

UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA  
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DIFFERENT INSTANCES OF POWER IN THE WALL BY PINK FLOYD

Tesis sometida a la consideración de la Comisión del Programa de Estudios de Posgrado  
en Literatura para optar al grado y título de Maestría Académica en Literatura Inglesa

DAVID BOZA MÉNDEZ

Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica


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Esta investigación está dedicada a mi papá que siempre vivió con miedo al poder, un miedo que nunca lo dejó ser libre.

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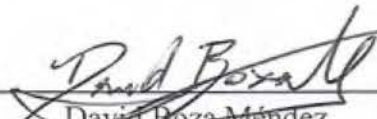
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Norman Marin Calderón  
Decana o Representante de la Decana del  
Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dra. Ilse Bussing López  
Directora de Tesis

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dra. Hilda Gairaud Ruíz  
Asesora

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Carlos Sandoval García  
Asesor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
M.L. Ivonne Robles Mohs  
Directora  
Programa de Posgrado en Literatura

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Boza Méndez  
Candidato

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## **Resumen**

La presente investigación contempla el análisis literario de *The Wall* de Pink Floyd y el poder como uno de sus principales temas explorados en sus letras. Para realizar dicho análisis, se utilizaron los trabajos teóricos de varios pensadores del siglo XX los cuales están centrados en el discurso de poder.

## **Abstract**

This investigation presents the literary analysis of *The Wall* by Pink Floyd and the notion of power as one of its central themes reflected in its lyrics. The works related to the theory of power of several authors from the XX century were taken into consideration in order to develop this analysis.



## **I. Introduction**

### **Topic**

Different instances of power in *The Wall* by Pink Floyd.

### **Range of the Topic**

#### a) Justification

My interest in approaching a rock music album such as *The Wall* by Pink Floyd as the basic text for my thesis relies on the significance that it and music in general have had in my life. My fascination with Pink Floyd began at the age of 12 and has continued until today to such an extent that it has determined my graduation project, which combines my two passions: music and literature. I believe the work of Pink Floyd has a strong literary influence; the latter constitutes a unique characteristic that contributes to create their style (take the case of their album *Animals* which was inspired by *Animal Farm* by George Orwell) and, because of this peculiarity, I believe that their work as an incorporation of the two subjects (music and literature) is well suited as a thesis project. Furthermore, I consider that, in order to generate a significant research, one must choose

a topic that thrills and (almost) obsesses one as researcher, and there is nothing more that catches my attention than basing my thesis on Pink Floyd's work.

In terms of its literary value, *The Wall* includes the metaphor, polyphony, rhyme, and imagery among other literary resources. These are characteristics of poetry, one of the oldest literary genres. In fact, one must remember that poetry and music were one at the beginning; ancient Greek poets, for instance, used to sing their poems. Consequently, considering song music to be similar to literature due to its characteristics and origins is to be expected. Having pointed out the literary significance of the lyrics of the text I am addressing, I should specify that despite the imagery and metaphor, the focus of my analysis lies elsewhere. It is important to acknowledge the value of song lyrics as literature and their similarity to poetry, but the scope of this study will focus on notions related to the dynamics of power.

Another reason why I believe a topic on Pink Floyd would be an excellent subject matter for this investigation relies on the lack of research on it. I began an initial review of the literature in the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of my masters and realized that there are almost no academic papers on the topic<sup>1</sup>. The latter amazed and shocked me due to the fact that rock music has experienced an increase in its value in the academic circles and the canon (take the example of the really recent creation of a masters program dedicated to study The Beatles in an university in Liverpool or the increase in the number of studies of the impact of music in the decade of the 60s).

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<sup>1</sup> If we compare the 27,300 results that arise from a first search in *Google Scholar* when typing in "Pink Floyd" into the search bar to the 1.040,000 results of "Shakespeare," we see that there is a rather significant difference in what kind of texts are considered worthy of academic studies.

The work of Pink Floyd represents a window to the human soul and to the core of its nature. It portrays existential issues such as time, death, and sanity; political matters as war, social order, and wealth, and the repercussions these have in modern life. It is ironic that such a critically and intellectually rich artistic production has been ignored by the academic circles, which seem to favor ancient or canonical works of art. This lack of interest is related to the fact that the work of this band is considered a “non-serious” artistic genre, or popular music. Academic criticism must evolve with art; it does not have to continue going over the same ancient works. Shakespearian criticism constitutes the best example of this infatuation with the old literary works since scholars, obsessively, continue writing on this writer’s work. It seems that what scholars are trying to prove is that they can read and analyze the complex works of this author and, by that, to display their intellectual faculties. In addition, how can current scholars such as Harold Bloom insist that only “masters” as Shakespeare represent the highest standard of literature? This exemplifies the obsession and the inflexibility of the academic circles when approaching the same old works. Statements like this constitute a war cry against new and alternative literary production. We, the new generations of critics and scholars, should be aware of this academic fault and should protest against it in order to emerge with a new and objective criticism, far from old prejudices.

#### b) Range

Today’s academic world offers several analytical tools to approach any type of text, including the work of Pink Floyd. Approaches such as Cultural Studies provide

new ways to look at cultural productions that were not considered artistic (hegemonic) before. In this sense, hopefully, this investigation will serve as an example (I am not suggesting that it has never been done before) of this amalgamation: the alternative text seen from a different perspective, that of Cultural Studies.

Furthermore, this proposal constitutes an important effort to continue with a line of investigation with similar alternative productions in the Costa Rican and the regional academic environment. In addition, it contributes with a methodology of analysis in order to address the song as a poetical product.

### **Viability of the Project**

An academic investigation about such an alternative text as *The Wall* by Pink Floyd represents a challenge for the researcher due to the fact that it is not officially considered literature by the canon.

The object of study is viable bibliographically and theoretically speaking. Numerous texts related to theory and rhetoric constitute the methodological framework of this research.

Furthermore, in terms of consulted texts, different sources of information in relation to the topic of investigation were analyzed, including theoretical works and texts referring to Pink Floyd and its work. Several types of sources were consulted. These

included websites, newspaper articles, documentaries, historical documents, academic articles, and books.

### **Problem Statement**

*The Wall* by Pink Floyd evidences the way in which authorities and power relations oppress the subject.

### **General Objective**

To examine the discourse in terms of authority and power relations in *The Wall*.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To analyze mechanisms and instances of authority and power in the family in *The Wall*.
- To examine instances of power and authority in relation to education, medicine and the state in the album.
- To explore cases of authority and power in relation to the notion of *they* as a manifestation of the whole society and how *they* have an influence on the *I*.

## **Review of the Literature**

When searching for works related to Pink Floyd and its production, one realizes that there have been few academic approaches to this band. On the contrary, since Floyd is considered to be part of popular music, news articles, reviews of concerts and of albums, bibliographies and music score books constitute most of the written pieces focusing on it. Most of this material has little academic or theoretical value (except biographies which represent windows to the facts and detailed accounts of the band's period of activity). For instance, some news articles deal with information on tours (dates and cities); others report the changes of equipment (amplification, lights, etc) that the band underwent. In the same way, music score books constitute tools for musicians that want to learn to play the songs of the band; this would have been useful material if this research included an analysis of the music of the band, which is not the case.

The results from the investigation for this section are organized into cinematic productions, websites, newspapers and magazines, and academic productions (articles and books).

### **Pink Floyd in Film:**

Due to the popular nature of the band, media production as documentaries stands for a quite significant source of information of Floyd. Some documentaries represent biographical accounts with interviews of the band members and its crew, record

producers, and studio personnel; such is the case of the movie *The Pink Floyd Story: Which One is Pink?* produced by the BBC. Other film documentaries are more specific and focus on the production of specific Pink Floyd albums by reporting interviews with producers, musicians, and the people surrounding the band during the process of recording an album; these films also show the historical background that influences the writing of the songs and critical reviews of explanations of the albums. Some of the documentaries that follow this recipe are *Classic Albums: The Making of the Dark Side of the Moon*, *Rock Milestones: Pink Floyd's Wish You Were Here*, *Rock Milestones: Pink Floyd's Ummagumma*, *Rock Milestones: Pink Floyd's The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*, and *Pink Floyd-Behind the Wall*. In addition, some editions of the film *The Wall* include documentaries which explain the process of writing, producing, and filming it, such as *The Wall in Retrospective* and *The Other Side of the Wall*.

### **Pink Floyd in the Web:**

The website *Pink-floyd.org* presents several articles from well-respected magazines, such as *The Rolling Stone*, about the band. Some of these articles are concert reviews such as “David Gilmour and the Guitar Greats” by Vernon Fitch. In this article, Fitch narrates his experience while attending the concert of many prominent guitarists including David Gilmour, member of Pink Floyd and “the last guitarist to make an appearance (saving the best for last)” (in the words of the author). “A Wall Goes Up at the Nassau Coliseum” by Elliot Tayman describes the participation of the author in the

two The Wall concerts in New York in February 1980. It is noteworthy that Tayman concludes his article by describing himself as “‘one of the few’ fortunate fans who have witnessed two of these historic concerts.” Other articles constitute part of the album reviews the band was subjected to. For instance, in “A Review of Meddle” Jean-Charles Costa depicts the 1971 album *Meddle* as a remarkable step in the musical development of Floyd. In the same way, Loyd Grossman states that Pink Floyd represents “one of Britain's most successful and long lived avante-garde rock bands” in his review of *The Dark Side of the Moon*, which, from his perspective, “has flash -- the true flash that comes from the excellence of a superbperformance.” On the contrary, Frank Rose in his review of *Animals* states that the album lacks depth; the band sounds bitter and morose; and “their message has become pointless and tedious.” Nevertheless, one problem of Rose’s critique is that his evaluation is based on comparing *Animals* to its predecessors, *The Dark Side of the Moon* and *Wish You Were Here*, and it gives the impression that Rose could not bear the fact the Floyd decided to change the sound and themes for this record (*Animals*).

#### **Written Pink Floyd (Newspaper, Magazines, and Academia):**

Amanda Dobbins and Abby Schreiber in their article “The Six Very Profound Types of Concept Albums” classify concept albums into six main categories: semi-autobiographical tales about the rock life, an unlikely messiah, is technology good?, a



dystopian world, America is..., and magical adventures. The authors exemplify each category with what they consider the most emblematic concept albums; in this sense, they mention albums like *Tommy* by the Who, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* by David Bowie, *2112* by Rush, *Joe's Garage* by Frank Zappa, *American Life* by Madonna, *What's Going On* by Marvin Gaye, and other works by artists like Genesis, Dio, Blue Oyster Cult, Green Day, Tory Amos, Styx, Alan Parsons, Queensryche, Smashing Pumpkins, Elton John, Janelle Monae, Camber Van Beethoven, and Kraftwerk. This canonical inventory is completed with *The Wall* by Pink Floyd and *Radio K.A.O.S.* by Roger Waters (Floyd's bassist and song writer). "The Six Very Profound Types of Concept Albums" represents a methodological approach to the "ambitious musical tradition" of rock operas. Like a scientific account, this article classifies, delimits, and defines each of the different categories of this enormous beast called the concept album. In order to do that, the authors illustrate each type with the albums of bands that are considered milestones in the history of rock music due to their musical and intellectual qualities, as The Who, David Bowie, Alan Parsons, Frank Zappa, and Pink Floyd. This approach constitutes a fairly proficient strategy in order to validate their position as remarkable productions in the history of rock music and to create "a rock canon," the highest standards, with them.

Addressing the subject of the canon, Ralf Von Appen and Andre Doehring in their essay "Nevermind The Beatles, here's Exile 61 and Nico: 'The Top 100 Records of all Time' - a canon of pop and rock albums from a sociological and an aesthetic perspective" attempt to delimit a popular music canon (of Anglophone countries) by

analyzing different international lists of best albums. In order to achieve this, the authors state that they have to approach these works from a sociological and an aesthetical perspective, and in order to do this, they must create what they called a meta-list of the best albums, that is, a compilation of the statistics of 38 different rankings. The fact that The Beatles hold 4 of the 10 first positions is no surprise; however, *The Dark Side of the Moon* by Pink Floyd, placed in the 7<sup>th</sup> spot in the list of the 100 best albums in the history of rock music, constitutes an outstanding accomplishment for a band that at the end of the 60s and beginnings of the 70s was considered underground. Likewise, *The Wall* by Pink Floyd is ranked number 3 in the list of the best selling records.

Nevertheless, Von Appen and Doehring explain that behind these charts, there is a notable process of canonization that is related to similar social, economic, and education status of the various voters. As a matter of fact, the authors affirm that the average voter is white, male, from 20 to 40 years old and highly educated. This institutionalization of a canon causes the segregation of minority voters, consequently, exclusion of their musical preferences. Finally, the authors insist that, while the aesthetical approach tries to define the *real* value of canonized music, the sociological approach makes evident the dynamics behind the formation of a canon and the fact that this is inevitably tied to social dispositions (social and economic class for instance).

In a more serious attempt to approach popular music, in his article "Space Oddities: Aliens, Futurism and Meaning in Popular Music," Ken Mcleod states that an analysis of the so-called space rock that began in the 60s and developed during the 70s and 80s may reveal some noteworthy ideas in terms of popular culture and alienation. As

a matter of fact, Mcleod believes that the outer-space fantasies created by bands such as Pink Floyd, Hawkwind, and King Crimson represent an amalgamation of the different science fiction and science fiction-like events that saw the light in the 50s and 60s (the exploitation of outer-space themes in the movie industry, the growth of science fiction literature, and space exploration by the US and the USSR). Furthermore, Mcleod affirms that extraterrestrial topics in music also symbolize the departure from mass culture due to racial, gender, or other cultural issues. The author takes the case of David Bowie and his genderless extraterrestrial alter ego, Ziggy Stardust, to exemplify the otherness of nontraditional sexual practices or preferences and of Afro-futurism (a musical movement for afro-descendant artists which included futuristic and space themes to symbolize the *othersification* or marginalization that African Americans have suffered throughout their history). In addition, the technological exploration of progressive rock bands such as Pink Floyd, Yes, or King Crimson for musical purposes stands for an allegory of technological development and outer space exploration. Mcleod states that the technological colonization in rock music symbolizes the growing significance of technology in our society. Furthermore, when the author starts his review of the extraterrestrial and the 1980s, he affirms that new wave bands adopted Bowie's use of outer-space themes to symbolize transgression. In fact, many musicians in this era created alien alter egos which broke sexual, social, and musical boundaries. The latter provoked the canonization of several of these musicians as icons of the gay and lesbian movement. Finally, as the author moves into the 1990s, he affirms that alternative aliens characterized this decade. Alien stage personas continued to be a trait of the new-

emerging musicians, and new musical movements, such as techno and electronic music, materialized due to the development and influence of new technologies as the Internet and cyberspace. Moreover, nostalgic themes in music constituted a significant representation of alienation in the 90s. There was a break from the stereotypical ideals of the 80s rock music and musicians aimed to return to previous musical values.

Nonetheless, other remarkable artistic themes and expressions hoped to embrace futuristic ideas, like in the case of cyberpunk, which conveys the anxiety about technology and the social and ethical boundaries it was breaking.

David Chandler in his article “Roger Waters and British Opera” focuses on *Ca Ira*, an opera written by former member of Pink Floyd Roger Waters, and the mixed critical reviews it generated when released. On one hand, it constitutes the best selling opera in English, having been highly praised mostly by Waters and Floyd’s fans. On the other hand, it was disapproved by many classical critics. The reason for this reveals a controversial issue: reviewers affirmed that *Ca Ira* is not an opera but a musical, basing their opinion not on the music per se, but the audience to which it is intended for. In this sense, Waters belongs to a group of music writers whose operas have been underestimated due to their commercial success. In fact, it is on this problem, whether there can be a successfully commercial opera, in which the article is centered. Chandler refers to what critics considered the insult of presenting musicals in opera houses. In addition, this dispute about the artistic nature and value of the opera-like works can be traced back to the middle of the nineteenth century when a gap developed between a light form of opera called musical comedy and the serious opera. This split generated a

division of the audience. Lighter musical theater works got the largest amount of spectators; consequently, serious operas were associated with small and exclusive audiences and little commercial success. Moreover, serious opera composers started experimenting with advanced compositional techniques which were particularly difficult to digest by non-academic ears. The author states that this represents the beginning of elitism as one of the main characteristics of British opera. Furthermore, Chandler establishes the fact that *Ca Ira* has an excess of crescendos (which is one of the main reasons why critics consider *Ca Ira* a musical) suggests Water's unconscious need for approval by the intellectual circles due to his lack of academic musical formation and his middle-class background.

Jorge Sacido Romero and Luis Miguel Varela Cabo published an article dealing with the image of post-war England depicted in Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and *The Final Cut*: "Roger Waters' Poetry of the Absent Father: British Identity in Pink Floyd's *The Wall*." This article deals, specifically, with the political and socio-economic crisis suffered during the collapse of the welfare state after WWII. As a matter of fact, the authors believe that the portrayal of the main character of the movie version of *The Wall* (and his internal struggles) stands for the social identity of Britain in the 1970s and 1980s. For instance, the death of Pink's father (the main character) represents the death of the post-war dream, which was to create a land suitable for war-heroes. Moreover, excess in Pink's life as a way to diminish the pain caused by childhood traumas symbolizes the way in which British society was "narcotized by alcohol, TV, and Hollywood" in the second half of the XX century. The intoxication of Britain, Waters

suggests, is a consequence of ultra-liberal policies in Margaret Thatcher's era, which were meant to work as mechanisms to deal with the new global scene in which Britain was a mere shadow of what was once the largest empire, just an observer of the new international panorama dominated by two opposing savage beasts, one capitalist, the other totalitarian. Moreover, the authors affirm that *The Wall* portrays how the figure of the father (post-war dream) has been taken away, and this position was assumed by a gigantic machinery (sociopolitical crisis and Thatcher's policy) which transforms the individual into mere producers and consumers. In addition, *The Wall* demonstrates the speaker's frustration of living in modern society, in the hands of institutions such as the family and education that ended up asphyxiating the post-war dream and which lead to empty spaces and to feelings of frustration, anger, desperation, and fear.

Another significant article focusing on *The Wall* and its social and political spheres is "Rocking the Culture Industry/Performing Breakdown: Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and the Termination of the Post War Era" by Zeno Ackermann. The author believes that *The Wall* stands for one of the most remarkable works which tries to tear down the ideal of rock music as an agent of social change; moreover, it points out several ideological changes that occur in the politics and the culture of Britain in the 80s. The album includes various allusions to the postwar fiasco in British society fueled by the detrimental capitalistic machinery controlling every aspect of the individual. In terms of rock music as an agent of social change, Ackermann states that the amalgamation of rock and folk music characterized the first with the opposing, transcendent, and creative ideals of folk. The 60s was the decade in which a new kind of rock, an almost-religious

music gender with a social content, emerged and reached its climax at the end of the decade. The romantic quality of rock music showed the way, gave an answer, and transformed the people that felt trapped in a materialistic and automatized culture. After the hippie climax in 1969 staged in Woodstock, rock suffered a creative and ideological crisis and branched into two significant movements: punk rock and progressive rock. Progressive rock musicians aimed to transcend the standards of the stereotypical pop song and tried to monumentalize music by writing complex tempo/harmonic songs with pretentious lyrics. Nevertheless, by the end of the 70s prog bands such as Pink Floyd went through a crisis which led, at least in the case of the Floyd, to the disenchantment with the ideals of rock music. Their album, *The Wall*, symbolizes the disillusion of not only the life of the rock star but also of the whole machinery of rock music. As a matter of fact, the musician depicted in this album is no longer an image of social change who in his songs tells the truth about life, but a dictator, the ultimate image of power, who preaches intolerance and hatred. Ackermann continues and utters that this fascist image is the result of a life of isolation originated in the family, cultural factors, materialism, and failed love relationships. In terms of the work as a mirror of the postwar era, the album alludes to the bitterness British society had to go through after WWII. The narrative presented by Pink Floyd shows a child without a father who grows and develops several mental disorders. This is clearly an allegory of the British society which is unable to cope with traumatic experiences of war thus evolving into a sick organization which creates scenarios prompted to alienate its members. In addition, the mental breakdown that the main character of Pink Floyd's story suffers stands for the

fall, failure, and dismembering of the British Empire and the welfare state politics in the postwar era. *The Wall*, in this sense, constitutes a requiem for the postwar dream, its discourse, and its ideology.

### **Pink Floyd and Philosophy: Careful with that Axiom, Eugene!**

*Pink Floyd and Philosophy: Careful with that Axiom, Eugene!* constitutes an anthology of several academic essays about Pink Floyd. The book is divided into 5 main thematic categories: *Pink Floyd in Popular Culture*, *Alienation (Several Different Ones)*, *Apples and Oranges? Or Just Apples?*, *Perception, Non-Being and Other Empty Spaces*; and *The Art of Insanity: Nietzsche, Barrett, and Beyond*. As the names of the thematic categories suggest, the different articles in the book center on particular topics; some of them are: the collective identity of the band, the cultural impact of the band, philosophical issues suggested in the lyrics such as parameters of sanity, society and alienation, the nature of art and of the artist, death and empty spaces, and cultural organization and injustice; the impact and connection of Floyd and cinema, and the different ideological footprints in the work of the band.

Obviously, *The Wall* represents a recurrent subject of analysis in the different essays in the book. For instance, Sue Mroz in “Dark and Infinite” establishes that the movie version of *The Wall* has no sequence; it is a series of memories that interpose in the actual action of the movie which is Pink (the main character of the movie) sitting speechless in front of a TV and then a psychotic dream fueled by drugs. Therefore, the



structure of the plot juxtaposes the two traditional plot structures: Aristotle's Plot Curve and Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey. Mroz affirms that this juxtaposition creates the sense of nothing happening in the story and of a lack of closure. In "Dragged Down by the Stone: Pink Floyd and the Pressure of Life," David Detmer states that one of the recurrent themes in the works of the band is alienation and affirms that *The Wall* corresponds to a study on alienation, alienation of the artist from the audience, and of the artist from the artistic authenticity. Deena Weinstein in "Roger Waters: Artist of the Absurd" makes an analogy between Waters's view of life and Albert Camus's existential philosophy; she affirms that Waters and Camus's images of the artists are very similar due to the fact that they are permeated with absurdity. Waters evokes absurdity in his lyrics by generating frustration as a consequence of trying to promote unity through his songs. In *The Wall*, the mother and the wife represent, instead of a unified home, a broken and malfunctioning institution, as well as education which, as conceived by Waters, blocks communication, creativity, and unity in individuals. Weinstein establishes that the absurdity of *The Wall* relies on the fact that every time the persona tries to communicate or connect with a person, he adds a brick to the wall, which in turn alienates him from society. In the same way, in "Wish you Were Here (But you aren't): Pink Floyd and Non-Being" Jere O'Neill Surber states that *The Wall* represents the *opera prima* in terms of alienation in the works of the band. Surber affirms that by telling the story of a person that is separated from the contemporary world due to traumatic childhood experiences, oppression of the system, and failed interpersonal relationships, the album exemplifies Karl Marx's notion of alienation from

other people. Furthermore, George A. Reisch states in his essay “The Worms and the Wall: Michel Foucault on Syd Barrett” that *The Wall* by Pink Floyd and *Madness and Civilization* by Foucault share some significant notions about madness. Both works establish that madness is a social product and that it is society and its different manifestations that generate it and are to blame. In addition, guilt plays a significant role in madness due to the fact that, for Waters and Foucault, the mad man is corrupted not only mentally but also morally.

The latter represent some of the references to *The Wall* by the academics included in *Pink Floyd and Philosophy: Careful with that Axiom, Eugene!* Not only these scholars, but the whole group of intellectuals included in this anthology believe that the works of Pink Floyd have a significant academic value which is worth studying due to the social and cultural ideals that these works entail. In fact, the music of Pink Floyd is a complex work of art which gives rise to the reflection on many universal issues and whose final goal is to examine the core of the human soul.

### **So... Bottom Line...**

In a general sense, the texts written about Pink Floyd cover many different domains, from how to play their music to complex academic works which analyze the many universal issues implied in their lyrics. Since the band constitutes an icon in the rock industry, many of these works have commercial purposes; these are conceived to be sold on a massive scale, include collectable material, and have little value for my

research. Other documents such as newspaper articles, concert reviews, and history or anniversary reviews of albums have cultural and analytical value because they show the impact Pink Floyd has had in popular culture and they can be used as reference for an investigation of the historical evolution of the band or of rock music. Nevertheless, the value of these sources regarding my research is limited since they are referential and place the band and their production in time. In terms of film production, the documentaries about Pink Floyd are full of information about the making of their music, the relevance of their albums, and some references to the academic significance of the lyrics and the music. In some cases, they expose the intertextuality that characterizes the works of the band and the recurrent topics in Waters's lyrics: war, education, and insanity. In other cases, they point out the aesthetic relation between the music and the lyrics and how this relation gives an artistic value to the albums of the band. Nevertheless, these documentaries focus on the commercial aspect and praise the albums and the band and in order to reinforce their iconic image instead of presenting a complete academic reading of the works of Floyd.

Regarding academic articles, they present a new perspective of analysis of the band and their artistic production. In fact, the articles reviewed in my research are quite recent because they constitute part of the growing movement that supports canonizing rock music, a music genre that several exponents have been addressing as a valuable artistic expression. Nevertheless, due to the immaturity of this canonizing movement, the articles about Pink Floyd are not really innovative in their topics. As a matter of fact, these topics have been discussed informally since the albums were released; take the

case of alienation in Pink Floyd, which has been pointed out since the production of *The Wall* (more than thirty years ago). The same phenomenon occurs with the essays included in *Pink Floyd and Philosophy: Careful with that Axiom, Eugene!* The topics in this anthology are somewhat redundant or lack originality although there are some which are actually fascinating and innovative (as in the case of “Theodor Adorno, Pink Floyd, and the Psychedelics of Alienation” that represents a study of alienation in the first stage of the band, the Psychedelic Floyd, and establishes a relation between alienation, the use and the effects of psychedelic drugs, and the music structures the band used in this stage). But lack of originality and redundancy are not the only weaknesses one can find in this anthology. The analyses in the essays are sometimes too biographical; they focus excessively on the lives of Roger Waters or Syd Barrett in order to explain their arguments.

To conclude, the works written about Pink Floyd seem to be too general in some cases. In other cases, they have a commercial purpose, which make them worthless from an academic perspective. Furthermore, in the case of academic articles, they are too redundant, lack innovation in their themes, or are too biographical. It is in this point that my research has a significant value. My research aims to break with the redundancy of topics and to innovate with a whole new perspective of *The Wall*, one apart from the biographical approach and from the trite alienation people allude to when approaching the work of this band.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the present investigation attempts to summarize the most significant concepts related to the theory of power from a cultural studies perspective. This means that the works of social theorists such as Louis Althusser, Michael Foucault, and Stuart Hall will be reviewed. Even though each concept is going to be explained from the perspective of each of these authors, the following framework will not emphasize the ideas of one specific author in an authoritarian and subjective manner in order to imply a proper or more accurate definition. Contrary to this, the present framework aims to review, as objectively as possible, the various perspectives that different authors have about specific concepts.

In addition, this framework will present a general-to-specific system of organization, which means that the first to be reviewed will be the more general concepts about the theory of power and its background and will gradually move to more specific terms, finally concluding with the most specific concepts that will be considered for this investigation.

