefore the secret related to Edgar served for the right end, enabling Edgar to lead Clithero to death. The benevolence of Edgar and the effort to save Clithero thus proves to be pretended, not sincere in fact, Edgar turning to an enemy and not benefactor of Clithero. This perspective relates the knowledge of others' secrets to absolute power.

What gives power to Ormond is meddling in the affairs of others while remaining hidden. It is well captured in the expression "secret witness" from the subtitle of the novel. Ormond managed to hide himself in secret recesses of Constantia's house with which he was familiar because it used to belong to his mistress Helena. Thus he was present during the conversations of Constantia with Sophia, the narrator of the story and the friend of Constantia, while the two were not at all aware of his presence. These conversations were intended to be secret and all possible precautions were employed to secure its secrecy, the conversations taking place "at seasons of general repose, when all doors were fast and avenues shut, in the midst of silence, and in the

bosom of retirement."[88] Ormond's mention of Sophia's counsels that were voiced during the conversation causes the astonishment of Constantia. Ormond even goes as far as claiming that Constantia's steps were in fact directed by him: "Perhaps I know not your fruitless search for a picture. Perhaps I neither followed you nor led you to a being called Sophia Courtland."[89] Not only does he know all previous facts concerning Constantia, but he even foresees an unspecified disaster that is to befall her: "Poor Constantia! Shall I warn thee of the danger that awaits thee? For what end?"[90] From these implications it is obvious that Ormond knows something important as for Constantia's future. He proved to be omniscient as for the past, this omniscience resisting any explanation, and therefore his comments about future acquire validity as well. He also claims to know all thoughts and intentions of Constantia: "Thy decision was known to me as soon as it was formed. Thy motives were known."[91] He claims to know the content of the letter Constantia is about to write before it is written. Having all the knowledge, Ormond becomes almost God-like, his knowledge serving him as a weapon that causes the terror of Constantia, which in turn makes her more liable to his influence. Like God, whose eye is believed to penetrate into the hidden recesses of human soul and who is believed to have the power to punish the sinners, Ormond forces Constantia to awareness that he knows about all her thoughts, therefore also forcing her to avoid those thoughts that would be unacceptable for Ormond. Otherwise she will not escape the punishment. He can control the conduct of Constantia because he has the necessary authority – knowledge of a future disaster. Ormond is thus powerful in both ways – he has a secret and at the same time he knows the secrets of Constantia, which leaves her almost unable to defend.

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[88] Brown, *Ormond* 212.

[89] Brown, *Ormond* 212.

[90] Brown, *Ormond* 214.

[91] Brown, *Ormond* 213.

In *Ormond* there is one more secret witness. It is the narrator Sophia. When she describes the character of Ormond, she uses the rhetoric that is suspect: "I shall omit to mention the means by which I became acquainted with his character. . . I do not conceive myself authorized to communicate a knowledge of his schemes, which I gained, in some sort, surreptitiously, or, at least by means of which he was not apprised."[92] Sophia has a secret which she does not want to tell. Thus she very much resembles Ormond who proves to be maliciously following his own interest related to Constantia by concealing facts from her. The novel develops into the struggle between Ormond and Sophia, both of them trying to win Constantia. The intentions of Ormond are villainous, but what are the intentions of Sophia? They may seem to be benevolent, but it is not possible to guess all that Sophia endeavours to hide. She works with secrecy in the same way as Ormond and the same machinations that Ormond uses with respect to Constantia are used by Sophia with respect to the reader, previously lulled into confidence towards Sophia by her narrative. I will deal with this problem in more detail later (see Chapter 4.), for now suffice it to say that secrecy of Sophia and Ormond are employed for the same end, which is their pursuit of power.

Arthur Mervyn also finds himself in a role of secret witness, although involuntarily and only for a while. Shortly after his desertion of his father and his arrival to Philadelphia, he is tricked into a big house where his deceitful companion leaves him at mercy of the inhabitants of the house, forcing him into a role of intruder or thief. Arthur has no other possibility than to hide in a closet of a room where a conversation between two people unknown to Arthur takes place. At first, the content of the conversation is of no use to Arthur. However, he later realizes that the two strangers dealt with the transaction concerning his master, which would be very harmful for him. By means of secret gaining of information, Arthur would have a possibility to protect his master and exert his influence to mar the scheme

[92] Brown, *Ormond* 92.

contemplated in unsuspected presence of Arthur.

Knowledge of a secret that is not desired by the holder of the secret is dangerous indeed, after all, it is the main principle of manipulation by blackmailing. Brown associates the desire for knowledge generally with danger, as it is demonstrated especially on the relationship between Carwin, his brother and father. Carwin's brother never showed any enthusiasm for learning, and although he could read and write, he learned it just because he feared punishment that would be a consequence of his refusal. Carwin was the opposite. His desire for knowledge was irresistible: "My thirst of knowledge was augmented in proportion as it was supplied with gratification. The more I heard or read, the more restless and unconquerable my curiosity became." Carwin's father was trying to do his best to quench his son's thirst, considering all additional knowledge as "useless or pernicious." Carwin longed for knowledge in an unusual way, and he paid special attention to everything that was "mysterious or unknown."[93] This interest in mysteries beyond limited understanding of human beings links Carwin's curiosity with his desire to omniscience, i. e. his desire to resemble God.

Carwin's voice was connected with a voice from heaven endowed with omniscience, when Carwin spoke about the death of Pleyel's fiancée, Theresa, who lived in Germany. He could manipulate the thoughts of those who were listening because he had knowledge of events related to their lives. He had heard a rumour about Theresa's death while still in Europe, prior to the time when it reached America. Pleyel and the Wielands believed in supernatural origin of the voice, coming as if from heaven, because the message conveyed by the voice was confirmed afterwards by a message with the same content coming from Europe. This proved to be false, Theresa being alive, but not until Carwin's machinations came to light by his own confession.

Similarly, Carwin could use his knowledge of the past and mysterious death of the

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[93] Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs* 281.

elder Wieland to manipulate the family. Although Clara in her account is not explicit about what Carwin heard during their conversations, she admits, that he was acquainted with many intimate details concerning the family, which includes the death of their father. He used this particular piece of information when he warned Clara away from the summerhouse: "Avoid this spot... Remember your father and be faithful."[94] Carwin later confessed to be the author of this warning, and his motivation was also apparent – he wanted to use the summerhouse for the meetings with Judith, Clara's servant, whom he had seduced. He was able to direct Clara's movements as he wished and dispose of her presence on this spot, because he made use of her fear. All this was enabled to him by a piece of knowledge.

3.2. Benevolence and Gratitude

Reading Brown's novels we come across many examples of benevolent behavior. In many cases it is not the benevolence for the sake of its object, but the opposite: benevolence serves as a method of tying up a person with gratitude. What remains is to request something in return, which renders manipulation easy. Grateful characters in Brown's novels often have to face the problem of paying the debt, and sometimes they suffer the consequences if they decide not to, their supposed benefactors being manipulators in fact.

Ludloe and Welbeck offer means of subsistence to penniless youths only to trick them into their plans. It is not so obvious at first in case of Welbeck. He hires Arthur as a scriptor, being unable to write because of his maimed hand. Compared to his light duties Arthur's profit is unappropriately high, however, it can be at least said that Arthur works for Welbeck. As for Carwin, it is different – he leaves native America in the company of Ludloe, without any prospect of employment. What is more, Ludloe, enumerating disadvantages of various employments in fact forces Carwin to stay in his house. Carwin is therefore wholly dependent on his benefactor. It is after some

[94] Brown, *Wieland* 59.

time that Ludloe begins to mould Carwin for his purpose of joining his group of utopianists. In both instances it is obvious that the benevolence is not disinterested, offered out of sheer kindness of heart, but the opposite, both Ludloe and Welbeck being benevolent only to fulfill their intention to manipulate.

Welbeck in fact manages to make of Arthur his assistant after a murder. He suggests that Arthur helps him bury the corpse "if [he is] grateful for the benefits bestowed upon [him]," appealing to Arthur's "man-like spirit."[95] He is not forcing Arthur, leaving it to his own consideration what is appropriate to do. Arthur, without any time to deliberate on whether to come with Welbeck or not, is at least partly influenced by the feelings of gratitude: "To shut this spectacle from my view was the first impulse; but to desert this man, in a time of so much need, appeared a thankless and dastardly deportment."[96] In confusion of his thoughts, having just witnessed the murder and heard the confession of Welbeck who enumerated all his crimes, Arthur is unable to decide what to do. He is young, inexperienced and grateful, moreover, it costs him no effort to "remain where [he] was, to conform implicitly to [Welbeck's] direction."[97] Arthur is so much under influence of Welbeck that he simply follows his patron when he cannot decide for himself. As Arthur was not moving, Welbeck prepared to bury the corpse, and consequently Arthur began to imitate the behaviour of his benefactor, yielding to Welbeck's will.

