

Biographical Mosaic of
Malcolm Edmond de CHAZAL
by Patrick Harel
(Translated by Christopher. C. de Chazal)

Translators Note : *It is expected that the reader will have knowledge of the French language and that the French text is read in conjunction with this translation.*

Patrick Harel has extensively researched this biography and also tried to explain in Malcolm's words the ultimate aim of his thought and writings which I deem to be a closer relation, through nature, to The Divine. I see a real influence of Swedenborg, specially concerning the theory of Correspondence.

The numerous references to Patrick's sources are not reproduced but are shown as footnotes in the original French text.

A potted biography of Malcolm Edmond de Chazal and his works

Son of Furcy Edgar de CHAZAL and Emma Éléonore KELLMAN, Edmond Malcolm de CHAZAL was born on September 12th, 1902 in Vacoas, Mauritius. In 1908, his parents left their home "Cokerney" in l'Allée Brillant, firstly to live in Forest-Side then in St. Martin's Road before settling in Villa Sylvain, Rue Bernardin de St-Pierre, Curepipe. On Sundays he attended the Church of The New Jerusalem (Swedenborg) with the family at the church built in 1907 on Remono Street. In a Curepipe still relatively wooded, Malcolm de CHAZAL imagined it to be Eden, "the intimate embodiment of all things" and learnt to read at the BRUNEL school run by nuns where he was recognised to have exceptional intelligence. He entered the Royal College of Curepipe in 1914 and the Rector, Thomas WOOLLEN EYRE already saw in him a future recipient of the "Bourse d'Angleterre", scholarship to England. In 1918, without completing his secondary studies, he left Mauritius in the company of his brother Lucien and Antoine REY aboard the Orel (a former Tsarist Cruiser converted to passenger use).

He says it was at the request of his grandmother that he agreed to accompany his brother, stating that he wanted to be a lawyer and go to London. The destination of the de CHAZAL brothers was The Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, alleged by the CERNÉEN to be his quest for a "certificate of competence". Arriving in Vancouver on 12th September 1919, the de CHAZAL brothers reached Baton Rouge by train, via New York. Malcolm completed his secondary education at Bâton-Rouge High School, part of the Audubon Sugar School which had been allied to the University of Louisiana since 1897. Malcolm de CHAZAL undertook two years of engineering studies at the University of Louisiana, Baton Rouge and two years practical work at the *New Orleans Experiment Station*, following the curriculum laid down. He then followed an internship at the *New Orleans Experimental Station*. He spent a cane harvest period at *New Hope S.E.* Louisiana and at *Harmiguero* of Cuba. He also spent a period at the *Baldwin Locomotive Works* of Philadelphia. He would later refer to those years in the USA as the "torture of false knowledge"! From the USA, he went to Bordeaux, and after a brief stay in Paris, returned to Mauritius via Marseille on the 'General Duchesne' that arrived in Port Louis on 26th April 1925. He was employed in the sugar industry at the St-Aubin sugar factory from the beginning of 1926. In the same year he joined the Solitude factory. One day he came to work dressed in a tuxedo, and they found him in the factory, worse for wear, asleep on a pile of bagasse. The administrator DUPONT dismissed this engineer with no vocation. "Within a year I would have thrown my degree to the winds" he later wrote in "Sens Unique"

Malcolm was not insensitive to the socio-economic situation of the Colony. At the beginning of 1935, he published, "Nouvel Essai d'Économie Politique", a 189-page book printed by "Nouvelle Imprimerie Coopérative. Before that he had been employed as a foreman at the Central Aloe Spinning Mill (run by the workers), inaugurated on 24th September 1927 at Trou Fanfaron, Port-Louis, this was superseded by The Mauritius Hemp Spinning and Weaving Co. Ltd, inaugurated on 11th March 1932 at Quatre-Bornes. The situation of this second most important industry of the island was rapidly deteriorating, culminating in the dismissal of 200 workers at the beginning of 1935. The crisis in the aloe industry and local manufacture of sugar bags did not leave Malcolm de CHAZAL indifferent; he expressed his views in a series of articles in newspapers under the pseudonym of "MEDEC". The articles were brought together in "Une Synthèse Objective de la Crise Actuelle" published on 9th March 1935 prior to "Nouvel Essai d'Économie Politique". Philippe GALÉA replied on the following 4th April in an article entitled "Factual Errors and Errors of Understanding". The controversy became passionate, leading, in its wake, to the intervention of Abel de ROBILLARD and bringing in René MAINGARD de La VILLE-ès-OFFRANS, President of the Mauritius Union of Producers of Hemp. If the fibre industry had found in Abel of ROBILLARD an advocate with concrete proposals for the survival of the industry, it found in Malcolm of CHAZAL an ardent critic who held responsible a mass of organisations responsible for the slump in which the country was struggling, the leaders, industrialists, financiers "devoid of the slightest notion of political economy" and managers in the spinning industry who would not change anything "of the archaic methods in use in their factories" Previous writings of de CHAZAL, had already shown an acerbic critical assessment of the financial system especially in the sugar industry. "The university titles (Baton Rouge, Louisiana USA) which he appends to his name may confer on him some theoretical competence and understanding of the sugar industry. Of the fibre industry, he could not have acquired much knowledge of the classification and pressing of fibres in his brief stint at the Union Factory in Port-Louis". This answer by René MAINGARD just inflamed de CHAZAL's anger. From "Riposte" to "Counter-riposte", from one newspaper to another de CHAZAL ends by asking how "an intelligent man like Mr René MAINGARD de La VILLE-ès-OFFRANS (behind whom one can guess all the inflationary plutocracy of the country are now lined up and on parade) can come and tell him:" you're just making it all up!