The first concept one has to refer to in an investigation centered on power and social criticism is **cultural studies**. For Chris Baker, this term constitutes the product of a group of thinkers and academics who consider that the formation of knowledge has a connection with politics. In this sense, cultural studies focuses on the discursive formation that creates forms of knowledge associated with particular topics, social

activities, or institutional practices in society (*Cultural Studies* 5). Moreover, due to the fact that the notion of discourse is the focal point of cultural studies, power and its different manifestations constitute the axis of this social theory. In terms of this relationship between power and cultural studies, Baker states:

The forms of power that cultural studies explores are diverse and include gender, race, class, colonialism, etc. Cultural studies seeks to explore the connections between these forms of power and to develop ways of thinking about culture and power that can be utilized by agents in the pursuit of change. (*Cultural Studies* 6)

Baker's emphasis on the humanitarian nature of this social theory is clear; the main purpose of cultural studies is to generate knowledge about power and its possible facets in order to promote social change. Furthermore, since the different forms of power that this social theory studies are particularly vast (including gender, race, class, etc), cultural studies constitutes a multidisciplinary field of knowledge whose boundaries are blurred (Baker, *Cultural Studies* 4-5). In this sense, CS represents a cluster of different ideas, theories, and practices of many different fields whose only purpose is to decipher cultural behaviors in order to reveal the power relations and ideas behind discursive formations (Baker, *Cultural Studies* 6). Baker continues and affirms that the relation power-discourse lies in the signifying practices of culture (*Cultural Studies* 7-8). In other words, cultural practices have material forms; they correspond to books, magazines, music, movies, and TV programs (among many others) that evidence cultural meanings, values, and contexts. In this sense, all human practices and human products have specific meanings in human history, and these meanings signal contextualized relations

of power, domination, and struggle (Hall, *Critical Dialogues* 105). Furthermore, Cultural Studies represents the approach that will validate this type of study because of its interdisciplinary nature and its alternative focal perspective. Although I will follow and explain several of its guidelines in this theoretical framework, power stands for the main theoretical theme of the following investigation.

Another significant term, which is significantly important to define due to the alternative work of art that this investigation aims to analyze, is **text**. Chris Baker establishes that for CS the text is not only a written work, but also any signifying practice, anything that can carry a meaning, and this includes images, sounds, objects, and activities. The reason for this relies on the fact that all cultural practices are language-like organized, and this makes them resemble readable texts (*Cultural Studies* 11). Furthermore, this author claims that texts do not carry meanings; on the contrary, meaning emerges from the interplay between the reader and the text. In other words, it is the act of reading which creates the text and its meaning. The latter represents the reason why, from a cultural studies perspective, anything that can be read can become a text (ibid). However, one must consider Stuart Hall's thoughts on the subject of texts: although texts have no ideology, they are not completely free from their contextual history. They are windows to the ideological perspectives present in society at the moment of their conception. Therefore, even though everything can be a text, social products are not ideologically free nor represent an arbitrary mixture of cultural traits (*Critical Dialogues* 160). Finally, it is important to emphasize the concept of culturalism

which, for Baker “stresses the ‘ordinariness’ of culture and the active, creative capacity of people to construct shared meaningful practices... explores the way that active human beings create cultural meanings...not confined to ‘high’ art (*Cultural Studies* 15). This excerpt demonstrates the way in which in CS texts do not constitute only the product of artistic elites, but also any human activity aiming to communicate an idea.

Any discussion about cultural studies will eventually lead to the next concept of this discussion: **power**. As stated above, this social theory is linked with the notion of power because the main purpose of CS is to identify the different discursive formations that evidence power relations. Chris Baker states that power stands for the glue that holds together the social machinery, and it defines social classes and subordinates subjects to them. In addition, power is not only a censoring force but also a force which enables and promotes as long as one sticks to its policies (*Cultural Studies* 10). In this sense, Michael Foucault, who is one of the most significant theoreticians exploring the notion of power, affirms that the emergence of a discipline of normalization in the eighteenth century promoted this positive facet of power, having the repressive image of power as collateral effect in the organizational system (*Abnormal* 76). Foucault continues and states that in a relationship between a powerful and a powerless subject there is an imbalance of power in one direction from the beginning. There is no reciprocity, exchange, sharing, or transparency between the powerful and the powerless; one has the control and the other is subjected (*Psychiatric Power* 146). This author asserts:



Power is exercised over the mad, criminals, deviants, children, and the poor in these terms. Generally, we describe the effects and mechanisms of the power exercised over these categories as mechanisms and effects of exclusion, disqualification, exile, rejection, deprivation, refusal, and incomprehension; that is to say, an entire arsenal of negative concepts or mechanisms of exclusion.

*(Abnormal 70)*

Foucault establishes that the individuals that present deviant behaviors are the ones being subjected, censored, and excluded while the individuals who function according to the established rules are the ones in control and are the ones benefiting from this power; this second category of individual would be the opposite of the mad, criminals, deviants, children, and the poor; these are the psychiatrist, the police officer, the sexual authority, parents, and the rich. Foucault calls this condition grotesque since these individuals have control over others just by virtue of their status or the enshrinement of a discourse *(Abnormal 37)*.

Foucault also refers to a specific kind of power in his writing; he calls it **disciplinary power**. This term alludes to the final and optimum state, that is, the moment when power will continue by itself and vigilance over individuals will be completely ideological; therefore, discipline will be a habit *(Psychiatric Power 47)*. In addition, disciplinary power uses methods such as supervision, reward, pressure, and punishment to submit subjects. In fact, the author affirms that punishment represents the dark side of discipline and is remarkably necessary to subdue subjects to it *(Psychiatric*

*Power* 51). Furthermore, disciplinary power has a double function: on one hand, it constitutes a force that discards abnormal individuals, separates and censures them according to parameters of discipline; on the other hand, it works as a force for normalization, that is, as an entity which creates institutions and practices whose purpose is to normalize individuals (*Psychiatric Power* 54).

Another significant term that is connected to cultural studies and to power is **ideology**. Chris Baker states that ideology relates to meaning and universal truths that, actually, are not universal but historically set and have the single purpose of maintaining power (*Cultural Studies* 10). In this sense, French philosopher Louis Althusser establishes that “ideology is the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group” (158), which means that these historical truths dictate the parameters of normality that will control mankind. Stuart Hall does not only focus on the oppressive nature of ideology and affirms that ideology constitutes “the mental frameworks—the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representation—which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works” (*Critical Dialogues* 25-26). For Hall, ideology stands for all cultural practices and cultural constructions employed to make reality understandable.

Louis Althusser draws a remarkable comparison in order to explain the intangible nature of ideology, by affirming that ideology resembles dreams:

The dream was the purely imaginary, i.e. null, result of ‘day’s residues’, presented in an arbitrary arrangement and order, sometimes even ‘inverted’, in other words, in ‘disorder’... Ideology, then, is for Marx an imaginary assemblage (*bricolage*), a pure dream, empty and vain, constituted by the ‘day’s residues’ from the only full and positive reality, that of the concrete history of concrete material individuals materially producing their existence. (159-160)

For Althusser, ideology and dreams are null, vain, and distorted and are just simple residues of a concrete reality. This author continues and establishes that the relationship between ideology and reality is one of representation: “ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.” (162). Nevertheless, he believes that the many different ideologies (religious ideology, ethical ideology, legal ideology, etc) represent just mere world outlooks (*ibid*) and, as outlooks, they are subjective perspectives. Moreover, although the different possible ideologies do not correspond to reality, they stand for allusions to it and, as allusions, they can be interpreted in order to understand their mechanics and their motives (*ibid*). Althusser also affirms that ideology is not the group of real relations between subjects and reality, but the imaginary relations which rule the interaction of these individuals and the material conditions (165). Furthermore, this author believes that the cause of this imaginary transposition of real conditions relies on “the existence of a small number of cynical men who base their domination and exploitation of the ‘people’ on a falsified representation of the world which they have imagined in order to enslave other minds by dominating their imaginations” (163). Althusser illustrates this by giving the example of

priests who, using the biased premise of the existence of God, have the masses follow them (ibid).

When one continues exploring the subject of ideology, another significant phenomenon related to it comes into view. Many thinkers believe that ideology is so significant that it creates subjects and not the other way around. For instance, Stuart Hall believes that individuals formulate their intentions within ideology; ideology constructs individual and collective positions within a society and subjects will come to fill these spaces (*Critical Dialogues* 48). When speculating about these social positions, Hall states that “it is not the subject that produces ideology as ideas but it is ideology, conceived as a material instance of practices and rituals, that constitutes the subject” (*Critical Dialogues* 47). Ideology and ideological positions are produced by rituals and material instances. In other words, in order to have an ideological position, one must carry out certain social rituals or have certain material resources connected to the ideal behind this ideology. Furthermore, Hall affirms that as an ideological vision emerges, so does the social group connected to it due to the fact that a particular social identity materializes from particular experiences which will equal the authentic cultural practices of a group (*Critical Dialogues* 144,155). In terms of cultural practices, Louis Althusser establishes that the individual “participates in certain regular practices which are those of the ideological apparatus on which ‘depend’ the ideas which he has in all consciousness freely chosen as a subject” (167). Both authors have similar thoughts in the sense that ideology has repercussions for experiencing subjectivity. He provides a provocative example to clarify this notion:

If [a subject] believes in God, he goes to Church to attend Mass, kneels, prays, confesses, does penance (once it was material in the ordinary sense of the term) and naturally repents and so on. If he believes in Duty, he will have the corresponding attitudes, inscribed in ritual practices ‘according to the correct principles.’ (ibid)

A subject that has already chosen an ideological position has to behave and adopt the practices that come with it. If one decides to be religious, one has to go to mass and adopt all the cultural symbols within it. In fact, he affirms that ideology does exist and it emerges and materializes in cultural practices (166). Halls goes further and states that subjects cannot live outside ideology since the latter involves the relation that subjects have with material existence; therefore, the relation between subjects and existence is mediated by these ideological practices and will always produce an ideology (*Critical Dialogues* 159).

A term that is closely connected to ideology and power is **hegemony**. Chris Baker affirms that hegemony stands for “the process of making, maintaining and reproducing ascendant meanings and practices” (*Cultural Studies* 10). Baker continues and affirms that one can observe different materialized forms of this term within society; it is manifested in the groups holding to power and in their attempts to preserve power through authority, organization, and leadership (ibid). In other words, the process of creating, maintaining, and reproducing power constitutes hegemony. Moreover, Stuart Hall states that hegemony is not a homogeneous group; on the contrary, it is a

“conjunctual politics” in which capitalist conditions, mass communications, and culture play a significant role. It is a complex game of the ruling classes to secure economic domination and political power (*Critical Dialogues* 162). Hall continues and establishes that in the struggle to articulate the leadership, the ruling bloc has to have influence over many different fields, including civil society, the state, the economic sector and, extremely important, popular culture (*Critical Dialogues* 163). However, the author affirms that in modern capitalist societies the appearance of a hegemonic group is closely related to mass consumption in the sense that hegemony will be *consumed* by the great majority of people (*Critical Dialogues* 162). To conclude, when Hall refers to the influence of the others, he affirms that “the 'others' are always those who rank and stand above us in the social hierarchy: people we 'look up to', and in turn respect” (*Policing the Crisis* 78). The author implies that the others, the fellow human beings, have hegemonic-like influence on the subject due to the fact that he/she looks up to them with respect.

Eventually a discussion about ideology and hegemony will lead to a term deeply rooted in these two, **common sense**. Stuart Hall defines it plain and simple: “common sense: being natural: that the way things are” (*Critical Dialogues* 82). Hall and Chris Baker emphasize the idea that common sense is the set of things taken for granted, the things that are considered fact. Moreover, Baker affirms that common sense is not rigid; on the contrary, what is considered a fact and natural is “continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered

ordinary life” (*Cultural Studies* 67). In this sense, the mechanisms that produce knowledge contribute to create the consent that common sense represents. The problem relies on who controls these mechanisms, and it is here that one recognizes the relationship between common sense and ideology/hegemony. Common sense seems to relate to public opinion since it constitutes the result of collective consent about parameters of normality; these parameters have to go public in order to become *universal*. In this sense, Hall states “the crystallizing of public opinion is thus raised to a more formal and public level by the networks of the mass media” (*Critical Dialogues* 74). In other words, according to Hall, public opinion is spread through mass media and communication channels. These communication channels are in control of hegemonic groups and work as means to transmit the ideological values that benefit these groups. In other words, common sense results from the influence of these communication channels in individuals. These convey a truth that is fact, that only works inside a specific society and that comes to equal the opinion of people, as Hall puts it:

It is communication and communication networks that create that complex creature we call public opinion...public opinion... does not simply form at random. It exhibits a shape and structure. It follows a sequence. It is a social process... the more such an issue passes into the public domain via the media, the more it is structured by the dominant ideologies... (*Critical Dialogues* 74)

Another concept that plays a significant role in theories of power and has a connection to ideology, hegemony, and common sense is **identity**. According to Chris

Baker, cultural studies, instead of trying to define this concept, suggests that identities do not exist; they have no essence or universal value; on the contrary, they are discursive formations produced by regulated or mediated opinions (*Cultural Studies* 11). It is here that cultural texts play a major part in the process of identity formation, take the case of advertising. Baker affirms that the job of advertising is to create an identity, not only of a product, but also of consumers; products are qualified with certain values that consumers are acquiring by purchasing the product; in this sense, one is not only buying a product, but also a lifestyle (*Cultural Studies* 69).

Stuart Hall presents another intriguing perspective on the subject of identity. He gives the example of the working class in England. For the working class, there are two main identities, the *us* and the *them*. While the *us* consists of their equal, the others that share the same socio-economical position, the *them* are “‘the people at the top', 'the higher ups', the people who give you your dole, call you up, tell you to go to war ... 'aren't really to be trusted'... 'will do y' down if they can'...” (*Policing the Crisis* 83). In addition, Hall believes that, according to this suppressed culture, the social moves of the hegemony have had a negative impact on the definition of their respective identities (ibid). Consequently, there is the juxtaposition of their identities; *us* represent my social and cultural comrades while *them* is the hegemonic enemy. These two notions constitute noteworthy examples of the vast range of discussions around the term of identity in the field of cultural studies. On one hand, CS studies the impact of consumerism and popular culture in identities; on the other hand, CS examines complex social relations and how the relation between different groups affects their identities.



**Discourse** constitutes the next term that is going to be examined in the present theoretical discussion. In the field of cultural studies one author in particular, Michel Foucault, has devoted a great amount of his writing to develop this concept. For instance, Chris Baker states that for Foucault the term discourse “refers to the regulated production of knowledge through language which gives meaning to both material objects and social practices” (*Cultural Studies* 20). This suggests that discourse has a direct relationship with ideology since both deal with meaning. As stated, discourse stands for the articulation of meaning of material and abstract objects, a meaning that is ideologically manufactured. Moreover, according to Baker, Foucault is concerned with language and practice; in fact, he dedicates many of his investigations to analyzing the surfaces of discourse and their impact on a specific time and spatial conditions (*ibid*). Baker continues and point out some of the more significant problems of discourse in CS and in Foucault’s theory: discourse generates objects of knowledge in an intelligible way at the same time that it excludes other forms of reasoning as unintelligible; besides that, discourse regulates not only what can be said, but also who can speak. The latter represents another instance in which discourse relates to ideology since discourse comes to reproduce and impose a partial truth and order (*ibid*). In this sense, Stuart Hall believes that, for Foucault, the regimes of truth generated in a society are subordinated to other regimes of truth and relations of power; this is represented in the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of the fields of knowledge. In other words, when analyzing a discursive formation, one will eventually be driven to analyzing relations of power as part of the raw material of discourses (*Critical Dialogues* 136). Finally, Foucault affirms

that power relations and authority used to appeal in specific discourses are not intrinsic to epistemological law; therefore, using them as means of control and of generation of scientific knowledge constitutes a grotesque act (*Abnormal* 37).

Another significant term to take into consideration in a discussion about theory on power is **subject/subject position**. Louis Althusser establishes that two main definitions of subject exist: “(1) a free subjectivity, a centre of initiatives, author of and responsible for its actions; (2) a subjected being, who submits to a higher authority, and is therefore stripped of all freedom except that of freely accepting his submission” (182). Althusser also states that the category of subject constitutes an important component of an ideology; however, there are no subject positions if ideologies do not allow them (171). In other words, the relation between the subject and its ideology is characterized by a symbiotic relation, and it is this relation that gives a value to the subject. In this sense, Chris Baker believes that “subjectivity is an effect of language or discourse” (*Cultural Studies* 22) and that “subjects are the effects of discourse because subjectivity is constituted by the positions which discourse obliges us to take up” (*Cultural Studies* 64). In terms of the subject being obliged by discourse, Althusser affirms that:

The subjects ‘work’, they ‘work by themselves’ in the vast majority of cases, with the exception of the ‘bad subjects’ who on occasion provoke the intervention of one of the detachments of the (Repressive) State Apparatus. But the vast majority of (good) subjects work all right ‘all by themselves’, i.e. by ideology ... They are inserted into practices governed by the rituals of the ISAs

[ideological state apparatuses]. They ‘recognize’ the existing state of affairs (*das Bestehende*), that ‘it really is true that it is so and not otherwise’, and that they must be obedient to God, to their conscience, to the priest, to de Gaulle, to the boss, to the engineer, that thou shalt ‘love thy neighbour as thyself’, etc. (181).

According to the author, the main role of state apparatuses and institutions corresponds to spread, through discourse (language and action), the governing ideology and to make subjects behave according to its standards.

Stuart Hall explores another important term for the purpose of this theoretical review: **moral panic**. Hall uses the definition provided by Stan Cohen in order to explain this term: “societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests” (*Policing the Crisis* 16). Moral panic seems to refer to a symptom or anxiety about difference, a fear of diverging from social standards. In terms of these social standards, Hall continues and affirms that “the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other rightthinking people” (ibid), in other words, authorities and hegemonic groups that see their hegemonic position endangered by alternative practices and ideals. Hall uses the term “ideological discrepancies” to refer to this divergence that leads to moral anxiety (*Policing the Crisis* 21).

In an investigation centered on power, **ideological state apparatus** is another vital term that must be reviewed in this theoretical framework. When doing research on this term, Louis Althusser's work stands out as one of the most thorough approaches to the subject. Althusser defines the term in the following comprehensive manner:

I shall call Ideological State Apparatuses a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions...we can for the moment regard the following institutions as Ideological State Apparatuses:

the religious ISA (the system of the different churches),

the educational ISA (the system of the different public and private 'schools'),

the family ISA,<sup>[8]</sup>

the legal ISA,<sup>[9]</sup>

the political ISA (the political system, including the different parties),

the trade-union ISA,

the communications ISA (press, radio and television, etc.),

the cultural ISA (literature, the arts, sports, etc.). (143)

The author does not rely on the abstract ideas that characterize a discussion on cultural theory and points out openly the different institutions/organizations that constitute the group of ideological state apparatuses. He continues and affirms that these ISAs (ideological state apparatuses) function predominantly by ideology; nevertheless, they also use repression to accomplish their task, and this represents the reason why Schools, Churches, and Families (to name a few) use methods of punishment, expulsion, and

selection (to name a few) to discipline (145). Moreover, he establishes ISAs should not be confused with mere state apparatuses (SAs). Two main differences exist between ISAs and SAs. First, SAs belong to the public domain while ISAs belong to the private domain. Second, SAs function by violence while ISAs work mainly by ideology (ibid). According to the author, in marxist theory the SAs take the form of the government, the administration, the army, the police, the courts, and the prisons (142-143). All these institutions have a primary role: to secure the political conditions, by means of political repression, so that the hegemonic class maintains the control; by achieving this, they also secure and promote ISAs (which in turn will work as another tool, an ideological one, to maintain power) (149-150). When addressing the subject of ISAs, Althusser affirms that the communications apparatus, for instance, showers individuals with daily doses of “nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, moralism, etc, by means of the press, the radio and television”; likewise, the religions apparatus uses tools like sermons to convey its ideology and *program* the mind of subjects according to it (154). In the case of the education apparatus, it takes children from the more vulnerable ages (the kids at infant-school) and starts the process of bombarding them with the ruling ideology in the form of French, arithmetic, natural history, sciences, literature, ethics, civic instruction, or philosophy. Then, at the age of sixteen, a certain amount of children are ejected into the labor world (working classes) with their minds programmed to accomplish their social and working duties (155). A small group continues their preparation within the education apparatus and reaches privileged positions at the top: intellectuals, agents of exploitation (capitalists and managers), agents of repression (soldiers, policemen,

politicians and administrators), and professional ideologists (priests) (ibid). After years of preparation, each social stratus is provided with the ideology they have to fulfill in society:

The role of the exploited (with a ‘highly-developed’ ‘professional’, ‘ethical’, ‘civic’, ‘national’ and a-political consciousness); the role of the agent of exploitation (ability to give the workers orders and speak to them: ‘human relations’), of the agent of repression (ability to give orders and enforce obedience ‘without discussion’, or ability to manipulate the demagogy of a political leader’s Rhetoric). (155-156)

Finally, Althusser establishes that even though the education apparatus plays a remarkable role in the implantation of ideology in the mind of subjects, one should not forget that the education (implantation of ideology) of people also depends upon other apparatuses; the author believes that social values are taught in “the Family, in the Church, in the Army, in Good Books, in films and even in the football stadium” (156).

**Education** constitutes one of the main ideological state apparatuses which play a significant role in Althusser’s research. Althusser believes that in mature capitalist societies the educational ideological state apparatus constitutes the dominant ISA (152). Education has reached its dominant position due to the fact that children at school not only learn techniques and knowledge, but also internalize rules of morality, good behavior, civic and professional conscience according to the specific jobs they are meant to carry out (132-133). Foucault affirms that the tool that education uses to promote

these values is discipline (*Psychiatric Power* 150). Likewise, Althusser continues and establishes that the great majority of the people do not suspect the influence that education has on them to make them act or think in certain ways, and it is this veiled devotion to the educational system that contributes to maintaining the educational ideological apparatus in its privileged position, to be considered as natural, indispensable and beneficial, as the Church was centuries ago (157). In fact, education is presented to the subject as:

a neutral environment (...) where teachers respectful of the ‘conscience’ and ‘freedom’ of the children who are entrusted to them (...) by their ‘parents’ (...) open up for them the path to the freedom, morality and responsibility of adults by their own example, by knowledge, literature and their ‘liberating’ virtues.

(Althusser 156-157)

This fake freedom of choice corresponds to the main mechanism that the educational ideological apparatus makes use of in order to preserve its omnipresence in the collective mind of culture.

Another important apparatus for this investigation corresponds to **the state**. Althusser establishes that the state has a repressive nature: it was conceived as a machine with the only purpose of ensuring the domination of the ruling classes over the working classes, by that, guaranteeing economic order (137). Moreover, this apparatus has different facets, such as the police, the courts, the prisons and the army; the latter works as a supplementary repressive and disciplinary force for the state (ibid). Stuart Hall, when dealing with the subject of the state, affirms that at first glimpse this

apparatus aims to preserve the general interest and universal rights; it appears to be free of any class interest. However, in capitalist societies, general interests become economic interests; therefore, general interests equal the interest of the ruling-producing class (*Policing the Crisis* 106). Hall establishes: “the state is therefore not independent of the class struggle; but it is, or comes to be, the structure which enables a ruling-class alliance to 'give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones'” (*Policing the Crisis* 105). Hall also refers to one of the most important theorists of power and SAs as a significant reference to the theory of the state, Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci believes that this machinery has another vital role beside its coercive one, and it is the role of leadership, direction, and education, due to the fact that it aims to create a more civilized society (*Policing the Crisis* 108). Gramsci adds that this apparatus uses both types of power, coercion (domination) and consent (direction), to assure its authority (*ibid*). Hall also adds that the state uses several apparatuses to guarantee its control; for instance, by operating within the judicial ground, it can segregate social phenomena that threaten social security (*Policing the Crisis* 111). Furthermore, the state organizes its structure by means of the education system and transmits its values through public opinion and the media apparatus (*Policing the Crisis* 109-110). Finally, Hall believes that in modern societies there is a sort of confusion/fusion of the state and society and, therefore, “its 'rule' comes to stand for the social order, for 'society' itself. Hence a challenge to it represents a token of social disintegration. In such conjunctures, 'law' and 'order' become identical and indivisible” (*Policing the Crisis* 111).



A concept that is closely related to the notion of the state and that plays a significant role in its machinery corresponds to **the law**. Stuart Hall states that at the beginning the law was considered of a divine nature; in other words, the law stood for a gift from God to maintain public order and, even though it is now believed to be secular, its genealogy shows that it has evolved from its origins as divine right (this explains the evolution of historical figures as priests and kings who have been closely related to divine right) (*Policing the Crisis* 92). Moreover, the law stands as the only institutionalized defense for social values; these values rely on the right way of thinking of just men, but when these men become irrational and a threat to social order, law constitutes the only and most powerful barrier against devilish anarchy (*Policing the Crisis* 81). In this sense, the law stands for “a promise to defend the interests of all members of society against the criminal (...) life is a property – to whom they belong – will be protected” (ibid). Besides that, Foucault affirms that the parameters to create the discourse of the law are fairly ambiguous. As a matter of fact, he gives the example of how the law relies sometimes on the medical discourse to justify the guilt of the accused because the legal discourse is not enough. Foucault mentions the case of monstrosity, which is evaluated from a medical perspective in order to prove its cultural transgression. The medical discourse is used to demonstrate how a monster violates the laws of nature; consequently, the monster violates cultural standards of normality (defended by the legal apparatus) (*Abnormal* 82). Likewise, several discourses outside the legal apparatus are used as legal evidence in order to defend a specific legal thesis. Foucault notes the case of psychiatric opinions used in trials so that judges condemn, no

longer the offense, but the offender and his/her psycho-moral condition (*Abnormal* 43-44).

**The family** constitutes the last essential ideological state apparatus for this investigation. Stuart Hall affirms that traditionally the family corresponds to the institution where inner controls, notions about morality and social life, values of socialization, and the first barriers against sexuality are produced. Moreover, this institution accomplishes all of the above through the game of love-anger, reward-punishment, and its patriarchal structure that individuals/family members have to go through (*Policing the Crisis* 79). In terms of this ambivalent game inside the structure of the family, Hall establishes: “love is what we hope and pray will emerge from the family, but disciplining, punishing, rewarding and controlling is what we seem actually to do in it a great deal of the time” (ibid). This expectation-reality interplay constitutes the reason why, in the family, individuals internalize the whole frame of action, the fundamental dos and don'ts possible in family and social relations. In fact, this institution, as well as others, helps to internalize the laws that glue society together and the values that stand against social threats such as crime and indiscipline (ibid). In regards to the internal structure of the family, Foucault suggests that the power exercised inside it, more than disciplinary, is sovereign-like due to the fact that the father is located at the top, as the king-like figure who embodies power (*Psychiatric Power* 79-80). In addition, in this ISA contractual and property relationships between its members exist, “which recalls the power of sovereignty rather than the monotony and isotopy of

disciplinary systems” (ibid). This theorist also affirms that the reason why the relations inside the family hold these characteristics corresponds to the constant reference to blood and sacred bonds that join the family as a whole, such as marriage and birth (ibid). Moreover, this ISA is considered to be the “zero point”; this means that the family constitutes the institution where other ISAs are implemented (*Psychiatric Power* 81). For instance, Foucault emphasizes that the family and the asylum discourse mutually support each other to the point that they give rise to the psychiatric discourse which, at the same time, has family values as the base of its doctrine (*Psychiatric Power* 94). However, the family seems to have the opposite effect also: it is considered to be the cause of insanity in individuals; the author affirms that “what precipitates episodes of madness are vexations, financial worries, jealousy in love, grief, separations, ruin, and poverty, etcetera” (*Psychiatric Power* 99). Foucault also states that the power relations inside the family core are the ones that generate madness; the author gives the example that excessive will of the father over his children is what predisposes them to insane episodes (*Psychiatric Power* 100). Nevertheless, when the mentally ill are to be treated, the psychiatric institution, paradoxically, implements a family-like approach, filled with love and security, to cure the insane, and at the same time, to restore moral values and controls, the way the family does it in the first place (*Psychiatric Power* 108). Finally, Foucault emphasizes another relevant characteristic of the family: its disciplinary essence. When family values are transferred into disciplinary systems, these systems mark the family with disciplinary techniques; for instance, the family has adopted duty repartition, which is an attribute of the discipline of the school, or the family begins to

function as a micro clinic by differentiating the normal from the abnormal as a psychiatric institution (*Psychiatric Power* 115). In fact, the family developed a watchful eye that will function as a psychiatric gaze, as a mechanism to observe, judge, and generate knowledge out of the powerless member in this ISA. This gaze produces control and censorship over the child's sexuality, for instance (*Psychiatric Power* 124-125). Its functioning is vital in order to avoid major evils such as infantile masturbation, a practice that now a days is considered universally practiced but that in the past was either ignored or completely forbidden (*Abnormal* 85). Foucault establishes that "the crusade against masturbation reflects the development of the restricted family (parents and children) as a new apparatus of knowledge-power" (*Abnormal* 353).