Benevolence and consequent gratitude are influential in *Wieland* as well. Brown presents Wieland's homicide as his gratitude to God, as it is pointed out by Donald A. Ringe. Wieland perceives his happiness with his wife and children as a benefit from heaven, therefore he is filled with feelings of gratitude. When he decides to kill them all, it is only the expression of this gratitude and the evidence of his faith, or simply

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[95] Brown, *Arthur* 326.

[96] Brown, *Arthur* 327.

[97] Brown, *Arthur* 327.

"the service due so great a benefactor"[98] as God.

Edgar Huntly also describes all his decisions concerning Clithero as dictated by benevolence. However, all that Clithero desires is to be left alone, Edgar's interest being harmful for him. He escapes to the wilderness of Norwalk to avoid any kind of influence, no matter how benevolent. Clithero decides to die of hunger in the woods, and he chooses a secret hiding place that seems to be inaccessible. However, Edgar traces his steps and comes across sleeping Clithero. Bringing food, he wants to prevail on Clithero to relinquish his purpose of starving himself to death and to make him eat. Edgar describes this effort as a beginning of his control over Clithero: "When made to swerve from his resolution in one instance, it would be less difficult to conquer it a second time."[99] At first, Edgar wants to convince Clithero by means of words. On second thoughts, however, he decides to leave the food at a place where Clithero is sure to spot it when he awakens, so that Clithero, believing it is beyond the power of any human being to access his hiding place, comes to a conclusion, that it was supernatural benevolent power that provided him with food: "A provision, so unexpected and extraordinary, might suggest new thoughts, and be construed into a kind of heavenly condemnation of his purpose."[100] Edgar thus tries to assume a role of God to achieve his purpose. The same thought recurs in Brown's works a few times, always with relation to manipulation.

There are two possible ways of interpretation of Edgar's benevolence – either it is really intended to do good (which does not wholly justify Edgar's meddling into affairs of others), or, taking into consideration that Clithero is Edgar's savage self, benevolence serves only as an instrument to destroy Clithero and thus outroot the savage and the irrational from Edgar's mind. Donald A. Ringe comments Brown's

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[98] Ringe 18.

[99] Brown, *Edgar* 737.

[100] Brown, *Edgar* 738.

treatment of benevolence as "the critique of benevolist principles."[101] Brown certainly implies the presence of other motives behind the effort to help, suggesting that to help means the same as to exert the influence over someone.

In one episode of *Ormond*, Constantia was returning home late in the evening and she encountered two ruffians who started to bother her. The situation was dangerous for Constantia, but before she was harmed, a stranger came to her aid. Mr. Balfour being his name, it was his wish to meet Constantia regularly after the incident and later he proposed to her. Constantia seemed to be an easy prey for him, as she was bound with gratitude towards him. Indeed, he was very kind to her and he would be able to help her even more in distress and need of money that she faced at that time. However, she refused his proposal because her notion of her future husband was quite different from the personality of Balfour and the money of her suitor did not play any role in making decisions about marriage. The true character of Balfour came to light the moment of Constantia's refusal – he reacted by spreading gossips about Constantia, in consequence of which her subsistence was endangered as it depended on a good opinion of people for whom she worked. Balfour was willing to help Constantia only to have influence over her, once it proved useless, he changed from a benefactor to an enemy.

Ormond, the main manipulator of Constantia, also employed benevolence as means of arousing gratitude and therefore achieving his goals. He got to know Constantia during an epidemic of the yellow fever, Constantia at that time being responsible for the whole household and care of her blind father. Ormond saved them from poverty, moreover it was his merit that the eyesight of Mr. Dudley was restored, as it was because of Ormond that Mr. Dudley could undergo an operation. However, as Ormond later admitted, by means of benevolence, "among other facilitators for his purpose, he summoned gratitude for his aid. To snatch [Constantia] from poverty, to restore his sight to [her] father, were expected to

[101] Ringe 84.

operate as incentives to love."[102] Although his benevolent deeds were appreciated by Constantia at first, his own benefit was a true motive of bestowing a benefit on another from the very beginning.

It is different later, when it was one more time demanded from Constantia to express her gratitude by submitting to her benefactor. Constantia's father was well aware of the damaging influence of Ormond on Constantia, so he persuaded her to leave America in order to escape Ormond. Constania's father was perceived as an obstacle to Ormond's intentions, and so Ormond removed this obstacle by killing him. Moreover, he called for gratitude after the murder while emphasizing that Constantia's happiness depends on Ormond's wishes. He therefore claims the superiority over Constantia: "My happiness and yours depend on *your concurrence* with *my wishes*. Your father's life was an obstacle to your concurrence. For killing him, therefore, I may claim your gratitude."[103] Ormond further develops the reasons why Constantia should be grateful, emphasizing that her father was old already and his death was not any distant event either: "To make it unforseen and brief, and void of pain, to preclude the torments of a lingering malady, a slow and visible descent to grave, was the dictate of beneficence."[104] Ormond already knew that he could not succeed in his effort to make Constantia stay in America, therefore he started to use "benevolent" violence.

Brown provides the reader with an example of perverted benevolence to stress the dangers of any deed of bestowing benefit. He draws a parallel between the first (profitable) and second (harmful) instance of benevolence, suggesting that the former is likewise a form of pressure though it does not seem to be so at first. However, Brown writes about disinterested benevolence as well: Constantia is trying to help the victims of the yellow fever without any concern for herself, and so is doctor Stevens,

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[102] Brown, *Ormond* 231.

[103] Brown, *Ormond* 231, my emphases.

[104] Brown, Ormond 232.

when providing feverish Arthur with accommodation and care, risking his own safety. Brown in his novels does not solve the question of benevolence; he points out its harmful as well as profitable effects. By means of this attitude, he suggests that the real problem is to make a right judgement in distinguishing these instances.

3.3. Deception and Sincerity

An important source of power used by Brown's villains is the art of deceit. They quite often mask themselves in order to get information, or make up a new story about their lives so that they can be accepted by their future victims. Deception connected to duplicity goes hand in hand with secrecy, as those who act as someone else must carefully conceal their true identity. However, they are not satisfied with just being quiet; they no longer work just with mystery created by a secret. Instead, they unashamedly employ lies while appearing sincere.

This description most matches a character in *Ormond*, known by the name Thomas Craig. He managed to win the trust of Mr. Dudley, who was running a shop after his father, working as an apothecary. Craig came to Mr. Dudley with a request to become his apprentice, and Dudley accepted him, because he was in need of an assistant. Once Craig was working for him, Mr. Dudley could enjoy more leisure and he devoted his time to painting. To enjoy even more free time, Dudley started to shift more and more responsibility on Craig, finally making him his partner.

What caused the total ruin of Mr. Dudley was his trust to Craig, Craig's skills at imposture, and Dudley's desire to unburden himself of the duties of his trade to enjoy art. By means of deception Craig managed to manipulate Dudley into bestowing on him so many responsibilities that he wholly depended on Craig. Craig proved to be skilled at forging letters, managing to create a family background that would properly serve his purpose. He purloined Dudley's letter written with an intention to check the veracity of Craig when suspicions appeared. He even wrote an answer that would satisfy Mr. Dudley in this respect. He was able to preserve a

countenance of honesty, finally disappearing and reducing Mr. Dudley with his whole family to beggary.

Ormond is not less successful than Craig in pretending to be someone else. He often enters the appartments of his acquaintances in disguise to obtain the information about their true characters. By these impostures he does not aim for money as Craig, but for knowledge and the power knowledge can bring about, as noted above. What I want to suggest is that duplicity is important as the very first link in the chain of manipulation in some cases. Assuming the appearance of a chimney sweep Ormond entered his own lodging and listened to the true opinions of his servants. He also used this disguise to learn more about Constantia and her father. Ormond worked in disguise because "he was delighted of the power it conferred. It enabled him to gain access as if by supernatural means, to the privacy of others, and baffle their profoundest contrivances to hide themselves from his view. It flattered him with the possession of something like omniscience."[105] From Ormond's behaviour later on in the novel it is obvious that he was very skilful in making profit of all knowledge whether it be obtained in disguise or in secrecy.

Duplicity and deception are similarly apparent in the conduct of Carwin. As well as Craig and Ormond, in his efforts to manipulate various people he pretends to be someone else with the difference that he counterfeits sounds instead of images. At first he is satisfied with the imitation of voices of the dead to awaken superstitious beliefs, but later he becomes even more ambitious because he "masquerades as God."[106] Brown keeps returning to this idea in his works and he views it from different perspectives. What he uses as a parrallel with the divine is Edgar's benevolence, Ormond's omniscience and Carwin's duplicity, e. g. three aspects of manipulation that provide the manipulative agents with God-like power.

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[105] Brown, *Ormond* 96.

