



CRITICAL REVIEW

Overcoming the trauma through the psychedelic in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*

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Abstract. This is an attempt to investigate the causal relationship existing between the psychedelic literary genre in fiction and the application of trauma theory in the study of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Trauma theory, which is a psychological theory in essence; has been widely linked to the study of literature since traumatic responses take narrative forms. Scientifically, many studies have proven that the psychedelic trip leads to a deepened exploration of the unconscious tracing latent emotional traumas. Henceforth, I am going to explore this novel as a psychedelic example of science fiction through a generic analysis due to the numerous parallels I have noticed with the effects of drug administration on real life patients. I will base my claim on a medical theory known as Psychedelic Information Theory which investigates psychedelic hallucinations, expanded consciousness and their impact on the metaphysical aspects of self-exploration. Consequently, I shall presuppose that psychedelics act metaphorically on the text of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* inducing character-based hallucinatory narratives. Hallucinations are caused by an eruption of a psychedelic consciousness that is the antithesis of the normal state of a mind. Hallucinations range from happy enjoyable experiences laden with kaleidoscopic colourful streams of visions to painful manifestations of latent trauma. The researcher endeavours to analyze this novel as a traumatic example of psychedelic fiction through establishing a cause-result relationship between information theory and trauma theory as a fluid encounter between literature and science within science fiction framework. Finally, it is attempted to link the cultural integration of psychedelics to the shift of the traumatic experience from cultural to structural. This paper explores primarily the manifestations of Chief Bromden's historic trauma. It traces secondarily the psychedelic characteristics of the novel. Lastly, it studies the effects of Bromden's psychedelic journey on his traumatic recovery.

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INTRODUCTION

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest has to this day been causing controversy due to the complexity of its allegorical nature. The story takes place in the Oregon mental asylum where the schizophrenic Chief Bromden communicates his distorted vision of the truth "even if it didn't happen" (Kesey, 1962, 9). To escape from the work farm, Patrick Randle McMurphy feigns insanity and joins the

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mental patients. McMurphy finds that the asylum is under the tight controlling grip of Nurse Ratchet and decides to liberate them from her strict regime. The war between “Big Nurse” and the “Bull Goose Loony” begins where some battles are won and others lost. Under McMurphy’s guidance, the Chief who feigns dumbness learns to speak again and regains his sanity. Big Nurse culminates the battle by lobotomizing McMurphy leaving a breathing corpse instead. Chief euthanatizes him and breaks towards the wilderness.

When asked about the symbolism of his book, Kesey simply answers that “Cuckoo’s Nest was supposed to be a revolutionary book. It was supposed to be about America, about how the sickness in America is in the consciousness of people, not the government, not the cops and not Big Nurse” (Dodgson, 2006). This statement has opened the door for a tremendous critical upheaval examining this book from different interpretative angles.

Krause (2009), Madden (1986) and Morris (1986) to name a few have explored the psychoanalytic manifestations of this book arguing that the madness is allegorically representative of American social illnesses. Accordingly, the struggle between McMurphy and Nurse Ratch is nothing but a metaphor between subverted reason and uprising madness where “what is normal is perverted and reason becomes madness while some small hope of salvation lies in the non-rational if not the downright irrational. Irrationality is characteristic of the Bromden’s story that goes beyond mere madness to unveil an underlying disease of a past wound. Elaine Ware, Andrew Foley and James Knapp have examined Bromden’s tragic past claiming that his land dispossession, his title usurpation and condemning ethnic invisibility have led to his chronic schizophrenia. He has become “the vanishing American” (Ware, 1986).

When Bromden is labelled as the “vanishing American”, McMurphy is hailed as the rugged American Cowboy as Simmons (2008) calls him in his book *The Anti-hero in the American Novel*. Tanner (1983, 24) names him the “Hero of events” whereas Havemann (1971) defines him as “the fool as the mentor”. More importantly, they have stressed his importance as a catalyst of the events of the story and an idol to follow. Thomas Frick even considers him as a savior who like Christ has sacrificed himself for the welfare of the patients. Basically generic, psychoanalytic, gender, and cultural perspectives have touched on the subject of trauma but neither elaborated on its determinism or its effects on the troubled Chief. To their credit, most critics were able to perceive the positive effect McMurphy had on the recovery of the Chief. Contrastively, only a few pieces have been written on McMurphy being a psychedelic hero. Alternatively, Mathew (2006) has endowed Kesey and not McMurphy with the role of shamanism. Naturally, the Chief’s historic trauma, Cuckoo’s Nest as psychedelic trip and McMurphy as the shaman have been treated separately and disconnectedly. In this context, my article attempts to defend the claim that Cuckoo’s Nest is a psychedelic trip that Chief Bromden undergoes through telling his story in order to heal his latent historic trauma through the help of McMurphy as the epitome of LSD.