A final notion which has a significant value for this investigation is that of **the Panopticon**. This is an architectural prototype developed by Jeremy Bentham, which Foucault refers to in order to explain and to justify several of his ideas about power. It is a circular building consisting of an outer ring and a tower in the center designed to create a sense of surveillance on the subjects imprisoned in the many chambers that give form to the outer circle. Foucault affirms that "a single person will be placed in each of these boxes; each body will have its place" (*Psychiatric Power* 75). By this, the institution achieves control over the subject, by subjugating his body. Besides that, by isolating each subject in his/her respective cell, all possible strikes and multiplicities are controlled (ibid). Furthermore, by having powerful lights pointing at the cells which makes it impossible for the prisoners to see anything but the light, this system ensures

that the prisoner cannot see his observer, meaning that he cannot know whether or not he is being permanently supervised. This implies that the prisoner becomes used to the idea that he is being observed by a faceless vigilant at all times and guarantees that the person does the right thing even when he is alone (*Psychiatric Power* 76). In this sense, by producing games of light (directed to the prisoner) and darkness (surrounding the supervisor) the panopticon involves two main notions: first, that everything is perceivable and, second, that power is an optical effect (*Psychiatric Power* 77). Moreover, as in the case of a physician using a light when examining a patient and creating knowledge about his/her disease, in the panopticon light is used to extract information about the prisoner and to create knowledge about him/her. Foucault affirms that the panopticon is “an apparatus of both individualization and knowledge; it is an apparatus of both knowledge and power that individualizes on one side, and which, by individualizing, knows” (ibid). The author uses the example of the hospital as an institution that has included in its evolution the spatial organization of the panopticon and states that the hospital cures because it includes, distributes, and applies power according to Bentham’s model (*Psychiatric Power* 102).

The last concept that must be addressed because of its clear connection to the panopticon in Foucault’s theory and to the whole theory of power is that of **punishment**. Foucault believes that historically punishment constitutes the vengeance of the sovereign upon the criminal that breaks his law (*Abnormal* 108). Punishment had to equal the crime; this means that the barbarities of crimes had to be evident in the barbarity of the punishment (following the notion of an eye for an eye) (ibid). However, in the

eighteenth century, with the social revolutions and the new ways of social organization, the new essential elements of punishment are based on the new principle of power, discipline. In this sense, punishment no longer corresponds to the vengeance of sovereignty upon the dishonest, but a way to neutralize the basis of crime, to correct deviant behavior (*Abnormal* 114- 115).

This theoretical framework aims to provide a clear and concise approach to the subject of power from the perspective of cultural studies. It is meant to be not only the theoretical basis for this investigation, but also a possible reference for future investigations on the subject of power. Furthermore, although the review of theory mostly centers on the works of Chris Baker, Louis Althusser, Stuart Hall, and Michel Foucault, one has to remember the intertextuality of their works; in this sense, there are references to other significant figures on the subject, such as Antonio Gramsci and Jeremy Bentham. All this body of theory was arranged, as stated at the beginning of this section, from the most general terms to the most specific, in order to demonstrate the connections that exist between one term and another and, by this, to reveal the way in which power moves between the network of social institutions and the different facets that power has exhibited throughout history and culture.

## **Historical background**

### **a) England After the Two World Wars (Historical/Political Overview)**

World War I gave a dramatic strike to the status and image of England as the most powerful and influential empire on the surface of the earth and, by the end of World War II, Great Britain lost all trace of past glory and was immersed, as the rest of Europe, in an appalling devastation.

At the end of the XIX century, Great Britain was the head of, perhaps, the largest empire on earth, whose colonial power extended to territories in Africa, Asia, America and Australia (Arnstein 173). In addition, England represented the principal industrial machinery of the world. Nevertheless, its position at the top was increasingly threatened by the rising German Empire. The tension between the two powers led to The Big War (WWI) and 20 years later to WWII. In a period of 31 years, Great Britain lost its position as the most influential and powerful empire to the two rising powers: USA and the communist USSR. In addition, the empire lost its grip in several colonies and was left as the weak leader of the Commonwealth, a group of nations that while previously part of the British Empire, were now independent, but still praised a symbolic submission to the Queen and her state. Decolonization was a natural or expected phenomenon due to the impoverishment of European empires after the war and to the fall of nationalistic ideals, many of them supported by racism (which showed its darkest facet in the Nazi atrocities in WWII) (Burns 214).

After 1945, Britain was a worn out empire in monetary debt with USA and had lost economic and political strength inside and outside its borders. This brought significant consequences in the life of Britons, such as food rationing, tax raising, restrictions on gasoline and newspapers, etc. (Arnstein 367-371). Moreover, the country had to face the challenge of rising from its ashes. Some of these challenges were giving households to the thousands of citizens that had lost their homes during wartime, creating employment, and reactivating the economy. The government accomplished the latter by nationalizing several industries. The other two were tackled by the gradual launching of the welfare state. One example of this move constitutes the creation of the National Health Service in 1945 (Burns 209-210). The guidance of the falling empire by conservative governments in the 50s and the beginning of the 60s led to a somehow economic, social and political stability and prosperity. This stability could be traced in what is called the society of leisure, a phenomenon found in advanced capitalists societies in which the industrial and commercial spheres gave a significant place to youths as consumers and their lifestyles (Hall and Jefferson 197).

The sixties are widely known as a decade of change all around the world. Civil rights, artistic movements including fashion, design and pop art, the cult for youth, and changes in sexual practices represent some of the significant transformations that global society evidenced in this era. Gradually, the former empire showed a more tolerant social environment. For instance, important groups from former colonies migrated to England and contributed to the process of multiculturalization in British society (Burns 224-225). However, there were many revolts in many sectors of society protesting



against immigration based on fascist and neo-nazi ideals (ibid). Furthermore, in the sixties, not only the feminist movement reemerged after a period of calm due to accomplishing female vote in England in the first quarter of the XX century, but also the gay-lesbian movement gained strength in this decade. Previously, homosexuality was mostly exercised in the shadows of underground clubs due to the fear of penal punishment (Burns 226-227).

By the 70s, the empire had experienced an economic decline. Generally, there was a feeling of economic and social backwardness as consequence of malfunctioning trade unions, excessive inflation, growing unemployment, and the rise of crime rates (Burns 255). The response in 1979 to all these social tribulations corresponded to Thatcherism. William Burns affirms that Thatcherism stands for “a conservatism willing to break with the postwar social compact using an aggressive, confrontational attitude to the unions, hostility to state ownership, and plans to make substantial cuts in the welfare state” (232). The head of this movement was the first woman to become prime minister of Britain: Margaret Thatcher. Thatcherism constitutes one of the many right-winged movements by governments all around the world in the late 70s and early 80s (Burns 233).

Thatcherism represented an effort to make British society more American-like. In a sense, this political ideology promoted neo-liberal values such as individualism, self-reliance, and the privatization of economy, as a response to the economic slow down that, for Thatcher, had its root in the maintenance of the welfare state (ibid).

## **b) Cultural and Social Revolutions in the 50s and 60s (Social and Cultural Overview)**

In the third quarter of the XX century, not only Britain but also the whole world went through some significant transformations which generated cultural and social changes and marked the beginning of the so called *postsocieties* (*postsocieties* due to the rising trend of using the prefix *post* in all new cultural manifestations: postindustrial, postmodern, postmarxism, poststructuralist, etc.) (Hobsbawm 287-288). These included the reduction of peasantry, the fall of industrialization, the rise of the rate of education, migration from rural areas to urban centers, the rise of feminist consciousness and the decline of the traditional family. All these changes, which had their roots in 50s and before, would become magnified in the 60s.

The fundamental change that contributed to the transformations in such a radical decade as the 60s corresponded to the new role of youth in society. Previous values related to nationalisms were questioned after WWII, which resulted in a “rebellion against traditional values [and] a temporary worship of the vitality of youth” (Arnstein 391). The concept of youth changed. Hobsbawm states that youth was no longer a passing stage to reach adulthood but the final stage of human development, after it, life would go downhill (325).

In Britain, all the changes against old values are known as the permissive society. England was the capital of fashion, the home of James Bond, the Beatles, and the miniskirt. London was one of the centers of social change in which youth represented its

raw material and pop culture the final product (Arnstein 414-415). Manifestations of this pop culture included cinema, rock music, art, fashion, and the media. Changes in censorship and the minimum age for voting and driving also exemplify the permissive society in Britain (ibid).

### **c) From Permissive Music to I Hate Pink Floyd**

In the 60s, pop music in Britain had such a considerable impact that, currently, some British bands are known as the most important bands in the history of rock music. In the previous decade music was practically imported from the US. In this sense, young Britons were used to listening to American (US) blues, jazz, and rock-and-roll artists, such as Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf, Roy Orbison, etc. When these Britons grew, and with the influence of the social changes taking place in the 60s, many of them decided to create their own bands basing their sound on the influence of their youth idols; this is the case of the very first wave of British rock artists, such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, The Who, The Yardbirds, The Zombies, etc. These bands were popular not only within the United Kingdom, but also in the United States. In fact, these groups led the phenomenon known as the (first) British invasion (which is known as the importation of music from Britain to the US market and whose first *invaders* were The Beatles) (Burns 222). These groups were considered to evolve rapidly and to experiment with music,

sounds, and even with ideologies (Hinduism, Buddhism, etc). Furthermore, drugs played a vital part in the evolution of their art and many adopted or implemented new trends in terms of music like psychedelic sounds (inspired in the drug of the moment, LSD).

There are some remarkable albums which illustrate all these innovative aspects of British music, such as *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* by The Beatles, *Tommy* by The Who, and *Odyssey and Oracle* by the Zombies.

British bands evolved with the decade and, by the end of 60s, many of these bands were leading the hippie movement, musically speaking. However, the peak of the hippie movement, Woodstock in 1969, also marked the beginning of the decline of the movement and of their music. Many people reached the understanding that hippies were not actually going to change the world. In the same way, many musicians realized that they were not going to stop the Vietnam War with songs about peace and love (Reisch 4-3). By the end of the 60s, many bands dissolved, just like the dreams of the flower children (Burns 223).

The end of the 60s and beginning of the 70s witnessed a second and a third wave of British invaders. However, these bands were not as original, creative, and talented as their predecessors, many of them playing music too elaborate (the so called progressive bands) others playing music with worn-out themes, such as love, whose purpose was related to commercial success. This is known as the musical decadence of the 1970s, in which two ramifications of rock music corrupted the genre: progressive rock (which became kind of a meta-language in which resources were used not because the song needed them, but to prove the mastery and virtuosity of the performers) and disco

(which represented the automation of music and was associated only with party-like environments, in other words, music as equivalent to party) (Reisch 4). The somber outlook of the 70s that characterized British society also impregnated artistic production. The difficult economic, social, and political conditions, which the 60s' fashions, and idealizations could not solve (or hide), discharged into a new musical movement, punk.

Punk is the crudest expression of rock music. It is the genre that embodies rebellion and disenchantment, that screams the injustices but does not try to change the world. It just exists (because injustices exist). In terms of musical technique, punk also stands for the vindication of rock music, by going back to the basics: the upbeat drums, the screaming, and the raucous guitar (Burns 223). As soon as punk emerged in the musical scene of Britain and the US, it became a dominant trend. As stated above, music was no longer about changing the world, accomplishing peace, and living in a hippie commune. Music was about anger, hatred, and rebellion; once again, old values were discharged and a more honest music, in accordance to social and political conditions, took control of radio stations. It is in this era that many people recall singer and frontman of The Sex Pistols, Johnny Rotten, wearing his famous "I hate Pink Floyd" shirt and voicing his disagreement with old thematic and esthetic values in rock music (Reisch 5). Besides The Sex Pistols, other significant punk bands/artists were The Ramones, The Clash, Dead Kennedys, and Patti Smith.

By the end of the 70s, the punk movement had become a genre, and the norm to follow, so the crude sound of many of their bands changed into a more digestible sound, perhaps, to fulfill commercial purposes. Other bands could not even reach the end of the

decade and split up. The punk movement had its peak and fell from that position (as in the case of psychedelic music at the end of the 60s), and other genres, such as post-punk and new wave, became predominant with the change of decade.

#### **d) What about Pink Floyd?**

Pink Floyd materialized when singer, guitarist, and songwriter Syd Barrett joined the band of his childhood friend Roger Waters in 1966. Before Barrett, the band played covers of blues; they did not seem to have a promising future. When Barrett joined the band, they changed their name to Pink Floyd (first, The Pink Floyd Sound, then The Pink Floyd and, finally, just to Pink Floyd) and adopted his artistic and musical perspectives as their own. The innovative sound brought by the new member put Floyd in a position they never expected, as one of the leading members of the psychogenic movement in music. Shortly after The Beatles released in 1967 their iconic *Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band* (which is considered a milestone of psychedelic rock), Floyd came up with their first album, *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*; this was an album that, with its themes related to childhood, fear, innocence, and parameters of normality, pushed the genre to new boundaries. However, the days of glory did not last long; Barrett had to leave the band in 1968 due to a schizophrenic breakdown, many people believe, caused by the overuse of LSD (Reisch 6).

After Barrett's departure, the band vanished from the lists of popularity. Moreover, they spent the next years struggling to find their new sound with their new singer and guitarist, David Gilmour, until 1971, when they released *Meddle*. Two years after that, the group came up with the album that was going to put them back again at the top the list of popularity, *The Dark Side of the Moon*. As soon as the album hit the shelves of record stores, it became a social phenomenon (Reisch 5-6). Immediately, people identified with the gloomy themes related to the aspects of modern life that drive people to insanity. In this sense, the album deals with issues like the brevity of life, time, death, greed, and the parameters of normality and breaking the norm. With *Dark Side*, Floyd was leaving all possible traits connected to the cheerful 60s behind and was addressing more real topics related to the unpleasantness of the 70s. The album established Floyd as one of the most important bands on the planet. In 1975, the band released the album *Wish You Were Here*, a tribute to their friend and ex-bandmate Syd Barrett.

In 1977, the band released *Animals*, an album inspired by George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. In the tour that followed this album, an incident which had vital relevance to the writing of their next work took place. Roger Waters, singer, bassist, and lyricist, spat at one fan after a show (Reisch X). After the episode, Waters tells that the possible explanation of his behavior was caused by the feeling of having a wall between him and other people, of being isolated from the people surrounding him. This is how Waters came up with the idea and the whole concept of their next work, *The Wall*.

In 1979 the band released a four-sided album that tells the story of a man who

finds himself isolated from his equals by a metaphorical/emotional wall. *The Wall* constitutes an epic story about the human condition and the environment, about the inexplicable notions related to loneliness, human nature, and the essence of society, but it deals with them through universal images related to the family, education, childhood, love, and war, among others (Reisch 86-87). In this sense, the story stands for a semi-autobiographical account of Waters's life, which many people connected with around the globe. This album also represented a landmark in the history of Floyd and of rock music. It seems that the band gathered all the disenchantment around society in those years and produced a magnificent tribute to the despair of living in modern society.

In the 1980s Floyd was already worn out and, by 1983, Waters left the band. They continued and produced two more studio albums until 1995, when they disbanded. Nowadays, Pink Floyd is considered one of the most significant bands in the history of rock due to their majestic music, their intriguing lyrics, and their universal topics. The work of Pink Floyd seems to have one main purpose: to explore each and every corner of the human soul in order to depict the nature of humanity. Furthermore, they represent a mirror of an exciting and innovative era, the second half of the Twentieth Century, and all its social, political, and economical turmoil.



## Methodology

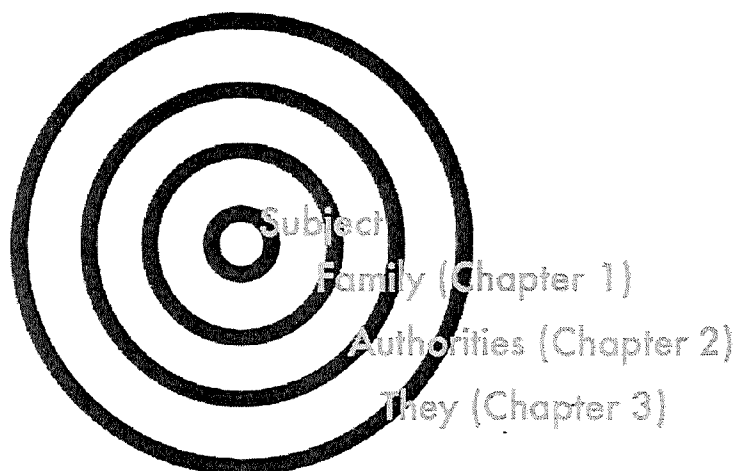
The methodology employed in this investigation corresponds to the method applied in every literary analysis, that is, focusing on the text and its language in order to reveal the semantic relations underneath the syntax. Once semantic associations are identified, they are going to be examined under the light of the theory reviewed in the previous section. In this sense, a dialogue will emerge between the text and the theory in order to propose an interpretation which, in this case, will focus on the power relations within *The Wall*. This methodology represents a suitable choice due to the nature of an academic investigation like this one, in which one should focus the analysis in the text, its words, its semantics, and syntax relations that create or contribute to create a meaning. In this sense, the innovative factor of this investigation relies on using an already accepted methodology to analyze a text which, as already stated before, does not constitute a canonical text or represent a canonical artistic genre.

Regarding the corpus, several songs/poems are going to be organized in categories and are going to be included in the different chapters of this investigation. These categories will include: songs related to the family, songs related to the law, songs dealing with education, songs that suggest the panopticon, songs that show images that embody power like the physician, the teacher, and the judge, etc. All the songs in each category are going to be dissected in order to evidence first the semantic relations between each other and then the connection that can be established between the semantic relations and the theory in order to produce an analysis supported by the aforementioned

theoretical background.

By establishing the connection between the text, the semantics, and the theory, the reader will observe and comprehend what the text may be trying to transmit in terms of power, repression, control, domination, freedom, human relations, collectivity, and the self.

Finally, the following chapters are set not by chance; they are set based on a specific-to-general structure, as the following image demonstrates it:



In this picture, there are four rings that represent the different categories of characters in the album. The subject is at the center of the diagram and the other rings represent concentric circles that stand for his family, the authorities that he has contact with, and *they* as a manifestation of the whole social body. This organization allows seeing the closeness of these characters and the subject and is a structured way to approach all characters in the album in order to avoid any possible confusion when dealing with their role and the influence they have on the subject.

## **CHAPTER I: Mama Loves her Baby and Daddy Loves you Too (Family and Power)**

Some of the central and more powerful images in *The Wall* are the family-related images. It seems that when speaking about power relations in *modern life*, the family constitutes one of the most significant social institutions which uses power as a tool to shape and impose proper behavior and parameters of normality, and this may be the reason why the speaker, when referring to it, evidences a kind of rage and resentment.

In the album, there is one song/poem which is vital at the moment of dealing with the family, "Mother." This song portrays the relationship of the I and his over protective mother, who sometimes seems so obsessed with the speaker that she may be considered infatuated with her son or even mentally ill. This song will be compared with other songs/poems within the category of what can be called the *family songs*, which are "The Thin Ice," "Another Brick in the Wall Part I," "The Show Must Go on," and "The Trial" (the latter also evidences other power relations as well and that is the reason why it will be approached in another segment of this analysis). These songs make reference to the family and to the emotions that it generates on the I.

### **1) The Mother**

In Pink Floyd's work, one of the most significant figures related to the family and present in the album stands for the mother. This manifests ideas related to power

and authority. In fact, Roger Waters dedicates the song “Mother” to this figure and, in it, he denounces many traits of the mother which are closely connected to control. The speaker, who in this case is the mother speaking, states: “Mama’s gonna keep you right here / Under her wing / She won’t let you fly but she might let you sing.” These verses compare the attitude of the mother to the behavior of a bird looking after its offspring and, although the first verse suggests that the love of the mother is nurturing and natural, the second and the third verses demonstrate that this love and care is indeed too excessive. In addition to this powerful image, the prohibition in “she won’t let you fly” constitutes an example of the mother’s control due to the fact that if one wants to control a subject, prohibition stands as one of the vital techniques in order to achieve this. Bertrand Russell establishes that there are three main forms of power influencing individuals:

Power over human beings may be classified by the manner of influencing individuals, or by the type of organization involved.

An individual may be influenced: (a) by direct physical power over his body, e.g. when he is imprisoned or killed; (b) by rewards and punishments as inducements, e.g. in giving or withholding employment; (c) by influence of opinion, i.e. propaganda in its broadest sense. (*Power* 19)

In the case of the album, the influence of the mother assimilates the first type that Russell mentions, that of physical power over the body, due to the fact that, when the mother birds does not allow the young pigeon to fly, she is in fact imprisoning the pigeon under her wing. The control and prohibition that the mother exercises over her

offspring frustrate his freedom; they function as an ideological prison that does not let the subject achieve his autonomy as a person. The speaker continues and affirms: “Mama’s gonna wait up until you get in / Mama will always find out where / You’ve been.” These verses stand for other instances of the mother showing a predisposition to controlling the subject. In this case, the author uses the image of an angry mother sitting in a sofa late at night waiting for her son to come home again from what seems to be an escapade or ignoring his curfew. The two possible scenarios represent the breaking of the law of the mother but it is the line: “Mama will always find out where you’ve been” which demonstrates the mother’s control over the subject since the latter cannot manage to have some sort of privacy or cannot go unnoticed. The mother represents this figure that needs to know where the subject is, even when he is out of the house, thus a figure of surveillance, prohibition, and control not only in the family space, but also out of it (and which uses family values to judge the subject even when he is without the company of the family). In this sense, Michel Foucault affirms:

I think it [the family] also has another function, which is that it is the zero point, as it were, where the different disciplinary systems hitch up with each other. It is the switch point, the junction ensuring passage from one disciplinary system to another, from one apparatus (*dispositif*) to another (...) What I will call the Psy function, that is to say, the psychiatric, psychopathological, psycho sociological, psycho-criminological, and psychoanalytic function, makes its appearance in this organization of disciplinary substitutes for the family with a familial reference. (*Psychiatric Power* 81, 85)

The family represents the milestone of all disciplinary systems and state apparatuses because it is in the home where children learn to behave properly, obey instructions, and respect authority. Foucault calls this first programming of the mind happening in the household the Psy function; it is the mental framework that tells subjects to follow rules and authorities even when they are outside their home. In *The Wall*, the fact that the mother will always find out where the subject has been alludes to the Psy function because, although the subject may be far from home, he will always have the feeling that he is being observed and that the mother will eventually find out where he has been and what he has been doing. In other words, the control of the mother exceeds the household and spreads throughout the social structure.

Now it may seem that this control over the subject represents the natural instinct of protection that a mother has towards her offspring. However, when analyzing the song(s) in depth, one realizes that this protection is not as positive as it seems. Beside the image of the mother bird, the speaker utters: “Mama will keep baby cozy and warm (...) Mama’s gonna keep baby healthy and clean (...) You’ll always be baby to me.” These verses evidence the selfless, love and care that the mother in *The Wall* has towards her son. Nevertheless, the caring attitude of the mother contrasts with the fact that the subject, her son, can be considered an adult<sup>2</sup> because of the nature of the

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<sup>2</sup> The fact that the song presents a grown up as son and not a child can be further proven by considering musical aspects of “Mother,” aspects which are truly intriguing. The stanzas of the song which are meant to be the son speaking are sung by Waters in a remarkably low register in comparison to Gilmour who sings the chorus, the parts of the mother speaking. The latter implies that the subject/son is a grown-up due to the fact that the register of a grown-up man (in most of the cases) is lower than the register of a mature woman, which is not the case of the register of a child who has a range similar to the one of a woman.

questions he asks his mother in the first stanza of the song: “mother do you think they’ll drop the bomb (...) mother should I run for president / mother should I trust the government.” These questions are not very likely to be uttered by a child. Instead of asking “mother should I run for president,” a child would normally say “mom, when I grow up, I want to be president.” Moreover, a kid would not refer to his mother as *mother*; on the contrary, he would approach his mother as *mom* or *mama*. Therefore, this nurturing attitude that the mother shows is nothing more than an obsession with her son, the need to satisfy the needs of a kid that is no longer a kid. The non-acceptance that her baby is a grown man with more complex questions about his surroundings and his place within society than infantile needs (such as not being cold or being dirty) shows the way in which the mother, more than a nurturing, understanding, caring, and selfless figure, represents an image of obsession, which is evidenced in the excessive control over her son through surveillance, prohibition and, quite surprisingly, fear. But where is fear present in the behavior of the mother and why is this important to the premise that the mother is obsessed with her child? The answer for this question illustrates the connection between obsession and control and justifies the reason why the first leads to the other.

“Mother” presents some verses which are closely connected to anxiety. In the first chorus, the speaker (in this part it is not clear if it is the mother referring to herself in third person, the subject, or a third person approaching the subject) utters: “mother’s gonna make all your / nightmares come true / mama’s gonna put all of her fears into you.” These are not only extremely direct images that convey the notion of anxiety

associated to the portrayal of the mother, but also images that juxtapose the figure of the mother as protective and nurturing. The mother is no longer this semi-goddess who has a special bond, an almost spiritual connection with her child, as it is normally believed in western society. On the contrary, the mother in *The Wall* is an *anti-mother*, a figure that has procreated, therefore, has earned the title of “mother,” but that presents opposite values: instead of love, obsession; instead of understanding and trust, prohibition; and instead of encouragement, fear. The verses “mother’s gonna make all your / nightmares come true” support this notion of the anti-mother. This woman does not constitute a person that protects against possible harm or fear. On the contrary, she represents the cause of the nightmares for the child; she is the figure which actually generates fear. In addition, the next verse “mama’s gonna put all of her fears into you” reveals how the mother, besides being a figure that produces fear, experiences this feeling herself and projects it onto her offspring. Now, fear about what? What does she fear? Well, after this verse the speaker continues and utters three verses already analyzed and stated above: “mama’s gonna keep you right / under her wing / she won’t let you fly but she might let you sing.” This comparison between the mother in the song and the mother bird holds the key to finding what she fears.