[106] Michael Davitt Bell, "'The Double-Tongued Deceiver': Sincerity and Duplicity in the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown," *Early American Literature* 9.2 (1974): 148.

Duplicity of Brown's villains is inherently connected with its opposite, i. e. sincerity. The great emphasis on sincerity is laid especially by Ormond – he claims all his actions to be dictated by sincerity. According to Sophia's account, he goes as far as boasting with his sincerity, affecting to conceal nothing. He was always ready to correct any errors in the opinions of others even though such errors would be advantageous to him – the image of sincerity was more important to him than any benefit that an erroneous opinion could bring him. This feature seems to be contradictory to his tendency to duplicity, however, his sincerity proved to be nothing less than a mask for Ormond, as "no one was more impenetrable than Ormond, though no one's real character *seemed* more easily discerned."[107] Sincerity therefore very well serves Ormond's purpose.

Apparent sincerity is also the main tool applied by Arthur Mervyn in his conversations with doctor Stevens and his wife. The doctor believes every word of Arthur until the story presented by the youth is outweighed by a different one, very disadvantageous to Arthur, related to doctor Stevens by his acquaintance. Arthur denies the veracity of this source, claiming the information to be second-hand, and emphasizing the scorn of people that used to live in his neighbourhood. The doctor is satisfied with Arthur's explanation, because the appearance of honesty on his face. Nevertheless, it is again only an appearance, or impression made by a particular person. Taking into consideration that someone is good at assuming the appearance of someone else, the supposition that the people may be equally skilled in assuming the appearance of sincerity cannot be excluded.

This point is illustrated in Jay Fliegelman's introduction to *Wieland and Memoirs of Carwin.* Drawing an example from *Memoirs* (1789), a book written by Stephen Boroughs, a master of disguise, he suggests the real relationship between sincerity and duplicity. Fliegelman captures a conversation between Boroughs and his physician, when the doctor describes the difference between the openness and

[107] Brown, *Ormond* 96, my epmhasis.

frank appearance of his present patient (Boroughs in fact, not recognized by the doctor) and Boroughs's countenance of deceit as the most striking contrast. Fliegelman underscores the fact that "the honest, open countenance *is* the countenance of deceit."[108] He further points out the relationship of duplicity in real life and that on the stage: the emotion of actors, playing in a new naturalistic style that was introduced to the English stage by David Garrick was undistinguishable from the real emotion and therefore the "line between expressing emotion and counterfeiting it was blurred, and with it the line between theatrical performance and natural behaviour."[109] The apparent contradiction between Ormond's emphasis on sincerity and his duplicitous behaviour functions rather as harmony of his deceitful personality. It is the same with Arthur, having only the countenance of sincerity as an evidence for the veracity of his story; however at the same time it underscores his duplicity as well.

The deceit may be employed in a way different from assuming a new appearance. What I have in mind is the seeming compliance of the manipulators to the will of their victims – they are willing to assume the opinions of their victims only to mould them for their purposes. It is apparent in the behaviour of Ormond towards Constantia. Ormond, considering marriage as hateful and absurd, is nevertheless ready to listen to Constantia's opinions in this respect. Or, he rather appears to be so. He is determined to obtain Constantia by any means, and his seeming compliance with her wishes is only one of them: "He was determined to adopt a system of imposture – to assume the guise of a convert to her doctrines and appear as devout as herself in his notions of the sanctity of marriage."[110] The consent with one's opinions is therefore only a means of manipulation.

By Fliegelman, Brown is supposed to have learnt a similar lesson from a

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[108] Jay Fliegelman, Introduction, *Wieland and Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist*, by Charles Brockden Brown (New York: Viking Penguin, 1991) xxxiii.

[109] Fliegelman xxxiii.

[110] Brown, *Ormond* 148.

Henrietta G., a girl who appeared in his correspondence and with whom he had a romantic relationship, but who might nevertheless be wholly fictional. In one of his letters to her Brown vowes to give up the privilege to think and act for himself, leaving Henrietta to decide in his stead. However, Henrietta refuses to believe that he is really as powerless as he claims to be, calling him a pretender. As Fliegelman puts it, "she recognizes that the pose of surrender is a rhetorical strategy for soliciting her own submission, ultimately perhaps to marriage."[111] This situation is applied to the relationship of Ormond and Constantia with the omition of the woman's suspicion.

This method is used by Ormond also with respect to his secret that he reveals to Constantia – the one of being a member of a group the existence of which depended on its secrecy. Up to a certain point he made Constantia acquainted with the proceedings of the group and he asked her for her opinions about that, her advice and assistance with relation to his schemes. Ormond acts as if he had no secret in front of Constantia, appreciating her opinions. However, this is nothing more than a secret manipulation based on duplicitous countenance expressing a pretended need of victim's advice:

> Ormond aspired to nothing more ardently than to hold the reins of opinion – to exercise absolute power over the conduct of others, not by constraining their limbs or by exacting obedience to his authority, but in a way of which his subjects should be scarcely conscious. He desired that his guidance should control their steps, but that his agency when most effectual, should be least suspected.[112]

What Ormond creates by telling his secrets to Constantia and pretending to do his best to accept her notion of marriage, is the false stream of power. He makes Constantia feel that she has power over Ormond and that she can control him; by

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[111] Fliegelman xxiii.

[112] Brown, *Ormond* 147.

increasing self-confidence of Constantia he manages to weaken her defence, so that it becomes easier for him to catch her off guard. Thus she is in fact controlled by him when it is least suspected.

A skilful manipulator is able to lead the victims to the desirable track by making them want what he wishes. It is well expressed by Brown's presentation of the relationship between Carwin and Ludloe. It is Ludloe's interest to win Carwin for his secret utopianist group. However, instead of forcing Carwin to assume his opinions of its convenience, he manages to make Carwin want to become a member. Instead of the method of persuasion Ludloe tries the opposite method, starting to dissuade Carwin from joining the group, enumerating its difficulties. However, this is not taken up before Carwin's curiosity was inflamed to the desirable degree. As a result, it is not Ludloe trying to win Carwin for his purpose, but Carwin persuading Ludloe to let him do it. Ludloe tricks Carwin into the belief that he decides according to his own will: "It was his business to make every new step appear to be suggested by my own reflections."[113] The deception lies in Ludloe's pretending to discourage Carwin – it is even more effective than any encouraging. The comment of Donald A. Ringe made with respect to Ormond, that "in his dealings of others ... he pretends to speak openly and frankly, to state impartially the issue, and to allow the other to make the decision,"[114] is therefore as well applicable to Ludloe, who is trying to live by principles of sincerity as much as Ormond, turning out to be a deceiver.

3.4. Political Implications II

As it is possible to trace the influence of secrecy, duplicity and benevolence in the relationship of a state and citizen, or even mutual relationship of two states, the meaning of Brown's representation of these phenomena becomes more widely applicable.

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[113] Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs* 311.

[114] Ringe 40.

The idea of relating knowledge as well as secrecy to power is closely connected to the principle of Panopticon of Jeremy Bentham, on which also Michel Foucault commented in his work *Discipline and Punish* (1975), explaining his theory of power. Panopticon, as described by Bentham, is a form of inspection house ensuring the correction of criminals, guarding the insane, or checking any kind of undesirable behaviour, e. g. laziness of students or manufacturers with the aim to increase productivity etc. It is a circular building with the cells of prisoners on the circumference. The cells are divided from one another by partitions that hinder the prisoners from any communication. The appartment of the inspector is in the centre, separated from the cells by an open space. There are two windows in each cell, so that the light can come through it to enable observation of every movement of the prisoner's silhouette. At the same time, the appartment of the inspector is wrapped up in the dark, with blinds on all windows. Invisibility of the inspector is additionally enabled by special partitions without doors in the appartment, dividing it into four parts, so that not even a shadow cast against light is visible from the cells.[115] The principle of Panopticon is "seeing without being seen."[116] As seeing is an equivalent to possessing knowledge, the notion of an inspector in such a building is similar to the notion of Brown's secret witnesses – the secret holders who know all.

What is more, it is not necessary in Panopticon that the prisoners are observed all the time; it is enough that they feel to be observed, and once they do feel this, the inspector does not have to be present at all. The appearance of inspector's presence proves to be enough for the control or manipulation: Bentham writes about inspector's "*apparent omnipresence* (if divines will allow [him] the expression),"[117] thus comparing the power of inspector to the power of God. As for Ormond, it is enough to make his victims believe in his omniscience, which is also apparent, only

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[115] See Jeremy Bentham, *Panopticon or the Inspection House* (London: T. Payne, 1791) 2-7.

[116] Bentham 23.

[117] Bentham 28.

once. When he manages this, he acquires similar power as the inspector in Panopticon.