METHODOLOGY

I endeavour to investigate the following research problem: the extent to which there is a causal relationship between the application of psychedelic information theory on literary texts and its induction of traumatic exploration in the

psychedelic fiction *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. This problem entails underlying several hypotheses, respectively; how applicable information theory is suggesting this novel as psychedelic? On what grounds is this novel an expression of a historic traumatic event? Can psychedelics ensure the healing of the trauma or only its exploration?

To answer the above mentioned questions, I shall draw on Kent's Psychedelic Information Theory (2010) as well as Masters and Jean study on *The Varieties of psychedelic Experience* (1966) along with Historic Trauma theory by Wesley Esquimaux and Magdaleina (2004). I attempt to offer a midway reading that encompasses the medical, the psychoanalytic with the literary celebrating the interdisciplinarity between the subjective literary experience and the scientific theory. Following this line of thought, I shall devote the first section of this article to discuss how *Cuckoo's Nest* can be considered as a historic traumatic event. The second Section is an examination of the psychedelic determiners of psychedelic fiction. The final section examines the relationship between psychedelic healing and trauma recovery.

Unveiling Chief Bromden's Historic Trauma

Trauma in Greek means wound and it was first used by Freud in his *Studies of Hysteria* (2006) as "wounding experience that became integrated within the personality encoded through dreams (*The Etiology of Hysteria*, 189). In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud defines trauma as an event that happens before the individual is able to assimilate it at the time or space returning to the event in flashbacks or in dreams attempting to master the experience respectively. Trauma occurs in the form of a fragmented narration that is unrepresented. Basically, the subject attempts to make sense of the past through the repetition of the trauma and forging an incomprehensible nature of the experience. Since Trauma responses are narrative in essence, Cathy Caruth has tried to apply this psychoanalytic study on the text of literature. Cathy Caruth's leading book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma Narrative and History* provides a detailed explanation of this psychoanalytic framework and its applicability in fiction. She links traumatization to being haunted by an event or an image (Caruth, 1996, 4-5). Lyotard defines trauma as a failure in representing the event due to its inexpressibility. He contends that "the event makes itself incapable of taking possession and control what it is" (Lyotard, 1990, 59). He thinks that the traumatic event is highly paradoxical resulting from the disappropriation of the mind (Lyotard, 1990, 65).

Trauma is either structural or cultural. Structural trauma is the absence that is unassociated with an event and is "atemporal and transhistorical, unspecified and uncertain. The absence creates a cultural anxiety that seeks a cause or a source of tangible loss" (Lacapra, 2001, 78). This absence creates a cultural void that creates a "narrative of restoration" to retrieve the lost object or person. According to Jeffery Alexander, cultural trauma is a deep wound, an exclamation of the terrifying profanation of some sacred value, a narrative of a destructive process and a demand for emotional institutional and symbolic restructuring and rebuilding of institutions. Cultural trauma emanates from a strong state of choc resulting from a dysfunctional institutional system. Historic trauma is a severe case of cultural trauma as it happens when the effects of the trauma are not resolved in one generation:

When trauma is ignored and there is no support for dealing with it, the trauma will be passed from one generation to the next. Children will learn that physical and sexual abuse is normal and who have never dealt with the feelings that come from this may inflict physical abuse and sexual abuse on their children. (Wesley-Esquimaux and Magdalena, 1999).

Chief Bromden is a bearer of a deep wound that goes deep beneath his skin hiding the scars of a dispossessed nation.