The mother bird in the metaphor keeps her young pigeon under her wing implying that it is in the nesting stage, when the baby is dependant of its mother. However, as the natural law states, this nesting stage ends with the pigeon learning to fly and leaving the nest but, in this case, the mother is not about to let that happen. Why? Well, the mother is afraid that the baby bird, instead of flying, will fall to the ground and



suffer what this represents: be exposed to predators, die because of the impact, starve to death, etc. This constitutes a logical explanation of the fear of losing her offspring since the mother in *The Wall* has already suffered the loss of another significant bird in her life, her husband, and the father of her son. The song “Another Brick in the Wall Part I,” which is part of the family songs, shows the feelings of the subject, the I, towards his absent father. The first two verses demonstrate this detail: “Daddy’s flown across the ocean / Leaving just a memory.” The reason why the father left is not completely clear<sup>3</sup>. The only thing that the speaker affirms is that his father is not present, he is past, not part of the present. This fact constitutes a good reason to believe that the anxiety that generates the thought of losing the offspring goes back to the traumatic moment when the mother lost her husband. In terms of language, the author makes this connection evident by using the same verb to state that the husband has left or disappeared (trauma) and that she experiences anxiety when thinking about her offspring leaving or growing (fear): “Daddy’s *flown* across the ocean,” “she won’t let you *fly* but she might let you sing.” Now, the fear of the mother leads to obsession since this feeling may be the trigger of the compulsive surveillance, over protection, and tight control over her child

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<sup>3</sup> Some critics believe that flying across the ocean stands for a reference to war, WWII (flying to continental Europe to fight), which can be inferred from the many allusions to war. For instance, “Good Bye Blue Sky” can be considered a reference to the bombing of Britain in WWII. “Vera” stands for a reproach to the singer Vera Lynn and her songs about a positive future that never arrived after WWII, and which was played recurrently in the British radio during 1940s wartime. Other critics such as Jorge Sacido and Luis Miguel Valera believe that flying across the ocean actually stands for the relocation of the symbolic father in the USA; consequently, the father, besides being absent, will represent values of this capitalist superpower. In both cases, the absence of the father will generate in the subject a feeling of “discontent, frustration, materialist fetishism, isolation, narcissistic introversion, disorientation, vacuous hedonism and irrational (self-)aggression” (52).

as a strategy to avoid the possibility of losing another significant “bird” in her life. In other words, the trauma of losing the husband generates the fear of losing the child, so the mother incorporates a mechanism to cope with this fear: fixation, a fixation that is manifested as excessive control over her son.

Another instance in which the mother stands as a figure of control is in the sexual field. As we have considered, the mother in *The Wall* shows an extreme attachment towards her son, which can be seen as unwholesome. Consequently, the fact that the mother also tries to control her son in the sexual field is not surprising since it follows the conduct of an over-protective person. Moreover, considering that sex is believed to be a social taboo and to be a sin-like act which can lead to perdition and death (as in the case of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases), the listener can expect this reaction of the mother when dealing with the sexuality of her offspring. In the second verse of “Mother,” this woman states: “mama’s gonna check out all your girlfriends for you / mama won’t let any one dirty get through.” Again, the words uttered by the mother demonstrate traits associated to control. In the first verse, the verb *checkout* has clear connection to the notion of surveillance, a significant mechanism to control individuals. The conduct of the mother alludes to the aforementioned mechanism of the panopticon in the sense that she uses the gaze to exercise her power over her son (nevertheless, this notion will be analyzed in depth in section D of this chapter). Likewise, in the second verse, Waters uses in “she won’t let anyone dirty get through” the compound tense *won’t let* to evince that the attitude of the mother is one of prohibition, to show that she is an authority and that she says *no* to her child’s sexuality. In addition, the speaker uses a

rather powerful word in that same verse to refer to her son's suitor: dirty. The connotation of this word is extremely pejorative; it denotes that these girlfriends are sexually perverted, sexually starving, but more importantly, sexually active. The way the mother judges these girlfriends is rather severe. "She won't let any one dirty get through" implies that no dirty woman deserves the company of her son and that it is her duty to avoid this and to clear the path from any possible sexual predator. For this reason, she has the responsibility to "check out" all his girlfriends. The mother doesn't want to take any chances and that represents the reason why she will check ALL of them. According to Foucault, the household contains one moral monster which has to be controlled, the masturbator:

The "masturbator."... whose field of appearance is the family or even something narrower than the family...It is the bedroom, the bed, the body; it is the parents, immediate supervisors, brothers and sisters; it is the doctor: it is a kind of microcell around the individual and his body. (*Abnormal* 85)

Foucault establishes that families are in charge of fighting against this perversion by means of supervision. The French theorist continues and states that "the crusade against masturbation reflects the development of the restricted family (parents and children) as a new apparatus of knowledge-power" (*Abnormal* 353). On one hand, the family members will become guardians whose main purpose is to prevent the auto-stimulation of subjects. On the other hand, the family, as the principal institution fighting against infantile masturbation, has produced a connection between power and knowledge in the sense that the family observes and, by observing, knows and generates knowledge.

Likewise, the mother figure in the album checks out all suitors. This phrasal verb has a connotation beyond mere observation; it is more related to investigation, and to the production of knowledge about a subject and his dirty suitors.

But there is another significant reason why the mother has a defensive attitude when dealing with her son's sexuality and all his possible suitors. Although the official text analyzed in this investigation stands for the lyrics included in the booklet of the *The Wall* in the CD format manufactured in 1994 by EMI, the lyrics of "Mother" will be complemented with the missing stanza, which is part of a song version and left out from the booklet:

Mother do you think she's good enough for me

Mother do you think she's dangerous to me

Mother will she tear your little boy apart

Mother will she break my heart

As in the case of the first stanza, this one has the I/subject/son as the speaker. Moreover, the text is composed of a series of questions, which again are not very likely to be uttered by a child. The first and second verses show questions that the speaker's lack of trust for a possible girlfriend or relationship (this is maybe connected to the distrustful attitude that the mother has against any female intruder, a kind of copied conduct pattern). But it is the third verse that exposes a possible reason why the mother has a suspicious attitude against the dirty suitors: "Mother will she tear your little boy apart" constitutes a verse that shows, with an excessively violent image, the dangers of getting involved in a romantic relationship. This risk triggers in the psyche of the mother the

anxiety of having her offspring hurt or even lost as his father. Her attitude is prohibitive and reiterative and is caused by fear because she does not want to lose her young pigeon (as explained above) in the claws of a “dirty” femme fatale.

But what is the attitude of the I/subject/son towards the defensive approach that the mother has against his girlfriends and, more importantly, against his sexuality? The subject’s behavior is characterized in this instance with secrecy. While in the stanza mentioned above, the speaker asks questions which seem to support the attitude of the mother in the sense that he is also cautious about possible *dirty* girlfriends, the song “Young Lost” shows the completely opposite behavior:

I am just a new boy  
 Stranger in this town  
 Where are all the good times  
 Who’s gonna show this stranger around  
 Ooooh, I need a dirty woman  
 Ooooh, I need a dirty girl

In this song, the subject no longer represents a boy confined to his mother’s house and rule, but a young man traveling to another town, and the first thing that he does when he gets there is trying to exercise his sexuality. One can infer this from the first two verses: “I am just a new boy / a stranger in this town” because of the use of the words *new* to qualify *boy* and *stranger* (one can be considered a stranger the first time one arrives to a new place). Consequently, the reader/listener can imagine that the subject is so sexually aroused that the first thing he wants to do is to have sex, to calm his physical impulses,

impulses that, bottom line, are normal to humankind. The problem lies in the fact that, in order to exercise his sexuality, the subject has to go to a town where he is a complete stranger. But why does he have to behave like this? The speaker has to go and become a stranger because the person that may know him the most, his mother, does not let him exercise his sexuality close to home. In order to satisfy these impulses that are normal and necessary, he has to adopt the identity of an unknown man because as a known person he is not allowed to address sex; therefore, he decides to give up to his name, face, and essence and becomes a man with a secret identity. Moreover, the fact that the subject has to go to a different town to exercise his sexuality represents another instance of secrecy since he is not allowed to approach his sexuality in his home, his most familiar space, because of the presence of the mother and what she represents. Consequently, he has to go to a town where he is considered a *new boy* or a *stranger* in order to, far from the space of the family, look for sexual adventures. He has no other option, either he exercises his sexuality in secrecy, or he follows his mother's rule and gives up his instinctual urges. The next part of the song reveals other intriguing facts about the subject and his sexuality:

Will some cold woman in this desert land

Make me feel like a real man

Take this rock and roll refugee

Oooh, baby set me free

Ooooh, I need a dirty woman

Ooooh, I need a dirty girl

Again, this part makes reference to a physical space. In this case, it is a *desert land* which also has a connotation of secrecy, since there are no people around to judge the subject in his sexual quest, there are no eyes to observe him. But the significant detail in this part stands for the fact that the subject is not looking for a specific woman to satisfy his needs; actually, he is looking for *any* woman, he is not demanding. This detail becomes evident in the use of *some* in the first verse to qualify woman, and it demonstrates that the subject is so sexually aroused that he does not care about the type of woman with whom to share his adventure. However, at the end of the stanza he states that what he really needs is a dirty woman. He does not *want* a dirty woman; in fact, he *needs* one. His desire constitutes such a strong urge that he uses the word *need*. This fact corresponds to the reply of a question which has not been uttered yet: Why does the subject have to keep his sexual experiences as a secret if he is an adult? Well, because he desires what he has been banned to have: what is perceived by the repressive mother as a dirty woman, a sexually perverted, sexually starving, and more importantly, a sexually active woman. Furthermore, the subject tells the dirty woman “oooh, baby set me free” implying that the act of sex constitutes an act of liberation, an act that breaks the rule of the family, a rule that ultimately enslaves the subject to a moral code that is oppressive and does not take into consideration the natural needs of the human body<sup>4</sup>.

Dealing again with the issue that the mother fears losing her offspring, through analysis and deep reading, one can find out another cause for this behavior, one that is

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<sup>4</sup> Pink Floyd did a remarkable job by using such an energetic music, an upbeat rock and roll rhythm, to enforce the sexual content of the lyrics since the use of the rock and roll beat has been associated to sexual rebellion since the 1950s; take the case of Elvis Presley and his socially perverting movement of the hips.

more related to the notion of power. It is clear that the mother represents a figure of authority because she has power over the subject through prohibition, oppression, and control; she embodies power. Now, Michel Foucault affirms: “we have in the first place the assertion that power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and that it only exists in action” (*Power/knowledge* 89). If one takes into consideration Foucault when dealing with the figure of the mother, one recognizes that the mother does not embody power but exercises it, and it is this action which formulates her as a figure of authority. She does not possess power, but when she prohibits, oppresses, and controls she becomes the authority, the powerful one in the relation with the subject. Furthermore, Foucault continues and states:

The individual, that is, is not the vis-à-vis of power: it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle. (*Power/knowledge* 98)

Foucault believes that individuals do not produce power; actually, it is the other way around. Power generates individuals so that it spreads, by means of their essence and their actions, through every part of the social body. Power creates the powerful and the powerless in a power-relation. Now, from these two excerpts, the reader can conclude two main features of power: power is not held, but exercised; and power creates individuals. But how does power create individuals? By exercising it! An individual such as the mother has an essence at the moment she, by means of her actions and her



words, exercises power over her son. She becomes an individual when she becomes the vehicle of power and helps to spread it through society. But how does this relate to the fear of the mother of losing her child? If she loses her offspring, she will not have the other person, the subject in a lower position, in the power-relation. Consequently, she will not be able to exercise the power that has been given to her because she has no target to direct the power she is supposed to proliferate. Following Foucault's logic, if she is not able to exercise power, she does not *exist* as an individual because she is an effect of power. She exists, as an individual, when she exercises her will over the other, her offspring. The fear of losing her child constitutes the fear of losing her purpose in life, to be a mother, by means of exercising the power that was given to her. The fear of the mother stands as one of the most primitive and prevailing fears of human kind: the fear of death, of disappearing due to the lack of fulfilling her purpose: exercising power. Therefore, if the young pigeon falls from the nest and dies, the mother bird will also die; she will disappear because the only purpose of her existence is to protect the offspring and to not let him fly.

## 2) The Father

The father constitutes the other family figure present in *The Wall*. Waters refers to this character in songs such as "Another Brick in the Wall Part I" and "The Show Must Go On" and makes indirect reference to him in "Bring the Boys Back Home" (due to the fact that this song shows the subject calling the soldiers to go back to their homes

so that they do not leave their children fatherless as in his case<sup>5</sup>). However, the first of these songs, “Another Brick in the Wall Part I,” represents the piece in which the speaker reveals more details about this figure. This song has three main parts: The first part constitutes a three-verse section in which the speaker affirms that his father is absent: “daddy’s flown across the ocean / leaving just a memory / a snapshot in the family album.” As stated before, this image of the father flying across the ocean may stand for his departure to go to fight in WWII (to continental Europe) and losing his life (because if he went to war and never returned, that implies that he died in service). The second part is composed of two questions: “daddy, what else did you leave for me / daddy what d’ja leave behind for me.” And the third segment repeats the same affirmation with minor variations: “all in all it was just a brick in the wall / all in all it was all just bricks in the wall.” As stated above, this is the song that reveals more information about the father; nevertheless, a lot remains unsaid and unknown. The only fact the reader is sure about the father is that he is absent. That represents his main characteristic, absence. But how is absence related to power?

The father is absent and the speaker affirms that the only thing that is left from him is a memory, specifically, a snapshot in the family album. In addition, the questions the subject poses to his father in the second section of “Another Brick in the Wall Part I” are not and will not be answered since the father is gone. In this sense, absence equals silence. Consequently, the subject has no reply to these questions, and the only thing that

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<sup>5</sup> Even though the lyrics of the song are not completely clear about this issue, it is the music, the use of a snake drum to play a military marching music rhythm, that implies that the boys are more likely to be soldiers than just young men.

comforts him is the picture of his father. This is the picture of a person that in theory represents one of the most significant persons in his life, a person that would have taught him many things and would have helped him throughout his life, but that in reality was not there. The father is an unsolved puzzle. After asking the questions and having no answer at all, the subject resigns himself and affirms: “all in all it was just a brick in the wall.” In this verse, the pronoun *it* substitutes the picture; so the photo and what it represents, his father, becomes one of the bricks that are used to build the wall.

Now, many critics believe that the wall in the album and its narrative represents isolation. The whole album alludes to the isolation of individuals in modern life, to lack of communication, and to modern dehumanization. However, I would like to offer a new possible explanation of the wall in the work by The Pink Floyd: the wall represents the Panopticon in Foucault’s theory on power. As stated in the theoretical framework, Bentham’s panopticon stands for a prison-like building with an external ring made of small cells (meant to hold one prisoner each) and a central tower that works as the point of surveillance and control. In terms of spatial organization, Foucault states that “a single person will be placed in each of these boxes; each body will have its place” (*Psychiatric Power* 75). What many critics believe is a major characteristic of the wall, isolation, constitutes one of the effects of the spatial/metaphorical organization in *The Wall*, which turns out to be panoptical. But why does each individual have to be isolated from his fellows? Foucault continues and utters:

All the phenomena of multiplicities, are thus completely abolished... in workshops there will be no more collective distraction, songs, or strikes;<sup>2\*</sup> in

prisons, no more collusion;<sup>21</sup> and in asylums for the mentally ill, no more of those phenomena of collective irritation and imitation. (ibid)

Panoptical spatial organization aims to isolate individuals in order to avoid, as Foucault believes, phenomena of multiplicities such as riots, distractions, or collective discontent. It is substantially easier to control an isolated case of misbehavior than a massive riot in a prison, for instance. In *The Wall*, the subject is isolated from his equals and the fact that his father's photograph helps to create the wall shows the way in which his absence contributes to isolate the subject, emotionally and psychologically, from other human beings. He is alone with his social discomfort and cannot rebel against the oppressive system because he is unable to connect with others. Moreover, the photograph is stuck on the wall and when the subject tries to communicate with another person (screaming through the wall or trying to find a hole in it), the case of his absent/silent father comes into his sight and the bitter memory of the failed attempt to communicate with this absent father withers every new effort to communicate with other subjects. In a sense, the photo of the father stuck in the wall acts as a vigilant, which controls and frustrates every attempt of the subject to free himself.

Now that the notion of the absent father is clear and of how this relates to power, it is time to analyze another instance in which this absence affects the subject. "The Show Must Go On" evidences this case. This song portrays the subject just before a performance. It seems that the subject is a musician<sup>6</sup> but, surprisingly, he does not want

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<sup>6</sup> One can infer this from other references which relate him to some feature of the musical world. The line "she won't let you fly but she might let you sing" in the song "Mother" depicts him as a

to go on stage and perform his art. On the contrary, he seems to throw a temper tantrum and complains to his parents. While the complaint to his mother constitutes a manifestation against her will over him: “Ooooh Ma let me go,” the complaint to his father signifies a cry for rescue: “Ooooh Pa take me home.” His cry assimilates the cry of a child when he/she is in an uncomfortable, difficult, or painful situation and, as a kind of self-defense mechanism, he/she wants to go home, to run away from the situation. Home, in this case, opposes the rough situation; it represents safety. The home he wants to be taken to stands for the ideal home, a place of affection, comfort, and protection, and the vehicle to reach this place: his father. However, the father is absent, a photo stuck to a wall; consequently, he cannot take the subject to this ideal place. In addition, the subject is complaining to a photograph, and the photograph cannot do anything to change the subject’s situation; therefore, he continues trapped behind this wall. He has to face this situation alone, emotionally isolated from the others. The father represents the promise of the ideal home, a place where the subject will be nurtured, loved, and comforted but, since the father is absent, he will never be taken to this promised place.

The way in which Waters depicts this contrasting situation between the mother instigating the subject and the father representing the way out is rather fascinating in the sense that the traditional roles of the family are inverted. Traditionally speaking, the figure of the mother implicates the idea of home; home represents the physical and ideological sphere of the mother (according to long-time patriarchal values), and the

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future singer; likewise, the song “No Body Home” portrays him as a music writer: “I’ve got a grand piano to prop up my mortal remains.”

figure of the father is associated with being outside, with working, and with meeting responsibilities. However, the parents in *The Wall* work the other way around: the mother instead of being connected to home is connected to responsibilities, the responsibility of performing well, while the father is the one linked to the household and what it implies. Since the album stands for a pseudo-autobiographical account of Waters, this infringement of traditional family values really reflects the way in which the idea of the traditional family went through several changes in the 50s and the 60s in Britain.

In summary, the father represents the promise of the ideal home, a place of affection and protection but, since the father is gone, the subject will never reach this ideal place. On the contrary, the absence of the father contributes to create isolation. This isolation entails lack of communication, the refusal to make new relations with others, and seclusion to a new space, the panopticon. Instead of being in the ideal home, the subject is emotionally and psychically withdrawn into Foucault's panopticon, isolated from others so he can be manipulated easily. Foucault affirms that the panopticon constitutes "a multiplier; it is an intensifier of power within a series of institutions. It involves giving the greatest intensity, the best distribution, and the most accurate focus to the force of power" (*Psychiatric Power* 74). Through its distribution, the panopticon is used to exercise power over the subject. In the case of the subject in *The Wall*, the loss of his father represents both, the loss of the ideal home and his seclusion within an-emotional panopticon.

### **3) The Mother and the Father: Similarities and Differences and Their Relation to Power**

This section of chapter one is going to be dedicated to show similarities and differences between the figures of the mother and the father in *The Wall* and how these features relate to power and have effects on the I/subject.

The first notion in which the mother and the father can be contrasted is in terms of their presence. As discussed in section B, the main trait of the father in the album constitutes his absence. He left for war and never came back. This had emotional and psychic consequences on the subject. The latter becomes figuratively isolated into a panoptical prison, where he has no contact with others. However, the absence of the father not only affects the subject. The mother also experiences negative consequences due to the absence of her husband. As stated in section A, the overprotective behavior of the mother can be considered the result of a painful experience such as losing her beloved. This loss marked her and triggers her anxiety when she faces situations in which she feels she is about to lose her son and, therefore, to go through a similar sorrowful situation. This represents the reason why the mother is quite controlling. In addition to this, the overprotection by the mother can stand for wanting to be present, to playing a significant part in the life of the offspring, which makes sense because the mother needs to exercise her power in order to exist as an individual, as explained previously. In other words, the overprotection of the mother constitutes her effort to exist (as Descartes would put it *I overprotect, therefore I am!*). The second chorus of

“Mother” illustrates the way in which the mother tries to be present or to meddle in such a private element of a person’s life as his/her sexuality with the only purpose of existing:

Hush now baby, baby don’t you cry

Mama’s gonna check out all your girlfriends for you

Mama won’t let anyone dirty get through

Mama’s will always find out where

You’ve been

The actions “check out all your girlfriends,” “not let anyone dirty get through,” and “find out where you been” show the excessive meddling of the mother in the life of her son. These controlling actions represent ways to call the attention of her son so that he understands that she is present in his life, as a figure of authority; these constitute ways of stating: *Sir, I exist!* (as Crane would put it). In terms of power, by means of control and overprotection, the mother assures her presence in her son’s life. In other words, if this family figure is present, she will exercise power over the subject. However, as in the case of the father, if the family figure is absent, it will also have consequences related to isolation and lack of communication which are connected to Foucault’s analysis of the panopticon as an instrument to exercise power. As a result, although the mother and the father differ in a sense (the mother is present while father is absent), their presence and non-presence are related to the subjugation of the subject to the force of power.

Another instance in which the mother and the father figures differ corresponds to the case of the father being an image of salvation/consolation while the mother represents a figure of obligation. The song “The Show Must Go on” illustrates this issue:



Ooooh, Ma, Oooh Pa

Does the show have to go on

Ooooh Pa take me home

Ooooh Ma let me go

This excerpt shows the speaker asking his parents if he really has to perform a show. After asking, and without waiting for an answer, the subject claims “Ooooh Pa take me home / Ooooh Ma let me go.” As explained in section B, the demand to his father represents a cry to be taken to the ideal home, a place of affection and protection. The opportunity to be taken to this place never comes since the father, the vehicle to achieve this, is dead/absent. Nevertheless, he still represents salvation and comfort for the subject because in the subject’s mind, his father equals the ideal home, which equals salvation/comfort; therefore, his father equals salvation/comfort. On the contrary, the demand to his mother constitutes a cry for freedom since, after the question “does the show have to go on,” the subject utters “Ma let me go” implying that it is very likely that the mother is forcing him to play in the show. In this sense, the mother stands for obligation. This verse represents a cry for freedom, not to have his mother help him reach freedom, but escape from the mother’s dictatorial influence. In relation to obligation and the family, Stuart Hall states:

When we come 'right down to it', the dominant image of the family – perhaps across classes - still has more to do with the duty of instilling a basic understanding of fundamental 'do's and don'ts' than it does of providing a mutually sustaining and releasing framework. (*Policing the Crisis* 79)

Hall considers that the family embodies the institution in which the basic premises of responsibility, obligation, and prohibition are set as part of the moral premises of its members. Therefore, the behavior of the mother, as an agent of distribution of responsibilities, is normal and expected since she is supposed to impose duties on the powerless family members. But how does the family accomplish such mind programming or how is it justified for family authorities to behave this way? Foucault believes that:

(...) disciplinary techniques are transplanted into the family. And at that point the family, while retaining the specific heterogeneity of sovereign power, begins to function like a little school: the strange category of student parents appears, home duties begin to appear, the control of school discipline by the family.

*(Psychiatric Power 115)*

Foucault affirms that the way the family has functioned has changed so that it now institutes discipline as one of its key commandments. The family based this change on the configuration of other discipline-structured institutions such as the army or the school. In this sense, the mother in *The Wall* resembles a sergeant or a teacher that dictates obligations or responsibilities to the subject, such as performing in a concert. This model of organization, based on discipline, supports the conduct of the mother as a figure telling the powerless members of the family what to do. In addition, in order to make this change work, the power relationship has to have an unbalance in the sense that power has to be exercised by one of the parts, the mother saying what to do, and directed

to the other part, the subject being forced to perform in a show. Foucault suggests a possible explanation for the unbalance between power relations within the family:

The power of sovereignty can still be found in contemporary society. Where do we find them? Well, I would find them in the only institution in the traditional dynasty of schools, barracks, prisons and so forth, that I have not yet spoken about, and the absence of which may have surprised you; I mean the family.

*(Psychiatric Power 79)*

This theorist believes that the family constitutes the only institution which still has a sovereignty-like organization. Sovereignty represents an organizational pyramid in which the sovereign is at the top. Moreover, the monarch will embody power and the rest of individuals will have to follow his rule. In the case of the family, the father will take the place of the monarch and his word, the rule to follow. The family in *The Wall* resembles a monarchy because in the case of sovereignty if the king is dead, his wife will take his position as the sovereign, like in the case of the mother in the album that takes the position of the absent father. Therefore, the relationship between the mother and her son depicts the power relationship in a sovereignty, an unbalanced power relationship in which the monarch dictates the rules while the vassel obeys. To sum up, the sense of obligation that characterizes the mother contrasts with the sense salvation/comfort in the image of the father. These two images contradict each other because the only way in which the subject will be relieved from his mother's discipline is by having his father take him "home."

In terms of similarities, the father and the mother share a trait that is rather significant to the theory of power and which has a connection to silence. In the case of the father, as discussed above, he is absent. Now, this absence has a relation to silence since death can be understood as silence. Life, consequently, is represented by sound (birds sing, tree branches produce sound when the wind blows on them, animals and humans vocalize, etc). In the case of the father, he is gone and when the subject asks him questions in “Another Brick in the Wall Part I” as “daddy, what d’ja leave behind from me” the father replies with silence; there is no answer because the father is dead. After that, the subject, showing his disappointment, states: “all in all it was just a brick in the wall.” In the same way, the mother is silent, not because she is absent, but because she does not answer and is indifferent to the inquiries of her son. As in the case of the father, the subject approaches her in the song “Mother” with questions like: “mother should I run for president / mother should I trust the government / mother will they put me in the firing line.” What does the mother answer? She does not refer to these questions; she changes the subject: “hush now baby don’t you cry (...) Mama’s gonna keep you right here / under her wing (...) mama will keep baby cozy and warm.” There is silence<sup>7</sup> in the reply of the mother in the sense that she does not refer to the questions of the subject. These are questions without answers, like the ones directed to his father. The attempt to

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<sup>7</sup> The silence of the mother in relation to the questions of her son is similar to the context of the social revolutions of 60s since, according to Eric Hobsbawm, during this decade the line of adulthood, that is the line when a person becomes sexually active and socially responsible and, at the same time, demands the respect from others, had fallen. The young were now in power and at the top of the consumers’ scale. However, this created tension between them and their “old fashioned” parents and teachers, because the last two did not want to recognize their position (325). In a sense, they still considered the young too young to be adults or have the responsibilities and rights of them.

communicate with others dies. Now, in the case of the father, this silence manifests his absence in the life of the subject and contributes to his isolation and his psychological seclusion into a figurative panopticon. In the case of the mother, this silence represents a different issue, which is related to power. Hannah Arendt establishes:

[the landmark of authority] is unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey; neither coercion nor persuasion is needed. (A father can lose his authority either by beating his child or by starting to argue with him, that is, either by behaving to him [his child] like a tyrant or by treating him as an equal.)

To remain in authority requires respect for the person or the office. (*Power* 65)

Arendt believes that if an authority wants to keep control over subjects, its power and status has to be clearly acknowledged by them. This constitutes the main technique to maintain its rule. In addition, the author affirms that one of the simplest ways to wreck its image as unquestionable is by showing itself as equal with the powerless. Therefore, authority has to avoid any kind of dialogue, explanation, or consent with the powerless. The mother in *The Wall* behaves this way. By not answering the questions of the subject, she states that she is not equal to him, that he is not in the same level as her. Her silence corresponds to a manifestation of her power over him, thus acting as the authority she aims to be. To sum up, both types of silence manifested by the parents in Pink Floyd's work evidence problems in the communicative process and turn out to be manifestations of power. In the case of the father, his silence contributes to the sense of isolation related to the notion of the panopticon; meanwhile, the silence of the mother is an attempt to

declare she is an authority that does not reach any sort of consensus with the subjects under her rule.