There is a difference between the inspector in Panopticon and Brown's characters, as the inspector is a representative of authority resulting from his position ensured by state. Brown's characters must first establish their authority to make their influence effective. Nevertheless Bentham's Panopticon exemplifies the same idea with respect to secrecy and knowledge as Brown in his works. Panopticon no longer demonstrates the relationship between two individuals, it is rather a demonstration of exercising of power over individuals by some authority. As such it is a nice example of how the power drawn from secrecy works on a higher scale, i. e. in a state.

Michel Foucault in his comments on secrecy emphasizes the thought presented by Brown and Bentham. He likens the problem of being visible to that of being entrapped,[118] thus viewing a secret (or invisibility) as a protective power. It is comparable to Clithero's secret, as it protects him from Edgar at first. Foucault expresses the opposite idea as well, linking the power with secrecy – stating that the most effective means of control are those that remain secret,[119] exactly as the means of control exercised by an inspector in Panopticon. He further states that a king, the highest representative of power, was substituted by machinery of secret power,[120] suggesting that in new regimes power is necessarily connected to secrecy. Compared to monarchy where the secrets were the monopoly of the emperor, the secrets in democracy are in fact dispelled among many subjects as well as power.

This notion contrasts with the secrecy as viewed by William Godwin. He expresses his antipathy to secrecy as an obstacle to democracy, labelling it as vice. He argues that "it is an eminent advantage incident to democracy that ... its inherent

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[118] See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975; London: Penguin Books, 1987) 200.

[119] See Foucault 171.

[120] See Foucault 203.

tendecy is to annihilate [secrets]."[121] The only way how the vice brought about by secrecy may be overpowered is the practice of sincerity.

In Godwin's view, the main virtue of men is sincerity. By means of sincerity it is possible to dispose of secrets. Not only does it contribute to intellectual improvement, but it brings happiness to individuals and it is also connected to innocence and benevolence. Godwin sees an ideal society as that consisting of individuals living above all by the maxims of sincerity: "If every man today would tell all the truth he knew, it is impossible to predict how short would be the reign of usurpation and folly." [122] Godwin emphasizes the importance of absolute sincerity, i. e. the importance of avoiding any false utterances as well as any concealment of truth. It is only then sincerity may work to ensure general welfare.[123]

According to Godwin, power is not associated with secrecy but with sincerity. He exemplifies this by a question whether a virtuous man should take refuge in falsehood in the effort to save his life when threatened by an unjust government. The answer is no:

> To avow the truth with a spirited defiance of consequences has something in it so liberal and magnanimous as to produce a responsive feeling in every human heart. Nor is it to be forgotten that the threatened consequences can scarcely, in any instance, be regarded as certain. The intrepidity of his behaviour, the sobriety and dignified moderation of his carriage and the reasonableness of his expostulations may be such as to disarm the bitterest foe.[124]

A sincere man therefore becomes stronger than his enemies. On the contrary,

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[121] Godwin 531.

[122] Godwin 315.

[123] See Godwin 319-320.

[124] Godwin 329.

silence, falsehood and equivocation cause vulnerability. A liar must be constantly on guard not to betray any marks that would eventually lead to truth. It is difficult to overcome physical reactions that are sure to appear while telling a thing which is not, such as blushing or unintentional gestures.[125] At every moment a liar lives in fear that he would be revealed. Godwin thus views secrecy and deception rather as weakness.

Godwin's praise of sincerity meets with some degree of fascination in Brown's works. However, the problem of practising absolute sincerity is the same as of Carwin vs. Ludloe – neither of them is willing to give up the secret as the first one, relying only on the belief that the adversary would behave in the same way while already holding the advantage of knowing the secret of the other. There is no way of moving either direction from this dead point. Godwin admits the problem of *starting* to live by the principles of sincerity when asking: "Are we to practise an unreserved and uniform sincerity, while the world about us acts upon so different a plan?"[126] That would only make us vulnerable as there is no certainty that the same conduct would be applied by others. Nevertheless, Godwin does not offer any solution to this problem, and he still keeps on emphasizing the necessity to eliminate secrets as well as praising sincerity as the main principle.

Democratic regimes in reality deny Godwin's notion of secrecy. It is presented by Paul Downes in his book *Democracy, Revolution and Monarchism in Early American Literature* (2002). What he emphasizes in contrast to Godwin is the necessity of secrets in any democratic state; it was necessary to "democratize" secrets with the establishment of democracy because of their important function after the Revolutionary War in America, not dispose of them as Godwin suggests. It was necessary to democratize secrecy in order to enable the citizens to give a vote in accord with their real opinions. Compared to the elections by viva voce, or the voice vote, that was established during the rule of England in America, the secret vote

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[125] See Godwin 318.

[126] Godwin 321.

started to shield the individuals from any effort from outside to change their opinion, and therefore the way they vote. This was enabled by ballot box, where secrecy is ensured.[127] The mind of a voter cannot be manipulated because it is unknown. This secrecy is positive because of its protective power and because it enables the preservation of one's identity.

The attitude to secrecy is, however, ambivalent. Besides the advantages of secrecy Downes points out also its dangers. What the ruling Federalists feared were the conspiracies and secret plotting against the new republic, spreading from Europe where the terror after the French Revolution prevailed. It is personified in the group known as Illuminati or Jacobin threat also in America, and captured in the works of Jedidiah Morse and Timothy Dwight. The paranoid style recurs in later government as well, being central e. g. to McCarthyism in 1950s. The search for an enemy whose aims cannot be found because they are abstract and who cannot be pursued because of his secrecy in fact marks the government representatives' pursuit of power. This view is in accord with the notion of using secrecy only to the benefit of the government.

The Federalists were obsessed with secrecy in the same way as those who were assigned as their enemies. It was claimed by the Federalists that the anarchist groups want to keep public in the dark in order to subvert the existing order in the republic, deny the democracy that was being established and usurp the power. At the same time, however, the Federalists were trying to keep the public in the dark as well. It became evident during the formation of the Constitution, as the talks of Constitutional Convention were marked by secrecy.[128]

The commissioners were justifying the secrecy of Constitutional Convention, stating that it was necessary to debate the various ideas before they could be

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[127] See Paul Downes, *Democracy, Revolution, and Monarchism in Early American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 126.

[128] See Downes 115-116.

presented to the public and that the release of any hasty conclusion would hinder the process of the formation. However, as it is suggested by Jared Sparks who recorded an account of James Madison, a member of the Constitutional Convention, it was secrecy that enabled manipulation of the commissioners. Had the discussions been public, the members of the Convention would feel obliged to maintain their opinions. Because of secrecy it was easier to change their minds when more appropriate suggestions than their first opinions were at hand. It is implied in the record of Sparks that secrecy did not serve as protection of the delegates from influence from outside, but as a tool of influence within the Convention: "Rather than shielding delegates from persuasion and influence, the secrecy of the convention gave full play to the 'force' of persuasion."[129] Secrecy therefore serves as an appropriate way to avoid "the democratic consequences of revolutionary success,"[130] as well as a way to mask the real efforts of the group holding the power.

What was emphasized by Franklin during the discussions of Constitutional Convention were the desirable effects that flow from presenting the decisions concerning the Constitution in unanimous voice that speaks for all people. As Paul Downes shows, the problem was that this voice originated in secrecy,[131] behind closed doors. This fact throws a suspicion on the commissioners, who appear to be acting only in the interest of themselves while claiming to represent all people. In fact the people could not have been directly involved in the discussions of the Convention – it would resemble utopianist notion of direct democracy. However, what the Convention could have done was to inform the public. Instead, all was strictly secret. Joshua Miller explains that the Federalists in fact focused on elimination of the influence of people though the expression "we the people" was a part of their rhetorics: "[They] ascribed all power to a mythical entity that could never meet, never

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[129] Downes 118.

[130] Downes 119.

[131] See Downes 119.

deliberate, never take action... Once the Federalists had conjured an imaginary 'people' who could not challenge the power of the national government, they became bold in declaring that the people had the right to decide, to act, and even to overthrow the government whenever they chose to do."[132] By bestowing imaginary power on the people the Federalists fostered self-confidence of the people. It helped to solve the main problem of politics, i. e. "how to convince people *freely* to surrender themselves to one's leadership and will."[133] The condition that the Federalists had to fulfill was to create an illusion of freedom in the minds of people: What is important at this point is secrecy again, as the ruling representatives managed this by means of allowing the people to hold their own secret in ballot box.

As I have pointed out above, Brown in his works deals with all these questions. He shares Federalist fear of secrecy because he is aware of the vulnerability of the new republic to the infiltration from outside in the form of secret organizations. Ormond and Ludloe represent such a danger. Moreover, Brown associates secrecy with villainy not only in connection with utopianist groups trying to demolish established order but also generally – Carwin and Welbeck are presented as villains, too. However, at the same time he is sceptical of secrecy practiced by the Federalists which was most evident during the discussions about the Constitution. It is possible to trace his criticism of the Federalist secrecy especially in *Ormond*, as Sophia's secrets are comparable to those of the Federalists. What may be suggested by this criticism is Brown's discontent with the ruling government and its proceedings that aimed at increase of their power. The Federalists thus turn suspect as well as Sophia in *Ormond.*

Although Brown connects secrecy with villainy in most cases, he nevertheless

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[132] Joshua Miller, *The Rise and Fall of Democracy in Early America, 1630-1789: The Legacy for Contemporary Politics* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991) 115.