Torn between acculturation and assimilation, Chief Bromden chooses to withdraw to the fog and watch as the world passes him by. A half breed son of an Indian Chief and a white mother, Chief Bromden was born in the Dales near the Columbia River. The proud son of the Chinook tribe, has enjoyed an idyllic childhood where his father Tee Ah Millatoona or the pine that stands tallest enjoyed “the sound of the falls on the Columbia (...), the woop of Charley Bean Belly stabled himself a big chinook (...), the slap of fish in the water, laughing naked kids on the bank, the woman at the rocks. (Kesey, 1962,73). Once the government men came, this little haven was ushered into a new age of destruction. The beautiful Dales were sold and a giant dam was erected on its ruins washing with its water the identity of the Indian owners. He has realized how his history and culture has become a giant weed that needs to be uprooted:

The way Papa finally did when he came to realize that he couldn't beat that group from town who wanted the government to put in the dam because of the money and the work it would bring, and because it would get rid of the village: Let that tribe of fish Injuns take their stink and their two hundred thousand dollars the government is paying them and go someplace else with it! Papa had done the smart thing signing the papers; there wasn't anything to gain by bucking it. (Kesey, 1962, 134)

The instant his father has sold the tribe's land, that Bromden has started to experience that deep loss of his belonging. He was dispossessed, exiled and unwanted in his own home. Loss has become the substitute for pride in his origin. As a result when he has seen how his father “start[ed] getting scared of things, [he] got scared too” (Kesey, 1962, 147). Bromden felt the transmission of the state of loss that his father experienced and appropriated as his own. The trauma of the loss of the land radiates heavily in having a distorted vision of his father whom he has seen as shrinking in size and drinking himself in alcohol to hide his shame and his fear. Bromden has plunged in his grief claiming:

I can see all that, and be hurt by it, the way I was hurt by seeing things in the Army, in the war. The way I was hurt by seeing what happened to Papa and the tribe. I thought I'd got over seeing those things and fretting over them. There's no sense in it. There's nothing to be done. (Kesey, 1962, 106)

Bromden's helplessness testifies of his inability to cope with the wound resulting from his father suffering's his tribe being dispossessed of the only home it has known and above all his invisibility. This identity crisis emanates from a biological reference to his descent. His mother is white. She insists that they are not “Indians, we are civilized and you remember it” (Kesey, 1962, 239). In saying so, she denies him of his birth right as an Indian and confuses him with whites. Thus, she exerts pressure on him by rejecting his “primitive” side and embracing hers. His mother's enforced whiteness terrifies him and she transforms into a monster where she grows bigger than him and his father both (Kesey, 1962, 186). Bromden was offered no choice; either he accepts his mother's whiteness or

embraces his father's weakness. Whiteness is unusual to him as he associates it with fear and domination. Belonging to the sold chieftain is equated with losing his own name. Losing name for the Chinook tribe is the same as losing one's personality since names are hereditary and denotative of an incarnated spirit and shadow laden with a mystical connection (Bancroft, 1886, 245). In the ward, the orderlies make the situation worse through calling him sarcastically as the great "Chief Broom" (Kesey, 1962, 108). Consequently, Chief Bromden develops what Herman (1997) calls "complex post-traumatic syndrome" which she defines as enacting trauma as a way of life both personally and culturally. As a result he accepts this status as a given as McMurphy points out "look at Chief Broom clutching to his namesake there beside you" (Kesey, 1962, 53).

The second determiner of Bromden's Trauma is purely cultural. Society perceives him as invisible seeing "right through [him] like he wasn't there" (Kesey, 1962, 131) and even is disgusted at the very fact of his existence. The visiting doctors looked at him as if he is "some kind of bug" (Kesey, 1962, 99). Being marginalized and dimmed unhuman equating him with objects while referring to him as "this" exacerbates his trauma and his helplessness in the face of society. He lost his system of beliefs and ideals and was unable to assimilate himself in the modern society. Most importantly, he was marginalized, and segregated against. According to Sotomayor (1980):

The self-concept can suffer irreparable damage if the socialization process prevents significant and familiar symbols to be present and reinforced at various levels of experience. The sense of belonging is crucial in the development of self-concept, becomes blurred if one's language, cultural patterns, and ethnic experiences are reflected and supported, but rather given a negative connotation in the environment.

The damage was enormous on Bromden's self to the point of feigning dumbness as a defense strategy against his enforced segregation. Bromden developed schizophrenia as a result of repressing these painful memories that kept on haunting him.