de CHAZAL set himself permanently on the margins of a society where, in his perception, "economic dictatorship is wielded by two or three heads of Clans, and where the rich think they are all-knowing." In 1937 he continued to live in Villa Sylvain, which was then in the ownership of his brother Arthur. In 1937 he became a "Grade II Inspector" at the Telephone & Electricity Department of the Government in an office at Plaine-Lauzun and became a Civil Servant with an annual salary of, Rs 3 600 and he stayed there until his retirement in 1957. He had gathered his thoughts on the economy of the island in a booklet published in 1941 entitled « Laboratoire Central de Contrôle » (Laboratory of Central Control.) He then set himself to writing.

If the 1940s marked the outbreak of the poet, his first literary contribution probably dates from 1936: this consisted of a dozen or so "pensées" in "Vivre" a monthly magazine (Editor: Philippe LENOIR), which seems to have only appeared in April 1936. The second "pensée" gives the definition "Chazalienne" outlining the Poet's mission.

"With his ideas and reveries eternally alert, the poet is almost always the Prophet of the new era". From 1940 to 1944, under the auspices of The General Printing & Stationery Co Ltd., he published, "Pensées", in six volumes, work that earned the respect of intellectuals like Robert Edward HART. Aphorisms, containing precepts by definition, are perfect for the original strategy of de CHAZAL; going to "successive penetrations" to the discovery of man and his environment in the broadest sense, the most encompassing, including relationships with time, space and the universe. In 1940, « Pensées I » confirmed the fact with 204 aphorisms written between 1936 and 1938

- the existence, for de CHAZAL, of new fields of thoughts and expression, far removed from industry and closer to man;
- the continuity of literary engagement;
- by the signed cover by the painter Hervé MASSON, concrete evidence of a collaboration between local artists.

In 1942 there appeared « Pensées II » et « Pensées III » with more than 250 aphorisms each. « Pensées IV » appeared in 1943, with more than 500 aphorisms written in three months; « Pensées V », with 524 aphorisms written in five months and « Pensées VI », containing 723 aphorisms written in 8 months appeared in 1944. In 1945, he released « Pensées et Sens-Plastique »- in essence the 7th volume of "Pensées" where in the preface dated April 22, 1945, he says, "Man was made in God's Image, yes, but I add that nature was made in the image of man, and I seek to prove it, not by using my intelligence, but through my subconscious". Pensées et Sens Plastique, make up the first volume of Sens Plastique, the editions by GALLIMARD remained unpublished. This book is fundamental since it shows the basis of his thought and the first experimentation of his poetic method. It came out under the title "Le premier SENS PLASTIQUE" published by L'Ether Vague. In 1946, Esclapon Ltd published a booklet of 11 pages, "Histoire de La Pensée Universelle", in which de CHAZAL exposes the theory of Universal Thought which he explains in the book by means of examples; that the most direct path to God is that taken by the Yogis, Ste-Thérèse and the Saints, who speak the same language between themselves as well as when conversing with God, knowing that they can barely make themselves understood by man"; God himself being unable to make himself understood by man".

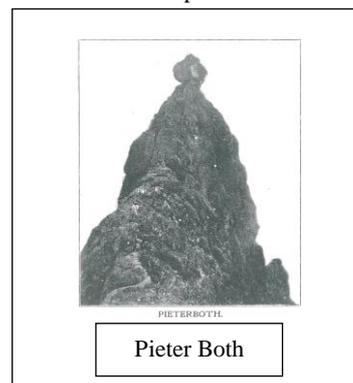
This trial can be regarded as the forerunner of a considerable evolution in the work of Malcolm de CHAZAL: "Sense-plastic", volume II. This eighth and final volume of the series « Pensées » appeared in the month of March 1947^[17]. It had mixed success in Mauritius as only 8 copies were sold in the Island, the bulk of the publication was sent to Europe, France in particular; de CHAZAL made it known (Friday 14 June 1946) in an advertisement that he was eager to buy two copies of «Sens-Plastique». Max MOUTIA took the microphone (Wednesday 26th August 1946) of the Mauritius Broadcasting Service, to read the unpublished preface of volume II of «Sens-Plastique».

In Paris, the work aroused a keen interest among the Surrealists, of whom the acknowledged "pope", André BRETON, advised Jean PAULHAN to convince GALLIMARD to publish de CHAZAL'S work. Without delay PAULHAN wrote the preface : "... an artistic work that deserves, I think, the name of genius, no other description will do". PAULHAN, presenting de CHAZAL to readers of the Literary Figaro on October 11th 1947, said immediately these defining words "it is not every day that one finds a, unknown writer of genius; this is one". André BRETON, in January 1948, hailed de CHAZAL, author of "Sense-Plastic, as "a writer of complete originality and incomparable accomplishment". The work was published in Paris in March 1948, and Denis SAURAT, Rector of the French Institute of London introduced his work to the BBC. In the aftermath, Georges DUHAMEL, visiting Mauritius in January 1948 stated that de CHAZAL was revolutionizing the French literature scene! He spoke too soon... «La Vie Filtrée» [Translation of Patrick's footnote "Of "La Vie Filtrée", de CHAZAL himself said: " Sens-Plastique contains the breath of the universal, since it is a cosmogony of the invisible. I tried in "La Vie Filtrée" to put this truth in greater perspective. In "La Vie Filtrée", I wanted to touch certain forms of intelligence so far considered impervious to the mind of man – a very distant location which can only be reached by supra-direct forms of Perception. Through this work I wanted to understand things of the Divine by uniquely using the antenna of the senses, abolishing completely, as much as is humanly possible, the Reasoning within me. I did this in order to strip bare all things to see the imprint of the Universal and the footprint of the Always. I wanted to eliminate the outside world in order to rebuild it in my way so as to make a type of human X-ray spectacles to approach and see God"].

