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Whose pain? Childhood, trauma, imagination

Lam-Hesseling, J.

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Acknowledgements

ASCA, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis is the home where my life as a scholar began. I dedicate the present study to this wonderful, facilitating environment in answer to the trust they placed in me with a PhD fellowship. I dedicate my work to the people who helped to turn me into a cultural analyst and who brought me to an enjoyment of my new role. I am privileged to have been in the midst of considerate, capable and open-minded intellectual friends, an ever-changing family hold together by Eloe Kingma. She was a cordial and skillful manager, who was sympathetically assisted by ASCA "extended family" members like Maartje Geraedts, Sherry Marx, and Cornelia Graebner.

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Together, Mieke and Ernst, you were a golden couple for me. Thank you for being so gifted and giving. I am happy and proud that I, a

woman in her fifties, am to be the fiftieth doctor of Mieke's incredibly productive academic career, which has made her, quite literally, worth her weight in gold.

Many thanks also to the other members of ASCA. You contributed to my doctorate in three ways, all of which have given me moments that genuinely count. First, I would like to mention personal encounters: an ear lent, an answer and a tip, a question, a clarification made with enthusiasm or consolation, an article sent or a laugh shared and not to forget, those who helped by correcting my English. Who dares not to recall the gift of a telephone call, an e-mail, and more seldom, a personal letter or a long walk at the right time? Second, I would like to remember the things we have done as a group apart from imbibing and chatting, like working out problems, taking part in theory seminars, organizing conferences, discussing difficult theoretical issues in workshops, learning presentation skills, attending reading groups, participating in mock-defenses, joining in celebrations, and making collective presents. While listing your names alphabetically, I do remember the exchange of person-bound sparks that made many occasions special for me. Thank you, Murat Aydemir, Marie-Aude Baronian, Stephan Besser, Maaik Bleeker, Inge Boer, Michael Burke, Mario Caro, Chris Doude van Troostwijk, Joyce Goggin, Petra Halkes, Isabel Hoving, Yolande Jansen, Madeleine Kasten, Frans Willem Korsten, Catherine Lord, Françoise Lucas, Sonja Neef, Patricia Pisters, Laura Quinn, Marleen Rensen, Wilma Siccama, Guido Snel, Ellen Tops, Markha Valenta, Peter Verstraten, Sasha Vojkovic, and Jos van Winkel.

I have placed the third way in which many of you played a part in my academic undertaking at the end, because the encounters involved were more transpersonal than personal, though not less intense. I refer here to your dissertations. Reading them often gave me the moments of searing insight that are the motor of my intellectual life. Although your books brought me a pleasure that I mostly savored on my own in Kudelstaart, thanks to the interpersonal background my reading never resulted in loneliness.

Reading a dissertation as well as writing one can be – necessarily is – a very singular activity, and this singularity harbors the danger of solipsism. I am grateful, therefore, that my home outside of Amsterdam has a room with a view of a beautiful garden. My study in Kudelstaart is

an ideal place for concentration; it provides me with open surroundings, neither threatening, nor distracting. For many years, it served as my dark room. I hope the subsequent occupants of Bungehuis 501 forgive me my preference for that room of my own.

There are many people in between ASCA and my private world who should not go unmentioned. I regret I cannot be exhaustive. I think of the encouraging conversations with Heleen Pott, for example. The subtle way in which George Dimock weaved my Learning to Read into the web of an ASCA congress. The beautiful letter Birgit Hansen wrote me in reaction to a paper. The few, intense encounters with my colleague photographer Ruud de Brouwer (and his work), not to mention his help with making my photographs ready for print. I think of Onno van der Hart making time for my questions about dissociation and for the promotion committee. The profound talk I had with filmmaker Thom Verheul. The astonishingly rapidity with which my corrector Kate Delaney returned my texts in polished English. I think of how Margriet Zwarthoed's attentive listening and didactic skills helped me to orally articulate difficult issues. I think as well of Kees Ostendorf who helped me to get injury time and of the tireless Els Voorham who took care of my house and cheered me up. And I think of designer Caro de Gijzel who decided to make the best of a far too small budget for a lay-out.

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working out the affinity between your interest in weaving patterns and my interest in the complexity of cultural objects. With your everlasting loyalty, Claar, you encouraged my feelings of trust and self-confidence. So, thanks for your contribution to this indispensable, personal and professional equipment. Besides, your husband Martin was there for me both in the beginning of the project and at moments in between when I most desperately needed help.

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