Cuckoo's Nest comes from Bromden's version on the asylum as flashbacks where the past overpowers the present dimmed with a colourless fear and excessive paranoia. The novel is laden with episodes where he hides in the closet, or under the bed, or feigns sleep to escape the black boys (Kesey, 1962, 1-106). This fits within the traumatic pathology's framework which "consists of the past invading the present in re-experiences and re-enactments, and of the person's efforts to defend himself from the consequences" (Antze and Lambek, 1996, 97). Cuckoo's Nest is then a traumatic event by excellence where a highly traumatized Indian Chief fumbles the threads of a distorted narrative of a disposed land, a lost identity and a tormenting segregation. Cuckoo's Nest is a tale about the Chief's horror as he waits his psychedelic savior.

The Psychedelic Elixir

Psychedelics or LSD -25 were synthesized by the Swiss chemist Albert Hauffman as uterotonics to enhance the ability of uterus contractions after birth. Surprisingly, in 1943 Hauffman decided to ingest his own potion. He reported seeing "an uninterrupted stream of fantastic images of extraordinarily plasticity and vividness accompanied by an intense kaleidoscopic play of colours" (Hauffman, 1959, 14-15). Six years later, the CIA subjugated prisoners and

security officers to mock interrogations. Many of them suffered from complete amnesia from disclosing classified intelligence. They also marked a loss of the contact with reality, intense distortion of time, place and body image frequently continuing in full-blown paranoid reactions and bizarre hallucinations (Lee and Bruce, 1944, 54).

Psychedelic Information theory is developed by James L. Kent in his book *Psychedelic Information Theory Shamanism in the Age of Reason* (2010). It is the investigation of how information is created in the human imagination in states of dreaming, psychosis, and hallucination. Information theory seeks to “model the functional output of human perception in order to extrapolate the limits and complexity of information arising in human altered states of consciousness” (Kent, 2010, 11). Basically, psychedelics are dream-like catalysts for generating information in the human imagination emanating from the unconscious, genetic memory, spirit entities and data remnants from neural excitation. The psychedelic experience results from its interaction with the neural network through the generation of new information in forms of hallucinations in the subject’s imagination. These take the form of novel juxtapositions of previous concepts erupting as epiphanies in unusual linguistic patterns. During this psychedelic trip, these information are presented as condensed and kaleidoscopic with fully detailed visions. Physically, psychedelics “create new information via spontaneous activation and organization of sensory and perceptual networks” (Kent, 2010, 22). The flow of psychedelic information goes through five steps, respectively; ingestion, internal transmission, internal integration, cultural transmission, and cultural integration.

Ingestion is the initial phase of taking the drug. Intentions vary for its use from recreational challenging of the limits of consciousness to spiritual quests for higher truths. The second phase is done through the eruption of hallucinations through the instilment of new information that have the potential of reshaping belief. Internal integration mirrors the manifestations of compressed memories into manageable snippets that loom in the condensed stream of information. During this phase, the subject will typically review their psychedelic trip and create a lasting narrative of the journey including what they have experienced and what they have learned. The Cultural transformation of psychedelics entails the transformation of the learned data into artistic forms like literature, painting, photography and architecture. Alternatively, they activate a process in which the realm of the psychological spills out in the realm of the physical. The final phase is psychedelic integration into modern culture forming psychedelic subcultures as it was during the 1960s revolution through festivals, colourful literary works and music like Jazz. When psychedelic indoctrination in society reaches its peak, the psychedelic ritual will be recognized as a legitimate rite of passage or spiritual practice (Kent, 2010, 25).

McMurphy acts like psychedelics on the asylum transforming patients’ lives tremendously and especially Chief Bromden’s. Like the flowing blood in the veins, McMurphy’s fingers are described as “[were thick closing over [his] like he was transmitting his own blood into it. It rang with blood and power” (18). Blood and power are a dual attribute of drugs that run deep in the system altering the subject’s consciousness and empowering him in his mind-opening journey in the dark pits of the self. Before the coming of McMurphy, Chief retreats back to the fog where he shields his past wounds and “feel[s] safe” (p.100). As soon as

McMurphy comes he starts questioning the nature of the fog and tries to “drag [them] out of the fog, out in the open where [they]’d be easy to get at (p.100). McMurphy resembles the drug in various ways. Drugs have an ephemeral effect lasting over a couple of hours (Masters and Jean, 1966). Similarly, McMurphy’s effect ended through his lobotomy. He has taken the patients to different realms and transformed their existence as his effect lingered despite all the nurse’s failed attempts.