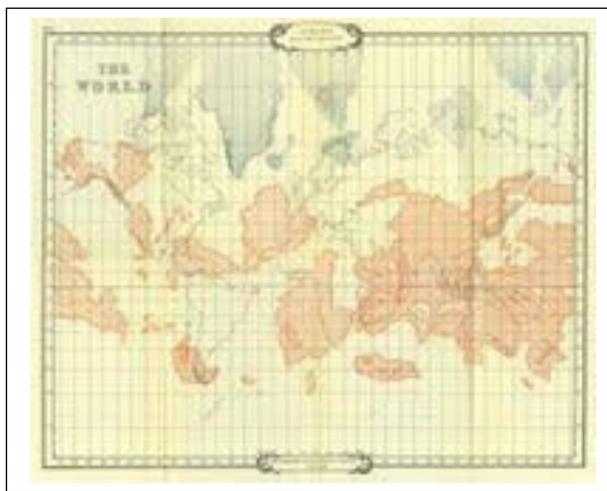
published by GALLIMARD in 1949 failed to obtain a review from BRETON or PAULHAN, and was, furthermore, roundly criticized! Subsequent writings in the series found several publishers closing their doors against de CHAZAL and he no longer enjoyed the support of the surrealists, because, it seems, of his leanings towards Deism. The use of aphorisms was no longer good enough. According to Robert FURLONG this was due to the growing number of aphorisms referring to God and The Divine Power; the question of God and the Divine had become paramount for de CHAZAL and the field of aphorisms was too narrow to apprehend the Divine.

Perhaps he had done too much; certainly he had prejudiced his work for the Government. He was demoted from Commercial Inspector First Grade to Meter Reader in the accounts department of the Electricity Board, and until his retirement he continued read meters in the suburbs of Port-Louis. He frequently headed for the Mauritian mountains with their striking forms. Some people even remember seeing him on foot, in his legendary felt hat, light sports jacket and grey flannel trousers, take the direction of the Vallée-des-Prêtres (where Marcel CABON, author of Namasté, lived) and Crève-Coeur, dominated by the summits of Pieter Both and Le Pouce. de CHAZAL sensed and perceived myths within these mountains.

At this time, Malcolm de CHAZAL as other Mauritian intellectuals, were seeking new innovations... Robert Edward HART would introduce him to the reflections,



analyses and conclusions of Jules HERMANN, a Réunionnais, author of a book entitled *Les Révélations du Grand Océan* ("The Revelations of the Great Ocean"), published posthumously in 1927. HERMANN exposes how the Mascareignes belonged to a vast mythical continent, Lemuria, where geomorphological giants lived, among whom were those who carved the mountains. These Revelations opened up to de CHAZAL unsuspected horizons and prospects: "I could not now see my island in the same way as before. My past had welded me to the impossible." Now that the secret of the mountains has been revealed, it will forever inspire the poet. To the revelation of the secret of the mountains he added that of the flower. Walking in the Botanical Garden of Curepipe, he discovered an azalea that looked at him. Commenting on this event in his poetic journey, he wrote: "from now on, while I am nothing to man, to the flower I am *someone*, because the flower took notice of me. This is when everything becomes clear. The landscape in Mauritius was no longer restricted; only men made it so..." His island, the bride that he chose never to leave, now had a mythical origin, and everything that encompasses that magical statement, dating back to the dawn of time



In 1946-47 Malcolm de CHAZAL was elected Secretary of the Mauritian Writer's Society (Société des Écrivains Mauriciens), succeeding Pierre de SORNAY and in 1948 he became its Vice President. In 1948, he was living in a room in the attic of "Villa Sylvain". This villa has its own story: it belonged to the de CHAZAL family from 1908 to 1986 and the attic under a mansard roof was added by the engineer Henri Geneva to better accommodate the family which was expanding. Edgar de CHAZAL wanted to call one of his sons 'Sylvain' but his wife would not agree, and so they gave the name to the villa! By 1935 Edgar de CHAZAL and Emma KELLMAN had died and the villa remained occupied by their unmarried children. André ROBERT married Olga de CHAZAL in 1938 and the young couple took possession becoming its owner in 1948. Malcolm lived in the attic but used it only for sleeping.

He now begins a search for The Essential Principles, upsetting normal conventions, revisiting biblical texts, replacing "mathematics of numbers" by "biblical mathematics". He was guided by his beliefs which he defined as "a doughy mixture of Christianity and Spiritual Naturalism".