[133] Fliegelman xxxv.

admits its salutary effects as well. What I have in mind are the effects of protection. Brown emphasizes this kind of positive secrecy in his presentation of Clara's and Clithero's secrets: secrecy means safety for them and it also enables them to keep their identity. In political point of view, it is represented by the secrecy of ballot box, which gives an advantage of free choice to every voter.

Brown discusses the question of an invisible manipulation by means of arousing false consciousness of power in the manipulated subject. It is apparent in Ormond's behaviour to Constantia, when he seems to respect her opinion to blunt her watchfullness, as well as in behaviour of Ludloe, when he allows Carwin to make apparently free decisions. This proves to be central in the post-revolutionary political maneuvering, when it was important to create a similar illusion of importance in the minds of the people. From this reason it was necessary to connect the people with power and freedom in the rhetorics of the ruling party.

Contrary to the opinion of William Godwin, Brown shows that it is necessary to maintain secrecy as it goes hand in hand with any kind of power. He can see the advantage the new republic brings to an individual. Nevertheless, compared to the power held by the government (similar to that of Carwin, Ludloe and Welbeck for example), the power that was bestowed on the individuals was only minor, being just the ability to protect their opinions and their identity as it is in Clara's and Clithero's case. In other words, instead of power, they have only a shield; or they have only a false awareness of power while in reality it is held by someone else.

To sum it up, it is possible to say that Godwin also longs for omniscience – if everyone knew everyone's secrets and thoughts (known also to everyone because of sincerity), the undesired behaviour would be outrooted. The lives of all would resemble constant voluntary confession. In this system, observation is as important as in Panopticon. It is not the rule by secrets but the rule by knowledge when all the people know all about their associates, and everybody has an equal share of power, i.

e. knowledge.

In Bentham's, Foucault's and Brown's point of view, knowledge is as important as in Godwin's view, therefore the main principle is the same. However, in contrast to Godwin they all see the necessity of secrecy and deception as well. Secrecy ensures involuntary confession (of the people spied by secret witnesses) and circumvents the necessity of confession by those who are trying to usurp power. In new regime it was nevertheless necessary to offer a possibilty to have a secret to every individual to ensure their satisfaction and avoid another revolution. With this secrecy the individuals receive power as well. However, it is only imaginary compared to the power held by ruling subjects, as it is only protective. Post-revolutionary democracy in America, or any modern democracy, therefore does not have the value of a true democracy as imagined by Godwin. Brown was aware of this. And although he much admired Godwin's philosophy and perhaps desired its realization, he nevertheless felt obliged to point out its limits, and the difficulty to bring about the aims of this utopia. What Brown could do after all was to endeavor to make the best of the situation he was in, while secretly objecting against it and indirectly criticizing the Federalist government.

4. Impact on the Reader

Manipulation in Brown's novels is moving in different directions – there are clear victims, the manipulated, and clear villains, the manipulators in his works. But there are also characters who change from the innocent to the plotters and the line between these positions is quite vague. The reader may consider himself to be detached from the problems of some fictional character, believing to be resistant to those kinds of manipulation presented in Brown's books. In fact he does not wholly avoid the influence of themes and narrative techniques chosen by Brown. The author wins the confidence of his readers by making them believe in what the fictional victim is saying, only to reverse this victim either into a villain or psychologically unstable character, thus catch off guard the reader himself, or in other words, stretch his influence as an author outside his novels, making various phenomena resonate in the minds of the readers with multiplied effect.

The disturbing aspect of both Clara's and Edgar's narrative, which may affect the reader as well, is the narrators' inclination to mental instability. Clara explicitly describes herself as tending to madness because she has heard the voices, together with her brother who turned maniacal. Analysis of the phenomena that lead another person to madness may have the same effect upon the analyst, as it is apparent from the condition of Clara. This point is illustrated in the essay of Scott Brewster, who deals with Gothic and madness as related to the reader: "Reading Gothic makes us see things. In identifying irrationality or pathological disturbance in Gothic writing, we admit, even succumb to the strange 'logic' of fictive madness. In defining madness in Gothic text, whose pathology is in question?"[134] Because of her attempt to analyse her brother's madness Clara too is slipping into madness, as well as Edgar who turned somnambulist after pursuing sleepwalking Clithero. The reader of *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly* is therefore in the same position as the narrators of the novels, the

[134] Scott Brewster, "Seeing Things: Gothic and the Madness of Interpretation," *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. David Punter (Cornwall: MPG Books, 2001) 297.

analysis of madness being involved in the process of reading. Brewster, following the explanation of David Punter, is relating Gothic fiction to paranoia that lies not so much in the author or fictional characters but in the process of reading.[135] He emphasizes the possibility that the disturbing effect which the events of the narrative have upon the fictional characters may be contagious for the readers as well.

Another aspect that plays its role in relation to the reader is Brown's choice of narrative techniques and especially unreliable narrators. The narratives of both Edgar and Clara are first-person retrospective narratives (both in a form of letters). Clara presents the recurrence of strange voices and analyzes every encounter with them as something new. She describes only her feelings after each occasion the voice is heard, not providing the reader with the conclusions she came to understand at the end. Thus she keeps the mystery of the voices, or in other words, makes the reader wonder what she was wondering about at the precise moment. She keeps the explanation for herself. It is the same with Edgar, as he does not tell immediately that it was a bout of somnambulism that led him to the dark pit although he knew it at the time of narration. The reader only knows as much as the first-person narrator lets him know.

Sophia Courtland as the narrator of *Ormond*, does not admit her presence from the beginning but remains hidden as a third-person narrator. The facts are presented to the reader by an omniscient narrator, therefore there is no ground left for the doubts about the validity of the facts. It is only later on in the novel that Sophia enters the narrative and participates in the action. The notion of omniscience is thus damaged together with the objectivity of the narrative and Sophia is suddenly seen in a different light – presenting only facts that serve to fulfill her own interests.

The rhetorics of Arthur Mervyn is becoming less and less exempt from the implicit effort to influence with the progress of the novel. He relates his story to Dr. Stevens, however, at the same time it is also the way how the reader comes to know all

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[135] See Brewster 285.

the details. Arthur appears to be trustworthy until the moment he is charged with the accusation that threatens to blast his reputation for the second time, which makes the reader return to a similar charge from the beginning of the novel. As it is pointed out by Emory Elliott, Brown warns the reader to be cautious about Arthur. Elliott emphasizes especially Arthur's boasting about his skills to deceive others when he states that "the stuff I was made of was damnably tough and devilishly pliant."[136] Though it is difficult to reveal the duplicity of Arthur on the first reading, nevertheless it is there and it is by means of shattering the reliability of this narrator that Brown manages to provide this novel with the unsettling effect.[137] There is another example of narrator's effort to deceive in *Memoirs of Carwin*, where Carwin as the first-person narrator refers to the voice uttered by himself as if it was uttered by an unseen person, describing it only as "a voice,"[138] not at all admitting his own agency. The deception is practised not only with respect to the fictional characters but also with respect to the reader.

Although in *Edgar Huntly* it is possible to notice dubious behaviour of Edgar from the beginning of the novel, suggesting that it is advisable not to take all his words too seriously (that he is "involved in an intellectual maze is obvius enough from the opening pages of the novel"[139]) and similarly Arthur's narrative provides the reader with some hints of the duplicity of his character, it is otherwise with Sophia, unfolding the story of *Ormond*, as well as with Clara Wieland. Both these narrators appear to be acting with the utmost sincerity and reason at the beginning. As it is suggested by Nina Baym, "nothing in the early chapters of the novel suggests to the reader that there is any serious defect in Clara's ability to perceive her world, ... but if Clara is to

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[136] Brown, *Arthur* 508.

[137] See Emory Elliott, "Narrative Unity and Moral Resolution in Arthur Mervyn." *Critical Essays on Charles Brockden Brown,*" ed. Bernard Rosenthal (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981) 143-144.

[138] Brown, *Wieland and Memoirs* 315.

[139] Ringe 71.

be the source of error and remain a character, she must become an unreliable narrator."[140] Clara turns into a fearful being that is easily swayed and Sophia changes to a subversive plotter. From these examples it is apparent that the unreliability of Brown's narrators lies either in their psychological disturbance, their direct secret effort to manipulate, or the combination of both. Although the reader might be cautious as for Arthur and Edgar, it is nevertheless problematic to see through these characters either. By means of unreliability of his narrators Brown manages to underscore the difficulty of forming decisions of the reader, as to what should be believed.