A somehow obvious but, at the same time, vital notion in order to introduce the next section of this chapter is the fact that both parents contribute to build up the wall. In “Another Brick in the Wall part I,” the subject states: “all in all it was just a brick in the wall” referring to the idea that the picture of his father functions as a brick in the construction of this emotional wall that will isolate him from the others. Likewise, at the end of the first chorus of “Mother,” the speaker, whose identity is not completely clear (it is quite difficult to tell if the person speaking is the mother, the subject, or an unknown third person), affirms: “of course mama’ll help build the wall.” The use of the phrase *of course* emphasizes the fact that the mother and her behavior will play a significant role in the creation of this metaphorical wall. The relationship between the subject and both of his parents produces or helps produce a wall, an emotional barrier that isolates him from communicating and connecting to other human beings. Now, throughout the first chapter of this investigation, there have been allusions to the wall and its relation to power in the sense that the wall that separates the subject from others constitutes a reference to the panopticon, a building employed to increase power over subjects through spatial organization. Consequently, the fact that both parents help to build up the wall suggests that they make a considerable contribution to the subjugation of the subject to the rule of power. In the following section, this issue will be approached in depth.

#### 4) The House as the Panopticon (Panoptical Traits of the Family)

One of the most significant contributions made by Foucault to the theory of power stands for the panopticon, its organization, and the way in which space has a major role when exercising power. Foucault devotes a remarkable amount of his work to depicting the panopticon and its influence in power relations. For instance, in “The Eye of Power” he focuses on the significance of this architectural subject. In fact, Foucault believes that the panopticon has such a notable impact in the control and organization of individuals that it constitutes the base of modern power relations since the nineteenth century:

It's a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised. This seems to me to be the characteristics of the societies installed in the nineteenth century. Power is no longer substantially identified with an individual who possesses or exercises it by right of birth; it becomes a machinery that no one owns. (*Power/knowledge* 156)

The author believes that the model of human relations and of the relations of individuals to their space that have developed inside the panoptical institutions (in which there is no personification of power; on the contrary, power fluctuates from one subject to another with the exception of the subjects secluded in the cells) is deeply rooted in the base of modern western society (in which power constitutes a monster that has no source of origin within the social framework, it fluctuates from one institution or authority to another). The panopticon represents the base of modern power; it depends on

surveillance and isolation (among others) to subjugate individuals. These characteristics of the panopticon appear in the reference of the family depicted in *The Wall*. The story told in this album oscillates between two main spaces, a physical and a psychic one. In both, there are allusions to panoptical organization at a figurative level. This section is devoted to showing these references and to explaining the effect on the subject when facing the panoptical references.

As discussed in section B, the fact that the father is absent generates a sense of isolation which the writer, Roger Waters, depicts as the subject having a wall between himself and the people he aims to communicate with. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, the isolation generated by the absence of the father and the image of a prohibitive barrier that does not let the speaker connect with other people alludes to the isolation produced by the seclusion inside a panoptical institution since, as Foucault states, “a single person will be placed in each of these boxes [individual cells]; each body will have its place” so that “all the phenomena of multiplicities, are thus completely abolished” (*Psychiatric Power* 75). In addition, the subject also becomes isolated from the body of power since he cannot see if he is being observed:

those who are being supervised cannot tell whether or not they are being supervised (...) There is a de-individualization and disembodiment of power, which no longer has a body or individuality, and which can be anyone whomsoever (...) surveillance may be exercised by the director, but also by his wife, his children, or his servants, etcetera. (Foucault, *Psychiatric Power* 76)



In relation to *The Wall*, the fact that power goes through a process of *de-individualization* or *disembodiment* makes reference to the disembodiment of the figure of the father, his death. Power no longer has a face as in the case of his father that is no longer present; there is his place in the institution of the family but no one is really there. His place, as in the case of the guard in a real panopticon, means that power is still being exercised. How? Well, there is the feeling of the figure of the father, being part of the life of the subject; nevertheless he is not there (he is absent), and this feeling is connected to isolation. The subject feels isolated from the body of power that secluded him in the figurative panopticon (his father) in the same way that a prisoner is isolated in the panopticon, separated from everybody, including his guardian, the figure that exercises power over him. In brief, the absence of the father is equal to power being disembodied and the sense of isolation that this lack creates refers to the isolation of the prisoner from the figure that exercises power over him, the guardian, by losing sight of him. Consequently, on one hand, the absence of the father produces isolation and the image the speaker uses to illustrate this, being separated from the rest of humanity by a wall, creates a feeling of seclusion which alludes to being isolated in an individual cell in a panoptical institution. On the other hand, the fact that the prisoner loses sight of his guardian stands for an allusion to the subject losing his father since in both cases this loss contributes to the sense of loneliness.

In the case of the mother, her conduct also evidences a significant trait of the panopticon, surveillance. In relation to surveillance and the panopticon, Foucault affirms: "This power needs no instrument; its sole support is sight and light. Panopticon

means two things. It means that everything is seen all the time, but it also means that the power exercised is only ever an optical effect” (*Psychiatric Power* 77). This except confirms the importance of sight in the panoptical game of power. The prisoner will be locked in an individual cell and he will be (or will be tricked to believe) he will be monitored all the time. Why? Foucault considers that this action has corrective consequences in the prisoner:

With these themes of surveillance, and especially in the schools, it seems that control over sexuality becomes inscribed in architecture. In the Military Schools, the very walls speak the struggle against homosexuality and masturbation.

(*Power/knowledge* 150)

The author believes that it is the architecture of the panopticon and its observation-quality that lead the fight against masturbation, for instance. In this sense, observation means control over the conduct of prisoners. In the case of the mother, her behavior is panoptical since she monitors the subject excessively; surveillance represents a feature of her behavior. In “Mother,” the speaker affirms:

mama’s gonna checkout all your girlfriends for you

(...)

mama’s gonna wait up until you get in

mama will always find out where

you’ve been

The mother has quite a busy agenda. She has to *checkout* all the girlfriends; she has to *wait up for the arrival* of the subject, and she has to *find out* where the subject has been.

All these three activities are deeply rooted on surveillance. Moreover, these seem efforts to correct the *immoral* sexuality of the subject. The meddling behavior of the mother, which we already discussed in section A, is nothing but an effort to control and to correct the subject and the instrument that she uses to accomplish her commitment corresponds to the gaze. Likewise, Foucault utters that the major instrument that the panopticon uses to exercises power is surveillance:

There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer (...) A superb formula: power exercised continuously and for what turns out to be a minimal cost.  
(*Power/knowledge* 155)

Like in the case of the mother, the panopticon uses observation as a mechanism to control and to shape the behavior of individuals. The subject will eventually interiorize the gaze of the panopticon to the point that he will develop an own gaze to judge and control his behavior even when he is not being observed. In the case of *The Wall*, the subject has to escape to another town to exercise his sexuality, as stated in section A. A dirty woman, the biggest fear of the mother, will be his real escape from the surveillance of his main caregiver who already shaped his own perception and judges him when she is not around.

Foucault refers to one last feature of the panopticon that can be traced in the album, and it is the game of light. When describing the structure, the theorist affirms that all cells have complete visibility of the tower in the center. Nevertheless, prisoners

cannot see if they are being supervised because the tower has a light pointing at the cells, blinding them (*Psychiatric Power* 76-77). Foucault uses the word blinding because prisoners are not able to tell if they are being observed or if the guardian is watching another cell (This point was already explained above as the disembodiment of power).

Furthermore, Foucault states:

You can see that the relationship of power really does have that immateriality I was just talking about, for power is exercised simply by this play of light; it is exercised by the glance from center to periphery, which can, at every moment, observe, judge, record, and punish at the first gesture, the first attitude, the first distraction. This power needs no instrument; its sole support is sight and light.

(*Psychiatric Power* 77)

The author believes that the foundation of power in the panopticon relies on this play of light and blindness which stands for an enormous eye with the ability of controlling, judging and punishing at the same time. He utters that this big eye represents the glue that makes the machinery of the panopticon stick together and work. In terms of *The Wall*, the song “The Show Must Go on” refers to this panoptical characteristic:

Ooooh Pa take me home

Ooooh Ma let me go

Do I have to stand up

Wild eyed in the spotlight

This excerpt places the subject begging his parents to be taken home and not to be

forced to perform in a show. The significance of this fact, that the show is not a pleasant moment (in fact, the subject seems to fear and hate it), relies on the way the subject refers to him playing the show; he has to stand up wild eyed in the *spotlight*. This spotlight can stand as an allusion to the central light in the panopticon. He is blinded by the light; he is controlled and judged by the crowd behind it and, if he fails performing, he will be punished with their boos and catcalls. Standing under the spotlight represents a sense of obligation or responsibility of performing well, of fulfilling the demands of the crowd/panoptical gaze, which also refers to the notion that the light of the panopticon tries to instill in the mind of individuals:

(...) for the true effect of the Panopticon is to be such that, even when no one is there, the individual in his cell must not only think that he is being observed, but know that he is; he must constantly experience himself as visible for a gaze, the real presence or absence of which hardly matters. (*Psychiatric Power* 76)

Being placed under the spotlight is equal to the ever lasting game of light in the panopticon because the observing gaze of the crowd forces the subject to perform well in the same way as individuals secluded in the panopticon have to behave properly because they think they are observed all the time. In addition, it is this feeling of being observed that will shape the conduct of individuals in both cases, when performing a show and when isolated in a panoptical institution. But what does the family have to do with this trait of the panopticon and this image of the spotlight? Well, the mother forces the subject to stay wild eyed in the spotlight. She is the one that creates this sense of obligation and responsibility to behave/perform well under a spotlight. Foucault states:

We could say that it [the family] is the hinge, the interlocking point, which is absolutely indispensable to the very functioning of all the disciplinary systems. I mean that the family is the instance of constraint that will permanently fix individuals to their disciplinary apparatuses (*appareils*), which will inject them, so to speak, into the disciplinary apparatuses (*appareils*). It is because there is the family, it is because you have this system of sovereignty operating in society in the form of the family, that the obligation to attend school works and children, individuals, these somatic singularities, are fixed and finally individualized within the school system. (*Psychiatric Power* 81)

The family constitutes the seed of all disciplinary systems and state apparatuses. It represents the first institution in which youths are programmed to follow other institutions. The theorist gives the example of schools, which are also panopticon-like organizations and that young people are prepared to act according to their logistic since their birth and their arrival to the family. Moreover, the family corresponds to a spotlight, to a show, and the individual is supposed to play this gig well, getting good grades and the recognition or approval of his teachers. In *The Wall*, the mother constitutes a metonymy of the family that introduces the subject to the show, a semi-apparatus that will demand proper behavior when standing under the spotlight.

## **CHAPTER II: They Must Have Taken my Marbles Away (Power and Authorities)**

Power in *The Wall* not only circulates within the closest circle of human relations, the family, but moves throughout society and that includes other spheres. This chapter is devoted to analyzing power and authorities, to the way in which power manifests in the actions and words of the experts and professionals that have had a role in the life of the subject. In this sense, this chapter will include three main authorities that seem to have repercussions in the life of this central character: the teacher, the physician or doctor, and the judge. In addition, the analysis of these three characters will point out significant notions in terms of the institutions that they represent (education, medicine, and the law/state) and the impact these institutions have on the subject.

The album has several songs which deal with these authorities and their effect on the subject. In this sense, the group of *authority songs* is made up of five pieces. Two pieces are related to education and the teacher: “The Happiest Days of Our Lives” and “Another Brick in the Wall Part II.” Two more songs deal with the issue of the doctor; these are “Another Brick in the Wall Part III” and “Comfortably Numb.” And one song shows the figure of the judge and the law he represents, “The Trial.” These songs evidence the discursive formation behind the attitude of each authority and the way in which this discourse influences the subject, mostly in a detrimental way.

Before the analysis begins, it is vital to define the term authority. George Simmel provides a remarkable description of the subject and establishes that “a person of superior significance or strength may acquire, in his more immediate or remote milieu,

an overwhelming weight of his opinions, a faith, or a confidence which have the character of objectivity” (*Power* 205). Simmel affirms that there are certain specific individuals whose opinions and beliefs are prompted to be taken as facts. These individuals are the authorities and they are of “superior significance” or “strength.” The power of authorities is evident since they state what is socially accepted and what is not based, bottom line, on their mere subjective opinions. Furthermore, when addressing the source of power of authorities, Simmel also states that “a super-individual power – state, church, school, family or military organizations – clothes a person with a reputation, a dignity, a power of ultimate decision, which would have never flown from his individuality” (ibid). In other words, individuals become authorities not because of their merits, but because they are endowed with this image by ideological state apparatuses. Consequently, when describing authorities, Simmel believes that authorities constitute, not unreachable god-like individuals, but normal persons that, because of “divine providence,” are empowered and have influence over other individuals. Now, the concern of this chapter relates to the influence they have over the subject, the ideological apparatus they represent, and the use of power they make.

### **1) The Teacher and Education**

The authority discussed in this section of chapter II corresponds to the teacher. In fact, *The Wall*, as the epic journey from childhood to maturity, focuses on this figure as



one of the key influences in the early years of the subject. Nevertheless, this influence does not seem to be a positive one. Actually, when the speaker refers to the whole educational systems, he sounds quite bitter and resentful. The clearest example stands for the first two verses of “Another Brick in the Wall Part II”: “we don’t need no education / we don’t need no thought control.” The lines are harsh and aggressive. Education equals thought control and the subject claims that *we* do not need it. It seems that education is no longer a means to achieve mental and moral emancipation but an oppressive system whose only purpose is to keep individuals under control so that they obey the rules of society. In this sense, Althusser establishes that:

Children at school learn the ‘rules’ of good behaviour, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is ‘destined’ for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-economical division of labour and ultimately the rules of other established by class domination. (132)

Although Althusser seems to focus on material production in relation to capitalist notions, he points out some significant traits of the nature of the education apparatus. He believes that education is used to implant “the rules of morality” and “civic and professional conscience” in order to make individuals respect the “rules of socio-economical division of labor and the rules of the established order.” In other words, education has one main purpose: to reproduce the established social order by implanting rules of proper behavior in the mind of subjects, the rules related to moral, civic and professional ideals. What Althusser is trying to make clear is that education equals

thought control, the same issue that Floyd tries to convey in “Another Brick in the Wall Part II.” It seems that education works as a means to spread and implant ideological ideas of the hegemonic groups; these have the only purpose of reproducing the structure of society in which they are at the top. Likewise, David Johnston believes that:

Overworked and unconcerned educators may treat their students as mere objects filling seats, which will be filled by an entirely new batch of its next year.

Administrators facing community pressure are often concerned merely with the graduation and placement of school’s degree products. The lessons themselves are often designed not to liberate student’s minds but to prepare them to be cogs in the social machinery. (*Pink Floyd and Philosophy* 129)

Johnston shares Althusser’s notion that teachers may be seen as mere tools whose intention is, through the education apparatus, to make students functional within the system in order to fulfill a productive purpose. The album does not hold specific references to the hegemonic groups; however, it is the mechanisms of power in the educational apparatus and the way in which power fluctuates within it that this part of the investigation will focus on.

The figure of the teacher in the album is deconstructed in the sense that his figure challenges the traditional image of the educator. He is not caring towards his pupils and he certainly does not embody knowledge; this new representation is characterized by violence. For example, the speaker states in “The Happiest Days of our Lives”:

When we grew up and went to school

There were certain teachers who would

Hurt the children anyway they could

By pouring their derision

Upon anything we did

Exposing every weakness

However carefully hidden by the kids

These verses evidence the violent nature of the teacher(s); the behaviors they have towards their students are fairly shocking and demonstrate the way they challenge the image of the good teacher. Teachers “would hurt” the children anyway they could and they “would pour their derision” upon children. The verb “hurt” clearly shows their violent personality. The speaker even affirms that they would hurt the children “anyway they could.” It seems that the purpose of teachers in *The Wall* is not to teach but to torment students. It is as if they are in the class in the middle of a lesson and they are paying attention to students to see in which way they can attack or offend them. How? By mocking them, by pouring their derision on them. Consequently, the teacher’s authority and power is based on the humiliation of the weak, of the powerless, of the students. Teachers are more bullies (to use an “in” word) than figures of knowledge or wisdom, and students may think that, if they do not speak or move or call the attention, they will not be attacked or humiliated by the person in power in the classroom. Students are also not willing to learn; all their energy inside the class goes to protecting themselves. The speaker demonstrates this by affirming that teachers hurt students by exposing the children’s weakness which children “carefully hide.” So, where is education? Is there any trace of conventional education (teachers teaching and students

learning)? There does not seem to be. Education in the album is a cruel game between teachers, who hold power, and students, who are too busy protecting themselves from teachers. In this sense, Denise Winterman affirms that the line “we don’t need no education” from “Another Brick in the Wall Part 2” was “inspired by [Roger Water’s] own schooling in the 1950s. It was a protest against the strict regime that he felt had tried to suppress children, rather than inspire them” (“Just Another Brick in the Wall?”). But not only that, Denise also tells the story of the group of children that sang the famous choir of this song who attended a school down the block from the recording studio. Denise states that the teacher (an unconventional teacher) and the children were discriminated by the institution after the heads of it found out what the song was about. The teacher moved to Australia after feeling disillusioned with the British education system; he even declared that “one could see and feel the clouds of conservatism heading towards the school system at the time” (ibid).

In terms of the context when writing the album, Waters may have the influence of the many social revolutions and manifestations all around the world at the end of the 60s in places such as Mexico, USA, France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. These revolutions were supported by significant amounts of high education students who were opposing political choices and social problems (Hobsbawm 298). In this sense, “we don’t need no education / we don’t need no thought control” is not only a scream against a specific institutions but against the whole social order and its “thought control.” We, in these verses, are students opposing and yelling, getting together in order to manifest a collective discomfort like in the case of the students from these countries.

Returning to our object of study, the education apparatus, as embodied by the teacher, uses hurting and public humiliation as a means to exercise power and to make students part of its game and, by that, subduing them as the powerless of the power relation. In addition, like in the case of the mother who, due to her actions and characteristics, is some sort of an anti-mother, the teacher's heartless attitude makes him the anti-teacher. The song "The Trial" evidences another characteristic of the anti-teacher. In this song, the teacher gets the opportunity to speak and establishes:

I always said he'd come to no good  
 In the end your honor  
 If they'd let me have my way I could  
 Have flayed him into shape

The first verse demonstrates the lack of faith that the teacher has towards his students. The teacher does not believe in education because he does not believe in students, one of the two main components of the education system. For the teacher, the subject as a student is *no good*, that is, he is bad. In which sense? Perhaps, in every sense since "The Trial" constitutes a metaphorical trial to show the subject's failure in human relations and in social responsibilities, basically in every field in life. Therefore, when the teacher claims that the subject has come to no good, he is establishing his lack of faith in the subject as a student. And what is the possible solution of this issue according to the educator? Violence: "If they'd let me have my way I could / Have flayed him into shape." In the attitude of the teacher, there is no trace of comprehension or empathy for the student; there is no wish to teach, to enlighten the student. The reaction of the

teacher against the student's "no goodness" is violence as a way to correct (to "flay into shape") and as a form of punishment. In terms of violence and power, John Galbraith establishes that there is a type of power associated to this relationship:

Condign power wins submission by the ability to impose an alternative to the preferences of the individual or group that is sufficiently unpleasant or painful so that these preferences are abandoned, there is an overtone of punishment in the term, and this conveys the appropriate impression. (*Power* 213)

Galbraith believes that condign power is an imposition characterized by pain, like a punishment or physical correction; this is the case of the Teacher in the album because if he'd have his way, he would have flayed the subject into shape; he would have imposed by means of physical punishment or correction his ideals of proper behavior and morality in order to fix the subject. Is this education? No, students will only learn the basic dos and don'ts, the basis of thought control, no enlightenment, no self-improvement, nor anything. To sum up, the teacher in *The Wall* represents an authority that does not care for the proper education of his pupils. On the contrary, he is a person whose only purpose seems to punish, humiliate, and to oppress students. He is not the traditional figure of the educator but an anti-teacher that creates a dictatorship-like environment in the classroom.

The case of the teacher evidences another significant trait of power: its fluctuating nature. For the purpose of this investigation, fluctuation denotes the ability, in this case, of power of not being held just by one individual, as Foucault would put it in *Psychiatric Power*, by a sovereign. The fluctuating nature of power implies that

power moves through all the different pieces of the social machinery. Everyone can exercise power, and everyone can be subjected to power. However, no one has the ability to hold it permanently. Foucault explores the subject deeply in

*Power/Knowledge:*

...power is not to be taken to be a phenomenon of one individual's consolidated and homogenous domination over others, or that of one group or class over others. What, by contrast, should always be kept in mind is that power, if we do not take too distant a view of it, is not that which makes the difference between those who exclusively possess and retain it, and those who do not have it and submit to it. Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain...

Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of undergoing and exercising this power. (98)

The author considers that power fluctuates within the social structure; therefore, it is impossible to have a sovereign-like figure who represents the source of power and who exercises it over the rest of individuals. But it also seems that power does not circulate between individuals, but individuals circulate between the joints and positions that power creates in society. Furthermore, there would be cases of individuals who are empowered and at the same time are subjected to it, which is the case of the teacher in *The Wall*.

In "The Happiest Days of Our Lives," the speaker, after discussing the sadistic

personality of teachers when treating students, affirms:

But in the town it was well known  
When they got home at night, their fat and  
Psychopathic wives would thrash them  
Within inches of their lives

These verses demonstrate another facet of the teacher, the one of the husband. They give the impression that his marriage is not a pleasing one. In fact, his wife is qualified as “psychopathic,” and the reason for this relies on the fact that she makes his life miserable. But her attitude towards him also exemplifies the way in which power fluctuates within society. First, the teacher ends up not being the personification of power. He is just powerful when he is in the class. Second, he holds power within the four walls of the classroom, not in other places, such as inside his house. On the contrary, when he is a husband, he is subdued by his wife, and her power is exactly as his, that is, condign power. His role is inverted; he no longer humiliates, punishes, or oppresses. Now, he is the one being humiliated, punished, and oppressed by the condign power of his wife.

Whether or not Waters alludes to hegemonic groups and the implantation of ideology through education in *The Wall* is up to each person’s interpretation. Some readers believe that “we don’t need no education / we don’t need no thought” in *Another Brick on the Wall Part 2* does refer to hegemonic groups; others consider that these isolated lines are not enough evidence to state this. However, the teacher, and the educational apparatus that he represents in the album really exemplify significant



notions related to power. One of them is the way it functions inside the class, condign power. The violent, fascist-like attitude of the teacher demonstrates the latter. The other is the way power fluctuates through the social threads. The way the teacher is bullied by his wife denotes the way in which power is not held by a single individual and the way in which individuals can exercise and be subjected to power at the same time.

## 2) The Doctor and Medicine

Another significant figure of authority present in *The Wall* corresponds to the doctor. The doctor embodies the medical apparatus, another social ideological apparatus which has a notable influence on subjects. Although the doctor does not constitute a vital character in the album, as he has represented in the last three hundred years in society<sup>8</sup>, this figure illustrates some traits connected to power in the record. As a matter of fact, the album includes only two songs which make reference to the medical apparatus. The first is “Comfortably Numb.” This song portrays the subject after some sort of mental or physical breakdown, and he is being helped to overcome this episode by the doctor. The second song is “Another Brick in the Wall Part III” whose “I don’t need no drugs to calm me” represents the only reference to the medical apparatus in the song. However, as stated below, this verse has a vital function in the explanation of the effects of this apparatus in the subject.

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<sup>8</sup> Foucault affirms in his book *Power/Knowledge* that the medical apparatus has had such a remarkable role in society that it has had effects on the organization of it. For the sake of collective hygiene, the medical apparatus has had an authoritarian influence in all the social spheres, from the most private circles, such as the family, to the control public spaces (174-175).

Bertrand Russell affirms that the power of the doctor comes from learning:  
 A very different type of character comes to the fore where power is achieved through learning or wisdom, real or supposed (...) When I say 'learning' I include, of course, reputed learning, such as that of magicians and medicine men. Twenty years of study are required in order to obtain a Doctor's Degree at the university of Lhasa. (*Power* 24)

The power of the doctor as an authority figure comes from the wisdom that learning and studying imply, the sacrifices that this character has to go through in order to achieve knowledge, and the mysticism that this knowledge will give him/her. Russell continues: "to gain a reputation for wisdom a man must seem to have a store of recondite knowledge, a mastery over his passions, and a long experience of the ways of men" (ibid). Now, is this knowledge present in *The Wall*? Explicitly no, but once one starts working with the text, one finds out that the wisdom of the doctor is present in the album. As stated above, the song "Comfortably Numb" shows how the doctor helps the subject to overcome what seems to be a mental or physical discomfort:

Hello,  
 Is there anybody in there  
 Just nod if you can hear me  
 Is there anybody home  
 Come on now  
 I hear you're feeling down  
 Well I can ease your pain

Get you on your feet again

Relax

I'll need some information first

Just the basic facts

Can you show me where it hurts

The doctor is such a learned man in the sense that he shows confidence in his abilities. He “can ease” the pain of the subject so he can get him on his feet again. The verb can implies that it is fairly possible, almost certain that he can cure the subject, without even having asking him for information in order to identify the problem, before asking “can you show me where it hurts.” An attitude connected to arrogance, the arrogance of a person that is sure of his knowledge about a subject matter, in this case, medicine. In this sense, Foucault states that one of the main tactics of doctors (psychiatrists) to treat a patient corresponds to demonstrating an inequality of power: “there is the maneuver of creating an imbalance of power, that is to say, right from the start or, anyway, as quickly as possible, making power flow in one and only one direction, that is to say, from the doctor” (*Psychiatric Power* 146). Why? This author continues and affirms: “Its first objective is to establish a sort of state of docility that is necessary for the treatment: the patient, in fact, must accept the doctor's prescriptions” (*Psychiatric Power* 147). Creating an imbalance of power on the side of the doctor has represented part of the procedures for treating patients in western society. Docility from the patient is equal to the cure.

Now, the important issue in relation to the doctor, whose image is connected to

knowledge, and the concept of power is that, due to his wisdom, the doctor has control over the body of the subject. His knowledge gives him the right to manipulate the body of the powerless. When treating the subject in “Comfortably Numb,” the doctor utters:

O.K.

Just a little pinprick

There’ll be no more aaaaaaaah!

These verses demonstrate the doctor preparing an injection (O.K.), and proceeding to use it on the subject in order to calm the “aaaaaaaahs” (the pain or the symptoms of the disease). Moreover, the verses also evidence the way in which the doctor, without asking the subject, injects him with a drug that the latter does not know. In other words, the physician, by means of knowledge, has control and influence over the body of the subject and administers a drug for the sake of the patient’s health. In this sense, Bertrand Russell establishes that power can be classified on the kind of influence that the powerful can have over the powerless, and one of these stands for the direct physical power over the body. The author gives the examples of imprisonment and of killing, which are clear forms of having physical power over the body of the powerless (*Power* 19). The way in which the doctor has influence and manipulates the body of the subject in the album represents another instance of the type of power Russell is referring to.