- In 1950: "Iésou", a mythical play in 6 acts; « L'Âme de la Musique »; « La Pierre Philosophale »; « Penser par étapes »
 - In 1951, "Mythology of Crève-Coeur"; 'Petrusmok'. a mystic-novel which he said was written in a few months when in an excited frame of mind, this is a key moment in his search for the Essential Principles, one where East cross pollinates with the West. Raymond ABELLIO described "Petrusmok" as "an expression of an 'all-seeing' besieged by cosmic forces. This "pierre lautreamontienne" (other-mountainous rock—untranslatable!) which follows the trail of a monstrous beast would be the work of a giant of Lemuria!" The book had no success: only André MASSON wrote a critique in *ADVANCE*. In France the critics remained silent: Jean PAULHAN, shortly after his election to the Académie Française, stated that after "Sens-Plastique", Malcolm de CHAZAL had "turned a wrong corner". After 'Petrusmok', CHAZAL continued to write: « Agenèse » volume one; « La Clef du Cosmos »; « Le Rocher de Sisiphe »; « Manifeste: Agenèse ou Révélation de la nuit »
 - In 1952: « La Fin du Monde »; « La Grande Révélation »; « La Science Immortelle »; « Le livre de Conscience »; « Le Livre e Principes »; « Le Livre d'Or »; « Le Roi du Monde »; « La Bible du Mal » 10 dialogues with illustrations by J. Roger CHAROUX; «L'Évangile de l'Eau » .
 - In 1953: "Judas". *Judas* was produced under the direction of Yves FORGET with an adapted text, in 1960 at the Plaza, Rose Hill and Port-Louis, with success, running for 2 months. It was also interpreted at the Theatre of the Charles DULLIN's workshop in Paris on June 15th 1981 by a group of Mauritian amateurs including Ellen CHASE, Robert FURLONG, Luc LEGRIS and Vinod RUGHOONUNDUN. Appearing soon after, came « Judas ou la Trahison du Prêtre »; « L'Absolu » volume I; « Pentateuque »; « Préambule à l'Absolu ».
- In 1954: "the Desamorantes", A satire, drama in 5 acts followed by « Le Concile des Poètes », a prophesying theatrical play in 1 Act which takes place in "a huge city in Tibet, where the best brains of the Universe are gathered together". to praise the "Cosmic Fraternity" to achieve Love and attain Heaven, which is Poetry; « Les Deux Infinis »; « Les Dieux ou les Consciences-univers »; « L'espace ou Satan ».

After this interlude of theatrical writing during which he wrote several other pieces that he would later destroy by burning them, he returned to editing, but at a much slower pace. He released « Le Sens de l'Absolu » in 1956. In 1957 « Sens Magique » was first published at the Al-Madinah Press, and again in 1958 in Antananarivo by the Société Lilloises d'Impression; CHAZAL with his 150 very short aphorisms for the most part approximates "Sense-plastic" and did well: "Midi. La lumière prend sa leçon d'équitation" ("Midday. Light takes a riding lesson.") Then "Poems Apparadoxes", in 1958 at the Al Madinah Press: "Revenir en conscience dans le jardin d'extase. ("Return to consciousness in the garden of ecstasy), reversing the dogmas of science and religion and changing our searching perceptions by Edenic dialogue between things, natural or manufactured. This is, for Malcolm of CHAZAL, the vital essence of poetry. With humour and passion, Malcolm de CHAZAL denounces the arbitrary constraints of a robotic society".

In 1962, he released "Race-going in Mauritius on the occasion of the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Mauritius Turf Club", containing many memories of the author. « Poèmes » is published in Paris in 1968 by Jean-Jacques PAUVERT taken up again by Leo SCHEER in Paris. in 2005

« Sens-Plastique », translated to English by Irving G. WEISS was published in 1971 in New York City. In the preface to this edition, Wysten Hugh AUDEN (1907-1973), Professor of poetry at Oxford, wrote unambiguously " Sens-Plastique" has been a companion of mine for nearly 20 years, and as far as I am concerned, Malcolm de CHAZAL is the most original and interesting French writer to emerge since the war".

« L'île Maurice protohistorique folklorique et légendaire », illustrated with gouaches by the author was, published in 1973 by Guillemette DOGER de SPEVILLE, who wrote the introduction. In 1974, Laurence NAIRAC presented «Sens Unique», illustrated by Maurice GIRAUD, in the a Chien-de-Plomb edition. The new generation of Mauritians welcomed Malcolm de CHAZAL with open arms. That same year, Camille de RAUVILLE made a study of Malcolm de CHAZAL in «CHAZAL des Antipodes, approche et anthologie», with Foreword and Postscript by Léopold SEDAR SENGHOR, published by Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, Dakar, Sénégal. «L'Homme et la Connaissance», prefaced by Raymond ABELLIO, barely 120 pages long, but an radical condensation, was published by Jean Jacques PAUVERT on May 22nd 1974. On this occasion, under the title "Malcolm de CHAZAL, *cet homme est né très vieux*" Raymond ABELLIO testifies his admiration for de CHAZAL. He states unambiguously that the spontaneity shown by de CHAZAL in creating an image by bringing together two distant realities was supported by a clear, rigorous and active consciousness "that owed nothing to the famous objective of chance, an obsolete method used by the surrealists, by which they have sterilized their art or wasted their talents...." "We are in the presence of a light of genius, a holder of Gnosis". And the last book by Malcolm de CHAZAL, « La Bouche ne s'endort jamais », published in 1976 in Paris in an Editions by St-Germain-des-Près, "surprend comme l'éclair" the preface written by Fréchette Serge BRINDEAU, by using an aphorism: "when we press the stomach of a fire, light laughs". In the meantime, CHAZAL, from its inauguration in 1964, is co-opted as a member of an Association called "Académie Mauricienne", but he never attend their meetings.