She tried to get her ward back into shape, but it was difficult with McMurphy’s presence still tromping up and down the halls and laughing out loud in the meetings and singing in the latrines. She couldn’t rule with her old power any more, not by writing things on pieces of paper. She was losing her patients one after the other. After Harding signed out and was picked up by his wife, and George transferred to a different ward, just three of us were left out of the group that had been on the fishing crew, myself and Martini and Scanlon. (Kesey, 1962, 247). Into thin air, Mack has soon evaporated from their systems as Chief Bromden euthanized him taking his last breath away. In Indian American traditions, the sun God is highly venerated. Mack calls himself the bull goose loony. The goose is the symbol of the sun god as he ventures deeply in the sky closely to the sun (Havemann, 1971). Similarly, Indian tribes “made rock paintings of mushroom deities while the word for psycobin-containing mushrooms was ‘flesh of God” (Schultes and Hofmann 1992). Ironically, McMurphy died like Christ for the salvation of the patients. Before his death Christ offered his flesh to his disciples (Larson, 1984, 35). His flesh is the intoxicating transcending substance named as LSD. The journey towards self-realization begins once all these patients are ready to let go of the ward policy and join him in this mind-opening adventure.

Now that the Chief is ready to embark on the journey to explore his own consciousness, he starts by ingesting red pill:

When you take the red capsule, you don’t just go to sleep and all night long; you are paralyzed with sleep and all night long you can’t wake, no matter what goes on around you. That’s why the staff gives me the pills. At the old place, I took to walking up at night watching them performing all kinds of horrible crimes on patients sleeping around me. (Kesey, 1962, 50)

The only state where consciousness becomes altered is through sleep. The realm of facts and ideas vanishes momentarily and the world of dreams takes over. Psychedelics simulate the same experience. The fact that Chief Bromden is sleeping but at the same time is watching may seem a bit paradoxical. But during the psychedelic trip, perception becomes enhanced and an alternative state of awareness is created. Masters and Jean (1966) contend that the psychedelic symptoms come in the beginning allowing the eruption of a peculiar state of mind that can be as entertaining as it is frightening (Kesey, 1962, 54).

The third stage is the hallucination or internal integration stage where a new set of information is created and remolded through imagination. Chief Bromden starts the enumeration of different bizarre episodes. He starts by perceiving the misconfiguration of the body image. Huston and Masters write that it is usually only after the passing of the more unpleasant physical symptoms that the subject experiences those drug state awareness of the body and the body image” (Masters and Jean, 1966, 68). Strikingly, he gives accounts of things quite incredulous like a chronic dangling from his heel strapped in the ceiling and

describes the group of Med Students following the public relation official as a “row of machines” , Kesey,1962, 50). He starts to visualize atrocities allegedly done by orderlies to chronics who instead of bleeding normally they “shower of rust and ashes, glass and wires” (Kesey, 1962, 51). This process is called “thingification” where he “anthropomorphizes “the consciousness” of the object. Chief Bromden’s perception Shifts even further when aligns Nurse Ratch with God. His paranoia amounts to suspecting the Big Nurse of setting “the wall clock at whatever speed she wants by just turning one of those dials in the steel door. She takes the motion to hurry things up and turns the speed up” (Kesey, 1962, 45). She even controls the light of day and decides when morning, afternoon and night is. She can even “turn a dial top a dead stop and freeze the sun” (45). Masters and Jean (1966) call this stage as alternate perception of other persons where the depicted subject is either perceived in extreme forms of hostility, appreciation or dehumanization (Kesey, 1962, 64).

Paranoia is another predominant form of hallucination that covers most pages of the book. Paranoia is what subjects experience while interacting with other people who are not under drugs (Masters and Jean, 1966). Chief Bromden’s pathological fear haunts most pages of Cuckoo’s Nest where his narrative takes the form of a muffled scream of terror. To him the ward is the horror, the horror. Basically, the novel opens on “they are out there” (p.4). The six-foot chief creeps along the hallway and hides in the closet, under the bed, everywhere he could disappear. A strongly- built Indian hides from everyone and feels that the combine is behind all the crimes he thought he was witnessing. He defines it as

A huge organization that aims to adjust the Outside as well as she has the Inside, has made her a real veteran at adjusting things. She was already the Big Nurse in the old place when I came in from the Outside so long back, and she’d been dedicating herself to adjustment for God knows how long.(Kesey,1962, 22)