Another remarkable feature of the doctor represents his indifference. For the purpose of this investigation, indifference refers to the coldness the doctor demonstrates in his behavior when treating his patients, in this case, the subject. As stated above, “Comfortably Numb” has two stanzas in which the doctor corresponds to the speaker of

these. These stanzas clearly show the doctor's indifference and coldness:

Hello,

Is there anybody in there

Just nod if you can hear me

Is there anybody at home

Come on now

I hear you're feeling down

Well I can ease your pain

Get you on your feet again

Relax

I'll need some information first

Just the basic facts

Can you show me where it hurts

O.K.

Just a little pinprick

There'll be no more aaaaaaaah!

But you may feel a little sick

Can you stand up?

I do believe it's working, good

That'll keep you going through the show

Come on it's time to go<sup>9</sup>

The stanzas demonstrate the way the doctor works, which is quite dehumanizing. He identifies the problem, treats it, and then he says “ok its time to go, you are ready to work.” This last attitude evidences his indifference because he does not care about the fact that the subject just had an appalling mental or physical breakdown and that he (the subject) must rest after one of these episodes, as anyone should. The doctor does not really care for the patient's health; he just wants to get him (the patient) on his knees so that he will be able to perform the show, so that he (the patient) does what he is supposed to do. The doctor is part of the game of power in society because he fixes the subject so that the latter fulfills his social responsibilities. The physician does not cure for sake of the patient's health; he cures so that the patient is able to fulfill his social purpose. In this sense, the doctor is not humanitarian; actually, he embodies the utilitarian values of culture: you have to be healthy so that you can produce. Foucault is rather clear when dealing with this idea:

(...) the techniques of power are invented to meet the demands of production

(...) I happen to be dealing with people situated outside the circuits of productive labour: the insane, prisoners, and now children. For them labour, insofar as they have to perform it, has a value which is chiefly disciplinary. (*Power/Knowledge*

161)

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<sup>9</sup> “Comfortably Numb” is sung in a remarkable way: Waters sings the parts of the doctor while Gilmour sings the chorus, the voice of the subject/patient. Although the chorus is considered to be the most important part of a (rock) song and Gilmour does an outstanding job in this song, it is the parts of Waters, of the physician, that are rather captivating. He sings with a deep, expressionless, absent voice, which really contributes to the sense of dehumanization in the doctor-patient relation.

If the subject is healthy, he is able to produce. If he is able to produce, according to Foucault, he functions within the system and he subdues to power. The physician represents the first phase: he makes sure the subject is healthy (so that he performs the show and, consequently, subdues to the will of power).

The album shows another case related to the submission to power and the role of the doctor in this. In the song “Another Brick in the Wall III” the speaker affirms: “I don’t need no drugs to calm me” as a way to show his abhorrence of this issue related to medicine and control; he is administered with drugs to *calm* him (the verb makes it clear). However, the rest of the lyrics demonstrate the subject’s disgust with other fields in his life:

I don’t need no arms around me  
 I don’t need no drugs to calm me  
 I have seen the writing on the wall  
 Don’t think I need anything at all  
 No don’t think I need anything at all  
 All in All it was all just bricks in the wall  
 All in All you were all just bricks in the wall

The lyrics are fairly bitter; the whole song evidences the subject’s repulsion and hatred. He needs no people around him, no drugs to calm him, nor anything else. Now, the subject’s behavior presents a problem in terms of his relation to society and to power. The subject states “don’t think I need anything at all”; he is in a position where he does not require anything. He will not compromise his freedom, himself, or his time in

exchange for something he may need. But most importantly, he will not subject himself to power in exchange of any considerable good; he is in an ideal position where he does not need anything or anybody. The social problem relies on the fact that if he does not need anything or anybody, he is outside the social regulations and the glue that stick society together: power and power relations. In this regard, Foucault tells the story of a psychiatric patient did not want to work in the vegetable garden in the asylum he was confined. He said money was unnecessary, and so was work, due to the fact that he was given everything in seclusion (*Psychiatric Power* 152). He was in the exact same position as the subject in *The Wall*, where they do not need anybody or anything. The doctors in the asylum decided to implement a system of needs applied to patient's residency in the hospital. He was denied food and the only way to get some was in exchange of coins he would earn by working in the garden (*Psychiatric Power* 153). This author affirms that the cure of this omnipotence comes from the implantation of needs and the submission of the patient to reality and its rules:

(...) the reality of an external world, which previously the omnipotence of madness was inclined to deny, takes shape through the asylum lack, and this reality beyond the asylum's walls is increasingly imposed as being inaccessible, but as inaccessible only during the time of madness. (*Psychiatric Power* 155)

Now, is this the case of the subject in the album? No, power in his account is more aggressive. In the shape of the doctor, power waits for the subject to experience a mental or physical breakdown in "Comfortably Numb" and administers the medicine that subdues the subject into this game of needs. From there on, the subject will need the



medicine to calm these episodes or breakdowns; therefore, he would have to do what it takes (that is to work, to perform shows, and to depend on others) to get his medicine. The doctor crushes the subject's motto "don't think I need anything at all," does not ask if he would like to be treated with that specific drug, and reinserts him into the game of power and needs of the social system.

The doctor constitutes a figure of power whose role in the album is not quite vital as the mother or the father; however, he exemplifies some vital notions that describe the nature of power and of authorities within the album. First, he embodies the learned man, a person whose power comes from the knowledge he has acquired through education. And he demonstrates this in the way he treats the patient and the confidence he has when speaking to the latter. This confidence also works as a means to establish his power over the subject. Second, the doctor, as a figure of power, is dehumanizing and utilitarian. The song "Comfortably Numb" demonstrates that the physician only wants to cure the subject so that he can fulfill his position in society, that is, to perform the show. Finally, he evidences the way in which society makes individuals carry out the tasks that have been assigned to them; by this, authority figures like the physician introduce them in the social game of needs and subjugation to power. As established, although the physician seems harmless, he actually represents a Machiavellian figure whose purpose is to drug and subdue the subject and to introduce him in the power system that organizes society.

### 3) The Judge and the Law/State

The last authority figure that personifies power in *The Wall* is the judge.

Although this character appears only in the second to last song, he plays a vital role in the resolution of the story. In fact, he comes to embody power itself (if we can say that): omnipotent, distant, unreachable, all-seeing, all-judging, all-influencing, etc. The judge resembles a god who comes to stand against the subject's insolence, for the sake of power, order, and justice.

“The Trial,” the song that tells the encounter between the subject and the judge, portrays the moment when the subject is going through a trial to be proven guilty although his crime or fault is never revealed. On one hand, the subject calls himself crazy; he seems to recognize this as his fault. On the other hand, the judge blames him of making his wife and mother suffer.... In this sense, the song also depicts the subject's mother, wife, and teacher, as witnesses in the legal process; all of them testify against him. Another rather interesting character present in the song is what seems to be the district attorney<sup>10</sup> speaking at the beginning of the song and introducing the subject as the defendant in the prosecution. This character utters a different version of the subject's sins and crime:

The prisoner who now stands before you

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<sup>10</sup> The listener/reader may think of a fairly similar character of a piece of art on another artistic field: the Master of Ceremonies in the 1972 film *Cabaret* performed by Joel Grey. The two characters play the role of the trickster, which in the case of Grey is significantly evident due to his sardonic smile, his makeup, and his facial expressions; however, the way Waters sings the lines of the district attorney also conveys this image.

Was caught red-handed showing feelings

Showing feelings of an almost human nature

This will not do

In this sense, the song is a polyphonic poem which portrays six characters in a rather credible way and shows how, at the end of the song, the figure of the judge appears and almost crushes the defendant, a defendant who never gets a complete clear reason why he is being prosecuted.

This part of the chapter will analyze what the trial is really trying to prove in terms of the subject's guilt and the organization of the trial per se. Moreover, it will not only focus on the figure of the judge, but will also take into consideration the district attorney and the witnesses in order to create a broader examination of the concept of the law and of the judicial apparatus and how these relate to power and the subjugation of the subject in *The Wall*.

The first point to clarify in this analysis of the law and judicial apparatus is the way the trial is organized. The song begins with the sound of a grinding door being opened and, after that, the sound of footsteps and a bell ringing (the bell, as in a funeral, announcing the impending insidious act). Then, the music emerges from the background and the soundscape and fits together with the tempo of the bells<sup>11</sup>. After this, there comes the district attorney greeting the judge, whom he calls "the worm your honor,"

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<sup>11</sup> The rhythmic pattern of the emerging music evokes circus-like music, an intriguing fact due to the sarcasm that this implies. This suggests that Pink Floyd wanted to compare a trial and the judicial apparatus with a circus. The whole set of rules governing the court is nothing but a charade, a mere act.

and proclaiming that the defendant, the subject has arrived. After the words of the attorney, the witnesses come to act, first, the schoolmaster, then, the subject's wife and his mother. As stated above, all of them testify against the subject. The teacher affirms that he "always said he'd come to no good" when speaking about the subject and utters that "if they'd let [him] have [his] way [he] could / have flayed [the subject] into shape," a fairly aggressive and violent statement from a teacher about his student (the teacher's violent nature is a notion that was discussed previously). The subject's wife affirms:

You should have talked to me more often

Than you did, but no you had to

Go Your own way. Have you broken any

Homes up lately?

Just five minutes Worm your honor

Him and me alone

Her words demonstrate her frustration in terms of the alleged infidelity of the subject. The last witness in this legal process is the mother who establishes that "M'lud I never wanted him to / get in any trouble / why'd he ever have to leave me." These verses are part of the not really clear testimony of the mother that, nevertheless, implies the resentment the mother feels towards his son for leaving her. After the three testimonies the judge starts to speak (actually, he shouts in a frightening way) and pronounces his verdict "I sentence you to be exposed before your peers / tear down the wall."

The trial is organized in a conventional fashion, with the attorney presenting the

case to the judge followed by the witnesses and, finally, the judge deliberating.

However, this mode of organization also reveals a rather significant characteristic of power and the law. According to Bertrand Russell, law depends on people's consent and support:

The law is almost powerless when it is not supported by public sentiment (...)

Law, therefore, as an effective force, depends upon public opinion and sentiment even more than upon the powers of the police. (*Power* 21)

The notion that Russell points out stands to reason the story of *The Wall* because in "The Trial" the witnesses are not only invited to participate to share their experience as spectators of a fault, but are also included to show that people are irritated and that they support this cause, to punish the subject since he has affected the lives of others with his actions. After the law proves that people back its case, the judge enters and attacks the defendant with "the full penalty of law." Furthermore, when the teacher and the wife state respectively: "if they'd let me have my way I could / have flayed him into shape (...) let me hammer him today" and "just five minutes Worm your honor / him and me alone", they express their discontent, articulated with these violent and raging statements, and which validate the law to act against the subject. Moreover, at the end of the song the listener can perceive that when the judge utters the verdict "tear down the wall," there is the immediate response of what seems to be a fairly large group of people repeating the decree. This also demonstrates how the judge is backed by public sentiment to correct the improper behavior of the defendant. This correction is so well received by the public that it causes a frenzy.

In terms of the witnesses, these are two members of the subject's family and one of his teachers. Now, if the purpose of the trial is to prove that the subject has mistreated his wife and mother or to show that he is mentally ill, what is the teacher doing there?

Well, the answer is fascinating since it points out other remarkable traits of the theory of power. It is not by chance that the teacher is called to testify in the subject's trial due to the fact that he is, as stated above, an authority. In *Abnormal*, Michel Foucault establishes that when dealing with the notion of proof and evidence in a trial:

(...) some evidence has in itself an effect of power, a demonstrative value, greater than other evidence and independently of its own rational structure (...)

Well, it is due to the status of the subject who presents the evidence. (10)

What Foucault is trying to explain is that, in a legal process, the significance of the evidence relies, not on the facts provided, but on the person presenting these proofs. If an expert presents a piece of evidence, this information will be more substantial than the testimony of a non-expert. Why? As stated above, George Simmel believes that an authority corresponds to a person who has, "in his more immediate or remote milieu, an overwhelming weight of his opinions, a faith, or a confidence which have the character of objectivity" (*Power* 205). In western society, these persons are considered to have objective judgments, due to their studies, preparation, or wisdom. Therefore, they are alleged trustworthy witnesses in a legal prosecution. Foucault affirms that these statements pronounced by experts even have presumptions of truth (*Abnormal* 11); they are true because they come from these individuals even though the law does not represent their field of specialization. This is the case of the teacher in *The Wall*, who is

called to testify and to give his opinion as evidence in a trial against a former student although his field of expertise does not constitute criminology. So the teacher exemplifies not only the way in which, in western societies, the opinion of authorities has such a significance that they are taken as presumptions of truth in other fields of knowledge, but also the way in which the legal system represents a game of power and truth in which there would be important people arguing against others in a powerless position, in the position of the accused.

What is the consequence of taking into consideration, what Foucault calls, an expert opinion as evidence in a trial? Well, the philosopher states that:

Expert opinion like this recounts a series of what could be called misdeeds that do not break the law, or faults that are not illegal. In other words, the aim is to show how the individual already resembles his crime before he has committed it.

*(Abnormal 19)*

For Foucault, expert opinion is used in trials to show predisposition to crime. He gives the example of psychiatrists giving “a psychologico-ethical double of the offense” *(Abnormal 16)* as part of their testimony, which means that a psychological profile of criminals is created in order to prove mental instability and to trace criminal predisposition. In this sense, expert opinion is used to condemn defendants not only for their crimes but also for their corrupted moral and their tendency to corruption. The teacher in “The Trail” gives his expert opinion: “I always said he’d come to no good.” His words evidence the inclination of the subject to commit crimes. These words would

not mean the same if they were not uttered by an authority, but he was his teacher. He saw the subject's performance at school and reached the conclusion that there was a predisposition to err in the pupil's heart (even though the subject's performance at school does not have anything to do with other fields of his life...). Moreover, the testimony of the teacher also supports the notion of the double offence: the subject is committing a crime but he was morally corrupted since childhood; the judge will have to condemn the subject for his crime *and* for his lack of moral:

What the judge will judge and punish, the point on which he will bring to bear the punishment, is precisely these irregular forms of conduct that were put forward as the crime's cause and point of origin and the site at which it took shape, and which were only its psychological and moral double. (*Abnormal* 17)

Now, it seems that having individuals that do not have any level of expertise in law participating in a trial jeopardizes objectivity when aiming to apply justice, even more when one realizes that these individuals are asked to participate in such a legal process just because they have the status of authorities or personalities. In addition, it seems even more incorrect for judges to take into consideration these subjective testimonies as valid evidence. Well, Foucault believes the same, and calls this phenomenon grotesque:

I am calling "grotesque" the fact that, by virtue of their status, a discourse or an individual can have effects of power that their intrinsic qualities should disqualify them from having. (*Abnormal* 12)

The mere act of having the teacher testify and the judge pay close attention makes this account grotesque, unnatural for the rules of justice and objectivity because something



grotesque corresponds to something that breaks the rules of harmony and order, in this case the rules of an objective prosecution. Pink Floyd seems to emphasize the whole grotesque issue by depicting the entire trial as bizarre. The band accomplishes this by the use of musical aspects such as circus-like music and the over accentuated way of singing by Roger Waters, which gives a sense of a theater performance. The voice of the teacher is a high-pitched voice that implies his anger and frustration when speaking about the subject while the voice of the judge corresponds to a dreadful scream, which evidences the hostility of this character. All these elements contribute to create a sense of charade in the court. Floyd approaches the courtroom in a fantastically cynical way in order to show the grotesqueness of the legal ritual.

In terms of the other two witnesses, the mother and the wife, although they are not authorities (or at least traditional authorities with their proper university degrees), they represent another social institution that we have already discussed previously, the family, which has a significant role in this legal process. But before discussing this, it is necessary to clarify the criminal profile of the subject. In *Abnormal*, Michel Foucault explains that there are three types of individuals which break the law: the monster, the individual to be corrected, and the masturbating child. The monster constitutes an entity that transgresses natural laws, such as Siamese twins, a half-animal-half-human creature, a person with two heads, etc. The masturbating child is self-explanatory and corresponds to the legal reaction of social anxiety related to child sexuality<sup>12</sup>. In the case of the individual to be corrected, Foucault believes that this criminal emerges within “the

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<sup>12</sup> These two terms are explored in depth in chapter three of *Abnormal*.

family and the school, workshop, street, quarter, parish, church, police, and so on” (*Abnormal* 57-58). Moreover, the individual to be corrected is so familiar and close that it is really difficult to define him:

There is a kind of familiar, everyday obviousness that renders him [the individual to be corrected] immediately recognizable; but he is so familiar that we do not have any definite evidence that an individual is this character. Consequently, being unable to provide any proof, we can never really demonstrate that an individual is incorrigible. (ibid)

These theoretical notions help the reader/listener conclude that the subject in the *The Wall* is the individual to be corrected. There is no significant proof to show the subject’s guilt in “The Trial”; in fact, the reader/listener does not even know why the subject is being prosecuted (as stated above, the district attorney blames him for feeling, while the judge accuses him for making his wife and mother suffer; at the same time, the subject censures himself for being crazy). Moreover, the witnesses represent two of the institutions where the individual to be corrected emerges: the school in the case of the teacher, and the family in the case of the wife and mother.

Now that it is clear that the subject in the album can be considered the individual to be corrected, let’s go back to the issue of having the mother and the wife as witnesses that represent the family. The family is present in the subject’s trial as a frame of reference of his condition as a criminal:

(...) the individual to be corrected appears to require correction because all the usual techniques, procedures, and attempts at training within the family have

failed to correct him. What defines the individual to be corrected is that he is incorrigible. (Foucault, *Abnormal* 58)

The fact that the mother and the wife are testifying the sins of the subject committed within the household constitutes a proof that “all the usual techniques, procedures, and attempts at training within the family have failed” and now they appeal to the power of the law and the judge to subdue the subject to social regulations. On one hand, the wife blames him for not talking to her more often and for being unfaithful:

You should have talked to me more often  
 Than you did, but no you had to  
 Go your own way. Have you broken any  
 Homes up lately?

On the other hand, the mother cries “why’d he ever have to leave me” implying that for the mother (the obsessive mother as stated above) leaving her home and leaving her are crimes. Both testimonies also exemplify the nature of the subject as an individual to be corrected since his faults are ordinary, frequent, and obvious in families, and the two women cannot correct these by themselves.

Now, in terms of the reason why the subject is being prosecuted, as already discussed, this reason is not completely clear. The wife states that the subject was a cheater and they had communication problems. The mother implies in a temper tantrum that he left her alone. The Teacher even utters that “the bleeding heart and artists / Let him get away with murder.” Is doing whatever you want a crime? If the teacher and the other antagonists in the narrative believe so, it is a fairly judgmental and irate

conviction. However, the subject calls himself crazy in the choruses of the song:

Crazy toys in the attic I am crazy<sup>13</sup>

They must have taken my marbles away

Crazy over the rainbow I am crazy<sup>14</sup>

Bars in the windows

There must have been a door here in the wall

When I came in

Is he guilty of being insane? Probably. He affirms that he is crazy and, therefore, he has bars in the windows as if he were in prison. The speaker suggests a relationship between insanity and imprisonment, between being insane and being a criminal. When dealing with the concepts of madness and criminality, Foucault establishes:

You see delinquents as the residues of society, colonized peoples as the residues of history, and the mad as the residues of humanity in general, all included together in the same category, all the individuals—delinquents, peoples to be colonized, or the mad—who can only be reconverted, civilized and subjected to

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<sup>13</sup> “toys in the attic,” such a simple and beautiful image to suggest transgression of social parameters of normal behavior. Floyd has done this before in “Brain Damage” (part of the album *The Dark Side of the Moon*) with the verses: “the paper hold their folded faces to the floor / and every day the paper boy brings more.” Picking the newspaper from the front door constitutes such an ordinary activity, but if it is not carried out, it can even denote that there is some sort of mental problem in a person.

<sup>14</sup> Probably, a reference to *The Wizard of Oz* since its soundtrack includes the famous song *Over the Rainbow*. This is not the first time a connection between this iconic movie and their music comes out, if one takes into consideration the urban legend of the *The Dark Side of the Rainbow* (the montage of the visual part of *The Wizard of Oz* and the music of *The Dark Side of the Moon*).

orthopedic treatment if they are offered a family model. (Psychiatric Power 109)

The subject, if he is crazy, is part of this group of individuals: peoples to be colonized, delinquents, and people to be reconverted, civilized and subjected to orthopedic treatment. All these individuals are treated the same, as residues of society. Moreover, Foucault also believes that the cure for the insane relies on returning to the family model, which makes sense with the wish of the mother when she states: “m’lud I never wanted him to / get in any trouble / worm your honor let me take him home.” She wants to take him home, to a place that resembles the panopticon (as explained in chapter I), the architectural model for modern institutions of controlling individuals, including prisons. Insane or not, the subject is treated as a delinquent. There is also the possibility that the subject is appealing to insanity as a way to avoid punishment; nevertheless, it seems that in the micro-world of *The Wall* madness constitutes a type of crime, or at least it is treated as one, so it does not matter if the subject is appealing to insanity as a way to avoid being declared guilty or because he really is insane; he is treated as a criminal.

Now, it is time to consider the figure of the judge. After the speeches of the witnesses and the subject calling himself crazy for the second time, the judge comes onto the scene. He does not speak; he screams dreadfully, suggesting the hostility and intolerance of the law, of authority, and of power when confronting the subject, a subject that has erred or has gone against social standards of normality. He even establishes: “the way you make them suffer / your exquisite wife and mother / fills me with the urge to defecate.” The judge demonstrates with these bizarre and disturbing verses the fury

that the case of the subject is generating on him. The lines also show that if an individual goes against the law, the law will reply with its worst<sup>15</sup>. Now, in terms of punishment, the judge is in charge of imposing it, so he establishes:

[Since]<sup>16</sup> my friend you have revealed your  
 Deepest fear  
 I sentence you to be exposed before  
 Your peers  
 Tear down the wall.

Why is the judge punishing the subject? It seems that his fault is revealing his deepest fear. Which is this fear? Well, if one pays close attention to what the subject establishes when he has the chance to speak, one finds out that there is anxiety in his words: “they must have taken my marbles away” and “there must have been a door there in the wall / when in came in.” His anxiety reveals his fear of losing his marbles, going insane, but this madness is caused by the influence of other people, perhaps his family and authorities, and of being lost in a maze fenced by the wall. On one hand, people cause anxiety on the subject to the extent that they can make the subject go insane, or at least, judge the subject so harshly that he concludes that he is insane; he feels as a residue of society, a piece not used in the social machinery. On the other hand, he is afraid of being trapped inside the wall, and what it represents (isolation, lack of communication,

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<sup>15</sup> The act of the judge defecating can also be analyzed from the perspective of the scatological theory and the anal stage in psychoanalysis and how the judge releases, exercises power, and derives pleasure from this.

<sup>16</sup> The lyrics included in the booklet of the *The Wall* have the word “but” instead of “since”: “but my friend you have revealed your deepest fear.” I decided to use the lyrics based on the audio of the album, which contain “since.”

reclusion, etc), and of not finding freedom. What is the verdict? To tear down the wall, to expose him before his equals, before the rest of society, in order to subdue him to the law established by popular consent. The exposition before society represents a mechanism of control: the subject has to behave because he will always be monitored; this mechanism alludes to the panopticon. As already stated, the individual secluded in this architectural model has to feel that he/she is being observed so that he/she behaves properly. But is being afraid of the cruelty of others and of never reaching freedom a real crime that deserves “the full penalty of law” in order to secure justice? No, the whole trial is absurd. There is no real crime behind “The Trial”; it only illustrates that the judicial apparatus and the law embodied by the judge (and the witnesses and the district attorney) represent an instrument of power, as Foucault believes: “Law is neither the truth of power nor its alibi. It is an instrument of power which is at once complex and partial” (*Power/Knowledge* 141).

The judge constitutes the last authority present in *The Wall*. He is vile, intolerant, and resentful, as the law that he epitomizes. In this sense, the law and judicial apparatus portrayed in “The Trial” correspond to a series of rules and regulations that preserve the common good, but this common good is a facade imposed by the ones in power so, through the law, they manipulate and control individuals. The clearest example in the album stands for the speaker who goes through a legal prosecution that aims to prove that he is guilty (of what? It is still a mystery), but most important, that he has to subject to the law and to the rules of proper behavior by society.

**CHAPTER III: Together We Stand, Divided We Fall (They as a Reference to Society and the Repercussions on the Subject)**

Much has been discussed about the different faces that power undertakes in *The Wall*. On one hand, the household entails two of the principal figures of power, the mother and the father. On the other hand, the story in the album presents a series of super-individuals outside the household who have influence on the subject due to their knowledge and their social status: authorities, such as the teacher, the doctor, and the judge. But *The Wall* also encompasses another face of power which, in this case, is a faceless facade. It is wider than the other types of power, not just two or three individuals; it is the collectivity represented in *they*. When one starts analyzing the album, one realizes that there is another character in the story, a collective character who has an impact in the life of the subject. *They* have a tremendous relevance in the album to the extent that *they* are mentioned in ten of its songs; their presence is rather clear. *They* constitute an allusion to society as a whole. Nevertheless, that is not the only notion that is going to be discussed in this section. This chapter will also explore the idea of the speaker as a subject who exercises power. After “Comfortably Numb,” there is a little twist in the events of the album; the subject gradually gains power himself. He climbs to a position, close to the one of an authority, where he has the opportunity to exercise power over other individuals; he has the chance to control and to prohibit. In “In the Flesh!” and “Waiting for the Worms,” the speaker reaches a peak and evidences some traits of power that were previously contradictory to his image of passivity and



subjectivity, an image that was juxtaposed and contrasted to other facades of power, such as family members and authorities. These two facets of power, of *they* and of the subject, the collectivity and the individuality, are going to be discussed in this chapter.

This section of my research will focus first on the presence of *they* as a collective character that exercises power of the subject. Nevertheless, it has to be clear that this group, society, is not only represented by this pronoun. There are going to be cases in which *they* are implied; these cases will be taken into consideration for the analysis. Then the analysis will address the notion of the subject as a figure that embodies and exercises power over others. Also, the influence that these two have on each other will represent a major focal point in this section.

### **1) They and Power**

*They* stand for society, a society that has an influence on the subject in the sense that the relationship between it and him is mediated by power. Chris Baker establishes that “society is understood to be an autonomous sphere of activity formed through the organization of rule-governed human relationships and interactions” (*The Sage Dictionary* 185). There is a power relationship between the individual and the collectivity due to the fact that the latter, in its most organized expression, society, is based on rules. Subjects must follow and respect the rules which are, on the surface, meant to protect the interests of society. However, these rules, as explored through the

theme of the judge and the law, are not completely objective. In fact, the main problem with social rules relies on who gets the chance to dictate these rules. The album portrays other traits of this power relationship that are necessary to take into consideration when analyzing *they* and their link to power.

The first issue to discuss constitutes the fact that *they* have an impact on the subject in terms of company, acknowledgement, and reaffirmation of his subjectivity. The album evidences moments in which *they* or the absence of *they* have consequences in relation to power and to these three notions. For instance, the song “Is There Anybody Out There?” deals with the notion of company, or lack of company, within its only verse. The speaker repeats the question “is there anybody out there?” but obtains no answer. After this, the music begins, perhaps, the saddest theme<sup>17</sup> of the album and one of the saddest in rock history. Now, the noun “anybody” does not represent an specific person; this noun stands for any of the many individuals that make up the social body. The subject is secluded from the rest of humanity by means of a wall, thus his cry for human contact. Seclusion behind a wall, as stated above, represents one of the most remarkable traits of the panopticon. The subject is isolated so that he can be observed and controlled. Consequently, in this case, the lack of contact with others, the sense of loneliness, demonstrates the way in which the speaker is being subjected to power and is imprisoned in the panopticon. In other words, the lack of contact with the social body is equal to imprisonment in this architectural prototype and its game of power. On the

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<sup>17</sup> A theme corresponds to a melody or a harmony which carries a recognizable melody and which is, in some songs, repeated several times. For instance in “Für Elise” by Beethoven, the theme corresponds to, approximately, the first fifty seconds.

contrary, the song “Vera” includes a question that, although it is similar to the one in “Is Anybody Out There?,” it has a complete different implication:

Does anybody here remember Vera Lynn

Remember how she said that

We would meet again

Some sunny day

Vera! Vera!