From the 1950s, de CHAZAL adopted a new means of communication: Newspaper articles, current affairs and painting. He wrote newspaper articles on a regular basis which appeared in several daily newspapers. Thus from 1948 to 1978, he published some 980 articles in the Mauritian press based usually on Mauritian and French writers, philosophical themes, social issues, religion, the atom, space exploration, poetry, immortality, his paintings, and his difficult relationship with Mauritian society. In particular, from 1972 to 1976, he regularly alleged that that underground of the Island was an oil field, much natural gas and other mineral resources such as uranium. Furthermore he stated that he knew the location of these potential riches that could save his magical island from the slump in which it found itself.

Just after the publication of "Apparadoxes" when Malcome's painting era arrived to give added expression to Chazalienne Thought, it coincided with the intensifying rhythm of the Chronicles. de Chazal was 56 years old and had no ability to draw but, he says in a letter published on 1st July 1958 only three weeks after starting to paint, "the poet can do everything, even the impossible", especially "to write life-size" (R. FURLONG)! He held his first exhibition on April 13th, 1958. His paintings were gouache on paper composed of large flat areas of color, set off by the use of a black foreground. His subjects were initially Mauritian: fishing villages, coconut trees, flowers, fish, imaginary birds, a critic might say "just decorative pieces". He again exhibited his paintings from 19th to 25th June 1965 at the CCT, showing his type of provocative humour, with Curepipe becoming "Paradis des Bourgeois" ("Bourgeois' Paradise"), Le Chaland being called; "Malcolmville" and Grand'Baie; "Grande Baise". Trees were given human form, the topmost leaves resembling ladies hair blowing in the wind, fruit, and flowers. animals and boats all dominated by rainbow colours, gently mocking conventional drawing, as a child who utters words and sounds at random without worrying about grammar and cohesion of sentences. The enormity of the brush strokes, the distorted balance are the features of Malcolm's pictorial art of. He did not shy away from flamboyance because he must have thought extravagance is the sign of the creative genius, unless within this, there is a form of humour (one columnist wondered). But the very best, the most original of his paintings must be those two mismatched shoes - or rather these sneakers - lace less, make one think of the gusts of expression of this child prodigy... a prodigal: RAIMBAUD. One is not to know if these shoes are starting a journey, returning, or eternally wandering



He did not stop writing; but burnt all his texts, including 148 paintings that would go up in smoke on the beach at Chaland. As he recounts in an article published on April 27th, 1962 in Le MAURICIEN, he did this a fit of rage against "the crowd (of Mauritians) passing by the exhibition room where he showed his paintings "bantering, hands riveted to their wallet and purse". Very few of his gouaches had been purchased in Mauritius.

After exhibitions in Galeries Charpentier, Paris 1961; the Mercury Gallery, London in 1967; Montréal in 1967; at Galerie Le Parti, Grenoble in 1968; The Hoover Gallery, San-Francisco in 1969; Galleria Sebastianello, Rome in 1972; Musée Dynamique, Dakar, Sénégal in 1973 and Réunion, de CHAZAL became a well-known painter, his art appreciated and purchased. Léopold SEDAR SENGHOR would say of his painting "it's an entirely fabulous world that de CHAZAL made us see, hear, smell and touch....the de CHAZAL colours not only humanize the universe and reflect the magic of the world, but especially to place his visual interpretations in multi-dimensional space. He painted mostly in a top room of the Hôtel National that he had transformed into a studio, but also at the Hôtel Paradis, one of the jewels of Mauritian resorts at the foot of the Morne mountain, today a UNESCO site. He left a large number of paintings which decorate the Hôtel Paradis to this day . He strongly believed in cultural tourism and in 1961 he had already written, "will not be a success unless the visitor can come and return home with the smell, the transfiguration, the perspiration of our soil, this quintessence which is the body and soul of our sweet country".

Politically inclined to the left, he also mingled in politics: As Labour candidate in Rose-Hill in the elections of 9th March 1959, he was beaten by a small majority by Jean - Henri YTHIER who received 1,995 votes against 1,259. He would no longer stand for office, but remained close to the Labour Party and in particular would prove a strong supporter of Independence. Of this experience he wrote "I come out of this heightened; glorified in myself. The People and the Artist are made to understand each other because the People are the Artist, and the Artist is the People. ... The author of Petrusmok has this time made contact with the people of Petrusmok. I have put Poetry into politics"

Malcolm de CHAZAL died on October 1st, 1980 at Eau-Coulée, at the home of his sister Olga, whose son Georges had moved the family there some 18 months previously. Deeply religious according to his own moral values, he was profoundly anti-clerical. But it was his cousin, P. Henri SOUCHON, who took the funeral service for lack of a Swedenborgian Minister.



Raymond ABELLION would say: "de CHAZAL's work takes place assuming the existence of the spiritual world". Praised initially by the Surrealists looking for a second wind, Malcolm de CHAZAL refused to be characterized as a surrealist, as had been suggested by André BRETON". Malcolm de CHAZAL's style is characterized by a profusion of images that seemed to him akin to surrealism but distinguished by its attempt to treat poetry as a spiritual search, to achieve knowledge of The Spirit, by writing based on perception".