What is in question because of Brown's unreliable narrators is reliability of Brown's fiction as such. During the time of narrative all the narrators have secrets, previously analyzed as means of manipulation. These secrets may be understood as the author's effort to manipulate the thoughts of the reader. Levine emphasizes this by pointing out that novelists were supposed to be dangerous in America of 1790s as they "appealed to the private imaginations and restless passions of their readers... In this respect, it is tempting to view Brown's artfully duplicitous villains as allegorical representations of the romancer himself."[141] As it is expressed by Michael Davitt Bell, to borrow Clara's words "the double-tongued deceiver" is not any of the characters of the novels but the artist who stands behind these characters:

> Brown turns from those forms in which a reliable narrator mediates between the audience and the world of the novel. He turns instead to the forms which pretend to authenticity and immediacy – letters, memoirs, confessions... All four novels reveal a basic fear ... of both the illusoriness and the consequences of imaginative fiction. The novel's unreal and

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[140] Nina Baym, "A Minority Reading of *Wieland*," *Critical Essays on Charles Brockden Brown,* ed. Bernard Rosenthal (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981) 94-5.

[141] Levine 16.

delusive picture of life unsettles the balance of mind...[142]

The relationship of the novelist to the reader is therefore similar to the relationship of Carwin to Theodore. Both Carwin and Brown unsettle the balance of mind, appealing to the imagination of their victims. As Theodore's imagination was set into motion by Carwin's voice, the imagination of the novel-readers may be similarly influenced by Brown's fiction. Brown, deliberately deciding in favor of the forms described above, is in fact intruding into the reader's mind just as Carwin or any of his secret-holding characters. He makes the reader believe what the characters are presenting only to subvert this belief into consciousness of being manipulated. He describes the dangers of false belief, most significantly in the presentation of Wieland's madness. And although the reader might feel safe from similar influences, Brown proves that such a false belief does not necessarily have to be originated by something extraordinary, such as strange voices, but it might be caused even by a supposedly harmless everyday activity, such as the pastime of reading fiction.

[142] Bell 159-160.

Conclusion

The analysis of Brown's novels shows that his notion of manipulation is applicable in the field of psychology as well as politics. The psychological aspect is most outstanding when the confrontation of manipulated and manipulating subject is projected into the relationship of the reader and author, the author having the control over the reader. The political aspect is achieved by paralleling the relationship between individuals with the relationship between the ruling representatives and citizens. The unifying element in both cases is human mind that is unchanging, therefore the comments of the author are valid not only with respect to the eighteenth-century politics and readers, but they also appeal to contemporary readers who have a possibility to perceive the connection of Brown's conclusions to political situation of the present.

Brown places the victims of manipulation in the extreme situations to underscore their vulnerability. They find themselves confronted by the adversaries endowed with extraordinary manipulative skills. The victims' submission to the manipulative powers is nevertheless achieved by the manipulators only partly; the true cause of such a submission are rather the predispositions of human mind. Brown's victims incline to the failures of judgement: They rely on their senses; or they are overpowered by imagination, unreal image or sound which arouses fear, but this fear is real and may lead them to a conduct with unpredictable consequences. The past can haunt them and poison their minds in a way that it destroys the body as well, they are in danger if they are without experience, as anything new is subject to various tests. A blind belief without considering what is right or wrong in their minds may lead them to a trap. Sometimes they may even fail to distinguish between right and wrong or they are not able to resist the evil in them. Some characters are acting in pursuit of their happiness, ignoring the faint voices in their minds which would otherwise make them feel guilty. All these factors enable anyone with malicious intentions to make their victim do what serves to fulfill their intentions.

What enables the operation of the factors that cause the vulnerability of fictional characters also outside his fiction, is Brown's usage of unreliable narrators. Although the readers are not placed in the extreme situations and thus may feel safe compared to Brown's characters, they are nevertheless constantly deceived by the author speaking through the narrators of his novels. Unreliability of the narrators causes uncertainty of the readers, which is exactly the condition in which Brown's victims of manipulation find themselves. The fictional terror is thus switched into reality and affects the readers by means of its unsettling effect upon their minds.

Brown underscores the means of manipulation, i. e. secrecy, deceptions and benevolence, and he implies that they play an important role in politics as well. It is evident especially in secret practices applied by Constitutional Convention. Brown indirectly evaluates the democracy that was established in America. As he associates mainly villainous figures with secrecy, his evaluation is not wholly positive. However, pointing out that secrets may have also a protective power, he acknowledges the values of American democracy as the voters also acquired their right to secrecy (represented by vote by ballot) with its establishment. The possibility to vote in secrecy therefore reflects the voters' share of power.

Brown's perception of eighteenth-century American democracy offers a viewpoint on any democracy at any time. Brown above all emphasizes its limitations. It is because the effort to manipulate the voters will never be wholly eliminated, and the liability to manipulation, encoded in human mind will always render this manipulation possible.

Czech Summary

Osmnácté století se zapsalo do dějin především revolucemi, a to jak v Evropě, tak i v Americe. Velká francouzská revoluce byla krokem od monarchie k republice, od feudalizmu k demokracii; na americkém kontinentu zase došlo díky válce za nezávislost k osvobození od vlivu Anglie. Byl narušen systém státního uspořádání, a to se projevilo novým přerozdělením moci. Za těchto okolností docházelo k vzájemné manipulaci jednotlivých skupin, které se snažily získat moc. Projevilo se to i v literatuře, zejména v díle Charlese Brockdena Browna, kde je možno vysledovat jasnou linii manipulace jako tématu.

Brownova tvorba se vyznačuje záhadami, které jsou vlastní gotické literatuře. Gotické romány se začaly objevovat jako reakce na období osvícenství, kdy byl velký důraz kladen na rozum. Záhady zdánlivě do tohoto kontextu nezapadají, ale ve skutečnosti jsou pravým odzrcadlením nejistoty a nepokojů, které období osvícenství spustilo vyústěním v revoluce. Autoři gotických románů vyjadřují svůj strach z nového, a proto neznámého uspořádání v podobě strachu z minulosti a z nevysvětlitelného. Brown se zabýval případy náměsíčnictví, šílenství a zločinů, ke kterým se postavy nechaly zmanipulovat, jeho díla vzbuzují pocit hrůzy, která má původ přímo v lidské mysli. Je to reakce na politickou situaci jeho doby, kdy převládal strach z jakobínů a jiných radikálních skupin, rozšířený do Ameriky. Brown se na jedné straně ztotožňoval s myšlenkou, že nová republika v Americe je skutečně ohrožená tajnými spřisaháními, na druhé straně tuto paniku vnímal jako součást taktiky federalistů, kteří jen hledali nedostihnutelného nepřítele na odvrácení pozornosti od vlastní snahy získat moc.

Brown ve svých románech podává extrémní situace lidí, kteří podlehli manipulaci. Rozebírá, jak lidská mysl reaguje na vnější vlivy. Jedná se vždy o manipulace mezi jednotlivci, protože ale lidská mysl figuruje jako neodmyslitelná součást jakýchkoliv vztahů, je možné Brownovy myšlenky promítnout také do politiky. Postup od psychologického rozboru k politickému se dá vysledovat v díle

Williama Godwina, hlavního představitele anarchismu osmnáctého století v Evropě. Godwin rozebírá podobné aspekty manipulace jako Brown, liší se jenom jeho pohledy na ně. Proto porovnání s Godwinovým dílem pomáhá objasnit Brownovy myšlenky.

Téma manipulace je možno rozebrat nejprve z pohledu obětí. Zahrnuje to především předpoklady, kvůli kterým lidská mysl podléhá cizím vlivům. Manipulace má šanci na úspěch, pokud v mysli oběti využívá faktory jako tendence ke zlu, nespolehlivost smyslů, síla představivosti, vlastní zájem, vášně, pověrčivost, vliv minulosti a strach z ní.

V románu *Wieland* se hlavní hrdina nechal zmanipulovat k vyvraždění celé své rodiny. Podnět k tomu dal cizinec Carwin, který se zamíchal do pokojného života Wielandovy rodiny. Carwin využil své schopnosti napodobovat hlasy jiných, mluvit z velké vzdálenosti tak, aby se jeho hlas donesl přímo k uším oběti. Sám zůstal neviditelný, což mu umožnilo napodobovat hlasy z nebe. Wieland, který žil podle zásad náboženské víry, byl velice zranitelný vůči hlasu, který od něj požadoval nejvyšší oběť na důkaz jeho víry – život jeho manželky a dětí. Předpoklady pro tento čin však nebyly vinou Carwina, ale součástí Wielandovy mysli. Zlo se projevilo v podobě Wielandova šílenství, které mu umožnilo vykonat vraždu. Hlas navádějící Wielanda k vraždě, kterého původcem mohl a nemusel být Carwin (Brown na tuto otázku nedává jasnou odpověď), pronikl do Wielandovy mysli prostřednictvím smyslů a Wieland už dál nezkoumal jeho věrohodnost. Důležitou úlohu sehrála také Wielandova minulost a strach z ní. Jeho otec zemřel za záhadných okolností a jeho smrt byla chápána jako trest za nevykonaný rozkaz. U otce i syna sehrávala roli náboženská víra. Brown ponechává možnost, že i otec byl naváděn k vraždě rodiny hlasem, který považoval za hlas z nebe. Wielanda a jeho sestru Claru v myšlenkách pronásledovala smrt jejich otce, Wieland tak mohl cítit povinnost dokončit to, co jeho otec odmítl, aby dokázal svoji víru. Na druhé straně ale mohl být veden strachem ze stejného trestu, jaký stihl jeho otce a poslechl

rozkaz neznámého hlasu, aby se tomuto trestu vyhnul.