What has become of you

Does anybody else here

Feel the way I do?

Vera Lynn is a singer who had several famous hits in the 1940s, such as “We’ll Meet Again,” the one referred to in Floyd’s song. This song stood for the promise of better days after the WWII. In a way, it was a way to say to the British “hold on, the sacrifice would worth it.” Nevertheless, “Vera” by Pink Floyd attacks these ideals that never became true. There was nothing for Britain after the war except destruction, misery, and suffering. As stated in the Historical Background of this investigation, Great Britain fell from the top the international scene and became, after WWII, another country reduced to ashes, which had to struggle in the second part of the twentieth century in order to overcome the atrocious consequences of the war in its society and economy. “Vera! Vera! / What has become of you” bitterly imply the question related to what happened to Vera and all the promises she made. Now, “Does anybody else in here / feel the way I do?” also includes the noun anybody as a manifestation of one of the

many persons that constitutes society. Nevertheless, the subject in this case is not separated from the rest of “anybodys”; actually, he is surrounded by them and is in a sense part of them. So why is the subject inquiring this? What is the motive behind this question? Well, it seems that the subject is looking for reaffirmation. On one side, He is disappointed of Vera and her promises and he asks the other individuals if they share his feelings because the collectivity is stronger than the individuality; consequently, it is easier for a group to demand or to complain than for a single subject. However, the subject is also looking for reaffirmation of his feelings since, due to the fact that the collectivity is stronger than the individuality, he needs to confirm that his feelings are normal in a situation like that; once he reaffirms his feelings, he can continue with the complaint, a complaint that would be stronger because the other individuals agree with him. This notion is connected to a phenomenon that Foucault explains in *Psychiatric Power* when he deals with the benefits of isolating individuals in the panopticon:

(...) in schools there will no longer be the “*cribbing*” that is the beginning of immorality;<sup>22</sup> in workshops there will be no more collective distraction, songs, or strikes;<sup>2\*</sup> in prisons, no more collusion;<sup>2'1</sup> and in asylums for the mentally ill, no more of those phenomena of collective irritation and imitation, etcetera.<sup>25</sup>

(75)

Subjects are isolated in the panopticon so that there are no more incidents such as collective distractions (which imply socialization), collusion (which imply social discomfort), or irritation and imitation (this last can be associated with reaffirmation because when one imitates your behavior, he/she is reaffirming it to you). All these

phenomena are associated with social interactions, and they are present not only in the life in prisons, hospitals, or asylums, but also in every aspect of the social experience (these are not behaviors acquired when these subjects are declared mentally ill or delinquents; these come from their experience in society and are repeated in the seclusion in hospitals, prisons, and asylums since prisoners and the mentally ill are, as the rest of humans, social animals). In this sense, collusion and imitation are two actions that occur in social interactions. In the case of “Vera,” the subject is asking the question to find out if his feeling of disappointment is part of a social discomfort and to find out if there is a sense of imitation and reaffirmation of his feeling in the answer of others.

The connection between *they*, the subject, and reaffirmation in the album demonstrates another different shade of *they* and power: approval. “Mother” includes a significant piece of evidence for this. In one of its verses, the speaker declares: “mother do you think they’ll like the song.” This question, aimed at the mother, shows a subject’s concern in terms of his creative production and the opinion of society. He is concerned if *they*, society, are going to like, to approve, his song, his creation. But why does he care about the opinion of them? Because deep down inside the subject worries about the opinion of society to the extent that he needs their approval. In this sense, his song is not a song meant to honestly share his feelings; it is not a way to express his deepest thoughts nor the purest accomplishment of the artistic mind. His song is a hit, a one-hit wonder, a song made for commercial purposes, why? Because he is creating music not for himself but the others, for society. Therefore, he needs the approval of the social body and that is the reason why he asks “do you think they’ll like the song?” In both

cases, of approval and of reaffirmation, the subject looks for an exterior influence in order to delineate his own feelings and thoughts. This influence comes from the social sphere, and it works as a mechanism of comparison. The subject juxtaposes his feelings, his thoughts, and creation against the social parameters of normality and creation. By asking these two questions the subject is implying: “society, is it ok if I think, feel, or behave this way?” In this sense, the power society exercises on the speaker is so present that he has to corroborate if he has an essence as an individual in accordance to social parameters. Consequently, *they* work as a judging mirror for the subject.

But this notion of *they* as a judging mirror for the subject does not only encompass approval and reaffirmation. Censorship constitutes another remarkable example of *they*, of society, as judges for the speaker. In the album, there are some fascinating examples of this. But in the case of censorship, *they* have a more aggressive function than in the cases of approval and reaffirmation. For instance, in “Run Like Hell,” the speaker affirms:

And keep your dirty feelings  
Deep inside and if you  
Take your girlfriend  
Out tonight,  
You'd better park the car  
Well out of sight  
Cos if they catch you in the back seat  
Trying to pick her locks

They're gonna send you back to mother

In a cardboard box

You better run

The whole song portrays the subject telling a series of “you’d better not,” and these lines correspond to one of the warnings. The speaker establishes that one has to keep his/her dirty feelings deep inside. What are these dirty feelings? Sexual urges. The image shows the consequences of expressing sexuality openly to the eyes of society. It turns out that the social body is not tolerant and, if they catch you exercising your sexuality, they not only reach the extreme of killing or deleting a you, but also they take you, figuratively, back to the house of your mother. It is significant to emphasize the fact that, according to this example and in the album in general, whenever a person behaves in an improper sexual way, he/she is taken to the place he/she grew up, which implies some sort of regression to childhood. As stated before, the mother is an image that entails castration and correction. In addition, the household, land of the almighty mother, is a place where the fight against infantile sexuality mainly takes place. Consequently, the social sexual defendant is taken to the household so that the mother can nullify his sexual urges. Now, in terms of social surveillance, the household, and infantile sexuality, Foucault establishes:

Wherever there was the chance they might appear, devices of surveillance were installed; traps were laid for compelling admissions; inexhaustible and corrective discourses were imposed; parents and teachers were alerted, and left with the suspicion that all children were guilty, and with the fear of being themselves at

fault if their suspicions were not sufficiently strong; they were kept in readiness in the face of this recurrent danger; their conduct was prescribed and their pedagogy recodified; an entire medico-sexual regime took hold of the family milieu. (*History of Sexuality Volume I* 44)

According to this author, the whole social body runs a campaign against child sexuality and it is through cultural institutions as the family and ideological states apparatuses as education that this evil is controlled. Moreover, a new medico-sexual discourse emerges so that, by means of creation of knowledge of the subjects, this ideology of censorship is installed. However, it is *they* who are behind all this censorship. *They* are the ones that alert parents and teachers, recodify the children's pedagogy, spread the notion that all children are guilty, and generate devices of surveillance. In this excerpt of "Run Like Hell," there is a fairly clear example of surveillance:

(...) if you  
 Take your girlfriend  
 Out tonight,  
 You'd better park the car  
 Well out of sight

If a person goes to the physical domain of *they*, outside, the street, and wants to exercise his sexuality, he has to park his car (the place where he is planning to have intercourse) out of sight, in the loneliness of darkness. In this sense, company means light and light means censorship; meanwhile, loneliness means darkness and darkness means freedom. Being under the spotlight represents a mechanism of surveillance; it also implies that



one is being observed by *them*. Observation entails judgment and censorship and, although it seems rather paradoxical that light stands for censorship, according to the logics of the album and the theory of the panopticon, light is used for this purpose. Finally, this excerpt of the lyrics also evidences another fact which demonstrates the degree of censorship and surveillance. At the end of the passage, the speaker states “you better run.” This warning entails that, in the world of the album, subjects have to constantly escape because society, or *they*, are in a perpetual state of hunt, surveillance, and censorship. The previous verses show the terrifying consequences of being caught:

(...) if they catch you in the back seat  
 Trying to pick her locks  
 They're gonna send you back to mother  
 In a cardboard box

If one considers the other perspective of the punishment for improper sexual behavior (not the one that they send the individual to the household so that the mother can castrate him), the one in which *they* literally kill the subject and send him back to his relatives, either in pieces or in a coffin, one realizes that this image alludes to the extreme cases of the most intolerant societies of the twentieth centuries, military dictatorships. The instances of fascist regimes like Mussolini's or the Nazis, in which thousands of citizens were persecuted, come to mind. In Latin America, there are the cases of the Argentinean and Chilean dictatorships in which thousands of citizens were kidnapped, tortured, and killed; others just disappeared during the night and never returned to their homes; all these examples are part of the most extreme cases when a society presents a tremendous

degree of censorship and intolerance.

Another notion related to power derived from the relation between *they* and the subject corresponds to castration. The album shows *they* as castrators; and there is the specific example that *they* aim to castrate the subject. In other words, *they* have such a significant influence on the subject that *they* have the power to deprive the subject of certain elements. In “The Show Must Go on,” for instance, the speaker states “I didn’t mean to let them / take away my soul.” If one takes these lines literally, *they* have taken or stolen the soul of the speaker. However, one should take into consideration the rest of the lyrics so that one has a better picture of the meaning of this image<sup>18</sup>. This song, as explained before, depicts the subject complaining to his parents because he doesn’t want to perform a show. At the end of his complaint, he establishes that *they* have taken away his soul, but it is not his spirit. What *they* took away is his essence as performer, as musician, as artist. That is his soul, when he is onstage. The fact that the speaker did not mean *them* to take away his soul probably means that, going back to the issue that the speaker as a musician is playing music not for his artistic satisfaction but for the others, he has lost his essence as an artist by performing for them and by trying to satisfy external artistic demands. Moreover, performing repetitively without wanting to do so wears out every desire and every spark of creativity and passion, leaving just the tedious act. In this sense, being trapped in the cycle of performing resembles other dehumanizing jobs such as working in textile factories or assembly plants in which individuals are mere screws of the production machinery, therefore, soulless bodies

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<sup>18</sup> It is due to such superficial readings that beliefs of satanic rock are spread by close-minded or intolerant religious fans.

meant to perform one action over and over again. In the case of the factory workers and of the speaker in the song, the demands of society or the need to work for *them* and satisfy *their* desires stands for the mutilation of the soul of individuals by society.

Another example of *they* as castrators is present in the lyrics of “The Trial”:  
“they must have taken my marbles away.” This verse is part of the chorus of the song and is the follow-up of “crazy toys in the attic I am crazy.” In this excerpt, as discussed above, the subject calls himself crazy. But the following idiom reveals that he has not lost his marbles, he has not gone crazy. On the contrary, his marbles were taken away by *them*; in other words, *they* represent the cause of his insanity. Castration or deprivation in this case corresponds to the castration of mental sanity on the subject as performed by society. This makes sense since one’s conduct can be considered senseless only in juxtaposition with the social parameters of normality. You do not realize you have lost your marbles; it is society that tells you you have lost your marbles. In a sense, *they*, society, create insanity by pronouncing it, by naming it, and by building up knowledge about it through observation of *abnormal* individuals (as Foucault puts it in *Psychiatric Power*). The final instance of *they* as castrators is included in “Mother” when the subject establishes: “mother do you think they’ll try to break my balls.” This verse literally implies castration and it is one of the many fears that the subject has in terms of his relationship with *them*, which he expresses in the first stanza of the song. The subject is afraid that *they* are going to remove his testicles. This can be interpreted as a forthright fear of losing his manhood; nevertheless, let’s stay away from such a statement that can be related to chauvinism and could raise discomfort in susceptible readers. On the other

hand, there are two alternative focal points. The first one corresponds to the notion that castration is equal to pain. Inflicting pain is associated with two issues: pain works as a Machiavellian mechanism of control or pain represents a punishment and negative incentive. In the first case, pain controls. It works in a conductive way since it shapes behavior. People do or do not do certain actions in order to avoid pain. In the second case, people behave properly and avoid breaking social rules because they do not want to be punished, and punishment sometimes entails inflicting pain. Take the case of kids that obey certain rules imposed by their parents because they do not want to be spanked or the case of some cultures that the punishment for stealing is cutting the accused's hands. When speaking about the way individuals can subdue to power, Bertrand Russell establishes:

An individual may be influenced: (a) by direct physical power over his body, e.g. when he is imprisoned or killed; (b) by rewards and punishments as inducements, e.g. in giving or withholding employment; (c) by influence on opinion, i.e. propaganda in its broadest sense. (*Power* 19)

Russell believes that punishment constitutes an essential mechanism to exercise power over the individual. In the song, *they* trying to break the subject's balls stands for a possible punishment in order to influence him not to commit any penalty. The second possible analysis of "mother do you think they'll try to break my balls" is that this image recalls the image of an animal: the ox or tame bull. In many countries, a tame bull is a bull whose testicles are removed so it is docile and can be easily controlled in order to carry out heavy duties. Bulls are deprived from their testes so that they may be subjected

to the will of their masters. In other words, castration implies submission to power. In “Mother,” the speaker is afraid that he will lose these sexual organs and will subdue to the will of *them*. The speaker, like a tame bull, will have to carry out an unpleasant duty: performing a task monotonously forced by *them*, following their resolutions.

Now the mechanisms of power that *they* employ in the album are not only negative. In other words, the power relationship between *they* and the subject is not only a relation characterized by repression and domination. In fact, *The Wall* includes one instance which portrays *them* as reward givers. In the lyrics of “No Body Home,” the speaker affirms: “I’ve got a little black book with my poems in / I’ve got a bag with a toothbrush and a comb in / when I’m a good dog, they sometimes throw me a bone in.” The image is fairly beautiful and bitter. The subject compares himself to a dog that, every time he is obedient, he is given a price. And who gives the price to the subject? His master, in this case, *they*... this leads to a rather sordid notion: *they* own the subject and, as with any belonging that is subjected to his owner’s will, *they* can do whatever they please with him; *they* have total control over the subject. In other words, individuals belong to society, a common belief in some totalitarian states. Moreover, this image shows that *they* not only use negative stimulus to subdue individuals and to make them follow *their* will. This image also recalls Ivan Pavlov’s story of the dog and the bell, related to conductism, in which a dog was instructed (unconsciously) to salivate every time it heard a bell. Like the dog, the speaker is taught to behave in a specific way by his master, *they*, in order to receive a price. But the submissiveness of the subject is not only a consequence of the power of the master. Submissiveness is a reaction to the price, in

this case the bone. The reward creates pleasure (the pleasure of eating and satisfying one basic need); therefore, the power of *them* is not just a repressive, punitive, and castrating power, as Foucault puts it: “Pleasure and power do not cancel or turn back against one another; they seek out, overlap, and reinforce one another. They are linked together by complex mechanisms and devices of excitation and incitement” (*History of Sexuality Volume I* 50). So one of the most important instruments of power corresponds to rewards which are appealing and pleasing to the subject, in the case of this image, a bone to a dog whenever he is good. Reinforcement in this case constitutes the opposite of a punishment as an inducement, as a way to influence individuals, what Russell calls *rewards* (*Power* 19).

Finally there are two images in the album which draw a connection between *they* and the subject and are rather significant in order to have a complete view in which *they* exercise power over the speaker. One image spreads all over the album; the other, is included in “No Body Home.” This song depicts the subject in, perhaps his apartment, making a list of all his material belongings. Furthermore, he seems to be in an apartment, longing to be home. He is alone and his only company is the TV. One infers this because, throughout the song, one can hear what seems to be TV programs, movies, and talk shows in addition to the fact that the speaker sarcastically affirms “Got thirteen channels of shit on the T.V. to choose from.” But what does this image have to do with the influence of them? In other words, what is the relationship between they, power, and the act of watching TV? The answer relies on the concept of common sense. Chris Baker believes that common sense constitutes “binary oppositions of the edible–inedible mark

another binary, insiders and outsiders, and hence the boundaries of the culture or social order” (*Cultural Studies* 152). Baker means that common sense is binary oppositions which help to judge cultural practices according to standards of normality and abnormality. But what is the purpose of judging everything according to these parameters? Stuart Hall establishes that in the case of England “English 'common sense', then, in one sense reflects the real, practical establishment of a 'natural' order of society - bourgeois society” (*Policing the Crisis* 82). In other words, common sense helps to generate ideals of natural order of society. Common sense contributes to organizing the system that *they* have created: culture and society. Moreover, this term also stands for the raw material for acceptable and unacceptable conducts and for social laws. Now, Hall also presents the link between this notion of common sense and the act of watching TV, which is under our scope. He states that “the crystallizing of public opinion is (...) raised to a more formal and public level by the networks of the mass media” (*Critical Dialogues* 74). What Hall affirms is that mass media and its mechanisms are in charge of showing opinions and to make them more formal, not just subjective thoughts about specific issues. In addition, these public opinions are charged with value judgments based on common sense. Consequently, if a public opinion becomes more formal through the media, so does the value judgment based on common sense that supports it. Therefore, mass media functions as a machine which spreads value judgments of normality and abnormality based on common sense; this means that the media helps to shape the social body according to the parameters given by *them*. As Hall puts it when dealing with the issue of crime, a non-accepted behavior:

It is communication and communication networks that create that complex creature we call public opinion (...) public opinion about crime does not simply form at random. It exhibits a shape and structure. It follows a sequence. It is a social process... the more such an issue passes into the public domain via the media, the more it is structured by the dominant ideologies about crime (*Policing the Crisis* 135)

In “No Body Home,” the fact that the subject is sitting alone watching TV corresponds to an allusion of the implantation of ideological premises based on the given-for-granted common sense through the communication networks of the media. Although the speaker seems to be alone, he is not really alone; society, *they*, and its principles accompany him. Paradoxically, the light produced by the TV does not enlighten him; on the contrary, it exposes him to a series of hegemonic values, which have the ultimate purpose of programming him in accordance to social parameters of *normality*.

The other image, or set of images, stands for the many allusions to war in *The Wall*. Throughout the album, the listener is exposed to war-related sounds, such as planes flying or falling, gunshots, bombs exploding, screams, etc. There are other direct references to warfare in the lyrics, take the case of “Good Bye Blue Sky” in which the speaker utters: (1) “did you see the frightened ones / did you hear the falling bombs,” or (2) “mother do you think they’ll drop the bomb (...) (3) mother will they put me in the firing line” from “Mother,” or the case of (4) “sitting in a bunker here behind my wall.” In the case of the second and third examples, the speaker includes *they* in the war images and even establishes that *they* are violent and are part of the combat; they attack or are



willing to attack. In the case of the first example, *they* can be implied in the frightened ones; *they* are not attacking, *they* suffer the attack. These verses demonstrate the relationship between *they* and war, a relationship that can be confirmed by looking at the various references to warfare in the album.<sup>19</sup> Foucault believes that there is a warlike phenomenon that runs through every corner of society:

(...) once we try to get away from economic schemata in our attempt to analyze power, we immediately find ourselves faced with two grand hypotheses; according to one, the mechanism of power is repression—for the sake of convenience, I will call this Reich's hypothesis, if you like—and according to the second, the basis of the power-relationship lies in a warlike clash between forces—for the sake of convenience, I will call this Nietzsche's hypothesis (*Society Must be Defended* 16)

According to this philosopher once the premise that power derives from economic relations is not taken into consideration, two new premises come into the play; one based on repression and the other on force. It is the latter which resembles war. The philosopher continues and affirms: “power relations, as they function in a society like ours, are essentially anchored in a certain relationship of force that was established in and through war at a given historical moment that can be historically specified” (*Society Must be Defended* 15). In other words, whenever someone exercises power or is subjected to it, the tension that is generated resembles the power relationship of the war that led society to its organization today. The way in which we solve our problems and

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<sup>19</sup> There are many references besides the biographical fact Roger Waters' father was killed in WWII and that the whole album can be seen as a semi-autobiographical account.

relate to other individuals is the way we used to solve problems and relate to others in wartime. The philosopher goes further and states that “We are therefore at war with one another; a battlefield runs through the whole of society, continuously and permanently, and it is this battlefield that puts us all on one side or the other. There is no such thing as a neutral subject. We are all inevitably someone’s adversary” (*Society Must be Defended* 51). This explains the reason why there is always an adversary: one is against his neighbor but becomes his ally when confronting another neighborhood or one has to compete against his coworkers in order to stand out in his job but at the same time there has to be teamwork. So the war-like references in *The Wall* stand for this perpetual state of war in society, that *they* promote, and which work as the main form to relate to one another, to solve possible misunderstanding, and to assign the roles in a power relationship. All the sound of bombs, gunshots, screams, and planes generate tension in the listener in order to make him or her empathize with the perpetual state of tension that the speaker experiences when relating to *they*.

The two contrasting images, the one of the speaker watching TV and the war images, resemble two literary works that also deal with the issue of power. On one hand, the image of the speaker watching TV resembles Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, a account of a futurist society in which pleasure and entertainment are used to control and subdue individuals, in addition to the fact that common sense also plays a significant role in the novel. On the other hand, the war-related images can remind the listener of another anti-utopian novel: George Orwell’s *1984*. This is a work that depicts a totalitarian society based on repression and whose perpetual state of war (due to the fact

that Oceania, the supercountry where the story takes place, is at war with the two other supercountries, Eurasia and Eastasia) resembles Foucault's theory and *The Wall's* allusion to warfare. It is possible that Roger Waters had read the novels before conceiving the idea of the album. Even without being certain about the influence of these texts on Waters, this comparison shows the value of a work whose themes are universal and have been in the mind of some of the most important writers that lived in such a tumultuous century as the twentieth century.

## **2) I and Power**

The speaker or subject in *The Wall* represents the counter part of every image of power in the album: the mother, the father, the teacher, the doctor, the judge and, finally, *they*. It is through the relationship between the subject and these characters that power becomes evident and a recurrent trait in the album. Furthermore, the dynamics of power always seem to favor one side. However, as stated at the beginning of this section, after "Comfortably Numb" the subject begins to obtain power, to exercise power over others, and by the time of "In The Flesh!," when he is onstage performing a show, he shows a completely different facet from the one of docility and subjugation demonstrated before. Now he is a vile frontman whose words are full of intolerance and hatred. The main songs that evidence such behavior are "In The Flesh!" and "Waiting for the Worms." These songs depict, through the words uttered by the subject, some major notions and

traits related to power.

The first song, “In The Flesh!,” stands for the performance, the presentation of the band. It is important to clarify that the subject is not performing and is not speaking in this track. There is, as the new speaker makes it clear, a surrogate band. So the speaker is the frontman from the substituting band. Nevertheless, this band represents the subject and his performance on stage. Besides that, the surrogate frontman can be seen as the subject getting into character, leaving his self in his hotel room, and becoming the performer that *they* want him to be, a completely different person. Consequently, although the speaker affirms that he is not the subject that has been present throughout the album, he is going to be taken as the subject because of the two reasons already explained and because this surrogate is taking the subject’s position. In other words, we are going to analyze the position of the subject and not him as an individual. Moreover, when we refer to the subject, we are going to refer to his position, in this case as person who was subdued to power but eventually gets the chance to exercise it. The first notion related to the subject exercising power is that the subject, when having the opportunity to exercise it, is violent. For instance, at the end of “In The Flesh!” he states “if I have my way I’d / have all of you shot” screaming to his audience. What do they do? They cheer him up. After the intense musical passage that leads to the conclusion of the song, one can hear the audience screaming in excitement. Another instance of violence in the behavior of the subject corresponds to the verse “waiting to smash in the windows / and kick in their doors” from “Waiting for the Worms.” This song depicts what seems to be an organized police which aims to maintain order by

inducing fear, a clear reference to controversial police-like organizations in totalitarian states such as fascist Italy's OVRA, Nazi's Gestapo, or soviet Russia's Geka and NKVD and which sometimes even acted outside the boundaries of the law (Kristie Macrakis). Furthermore, the voice of the speaker, who in this case appears to be the subject present previously in the album, suggests that he embodies the leader of this police, the dictator. One infers this due to the fact that when the subject speaks/sings, he uses a megaphone to address the crowd, an image associated to leaders speaking to the masses. The whole song lists a series of actions that this "secret police" is waiting to do, among them, breaking windows and smashing down doors. The violent behavior of the speaker resembles the attitude of other characters already analyzed such as the teacher and the judge. The three cases suggest that when a person is in a position where he/she can exercise power, he/she becomes violent. When the speaker was subjected by others, he was harmless, passive, and complaisant, the opposite of the aggressive tyrant he has become.

Part of the violent behavior of the subject in his new facet corresponds to the fact that he has the chance to punish and when he does it, it is more an act of violence for the sake of violence than an act of correction. In "In The Flesh!" this subject (the surrogate subject) utters:

Are there any queers in the theater tonight

Get them up against the wall

There's one in the spotlight

He don't look right to me  
Get him up against the wall  
That one looks Jewish  
And that one's a coon  
Who let all of this riff-raff into the room  
There's one smoking a joint and  
Another with spots  
If I had my way  
I'd have all of you shot

The punishment for all these defendants is the same: to get them up against the wall. In addition, the defendants exemplify some groups that have been historically targeted for discrimination by hegemonic groups: homosexuals, Jews, afro-descendants, and addicts. In other cases, the factors taken into consideration to judge these individuals is rather subjective, like in “there’s one in the spotlight / he don’t look right to me.” All these instances demonstrate the level of intolerance of the subject and aggressiveness of his resolution. Making X or Y stand against the wall corresponds to an allusion to execution by firearm, a punishment too severe for such questionable “crimes.” More than a figure representing justice and social order, the subject and his punishments resemble an omnipotent dictator who is blinded by power and does these grotesque demonstrations of force just to show his strength. Furthermore, the place where defendants are taken to be executed is the wall, the same wall that was the subject’s prison before. Now, it is his instrument to control, to exercise power. In this sense, if one considers that the wall was

an extension of the panopticon, the tool that was used to subdue him to power, now, is his main strategy to suppress others. Power, not only moves through all branches of the social web, it reproduces through the same means. In other words, the mechanisms of control are reproduced over and over again by means of internalization. The subject subjects to power, then internalizes its strategies and applies them once he is in a position where he can influence others; this cycle will repeat itself exactly in the same way for new subjects under his will. Going back to the notion of violence, it seems that the punishment corresponds to a strategy, a way to manifest force, and violence intensifies this force. Violence generates fear and fear, in many instances, gives rise to control.