Malcolm de CHAZAL was difficult and secretive. Several anecdotes documented or not-circulated, which he didn't like, testified to this trait. His idiosyncrasies being more developed than those of others, helped to characterize him as "strange or weird" in the mind of Mauritians. His complex and hypersensitive character had developed in him a defense mechanism that he had himself described as 'the circumcision of the heart'. In practice this caused him to consciously isolate himself from family and friends. Of those whom he suspected of wanting to provoke him on his high moral principles and disturb his inner mind he would be intransigent and rude despite it being sometimes misplaced

Malcolm de CHAZAL remained single. But the island and its inhabitants were his property (his fiancée said so). And he had a passion for children and animals. Dealing with people, given his susceptibilities, he was often on tenterhooks. He also shrank to venture into any social environment which may prevent or curb his immense creative power. He hated mediocrity and the bourgeoisie in the individual, as in the social class. His mood swings were ephemeral, his extraordinary whims! He was totally unpredictable. Generous, although not well off, he always had some money in his pocket. He travelled on foot, always impeccably dressed in his legendary sport jacket and gray flannels, with his inseparable vacoas platted basket.

He left Villa Sylvain and Eau-Coulée early in the morning for Port-Louis, to go to his room-studio at the National Hotel. And it is in this 'garret' that he painted or wrote frenetically until lunchtime, he ate frugally, creole style. In the afternoon, he often strolled, with a lively step, in the streets of Port Louis, especially to the Central Market; but he often went by taxi to the Hôtel Paradis at Le Morne where, in the 70's, he could be seen seated, contemplating the ocean when he was not busy painting. He returned to Curepipe in the early evening. It is said that he sometimes had supper in Vatel, while writing of course, before returning home. Generally he avoided society and especially its celebrities. He led a simple, frugal, regular and disciplined life. He had a few friends whom he would visit occasionally, but he insisted that all the mirrors be covered! Some said that it was not that he himself considered himself unattractive. He gladly proclaimed the superiority of the monkey to Man, because: "when a monkey looks in a mirror, he sees a monkey; when a man looks in a mirror, he also sees a monkey".

After his death, several of his works continued to be published in France, *inter aliae*:

- "Sense magic" in the Editions LACHENAL and RITTER, Paris 1983, January 2001; in Léo SCHEER, Paris 2004.
- "My Revolution, letter to (Sarane) ALEXANDRIAN", at the time it does. Cognac 1983.
- « Sens Magique » aux Éditions LACHENAL et RITTER, Paris 1983, janvier 2001; chez Léo SCHEER, Paris 2004.
- « Ma Révolution, lettre à (Sarane) ALEXANDRIAN », chez Le Temps qu'il fait; Cognac 1983.
- « La Vie derrière les choses », préfacé par Olivier POIVRE d'ARVOR, aux Éditions La Différence, Paris, 1985 et 1990. A collection of articles extracts from some of his works and correspondence.
- « Sens-Plastique » dans la collection L'Imaginaire, GALLIMARD, Paris 1985, 2002.
- « Pensées », aux Éditions Exils, 1999. Under this title were brought together « Pensées » vol I to VI and « Pensées et Sens-Plastique ».
- «Moïse» chez l'Harmattan, June 2008: a theatrical piece unedited by Malcom de CHAZAL saved from the conflagration of his own work by the author. One discovers between earth and sky, in an "allegory", the mystery of the Old and the New Covenant reconsidered by Moses himself surrounded by Greek, Egyptian, Jewish, and Indian sages, the Prophet observes the life of Christ, his death and resurrection. The text in this edition is preceded by a presentation from Robert FURLONG which enlightens us on the direction of the text and analyses Malcolm de CHAZAL's theatrical approach.
- « Autobiographie spirituelle », chez l'Harmattan 2008. Biography of Malcolm de CHAZAL by Robert FURLONG. A posthumous bibliography by Christophe CASSIAU HAURIE which remains unreleased to this day, the books making up "

Autobiographie Spirituelle» I represent an indispensable document for the understanding Malcolm de CHAZAL's work in the form of some vehement phrases, the author traces Malcolm's life from his "pre-birth" to his immersion in self-contained writing and painting. He writes about his birth among camphor trees, his childhood in Mauritius and his studies in Louisiana; « La Bible du Mal », chez Leo SCHEER, January 2009. A re-run of the original 1952 edition

- « L'Évangile de l'Eau », chez Leo SCHEER, January 2009.
- « Sens Unique » chez L'Éther Vague in Toulouse, 1985;
- The first « Sens-Plastique », chez L'Éther Vague in Toulouse, 1986;
- "Correspondances de Malcolm de CHAZAL avec Jean PAULHAN", followed by «L'Unisme » by Éric MEUNIER, at L'Éther Vague, Toulouse, 1987;
- « L'Ombre d'une île, Malcolm de CHAZAL », working with Bernard VIOLET, previously unedited texts, at L'Éther Vague, Toulouse, 1994;
- « Contes et Poèmes de Morne Plage », chez L'Éther Vague, Toulouse, 1994;
- La clef du Cosmos », chez L'Éther Vague, Toulouse, 1994.
- "Comment devenir un génie ?" chez Vizavi, Port-Louis and Philippe REY, Paris, 2006. A reproduction of 200 letters and articles published in Mauritian dailies by Malcolm de CHAZAL between 1948 and 1981. . In addition to this book Vizavi (Port-Louis) brought out a CD with all de CHAZAL's chronicles (about 1000) with a search engine using different criteria; title, date, topic, keywords, prepared by Kumari ISSUR.
- "Malcolm de CHAZAL Petrusmok-mythe", complete edition by Jean Paul CURNIER and Éric MEUNIER, 505 p, at Léo SCHEER, Paris 2004.
- "Malcolm de CHAZAL, Poèmes et Apparadoxes", complete edition by Jean-Paul CURNIER and Eric MEUNIER. Editions Léo Scheer, Paris
-