Přítomnost zla v lidské mysli Brown ilustruje zejména na postavách sourozenců Euphemie Lorimerové a Arthura Wiatta v románu *Edgar Huntly.* Euphemia a Wiatte jsou dvojčata zosobňující dobro a zlo. Euphemia věří, že její osud je propojený s osudem jejího bratra – v okamžiku smrti jednoho z nich stihne stejný osud i toho druhého. Znamená to, že zlo, které představuje Wiatte, nemůže zaniknout bez toho, aby přineslo zkázu také Euphemii, reprezentující dobro. Stejné je to i v lidské mysli, kde dobrá a zlá stránka fungují vedle sebe jako Euphemia a Wiatte – není možné zbavit se zla a nezasadit tím smrtelnou ránu i dobrým stránkám, nedají se totiž od zla oddělit. Brown tím, že upozornil na přítomnost zla v lidské mysli, objasnil důvod, proč je tak snadné manipulovat lidi právě ke zlu. Je to v jejich povaze.

Sebezáchova a vlastní zájem jsou faktory, které způsobují zranitelnost lidí vůči manipulátorům a projevují se v největší míře v díle *Arthur Mervyn.* Arthur utekl z farmy svého otce s cílem najít si zaměstnání v blízkém městě. Setkal se s Welbeckem, který mu nabídl práci. Welbeck vzbuzuje v Arthurovi jisté pochybnosti, Arthur je ale vůči nim hluchý, protože je to v jeho zájmu. Dobře si totiž pamatuje těžkosti s hledáním práce. Postupem času se nechá Welbeckem manipulovat a tím mu vlastně splácí dluh. Stejné je to i s Carwinem – v čase, kdy je bez peněz a podpory rodiny, setká se s Ludloem, který mu pomůže najít východisko z těžké situace. Spolu odjedou do Evropy, kde se Ludloe usiluje získat Carwina pro svoji tajnou skupinu radikálů. Carwin se může dostat do moci Ludloea kvůli tomu, že ho zpočátku uznává za vůdce v rámci sledování svých vlastních zájmů.

Vášně, mezi kterými je nejintenzívnější láska, způsobují ve výrazné míře zatemnění mysli, a tím ulehčují manipulaci. Arthurův otec se po smrti manželky podruhé oženil; oslepený láskou se stal loutkou v rukách nové ženy, která ho z neochoty dělit se o dědictví poštvala proti jeho vlastnímu synovi.

Posledním faktorem je síla představivosti. Brown jí v románu *Ormond* věnoval jednu epizodu, kde poukázal na její vražedné účinky. Baxter, vedlejší postava románu, se stal svědkem pohřbívání svého souseda v době, kdy vrcholila epidemie nebezpečné horečky. Okamžitě došel k závěru, že soused zemřel na následky horečky, i když všechny faktory svědčily proti tomu. Protože nemoc byla vysoce nakažlivá, Baxter usoudil, že se nákaze nemohl vyhnout při pozorování pohřbu; stál totiž v těsné blízkosti. Nakonec skutečně onemocněl, hlavním impulsem k tomu však byla jeho představa – tím, že si otrávil mysl přesvědčením o neodvratné smrti, otrávil i své tělo. Představivost se týká také Wielanda a hlasů, které slyšel. Tyto hlasy buď opravdu pocházely z nebe, nebo byl jejich původcem Carwin. Je zde ale ještě možnost, že existovaly pouze ve Wielandově mysli. Za předpokladu, že tomu tak bylo, byl Wieland naveden k vraždě jen svojí vlastní představivostí.

Po prozkoumání předpokladů lidské mysli je možné věnovat se přímým metodám, které manipulátoři využívají ve snaze ovlivnit druhé. Jde především o utajení manipulátorů spojené s jejich vědomostmi o obětech, přetvářka a podvody jako opak upřímnosti a zdánlivá dobročinnost, která souvisí s vděčností.

V utajení pracují všichni Brownovi zlosynové, ať už je to Carwin, Ludloe, Ormond nebo Welbeck. Díky tajemstvím jsou nevypočitatelní, nedají se předvídat jejich záměry, a tím získávají moc. Zároveň se dostávají k moci tím, že pronikají do tajemství svých obětí. Na druhé straně může mít tajemství obranný účinek; zranitelní jsou tedy ti, kteří se svých tajemství vzdávají.

Utajení je základním předpokladem pro Carwinovo úspěšné využití svých schopností – kdyby jeho oběti tušily, že mají ve své blízkosti břichomluvce, přinejmenším by zpochybnily důvěryhodnost hlasů, které se ozývaly v jejich okolí. Proto musel Carwin svoje schopnosti utajit. Ludloe tají svoje kontakty s radikální skupinou, která má za cíl vytvořit dokonalou společnost. Podmínkou přijetí do této skupiny je absolutní upřímnost nového člena, přičemž porušení této zásady se trestá smrtí. Zároveň je nutné zachovávat absolutní mlčenlivost ve všem, co se týká

skupiny. Ludloe manipuluje Carwina ve snaze získat ho za člena, přitom jej ale nutí vzdát se privilegií, která mu umožňují manipulaci, tj. jeho břichomluveckých schopností. Carwin a Ludloe se tedy navzájem sledují – oba chtějí získat kontrolu vzájemným narušením svých tajemství, ani jeden však není ochoten s tím začít. Ormond číhá za dveřmi a poslouchá rozhovory svých obětí, zejména Constantie, kterou chce za každou cenu získat. Následně se ztotožňuje s Bohem, protože působí dojmem, že ví všechno, včetně nejtajnějších myšlenek a plánů Constantie. Tím v ní vzbuzuje hrůzu a nutí ji vzdát se záměrů, které mu nevyhovují. Constantii k tomu nutí předpovídáním neodvratné katastrofy, a jeho předpověď budoucnosti získá věrohodnost díky tomu, že se projevil jako vševědoucí, pokud jde o minulost. Welbeck, poslední z Brownových zloduchů, zachovává přísnou mlčenlivost o své minulosti, příjmech, a vůbec o všem, co se týká jeho osoby. Jeho obětí je Arthur, a dá se předpokládat, že by s Welbeckem nezůstal, kdyby věděl o všech jeho zločinech.

Obranná funkce tajemství se projeví v případě Clary, sestry Wielanda. Neznámý hlas ji varuje, aby se vyhýbala altánku při řece, a aby se nikomu nezmiňovala o tom, že znovu slyšela záhadný hlas. Bude v bezpečí, pokud tyto dvě podmínky splní, jestli je však poruší, stihne ji osud jejího otce. Clara tedy věří, že zachováním tajemství zachová také svoji bezpečnost. Stejně funguje tajemství v případě Clithera v románu *Edgar Huntly.* Clithero je podezřelý z vraždy Edgarova přítele Waldegrava, protože během svých záchvatů náměsíčnosti navštěvuje za nocí místo vraždy. Aby utišil tyto pochybnosti, je nucen přiznat další zločin, vraždu Wiatta. Poskytne tak ale Edgarovi informace o své osobě – vyzrazením tajemství se tedy dostane pod Edgarův vliv. Tajemství Clary a Clithera představuje pro oba spíše břemeno, je to typ tajemství, které neumožňuje manipulaci. Současně je pro ně nevyhnutelné, protože slouží jako štít před cizím vlivem.

Protipólem tajemství jsou vědomosti o jiných. Získáním vědomosti o tajemství

manipulátor získá i moc. Je to evidentní v případě Clithera, který se dostal pod Edgarův vliv právě kvůli své zpovědi, stejně tak i Constantie, která bez svého vědomí poskytovala informace Ormondovi. Brown tak vytváří stupnici moci, ve které jsou nejvýše ti, kteří vědí všechno a sami jsou utajení, a nejníže ti, kteří o svém protivníkovi nevědí nic, zatímco on zná všechna jejich tajemství.