Through hallucinations, scenes in the ward are perceived differently and suggestively as well. He beholds through his imagination a much deeper significance of a much more concrete reality. He perceives things as they are meant to be and creates a symbolic network for their actual meaning. Hallucinations are the loops that allow the transcendence of the spirit to different realms taking “the reader’s mind places where it had never been before to convince him that this crazy Indian’s world is his as well” (Kesey,1962, 19). This novel is written in the form of psychedelic eruptions of hallucinatory flashbacks emanating from the deranged mind of a schizophrenic Indian on LSD-25. The Novel takes you places where robots, dolls, and potato-heads reign over the insane ward. This journey allows the chief to liberate his painful memories of a tormented past but only through the help of the psychedelic knight dubbed as the “bull goose loony” and bearing the name of none other than Patrick Randle McMurphy.

Keys to Words that are Already there

In 1953, Aldous Huxley tried mescaline hoping for a “valuable visionary experience” hoping “to see how things really are” (Huxley, 1959, 14). To investigate this claim over a hundred articles were written and published in medical journals around the world. Sandoz suggests that psychedelics might be useful to “elicit release of repressed material and provide mental relaxation, particularly in anxiety states and obsessional neuroses and also for self-

experimentation by psychiatrists, to gain an insight into the world of ideas and sensations of mental patients” (Hoffman, 1980c, 23). Medically, psychedelics are treated as keys to unlock memories that cause psychosis. Psychedelics grant patients a space to vent and to liberate suffocating painful recollections leading to the very core of their mental illness. Chief Bromden has experienced a hurtful past and suffered from acculturation as well as ethnic invisibility. With the loss of his home, heritage and identity, Chief Bromden feigned dumbness and deafness. He reacted to being invisible by refraining from using the language of the white supremacy. By doing so, he has affirmed his invisibility through its simultaneous negation. Through this strategy, he has a vintage point as being the observer who knows everything and says nothing. He celebrates his victory saying:

They don't bother not talking out loud about their hate secrets when I'm nearby because they think I'm deaf and dumb. Everybody thinks so. I'm cagey enough to fool them that much. If my being half Indian ever helped me in any way in this dirty life, it helped me being cagey, helped me all these years. (Kesey, 1962, 4)

The combine considers that Chief Bromden is actually deaf and mute bestowing him with the most suitable deprecating 'honorific' as chief broom while allocating the most degrading task to him. In becoming the "sweep machine", his inferiority is further asserted aggravating his trauma. Conversely, Mack was able to perceive how this was all an act, he was laughing because "he wasn't fooled for one minute by my deaf-and-dumb act; it didn't make any difference how cagey the act was, he was onto me and was laughing and winking to let me know it"(Kesey, 1962, 18). Mack reaffirms thus Aldous Huxley's contention that psychedelics allow you to see reality as it is. The reality is that by immersing himself in his act, Chief Bromden has forgotten how to speak. Forgetting language in trauma is the inability to express the wounding experience in words leading to what Kaplan defines as problems of representation. Basically, when the individual is entrapped in traumatic patterns of forgetting the horrors of the past or trying to retrieve some lost glorious moments of chosen survival, or being haunted by a sense of absence that will not be resolved (Harrison, 2009, 150). Mack constantly urges him to speak. He even tries to reason the Nurse into speaking with him saying: "Could be. I still think we should make some effort to speak with the Chief -" (kesey, 1962, 165). As usual the Big Nurse replies with a sharp "No" (kesey, 1962, 165). Like psychedelics, Mack strives to amplify the communicatory faculties that the chief has lost along his make belief game. Masters and Huston argue that psychedelics reveal a "heightened sensitivity to nuances of language and to nonverbal cues; greater use of gestures and shifts of posture and facial expression as means of communicating" (kesey, 1962, 79). One day and by means of a juicy fruit gum that Chief finally said "thank you". The Chief who has not spoken for over twenty years uttered his first words in complete chock (kesey, 1962, 167). Through regaining his voice, chief has acquired the necessary means for expressing his trauma and leapt towards the initial stages of recovery.