Did Malcolm de CHAZAL expect any appreciation? He did not accept the offer of the British authorities to award him the Order of the British Empire (OBE). Léopold SEDAR SENGHOR expressed regret that in 1976 the "The Committee awarding the Nobel Prize for literature forgot CHAZAL". One thing is certain: Malcolm de CHAZAL refused to have his work included in the collection «Poètes d'aujourd'hui» published by the Parisians editor SEGHERS in 1976 "for the very simple reason that I don't want to give any information about my life in Mauritius. My intention is to remain a mystery for Mauritius and for the rest of the world".

The Government of Mauritius, did, in a way, honoured him by creating, the "Malcolm de CHAZAL Trust Fund" decreed in law No. 51 of 2002, under the aegis of the Department of Arts and Culture. Lilian BERTHELOT assumed the Chair of the Board of Directors from its inception until its dissolution by virtue of non-renewal in 2005. The Malcolm de CHAZAL Foundation was reactivated in 2009, with Robert FURLONG as president.

The Mayor of Port-Louis, Mamade KHODABACCUS, with the President of the "Malcolm de CHAZAL Trust Fund", Robert FURLONG, renewed the lease on Maison du Poète, in Vieux Conseil Road for three years on the morning of Wednesday, February 9th, 2011 in the Mayor's state-room in Port-Louis. After a year of closure for renovation. La Maison du Poète, reopened its doors on March 3rd, 2011 and became the headquarters of the Malcolm de CHAZAL Foundation. 2011 would become 'Malcolm de CHAZAL Year' whose literary and artistic works "had given Mauritius a global dimension". "As part of the reopening of La Maison du Poète, Robert FURLONG talked about the schedule of activities planned for this year, which marked the 30th anniversary of Malcolm de CHAZAL's death. It would include the launch of a book titled "Histoires Étranges", followed by "Fables de Colloques Magiques". According to Robert FURLONG, this would be the first time this series of stories would be published, as they had been so esteemed by Malcolm de CHAZAL himself. The universality of Malcolm de CHAZAL, despite his desire to remain a mystery, never fails to assert itself on a daily basis through his collective works, studies, theses, articles and seminars on his works.



29 years already! The Malcolm de CHAZAL Association and the endangered Cultural Heritage Association lay a wreath on his grave.

Collective works:

- *Contributions sur Malcolm* chez L'Éther Vague, Toulouse; chez Vivazi, Port-Louis, 1996;
- *Malcolm en Perspectives* by the 'Association des Diplômés de l'Enseignement Français ADEFM, chez Mauritius Printing Specialists, Port-Louis, 2002;
- *Revue Italiques* No 8.. Special issue on Malcolm de CHAZAL, Port-Louis 2002;
- *Malcolm de CHAZAL, an extraordinary litterateur of Mauritius*, in Indradhanush 21 - Special issue, Port-Louis, September 2002
- *Malcolm de Chazal, outre mesure*, by Jean Paul CURNIER, in La Revue Littéraire No 1, April 2004: pp 145-158
- *Chazalee*, by Éric MEUNIER, in La Revue Littéraire No 1, April 2004.: pp 159-163

Studies

- *Tradition et Modernité de l'Aphorisme*, par Philippe MORET, chez Droz, à Genève 1997.
- *Malcolm de CHAZAL, quelques aspects de l'homme et de son oeuvre*, by Laurent BEAUFILS, chez La Différence, Paris 1995.

- *Malcolm de Chazal au miroir du fragment : réflexions*, by Philippe MET, University of Pennsylvanie, USA, 1999.
- *Malcolm de CHAZAL, l'homme des genèses, de la recherche des origines à la découverte d'un avenir perdu*, volume I, by Christophe CHABBERT, chez L'Harmattan, Paris 2001;
- *Petrusmok de Malcolm de CHAZAL: radioscopie d'un "roman mythique"*, volume II, par Christophe CHABBERT, chez L'Harmattan, Paris 2001.

University Theses

- *Le discours social et l'imaginaire littéraire dans la littérature Mauricienne de langue française*, submitted by Amina OSMAN, Université de Paris XII, 1997. Note: a good part of this thesis concerns Malcolm de CHAZAL.
- *Tradition et Modernité de l'Aphorisme*, submitted by Philippe MORET, Université de Lausanne, 1997.
- *Du spirituel dans l'art verbal à la lumière d'un verbe-fée: une lecture de l'oeuvre de Malcolm de CHAZAL à la lumière de la rencontre des isotopies religion et langage dans «Sens-Plastique »*, submitted par Hélène LAPREVOTTE, Université de Paris-IV Sorbonne, June 1998.
- *Les Mythes cosmogoniques dans la littérature d'expression française; l'exemple de Malcolm de CHAZAL*, submitted par Christophe CHABBERT, Université de Paris XIII, June 1999.

Articles:

Two books devoting several pages to a list of articles about Malcolm de CHAZAL and his work:

- *Chazal des Antipodes, approche et anthologie*, by Camille de RAUVILLE, Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, Dakar, 1974;
- *La Vie derrière les Choses*, chez La Différence, Paris 1985. A mix of articles, book excerpts and correspondence.