Podvody rozšiřují pojem utajení; když už nestačí pouhé skrývání a manipulace pomocí záhad, je nutné vystupovat jako někdo jiný. Thomas Craig, jedna z vedlejších postav románu *Ormond,* využívá přetvářku k manipulaci pana Dudleyho, otce Constantie. Craig je přijat za učně v Dudleyho podniku a postupně přebírá stále více zodpovědnosti za fungování obchodu, až dokud jej pan Dudley neobdaří velkými pravomocemi. Craig v tom okamžiku zmizí i se všemi penězi, čímž zruinuje Dudleyho a jeho rodinu. Přetvářku využívá i Ormond, když převlečený za kominíka poslouchá názory služebnictva na svou osobu, podobně slídí také v domě Constantie. Úloha utajeného svědka mu umožňuje získat moc nad těmi, kteří se nevědomky vzdávají tajemství.

Podvody spočívají i ve zdánlivém souhlasu manipulátora s názorem oběti. Ormond, který je zásadně proti manželství, je ochoten zdánlivě se přizpůsobit názorům Constantie – tím, že se začne chovat v souladu s jejími představami, vytvoří falešný tok moci a oslabí ostražitost oběti. Získává tím možnost udeřit přesně v okamžiku, kdy to oběť očekává nejméně.

Laskavost a projevy dobré vůle manipulátorů vůči obětem jsou v kontextu manipulace důležité proto, že zavazují oběti vděčností. Edgar je benevolentní vůči Clitherovi a zdůrazňuje svoji nezištnost, ve skutečnosti se ale snaží Clithera ovládat. Protože se v průběhu románu projeví známky náměsíčnosti také u Edgara, který má kromě toho s Clitherem hodně společného, Clithero může být chápán jako Edgarovo druhé já. Edgarova snaha pomoci Clitherovi tak zrcadlí snahu ovládat iracionální část jeho vlastní mysli, kterou Clithero reprezentuje. Clithero se bezprostředně po své zpovědi začne ukrývat v divočině Norwalku, ale Edgar je mu

stále v patách, aby mu vymluvil jeho záměr vyhladovět se k smrti. Edgar objeví spícího Clithera v jeskyni, která mu slouží jako úkryt. Má s sebou jídlo, a jeho první myšlenkou je vzbudit Clithera a přesvědčit jej, aby jedl. Vzápětí ho ale napadne nová myšlenka – nechat chléb na místě, které nemůže uniknout Clitherově pozornosti. Edgar předpokládá, že Clithero bude jídlo považovat za dar z nebe, protože věří v nedostupnost své skrýše člověkem. Edgar se tak pomocí laskavosti vydává za Boha, stejně jako Carwin, který mluví a rozkazuje jeho jménem, utajujíc vlastní identitu, a stejně jako Ormond, což je zřejmé z jeho snahy o vševědoucnost. Oběti jsou o to zranitelnější, že spojují výzvy manipulátorů s vůlí boží.

Dobročinnost uplatňuje i Welbeck a Ludloe vůči Arthurovi a Carwinovi ve snaze zefektivnit manipulaci prostřednictvím vděčnosti. Constantie se ocitne v podobné situaci, když ji neznámý cizinec zachrání před výtržníky. Na oplátku za tuto laskavost si zachránce Balfour dělá nárok na ruku Constantie. Když je odmítnut, Balfour se z obdivovatele změní na škůdce: rozšíří klebety, které poškodí dobrou pověst Constantie u jejích zákazníků a tím ohrozí její živobytí. Stejně se vůči Constantii chová i Ormond. Nabízí jí finanční zabezpečení, dokonce se zaslouží i o operaci, která jejímu otci navrátí zrak. Spoléhá na to, že z vděčnosti Constantie vyhoví všem jeho požadavkům. Když se ale nedostavuje předpokládaný efekt, projeví se u něj dobročinnost zvrácená: Ormond zavraždí otce Constantie a požaduje od ní vděčnost za tento čin; vždyť přeci je lepší zemřít nečekaně, než zdlouhavě v bolestech, což by určitě čekalo pana Dudleyho bez Ormondova zásahu. Kromě toho Dudley brání vlivu Ormonda na Constantii, a tím podle Ormondova názoru brání i štěstí Constantie. Její otec představuje překážku, kterou je třeba odstranit, Constantie proto musí být vděčná a náležitě všechno Ormondovi oplatit. Uvedením dobrosrdečnosti do souvislosti se zvráceností Brown poukazuje na nutnost nedůvěry vůči všem formám dobročinnosti. Její cíl je totiž vždycky stejný – vlastní zájem zdánlivého dobrodince.

Při rozboru tématu manipulace stojí za pozornost vztah Browna a čtenářů jeho románů. Fiktivní oběti manipulace musí čelit velmi schopným manipulátorům v extrémních situacích, které je těžké promítnout do reality čtenáře. Jakákoliv analýza šílenství či mentální nestability však v konečném důsledku vede k podobným stavům. Clara ve snaze najít příčiny jevů, které zapříčinily šílenství Wielanda, postupně ztrácí kontrolu sama nad sebou, stejně jako její bratr. Z Edgara se následkem pronásledování náměsíčného Clithera v průběhu románu stane rovněž náměsíčný. Šílenství spočívá v procesu analýzy, tedy též v procesu čtení. Brown podkopává čtenářovu jistotu, že jemu se nikdy nic podobného nemůže stát. Využívá k tomu především nespolehlivých vypravěčů. A tak čtenář věří vyprávění Clary a Edgara, kteří se na začátku od šílenství a náměsíčnosti distancují, nicméně ve své víře se zklame, když vyjde najevo duševní nerovnováha vypravěčů. Dostává se tak na úroveň obětí, které se také zklamaly ve své víře v podvodníky, a tím si uvědomí, že byl celou dobu manipulován. Brown dokonce uvádí některé vypravěče do souvislosti s tajemstvími, které byly rozebrány jako hlavní prostředek manipulace. Příkladem je Sophie z románu *Ormond* – svoji identitu zpočátku skrývala za vyprávění ve třetí osobě, čímž si nárokovala vševědoucnost, stejně jako Ormond, kterého kritizovala. Za všemi vypravěči ale celou dobu stojí sám autor románů, a tak je to Brown, kdo prostřednictvím příběhu způsobuje duševní nestabilitu čtenáře. Vztah autora a čtenáře je tak stejný jako vztah Brownových zlosynů a obětí. Autor tímto výraznou měrou upozorňuje na nebezpečí manipulace.

Brown ve svých dílech zdůraznil přítomnost zla v mysli všech lidí, příznivé účinky tajemství a nutné omezení upřímnosti. Zatímco Brown spojuje moc s tajemstvími, Godwin ji spojuje s upřímností. Godwin dále zastává názor, že lidská mysl je schopná neustálého zlepšování. Za zlo přítomné v lidské mysli jsou zodpovědné státní instituce a vláda, když se však člověk vymaní z jejich vlivu, společnost se dostane blízko k dokonalosti. V novém uspořádání si každý bude

vládnout sám, státní instituce tak ztratí opodstatnění a zaniknou. Godwin poukazuje na důležitost upřímnosti a eliminaci všech tajemství. Pokud by si lidé byli navzájem strážci, všechny zločiny by byly vykořeněny, úspěch tedy závisí na neustálém pozorování. Godwin tak souhlasí s Brownovou myšlenkou, že moc souvisí s vědomostmi o činnosti druhých. Absolutní přehled, který by zabezpečil absolutní kontrolu, je však utopií.

I když v Brownových dílech je možné vysledovat obdiv k myšlenkám Godwina, Brown vidí nutnost zachovat tajemství i v novém demokratickém režimu. Poukazuje tak na limity demokracie. Je však podstatné, aby podíl tajemství (a tedy i podíl na moci) měli také občané demokratického státu. Zabezpečilo to tajné hlasování, které vylučuje manipulaci voličů. Zároveň mají lidé pocit, že se rozhodují svobodně a díky této iluzi moci jsou ochotnější akceptovat rozhodnutí státu. Když se však Brownova stupnice moci promítne do vztahu mezi občanem a státem, je jasné, které složky se na moci podílejí nejvíce. Stát má daleko větší možnost činit si nárok na tajemství občana než občan na tajemství státu. Jakoukoliv vládu je proto možné přirovnat k moci Carwina či Ludloea. Na druhou stranu tajemství, na které má nárok občan, jsou podobná tajemstvím Clary a Clithera, protože nezabezpečují moc, ale pouze chrání.

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Annotation

In my thesis I focus on the theme of manipulation as presented in the works of Charles Brockden Brown. I relate the victims' point of view and the predispositions of human mind that make the victims susceptible to manipulation; as well as the point of view of the manipulators and the means they use to control others. By means of this analysis I capture the impact of Brown's novels on the readers, emphasizing the effort of the author to manipulate the reader's mind. Brown deals especially with psychological manipulation of individuals, it may however be projected into the field of politics as political manipulation, human mind being a unifying element.