The other song which portrays the subject as a despot, “Waiting for the Worms,” holds other significant issues related to power. These notions are related to nationalism and prejudice. The first example of these notions corresponds to “would you like to send our colored cousins / home again my friend / all you need to do is follow the worms.” First of all, what are these worms? Well, the worms, on one hand, are what the subject and his police have to follow if they want to carry out their role as a frightening force. However, the worms are also mentioned in “Hey You”:

But it was only a fantasy  
The wall was too high, as you can see  
No matter how he tried he could not break free  
And the worms ate into his brain

In this case, the worms come with the disappointment of realizing that he, the subject, could not escape from the influence of the wall, he was trapped and he had no escape. They can also correspond to a consequence of being under the influence of the wall and what it represents. So what are the worms exactly? It is still not clear. Let's remember that the worms, per se, are a strong image related to putrefaction, dirt, and even death. Do the worms in the album embody these? We do not know. Nevertheless, one thing is clear: the worms represent a negative and detrimental force. So if the subject wants to send his colored cousins back home, to send, perhaps, afro-descendants, Indians, Mexicans and Latin-Americans, Chinese, Africans, etc., to their country of origin, he has to follow the ideas connected to negativity and dirt (more than physical, spiritual dirt); this makes sense because racial discrimination is connected to intolerance, anger, and fear (concepts as already explained linked to power). In this sense, Christopher Borrelli affirmed in 2010 that *The Wall* corresponds to:

A broad political statement, with the wall representing a separation between 'East and West, rich and poor, powerful and weak.' Waters' defensiveness is less evident now than his ability to address evergreen maladies: prejudice (...), sacrifice (...), anxiety (...), the gulf between art and audience. ("Pink Floyd's 'The Wall,' Then vs. Now.")

The relevance of the album pointing out the many political and social problems of, not only western societies of the 50s, 60s and 70s, but also of these societies in the new millennium is, according to the author, unquestionable. Waters also believes that separation, power, and prejudice (racial prejudice) are common traits that run through



the thematic core of the album and which reflect what is going on in society. But how is this notion of racial intolerance related to power? Foucault holds the answer to this question in *Society Must be Defended*. As stated above, this author affirms that due to the nature of power relations in western societies which are characterized by tension, there is a perpetual state of war in them (15-16). The author continues and establishes that knowledge has been another significant tool in order to turn the (secret) war balance to one side; this is accomplished by means of historic justification. Some of these historic facts are related to race:

We also have the theme of the rights and privileges of the earliest race, which were flouted by cunning invaders, the theme of the war that is still going on in secret, of the plot that has to be revived so as to rekindle that war and to drive out the invaders or enemies; the theme of the famous battle that will take place tomorrow, that will at last invert the relationship of force, and transform the vanquished into victors who will know and show no mercy. (*Society Must be Defended* 56-57)

According to Foucault, one of the main branches in which this secret war that spreads through all society and which characterizes power relations stands for racial matters, specifically, racial intolerance. In other words, racial conflicts constitute a pressure release valve for perpetual war-like relationships that characterize social (power) relations. In this sense, Stuart Hall states that this war-like relation or social tension is similar to having a scapegoat:

One of the most familiar ways in which the moral calculus of work is recruited

into attitudes to social problems is in the way people talk about ‘scroungers’, ‘layabouts’, those who ‘don’t do a stroke’ or ‘live off the Welfare’. The characterisations are often applied indiscriminately, and without much evidence, to various ‘out-groups’: the poor, the unemployed, the irresponsible and feckless – but also youth, students and black people. These are seen as getting something without ‘putting anything into it’. The image implies instant moral condemnation. (*Policing the Crisis* 142)

According to Hall, the sense of social discomfort raises when dealing with the marginal groups, which in this case, the case of Britain of the 1970s, corresponds to the poor, the unemployed, the feckless, the young, and the black. These groups are the ones to blame for the social problems and the crisis that affect British society. For instance, Hall affirms that there were “particular groups defined in the view of the police as ‘potential muggers’ - above all, groups of black youths” (*Policing the Crisis* 43). The subject in “Waiting for the Worms” declares war to the foreign, plays his role in a power relation that resembles warfare. Moreover, since he is at the top of the relation, he aims to subdue the immigrants, by that, exercising power and reinforcing the war-like state that characterizes social relations<sup>20</sup>.

“Waiting for the Worms” also makes another reference to nationalism and power. Some of its verses state: “Would you like to see Britannia / rule again my friend / all you have to do is follow the worms.” These lines constitute an allusion to the British

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<sup>20</sup> Besides that, this image directly alludes to totalitarian states and their position about race, purification, the other, and immigration.

Empire of the XIX century, a kingdom that was the economic leader of the planet and held territories in all continents. In this case, the promise of the subject, the dictator, is that if the British population wants their country to become as politically, militarily, economically, and socially significant, they have to follow him and the “worms that ate into his brain.” The subject personifies a politician making campaign, promising that, under his lead, things would go back to the old days, the days of glory of the nation. These old times correspond to the days when the empire represented the lead of the international power relationship between countries by subjugating economically, politically, and militarily other cultures and nations. In a way, this case takes relationships based on power in the album to a macro level, the international scene. But in this case, the empire would rise again escorted by a dictator with an iron fist who is willing to harshly punish any one who does not follow the standards of normal behavior as in “In the Flesh!” or to expel immigrants or foreigners as in the song now under analysis. Furthermore, these lines about the rebirth of the empire have a similitude with the real Britain when *The Wall* was written, the end of the 1970s. By the end of this decade, a new wave of conservative politics was emerging: Thatcherism. According to William Burns Thatcherism “presented itself as having a moral and philosophical component. Thatcherism emphasized traditional values, or, as she sometimes called them, Victorian values” (234). Thatcherism appealed to an era with values such as “self-reliance, the power of hard work, and adherence to the traditional family” (ibid). However, the Victorian era was also an era when the empire was in its high tide as power executors. Perhaps, Thatcherism’s appeal to the Victorian era also entails a

craving for power as a nation, as conquerors, as world empire. Pink Floyd mocks and criticizes the appeal that this new political wave was using as a mechanism to gain popularity and support. “Would you like to see Britannia / rule again my friend” alludes to one specific mechanism of raising support in political power, Thatcherism’s longing for the good old days of the empire.

In this last section, *I* and *they* represent two more facets of power. *They* allude to the most general personification of power while *I* constitutes the specific, the individual. Moreover, *they* are faceless; they are a shadow made of thousands of hundreds of individuals who function as a minimal part of a collective body that does not have a beginning or an end. On the contrary, *I* represents the subject that has been under the feet of different personifications of power, but who now has the opportunity to subdue others, to exercise his force. In a way, these two contradict each other. However, the two exemplify and present some significant notions about power. On one hand, *they* illustrate reaffirmation, approval, censorship, castration, reinforcement, and common sense. On the other hand, *I* is linked to violence, punishment, and nationalism and prejudices. All these concepts demonstrate the way in which power moves through society and its relations. Furthermore, both embodiments of power show the way in which, according to Michel Foucault, power relationships resemble the way in which two parts behave in wartime. *I* and *they* are in a perpetual state of war but not between each other. War is part of them; it shapes of the way they see the world, the way they relate to it, and the way they give sense to it.

There is another pronoun which is significant to recall in this section: *we*. *We*

appears in two main songs. These are “Hey You” and “Another Brick in the Wall Part II”; in both cases, *we* refer to rebellion. Regarding the first one, the verse “together we stand, divided we fall” evokes the phenomenon of collectivity that Jeremy Bentham was criticizing when conceiving the Panopticon. The verses “we don’t need no education / we don’t need no thought control,” part of the second song, also remind the reader of how the collective generates issues to power; these issues are examples of resisting. So *we* in the album relates to resistance against power. However, these are the only two cases in which resistance against submission appears. On the contrary, the other two pronouns, *they* and *I*, are more recurrent and have more remarkable roles in the story.

## Conclusions

*The Wall* by Pink Floyd represents one of the most significant products of rock history, pop culture, and music of the twentieth century. Its verses depict the story of a subject who builds up a figurative wall. This wall isolates him from the rest of individuals, so the sense of loneliness, despair, and dehumanization is vast. In fact, the album stands for an ode to dehumanization; each and every of its songs may be seen as an account of the different instances which lead individuals to this condition. In this sense, the album constitutes an epic poem showing the life of a subject, Pink, and the different stages and persons that he relates to throughout this journey, from baby to child, from child to adult, from adult to dehumanized individual trapped in a detrimental society. With amazing music, mesmerizing background sounds which contribute to take the story to a new level of meaning, touching vocal interpretation, and clever lyrics which demonstrate artistic and literary value, *The Wall* shows itself, not just as a fine rock album, but as a multilayer piece of art which deserves academic respect.

This investigation had one main objective: *to examine the discourse in terms of authority and power relations* in the album. Moreover, the analysis of the text, the context, and the support given by the theory led to the main problem of the research: *The Wall by Pink Floyd evidences the way in which authorities and power relations oppress the subject*. Due to the rich content of the album, three specific objectives were set in order to show the way in which the different events result in the problem. At the same time, these three corresponded to the three chapters: (1) *to analyze mechanisms and*

*instances of authority and power in the family in The Wall, (2) to examine instances of power and authority in relation to education, medicine and the state in the album, (3) to explore cases of authority and power in relation to the notion of they as a manifestation of the whole society and how they have an influence on the I.*

The first chapter focuses on the closest group of relations, the one of the subject and his family member, his father and his mother. Both figures exercise power over the speaker although the direct influence of the father is subtler. In the case of the first figure, the mother evidences some major traits of power such as control, prohibition, and surveillance. The latter leads to another trait of the theory of power in the form of discipline (Foucault's disciplinary power). Family, in this sense, constitutes the base of all disciplinary institutions. Furthermore, the mother's excessive protection shows just how obsessed the mother is with her son. But this obsession, when analyzed in depth, demonstrates that the mother is afraid of ceasing to exist since she only exists as a subject when she exercises power. Consequently, she is reluctant to stop influencing her son. She is present, or at least tries to be present, in all parts of her son's life. On the contrary, the father is absent; therefore, he represents silence and the feeling of loneliness. Loneliness relates to power due to the fact that, when individuals are trapped in the different buildings of disciplinary institutions, such as hospitals, prisons, and asylums, they are secluded individually so that all phenomena of communal living are nullified. As "Hey You" states "together we stand, divided we fall," the relationship between the father and the subject shows the way in which power divides groups so that

it can subdue their parts easily. The sense of loneliness that the speaker evidences when speaking about his father and the silence he receives for an answer when trying to communicate with him exemplify the sense of loneliness and seclusion created in the panopticon. This architectural concept stands for one of the most significant physical manifestations in the theory of power. In this prototype, seclusion and silence constitute some of the traits used to control subjects, traits that are present in the relation between the subject and his absent father; after all, he is just a brick in the wall, a brick that builds the panopticon.

The second chapter constitutes a reflection on the notion of authorities and the influence they have on the subject, this, from a power relation perspective. The album presents three main authorities: the teacher, the physician, and the judge; and how the subject has contact with the three of them. In the case of the teacher, this character represents an institution which is intolerant and promotes violence. The teacher screams at students and tries to put them down every time he can, all this, from the upper position of the power relation. However, the teacher also exemplifies another instance of the theory of power: fluctuation of power through all parts of the social body. The teacher is powerful in the classroom; he is like a military sergeant subduing his pupils. Nevertheless, when he is home, he is subdued by his wife. This exemplifies the way in which no one can really hold power; there is always going to be someone above who is in control and whom one has to report to. In the same way, the doctor also personifies when he is overconfident, when he has control over the body of the subject, when he is



indifferent, and when he cures as a form of social control. In the first case, his arrogance or overconfidence reinforces the knowledge he has on the matter. This relates to Bentham and Russell's notion that the ones in power are the ones who accumulate knowledge. Likewise, the doctor has control over the body of the subject. About this, Russell believes that one of the possible manifestations of power is to directly have influence over the body of a person. Moreover, the doctor as a dehumanized personage alludes to the economical and mechanical nature of power. The physician just sees the subject as a task to be accomplished; he has to cure him so the latter can go and produce again. In regards to this, the cure of the doctor stands for a means to reintroduce the subject to a social order in which, if one is sick, one is not producing. In the case of the judge, this personage and the state apparatus he embodies demonstrate other intriguing characteristics of power. For instance, the organization of the trial shows the way in which, according to Russell, law needs the consent of the people in order to function. Furthermore, the trial in the album includes an authority as a witness, but this authority is not an expert in law. Therefore, his participation constitutes a fallacy which Foucault refers to as another mechanism of power: taking the testimony of an authority in another field different from law as a significant part of evidence in a legal prosecution, in the case of *The Wall*, the testimony of the teacher. The other two witnesses, the subject's mother and wife, allude to the notion that the subject stands for *the individual to the corrected* in Foucault's theory, a person that cannot be corrected within the household and that is why he/she has to be taken to a prison-like institution and undergo a treatment. In terms of the subject's crime, it is never clearly stated, but he calls himself

crazy. Whether or not he is really insane, *The Wall* evidences the way in which historically the insane have been treated as prisoners and how mental hospitals have really resembled prisons. Finally, the punishment represents a way to incorporate the subject back into the social body regulated by personal relations, and to *tear down the wall*, a form to reintroduce the subject into power relations, while remaining in the inferior position.

The third chapter focused on the third specific objective of this investigation, which is related to *they* as a manifestation of the whole social body and its influence on the *I*, the subject, and the way he behaves when he has the opportunity to exercise power. In terms of the first, *they* are connected to notions of company, acknowledgement of subjectivity, censorship, approval, and reward; all these notions are associated to the influence that society can have in the life of a subject to the extent that a person may be even governed by the social body. Moreover, the influence of *they* helps to implant common sense in the mind of individuals; this corresponds to one of the most efficient strategies to control and to subdue people. For Chris Baker, common sense is a method to organize reality; however, this view of reality is implanted by hegemonic groups. In the case of the album, TV is used as a reference of the subject being influenced by common sense. *They* are also connected to war through the many literary and auditory images which haunt the songs. These images exemplify Foucault's notion that power relations in society resemble war in the sense that these are based on the notion that the other is out there threatening our sovereignty; consequently, either we

subdue this other, or the other subdues us. This represents the reason why human relations in western society are power relations founded on tension and violence. In the same case, the analysis of certain images related to *I*, the subject, as an agent exercising power demonstrate that power is associated with violence, nationalism, intolerance, and racism. The album alludes to some specific and dramatic moments of the Twentieth Century by presenting the subject as a dictator who uses the wall that previously isolated him in the panopticon as a means to punish individuals that do not cope with his law.

In terms of the problem, *The Wall by Pink Floyd evidences the way in which authorities and power relations oppress the subject*, the analysis of the album, from the scope of the objectives and with the support of theory related to the matter, reveals that power relations really oppress individuals. From the family-subject relation to the widest circle of human relations, social body-subject, *The Wall* shows that social relations are characterized, as Foucault affirms, by tension, violence, oppression, and intolerance, among others; all these characteristics can be traced in the behaviors displayed by the different characters of the story. In addition, the theory used, the historical context review, and the rhetorical analysis helped creating actual links between the story in the album, the objectives, and the problem in order to make this last one more evident and to fully argue this investigation. In this sense, the theory shows that power relationships in *The Wall* exemplify certain specific theory notions as the panopticon, the individual to be corrected, war-like relationships, the subjugation of the body, ideological state apparatuses, in addition to several of the concepts explored in the theoretical framework.

Regarding areas of improvement, this investigation represents the first encounter of a text of this nature within the academic circle in Costa Rica (of course there are exceptions like the work related to trova by Guillermo Barzuna or the work of Mauricio Vargas Ortega on Fito Paez, both works focusing on Latin-American music). Therefore, there are always possibilities for improving and expanding this research. For instance, it could have taken an even deeper look at the theory of cultural studies to see if there were other perspectives that could help the analysis. It could also include a more extensive historical background to, again, strengthen the analysis. Bottom line, this investigation constitutes an exercise, a highly formal and serious attempt to demonstrate certain analytical, intellectual, and theoretical notions. Suggestions and other additions could better it, but the danger also exists that it will lose its scope, the reason why it was undertaken in the first place.

In a brief review, the task of making this investigation was a long but enriching journey. From the first moment, choosing the text to analyze, until this very instant in which I am sitting at my desk trying to give an end to a period in my life that has taken three years, it has been a process of learning, learning that there is a lot to read, know, and learn, learning that a text will always change and will always create a different meaning. It mutates as one mutates, as one changes, because reading is not a static action, reading changes within us, and we change while reading. In my case, throughout these three years I have read different colors and textures in a wall that was just supposed to be made of stone. Hopefully, I will encounter new methodological tools to make a new reading of *The Wall* in the future to discover new shapes, colors, and even

new flavors in a text that has accompanied me since I was in primary school. And what is the result from this investigation? What can we say about *The Wall*, power, and society? Well, the text by Pink Floyd is a reflection of the nature of human relations. In this sense, what I found is a text that describes not only its context, but also today's society. The *Wall* is as valid today as it was when it was written. Why? Because it describes, and because it is an examination of the human soul, its darkest side. In this sense, institutions portrayed in the album make the same faults today, whether they involve education, family, or the law. We still have walls, walls that isolate, that protect and seclude us with our fears, and that serve as instruments to inflict pain. But this is not new—Foucault's analysis of different institutions and social structures in previous centuries of the twentieth century also focused on this gigantic wall I dare now call power. So *The Wall* simply describes the sins of human nature, part of what makes us humans, but again, this represents just my perspective as investigator.

In conclusion, *The Wall* constitutes an artistic piece that not only touches the human soul, but also presents a highly detailed examination of it, of what human relationships are, what society is, what existence is, and where the individual ends and the collective begins. The album generates all these questions through its imagery, music, and narrative. It also explores other notions such as isolation, dehumanization, and power. It is this last issue that this investigation focused on. Power is evident in a great deal of its songs and in all stages of the subject's life. This is an extremely significant topic in a society that shows serious instances of violence, isolation, and apathy; these could be consequences of the tension generated in power relations. In this

sense, the album also represents a mirror which reflects and emphasizes the darkest parts of society. This, along with its artistic and esthetic value and its irrefutable cultural impact, are only some of the numerous reasons why *The Wall* by Pink Floyd deserved an investigation such as the one presented.

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## Appendix

Lyrics of *The Wall* used in this investigation:

### Another Brick in the Wall Part I

Daddy's flown across the ocean  
Leaving just a memory  
A snap shot in the family album  
Daddy what else did you leave for me  
Daddy what d'ya leave behind for me  
All in all it was just a brick in the wall  
All in all it was just a brick in the wall

### The Happiest Days of our Lives

When we grew up and went to school  
There were certain teachers who would  
Hurt the children anyway they could  
By pouring their derision  
Upon anything we did

And exposing every weakness  
However carefully hidden by the kids  
But in the town it was well known  
When they got home at night, their fat and  
Psychopathic wives would thrash them  
Within inches of their lives

Another Brick in the Wall Part II

We don't need no education  
We don't no thought control  
No dark sarcasm in the classroom  
Teachers leave the kids alone  
Hey teachers leave us kids alone  
All in all it's just another brick in the wall  
All in all you're just another brick in the wall

Mother

Mother do you think they'll drop the bomb

Mother do you think they'll like this song

Mother do you think they'll try to break my balls

Mother should I build the wall

Mother should I run for president

Mother should I trust the government

Mother will they put me in the firing line

Mother am I really dying

Hush now baby don't you cry

Mama's gonna make all your

Nightmares come true

Mother's gonna put all her fears into you

Mother's gonna keep you right here

Under her wing.

She wont let you fly but she might let you sing

Mama will keep baby cozy and warm

Ooooh babe Ooooh babe Ooooh babe

Of course mam'll help build the wall

Hush now baby, baby don't you cry

Mama's gonna check out all your girlfriends for you

Mama wont let anyone dirty get through  
Mama's gonna wait up till you get in  
Mama will always find out where  
You've been  
Mama's gonna keep baby healthy and clean  
Ooooh babe ooooh babe ooooh babe  
You'll always be baby to me  
Mother, did it need to be so high.

Goodbye Blue Sky

Ooooooooooooooooooooh  
Did you see the frightened ones  
Did you hear the falling bombs  
Did you ever wonder  
Why we had to run for shelter  
When the promise of a brave new world  
Unfurled beneath a clear blue sky  
Ooooooooooooooooooooh  
Did you see the frightened ones  
Did you hear the falling bombs  
The flames are all gone



But the pain lingers on

Goodbye Blue Sky

Goodbye Blue Sky

Goodbye

Young Lust

I am just a new boy

Stranger in this town

Where are all the good times

Who's gonna show this stranger around?

Ooooooooooh I need a dirty woman

Ooooooooooh I need a dirty girl

Will some cold woman in this desert land

Make me feel like a real man

Take this rock and roll refugee

Oooh baby set me free

Ooooooooooh I need a dirty woman

Ooooooooooh, I need a dirty girl

Another Brick in the Wall Part III

I don't need no arms around me  
I don't need no drugs to calm me  
I have seen the writing on the wall  
Don't think I need anything at all  
No, don't think I'll need anything at all  
All in all it was all just bricks in the wall  
All in all you were all bricks in the wall

Hey You

Hey you! out there in the cold  
Getting lonely, getting old, can you feel me  
Hey you! standing in the aisles  
With itchy feet and fading smiles, can you feel me  
Hey you! don't help them to bury the light  
Don't give in without a fight.  
Hey you! out there on your own  
Sitting naked by the phone would you touch me  
Hey You! with your hear against the wall

Waiting for someone to call out would you touch me

Hey you! would you help me to carry the stone

Open your heart, I'm coming home

But it was only a fantasy

The wall was too high, as you can see

No matter how he tried he could not break free

And the worms ate into his brain

Hey you! out there on the road

Doing what you're told, can you help me

Hey you! there beyond the wall

Breaking bottles in the hall, can you help me

Hey You! don't tell me there's no hope at all

Together we stand, divided we fall

Is there anybody out there?

Is there anybody out there?

Nobody Home

I've got a little black book with my poems in  
I've got a bag with a toothbrush and a comb in  
When I'm a good dog, they sometimes throw me a bone in  
I got elastic bands keeping my shoes on  
Got those swollen hand blues.  
Got thirteen channels of shit on the T.V. to choose from  
I've got electric light  
And I've got second sight  
I've got amazing powers of observation  
And that is how I know  
When I try to get through  
On the telephone to you  
There'll be nobody home  
I've got the obligatory Hendrix perm  
And the inevitable pinhole burns  
All down the front of my favorite satin shirt  
I've got nicotine stains on my fingers  
I've got a silver spoon on a chain  
I've got a grand piano to prop up my mortal remains  
I've got wild staring eyes

And I've got a strong urge to fly  
But I got nowhere to fly to  
Ooooh, Babe when I pick up the phone  
There's still nobody home  
I've got a pair of Gohills boots  
And I've got fading roots.

Vera

Does anybody here remember Vera Lynn  
Remember how she said that  
We would meet again  
Some sunny day  
Vera! Vera!  
What has become of you  
Does anybody else here  
Feel the way I do?

Bring the Boys Back Home

Bring the boys back home

Bring the boys back home

Don't leave the children on their own

Bring the boys back home

Comfortably Numb

Hello,

Is there anybody in there

Just nod if you can hear me

Is there anyone at home

Come on now

I hear you're feeling down

Well I can ease your pain

Get you on your feet again

Relax

I'll need some information first

Just the basic facts

Can you show me where it hurts

There is no pain, you are receding  
A distant ship smoke on the horizon  
You are only coming through in waves  
Your lips move but I can't hear what you're saying  
When I was a child I had a fever  
My hands felt just like two balloons  
Now I've got that feeling once again  
I can't explain you, would not understand  
This is not how I am  
I have become comfortably numb-  
O.K.  
Just a little pinprick  
There'll be no more aaaaaaaah!  
But you may feel a little sick  
Can you stand up?  
I do believe it's working, good  
That'll keep you going through the show  
Come on it's time to go  
There is no pain, you are receding  
A distant ship smoke on the horizon  
You are only coming through in waves  
Your lips move but I can't hear what you're saying

When I was a child  
I caught a fleeting glimpse  
Out of the corner of my eye  
I turned to look but it was gone  
I cannot put my finger on it now  
The child is grown  
The dream is gone  
And I have become  
Comfortably numb-

The Show must go on.

Oooh, Ma Oooh Pa  
Does the show have go on  
Oooh Pa take me home  
Oooh Ma let me go  
Do I have to stand up  
Wild eyed in the spotlight  
What a nightmare Why!  
Don't I turn an run  
There must be some mistake



I didn't mean to let them

Take away my soul

Am I too old is it too late

Oooh Ma Oooh Pa

Where has the feeling gone?

Oooh Ma Oooh Pa

Will I remember the songs?

The show must go on.

### In The Flesh

So ya

Thought ya

Might like to

Go to the show

To feel that warm thrill of confusion

That space cadet glow

I've got some bad news for you sunshine

Pink isn't well, he stayed back at the hotel

And they sent us along as a surrogate band

And we're going find out where you fans

Really stand

Are there any queers in the theater tonight

Get them up against the wall

There's one in the spotlight

He don't look right to me

Get him up against the wall

That one looks Jewish

And that one's a coon

Who let all of this riff-raff into the room

There's one smoking a joint and

Another with spots

If I had my way

I'd have all of you shot

### Run Like Hell.

You better run like hell

You better make your face up in

Your favorite disguise

With your button down lips and your

Roller blind eyes

With your empty smile

And your hungry heart  
Feel the bile rising from your guilty past  
With your nerves in tatters  
When the cockleshell shatters  
And the hammers batter  
Down the door  
You'd better run like hell  
You better run all day  
And run all night  
And keep your dirty feelings  
Deep inside And if you  
Take your girlfriend  
Out tonight,  
You'd better park the car  
Well out of sight  
Cos if they catch you in the back seat  
Trying to pick her locks  
They're gonna send you back to mother  
In a cardboard box  
You better run

Waiting for the Worms

Ooooh You cannot reach me now

Ooooh No matter how you try

Goodbye cruel world it's over

Walk on by

Sitting in a bunker here behind my wall

Waiting for the worms to come

In perfect isolation here behind my wall

Waiting for the worms to come

Waiting to cut out the deadwood

Waiting to clean up the city

Waiting to follow the worms

Waiting to put on a blackshirt

Waiting to weed out the weaklings

Waiting to smash in their windows

And kick in their doors.

Waiting for the final solution

To strengthen the strain

Waiting to follow the worms

Waiting to turn on the showers

And fire the ovens

Waiting for the queens and the coons

and the reds and the Jews

Waiting to follow the worms

Would you like to see Britannia

Rule again my friend

All you have to do is follow the worms

Would you like to send our colored cousins

Home again my friend

All you need to do is follow the worms

Stop

I want to go home

Take off this uniform

And leave the show

And I'm waiting in this cell

Because I have to know

Have I been guilty all this time

The Trial

Good morning Worm your honor  
The crown will plainly show  
The prisoner who now stands before you  
Was caught red-handed showing feelings  
Showing feelings of an almost human nature  
This will not do  
Call the schoolmaster  
I always said he'd come to no good  
In the end your honor  
If they'd let me have my way I could  
Have flayed him into shape  
But my hands were tied  
The bleeding hearts and artists  
Let him get away with murder  
Let me hammer him today  
Crazy toys in the attic I am crazy  
They must have taken my marbles away  
Call the defendants wife  
You little shit, you're in it now  
I hope they throw away the key

You should have talked to me more often  
Than you did, but no you had to  
Go Your own way. Have you broken any  
Homes up lately?  
Just five minutes Worm your honor  
Him and me alone  
Babe  
Come to mother baby let me hold you  
In my arms  
M'lud I never wanted him to  
Get in any trouble  
Why'd he ever have to leave me  
Worm your honor let me take him home  
Crazy over the rainbow I am crazy  
Bars in the window  
There must have been a door there in the wall  
When I came in  
Crazy over the rainbow he is crazy  
The evidence before the court is  
Incontrovertible, there's no need for  
The jury to retire  
In all my years of judging

I have never heard before of  
Someone more deserving  
Of the full penalty of law  
The way you made them suffer  
Your exquisite wife and mother  
Fills me with the urge to defecate  
But my friend you have revealed your  
Deepest fear  
I sentence you to be exposed before  
Your peers  
Tear down the wall.