Translations

- "Plastiske aspekter", Forlaget Arena 1970, 76 p. Illustrations by Wilhem FREDDIE. Danish translation of extracts from « Sens-Plastique ».
- "Plastic Sense", I. J. WEISS, USA, Herder and Herder Inc. 1971 144 p. Introduction by W. H. ARDEN. (CHAZAL disliked this title translated into English : « Sens-Plastique is not translatable » As for the selection of aphorisms, he considered the result "more powerful, more perceptive")
- "Sens-Plastique", chez Sun, New York 1979 (ré-édition of « Plastic Sense ») & Green Integer, USA, translation by Irving WEISS 1985;
- "Plastische Sinne", Édition Quatre en Samisdat, Berlin 1996. Photos by Manfred PAUL. Text by Andrée BUNKERT. German translation of a selection of aphorisms from "Sens-Plastique";

Audio Visual Productions

- ORTF, 1974, film by Claude Roland SAUZIER;
- RFI, "Archives sonores de la littérature noire et de l'océan Indien, Malcolm de CHAZAL";
- Khal TORABULLY: "Malcolm le tailleur de visions", a documentary film lasting 52 52 minutes (Chamarel Films/Mona Lisa Productions, (subsidised by The National Centre of Cinématographie), came out in 1998, shown in both Mauritius and Paris.
- Robert FURLONG, "Malcolm de CHAZAL, ce Mauricien de génie", a series of ten 20 minute showings on the work of Malcolm de CHAZAL, at TheMauritius College of the Air, Réduit, Maurice
- ORTF 1971, France-Culture. Six items of 30minutes each with Malcolm de CHAZAL, by Bernard VIOLET
- ORTF, 1974, France-Culture. "Malcolm de CHAZAL ou l'Anti-fou", by Bernard VIOLET (evocation of the life and work of the Mauritian genius through stories and texts read by actors in four emissions of 45 minutes).

Symposia

« Présence de Malcolm de CHAZAL ». A seminar organized at the Centre Culturel Charles BAUDELAIRE, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius in October 1994. Articles published in the collective work "Contributions sur Malcolm", 1996.. « Journées Malcolm de CHAZAL », University of Paris XIII-Villetaneuse, 31st May to- 1st June 2002, seminar organized by Jean-Louis JOUBERT, with the participation of Robert FURLONG, Bernard LEHEMBRE, Françoise PY, Christophe CHABBERT, Sarane ALEXANDRIAN and, Jean-Luc MOREAU

Press reviews

Annick GEILLE, in Le FIGARO, literary edition, May 19th, 2005. "If he were still among us, Malcolm de CHAZAL could verify the force of the insights he has sown throughout his work. Prophetic, quassi-inspired, his poetic vision of a world in which all objects are "animated" seems to be of our time., We must therefore congratulate the editor Léo SCHEER, who was unlikely to make a profit for publishing in early 2004, and continuing the publication until today, followed by the publication of "Poems, Apparadoxes", the edition of the complete works of CHAZAL. One should note in passing that, "Mauritian riddles' («devinettes mauriciennes) grouped in the chapter which gives the book its title are unpublished. The work of Malcolm de CHAZAL is a native scholar of Mauritius, who was at once poet, painter, philosopher and mystic. She is largely unknown. Despite de CHAZAL being a philosopher, Chazalienne Thought is not demonstrative. It proceeds by 'enlightenment' "featuring "correspondences" between the visible and invisible worlds. He was worried about the risks to our planet "the non-existent harmony". He was worried about the risks to our planet "the non-existent harmony." The future, peace, beauty, good all depended on "the end of the dualistic separation of man and the world." In the prison of dualism, the man dies; animals, plants and minerals are reduced to a state of objectivity. Salvation? Weave links between species to allow access to the final truth of the Universe; these poetic 'communications' are based on a «sixth sense», being flexible in nature. By dint of sensitivity, the artist comes to co-exist with the scientist, who can - and should - anticipate the balance of life. The idea of the 'fall' haunted de CHAZAL, for whom "every bird has the color of its call"... Do we understand the reality of the world? "It is not through

intelligence that this can be achieved, but by a «sixth sense» which is like the five known senses meeting in hyper-activity", He also said, adding immediately: "I immerse all men nature, (...)" and I put nature into all men " ... "It was so hot that the flowers needed to use their colors as fans," murmured de CHAZAL thirty years ago, immediately adding: "A bee leaving a flower comes out seemingly drunk." When he affirmed "the breeze thinks", de CHAZAL did nothing more than sense biologists theories... »

- **His works in World Libraries.**

- Library of Congress (<http://catalog.loc.gov/>): 27 titles by Malcolm de CHAZAL.
- Bibliothèque Nationale de France (<http://www.bnf.fr>): 38 titles by Malcolm de CHAZAL. La BNF lists a 2004 reproduction of a work entitled "L'Homme et la vie" that would have been edited in 1948.
- British Library (<http://www.bl.uk>): 9 titles by Malcolm de CHAZAL.
- National Library of Australia (<http://www.nla.gov.au>): 23 titles by Malcolm de CHAZAL.
- National Library of Mauritius
- Italie: www.libreriauniversitaria.it

In homage to Malcolm de CHAZAL

Patrick HAREL
Rivière-Noire.
March 2011