Kent (2010) defines cultural transformation as the sublimation of the psychedelic experience into an artistic form. Bromden was able to tell us the story that he could access through venturing back in the swarming tides of his memory. In this context, John Hunt argues that "Bromden's telling of McMurphy's story

thus functions as a vehicle for his reaching a truth about himself, a truth which releases him from sickness and promises to make him whole "(Kesey,1962, 13-23). The truth has come pouring ever since he responded by "thank you". The Chief didn't seem to be able to stop talking, not till [he] finished telling what [he] thought was all of it" (Kesey, 1962, 170). Mack's guidance unlocked his memories where he answered all of his questions about an alcoholic father who "just drank", a giant terrifying mother, the combine schemes, everything he has been trying to forget resurfaced (Kesey,1962, 170). After acquiring the ability to articulate his trauma, chief has moved to acting forsaking his role of the silent watchman and becoming an active agent of his own narrative. As the narrative draws to a close the drug -induced hallucinations have come to an end and the state of psychosis and paranoia have utterly vanished. The Chief has summoned enough strength to beat up Washington for attempting to molest George in the shower and was banished to disturbed where he had his shock treatment. That time, he was able to remember an old song that his grandmother used to chant (Kesey, 1962, 157-158). In her book, *The Fool as A Mentor in Modern Parables of Entrapment*, Carol Havemann (1971) contends that the nursery song proves that he has beaten the Combine being able to take shock treatments without retreating to the fog after being treated. The song is a climactic narrative technique in which the truth that was shielded from him before and stifled by his paranoid inferior state of nothingness is now revealed through a memory he forgot it had ever existed. Mrs. Tingle Tangle Toes becomes symbolic of Big Nurse who catches hens who are the patients tearing each other apart. Mc Murphy the goose swoops down from the sky to save those chickens (Kesey, 1962, 90).

During the 'mad' party (Kesey, 1962, 166-167), the chief is finally cured. He realizes after sipping vodka-cough medicine, red-wine, that "maybe the Combine [is not] all powerful" (Kesey, 1962, 92). The effect of psychedelics is quite liberating allowing the Chief to grow big and bigger to the extent that Mc Murphy's cap becomes "too small for him" (Kesey, 1962, 187). Eventually, He lifts the control panel crashing the window and he "[runs] across the grounds in the direction ...toward the highway" feeling "like [he] was flying. Free" (Kesey, 1962, 178). What was a senseless narration of reported events of which most were imagined and outstretched, has become a perceptive on events. The Chief participates as an agent and not as a subject, but able to become "the narrator and the executioner" (Madden, 1). He has finally spread his wings and flown 'over the cuckoo's nest'. The Psychedelic narrator has been able to widen his vision, gain an alternative consciousness, and find the cure. As the drug evaporates from Chief Bromden's body, Mack lays as corpse on his own bed. Bromden's system has been finally cleansed from any traces of his psychedelic substance redeeming him to a state of sanity. Bromden's spiritual purgation culminates with the stage of cultural integration where a new beginning awaits him. Bromden leaves towards the highway assuming the identity of an Indian wrestler equipped with a mental lucidity that enables him to start anew with a voice of his own, an identity of his own (Ware, 1986, 101). Chief Bromden has finally been cured from the trauma that has hindered him from living life instead of watching it pass him by.

CONCLUSION

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest offers a unique experience where hallucinations weave the threads of a narrative about recapturing the past. Psychedelic information theory through its detailed stages and the variety of psychedelic experiences provide analytical tools allowing the deciphering of the novel. Cuckoo's Nest becomes the scared scroll relating the conquests of a drug-like heroic figure in his battle against conformity. The psychedelic journey that erupts flash backs from the past take the form of an elixir grating traumatic recovery. Mack who transforms into LSD-25 guides the chief in his self-exploratory mission where the keys of a wounding past unlock his childhood memory while redeeming his sanity. The novel, accordingly; sheds light on the suffering of an Indian American generation, unable neither to assimilate to mainstream culture nor to maintain their ethnicity. The historic trauma that haunted the chief's father and has wounded him has only been cured by immersing oneself in a strange alteration of consciousness where the boundaries between reality and illusion become blurred. Obliterating any traces of logic or reality grants the chief access to his past and allows him to see into life lucidly. Mack who enables his release accounts for the stylistic and metaphorical complexity of the novel where characterization contributes in the creation of a new genre. Psychedelic fiction is thus born ushering literature into a new phase of experimentation and creativity.

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— This article does not have any appendix. —